

ABSTRACT

Conceiving Coexistence: An Exposition on the Divergent Western and Islamic Conceptualizations of Tolerance

Aaron M. Tyler, M.A.

Mentor: Derek H. Davis, Ph.D.

Is a “clash” between Western and Islamic civilizations underway? For some, Samuel Huntington’s prescient thesis is being realized. For others, his “clash of civilizations” paradigm only obfuscates with generalizations the complexities and confluences of world cultures. Cognizant of its potential deficiencies, this project utilizes a cultural comparative paradigm as an expressly limited systematic methodology for examining intercommunal, transcultural conflict and possible paths to reconciliation and coexistence. After demonstrating the reality of a multilevel conflict between Western and Islamic civilizations, the cross-cultural, interreligious conception of tolerance is proffered as one essential strategy for affecting a mutually desired level of peaceful coexistence. Tolerance is a strategic attitude for living with difference, and how this attitude is manifested largely depends on context, tradition, and the nature and extent of diversity.

This dissertation provides a brief analysis of select writings and practices of tolerance in Western and Islamic histories to show how an intercultural understanding of tolerance is well within the philosophical, theological, and practical

parameters of both traditions. Islamic and Western civilizations each have a unique hierarchy of values that have motivated conceptualizations of tolerance. Yet, despite their varying orders of supremacy, intercultural values of significant worth to both civilizations are apparent—liberty, justice, humility, human dignity, and charity, for example. In addition to the confluence of virtues that have quickened conceptualizations of tolerance, this project also examines how both traditions have found pragmatic, temporal stimulants for developing this important strategy. Beyond important virtues such as liberty or justice, the geopolitical desire to peaceably coexist has proven to be an equally important pragmatic incentive. This, of course, does not diminish virtue as a critical motivator for tolerance; it simply highlights the historical complexity of this pan cultural strategy for meaningful coexistence.

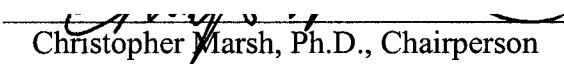
Conceiving Coexistence: An Exposition on the Divergent Western and Islamic
Conceptualizations of Tolerance

by

Aaron M. Tyler, M.A.

A Dissertation

Approved by the J.M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies

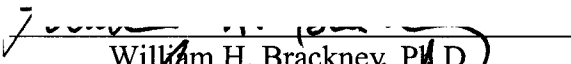

Christopher Marsh, Ph.D., Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved by the Dissertation Committee


Derek H. Davis, Ph.D., Chairperson


Francis J. Beckwith, Ph.D.

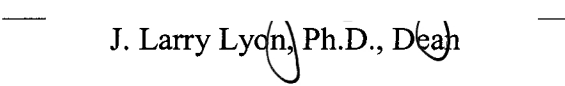

William H. Brackney, Ph.D.


Christopher Marsh, Ph.D.


Paul Fries, Ph.D.


Rodney Stark, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
May 2006


J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

Copyright © 2006 by Aaron M. Tyler

All rights reserved

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
DEDICATION	viii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. COLLIDING OR CONVERGING CIVILIZATIONS?	17
Limitations of a Comparative (Cross-Cultural) Paradigm	18
Capturing the Conflict	25
Western Fears: Real and Imagined	27
A Multidimensional Conflict	37
What is Religious Freedom	44
Crusade vs. Jihad	48
Conceiving Coexistence: A Strategy of Tolerance	53
3. A HISTORICAL GLIMPSE OF TOLERANCE IN THE WEST	58
Tolerance and the Transcendancy of Religion	62
A Fourth-Century Plea for Tolerance	65
Tolerance and the Medieval Epoch	71
Ramon Llull: Tolerance via Dialogue	78
The Gentile	83
A Sixteenth-Century Expression of Interreligious, Cross-Cultural Tolerance	86
Las Casas on Intercivilizational Tolerance	87
Jean Bodin: An Evolution of the Interreligious Dialogue	94

The Colloquium	95
Synthesizing the Discussion	100
4. MODERN TOLERANCE: A PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL CRITIQUE	104
Contextual Significance: Considering France	104
Distinctives and Deficiencies of Modern Tolerance	108
A Communitarian Critique	111
Engaging Liberalism: An Appraisal of Rawlsian Tolerance	115
Tolerance Rightly Conceived: Strategy or Virtue?	119
UNESCO Declaration of Tolerance: A Gauge of the Modern Conceptualization	122
France Reconsidered: The Case of Marseille	126
Summary	130
5. DISCOVERING ISLAMIC TOLERANCE	132
Tolerance: The Complicated Impact of Civil Society	135
Fundamental Intolerance	136
Maududi on Tolerance and the <i>dawla</i>	138
Qutb and <i>Jahiliyya</i>	141
Mechanical Intolerance of the Muslim Extremist	146
Theological Foundations for Tolerance	151
Metaphysical Justifications for Tolerance	161
Islamic Humanism of Abdolkarim Soroush	163
6. A DIVERSE SAMPLING OF TOLERANCE IN THE HISTORY OF ISLAM	167
The Dhimma: Contracting Coexistence	168

Tolerance in Ottoman Turkey: Secularism on the Periphery	174
A Turkish Intellectual's Quest for Coexistence	181
Historical Role of Tolerance on the Indian Subcontinent and the State of Pakistan	187
A Brief History of Tolerance under the Mughal Dynasty	191
An Islam of Tolerance: The Muslim Intellectuals of Pakistan	196
A Complex Assortment of Ideas and Practices	206
7. A CONSENSUS FOR COEXISTENCE: EMPLOYING A STRATEGY OF TOLERANCE	212
Intercultural Significance of Tolerance	221
Conceiving Tolerance: A Contextually Relevant, Cross-Cultural Definition	229
Contemporary Challenges to Tolerance and Coexistence	234
Conclusion	237
BIBLIOGRAPHY	242

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This acknowledgment has proven to be the most formidable task of my dissertation, as it is here that I attempt to express an inexpressible gratitude to those who helped me complete what has been a truly collective endeavor. I am indebted to an exceptional committee for their valuable time, penetrating wisdom, and thoughtful insights. Deserving special mention is William Brackney, who graciously volunteered his time, productive criticism, and invaluable wisdom throughout. As well, I must thank my outside reader, Cary Nederman. He provided me with a wellspring of ideas and suggestions, all of which guided my research and enhanced the caliber of this dissertation. Any success ascribed to this project is largely attributable to the combined influence and encouragement of these remarkable scholars and friends.

Far from being a reputed ivory tower experience, any preoccupations I developed with intellectual considerations during my doctoral studies were always tempered by the practical blessings I received from everyday life as a husband, father, and minister. The past four years of my academic journey were percolated with the encouragement, long-suffering, and infectious optimism of two wonderful sons, loving parents, and an amazing wife. Benjamin and Luke provide a taproot of endless joy and contentment to a proud dad. Their enthralling smiles, inquisitive minds, and endless imaginations remind me often of God's divine goodness. To my father- and mother-in-law Bruce and Gloria

Lomax I am truly thankful. Their patience and dependable encouragement helped mitigate any difficulties my family and I encountered along the way. My parents deserve the credit for so much. Their unconditional love, ceaseless affirmations, and fervent prayers are priceless foundations underpinning my entire person. Above all else, I am thankful for my wife, Lori. She is a loving and nurturing mother, a woman of God, and wife beyond compare. Her enduring love, unshakeable character, and intimate friendship have been my sustenance throughout. She has stolen my heart, and without her, this academic accomplishment was simply unattainable. Ultimately, for the accomplishments made and blessings received, my gratitude rests with God. This dissertation is a testimony to his matchless grace and provision.

To Lori and the Honor of God

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Samuel P. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* (1997), acclaimed by many policy makers and foreign affairs analysts in the West for its reasoned realism but also castigated by academics for its infidelity to liberalism and challenge to multiculturalism, attracted international attention for its assertion, following the end of Cold War rivalries, that Islam would emerge as the most potent and violent challenge to Western civilization.¹ In a 1999 keynote address delivered at Colorado College, Huntington stated: "For the foreseeable future, the relations between the West and Islam will be at best distant and acrimonious and at worst conflictual and violent."² Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, many again harkened to Huntington's prescient thesis. The September 2001 al-Qaeda attacks, described by most world leaders as senseless and cowardly acts of violence, inaugurated what has become a global war on terrorism. While careful to emphasize that Islam is a peaceful religion and that most Muslims are peaceable, law-abiding citizens, Western leaders and citizens are cognizant of how the recent rise in terrorism is a product of Muslim extremism.

¹Huntington's hypothesis was first articulated in a 1993 *Foreign Affairs* article, entitled, "The Clash of Civilizations?" The hypothesis was expounded at book-length in 1997. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 22-28; and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997). See also, Stanley Kurtz, "The Future of History," *Policy Review* 113 (June/July 2002): 43.

² Samuel Huntington, Keynote Address, Colorado College's 125th Anniversary Symposium: "Cultures in the 21st Century: Conflicts and Convergences," 4 February 1999.

For many in the West, Islam has become, in large measure, the scapegoat of terrorism.³ Deemed the impetus behind recent terrorist attacks on Western soil, Islam—more pointedly, its perversion by militant extremists—has become the chief fear of many Westerners. With the new “enemy” identified, attempts to excise Islam’s radical elements, whether through banal discrimination upon Muslim immigrants in the *dar al-harb* (“abode of war”; non-Islamic regions of the world) or military, economic, and diplomatic pressure against the *dar al-Islam* (“abode of peace”; regions under Islamic law) , are now underway.

One must remember that the Islamic world consists of much more than the Middle East. The 1.3 billion Muslims living in the contemporary world are a diverse group. Islamic civilization covers a range of political and economic systems, as well as a vast array of local cultures, languages, beliefs, and family and social values. Muslims comprise a majority in at least fifty countries from the African Continent to Central Asia. South Asian countries such as Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, as well as South East Asian countries such as Indonesia host a significant majority of the world’s Muslims and remain some of the most volatile regions of concern to the West. Furthermore, as once isolated communities are emerging from obscurity and distant cultures are experiencing more proximate expressions through processes of globalization and east to west

³Caution is taken when using the terms “West” and “Islam,” or “Western civilization” and “Islamic civilization.” This project is sensitive to the tendencies to objectify “Western” or “Islamic” identity with oversimplified generalizations and stereotypes that suppose a neat, compartmentalized unity of culture—neglecting the intracultural differences and internal struggles between religious and secular, as well as local, state, and regional entities. Recognizing the historical interconnectedness of our world and the internal complexity and diversity of civilizations, the above terms are used within a cross-cultural paradigm that seeks to accentuate the important differences, as well as shared values, between Western and Islamic cultures.

emigration, civilizational boundaries are becoming increasingly unclear. Learning to coexist with the Muslim Other is now as much a domestic question in the West as it is an intercultural one. Perhaps for the moment, Huntington is correct: Islamic civilization, in all of its complexity, represents a seminal challenge to traditional Western civilization.

Of course, cultural insecurity is a concrete reality, not only within the Western world but within the Muslim world as well. Many Muslims in the Middle East have grown weary of the long-standing and violent Israel-Palestine conflict and the West's ideological and financial support of the Jewish state. The American-led war on terrorism and its protracted liberation and occupation of Iraq have precipitated an unsettling anxiety for many Muslims in the region. Western consumerism and materialism are perceived by many as a relentless threat against the religiocultural values and traditions espoused by the greater Islamic community. The West's postmodern relativism is regarded by many Muslims as intolerant to those traditional Muslim communities that adhere to a system of absolutes. To many in the Islamic world, Western democracy's excessive individualism is viewed as antithetical to their traditional emphasis upon communal values and group solidarity.

For a many Muslims, their lives are plagued by social and economic underdevelopment. These depressed and often degrading circumstances, coupled with the perception of historical and modern exploitation by the West, help to explain the entrenched animosity many Muslims hold against Western societies and their values. Muslim puritans and extremists have profited from this inimical relationship, manipulating Islamic symbols and tradition in order to legitimate geopolitical goals. These militant casts of Muslims have spawned a violent terrorism that has only

exacerbated the current civilizational confrontation. Nevertheless, attempts at rapprochement with Western civilization are underway. Through *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), Muslim reformers are confronting the authenticity of Islam's militant adherents, challenging their exclusivist, ahistorical ideologies and interpretations.

Muslim reformers are encouraging awareness and appreciation of Islam's fourteen centuries of jurisprudence and tradition, emphasizing how its depth and complexity preclude mechanical interpretations. In an effort to inoculate Islam against the violent tendencies of its militant adherents, Muslim reformers are striving to cultivate a nonviolent and enlightened Muslim culture that is receptive to new ideas and cognizant of Islam's principled but adaptive history. Indeed, a struggle for the soul of Islam is underway as liberal and moderate Muslims seek to challenge Muslim extremists and their "impoverished" ideologies and infidelity to scripture and moral tradition.

Certainly, there are many theories supporting, as well as refuting, a cultural-comparative model for understanding intergroup conflict. When assessing complex "non-academic" global developments, especially after 11 September 2001, insightful observations from certain academic disciplines (religious ethics, sociology, and anthropology, in particular) reveal a growing awareness of the "need to imagine and cultivate new cross-cultural and even inter-civilizational bonds and arrangements."⁴ That comparative theorizing helps to underscore, for the purpose of greater understanding, the idiosyncrasies of one culture through its juxtaposition with other cultures, does not mean

⁴Fred Dallmayr, "Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory," *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (June 2004): 250.

that “relativism or radical incommensurability” is advocated.⁵ Instead, as pointed out by political theorists Anthony Parel and Fred Dallmayr, cultural-comparative theory not only probes the differences but also affinities or “equivalences” between cultural frameworks. Careful observation of both differences and “equivalences” between civilizations broadens and enriches global academic discourse, as comparative theorizing seeks to “deepen one’s understanding of one’s own tradition and engender understanding and respect for the traditions of others.”⁶ There are, of course, a host of necessary qualifications and limitations of such an approach to understanding intercommunal conflict; a tendency to neglect intracultural complexities through artificial stereotyping of civilizations is, perhaps, the most significant deficiency associated with cultural-comparative theorizing. Thus, chapter two of this project will, in part, address the limitations, as well as advantages of using a cultural-comparative model for understanding the current conflicts occurring between (and even within) Western and Islamic civilizations.

To state whether the current clash represents a long-term collision between Western and Muslim civilizations or, instead, is simply a temporary obstacle in the way of Western-led pursuits for a *Pax Democratica* would be mere conjecture. Whatever its future, this cultural confrontation requires critical assessment. In spite of the universal tendencies of both Western and Islamic civilizations, history and current experience teach that the most plausible, realistic, and mutually desirable solution to this escalating cross-

⁵Anthony J. Parel, “The Comparative Study of Political Philosophy,” in *Comparative Political Philosophy: Studies Under the Upas Tree*, ed. Anthony J. Parel and Ronald C. Keith (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), 14; quoted in Dallmayr, 252.

⁶Parel, 12; and Dallmayr, 252.

cultural conflict is coexistence. Thus, a central purpose of this work is to address the need and possibilities for coexistence between Islamic and Western civilizations.

Coexistence has been defined in a variety of ways. In the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1997), to coexist simply means “to exist together (in time or place) and to exist in mutual tolerance.” For Michael Walzer, coexistence occurs when “groups of people with different histories, cultures, and identities”⁷ live together in a peaceful and sustainable way. At a 1987 conference in Malta on Muslim-Christian relations, the Grand Mufti of Syria, Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Amin Kuftaro, stated that coexistence requires “two or more parties desiring to live together in peace, without dispute, quarrel or conflict.”⁸ In discussing the historical and modern complexities of the relationship between Islam and the West, Bernard Lewis writes that in our contemporary world coexistence occurs on various levels—national, racial, social, ideological, and religious—and “implies a willingness to live at peace, and perhaps even in mutual respect, with others.”⁹ Lewis argues that, ideally, meaningful, pragmatic coexistence becomes an inherent right of “equality between the different groups composing a political society.”¹⁰ In their organizational brochure, The Coexistence Initiative encapsulates coexistence as

⁷Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 2.

⁸Sheikh Ahmad Muhammad Amin Kuftaro, lecture given at the Muslim Christian Conference (Malta 1987), available at http://www.kuftaro.org/English/wot/coexistence_in_mediterranean.htm (accessed on 10 October 2005).

⁹Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 174.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 179.

the proactive interaction between different groups who are concurrently committed to tolerance, mutual respect, and the elimination of violence as a viable alternative for settling conflict.¹¹ From this perspective, coexistence does not necessarily discourage cross-cultural conflict; rather, it proscribes violence as an acceptable recourse to settling conflict.

Beyond abstract theories, coexistence is a pragmatic desideratum for reframing the complex inimical relationship between Islam and the West. In general, coexistence carries with it the recognition and acceptance of lasting difference and involves a necessary tension that is tempered through an attitude of mutual respect and a process of nonviolent discourse. Coexistence is one expression of how individuals and communities perceive those who are different, and it becomes a reality when individuals, communities, and cultures develop practical policies and institutions (formal and informal) that adequately reflect positive perceptions of the Other and facilitate a global environment that accepts a diverse humanity. Michael Walzer contends that peaceful coexistence is “always a good thing.” And, tolerance, Walzer argues, is a very good thing—because it makes coexistence possible.¹² This project agrees and proffers tolerance as one practical and attainable transcultural strategy for affecting coexistence. Through a process of cross-cultural or intercivilizational comparative analysis, this dissertation will

¹¹The Coexistence Initiative, available at <http://www.intractableconflict.org/coexistence> (accessed 30 October 2005). Conflict, when expressed nonviolently, can be instrumental to positive social change. Thus, times of coexistence do not exclude (in fact, they often encourage) constructive conflict, but they do exclude violent expressions of conflict. Ibid. See also, Morton Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973); and Eugene Weiner, ed., *The Handbook of Interethnic Coexistence* (New York: The Abraham Fund, 2000).

¹²Walzer, 2 and xi.

demonstrate how tolerance emerges as one of the most effective means for achieving a specific goal of global importance—coexistence.¹³

For the important purpose of coexistence, a commitment to tolerance includes nonviolent disagreement, an attitude of mutual esteem, and an ongoing process of proactive intercultural dialogue and international diplomacy. In a world of immutable difference, efforts to assess and reassess the strategy of tolerance and its acceptable limits are exceptionally meaningful. However, while the desire by most in the Islamic and Western worlds to reach coexistence is reasonably transparent, a mutually edifying

¹³Some writers use the terms *tolerance* and *toleration* interchangeably, while others are quick to distinguish. For the purposes of this dissertation, *tolerance* is most appropriate and, for the sake of consistency, will be utilized throughout. The main distinction made between *toleration* and *tolerance* is that the former is principally a sociopolitical practice or allowance, where the strong/majority officially “tolerate” the weak/minority, while the latter is primarily an attitude, less dependent on the power of the agents in question. Both *toleration* and *tolerance* may be characterized as strategies to be employed by individuals, communities, or regimes, but *toleration*, as a social or political allowance, has more limited application than the attitudinal expressions of *tolerance*. *Tolerance* is a more fluid conception that can speak to the difficult encounters with difference at all levels of human society: between two neighbors, among communities, across religions, and between cultures. Moreover, *tolerance*, unlike *toleration*, is often considered a trait or characteristic of an individual, community, or culture and is considered by some to be a virtue as well. (This is discussed in greater detail in chapter four.) For lasting coexistence to occur between Western and Muslim cultures, a strategic attitude of tolerance toward the Other must be envisaged that permeates all levels of society, from local to global engagements. Coexistence depends, in large part, on how effectively the attitude of tolerance, within both cultures, challenges and overcomes the dominating antithetical attitude of intolerance. Ultimately, John Christian Laursen, political theorist at the University of California Riverside, is right, when it comes to discussing the semantic and conceptual differences of *toleration* and *tolerance* “there is nothing to be gained from overly technical distinctions that are not understood in ordinary language.” John Christian Laursen, “Orientation: Clarifying the Conceptual Issues,” in *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 2. Thus, this brief explanation of this project’s use of *tolerance* will suffice. For a greater examination of the differences between *tolerance* and *toleration* see Andrew R. Murphy, “Tolerance, Toleration, and the Liberal Tradition,” *Polity* 29, no. 4 (1997): 593-623; Michael Walzer, xi; and Jay Newman, *Foundations of Religious Tolerance* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1982).

understanding and appreciation of the malleable concept of tolerance is not as clear. Moreover, the fortitude of this embattled concept is truly measured only when it is juxtaposed against a culture's ultimate concern—that is, religion. Is tolerance compatible with or in contradistinction to religion? Is tolerance a concept that resonates deeply with Islamic scripture and tradition? Or is tolerance a particular phenomenon of Western Christian civilization, progressively secularized and wholly realized through liberalism? And, if only for the temporal urgency of reaching coexistence, what political and pragmatic place is religious tolerance currently afforded in Western and Islamic culture? The answers to these profound questions are both elusive and disputed.

A handful of works from such scholars as Cary Nederman and John Christian Laursen offer a formidable challenge to liberalism's unilateral claims of conceiving tolerance.¹⁴ By demonstrating how tolerance has important roots in such diverse frameworks as medieval functionalism, Confucian tradition, economic expediency, religious pluralism, and rising nationalism, Nederman and Laursen's edited works effectively dis sever tolerance from its Lockean and Enlightenment origins, demonstrating how disparate frameworks for the conceptualization of tolerance were in circulation long before the seventeenth century and not confined to Western civilization.¹⁵ Such scholarship has broadened and deepened the discourse on tolerance. Mindful of the current friction between Western and Islamic civilizations, this author hopes to corroborate and contribute to this contemporary discourse by emphasizing how the idea

¹⁴See Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen, eds., *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Toleration in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996); and John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

¹⁵Nederman and Laursen, *Difference and Dissent*, 5.

of tolerance was and is an inherent principle and an historical practice within not only the Western tradition but also the Islamic tradition. This dissertation seeks, in part, to examine various writings from historic and contemporary Muslim scholars on the theological and philosophical place of tolerance and to provide some select examples of the historical practice of tolerance in Islamic history to show how the concept of tolerance is neither new nor entirely Western, but rather finds deep and historical, philosophical, and theological roots within the Islamic tradition as well. The diverging Western and Islamic frameworks for tolerance must then be juxtaposed to assess their congruities and peculiarities, their strengths and weaknesses. This author believes that this comparative analysis will demonstrate how Islamic and Western civilizations, in fidelity to their history and traditions, can ascribe to a meaningful, cross-cultural understanding of tolerance from diverging paths—that is, on their own terms.

Once the cross-cultural, interfaith validity of tolerance is evinced, there remains the exacting task of defining what this mutual tolerance actually means. Research into the idea of tolerance reveals a wide range of definitions and uses. Depending largely upon context, peoples have interpreted and employed the idea of tolerance at various points along a vast spectrum of meanings. Religious, cultural, socio-political, and geographic variables are only a few of the many influences that can affect the conceptualization and application of tolerance. Michael Walzer's pivotal work, *On Tolerance*, shows how conceptions of tolerating the Other occur along a vast continuum where one extreme is simply a resignation to accept difference merely for the sake of peace, and the other extreme is an aesthetic or functional endorsement of difference. Between these ends exists three additional descriptions of tolerance: 1) a benign

indifference, 2) a moral stoicism, and 3) a curiosity or openness toward the Other.¹⁶

Historian Istvan Bejczy argues that the medieval conceptualization of tolerance is a “more coherent and forceful concept” than that employed in modern discourse, simply because medieval accounts of tolerance did not espouse religious liberty or embrace a relativity of truth.¹⁷ Rather, the medieval idea of tolerance was, following Aquinas, not an obligation to love but, instead, a bridling of one’s hate.¹⁸

Whatever its original, authentic meaning, the understanding and application of the idea of tolerance has depended on the historical, geographical, social, and religious realities that confronted a people and their culture. One would thus be mistaken to suggest the existence of one systematic conception of tolerance that has been affably and equally embraced across history by all cultures and all civilizations, regardless of context. Liberalism’s enthusiastic endorsement of difference, to the point of indifference, stands in contrast to the resigned acceptance of difference for the sake of peace in the sixteenth-century’s Peace of Augsburg. The respect and openness to the religious “stranger,” espoused by Pakistan’s founding fathers Ali Jinnah and Muhammad Iqbal, are distinct from Turkey’s secular tendencies of discounting the importance of religious and cultural difference in public life. Yet, all of these examples attempt to deal with the concept of tolerance.

¹⁶Walzer, 10-12. See also, Laursen, “Orientalism: Clarifying the Conceptual Issues,” 2-3.

¹⁷Istvan Bejczy. “Tolerantia: A Medieval Concept,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58 (1997): 367.

¹⁸Ibid., 372.

The various manners through which communities and civilizations seek to tolerate the Other are undeniably complex, and the vast array of definitions for tolerance has arguably inhibited the development of a mutually coherent meaning for Islamic and Western cultures. Thus, a concluding purpose of this dissertation—beyond supporting tolerance as a principle inherent to both Western and Islamic civilizations—is to emphasize a sustainable concept of tolerance that is not only consistent with, but also intrinsic to Western and Islamic traditions. A strategy of tolerance is necessary that not just accepts difference, but is, in fact, a product of the indestructibility of difference.¹⁹ It is a concept that facilitates difference, not through an embrace of radical relativism, but through a recognition and appreciation of a culture's entitlement to absolutes. Further, in order to affect coexistence, a cross-cultural strategy of tolerance must be located that has transparent limitations, which allow communities and cultures to engage, and even preclude, those fanatical and militant individuals and groups within a society who, in lieu of cross-cultural efforts toward coexistence, advocate violent coercion as the only viable recourse for settling conflict.

Considering the “clash of civilizations” addressed above, it seems that the purpose of this dissertation, to demonstrate the need for coexistence between Islamic and Western civilizations and address how the transcultural strategy of tolerance is essential to its achievement, is well justified. There are a number of works that debate the place and meaning of tolerance within either Western or Islamic traditions or that discuss the idea of tolerance in general. Michael Walzer's *On Toleration* investigates “five regimes of toleration,” describing the positive and negative attributes of each framework. There are

¹⁹Walzer, xii.

several edited works that discuss the various religious, philosophical, historical, and theoretical roots of tolerance within and beyond Western civilization.²⁰ In his book *Worlds of Difference*, political theorist Cary Nederman provides interesting insight into the prominent place of tolerance in the writings of orthodox and dissenting Western medieval thinkers.²¹ J. Budziszewski's *True Tolerance* offers a philosophical critique of contemporary liberal thought and its conception of tolerance.²² Khaled Abou El Fadl's "The Place of Tolerance in Islam" and Yohanan Friedmann's *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam* represent two distinct methodologies for addressing the conceptualization of tolerance in Islamic history and tradition.²³ Yet, this author's research has not discovered any contemporary attempts similar to this project's endeavor to address the need and strategy for reaching coexistence through a comparative, cross-cultural analysis of Islamic and Western conceptualizations of tolerance. If achieving coexistence between Western and Islamic civilizations is a realistic need and a cross-cultural aspiration, then

²⁰See, for example, Mehdi Amin Razavi and David Ambuel, eds., *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997); Susan Mendus, ed., *The Politics of Toleration in Modern Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); Louis J. Hammann and Harry M. Buck, eds., *Religious Traditions and the Limits of Tolerance* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Publications, 1988); and John Christian Laursen, ed., *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" from Cyrus to Defoe*.

²¹Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration, c. 1100-c. 1550* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

²²J. Budziszewski, *True Tolerance: Liberalism and the Necessity of Judgment* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000).

²³Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002). Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

the ascertainment of a mutual and intrinsic understanding of tolerance is absolutely essential.

The scheme of this dissertation follows its purpose: to demonstrate the diverging frameworks of Islamic and Western conceptualizations of tolerance and to identify a particular cross-cultural comprehension of tolerance as an effective strategy for affecting coexistence. Chapter two will address some of the strengths and weakness of cultural-comparative theorizing in explaining intercivilizational conflict. It will suggest a *qualified* cross-cultural comparative model as one limited method for understanding the current conflict between Western and Islamic cultures. Further, chapter two will show how the current dissonance between Western and Islamic civilizations and communities is a present reality in urgent need of resolution. It will discuss the major contemporary conflicts resulting from and exacerbating this cultural confrontation, as well as some of the major obstacles to achieving coexistence. Additionally, the debate over the universal or relative nature of human rights will be addressed. Realizing the temporal limitations of the universal ambitions of Western and Islamic civilizations, it will suggest coexistence as a more sober but pragmatic and realizable alternative. A cross-cultural understanding of tolerance will then be proffered as an essential strategy for achieving coexistence, and an exploration of the diverging Western and Islamic frameworks for conceptualizing tolerance will be introduced as an effective comparative method for demonstrating the intracultural pedigree of this worthy strategy.

Chapter three will provide a discussion of the diverse Western frameworks of tolerance, contributing to the recent scholarship challenging liberalism's paternalistic claims of cultivating and perfecting this labyrinthine concept. It will broadly trace the

emergence, evolution, and elaboration of this concept across Western history through an examination of select writers on tolerance and the contexts within which they were conditioned. Chapter four will then consider Western civilization's modern and postmodern manipulation of tolerance and attempt to contribute to the reclamation of its more historically authentic purpose of living with and engaging real difference.

Chapter five will analyze leading theological and metaphysical frameworks for tolerance intrinsic to Islamic civilization. It will consider various theological justifications and metaphysical ideologies for and against tolerance within Islamic history and tradition. Because a substantial portion of this and the following chapter examines Islamic scripture, writings, and tradition, this author must acknowledge at the outset his limited familiarity with the Arabic language. I have endeavored to understand the subtleties of pivotal words and expressions. Nevertheless, while I have benefited from many contemporary works written by Islamicists in English and German, in lieu of my deficiencies in Arabic (and Turkish), much of my research and exegesis for chapters five and six relied heavily on translated primary texts. In addition, while I designated much of my graduate education to the study of Islamic culture and politics, I undertake the examination of tolerance in Islam recognizing my non-Muslim status and cognizant of the impressions that may arise from a Western scholar investigating Islam.

Exploration of tolerance in Islamic civilization's historical praxes will be the purpose of chapter six. It will demonstrate the conceptual complexity of tolerance in Islamic tradition through a brief examination of three disparate examples of its understanding and application: the historical *dhimma*, Ottoman-Turkey, and Mughal-

Pakistan. It will conclude with a brief synthesis of the various theological, philosophical, and historical conceptualizations of tolerance evinced from within Islamic civilization.

Chapter seven will reassert the importance of coexistence and the need for tolerance, summarizing the common and distinguishing characteristics of these two civilizational uses of tolerance. This chapter will then identify a particular cross-cultural conception of tolerance as an effective strategy for achieving and sustaining coexistence. Despite the disparate religious, sociopolitical, and historical realities from which tolerance has occurred, this chapter will emphasize the ability of both Islamic and Western cultures to embrace a mutually endorsed understanding of tolerance as an important strategy for realizing coexistence and as an effective method for expressing cross-cultural, interfaith values such as liberty, justice, peace, humility, and human dignity.

This project of cross-cultural comparativism will be purposefully interdisciplinary. It will utilize several disciplines, including intellectual and social history, political theory, comparative religions, and international relations. It is expected that the interdisciplinary format of this project will prove useful and successful.

CHAPTER TWO

Colliding or Converging Civilizations?

“Wherever one turns, the world is at odds with itself. If differences in civilization are not responsible for these conflicts, what is?” So states Samuel Huntington in response to critics of his “Clash of Civilizations” hypothesis. “History has not ended,” and “the world is not one,” Huntington declares. And if it is civilizations that “unite and divide humankind,” then “in a world of different civilizations . . . each will have to learn to coexist with the other.”¹ From this viewpoint, a cultural-comparative paradigm becomes one useful framework for exploring the conflicts that are occurring between Islamic and Western cultures and how coexistence may be effectively conceived.

When discussing conflicts between *civilizations* or *cultures*, one can easily become preoccupied with the disputed meanings of such broad and ambiguous terms. A brief digression on meaning is necessary, therefore, to determine how *culture* or its cognate (at the widest level) *civilization* might be defined when used as a comparative term. The *American Heritage Dictionary* (1996) offers one possible meaning of *civilization*: “the type of culture and society developed by a particular nation or region or in a particular epoch.” One may think of the Mayan civilization or the civilization of Ancient Greece. Likewise, the same dictionary defines *culture* as particular “patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community,

¹Samuel Huntington, “If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War,” *Foreign Affairs* 72 (November/December 1993): 194.

or population.”² “Elizabethan culture,” “Chinese culture,” and “a culture of violence”: these are all examples that may fit within this broad understanding of culture. Certainly, *civilization* and *culture* are broad terms with many disputed meanings. Huntington offers three ways in which *culture* may be understood:

First, culture may refer to the products of a society. People speak of a society’s high culture—the art, literature, music—and its popular or folk culture. Second, anthropologists speak of culture in a much broader sense to mean the entire way of life of a society, its institutions, social structure, family structure, and the meanings people attribute to these. Finally, other scholars, perhaps particularly political scientists, see culture as something subjective, meaning the beliefs, values, attitudes, orientations, assumptions, philosophy, *Weltanschauung* of a particular group of people. However it is defined, villages, clans, regions, nations, and, at the broadest level, civilizations, have distinct cultures.³

For Huntington, civilizations represent the most expansive cultural unit.⁴ And it is primarily at the level of civilizations that this project will examine the conflicts, as well as potential for coexistence, between Islamic and Western cultures.

Limitations of a Comparative (Cross-Cultural) Paradigm

Arguably, in today’s global society, culture is consequential. Conflict and coexistence largely depend on cross-cultural dissonance or harmony. Samuel Huntington

²*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 3d ed. (1996).

³Samuel Huntington, Keynote Address, Colorado College's 125th Anniversary Symposium: “Cultures in the 21st Century: Conflicts and Convergences,” 4 February 1999.

⁴Culture and civilization will be used interchangeably when discussing the contemporary macro-variances, -interactions, and -conflicts between Muslim and Western worlds. Of course, it is acknowledged that civilizations, as the most expansive entities of culture, are comprised of many geographic cultures (local, national, regional, etc.) and include diverse communities where different languages, social structures, religions, and ethnicities further contribute to the complex dimensions of a society or civilization. When discussing the characteristics of Islamic or Western cultures, this project seeks to remain sensitive to their various subcultures and will emphasize various inner-cultural complexities throughout.

describes the twenty-first century as the “century of culture,” with cooperation and confrontation among cultures providing a central ingredient for understanding human behavior—religiously, socially, economically, and politically.⁵ “What ultimately counts for people is not political ideology or economic interest,” he argues. Rather, “faith and family, blood and belief, are what people identify with and what they will fight and die for.” It is for this reason that the “clash of civilizations” is today’s “central phenomenon of global politics.”⁶ Brigham Young law professor Cole Durham agrees. He likens contemporary tensions between civilizations to the “vast tectonic plates beneath the surface of the earth” that cause the earth to quake (often violently) whenever they collide. These cultural divides provide constructive, albeit limited, explanations for many of today’s conflicts, and the current collision between Muslim and Western worlds may represent the most recent seismic activity in the “long-term historical struggles between rival civilizations.”⁷

Khaled Abou El Fadl, professor of Islamic law at the University of California at Los Angeles, acknowledges the primitive binary stimulant within human beings to create an “us versus them” perception of the world. In contrast, however, because we are also social beings, he suggests that there is an innate need within us to engage and cooperate

⁵Huntington, “Cultures in the 21st Century: Conflicts and Convergences.”

⁶Huntington, “If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War,” 194.

⁷W. Cole Durham, Jr., “Perspectives on Religious Liberty: A Comparative Framework,” in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspectives*, ed. Johan D. van der Vyver and John Witte, Jr. (The Hague: Maritnus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996), 4.

with different communities.⁸ Abou El Fadl demonstrates how this duality of human behavior was expressed prior to modernity:

In the pre-modern age, although there is clear evidence of a strong binary impulse pervading both the Muslim and Western worlds, considering the scientific and intellectual achievements of Muslims, the Christian and Jewish bigotry towards Muslims had to be tempered by the element of need. Both Jews and Christians could not help but be influenced by Muslim intellectual products, and this made the dynamics with Islam complex and multi-faceted.⁹

In today's context, however, the binary impulse to categorize Muslims as the baneful Other, argues Abou El Fadl, goes "largely unchallenged by the absence of need, or the relative sufficiency of the West, and the dependency of the Muslim world."¹⁰ This apparent absence of "social need" of Muslim culture, coupled with the effects of recent terrorist attacks and various "offensive incidents" in the area of human rights, has caused many to place Islamic civilization in direct opposition and conflict with Western tradition.¹¹ Nevertheless, Abou El Fadl and a number of other scholars urge caution when using a civilizational paradigm to explain recurring conflicts between Islam and the

⁸Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality," *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 2, no. 1 (2002/2003): 38.

⁹Ibid. The Jewish and Christian embrace of Muslim philosophy and science in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance periods was, in general, not reciprocated by the Muslim world. Muslims continued, in large part, to view Europe as backward and of limited usefulness. Eventually, the Ottoman Empire, out of necessity, reluctantly began to draw from Western ideas (military science, etc.). For an insightful study on the dynamics of intercultural exchange between Islam and the West, see Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

¹⁰Abou El Fadl, 38.

¹¹Ibid., 39-40.

West. “Claims of civilizational distinctiveness and conflict,” warns Abou El Fadl, “are fraught with conceptual pitfalls.”¹²

Opponents of the cross-cultural paradigm argue that such theorizing does not adequately account for the complexities and vast differences within each civilization and is thus susceptible to faulty interpretations. For example, Abou El Fadl characterizes recent human rights atrocities in the Muslim world, which have taken place under the name of Islam, as a “vulgarization of Islam,” and he questions how a civilizational methodology can adequately account for internal Muslim struggles over what are and are not genuine values and characteristics of Islamic civilization. Indeed, one must question any methodology that indiscriminately vindicates “acts of extreme ugliness and vulgarity as authentic expressions of civilizational distinctiveness or particularity.”¹³

Fred Halliday, professor of international relations at the London School of Economics, points to another deficiency of the cultural comparative model. A civilizational paradigm reinforces public stereotypes of Muslims and non-Muslims through its simplified “two-sided” identification: Western or Islamic. Such simplification neglects the complexity of difference within civilizations and the complicated interaction across cultures. On the one hand, using “Islamic civilization” as a formulaic reference for over one billion Muslims, who represent a diversity of languages, ethnicities, and family structures, and a majority in over fifty countries across Africa, Asia, and the

¹²Ibid., 48.

¹³Ibid, 44.

Middle East, can become a dangerous oversimplification.¹⁴ Similarly, academic and policy efforts to compartmentalize Western civilization have a tendency to interpolate generalizations that overlook the complex diversity of ideas and peoples that comprise Western culture. Such labels are prone to dismiss the internal conflicts taking place within civilizations and ignore the pluralistic character of Islamic and Western worlds. There is always the potential of associating certain socio-political mores—good or bad—as characteristic of a culture without considering whether or not those particularities are being contested by the various interpretive communities inside that civilization. Thus, as Abou El Fadl cautions, a “clash of civilizations” model has an underlying tendency of compacting complicated socio-political and historical forces into neat, compartmentalized categories that only “obfuscate the real dynamics that are, in fact, taking place” within a civilization.¹⁵ Abou El Fadl offers the truculent religion of Osama Bin Laden to prove this point:

Acts of cruelty, such as Bin Laden’s terrorism, are not simply the product of an invented system of thought that can be treated as a marginal idiosyncrasy in modern Islam Rather, the violence of someone like Bin Laden is an integral part of the struggle between interpretative communities over who gets to speak for Islam and how.¹⁶

Which Muslim nation, community, or individual represents Islam? In the same way, which Western nation, ideology, or denomination rightly reflects Western civilization? A

¹⁴Fred Halliday, “West Encountering Islam: Islamophobia Reconsidered,” in *Islam Encountering Globalization*, ed. Ali Mohammadi (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 14.

¹⁵Abou El Fadl, 48-9. See also Anders Jerichow, “Civilizations: Clash or Cooperation?” in *Islam in a Changing World: Europe and the Middle East*, ed. Anders Jerichow and Jørgen Baek Simonsen (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997), 144-156.

¹⁶Abou El Fadl, 49.

cultural-comparative model for understanding and mediating civilizational differences and conflict must consider the complex dynamics associated with intracultural struggles if it is to more accurately examine the normative principles and historical experiences that drive a civilization.

Perhaps an even greater difficulty attributed to cultural-comparative theorizing is its propensity to overemphasize cultural differences, thereby neglecting common values and goals that may facilitate meaningful intercivilizational interaction. While one may agree with Huntington's theory that a conflict between Islam and the West has occurred, a less palatable aspect of his theory is that states and cultures will always require an "enemy" or "conflict." Theories of ethnic, religious, and cultural conflict fail when they resist any suggestion of "neutral zones of influence" or the desire of peace and coexistence by those on either side of the conflict.¹⁷ That Western and Islamic cultures bear distinct characteristics and cultural peculiarities does not preclude transcultural efforts to find those moral judgments and values that are normative to both.

Regardless of its limitations, the cultural-comparative model has generated a corpus of literature and much debate, supporting and challenging its effectiveness as a methodology for interpreting human difference and commonality. Much has been written about the importance of cultural values and the impact they have on transnational conflicts and violence today.¹⁸ Susceptible to misinterpreting what constitutes a culture's

¹⁷Mahboob A. Khawaja, *Muslims and the West: Quest for "Change" and Conflict Resolution* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 135-36.

¹⁸See, for instance, Colin Chapman, *Islam and the West: Conflict, Coexistence or Conversion?* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 1998); Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (New York : I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999); Shireen Hunter, *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence* (Westport, CT. :

unique essence, Huntington's paradigm could lead to many damaging ramifications: namely, further confusing the complicated relationship between Islam and the West, exacerbating prejudice, and deepening intercommunal conflict. Nevertheless, a cultural-comparative model retains a *qualified* viability as one systematic alternative for examining conflict between Islamic and Western cultures; if anything, it is a "useful starting point for understanding and coping with the changes going on in the world."¹⁹

It is inevitable that a society's ideas, interpretations, and interests will, at some juncture, conflict with those of other communities. While we cannot completely eliminate such conflicts, we can continue to proffer systematic mechanisms for explaining and, perhaps, resolving those conflicts through processes of mutual understanding and active engagement rather than animosity and violence. Cultural comparativism offers an expressly limited systematic methodology for examining intercommunal and transnational conflict and possible paths to reconciliation and coexistence. It provides one possible way to cautiously embrace the importance of civilizational distinctiveness and cultural essence in an effort, not only to appreciate human difference, but also to reaffirm those moral precepts that transcend human divisions, thus revealing a common heritage of values across civilizations. Former European Commission President Jacques Delors (1985-1995) vocalized support for such an approach in the West. Because "future conflicts will be sparked by cultural factors

Praeger, 1998); Jorgen S. Nielsen, ed., *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue* (New York : I.B. Tauris, 1998.); Michael Novak, *The Universal Hunger for Liberty: Why the Clash of Civilizations is Not Inevitable* (New York: Basic Books, 2004); and Dieter Senghaas, *The Clash Within Civilizations: Coming to Terms with Cultural Conflicts* (London: Routledge, 2001). See also, Abou El-Fadl.

¹⁹Huntington, "If Not Civilizations, What?", 194.

rather than economics or ideology,” he stated, “the West needs to develop a deeper understanding of the religious and philosophical assumptions underlying other civilizations, and the way other nations see their interests, to identify what we have in common.”²⁰ From this perspective, cultural comparativism is not intended to identify civilizational differences for the purpose of vilifying the Other. On the contrary, it becomes a useful framework of mutual respect and dialogue that encourages the discovery and employment of pan-cultural mores that will facilitate coexistence.

Capturing the Conflict

Any attempt to organize or categorize human beings—on any level—is fraught with obstacles and necessitates qualifications. This project recognizes the many deficiencies associated with a cultural-comparative model: most significantly, its proneness to generalize and misinterpret cultures and its tendency to neglect cross-cultural commonalities. Cognizant of the potential pitfalls of a cultural-comparative framework, this project must, nevertheless, avow the existence of conflict between Islam and the West. Much of the relationship between Western and Muslim worlds has been characterized by an attitude of fear, animosity, and resentment. Thus, the purpose of this chapter, in part, is to emphasize how the current dissonance between Western and Islamic civilizations is a reality that cannot be gainsaid or simply dismissed as exaggerated or peripheral in nature. Inimical feelings and general animosity toward the Other continue to cultivate intercultural divisions. While various “clashes” between cultures may have been perpetrated through “vulgar” interpretations of Islamic or Western culture, this has

²⁰Quoted in *ibid.*

not prevented misunderstandings of the Other or tendencies to revert back to a binary arrangement for explaining cross-cultural dissonance and violence.

Historical context is an important variable when considering behaviors and values competing for allegiance within, as well as across civilizations. The consequence of fluid cultural variables—religious, social, political, geographic, etc.—is the evolution of interpretations of what it means to be part of a Western or Islamic civilization. These multifaceted complexities provide important limitations to a civilizational paradigm but do not preclude its usefulness as a “starting point” for cautiously observing the reality of contemporary frictions between Western and Islamic cultures. This chapter focuses on some of the major contemporary conflicts influenced by and exacerbating this cross-cultural “clash” in a way that acknowledges rather than depreciates inner-cultural complexities and struggles.

Second, this chapter not only addresses the volatile dynamics associated with competing Islamic and Western civilizations, but will also introduce their potential for coexistence. Consequently, it will pivot from dealing with present realities of transcultural conflict and the urgent need of resolution to setting out a proposal for realizing coexistence through the cross-cultural value of tolerance. There are prominent dissident voices competing within Western and Islamic civilizations that obviate attempts to simplify this cross-cultural conflict into a two-sided debate, with one side merely the antithesis of the other. In fact, there is a multiplicity of interpretations competing within the “evolving and shifting contexts” of Western and Islamic civilizations.²¹ Moreover,

²¹Abou El Fadl, 47.

there are important values that bridge cultural divides, finding intellectual and practical origins within both Western and Islamic traditions. These intercivilizational values transcend the limitations of any artificial systematic framework and address the socio-historical realities in a way that positively affects meaningful dialogue toward lasting coexistence.

Western Fears: Real and Imagined

On 20 September 2001, in one of the most anticipated speeches in American history, President George W. Bush described the state of the nation following the violent attacks of 11 September. “Americans have many questions tonight,” he declared: “Americans are asking: Who attacked our country?” Who was to blame for such an atrocity? The answer was militant Muslim extremists. Al-Qaeda was responsible for the attacks on the world trade center and Pentagon, and the destruction of this terrorist organization became the focal point of the West’s new war on terrorism. Both George Bush and the Prime Minister of the U.K., Tony Blair, went to great lengths to describe the ensuing war on terrorism as one against violent extremists, such as al-Qaeda, and not against Muslims in general.²² Bush explained in his address:

These terrorists [al-Qaeda] practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics—a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists’ directive commands them to kill the Christian and Jews, to kill all Americans, and to make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children. . . . The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself.

²²Oliver Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 332.

The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.²³

To an attentive audience in America and across the world, Bush described how al-Qaeda was connected to numerous other Islamic terrorist groups across the Muslim world.

“There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries,” and their overarching agenda is “to plot evil and destruction,” he warned. Violent Islamic radicals were to blame, but for many in the West, following 11 September, Islam, in general, became the scapegoat of terrorism—the root cause of the problem.

Less than three years later, Islamic militants were implicated in the 11 March 2004 train bombings in Madrid that killed almost 200 people and wounded hundreds more. Although accustomed to sporadic violence from such home-grown groups as the Basque separatist movement, ETA, the 11 March bombings represented the worst-ever terrorist attack in modern Spanish history. Exacerbating the already rising fears of national security, Spanish counterterrorism officials indicated that, following the coordinated bombings of 11 March, a sequence of violent attacks had been intended by the terrorists; they were likely hindered, however, when seven militants detonated their residence in Leganes as Spanish police converged on the location. While the authenticity of its claims of responsibility remain highly suspect, *al-Quds al-Arabi*, a London-based Arabic newspaper, reported receiving written correspondence from the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades (named after former lieutenant of al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden). The letter claimed that the 11 March attacks were waged to settle “old accounts with the

²³Presidential Address, 20 September 2001, available at www.whitehouse.gov (accessed 25 October 2005).

Spain crusader” (possibly in reference to the fifteenth-century climax of the Christian *Reconquista* of the Iberian Peninsula).²⁴ A subsequent letter from this elusive group also repeated a warning al-Qaeda gave in 2003, regarding Spain’s support of the “Crusaders” (i.e. The United States and Britain) and their war in Iraq. The warning promised a cessation of violence if Spain would cease supporting the war in Iraq and keep out of Muslim matters: “The leadership has chosen to suspend all operations in Spain against civilian targets, until we know the stance of the new government which has promised to withdraw Spanish forces from Iraq, and until we confirm the non-interference of the new government in Muslim affairs.”²⁵ Whether or not it was influenced by threats of more violence, Spain’s new socialist government promptly withdrew all troops from Iraq, possibly (but unlikely) removing Spain from the Muslim terrorists’ field of vision.

Less than sixteen months after the terrorist attacks in Spain, Muslim extremists bombed London’s underground train system and one of its double-decker buses. Fifty-two people were killed and 700 were injured. One London survivor, Garri Holness, recovering in a hospital after losing his left leg in the attack, told *BBC News* that he pitied his attackers and detested those who “brainwashed” them: “The people that have brainwashed them and got them to do that, these are the people that I hate. Because these people are turning people against Muslims. Because they have taken part of the Koran, little sections of it, switched it round, watered it down and brainwashed individuals to

²⁴For a translation and commentary on the 12 March statement of alleged responsibility, go to <http://memri.org/bin/articles> (accessed 30 October 2005).

²⁵Available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3523804.stm> (accessed 30 September 2005).

believe what they are doing is correct.”²⁶ Immediately following the terrorist bombings against London’s transportation system on 7 July 2005, a *Telegraph* YouGov survey indicated that 82% of Britons polled were immediately convinced, with evidence yet to be presented, that Islamic extremists were responsible for the coordinated bombings. Sixty-two percent of those polled agreed that Britain’s security services should focus their intelligence-gathering and terrorism-prevention efforts on Muslims now living in England or attempting to immigrate there. Most significantly, perhaps, the number who believed that Islam—beyond fundamentalist Islamic groups—posed a threat to western liberal democracy rose from 32% just after the 2001 attack on the World Trade Centers to 46%.²⁷ The enduring trauma of these terrorist attacks continues to leave many Westerners uneasy and bemused. For an increasing number, there is the disturbing realization that large-scale violence by Muslim radicals against Western marks will continue, and a return to normalcy is not a part of the foreseeable future.

Of great concern to many in the West is this largely indefensible and indiscriminate strategy of suicide-bombing now employed by Muslim terrorists within American and European borders. Moreover, the attacks in Spain and England demonstrate the expansive, loosely associated network of terrorist groups now operating in Europe, with many acting independent of Osama bin Laden and enlisting members from local Western communities. There is a growing fear that this once foreign threat of

²⁶“I Won’t Let the Bombers Beat Me,” *BBC News*, 4 August 2005, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 17 September 2005).

²⁷YouGov/ *Daily Telegraph* Survey, 8 July 2005, available at www.yougov.com. See also, Anthony King, “Britons will Never Give in to Terrorists,” 9 July 2005, available at <http://portal.telegraph.co.uk/news> (accessed 23 August 2005).

Islamic extremism is now cultivating domestic roots. French political scientist Oliver Roy writes that “neofundamentalism” continues to attract “rootless Muslim youth, particularly among second- and third-generation migrants in the West.” And this phenomenon of radicalization of a minority of young Muslims in Europe is simply a “means of rejecting integration into Western society.”²⁸ “It is a fact,” writes Tunisian historian Muhammad Talbi, “that most Muslim immigrants do not become integrated in the West, and their rate of demographic growth, which in the long run can upset certain balances, gives reason for fear.”²⁹ The weeks of violent protests and rioting across France at the close of 2005 by despondent Muslim youths living in deprived immigrant enclaves is certainly indicative.

As our world continues to shrink through the processes of globalization and Muslim emigration from East to West, civilizational boundaries are pulsating, as the Islamic “stranger” is quickly becoming the Western “neighbor.” Learning to coexist with the Other has become just as much a domestic question in the West as it is an intracivilizational one. Certainly, local Muslim communities throughout the West are being affected by the recent terrorist attacks, as a number of examples of Islamophobia indicate. Religious Studies Professor Gören Larsson conducted a survey on the situation of Islamic communities in Sweden following the 11 September attacks in the United

²⁸Roy, 2. Roy defines “neofundamentalism” as a conservative, narrowly-defined, scripturalist understanding of Islam “that rejects the national and statist dimension in favour of the *ummah*, the universal community of all Muslims, based on *sharia* (Islamic law).” Such terminology appropriately describes those Muslims who have been uprooted or have migrated to the West and no longer identify with a particular nation-state. Through a “deterritorialisation” of Islam, they seek to reestablish a transnational *ummah* and restore an Islamic way of life within their minority Muslim communities. *Ibid.*, 1-2.

²⁹Muhammad Talbi, “Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding Between Islam and the West,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 25 (Spring 1988): 177.

States. His data concluded that the Muslim population in Sweden (approximately 300,000) was significantly affected by a growing anti-Muslim attitude.³⁰ Larsson highlights one example in Gothenburg where a taxi driver with a “Muslim-sounding name (Ali)” was severely attacked and bomb threats were made against an Ahmadiyya mosque.³¹ According to Larsson, despite the fact that the largest Sunni youth organization in Sweden—The Young Muslims—adamantly denounced the terrorist attacks, and even though Sweden’s Muslim leaders have proactively participated in public dialogue explaining how Islam could never justify such violence, such efforts have had minimal effect on tempering public opinion toward Muslims and Islam in general. Larsson ultimately agrees with another of Sweden’s professors, Anne Sofie Roald (a convert to Islam), when he states that even in remote countries such as Sweden, Muslims are in large measure being blamed for the terrorist violence taking place in the West.³²

Following the murder of the controversial film director, Theo van Gogh, by an Islamic radical, the Netherlands, known for its high degree of tolerance, recoiled in shock as intercommunal tensions quickly reached volatile levels. Van Gogh’s murder was a premeditated reaction to the filmmaker’s condemnation of the oppression of women under Islam, and the convicted Dutch-Moroccan murderer, Mohammed Bouyeri, swore

³⁰Gören Larsson, “The Impact of Global Conflicts on Local Contexts: Muslims in Sweden after 9/11 – the Rise of Islamophobia, or New Possibilities,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 16 (January 2005): 30.

³¹*Ibid.*, 31.

³²*Ibid.*, 34. See also A. S. Roald, “Islamofobi,” in *Jalla! Nu Kär vi granen. Möte med den muslimska kultursfären* (Stockholm: Regeringskansliet, Utrikesdepartementet, 2002), 53; and A.S. Roald, “From ‘People’s Home’ to ‘Multiculturalism’: Muslims in Sweden,” in *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*, ed. Z.Y. Haddad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

to repeat such violence if allowed the opportunity.³³ Many within the Netherlands have expressed concern that any further terrorist attacks in the country could lead to a prolonged period of intercultural conflict and insecurity, putting the Netherlands' historically high standards of freedom in jeopardy. Contemplating the various venues of violence throughout Europe in the past two years, urban sociology professor Paul Scheffer of Amsterdam University urged calm and reconciliation: "If there is more violence like we've seen in Madrid and London, and in the Netherlands, it will become very difficult to live together in a peaceful way. We should try to do everything we can to achieve that—because otherwise everyone loses out."³⁴

Is a global clash between Islam and the West taking place? Can cultural differences explain this increase in violence? Have these militant Islamic extremists permanently changed the social and political fabric of the West? Many Westerners are answering these difficult questions in the affirmative. While Islamic radicals are the clear perpetrators of said violence, some in the West are readily identifying Islamic culture in general as the root cause of the current conflict, and, whether through banal discrimination upon Muslim immigrants in the *dar al-harb* or military and diplomatic pressure against the *dar al-Islam*, Western efforts to counter these real or imagined threats have begun.

It is important to emphasize that there are undaunted Muslim voices within and beyond Islamic civilization wholly condemning Muslims who, in the name of Islam,

³³"Dutch Face Future After Van Gogh," *BBC News*, 7 July 2005, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 17 September 2005).

³⁴*Ibid.*

condone or carry out violence against innocent humanity. They are refuting the theological and juridical justifications of Muslim extremists, calling such violence antithetical to the teachings and tradition of Islam. For example, Jordan's King Abdullah II led a conference of 180 Muslim imams and sheiks in 2005, where a collective decree endorsed by followers of all schools of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) was issued that prohibited the declaration of *takfir* (apostate) against any Muslim. The declaration directly challenged al-Qaeda's theological strategy of authorizing the death of those Muslims who oppose its militant interpretation of Islam. In addition, the statement forbade edicts from being issued by unqualified Muslim scholars.³⁵ Turkey's Fethullah Gülen, Iran's Abdolkarim Soroush, Tunisia's Muhammad Talbi, and Syria's Muhammad Habash are just a few of the Muslim leaders and intellectuals within the *dar al-Islam* who are courageously contrasting the religious ideology of Muslim militants with their own sincere beliefs in Islam's benevolence and humaneness. In the West, a thirty-second public service announcement entitled "Not in the Name of Islam" was circulated in English, Arabic, and Urdu by The Council on American-Islamic Relations, condemning militant Muslim terrorism as outside of and contrary to Islam. Prominent Western Muslim scholars such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, and Abdulaziz A. Sachedina have effectively criticized Islamic fundamentalism, showing

³⁵Fareed Zakaria, "How We Can Prevail," *New York Times*, 18 July 2005, 39. The statement was authorized by 10 *fatwas* (religious edicts by a qualified scholar) that were issued from recognized scholars such as Tantawi; Iraq's Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani; Egypt's mufti, Ali Jumaa; and the Al-Jazeera Tv-sheik, Yusuf al-Qaradawi. See *ibid.*

how Islam is the embodiment of mercy, justice, and peace, capable of cultivating a high degree of tolerance, human rights, and democracy.³⁶

Nevertheless, such attempts to reclaim Islam as a religion of peace and charity have been almost completely overshadowed by the amplified violence carried out by Islam's radical adherents and the global publicity given to Muslims who support or justify aggression and violence. The majority of news coverage regarding Islam and the Muslim world prior to 11 September 2001 was already cast in a negative light. And when Western media televised such instances as Muslim women reveling and dancing in celebration of the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States, its negative reverberations across Western society only induced greater trepidation, aggravating a growing disdain toward the Muslim Other.³⁷ What is more, recurring terrorist attacks against Western cities have only magnified the violations of human rights occurring in various contemporary Muslim societies. Khaled Abou El Fadl laments how the modern "vulgarization of Islam" has further damaged global perceptions of the Muslim world:

In recent times, Muslim societies have been plagued by many events that have struck the world as offensive and even shocking. This has reached the extent that, from Europe and the United States to Japan, China, and Russia, one finds that Islamic culture has become associated with harshness and cruelty in the popular imagination

³⁶See, for example, Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002); Khaled Abou El Fadl, "Islam and the Challenge of Democracy," in *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Deborah Chasman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights and International Law* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990); and David Little, John Kelsay, and Abdulaziz A. Sachedina, eds., *Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures: Western and Islamic Perspectives on Religious Liberty* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).

³⁷Larsson, 40.

of people from various nations around the world. When one interacts with people from different parts of the world, one consistently finds that the image of Islam is not that of a humanistic or humane religion. In fact, for many non-Muslims around the world, Islam has become the symbol for a draconian tradition that exhibits little compassion or mercy towards human beings.³⁸

There is a Western propensity, in the aftermath of violence from Muslim terrorists, to misinterpret such flagrant violations of human rights as an inherent, distinct, and immutable part of Muslim cultures and the Islamic creed. An appreciation of the complex social, political, and historical dynamics and interpretations competing within Islamic civilization and the “gross misuse of the doctrines and traditions of Islamic law”³⁹ by Islamic fundamentalists in the contemporary era have been largely dismissed in the West, as fear and anger against the relentless ferocity of Muslim terrorists continues to fester and overshadow any attempts at coherent dialogue. Perhaps, for the moment, Huntington’s preconceived cultural clash is underway. Of course, this conflict between cultures is not one-sided. At the same time, and for a plethora of reasons, cultural insecurity and resentment are concrete realities within the *dar al-Islam* as well.

³⁸Abou El Fadl, “The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality,” 34. Abou El Fadl highlights an incident in Mecca in March of 2002 that he argues should have caused public outrage and led to criminal convictions in Saudi Arabia. According to an official report, 14 young girls were killed—burned to death or asphyxiated by smoke—when an accidental fire destroyed their public school. According to parents, there was no way to escape the fire, as doors were locked from the outside by Saudi religious police to prevent the girls from escaping the school. Because the girls were not properly covered, the mutawwa’un (religious police) forbade firemen or police from rescuing them and, according to unofficial reports, actually beat some of the girls back inside the burning building. He also mentions various other “inhumane incidents in the history of modern Islam,” such as the stoning and incarceration of rape victims in Nigeria and Pakistan, the excommunication of writers in Egypt, the degradation of women by the Taliban, and the demolition of ancient Buddha statues in Afghanistan. Ibid., 33-35.

³⁹Ibid., 50.

A Multidimensional Conflict

Muslim countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia have spent the last half-century struggling to recover from the social, political, and economic effects of Western colonialism. Progress within these post-colonial societies was further inhibited by the exploitation of competing Cold War policies. Muslim societies struggled to reconcile those ideologies and political systems imposed by foreign powers with their own religious beliefs, historical circumstances, and cultural peculiarities. The resurgence of political Islam throughout the Muslim world in recent decades is evident. Perhaps the Iranian Revolution of 1979 represents the pinnacle of modern Islamic revivalism. But one can also point to the contemporary efforts to re-Islamicize society in Egypt, Syria, Sudan, and Algeria; the increasing “Islamic activism” in Palestine and Lebanon; the growing power of Islamic parties in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Malaysia; and even the Islamic revivalism gaining popular support in secular Turkey.⁴⁰ George Washington University Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr has written of a “widely prevalent desire” among a large majority of Muslims in the contemporary Islamic world to “preserve their religious and

⁴⁰Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003), 178-79. Nasr laments the Western tendency to label these various Islamic resurgence movements in the Muslim world as *fundamentalism*—a word derived from an “American Protestant context,” later conferred upon Islam. Such a term is misleading and leads to further confusion by dismissing many variations of Islamic revivalism taking place in Muslim societies. In fact, he argues that a “great majority of Muslims” are expressing the desire to reassert their religiocultural identity. Such Islamic revivalism should not be indiscriminately labeled “fundamentalism,” Nasr cautions, because “most people who share these ideals are traditional Muslims.” Fundamentalism will be addressed in further detail in chapter five. It is a term that essentially represents only those puritanical movements that seek to reform wayward Muslim societies through a narrowly-defined interpretation and strict application of *shari’a* that not only contests the invasion of Western ideas but also dismisses the intellectual and mystical traditions of Islam as historical aberrations, antithetical to the Islamic way of life. See *ibid.*, 179-80.

cultural identity,” to break from the Western jurisprudence imposed upon the Muslim world during the colonial era, and to restore the *shari’a* (divine law) as the primary source of law. Thus, there is a concerted effort within the contemporary Muslim world to shield the Islamic way of life from further Western encroachment by bringing “the various parts of the Islamic world and the Islamic people (*al-ummah*) closer together” and through reaffirming “the intellectual, cultural, and artistic traditions of Islam.”⁴¹

Is Western culture becoming a global culture, threatening the distinct essence of Islamic culture? Many in the Muslim world answer with an emphatic yes! A host of modern thinkers and modern movements emerged in the twentieth century in response to the “Westernizing” of Muslim communities and Islamic culture. Khurram Murad, a conservative intellectual thinker and activist in the contemporary Islamic resurgence and a member of the Pakistani based Islamic revivalist group, Jamaat-i-Islami (The Islamic Society), attempts to articulate for Muslims the root causes of the historical clash between Islam and Western civilizations. He begins by emphasizing the West’s material and political exploitation of Islamic lands:

No doubt, the West has its own . . . interests to pursue. Arab oil and the vast petro-resource are important for it. Israel implant[ed] in [the] heart of [the] Muslim world . . . becomes apprehensible. Intent to enslave Muslim rulers has firmly been established now when we see a vast network of Western army installations in the Middle East, which negotiate nothing besides weakening the Muslim countries in all respects. Moreover, the Western countries are tightening the noose around Muslim nations posing [a] threat to their interests anywhere on globe [*sic*].⁴²

⁴¹Ibid, 179-80.

⁴²Khurram Murad, “Prophethood: Root Cause of Islam-West Conflict,” *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* (July 1992), available at www.jamaat.org (accessed 19 September 2005).

Within the Muslim world, Western civilization is widely perceived as an imperialist oppressor that pursues its global economic and geopolitical interests at the expense of politically, economically, and militarily depressed Muslim societies. The Arab-Israeli conflict in Palestine remains a central cause of political tension between Western and Islamic states, as a mutually desired resolution remains elusive. Many in the Middle East resent the partiality shown Israel, as well as the undulating Western support of both moderate and autocratic Arab governments, depending on expedient interests instead of principled policies. The circumstances surrounding the indefinite imprisonment of Muslims at Guantánamo Bay and the growing Western imagination since 11 September of Muslim Arabs as irrationally zealous in their faith are also points of deep-seated resentment. And, with two-thirds of the world's known oil reserves located in the Middle East, Muslim societies in the region anticipate, with indignation, a continued Western "occupation."

This socio-political exploitation is a key ingredient to the inimical feelings many Muslims have developed toward the West. Exploitation and conflict is, indeed, an epiphenomenon of the imbalance of power between Western and Muslim worlds. In fact, some scholars argue that many of Islam's more radical groups are as much "anti-Western" as they are "pro-Islamic," seeking Islamic legitimatization of their territorial and nationalist grievances and aspirations.⁴³ A materialist interpretation would thus view

⁴³See, for instance, Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Place of Tolerance in Islam." While a realist perspective may conclude that "balance of power" politics will perpetuate Western intrusions until Muslim states can acquire the geopolitical ability to remedy this imbalance, liberal institutionalists would suggest that equalization can begin now through international mediating organizations such as the United Nations. Yet there is concern from many Muslim intellectuals and political leaders that organizations such as the

the economic, social, and political malaise in the Muslim world as the root motivation behind the twentieth-century rise of Islamic resurgence and a century of Muslim resentment toward the West. As professor Talbi writes, “faced with an over-developed West, Islam, which has barely emerged from the colonial era, now finds itself wholly in the zone of underdevelopment, with all the political, social, economic, and cultural consequences that this involves.”⁴⁴ Thus, from a materialist perspective, when seeking to understand contemporary Muslim motivations and movements, it is vital to consider the modern social, political, and historical contexts from which Islamic texts and tradition are being interpreted.⁴⁵

Ideology is another significant instigator of conflict, as traditional Islamic culture struggles to maintain the integrity of its essence against what Huntington calls “Westoxification.” Of course, modernization and Westernization are not synonymous. On the contrary, argues Huntington, modernization has been embraced by many communities within Islamic civilization. Nevertheless, through the processes and bi-products of globalization, the Western manifestation of modernization has become an international phenomenon of cultural dominance.⁴⁶ As such, throughout the Islamic world, modernization is actually promoting a recommitment to traditional culture that “almost necessarily assumes an anti-Western cast,” challenging Western culture either

United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund possess inherently Western biases that prohibit a genuine respect for cultural equality.

⁴⁴Talbi, 170.

⁴⁵See, for instance, Stanley Kurtz, “Text and Context,” in *The Place of Islam*.

⁴⁶Samuel P. Huntington, “The West: Unique, Not Universal,” *Foreign Affairs* 75 (November/December 1996), 37.

because of its degenerative secular influence or because of its undermining Christian agenda.⁴⁷

Recoiling against the deleterious—some would argue superficial—symbols of Western civilization, many Muslim communities are struggling to retain or reclaim their cultural integrity. Media and modern communication technologies have served a central function in propagating Western conceptions of modernism, emitting an almost instant influence of values and images around the world. Modern Media requires “no passport or visa,” as it can infiltrate the most insulated regions of the world to challenge the traditional values of any culture.⁴⁸ In *Jihad vs. McWorld*, professor Benjamin Barber shows how the West’s (McWorld’s) devouring mantra of individual consumerism and materialism is threatening the integrity of traditional cultures.⁴⁹ Bombarded with a steady diet of Coke and Big Macs; *Baywatch* and MTV; blue jeans and Nikes, many Muslim communities fear the corrupt and seductive nature of secular materialism on future generations and its long-term effect on the essence of traditional culture. Embittered traditional cultures (Jihad), argues Barber, “may grow out of and reflect (among other things) a pathological metastasis of valid grievances about the effects of arrogant secularist materialism that is the unfortunate concomitant of the spread of consumerism

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Akbar S. Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 98.

⁴⁹Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* (New York: Times Books, 1995).

across the world.”⁵⁰ The injurious effects of globalization discussed above, propagated through a dominant Western culture, only exacerbate the cultural insecurity of Muslim traditionalists and fundamentalists.

From this vantage point, comparative theorists might argue that a “clash of civilizations” theory actually provides Muslims a “recognition and, in some degree, legitimation for the distinctiveness of their own civilization and its independence from the West.”⁵¹ Not only Muslim fundamentalists, but Muslim modernists as well, continue to seek answers to the challenges of modernity from within the treasury of Islamic tradition and scripture. As Islamic civilization confronts the powerful secular influence of the West, Muslims are struggling to protect the intrinsic place of religion and revelation. Notwithstanding “the obstacles that a powerful world living in the forgetfulness of God has placed before them,” many Muslims are striving to live according to the tenets of the Qur’anic message and the Traditions of the Prophet.⁵²

Many Muslims resent attempts to use Western practices and interpretations as the measure from which to evaluate the merits of Islamic civilization and the worthiness of its distinct qualities. They point to the hypocrisy and inconsistency between “Western idealism” and “Western pragmatism.” The University of California, Berkley professor, Saba Mahmood, questions the double standards of the West, as geopolitical policies often contradict stated principles. For instance, why would the United States and other

⁵⁰Benjamin Barber, “Beyond Jihad vs. McWorld,” *The Nation* 274 (21 January 2002): 17.

⁵¹Huntington, “If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War,” 194.

⁵²Nasr, *Islam*, 185-86.

Western liberal democracies aid and enable Islamic states that have committed the most blatant infractions of democracy (Pakistan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, for instance)?⁵³

Samuel Huntington echoes the same concern regarding Western contradictions between policies and principles:

Democracy is promoted, but not if it brings Islamic fundamentalist to power; nonproliferation is preached for Iran and Iraq, but not for Israel . . . human rights are an issue with China, but not with Saudi Arabia; aggression against oil-owning Kuwaitis is repulsed with massive force, but not so aggression against oil-less Bosnians.⁵⁴

The cost of ostentatious claims of universality, concludes Huntington, is inevitably “hypocrisy and double standards.”⁵⁵

Western systems of limited government (popular sovereignty), free markets, disunion of spiritual and temporal authority, human rights, social pluralism, and individualism represent a non-exhaustive enumeration of ideals that, when uniquely blended together, symbolize a distinct socio-ethical mosaic of Western civilization. Huntington readily concedes that such characteristics were neither always present in Western civilization, nor absent from other civilizations. Rather, it is the unique combination of these values that symbolizes the essence of Western civilization.⁵⁶ Huntington argues that the self-righteous and promiscuous attempt by the West to directly or indirectly permeate Islamic civilization (and all other civilizations) with its

⁵³Saba Mahmood, “Is Liberalism Islam’s Only Answer?”, in *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, 77,

⁵⁴Huntington, “The West: Unique, not Universal,” 41.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 30-35.

conceived combination of universal values “is immoral in its implications.”⁵⁷ While some Muslim individuals and communities may espouse some combination of the values embraced in the West, the prevailing response in “non-Western cultures range from skepticism to intense opposition.” “Universalism to the West” is, in Huntington’s words, “imperialism to the rest.”⁵⁸

It is important to realize that ideas and values such as limited government, human dignity and equality, social pluralism, and religious freedom have a transcultural genealogy, with important roots in both Islamic and Western civilizations. Without difficulty one can locate such values within the historical, philosophical, and theological pedigrees of both cultures. The difficulty lies in the terms under which these cross-cultural values are interpreted and applied. For example, both Western and Islamic traditions claim parentage of human rights, imbuing them with their own unique historical experiences, traditions, and beliefs. A brief digression into the contemporary dispute concerning the universal or relative nature of a pivotal human right—religious freedom—as reflected in the debate over Article 18 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), will help illustrate the important differences between both civilizations and the complexity of cross-cultural dialogue.

What is Religious Freedom?

Article 18 of the UDHR, which asseverates the right of religious liberty for the individual person, faces criticism from many Muslim religious leaders, intellectuals, and communities who take exception to its universal claims. They argue that the

⁵⁷Ibid., 41.

⁵⁸Ibid., 40.

conceptualization of Article 18 reflects a liberal Western construct that fails to appreciate the contextual differences and interpretations of non-Western civilizations. The disputed Article 18 states as follows: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.” While a post-Enlightenment tradition clearly undergirds the framing of the UDHR and helps to explain the individualist tones and broad swath of liberties rendered in Article 18, its Islamic antagonists argue that the Article’s sweeping pledge for individual religious freedom fails to proffer a congruous recognition of non-liberal, communitarian interpretations of religious liberty. Abdullah Saeed and Hassan Saeed state that, while some Muslims seek to show how the Qur’an and ways of the Prophet effectively support a universal understanding of human rights, there are many who resent Western inferences that the UDHR represents that universal understanding:

Muslims who oppose the universality of human rights argue that the UDHR and other similar human rights documents are a product of the secular West and therefore cannot be a basis for a Muslim understanding of human rights. For them, the UDHR is a “human construct” and should not be privileged over . . . the rights and freedoms covered by the Divine Law. Some dismiss the UDHR as a relic of neo-colonialism while others argue that the United Nations, or any similar body, has no authority to legislate to Muslims. . . . Islam has a particular concept of human rights, including religious freedom, and these must be understood in the context of the Islamic law, which itself determines the scope of freedom available to a Muslim.⁵⁹

Proselytism and the freedom to change one’s religion epitomize two of the most disputed categories surrounding Article 18’s description of religious freedom. While

⁵⁹Abdullah Saeed and Hassan Saeed, *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy and Islam* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 13.

proselytism is perceived from a Western perspective as a necessary corollary of religious freedom, many within the Islamic world view such behavior as an offensive, threatening, and unacceptable encroachment upon traditional Muslim communities, where the religious conscience of each person is deeply intertwined with the religiocultural essence of the community to which he or she is wholly allied. Jamil Baroody, the Saudi delegate to the UN in 1948, expressly condemned the “right” to change one’s religion and the implied freedom of proselytism proposed in Article 18. He argued that the “freedom” to change one’s religion, called for in the Declaration, was of western derivation and thus carried no universal application.⁶⁰ Concerning Christian proselytism in the Muslim world, history has shown, Baroody warned, that missionaries were in many cases simply “the forerunners of a political intervention, and there were many instances where people had been drawn in to murderous conflict by the missionaries’ efforts to convert them.”⁶¹

⁶⁰See Youssef K. El-Hage, “Human Rights: A Western Christian Invention?” in *The Near East School of Theology Theological Review* vol. XXV, no. 2 (November 2004): 12-14. While the UDHR was approved with a unanimous vote by the General Assembly, Saudi Arabia abstained from voting, and Egypt officially objected to Article 18’s freedom to change one’s religion. U.N. Doc. A/PV.183, at 913 (1948); see also El-Hage, 14.

⁶¹U.N. Doc. A/C.3/SR.127, 391-92 (1948); see also El-Hage, 13-14. Demonstrating the often unappreciated complexity and diversity of Islamic civilization, Pakistan’s foreign minister Muhammad Zafrulla Khan told the plenary session of the General Assembly in 1948 that the language on religious liberty in Article 18 of the UDHR was entirely consistent with the tenets of Islam. While sympathetic to Baroody’s concerns over the historical relationship between Christian missionary work and its potential political motivations, Khan held firm to his belief that the freedom to change one’s religion was compatible with his interpretation of Islam. El-Hage, 14-15. From Khan’s Muslim perspective, “the Moslem religion was a missionary religion: it strove to persuade men to change their faith and alter their way of living, so as to follow the faith and way of living it preached, but it recognized the same right of conversion for other religions as for itself.” Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly, 183rd Plenary Meeting, 10 December 1948, 890; see also El-Hage, 14-15. It is important to note, however, that Zafrulla Khan was an Ahmadi, a Muslim sect that is severely persecuted in

Hence, for many Muslims, the corollary “right” to proselytism—the freedom to change one’s religion—is perceived as an unacceptable contradiction to true religious freedom.

What is more, many Muslims— both Sunni and Shi’i— are uncomfortable with the wording of Article 18, as liberty of conscience and freedom to exercise one’s religion is approbated by Islamic scripture and tradition, but the right to apostatize from Islam is not as scripturally clear.⁶² *Ridda*, or apostasy, remains a very controversial issue within the various Islamic communities and nation-states since apostasy, according to Islamic law and tradition, can carry the punishment of death. Saudi Arabia’s Basic Law of 1992 upholds the *shari’a* as the law of the state, outlawing apostasy and endorsing the government’s role as enforcer of the majority’s religious scruples. Even though Iranian jurisprudence contains no codified legislation criminalizing apostasy, a de facto threat of punishment remains a reality, as Iran’s religious jurists worry about the effects conversions may have on Muslim society. In Sudan, the 1991 Criminal Act promulgates that apostasy from Islam is a capital offense. And proselytism by non-Muslims is prohibited in Morocco, Oman, and Malaysia. Apostasy is seen as blasphemy against Islam and a significant threat to the communal and cultural solidarity that Islam provides.

Pakistan today. Currently, state law prohibits recognizing Ahmadis as Muslims. It is impossible that in Pakistan today an Ahmadi would be placed in the position of foreign minister. Thus, his interpretation of Islam would be largely dismissed by many jurists and leaders within contemporary Islamic civilization. Still, the words of this once-respected “Muslim” are significant.

⁶²Saeed and Saeed, 16. There are, of course, dissident voices of Muslim intellectuals from Western and Islamic venues, who are challenging the severity of punishment for apostasy dictated in the *shari’a*. For example, Mohamed Talbi, history professor at the University of Tunis, argues that the Qur’an speaks of a harsh penalty for apostasy in eternity but provides no explicit injunction for temporal punishment in this life.

Thus, attempts by Western Christians and Secularists to convert Muslims or dilute their faith is often resented and forcefully rebuffed.⁶³

Cultural insecurity is a borderless phenomenon. On many different levels, Western and Islamic cultures are colliding. While the contextual contingencies motivating the conflict may vary over time, this conflict between Western and Muslim civilizations has deep historical and, perhaps most significantly, religious roots. Although Western civilization continues to experience the collateral effects of three centuries of liberalism and secularization, the deeply-embedded role of Christianity should not be discounted. In fact, it is the geographical, political, and social expressions of Christianity and Islam that have come into conflict most often over the past fourteen centuries.

Crusade vs. Jihad

What is today Western civilization was for centuries known simply as Christendom. Islam and Christendom were concomitant civilizations vying for territory and converts. Both Christianity and Islam declare a universal mandate as the final truth for all of humanity. Both trace their religious heritage to the Middle East region and claim territorial entitlement of the “Holy Land,” for it is there that scripture was revealed

⁶³Ibid., 16-19. The Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights (1981) and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (1990) adopt a more limited definition of religious freedom than that espoused in the UDHR. Neither document directly addresses the right to change one’s religion.

and religious experiences found expression.⁶⁴ Bernard Lewis aptly encapsulates this historical collision:

Though Christendom and Islam were rivals, indeed, competitors, for the role of world religion, and though both shared so many traditions and beliefs, so many purposes and aspirations, neither was willing to recognize the other as a viable alternative. . . .Of the civilizations that were neighbors of Islam, Christianity alone was, in principle, universal—in belief, in self-perception, in intention.⁶⁵

Islam and the West share many characteristics and influences: origins in the Middle East, monotheism, revelation, Greek philosophy and science, Roman law and divine kingship. Yet, their cross-cultural interactions were often characterized with either general animosity or expedient utility.⁶⁶ As French Orientalist Simon Jargy wrote, “To try to analyze the historical relations between Islam and Christianity, in both their religious and sociopolitical components, is to come up immediately against one preliminary fact: although the three great religions of the monotheist faith came from the same roots, they developed separately from each other. They have not supplemented but rather opposed each other in perpetual conflict.”⁶⁷ Muhammad Talbi laments how, throughout history, both sides in this precarious relationship have been the “unconscious victims of

⁶⁴Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5. Bernard Lewis states: “It is now a commonplace that the term “Islam” is the counterpart not only of “Christianity” but also of “Christendom”—not only a religion in the narrow Western sense but of a whole civilization which grew up under the aegis of that religion.” Ibid., 4.

⁶⁵Ibid., 7-8.

⁶⁶Ibid., 5-6.

⁶⁷Simon Jargy, *Islam et Chrétienté* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1981), 10; quoted in Talbi, “Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding Between Islam and the West,” 162.

caricatures” by the other.⁶⁸ Neither Christendom nor Islam were ethnically, politically, or linguistically homogenous. Each struggled continuously with many internal divisions, local aspirations, and regional conflicts. Nonetheless, through numerous periods of conquest and reconquest across the centuries, Christendom and Islam generally perceived one another as two empires and two religions competing for the allegiance of the world. Christendom and Islam are “old acquaintances, intimate enemies,” writes Lewis, “whose continuing conflict derived a special virulence from their shared origins and common aims.”⁶⁹

Although Christianity has been argued into irrelevance in much of Western Europe and continues to confront the challenges of secularism in the United States, it is experiencing explosive growth across the Southern Hemisphere. Despite Christianity’s reduced roll in the West, its deeply-embedded influence throughout Western history causes many Westerners to consciously and subconsciously sympathize and support non-Western Christian communities.

Like Christianity, Islam is also experiencing explosive growth across much of the developing world.⁷⁰ The tension between Christianity and Islam has been the alchemy

⁶⁸Talbi, 174.

⁶⁹Ibid., 17.

⁷⁰For example, history and religious studies professor Phillip Jenkins predicts that six nations (Brazil, Mexico, Philippines, Nigeria, D.R. Congo, and the United States) each may have 100 million Christians or greater by 2050, with only one of those countries (United States) coming from the industrial West. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 89-90. What is more, he shows how those countries that currently have the highest birth rates are “neatly divided” between majority Christian nations, like Uganda and Bolivia, and majority Muslim states, like Yemen and Afghanistan. Ibid., 165.

behind much of the violent conflict in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While ethnic, cultural, political, and geographical variables may play a significant role in national and transnational conflicts, when a community's "ultimate concern" is called on to legitimize hostilities, violence escalates. Religious tension is especially magnified within those states or regions where either Muslims or Christians comprise a majority of the population with the other constituting a significant minority. Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Indonesia, the Balkans, and the Philippines are such examples where religious tension between sizeable Christian and Muslim communities has instigated or inflamed conflict.

What is more, although Western civilization has experienced significant secularization in its policies and ideologies over the past two centuries, many Muslims today still view Western politics, philosophies, and policies as inherently Christian. Seyyed Nasr asserts that "traditional Muslims always saw other people in terms of their attachment . . . to a religious community." This explains why many Muslims today "see Westerners as Christians and cannot even understand the category of secularism and the fact that many Westerners are . . . no longer attached to the Christian world view."⁷¹ For some, the conflict is still between Islam and Christendom—one of Crusade and *Jihad*. The vocal influence of Christian Zionism on American foreign policy in the Israel-Palestine question, the close historical association between Christian missionaries and Western imperialism, and the banal discrimination experienced by non-Christian

⁷¹Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Metaphysical Roots of Tolerance and Intolerance: An Islamic Interpretation," in *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance*, ed. Mehdi Amin Razavi and David Ambuel (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 50.

minorities living in the West are just a few examples of why some Muslims choose to view the current conflict as one between Christianity and Islam.

Thus today there are many within Western and Islamic civilizations who continue to perceive religion as the primary difference and danger of the Other. Mohammed Arkoun laments how the “heterogeneous complexes” of Christianity and Islam still conjure “up powerful imagery” and “negative connotations” of the Other.⁷² In an effort to justify their struggles, Arkoun writes,

“Islam” and the “West” have ceased to refer to their objective contents, whether religious, cultural, intellectual, or historical; from now on they function as powerful conglomerates of images, or prejudices, or projections, which call for two grids of mutual perception, two systems for legitimating all enterprises, exclusion and combat on both sides. The “Westerners” make full use of these ideological conglomerates to justify the policy of controlling and rejecting Muslim immigrants; the “Muslims” legitimate their struggle, even sacralizing it, by identifying imperialism, the missionary movement, and Judeo-Christianity as the destructive wills which have been directed against the truth of Islam since its emergence.⁷³

Adding complexity to this cross-cultural collision, “mental constructions,” states Arkoun, place the conflict not only between two civilizations, but two religions as well. Philip Jenkins surmises that for the twenty-first century, religion is and will continue to be a foundational explanation for much of the political violence and many of the interminable civil wars around the world. And, “in most cases,” he adds, “the critical division” will continue to be “the age-old battle between Christianity and Islam.”⁷⁴ From this religiocultural perspective, lasting coexistence appears unlikely; for, in the words of

⁷²Mohammed Arkoun, “Is Islam Threatened by Christianity,” *Cross Currents* 45, no. 4(1995/1996): 470.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 471.

⁷⁴Jenkins, 163.

former U.S. Secretary of State, and an historian himself, Henry Kissinger, “When truths collide, compromise becomes the first casualty.”

Conceiving Coexistence: A Strategy of Tolerance

A collision is occurring on many levels between Islam and the West. This, however, does not mean that cross-cultural conflict is unavoidable or that coexistence is unattainable. Coexistence has and can again occur between these two world cultures. In Seyyed Nasr’s words, “The future of the world in the next few years and decades will depend obviously on how various world views and civilizations will be able to live together.”⁷⁵ In spite of the universal aspirations of both Western and Islamic civilizations, history and current experience indicate that, in reality, “the future of our world” does depend on the pragmatic ability of Western and Islamic civilizations to “live together”—that is, coexist.

As put forth in chapter one, there are a variety of ways to define coexistence, from a simple inclination to live at peace with others despite differences, to a more complex recipe of individual commitments and group policies that facilitate proactive dialogue and a non-violent environment. Despite the subtle nuances of its various definitions, coexistence, in general, carries with it the recognition and acceptance of lasting difference and involves a necessary tension between groups that is tempered through an attitude of mutual respect and a process of non-violent discourse. At its core, an enduring coexistence has three central preconditions.

A vision of coexistence first requires a universal willingness among groups to live at peace. For peace to be achieved and maintained, it must first be desired. “Islam

⁷⁵Nasr, “An Islamic Interpretation,” 55.

and the West find themselves equally in the same crisis,” writes professor Talbi; thus, “we have no choice except to agree to good neighborliness in the interest of all, insofar as possible.”⁷⁶ Emory professor Abdullahi An-Na'im is correct when he stated that what is undermining a consensus toward peace, within and across cultures, is not the power in difference, but the difference in power.⁷⁷ In a world of competing nation-states and undulating alliances, reconciling the practical balance of power policies of *realpolitik* with moral and principled transnational concerns will require continuous dialogue and compromise from actors at all levels, from grass-root activists to international institutions. From a pragmatic political perspective, this means that Western and Muslim states must constantly reassess their political and economic policies from the perspective of peace, seek continuous diplomacy and benevolent engagement, and struggle to balance important territorial interests with the long-term agendas of peace, security, and mutual trust. In spite of differences in temporal power, a willingness to live in peace must be a rudimentary motivation at every level if coexistence is to be realized.

Second, beyond this basic willingness to live peacefully with others, if it is to persist, coexistence must also include a high valuation of the Other as an equal member of humanity, worthy of dignity and respect. A constructive and positive perception of the Other is important not only for a positive awareness of oneself as a human being but also

⁷⁶Talbi, 187.

⁷⁷Professor Abdullahi An-Na'im made this distinction during a keynote address on reframing human rights in Berlin, Germany on 4 October 2005. I participated the following day in a roundtable discussion with An-Na'im that pursued the issue of human rights and cultural consensus further.

for the welfare of the whole of humanity.⁷⁸ Muhammad Talbi is right, when conceiving coexistence between Islam and the West, “there can be no exchange when there is no reciprocal esteem.”⁷⁹ One of the most effective ways in which to remove barriers to coexistence is to actively and respectfully engage the Other, even when offensive differences abound.

Finally, if a meaningful coexistence between Western and Islamic civilizations is to be realized and sustained, it must be grounded and developed through cross-cultural, interfaith values. Despite their important differences, a broad array of transcultural values must be located if a traversable path toward coexistence is to be found. Can a common heritage of values be found to restore coexistence between Islam and the West? Indeed, there is no vacuity of corresponding moral perceptions and traditions between Islamic and Western cultures.

Ignorance of and isolation from the Other only exacerbates animosity and increases potential for conflict. For coexistence to occur, “we must prefer crossroads to blind alleys.” That is, instead of incessantly revisiting the history of tension and conflict between Islam and the West, both civilizations must put forth a joint effort to emphasize and benefit from their convergences.⁸⁰ As they have done sporadically in the past, Western and Islamic cultures can learn from the experiences and ideas of the Other. If Western (secular and Christian) and Muslim communities are to achieve coexistence,

⁷⁸ Lalsangkima Pachau, “Engaging the ‘Other’ in a Pluralistic World: Toward a Subaltern Hermeneutics of Christian Mission,” in *Studies in World Christianity* vol. 8, part 1 (2002): 68.

⁷⁹Talbi, 182.

⁸⁰Ibid., 183.

their only viable option is to probe together their theologies, philosophies, and histories for a common heritage of values and principles for living together. Coexistence will require a persistent, intelligent, and thoroughgoing investigation into the unique and borderless ideas that reflect the greatest parts of Islamic and Western cultures.⁸¹

One such cross-cultural concept, pivotal to this project and absolutely essential to achieving coexistence between Islam and the west, is tolerance. Coexistence demands a cross-cultural commitment to tolerance. This commitment to tolerance includes learning how to disagree without resorting to violence, an attitude of mutual respect, and an ongoing process of proactive engagement. Realizing that, coexistence involves addressing the meaning and limits of tolerance according to both Islamic and Western cultures. To retain the integrity of one's identity without denying that integrity to others remains a fundamental requisite for coexistence. It is from this perspective that the conceptualization and application of tolerance becomes a fundamental and effective strategy for achieving a lasting peace between Islamic and Western civilizations.

Tolerance is neither inherently Western nor inherently Islamic. Rather, it is intrinsically human. It is a concept that finds deep meaning within the rich sources and traditions of Western, as well as Islamic histories. As indicated in chapter one, both traditions approach tolerance from their own contextually contingent perspectives—that is, on their own terms. Both would do well to reexamine the worthy concept of tolerance and its ability to facilitate lasting coexistence. The cross-cultural confluence of interpretations of tolerance can only broaden and deepen the discourse on coexistence.

⁸¹Ibid., 189-91.

The ensuing four chapters examine consonant, as well as diverging, historical, philosophical, and theological accounts of tolerance within Western and then Islamic traditions. The many diverging paths to tolerance evinced within and beyond these civilizations will highlight the complexity of this idea and the effect that geopolitical, social, and religious realities have upon people and cultures. As proffered in chapter one, there is no one universally accepted, systematic conception of tolerance, consistently understood and applied by all cultures at all times. Moreover, there are many different forms and frameworks of tolerance—theological/theoretical and political/practical—within Islamic and Western civilizations, which are a manifestation of local, state, and regional peculiarities. However, beyond the different genealogies of tolerance, chapter seven percolates from the various historical and ideological understandings of tolerance within Islamic and Western cultures a number of foundational, recurring principles that give credence to a transcultural, sustainable, and mutually endorsed strategy of tolerance that not only facilitates lasting coexistence, but also enables the expression of other cross-cultural and interfaith values such as *caritas*, humility, liberty, justice, and human dignity.

If Huntington is right that, at the broadest level, civilizations “unite and divide mankind,” then “in a world of different civilizations,” Islamic and Western cultures “will have to learn to coexist with the other.” It is hoped that locating and embracing a transcultural strategy of tolerance will affect such an achievement.

CHAPTER THREE

A Historical Glimpse of Tolerance in the West

Whether religious, linguistic, political, or cultural, difference is not a recent phenomenon of Western civilization. In fact, a persistent characteristic of the Occident has been diversity. The strategic and often violent interactions between Rome and the Germanic tribes of the European continent in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries; the enclosing proximity of an imposing Islamic civilization beginning in the seventh century; the capricious coexistence of Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Spain and the Mediterranean from the eighth to fifteenth century, as well as the synchronous brutality and intolerance that resulted from numerous wars between Christian and Muslim kingdoms on the Iberian Peninsula; the potent lure of transcultural commerce across the Mediterranean and Maghreb; the fall of Constantinople (1453) and the incessant geopolitical threat of the powerful Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries; and the West's distressing conquests in the sixteenth century of the indigenous peoples of the New World are only a few of the many Western encounters with the religious and cultural Other. And it was from various historical encounters with otherness that theories and policies of tolerance, as well as intolerance, were conceived.

Indeed, tolerance is a labyrinthine concept not easily encapsulated. While the origin of its Western pedigree is disputed by intellectual, as well as social and political historians, contrary to a contemporary misconception, tolerance was not birthed in the Age of Reason. Neither was tolerance a novelty of the Enlightenment. This somewhat "whiggish" argument—that seeds of tolerance were first planted in a discordant sixteenth

century, expanded in response to the tumultuous seventeenth century (after its wars of religion were fought to exhaustion), nurtured in the writings of the eighteenth-century philosophes, and blossomed to maturity through nineteenth- and twentieth-century liberalism and secularization—is ill conceived. On the contrary, all through Western history (and non-Western history) one can locate people who were writing about tolerance and related themes or benefiting from its practice. What is more, in the history of tolerance, context mattered, as social, political, and geographic variables affected local human experience. Modern ideas of tolerance are not the result of the “end of history” or the pinnacle of human progress. In fact, more often than not, modern conceptualizations of tolerance were simply intellectual and pragmatic reactions to unique sixteenth- and seventeenth-century experiences with religious and political conflict.¹

In addition to a number of individually produced writings, Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen have collaborated to produce two edited works that offer a critical reexamination of the historical and geographical breadth and complexity of tolerance, presenting a critical examination and refutation of the mainstream post-Reformation hypothesis for tolerance.² They suggest that once tolerance is disentangled “from its

¹Michael Gervers and James M. Powell, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance: Social Conflict in the Age of the Crusades* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001), XVII.

²Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen, eds., *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Toleration in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996); and John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration Before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998). Other works include John Christian Laursen, ed., *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999); Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourse of Toleration, c. 1100-c. 1550* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press,

Lockean and Enlightenment roots,” it becomes clear how conceptualizations of tolerance were “in circulation long before the late seventeenth century and were found among disparate and even directly opposed conceptual frameworks.” Instead of a singular linear narrative, the Western chronicle of tolerance is “a tale of many divergent and potentially conflicting visions.”³ Not only do these pivotal works challenge the historical specificity of tolerance, but they also show how the liberal political framework of tolerance, based upon abstract individuality, is only one of many parallel and even deviating paths to tolerance.

Late medieval and Reformation scholar Heiko Oberman argued that the history of tolerance “is one of the last preserves still firmly in the grasp of intellectual historians.”⁴ Oberman and other scholars of social history have sought to reorient the debate on tolerance from intellectual history to the social history of ideas, not to discount intellectual history but, rather, to enrich and, perhaps, emend the traditional epic of

2001); and John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, “The Problem of Periodization in the History of Toleration,” *Storia della Storiographica* 37 (2000): 55-65.

³Nederman and Laursen, “Difference and Dissent: Introduction,” in *Difference and Dissent*, 5.

⁴Heiko A. Oberman, “The Travail of Tolerance: Containing Chaos in Early Modern Europe,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 13. Oberman references Joseph Lecler’s fascinating two-volume study, *Toleration and the Reformation*, trans. T.L. Westow (New York: Association Press, 1960). Lecler’s exhaustive examination covers a wide berth of prominent and periphery proponents of tolerance across a wide geographical range from England to Transylvania. Oberman applauds Lecler’s expansive scholarship and acknowledgement of the effects of political context, but he points to Lecler’s reinforcement of intellectual history as the primary perimeter of the debate. Ibid.

tolerance.⁵ To procure a balanced understanding of tolerance in Western and Islamic civilizations, one must not only investigate how tolerance has been conceived but also the realities that influenced such conceptions. Thinkers and practitioners of tolerance (as well as intolerance), past and present, are products of their age—hopefully learning from experiences in the past as they respond to the unique circumstances of the present.

Nederman and Laursen have indicated that a central purpose to their collaborative scholarship was to “encourage readers to expand their horizons in thinking about” the historical roots and conceptual dilemmas surrounding the attitudes and practices of tolerance.⁶ In that respect, their work is indeed a success. A central portion of this chapter is devoted to investigating the pragmatic and principled existence of tolerance in the West well before the seventeenth century, focusing on the context and ideas of select thinkers who advocated tolerance of the Other. Instead of suggesting a systematic progress of tolerance along a simple continuum of Western history, this chapter reinforces the contrary argument that Western tolerance—in theory and practice—was neither an end-product of historical human progress nor confined to a modern-liberal association. Rather, tolerance was contextually contingent; its sociopolitical practice and

⁵Ibid., 29. Ole Peter Grell offers Martin Luther’s theological evolution in the area of tolerance as one example of how social, political, and religious considerations pressed Luther to modify his argument significantly. “Within less than a decade,” writes Grell, “Luther had moved from an outsider’s position, hoping and wanting to reform the whole Church to that of an insider who sought to protect and secure the existence of the Protestant churches already established.” Consequently, subsequent works on tolerance that utilized Luther’s writings (such as Sebastian Castellio’s *De haeretics an sint persequendi* (1554)) only reference his early arguments, while necessarily neglecting his later positions. Ole Peter Grell, “Introduction,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, 5-6.

⁶John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, “General Introduction: Political and Historical Myths in the Toleration Literature,” in *Beyond the Persecuting Society*, 7.

ideological defense were inconstant phenomena diversely defended throughout Western history.

A terse rendering of tolerance as a linear pattern of development, culminating in the liberal ideal, discounts the earliest experiences and theories that help comprise the West's complex historical record of tolerance. At the same time, however, this chapter cannot attempt to provide a complete, sequential history of events and ideas of tolerance in the West. Thus, omitting a number of significant Western theorists and practitioners of tolerance, a brief examination of the inconsonant and consonant convictions of some of the West's earlier proponents of tolerance will sufficiently demonstrate how the profundity of past concepts of tolerance still have meaningful application to today's timeless goals of interreligious dialogue, mutual respect, and cross-cultural coexistence.

Tolerance and the Transcendancy of Religion

When discussing the place of tolerance in Western civilization, the context of religion is unavoidable. There is little debate "that in Europe the ideas and practice of tolerance and toleration were developed with reference to religion."⁷ Tolerance, of course, finds expression through adversity and motivation from intolerance and persecution, all of which were chronic historical occurrences in the overlapping realms of religion, politics, and society. Nederman and Laursen are right: "religion, and specifically Christianity, created the most significant . . . disputes in the European world from the time of the Roman empire."⁸ As stated in chapter two, no more than four

⁷Ibid., 7.

⁸Ibid., 7-8.

centuries ago, Western civilization was coextensive with Christendom. The West was a world civilization that developed its identity from within the world of Christianity. There were a variety of kingdoms and states but all under the auspices of one Church.⁹ Western civilization was seen by most Westerners, since the ninth century at least, as a genuine attempt to provide temporal expression to God's final truth. For instance, Bernard Hamilton, emeritus professor of medieval history at the University of Nottingham, writes that the Church was a formidable institution in the medieval period "not because the majority of its lay members were, in the modern sense, fervent Catholics," but because its ecclesiastical hierarchy and laws "pervaded all society at all levels in a way which has no parallel anywhere in the western world today."¹⁰ Indeed, for much of Western history, religion (specifically Christianity) furnished a persistent and inherent metaphysical and philosophical source for justifying, as well as vitiating, a principled and pragmatic tolerance within temporal society.

It is often through experiences of intolerance that intellectual and practical arguments for tolerance emerge. It is this necessary duality—intolerance spawning tolerance—that consumes much of this project. In the minds of many Western and non-Western scholars today, intolerance has played a more notable role than its converse. The Donatist persecution in the early fifth century; the medieval suppression of the Cathar and Waldenisan heresies; the medieval, Spanish, and Roman inquisitions; the excommunication and burning at the stake of the Bohemian dissident, Jan Huss (d. 1415); the commensurate fate in the next century of the Spanish theologian Michael Servetus in

⁹Bernard Hamilton, *The Medieval Inquisition* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1989), 16.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

Calvin's Geneva (1553); and the brutal wars of religion in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe are often adduced as some of the more prominent historical markers of religiopolitical intolerance in the West. Such examples, however, deal directly with the religious dissenter—that is, the heretic. Of even greater importance for this project of cross-cultural coexistence is the tolerance and intolerance shown to those non-Christian communities within and beyond Western civilization. The proximity of the Other within and beyond the Occident necessitated a variety of interactions: intellectual, economic, militaristic, and, of course, religious.

The degree of tolerance afforded the pagan or non-Christian was incommensurable with that shown the heretic. Theological, philosophical, economic, and, most conspicuously, geopolitical considerations affected the variation of coexistence and conflict between believers and unbelievers. Interreligious contact and conflict led to a proliferation of writings on tolerance (and intolerance), as well as a wide variety of pragmatic policies of coexistence.

This chapter proffers a brief examination of four important theorists of tolerance: the Patristic period's Lactantius; the medieval theorist, Ramon Llull; and the sixteenth-century proponents, Bartolomé de Las Casas and Jean Bodin. The rhetorician, theologians, and philosophers examined in this chapter were proactive participants of their interreligious, cross-cultural environments. Each showed tremendous resolution and intellectual acumen in their then controversial apologies of tolerance. This exposition will hopefully contribute to contemporary efforts to disinter the existence and varieties of tolerance throughout Western history, thereby providing additional stimuli and insight for framing a meaningful theory of cross-cultural, interfaith tolerance today.

A Fourth-Century Plea for Tolerance

In its first three centuries, the burgeoning Christian community was a fairly homogenous voice of tolerance. Jesus taught through words and example the importance of loving others, even one's enemies. The Beatitudes promise blessings to the meek, the merciful, and the poor in spirit. What is more, that salvation was freely given and must be freely accepted and acted upon is a recurring theme of the Christian scriptures. The third-century Christian rhetorician, Tertullian, states in chapter two of *To Scapula* that "it is the law of mankind and the natural right of each individual to worship what he thinks is proper." For it is not correct, he argued, "to compel men to religion, which should be accepted of one's own accord, since sacrifices also are required of a willing mind."¹¹

Context undoubtedly influenced Christian calls for tolerance in the early centuries as persecution was a common occurrence. In contrast, from the perspective of secular authorities of an attenuating Roman Empire, Christian adherents also had a propensity toward being intolerant of the imperial ideal. It is thus somewhat ironic that, while Christianity's monotheistic claims to absolute truth and the consequential damnation of those outside the Church were deemed traitorous to Roman solidarity, such religious certitude provided future justifications for an uneasy marriage between spiritual and secular authorities.

¹¹Tertullian, *Liber ad Scapulum*; cited in Rudolph Arbesmann, Emily Joseph Daily, and Edwin A. Quains, trans., *Tertullian: Apologetical Works, and Minucius Felix: Octavius* (Books on Demand, 1985), 152. In chapter 24 of his *Apology*, Tertullian declares that "no one, not even a man, will be willing to receive the worship of an unwilling client." Ibid., 76. See also J. Budziszewski, *True Tolerance* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 290.

The fourth century was pivotal, as it set the official course for Western civilization. Its tolerance and then official embrace of Christianity is critical to the history of Western civilization. The fourth century inaugurated what would become a restless merger between the rudimentary components of Western civilization: Greco-Roman culture with Christianity.¹² The fourth century witnessed the seeding of a Christian Empire. On his death-bed, Emperor Galerius issued an edict of tolerance (311), declaring an official forbearance of Christians.¹³ Two years later, Constantine, along with his co-emperor Licinius,¹⁴ expanded the protection of Christians in the famous Edict of Milan (313) by restoring state-confiscated property. Paganism was still officially tolerated (even encouraged) but no longer the official religion of Rome. Unity of the Roman Empire—not religious freedom—was of central importance; thus, all peaceable religions were tolerated. Tolerance was countenanced to secure public order and the hopes of divine favor—not for the sake of human liberty or equality. In the same century, this exceptional degree of tolerance was discontinued as Christianity was approbated as the official religion of the empire, and more oppressive measures were promptly instituted against pagans. Notwithstanding the religious and political disarray

¹²A suggestion made by Sister Francis Mary McDonald in her introduction to Lactantius, *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, in Sister Francis Mary McDonald, ed. and trans., *Lactantius: The Minor Works* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 127-28.

¹³Gelarius was a notorious persecutor of Christians, instigating and supporting Diocletian's brutal policies of intolerance. Gelarius' declaration of tolerance was approbated the year of his death.

¹⁴Licinius would return to persecuting Christians and ultimately be defeated in a power struggle with Constantine and executed.

of the period, the fourth century played an important role in the development of tolerance in the West.

During this vital period of formation for Western civilization, the Christian apologist and teacher of Latin rhetoric, Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius (d. 325), presented an eloquent defense of tolerance still referenced by Western theorists and theologians today. The *Divine Institutes* (written between 303 and 311) was a Latin apologetic disquisition consisting of seven books that juxtaposed the rationality and inherent truth of the Christian faith with the profane inferiorities of paganism. Responding to the religious intolerance of the early fourth century, Lactantius lamented that religion was polluted and outraged by those who defended it with bloodshed, torture, and evil, ignoring authentic religion's requisite of freedom: "There is nothing that is so much a matter of willingness as religion."¹⁵ He argued that God cannot love a worshiper who does not love him:

An unwilling sacrifice is no sacrifice. Unless it come from the heart spontaneously, it is blasphemy when people act under threat of proscription, injustice, prison or torture. . . . We [Christians] by contrast make no demand that our God . . . be worshiped by anyone unwillingly, and we do not get cross if he is not worshiped.¹⁶

Tolerance of the free will of others was a consequence of authentic Christianity. Faith must be approached by each individual voluntarily, trusting in God's power to avenge those who hold him in contempt. If God does not want an "unwilling sacrifice," then tolerance must be afforded to those who believe in other gods. "Worship cannot be forced," warned Lactantius, "it is something to be achieved by talk rather than blows, so

¹⁵Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, trans. Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 5.19.23-26.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 5.20.7, 9.

that there is free will in it.”¹⁷ Persuasion and argumentation, motivated by a love of God and his creation, are the methods available to the Christian. Retaliation, arrogance, and absolute intolerance, on the other hand, remain under the judgment of God.¹⁸

Moreover, Lactantius remarked how authentic religion is upheld not through violence but through endurance. Lactantius ascribed virtue to endurance, defining it as “the bearing with equanimity of ills whether imposed or accidental.”¹⁹ For Lactantius, endurance was a consequence of suffering adversity, and those in prosperity (outside of adversity) often lack this important virtue. But a just and wise person who has suffered adversity was imbued with the virtue of endurance.²⁰ Furthermore, the virtue of patience existed in tandem with endurance. Lactantius asserted, “There is no truer virtue than patience,” which has the potency to extinguish the flames of evil and bloodshed. It is, of course, the nature of patience that it cannot be demonstrated until confronted with insult or provoked by injury. He described patience as the fortitude of restraint or self-control: patience “recalls a troubled and wobbling soul to its calm, it soothes it, and restores man to himself.”²¹ Tolerance has been defined as the *endurance* and *patience* of hardship or persecution.²² And for Lactantius, it was this enduring patience or tolerance that

¹⁷Ibid., 5.19.11.

¹⁸Ibid., 5.18, 19.

¹⁹Ibid., 5.22.1-5.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., 6.18.32.

²²For example, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines tolerance as “the action or practice of enduring or sustaining pain or hardship; the power or capacity of enduring.”

characterized wisdom, suggesting a calculated composure or reasoned calmness in the thick of unfavorable circumstances or offensive behavior.

It is the nature of “a wise and excellent man,” Lactantius reasoned, “to want to be rid not of his adversary (which is impossible without risk of doing wrong) but of the quarrel itself, which can be done usefully and justly.”²³ Here we see that a just and wise person wishes to disembarass himself not from his antagonists in a quarrel but from the quarrel itself; and it is reasoned discussion, coupled with the supreme virtues of patience and endurance, that will dissolve quarrels and affect goodwill and *caritas* toward the Other. Tolerance, then, is a strategy that enables the wise to cultivate the important virtues of patience and endurance. In fact, tolerance may be broadly defined as a principled forbearance or endurance of those ideas and practices which one finds repugnant or simply untrue. And, of utmost importance for Lactantius, beyond the virtues of patience and endurance, tolerance becomes a necessary strategy for ensuring the divinely ordained liberty of conscience: True worship calls for “the maximum of devotion and loyalty. How will God love a worshipper if the worshipper doesn’t love him?”²⁴

One may wonder how the religiopolitical context of the third and fourth centuries affected Lactantius’s interpretations and teachings on tolerance, from the violent persecutions of Christians by Diocletian and Gelarius, to the positive tolerance afforded Christians through Constantine’s Edict of Milan. Lactantius was not writing as a champion of religious freedom for the pagan. Indeed, a persistent purpose behind much

²³Ibid., 6.18.29-33.

²⁴Ibid., 5.19.26.

of his work was to excoriate the persecutory nature of the Roman state and its intolerant paganism.²⁵ From experience and providence, Lactantius did, however, advocate a religiously tolerant society based on human freedom and virtuousness. He endeavored to uplift the tolerant and benevolent nature of Christianity as a way to chastise imperial persecution of Christians and dissuade non-Christians from subsequent intolerance. Lactantius believed in a Divine governance of the world and that God, in the end, would have justice. Important virtues such as endurance, patience, and forgiveness are a product of this temporal world of adversity and plurality. Because God would have us cultivate “the perpetuity of virtue,” difference and confrontation become necessary conditions for this “time-bound” world. The ultimate reward for a life of virtue (via tolerance) comes not in this life but only through death: “Death does not extinguish a man,” he wrote, “it escorts him to the reward of his virtue.”²⁶

Making converts was essential for Lactantius but only through reasoned dialogue, gentle persuasion, and a virtuous life. Following Constantine’s Edict of Milan, Lactantius did not urge reciprocation of persecution toward non-Christians. On the contrary, he portrayed this period of religious diversity and tolerance as a “clear sky with longed-for light.” This, of course, is not to suggest that Lactantius would have embraced modernity’s understanding of multiculturalism and secular neutrality or indifference toward religion. (He would have supported neither.)²⁷ Yet, following the imperial

²⁵Lactantius, of course, devoted a significant portion of his *Divine Institutes* to the violent and intolerant nature of paganism. Other minor works, such as his pamphlet *On the Deaths of the Persecutors* also relay this persistent theme.

²⁶Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 7.10.5-9.

²⁷See Anthony Bowen’s and Peter Garnsey’s introduction to Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, 48.

declaration in Milan to tolerate all peaceable religions, he does celebrate the “tranquility . . . restored throughout the world” and how a “joyous and serene peace rejoices the hearts of all men.”²⁸ This Roman historian and Christian moralist helped to cultivate a vocabulary for tolerance in Western civilization that has been condoned and condemned by popes, princes, and philosophers across the centuries. Pragmatism and power often determined how future leaders and thinkers would appropriate, expand, or neglect Lactantius’s discourse on tolerance.

Tolerance and the Medieval Epoch

At best, tolerance was an inconstant phenomenon of Western history. Its temperamental existence is a testament to the efficacy of context. With the ill-fated Roman Empire relocated to the Bosphorus, the West remained fraught with geopolitical division and fragile, unpredictable alliances. In the sixth century, with Gaul conquered by the Franks, England under the control of the Angles and Saxons, Spain in the hands of the Visigoths, and Italy under constant threat from the Teutonic Lombards, the pope and the Church asserted even greater temporal authority, proffering Christianity as the sole source of unity.²⁹ Forsaking its tenuous alliance with Byzantium, in the eighth century Rome sought an alliance with and allegiance from the Frankish monarchs.³⁰

Western civilization remained politically fragmented through the medieval period. The emergence of monarchies in England and France and the unstable relationship

²⁸Lactantius, *On the Death of the Persecutors* 1.5.

²⁹Brian Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State 1050-1300* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 16.

³⁰*Ibid.*

between popes and kings prevented a sustaining political unity of Christendom. As historian Brian Tierney asserts, under these temporal conditions, the primary “bond of unity” within a politically fragmented Middle Ages was the Church.³¹

While Christianity was the official religion of Western civilization from the fourth through fifteenth centuries, uniformity in ritual and doctrine was never a reality. In particular, the medieval worldview should not be compartmentalized as a monolithic era, as popular religiosity and speculative theology were complex parts of this diverse epoch.³² Yet, scholar of medieval history Bernard Hamilton emphasizes how a “minimum of conformity” to the Church characterized the medieval era:

Although the average level of religious practice was low and religious doubt was widespread, these facts were not considered incompatible with membership of the Church, as now days they tend to be. Everybody in western Europe who was not a Muslim or a Jew was baptized at birth and received a Catholic funeral when he died.³³

The extent of participation in Church life varied significantly between individuals and communities. Still, although some never entered the doors of a church and others scrupulously adhered to religious ritual, to reject the Church entirely was “almost unheard of.”³⁴ The Catholic Church was a system of faith and values, as well as a comprehensive world view that imbued every aspect of the social order. Thus heretical movements that called for the dissolution of the Church, as it was understood in Western

³¹Brian Tierney, “Religious Rights: An Historical Perspective,” in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspectives*, ed. John Witte, Jr. and Johan D. van der Vyver (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996), 31.

³²See Heinrich Fichtenau, *Ketzer und Porfessoren: Häresie und Vernunftglaube im Hochmittelalter* (Munich: C.H. Beck’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1992).

³³Bernard Hamilton, 17.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 18.

society, were seen as threats not only against the doctrinal tenets of the Church but against an embedded social institution to which the vast majority of Western civilization to some extent belonged.³⁵

The heretic, unlike the Muslim or Jew, was not considered a religious Other; he was labeled a criminal whose attack upon the Church threatened the socio-cultural limits of Western civilization. Medieval canon law taught rather consistently that forcible conversion of Muslims or Jews was contrary to the doctrine of salvation, which was a gift from God that must be freely embraced. The orthodox teaching of Thomas Aquinas, for instance, taught that heretics and apostates, unlike the Other, who have already embraced the Christian faith “must be compelled by secular powers” to fulfill their commitment to observing God’s law.³⁶ Aquinas addressed this dichotomy of religious tolerance:

The Church does not forbid the faithful to communicate with unbelievers, who have not in any way received the Christian faith, viz. with pagans and Jews, because she has not the right to exercise spiritual judgment over them, but only temporal judgment, in the case when, while dwelling among Christians they are guilty of some misdemeanor, and are condemned by the faithful to some temporal punishment. On the other hand, in this way, i.e. as a punishment, the Church forbids the faithful to communicate with those unbelievers who have forsaken the faith they once received, either by corrupting the faith, as heretics, or by entirely renouncing the faith, as apostates, because the Church pronounces sentence of excommunication on both.³⁷

³⁵Ibid., 19-20. Bernard Hamilton and Heinrich Fichtenau both distinguish between academic skeptics or intellectual heresies (confined to theological technicalities and complex doctrinal debates), where the potential for generating a popular following was unlikely, and those popular heresies which posed a real threat of exacting significant support from the masses, potentially undermining the institutional Church.

³⁶Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, trans. Fathers of the Dominican English Province (Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, 1981), 2.2ae.39.4.

³⁷Ibid., 2.2ae.10.9.

Here one sees that a patient endurance of the nonbeliever was justified through an orthodox argument that salvation must be volitional, not coerced, while a heretic or apostate to the Christian faith must be compelled, even corporeally, to fulfill their promise to the faith.

Two brief illustrations exemplify this dichotomy of tolerance between heretics and non-Christians. Frederick II (r. 1215-1250) was the Holy Roman Emperor and Ruler of Sicily. Initially lauded by Innocent III as “defender of the Church,” he was later excommunicated twice by Gregory IX and deposed by Innocent IV. (Frederick II was a persistent geopolitical threat to papal territories.) Prior to being deposed, Frederick II’s reign was consumed with realizing a united Holy Roman Empire.³⁸ Consequently, as representative of God in temporal matters, he officially abhorred heresy, being the first to officially burn heretics at the stake. Yet, to the dismay of many, after reclaiming Jerusalem through a bloodless truce in 1229, he permitted Muslims to practice their faith in public and retain dominion over the Temple area.³⁹ Frederick II was indeed complex: he styled himself defender of the Christian faith, brutally suppressing heresy; and yet he maintained a harem of Muslim women and enlisted Muslim mercenaries—who were beyond papal excommunication—as part of his “Christian” army.⁴⁰ The reign of Alphonso X (The Wise), who ruled over the state of Castile from 1253 to 1284, is another interesting example of how tolerance of the non-Christian was incommensurate with that of the heretic. Religious tolerance was a sociopolitical necessity in a state where

³⁸Hamilton, 33. See also Tierney, *The Crisis of Church and State*, 139-42.

³⁹Ibid., 33. In 1224, under Frederick II, the secular penalty for heresy was burning; if clemency was granted, however, the heretic’s tongue was to be cut out. Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.; and Tierney, 139

Muslims and Jews represented a significant portion of the population. While he did not permit the medieval Inquisition to operate within the medieval state of Castile (motivated by the need to limit papal influence), Alphonso X instituted unsparing secular legislation against heretics, burning at the stake those who refused to recant.⁴¹ At the same time, however, he took pride in characterizing his kingdom as a realm of religious tolerance, where Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities maintained a delicate coexistence.

One should not infer from these localized examples that interreligious coexistence was an enduring reality of the medieval era. It was not. A begrudging forbearance of non-Christians was clearly a part of official medieval doctrine, but discrimination (often violent) against non-Christian communities, and especially Jewish, within Western civilization and Western controlled territories was an undeniable reality.⁴² Judaism was often a scapegoat for explaining internal instabilities of Christendom, as well as a frontline “enemy” of the Crusades. The massacre of the Jewish community in the French city of Rouen, an early expression of the religious fervor surrounding the first crusade, is indicative of the pragmatic fragility of tolerance afforded the Other.⁴³

⁴¹Ibid., 72-73.

⁴²Brian Tierney, “Religious Rights: An Historical Perspective,” 25-26. This general tolerance toward Jews and Muslims waned significantly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as forced baptisms, massacres, and ultimatums of conversions or exile grew in frequency (especially during the “reconquests” of Ferdinand and Isabella).

⁴³R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987). Regarding Rouen and the first crusade, the monk, Guibert of Nogent, recorded the following occurrence: “Some men who had taken the cross with the intention of leaving for the crusade began complaining among themselves. ‘Here we are,’ they said, ‘going off to attack God’s enemies in the East, having to travel tremendous distances, when the Jews are right here before our very eyes. No race is more hostile to God than they are. Our Project is insane!’ Having said this they armed themselves, rounded up some Jews in a church—

Although the West described Islam as a dangerous heresy in its inaugural centuries, it was eventually feared as a competing dispensation vying for dominion over other world religions. Islam deemed Christendom as a backward, local, and divided region that professed an abrogated faith. Infidel or *kafir* became the most common reciprocal “insult” for Western and Islamic descriptions of the other.⁴⁴ In Western history, temporal intolerance of the “infidel” was not uncommon. Yet, ironically, the Church’s tolerance of intellectual investigation into the vast corpus of Islamic learning and translations into Arabic of the great pagan texts is what stimulated a reinvigoration of intellectual life in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries of Western civilization.⁴⁵ As Cary Nederman notes, perhaps the highest level of “intellectual forbearance” during the

whether by force or by ruse I don’t know—and led them out to put them to the sword regardless of age or sex. Those who agreed to submit to the Christian way of life could, however, escape the impending slaughter.” Guibert of Nogent, *A Monk’s Confession: The Memoirs of Guibert of Nogent*, trans. Paul J. Archambault (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 111. While clerical propagators of the crusades, like Bernard of Clairvaux, made attempts to prevent violent persecution of Jews, arguing that scripture warranted dispersion only, “the preaching and preparation of crusades” and “religious fervour and social unrest associated with them, continued to represent danger for the Jews.” Moore, 31.

⁴⁴Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 7-8. “For almost a thousand years,” writes Lewis, “from the first Moorish landing in Spain to the second Turkish siege of Vienna, Europe was under constant threat from Islam.” It was a “double threat” in the first few centuries, he continues, “not only of invasion and conquest, but also of conversion and assimilation.” *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴⁵Avicenna (Ibn Sina), al-Kindi, al-Farabi, and Avveroes (Ibn Rushd) were all Muslim scholars (often renounced by Islamic clergy for their religious mysticism) who produced important commentaries on Aristotle. Averroës (Ibn Rushd) was largely unknown in the twelfth century, but later became the most important Muslim (Spanish-Arab) scholar to Western (especially Parisian) philosophers. See Heinrich Fichtenau, 317-18. In fact, The Grand Commentator, as he was titled, was at that time more influential to Christian thought than Islamic.

medieval period came from the “open dissemination of Islamic learning.”⁴⁶ Still, even though the intellectual importance of Islamic scholarship necessitated a limited and ultimately untenable forbearance of rational Muslim commentaries and translations of important Greek texts, tolerance for the good of human equality was a reality in neither Western nor Islamic civilizations.⁴⁷ From a macro-perspective, Islam was persistently seen as a largely external threat, whose claims to Jerusalem and encroaching proximity threatened Christendom’s religiopolitical identity.

The tolerance shown Jewish and Muslim communities was inconsistent, and it was not unheard of for secular authorities or local communities, when confronted with geopolitical pressures or social and economic turmoil respectively, to differ with the Church on the principle of tolerance and the temporal benefits of intolerance. What is more, the Church generally reacted to unavoidable contact and, in some cases, coexistence with non-Christian cultures by “closing ranks, clinging to its self-proclaimed unity, and enhancing its efforts to suppress and persecute its enemies (real or perceived).” But, as Cary Nederman writes, “not every medieval thinker was entirely comfortable with repression as a response to religious nonconformity.”⁴⁸ There were contrary interpretations of the Church as a bulwark of *caritas*, patience, humility, and respect that countenanced a different approach to engaging the Other: namely, tolerance of ineluctable human difference and conversion through gentle persuasion and reasoned

⁴⁶ Nederman, “Introduction: Discourses and Contexts of Tolerance in Medieval Europe,” in *Beyond the Persecuting Society*, 20.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

⁴⁸ Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 25.

dialogue. A brief discussion of tolerance on the part of one medieval theorist, Ramon Llull, will help illustrate the political complexity and intellectual diversity that characterized the *Respublica Christiana*.

Ramon Llull: Tolerance via Dialogue

One of the more pronounced medieval articulations of tolerance is found in the intellectual exercise of interreligious dialogue.⁴⁹ Peter Abelard (1079-1142)⁵⁰ and Ramon Llull (1232-1316) were two contributors to this style of reasoned disputation who

⁴⁹Chapter 2 of Nederman's *Worlds of Difference*, "Demonstration and Mutual Edification in Inter-religious Dialogue," provides an insightful study of tolerance and the medieval genre of inter-religious dialogue.

⁵⁰See Peter Abelard, *Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and a Christian*, trans. Pierre J. Payer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979). Peter Abelard experienced persecution and intolerance as a heretic. He was castrated in 1117 and charged with heresy twice, first at the Council of Soissons in 1121 and then by Bernard of Clairvaux in 1140 at the Council of Sens. See Constant J. Mews, "Peter Abelard and the Enigma of Dialogue," in *Beyond the Persecuting Society*. Mews highlights a major difference between Abelard's dialogue and the popular philosophical dialogues of Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) a century earlier (*Se vertate, De casu diaboli, De libertate arbitrio*) and Anselm's pupil Gilbert of Crispin (*Disputatio Iudei et Christiani*). Rather than using the philosopher for the sole purpose of demonstrating Christianity's inherent logic ("the rightness of one's point of view"), Abelard's dialogue avoided religious dogmatism and, instead, endeavored to understand competing viewpoints (that of a philosopher, Jew, and Christian) and emphasize a common agenda of reaching the supreme good. Abelard, of course, agreed that the Christian faith was superior and demonstrable through reason, but was unique for his criticism of Christendom's authoritarian intolerance of those beyond the Christian worldview. Ibid, 39-40. In a morally instructive poem, the *Carmen ad Astralabium*, addressed to his son, Abelard raises the issue of lasting human difference: "The world is divided among so many sects that what may be the path of life is hardly clear. Because the world harbors so many conflicting dogmas, each makes his own, by way of his own background. In the end, no one dares rely on reason in these things, while he wants to live in some kind of peace with himself. Each person sins only by having contempt for God—only contempt can make this person guilty." Quoted in Mew, 44. Thus, as Mew concludes, for Abelard, "only contempt of God, not ignorance, is truly sinful." Ibid. His open-ended dialogue was an original argument for tolerating disagreement and difference while raising the edifying nature of inter-religious discussion.

recognized the finite nature of human intellect and the limits of compromise in the area of one's ultimate concern.⁵¹ For Abelard and Llull, interreligious dialogue, beyond simply impugning rival religions, demonstrated the "deep difficulties in achieving complete mutual understanding in matters of religion."⁵² A specific examination of Llull's work will show how a discursive dialogue on truth between different faith communities should be encouraged, with the understanding that the desideratum of religious concord is likely to remain elusive in a temporal world of immutable difference.

Majorca, where Ramon Llull was born and spent half of his life, was an epicenter of commerce, strategically located in the western Mediterranean, roughly the same distance from Barcelona as it is from Algiers.⁵³ The western Mediterranean, along with much of the Iberian Peninsula, had been under North African Muslim control—first by the Almoravid Empire in the eleventh and twelfth century and then by the more puritanical Almohad Dynasty at the end of the twelfth century. In 1212 the Almohad Dynasty was vanquished by an alliance of Christian princes in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. Within a few decades, except for the long-lasting petty kingdom of Granada, Moorish dominions on the Iberian Peninsula, as well as the Balearic Islands, were retaken by conquest, resulting in a significant number of Muslim inhabitants now under Christian suzerainty.

⁵¹Nederman, *Words of Difference*, 6.

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³J.N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms 1250-1516: Precarious Balance*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 247.

The Mediterranean island of Majorca became a focal point of political and economic internationalism. Muslims comprised a significant portion of the island's population. Many were slaves, but a good number were free, "both working the land and as artisans (painters, blacksmiths, bakers, etc.) in the towns."⁵⁴ While they constituted a much smaller portion of Majorca's populace, Jewish inhabitants played a pivotal role in diplomacy (as ambassadors to North Africa), administration, and economic development.⁵⁵ The intensity of this cross-cultural, interreligious contact, however, should not be perceived as selfless multiculturalism. Tolerance and coexistence was provisional, as economic expansion and balance of power were of primary importance.⁵⁶

An autobiographical account of the latter half of Llull's life and journeys, entitled the *Vita coaetanea* (Contemporary Life), was composed in 1311. Llull was a multilingual intellectual, who mastered the Arabic language for the primary purpose of encountering and debating his Muslim counterparts in the region.⁵⁷ In the *Vita*, we are told of Llull's journey to Tunis in 1293 to debate and perhaps convert the wise men of the "Mohammedan religion." There, within a "Saracen land" close to his Mediterranean home and frequented by Genoese and Catalan merchants, Llull entered a precarious

⁵⁴Ibid., 27.

⁵⁵Ibid., 239.

⁵⁶See Anthony Bonner's "Historical Background," in *Selected Works of Ramon Llull (1232-1316)*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 10.

⁵⁷Llull was successful at the end of his life in influencing the Council of Vienne in 1311 to support his goal of establishing a school of oriental languages. Canon 11 of the Council ordained the instruction of Arabic, "Chaldean," and Hebrew at Paris, Oxford, Salamanca, Bologna, and the Papal Courts to those being trained as missionaries. See *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader*, trans. and ed. Anthony Bonner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 41.

realm of interaction, seeking a discursive dialogue with knowledgeable adherents of Islam. He reportedly asked if they would care to discuss the foundations of religious truth “calmly” and “in the most rational way.”⁵⁸ According to the *Vita*, a man “of no little fame among the Saracens” found Ramon’s words and intentions offensive and beseeched the king to order Ramon’s beheading. As a council was convening to discuss the matter, one of the Muslim councilors, “a man of prudence and knowledge,” called for tolerance through reciprocity, arguing that Ramon was attempting to spread his Christian faith with a disposition of goodness and prudence. His Muslim defender believed that Ramon was behaving “the same way a man who dared to enter Christian lands for the sake of imprinting the Saracen religion on their hearts would be considered a good Saracen.”⁵⁹ From this autobiographical account, it appears local instances of reciprocity and tolerance of sensible and respectful dialogue between Muslims and Christians were not unheard of in the thirteenth century. Of course, such tolerance was limited and locally contingent, as Llull was subsequently beaten and jailed when instigating similar challenges on a later journey.

Throughout his life, Llull’s primary motivation was never coexistence or human liberty but salvation. The truth of the Christian faith could be rationally proven through open argumentation. Thus, he strove to incite non-believers to the service of Christ through philosophical arguments and superior wisdom. Persuasion, not coercion, was of

⁵⁸“Contemporary Life,” in Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader*, 28-29.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 30.

central importance “at all intellectual and social levels of society.”⁶⁰ Works written for a Muslim audience were written in Arabic; for Christian laity, he wrote in his local vernacular (Catalan); for clergymen he often preferred the Church’s Latin.⁶¹ The multilingual nature of his work testifies to his exquisite awareness of the particular community he was engaging.⁶²

A product of this cosmopolitan environment of interreligious coexistence, Raymond Llull provided a salient contribution to the medieval genre of interreligious dialogue that remains instructive for interfaith engagements today. Llull’s most prominent work was the *Liber de gentili et tribus sapientibus* (The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men), which was translated during the Middle Ages into Spanish, French, and Latin.⁶³ The *Gentile* offers an intriguing argument for tolerance from the perspective of Llull’s own cross-cultural, interreligious experiences of *convivencia* or coexistence. “As a result of his circumstances,” Nederman points out, “Llull enjoyed greater familiarity with the actual teachings espoused by members of non-Christian sects.” As a result, the *Gentile* “more nearly reflects the complexities, socially and culturally as well as doctrinally, of multireligious experience.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 46. Bonner suggests that “for the sake of persuasion,” Llull was not beyond adjusting his sociopolitical viewpoint: “Llull sought to persuade in order to save souls; consistency of personal social convictions was for him less important.” Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., 46-47.

⁶²Ibid., 46.

⁶³Ibid, 81-82. All except for the surviving Spanish translation appear to have been translated during Llull’s lifetime. Ibid.

⁶⁴Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 30.

The Gentile. The *Gentile* is divided into four books and consists of a gentile and three wise men. All three wise men defend the monotheistic commonalities of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in book one. The identities of the wise men speaking are regarded incidental and thus not mentioned in book one (or in the Epilogue). The three wise men—a Jew, a Christian, and a Saracen—attempt to demonstrate the superiority of their faith to a learned Gentile (who is searching for life’s meaning and purpose) in books two, three, and four respectively. That heated disagreement is often a consequence of debate is demonstrated in the *Gentile*, but mutual respect is also clearly observable throughout. The intentions behind Lull’s interreligious dialogue appear twofold: to demonstrate the amiable and virtuous nature of non-coercive persuasion⁶⁵; and to demonstrate through a dialogical framework of mutual tolerance how Christians, Muslims, and Jews might peacefully coexist.

Within a thirteenth-century environment of *convivencia*, more than just a polemical work, Lull’s *Gentile* gives close attention to the human dignity and equality of all four participants in the debate: “We have the Gentile’s tears of sadness at the beginning and of joy at the end; the Jew’s sorrow at the successive captivities of his race; and the Saracen’s assertion of the temporal efficacy of his religion (resulting in the Muslim possession of the Holy Land).”⁶⁶ Moreover, the civility and genteelness demonstrated by each disputant is another prominent feature of the *Gentile*. As Nederman notes, despite their membership to “competing faiths, the wise men conduct

⁶⁵Bonner, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 80.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 78.

themselves in a dignified and convivial manner.”⁶⁷ The degree of coexistence between the wise men was significant, as benevolent engagement is portrayed by Llull as a regular occurrence and a source of enjoyment. The prologue of Llull’s *Gentile* makes this interreligious friendship clear:

Three men met upon leaving a city. One was a Jew, the other a Christian, and the third a Saracen. When they were outside the city and saw each other, they approached and greeted each other in friendly fashion, and they accompanied one another, each inquiring about the other’s health and what he intended to do. And all three decided to enjoy themselves together, so as to gladden their spirits overtaxed by studying.⁶⁸

The cordiality and friendship of the wise men is again given special attention in Llull’s Epilogue. At the close of the *Gentile*, even though the Gentile defers announcing his preferred religion, the three wise men departed in a most benevolent manner, blessing and tearfully embracing one another.⁶⁹ When the Gentile, “in astonishment,” queries why the wise men did not wait to hear which religion he had chosen, the wise men collectively replied that “in order for each to be free to choose his own religion, they preferred not knowing which religion he would choose.” Here, Llull makes religion, for all three monotheistic faiths, a matter of free will—an unfettered choice for the non-believer. Persuasive dialogue is offered by all three wise men, but ultimately deference

⁶⁷Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 30.

⁶⁸Ramon Llull, *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, trans. Anthony Bonner in *The Selected Works of Ramon Llull (1232-1316)*, 1:113.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 1: 300. In the Epilogue, the Gentile emerges from the dialogue illuminated by the path of salvation and begins to worship God in prayer. As he emotionally recounts the charitable, prudent, patient, and self-restrained nature of God, the three wise men were reminded of their own sinful state and convicted to reclaim a devotion to the divine virtues of God commensurate with that of the Gentile. *Ibid.*, 1:299-300.

was respectfully given to individual reason and volition.⁷⁰ The *Gentile* concludes with the wise men “most amiably and politely,” departing. Forgiveness was asked by each “for any disrespectful word he might have spoken against his religion,” and it was agreed by all that tolerant dialogue would continue as a mutually endorsed alternative to “war, ill will, and injury.”⁷¹ Llull’s *Gentile* seeks religious concord, but recognizes that in a world of deeply embedded religious difference and consequential intolerance, the efficacy of benevolent dialogue remains the only sustainable means of persuasion and, for the foreseeable future, peaceful coexistence.

The *Gentile* offers the viewpoints of the Jew, Christian, and Saracen in an anachronistically balanced fashion that reveals important similarities and complex differences between them. As Nederman notes, the *Gentile* demonstrates how the “discovery of truth is a process shrouded in difficulty and uncertainty.”⁷² In a world of lasting difference, Llull’s *Gentile* shows how strategies of tolerant dialogue and humane engagement are efficacious qualities of the wise, regardless of religion or culture. Instead of the incessant persecution and intolerance that has characterized much of their communities’ historical interaction, benevolent engagement emerges as an alternative method for “enlightening clouded minds and awakening the great who sleep, and for entering into union with and getting to know strangers and friends.”⁷³ Llull’s sapient

⁷⁰As mentioned earlier, regarding the unbeliever, the voluntary nature of faith played a prominent role in medieval doctrine. Llull is not dealing with an apostate Jew, Christian, or Muslim but an unbelieving, searching Gentile. It is unlikely that an apostate would have found similar sympathy from these religious wise men.

⁷¹Llull, 1:303.

⁷²Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 36.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 1:304.

dialogue offers a timeless lesson on how one's pursuit of religious truth, instead of causing division and intolerance, can, through an interreligious ethic of tolerance, actually help ameliorate hostility and foster coexistence.

A Sixteenth-Century Expression of Interreligious, Cross-cultural Tolerance

Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner have edited a volume of essays written by fifteen leading scholars, which collectively impeaches the orthodox perception that tolerance systematically emerged as a sixteenth-century phenomenon that reached maturation in modernity.⁷⁴ Instead, their collaborative work argues that instances of tolerance and intolerance (specifically religious) during the European Reformation occurred sporadically throughout every region of Europe and were inevitabilities of localization—a product of the inconstant social and political considerations of local communities. Grell highlights the pragmatic (often expedient) nature of sixteenth-century tolerance:

Securing peace and co-existence in the local community had been of paramount importance to most city magistracies long before the Reformation. . . . However, the need to establish religious concord added a new and difficult dimension in the Reformation period to this traditional area of magisterial concern; and it is noteworthy

⁷⁴Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*. Grell writes that, according to traditional scholarship (he references W.K. Jordan's four volume work, *The Development of Religious Toleration in England* and Joseph Lecler's two volume study, *Toleration and the Reformation*), the Age of Reason was initiated with the tolerance of humanists like Erasmus and Thomas More, followed by the "bigotry and intolerance of the first decades of the Reformation" (he references Calvin, Knox, and Beza), culminating in the religious wars and "a gradual tiredness of constant religious confrontation." This led to a waning religious zeal at the close of the sixteenth century, which paved the way for "a common-sense tolerance of religious differences." Ibid., 1. The Post-Reformation argument then asserts that, in response to the horrors and chaos associated with the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religious wars, a broadened Enlightenment understanding of tolerance emerged (motivated by pragmatism and progress).

that where and when some form of religious toleration was granted, it was never offered as a policy of choice but as pragmatic.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, while local context and political-practical necessity have always been central motivations for temporal policies of tolerance, one should not discount its recurring use as a viable method for achieving important virtues such as liberty, patience, humility, and charity. It is impossible within the confines of this project to systematically recount each episode of tolerance in the sixteenth century. Whether as a temporal expediency of a local magistrate, a necessity of survival for a dissident sect, a temporary strategy until eventual *Concordia*, or as the only peaceful solution to interminable human difference, tolerance was an inconstant occurrence in Western civilization's sixteenth century. For the general purpose of this chapter—to demonstrate the historical variations and complexities of tolerance in Western civilization—two disparate conceptualizations of sixteenth-century tolerance will suffice, that of Bartolomé de Las Casas and Jean Bodin.

Las Casas on Intercivilizational Tolerance

When studying Spain's sixteenth-century conquests of the New World and the conquistadors' brutal oppression or complete elimination of indigenous communities, one can easily become incredulous to the existence of tolerance within the expanding Spanish-Hapsburg Empire. A contextual Christianized theory of empire was devised to justify intolerance and conquest through such Old Testament stories as Joshua's destruction of Jericho and its idolatrous inhabitants and New Testament injunctions

⁷⁵Ole Peter Grell, "Introduction," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, 10.

calling for “one fold, and one shepherd.”⁷⁶ The infamous *Requerimiento* exemplifies how conquest and forcible coercion, not coexistence, was a temporal priority of the Spanish crown since the fifteenth century. The *Requerimiento* of 1510 was one religiopolitical mechanism for exculpating the conquerors and placing the fault of conquest on noncompliant native peoples. It was a statement read in Spanish or Latin (an exonerating prologue to forcible conquest and conversion)—unintelligible to non-Westerners—that required native populations to acknowledge the authority of the Catholic Church, the pope, and the crown and to allow the preaching of Christianity. Failure to comply justified the conquerors’ forthcoming cruelty:

Wherefore...we...require...that you acknowledge the Church as the ruler and superior of the whole world.... But if you do not do this, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of Their Highnesses. We shall take you, and your wives, and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command. And we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can, as to vassals who do not obey and refuse to receive their Lord and resist and contradict Him. And we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their Highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us.⁷⁷

The *Requerimiento* shows clearly the Church’s culpability in sanctioning coercive force and physical oppression of non-Western, non-Christian communities. The Empire, under the cloak of the Church, justified conquest of the New World’s indigenous peoples as a divinely ordained means of spreading Christianity. The *Requerimiento* remains one of

⁷⁶Joshua 5 and 6; and John 10:16 *NIV* (New International Version).

⁷⁷The *Requerimiento* was written by Spanish jurist and professor Juan López de Palacios Rubios of the Council of Castille and approbated by King Ferdinand as a legal instrument for achieving the imperial mission of the Church.

the most pernicious instances of intolerance in Western history, as temporal authorities exploited religious sources to justify temporal injustices and violent conquest.

As mentioned above, tolerance is often a reaction to intolerance, and it is from this notorious experience of intolerance that one finds one of the most profound and exacting arguments for tolerance and coexistence in the West. Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474-1566), convicted by his own exploitation of the *encomienda* (forced Indian labor) and his direct witness of the human potential for brutality, experienced a “reconversion” in 1514 and devoted the last fifty years of his life defending—philosophically, theologically, and legally—the indigenous communities against the baleful policies of Western colonialism. Las Casas was a Spaniard who, through direct observation and a full command of Scholastic philosophy and reason, held his country accountable to its professed Christian convictions.

Convinced of the reprehensible treatment of the native peoples by Spanish conquerors and landowners, as a Dominican priest, and later Bishop of Chiapas, Las Casas provided the Dominican reformers a principled and uncompromising advocacy of a peaceful and tolerant Christianity that called for a complete cessation of the Spanish colonialism that dehumanized the non-Christian communities of the New World.⁷⁸ For Las Casas, the way in which Spain and the Catholic Church had yoked political and religious power for the sake of conquest and conversion was antithetical to Christianity and a misrepresentation of the genuinely religious. The only reason Pope Alexander VI had granted the New World to Spain and Portugal, argued Las Casas, was to convert the

⁷⁸Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950), 36-37.

unbeliever through love, charity, and persuasive dialogue.⁷⁹ Thus the *Requerimiento*, *encomienda*, or any other exploitation of native peoples and property for purposes of secular profit was a mortal sin. Las Casas suggested that the only just solution was to withdraw the Spanish conquerors from among the native people and allow only missionaries to remain; and these missionaries were to teach the gospel through a Christian filter of non-coercion and goodwill.⁸⁰ Las Casas quoted the distinguished twelfth-century author of the *Decretum*, Gratian: “Anyone forced to shift home or belief, shifts neither home nor belief, but is shifted.”⁸¹ “The way of humility, peace, rejection of worldliness, fits with nature,” Las Casas wrote; “it draws people to moral life quicker and better—the way Christ intended—than force of arms.”⁸² Consent through gentle persuasion, not coercion, was consistent not only with the Christian faith but with the traditions of philosophical reasoning as well. The best philosopher, he contended, “sets

⁷⁹Ibid., 37.

⁸⁰Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950), 36-37.

⁸¹Quoted in Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Only Way*, trans. Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J., ed. Helen Rand Parish (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992), 96.

⁸²Ibid. The famous debate in Valladolid (1550-51) between Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and Las Casas offers another scintillating resource for demonstrating how one of the most significant writers on tolerance in the sixteenth century challenged the spiritual-temporal dichotomies of Western civilization. For an insightful and concise article on the role of tolerance in this famous debate, see Gerardo López Sastre, “National Prejudice and Religion in the Toleration Debate between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda,” in *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999). In addition, for a thoughtful study on Las Casas’ use of *dominium*, as it had been systematized in the theology of Aquinas, see Paul J. Cornish, “Spanish Thomism and the American Indians: Vitoria and Las Casas on the Toleration of Cultural Difference,” in *Difference and Dissent*. See also Lewis Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1959).

out his theme . . . with a soft voice, an eager look, graciously, with quiet argument and suitable language, with lively and lovely benevolence.”⁸³

Christ understood the human condition, Las Casas wrote, and Christ ordered that people must embrace “His gentle rule of their own free will.” Each community, each person must have the liberty to accept or not to accept Christianity. Las Casas suggested Jesus’ table, where publicans and sinners, as well as disciples, were all welcome, as an example of Christian tolerance. Because none were afraid to approach Jesus, they could choose, unfettered, to embrace Christ without reticence and in perpetuity. If, like the Spanish conquerors, Christ had first ravaged the unbelievers through war and its consequences, if Christ had scourged and lashed them “to the point of hatred,” they would not have willingly followed him but, instead, “avoided Him with a passion.”⁸⁴ This means that tolerance of religiocultural differences, even those differences which one finds to be offensive or untrue, is countenanced out of the necessity of a willing faith.

Recognizing that free will is essential to conversion requires a tolerance that endures “inferior” beliefs, while showing love and caritas to the individuals or communities that hold them. Again citing Gratian, Las Casas implored a gospel of peaceful persuasion and human freedom:

No choice of a thing, no say in it, no love of it. No love of a thing, easy scorn of it. Not good not chosen. The Lord commanded: Take no staff for the road, you could do someone violence with it. It is wiser to enkindle contempt for the world and love God and heaven with prayerful, persuasive preaching than by unleashing violence on people, etc.⁸⁵

⁸³Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 122-23.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 96-97.

⁸⁵Quoted in *ibid.*, 152.

Violence, Las Casas warned, “creates nothing able to last.”⁸⁶ Tolerance, motivated by love of God and human freedom, becomes an essential means for expressing goodwill toward the Other for the sake of salvation. “Let my brothers become weak with the weak,” urges Las Casas, “let them bear [tolerate] everything, with warnings, with beseechings, with tears openly, as Paul did, in order to save others.”⁸⁷ In the words of one historian, “To Las Casas, toleration was a precondition to conversion.”⁸⁸ From this vantage point, for the Christian on mission “there must be no evil inflicted in any way, no force, no punishment on pagans who have never had the faith, if they do not want to listen to it or to welcome its preachers.”⁸⁹

It is important to remain mindful of the fact that liberty is not commensurate with tolerance.⁹⁰ Rather, tolerance, in this instance, is simply an effective strategy for achieving the important, faith-based goal of liberty. Thus, the contemporary argument that liberty has succeeded tolerance must be false. For with Las Casas, it is not a case of either tolerance or liberty. On the contrary, tolerance is a significant means by which to uphold human liberty: “We can claim no reward from what we have done unwillingly,” he writes.⁹¹ What is more, the work of Las Casas appears to contradict those who argue

⁸⁶Ibid., 123.

⁸⁷Ibid., 156.

⁸⁸Kevin Terraciano, “The Spanish Struggle for Justification in the Conquest of America,” in *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe*, 106.

⁸⁹Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 80.

⁹⁰Henry Kamen is one of several scholars to make this suggestion. See Henry Kamen, *The Rise of Toleration* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 8.

⁹¹Ibid., 96.

that tolerance is simply “a last-ditch, expedient tool available to the powerful when forced to put up with the weak.” Las Casas’ argument for tolerance wholly contradicts such a thesis. He, in fact, called for imperialist Spain (the powerful entity), who had no geopolitical urgency to tolerate the native peoples of the New World, to embrace tolerance as an imprimatur of the Church and principle of a Christian empire, where authentic conversion of the pagan (the weak entity, in this case) precludes war, violent political subjection, or any other form of temporal coercion. “All those who wage wars of conversion,” warned Las Casas, “have no love for God; they have a hatred of God, they live without charity.”⁹² Instead, converting the heathen can only occur through love and humility.

It is widely believed that Las Casas’s work had a powerful effect on the position and future posturing of important church councils—the Third Mexican Council of 1585 and the pivotal Council of Trent, for example.⁹³ Las Casas offered a profound conceptualization of tolerance, built upon human dignity, equality, and virtuousness, that greatly influenced the intellectual arguments of his contemporaries and those yet to come. Pragmatically, however, while Las Casas’s pertinacious character, intellectual acumen, and immovable religious principles were in large part responsible for the New Laws of 1542, which led to the gradual extinction of the oppressive *encomienda*, his call for tolerance was never fully appropriated by the Crown, and thus no palpable manifestations of principled tolerance or coexistence were sustained.

⁹²Ibid., 136.

⁹³Terraciano, 120.

Jean Bodin: An Evolution of the Interreligious Dialogue

French jurist, philosopher, and humanist Jean Bodin (1529-96) redacted his notable treatise on tolerance amidst the incessant violence of the religious civil wars in France. Bodin would agree with his medieval counterpart Llull that religious tolerance was an essential requisite to humanity's pursuit of truth and a consequence of unalterable human difference. Bodin, like Lactantius, Llull, and Las Casas before him, was a product of his sociopolitical environment. The religious unity of Christendom was no longer a realizable vision. Beyond Islam and Judaism, the Catholic Church now faced another formidable competitor—Protestantism. What is more, the devolution of Protestantism in the sixteenth century into mainline denominations (Lutheran, Calvinist, and Armenian) and radical sects (Anabaptist, Socinian, Spiritualist, etc.) only added to the complexity of religious conflict in the West.

It was within a reality of political and religious rivalry and intolerance that Jean Bodin espoused his arguments for tolerance. For the latter half of the sixteenth century (until the Edict of Nantes in 1598), civil war enveloped France. For the Huguenots (a significant Calvinist minority in France), submission to the “papist idolatry” of the Catholic majority was an unthinkable Rubicon, politically and religiously. For the unorthodox Catholic, Bodin, religious coercion of individual consciences by Catholics or Calvinists was an act of opprobrium, antithetical to the true Christian faith.⁹⁴ In a 1590 letter, Bodin made a clear declaration against the blasphemous nature of the political violence in France: “Victory depends on God, who . . . will punish those who, on either

⁹⁴A suggestion made by Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz in her introduction to Jean Bodin's, *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, trans. Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), xx-xxi.

side, are covering their ambitions and their thefts under the veil of Religion.”⁹⁵

Disenchanted by the intolerance of both Catholic and Protestant governments in Europe, Bodin’s experiences in France and travels to the Netherlands and England, “seemed to crystallize his thoughts regarding toleration and freedom of conscience.”⁹⁶ As his thoughts on tolerance matured, Bodin eventually realized that religious persecution was not solely a Catholic or Protestant problem, nor simply a French, Spanish, or English dilemma; rather, it was a ubiquitous phenomenon of Western civilization, largely dependent on local, economic, political, and religious contexts.

The Colloquium. Bodin’s 1558 *Colloquium Heptaplomeres de Rerum Sublimium Arcanis Abditis* (*Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*) was a Reformation era contribution to the Western genre of the interreligious dialogue. Unlike his medieval predecessors, however, Bodin’s dialogue was necessarily expanded to include seven learned participants, speaking to the practical predicament of greater religious plurality and the commensurate complexities associated with religious difference. What is more, unlike the searching gentile in Llull’s dialogue, Bodin has no neutral, unbiased observer. Instead, all participants of Bodin’s *Colloquium* are men of conviction, portrayed as equal members of the human family.

The *Colloquium* is a discourse among seven learned men with distinct religious beliefs: Coroneus (Catholic), Salomon (Jewish); Toralba (philosophic naturalist); Curtius (Calvinist); Fridericus (Lutheran); Senamus (Skeptic); and Octavius (Muslim). Despite the deep religious differences between the various discussants, they all share a

⁹⁵Quoted in Kuntz, xxvi.

⁹⁶Ibid., xxiv.

common conceptualization of harmony: “unity based on multiplicity (*Concordia discors*).”⁹⁷ For Bodin, a harmonious and sustainable civil society was a corollary to political and religious diversity (atheism remained untenable for Bodin). Conflict between religious beliefs was, at the same time, a conflict between communities, states, and civilizations.⁹⁸ Thus, achieving harmony from civil diversity required harmony from religious diversity as well.

Tolerance, then, becomes an effective strategy for achieving societal harmony. To use Kuntz’s description, tolerance is a “by-product” of harmony: “Men who live in harmony, as Bodin conceived it, must of necessity be tolerant of each other.”⁹⁹ The Calvinist, Curtius, who moves beyond a discursive argument to recite a didactic poem on the divine nature of diversity and contrariety, espouses Bodin’s concept of a melodic harmony through multiplicity and contradictions:¹⁰⁰

Creator of the world three times greatest of all, . . . Who, moderating melody with different sounds and voices yet most satisfying to sensitive ears . . . Who directs the fixed courses of the heavenly stars from east to west, West to east with contrary revolutions, Who joins hatred with agreement, A friend to hateful enemies. This greatest harmony of the universe through discordant contains our safety.¹⁰¹

Toralba agrees with this harmony via contrast, stating how distinguished men of “justice, integrity, or virtue” are only discovered through their reaction to men of opposing values;

⁹⁷Ibid., lxiii.

⁹⁸Ingrid Creppell, *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 40-41.

⁹⁹Kuntz, lxv.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., lxvi.

¹⁰¹Jean Bodin, *Colloquium*, trans. Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) 147.

the luster of wisdom and goodness arise only in their distinction to opposing arguments of madness and evil.¹⁰² Curtius contends that a state divided between two factions is most destructive, but a society with many factions is in “no danger of civil war, since the groups, each acting as a check on the other, protect the stability and harmony of the state.” Octavius then suggests the Turkish and Persian kingdoms as the epitome of such civil harmony. The kings of the Turks and Persians, he proclaims, “admit every kind of religion in the state,” thereby achieving concordant support for a unified state through a remarkable harmony among “citizens and foreigners who differ in religions.”¹⁰³

Bodin offers human freedom as another inducement for tolerance. Upholding liberty as the virtuous motivation for tolerance, Curtius recalls the pleas of antiquity. Quoting fourth-century apologist St. Hillary of Poitiers, Curtius exclaims: “God does not need necessary compliance. He does not require forced confession; He does not receive it unless the confession is made willingly.” Salomon agreed, stating that no “more serious insult against God can be conceived than to force anyone to obey Him.”¹⁰⁴ After Salomon and Octavius both recount episodic encounters of persecution toward Jews and Muslims respectively in the West, the Lutheran, Fridericus, opines how the suggestion of

¹⁰²Ibid., 148.

¹⁰³Ibid., 151. Bodin selects the Muslim participant, Octavius, to introduce the moral dilemma of the erring conscience. Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, 2:182. Octavius quotes Thomas Aquinas’ well-known statement: “When errant reason has established something as a precept of God, then it is the same thing to scorn the dictate of reason and the commands of God.” Bodin, 157-58. The purity of spirit and inviolable conscience that Aquinas and Scholasticism had applied to moral issues, Octavius, to the chagrin of the *Colloquium*’s more conservative participants, now “extends to religion at large.” Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, 2:182.

¹⁰⁴Bodin, 468.

Theodoric, the ancient emperor of the Goths and Romans, should “be inscribed in golden letters on the door posts of princes.” When advised by the Roman Senate that he should forcefully compel Arians to convert to Catholicism, Theodoric replied that an emperor was prohibited from commanding religion, because belief must come not by force but from the liberty of one’s own volition.¹⁰⁵

In the *Colloquium*, religious piety and truth were essential. In response to the skeptic, Senamus, who, to avoid offense, preferred embracing the religions of each member of the dialogue to make certain the true religion was not excluded, the Jewish Salomon paraphrases a New Testament passage in Revelation, wishing that Senamus “were hot or cold rather than lukewarm in religion.”¹⁰⁶ “How is it possible,” Salomon inquires, for one to approve of all religions, whereby he ends up confessing and denying, at the same time, that Christ is God.¹⁰⁷ Except for Senamus, each of Bodin’s interlocutors maintained an unyielding fidelity to their unique perception of religious truth and ritual; and, for the sake of harmony, a free humanity, and the search for truth, all seven discussants tolerated the religious idiosyncrasies of the others.

Despite maintaining their distinct religious identities, mutual friendship and respect was never forfeited but remained an immutable reality throughout the discourse. Bodin closes the *Colloquium* with all seven participants embracing each other in mutual

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 469-71.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 465. In Revelation 3:15-16 *NRSV* (New Revised Standard Version), God declared to the church in Laodicea, “I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

love, nourishing “their piety in remarkable harmony and their integrity of life in common pursuits and intimacy.” “Piety, uprightness, and mutual love” were approved by the seven participants, and the unity of a diverse human family was entreated by all.¹⁰⁸

Over a century earlier, in what was arguably the most prominent work on tolerance in the Renaissance era, Nicholas of Cusa’s *De pace fidei* (1453) offered a conclusion intimating that concordance, although unlikely, was still a possibility. At the close of the sixteenth century, however, this notion had waned significantly.¹⁰⁹ Written in a context of religious civil war, the *Colloquium* expresses Bodin’s repulsion of interdenominational violence and longing to reach a peaceful solution appropriate to his era.¹¹⁰ In an ending much different than that of Llull’s *Gentile*, Bodin’s participants simply agree to disagree—perpetually. “Afterwards,” he writes, “they held no other conversation about religions, although each one defended his own religion with the supreme sanctity of his life.”¹¹¹ Nondiscussion, to use professor Ingrid Creppell’s term, was Bodin’s solution to lasting coexisting between religious communities. Creppell argues that, for Bodin, “conflicts over religious beliefs inevitably ratchet up into conflicts of identity.” (This was the case in Bodin’s sixteenth-century France, where religious disputes led to civil violence and political instability.) But within an alternate

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 471.

¹⁰⁹Lecler, 184.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Bodin, 471.

environment of religious nondiscussion, other linkages such as a common humanity and state membership can, instead, be emphasized.¹¹²

Bodin's pivotal concern was the stability of civil society via religious liberty. Tolerance, then, of religious difference served as an efficacious method for achieving liberty and state tranquility. It was not eventual *Concordia* that enabled Bodin's seven participants to coexist; rather, it was a tolerance, based upon mutual respect and harmony, of interminable religiocultural difference.¹¹³

Synthesizing the Discussion

What has been the conceptual basis of tolerance in the West? Some found it necessary to legitimize the practice of tolerance theologically or philosophically. Others simply evinced tolerance from an unselfconscious, pragmatic perspective. Tolerance of the Other was an inconstant actuality of Western civilization that found both political and religious justification. Social historians are correct that political and pragmatic concerns certainly played a role in the writings and experiences of both tolerance and intolerance. Western civilization's diverging frameworks of tolerance emphasize the *a posteriori* influence of local context. While not a virtue itself, tolerance recurs throughout Western history as a pragmatic pathway to a peaceable society. Lactantius's observations, from pagans persecuting Christians to imperial edicts of religious tolerance, certainly motivated his work. Llull's thought was undoubtedly conditioned by his Mediterranean environment of religious plurality and his lifelong proximity to the Other. Las Casas's personal involvement with the unjust *encomienda* system and direct observation of the

¹¹²Creppell, 62-63.

¹¹³Ibid., 62.

religious hypocrisy and brutality of the Spanish conquerors surely helped sustain his fifty-year pursuit of justice and tolerance. Bodin's restive, warring France and its intolerant neighbors routed his evolving thought on the important place of tolerance. For each, context mattered, but so did conviction.

Beyond pragmatism and context, this chapter has endeavored to show how tolerance was also defended in Antiquity, the Middle Ages and through the Age of Reason as a principled strategy for achieving important virtues.¹¹⁴ Liberty, patience, humility, and goodwill were important, recurring leitmotifs of tolerance through Western history. Contrary to the contemporary perception, the liberty of conscience espoused by early modern theologians and philosophers such as Roger Williams, Pierre Bayle, and John Locke was not a novel conception; rather, it was an argument thirteen centuries old that had been widely disregarded.¹¹⁵ Hilary of Poitiers and Lactantius portrayed coercion as antithetical to religion and declared human liberty as central to one's ultimate concern. Likewise, for Llull, the Gentile was left to make his own decision regarding the true faith. After an open dialogue on truth by the three religious adherents, they departed in a spirit of benevolence, agreeing on the impermeable sanctity of the Gentile's volition. The *Requerimiento* (*inter alia*) emphasized for Las Casas the ignominy of Spanish colonialism in the Americas and its harmful effects on authentic efforts of Christian mission among the indigenous peoples. Because they must come to truth voluntarily, motivated by goodwill and gentle persuasion, tolerance was the *sin qua non* to permanent

¹¹⁴Moreover, tolerance was often seen as co-dependent with a number of virtues, including charity, respect, humility, patience, and goodwill. This suggestion is made by Budziszewski, 7.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, 225.

spiritual regeneration of indigenous peoples. Finally, Bodin, confronted with a restless era of ineradicable religious diversity and conflict, experienced an evolution in his own thought, ultimately concluding that the attainment of a peaceful and stable society necessitated an unfettered liberty of conscience and a respect of lasting religious difference. Throughout Western history, liberty was a recurring reason for tolerance. Indeed, there were many overlapping principles, as patience, humility, mutual respect, and friendship were coherent parts of the Western heritage of tolerance as well.

In every century of Western civilization, one finds writers who were profoundly affected by experiences of social, political, and religious division and in search for peaceful coexistence and a virtuous humanity. Yet, it should not be inferred from this chapter that tolerance was an even, consistent, and ever-present movement or idea throughout Western history. It was not. Rather, it was predominantly a minority view or practice, often overcome by official and systematic policies of intolerance. The problem of intolerance has been one of the greatest and persistent predicaments in Western history and is no less problematic today. Religion and culture remain ambient causes of violence, persecution, and division.

Western political scientists and theologians today belong to a multicultural, multi-faith civilization that can undoubtedly benefit from the instruments and ideas of tolerance employed by their ancient, medieval, and sixteenth-century predecessors. In a contemporary context of unprecedented plurality and enduring religiocultural division and intolerance, academicians and policymakers would do well to extract some positive lessons from the tolerance and coexistence conceived and experienced in the past. To borrow Cary Nederman's fitting conclusion, "there is simply no future for any theoretical

attempt to understand political life, whether in the west or globally, that does not appreciate and take seriously the past.”¹¹⁶

When it comes to conceptualizations and policies of tolerance, Western civilization has not reached the “end of history.” In truth, contemporary conceptions of tolerance appear to have misplaced the lessons of the past. But this historical infidelity is a subject for the succeeding chapter.

¹¹⁶Nederman, *Worlds of Difference*, 121.

CHAPTER FOUR

Modern Tolerance: A Practical and Theoretical Critique

Contextual Significance: Considering France

Migration has been a potent corollary to globalization. The mass immigration of Muslims to Europe is most significant, with millions of second- and third-generation immigrants now residing in Europe. Muslims from the Maghreb, West Africa, Turkey, the Indian subcontinent, and the Arabian Peninsula continue to immigrate to the European Continent in overwhelming numbers. Over 14 million Muslims currently reside within the European Union—over 50 million when considering the entire continent. According to recent numbers released by the Central Institute’s Islam Archives in Soest, Germany, France has the greatest number of Muslims—primarily from North Africa—at well over five million, and Germany is next with 3.2 million, mostly of Turkish origin. While still a clear minority in European society, the number of Muslims in Europe is expanding rapidly, increasing by 800,000 over the past two years. What is more, the Central Institute has labeled Islam as a “young religion,” with, for instance, 850,000 Muslim minors living in Germany alone.¹ As well, although Islam is still a minority religion in Western Europe, it comprises a much higher percentage of the “active” worshipers in Western civilization. French political scientist Oliver Roy is

¹See the Central Institute’s Archives (2005). These statistics were drawn from a concise article by Wolfgang Polzer, “More than 53 Million Muslims in Europe,” *WorldNetDaily*, 22 October 2005, available at www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article (accessed 23 December 2005). See also the Migration Policy Institute at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Resources.cfm>.

correct: “In Europe the issue of immigration is . . . largely linked with the issue of Islam.”² According to Roy, “the frontier between Islam and the West is no longer geographical,” and, in fact, is becoming “less and less civilizational.”³

Since the seventeenth century, the nation-state has been ascribed a sacred significance, where national integrity and solidarity, in many Western societies, requires the political regime to limit tolerance to only those individuals and communities whose beliefs and practices neither contradict nor potentially undermine the spectrum of values that undergird the sacrosanct society of citizens. France, in particular, has long been considered the bastion of secular republicanism and human liberty, a symbol of contemporary tolerance.⁴ While a French majority still claims a Catholic heritage, a nominal sum regularly participates in traditional public worship and ritual. After Catholicism, Islam is the second largest and fastest growing religion in France, and societal attempts to assimilate the religiously active Muslim populace into the secular republic have proved largely ineffective. The *hijab* controversy is a case in point. The *hijab* or Muslim headscarf debate that currently rages in France offers a laboratory from which to observe and analyze the complex parameters secularism has placed upon religious liberty and the concept of tolerance.

Debate has intensified across Western Europe in the last several years over the visible display of religious symbols, most potently represented in the disputed rights of

²Oliver Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 16.

³*Ibid.*, 19.

⁴Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 37-40.

Muslim girls in France to wear the *hijab* in public schools. At the conclusion of 2003, a presidential panel in France recommended that the state impose a ban on the outward display of Islamic headscarves, conspicuous crucifixes, and Jewish skullcaps in public schools. While the recommendation was made toward all three major religions, the official suggestion is widely viewed as a direct response to the social tensions that have festered from the perceived rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Europe.⁵ Some in France view the ban as a political response to the growing problem with Islamists and the political symbolism the *hijab* is thought to promote. Although many Christian and Jewish religious leaders recently advocated against any law that would prohibit headscarves, in order to encourage a greater integration of France's five million Muslims into mainstream society, over 70 percent of the French electorate has indicated that they endorse the prohibition on religious garb in public schools.⁶

Protection of the secular nature of the state remains unabated in France, as it struggles to reconcile the right of religious and cultural freedom within the principles of secularism. Describing France as a "lay country," an MP from Jacques Chirac's UMP party, Jerome Riviere, stated that "in order to be able to worship wherever you want, you need to accept that others are worshipping somebody else." As such, he continued, "in schools...and public offices, we should completely ban any visible religious sign and specifically the Islamist's veil."⁷ Many Muslims, however, lament the recent legislation

⁵*Associated Press Report*, "French Panel Backs School Ban on Head Scarves," available at <http://foxnews.com/story> (accessed January 2006).

⁶See *ibid.*; and "President's risky move," *BBC News*, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk> (accessed January 2006).

⁷*BBC*, "President's risky move."

as an example of Western intolerance toward their religious beliefs and customs, only exacerbating social tensions. One seventeen-year old student in Paris lamented that her country misunderstood the significance of the *hijab* in her faith: “We choose to wear the veil. But they want to ban us from wearing it and that infringes on our freedom. I think Muslims are going to be bigger losers from this new law than any other religion here.”⁸

While it is merely one of many transcultural struggles in Western civilization, the contentious cross-cultural debate in France is perhaps the most prominent example of the tenuous nature of coexistence in Western secular societies today, justifying a reanalysis and reconsideration of the conceptualization and purpose of contemporary tolerance in the West.⁹ When considering contemporary framings of tolerance in the West, what should and should not be within the fences of tolerability is, at best, unclear.

In light of the growing diversity of Western civilization and the challenges posed by cultural pluralism, this chapter will engage the idea of tolerance in modern Western society, addressing the peculiarities and discrepancies of its predominant conceptualization today and the formidable arguments put forth by its critics.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Another example occurred in Italy when an Italian Muslim activist recently went to court to have a local public school remove the crucifix on display in his son’s classroom, and the local magistrate agreed; vigorous debate and outrage occurred across the nation. Such national outrage led many Muslims to perceive that in a Western secular society, steeped in centuries of Christian tradition, some religions still have greater freedom than others. See “Italian Muslims Fear ‘Crucifix’ Fallout, *BBC News*, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 30 March 3006).

Distinctives and Deficiencies of Modern Tolerance

The rise to supremacy of the individual is a somewhat recent historical phenomenon, finding its clearest expressions over the past three centuries. A prominent milestone for the autonomous individual was the French Revolution. Political theorist Michael Walzer expounds the significance:

The revolutionaries aimed first to free the individual from the old corporate communities and to establish him (and, later, her) within a circle of rights—and then they aimed to teach these rights-bearing men (and women) their citizenly duties. Between the individual and the political regime, the republic of French citizens, there was (in the minds of the revolutionaries) only empty space, which facilitated easy movement from private to public life and so encouraged cultural assimilation and political participation.¹⁰

Gradually, the republic nation-state began to appreciate the limited necessity of secondary associations as organized forums for articulating individual curiosities, fostering democratic ideals and fidelity, and espousing collective grievances and desires. These “intermediate associations,” however, were accepted and even encouraged by liberal democracies only to the extent that their demarcation as lesser associations remained clear.¹¹ Any lesser association—religious, cultural, etc.—perceived as a latent threat to the sacrosanct collective of citizens remains a *bête noire* to most Western democracies today.

Undoubtedly, the private realm of liberal Western societies reveals a high level of tolerance toward difference, cultural or otherwise. However, the “public collective” remains, in most cases, wary and benignly, if not conspicuously, intolerant of those

¹⁰Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 84.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 84-85.

minority cultures that attempt to proclaim their heterodoxies in the public sphere.¹²

Walzer explains the modern ideal further:

In principle, there is no coercion of individuals, but pressure to assimilate to the dominant nation, at least with regard to public practices, has been fairly common and, until recent times, fairly successful. When nineteenth-century German Jews described themselves as “German in the street, Jewish at home,” they were aspiring to a nation-state norm that made privacy a condition of toleration.¹³

Whenever language, religion, ethnicity, or ideology functions as an instrument for civil unity, the majority’s public tolerance of a minority’s alternative identity approaches a more precarious level.¹⁴

According to the secular ideal, national and even civilizational unity is largely grounded on the individual. Singularity is emphasized, where religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences are often aggressively subordinated to the primacy of the individual. Portrayed as a cardinal principle of liberal multiculturalism today, tolerance is generally defined as an indifferent non-judgmentalism.¹⁵ Assimilation of individuals and communities through universal inclusiveness is countenanced. In addition, from the prevailing contemporary perspective, a tolerant society is one that espouses a

¹²Ibid., 26. For a thought-provoking look at the realities of banal discrimination toward minority cultures in the UK, see Eileen Barker, “Banal Discrimination : Equality of Respect for Beliefs and Worldviews in the UK,” in *International Perspectives on Freedom and Equality of Religious Belief*, ed. Derek Davis and Gerhard Besier (Waco, TX : J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies, Baylor University, 2002). Banal discrimination is generally defined as a “common unthinking discrimination” that encourages traditional, cultural, and social boundaries that ensure a “normalcy” or status quo in society. See *ibid.*, 31.

¹³Walzer, 26.

¹⁴Ibid., 26-28.

sociopolitical correctness. It is intolerant of offense: the public expression of grievances, dislikes, and differences with the “private” ideas and practices of others is highly discouraged, if not officially prohibited. This non-judgmental indifference is declared the only workable arrangement for a multicultural, interreligious society—if it is to avoid cross-cultural, ethnic, or sectarian conflict. Neutralism, on the part of the state and its citizens, is warranted as the only sociopolitical framework for maintaining a multicultural society.¹⁶ Autonomous cultures within a national culture are ultimately intolerable, as community identity now rests primarily with the citizen and the state.

The contemporary framing of postmodern tolerance was a convulsion of the concentrated multiculturalism arising within Western civilization, amplifying the growing abstraction of difference and reducing diversity to an eclectic plurality of autonomous individuals. The postmodern ideal, writes Walzer, “undercuts every sort of common identity and standard behavior,” pointing “to the very perfection of individual liberty.”¹⁷ Paradoxically, a universal strangeness and sameness are simultaneously

¹⁵For a discussion on liberal tolerance as “non-judgemental,” see Michael Sandel, “Judgemental Toleration,” in *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality: Contemporary Essays*, ed. Robert George (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 107-12.

¹⁶Liberal theorist Ronald Dworkin emphasizes the value of an ethically neutral body politic, demanding that the government be neutral “on what might be called the question of the good life.” Quoted in Budziszewski, 25; and in Gary Remer, “Bodin’s Pluralistic Theory of Toleration,” in *Difference and Dissent*, ed. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996), 119. See Ronald Dworkin, *A Matter of Principle* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 181-204. See also, Bruce Ackerman, *Social Justice in the Liberal State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980); and John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971). See also J Budziszewski’s challenge to ethical neutralism in his chapter “Arguments for Ethical Neutrality,” in *True Tolerance* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 61-101.

¹⁷Walzer, 88.

espoused. We are called to recognize the uniqueness of our essence within the rudimentary commonality of our species. We are all deemed unique, just like everyone else. Such a perspective views as impertinent the “politics of difference.”¹⁸ Because human sameness and strangeness are made universal, community or cultural identity is indeed sacrificed by the postmodern project, as the declaration of universal sameness and strangeness make true difference inconsequential.

Does the individualized tolerance of modern Western society lack continuity with the history of tolerance in the West? Does postmodernity’s “unrestrained pluralism,” whether for the sake of power or individualism, enfeeble shared values or common human identity?¹⁹ As Nederman and Laursen note, the permissiveness or apathy toward difference of contemporary tolerance is being challenged from various fronts,²⁰ and the communitarian opposition is of pertinent interest.

A Communitarian Critique

In a Western civilization of increasing cultural diversity, the individualist conceptualization of tolerance is deemed of the essence, as cultural differences (especially religious) must be subordinated, via tolerance, if the state is to maintain a

¹⁸Ibid., 89. See also Nederman and Laursen, “Difference and Dissent: Introduction,” in *Difference and Dissent: Theories of Toleration in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 4.

¹⁹Nederman and Laursen, 4. Cary J. Nederman and John Christian Laursen highlight the recent challenges to the tolerance claims of contemporary Western society from communitarian political theorists. Ibid., 3-4.

²⁰Ibid., 3.

stable society and retain the loyalty of its citizens.²¹ The individual and the state—a “bipolar society”—are central to the modern conception of tolerance; “the individual is the only unit of society worthy of making serious demands.”²² Tolerance, from the contemporary perspective of the western-derived nation-state, is primarily directed toward “individual participants,” not the *lesser* groups to which those individuals may be a part.²³

While the ostensible purpose of tolerance in modern Western society may be coexistence, it has been proposed that the underlying agenda behind its conceptualization is societal uniformity and the consolidation of power. The late Baylor University professor, A.J. Conyers, remarked how the modern doctrine of tolerating others has made a significant detour from its Western historical variances. State sovereignty is of primary importance, he argued, and the consolidation of power provides a foremost stimulus for modernity’s version of tolerance: “the central power makes peace with groups by detaching them from their spiritual essence and then testifying to its respect for the dispirited remains of what was once both the body and soul of a culture.”²⁴ Conyers described how modern tolerance, beginning in the seventeenth century, became a strategy for “diminishing lesser loyalties” that competed with “the comprehensive political arrangement of the modern state.” Modern tolerance compromised competing customary

²¹A.J. Conyers, *The Long Truce: How Toleration Made the World Safe for Power and Profit* (Dallas: Spence Publishing Company, 2001), 9.

²²*Ibid.*, 17.

²³Walzer, 25.

²⁴Conyers, 10.

authorities by questioning their moral competency and authority, as well as their loyalty to the burgeoning nation-state's society of individuals.²⁵ The modern concept of tolerance, argued Conyers, essentially negates those troublesome "secondary" associations (family, locale, church, etc.) by wearing away their ability to foster social solidarity among communities for reasons other than those of state interest.²⁶

From a communitarian perspective, the individual, since the late seventeenth century, has been gradually recreated; he is no longer a responder within community but now an autonomous, isolated agent—not a means but an end.²⁷ Moreover, the portrayal of tolerance as non-judgmental indifference seems to espouse an ethical neutralism where relativity has triumphed over absolutes, and truth, it is argued, lay beyond the imperfections of individual or collective human understanding. Skepticism of transcendence, for instance, has progressed beyond the Cartesian idea of doubt leading to moral truth, to a general dismissal of the existence of the universal good.²⁸ From this perspective, liberal neutrality emerges as the contemporary solution, where individuals are reintroduced, from within a Kantian construct, as ends in themselves instead of means

²⁵Ibid., 51.

²⁶Ibid., 7.

²⁷See David B. Burrell, "Freedom and Creation in the Abrahamic Traditions." *International Philosophical Quarterly* v. 40, no. 2 (2000), 161-171.

²⁸Budziszewski, 70. J. Budziszewski, a political theorist at the University of Texas, challenges modernity's mutation of skepticism, arguing that ancient skeptics, for example, "did not claim that we cannot know anything at all, but only that our knowledge lacks absolute certainty." Doubt, of course, has always been a key ingredient to skepticism, but this does not mean that an individual, community, or culture was proscribed by the skeptic from "acting on whatever principles seemed on rational reflection *most likely* to be true." Ibid..

to a higher end.²⁹ In a world of autonomous individuals, relativity has suppressed the notion of absolutes, leaving tolerance, in theory at least, unrestrained.

For the communitarian theorist, however,

a readiness to tolerate any idea or practice whatsoever has a corrosive impact on the shared values that form the foundations of a community. This is not to say that every member of a community must be committed to precisely the same comprehensive conception of goodness. But it is to assert that the existence of some standards held deeply in common defines the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion within any genuine community.³⁰

Here, the first principles or “shared values” within an unfeigned community set important parameters on the conceptualization of tolerance, and an appreciation of group difference is encouraged. These shared values of a community—religious or otherwise—provide a customary moral authority for its members. Nicholas Lash, professor of divinity at Cambridge University, joins Conyers in rebuffing modern Western society’s litmus test of secularity, decrying the self-constituting individual that emerged from the enlightenment and was solidified in the canons of liberal multiculturalism as a “fiction of the modern imagination”:

We can and do receive and accept all manner of things from outside our individual selves: things such as language and identity, shelter and suffering, pain and delight, gratitude and disease.³¹

Conyers remarks that a flourishing humanity is absolutely conditioned upon the “gifts of society and tradition—even traditions other than our own.” Genuine tolerance does not obstruct but, in fact, “serves . . . the forming and functional life of groups within

²⁹Ibid., 64-66, 234.

³⁰Nederman and Laursen, 3-4.

³¹Nicholas Lash, *The Beginning and the End of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 240.

society.”³² Authentic tolerance, notes Conyers, is an expression of humility that challenges the narcissistic propensities of the individual, enabling the cultivation of meaningful groups. His communitarian description of authentic tolerance is discerning:

It [tolerance] draws naturally from the spirit of self-sacrifice. It endures assaults upon its most long lasting dogmas for the sake of making dialogue possible, because the process of dialogue even about . . . the most cherished convictions, is the heart and soul of a group, whether a family, church, or a community of professionals, or a region that shares distinct practices and manners and patterns of language.³³

The timeless characteristics of patience and endurance are at the core of authentic tolerance. Whereas modern tolerance seeks a dialogue that is expressly confined to a “deep-seated suspicion that undergirds much of modern thought,” genuine tolerance, Conyers concludes, is “a rediscovery of the freedom afforded men and women to think and act in a world designed for human beings to inhabit in peace.”³⁴

Engaging Liberalism: An Appraisal or Rawlsian Tolerance

The sociopolitical idiosyncrasies of modern Western democracies find parentage in the sixteenth-century wars of religion, and tolerance was a consequential development.³⁵ So reasoned the late Harvard philosopher, John Rawls. Here one finds the argument, challenged in chapter three, that the conception of tolerance was a triumphal accomplishment of the liberal narrative, a product of constitutional democracy and its requirements for liberty of conscience and egalitarian justice. Liberalism’s

³²Conyers, 243.

³³Ibid., 244.

³⁴Ibid., 245.

³⁵“The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus,” in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 424.

political conceptualization of tolerance was rendered necessary in order to ensure liberty of conscience. As shown in chapter three, liberalism's purpose of liberty is only one of many justifications for the theorizing and practice of tolerance. Moreover, tolerance, embraced as an effective means toward the end of human liberty, was not unique to modern Western society but was theorized long before the seventeenth century.

For liberalism, tolerance, more than just a method for achieving the important goal of liberty, is seen as a countervailing instrument, necessary to temper the various comprehensive doctrines competing in a pluralistic society.³⁶ Liberalism's more recent theories on the social contract, expressed most poignantly by Rawls, follow the Kantian vein of upholding the "equal ultimacy" of the individual, placing representative persons "in an Original Position in which each forgets the things that distinguish him from every other."³⁷ In the original position or, to use Rawlsian imagery, behind a "veil of ignorance," individual representatives will be indisposed to speculation and thus propose an unfettered equality and freedom of citizens for the sake of attaining a broader community consensus.³⁸ Principles of justice will arise, argues Rawls, when citizens honor the shared views of a sustainable society. Essentially, these shared values are commonalities which may be located within the various comprehensive doctrines of

³⁶"The Idea of Public Reason Revisited (1997)," in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, 591.

³⁷Budziszewski, 234. Rawls's original position, as a constructivist political conception, is, unlike Kant, focused primarily on a constructivist framework for political justice rather than an encompassing moral doctrine. Such a construction, argues Rawls, makes an overlapping consensus of basic political values possible in a pluralistic, democratic society. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 89-90.

³⁸Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 26.

society, but must be expressed, with no prior obligation to any of the competing comprehensive doctrines, in a universal political language. In upholding these shared views, “citizens show themselves autonomous, politically speaking.”³⁹

Rawls argued that society must disregard how the comprehensive doctrines of its members justify the egalitarian concept of justice (or fairness) and, instead, regard (from behind a veil of ignorance) the resultant societal framework as derived from the “various fundamental ideas drawn from the public political culture of a democratic society.”⁴⁰ Thus, individual representatives, when placed in the original position, are precluded from putting forth arguments for a similar conception of equality and fairness from any particular religious, philosophical, or moral doctrine. According to Rawls, in a Western age of “reasonable pluralism,” social cooperation renders it both acceptable and necessary to exclude religious and moral comprehensive doctrines as “good reasons” for legitimizing a fair and equal society.⁴¹ As such, the high level of pluralism in Western constitutional states necessitates a conception of fairness in the body politic that is tolerant of only those attributes within a comprehensive doctrine that find an overlapping consensus with competing dogmas. Moreover, because of the persisting inevitability of a diversity of doctrines and views in a pluralistic society, Rawls advocates a political framework of equality and fairness that, inasmuch as possible, is not conceived through or committed to any one comprehensive doctrine.⁴²

³⁹Ibid., 90.

⁴⁰Ibid., 25 (ft. note 27).

⁴¹Ibid., 24-27.

⁴²Rawls, “The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus,” 424-26.

In contrast to the prevailing contemporary conceptions of tolerance, an open recognition of difference is essential to the central objective of this dissertation: lasting coexistence. Rawls is correct that a stable multicultural society requires a civil unity that establishes a neutral citizen identity; but does it necessitate a dilution or disregard of group difference? Public discourse can be an effective means for helping citizens to mediate their divisions in a neutral forum without having to completely discard what distinguishes them. Justice, for Rawls, is fairness—an impartial equality. The “veil of ignorance,” as Budziszewski explains, is there to “temporarily erase” from the memories of individual representatives all that differentiates them. While the suggested model is creative and profound, in reality, we cannot divorce ourselves from these personal peculiarities.⁴³

A peaceable global society—coexistence—renders necessary a cross-cultural, interreligious conceptualization of tolerance. If coexistence is to last, a concept of tolerance must be developed that is not divorced from the comprehensive doctrines out of which moral clarity and consensus must ultimately be derived. Common, overlapping foundations are imperative, but they must first be found within the ultimate concern of the individual and his community—not simply under the moral shadow of political liberalism. To displace such foundational justifications behind a “veil of ignorance” is only sustainable in a society bereft of communities whose highest order of goods necessarily transcends any temporal conception of the body politic. Instead of liberalism’s moral, religious, and philosophical vacuum, so to speak, to achieve meaningful and lasting coexistence, social and political cooperation must, in the end,

⁴³Budziszewski, 76-77.

strive, in good faith, to establish a consensual moral framework that, inasmuch as possible, finds legitimacy from among the comprehensive doctrines interacting within the aggregate pluralistic community. Coexistence in an increasingly diverse Western civilization requires, more than ever, an open dialogue between participating traditions in a manner that combines open contestability with a deferential regard for particularities.⁴⁴

Tolerance Rightly Conceived: Strategy or Virtue?

There is an inclination in modern parlance to assign virtue to the project of tolerance. Professor A.J. Conyers argues, however, that the tolerance of others is not a virtue but, instead, a *strategy* that “calls upon virtues, such as patience, humility, moderation, and prudence.” A tolerance of others is not comparable to the virtue of love, humility, or liberty; rather, it is a “modus vivendi” or “strategy” for reaching “a goal in something else.”⁴⁵ Conyers insightfully remarks how there is never enough of any virtue in human society: there cannot be too much love, hope, or prudence. However, unlike these ancient virtues, there can be too much tolerance. Tolerance has limits, and while those limits have been and continue to be debated (blasphemy, obscenity, privacy, justice, liberty, truth, etc.), it is not incorrect to say that every individual, community, and culture maintain categorical parameters on what should not be tolerated.⁴⁶ Political theorist Cary Nederman would agree with Conyers, that the value of tolerance, in the end, depends on its function—the goal for which it is designed to accomplish.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Lash, 24.

⁴⁵Conyers, 7-8.

⁴⁶Ibid., 4.

On the other hand, while Budziszewski would join Conyers in disputing the modern conception of tolerance, he contends that *true* tolerance is indeed a virtue.⁴⁸ Budziszewski begins with the postulation that rights and wrongs, goods and evils, can be, with varying difficulty, universally discerned. True tolerance, he writes, is a virtue that encompasses the complicated reasons behind why one puts up with what one considers incorrect, offensive, or undeserving of favor. Tolerance is a peculiar virtue that enables one to interpret the appropriate ethical limits on when, why, how, and to what extent something “ought” to be endured without interference.⁴⁹ For Conyers, tolerance is simply one available strategy for achieving important virtues, but for Budziszewski, tolerance is itself a virtue that engages and is often co-dependent with other virtues, such as charity, mercy, and humility.⁵⁰ This author tends to agree with Conyers that tolerance is an important operational quality that positively affects important goals such as

⁴⁷Through his exposition on tolerance in the works of Peter Abelard, John of Salisbury, Marsiglio of Padua, Nicholas of Cusa, William of Rubruck, and Bartolomé de Las Casas, Cary Nederman shows how the tolerance of others becomes “necessary by the conditions—physical, psychological, or both—imposed by divinely-created (if flawed) human nature itself.” Intellectual humility, “communal functionalism,” and divinely ordained sociocultural diversity have all been important goals that rendered a framework of tolerance necessary. The tolerance of others is thus “not a good or an end in itself, but a course of action or inaction sanctioned, ultimately, by God himself inasmuch as He created and endowed humanity with certain capacities and frailties.” Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 4-5.

⁴⁸Budziszewski, 5-15. Budziszewski begins his exposition by explaining what he means by virtue: “Virtues are complex dispositions of character, deeply ingrained habits by which people call upon all of their passions and capacities in just those ways that aid, prompt, focus, inform, and execute their moral choices instead of clouding them, misleading them, or obstructing their execution.” *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 5-7.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 7.

coexistence and virtue. When considering the cogent, albeit trite, maxim, “Virtue is its own reward,” tolerance does not seem applicable, as it is not a reward in itself but a means to reaching such a reward.⁵¹ Its value is determined by the intrinsic worth of the goal in which it is employed to accomplish.⁵² Thus, in addition to how it is conceived, the value of tolerance is also determined by its motivation.

Regardless of its virtue or lack thereof, both Conyers and Budziszewski offer coherent conceptions of tolerance that are consistent with its complex heritage in the West. Budziszewski’s description of “true” tolerance is particularly noteworthy:

[Tolerance] is not forbearance from judgment, but the fruit of judgment. We may disapprove something for the love of some moral good—yet we may be moved to put up with it from still deeper intuitions about the same moral good or other moral goods, and on such deeper intuitions the discipline of tolerance is based.⁵³

For Budziszewski, tolerance may be formulaically stated thus: putting up with an evil in “just those cases where its suppression would involve equal or greater hindrance to goods of the same order, or any hindrance at all to goods of higher order.”⁵⁴

To discern the boundaries of *authentic* tolerance, as described by Conyers and Budziszewski, one must acknowledge the precarious realm of what theologian Paul Tillich terms the *ultimate concern*—what an individual or community considers to be the highest order of the good. “Whatever concerns a man ultimately,” wrote Tillich,

⁵¹Rushworth M. Kidder offers a similar assessment of the term “value” that provides an effective framework for distinguishing between those ideas that possess an intrinsic worth and those which help to achieve some worthy goal. Rushworth M. Kidder, *How Good People Make Tough Choices* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 79.

⁵²Conyers, 8.

⁵³Budziszewski, 7.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 13.

“becomes god for him, and, conversely, it means that a man can be concerned ultimately only about that which is god for him.”⁵⁵ From this transcendental vantage point, tolerance can only exist if one’s highest object of loyalty sanctions it. Thus a devout Christian or Muslim, for example, must ultimately locate the necessity and limits of tolerance supernaturally (from God) before it can be effectively appropriated toward their fellow humanity. Peaceful coexistence, free trade, democracy, or any other “less than ultimate” concern is a forceful argument for justifying tolerance but only insofar as one’s ultimate concern approves.⁵⁶

UNESCO Declaration of Tolerance: A Gauge of the Modern Conceptualization

Perhaps the prevailing Western conceptualization of tolerance is best defined in the well-intended, but ambiguous, UNESCO Declaration of Principles of Tolerance:

Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace. . . . Tolerance is not concession, condescension or indulgence. . . . It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments. . . . It means that one is free to adhere to one’s own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs. . . . It also means that one’s views are not to be imposed on others.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 211.

⁵⁶Budziszewski, 224.

⁵⁷Available at <http://www.unesco.org/tolerance/declaeng.htm>. The declaration was formulated by the member states of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, convening in Paris at the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference in 1995.

Undoubtedly, the purpose of the United Nations' quest for a global understanding and declaration on tolerance is noble and, indeed, necessary. Tolerance is rightly suggested by the UN as an important international strategy for combating the violations of human rights, armed conflicts, and violence plaguing many cross-cultural, inter-religious societies. The UN's "Global Quest for Tolerance" makes a spirited call for coexistence with others as good neighbors.⁵⁸ As well, there are attributes of the conceptualization of tolerance described above that are vital to cross-cultural coexistence today. For example, the "freedom to adhere to one's convictions" and accepting that others are free to adhere to theirs, is an important element to living peacefully in a world of immutable differences. Yet, despite its important contributions, there remain significant inconsistencies or contradictions within the declaration that contribute to its general ambiguity and ineffectiveness. For instance, the declaration calls for an "appreciation" of our world's diverse "forms of expression and ways of being human." Whether for reasons of coexistence or the achievement of important virtues, such as liberty, justice, or peace, the *respect* and *acceptance* of seemingly inalterable differences are indeed core characteristics of tolerance. However, the rudimentary essence of what it means to be tolerant is immolated in the declaration's plea to *appreciate* such differences of expression and ways of being human. Here one clearly finds the underpinnings of liberal multiculturalism, where difference is not endured in an effort to achieve a higher order of goods but simply embraced or *appreciated*. Walzer describes this untenable framework of tolerance as "aesthetic endorsement," where tolerance of the Other no longer means

⁵⁸See the United Nations, "A Global Quest for Tolerance," available at <http://www.unesco.org/tolerance/global.htm#introduction>.

forbearance but, instead, an endorsement or support of those ideas and practices that constitute otherness. How can I tolerate, Walzer asks poignantly, “what I in fact endorse?”⁵⁹

Another glaring deficiency of this modern understanding of tolerance is its pronounced intolerance of absolutism or dogmatism. Indeed, tolerance must have limits. Humanity should not, and meaningful coexistence cannot, tolerate those individuals and groups who espouse an intolerance of cultural, religious, or ethnic otherness that condones violence, oppression, or simply disengages the Other from the greater community solely because of their cultural idiosyncrasies or refusal to assimilate. Such dogmatism is indeed intolerable. It stands in opposition to any strategy of tolerance and is antithetical to coexistence. This, however, does not mean that individuals or communities must be precluded, *prima facie*, from embracing any absolute doctrines or standards. As demonstrated earlier, it is in fact a community’s “ultimate concern” (for Christians and Muslims, for example) that lends credence to the ethical probity of tolerance. From a modern Western perspective, a tolerant society is non-judgmental. For the devout Christian or Muslim, on the other hand, tolerance is, at its core, judgmental. According to the nineteenth-century English novelist Sir Walter Besant, “tolerance is the eager and glad acceptance of the way along which others seek the truth.” Such a conceptualization, however, is devoid of divine vindication, as righteous tolerance neither eagerly nor gladly accepts the “inferior” or “repugnant” ways by which the Other may seek the truth. In contrast, a righteous tolerance endures the diverging beliefs and ways of the Other for reasons of a higher order, such as peace, liberty, or justice, usually

⁵⁹Walzer, 11.

desiring sameness and advocating gentle persuasion. The Other is gladly, and perhaps eagerly, accepted, but their “inferior” ways are endured with forbearance.

Chapter Three demonstrated (as will subsequent chapters on the roots of tolerance in Islamic culture) how tolerance cannot presumptively disregard systems of absolutes as antithetical to its conceptualization. Rather, individuals and communities must be encouraged to find legitimacy and justification for tolerance and coexistence from within their religious and cultural traditions. For instance, if a group’s religious beliefs countenance a strategy of tolerance for the sake of peace and human liberty, then a lasting support of such a strategy becomes essential. That tolerance is a rational means for achieving coexistence is secondary to one’s faith-based directives. The fact that tolerance is certainly a reasonable strategy for realizing coexistence is simply an added benefit. Ramon Llull and Jean Bodin demonstrated how coexistence came, not through a dilution or compromise of absolutes, but through recognition of human society’s diverse and complex religious and cultural traditions. For Llull and Bodin, unity did not require that communities disassociate their embedded idiosyncrasies for the sake of unity. Instead, unity came through an interreligious search for common principles of coexistence, which, via tolerance, respected dogmatic differences while, at the same time, embracing the humanity of the Other.⁶⁰

⁶⁰This, of course, is not to say that *Concordia* was not desired. Llull, Bodin, and Las Casas all desired religious unity. However, recognizing the likelihood of lasting difference, they sought unity elsewhere. For Llull it came in the form of a common humility and search for truth, respecting the inalienability of human liberty. For Las Casas unity was located in the idea of the *imago dei*; all of humanity is bequeathed a sacred dignity as created in God’s image. For Bodin, temporal unity rested in a pragmatic fidelity to the state.

France Reconsidered: The Case of Marseille

A number of political theorists, philosophers, and theologians have suggested the *hijab* controversy in France as a useful contemporary context for addressing the inability of modern tolerance to address the timeless challenge of locating peace in diversity. The weeks of rioting in 2005 by disenchanting Muslim youths in suburbs across France is also illustrative, as the touted claims of tolerance in modern Western society have come under increased scrutiny for their inability to quell the unrest. Yet, it is interesting to note that, although France is often portrayed as emblematic of modern tolerance and the secular ideal of *laïcité*, it is within this same immigrant nation that we find an intriguing antithesis: the city of Marseille.

Marseille, the centuries-old port city on the Mediterranean, is France's oldest city and remains its most important commercial seaport. Moreover, Marseille is the second largest city in France, with close to a million inhabitants. Trade and immigration are two historical priorities of this important city that have instigated periods of conflict with the French state. Independence and pluralism are deeply embedded attributes of Marseille, a city replete with unfettered variety. In a 2005 report, *National Public Radio* offered an insightful analysis of this independence and diversity, describing Marseille as a city whose back is turned against France, physically and philosophically.⁶¹ Following successive weeks of violence and rioting across France in 2005, the question was asked: Why was Marseille spared from the wide-spread rioting?

⁶¹National Public Radio, "Diverse Marseilles Spared in French Riots," 10 December 2005.

Marseille is a collage of religions, ethnicities, and languages. Cultural difference is highly transparent and extensive. Roughly 35% of Marseille residents are of Italian descent, 15% North African (primarily of Tunisian and Algerian origin), and 10% Jewish. There are sizeable Armenian, Turkish, Russian, Greek, Vietnamese, and Chinese communities as well. “Marseille . . . is the portal of France, the waiting room for integration,” said Marseille’s mufti Soheib Bencheikh. He continued: “Here you have many communities over many generations. People here are not disturbed by strange or foreign behavior of others.”⁶² In a community of such overwhelming cultural diversity, dialogue and engagement are critical. For Marseille’s residents, contrary to customary French policy, difference is approbated as an acceptable aspect of community. For individual communities, sameness may be the inherent desire, but, for the sake of coexistence and virtue, a tolerance of difference is favored. City officials have utilized a twenty year old program that fosters proactive dialogue between communities known as Marseille Hope. When conflicts arise between religious or ethnic groups, Marseille’s city authorities use such programs to bring representatives of the community together to discuss current issues of conflict in an effort to quell any unrest or swelling resentment.⁶³

Unity comes not through uniformity but through a sense of belonging—belonging to a society tolerant of difference. Of course, Marseille is not devoid of problems.⁶⁴

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴For instance, in 2002 a Jewish synagogue was burned in Marseille, sparking fears that anti-Semitism was reemerging in France. Moreover, the continuation of the Arab and Israeli conflict in the Middle East remains an unsettling motivation for Jewish-Muslim conflict in cities like Marseille.

Community conflicts do arise and economic hardships are often concentrated in the more recent immigrating communities. Marie-Noelle Miville, an aide to Mayor Jean-Claude Gaudin, stated as much: "We're not saying there could be no explosion here. That is not the case. We are neighbors and recognize that neighbors have differences."⁶⁵ But a suppression of community difference is not Marseille's solution to a peaceful society. Rather, coexistence comes through an open recognition of difference, proactive engagement between communities, and public policies that encourage integration into a society that nurtures its unity through diversity. Marseille, as one reporter put it, is a "spicy stew of nationalities."⁶⁶ "It's obvious there are problems here," stated Nassim Khelladi, an Algerian-born citizen of Marseille, "but there's a huge amount of respect in this city and a great willingness to work together."⁶⁷

As in any major city, ghettos exist. However, unlike other French cities, minority communities are centrally located, not exiled to some outlying suburb.⁶⁸ "We have our troubles, but I can go to the center of the city without thinking I am entering enemy territory," said Abida Hecini, a resident of Marseille and mother of six children. "We belong to Marseille and Marseille belongs to us." Lauding the unique qualities of Marseille, Dia Ghazi, a Palestinian-born citizen and business owner, expressed pride in

⁶⁵Daniel Williams, "Long Integrated, Marseille is Spared," *washingtonpost.com*, 16 November 2005, available at www.washingtonpost.com (accessed 14 January 2006).

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷Glenn Frankel, "Harmony Strikes a Chord with Muslims, Jews in Marseille," *washingtonpost.com*, 21 February 2004, available at www.washingtonpost.com. (accessed 24 January 2006).

⁶⁸*NPR*, "Diverse Marseilles Spared in French Riots."

his city's ability to coexist: "Here, we all have contact with each other. That's the way it's always been here. We are not separate from each other."⁶⁹ The outdoor marketplaces and city centers externalize these claims of coexistence, as merchants and shoppers from different ethnic and religious backgrounds and young people of various social classes and cultures engage one another in a spirit of tolerance, befriending and respecting each other.

That Marseille was spared the three weeks of disquiet that beset Muslim communities across France is noteworthy. In Marseille, communities are not segregated, and difference is not sacrificed for the sake of unity. "I dislike going to Paris," remarked Dia Ghazi. "They are cold there. A few days, and I want to return."⁷⁰ Immigrants like Dia Ghazi find a sense of belonging in Marseille and, as a result, make proactive efforts to ensure a long-term coexistence through strategies of authentic tolerance and dialogue. There is always an underlying tension to coexistence, as different ethnicities and religions inherently conflict. It is this underlying tension that makes tolerance both necessary and desirable. Tolerance serves an important role in nurturing coexistence through acknowledging, and even contesting, immutable differences, while committing to an ecumenical humaneness and mutual goodwill. In a number of ways, the tolerance espoused in Marseille is nearer to the ideas of Llull, Las Casas, and Bodin than those of modernity. Living with otherness is not easy; it is hard. Tolerance is not supporting otherness; rather, it is learning to live with otherness. From the vantage point of one's cultural heritage, ethnic roots, or religious beliefs, tolerance may be conceivable, but

⁶⁹*Washingtonpost.com*, "Long Integrated, Marseille is Spared."

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

ethical neutrality or indifference is not.⁷¹ The Arab, Jewish, and Greek communities of Marseille do not achieve coexistence through non-judgmental neutrality but through a highly judgmental attitude that disagrees, and perhaps even hates, the beliefs and practices of the Other but respects, in a spirit of goodwill, their human dignity and inherent freedom to be different. Coexistence and civil unity are formed through an attitude of tolerance, where common ground is sought and dialogue and respect are of foremost importance. Tolerant individuals and communities, Walzer explains,

make room for men and women whose beliefs they don't adopt, whose practices they decline to imitate; they coexist with an otherness that, however much they approve of its presence in the world, is still something different from what they know, something alien and strange.⁷²

Coexistence means actively engaging, in a spirit of tolerance, with one's neighbors, and, in an era of globalization, the neighborhood is indeed vast, encompassing many cultures, religions, and ethnicities.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the challenges facing the modern Western conceptualization of tolerance; in particular, its inability to effectively facilitate the rising cultural diversity of Western civilization. This, of course, is not to suggest that today's prevailing understanding of tolerance is unable to contribute to resolving contemporary conflict. Rushworth M. Kidder, founder of the Institute for Global Ethics, is right to

⁷¹Budziszewski, 228.

⁷²Walzer, 11.

suggest that societies have a “perpetual impulse” to condemn the ethics of today,⁷³ failing to appreciate the positive attributes of contemporary ideas. Demonstrating the shortcomings of tolerance, as it is generally understood in Western society today, should not prevent citizens of the world from appreciating its important contributions. For example, considering the conceptual dilemmas already posed, one can, at the same time, benefit from the palpable limitations Rawls places on tolerance and a well-ordered society: namely, respecting the values of peace, a system of law legitimate in the minds and hearts of its members, and a respect for rudimentary human rights. These parameters, Rawls has concluded, “indicate the bedrock beyond which we cannot go,”⁷⁴ and, significant to this project, are important limitations found within and across the theological, philosophical, and juridical parapets of Western, as well as Islamic, civilization.

⁷³Kidder, 34.

⁷⁴“The Law of Peoples (1993),” in *John Rawls: Collected Papers*, 561-62.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discovering Islamic Tolerance

Unlike its nineteenth- and twentieth-century fate in the West, religion for the *dar al-Islam* has not been secularized. It has not been relegated and confined to the private sphere. Rather, for the majority of Muslims, religion, like politics, is inherently public; it permeates all facets of life: moral, political, social, economic, and cultural. As Bernard Lewis has stated, historically, Islam was both God and Caesar. Islamic history illustrates how, prior to its initial encounters with secularism in the eighteenth century, the entire Muslim world embraced the idea that “the state was God’s state, the army God’s army, . . . the enemy was God’s enemy,” and “the law was God’s law.”¹ Religion was inextricably linked with the state. Nevertheless, in spite of its seemingly immutable yoke to both temporal and spiritual realms, Islam’s profundity of ideas and traditions has lent credence over the past two centuries to a broad spectrum of political systems. Islam has been used to facilitate diverse forms of government, from dictatorships and monarchies to democracies and “Europeanized” republics.²

Plagued by the oppressive and coercive natures associated with both autocracy and militant secularism, the Islamic world has experienced both secular and counter-secular revolutions. Perceiving religion’s theocratic tendencies as the cause of

¹Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 181.

²John L. Esposito, “Practice and Theory,” in *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Deborah Chasman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 95-96.

geopolitical regression throughout the Muslim world, Turkey, under Ataturk's leadership, wholly embraced a laicized interpretation of the state, one that mimicked the French-Enlightenment construct of secularization.³ In Pakistan, while still struggling with a thirty-year identity crisis and socio-political instability, the 1979 coup led by General Zia-ul-Haq—instituting martial law for the third time in as many decades—represented a climax to the proactive attempts underway in that Muslim country to rebuff secular, “non-Islamic” tendencies and, instead, reinforce a more intransigent interpretation of the original intentions behind Pakistan's creation. Ayatollah Khomeini inspired an Iranian revolution against the corrupt and coercive secularism of the government under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. This new Islamic Republic, however, was far from republican, as it represented a new radical resurgence of Shi'i Islam into Iran's political system, becoming just as coercive and undemocratic as the regime it sought to replace. Syria, long-considered one of the more secular Muslim nations, has been accused of dictatorial corruption and has confronted fundamentalist threats throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Today, the Syrian government is endeavoring to support and facilitate a moderate interpretation of Islam in order to forestall a rising fundamentalism within its borders.

In *The Universal Hunger for Liberty*, Michael Novak points out that, as a result of the coercive and authoritarian tendencies of the secular and countersecular revolutions that have occurred within Islamic civilization, a new generation of scholars is materializing to “plead for greater humility and common sense on the part of both secular

³Michael Novak, *The Hunger for Universal Liberty: Why the Clash of Civilizations is not Inevitable* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 208-09.

and religious leaders.” There must be a compromise between radical secularism and militant theocracy, argues Novak, where this “humility and common sense” are “the order of the day.”⁴ In other words, a search for a *via media* within Islamic civilization—between secularism and theocracy—is underway, and its success depends on those Muslims who embody the good judgment, humility, and contextual flexibility intrinsic to Islam. Novak echoes the beliefs of many scholars, both Muslim and Western:

As it happens, Islamic theology and tradition offer many resources for recovering that middle way, particularly when examined in the light of the modern scholarship in which so many Muslims are now quite learned and in the light of the sad experiences of the last 20 years or more.⁵

Thus, even though Islam was used in various ways—right or wrong—to verify a spectrum of political systems, it is Islam that now offers the resources necessary to locate the balance between extremes.

This introduction is intended to demonstrate the complexity and diversity of the Muslim world. In spite of its universal and borderless aspirations, the Muslim world is not monolithic. It has been influenced by a host of cultural, linguistic, historical, and geographical variables. Muslim advocates of humanism and literalism, traditionalism and modernism, reason and pure revelation, all claim authenticity in their depiction of Islam. In light of this great diversity and complexity, this project’s search for a cross-cultural conception of tolerance demands a critical examination of some of the rival interpretations competing for Muslim allegiance to determine if tolerance is an inherent

⁴Ibid., 209.

⁵Ibid.

Islamic ideal and if coexistence with the West is a task being appropriated by Muslim thinkers and communities today.

Is religious tolerance a universal idea or virtue? Do human beings have the right to coexistence? These are profound questions that, in the opinion of many in the West today, can be answered affirmatively. And yet what about the Muslim world? Can Islam contribute to the discussion and search for lasting coexistence? This chapter offers a brief examination of some explicit theological and philosophical justifications opposing and supporting the measure of tolerance necessary for coexistence.

Tolerance: The Complicated Impact of Civil Society

For a majority of Muslims, their lives are besieged by social and economic underdevelopment and political oppression by autocratic Muslim governments. These depressed and often degrading circumstances, coupled with the perception of historical and modern exploitation by the West, explain in part the entrenched animosity many Muslims hold against Western culture and its values. From this perspective, some within the Islamic world hold, without reservation, to the Qur'anic teaching that violence is to be preferred over oppression: "fight them [non-Muslims] until there is no more tumult or oppression and there prevails justice and faith in Allah but if they cease let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression."⁶ Muslim extremists have exacerbated and profited from this inimical relationship with the West, often exploiting the emblems of Islam so as to legitimate various political interests.

⁶Mashhood Rizvi, "Intolerable Injustices," in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 70-71.

Are there Islamic cultural impediments to coexisting with non-Muslims? Can a state dominated by a Muslim population and immersed in an Islamic culture embrace, through tolerance, the value of coexistence? For coexistence to occur, an equitable analysis of the place of tolerance, as well as intolerance, in Islam must be made. To suggest that scholastic scrutiny of intolerance in Islamic tradition be eliminated, as it may encumber contemporary efforts toward coexistence, merits caution. Indeed, a candid assessment of the intolerant and tolerant elements of Islam vying for Muslim allegiance is critical if a lasting coexistence is to be achieved.

Fundamental Intolerance

The term Islamism was popularized in the twentieth century and is generally seen as coterminous with labels such as Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic puritanism, and political Islam.⁷ This extensive and multifarious movement emerged in earnest as a modern pan-Islamic antagonist to Western imposed values and Western supported Muslim governments, and it continues—in both violent and non-violent ways—to

⁷“Islamists,” “fundamentalists,” and “puritans” will be used interchangeably to denote those Muslims who seek to employ Islam as an all-pervasive socio-political, individual, communal, and spiritual worldview designed to challenge all that is deemed contrary to Islam. Noah Feldman, *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 42. As emphasized in chapter two (fn. 34), a variety of Islamic revival movements are taking place throughout Islamic civilization, and many are peaceful, local, and inwardly directed. “Fundamentalism,” then, is one distinct category of modern Islamic revivalism that essentially represents the more rigid (often coercive) puritanical movements that seek to reform wayward Muslim societies through more narrowly-defined, mechanical interpretations of scripture and tradition and a strict application of *shari’a*. Moreover, “Islamists” not only contest the invasion of Western ideas but also dismiss the intellectual and mystical traditions of Islam as historical aberrations, antithetical to the Islamic way of life. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003), 179-80.

motivate Muslims through such Islamic principles as justice and obedience to God.

Muslims have a sacred trust to oppose those individuals, societies, and states that corrupt or challenge their conservative (often radical) Islamic way of life.

In large part, the historical groundwork behind the theological obduracy of Islamism emerged with the puritanical and literalist interpretations developed by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in the eighteenth century. In response to what he perceived to be a pervasive corruption of Islam across Arabia, Abd al-Wahhab inaugurated a conservative and intransigent Islamic political movement that would come to be known as Wahhabism. Wahhabism would dismiss all competing interpretations—intellectual, mystical, or otherwise—as antithetical to the true faith, insisting on a doctrinal supremacy crafted from a literalist, simplistic, and exclusionary reading of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Flexibility in interpretation due to contextual contingencies was unacceptable, and inconsistencies in Islamic history were treated as an aberration to the orthodox faith. The potency of the Wahhabi creed, espoused most clearly by the ruling House of Saud, has waxed and waned over the past two centuries, subject to the sociopolitical dictates of history, emerging in earnest over the past three decades as a formidable inspiration to many of the conservative and radical Muslim movements around the world.⁸

The ambit of Wahhabi influence is vast. The Salafiyyah movement in Egypt and Syria, the Muhammadiyyah movement of Indonesia, and the Jamiaat-i-Islami of Pakistan represent twentieth-century movements that possess similar conservative perspectives to

⁸Abou El Fadl, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, 8-9.

Wahhabism. These series of movements seek to “re-Islamize” Muslim societies through strict interpretation of the *shari’a* (Islamic religious law), staunch opposition to Western intrusion, and even dismissal of “the intellectual, artistic, and mystical traditions of Islam itself.”⁹ Two twentieth-century Muslim thinkers who inspired a century of fundamentalism require brief mention. Their broad, multi-generational influence is evident in contemporary Islamic thought, providing a comprehensive vision of Islam that most Islamist movements have since used to justify their religio-political causes.

Maududi on Tolerance and the dawla

Abul A‘la Maududi (1903-1979) was the ideologue and amir (“commander”) of the Jamiaat-i-Islami, a group that epitomized the puritan opposition to the liberal arguments put forth by some of Pakistan’s early Muslim leaders. Maududi is one of the most widely read and influential interpreters of Islam in the twentieth century. His impact on Islamic revivalism and fundamentalism is evident, extending well beyond the Indian subcontinent.

In Maududi’s view, Pakistan’s authenticity as an Islamic *dawla* (state) necessitated an active resistance to the temerity of Muslim reformers who embraced the “decadence” of the West: namely, liberalism, capitalism, and secularism.¹⁰ Maududi saw no separation between Islam and the state; both religion and politics were inherently public. An Islamic state is guided foremost by the *shari’a*, where Muslim unity and the sovereignty of God are given juridical grounding. Maududi’s prescriptive ideas for the

⁹Nasr, 180.

¹⁰Lenn E. Goodman, *Islamic Humanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12.

dawla, while theocratic in nature, did not dismiss democracy as antithetical to Islam. “Islam and democracy are not contradictory to each other,” he argued, “but the values of western democracy are not identical with those of Islam.”¹¹ Democracy was possible for an Islamic state—but on its own terms. Ruling an Islamic state was the responsibility of the entire Muslim community through *shura* (mutual consultation), and it required a government structure built on Muslim institutions as dictated by the *shari’a*. Unlike Western democracy, the people are not sovereign—it is God who governs (as manifested in the *shari’a*). What is more, an Islamic state is to recognize hierarchy of citizenship—Muslim above non-Muslim (*dhimmis*)—based entirely on religion. Thus, equal rights are not afforded to all citizens, as religious affiliation determines the particular entitlements and privileges prescribed to each person and group.¹²

Maududi and his followers embraced an ahistorical, inflexible interpretation of scripture where the *shari’a* was intransigent to context.¹³ In his narrowly defined conceptualization of tolerance, Maududi allowed for a traditional interpretation of tolerance where non-Muslims received protection by the state only after payment of the *jizya* (“tributary tax”), and only Muslims in good standing could serve in government

¹¹Maududi, quoted in Beverly Milton-Edwards, *Islam and Politics in the Contemporary World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 53. See also John Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 147.

¹²Milton-Edwards, 54-55. See also Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 147-49; and Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990), 110.

¹³Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 320.

positions. In addition, any Muslim apostate was liable to execution.¹⁴ While race, ethnicity, language, and nationality were seen as beyond the limits of discrimination, a person's or group's religious beliefs were within the realm of classification as "the best and most just solution of the unusual complications arising out of the existence of a foreign element [non-Muslims] in the body politic of a nation or an ideological state."¹⁵ Because non-Muslims symbolized a foreign (and potentially destabilizing) entity within the Islamic state, even this limited tolerance was vulnerable to change. While Maududi's conception of an Islamic state was certainly flexible to the political expediencies surrounding Pakistan's fragile existence, the rudimentary parameters of his "theodemocracy" still inform contemporary Islamist interpretations. In general, from an Islamist perspective, a Muslim state

is an ideological state in which legislators do not legislate, citizens only vote to reaffirm the permanent applicability of God's laws, women rarely venture outside their homes lest social discipline be disrupted, and non-Muslims are tolerated as foreign elements required to express their loyalty by means of paying a financial levy.¹⁶

The equality of each individual and community is dismissed as antithetical to the spirit of Islam. Those Muslims who implicitly embrace the ideology of the Islamic state are to be considered "first-class" citizens, while all "others" who show obedience to the laws and customs of this ideological Muslim state are afforded subordinated citizenship with

¹⁴Maududi, *Rights of Non-Muslims in the Islamic State* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1982), 22-3. See also Choueiri, 111-112; Noah Feldman, 121-22; and Black, 343-44.

¹⁵Maududi, *First Principles of the Islamic State* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1983), 67. See also, Choueiri, 111.

¹⁶Choueiri, 111.

commensurate rights.¹⁷ Such an ideological *dawla* espouses a highly circumscribed view of Islam and democracy that essentially precludes the realization of lasting coexistence through a meaningful conception of tolerance.

Qutb and Jahiliyya

The well-educated Sayyid Qutb (1909-1966) was notably influenced by Maududi's writings. Qutb turned to Islamic fundamentalism later in life, joining and eventually leading the politically and socially powerful Muslim Brotherhood.¹⁸ Qutb was a political dissident and prodigious writer,¹⁹ who after over a decade of incarceration, was executed by the Egyptian government. He provided one of the most articulate and thoroughgoing explications of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism.

For Qutb, the distinctions between *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-Harb* were clear. Those societies—Muslim or non-Muslim—that failed to exemplify Islamic principles in all aspects of life fell outside the ambit of Muslim obedience and were labeled with the derogatory term *jahiliyya*. Noah Feldman comments on how this Arabic term,

¹⁷Maududi, *First Principles of the Islamic State*, 16-65; and Choueiri, 110.

¹⁸Feldman, 43. The Muslim Brotherhood was founded by Egyptian Hasan al-Banna in 1928 as a religious, educational, and socio-political order grounded on a conservative and comprehensive worldview of Islam that encompassed every aspect of life, temporal and spiritual. Its *weltanschauung* directly opposes the Western worldview. The Muslim Brotherhood became a distinct political force in 1939, directly challenging the corrupt monarchical government in Egypt in favor of re-Islamization of society. Its influence would spread across the Middle East, arguably becoming “the single most important institutional element in the diffusion of political Islam.” As some in the Muslim Brotherhood began to resort more regularly to political violence and radical policies, the organization would be forcefully suppressed and isolated by government authorities, culminating in al-Banna's assassination in 1949. Ibid., 42-43.

¹⁹Among Qutb's many writings is a thirty-volume commentary on the Qur'an that has been widely studied by Muslims over the last four decades.

traditionally used to depict the “ignorant barbarism” of the Arab peninsula prior to the seventh-century arrival of Islam, seethes with the oxymoronic idea of pejorative sympathy when referring to the abject existence of the infidel. One of Qutb’s most significant contributions to Islamism “was to apply the idea of ignorant barbarism not only to non-Muslims who had never heard of Muhammad’s call, but also states populated by Muslims who had neglected to make their state truly Islamic.”²⁰ “There are two kinds of culture,” writes Qutb, “Islamic culture, based on the Islamic conception of righteous living, and Jahili culture, which essentially elevates man’s sovereignty above God’s.” Muslims, warned Qutb, must only draw from the divine source of Islamic culture, as Western methods of thought are entrenched in “poisonous residues of hostility” toward Islam and strive to weaken Islamic convictions and dismantle the essence of Islamic society.²¹ Influenced by state persecution and repulsed by the greater Muslim community’s non-Islamic embrace of Western ideas, Qutb lamented: “This [Westernization of Muslim societies] is the most dangerous *jāhiliyya* which has ever menaced our faith. For everything around us is *jāhiliyya*: perceptions and beliefs,

²⁰Feldman, 43. See also Black, 321. Many scholars agree that *jāhiliyya* was reintroduced as a fundamentalist concept by Muslim Indian politicians and thinkers in the 1930s and 1940s to refer to the Hindus’ non-Islamic doctrines and ideologies. See Choueiri, 94-5; and Yvonne Haddad, “Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival,” in *Voices of Resurgent Islam* ed. John Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 85-87. Qutb admitted to borrowing this term from Maududi. Sayyid Qutb, *Maalim fi al-Tariq*, (Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1964) [English translation: *Milestones* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Unity Publishing Company, 1981), 63]. However, he would expand this term for “religious ignorance” to include all philosophies—Muslim or non-Muslim—that fell outside the pale of authentic Islam. See Haddad, 85-87.

²¹Sayyid Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, trans. William E. Shepard (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 303-4, 308.

manners and morals, culture, art, and literature, laws and regulations, including a good part of what we consider Islamic culture.”²²

What distinguished Qutb and the Muslim Brotherhood from Maududi was their greater flexibility (or, perhaps, general indifference) toward the external framework and procedures of the state. The technicalities of an acceptable Islamic political system would be contextually contingent, depending on the “time, place, and needs of the people.”²³ Ahmad S. Moussalli, professor of political science at the American University of Beirut, captures this distinction, arguing that from Qutb’s perspective, “the form of government . . . based on the principles of Islam is not of vital importance. In theory, it is a matter of indifference.” For Qutb, regardless of its form of government, democratic or otherwise, “the goodness of the state does not depend on its institutions,” but rather “on its underlying principles.”²⁴ These underlying principles of Islam begin and end with the sovereignty of God and permeate all aspects of society, making Islam “an indivisible whole: its worship and its social relations, its laws and its moral guidance.”²⁵

Condemning what he perceived as Western preoccupation with materialism and consumerism, as well as a lack of humaneness, Qutb elevated Islamism as the only

²²Sayyid Qutb, quoted in Robert Worth, *New York Times*, October 13, 2001; and Goodman, *Islamic Humanism*, 14.

²³Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 245. See also Black, 341.

²⁴Ahmad Moussalli, *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992), 162-63; and Black, 341.

²⁵Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 8.

solution to forestalling further global degradation and for renewing the spirit and praxis of Islamic civilization:

Truth and falsehood cannot coexist on earth. When Islam makes a general declaration to establish the lordship of God on earth and to liberate humanity from the worship of other creatures, it is contested by those who have usurped God's sovereignty on earth. They will never make peace. Then [Islam] goes forth destroying them to free humans from their power . . . the liberating struggle of jihad does not cease until all religions belong to God.²⁶

Although the Qur'anic declaration that there is no compulsion in religion has provided a precautionary stipulation against those who would coerce non-believers, Qutb tempers this protective measure of religious freedom by focusing on the Muslim obligation to destroy those secular opponents (*jahiliyya*) that contradict and challenge the Islamic way of life.²⁷ "Truth and falsehood," he declares, "cannot coexist on earth." His exegesis of Islam reaches an intolerant deduction; because those outside the *dar al-Islam* will "never make peace," conflict between Islamic and non-Islamic civilizations remains interminable. For Qutb, the ethical foundations of Islamic thought cannot find commonality with the contemporary West. For that reason, Muslims must rebuff attempts by those in the *jahiliyya* to imbue the Islamic way of thinking with unauthentic and corrupting borrowings of the West.

Qutb emphasizes the inherent place of equality in Islam, its overarching concern for social justice and inward freedom of the soul. Indeed, Islam sought liberation from the tribal, linguistic, and ethnic partisanships of history, achieving a measure of human equality that historically eclipsed that of Western civilization. However, like Maududi,

²⁶Qutb, *Maalim*, 93; quoted in Haddad, 82.

²⁷Goodman, 15.

while God has commanded human unity and equality, there exists a hierarchy of humanity that is based on a piety that begins with one's submission (*islam*) to God.²⁸ This distinction predicated on religious belief effectively subjugates non-Muslims to an inferior status, making temporal equality impossible. What is more, Maududi's influence is evident in Qutb's practical strategy of *jihad*, which calls for non-Muslims who refuse conversion to pay *jizya* as a token of their desire for peace and their awareness of the non-reciprocal freedom of Muslims to missionize. War is justified against those who refuse such submission, as they are opposing God's will and prohibiting all of humanity from experiencing the justice and tranquility that only come from an Islamic way of life.²⁹ Qutb's intransigence symbolizes the deleterious effects Islamic puritanism can have on cultivating a cross-cultural conception of tolerance for the sake of coexistence. Necessary tenets such as mutual respect, proactive engagement, temporal equality, and cross-cultural friendship appear to be unacceptable conditions of a perfidious human society that will only weaken Muslim efforts at reviving the Islamic way of life. If coexistence requires a cross-cultural strategy of tolerance, where individuals and communities endure the immutable—and often offensive—differences of others, while not refusing goodwill toward them as members of the human family, then for fundamentalists like Qutb and Maududi, coexistence, via tolerance, is inconceivable in

²⁸Qutb, *Social Justice*, 59-60.

²⁹Haddad, 84.

Islamic thought. Instead, it represents an irresponsible, Western way of thinking that must be avoided if Islamic civilization is to experience revival.³⁰

Mechanical Interpretation of the Muslim Extremist

The militant beliefs and actions of Muslim extremists frequently find motivation in the intolerant doctrines of the Islamist patriarchs and fundamentalist movements mentioned above. For instance, the “comprehensive revolution,”³¹ called for by Qutb, against all forms of human governance that seek to usurp God’s sovereignty is clearly a “harbinger of Osama bin Laden’s thinking” and central to the extremists’ call for Muslims to revoke their allegiance to any government or cause that strays from the way of Islam.³² However, while recognizing their common desire to re-Islamize society and rebuff Western impositions through an inflexible interpretation of Islam, it is important to briefly delineate some of the differences between the radical, militant cast of political Islam, fueled by extremist groups such as the Taliban, al-Jihad, and al-Qaeda, and the more traditional forms of Islamism.

Beyond inspiring their intolerant and intransigent interpretations of Islam, the variances between these two species of Islamism are somewhat apparent. Traditional movements such as Wahhabism, although undoubtedly concerned about exploiting sociopolitical power as a way to assert their religiopolitical conservatism, are distinctly

³⁰Qutb, *Social Justice in Islam*, 297, 299, 306, 329, 333-35. See also Qutb, *Maalim*, 59, 64, 125-28, 200; and Haddad, 86-87.

³¹Qutb, *Maalim*, 81; quoted in Haddad, 81.

³²Goodman, 15.

intracivilizational.³³ That is, their concern about religiopolitical control does not generally extend beyond Islamic civilization. Abou El Fadl, a Muslim intellectual and expert in Islamic law at the University of California at Los Angeles, discusses how the distinctive inwardness of traditional fundamentalism is congenial to its compulsive preoccupation with traditionalism and fixation on Muslim conformance to ritualistic formalities.³⁴ In contrast, the aspirations of Islam's radical Islamists are not limited to the Muslim world but include forceful, intercivilizational efforts to assert their uncompromising will on Muslims and the Other alike. Abou El Fadl highlights the belligerent tendencies of Muslim extremists:

As populist movements, they [militant Islamists] are a reaction to the disempowerment most Muslims have suffered in the modern age at the hands of harshly despotic governments, and at the hands of harshly despotic powers. These groups compensate for extreme feelings of disempowerment by extreme and vulgar claims to power. Fueled by supremacist and puritan theological creeds, their symbolic acts of power become uncompromisingly fanatic and violent.³⁵

What is more, even though both traditional and militant varieties of Islamism find their solution to the social, political, and economic malaise of the Muslim world through a worldview of Islam that is infused with a text-centered particularism, its more extreme casts, unlike the earlier forms of conservatism, have made opportunistic use of modernity's benefits—"wholesale adoption" of Western science, technology, and propaganda—for the sake of acquiring power and affecting socio-political change.³⁶

³³Abou El Fadl, 11.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Nasr, 181. See also Feldman, 47.

Ironically, recoiling against the Western mantra of consumerism and materialism and modernity's assertion of universal human values has not precluded Islamism's forward-thinking adoption of modern technology for use against Western imposition. Whatever the sociopolitical disparities between the various forms of Islamic fundamentalism, in general, there remains an overlying tendency toward a "normative particularism" that is manifested in circumscribed doctrines of exclusion and intolerance.³⁷

Proof texts are proffered by Islamists to contest coexistence with the West and to advocate a general intolerance to lasting difference. The bellicose verbiage and actions of Islamic extremists clearly resonate with those passages that, in isolation, justify exclusion and intolerance.³⁸ They often refer, for instance, to passages which direct the Muslim "to fight those among the People of the Book who do not believe in God or the Hereafter, who do not forbid what God and His Prophet have forbidden, and who do not acknowledge the religion of truth—fight them until they pay the poll tax with willing submission and feel themselves subdued."³⁹ Mechanical readings enable Islamists to appropriate their exclusionary conservatism with such verses as, "O' you who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as allies. They are allies of each other, and he amongst you who becomes their ally is one of them. Verily, God does not guide the unjust."⁴⁰ Literal and ahistorical exegeses of such verses help explain the baneful effects puritan interpretations can have on cross-cultural efforts toward coexistence. Read in isolation,

³⁷Abou El Fadl, 10-11.

³⁸Ibid., 11.

³⁹Qur'an 9:29. Abou El Fadl, 12-13.

⁴⁰Qur'an 5:51. Ibid., 11.

“do not take the Jews and Christians as allies” appears incontrovertible, obviating Muslim support of proactive, respectful, and non-violent engagement with Western civilization. This intolerant and circumscribed mold of Islam effectively forestalls, within the Muslim world, a wholesale acceptance of tolerance for the sake of coexistence. For Islamic puritans, the Qur’anic injunction to “fight them [Jews and Christians] until they pay the poll tax (*jizya*) with willing submission,” clearly outlines a hierarchy of human existence and a subordinate dignity conferred on non-Muslims. Abou El Fadl explains this Muslim dilemma to coexistence:

The puritan doctrine is not necessarily or entirely dismissive of the rights of non-Muslims, and it does not necessarily lead to the persecution of Jews and Christians. But it does assert a hierarchy of importance, and the commitment to toleration is correspondingly fragile and contingent. So it is conducive to an arrogance that can easily descend into a lack of respect or concern for the well-being or dignity of non-Muslims. When this arrogant orientation is coupled with textual sources that exhort Muslims to fight against unbelievers (*kuffar*), it can produce a radical belligerency.⁴¹

Coexistence demands a cross-cultural commitment to tolerance. This commitment to tolerance must be expansive enough to include learning how to disagree without resorting to violence, an attitude of mutual respect, and an ongoing process of cross-cultural engagement. However, the theological orientations of Islam’s fundamentalists approbate an inhibited idea of tolerance that relegates non-Muslims to a subordinated existence, essentially dispelling the ethic of *caritas* and a posture of mutual respect critical for coexistence.

In spite of its pervasive influence in the Islamic world, some argue that the West has exaggerated Islamism’s potency and future impact. Iranian philosopher and professor at George Washington University Seyyed Hossein Nasr, along with other Muslim

⁴¹Abou El Fadl, 13.

scholars, warns against Western tendencies, since the tragedies of September 11, 2001, to associate Islamic civilization, in its entirety, with “the violent nature of extremism in certain Islamic countries.”⁴² In addition, Nasr cautions those who would encapsulate all Muslim efforts to regain or sustain Islamic values and symbols as “revolutionary” or “violent” fundamentalism.⁴³ Anthropologist Dale Eickelman takes this warning a step further, arguing that indiscriminate labels such as “fundamentalism” reflect only one part of the Islamic story and inevitably distract the global community from the profound spiritual and intellectual cultivation currently being realized across the Muslim world.⁴⁴

Coexistence can only occur if a civilization’s ultimate concern permits. Instead of circumventing the reality of illiberal and intolerant ideas in Islamic history and tradition, coexistence requires recognition of their existence (without exaggeration), as well as recognition of the Muslim prerogative to challenge the authenticity of those intolerant elements, while at the same time encouraging those irenic and tolerant elements of their faith.⁴⁵ Modern Muslim intellectuals such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, Muhammad Talbi,

⁴²Nasr, 182.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Dale F. Eickelman, “The Coming Transformation in the Muslim World,” in *Current History* (January 2000), 16. Dale Eickelman is a professor of anthropology and human relations at Dartmouth College. One of his more recent works is *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999).

⁴⁵Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 4. Friedmann acknowledges the same required admission for Christians. Furthermore, he points out that Muslims can find solace in the commonly held belief that the living standards of non-Muslims under medieval Muslim rulers, for instance, “were significantly better than those imposed on Jews and other minorities by their Christian counterparts.” Bernard Lewis supports this view: “there is nothing in Islamic history to compare with the

Fethullah Gülen, Muhammad Arkoun, Abdullahi Ahmed an-Na'im, and Abdolkarim Souroush cogently propose as much. They have exercised their right as Muslims to advocate the tolerant principles of their tradition that they believe symbolize Islam, while vitiating the obduracy of competing Muslim interpretations of intolerance and exclusion.

Theological Foundations for Tolerance

In his prospectus on religious liberty around the globe, W. Cole Durham, law professor at Brigham Young University, argues that within societies of greater religious homogeneity “cultural blindness” often plays a prominent role in obfuscating the need for protecting religious difference.⁴⁶ And, as Durham rightly concludes, such an obstacle can only be overcome “if there are grounds within a religious tradition calling for toleration of or respect for the rights of others to have divergent beliefs.”⁴⁷ An abundance of resources approbating the tolerance of others certainly exists within Islamic jurisprudence and tradition. John Esposito, a scholar of Islamic Studies, highlights the existence today of a “cross section of Muslim thinkers, religious leaders, and mainstream Islamic movements from Egypt to Indonesia, Europe to America,” who “engage in this kind of reformist interpretation of Islam and its relationship to democracy, pluralism and human

massacres and expulsions, the inquisitions and persecutions that Christians habitually inflicted on non-Christians and still more on each other. In the lands of Islam, persecution was the exception; in Christendom, sadly, it was the norm.” Bernard Lewis, *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East* (New York: Schocken Books, 1998), 129.

⁴⁶W. Cole Durham, Jr. “Perspective on Religious Liberty: A Comparative Framework,” in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspectives*, ed. Johan D. van der Vyver and John Witte, Jr. (Hague: Martin Nijhoff, 1996), 13.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 15.

rights.”⁴⁸ Potent arguments from a host of Islamic scholars reveal how the concept of tolerance, although historically inconsistent, is a clear leitmotif deep within the scriptures and history of Islam.

A lasting solution toward a greater understanding of tolerance across the Muslim world is not to be found in such Western constructs as liberalism and secularism, but in the root and fabric of Islam itself. Notwithstanding Turkey’s complex and tumultuous body politic, secularism was largely deemed a failure for Muslim states, particularly in the Middle East and Indonesia.⁴⁹ In contrast, Islam has sustained reputations as a viable source from which to mobilize justice and challenge intolerant treatment of religious and ethnic minorities from both governments and society at large. Professor Noah Feldman encapsulates this capacity within Islam:

Like other religious traditions, Islam provides a deeply resonant vocabulary for criticizing government from the standpoint of morality. Muslim scholars, judges, and philosophers have long called for justice and righteousness in the name of Islam. When people in the Muslim world criticize their governments as being “un-Islamic,” they are often simply calling those governments unjust, corrupt, and repressive.⁵⁰

Islam’s potency lies in the lucidity of its moral imagination, which holds magistrates and citizens responsible to one another and ultimately accountable to God.⁵¹ Many Muslims today are revisiting and interpreting the wellspring of values inherent to Islamic tradition and jurisprudence. For Islamic law professor Mohammad Hashim Kamali, the *shari’a* epitomizes true human equality and justice, two moral elements that are “pivotal to the

⁴⁸Esposito, “Practice and Theory,” 98-99.

⁴⁹Feldman, 20.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., 20-21.

value structure of Islam.”⁵² What one scholar said of Pakistani Muslims could be ascribed to Muslims in general: “No morality exists which does not find its ultimate sanction in Islam.”⁵³ Thus, there is significant value in examining historical, theological, and philosophical arguments for tolerance in the soul and tradition of Islam. Of course, it is not this author’s purpose to assess the proper place of tolerance for Muslims; that is an interpretive question for Muslims to ultimately address. For that reason, the remaining pages of this chapter place primary focus on how Muslim thinkers are searching for the place of tolerance in Islam.

An isolated reading of particular texts for religious tolerance or intolerance in Islam provides a seemingly inchoate message. While one may glean from some Qur’anic passages, such as “there is no compulsion in religion”⁵⁴ or “to you your religion and to me my religion,”⁵⁵ that Islam advocates a fair degree of tolerance, passages such as “take not the Jews and Christians for friends. . . . He among you who takes them for friends is one of them,”⁵⁶ seem to discourage contemporary efforts toward coexistence.⁵⁷ A closer

⁵²Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Freedom, Equality, and Justice* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2002), 47.

⁵³Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, *Pakistan: An Islamic Democracy* (Lahore, n.d., [1951]), 5; quoted in Sharif Al Mujahid, *Ideology of Pakistan* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1974), 4; found in *Essays on Pakistan Affairs*, vol. 2 (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1975), series no. 21.

⁵⁴Qur’an 2.256.

⁵⁵Qur’an 109.6.

⁵⁶Qur’an 5:51.

⁵⁷This suggestion is made by Roger M. Savory, “Relations between the Safavid State and its Non-Muslim Minorities,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 14, no. 4 (2003): 435.

examination into the moral essence of Islamic scripture and tradition may help elucidate the distinct place for tolerance in Islam.

Khaled Abou El Fadl challenges the intolerant readings of Islam by modern Muslim puritans, arguing that Islamists essentially disengage the Qur'an from its historical context and moral imperatives of justice, kindness, gentleness, mercy, and goodness.⁵⁸ In contrast, he argues that a virtuous, contextual reading of the Qur'an reveals an inherent ethic of tolerance. Quoting the Qur'an, Fadl writes: "If thy Lord had willed, He would have made humankind into a single nation, but they will not cease to be diverse...And, for this God created them [humankind]." ⁵⁹ He maintains that the classical interpreters of the Qur'an, due primarily to a lack of strong temporal incentive, never completely analyzed the divine sanctioning of diversity and interfaith intercourse, leaving such possibilities of pluralism "underdeveloped in Islamic theology."⁶⁰ Although Muslims in the first two centuries of Islamic conquest did confront a sizeable non-Muslim population and the political necessity of religious tolerance (e.g., development of the *dhimma*), the rapid ascendancy of Islamic civilization—militarily, politically, and numerically—resulted in a Muslim world where the recognition and subsequent protection of religious diversity were of little temporal importance and thus ideologically underdeveloped. However, as the first two centuries demonstrated, when confronted with

⁵⁸Abou El Fadl, 14.

⁵⁹Qur'an 11.118-9.

⁶⁰Abou El Fadl, 16.

a greater degree of religious pluralism and diversity, the idea of tolerance could be principally justified by Muslim leaders and the Islamic state.⁶¹

Important to coexistence is the Qur'anic affirmation of God's authority to resolve all matters of disagreement, perhaps even offering non-Muslims the blessing of salvation: "Those who believe, those who follow Jewish scriptures, the Christians, the Sabians, and any who believe in God and the Final Day, and do good, all shall have their reward with their Lord and they will not come to fear or grief."⁶² Further, a moral and contextual reading of the Qur'an, contends Abou El Fadl, illuminates the Islamic teaching of reciprocity. Muslims must support and defend the Prophet and Islam against any threats from non-Muslims, but they must also acknowledge the distinctiveness and divinely sanctioned "moral worth and rights of the non-Muslim 'other.'"⁶³ It follows, then, that such terms as *jihad* (to strive or struggle—internally and externally—for justice and purity) are not imperialist and unlimited, but rather grounded upon the idea of reciprocity: "If your enemy inclines towards peace, then you should seek peace and trust in God."⁶⁴ Though the Qur'an encourages Muslims to make peace with those who seek peace, its ethic of reciprocity does direct *jihad* against those who "Fought you in religion and drove you out of your homes and assisted in driving you out."⁶⁵ Nonetheless, if Islamists

⁶¹Ibid. The Ottoman and Mughal Empires would later confront sizeable non-Muslim populations with anachronistic policies of systematic tolerance. The idiosyncrasies underpinning their policies for coexistence will be discussed in chapter six.

⁶²Ibid., 17. Qur'an 5.69, 2.62.

⁶³Ibid., 18.

⁶⁴Qur'an. 8.61. Ibid.19-20.

⁶⁵Qur'an. 60.9. Ibid., 20.

conclude that Muslims are in an enduring state of conflict with nonbelievers, and non-believers are “a permanent enemy and always a legitimate target,” then such Qur’anic passages directing reciprocity, restraint, and peace must be discarded as null and void.⁶⁶

An often repeated verse, “There Shall Be No Compulsion in Matters of Faith,”⁶⁷ is perhaps the clearest Qur’anic declaration for religious tolerance and freedom for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslim, Sudanese scholar Muddathir ‘Abd Al-Rahim writes how this “categorical statement” explicitly enjoins Muslims from forceable conversions. More than a sin, he argues, coercion “is also a crime punishable by *shari’a* law—the punishment under the Ottoman Empire being death, an injunction derived from the Qur’anic precept that ‘tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter.’”⁶⁸ What is more, Muslims are not only to forgo religious coercion of non-Muslims, but they are to extend kindness, compassion, and justice to them as well. “God forbids you not with regard to those who fight you not for [your] faith nor drive you out of your homes from dealing kindly and justly with them: for God loves those who are just.”⁶⁹ This Qur’anic passage teaches that obedience to Islam requires a proactive charity and justice to all “peaceful

⁶⁶Abou El Fadl, 20-21. Qur’an 60:9, 4:90, 4:94, 2:194, 2:190, and 5:2. See Goodman for a detailed discussion and exegesis of studies, texts, and scholars dealing with the historical roots and contemporary place of Islamic thought.

⁶⁷Qur’an 2:256

⁶⁸William H. Brackney, ed. *Human Rights and the World’s Major Religions*, vol. 3, *The Islamic Tradition*, by Muddathir ‘Abd al-Rahim (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 46. Qur’an 2:190. ‘Abd al-Rahim is a professor of Political Science and Islamic Studies at the International Islamic University of Malaysia. He is also a charter member and Secretary General of the Sudanese National Committee for Human Rights, founded in 1967.

⁶⁹Qur’an 60:8-9. Ibid.

and law-abiding citizens” (Muslim and non-Muslim).⁷⁰ Once again the ethic of reciprocity is emphasized as central to Islam: “Fight in God’s cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression.”⁷¹ Unless direct acts of hostility are carried out against Muslims, relations with non-Muslims should be characterized by goodwill and coexistence.⁷² Peace is the most righteous and beneficent alternative for the pious follower of Islam. Even when reciprocating in self-defense against foreign aggression, “indiscriminate destruction” is prohibited. According to one report, when the Prophet Muhammad dispatched an army to rebuff foreign aggression, “he charged its commander personally to fear God, the Most High, and he enjoined the Muslims who were with him to do good [i.e., to conduct themselves properly]. . . . Do not cheat or commit treachery nor should you mutilate anyone or kill children.”⁷³ From this perspective of Islamic tradition, no temporal circumstance ever relieves Muslims from the religious obligation of mercy and self-restraint. Emphasizing this Islamic injunction toward righteous conduct, ‘Abd al-Rahim recites the instructions the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, gave to warriors preparing to advance into Syria against a Byzantine army:

Do not commit treachery, nor depart from the right path. You must not mutilate, neither kill a child or aged man or woman. Do not destroy a palm-tree, nor burn it with fire, and do not cut any fruitful tree. You must not slay any of the flock or the herds or the camels, save for your subsistence. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them to that to which they have devoted their lives.⁷⁴

⁷⁰Ibid., 46-47.

⁷¹Qur’an 2:190. Ibid., 47.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Quoted in Ibid., 47.

Thus, even during times of violent conflict with non-Muslims, within and beyond the realm of *dar al-Islam*, innocence was to be protected and restraint was expected.

Numerous *hadith* (narrative reports of a saying, precept, or action of the Prophet Muhammad) demonstrate a congruity between the Qur'an's directives toward tolerance and the Prophet Muhammad's teachings and sayings. Muslims are taught: "One who forbids leniency closes the door to all goodness," and "Be merciful to the inhabitants of the earth and He who is in heaven will be merciful to you." The Prophet Muhammad instructs Muslims on how "mercy is not denied to anyone except to those who are cruel to others." He again imparts: "One who is not compassionate, God will not be compassionate to him."⁷⁵ An obedient Muslim disposition, then, encompasses such critical values as leniency, mercy, and compassion. A sixteenth-century addition to *hadith* literature declares the Islamic significance of a good disposition:

The believers who are the most perfect in faith are those who are the happiest in disposition.

A good disposition melts offences as the Sun melts ice

A good disposition is the greatest of Allah's creations

He who has a good disposition will receive the same reward as one who has merit from fasting and prayer.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-Farid*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 1983), 247; quoted in 'Abd al Rahim, 47-48.

⁷⁵Abū Zahrah, *al-Mujtama' al-Insānī fī Zill al-Islām*, 2nd ed (Jeddah: Dār al Ṣu'ūdiyyah, 1981), 57-8; quoted in Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *The Dignity of Man: An Islamic Perspective* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2002), 69.

⁷⁶These sayings were composed in the sixteenth century by Ala 'al-Din ibn Mutaqqi, "The Treasury of Workmen in Traditions and Sayings and Deeds" (*Kanz al-'Ummal fī Sunan al-Aqwal wa'l-Af'al*) and had been published on the margins of the *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal (Cairo edition); quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, *Studies in*

A good disposition is not only an acknowledged virtue in Islam, but it is the *summum bonum* of the Muslim life. One finds a good disposition at the root of lasting coexistence. Islamist interpretations of exclusivism, extremism, and general intolerance appear in conflict with the irenic spirit central to Islamic thought, tradition, and scripture. According to Kamali, the Prophet Muhammad taught that *dīn al-samāhah* was a distinguishing mark of Islam that can be compared to three English nouns of similar meaning: magnanimity, generosity, and tolerance.⁷⁷ “Avoid extremism, for people have been led to destruction because of extremism.” This *hadith* demonstrates the Prophet’s aversion to fanaticism and doctrinal hair-splitting (*tanattu’*).⁷⁸ The Qur’an’s proclivity toward an authentic embrace of tolerance is evident in its injunction to “hold to forgiveness, enjoin the good and turn away from the ignorant.”⁷⁹ Again, it teaches, “He who bears patiently and forgives—that is a sign of real resolve.”⁸⁰ Forgiveness is urged by the Qur’an, as believers are taught not to impatiently challenge every conflicting issue

Muslim Ethics (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), 79. The Sunni canon of *hadith* was completed five hundred years after Muhammad’s death and consists of six authentic collections of Traditions: al-Bukhari (d. 870), Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (d.875), Ibn Maja (d.886), Abu Dawud (d. 888), al-Tirmidhi (d. 892), al-Nisai (d. 915). Ahmed ibn Hanbal (mid-eighth century) is often included as a recognized source of Traditions. The sayings above were published in the margins of Ibn Hanbal’s *Musnad*. Ibid.

⁷⁷Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 68.

⁷⁸Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad Ibn Hanbal*, vol. 5, *hadith* no. 3655. See Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 68. The Prophet Muhammad’s condemnation of *tanattu’* is clear in his pointed repetition, “Perished are the hair-splitters, perished are the hair-splitters, perished are the hair-splitters” (*hadith* no. 1824). Quoted in Ibid., 71.

⁷⁹Qur’an 7:199.

⁸⁰Qur’an 42:41.

but, instead, to tolerate that which “emanates from ignorance rather than malice.”⁸¹ Such instruction empowers Muslims to endure the immutable (and what they consider to be inferior) beliefs and practices of non-Muslims, grounding that tolerance on the Islamic precept to respect the non-malevolent intentions of the Other. At the root of Islam is submission to God and an awareness of Muhammad’s example of an ideal life of faithfulness toward which all Muslims should aspire. The *sunna* represents a gathering of the way and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad for the purpose of illuminating the divine precepts of normative Islam. Following the Qur’an the *sunna* is the second source for Islamic law. The *sira* represents a collection of traditions for the specific purpose of studying, biographically, Muhammad’s life.⁸² Both the *sira* and *sunna* routinely reference the following magnanimous sayings of Muhammad:

The three doors of good conduct are generosity of soul, agreeable speech, and steadfastness in adversity.

The generous man who is ignorant is more precious in the sight of Allah than the learned man who is miserly

Generosity is one of the trees of Paradise. Its branches extend to the earth, and whoever seizes one of these branches will be raised to Paradise.

The most worthy of you is the one who controls himself in anger, and the most tranquil [tolerant] of you is the one who forgives when he is in authority.⁸³

⁸¹Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 69.

⁸²Donaldson, 67-68. For Twelver Shi’i, the *sunna* represents the deeds, sayings and approvals of Muhammad, as well as the twelve Imams. Shi’i believe the Imams were appointed by God to follow Muhammad and to lead mankind in the Islamic way of life.

⁸³Muhammad Amin, *Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad* (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, nd.); quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, 70.

From these familiar sayings one learns how the respect of human difference and the task of coexistence can be commendable values for Muslims. The generosity, benevolent speech, and endurance in diversity recorded above are all tenets of tolerance and requisites for coexistence that find cogency in Islam.

It is evident in the Qur'an and in numerous *hadith* and *sunna* that tolerance is co-dependent with other pervasive values such as compassion, generosity, restraint, equality, and justice. One of the ninety-nine names most often ascribed to God perhaps best demonstrates the tolerant and charitable marrow of the Islamic faith: "Most Compassionate." Muhammad Kamali concludes his analysis of tolerance in Islam by declaring that compassion and tolerance are the perfect attributes of God that humanity is ultimately called to embrace and reflect upon one another. For that reason, "tolerance and *rahmah* [compassion]," he declares, "become the most favoured of all attributes and they become characteristic of Islam itself."⁸⁴

Metaphysical Justifications for Tolerance

An Islamic philosophical renaissance of sorts occurred from the ninth to twelfth centuries. Many Greek texts were translated into Arabic and introduced into the Islamic world during this time. Al-Farabi (873-950), Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980-1037), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes—"The Commentator") (1126-98) were great figures of philosophy during this era that influenced both Islamic and Western philosophical traditions.⁸⁵

⁸⁴Kamali, *The Dignity of Man*, 72.

⁸⁵Paul Kurtz, "Free Inquiry and Islamic Philosophy: The Significance of George Hourani," in *Averroës and the Enlightenment*, ed. Mourad Wahba and Mona Abousenna (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996), 234.

Philosophy has played a disputed role in the history of Islamic thought. The historical debate between the philosophers and orthodox leaders rested on the benefits and dangers of synthesizing *falsafa* (philosophy or rational discourse) with revelation. Historically, however, few Muslim philosophers looked beyond the *shari'a* as the “one true moral Code.”⁸⁶ For Ibn Sina and al-Farabi, for example, *falsafa* was simply a more effective epistemological method for conveying the truths of the Qur'an than that of the “crass popular narrativism of the Reporters and, indeed, Jurists.”⁸⁷ But unbelief was rarely a question, as few Islamic philosophers ever believed that revelation and reason stood in contradiction.⁸⁸ The conflict centered on the philosophers' rationalistic alternative to revelation alone. The philosophical tradition in Islam did embrace reason as an effective means, beyond religious dogma, to help solve moral dilemmas and address new situations.⁸⁹ They did believe in a “perceptible rationality” behind “Prophetic morality,” and thus all humanity could be convinced—from both rational judgment and historical human experience—of the credibility of the *shari'a* as the one true code of morality.⁹⁰

There is always a danger in attributing great thinkers of the past with modern sensitivities in order to address our circumstances today. However, acknowledging this tendency, philosopher Paul Kurtz comments on how human communities “have always

⁸⁶Black, 59.

⁸⁷Ibid., 58.

⁸⁸Ibid., 59-60; and George Hourani, *On the Harmony between Religion and Philosophy* (London: Luzak & Co., 1967).

⁸⁹Kurtz, 240-41.

⁹⁰Black, 59.

interpreted the past in the light of present needs.”⁹¹ Indeed, Muslims today are reexamining past Islamic thinkers in ways that speak to circumstances today. Islamic humanists today are embracing the rationalism and intellectual freedom espoused by Muslims in the past while devoted to the timeless postulates of Islam. Like their tenth-century counterpart, al-Farabi, modern Muslim philosophers are again employing reason and human experience, in conjunction with law and tradition, as alternative epistemologies for perceiving and expressing the Qur’anic message.⁹² One prominent Islamic philosopher, whose works reveal an ethical theology that powerfully speaks to today’s need for coexistence, is Abdolkarim Soroush.

Islamic Humanism of Abdolkarim Soroush

To the dismay of those Islamists who recoil against that cosmopolitan spirit espoused by Islamic humanism, contemporary Iranian thinker and Muslim philosopher Abdolkarim Soroush, in his “Treaty on Tolerance,” begins by paying tribute to the “soul of Erasmus,” whom he describes as the “master of tolerance and pluralism.”⁹³ To his conflicted Muslim community in a post-revolutionary Iran, where the “political asphyxiation” of *unorthodox* interpretations of Islam has forced many political and intellectual reformers into exile, Soroush states that it is possible to live within a democratic political system where diverse opinions are freely expressed while maintaining fidelity to the normative values of Islam. Espousing democratic governance

⁹¹Kurtz, 239.

⁹²Black, 63.

⁹³Abdolkarim Soroush, “Treatise on Tolerance,” translated by Nilou Mobasser, (Praemium Erasmian Foundation, 2004), 1.

as wholly consonant with Islam, Soroush argues that neither tolerance nor government accountability to its citizens are alien ideas to his Iranian culture or Islamic creed.⁹⁴

Philosophically, for Soroush, Islam exposes the feebleness and imperfections of human beings, resulting in an attitude of intellectual humility. The humility that results from the recognition of human fallibility is a rudimentary source for tolerance in Islam. To tolerate those who err becomes an effective means of expressing the end of humility. Referencing the celebrated fourteenth-century Iranian poet Hafez, Soroush emphasizes the poet's readings of Islam, which conclude that human persons, each a product of sin and each susceptible to Satan's temptations, "can neither stake claim to infallibility themselves nor treat harshly others who err and expect them to behave like angels."⁹⁵ Soroush challenges the imperious self-confidence of Islamists, arguing that those who are closer to the truth are more tolerant and humble than those who, through intellectual arrogance and self-righteousness, would forcefully impose their self-assured religiosity on others. Soroush's Islamic humanism is transparent as he draws from both Western and Islamic thought to put forth epistemological skepticism as central to understanding human limitations and the subsequent need for tolerance and humility.⁹⁶

Moreover, reflecting on Islamic mystics such as India's Mowlana Jalal-al-Din Rumi (Rumi), Soroush discusses the individual nature of faith. Rumi described religion, not as a sword, but as a rope that each person must freely take hold, "with a longing to ascend, in order to climb out of the well of ignorance and conceit and glimpse the light of

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid., 2.

⁹⁶Ibid., 3-5.

knowledge, magnanimity and kindness.”⁹⁷ The rope, symbolizing Islam, is without fault. However, its human expression depends on the individual who chooses to either ascend upward toward God or descend downward into the mire. Similar to Abou El Fadl, who argues that Muslims must approach the Qur’an with a certain measure of moral fortitude if they are to be morally enriched by the text of their faith, Soroush contends that one must first rectify his or her intentions and directives before appropriating Islamic scripture and tradition. He explains: “There are people who turn religions into the instruments of animosity and there are people who turn them into the instruments of kindness and coexistence. It depends on their ‘passion,’ which comes before religion and sits outside of it.”⁹⁸ Moral turpitude must be avoided, then, if one is to articulate the authentic Qur’anic message and truly experience the Islamic way of life.

Soroush concludes his essay on tolerance by elevating Sufism as the pinnacle representative of tolerance in Islam. By piloting people in the direction of intellectual humility and unequivocal benevolence and rejecting deprecating power and avarice, Sufism has helped to temper human conflict, thereby stimulating coexistence. Arrogance has been deemed the greatest vice, breeding violence and isolation, while humility esteemed the greatest virtue, fostering tolerance of and coexistence with all humanity.⁹⁹ Thus, for Soroush, it is humility or, maybe more accurately, meekness that in the end begets tolerance. Meekness is a potent virtue found within Islam (and Christianity) that may be likened to an unbridled stallion that has been harnessed by its master. It

⁹⁷Ibid., 6.

⁹⁸Ibid., 6.

⁹⁹Ibid., 7.

represents our sinful human nature harnessed in submission to the sovereignty of God. Perhaps it is on this volitional deference to the judgment and justice of God that tolerance finds its most stable and enduring foundation.

Viable exegeses from a number of Muslim scholars have revealed how concepts of tolerance have converged from various paths of Islamic theology and thought to become a leitmotif in Islamic scripture and tradition. Still, Muslims today are left with a critical choice as they confront opposing interpretations concerning the limits, or abeyance, of tolerance in Islam. There is the Islam of al-Qaeda, an Islamism fraught with triumphalism, xenophobia, militant intolerance, and violent opposition to coexistence. Then there is the Islam of tolerance and peace, a religion that embodies the Islamic postulates of compassion, diversity, humility, friendship, and mutual respect. Lenn Goodman is right to conclude that both faces of Islam—intolerant and tolerant—provide authentic representations with clear historic foundations.¹⁰⁰ The future course that Islamic civilization will traverse is yet uncertain. Not unlike the West, an introspective, self-defining struggle is taking place for the marrow of Islam, and the place of tolerance remains in the balance.

¹⁰⁰Goodman, 23.

CHAPTER SIX

A Diverse Sampling of Tolerance in the History of Islam

The Muslim world is not monolithic. Islamic civilization is comprised of numerous Muslim communities loosely conglomerated under Islam. Differences between Muslim communities abound. While some have a history of quietism, others are inherently political. As in the West, violent struggles for power have characterized much of Muslim history. The first civil war between the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, Ali, and the first Umayyad caliph, Muawiyah, occurred within three decades of the Prophet's death. This was the first of many civil wars between Muslim communities. The Muslim world eventually fragmented into competing regimes, each vying for control of the *dar al-Islam* under the auspices of their particular Islamic interpretations. In the tenth century, the missionizing Shi'i Fatimids in Egypt dawned as a formidable religiopolitical challenge to the Umayyads in Spain and the Sunni Abbasid caliphate. Overwhelmed by the thirteenth-century Mongol invasions, the Abbasid Empire fractured permanently and was replaced by multiple military dynasties. The medieval Muslim empires that ultimately materialized from this panoply of sultanates—the Mughals, the Safavids (Shi'i), and the Ottomans—struggled against one another, often intolerant of rival interpretations of Islam and distrusting of external, competing Islamic communities.

Interminable violence from the sectarian strife between Sunni and Shi'i continues in such places as Pakistan, Lebanon, and Iraq. The violence and disunity in Iraq is indicative of the divisions within the Muslim world. After the overthrow of Saddam and his regime, Iraq's constitutional assembly labored for many months on the structure of

their new government. While the three major factions—Kurds, Sunnis, and Shi'i—all agreed that Islam would play a prominent role as a source of law, they were deeply divided on the issue of federalism and national power distribution. All three groups are Muslim, yet they are deeply divided—politically and territorially—either because of ethnicity or interpretation of Islam.

Thus, although the Muslim world is united by the religion of Islam, in reality, it is a diverse array of cultures and communities that have understood and experienced their Islamic faith in different ways. Appreciating the heterogeneity of Islamic civilization, this chapter will analyze some of the various Muslim ideas and practices of tolerance that occurred during Islam's fourteen centuries. In particular, it will examine how tolerance was expressed in the historical Islamic concept of the *dhimma*; the Ottoman Empire and its modern vestige, Turkey; and the Indian subcontinent's Mughal Dynasty and its modern inheritor, Pakistan. As with Western civilization, context matters. Historically, contextual variables affected the way in which Muslims conceived tolerance. Muslims continue to debate and disagree about the history, traditions, and principles of their faith and how they have influenced their conceptualization of tolerance. This complexity must be emphasized if one is to appreciate the difficulties of encapsulating an Islamic imagination of tolerance for the sake of coexistence.

The Dhimma: Contracting Coexistence?

One important historical example of early Muslim formations of tolerance was the development of the *dhimma*. *Dhimma* was “the contractual relationship that granted to some, but not all, non-Muslim minorities a degree of protection of life and property under

the *Sharī'a* in return for payment of the *jizya*, or poll tax.”¹ According to C.L. Cahen, the *dhimma* became an “indefinitely renewed contract,” whereby the Muslim community conceded “hospitality and protection to members of other revealed religions” on the condition of their willing submission to Muslim authority.² While Zoroastrians were later justified for basically temporal reasons (as well as Hindus on the Indian Subcontinent), the *dhimma* originally applied only to the *ahl al-kitab*, or “People of the Book” (Jews and Christians). The idea of limited religious tolerance in Islam officially emerged during the seventh century under Muhammad and the subsequent Caliphate period, but the concept of *dhimma* was not implemented as an official state policy until the Umayyad Dynasty (661-750).³

In essence, the *ahl al-dhimma*, or *dhimmis*, represented an elevated class of non-Muslims—above the idolator and below the Muslim—within the *dar al-Islam* that was permitted in varying degree to openly express their religious beliefs and practices. While revolutionary for its time, the tolerance of *dhimmis* was by no means absolute and clearly mercurial in nature. The level of tolerance offered by Muslim authorities largely depended on the unique circumstances confronting local and regional Islamic leaders.

¹Roger M. Savory, “Relations between the Safavid State and its Non-Muslim Minorities,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 14, no.4 (2003): 435.

²C.L. Cahen, “Dhimma,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. Bernard Lewis and J. Schacht (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1983), 227.

³The legendary “Pact of Umar” is traditionally seen as the first formal agreement of tolerance between Muslims and the “People of the Book.” Its origin is disputed. Western scholars have typically designated the Umayyad caliph, Umar II (717-20), as the creator of the first edict of tolerance. Bruce Masters seeks to mediate the discrepancy surrounding its official origins, arguing that the “final formulation” was likely “a composite of many different agreements between Muslims and non-Muslims.” Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 21.

Out of primarily temporal motivation, the *dhimma* was employed by Muslim conquerors for a plethora of reasons. Placating the overwhelming non-Muslim majority, for instance, was essential to preserving a young, rapidly expanding Islamic empire. The *dhimma* enabled Muslim conquerors to accord an anachronistic level of freedom and protection to their “religiously inferior” subjects, while still officially categorizing them as second-class members of society. Moreover, this contract of tolerance helped the Muslim conquerors early on to benefit from the professional experience of the *ahl-al-kitab*, utilizing their expertise as civil administrators to ensure stable governance of the non-Muslim masses. This limited tolerance gave capable *dhimmis* largely unfettered authority to administer the non-Muslim populations that dominated the empire early on. As history would show, however, such tolerance was often situational and always susceptible to change.⁴

History reinforces the duality of political expediency and religious principle that undergirded this historically high level of tolerance. As the Muslim population became numerically superior—through both conversion and conquest—the tolerance of *dhimmis* became much more tentative, as explicit examples of growing discrimination toward non-Muslim minorities increased.⁵ Jane Smith, professor of Islamic studies at Hartford Seminary, offers a succinct analysis of this capricious framework of tolerance:

⁴See, for instance, Cahen, 227-31; and Masters.

⁵See Savory for a brief discussion of the *ahl al-dhimma*. A concise overview is provided by Chafik Chehata, “Dhimma,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 231; C.L. Cahen, “Dhimma,” in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 227-31; and Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis eds., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, 2 vol. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982).

The dhimmi status seems to have been a changing one, in that laws were made and either broken or forgotten, and relations between Christians and Muslims obviously were dependant on individual whim and personal advantage as well as on what was stipulated by the law. Although Christians and Jews were often in the ranks of the very wealthy, they were never free from the whims of individual rulers who might choose to enforce strict regulations, or from the caprice of mobs expressing their passions in prejudicial and harmful ways. . . . In general, the first Arab Muslim dynasty, that of the Umayyads, was fairly flexible in terms of its Christian citizens, but in Islam's second century the laws became more stringent. . . . Through the Middle Ages there was a hardening of attitudes against dhimmis, due more to political than to religious reasons, especially after the period of the Crusades.⁶

While the *dhimma* cannot be equated to modern juridical efforts toward intercommunal coexistence, it continues to symbolize a degree of tolerance, officially sanctioned through Islam, which was anachronistic to its age, generally exceeding the minimal tolerance afforded to religious minorities in the contemporary Christian world.⁷

Islam was the official religion of the Ottoman Empire, which controlled a multi-creedal, polyglot, cross-cultural region of the world. A brief look at the treatment of

⁶Jane I. Smith, "Islam and Christendom: Historical, Cultural, and Religious Interactions from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 308-09. The concept of *dhimma* was interpreted in an exacting sense mainly by judges and jurists of Islam, while in a more contextual sense by various regional rulers and administrators. The legal schools differed on the level of religious tolerance to non-Muslims. While Christians did occupy important positions throughout the Islamic empire, including court physicians, architects, engineers, translators, and civil administrators, they were, at the same time, prohibited from, *inter alia*, living in Mecca or Medina, giving testimony about a Muslim in legal courts, marrying a Muslim, or building new churches or repairing old ones in towns where Muslims lived. Ibid., 308. Other restrictions required that non-Muslims be clearly distinguished from Muslims, as Jews and Christians were ordered to display a yellow patch on their external clothing and were forbidden to ride certain kinds of animals. In addition, insulting Islam, seeking conversion of a Muslim, and apostasy were all punishable by death. See Savory, 435-36; Smith, 308; and Cahen, 227. Non-dhimmis such as the Manicheans and Mazdakites were not protected under the *dhimma* and thus "had no redress if persecuted." Savory, 437.

⁷See Cahen, 230, for a brief comparison of historical tolerance and intolerance between Christian and Muslims. See also Masters, 23.

dhimmis during the Ottoman period helps penetrate the complexity of this limited, yet significant form of tolerance. In the Ottoman city of Aleppo, court records and historical reports reveal that Muslims and non-Muslims cooperated effectively in various socio-economic venues (especially in the city markets and trade guilds) without any blatant enmity and often spoke with a collective interest before the imperial courts. Still, intercommunal coexistence was always susceptible to the undulating behavior of the various religious communities, ranging from benevolent cooperation to blatant hostility.⁸ While *dhimmis* were afforded an unprecedented degree of tolerance under the Ottomans, a concise discussion of judicial *fatawi* (rulings by Ottoman judges), as well as court records from around the Ottoman Arab Empire, show how the stratification of social relationships between Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities was an immutable reality. For example, language used in the rulings issued by Ebussuûd Efendi (1574), who was highly respected as the chief justice or *Şeyhülislam* of the Ottoman Empire, reinforced the public opinion that the Muslim community should remain separate from the contemptible and inferior *dhimmi* communities. Rather than the “legalistic, and value neutral term *dhimmi*,” Efendi preferred to use the more derisive term of *kafir* (infidel) when referring to non-Muslim subjects.⁹ In the *dar al-Islam*, equality between communities was never a viable alternative for coexistence. Although the *dhimmi* were granted a high degree of autonomy for maintaining “their own legal traditions, the right to property, and safety of person,” the social demarcation remained clear, as “non-

⁸Masters, 29, 33-37, and 39.

⁹Ibid., 29.

Muslims had to accede to the social superiority of Muslims by doing nothing to disturb their peace and sense of well-being.”¹⁰

Confessional loyalties remained the foundation for identity in the Muslim world, “if for no other reason” than that state law and longstanding tradition required a society divided by religious distinction.¹¹ Historian Bruce Masters discusses how religious classification was enforced much more stringently through Islamic law in the cities than it was in the “thousands of villages where more heterodox religious traditions prevailed and the casual intermingling of people of different faiths was common before the hardening of sectarian boundaries in the nineteenth century.”¹² In spite of the contradictions surrounding the theoretical understandings and practical applications of the *dhimma*, it is clear that freedom and security of *dhimmis* were never indefinitely guaranteed. Informal cooperation and magnanimous interaction between Jewish, Christian, and Muslim peoples, easily interpreted as coexistence through tolerance, were always subordinated to socioeconomic and geopolitical contingencies. Mutual respect, hospitality, and even friendship were often discarded in situations of intercommunal tension and conflict, “not only between Muslims and non-Muslims, but between Christians and Jews as well.”¹³ Thus, even though *dhimmis* regularly intermingled with the Muslim community for political, economic, and cultural reasons, “as long as religion lay at the heart of each individual’s world-view, the potential for society to fracture along

¹⁰Ibid., 29.

¹¹Ibid., 39.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., 29.

sectarian lines remained.”¹⁴ As history eventually demonstrated, the dwindling Ottoman Empire would be forced to confront the potential of such a fracture during its encounters with the secularizing West in the tendentious nineteenth century.

Tolerance in Ottoman Turkey: Secularism on the Periphery

Michael Walzer writes that the multinational empire is the oldest form of tolerant regimes. Multinational regimes were heterogeneous, consisting of diverse self-governing or semi-independent religious and cultural communities.¹⁵ Stable coexistence was the overarching temporal impetus behind an imperial regime’s official tolerance of group difference. The Ottoman Empire—emerging in the thirteenth century and lasting into the early twentieth century—certainly met these general criteria. The Ottoman Empire’s official tolerance of group difference was carried out through its well-developed *millets*. In essence, the *millet* was the Ottoman’s modus operandi for systematizing the Islamic concept of the *ahl al-dhimma*. These *millets* were largely independent religious communities, differentiated, not by regional, national, or ethnic differences, but according to ecclesiastical association.¹⁶ Rather than segregating minority religious communities into ghettos or exiling them beyond its borders, the millet system, by according legal and religious authority to the respective ecclesiastical authorities of each community, enabled the Ottoman regime to experience longstanding unity across its

¹⁴Ibid., 40.

¹⁵Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 14.

¹⁶Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 11.

empire.¹⁷ Jewish, Armenian Orthodox, and Greek Orthodox peoples coexisted without impunity as semi-autonomous communities that professed political allegiance to the Ottoman Empire. Through its *millet* system, intercommunal coexistence was realized, providing social cohesion and political stability to this multinational regime.

As with the *dhimma*, the tolerance afforded by the Ottoman Empire should not be likened to equality, as non-Muslim communities were restricted to a lower-tier classification than that of the Muslim community. Bernard Lewis explains the parameters of this medieval Muslim tolerance:

This [tolerance] has sometimes been misrepresented in modern times as equality. It was not, of course, equality, and the very idea of such equality in a medieval society is absurdly anachronistic. The granting of equal rights by believers to unbelievers would have been seen, on both sides of the Mediterranean, not as a merit but as a dereliction of duty.¹⁸

Islam was the established religion, and Muslims were accorded a status of supremacy. For that reason, a recognized religious hierarchy was seen as both warranted and expected. While equal to each other, Walzer explains how these prominent non-Muslim communities were all “subject to the same restrictions vis-à-vis Muslims—with regard to dress, proselytizing, and intermarriage, for example.” What is more, these communities were given “the same legal control over their own members,” and, significantly, the level

¹⁷Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 10-12.

¹⁸Bernard Lewis, *Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Age of Discovery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 16. For a thorough historical study on the Ottoman system of tolerance see Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam* (New Haven, CT: Princeton University Press, 1984), 3-66; Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, eds, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*; and Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*.

of religious and social freedom the Ottomans extended to the various *millets* was not commensurately accorded by the various communities to their individual members.¹⁹

Modern parlance on the obligation of temporal authorities to secure individual freedoms and equality was not in the medieval lexicon of effective governance. Individual liberties were subordinate to the primary needs of communal cohesion and the common good. Communal solidarity was of paramount importance for the empire's stability and for the sake of group survival. For these reasons, an individual was inextricably associated with the religious, cultural, and linguistic particularities of his community.²⁰ Thus, Ottoman tolerance represented an exceptionally high level of longstanding communal tolerance (as compared to its Western contemporaries), but tolerance of individual liberties within and across the various *millets* remained historically unwarranted and theoretically inconceivable.

As the West began to expand economically, politically, and geographically, threatening the survival of the diminishing Ottoman Empire, Ottoman reformers in the nineteenth century sought a more amicable relationship with Europe and thus began to embrace a "modernization" of the state, supplanting the traditional understanding of Islam and the state with a Western ideal of "enlightened despotism."²¹ The Tanzimat reforms, beginning in 1839, altered the traditional *millet* system that had officially elevated the Muslim community above non-Muslim groups. The Reform Edict of 1856

¹⁹Walzer, 18.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Richard Tapper, ed., *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1991), 4.

was issued to dismantle the traditional inequality between religions that had existed for centuries.²² Islamic ideology, which had permeated and guided all societal institutions, was superseded by a secularization of the state and the prioritization of a territorial Turkish identity. Accentuating the pluralistic character of the Ottoman Empire, these nationalist reformers believed that the survival of the Ottoman Commonwealth depended upon the successful and swift implementation of modernizing policies that pushed national solidarity forward as the ultimate concern.²³ As such, the preservation of the commonwealth necessitated the realization of an “enlightened” idea of progress. More thematically, according to Niyazi Berkes, it called for a trio of comprehensive objectives—Muslim consolidation and unity, a synthesis of the *millets*, and modernization—in order to facilitate an Ottoman solidarity that could effectively buffer growing European ascendancy and expansion. In the nineteenth century, this multifaith, multiethnic, polyglot commonwealth realized a greater degree of religious and social equality that was subordinate only to patriotism to the sacred state²⁴

Weakened and fragmented in the previous century, following its defeat in World War I, much of the Ottoman Empire’s remaining territory came under the control of the Allied powers. At the center of this dismantled empire, Turkish nationalists began developing a modern state. Turkey became the Ottoman successor to the heterogeneous

²²Ayşe Kadioglu, “Republican Epistemology and Islamic Discourses in Turkey in the 1990s,” *Muslim World* 88 (January 1998): 5. The issue of religious inequality by the state was a critical item that the Western powers required a resolution to before rapprochement with the Ottomans could be made. England, France, Austria, and the Ottomans formed a commission that constructed the Reform Edict of 1856. *Ibid.*

²³Berkes, 221.

²⁴*Ibid.*

regions of Southeast Europe and the Anatolian Peninsula. It also inherited and embraced a Republican epistemology that found “its origins in the Ottoman statesmen’s initial encounters with the West.”²⁵

Led by Kemal Ataturk, Turkish revolutionaries (Kemalists) in the early twentieth century endeavored to realize their Ottoman predecessors’ dream of an interfaith, cross-cultural system of values by embracing a modern, minority view of Islam that not only separated religion from the state but replaced Islam with secular nationalism as the “social cement” of the commonwealth. These reformers placed the normative order of Islam under the control of individual Muslims, secularizing the laws of the state. This new societal glue—republic nationalism—subordinated Islam to the private sphere, officially outlawing the direct projections of religion into the political sphere of the nation.²⁶ The Turkish republic was officially established in 1923, and the state took oversight of religion. Following the First World War, the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 gave official recognition to the Turkish Republic and formally ended the *millet* system, granting equality to all citizens regardless of race or religion.²⁷ Most significantly, “the copingstone of the edifice of legal secularism was laid in April 1928, when Islam was removed from the constitution.”²⁸

²⁵Kadioglu, 2.

²⁶ Tapper, 5- 6.

²⁷Kevin Boyle and Juliet Sheen, *Freedom of Religion and Belief: World Report* (London: Routledge, 1997), 388.

²⁸Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 404.

Niyazi Berkes illuminates how this new secularized nation established a historical precedent in demonstrating the ability of a predominantly Muslim country to embrace the governing principle of popular sovereignty. According to Turkish nationalists, intercommunal unity would not be realized until the “theocratic concept” was eliminated as a religious and political requirement. In light of this ideological transformation, a major implication of the emerging sovereignty of the Turkish people was that tolerance through popular sovereignty was no longer an epiphenomenon of politics, but now a rudimentary principle of a majority-Muslim state.²⁹

Considering Turkey’s controversial embrace of various aspects of modern Western thought and practice, many within the Islamic world have come to view Turkey as a wayfaring state that succumbed to a heretical pursuit of militant secularism, an ideology that can never adequately replace the traditional and deeply ensconced place that Islam had served for centuries. Acknowledging this concern, it is worth remembering, however, that Turkey is not merely composed of simple polarities—West versus Islam—but, in actuality, is a periphery state that governs a citizenry variously committed to “both Islam and secularism, and indeed nationalism.”³⁰ While tensions between Kemalists and Islamists persist in Turkish politics and society, there is not a diametric opposition between secularists and Muslims, for many Kemalists and other supporters of a secular state are devout adherents to the Islamic faith.³¹ In short,

²⁹Berkes, 481-82.

³⁰Tapper, 7.

³¹In addition to Kemalists, for example, the approximately twelve million Alevis, a Shi’i minority in Turkey, have purposefully embraced, in fidelity to their Islamic beliefs, the Turkish Republic’s secularism as a necessary safeguard against the religious

contested meanings and practices internal and external to Islam are prevalent in Turkey. And despite the obvious faults and shortcomings that are clearly attributed to the rapid creation of a secular republic, Turkey has remained a predominantly Muslim state that has been able to exist in relative peace, tolerating minority faiths and respecting religion's sacred civil role as a prophetic voice and moral compass.

Since the 1940s Turkey has experienced a revival of Islam's "multi-level appeal."³² Arguably, Islam's influence perseveres, because after twenty-five years of secularism the materialist values of Kemalism failed to supply the human contentment and moral vision that only religion could provide.³³ Laicism has failed to extinguish the efficacy of Islam in the public square, as its moral and unifying influence remain. Thus, although Turkey has come up against a host of negative imperfections and challenges that have accompanied the establishment of a secular republic,³⁴ indefatigable efforts continue

persecution from the Sunni majority. For recent studies on the Turkish Alevi, see David Shankland, *The Alevis in Turkey: The emergence of a secular Islamic Tradition* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); İlhan Ataseven, *The Alevi-Bektasi Legacy: Problems of Acquisition and Explanation* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wil International, 1997); and Tord Olson, Catharina Raudvere, and Elisabeth Özdalga, eds., *Alevi Identity: Cultural, Religious, and Social Perspectives* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1998).

³²Tapper 7.

³³Ibid. Kadioglu writes that Kemalism's attempts to marginalize and direct Islamic institutions failed to disengage Islam from the public realm and, instead, made a way for its politicization. Kadioglu, 13-21.

³⁴Turkey continues to struggle with an ethnic intolerance and violence that culminated, in large part, following the transition towards nationalism and the desire for a Turkish identity. The sizeable Kurdish minority, for example, has faced persecution and intolerance because of their desire for cultural autonomy and the perceived threat they pose to national solidarity. Even though the Kurdish community is part of the majority Muslim population, its apparent refusal to accept its "Turkishness" has led to greater inequality, a general ethnic intolerance, and, in many cases, a forced assimilation. Turkey, then, is in essence an "ethnocracy" that "precludes any ethnonational

within this Muslim state to achieve a balance between the public and private nature of Islam, while at the same time separating it from the temporal dictates and influence of the state.

A Turkish Intellectual's Quest for Coexistence

A vibrant discourse on tolerance and the public place of Islam is underway among Muslim intellectuals in Turkey. A product of the Turkish Republic, these intellectuals are somewhat of a paradox. While many work to criticize the tenets of secularism and the state's marginalization of Islam, they remain entrenched within a dialogue firmly grounded in modern thought. In other words, in their attempts to restore Islam as an alternative to Western, secular discourse and re-Islamize the way of life for Muslims in Turkey, they are utilizing the "polemical terrain of modernism."³⁵ For most of these Muslim intellectuals, the solution to societal, political, and human decline in Turkey can only be located in the principles of Islam. They challenge the modern stereotypes, which often depict the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the twentieth century as indicative of Islam's inability to cope with modernity. Instead, as Michael Meeker comments, for Turkey's Muslim intellectuals, "Islam is not traditional, conservative, or reactionary."

differentiation within its borders." Thus, although it demonstrates a significant degree of religious tolerance, it has not yet demonstrated an acceptable tolerance to those who are seen as a threat to the integrity of the "sacred" secular state. Nils A. Butenshon, "State, Power, and Citizenship in the Middle East: A Theoretical Introduction," in *Citizenship and the State in the Middle East: Approaches and Applications*, ed. Nils A. Butenshon, Uri Davis, and Manuel Hassassian (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 19-20.

³⁵Kadioglu, 17. See also Michael Meeker, "The New Muslim Intellectuals in the Republic of Turkey," in *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State*, ed. Richard Tapper (New York: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 1991), 189-219.

Rather, “it is a religion for all times and places which stands outside of history.”³⁶ In essence, these contemporary intellectuals are striving to equip Muslims with the instruments of their faith, enabling them to respond effectively to contemporary challenges of increasing pluralism, globalization, and cross-cultural engagement. One of Turkey’s most prominent Muslim intellectuals deserves mention for the profundity of his work on intracivilizational and intercultural tolerance.

Fethullah Gülen, a prominent Sufi teacher and leader in the “moderate Islamic” community in Turkey, has gained a reputation from many in the country as a voice for tolerance and dialogue.³⁷ Recognizing the important role of Turkey’s future leaders, Gülen is working to create “an idealist, activist, disciplined, and tolerant youth,”³⁸ who embrace an ethos of universal friendship that is obedient to Islamic principles and responsive to the cross-cultural need for coexistence. Representing a *via media* between strict secularists and those leaders and intellectuals who long nostalgically for a re-Islamization of society, Gülen has urged Turkey’s Muslims to embrace the idea of an Islamic Enlightenment, where Turkish people are open to ideas and technologies of the West, while at the same time seeking a renewed public charter for the traditions and values of Islam.³⁹ He encourages obedience to a neutral state, arguing that Turkey’s geographical location and demographic diversity demand a pragmatic and principled

³⁶Meeker, 200. Meeker makes this observation in the context of a particular Muslim intellectual’s work, that of Ali Bulac.

³⁷See Kadioglu, 17-18.

³⁸Ahmet T. Kuru, “Search for a Middle Way,” in *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement*, ed. M. Hakan Yavus and John L. Esposito (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 119.

³⁹Kadioglu, 18.

tolerance of human difference. Significantly, Gülen's idea of equilibrium between radical secularism and the more extremist interpretations of Islam is not a philosophy built upon compromise. Rather, it is based on his understanding of Islam. For him, Islam epitomizes the balance needed in our global society:

Islam, being the 'middle way' of absolute balance—balance between materialism and spiritualism, between rationalism and mysticism, between worldliness and excessive asceticism, between this world and the next—and inclusive of the ways of all the previous prophets, makes a choice according to the situation.⁴⁰

Gülen's pragmatic, humanistic, and faith-based view of tolerance seeks to facilitate a climate of coexistence between the inexorable role of Islam in Turkey and the secular tradition of the state.

In an effort to address global misconceptions about Islam, Gülen confronts the "false accusations" that Islam espouses an ethos of bigotry. On the contrary, he describes "real Muslims" as those who embody the magnanimous and benevolent ideals of Islam: "In the Qur'an, Sunna, and in the pure and learned interpretations of the Great Scholars there is no trace of a decree or an attitude that is contrary to love, tolerance or dialogue."⁴¹ He points to such Qur'anic passages as "And if you behave tolerantly [pardon], overlook, and forgive, then God is Forgiving and Merciful,"⁴² and "Tell those who believe to forgive those who do not look forward to the Days of God; in order that

⁴⁰Fethullah Gülen, *Prophet Muhammad: The Infinite Light* (London: Truestar, 1995), 200-01; quoted in Ahmet T. Kuru, 117.

⁴¹Fethullah Gülen, "The Two Roses of the Emerald Hills: Tolerance and Dialogue," available at www.fgulen.com (accessed 25 August 2005).

⁴²Qur'an 64:14.

He may recompense each people according to what they have earned.”⁴³ Gülen implores Muslims to rebuff the negative image of Islam “fed to the world” and, through a strategy of “general persuasion,” reclaim Islam’s overarching message of love, dialogue, and tolerance.⁴⁴

In a speech recorded in 1996, Gülen stated that “tolerance does not mean being influenced by others or joining them”; on the contrary, “it means . . . knowing how to get along with them.” For him, tolerance is recognizing and respecting lasting difference: “There have always been people who thought differently to one another and there always will be.” Tolerance “does not mean foregoing traditions that come from our religion, or our nation, or our history; tolerance is something that has always existed.”⁴⁵ Gülen is not reticent to embrace as wholly Islamic a conceptualization of tolerance that would effectively sustain coexistence through a charitable recognition of human difference:

We should have such tolerance that we are able to close our eyes to the faults of others, to have respect for different ideas, and to forgive everything that is forgivable. . . . Even before the coarsest thoughts and the crudest ideas, ideas that we find impossible to share, with the caution of a Prophet and without losing our temper, we should respond with mildness. . . . We should have so much tolerance that we can benefit from opposing ideas in that they force us to keep our heart, spirit, and conscience active and aware, even if these ideas do not directly or indirectly teach us anything.⁴⁶

⁴³Qur’an 45:14.

⁴⁴Gülen, “The Two Roses of the Emerald Hills.”

⁴⁵Fethullah Gülen, “Tolerance in the Life of the Individual and Society,” Speech recorded on 13 January 1996, available at www.fgulen.com (accessed 25 August 2005).

⁴⁶Fethullah Gülen, “Tolerance,” in *The Thoughts of Growing to Yield Fruit* (Kaynak, Izmir, 1996), 19-22. Article is available at www.fgulen.com. (accessed 30 August 2005).

For coexistence to occur, such a conceptualization of tolerance must take root, a conception that recognizes the immutable existence of difference and the need for mutual respect, human friendship, and active engagement. As a citizen of Turkey, Gülen proudly lays claim to the historical roots of tolerance found in the Ottoman Empire's ability to maintain peace and stability within its multi-faith empire and facilitate coexistence with contemporary world powers. Gülen declares that if cross-cultural, interfaith reconciliation and peace are to be realized, Turkey must emulate its progenitor and once again become a symbol of tolerance and coexistence to the world.⁴⁷

In the wake of the global "War on Terrorism," Turkey has been placed in a somewhat tenuous position—an East-West mediator of sorts. As a result of its geographical and ideological *via media*, it has experienced sporadic violence from Islamists. In general, however, the "religious violence in Turkey cannot begin to compare with the vicious orgy of killings in Algeria or the deadly mass assaults in Egypt or the sectarian strife in Lebanon."⁴⁸ Turkey continues to mediate a divided world, contributing conceptualizations of tolerance that are able to permeate two opposing worldviews. For some, it is a haven of tolerance, inaugurating a revival toward cross-cultural engagement and coexistence. For others, Turkey espouses a heretic's creed, inconsonant with the tenets of Islam. Regardless of its seeming contradictions, Turkey is asserting its right as a part of the Muslim community to interpret Islamic texts and

⁴⁷Gülen, "Tolerance in the Life of the Individual and Society."

⁴⁸Marvine Howe, *Turkey Today: A Nation Divided over Islam's Revival* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), 47. Howe suggests that religious violence in Turkey is in many ways due to a "spillover" from more intolerant neighbors like Iran and Iraq. See *ibid.*

teachings that speak in a meaningful way to its unique historical and geopolitical concerns. Writing about Turkey and the Islamic periphery, and referencing Muhammad's famous Medina Constitution, Ozay Mehmet writes how the absolute truth of Islam, as Muhammad demonstrated, must be applied to historical, geographical, and socio-cultural contexts, "which, unlike truth, change."⁴⁹ Indeed, one must appreciate the impact of context if coexistence through tolerance is to be realized.

A discussion of the place of tolerance within the Turkish state was not made to offer the privatization of religion and culture as the solution or their official establishment as the obstacle for the Islamic world. In fact, Turkey demonstrates how governing antitheses, such as secularism and theocracy, often "meet and couple behind the scenes."⁵⁰ Contemporary Turkish intellectuals like Fethullah Gülen, aware of Turkey's peripheral existence between conflicting cultures, are recognizing the importance of common ground and moderation, confronting the obstacles that come with reconciling teleological arguments for a secular state with the well-ensconced principles and traditions of Islam. It is encouraging that even in the midst of a numerically superior Muslim population (almost all) in Turkey, not currently confronted with a high degree of religious pluralism, Muslim voices advocating tolerance continue to resound. Although there is still much to be desired in the way of freedom and societal cohesion in Turkey, it offers an unusual patchwork of positive ideas and possibilities that demonstrate the

⁴⁹Ozay Mehmet, *Islamic Identity and Development: Studies of the Islamic Periphery* (London: Routledge, 1990), 69. It was Muhammad's Medina Contract that "made possible [in the seventh century] the livelihood of various groups with different religious convictions, secularists, and atheists in political unity." Kadioglu, 16.

⁵⁰Lenn E. Goodman, *Islamic Humanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 28. Goodman makes this important observation, suggesting a dynamic equilibrium as the ultimate goal.

Muslim capacity to achieve a relatively high degree of tolerance that is faithful to Islam and allegiant to a free society. Regardless of its debated contradictions, it is possible to conclude that “extremism aside, . . . the Turks have achieved considerable progress in mobilizing nationalism, without abandoning Islam,”⁵¹ conceiving a conceptualization of tolerance that merits closer consideration by those participating in the important dialogue of coexistence.

*Historical Role of Tolerance on the Indian Subcontinent and the State of Pakistan*⁵²

Approximately 96 percent of Pakistan’s 157 million citizens are Muslim.

Pakistan was constituted as a Muslim state; thus, its cultural center of gravity is Islam. The preamble to the 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan begins by proclaiming the universal sovereignty of Allah and the authority of the people of Pakistan to govern “within the limits prescribed by Him as a sacred trust.” Pakistan views itself as having a sacred trust, a divinely appointed responsibility to govern in accordance with the values and guidelines of Islam. Article 31 of Pakistan’s Constitution calls the state to succor Muslims, individually and communally, to live in accordance with the principles of Islam. Article 227 states that all existing laws must conform to the injunctions of Islam as stipulated in the Holy Qur’an and *sunna*. Article 228 establishes a Council of Islamic Ideology to help inform and enforce Article 227. And Article 41 requires that the President of Pakistan be a Muslim.

⁵¹Mehmet, 21.

⁵²A sizeable portion of this section on Pakistan will also be available in a forthcoming publication of the UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law. “Administering a Sacred Trust: The Place of Religious Tolerance in the State of Pakistan,” *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 5, no. 1 (2006).

In reality, across Pakistan's tumultuous and young existence, Islam has been utilized as an expedient instrument, often harnessed for political, cultural, and social objectives.⁵³ Forayed by Islamic fundamentalists, this Islamic Republic has succumbed to the social and religious pressures of Islamism, whereby religion serves a discordant role in facilitating rampant social and legal intolerance of religious minorities. Intercommunal intolerance in Pakistan remains problematic. Over the past two decades, thousands of people have been killed as a result of sectarian violence between Shi'i and Sunni communities.⁵⁴ In the past two years, dozens of doctors and other professionals in Shi'i communities have been victims of targeted assassinations.⁵⁵ Decades of praetorian rule and subtle compliance with religious intolerance on the part of state officials have only delegitimized the state's place as legal protector of religious freedom. The Ahmadiyya Movement has been legally ostracized as an unacceptable aberration of Islam, and subsequent intolerance and persecution have resulted. Under Pakistan's Blasphemy Law (section 295-C of the penal code), desecrating the name of the Prophet Muhammad carries a possible death sentence. Various human rights' organizations lament that falsified charges of blasphemy against Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus, and even other Muslims are on the rise.⁵⁶ The government's use of *hudud* Ordinances, where

⁵³ Mahmood Monshipouri, "Reform and the Human Rights Quandary: Islamists vs. Secularists," *Journal of Church and State* 41, no. 3 (1999): 460-61.

⁵⁴ Amnesty International 2004 Report, available at www.amnesty.org/report2004 (accessed 13 March 2005). See also Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom, available at www.freedomhouse.org/religion/; and the "International Religious Freedom Report 2004," released by the U.S. Department of State, available at www.state.gov.

⁵⁵ See the "International Religious Freedom Report 2004."

⁵⁶ See www.freedomhouse.org

elements of Islamic law are compelled upon Muslims and non-Muslims alike (and non-Muslims are judged with lesser standards of evidence for violating Islamic law) is another example of religious intolerance and discrimination.⁵⁷ In this environment, such ambiguously defined and enforced laws are often used as sociopolitical tools of oppression and intimidation.

While it does declare Islam as the official state religion, Pakistan's 1973 Constitution—indefinitely suspended since General Pervez Musharraf's 1999 coup—also proclaims the religious freedom of all citizens. "Subject to law, public order, and morality," Article 20 declares that every citizen has the right to practice and propagate his or her own religion, and all religious communities are entitled to establish, manage, and maintain religious institutions. Article 22 states that no citizen shall be coerced to receive religious instruction or take part in religious ceremonies outside of their own religion, and educational institutions, which are maintained completely by a creedal community may offer religious instruction⁵⁸ From a constitutional perspective, religious freedom and tolerance are clearly called for. However, as discussed above, in practice such protections are chimerical. Although Pakistan's constitutional intention is to promote religious tolerance under the guise of Islamic law, in reality, gross intolerance of minority religious communities continues to occur. When one examines the inimical and intolerant environment of this complex Muslim state, the question emerges: Can a state

⁵⁷"International Religious Freedom Report 2005" and "International Religious Freedom Report 2004," both available at www.state.gov (accessed 27 March 2006).

⁵⁸1973 Constitution of Pakistan. See also Y.V. Gankovsky and V.N. Moskalenko, *The Three Constitutions of Pakistan* (Lahore: People's Publishing House, 1978).

dominated by a Muslim population, Islamic in culture and character, embrace, through tolerance, the virtue of religious freedom?

As militant Muslims dominate today's headlines, the notion that Islamic fundamentalism and intolerance were the inevitable consequence of Muslim nationalism during Pakistan's creation is misconceived. The Muslim progenitors of Pakistan unabashedly espoused an Islam of tolerance. Through its language of justice and morality, Islam would be the solution for peace and societal harmony. This notion is evident in the scholarly disquisitions of Muslims on the eve of Pakistan's creation and is emerging once again through brilliant and devoted Islamic scholars who champion Islam's innate compatibility with this fundamental concept. As Pakistan's spiritual forefather Muhammad Iqbal so often articulated, a government derived from Islam does not mean forceful coercion and subsequent repression. Instead, to work toward a universal and authentic Islam meant to permeate our fractured world with Islam's universal aspirations of peace, justice, and equality. Moreover, this "Islamic ideology," championed by Iqbal and constitutionally proclaimed by Pakistan, was not merely bequeathed on the eve of Pakistan's founding or imposed by an isolated hierarchy of elites. Rather, as Professor Sharif al-Mujahid asserts, the ethical values enunciated by Islamic tradition were not part of a "new manifesto that the Pakistanis presented to themselves on the marrow of their freedom"; indeed, such values were "as old as Islam itself." And the Indo-Pakistan Muslims materialized into a new nation because they "wanted to enthrone" such values.⁵⁹

⁵⁹Sharif Al Mujahid. *Ideology of Pakistan* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1974), 4-5; found in *Essays on Pakistan Affairs*, vol. 2 (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1975), series no. 21.

A Brief History of Tolerance under the Mughal Dynasty

The conspicuous place of religious tolerance for the Muslims of Pakistan has deep historical roots on the Indian subcontinent. A tolerance of non-Muslims, although far from absolute, was demonstrated for centuries by some of the subcontinent's Muslim rulers. The pinnacle of Muslim conquest on the Indian subcontinent occurred in 1526 with Babur and the Mughal Dynasty, representing "the end product of a millennium of conquest, colonization, and state-building in the Indian subcontinent."⁶⁰ The success of the Mughal Empire is in part attributable to the unwonted degree of tolerance accorded to its sizable non-Muslim communities into the seventeenth century. The prominent place of tolerance in the powerful Mughal Empire requires thoughtful consideration.

A juxtaposition of sixteenth-century Europe with sixteenth-century India reveals remarkable similarities between undulating cultural and religious climates that were more open and tolerant of religious difference. In a world of monarchical absolutism, the Mughal rulers garnered their responsibility for ensuring the welfare of their diverse Indian subjects from the ethical principles of Islam, as well as the pragmatic need for socio-political stability. No doubt affected by the rich and variant cultural life of the age and region, the Mughals developed an anachronistic capacity for tolerating and accommodating non-Muslims. Babur's grandson, Jalal-ud-Din Akbar, took up the herculean task of consolidating Hindus and Muslims—both Shi'i and Sunnis—into a unified, multi-faith civil society. The effective administration and unification of his vast

⁶⁰John F. Richards, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Mughal Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 2.

empire called for a broad conceptualization of tolerance and acknowledged equality of the various religious communities.⁶¹

Undoubtedly, the Mughal's founding emperor, Babur, whose proclivity toward tolerance was not unremarkable, influenced Akbar's policies of ardent forbearance. On one occasion, Babur cautioned his son Humayun to ignore the quarrels of the Shi'i and the Sunnis, for therein rested the fragility of Islam.⁶² Babur counseled,

The realm of Hindustan is full of diverse creeds. . . . It is but proper that thou, with heart cleansed of all religious bigotry, should dispense justice according to the tenets of each Community. . . . And the temples and abodes of worship of every Community under the imperial sway, you should not damage. . . . The progress of Islam is better with the sword of kindness, not with the sword of oppression.⁶³

For Akbar (r.1556 to 1605), irenic policies toward religion were centered upon two distinct motivations: temporal-pragmatic and theological-theoretical. First, religious toleration was politically pragmatic. The success of Akbar's rule rested on the cooperation of the defeated Hindu princes and their numerous Hindu subjects.⁶⁴ The temporal need to ensure a peaceful and sustainable empire was one motivating factor behind the tolerant policies of the early Mughal dynasty. Some of Akbar's practical policies of tolerance, which exacerbated the growing acrimony of leading Sunni imperial jurists, are worth delineating. In 1563, Akbar abrogated the collection of a high tax from Hindu pilgrims when they assembled for religious and cultural festivals. Ashamed of

⁶¹Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 239.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 239.

⁶³N.C. Mehta, "An Unpublished Testament of Babur," *The Twentieth Century* (January 1936): 340; also quoted in Black, 239-40.

⁶⁴Black, 240.

forced conversions, Akbar ordered that Hindus who had been coerced to follow Islam be permitted to apostatize without fear of the death penalty. In addition, in breach of the *shari'a*, Akbar permitted non-Muslims to refurbish dilapidated temples or even to construct new ones.⁶⁵ The most noteworthy demonstration of religious equality occurred in 1579 when Akbar abolished the *jizya*, or discriminatory poll tax, which brought a sudden end to a centuries-old Muslim privilege.⁶⁶ Such wide-sweeping policies of social and religious equalization directly impacted all non-Muslim subjects, making the common *dhimmi*s acutely aware and appreciative of Akbar's conciliatory and benevolent kingship.⁶⁷

Second, and perhaps more significant to Akbar's tolerant tendencies, was his "remarkable open-mindedness in religious and philosophical matters."⁶⁸ The cosmopolitan nature of his disposition was formed through a variety of influences.⁶⁹ Akbar's principled epistemological quest culled from a broad spectrum (Muslim and non-Muslim) of mystical and intellectual influences across the subcontinent. His mysticism, intellectual humility, and religious syncretism, coupled with the pragmatic need to foster goodwill and cooperation among the various Hindu and Muslim communities, created a

⁶⁵Richards, 38.

⁶⁶Richards, 39; and Black, 243.

⁶⁷See, for instance, Black 239-46; MD. Arshad, "The Mughal Period," in *An Advanced History of Muslim Rule in Indo-Pakistan* (Dacca: Rashida Akhter, 1967), 54-57; and S.M. Ikram, *Muslim Civilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 144-49.

⁶⁸Black, 240.

⁶⁹Arshad, 50-51.

level of religious tolerance that was nonpareil, even when considering the religious ferment of the age. Akbar's imperial court made its desire for coexistence known: "It has been our disposition from the beginning not to pay attention to the differences of religion and to regard all the tribes of mankind as God's servants. It must be considered that divine mercy attaches itself to every form of creed."⁷⁰ Although Akbar's attempts to supplement Islamic jurisprudence and tradition with his mystical and syncretic affinities were eventually discarded after his rule, Akbar's son Jahangir (r. 1605-27) would continue to implement, in undulating degrees, pragmatic policies of tolerance.⁷¹

A central theme throughout the various works in the Advice-to-Kings genre, written under Akbar and Jahangir, was the way in which Islamic political morality was best expressed through justice.⁷² Akbar's close companion and advisor, Abu'l Fadl, purported that justice must be achieved through civil equality and tolerance: "It is a prerequisite of . . . sovereignty that justice be administered to the oppressed, without distinguishing between friend and foe, relative and stranger . . . so that . . . those attached to the court may not make their relationship a means of oppression."⁷³ Nur al-Din al-

⁷⁰Eugenia Vanina, *Ideas and Society in India from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 34; also quoted in Black, 241.

⁷¹For a thorough study of Islam and the Mughals see MD. Arshad, *An Advanced History of Muslim Rule in Indo-Pakistan* (Dacca: Rashida Akhter, 1967); and A.A. Rizvi, *The Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign with Special Reference to Abu'l Fadl (1556-1605)* (New Delhi: M. Manoharlal, 1975). Akbar ultimately developed a syncretic religion or Din-i-Ilahi (Divine Faith), which enshrined a "Divine Right of Kings" theory that incorporated the principle of tolerance for all religions and sects.

⁷²Black, 248.

⁷³Rizvi, 364; quoted in Black, 248.

Khaqani, a prominent theorist of Islamic thought and advisor to Jahangir, insisted that justice was the equivalent of universal tolerance (*sulahkul*).⁷⁴

In spite of Akbar's religious tolerance and administrative genius, the demise of the Mughal Empire was inevitable, as the Sunni Muslim leadership grew increasingly indignant and inconsolable toward such equalization of "inferior" peoples. The reign of Akbar's grandson Shah Jahan closed in 1658 with a fratricidal war of succession that led to the violent ascension of the intransigent military leader, Aurangzeb. Expressing an inexorable piety (some would argue fanaticism) toward Islam, Aurangzeb brought the longstanding policy of religious tolerance to an abrupt end. *Shari'a* law was imposed on non-Muslim communities, establishing an orthodox judicial system built on Hanafi jurisprudence. Hindu temples were destroyed, and the oppressive *jizya* was restored. Although the Mughal dynasty reached the pinnacle of military strength under Aurangzeb, his rule was characterized with great enmity and distrust between the various communities, leading ultimately to the destabilization of public order and the dismantling of a once coherent Mughal Empire. By expunging both principled and expedient practices of tolerance, the Mughal Empire, no longer able to project an empire centered on solidarity and general human equality, was fast becoming "the empty shell of its formerly grand structure."⁷⁵

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, under authority of the British crown, the Indian subcontinent had finally succumbed to the hardening of religious positions between Muslim and Hindu communities. Religiously and culturally, India had gradually

⁷⁴Black, 248.

⁷⁵Richards, 297.

reverted from a high and broad expression of tolerance to a more confined and territorial configuration, similar to Germany's limited Peace of Augsburg over three centuries earlier. Yet, 300 years after Akbar, there still flourished in India a moderate and irenic array of Muslims who remained loyal to an Islamic tradition of religious tolerance and human equality. Tolerant Muslims were not relics of a bygone age. They were readily apparent and active in nineteenth- and twentieth-century India, and they played an integral part in the conception and creation of Pakistan.

An Islam of Tolerance: The Muslim Intellectuals of Pakistan

At the close of World War II, it was becoming increasingly clear that India—the trophy of Britain's colonial empire—was slipping from the imperial grasp. With Jawaharlal Nehru's political prowess and direction and Gandhi's ethical guidance, the Congress Party stood at the forefront of the Indian independence movement, long envisaging a united, cross-cultural, interreligious nation, where Hindus would constitute the overwhelming majority and Muslims the most significant minority.⁷⁶ Although historically accustomed to lengthy intervals of coexistence, the subcontinent's nineteenth-century social climate was characterized by increased communal tension under the pretext of religiocultural difference. The growing communal tension between Muslims and Hindus was only exacerbated by the British colonial strategy of divide and conquer, “which sometimes involved playing off Muslim and Hindu interests against one another to distract attention from British domination.”⁷⁷

⁷⁶Noah Feldman, *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2003), 119-20.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 120.

In an India wracked with animosity, distrust, and relenting violence between Hindus and Muslims, Pakistan's spiritual forefather, Muhammad Iqbal, reproved India's mullahs and brahmins for propagating myths of intolerance, casting the Other as the *bête noir*. He challenged both religious communities to demolish distrust and division and rebuild a civilization grounded upon benevolent coexistence.⁷⁸ Although Iqbal was a devout Muslim who clearly rejected Hinduism as inferior to Islam, he did not hesitate to admonish his Muslim brethren for what he deemed to be an egregious betrayal of the spirit and values of Islam: "Surely we have out-Hindued the Hindu himself; we are suffering from a double caste system, sectarianism, and the social caste system, which we have either learned or inherited from the Hindus."⁷⁹ Iqbal believed that Muslims in India had yielded to an existence that was diametrically opposed to the principles inherent to Islam's moral tradition. He called for both Hindus and Muslims to break from Western-derived concepts and, instead, reclaim the rich moral heritage they had ruefully neglected in their own traditions.⁸⁰ As world religions scholar Ronald W. Neufeldt notes, "Just as Iqbal had counseled the Brahmin to recover the ideals of his own tradition, so much of his post-1908 writing [following Iqbal's return from Europe] was written in the interests of calling Muslims back to the practice of the true ideals of Islam." Iqbal believed that

⁷⁸V.G. Kiernan, *Poems from Iqbal* (London: John Murray, 1955), 8-9; and Ronald W. Neufeldt, "Islam and India: The Views of Muhammad Iqbal," *Muslim World* 71 (July-October 1981): 182.

⁷⁹Syed Abdul Wahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964), 54; quoted in Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 183.

⁸⁰Ronald W. Neufeldt, "Religion and Politics in the Thought of Muhammad Iqbal," *Journal of Religious Thought* 34, no. 1 (1977): 35-39; and Neufeldt, "Islam and India," 183, 186.

central to Islam was its emphasis upon justice and equality, uplifting the oppressed and empowering the powerless; these qualities stood in stark contrast to the caste system and sectarianism that plagued the Indian subcontinent.⁸¹

In Islam, the essence of *tawhid* (unity or oneness of God), wrote Iqbal, is expressed as a working idea and concrete reality in the human values of “equality, solidarity, and freedom.”⁸² Islam as a body politic is merely the pragmatic way of manifesting the principle of *tawhid* as a “living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind.”⁸³ Thus, in order to restore the ethical ideals of Islam and the pure essence of *tawhid*, Iqbal entreats Muslims to “tear off from Islam the hard crust which has immobilized an essentially dynamic outlook on life, and to rediscover the original verities of freedom, equality, and solidarity with a view to rebuild our moral, social, and political ideals out of their original simplicity and universality.”⁸⁴ For Iqbal, tolerance and human equality are not only a part of Islamic orthodoxy, but must remain for Muslims a critical aspect of orthopraxy as well.

Iqbal did not advocate tolerance in a relative, postmodern sense. Iqbal never called for a dilution of communal identity for the sake of unity. Instead, he heralded India as a place of diverse languages, cultures, and religious confessions, where tolerance

⁸¹Vahid, 54, 100-01; and Neufeldt, “Islam and India,” 185.

⁸²Sir Mohammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Ashraf Press, reprinted 1960), 154.

⁸³Iqbal, 147.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 156.

and peace had historically flourished.⁸⁵ In his 1932 address, as president of the Muslim League, Iqbal believed in the possibility of India “constructing a harmonious whole whose unity” could not “be disturbed by the rich diversity which it must carry within its bosom.”⁸⁶ For Iqbal, unity in India meant federalism, a country where cultural autonomy and the right to self-determination were protected. Diversity was encouraged, and Iqbal advocated constitutional assurances that respected and protected the traditions and institutions of India’s various religious communities.⁸⁷ In spite of such pronounced hopes by Muslim leaders in India, with Indian independence from Britain an imminent reality, Muslims began to fear the growing socio-cultural solidarity of the Hindu people and the increasing marginalization of Muslims in Indian society. Many Muslims, including Iqbal, reluctantly abandoned their hopes of intrastate coexistence with the dominant Hindu community and began vying for a two-state solution as the most peaceful means for tempering the nationalistic aspirations of both sides. The two-state solution sought to divide the subcontinent into two states—based almost entirely on religion.

While Iqbal expected Pakistan to be a Muslim state, it is important to understand that when this Muslim intellectual aspired for a Pan-Islamism, or universal Islam, he was clearly calling for a revolutionary, benevolent humanism that transcended the inhumane

⁸⁵B.A. Dar, ed., *Letters and Writings of Iqbal* (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967), 55 and 70; and Neufeldt, “Islam and India,” 187.

⁸⁶Vahid, 197; and Neufeldt, “Islam and India,” 187.

⁸⁷Neufeldt, “Islam and India,” 188.

barricades erected around religion, ethnicity, and culture.⁸⁸ On many occasions, Iqbal cautioned that the idea of religion underpinning communal unity was only acceptable when based on a genuine tolerance and respect for the interests and beliefs of other religious communities.⁸⁹ For a Muslim, Iqbal taught that tolerance is not a characteristic of weakness or derived from temporal necessity. Rather, tolerance is a rudimentary attribute of a true believer as vice regent of God on earth, whose view of human dignity beholds how “unbeliever and faithful are both created by God.”⁹⁰

Understandably, many perceive Iqbal as the spiritual founder of the Muslim state of Pakistan. But more importantly, it seems, Iqbal stands as a champion of Islam—a champion of its peace, its mercy, its justice, and its tolerance. While one can effortlessly cull together a plethora of illustrations, perhaps Iqbal’s irenic embrace of Islam’s teachings of tolerance is most powerfully demonstrated in a simple rejoinder to Nehru:

True toleration is begotten of intellectual breadth and spiritual expansion. It is the toleration of the spiritually powerful man who while jealous of the frontiers of his own faith, can tolerate and even appreciate all forms of faith other than his own.⁹¹

While some may struggle to systematize Iqbal’s often contrary and complicated weltanschauung, one cannot dismiss his consistent opposition to all forms of human oppression and intolerance.⁹² Sir Mohammad Iqbal died in 1938, prior to the formation

⁸⁸Vahid, 100-01; and Ibid., 184-85.

⁸⁹Hafeez Malik, ed., *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 134.

⁹⁰Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel’s Wing: A Study into the Religious Ideas of Sir Muhammad Iqbal* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963), 111.

⁹¹Vahid, 261. See also Neufeldt, “Islam and India,” 191.

⁹²Malik, 135.

of Pakistan. In the months leading up to his death, he was still urging reconciliation and religious tolerance for the sake of coexistence:

Only one unity is dependable, and that unity is the brotherhood of man. . . . So long as men do not demonstrate by their actions that they believe that the whole world is the family of God. . . . the beautiful ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity will never materialize.”⁹³

In a “Father’s Prayer,” this Muslim father imparted these words to his son Javid: “The man of love, who sees men with God’s eye, loves heathen and believer equally.”⁹⁴ Of course, Iqbal’s Islamic interpretation of tolerance and coexistence was not espoused in isolation. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, revered in Pakistan as the Quaid-I-Azam, or “Father of the Nation,” sought to inculcate this new Muslim state with just such an understanding.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah was an eristic and discerning jurist and politician who guided the influential Muslim League and led the final push of the “two nation” solution. He was a “world-class political figure” created by Pakistan; he was altogether “Pakistan’s George Washington, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson.”⁹⁵ Ali Jinnah espoused a religious tolerance that was inherent to Islam, envisioning the new Muslim state of Pakistan as a bulwark for religious freedom.⁹⁶ Quaid-I-Azam’s liberal conception of this new modern nation-state was unacceptable to many within the *ulema*, but Jinnah refused to accept any notion that advocated an Islamic body politic conceived and administered by clerics.

⁹³Quoted in Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: a study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), 78.

⁹⁴Malik, 64.

⁹⁵Stephen Phillip Cohen, “The Nation and the State of Pakistan,” *Washington Quarterly* 25 (Summer 2002): 110.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 110-11.

Complicating the debate, Jinnah's political strategy, which mandated extreme flexibility in order to placate the often disparaging differences between the various Muslim groups in India, was not well defined.⁹⁷ Through ambiguous political proclamations, he paved the way for the different Muslim groups to see Pakistan in a variety of ways: for the orthodox, a religious state; for the intellectuals, a place of cultural renewal; and for the businessman, a place of new, unfettered competitive markets.⁹⁸ Yet, in spite of his political vagueness, Jinnah was clear in his efforts to enshrine Pakistan as a place of coexistence, a place of equality, a place of justice, and a place where the personal faith of each individual citizen was assured. In a radio broadcast in 1939, Jinnah vocalized a religious tolerance that was derived from deep within his Islamic beliefs:

If we have faith in love and toleration towards God's children, to whatever community they may belong, we must act upon that faith in the daily round of our simple duties. . . . No injunction is considered by our Holy Prophet more imperative or divinely binding than the devout but supreme realization of our duty of love and toleration toward all other human beings.⁹⁹

The drafting and ratification of Pakistan's first constitution did not occur in Jinnah's lifetime, but he did experience the pressure from Islamic fundamentalists to appoint in the forthcoming constitution a religious leader to appropriate ministerial and executive powers.¹⁰⁰ In one of his last public speeches, Jinnah declared,

⁹⁷Gandhi, 160.

⁹⁸Allen Hayes Merriem, *Gandhi vs Jinnah* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1980), 91-92; quoted in Gandhi, 160.

⁹⁹Eid Day broadcast, Nov. 13, 1939, quoted in C.M. Naim, ed., *Iqbal, Jinnah, and Pakistan* (Syracuse: Syracuse University, 1979), 101.

¹⁰⁰Afzal Iqbal, *Islamisation of Pakistan* (Delhi, Mohammed Ahmad for Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1984), 38-39.

The Constitution of Pakistan has yet to be framed by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. I do not know what the ultimate shape of this Constitution is going to be, but I am sure that it will be of a democratic type, embodying the essential principles of Islam. Today they are as applicable in actual life as they were 1300 years ago. Islam and its idealism have taught us democracy. It has taught equality of man, justice and fair play to everybody. . . . In any case Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic state to be ruled by priests with a divine mission.¹⁰¹

Jinnah concluded the address with a proclamation of equality: “We have many non-Muslims—Hindus, Christians and Parsis—but they are all Pakistanis. They will enjoy the same rights and privileges as any other citizen.”¹⁰² The embittered struggle for the soul of Pakistan, the “new Muslim state,” had begun. Jinnah died dismayed at the antipathy and violence of Pakistan’s lamentable beginnings and at the bleakness of Pakistan’s future as a viable and harmonious state.¹⁰³ Perhaps Jinnah’s idealistic words for a ruptured India can be delicately modified for application to Pakistan today: For redemption to occur, all Pakistanis “must offer to sacrifice not only their good things, but all things they cling to blindly—their hates and their divisions, their pride in what they should be thoroughly ashamed of, their quarrels and misunderstandings. These are a sacrifice that God would love.”¹⁰⁴ From the foregoing examination, it is clear that both Jinnah and Iqbal regarded coexistence through religious tolerance and genuine human equality as wholly consonant with the values of Islam.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. M.A. Jinnah* (Lahore, 1964), 463; quoted in *ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰²Gandhi, 180.

¹⁰³Cohen, 110.

¹⁰⁴Gandhi, 128-29.

¹⁰⁵Anwar Hussein Side, *Pakistan: Islam, Politics, and National Solidarity* (New York: Pager, 1982), 59-61. See also, Afzal Iqbal, 38-41.

alleviating their sufferings and aspirations.”¹⁰⁷ Contemporary Islamists, he argued, seek to narrowly interpret Islamic scripture and thought, neglecting its rich moral tradition and the impact of historical context. The complexity of Islam, wrote Ahmad, threatens most Islamists, “because they seek an Islamic order reduced to a penal code, stripped of its humanism, aesthetics, intellectual quests, and spiritual devotion.”¹⁰⁸

After decades of constitutional struggles and dubiety, it seems that Maududi’s puritanical interpretation has vanquished the diametrical Islamic ideal of tolerance (promulgated in Pakistan’s latest constitution) only to assert a fundamentalism and religious intolerance that has characterized much of Pakistan’s precarious history. Despite the rich Islamic heritage of human equality and religious tolerance on the subcontinent, Pakistan remains plagued by intra-and inter-communal violence, general intolerance, and rampant injustice.

Undeniably, the socio-political process of nation building in Pakistan has proven more difficult than ever imagined and has been compounded by six decades of war, marital law, corruption, and violent oppression. Yet, in spite of its tumultuous beginnings, Pakistan remains a potent laboratory for assessing the historical, ideological, and practical legacy of tolerance in Islam, espoused and experienced by Muslims for centuries. The Pakistan experience highlights the lugubrious problems as well as the promising possibilities for mobilizing tolerance as a political-pragmatic and theological-philosophical concept that is wholly consonant with an Islamic worldview.

¹⁰⁷Eqbal Ahmed, “Religion in politics,” *Dawn* (31 January 1991).

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*

A Complex Assortment of Ideas and Practices

This chapter has demonstrated how, historically, Muslims have chartered multiple paths to tolerance. In the midst of Islam's rapid expansion in the seventh and eighth centuries, most non-Muslims in the conquered territories experienced a higher level of tolerance and societal stability than under either Byzantine or Sasanian dominance. The *dhimma* gave these non-Muslims an unfamiliar liberty to practice their different religions and the freedom to govern their own communities in exchange for submission to Muslim rule, symbolized through the tribute tax or *jizya*.¹⁰⁹ While such limited tolerance may be deemed unacceptable by modern standards, this peaceful option proffered by Muslim conquerors (as opposed to the alternatives of brutal oppression or annihilation) represented an unprecedented level of systematic tolerance and limited coexistence, adumbrating early on the Muslim potential for embracing tolerance as an effective, faith-based strategy for achieving coexistence.

A realistic historical assessment makes clear that the multinational Ottoman and Mughal regimes were in no way utopian. They were neither democratic nor republican in nature. Relinquishing absolute rule was never a consideration, and in spite of their recognition and accommodation of difference, these autocratic empires could be relentlessly oppressive if regime stability and imperial power was threatened. What is more, tolerance was strictly communal in nature. Individuals were inextricable from their religious communities and thus susceptible to the often intolerant limits established by

¹⁰⁹John Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 34.

their own religious leaders.¹¹⁰ Of course, until recently in history, collective identity was always given primacy over the individual in both Western and Islamic societies. Thus, individual tolerance was neither desired nor conceivable.

While noting their similarities, a juxtaposition of these two multi-creedal, polyglot regimes reveals significant differences as well. The Ottoman *millet* system was a well-established framework of segregated unity, where separate, self-governing religious communities united in their submission to the Empire. The *millet* system, however, was not neutral toward religion. Islam was the established religion of the Ottoman Empire and represented the apex in a hierarchy of religious identities. Non-Muslim communities were tolerated, but they were not equal. They enjoyed autonomy as second-class communities, always vulnerable to the political and social whims of Ottoman leaders and the Muslim populace. As in the contemporary Ottoman Empire, non-Muslims on the Indian Subcontinent were also susceptible to the vacillating policies of Muslim leaders and capricious mobs. However, during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Hindu communities achieved an anachronistic level of equality with their Muslim neighbors yet unrealized by the Ottoman *millets*.

The intellectual history of Islam also reveals the coherent place of tolerance in the values and expressions of Muslim thinkers and political leaders. Traditionally for Muslims, the divine injunction for justice was the centerpiece of morality and thus permeated nearly every conception of tolerance. In the “Advice-to-Kings” genre of the Mughal Empire, intellectuals such as Abu’l Fadl and Nur al-Din al-Khaqani interpreted universal tolerance as the pinnacle manifestation of justice. Under Mughal patronage,

¹¹⁰Walzer, 15-16.

Persian religious scholar Muhammad Baqir stated in the seventeenth century that justice, through limited tolerance (impartiality in judgment and protection of the weak), was required by an Islamic state, for nothing should be more important to a king than ensuring the welfare and peace of the people.¹¹¹

Chapters five and six both have emphasized the intellectual and spiritual impetus behind efforts of modern reformers to imagine an Islamic conceptualization of tolerance that recognizes the divine injunction for humaneness. Most significantly, Muslim reformers struggled to reclaim their right to reopen the “Gate of *ijtihad*,” and thus restore to Muslim communities the use of reason to help address contemporary problems and situations. Scholar Ozay Mehmet comments how, for early Muslim reformers, Islam was not only a system of absolutes, but it was also a dynamic and innovative faith, quite capable of addressing the challenges of modernity.¹¹² A study of the Islamic history of ideas reveals how the role of *ijtihad* (self-struggle; independent reasoning) and *ijma* (the authority of consensus in the Muslim community) emerged after Muhammad’s death as natural processes for Muslims to interpret the corpus of Islamic law in a way that spoke to new and changing situations.¹¹³ It is these same Islamic sources that are once again enabling Muslims to confront—in fidelity to their faith—a world of increasing pluralism and civilizational conflict with a benevolent, faith-based understanding of tolerance that encourages greater humaneness, mutual respect, and meaningful coexistence. For

¹¹¹Black, 248.

¹¹²Mehmet, 66-67.

¹¹³Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, 82-83.

Muslim reformers, then and now, *ijtihad* and *ijma* remain fundamental to achieving contemporary reform and coexistence.

Tolerance finds important roots in the teachings and traditions of Islam and in the history of Muslim civilization. It is a concept that Muslims have idealistically envisioned and historically derived. Much like the West, it is a term that has been distorted and authenticated through the moral and legal tenets of religion. As demonstrated, intellectual ideas and historical policies of tolerance are contextual; that is, they are relative to the unique circumstances and interpretations of those people that are immediately affected. However, as Michael Walzer rightly concludes, whatever framework for tolerance is conceived, it is only a moral option if it stipulates some variation of peaceful coexistence. Thus, the historical relativism that informs the various Muslim understandings of tolerance is not absolute but is limited to the ability of a particular conceptualization to facilitate a meaningful and timeless ethical principle: peaceful coexistence.¹¹⁴

Theologically, philosophically, and historically, Muslims have garnered Islamic strategies of tolerance for the sake of coexistence. Though expedient incentives of power and stability were central to the tolerance derived by early Muslim regimes, the mercurial concept of the *dhimma* and the enduring *millets* are both historical examples of Muslim success in achieving a relative degree of coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims. Although purveyed in a theologically “unorthodox” manner, Akbar’s broadly tailored policy of tolerance inaugurated a golden age of coexistence and exceptional religious equality on the Indian subcontinent. For over a century Muslims and non-Muslims were

¹¹⁴Walzer, 5-6.

largely unfettered to exercise, nurture, and even propagate their religious beliefs. In the twentieth century, the Muslim leaders of Turkey and Pakistan, Kemal Atatürk and Muhammad Jinnah, respectively, believed that the nation-state was a temporal image of coexistence, and religious tolerance served as an important strategy for achieving that end.

Certainly, when considering the Muslim history of ideas, one finds a host of Muslim reformers and intellectuals who have taught and are teaching tolerance as an Islamic principle necessary for coexistence. For Muslim intellectuals Muhammad Iqbal and Fethullah Gülen, true piety necessitates a spirit of tolerance and dialogue. Human friendship and mutual respect are immutable attributes of God's vice-regents on earth. Contemporary scholar Muhammad Kamali would agree. As pointed out in chapter five, Muhammad Kamali exalts tolerance and compassion as those perfect attributes of God that humanity is enjoined to reflect in relation to each other. As well, Abdolkarim Soroush purports that intellectual humility, as counseled by his Islamic faith and Iranian culture, cultivates an attitude of tolerance and fosters a climate of nonviolent dialogue and lasting coexistence.

After examining a broad swath of Muslim ideas and historical experiences, it becomes evident that tolerance is a complex and largely neglected tradition within Islamic civilization. Coupled with the numerous *hadith* and Qur'anic verses advocating tolerance, the historical practices and intellectual ideas discussed above reveal the important roots this concept finds in Islam. Tolerance, as a religious and political concept of Islamic civilization, much like the West, was sporadically utilized, always subject to the dictates of history. Yet, in spite of its distortions and inconstant

application, it is clear that, for fourteen centuries, tolerance, in theory and practice, has been conceptualized and expressed by Muslims as a wholly Islamic ideal. This realization will hopefully deepen the current global discourse on tolerance and encourage the cross-cultural search for coexistence between Western and Islamic civilizations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Consensus for Coexistence: Employing a Strategy of Tolerance

It is inevitable that a society's ideas, interpretations, and interests will, at some juncture, conflict with those of other communities. While societies cannot completely eliminate such conflicts, citizens of the world must continue to proffer systematic processes of mutual understanding and active engagement rather than misunderstanding, animosity, and violence. The cross-cultural paradigm utilized in this project provides one possible way to discern the importance of civilizational distinctiveness and cultural essence in an effort to not only appreciate human difference but also to reaffirm those moral precepts that transcend human divisions, thus revealing a common heritage of values across civilizations. Utilizing a cross-cultural paradigm does not mean that a culture's ideas and practices are impermeable to influence or incompatible with other cultures, nor does it mean that moral imperatives cannot permeate different communities as universally valid. Accordingly, this intercivilizational study was not intended to identify civilizational differences for the purpose of vilifying the Other. On the contrary, a cross-cultural comparative model has provided this project with an efficient and functional paradigm for recognizing the ineluctability of difference while, at the same time, encouraging the discovery and employment of pancultural values that will facilitate coexistence.¹

¹As stated in chapter two, any attempt to compartmentalize human beings—on any level—is fraught with theoretical and practical limitations. Chapter two addressed the potential deficiencies associated with a cultural-comparative model: most significantly, its proneness to generalize and misinterpret cultures and its tendency to

This concluding chapter begins by reasserting the reality of a complicated conflict between Islamic and Western cultures. Much of the relationship between Western and Muslim worlds continues to be characterized by an attitude of fear, animosity, and resentment, and the current dissonance between Western and Islamic civilizations is a reality that cannot be gainsaid or simply dismissed as exaggerated or peripheral in nature. The global, intercultural wrangling in early 2006 over the publication of religiously offensive caricatures of the Muslim Prophet, Muhammad, is indicative.

In September of 2005, Denmark's *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper printed a series of cartoons that caricatured the Muslim Prophet Muhammad, suggesting that Islam was a faith imbued with intolerance and belligerence. One cartoon depicted the Prophet with a headdress resembling a bomb; another made the irreverent jest that paradise is running short of virgins for suicide bombers. By early 2006, the cartoons had instigated widespread protests and rioting across the Muslim world, as depictions (especially caricatures) of the Prophet or God are prohibited in the *hadith*. Further exacerbating this cultural clash, newspapers in Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Hungary, and Germany issued conspicuous reprints of the cartoons to show solidarity for the West's treasured value of free expression. *Jyllands-Posten* apologized for the offensive cartoons but reasserted the

neglect cross-cultural commonalities. Chapter two discussed how the binary, compartmentalizing framework of cross-cultural comparativism does retain a propensity to misinterpret and confound the complicated, multi-level relationship between Islamic and Western nations. Indeed, there is a multiplicity of difference inside both Western and Islamic civilizations, as cultural identity is grafted to diverging national and geopolitical idiosyncrasies, creating a collage of varying traditions, languages, rituals, and ideologies within both civilizations. Nevertheless, despite the important intracultural complexities, inimical feelings and general animosity toward the Other continue to cultivate intercultural divisions. Cognizant of its latent pitfalls, a cultural-comparative framework still offers an expressly limited systematic methodology for examining intercommunal and transnational conflict and possible paths to reconciliation and coexistence.

legality of its actions. Other European papers, however, repudiated diplomatic suggestions to apologize for what is viewed by some as nothing more than cultural intimidation by the Muslim world. Serge Faubert, chief editor of the French daily, *France Soir*, stated that “it is not religion that is being called into question, but rather intolerance. Faiths are not being targeted, but the outrageous intentions of some people who want to impose their commandments on those who do not share their beliefs.” In a show of unity with the former managing editor of *France Soir*, Jacques Lefranc, who was dismissed by the paper’s Egyptian-born Christian owner, the journalists of *France Soir* stated that “there is absolutely no question of stigmatizing Islam and Muslims. Religion is not the issue here but intolerance.” The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* cautioned against the ramifications of an apology for the publication: “It would be utterly disastrous if, under the pretext of ‘political correctness,’ something like a special duty to protest all or some religions were to be devised.” We must protect against “taboos on thought” it warned, if we are to uphold a secular civil society. Lamenting an apparent double standard, Germany’s *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* stated, “It would be nonsense to regard the disparagement of Christian, Jewish, Hindu or other religious beliefs as an ‘opinion’ covered by free speech, but making fun of the Prophet as a deadly sin or crime.” Freedom of speech is “not negotiable,” it affirmed. The Czech paper, *Mlada Fronta Dnes*, described the latest ruction between Western and Islamic cultures as “a clash of civilizations,” blaming the protests on Muslim nescience of the immutable freedoms of Western civil society—namely, freedom of speech and press.² Danish Prime Minister

²The quotations and references in this paragraph were acquired from the “European Press Review,” *BBC News*, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 28 February 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR

Modern Tolerance: A Practical and Theoretical Critique

Contextual Significance: Considering France

Migration has been a potent corollary to globalization. The mass immigration of Muslims to Europe is most significant, with millions of second- and third-generation immigrants now residing in Europe. Muslims from the Maghreb, West Africa, Turkey, the Indian subcontinent, and the Arabian Peninsula continue to immigrate to the European Continent in overwhelming numbers. Over 14 million Muslims currently reside within the European Union—over 50 million when considering the entire continent. According to recent numbers released by the Central Institute’s Islam Archives in Soest, Germany, France has the greatest number of Muslims—primarily from North Africa—at well over five million, and Germany is next with 3.2 million, mostly of Turkish origin. While still a clear minority in European society, the number of Muslims in Europe is expanding rapidly, increasing by 800,000 over the past two years. What is more, the Central Institute has labeled Islam as a “young religion,” with, for instance, 850,000 Muslim minors living in Germany alone.¹ As well, although Islam is still a minority religion in Western Europe, it comprises a much higher percentage of the “active” worshipers in Western civilization. French political scientist Oliver Roy is

¹See the Central Institute’s Archives (2005). These statistics were drawn from a concise article by Wolfgang Polzer, “More than 53 Million Muslims in Europe,” *WorldNetDaily*, 22 October 2005, available at www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article (accessed 23 December 2005). See also the Migration Policy Institute at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Resources.cfm>.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen placed the controversy at the center of Western democracy, arguing that the issue has escalated beyond Denmark into a more precarious realm of civilizational difference: a clash between Islamic proscriptions and the Western understanding of free speech.³

Objections from Muslim heads of state and fervid protests—many violent—quickly erupted throughout the Muslim world, from North Africa, across the Fertile Crescent and Arabia, and into the most populist Muslim countries of Indonesia and Pakistan.⁴ The Syrian and Saudi Arabian ambassadors to Denmark were recalled, and the Iranian government severed trade relations with Denmark. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stated the freedom of opinion and press, “which we guarantee and respect, cannot be used as an excuse to insult sanctities, beliefs and religions.” Afghani President Hamid Karzai admonished those involved with the publications, cautioning that such insults against over one billion Muslims should never be repeated. Qatar’s daily paper *Al-Watan* warned that “European leaders should change their attitudes and remember that

³“In quotes: Reaction to Cartoons,” *BBC News*, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 26 February 2006).

⁴Several people were killed in Afghanistan, Somalia, Lebanon, and elsewhere as a result of violent protests. The Danish embassy in Syria was attacked. A mob in Beirut torched the Danish embassy and ransacked a Christian community in response to the cartoon publications. Protestors in Tehran broke windows of the Austrian embassy, businesses in Indian-administered Kashmir went on strike to protest, and, in Indonesia, authorities fired warning shots at rioters around the US and Danish consulates in the country’s second largest city, Surabaya. While the response by Muslims in France has been subdued, French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy reprehended the violent rioting and protests: “I am totally shocked and find it unacceptable that because there have been caricatures in the West, extremists can burn flags or take fundamentalist or extremist positions which would prove the cartoonists right.” Caroline Wyatt, “Cartoon Row Rattles France,” *BBC News* (3 February 2006), available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 4 February 2006).

Islam has become the second religion in a number of European countries.” The deputy chief editor of Jordan’s *Al-Dustur*, Muhammad Hasan al-Tall, decried the inability of modern Western civilization to exercise its freedom of expression without “wronging the Prophet.” What took place in Denmark, he stated, “is not different from the attitude prevailing in Western Streets against Islam and its symbols.” A majority of Muslims expressed a collective concern over how the Western caricatures belie the Islamic faith, emboldening a perilous Western “Islamophobia” that presupposes a correlation between Islamic terrorism, which most Muslims detest, and the core values of Islam. Fehmi Koru, columnist for the pro-Islamist daily in Turkey, *Yeni Safak*, reasoned that “in today’s atmosphere, when minds are clouded by the ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis, the real danger that will spark a clash could be the perception that the West is attempting to attack the divine entities of Islam. The situation is rapidly being escalated to this level of tension.”⁵

Many in the West are somewhat bemused by the collective outrage across the Muslim world, while Muslims, within and beyond Western civilization, stand united in their opposition to Western protections of such blatant provocations under the pretext of free expression. Many French Muslims perceive the European argument of free expression as disingenuous, as Muslims in France were denied such freedom of expression (wearing the *hijab*) in the public square. Both sides of this cultural conflict concur that the illustrations were indeed offensive. (The Western media generally agreed that there was no moral equivalence to the uncongenial cartoons in and of themselves.)

⁵The quotations and references in this paragraph were acquired from “Arab Press Review” and “In Quotes: Reaction to Cartoons,” *BBC News*, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 28 February 2006). *BBC News* offers a thorough collection of world opinions and press quotations surrounding the global donnybrook that occurred.

However, the central issue of dispute concerned two treasured values of Western secular liberalism—freedom of press and freedom of speech—and the Muslim faith-based response to what is perceived as a blasphemous act purposely affronting Muslim beliefs and identity. Many Muslims lamented how the incident would only bolster the agenda of Muslim extremists, reaffirming Islamists' claims of a corrupt and immoral Western media and their assertions that the Western-led war on terrorism is essentially a war against Muslims—a contemporary crusade to vitiate and vilify Islam.

It is probable that the controversy surrounding the offensive publications, beyond a mere cultural clash, served as a meaningful outlet for expressing festering resentment associated with various political, economic, and ideological conflicts within and between states and regions. Yet, the purposeful republication and defense of the offensive cartoons by European presses and the violent protests throughout the world's Muslim states and enclaves demonstrate a clear demarcation of worldviews. Even though many Westerners (including this author) lament the publications—calling them reprehensible and an irresponsible use of free speech—and many Muslims within and beyond the Muslim world condemn protests that have escalated into violence—describing such behavior as antithetical to appropriate peaceful protest and Islamic values—many in the Western and Muslim worlds still find it difficult to overemphasize the gulf of difference between cultures. A *Washington Post* staff writer, Kenneth Kennicott, ended his article entitled, “Clash over Cartoon is a Caricature of Civilization,” with resignation: “So perhaps these cartoons really do crystallize why Islam and the West are incompatible and must hunker down for a ‘long war.’ The only other option, it seems, is to remember that if vastly different worldviews can find no accommodation on a subject, then perhaps it's

too early, in human history, to have the conversation.”⁶ World religions scholar (and former nun) Karen Armstrong argued that the recent conflict revealed a “clash of two different notions of what is sacred,”⁷ as both Western and Islamic cultures appear committed to determining what should be the appropriate ideological boundaries of the Other. Cultural identity lies at the core of this latest conflict, with Western and Islamic parlance escalating beyond vitiating rhetoric to cultural and religious provocation.

The latest collision between Western and Islamic cultures does not mean, however, that coexistence is ineffable. Coexistence between Muslim and Western worlds is a historical reality and remains a contemporary possibility. Chapter two discussed the different levels of engagement necessary for coexistence: 1) a mutual desire for peace and neighborliness, with Western and Muslim states constantly reassessing their geopolitical interests from the perspective of peace—seeking a benevolent engagement that accepts the struggles associated with balancing important territorial interests with the long-term agendas of peace, security, and mutual trust; 2) a high valuation of the Other as an equal member of the human family, worthy of dignity and respect; and 3) a persistent, intelligent, and thoroughgoing exploration of the unique and borderless values that reflect the best of Islamic and Western civilizations.

⁶Philip Kennicott, “Clash over Cartoon is Caricature of Civilization,” *Washington Post* (4 February 2006), available at www.washingtonpost.com (accessed 7 February 2006).

⁷Karen Armstrong is a leading British commentator in the area of religious affairs and has written a number of books discussing Christian, Jewish, and Muslim relations and distinctives. Quote was taken from a commentary she gave to BBC News, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 4 February 2006).

Recalling Khaled Abou El Fadl's discussion in chapter two of an inherent binary stimulant (the idea that within humanity lies a primitive incentive to cultivate an us versus them, good versus evil understanding of human communities), one sees how the various cultural conflicts today are befitting of the binary paradigm of reciprocal vilification of the cultural and religious Other.⁸ While various contemporary "clashes" have been perpetrated through "vulgar" interpretations of Islamic or Western traditions, this has not prevented misunderstandings of the Other and the tendency to revert back to a binary arrangement for explaining cross-cultural dissonance and violence. In addition to humanity's ignoble binary impulse, however, Abou El Fadl also discussed the countervailing human predilection toward socialization—an instinctive desire to cooperate and proactively engage other communities and cultures. He contended that "with a sufficient amount of overlapping interests, interactions, and conscientiousness," the primitive tendency to explain human existence as an "us versus them" can give way to a more humane understanding of the global human society that seeks meaningful coexistence with the Other.⁹

Temporal incentives of chauvinistic nationalism, political power and solidarity, economic development, and regional stability are only a few of the macro-variables that remain determinative in realizing peaceful coexistence. Religious and cultural intolerance remain primary temporal strategies for galvanizing majority consensus against local, regional, and international threats. Secularism, Christianity, and Islam are

⁸Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality," *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 2, no. 1(2002/2003): 38.

⁹*Ibid.*

frequently harnessed to legitimize political, economic, and social initiatives that only exacerbate cross-cultural and interreligious tensions. In fact, it is often the case that temporal motivations at the local and global levels do not acquiesce to the principled value of coexistence and, instead, tend to provoke intercommunal disputation and violent conflict. Nevertheless, one finds difficulty in arguing that coexistence is not a transcultural goal, worthy of universal aspiration. As Michael Walzer suggests, coexistence—cross-cultural peace and benevolent cooperation—is a human desire that permeates the identity of every individual and community, and to argue or encourage the contrary is rarely desirable in the realm of moral discourse.¹⁰ This is doubtless the case with Western and Islamic civilizations, as peaceful coexistence finds widespread, cross-cultural endorsement.

Consequently, beyond addressing the volatile dynamics associated with competing world civilizations, a further proposal was to substantiate the prospect of realizing coexistence through the cross-cultural value of tolerance. There are a host of value-laden attitudes and strategies that have historically bridged the civilizational divide, finding intellectual and practical origins within both Western and Islamic traditions. This dissertation has offered an in-depth exposition of one such strategy, the intercivilizational concept of tolerance, revealing how this strategic attitude has transcended civilizational demarcations to address the socio-historical realities, past and present, in a way that

¹⁰Michael Walzer states that “peaceful coexistence . . . is always a good thing. . . . The sign of its goodness is that individuals and regimes are so strongly inclined to say that they value it: they can’t justify themselves, to themselves or to one another, without endorsing the value of peaceful coexistence.” From a moral perspective, he argues, the burden of argument falls on those who would reject the ethical impetus to peacefully coexist. Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 2.

positively affects the meaningful endeavor to coexist. Coexistence is a mutually garnered prospect, essential to peace and humaneness, and, as this project has manifested, although coexistence will require a number of important strategies, its realization is largely predicated upon the transcultural and interreligious conceptualization and practice of tolerance.

Intercultural Significance of Tolerance

This project has challenged the modern myth that tolerance is a new concept in the human lexicon of ideas. One of the most effective ways in which to substantiate the cross-cultural coherency and historical relevance of tolerance is to demonstrate the endurance of its theoretical articulation and practical application in the stories of Islam and the West. A substantive purpose of chapters two through six was to disinter the historical trajectories of this important strategy across both traditions. In particular, chapters three and six examined the pragmatic applications and theories of tolerance across a wide ambit of Western and Islamic histories, respectively, demonstrating how the profundity of past conceptualizations might prove meaningful in the modern search for dialogue, mutual respect, and cross-cultural coexistence.

Geopolitical realities certainly played a part in the writings and sporadic policies of tolerance in Islamic and Western traditions. Local context provided (and continues to provide) an empirical stimulant for conceiving tolerance as a pragmatic pathway to a peaceable society. In the fourth century, Lactantius acknowledged the immediate temporal benefits of tolerance that came through Constantine's politically motivated Edict of Milan, which sought, via a communal tolerance of peaceable religions, to secure public order, receive divine favor, and engender unity across the Roman Empire.

Likewise, as discussed in chapter six, the *dhimma*, which found its earliest expressions under the Umayyad Dynasty in the eighth century, quickly emerged in the early Islamic empires as a capricious but effective and practical framework of limited tolerance that afforded select communities of non-Muslims (originally the “People of the Book”) within the *dar al-Islam* a high level of autonomy. The *dhimma* was originally conceived as a sociopolitical contract to placate the significant non-Muslim majority living under the suzerainty of a young, rapidly expanding Islamic civilization. Hospitality, security, and an inconstant, yet consequential degree of religious freedom were extended to the *ahl al-dhimma*, or *dhimmis*, to the extent that their second-class membership in society remained clear. (Such limited tolerance was not dissimilar to the qualified coexistence granted Muslims and Jews in Ramon Llull’s thirteenth-century context on the Balearic Islands.)

Chapter six examined the high degree of tolerance (relative to its contemporaries) inside the multinational Ottoman Empire. While proclaiming Islam as the official religion, the Ottoman regime established the confining, yet anachronistic *millets*, which systematized the Islamic concept of the *dhimma*. Through its *millet* system, a circumscribed but lasting intercommunal, interreligious coexistence was realized, providing social cohesion and political stability to a religiously and ethnically diverse empire. While lacking the ingenuity and longevity of the Ottoman *millet*, both Frederick II in Jerusalem and Alphonso the Wise in Castile extended a pragmatic level of tolerance to non-Christian communities that approximated that of the Ottomans. While the varying tolerance practiced by different regimes suggests a historical relativism that informed their conceptualizations, these regimes collectively demonstrate how strategies of

tolerance were effective and pragmatic means for ensuring the timeless, intercivilizational desire for peaceful coexistence. Infidel or *kafir* was indeed the most common reciprocal “insult” for Western and Islamic descriptions of the non-believer.¹¹ Yet, a religiopolitical policy of tolerance was readily available in both civilizations as an effective strategy for living peacefully with the *kafir*.

For Jean Bodin, the restive environment of a religiously divided, warring France and the ethos of religious intolerance that pervaded most of Europe in the sixteenth century no doubt influenced his writings on the pragmatic importance of tolerance for achieving political order and national solidarity. A continent away, Bodin’s contemporary, Mughal emperor Jalal-ud-Din Akbar, also recognized the need for a broad conceptualization of tolerance in order to unite and effectively administrate a vast multiethnic, interreligious empire on the Indian subcontinent.¹² Bodin died two years prior to the temporally motivated and provisional Edict of Nantes (1598)—a treaty that sought to end the protracted wars of religion in France by granting substantial entitlements to French Huguenots (revoked in 1685 when circumstances allowed). Akbar, however, realized the high degree of tolerance he espoused for the sixteenth-century Mughal empire, reaping the apodictic rewards of interreligious, cross-cultural coexistence—a realization that dissipated a century later under the oppressive intolerance of Aurangzeb. Expedient incentives of power and stability were transcultural variables that justified (or nullified) the important strategy of tolerance, and the different historical

¹¹Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 7-8.

¹²Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 239.

contexts of Muslim and Western regimes largely determined the degree to which coexistence and the interdependent strategy of tolerance were temporally advantageous.

Beyond the pragmatic realities of tolerance in both Western and Islamic history, this dissertation also showed how tolerance was defended as a reasonable, faith-based strategy for achieving important transcultural and ecumenical virtues. Indeed, Islamic and Western cultures possess a canvas of mutual values upon which writings and policies of tolerance have been predicated. Moreover, this dissertation evinced some important theological arguments for the divinely ordained importance of tolerance in the West (profoundly impacted by Christianity) and Islam. The theologians and theorists examined in this project conceptualized tolerance as a local necessity but with timeless application, engaging their particular historical context with the ageless moral imperatives of their religious and cultural traditions.

Liberty is perhaps the most far-reaching moral imperative of Western history. Lactantius, Ramon Llull, and Bartolomé de Las Casas all believed that a willing faith was paramount to an authentic faith, repudiating contrary efforts to coerce non-believers into accepting the true religion. People must embrace Christ's "gentle rule of their own free will," wrote Las Casas.¹³ Twelve centuries earlier, Lactantius stated as much: "There is nothing that is so much a matter of willingness as religion."¹⁴ Liberty has also been the lingua franca of modern Western liberalism, which reasoned that freedom of conscience

¹³Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Only Way*, trans. Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J., ed. Helen Rand Parish (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992), 96.

¹⁴Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, trans. Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 5.19.23.

is at the essence of what it means to be human. For most Western theories of tolerance, liberty has provided the pinnacle objective.

While liberty is a defensible goal within Islamic scripture and tradition as well—one recalls the Qur’anic injunction, “There shall be no compulsion in matters of faith”¹⁵—arguably the most influential virtue justifying Muslim conceptualizations of tolerance has been justice. Justice is interdependent with the Islamic principle of reciprocity, which calls Muslims to seek a mutual peace with the nonbeliever. Relations with non-Muslims should reflect goodwill, peace, and, even in cases of self-defense against hostile acts, mercy or self-restraint. Muslims are enjoined to support and defend the Prophet and Islam against any violent provocation, but justice requires that they also appreciate and uphold the divinely sanctioned “moral worth and rights of the non-Muslim ‘other.’”¹⁶ As discussed in chapter six, Akbar’s close companion Abu’l Fadl reasoned that a faithful Islamic regime will pursue justice through civil equality and tolerance: “It is a prerequisite of . . . sovereignty that justice be administered to the oppressed, without distinguishing between friend or foe, relative and stranger.”¹⁷ Contemporary Muslim scholar Khaled Abou El Fadl challenges Muslims to reclaim the largely forgotten intellectual heritage of the *awlawiyyat al-Islam* (the priorities of Islam),¹⁸ which would

¹⁵Qur’an, 2.256.

¹⁶Khaled Abou El Fadl, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” in *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*, ed. Joshua Cohen and Ian Lague (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 18.

¹⁷A. A. Rizvi, *The Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar’s Reign with special reference to Abu’l Fadl (1556-1605)* (New Delhi: M. Manoharlal, 1975), 364.

¹⁸Abou El Fadl, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” 110.

explain why the ultimate end for Muslims is not tolerance in itself but, rather, the justice it aspires to achieve.

While the hierarchy of values may differ between cultures, there is a confluence of important cross-cultural virtues underpinning both Western and Islamic conceptualizations of tolerance. A good disposition, for instance, has been redacted as a distinct characteristic of the virtuous individual in Western and Muslim writings. Las Casas described a virtuous disposition—imbued with charity, peace, and a rejection of worldliness—as a precondition to genuine missionizing. In their interreligious dialogues, Ramon Llull and Jean Bodin inculcated their interreligious participants with a benevolent disposition of civility and genteelness toward the Other. Tolerance, imbued with a spirit of cordiality and friendship, is readily apparent in Llull’s *Gentile* as well as Bodin’s *Colloquium*, as their learned and pious interlocutors sought to persuade and debate in an environment of mutual respect and goodwill. In the same way, within the Islamic tradition the important *hadith* composed by Ala ‘al-Din ibn Mutaqqi declared that “a good disposition is the greatest of Allah’s creations,”¹⁹ the *summum bonum* of the Muslim life. The Mughal Emperor, Babur, declared that “the progress of Islam is better with the sword of kindness, not with the sword of oppression,”²⁰ ascribing a benevolent disposition to the obedient Muslim. In the *sunna* we find that three attributes of a good disposition are “generosity of soul, agreeable speech, and steadfastness in adversity”—three important elements to Western and Islamic conceptualizations of tolerance.

¹⁹Quoted in Dwight M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), 79.

²⁰N.C. Mehta, “An Unpublished Testament of Babur,” *The Twentieth Century* (January 1936): 340; quoted in Black, 240.

Intellectual humility is also countenanced by both traditions as a commendable attribute of the tolerant individual. Humility or meekness pervades the charitable disposition of each participant in Llull's *Gentile*. The three learned men beseech forgiveness for any offense conveyed during the discourse, understanding that amidst a diverse humanity finding truth is indeed "a process shrouded in difficulty and uncertainty,"²¹ and that a tolerant interreligious dialogue, imbued with a spirit of meekness and intellectual humility, would remain a long-term requisite for coexistence. Contemporary ethicist and philosopher from the University of Texas J. Budziszewski emphasizes the interdependence of humility and tolerance, describing the tolerant individual as one who "refuses to indulge in himself the conceit that he can examine souls; he remembers his own proneness to vice and error; and at all times, he remembers that he himself is an object of tolerance to others."²² In chapter five's examination of contemporary Iranian philosopher Abdolkarim Soroush and Islamic mystic Mowlana Jalal-al-Din Rumi (Rumi), one sees the importance of avoiding religiopolitical arrogance and, instead, preferring the potent virtues of patience and humility, ultimately submitting one's sinful nature to the sovereignty and will of God. (Perhaps it is on this volitional deference—via intellectual humility and meekness—to the final judgment and justice of God that tolerance finds its most formidable interreligious foundation.) It appears that as much as anything else, achieving coexistence through tolerance must reflect a cross-cultural value of meekness, where self-righteous moralism is tempered with a mutual

²¹Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration c. 1100-c. 1500* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 36.

²²J. Budziszewski, *True Tolerance: Liberalism and the Necessity of Judgment* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 9.

respect (not necessarily appreciation) of exogamous views that, through patience and humility, may, in fact, validate and even enrich one's own cultural and religious peculiarities.

Significantly, both traditions demonstrate the possibility of claiming an exclusivity of "truth" while espousing an inclusivity of the Other as a valued part of the human family. It follows, then, that the inherent worth and equality of humanity are transculturally meaningful stimulants for Western and Islamic conceptions of tolerance. Pakistan's spiritual forefather Muhammad Iqbal envisioned a righteous believer as one "who sees men with God's eyes" and "loves heathen and believer equally."²³ Similarly, Las Casas found the equal ultimacy of each individual from within the all important idea of the *imago dei*—God's creation of humankind in His own image. Western liberalism, following Kant and Rawls, has also upheld the equal nature of humanity as a primary motivation for theorizing a sustainable society predicated upon universal fairness.

Perhaps most significantly for tolerance and coexistence is the historical recognition by Muslim and Christian scholars and theologians that, though they may desire a universal *umma* or religious *concordia*, a divinely sanctioned reality of lasting difference was and is the temporal context from which citizens of the world must seek to live peacefully. Conversion through noncoercive persuasion is commanded, but tolerance of difference is principally countenanced as well. Tolerance of the Other, then, is more than just a stopgap until uniformity can be reached or regained. In a world of

²³Quoted in Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A Study of the Hindu-Muslim Encounter* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), 78.

immutable differences, it becomes a permanent mechanism for tempering conflict and encouraging coexistence.

It suffices to say that throughout Western and Islamic histories one can locate writers of tolerance who, undoubtedly affected by their historical circumstances, sought to harness the strategy of tolerance in an effort to achieve a variety of important virtues, such as liberty, justice, and humility, as well as the timeless and pragmatic motivation of peaceful coexistence. Applying past lessons and conceptualizations of tolerance are a boon of doubtless value to contemporary theorists and policymakers. In a world beleaguered with conflict over religious, ethnic, and cultural difference, one should not be opposed to marshalling old sources to help derive contemporary solutions. Indeed, citizens of the world must continue to “ransack the history of the theories and practices of tolerance . . . in order to develop new tools for contesting persecution in its contemporary forms.”²⁴

Conceiving Tolerance: A Contextually Relevant, Cross-Cultural Definition

Throughout the history of Western and Islamic worlds, one finds persons who were profoundly affected by experiences of social, political, and religious division and in search for peaceful coexistence and a virtuous humanity. However, it should not be inferred from this project that tolerance was an even and ever-present movement or idea throughout human history; it was not. Rather, it was and remains a largely minority view or practice, often overcome by official and systematic policies of intolerance. The problem of intolerance has been one of the greatest and persistent predicaments in human

²⁴John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman, eds., *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration Before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 8.

history and is no less problematic today. Religion and culture remain ambient causes of violence, persecution, and division within and across Islamic and Western civilizations. Tolerance, as a religious, political, and philosophical concept found within both Western and Islamic traditions, was sporadically utilized, always subject to the dictates of history. Yet, despite its distortions and inconstant applications, tolerance, as demonstrated in this dissertation, was, in theory and practice, an intercultural concept and experience, wholly consonant with Islamic and Western imaginations; and with cross-cultural, inter-religious violence an endemic part of the contemporary international landscape, the value of tolerance remains high.

This dissertation showed how religious, cultural, sociopolitical, and geographical variables are a few of the many influences that have affected the various conceptualizations of tolerance. Accordingly, it would be a mistake to suggest the existence of one formulaic understanding of tolerance that has been unequivocally embraced throughout history by Islamic and Western cultures. Indeed, context matters, and the diverse framings of tolerance (and their infrequent implementation) make the development of a transculturally cogent definition arduous, if not impossible. Nevertheless, a primary purpose of this concluding chapter—beyond avowing tolerance as a viable transcultural strategy for coexistence between Islamic and Western civilizations—is to suggest a sustainable conceptualization of tolerance that accepts the indestructibility of difference while affirming the historical distinctives and cultural absolutes that make a community or civilization unique.

Recognizing the likelihood of lasting difference between civilizations is not to say that cultures are impervious to amelioration or that two-way, cross-cultural dialogue

should avoid trying to effect positive change in the Other for the sake of promoting humaneness and coexistence. Thus, non-coercive persuasion and proactive debate are essential elements for bettering the human community and sustaining coexistence between Islamic and Western cultures. It is within this dynamic environment of vigorous discourse and abiding difference that a mediating and meaningful cross-cultural conception of tolerance is (with great humility) here proffered: Tolerance, for the sake of coexistence, requires both Islamic and Western civilizations to endure the immutable beliefs and behaviors of the contrary culture that they consider to be abhorrent or inferior to, or simply different from, their own, while not withholding the ethic of *caritas*—that is, charity, fellowship, and humaneness—to the peoples who convey those contrary behaviors and beliefs. This understanding of tolerance resonates deeply with Western and Islamic civilizations and symbolizes the benevolent and charitable tendencies of both traditions. Western philosopher J. Budziszewski offers a similar definition of tolerance as withdrawing approval from another’s flaws while extending kindness toward their persons.²⁵ Similarly, Khaled Abou El Fadl places benevolent reciprocity at the center of tolerance, as Islam directs Muslims “to support the Prophet of Islam” against his deprecators, while, at the same time, recognizing “the moral worth and rights” of those who conduct such offense.²⁶

²⁵Budziszewski, 9.

²⁶Abou El-Fad, “The Place of Tolerance in Islam,” 18. As well, chapter five discussed the Qur’an’s teaching on how a firmness of character is achieved when one chooses endurance and forgiveness as the best response to being maligned by the non-malevolent ignorance of the Other. Chapter five quotes several passages from the Qur’an, including: “The wronged one who endures with fortitude and forgiveness indeed achieves a matter of high resolve” (42:44); and “Take to forgiveness, enjoin good, and turn away from the ignorant” (7:199).

What is more, the conceptualization this author offers above emphasizes an important commonality of Islamic and Western theories of tolerance: the understanding that tolerance, at its core, is a product of judgment. In the words of Budziszewski, tolerance “is not forbearance from judgment, but the fruit of judgment.”²⁷ In essence, genuine tolerance is judgmental beneficence—reckoning the behavior, character, or beliefs of the Other as mistaken, inferior, or even offensive, while affirming the inviolable humanity of its bearer. The prominent and controversial Turkish Muslim, Fethullah Gülen, argued that “tolerance does not mean being influenced by others or joining them”; rather, “it means . . . knowing how to get along with them.” It “does not mean foregoing traditions that come from our religion, or our nation, or our history,” he explained.²⁸ Similarly, Muhammad Iqbal repudiated the relative, postmodern understanding of tolerance, explaining how true tolerance is a product of “intellectual breadth and spiritual expansion,” where the spiritually powerful person can tolerate other forms of faith while remaining jealous of the idiosyncrasies of his own.²⁹

The idea of tolerance as a judgmental beneficence is a part of Western tradition as well, playing a prodigious role, for instance, in the interreligious dialogues of Llull and Bodin. The interaction of the religious scholars in both the *Gentile* and *Colloquium* demonstrates how coexistence came, not through a dilution or compromise of absolutes,

²⁷Budziszewski, 7.

²⁸Fethullah Gülen, “Tolerance in the Life of the Individual and Society,” Speech recorded on 13 January 1996, available at www.fgulen.com (accessed 25 August 2005).

²⁹Syed Abdul, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1965), 261; quoted in Ronald W. Neufeldt, “Islam and India: The Views of Muhammad Iqbal,” *Muslim World* 71 (July-October 1981): 191.

but through a tolerance that accepted human society's varied and complex religiocultural traditions, enduring dogmatic differences and respecting the sacred humanity of the Other. Likewise, Las Casas judged the paganism of non-Christians as antithetical and inferior to the truth, but he sought the willing salvation of the divinely created Other, not through warring and coercion, but through "a soft voice . . . with quiet argumentation and suitable language, with lively and lovely benevolence."³⁰ In both Islamic and Western traditions, tolerance has carried the idea of disfavoring otherness, while upholding the equal worth of the Other. That a judgmental, benevolent conception of tolerance is intuitive to both Islamic and Western civilizations is significant, as contemporary coexistence will require a strategy of tolerance that can positively affect a global community of abiding difference.³¹

In order for this view of tolerance to remain useful, both Islamic and Western civilizations must find energy to employ this strategy from inside their unique historical, theoretical, and theological traditions. Moreover, they must percolate this mutual idea through a filter of universally accepted values such as human dignity, humility, liberty, justice, and peace. If tolerance is to become and remain an effective strategy for mediating current intercivilizational conflicts, it must be nurtured within a persistent and

³⁰Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 122.

³¹It is, of course, imperative to establish mutually accepted limitations for this cross-cultural understanding of tolerance. This symmetrical conception does not advocate an unfettered acceptance of the Other. Those who advocate violent intolerance toward others within and outside of a community only exacerbate the potential for conflict and threaten coexistence. Thus, this tempered conception of tolerance must have transparent parameters that allow communities and civilizations to confront and even forestall those rogue and belligerent members of society who violently rebuff cross-cultural efforts toward achieving coexistence.

intensive cross-cultural process of dialogue and engagement—listening and learning how to live with real and lasting difference.

Contemporary Challenges to Tolerance and Coexistence

When the question is asked, “Is tolerance a cross-cultural possibility?” the answer is not immediately obvious. Many in the West continue to perceive the Muslim world as opposed to coexistence and Islam as a religion devoid of tolerance. The terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists in New York, Madrid, and London, as well as the way in which many of the protests against the European publications of offensive cartoons degenerated into acts of violence and bitter diatribes across the Muslim world, are, for many Westerners, representative of an intolerant Islamic culture. Moreover, the violent invectives from such Muslim extremists as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who stated at the execution of Nicholas Berg, “So kill the infidels wherever you see them, take them, sanction them, and await them in every place,” represent what Abou El Fadl terms “vulgarizations of Islam.” Yet, despite their perversions, the voices of Muslim extremists continue to dominate the inchoate perceptions created by many Westerners of what Islamic culture espouses. The intransigency of extremists like Zarqawi, Osama Bin Laden, or Britain’s Abu Hamza al-Masri belie the humane and benevolent tradition they claim to represent, a rueful example of how context often obfuscates authenticity. As demonstrated in chapter two, Muslims within and beyond Islamic civilization who condemn those who condone or carry out violence against innocent humanity in the name of Islam are too often overshadowed by the amplified violence propagated by Islam’s radical adherents and the global publicity afforded Muslims who justify such aggression. After hearing the bellicose language of such Muslim radicals as Zarqawi or Masri, many

in the West feel that strategies of tolerance are terra incognita for Islam and the Muslim world.

At the same time, many Muslim communities in the West and throughout the Muslim world are wrestling with socio-political exploitation and economic underdevelopment, recoiling against the injurious effects of globalization and the ideological onslaught of Western culture (what Huntington calls “Westoxification”), and struggling to uphold the integrity of traditional Islamic culture. Many Muslims view the West’s dissemblance of tolerance as a disingenuous non-judgmental indifference, where individuals are extracted from their group identities, and a universal strangeness and religious apathy are espoused. Muslims describe the thin conceptualization of tolerance that dominates the West as nothing more than hypocritical relativism or indifference, intolerant of absolute convictions. George Washington University professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr makes this assertion:

The very assertion of tolerance on the basis of relativism brings about a negation and intolerance toward those who refuse to participate in the prevalent process of relativization. That is why, while many people in the West talk of tolerance, they are usually very intolerant of members of other civilizations which do not accept their views. . . . The challenge [for the West] is how to be tolerant toward those who do not accept the Western definition of the human state, nor relativism and secularism, those who belong to other civilizations or even those within the West for whom the sense of the Absolute and the Sacred has not withered away and is not likely to wither away no matter how much one extols the glory of secularism.³²

Nasr concludes by challenging the Islamic world to learn how to tolerate an opposing culture that threatens its existence without forfeiting its essence, while the secularized

³²Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “Metaphysical Roots of Tolerance and Intolerance: An Islamic Interpretation,” in *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance*, ed. Mehdi Amin Razavi and David Ambuel (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1997), 49-55.

West, he argues, must grasp the difficult understanding that its conception “of man and the world is not necessarily universal.”³³

For a cross-cultural concept of tolerance to emerge, secular concepts of tolerance proffered by the West must acknowledge the important contributions that religious perspective brings to understanding tolerance, and religious adherents in the Muslim world must ultimately demonstrate how the concept of tolerance is an inherent aspect of their ultimate concern instead of some wholly secular invention reluctantly integrated by Islam. Just as Christians in the West must espouse a tolerance that is imbued by the gospel, Muslims must teach the inherent importance of tolerance without sacrificing the exclusive claims of their faith. In other words, a cross-cultural, transnational, and interfaith effort must be made to locate a mutual understanding and appreciation of tolerance.

Both Muslim and Western worlds face formidable obstacles to coexistence, as tolerance has been either equated with sinful disobedience or diluted into an opaque and hollow concept replete with ambiguity. Indeed, John Christian Laursen is right, tolerance, as a *via media* concept, “is often unstable in the sense that there will be pressures to move toward one or both of the extremes: toward persecution or full respect.”³⁴ A necessary tension will persist, as coexistence will largely depend on the ability of both world cultures to nurture, defend, and express the fragile cross-cultural strategy of tolerance. Whether a “clash of civilizations” is underway or simply a popular

³³Ibid., 55.

³⁴John Christian Laursen, “Orientation: Clarifying the Conceptual Issues,” in *Religious Toleration: “The Variety of Rites” from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 6.

trope that neglects the complexity associated with Western and Islamic cultures, does not take away from the reality of a multilayered conflict taking place between Muslim and Western cultures today. One must not overlook the predominantly negative connotations both sides are ascribing toward the cultural and religious Other. At what Nasr calls “this dangerous juncture of human history,”³⁵ it is important for Islamic and Western cultures to embrace a dialogue of humane coexistence, extrapolating from their rich histories and traditions the inherent and ecumenical strategy of tolerance.

Conclusion

Mitrovica, Kosovo is a city divided between its Muslim Albanian majority and its Orthodox Serbian minority. The cross-cultural tension is effusive in Mitrovica, which has been a flashpoint of interethnic, interreligious violence in the region for a number of years. In 2005, the bridge crossing the river Ibar, which largely divides the two communities and is heavily monitored by NATO peacekeepers, was ceremonially reopened for operation at scheduled intervals. Some have protested the bridge’s reopening, preferring to remain physically (and psychologically) divided. Others, however, view the reopened and redesigned crossing as a symbolic attempt to bridge those religiocultural divisions that have long plagued Mitrovica—a symbolic token toward reconciliation and peaceful engagement. Elucidating the limited symbolism of the reopening, at the conclusion of the ceremony, Albanian and Serbian onlookers hastily returned to their divided communities on opposite sides of the river, and traveling into the

³⁵Ibid., 56.

Other's territory remains uncommon.³⁶ Some dismiss the refurbished and reopened bridge as an idealistic gesture elevated above the tumultuous currents of conflict that actually exist below, while for others it represents one proactive, hopeful step forward toward coexistence somewhere in the future.

Like the bridge in Mitrovica, some may consider an investigation into the theoretical, theological, and historical conceptualizations of tolerance within Western and Islamic cultures an idealist exposition that is divorced from the muddy reality of conflicts on the ground. It is true that the idea of tolerance has not been a conspicuous component of historical reality, with official intolerance playing a predominant role in every human civilization. Nevertheless, conceding that tolerance has been a perfunctory element, at best, subject to the temporal dictates of history, its transcultural relevance should not be discounted. In every era dominated by systematic or official intolerance toward the Other, one can also locate contemporaneous proponents of tolerance. Those who theorized on the importance of tolerance certainly aspired toward an ideal environment of coexistence and heightened virtue, but they did so cognizant of the difficult social and political realities within which they lived and participated.

In our contemporary context of multi-level conflict between Islamic and Western cultures, we are not void of transcultural resources for addressing current realities. This project showed how an eclectic, yet consensual, appeal for tolerance can be harnessed from a venerable depository of Western and Islamic theories, revelations, and traditions to help facilitate an intercultural and interreligious accommodation for coexistence (as well as heightened virtue). Perhaps both cultures would prefer a conforming worldview.

³⁶Matt Prodger, "Serbs Block Kosovo Bridge Opening," *BBC News*, available at www.bbcnews.com (accessed 12 December 2005).

But when it comes time to choose between conformity and coexistence, two competing goods, it becomes clear that, in a temporal context, the latter is the only realizable alternative. Even if one were to challenge the existence of a rudimentary core of intercultural virtues, such as justice, humility, liberty, and charity, they would find difficulty in dismissing the borderless desire to peacefully coexist. Walzer is correct that an individual or community would confront a profound burden of proof in attempting to explain to the world community how peaceful coexistence is not a worthy and intrinsic goal of all humanity. Coexistence does not have to be seen as a lesser of two evils; rather, it can be portrayed, in fidelity to both Islamic and Western traditions, as an acceptable inevitability of lasting human diversity. Consequently, tolerance for the sake of coexistence remains an inherent part of the pragmatic and ethical desiderata of both traditions.

Conflict between “us and them” is etched into the annals of human civilization.

Tolerance, however, has also been a timeless strategy, variously defined and infrequently implemented, that must be reconsidered and employed today. A.J. Conyers is right: tolerance is most succinctly a strategy, and its profundity is in direct relation to its intention. Its importance depends on how and why it is used, in the service of what purpose.³⁷ In Seyyed Nasr’s words, “The future of the world in the next few years and decades will depend obviously on how various world views and civilizations will be able to live together.”³⁸ A hermeneutic of tolerance that cultivates mutual respect, goodwill, and active engagement is an important strategy for living together or coexisting, and, just

³⁷A.J. Conyers, *The Long Truce* (Dallas: Spence Publishing, 2001), 8.

³⁸Nasr, “An Islamic Interpretation,” 55.

as lasting peace between two persons must be motivated by an internal desire to endure disagreement in the hopes of reconciliation, transcultural coexistence must also begin with an intracultural desire to relocate tolerance as a cultural predisposition of both Western and Islamic civilizations.

The history of human civilization is one of contact, cooperation, conflict, and coexistence—an apt generalization of the historical and contemporary relations between Islam and the West. In light of the inimical international context today, coexistence and conflict resolution must be cultivated by our world's cultures and religions. Theologian and scholar at the University of Chicago Martin Marty makes the hopeful statement that “more alert citizens of the world are at work attempting to effect politics and policies in which conflicting religions [and cultures] can learn to coexist and even cooperate with each other.”³⁹ Muslim scholar at the University of Tunisia Muhammad Talbi has called for Western and Islamic scholars to engage in the struggle for wisdom and greater understanding, “to gird themselves for the battle to create a confluence of interests.”⁴⁰ For coexistence to occur, voices within Islam and the West must decide to explore

³⁹Martin E. Marty, *When Faiths Collide* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 6. This project disagrees, in part, with Marty's thesis that we must move beyond tolerance and “begin to effect change by risking hospitality toward the other.” This project agrees that hospitality, among a host of important virtues, must be cultivated towards the Other. However, my thesis contends that important virtues, such as charity, liberty, justice, and hospitality, are vital goals best affected by a transcultural strategy of tolerance. A community or individual is able to “welcome a stranger” or risk hospitality toward the Other only when they are first able to tolerate those beliefs and rituals of the Other that they believe are inferior or even offensive to their own. One is reminded of the Christian maxim, “hate the sin, but love the sinner.”

⁴⁰Mohamed Talbi, “Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding between Islam and the West,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 25, no. 2 (1988), 189.

together their immutable differences and important commonalities. It is hoped that this dissertation has made a humble contribution to this worthy and urgent endeavor.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Selected General Works

- Ahmed, Akbar S. *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Barber, Benjamin. *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World*. New York: Times Books, 1995.
- Brackney, William H., ed. *Human Rights and the World's Major Religions*. Four Volumes. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005.
- Chapman, Colin. *Islam and the West: Conflict, Coexistence or Conversion?* Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 1998.
- Davis, Derek H. and Gerhard Beisier, eds. *International Perspectives on Freedom and Equality of Religious Belief*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2002.
- Ellens, Harold J., ed. *The Destructive Power of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Four Volumes. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing, 2004.
- Esposito, John. *Islam: The Straight Path*, 3d. ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Euben, Roxanne L. *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Feldman, Noah. *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2003.
- Fukuyama, Francis. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 1992.
- Hadda, Z.Y., ed. *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Halliday, Fred. *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation*. New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999.
- Hunter, Shireen. *The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998.

- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Touchstone, 1997.
- Ibrahim, Anwar. *The Need for Civilizational Dialogue*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, 1995.
- Jargy, Simon. *Islam et Chrétienté*. Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1981.
- Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Jerichow, Anders and Jørgen Baek Simonsen. *Islam in a Changing World: Europe and the Middle East*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997.
- Khawaja, Mahboob A. *Muslims and the West: Quest for "Change" and Conflict Resolution*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000.
- Küng, Hans, J. van Ess, and H. Bechert. *Christianity and World Religions: Paths to Dialogue*. Translated by P. Heinegg. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993.
- Lewis, Bernard. *Islam and the West*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- _____. *Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Age of Discovery*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Little, David, John Kelsay, and Abdulaziz A. Sachedina. *Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures: Western and Islamic Perspectives on Religious Liberty*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.
- Marty, Martin. *When Faiths Collide*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Milton-Edwards, Beverly. *Islam and Politics in the Contemporary World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004.
- Mohammadi, Ali, ed. *Islam Encountering Globalization*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003.
- Nielsen, Jorgen S., ed. *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue*. New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1998.
- Novak, Michael. *The Universal Hunger for Liberty: Why the Clash of Civilizations is not Inevitable*. New York: Basic Books, 2004.

Roy, Oliver. *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Sardar, Zia. *Postmodernism and the Other: The New Imperialism of Western Culture*. London: Pluto Press, 1998.

Senghaas, Dieter. *The Clash Within Civilizations: Coming to Terms with Cultural Conflicts*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Shayegan, Daryush. *Cultural Schizophrenia: Islamic Societies Confronting the West*. Translated by John Howe. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997.

Van der Vyver, Johan D. and John Witte Jr., eds. *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Legal Perspectives*. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996.

Witte, John Jr. and Johan D. van der Vyver, eds. *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspectives*. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996.

Selected General Articles

Arkoun, Mohammed. "Is Islam Threatened by Christianity." *Cross Currents* 45, no. 4 (1995/1996): 469-79.

Barber, Benjamin. "Beyond Jihad vs. McWorld." *The Nation* 274 (21 January 2002): 11-18.

Dallmayr, Fred. "Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory." *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 2 (2004): 249-57.

Huntington, Samuel P. "If Not Civilizations, What?: Paradigms of the Post-Cold War." *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 5 (1993): 186-94.

_____. "The West: Unique, Not Universal." *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 6 (1996): 28-46.

Kurtz, Stanley. "The Future of History." *Policy Review* 113 (June/July 2002): 43-58.

Talbi, Mohamed. "Possibilities and Conditions for a Better Understanding Between Islam and the West." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 25, no. 2 (1988): 161-93.

Select Works on Religious Tolerance

Hammann, Louis J. and Harry M. Buck, eds. *Religious Traditions and the Limits of Tolerance*. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1988.

Laursen, John C., ed. *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" From Cyrus to Defoe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Makdisi, George, Dominique Sourdél, and Janine Sourdél-Thomine, eds. *La Notion de Liberté au Moyen Age Islam, Byzance, Occident*. Paris: "Les Belles Lettres," 1985.

Mensching, Gustav. *Tolerance and Truth in Religion*. Translated by H.J. Klimkeit. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1971.

Razavi, Mehdi Amin and David Ambuel, eds. *Philosophy, Religion, and the Question of Intolerance*. Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1997.

Walzer, Michael. *On Toleration*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.

Wolff, Robert P., Barrington Moore, and Herbert Marcuse. *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1965.

Tolerance and Western Civilization

Abelard, Peter. *Dialogue of a Philosopher with a Jew and a Christian*. Translated by Pierre J. Payer. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979.

Abulafia, Anna Sapir. *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Bainton, Roland. *The Travail of Religious Liberty*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951.

_____. "Sebastian Castellio and the Toleration Controversy of the Sixteenth Century." In *Persecution and Liberty: Essays in Honor of George Lincoln Burr*. New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1931.

Bodin, Jean. *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*. Translated by Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.

Budziszewski, J. *True Tolerance*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000.

Butler, C.J. "Covenant Theology and the Development of Religious Liberty." In Daniel J. Elazer and John Kincaid, ed., *The Covenant Connection*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2000.

Castellio, Sebastian. *Advice to a Desolate France*. Translated by Wouter Valkhoff. Edited by Marius F. Valkhoff. Shepherdstown, WV: Patmos Press, 1975.

- _____. *Concerning Heretics*. Translated by R.H. Bainton. New York: Octagon, 1965.
- Conyers, A.J. *The Long Truce*. Dallas: Spence Publishing Company, 2001.
- Creppell, Ingrid. *Toleration and Identity: Foundations in Early Modern Thought*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Fichtenau, Heinrich. *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages, 1000-1200*. Translated by Denise A. Kaiser. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998.
- Fubini, Riccardo. *Humanism and Secularization from Petrarch to Valla*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Gervers, Michael and James M. Powell, eds. *Tolerance and Intolerance: Social Conflict in the Age of the Crusades*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001.
- Grell, Ole Peter, and Bob Scribner, eds. *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Grell, Ole Peter, and Roy Porter, eds. *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Guggisberg, Hans R. "Wandel der Argumente für religiöse Toleranz und Glaubensfreiheit im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert." In *Zur Geschichte der Toleranz und Religionsfreiheit*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977.
- Henderson, John B. *The Construction of Orthodoxy and Heresy*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1998.
- Hirsch, Elisabeth Feist. "'De Arte Dubitandi' and the Problem of Religious Liberty." In *Autor De Michel Servet et de Sebastien Castellion*, ed. B. Becker, 244-58. Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon N.V., 1953.
- Jordan, W.K.C. *The Development of Religious Toleration in England*. Four volumes. London: Allen and Unwin, 1940.
- Kamen, Henry Arthur Francis. *The Rise of Toleration*. London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1967.
- Lactantius. *Divine Institutes*. Translated by Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003.
- Lamirande, Emillien. *Church, State and Toleration: An Intriguing Change of Mind in Augustine*. Villanova, PA: Villanova University Press, 1975.

- Las Casas, Bartolomé. *The Only Way*. Translated by Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J. and edited by Helen Rand Parish. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992.
- Laursen, John C., ed. *Histories of Heresy in Early Modern Europe: For, Against, and Beyond Persecution and Toleration*. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Laursen, John C. and Cary J. Nederman, eds. *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration Before the Enlightenment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998.
- Lecler, Joseph. *Toleration and the Reformation*. Two Volumes. Translated by T.L. Westow. New York: Association Press, 1960.
- Levine, Alab, ed. *Early Modern Skepticism and the Origins of Toleration*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999.
- Llull, Ramon. *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*. Translated by Anthony Bonner. In *The Selected Works of Ramon Llull (1232-1316)*, ed. Anthony Bonner, 91-304. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- _____. *Vita Coaetanea (Contemporary Life)*. Translated by Anthony Bonner. In *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader*, ed. Anthony Bonner, 10-40. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- Makdisi, George et al, eds. *The Concept of Freedom in the Middle Ages*. Paris: "Les Belles Lettres," 1985.
- McDonald, Sister Mary Francis, ed. *Lactantius: The Minor Works*. Translated by Sister Mary Francis McDonald. Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1965.
- Mendus, Susan, ed. *The Politics of Toleration in Modern Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Moore, R.I. *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1987.
- Mullan, David George, ed. *Religious Pluralism in the West: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.
- Murphy, Andrew. *Conscience and Community*. University Park: Penn State University, 2001.
- Nederman, Cary J. *Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration: 1100-1550*. University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.

- Nederman, Cary J. and John Christian Laursen, eds. *Difference and Dissent*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996.
- Newman, Jay. *Foundations of Religious Tolerance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.
- Patschovsky, Alexander and Harald Zimmermann, eds. *Toleranz im Mittelalter*. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1998.
- Remer, Gary. *Humanism and the Rise of Toleration*. University Park, PA: Penn State, 1996.
- Reynolds, Noel and W.C. Durham, eds, *Religious Liberty in Western Thought*. Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1996.
- Schreiner, Klaus. "Toleranz." In *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, ed. Otto Brunner, Werner Coeze and Reinhardt Koselleck. E. Klett, 1995.
- Shiels, W.J., ed. *Persecution and Toleration*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.
- Stetson, Brad and Joseph G. Conti. *The Truth About Tolerance: Pluralism, Diversity, and the Culture Wars*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005.
- Van Loon, Hendrick W. *Tolerance*. New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925.
- Waldron, Jeremy. *God, Locke, and Equality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Zagorin, Perez. *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Articles

- Bejczy, Istvan. "Tolerantia: A Medieval Concept." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58 (1997): 365-84.
- Digeser, DePalma Elizabeth. "Lactantius, Porphyry, and the Debate over Religious Toleration." *The Journal of Roman Studies* 88 (1998): 129-46.
- Guggisberg, Hans R. "The Defense of Religious Toleration and Religious Liberty in Early Modern Europe: Arguments, Pressures, and Some Consequences." *History of European Ideas* 4, no. 1 (1983): 35-50.

- Laursen, John Christian and Cary J. Nederman. "The Problem of Periodization in the History of Toleration." *Storia della Storiographica* 37 (2000): 55-65.
- Lorenzo, David. "Tradition and Prudence in Locke's Exception to Toleration." *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2003): 248-58.
- McClure, Kristi. "Difference, Diversity and the Limits of Toleration." *Political Theory* 18 (1990): 361-91.
- Murphy, Andrew. "Tolerance, Toleration, and the Liberal Tradition." *Polity* 29, no. 4 (1997): 593-624.
- Rohr, John H. "Religious Toleration in Augustine." *Journal of Church and State* 9 (Winter 1967): 51-70.
- Sandel, Michael. "Judgemental Toleration." In *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality: Contemporary Essays*, ed. Robert George, 107-12.. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Shogimen, Takashi. "From Disobedience to Toleration: William of Ockham and the Medieval Discourse of Fraternal Correction." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 52 (2001): 599-622.
- Turchetti, Mario. "Religious Concord and Political Tolerance in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 22 (1991): 15-25.

Tolerance and Islamic Civilization

- Abd Al-Rahman, Awang. *The Status of the Dhimmī in Islamic Law*. Kuala Lumpur: International Law Book Services, 1994.
- Ahmad, Ishtiaq. *The Concept of an Islamic State: An Analysis of the Ideological Controversy in Pakistan*. London: Francis Pinter, 1987.
- Al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid. *On the Boundaries of Theological Tolerance in Islam*. Introduced and Translated by Sherman A. Jackson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- An-Naim, Abdullahi Ahmad. *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights and International Law*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1990.
- Binder, Leonard. *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988.

- Biswanger, K. *Untersuchungen zum Status der Nichtmuslime im Osmanischen Reich des 16. Jahrhunderts. Mit einer Neuen Definition des Begriffes "Dimma."* Beitrag zur Kenntnis Südost Europas und des Nahen Orients. Munich: R. Torfenik, 1977.
- Black, Antony. *History of Islamic Political Thought: From the prophet to the present.* New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Boullata, Isa J. "Fa-stabiqu 'l-khayrat: A Qur'anic Principle of Interfaith Relations." In *Christian-Muslim Encounters*, ed. Yvonne Y. Haddad and Wadi Z. Haddad. 43-53. Gainesville, FL.: University Press of Florida, 1995.
- Braude, Benjamin and Bernard Lewis, eds. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society.* New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982.
- Cohen, Joshua and Ian Lague, eds. *The Place of Tolerance in Islam.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2002.
- Cohen, Joshua and Deborah Chasman, eds. *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Donaldson, Dwight M. *Studies in Muslim Ethics.* London: S.P.C.K, 1953.
- Fakhry, Majid. *Ethical Theories in Islam.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994.
- Forte, David. "Religious Toleration in Classical Islam." In *International Perspectives on Church and State*, ed. Menachem Mor, 209-218. Omaha, NE: Creighton University Press, 1993.
- Franz, Erhard. *Minderheiten im Vorderen Orient: Auswahlbibliographie.* Hamburg: Deutsches Orient-Institute, 1978.
- Friedmann, Yohanan. *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Goodman, Lenn E. *Islamic Humanism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Griffel, F. *Apostasie und Toleranz im Islam: Die Entwicklung zu al-Ġazālī's Urteil Gegen die Philosophie und die Reaktionen der Philosophen.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000.
- Gülen, Fethullah. *Prophet Muhammad: The Infinite Light.* London: Truostar, 1995.
- Hussain, Showkat. *Minorities, Islam and the Nation State.* Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1997.

- Iqbal, Mohammad. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Lahore: Ashraf Press, reprinted 1960.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. *Freedom, Justice, and Equality in Islam*, 2d. ed. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2002.
- _____. *The Dignity of Man: An Islamic Perspective*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2002.
- Kerber, Walter, ed. *Wie Tolerant ist der Islam?* Munich: Kindt Verlag, 1991.
- Khouj, Abdullah Muhammad. *Religious Tolerance in Islam*. 2d. ed. The Islamic Center of Washington, D.C., 1992.
- Khuri, Richard K. *Freedom, Modernity, and Islam*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998.
- Kurzman, Charles, ed. *Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Lewis, Bernard. *The Jews of Islam*. New Haven, CT: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Masters, Bruce. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Maududi, Abul A'la. *Human Rights in Islam*. Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1980.
- _____. *Rights of Non-Muslims in the Islamic State*. Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1982.
- _____. *First Principles of the Islamic State*. Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1983.
- Mottahedeh, Roy P. "Toward an Islamic Theology of Toleration." In *Islamic Law Reform and Human Rights*, ed. Tore Lindholm & Kari Vogt, 25-36. Copenhagen & Lund: Nordic Human Rights Publications, 1993.
- Müller, Lorenz. *Islam und Menschenrechte. Sunnitische Muslim zwischen Islamismus, Säkularismus und Modernismus*. Hamburg: Deutsches Orient-Institut, 1996.
- Nazir-Ali, Michael. *The Roots of Islamic Tolerance: Origin and Development*. Oxford Project for Peace Studies. Oxford, 1990.
- Paret, R. "Innerislamischer Pluralismus." In *Die Islamische Welt zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. P. Bachmann, and U. Haarmann, 523-529. Beirut: Beirut Texts und Studien, 1979.

- Qutb, Sayyid. *Social Justice in Islam*. Translated by William E. Shepard. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996.
- Rizvi, A.A. *The Religious and Intellectual History of Muslims in Akbar's Reign with Special Reference to Abu'l Fadl (1556-1605)*. New Delhi: M. Manoharlal, 1975.
- Rosenthal, Franz. *The Muslim Concept of Freedom Prior to the Nineteenth Century*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960.
- Sachedina, Abdulaziz. "Freedom of Conscience and Religion in the Qur'ān." In *Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures*, ed. D. Little, J. Kelsay, and A.A. Sachedina, 53-96. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.
- Saeed, Abdullah and Hassan Saeed. *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy and Islam*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004.
- Shoufani, E. *Al-rida and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press and The Arab Institute for Research and Publishing, 1973.
- Sonn, T. *Islam and the Question of Minorities*. Atlanta: Scholars' Press, 1996.
- Soroush, 'Abdolkarim. *Reason and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of 'Abdolkarim Soroush*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Vahid, Syed Abdul. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964.
- Wismar, Adolph L. *A Study in Tolerance as Practiced by Muhammad and His Immediate Successors*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1927.
- Yavus, M. Hakan and John L. Esposito, eds. *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003.

Articles

- Abou el-Fadl, Khaled. "Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries." *Islamic Law and Society* 1 (1994): 141-87.
- _____. "The Culture of Ugliness in Modern Islam and Reengaging Morality." *UCLA Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* 2, no. 1 (2003): 33-98.
- Ahmed, Shihab. "Ibn Taymiyya and the Satanic Verses." *Studia Islamica* 87 (1988): 67-124.

Ayoub, Mahmoud. "Islam and Christianity: Between Tolerance and Acceptance." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* (December 1991) 171–181.

_____. "Religious Freedom and the Law of Apostasy in Islam." *Islamochristiana* 20 (1994): 15-91.

Douglas, Elmer H. "The Theological Position of Islam Concerning Religious Liberty." *The Ecumenical Review* 13 (1960-1961): 450-62.

Friedmann, Yohanan. "Classification of Unbelievers in Sunni Muslim Law and Tradition." *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 22 (1998): 163-95.

Hashmi, Sohail. "The Qur'an and Tolerance: An Interpretive Essay on Verse 5:48." *Journal of Human Rights* 2, no. 1 (March 2003):

Highland, James. "Guidance, Tolerance, and the Reverent Mindset in the thought of al-Ghazzali and Symeon." *The Muslim World* 94, no. 2 (April 2004): 259-73.

Mazrui, Ali. "Islamic and Western Values." *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 5 (September/October 1997): 118–132.

Neufeldt, Ronald. "Islam and India: The Views of Muhammad Iqbal, *Muslim World* 71 (July-October 1981).

Noth, A. "Möglichkeiten und Grenzen islamischer Toleranz." *Saeculum* 29 (1993): 190-204.

Paret, R. "Toleranz und Intoleranz im Islam." *Saeculum* 21 (1970): 344-65.

Sachedina, Abdulaziz. "Political Implications of the Islamic Notion of 'Supersession' as Reflected in Islamic Jurisprudence." *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* 7 (1996): 159-68.

Savory, Roger M. "Relations between the Safavid State and its Non-Muslim Minorities." *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* 14, no. 4 (2003): 435-59.

Watt, W. Montgomery. "Conditions of Membership of the Islamic Community." *Studia Islamica* 21 (1964): 5-12.

Unpublished

Oh, Irene Young In. "Human Rights in Contemporary Islamic Thought: Toward a Cross-Cultural Discourse Ethic." Ph.D diss., University of Virginia, 2004.

Saeedi, Meade Goodenow. "The Politics of Religious Persecution: Can Tolerance Occur Within Certain Islamic States for the Ahmadi and Baha'i Faiths?" Ph.D diss., University of Maryland, College Park, 1993.