

Lettres de Byblos
Letters from Byblos

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KARIN KNEISSL

Culture, Religion and Conflict



Centre International des Sciences de l'Homme
International Centre for Human Sciences
المركز الدولي لعلوم الإنسان



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المركز الدولي لعلوم الإنسان



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It is based on the symposium "Cultures, Religions et Conflits" hosted by the Lebanese Minister of Culture, Ghassan Salamé, in Mzaar, in the Lebanon Mountains, with the support of the European Commission, UNESCO and the Centre International des Sciences de l'Homme in Byblos.

Sixty-eight participants from 21 nations attended the conference.

The Report is based on the contributions of the participants, including critical analysis of the concepts within the broad context of the subject and the discussions with comments.

Karin Kneissl

Culture, Religion and Conflict

KARIN KNEISSL

Introduction

Culture makes headlines. But no longer as humanistic outpourings of music or art that move people to feel the presence of genius. Far from it. In any reading of recent chronologies of war between cultural communities caught up in nationalistic hate from the Balkans to the Hindu Kush culture is the pre-eminent dividing line. The resurgence of cultural affinities is also rocking domestic policy in Europe. Here, too, the immediate concern is political mobilisation in the name of the narrow community, against the broad background of competing views about Europe's cultural identity.

The conference held at Mzaar in Lebanon in September 2002 sought to trace the causes of these new cultural - and often in the narrow sense religious - chasms. Lebanon is a good place for a meeting of people from very different academic and other backgrounds - in 1840 Prince Metternich had aptly spoken of "this little country that makes so much noise". This microcosm of 18 confessions and a recent history of decades of war in the course of which the structures of statehood collapsed as a nation-state was being born¹ provides a wealth of dramatic material for the topic of "Culture, Religion and Conflict". At the same time, Lebanon, and in particular the many unrecognised heroes of everyday life who quite literally held out "in spite of everything", are exemplars of the eternal possibility of coexistence.

¹ Theodor Hanf, *Coexistence in Wartime Lebanon: Decline of a State and Rise of a Nation* (Oxford und London 1993)

The new wars

"War is the cause of everything" is a huge and bloody step ahead of scientific observation. Anybody who has followed the wars, their causes and methods, in the last quarter of the twentieth century is aware that none of them, whether wars within (Lebanon, Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, etc.) or between states (Armenia and Azerbaijan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, etc.), was fought in the name of ideology or to gain control of natural resources. People are defined as enemies not because they are adversaries or members of a hostile army. They are enemies because what of what they are, not because of what they have done. The line separating friends and enemies exists because of cultural, ethnic or religious background. It was this fatal ethnocentrism that led radical Croats and Serbs to resort to "ethnic cleansing" in the 1990s. This concept is not all that new. Its roots lie in twentieth-century organised extermination, genocide and expulsion on the basis of ethnic criteria as practised by Germany, Turkey and the Soviet Union.

From the 1960s onwards, new actors and methods materialised in numerous conflicts fought out in the shadow of the official Cold War. The war in Lebanon was the precursor, so to speak, of the new type of war that raged in Yugoslavia after the death of Marshall Tito in 1980 and the Caucasus after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The old labels of "Left" and "Right", pro-West and pro-Moscow had long been superseded: the new reference points were religion and culture. The political credo of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 was "neither East nor West". To Muslim zealots the Soviets were no better than the Americans. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, it was even more important for the Iranian revolutionaries to maintain an equal distance to Moscow and Washington.

Rampant anti-Americanism, however, was far more widespread than opposition to the USSR. Already in 1964, Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the revolution in Iran, ranked the "powers of evil" for his followers as follows:

*"America is worse than Britain; Britain is worse than America. The Soviet Union is worse than both of them. They are all worse and more unclean than each other! But today it is America that we are concerned with."*²

As Iran's supreme leader, Sayed Ali Khamenei, head of the clerical and political hierarchy, himself pointed out in 1985, the greatest challenge facing the superpowers was how to deal with Islam.³ Subsequent developments in Afghanistan, Chechnya and, since 11 September 2001, other regions of the globe, confirm Khamenei's diagnosis.

² Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, Berkeley 1981, p. 185; quoted in Daniel Pipes, *Fundamentalist Muslims between America and Russia*; *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 64. No. 5, 1986, pp. 939-959

³ Radio Teheran 17 November 1985, quoted in Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 939

Culture as a weapon

The collapse of established ideologies and rapid globalisation helped a new vocabulary in the on-going epic of war and peace to gain widespread acceptance. In the language of the debates and, above all, the wars of our age "culture", "religion", "ethnicity", "nation" and related concepts have become key words. The prophets of the 1960s who confidently predicted the withering of cultural values and traditions were mistaken. Belief in progress, industrialisation, urbanisation and mass communications has resulted not in general demystification, neither in the Third World nor, it is increasingly apparent, in large swathes of the industrialised world either, a development Theodor Hanf noted as early as 1986.⁴ Indeed, André Malraux, a French writer, is closer to the truth than the modernists with his prediction that the twenty-first century would be a "religious century".

At the beginning of the twenty-first century "the cultural dimension" has become a security policy category. Ghassan Salamé phrases it: "The cultural dimension has stormed the very heart of politics, but at what price?" For many contemporary political actors this cultural dimension is the essence of politics per se. In Salamé's view, the cultural dimension, which has been seeping into politics over decades, now triggers bloody wars in a hopeless struggle over identity.

This holds not only for the obvious crisis zones on our earth, but also for the sheltered hearths of Scandinavian and Western European welfare states, where fears of global recession, the immigration debate, new concerns about jobs and about aliens and alienation in general have stoked a new populism that also seeks to reconstruct old identities.

Identities reconstructed in blood

As traditional ideologies break down and the state withdraws from many of its responsibilities, people feel that all they can turn to in an uncertain world is their cultural community. There is no global language, or global community, or universally valid and enforceable system of law. Even the most global of all international organisations, the United Nations, whose 191 members subscribe to the Charter of the United Nations and - from the point of view of international law - its extremely defining criteria, is a very weak bond. The explanation for the past, and probably future, failure of modern attempts to establish an international community - the League of Nations is a case in point - is that no community this broad can offer its members a tangible identity.⁵

⁴ Theodor Hanf, *Modernisierung ohne Säkularisierung? Versuch über religiös-politische Ideologien in der Dritten Welt*, in *Die Bedeutung der Ideologien in der heutigen Welt*, special issue of *Zeitschrift für Politik*, Cologne 1986, pp. 129-152

⁵ Guy Hermet in the debate on 19 September 2002

The greater the uncertainty - e.g. in the Middle East and Southeast Europe, thanks to persistent wars and the collapse of political systems - the more intensely all concerned, the elite as much as the man in the street, seek salvation in religiously rooted identity. People place high - often tragically exaggerated - hopes in their culture, which they usually hold superior to others. Phases of regression, of looking back on imagined communities, are no exception. "Greater Serbia" and "Greater Albania" illustrate all too clearly the dangers of such images: new borders, new minorities and new territorial sovereignty. And the means to these ends is always military, never a peaceful settlement.

Yugoslavia's self-destruction was repeated in the Caucasus and in many other imploding states. Klaus Roth, an ethnologist, speaks of a "phase in which personal, social, cultural and national identities are redefined, in which people look back to historical commonalities (such as "Orthodoxy", "Islam" or "Central Europe") and, almost inevitably with fatal consequences calling into question and hence destroying the communities that subsequently evolved, and not only in former Yugoslavia."⁶

The underlying natural cultural diversity was concealed by an epoch of authoritarian rule, until it finally collapsed in an orgy of violence. We live in an age in which culture has become a fetish, as Salamé regretfully noted in his opening remarks to this conference. The logical question, therefore, is how much importance should and can be attached to this "cultural dimension" on the political stage, particularly in the field of foreign policy.

To take a topical example, has the partnership between the European Union and the other states bordering on the Mediterranean, the Barcelona Process initiated in 1995, helped to improve understanding and cooperation between the states around the *mare nostrum*?

Do these many forums conceal, in the name of dialogue between civilisations, more profound phenomena? Instead of admitting that much of what passes for economic development and security policy is wrong - on all shores of the Mediterranean - and grasping the opportunity of diverse practical forms of dialogue on questions such trade, educational cooperation and infrastructural investment, governments are absorbed in apathetic contemplation of cultural differences. Indeed, these very necessary forms of cooperation cannot even emerge because the North's fears of being swamped by migrants have generated a fortress mentality that restricts travel from the southern and eastern Mediterranean.

⁶ Klaus Roth, Ethnokulturelle Gemeinschaft der Balkanvölker - Konstrukt oder Realität?, p. 64, in Der Balkan: Friedenszone oder Pulverfaß? (Wiener Osteuropa Studien, Vol. 7, Vienna 1998)

A culture of violence instead of the culture of peace

The humanistic concept of universality, rooted in respect for the dignity of man, has to contend with discourse and conflict about cultural particularities. The ever-present question of conscience for any cultural community - "Who belongs to "us" and who does not?" - has an unpleasant taste to it. In many places ideals and norms once believed immutable, e.g. the international protection of human rights, are being questioned in the name of culture and religion.

Instead of the "culture of peace" that UNESCO publicised in an expensive media offensive in the 1990s, a culture of violence has acquired its own momentum and is gaining ground with each passing day, whether in the family, in school or, as we see, in international relations. The prohibition on violence in Article 2, paragraph 4 of the Charter of the United Nations forbids - except in the clearly defined case of self-defence - all states not only from using, but also from threatening violence. Never in modern history has there been such a comprehensive ban on settling conflict by war. And yet: peaceful conflict resolution is limited to intellectual reflections. The concept of "preventive war", as defined in the US doctrine of national security unveiled on 20 September 2002, contradicts the normative principle of the prohibition on violence in international law.

International law has proved to be very accommodating of the "war against terrorism". This accommodation is all the more deplorable as research into terrorism, in particular the so-called "new terrorism", raises a lot of unanswered questions, many of which decision-makers have failed to take into account.

Deregulating crime

There is no empirical evidence to back up assertions about the "new terrorism". Nor is the concept of "rogue states" as territorial units that pose a terrorist threat very plausible, as intelligence services without exception have been insisting for some time. International terrorist networks in particular have been financed privately and a growing number of wars take place outside of state structures. There is no shortage of rich nihilists like Osama bin Laden. With money they can hire recruits for terrorist attacks on the open market, as it were. The recent wave of deregulation goes beyond telecommunications.

The US thesis of the "axis of evil" contradicts this view, and identifies three "evil" states. This is a new culturalistic version of old assumptions about the "communist connection" of terrorist networks in the Cold War era, which hindsight has shown to be totally wrong in many respects. Thus, a generation of fundamentalists, some of whom are no longer even active, have achieved their aim: a struggle with the immoral West on the basis of religious values that draws no distinction between communism and capitalism. A western public stirred up by fear and disinformation has walked straight into the trap of a cultural struggle. The consequences are a new witch-hunt and dangerous signs of general paranoia. This time the targets of executive excesses and discrimination are not Hollywood stars suspected of

communist sympathies, as in the McCarthy era, but Middle-Eastern-looking US citizens. One of the earliest consequences of the spreading collective suspicion generated by the "we-are-at-war" mood in the USA is the (voluntary) withdrawal of Arab students from US universities.

Intellectuals and politicians warned against a battle of the cultures at the time of the Gulf War of 1991. Since then, the Arab Muslim world has lived through another decade of failure and disillusionment. The confrontation over military operations in Iraq and their consequences is a repeat of the earlier scenario.

Territorially based structures encompass more than just economics, finance and communications. The global market has also opened up an undreamt-of scope for criminal organisations and new possibilities of raising funds. Terrorist organisations take advantage of modern information technology and financial transactions; they would be stupid not to. As the genesis of numerous terrorist groups in the past illustrates, collaborating with organised crime to obtain funds is as old as the hills.

Failed states

Contemporary terrorist networks benefit from more than just technical innovations. They also exploit the spreading phenomenon of failed states, particularly in crisis-ridden regions such as the Horn of Africa - e.g. Somalia, with a terrorist branch-line to Kenya. When the structures of statehood collapsed in multi-ethnic Lebanon in the 1970s, the international community deliberately looked away from an implosion that was called the Balkanisation of Lebanon. The larger states left the field to the regional powers. In the western media Beirut traded its amiable image of the "Paris of the Middle East" for the "capital of terrorism". Images of hijacked aircraft and western hostages in the Bekaa Valley were flashed around the world. The world learned about what happened in Afghanistan only retrospectively and piecemeal after the US-financed and logistically supported jihad against the Soviet army of occupation and the civil war of the 1990s. Public interest in Afghanistan awakened with "Operation Enduring Freedom", the US military invasion that began on 7 October 2001. Here, in another disintegrating state, dubious figures had found a hiding place and wealthy Saudis intent on expelling the USA from their holy Islamic soil ran paramilitary training camps. The rest is history.

Fragile states with weak government, ethnic diversity and economic and possibly security problems became "failed states". Abandoned by the international community to their fate, sometimes after a brief attempt at troubleshooting, war-ravaged territories descending into chaos systemically fulfil the requirements of contemporary terrorist organisations. It is difficult to determine the precise circumstances - external intervention, multi-ethnic conflict or religious indoctrination - that trigger this "new terrorism". We still lack objective empirical evidence of who acts against whom with which methods in the interest of which ideologies. But there is no lack of theoretical models based purely on conjecture.

One fact is certain: terrorist agitators portray themselves as a regulatory and counterforce to globalisation, which they simultaneously interpret as an instrument of western domination and undesirable modernisation. At the same time, paradoxically, they exploit modern communications technology, in particular the global media. The media are a problem in two senses. On the one hand, images of violence generate a dangerous copy-cat and multiplier effect, regardless of whether it is normal urban violence in Bogotá or terrorist acts such as spectacular suicide bombings; and on the other, the media are also instruments of a conscious campaign of disinformation.

The result is an explosive and virtually indecipherable mixture of old and new identities, dissatisfaction with politics, economic and political weakness, and extensive methods of mobilisation. The role of state as principal actor in international politics has been in decline for decades, and globalisation is speeding up the process. Moreover, usually to save money, the state has withdrawn from many fields that were previously regarded as its responsibility. One long-term effect of outsourcing competencies, such as the maintenance of public security, the administration of justice or even aspects of foreign policy, to specialised non-governmental organisations and institutions is the dismantling of public, and thus objectifiable, conditions for political action. The state is depriving itself of the instruments of political action. One trend that is gaining ground rapidly, particularly in the USA, the transfer of social functions to religious institutions, is accelerating a process towards the growing influence of culturally defined actors.

There is no question but that culture, religion and war are linked in a number of ways. This article examines the different aspects that social scientists have raised in their papers and debates in Mzaar. It does not claim to be complete; rather it seeks to provide an umbrella for these three concepts in the light of the political and social developments at the turn of 2003.

Karin Kneissl

Focus

In their opening addresses, Patrick Renauld, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Lebanon, who spoke on behalf of Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, Pierre Sané, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO, and Ghassan Salamé, Lebanese Minister of Culture and conference host, raised points that shaped the debates that followed.

Patrick Renauld referred to a March 2002 initiative of Romano Prodi, in which the President of the European Commission called for the partnership between the EU and the other Mediterranean countries to be revamped. The dialogue between civil societies should constitute the core of this partnership.

Pierre Sané spoke about the new cycle of violence in the Middle East. People can and must learn from the conflict in Lebanon. Twenty years after the massacres of Sabra and Shatila people need to be reminded of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians. The recently announced UNESCO programme for dialogue between the civil societies of Israeli and Palestine seeks to replace the culture of violence by a culture of peace. Prerequisite for this is respect for fundamental human rights, in particular human dignity. Sané pointed out that the strength of democracy lies in its weakness: anyone who has understood the rules will use them. All people privileged to live in democratic conditions have an obligation of solidarity to help others to achieve human dignity and human rights.

UNESCO's work rests on three pillars: reflection, action and consolidation of fundamental rights. Solid, well-thought-out programmes are supposed to prepare the ground for political action and then gradually consolidate it. Democracy cannot exist without comprehensive support for human rights. It is necessary to elucidate the relationship between culture and democracy. This is the task of the CISH in Byblos, a Lebanese institution under public law under the patronage of UNESCO. The CISH's new research programme on culture and democracy is an important contribution to UNESCO's fundamental reflection in preparation for spreading democratic values.

Ghassan Salamé welcomed the participants to Lebanon, a culturally diverse country that has paid a high price for not having properly administered and lived this diversity. The damage caused by the war was more than material. The task now is to create a new national identity. To pre-empt a slide into parochialism, the country needs to renew not only its infrastructure, but also its way of thinking.

Culture, identity and fear

Exclusion and inclusion are basic concepts in definitions of identity and the emergence of culture. Identity is based on linguistic, ethnic, religious and other forms of delineation. In its extreme form it pursues a dogma of purity, which led to the horrors of "ethnic cleansing". Thus, fear of the otherness of others determines peoples' actions and leads to catastrophes. Inclusion in the sense of a global market also has its dangers: creating the illusion of general inclusion creates in reality mechanisms of exclusion.

Identity is under constant construction, never complete. This fragility is also at the root of the uncertainty of people who fear of change. It is also obvious that identities can be reconstructed. Every individual has an identity for each of a range of factors such as gender, origins, environment, etc. Each person has to work out which of these various identities takes priority. At a time of radical change in international relations, when the relevance of the nation-state and conventional ideologies is declining, religion becomes an increasingly significant reference point in individual's coordinate systems.

Religion as a form of exclusion

In terms of their own logic, all universal religions are an appeal for inclusion. However, the three major monotheistic religions have de facto produced forms of exclusion. All historical epochs have their acts of excommunication and wars of religion. In long periods of peace, religion's influence on society tended to diminish. But what we see in numerous religious communities at present is a revival of tribalism, rather than a claim to universal proselytisation. We are experiencing religion without God.

The return of culture as a dividing line

When the capacity to assimilate otherness and others is exhausted at the level of local politics, as is the case in numerous European communities, "culture" returns with a vengeance. Every country has its populists. Their polemics even influence international politics. One need only recall the unhappy debate about the clash of civilisations that was given respectability by one Samuel P. Huntington. At one remove from this is the culturally delineating concept of "fortress Europe". The interpretation of such phenomena and resulting conclusions are often more dangerous than the phenomena themselves. Hence, each of us has a duty to critically analyse the political and economic significance of culture.

How can cultural dialogue be defined?

There is no such thing as a dialogue between religions or between cultures; strictly speaking, neither religion nor culture is an actor. Hence, not abstract cultures, civilisations or religions, but only their respective representatives or institutions can fight or enter into a dialogue with one another. True dialogue presupposes an acceptance of the other, recognition of the other's otherness as legitimate and, finally, a willingness to change one's own preferences, possibly even oneself. Dialogue is in effect a process of personal transformation. Without acceptance of this, dialogue cannot be an alternative to conflict. Genuine dialogue is an adventure. People have to embark on it as equals: dialogue is not a gesture of the strong towards the weak.⁷

⁷ Salamé emphasises the direct role of the individual, in contrast to all other participants, in particular the representatives of the EU, who always speak of dialogue between the civilizations in the abstract

Globalisation and culture

When did globalisation start?

Globalisation,⁸ internationalisation and similar concepts are fundamental elements of contemporary vocabulary. But what does globalisation mean? Does it describe something novel, or an uninterrupted process of constant change in the structures of international trade that has been going on over a century?

In the historical context of Lebanon, the concept of *genius loci* acquires an inspiring dimension. Archaeological evidence shows that Phoenician sailors and traders were the first to travel around the globe, as it were. With their offices and antique forms of customer loyalty, they practised globalisation from West Africa to southern England more than 3000 years ago.⁹

Seventeen civilisations in seven thousand years of continuous settlement made the Lebanese port of Byblos, whence the Bible takes its name, a kind of emporium of cultures and religions. From here knowledge of an alphabet of rational, abstract symbols, which the Mesopotamian civilisations adopted in place of their complex systems of cuneiform, followed Phoenician trade. Settlements around the shores of the Mediterranean gave rise to a dense network of Phoenician-controlled trading routes that influenced economies and cultures. Trade and the accumulation of wealth went hand in hand with military prowess, as amply attested by the Punic Wars: this linkage has a long and solid tradition.

The concept of globalisation as used today goes beyond the international exchange of goods. Since fixed exchange rates were abandoned in 1973, the size and speed of global flows of capital, scientific knowledge, cultural ideas, information and communication and the exchange of services in general have exploded.

Is this new comprehensive globalisation still growing in strength? Can it be reversed? Will the current global financial and economic volatility cause people to have

⁸ The concept of globalisation describes growing international integration of flows of trade, capital and technology. In reality, globalisation is nothing else than multinational corporations operating worldwide with standardised working practices and practically the same products, i.e., developing, producing, marketing and selling in the same way in all corners of the earth. Large International companies employ the standardised, quasi-identical production methods everywhere and use practically the same marketing strategies to sell almost identical products everywhere.

For an overview of the opportunities and risks of globalisation, see the final report of the commission of enquiry into the challenges of and responses to the globalisation of the international economy as authorised by the German parliament on 15 December 1999: http://www.bundestag.de/gremien/welt/glob_end/n4.html

For a critique of globalisation, see *inter alia* Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalisation and its Discontents* (New York & London 2002); Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (New York 2000)

⁹ Karl-Heinz Bernhardt, *Der Alte Libanon* (Leipzig 1976), p.115: Phoenician trade and commerce expanded especially in times of crisis

reservations about its progress? Undoubtedly, the world is more closely integrated today than it was in the 1960s and 1970s. On the other hand, recent events demonstrate that despite multilevel networking, the economy and society is more susceptible than ever to sudden and hefty shocks.

The question of cultural identity and diversity

Given the struggle for market control, it is logical to question the interaction between globalisation and cultural identity. In 1948, T. S. Eliot, a poet and writer interested in a world culture, published *Notes towards a Definition of Culture*.¹⁰ Eliot thinks that the concept of a world culture is essential, but would be impossible to realise without causing considerable damage in the form of dehumanizing humanity. Hence, he comes out in favour of preserving particularities.¹¹

The speakers in the first podium discussion took the same line. Louise Beaudoin, minister for international relations of the Canadian province of Quebec criticised the cultural imperialism of the USA. Beaudoin delivered a fighting appeal for small nations with their own culture and briefly outlined the need for a common diplomatic approach in the name of cultural diversity which should find expression in a "Convention de la Diversité Culturelle". The ministry of international relations of the province of Quebec has already prepared a draft of such a convention. From comments of participants at the Francophone Summit, UNESCO is viewed as the appropriate forum for preparing a UN convention of this kind.

There is a lot of discussion, some sceptical, some euphoric, about the role of small states in cultural pluralism. The imminent expansion of the EU to include another ten states, mostly small and some with populations of less than two million people (Malta, Estonia and Slovenia), many with their own national language, gives renewed impetus to efforts to preserve literary heritages and help languages develop. As Drago Jancar, Slovenia's pre-eminent writer, sees it, the Slovenes, for instance, have no identity besides language.¹² Small central European countries are already worried about the threat posed by English. Although francophone intellectuals tend to evaluate the hegemony of the English language from their particular tower, the people of the current

¹⁰ António Sousa Ribeiro, *Trans Internet Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften*, No. 5, July 1998; *Globalisierung und kulturelle Identität*. <http://www.inst.at/trans/5Nr/ribeiro.htm>

¹¹ "A world culture which was simply a uniform culture would be no culture at all. We should have a humanity de-humanised. It would be a nightmare. But on the other hand, we cannot resign the idea of world-culture altogether. [...] We are therefore pressed to maintain the idea of a world-culture, while admitting that it is something we cannot imagine. We can only conceive it as the logical term of relations between cultures. [...] we must aspire to a common world culture, which will yet not diminish the particularity of the constituent parts. [...] We are the more likely to be able to stay loyal to the ideal of the unimaginable world culture, if we recognise all the difficulties, the practical impossibility, of its realisation" (Eliot, 1948: 62-63), quoted and analysed in Sousa Ribeiro, op. cit.

¹² Interview in Laibach, 15 March 2002

and future intakes of the expanding European Union are just as sensitive. On the other hand, a language such as Irish owes its recent literary revival precisely to EU membership. Hence, it is still too early to make a final assessment of whether membership of large organisations such as the EU is an advantage or disadvantage for the cultural identity of their members.

Given the WTO's planned liberalisation of trade in services, the on-going debate about the US monopoly on films and media was also raised in Mzaar. The box-office takings of Hollywood hits, often more than the gross domestic product of small countries, illustrate the economic role of culture.¹³ The survival of media with low circulations or small listener or viewer ratings in the shadow of infotainment, that questionable mixture of information and entertainment, is undoubtedly a problem. However, developments work in favour of small publishers and TV channels. Optimists take a sanguine view of the struggling media market. In view of the industry's liquidity crisis following the collapse of the advertising market in mid-2000 and the over-ambitious expansion of the media giants, the deck is being at least reshuffled. Instead of cheap uniformity, people are starting to look for individuality and quality. Information reception in general and cultural mediation in particular is becoming more individualistic.¹⁴

The chances of small players in the global market

Instead of sentimentality and experts' repeated calls for intellectual depth, it is time for a fresh approach. As Lebanon with just 10,452 sq. km, but no fewer than 43 universities and dozens of publishing houses demonstrates, it is possible for small units to function as economic, political and cultural actors. Similar situations exist elsewhere. The renaissance of the Baltic States has followed the collapse of the USSR. Estonia, defying all prophets of doom, is a success story, and proof that a small, young culture can survive in a globalised world. The key is an open liberalised market economy and membership of a free-trade area and customs union as developed by the European communities.¹⁵

Leopold Kohr, an economist, praised "The Glory of the Small" as early as the 1950s, and true to his cultural and philosophical insights, he called for more small states. E.F. Schumacher subsequently developed Kohr's idea of "human scale" in his economic theories. Thanks to Schumacher, "small is beautiful" became a byword well beyond academic circles. Kohr was impressed not only by the city states of antiquity and the towns of the Hanseatic League, but also by the small manageable communities of the twentieth century. He saw in the small the roots of western individualism and rejected the ideal of a universal community as a destruction of

¹³ Ghassan Salamé in his opening address

¹⁴ Olivier Mongin in his presentation, 19 September 2002

¹⁵ Big Reasons to Keep Europe Small, in *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 November 2002

cultural creativity.¹⁶ In this view, history is always breaking fresh ground as systems of small states alternate with universalistic concepts. The struggles between the ancient empires and city cultures of the Mediterranean region are a case in point. The Holy Roman Empire and the Italian city states had a similar relationship. We may well ask where the Carthage of our time lies.

Compassion instead of profit maximisation?

Now that the world is a global village, travel is no longer a problem. The multitude of possibilities are an expression of freedom, but also a source of instability,¹⁷ as the ineffectual attempts to regulate flows of people by law, or by patrols on the border between the USA and Mexico and all around the "fortress" of the European Union, show.

However, the powerful process of globalisation has provoked "cultural counteractions",¹⁸ which range from various expressions of nationalism through to religious fanaticism. How can such reactions be moderated? One solution is "globalisation with a human face", a shift away from the lowest possible production costs in complete disregard of all ethical considerations.

In Mzaar Léonce Bekemans presented an appeal for "compassionate globalisation". The slogan of "good governance", i.e., a system of governing that observes the rule of law and social concerns, is already part and parcel of the catalogue of demands for the community of states. A criterion used by international financial institutions in granting funds is now applied to the manner of governing per se. In 2001, the European Commission published a white book on good governance. We must wait and see to what extent these demands reshape globalisation. A good year after revelations of massive accounting fraud and spectacular bankruptcies in the USA, there are signs that the global market is taking the first steps to clean up its act. The basic laws of supply and demand - in this case in the financial markets - may be more effective in the long term that the undoubtedly important attempts to find a more civilised form of globalisation. In contrast to symbolic actions from Seattle to Genoa, in e.g. South Africa there is relatively little opposition to McWorld globalisation at present. Rather, the local elites understand how they can harness a policy of tribute to the West to benefit from the effects of globalization. The consequences are greater cronyism and greater concentration of resources in the hands of a few.¹⁹

¹⁶ Leopold Kohr, *The Breakdown of Nations* (London 2001, new edition), p. 142

¹⁷ Georges Prevelakis in his presentation

¹⁸ Léonce Bekemans in his presentation

¹⁹ Lawrence Schlemmer in the debate on 19 September 2002

De-westernisation verses McWorld

Rather than a standardised McWorld culture, Bassam Tibi, a professor in Islamic Studies, sees de-westernisation as the long-term consequence of globalization,²⁰ as the West gives up some of its political and economic power. In particular, differences in demographic developments put the West at a crucial disadvantage. Tibi does not foresee a cultural struggle, but conflicts between civilisations over weltanschauung. A proponent of a "euro-Islam" and father of the concept of the "defining European culture", which a most unfortunate discussion among German politicians turned into the defining German culture, Tibi warns against progressive de-westernisation of society.

But it waits to be seen whether the forces driving de-westernisation gain the upper hand in the long term. Other scholars of Islamic Studies maintain that we have already entered a post-Islamist phase.

Since the late 1970s, the view of the West as the enemy has been gaining strength, particularly in the Arab Muslim world, where it is heavily influenced by the local conflicts, above all the Israeli-Palestinian, and by Western alliances with authoritarian Arab regimes. The irony is that in the mid-twentieth century the USA was generally very popular among the Arab public and in newly independent states that had just got rid of the British or French colonial governments. The USA squandered this advantage mainly through a "strategic and unconditional alliance" with Israel, especially after 1967, when ties grew very much closer.

The decline of the Islamic world relative to the politically, economically and technologically superior West challenged Muslims' self-esteem. Sura 3, verse 100, of the Koran reads: you are the best of communities. This is interpreted not only in a spiritual sense, but also as a claim to a perfect political order. Already in the nineteenth century it was difficult to reconcile this with the rapid decline of an Ottoman Empire burdened by military defeat and financial debt; Europe appeared to be "better". Soon, the reality of the European colonisation of Muslim countries utterly contradicted the image Muslims had of themselves. Ideal and reality drifted further and further apart.

Since the 1970s, appeals to the international community of Muslims, the "umma islamiya" have been reformulated, and new methods of terrorism have sought to revive the old pattern of contrasting the soft and decadent West with the morally superior, combative cultural circle of Islam. The new mentors continue to preach the chimera that the power of Islam is fundamentally superior.

However, the idea of a struggle to "overcome the West" is not a product of the Arab world, or of any other Muslim region. The origins of a "holy war to liberate Asia from the West and purify Asian minds of western ideas" lie in Japan. "Occidentalism", as the counterpart of the "Orientalism" of the early twentieth century, were present in the authoritarian structures of nationalist neo-Shintoism in the Japan of the 1930s - and in

²⁰ Bassam Tibi, *Krieg der Zivilisationen: Politik und Religion zwischen Vernunft und Fundamentalismus*, p. 5 (Munich 1998)

National Socialist Germany.²¹ Both systems adopted "blood-and-soil" state doctrines that selected the members of their respective communities on the basis of racial origins and rejected the republican principle of a social contract of what they regarded as "decadent and infiltrated western states". Calls to fight the materialistic West in German and Japanese propaganda are strikingly similar to the appeals of Ayatollah Khomeini and Osama bin Laden.²²

For this reason, Aurel Kolnai believes that it does not make sense to speak of a clash of cultures or religions. Rather, it is the case of a new death cult²³ nourished for the past 50 years by the fertile ground of the Arab-Israeli conflict and all its sideshows.

Identity and political mobilisation

A controversial issue already before 11 September 2001, these events and the declaration of a global "war against terrorism" gave the globalisation discussion a new dimension.

As Pierre Conesa points out in his analysis of the motives: "The attacks did not target the Vatican, the Knesset or the Statue of Liberty, but (for the second time) the twin towers of the World Trade Centre, a sign of hostility against globalisation rather than a war of religion." In connection with the role and life of Osama bin Laden, a Saudi deprived of his citizenship, he speaks of a deep schizophrenia affecting Saudi society: "Abroad they enjoy everything that is forbidden them at home; in 'other', especially American, things they see a hell that is very close to the paradise promised to martyrs". A sect such as bin Laden's has been able to recruit so successfully because of the failure of other ideologies, such as Arab Socialism. The members of al-Qaida do not have a programme for specific Muslim countries. "Homeless against their will", they have no fatherland. Many of them are products of globalisation that ended up in "the West", where they have not been successful.²⁴

According to Gilles Kepel, a sociologist and Islamic scholar, the strength of Islamic fundamentalists lies in their ability to construct new identities. In the past quarter century, Islamists from Teheran to Cairo have provided new reference points and ideals for poverty-trapped youths in North Africa and left-wingers disillusioned by the military defeats of their pan-Arabist leaders.

²¹ Ian Buruma und Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism*, pp. 4-7, in *The New York Review of Books*, 17 January 2002

²² *Ibid.*, p. 6: In his book "The War against the West", Aurel Kolnai studies the western values that Japan and National Socialist Germany wanted to combat

²³ *Ibid.* There is no clash of civilisations. (...) The current conflict, therefore, is not between East and West, Anglo-America and the rest, or Judeo-Christianity and Islam. The death cult is a deadly virus which now thrives, for all manner of historical and political reasons, in extreme forms of Islam

²⁴ Pierre Conesa, "Al-Qaida - A Terrorist Sect", in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 11 January 2002

What is the role of Islamism in political mobilisation?

Various factors have played roles of varying importance in the recrudescence of political Islam. After an alliance of radical nationalists and Shiite clergy spearheaded the the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the latter moved quickly to take control. The Sunni Muslim Brotherhood flourished temporarily in Egypt and in secular Turkey, respectively, but in completely different circumstances, with each group practicing its own specific methods. Simple theses on Islamism simply do not work for the entire Islamic world from Indonesia to Nigeria. That said, there are common themes in the search for identity. Given the economic and military dominance of the West and its representatives in the Muslim world, numerous fundamentalist movements have grown by appealing to Islam's moral superiority. It is easier to condemn the materialist and decadent West in religious terms than in the terms of nationalist, and later marxist, programmes imported from the West. Religion is rooted in a long and glorious past and the associated myths. Recourse to it facilitates the search for an identity, especially in an age dominated by virtually indistinguishable retail chains. Given the geopolitical significance of the Muslim regions, the question of control over oil and gas reserves and the unresolved Arab-Israeli conflict, it is inevitable that Islam should play a leading role in this quest.

The book market is also a market for explanations of the rise and fall of Islamism. In the eyes of the Islamic scholars Gilles Kepel and Olivier Roy Islamism has already entered an age of decline, a post-Islamic age.²⁵ Whether this is so is questionable: with hindsight it is clear that Islamism also goes through cycles of strength and weakness.

The start of a political Islam capable of mobilising people, is officially dated to 1928. In that year, Hassan al-Banna, an Egyptian elementary school teacher in Ismailia, founded the Muslim Brotherhood. Headquarters of the British-dominated Suez Canal Company, with a strong presence of other foreign commercial interests, Ismailia was *the* symbol of western domination in Egypt. In the next two decades the Muslim Brotherhood grew into the most influential Islamic society. As with Hezbollah in Lebanon in the 1980s, social and educational work was just as important as the political struggle for the Muslim Brothers. Given the intractable Israeli-Palestinian situation, and the resentment this generates throughout the Arab Muslim world - the so-called Arab street -, mobilization for the Islamic struggle will remain a significant issue for some time to come.

Despite all religious symbolism used by Palestinian suicide bombers, Sadik al Azm regards the struggle as primarily nationalist in nature. He uses the statements of those bombers that have survived their attacks to explain his view:

*It is only in the first lines of these testimonies that we hear about religious motivation. The statements usually refer to the circumstances of the occupation, humiliation and that the sacrifice of their own lives is the last resort.*²⁶

²⁵ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad. Expansion et déclin de l'islamisme* (Paris 2000)

²⁶ Sadik al Azm in the debate, 20 September 2002

History will show whether the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood is in decline, as Kepel and others believe. The revival of religious values is not limited to the Muslim world. This trend is also apparent among the rural population in the European Union, a veritable field of integration and globalisation. Interesting examples include certain trends in the Catholic Church in Poland, a candidate for EU membership. Radio María, a controversial, extremely conservative radio station, is consistent in its opposition to EU membership and its nationalistic and xenophobic sentiments. The fear of cultural globalisation is not specifically Islamic by any means. Yet, the fatal susceptibility to the readily evoked confrontation between the "western" and "Muslim" worlds is a much greater risk to the development of international relations in the short and medium term.

Taking the example of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Ivesa Lübben explains why religion always constitutes the last line of defence against alien, apparently incomprehensible cultural influences, against symptoms of social disintegration and against a sense of inferiority and powerlessness.²⁷ Whether Egyptian resistance to British colonialism in the 1930s, or the weakening of the pro-US and Israel-friendly regime in Cairo since 1977, it appears that every Arab political elite has to participate in the Islamic discourse at some point if it is to gain mass support. From this point of view, there can be no definitive end to political Islam, as foreign interests will always be interested in the Islamic regions on account of their natural resources.

Repeating old mistakes

In the great race to the resources of Central Asia the West could be about to repeat the fundamental mistake it made in its dealings with the oil producers of the Gulf, i.e., supporting autocratic rulers - whether Reza Shah Pahlavi or the House of Saud - instead of democratic movements. Turkmenistan's natural gas reserves, for instance, are attracting attention. Yet the approach of the OSCE, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to Niazov, also known as Turkmenbashi, the self-proclaimed president for life, is fairly subdued. The emergence of an Islamic opposition can no longer be excluded.

In short: given the volatile political and economic situation in most Muslim countries, Islam is likely to remain a crucial factor in people's identity and political mobilisation.

Those states that have already experienced a very radical version of political Islam and whose populations in the meantime desire greater social freedom - e.g. the 24-year-old Islamic Republic of Iran - may indeed have entered a post-Islamic phase. Even the generation of educated Hezbollah functionaries in multiconfessional Lebanon with its many sources of cultural friction and free access to information is beginning to question some of the doctrines of its teachers.²⁸ Thus, precisely the high level of education in Iran and Lebanon is helping to weaken the Islamists, the very people who reformed public education.

²⁷ Inamo (Informationsprojekt Naher und Mittlerer Osten), Vol. 31, autumn 2002, pp. 9-13

²⁸ Discussion with Bernhard Hillenkamp, a specialist on Islamism, 30 November 2002

The situation is different in regions in which well-financed Wahabit missionaries propagate at the behest of charitable institutions a form of Islam that serves as the last refuge of political resistance. During the war years of 1992-1995, mercenaries from Iran and Saudi foundations were on the point of tipping Bosnia into an Islamic war of liberation against the Serbian nationalists. The intervention of NATO and the Dayton Agreement prevented the conflict from degenerating into a religious war, primarily because the intervention was to some degree an intervention by the West in favour of the Muslim Bosnians, who were fighting with their backs to the wall.

Biographies of the Chechen hostage-takers in the Moscow Theatre in November 2002 reveal a number of graduates of Koran schools who were firmly convinced that the only way to escape from occupation and repression was martyrdom through terrorist acts.²⁹

Thus, it is impossible to come to any definite general estimate of the mobilisation potential of Islamic movements. The circumstances between the Caucasus today and Egypt in the early 1980s are too different to support Kepel and Roy's view that Islamism is in terminal decline.

The search for identity and the lack of political action

"National identity is like one's own bones: if they are in good shape one does not talk about them" (George Bernard Shaw).

In 1960, Elias Canetti, a naturalised Briton, called the national feeling of the English "the most stable in the world". Since then even it is showing cracks. The Channel is no longer an effective barrier against unpopular Europeanisation, Afghani asylum-seekers and the erosion of the former imperial self-esteem.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century some peoples are obviously suffering from severe bone disease. In Mzaar the causes and symptoms of this disease were analysed in detail, but no one could prescribe an all-embracing remedy.

To conclude, any search for identity that involves a struggle for influence and power must be studied in all its concrete social conditions. This holds for populists in western Europe just as much as for Islamic leaders in the Muslim world.

According to Kepel, Islamists use symbols such as beard, clothes and radical discourse to compensate for the loss of what they believe once was. Their elites see the present as a new version of that pre-Islamic "Jahilia", a period characterised by ignorance and barbarism.³⁰ One has to break with this evil world, if necessary with violence.

Scandinavia is the political home of European populists of the 1990s.³¹ According to Guy Hermet, a French political scientist, it was the ideological workshop of the welfare

²⁹ Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 21 December 2002

³⁰ Gilles Kepel in his presentation, 19 September 2002

³¹ Guy Hermet in his presentation, 19 September 2002

state, which is currently in the process of disintegration. This is also the end of a dream of equality and security. The cult of otherness is already taking shape.

Guy Hermet notes that political involvement in (Northwest) Europe is limited to populist programmes that promise everybody everything. This populist agitation is a response to the increasingly evident collapse of the welfare state and to fears of immigration, which, given the low birth rate, raise concerns about both the national and the European identity.³²

Hermet believes that a sober, pessimistic stocktaking of the identity question and political mobilisation in the northwestern hemisphere is called for. For, there is little left of the so-called Occident, apart from the US production of (cultural) diffusion and a political stage occupied by populists.

What is Europe's cultural identity?

Talk of Turkey's possible membership of the EU has triggered identity debates in the media and statements from every politician.

The decision of the European Council in Copenhagen on 13 December 2002 that the European Council would official open negotiations on membership with Turkey at the end of 2004 - if the country fulfils a number of criteria - highlights in all clarity the enormity of the question of identity both for what will by then be 25 EU members and for Turkey. Enough voices in Istanbul that favour a strong, independent Turkey with its own zone of influence in the Caucasus and among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

But what is the European identity? What is its defining element: the Enlightenment, language, a profession of faith? Support for Turkish membership is just as vociferous as warnings that it will confuse people's European identity. "Turkey is not a European country", emphasised Giscard d'Estaing, former French president and chairman of the EU Convention. He added that Turkish membership would mean the end of the European Union. Giscard put into words what many leading politicians were thinking, but afraid to say. It is not primarily a matter of geographic boundaries, but of - though not mentioned - religion and values, whatever people understand by that. Turkey is a Muslim country, and the European is a "Christian Club", at least in the eyes of leading Christian Democratic politicians and probably a majority of the population.

This raises the question of whether a common identity across borders and divisions is possible between those on the inside and those on the outside.³³

At the end of June 2003 the EU Convention presented a 200-page draft constitution to the European Council in Thessalonica. The debate on the preamble was particularly difficult: should it contain a reference to Christian values or not, should Europe be a Europe of fatherlands - as General Charles de Gaulle wanted - or perhaps a federally organised United Europe. Giscard d'Estaing, the Convention

³² Ibid.

³³ Regis Debray in the debate on 19 September 2002

chairman, Catholic and at the same time upholder of the ideal of a secular republic, got his way: the preamble contains no reference to God or Christianity, a decision criticised by the Vatican and Convention members from Christian Democratic parties.

Different passport controls for citizens of EU member states and people from elsewhere indicates that boundaries are continually being redrawn - motivated in part by the desire to create identity.

The immigration controversy

The demographics of the western industrialised states are well known. The debate on how to pay for pensions is a familiar topic in all EU member states. Yet a broad European front still contests that immigration is necessary. Xenophobic election campaigns are no longer the exclusive preserve of extremist parties. Ideas originally expressed by populist parties are now part of the mainstream. "Children instead of Indians", the slogan of the opposition CDU in the 1999 election in North Rhine Westphalia, is a true reflection of general attitudes.

Election results in the Netherlands, Denmark and France attest to the partial success of such slogans even in traditionally liberal societies. Pictures of illegal immigrants wading ashore on the coasts of Italy and France, refugees, and the daily discovery of attempts to smuggle people across the EU's borders in the back of lorries create a roller-coaster of emotions between pity for the human tragedy and fear of a mass migration. In the EU, hostility towards immigrants has increased with the economic downturn and rising unemployment. Furthermore, a debate is taking place on cultural identity in the individual EU member states and in Europe as a whole. In many places attempts to integrate immigrants, naturalised Maghrebis and Turks, have failed. Ethnic ghettos in major European cities with all their potential for social explosions are still waiting for solutions.

It is also a question of whether within any national borders mutual tolerance is enough in an increasingly diverse multicultural society, or is an additional "integrating culture", the aforementioned "defining European culture", necessary, one that embraces a European consensus on values, based on democracy, pluralism and the rule of law? The latter would have to give effect to national values and traditions, and in the long term perhaps even engender a form of "European patriotism".

The political feat required of governments is to convince voters that without immigration no economy will be able to maintain the pension system based on the generational contract.

"The Economist", a British newspaper, has taken a consistent line on this point and, not for the first time, has appealed to governments to rethink the policies that have been hijacked by populists and of late also by mainstream parties:

"Immigrants, unlike natives, move readily to areas where labour is in short supply, so easing bottlenecks. They bring a just-in-time supply of skills, too, which is why hospitals want to hire foreign doctors and nurses; farmers, spare hands to pick fruit and vegetables; and wealthy couples, nannies for their children. In many cases,

*immigrants also pay more in taxes than they cost in public spending. (...) If immigration policy forces people to return, it will fail; if it facilitates and promotes return, all will gain.*³⁴

It is time to completely revamp the "management" of the immigration debate so as to raise the dismal subject of economic refugees and asylum-seekers from the level of illegality to the level of economic necessity. More rigorous selection instead of restrictions would be a sensible political start. Immigrants willing to integrate should be given preference. Which raises the old problem of the definition of community: is society secular enough, i.e., not just, as Tarek et Mitri emphasises, secularised, to give precedence to "citizens" and republican virtues over cultural identity?

*This requires a strong state that as defining actor is able to carry the loyalty of its citizens. In a weak state, identification with cultural values gains ground. Instead of the predictability that secular legal systems bring, the result is uncertainty and mistrust.*³⁵

The controversy over the advantages and disadvantages of immigration demonstrates the practical economic relevance of the identity debate. But over and above these concrete concerns, the concept of a universalistic body of thought is still the old and new challenge for cultural particularisms.

Is the concept of universality still valid?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 laid down the principle of universalism to protect and promote human rights. Even then, shortly after the founding of the United Nations Organisation, it was no easy task to reach consensus among the 74 members on the basic principles of human rights. Many delegations requested that the Human Rights Commission grant specific exceptions on cultural grounds.³⁶ Despite all resistance, the UN eventually agreed on particular human rights that have universal application. When it was put to the vote in the General Assembly, no state voted against this package of human rights. Saudi Arabia alone abstained, on the ground that it could not accept the principle of religious freedom included in the Declaration.

The negotiations at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993 proved to be exceptionally tough. Only by adopting a series of vague formulations could the conference agree to reaffirm the principle of the universality of human rights. In the years between the Declaration of 1948 and the Final Report of the Vienna Conference of 1993 the emphasis on particular rights had grown. Whether it was the "Asian values" defended by the Prime Minister Mahatir bin Mohammed of Malaysia or the renewed debate on Islam and human rights following the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the number of reservations about the compatibility of the principle of universal human rights and particular cultural rights has grown.

³⁴ The Economist, 2 November 2002, p. 11

³⁵ Tarik el Mitri in his presentation, 19 September 2002 (translation of the Arab original)

³⁶ Charles Malik, *The Challenge of Human Rights* (Oxford 2000)

The Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, August/September 2002 is the most recent example of the affirmation of particularities, subjecting, as Jean-Michel Baer points out, the exercise of the right to health to cultural and religious values.³⁷

Watering down international law

From the qualitative changes taking place in international law, it is clear that the principle of "jus cogens", i.e., cogent or binding law, may also be under threat. By binding international law jurisprudence understands the expression of fundamental, inalienable values. The prohibition on torture, for instance, is part of the jus cogens, as it is accepted and recognised by the community of states in its entirety. International Agreements under international law that violate the jus cogens are null and void.³⁸

The idea that international law is an agreement on binding law in the sense of universally accepted norms - across all ideological and cultural barriers - is an expression of the humanistic concept of universality. International common law may not question such principles. This principle is endangered by the deliberate suspension of international legal provisions. One is reminded of the question of the status of persons detained by the US army in Afghanistan suspected of being Taliban or al-Qaida supporters. By taking them to the base at Guantanamo on Cuba, the US government is deliberately avoiding its obligations under the Geneva Convention of 1949. Its provisions on the international treatment of prisoners of war are recognised as international common law. Contrary to all protection provisions, the captured combatants are not regarded or being treated as prisoners of war by the US authorities.

In view of the terrorist threat and the globally coordinated fight against it, particularly in the light of the resolutions of the UN Security Council since September 2001, the prohibition on torture is also in danger of being watered down - as has already been done in Israel. Thus, it appears that exceptions are being made to the principle of universality in international law. Making exceptions to generally binding values carries the long-term risk that legally binding principles will also cease to be observed.

Cultural power as a new form of dominance

The US political scientist Samuel P. Huntington's article and book on the clash of civilizations differ only in length, informative content and question mark; the last ended the title of the 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs*, but not that of the 1995 book. After the event of 11 September 2001, the book became a bestseller - both among Islamists and in the Pentagon.³⁹

³⁷ Jean-Michel Baer in his presentation, 21 September 2002

³⁸ Art. 53 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969)

³⁹ Gilles Kepel in his presentation, 19 September 2002

The West has reacted to the totalitarian excesses of Islamism with a new "civilising campaign" that Hélé Béji, a Tunisian cultural philosopher, views as a culture of inhumanity.⁴⁰ She criticises a threefold cultural betrayal of humanism. First came the crime of colonialism, the effects of whose "civilizing mission", the "white man's burden", is still felt in the twenty-first century. This was followed by the arrogance of the decolonised, who, in their efforts to resurrect their own culture, practised forms of cultural tyranny. The result was the paradox that the former colonial power became the protector of values and freedom. Béji reveals the true nature of the intellectual debates and arguments in Washington and the Arab world as follows: racism has been replaced by culture, which is a cover for the "thirst for power". Cultural rights are opposed to universality. They are the opposite of what were previously defined as universal human rights.

In Béji's view, it is a fundamentally inhuman trait of cultural rights to give culture - whether Arab, Jewish, Serbian, American, etc. - precedence over people. She writes:

*The cultural illusion causes the greatest damage by making people believe that only cultural affiliation, not human nature, makes an individual human. In this way, human dignity becomes a prisoner of ethnic, religious, national or imperial origins. "Culture" is no longer understood as freely selected completion, as integrating one's awareness with a pre-determined primacy.*⁴¹

According to Hélé Béji, by demanding its cultural rights a society legitimises the negation of the idea of universalism, and in so doing creates the prerequisites for a new inhumanity.

"The path of modern education leads from humanity through nationality to bestiality," wrote Franz Grillparzer, an Austrian playwright, in the middle of the nineteenth century. At the time he penned this early plea for universality instead of the nation and cultural rights, the concept of a multicomunal empire held together by loyalty to a supranational imperial family that embodied the Dual Monarchy until its collapse in 1918 was already an anachronism.⁴² But glorification of pre-World War I multi-ethnic structures offers no solution. Phases of genuine universalism in human history were extremely short. Even the multilingual officials and officers of the Habsburg Empire were past masters at exclusion on the basis of religion or class.

Looking back at the beginning of nationalism in Central Europe, the appeal to "cultural particularities" as an excuse for inhumane excesses is not new. A defining characteristic of the global nature of our time is the rootlessness of modern man. And this rootlessness is spreading, whether in the form of people on the losing side of

⁴⁰ Hélé Béji in her presentation, 21 September 2002

⁴¹ Article in *epd-Entwicklungspolitik* 21/2002, pp. 32-35

⁴² "For years I have been aware what an anomaly we are in the today's world," Emperor Francis Joseph in 1916, the year in which he died. Quoted in *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848-1918*, Vol VI, Part 1, p. XI (Vienna 1989)

globalization, of migrants or of homeless modern nomads on the winning side. The state of the world as such is global.

Is there a cure for global confusion?

Recently there have been renewed calls for strengthening the primacy of politics, whether as part of an integrated Europe or even at a universal level. The "Group of 77", the Third-World members of the UN, has also expressed its support. In 1974 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution in favour of a "new international economic order", and in the 1970s UNESCO supported a "new information order". For different reasons, both ideas came to nothing. Centrally planned programmes have never succeeded in holding back social and economic developments that bring wrenching change. The old saying that no army or decree can keep down an idea whose time has come is as true as ever. Just what this new idea is is difficult to say. But it cannot be the current form of globalisation stuck in economic stagnation with far too many losers.

Ostracised and propagated at the same time, the current global culture, or global way of life, is an expression of powerlessness between the hegemony of a hyperpower, as Hubert Védrine, France's former foreign minister, defines the USA, and the sectarian or fanatic models that oppose it. For Hélé Béji, globalism is the bankruptcy of modernity: modernity has not been able to reconcile its gift of power with the tempo of its consciousness.

As Béji emphasises, global is not the same as universal. Universal presumes much more; above all, it is about the recognition of an absolutely binding humanism. There is any number of instruments to defend human rights, but for them to be effective it is necessary to constantly defend the most fundamental human rights upon which all others are based:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. ... Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

(Article 1, Sentence 1, and Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948).

However, before these so-called fundamental human rights, which are the right of all human beings by nature, can be realised, a lot has to be done to promote democracy.

The 2002 report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on human development was devoted to "deepening democracy in a fragmented world". It has become common wisdom that globalisation increases our mutual dependence; yet at the same time our world is becoming increasingly fragmented between rich and poor and the powerful and the powerless. How is democracy, that precious good, faring at this time? What is the role of pluralism in the global decision-making process?

Democracy between integration and fragmentation

For Guy Hermet democracy is more than a sum of institutions; it is a culture, the result of a gradual process of cultural maturing. As this is an on-going process, democracy

always contains an element of uncertainty. Dictatorships, by contrast, always promise their subjects many things, but no one checks on whether they delivery.⁴³

Even if democracies are not immune to modern populists who pull out all the stops with extraordinary political instinct, the old democracies have learnt some lessons from the 1930s. The new beginning after 1945 went hand in hand with the creation of social welfare systems.

Hermet's summary in autumn 2002 is more sober. Given the breakdown of this model, not least because of the economic slowdown and global competition, contemporary populists can cleverly play with people's fears. This becomes dangerous when politics is reduced to a culture of dissemination, as Hermet sees in the USA.

Democracy and development

Hermet does not agree in all respects with the thesis of "economic conditionality" developed by Martin Lipset in the 1950s:

*La richesse ne représente donc pas la pré-condition automatique de la démocratie, cependant que la pauvreté ne constitue pas davantage ce qui l'interdirait de façon presque irrémédiable.*⁴⁴

The differences in development between Chile, China and Germany during the twentieth century are too great to draw a direct connection between economic development and democracy. For this reason, Hermet speaks of the paradoxes of history.

There have been numerous studies in the social sciences of the direct influence of economic development on democratic development, whether a condition or a result. Common sense calls for a minimum of respect for human rights, regardless of the gross domestic product. And without respect for human rights there can be no democracy.

The UNDP chose as the subject of its report on human development in 2002 "Deepening democracy in a fragmented world" because politics is as important to successful development as economics. The report deals with political participation as a dimension of human development and emphasises the links between democratic governance and economic and social development:

*When a small elite dominates economic and political decisions, the link between democracy and equity can be broken.*⁴⁵

The report cites the inequalities in the European transition states and in Black Africa as examples. Once again, the old lesson of Latin America is thoroughly topical. In times of poverty and low public trust in political institutions there is greater willingness to accept authoritarian rule and violations of human rights.

⁴³ Guy Hermet, *Culture et démocratie*, pp. 41ff. (Paris 1993)

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140

⁴⁵ UNDP Report, p. 4.

The development experts of the UNDP affirm another - frequently described - insight into the development of democracy in a globalised world:

Democracy that empowers people must be built - it cannot be imported. ... Because the democracy a nation chooses to develop depends on its history and circumstances, countries will necessarily be "differently democratic". But in all countries democracy is about much more than a single decision or hastily organised election. It requires a deeper process of political development to embed democratic values and culture in all parts of society - a process never formally completed.⁴⁶

Democratic development is not a case of holding (one or two) free elections. Principles of participation and accountability must gradually take hold at all levels of civil society. This requires a broad degree of pluralism, independent media - seldom possible economically - and democratic institutions such as independent courts and financial inspectorates. Montesquieu's demand for separation as essential to the rule of law is as topical as ever. In particular, its relevance is universal.

For this reason, UNO Secretary-General Kofi Annan disapproves of any regional particularities that undermine fundamental democratic development:

Obstacles to democracy have little to do with culture or religion, and much more to do with the desire of those in power to maintain their position at any cost. This is neither a new phenomenon nor one confined to any particular part of the world. People of all cultures value their freedom of choice, and feel a need to have a say in decisions affecting their lives.⁴⁷

India, the largest democracy in the world, is an interesting case study in this respect. Raj Monani sees India's main problem in the steady spread of a culture of corruption among Indian politicians, in particular the powerful electoral commission. As in many democracies, corruption is not perceived as illegal. Although on paper the Indian constitution fulfils all the basic criteria of a true democracy, and regular elections reflect the will of people, Indian democracy still is "rotten".

Indian democracy is flawed, for politics is the best business one can be in. It makes rich.⁴⁸

Although the Indian constitution guarantees a neutral and thus perfectly secular state, and India benefits from globalisation in many ways, Monani feels that ethnic polarisation is rapidly gaining ground:

Young Hindus claim their cultural identity and this bears great risks for a country in which more Muslims live than in Pakistan.

Should India define itself by cultural identity, the institutions of state could implode with enormous consequences for a multi-ethnic state of more than a billion people.

⁴⁶ Ibid., S. 5

⁴⁷ Ibid., Special Contribution, p. 16

⁴⁸ Monani Raj in his presentation, 21 September 2002

The Indian example shows that even with a legal foundation, institutions and decades of democratic practice, problems inherent in society - like the continued influence of the caste - and the abuse of political office as a source of income may mean that democratic maturity may still be lacking.

The lack of freedom and democracy in the wealthy Arab world

In July 2002, the UNDP presented its first regional report on the Arab countries.⁴⁹ The conclusions of the (mainly Arab) authors, were devastating. As measured by the UNDP's index of human development, based on access to education, health services, etc., the Arab world grew more slowly than the world as whole in the previous decade. The income indicators for the Arab world, thanks primarily to oil and natural gas, were better than their development indicators. Thus, it is possible to say that the Arab world is rich rather than developed.

The poverty of the Arab world is the poverty of capacity and opportunities. There are three main deficits: freedom, the participation of woman and knowledge.

Growth alone cannot explain these fundamental shortcomings, which account for its relative backwardness compared to the rest of the world.

The Arab world has the lowest rating on the freedom index; it also lacks any independent regulatory institutions to ensure the transparency and participation of civil society. There can be no doubt that Arab society notices the consequences of excluding half its productive potential - the female population - from any role.

The recommendations of the report's authors cannot have pleased the autocrats of the Arab world, especially the demand for free access to and dissemination of information. Society in the 22 Arab states is cut off from global developments and increasingly sidelined.

This special UNDP regional report provides convincing evidence that a low level of personal freedom can indeed hold back economic development.

The state of democracy in the globalised world

As discussed at the beginning, the state is gradually withdrawing from its social and political responsibilities. Budget cuts are driving the outsourcing of competencies, not only infrastructure but also certain justice and security functions, to private companies.

Giacomo Luciano sees a close connection between a state's gross domestic product and the state of democracy in the light of the global market:

*National politics is more concerned with the distribution of goods than with major political decisions. But when the global market takes charge of distribution, the state's role diminishes. This makes political life boring. As individual actors control the new elements, elections are increasingly irrelevant.*⁵⁰

⁴⁹ www.undp.org/ahdr

⁵⁰ Giacomo Luciano in his presentation, 21 September 2002

This is reflected in low voter turnout and frequent changes in voting behaviour. Typical of this trend in many states that are undoubtedly mature democracies is the political language of heads of government and ministers of finance who no longer think of the state as an institution in public law - for instance, "impresa Italia" instead of "Repubblica Italiana". In the 1990s, Lebanon was governed in much the same way, and the public infrastructure, already weak, was cut back even further.

Many EU finance ministers use the language of corporate balance sheets, forgetting that there is a fundamental difference between a company and the state as a polity. Companies function according to business rules, and management is focused on maximising profit. By contrast, as a polity the state relies on taxes and levies for its revenues. It could function as a company in the field of state-run operations, but this experiment has lost its appeal.

State withdrawal has gone even further in the ex-communist transition states and the relatively young former colonial states, which gained independence only to be looted and mismanaged by their autocratic rulers.

Lawrence Schlemmer sees as the crucial element not the type of economy, but the interplay between the social classes:

Can a market-oriented economy promote democracy? It does not matter whether an economy is capitalist or not. Democracy is an independent value that exists on its own. But every society has a political class that enjoys the fruits of dominance. It enters into a symbiosis with the rulers. Strata that seek to advance demand in turn a disproportionate degree of democratisation. This is the situation in parts of Africa.⁵¹

A healthy democracy needs a certain degree of competition. Concentration in all industries has, on the one hand, reduced the potential for political influence and, on the other, led to the creation of oligopolies or even monopolies in sectors such as the media that are crucial for the functioning of democracy.

This competition should not be seen in a purely economic sense. It also affects intellectual diversity and active participation in civil society.

Given that the development of democracy has long ignored the restraints of national boundaries, we need to consider the role of civil society in the light of globalisation.

The rise of a transnational civil society

Although repression and the refusal to link up to international sources of information still keeps certain regions isolated, a transnational civil society already exists. The most impressive evidence of the ability of this global civil society to campaign successfully was the prohibition on antipersonnel mines. In 1992, a platform of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) began to use the Internet, then a completely new medium of communication, for the global activity of sensitising the international public about landmines. By 1995, some governments were already working on the subject through

⁵¹ Lawrence Schlemme in his presentation, 21 September 2002

diplomatic channels. In 1997, the Ottawa Convention completely banning the use of antipersonnel mines was signed. Thanks to speedy ratification - by March 2003, 143 states had signed and 123 ratified - the Convention entered into force at the end of 1999. The number of landmine victims is already falling in many countries strewn with these armaments, and funding for the clearance of landmines has been increased.

The campaign also gave rise to the concept of virtual diplomacy. The movement was effective because of the global civil society, a network of NGOs, the national Red Cross organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and numerous personalities from different fields of public life. In 1999, this campaign was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Jody Williams, the coordinator, drew the following conclusion from this development:

"We could never have achieved our aim so soon without the cooperation of so many governments and officials. At the same time, with this campaign the international civil society has proved that we can bring about change. Democracies must give their civil societies space to work."⁵²

The number of NGOs grew from 1,083 in 1914 to 37,000 in 2000. Almost one fifth were founded after 1990. Globally, there are more than 20,000 transnational NGOs. In many ways this development parallels the globalisation of economics and communications in the same period.

Democracy in the age of globalisation is undoubtedly open to a lot of criticism.⁵³ Yet, for Pierre Sané, the former secretary-general of Amnesty International, the first non-governmental human rights organisation, and currently assistant director-general of UNESCO, it is still a worthwhile goal:

Democracy is also the "ideal of the abstract citizen". Often it is this much criticised democracy that makes freedom, education and reflection at all possible. Its counterpart in a globalised society has to be universalism. Only the universal idea of human dignity can protect society against the violence of a globalised market."⁵⁴

Another statistic demonstrates shows that people are aware that they can help to shape an international civil society - and take responsibility for democracy at the global level: according to the figures of the Union of International Associations, membership of

⁵² Interview with Jody Williams in Vienna, 3 July 1999

⁵³ Iliya Harik in his presentation, 21 September 2002; "Democracy is an outdated, provincial ideology that wants to become global, but stops short at its national dividing lines." In the light of the successful campaigns of transnational civil society, in particular that against antipersonnel mines, which can stretch from the USA to Sudan, Harik's contribution was mistaken in many points.

⁵⁴ Pierre Sané in his presentation, 21 September.2002

international NGOs in low- or middle-income regions is growing faster than in high-income regions. The largest increases are in Asia and eastern Europe.⁵⁵

In recent years, there have been a series of very professionally organised global campaigns, among them the campaign for debt-forgiveness for the poorest countries,⁵⁶ the campaign for access to essential medications,⁵⁷ the campaign for international human rights and the campaign for an international criminal court.

The existence of civil society at the global level can no longer be in doubt. This opens up new opportunities for democracy, and hence for transparency and for the accountability of decision-makers. People's growing sensitivity about democratic participation is also illustrated by their demands for that civil society should play a greater role in international organisations.

As regrettable as it is that universalistic concepts, in particular concerning the protection of human rights, are being watered down, partly in the name of religion and cultural particularities, the growing significance of - accountable - NGOs is evidence of the acceptance of certain universally recognised conditions in shaping politics and economics.

Religion and culture

Whereas ideologies are always constructs, civilisations are very real: we experience their heritage and their presence in the world around us.

Long before Huntington addressed the role of civilisation in international politics, Raymond Aron, a French political scientist, had formulated the same question with a different emphasis. In his main work "Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations", written in the middle of the Cold War, Raymond Aron discusses the heterogeneity of civilisations, pointing out that the long-term consequences were more

⁵⁵ Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius and Mary Kaldor (eds), *Global Civil Society* (New York 2001).

In Nepal the number of registered NGOs rose from 220 in 1990 to 1210 in 1993; in Tunisia from 1886 in 1988 to 5186 in 1991. The largest survey to date of NGOs discovered in 1996 that there were more than one million such groups in India and 210,000 in Brazil.

⁵⁶ The debt-forgiveness campaign in 2000 originated at a British university in 1996. It was supported by numerous national and international NGOs. Further support came from the growing insight of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that debt-forgiveness would make a decisive contribution to economic recovery.

⁵⁷ This campaign focused on the cost of drugs to treat AIDS and the effects of the WTO agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) on the prices of and access to essential medications. As such the campaign was a reflection of a globalised economy and society.

serious than the military confrontation between the blocs.⁵⁸ Aron wrote about tribalism and nationalistic fragmentation at a time when this was still overlaid by the global division along ideological lines.

Although he had no academic ambitions, General Charles de Gaulle always insisted on speaking of Russia and the Russians. The general did not want to have anything to do with the construct Soviet Union, not even in speech.

If one seeks a definition of civilisation that takes human reality into account, the following, although unscientific, is adequate. Civilisation is bringing up children so that even under the most extreme circumstances of war, chaos and the breaking of all taboos they not only go to school during breaks in fighting, have enough to eat and play, but, notwithstanding the madness they see about them day after day, and which may go on for decades, they also learn values. Namely the precepts that are shared all over the world and demand respect for creation. Families in Lebanon succeeded in doing this time and time again. This enabled society and civilisation to survive the war, albeit with scratches.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century, civilisation was used only in the singular; the use of the plural in our epoch is progress. One effect has been to overcome the tension in the duality between "civilisation and barbarism". On the other hand, discussions about the "clash of civilisations" or the struggle between cultures do not help us any further. The atmosphere this creates is possibly more harmful to international relations than the discussion about "culturalism" as claims to culture are already being labelled.

Immediately after the events of 11 September 2001, headlines proclaimed an attack on (western) civilization. Were the twin towers in New York a symbol of this?

Almost two years later, one has the impression that values such as liberalism and human rights - in particular freedom of expression, religious tolerance, etc. - that lie at the heart of western civilization have been weakened. The fight against terrorism risks watering down these achievements with the argument that precisely this civilisation is the terrorists' target.

Sadik al-Azm, a Syrian philosopher, sees an affinity between the Islamists and Huntington's "clash of civilisations":

*"Huntington reduces civilisation to culture and religion, and religion in turn to archetypes that in the case of Islam must lead to the homo islamicus who is on a collision course with the western homo economicus and his innate liberalism and the Indian homo hierarchicus and his natural polytheism."*⁵⁹

What is the role of culture within civilisation; to what extent does religion shape culture? The questions are open, and hotly disputed. No one will deny that the churches were and are a decisive, and often aggressive, factor in the search for a national identity in Poland and Serbia.

⁵⁸ Raymond Aron, *Paix et Guerre entre les Nations*, pp. 394 ff. (new edition Paris 1984)

⁵⁹ Sadik al-Azm in his presentation, 20 September 2002

The conclusions of migration research highlight an analogous development: migrants give up their language first; eating habits next and religion last of all. This would seem to imply that people's faith is the hard core of every culture.

Religious holidays determine the calendar, when to feast and when to fast, and, thus, in the final instance, when we eat what. The latter in turn conditions smells. And these are factors that shape our unconscious, something medical and anthropological research is studying intensively. Certain vernaculars, such as the German, have always recognised the significance of oleofactory influences, of perception through the nose - whether between any two people or in other form of communal proximity - of whether one can stand another person or thing (in German expressed as "(not) liking the smell" of someone or something).

Identity and the right to decide

The desire for religious neutrality on the part of the state is frequently expressed in countries such as Lebanon and Ireland, where individuals are not free to decide whom they want to marry, how to bring up their children and how to be buried⁶⁰ - a short catalogue so banal, yet unattainable. Lebanon has inherited the confessionalism of the Ottoman Empire in all its details. Ethnicity based on confession constituted the administrative foundation of the millet system and its religious autonomy, and influenced all facets of human existence.

In war-racked Northern Ireland religion defines the conflicting parties and affiliation with them. However, the recent census of autumn 2002 produced a small surprise. As expected, the proportion of Catholics had increased since 1991, but nothing like the wilder speculations. For the first time, the census included two questions on religious affiliation: 40 percent said they were Catholic, 46 percent Protestant, and an astonishing 14 percent either said they belonged to neither confession or did not answer the question. This group was particularly pronounced in Protestant strongholds. To reduce its size, the authorities also asked people for their confessional background. Roughly 44 percent had Catholic roots and 53% Protestant; the rest were ethnic minorities.⁶¹ The desire not to belong to a confession reflects people's longing for the status of citizen in the abstract sense.

⁶⁰ Maria McLoughlin in her presentation, 20 September 2002

⁶¹ The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 21 December 2002, commented: The continued segregation of the two confessions is informative and worrying. The western and southern parts of the province are becoming more and more Catholic, and the Northeast increasingly Protestant. The situation in the citadel of Belfast is a stalemate: the Protestants have a tiny majority. In 1920, prior to partition, Carson and Craig, the Protestant leaders, refused to accept all nine counties of the historical province of Ulster as Northern Ireland. At the time, Catholics accounted for 43 percent of Ulster's population, which Protestants felt was too unstable a situation. So they made do with six counties, which gave them an almost a two-thirds majority. In the meantime, the ratio in this smaller territory has reached almost exactly the figure initially rejected as too dangerous. The results of the census hold a

The fate of individuals in crisis-ridden multiconfessional states appears to be pre-determined by cultural or religious affiliation.

The anecdote of a confessionless Lebanese who has to wander the earth forever as he can be buried only in accordance with the rites of his confession elucidates this dilemma. The individual is chained to his group for better or for worse.

The shadow multiconfessional societies have to jump over is that of letting people choose their own identity.⁶²

As a semantic digression, in Arabic the word "fard" is used to express the concept of the "individual". Actually, the word means single, one half of a pair.⁶³ Accordingly, "fard" is something incomplete. Thus, an individual in the Arab interpretation needs the rest, the group, to be complete.⁶⁴

The Latin origin of the English, German and, in particular, French use of "individual" is the adjective "individuus", which means inseparable, indivisible. As a noun, it is the term for the atom, which for Latin-speakers in Antiquity was the smallest indivisible unit.

The comparison of the etymology of the two concepts may give some idea of the differences between the concept of the individual in western and oriental societies. Incidentally, the latter concept has nothing to do with religion. Arab Christians also see themselves as part of a whole, whether of the family, the group or possibly even an ideal pan-Arab association. By contrast, owing to linguistic imprinting, for a French Jew or an Armenian in Paris his personal role, despite the notoriously close family ties of these religious minorities, is first and foremost that of an individual, a citizen, and he will exercise his rights duties accordingly.

The different weight attached to individual and collective rights - e.g. between France and Austria in their foreign policy positions on the international protection of minorities - reflects different legal traditions. The French view in this question is coloured by the French Declaration of Human Rights, according to which it is above all the individual who needs to exercise his rights. Applied to the protection of minorities, the members of the group as individuals enjoy rights, not the group as an entity. The legal culture of Central Europe differs in this respect in that it has a tradition of recognising collective rights.⁶⁵ In the early 1990s, these different views were a source of diplomatic friction over international law, in particular in the European Council.

salutary lesson for Northern Ireland's politicians. The conflict will not be solved via the womb. There is no escaping compromise on the basis of equality. This insight could not have come at a better time: the political parties in Northern Ireland are negotiating with the British and Irish governments on reviving Northern Ireland's power-sharing agreement.

⁶² Guy Hermet in his contribution to the debate on 20 September 2002

⁶³ Hans Wehr, Arabisches Wörterbuch, 5. Aufl.

⁶⁴ Conversation with Samir Frangié, 20 September 2002

⁶⁵ In this case, though, theory is ahead of practice. Up to now, the Republic of Austria has failed to observe its duties in respect of the rights of its Slovenian minority, e.g. erecting bilingual place-name signs. After a ruling of the Constitutional Court in December 2001,

Apart from this rather academic question about the etymology of words, individuals in most societies still do not have the personal freedom to choose their own identity. Were people in the past more advanced than we are today?

Examples of multicultural states in history

The solutions that Karl Renner and Otto Bauer proposed to the nationality question in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy contain useful suggestions for a constitutional framework that allows people to determine their own identity. Under the pseudonym Rudolf Springer, Karl Renner, later first chancellor of the Republic of German Austria, wrote: "The element that binds the nation together is and remains historical and sociological, not ethnological."⁶⁶

The model he proposed for reorganising the Austrian crownlands, already strained by the centrifugal forces of national movements, was based on the principle of personality, not territoriality. Citizens should be allowed to choose the association of people they wanted to belong to. In addition to predestination on the basis of cultural affiliation, this would create a constitutional alternative of free choice.

The Moravian Settlement of 1905 was another attempt to consolidate coexistence - in this case the Germans and Czechs in the Margraviate of Moravia and the Moravian enclaves in Silesia - among the peoples of the multicomunal monarchy with its 15 official languages before it officially collapsed at the end of World War I. From a legal point of view, the constitutional obligation of the autonomous authorities to use both official languages, German and Czech, the regulation of electoral procedures and supervision of education are a masterpiece of equilibrium and would have done its name honour.

As a pilot scheme, the necessary administrative laws for the Moravian Settlement were implemented in Bukovina, another multi-ethnic region, shortly before the outbreak of war.

These legal concepts had no relevance in the new nation-states that emerged from the wreckage of the Dual Monarchy. Interest in the Moravian Settlement was rekindled

the government organized a conference to find a consensus on this issue, which failed, however, to reach agreement.

Austria's obligations under international law were laid down in the Treaty of St. Germain in 1921, which provided formal guarantees for minorities. Furthermore, Vienna has also failed to fulfil its obligations towards the Slovenian minority under the international treaty of 1955.

From this we can deduce that although diplomats regularly tell their Southeastern counterparts that minorities are an enrichment, not a threat, this expression carries little weight in domestic politics. To what extent this is influenced by the uncertain identity of the people concerned in Carinthia is the subject of a number of social and historical studies.

Karin Kneissl in her presentation, 20 September 2002

⁶⁶ Rudolf Springer, *Der Kampf der Österreichischen Nationen um den Staat*, p. 7 (Leipzig/Vienna 1902)

only decades later, during the constitutional debates of the twilight years of the apartheid system in South Africa. A delegation of South African constitutional lawyers travelled to Austria to study the groundwork for the Moravian Settlement in the archives in Vienna.

At the time, the favoured means of rebuilding structures of statehood - in Southeast Europe, in Africa and in the Caucasus, usually under the auspices of the OSCE or another regional organization, assisted by any number of NGOs - was "nation-building", a practice that sought to balance different interests. Instead of reinventing the wheel, modern multi-ethnic states can look to the administrative practices of the Habsburg Empire for potential solutions to their needs.

When a delegation of curious intellectuals asked Zlatko Dizdarevic, head of the multinational editorial staff of Serbs, Croats, Muslims and Jews that published "Oslobodjenje", the legendary Sarajevo daily during the 1992-1995 siege of the city, what his nationality was, he answered: "My nationality is journalist"⁶⁷ - his courageous way of establishing his very personal identity at all times in a utterly insane situation.

The Vojvodina, a region in Serbia with more than 20 ethnic groups, and Macedonia are examples of the patchwork quilt of cultures, religions and languages that are the legacy of the Ottoman and Hapsburg Empires in Southeast Europe. Were they mosaics, as embodied in not only the art, but also the demography of the Byzantine Empire, individual stones could possibly be removed or changed - with a corresponding damage to the whole work of art. But in the case of the intertwined peoples in the Vojvodina, Transylvania or Bosnia, such changes are hardly possible. And where they have occurred, they have been brutal, the result of massacre, expulsion and "ethnic cleansing".

Multi-ethnic societies are undoubtedly susceptible to crisis and war. This is a common theme in the collapse of prosperous mixed societies throughout history. Medieval Andalusia, Odessa or Salonika in the nineteenth century, Vienna in 1900, Prague in 1930, Beirut in the 1980s and Sarajevo in the 1990s: some of these multi-ethnic societies disappeared completely, others recovered to some extent. But the administrative structures and in particular the mentality that makes coexistence between different religions and cultures possible were also driven out with the expulsions. Whatever remains is transfigured nostalgia and the accusations.

The opportunity for a new syncretism

Cuba can teach us a lesson. The pervasive presence of Cuban music on all continents is another, refreshing face of globalization, a contrast to cheap American action films. This music - jazz, samba, fado - is syncretism in perhaps its most lively form, an amalgam of African rhythms, Latin fantasy and remnants of Arab Andalusian troubadours. The (general) absence of racism in Caribbean and Latin American countries, the legacy of a genuine fusion of very different cultures, has always

⁶⁷ Zlatko Dizdarevic in his presentation, 20 September 2002

surprised North Americans and Europeans. What has gone into making up this phenomenon was not dealt with at Mzaar in September 2002, but should be on the agenda of any follow-up conference.

The aftermath of phases of conquest in Islam and Christianity are testimony that religion and culture always rubbed off on each other. Perhaps this is clearer in the case of Islam, certainly more interesting for us since the role of Islam has become a political issue. The different expressions of mystic and popular Islam play a crucial role in the religious life of Muslims from North Africa to Indonesia. There are notable differences between the Islam of Southeast Asia and that of the Arabian Peninsular. In Southeast Asia Islam arrived from the coast and gradually worked its way into societies that had already been shaped by Buddhist and Hindu cultures.

The forms of government and society in states in which the majority of citizens are Muslims also vary considerably, from Turkey to Iran. Indonesia, a state with about 200 million inhabitants, of which 86 percent are Muslim, is not only the most populous Islamic country, but also the most remarkable. Pancasila, meaning principle, is constitutionally entrenched as the philosophical basis of the Indonesian state. It comprises five interrelated principles, the first of which is belief in the one and only God. Thus, Indonesia is a "religious" state in which religion is protected and promoted by the state. At the same time, the constitution of 1945 forbids the state from interfering in the internal affairs of any religious community. This syncretistic approach has enabled Indonesia to realise the political goal of national unity in the midst of religious diversity. This, according to Johannes Müller, a specialist on Indonesia, is the achievement of the Indonesian society. In his view, the many interrelationships have generated a syncretism of indigenous and acquired rites that encourages tolerance. Religion does not exist in the abstract; it needs a social environment, and hence is a product of climate, geography and history, too. The resultant cross-fertilisation accounts for the ambivalence of culture and religion.

The consequence, in Müller's opinion, is a willingness to take a more open view of syncretism than previously.⁶⁸ However, the act of terrorism on Bali in November 2002 has created a very dangerous situation for the government and the people. Under US pressure, this special form of coexistence and intermingling is being asked to take a harder line against Islamic fundamentalists.

The fundamentalist movements in Indonesia have largely the result of decades of intensive activities on the part of Saudi foundations endowed with huge financial resources to propagate their orthodox doctrine of Wahabism - with the tacit consent of the USA.

Nowhere is Islam closer to the ordinary people than where Sufi orders hold sway. Thanks to them, Islam is almost perfectly integrated in Africa. In Senegal, the Mouride Brotherhood has amalgamated colonialism, Islam, modern agriculture and the division of labour. Sufi societies are strong on integrating old cultures and agricultural practices

⁶⁸ Johannes Müller in his presentation, 20 September 2002

into Islam. Each of these societies is headed by a Sufi, who has to be a mystic and a person with a sense for what is feasible. Regrettably, Saudi Wahabites are using Koran schools and development projects to propagate their version of Islam in Senegal, too.

The Balkan peoples also have a treasure trove of historical experiences and traditions of the interethnic coexistence between religions and traditions. Until recently, relatively weak religious ties facilitated the emergence of a syncretism that made possible mixed marriages and a relatively high degree of tolerance, especially in Bosnia. This syncretism is perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the "Balkan culture" as expressed in the preservation of traditional values, honour and family ethos, regardless of confessional affiliation.⁶⁹

The ability of an entire society to acquire in the course of centuries the social ability to live with religious differences, to respect the sanctity of other peoples' cults and to congratulate them on their feast days has taken different forms - and associated negative effects. But whether the Taqquiah, the Shiite strategy of survival, also practised by Shiite splinter groups such as the Alawites, or the apparent assimilation of the Spanish Jews after the Reconquista, it was this syncretism that enabled coexistence in its various expressions.

Immigrant societies such as those of North America are generally thought to be tolerant of ethnic and religious affiliation. It is relatively easy to break with one's ethnic group and assume the common identity. Yet, particularly in these societies, many people pursue a dual strategy. Michael Walzer's term for it is "hyphen identity"⁷⁰ - Italian-Americans for example. The hyphen symbolises recognition of their specifically Italian character by their fellow Americans. By mutual agreement, "American" is a political identity without any cultural claims. "Italian", on the other hand, denotes cultural identity without any political claim.

How long such combinations can survive is a question for which Walzer has no answer. However, this dual strategy is relevant to the current debate on the creation of "euro-Islam". In this case, the hyphen is more problematic, as one side of the expression denotes a religious affiliation.

Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy's current "reorganisation" of Islam in France presents the complexity of the subject in all clarity. On 9 December 2002, the three most important Muslim federations in France signed a form of "non-aggression pact". Dalil Boubakeur, rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris, was appointed first chairman.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Klaus Roth, *op. cit.*, p. 76

⁷⁰ Michael Walzer, *Politik der Differenz*, p. 14, in *Das Europa der Religionen*, Transit No. 8 (Vienna 1994)

⁷¹ *Le Monde*, 20 December 2002: La Mosquée de Paris, la Fédération Nationale des Musulmans de France (FNMF) and l'Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (UOIF) are the three associations. One problem of Islam in France is the clash between adherents of different teachings. There is a lot of talk about established Islam - see La Mosquée de Paris -, the "radical Islam of the suburbs" and the rifts between them.

The negative reactions to this conference - e.g. a "media spectacle"⁷² under the chairmanship of the government - alone indicate that the route to a specifically French Islam, as one expression of European Islam, will be long and arduous.

The complex manifestations of Islam in Europe, particularly in France, Germany and the UK, are a fertile field for research. It is more than a question of how "European", "enlightened" or "liberal" the second largest religious community in these states can become; it is also a question of the ability of western societies not only to accept but also to integrate these new population groups. At present the process is extremely heavy going. Apart from numerous social problems and the rise of populism, there is the crucial question of how much scope the secular legal systems will allow the immigrants. How a Turkish family deals with the honour of a daughter who wants to go out alone in Berlin or what rights children of Pakistan parents in Sweden can assert against their parents are different aspects of everyday life, and their solution is also a measure of tension-free coexistence between the new and the old citizens.

Even in the ideal case - when immigrants and members of the receiving societies fuse into multicultural societies through intermarriage, shared workplaces and everyday life in common - rejection of such mixing can precipitate a rise in religious fundamentalism. Islamists do not fish only among unemployed second- or third-generation Maghreb youths in satellite towns who feel rejected and see crime as a form of rebellion. In their search for identity, a younger generation in integrated, socially and economically successful immigrant families may turn to the religion of their parents for meaning if they find none in their new environment. The search for meaning is a perfectly natural part of growing up for any young person, but when the reference point is religious fundamentalism, the result can be explosive.

A similar phenomenon may be observed among US Jews who after years of assimilation and a thoroughly unreligious way of life suddenly break with their past and adopt a national religious interpretation of their Judaism. There are many cases of previously utterly secular people who emigrate to Israel and turn into religious fanatics who seek their salvation as settlers in the Promised Land.⁷³

Even in overwhelmingly secular societies it is possible for people to relapse into religious categories.

A question of loyalties

Initially, Jews in the Third Republic in France - one need only recall the Dreyfus Affair, the trigger for Theodor Herzl, a Viennese journalist, to found a national movement he called Zionism - and Jewish citizens in German, Hungary and Austria in the 1930s were regularly accused of not being full citizens of these nation-states. It was said they had divided loyalties, that on account of their ethnic and religious affiliations they were more

⁷² Le Monde, 12 December 2002

⁷³ The author made this observation while studying in Israel from 1984 to 1988, but did not make a study of it.

likely to betray their country. The concept of the Jewish world community has fostered extremely bizarre and dangerous conspiracy theories, then and now.

Today, Muslims living in the same states have to defend themselves against the accusation of dual loyalty. The discovery of so-called safe houses, terrorist cells in Hamburg, Paris and London, has reinforced existing suspicions. Naturalised Muslims in European states face insinuations that their loyalties are with the world community of Muslims than with the constitution of the state whose passport they carry.

Paradox parallels and the constants of history

For it was the rise of the middle class and the victory of the nation-state that put an end to the pluralism of identities that were possible in the multicomunal empires along the Danube and in the Orient until 1918. The following observation is attributed to Prince Metternich, who ruthlessly repressed any liberal tendencies until forced to flee in the revolution of 1848:

I have nothing against liberalism, but it will be followed by nationalism, and that is the end of the Habsburg Empire.

The bourgeoisie mistrusted the cosmopolitan attitude of the old aristocracy and the Jews in the Habsburg Empire with their far-flung families; their ideal was homogeneous nations.

In his book on Balkanisation and Lebanonisation, Georges Corm compares this "cosmopolitanism and ethnic intermixing" of past epochs - and their subsequent tragic reversal in the ethnic conflicts of the Balkan and the Middle East - as follows:

On pouvait être grec, albanais, roumain ou arménien et s'élever dans la bureaucratie civile ottomane; on pouvait être croate, serbe ou italien et servir à la cour de Vienne ou Budapest. L'allégeance à l'empire, à la dynastie qui le gouvernait, était alors un élément de l'identité qui le gouvernait, tout comme l'est aujourd'hui l'allégeance à un parti politique et aux idées qu'il incarne.⁷⁴

In the meantime, political parties, too, have lost much of their integrating function. The Socialist International is a last, pale remnant.

Corm refers to Hannah Arendt's farsighted, perceptive analysis into the origins of total domination, in which she deals with the decline of minorities and non-territorial groups, such as the Jews and the aristocracy. She views the political emancipation of the bourgeoisie as a central element of the imperial age. Arendt deals at great length with the tragedy of all those people with numerous identities who were left stateless by the 1919/20 Treaties of Paris, those expelled by the totalitarian regimes that would follow and the victims of the ethnic cleansing of the war years.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Georges Corm, *L'Europe et l'Orient: de la balkanisation à la libanisation. Histoire d'une modernité inaccomplie*. S. 51 (Paris 1991)

⁷⁵ Hannah Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft*, pp. 426 ff. (München 1986)

Her analysis of statelessness and trenchant criticism of the "hypocrisy in the name of human rights" has lost none of its relevance.

*Unlike their more fortunate forefathers, who were expelled in the wars of religion, these masses of refugees and stateless people could not, with the best of will and any amount of humanitarian effort, be made to feel at home anywhere in Europe. Anyone cast out of the old trinity of people - territory - state, the basis of the nation, remained home- and stateless; anyone who lost the rights once guaranteed by citizenship, remained without rights. None of what really took place after the First World War could be rectified ...*⁷⁶

The search for identity as a result of the wars, new borders and expulsions of the twentieth century is a difficult undertaking, as much for the peoples of Eastern and Central Europe as for those of the Middle East. It is the search for a buried history that affects a community's collective subconscious as much as it does the psyche of the individual human being. This field is no longer the exclusive domain of psychotherapists. The new discipline of ethnopsychiatry lays entire peoples, as it were, on the couch. The social sciences, too, have a range of diverse, innovative approaches to researching identity, also in a contemporary virtual framework, of course: www.spacesofidentity.net

The search for identity in poetry and prose

People turn to dead poets for their national literature. Some authors are claimed simultaneously by three or more states, Kafka, for instance, and other Prague Germans and Prague Jews. Joseph Roth was born in 1894 in Lemberg, in what is now the Ukraine, though he moved to Vienna as a Galician Jew. At the age of 18 he decided that he would write in German, not in Polish. This man of many origins, who in 1936 chose exile in Paris, recounts in his novels the tales of refugees and exiles always searching without hope for new identities. Roth loved myths and made up a lot retrospectively to breathe life into his fictitious heroes. His novels "Radetzky March" and "The Emperor's Tomb" are glorified chronicles of the long gone Austro-Hungarian monarchy. He was particularly attracted to the periphery of the multicomunal empire, the sleepy Slavic provincial towns in whose small worlds he traced or vaguely sensed what was going on in the world outside. Wolfgang Müller-Funk, an expert on Roth, believes: "Roth's work runs contrary to those psychological theories that would like to prescribe for each person a fixed identity and a fixed sense of the reality of the superego. In other words, without the power of fiction there simply is no identity."⁷⁷

The things that moved Roth, that he described so clearly and packed so readably in wonderful stories - the experience of foreignness, of loneliness, of the loss of home and ties, the loss of reality and also the individual's social impotence -, are topics of our time. Hence, it is not surprising that contemporary writers, like Amin Maalouf, take as

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 423

⁷⁷ Wolfgang Müller-Funk, Joseph Roth, p. 10 (Munich 1989)

their subject the old and always current dilemma of identity. Maalouf tries to approach the eternal topic through autobiographical notes, "identités meurtrières". In view of the ethnic conflicts around the world, he pleads for each person to claim all the different identities he carries in him:

« A l'ère de la mondialisation, avec ce brassage accéléré, vertigineux, qui nous enveloppe tous, une nouvelle conception de l'identité s'impose - d'urgence ! Nous ne pouvons nous contenter d'imposer aux milliards d'humains désarmés le choix entre l'affirmation outrancière de leur identité et la perte de toute identité, entre l'intégrisme et la désintégration. Or, c'est bien cela qu'implique la conception qui prévaut encore dans ce domaine. Si nos contemporains ne sont pas encouragés à assumer leurs appartenances multiples, s'ils ne peuvent concilier leur besoin d'identité avec une ouverture franche et décomplexée aux cultures différentes, s'ils se sentent contraints de choisir entre la négation de soi-même et la négation de l'autre, nous serons en train de former des légions de fous sanguinaires, des légions d'égarés. »⁷⁸

Like many in his trade who are at home in several cultures, Maalouf professes his multi-identity. In this age, conflicts usually break out because one of each person's many identities - gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, etc. - has come to dominate the others. The Yugoslav sees himself as a Bosnian, the Bosnian as a Muslim, the Muslim as a Shiite, and the last perhaps as the God's emissary.

In his contribution to the identity debate, Nedim Gürçel, a Turkish writer living Paris, emphasised the Ottoman heritage and its cultural riches. Gürçel called the destruction of the Ottoman bridge in Mostar in 1993 symbolically the worst that the Croats committed. He spoke about descendants of the Ottomans expelled from the Balkans, such as his Macedonian grandmother.⁷⁹ Gürçel presented a transfigured view of a past epoch that never existed in this aesthetic form of a tolerant multiculturalism administered with a light touch from Constantinople. Other speakers reminded Gürçel of the shortcomings of Ottoman rule, which were felt in Bosnia in particular. Ivo Andrić, a Bosnian writer who won the Nobel Prize 1961, dealt more objectively and originally with this topic in his novel "Viziers and Consuls".

Currently, centrifugal forces in the name of culture are accelerating the collapse of the state. Even the much admired US melting-pot is, in its own way, no longer quite as immune to Lebanonisation. Arthur M. Schlesinger, a security expert, takes a sceptical view of a "tribalisation of the USA by the new, militant ethnocult" in which more and more groups raise claims against society in the name of their history of suffering.⁸⁰

Is it possible to peacefully resolve these contradictory identities? Even Goethe let his Faust complain: "Two souls live, oh!, in my breast." A clear-headed scientific

⁷⁸ Amin Maalouf, *Les identités meurtrières*, p. 49 (Paris 1998)

⁷⁹ Nedim Gürçel in his presentation, 20 September 2002

⁸⁰ Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The Disuniting of America*, p. 17 (New York 1992)

approach may help. Modernisation and secularization have created institutions that can be useful in breaking with a culture- and religion-oriented way of thinking.

The next section will provide a brief overview of the numerous experiments in this field and how brittle their success is. One field for further research is the regular phenomenon in Third-World states of modernization without secularisation.⁸¹

Secularisation: What is the rule and what the exception?

More than 150 years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that "religion, which never interferes directly in the government of the society, [is] the first among the Americans' political institutions".⁸²

Despite the separation of church and state, in America religion not only prospered in the private sphere, but successfully resisted being banned to there and preserved a public significance. Any major speech by a US president closes with "God bless America", that of his French colleague, by contrast, with "Vive la France, vive la République."

Various theories and studies attempt to explain the differences in secularisation between Europe, the USA and the rest of the world. There is a tendency to speak of the "American exception" and to view the European model of secularisation as the general paradigm. In the mid-1980s, Theodor Hanf showed that historical developments and existing differences are considerably more complex.⁸³

Tocqueville systematically studied the role of the religious and the republican virtues in a nation-state. Since then, numerous philosophers and political scientists have discussed his conclusions in the light of the radical changes of the twentieth century. This continued in Mzaar.

Samir Kassir asked without irony:

*How secular is the secular French republic, when its diplomatic representative in Lebanon has a mass said for the republic twice a year?*⁸⁴

The fundamental concern of secularism is not religion as a private matter, but the role of the religious establishment. It is not fundamentally concerned with whether a holy book or revelation is interpreted correctly or incorrectly, but with influences on the exercise of political power. The role of the churches in the underground in communist states in the 1980s clearly demonstrates how political the revival of Christian teachings, especially the right of resistance, can be.

⁸¹ Theodor Hanf in his conclusions, 21 September 2002

⁸² Alexis de Tocqueville, *Über die Demokratie in Amerika*, p.338 (Munich 1976)

⁸³ Theodor Hanf, *Modernisierung ohne Säkularisierung?*, p. 137, in U. Matz (ed.), *Die Bedeutung der Ideologien in der heutigen Welt* (Cologne 1986)

⁸⁴ Samir Kassir in his contribution to the debate on 19 September 2002

Protestants were the driving force in the weekly peace marches in Leipzig and Dresden, and in Rumania, that precipitated the collapse of the respective regimes. Nicolae Ceausescu, who instrumentalised the loyal Rumanian-Orthodox church for his power politics, finally fell in December 1989 after demonstrations organised by a Protestant pastor from the Hungarian minority in Temesvar-Timisoara. But does this not pose a danger for secularisation? Were not those believers who interpreted the Christian right to resistance as justifying civil disobedience responsible for the genuine secularisation of their countries? Well, no. In Rumania in particular the regime and Ceausescu personality cult against which Christian activists revolted had had no time for religious principles since the 1970s.

Secularisation is the sine qua non of modernization. The latter subsumes everything necessary to turn social, political and economic institutions into more effective instruments of democracy and development. But this does not imply the wholesale adoption of western concepts. Rather, the point is not to let misleading or static interpretations of the Holy Book hold up or change the development process.

The precise wording of the text, how law is interpreted and how far divine authority extends is secondary. For Gilles Kepel the crucial question is who decides under what conditions the interpretation of texts.⁸⁵ Hence, Kepel emphasises that it is necessary to always take into account the entire social constellation of text interpretation.

The ominous head-scarf affair at the end of the 1980s showed the French education and justice system as the embodiment of secularism; France alone is constitutionally bound to enforce secularism. This debate triggered a complex, on-going discussion about Islam in France. In his book "Les banlieues de l'Islam" Kepel discusses the results of empirical studies on French views of the three million Muslims living in France. He illuminates the background of the strong revival of Islam among young immigrants, whose fathers are in many ways more secular than their children. On the basis of his analysis he shows how difficult it is to reconcile the concept of religious identity with that of integration into a secular community:

"A l'autre extrémité de notre échantillon, le groupe des personnes les plus marginalisées exprime un besoin d'islam que l'on peut qualifier de 'viscéral': Ni intégration ni insertion ne sont, pour elles, imaginables, tant la société française, dans laquelle elles sont immergées, leur semble étrangère, incompréhensible ou hostile. L'islam est, ici, un recours fondamental, une planche de salut à laquelle on s'agrippe pour ne pas être submergé par le ressac des mœurs et des usages français. Il a vocation à exercer une fonction de stabilisation, à servir de garde-fou contre diverses formes de déviance sociale."⁸⁶

Religion, in this case Islam, fulfils many functions, even in a state such as France, which constitutionally and historically has a stronger tradition of secularism than other countries.

⁸⁵ Gilles Kepel in his contribution to the debate on 20 September 2002

⁸⁶ Gilles Kepel, *Les banlieues de l'Islam*, p. 59 (Paris 1991)

In Fouad Ajami's opinion, the secular century, that in the Arab world was synonymous with the nationalist and socialist Baath Party, has finally over. The end of secularism in the region began with the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 Six-Day War, followed by an "Islamic response in the guise of radical fundamentalism".⁸⁷

What is secular politics in the Islamic world based on? After the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Saddam Hussein knew how to exploit secularism perfectly to his advantage. The secularist in uniform decorated the Iraqi flag with the Islamic credo, infringing Saudi Arabia's copyright in the process.

Was this the typical opportunism of a despot or was there more to it? Each case of Islamist radicalisation from Morocco to Pakistan must be understood in its specific circumstances. At the same time, this may conceal a deeper malaise: Islam, not unlike the Catholic Church may be resisting any change in the status quo for fear of losing religious values. As José Casanova's analysis shows, the one need not imply the other:

*"If an established religion become disestablished, in other words gives up the element of institutional compulsion, it becomes a voluntary religious association, a sect or a 'free church'. As soon as religious freedom is recognised, from the point of view of the henceforth purely secular state all religions, churches and sects become denominations. Perhaps the Catholic Church is the best confirmation of this structural trend in the modern world. After long and often vehement resistance against abandoning its identity as the 'Church', it accepted the principle of religious freedom at the Second Vatican Council and subsequently also recognised the constitutional separation of church and state promulgated by new democratic governments in many largely Catholic countries. In contrast, the disappearance of religious convictions and behaviour is not a necessary structural trend in modern life, although it is in fact indubitably a dominant historical trend in many European societies."*⁸⁸

Thus, if the US situation is not treated as an exception and the European model as the rule, it can be argued that secularism can also contribute to strengthening religious values.

The love-hate relationship with modernisation

Certain conditions are necessary for modernisation:

First, institutions must be adapted to meet the new challenges; this means changes in the legal, economic and financial systems. Second, society must accept the insights of natural and social research. It is all too common for Arab and non-Arab societies to want the "things", but not the "ideas" of the West. Even the Islamic Republic of Iran makes use of information technology "made in Silicon Valley", whereas in the social

⁸⁷ Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament*, pp. 48-60 (new edition, Cambridge 1993)

⁸⁸ José Casanova in *Religion und Öffentlichkeit*, pp. 23-24, in *Das Europa der Religionen* (Transit 8, Vienna 1994)

sciences religious and cultural values are still recognised as the determining factors. The case of Saadeddin Ibrahim, head of the Ibn Khaldun Centre in Cairo, highlights the risks facing social scientists in authoritarian states in the Middle East: in summer 2002 an Egyptian court sentenced him to several years' hard labour for conducting opinion research.

Third, human rights must be respected. Any attempt to relativise human rights on the grounds of specifically religious interpretations violates not only the principle of universality, as discussed above, but also specific human rights. Fourth, nationality in the sense of an objective citizenship, rather than religious affiliation, must become the basis of all rights and duties. This is the only way of guaranteeing the equality of all citizens in law, regardless of religion or ethnic affiliation.

In the course of the twentieth century modernisation was westernisation through European and more recently US hegemony, which is now true of globalization too. And in its shadow is always the recurring theme of the struggle against the West.

In his article on culture and modernisation in the Middle East, Bernard Lewis describes two forms of modernization: the successful example of Turkey and the unsuccessful example of Iran.⁸⁹ Turkey started modernising under the Ottoman sultans; the construction of railways in the late nineteenth century was an expression of the urgency of progress and renewal. Later Atatürk borrowed elements of European systems for his young republic: French centralism, German military command, Swiss civil code and grand projects in the Soviet style, all of them integrated on the basis of the European ideology of the nation-state. By abolishing Arab script in favour of the Latin alphabet, he set an unmistakable sign that he was determined to westernise his country: the change in writing was simultaneously a change in cultural affiliation, a break with the past.

Particularly from 1973 onwards, Shah Reza Pahlavi used petrodollars to force his country to modernise - the contemporary classic example of centralised adoption of western products and standards without the democratic participation of those affected. The experiment with the "Iranian industrial revolution" ended with the Islamic revolution of February 1979, when an alliance of nationalists and clergy gained power, and the Islamic clerisy soon took exclusive control.

Certain Oriental elements of the (regular) attempts to modernise the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century reappeared when the Pahlavis, Cossacks turned emperors, tried to modernise Iran. Lewis trenchantly describes them as follows:

Paradoxically, the cumulative effect of the reforms and modernisation was not greater freedom, but an affirmation of autocratic rule because, first, the new means of communication and coercion made available by modern technology strengthened the central authority and because, second, the intermediary institutions that

⁸⁹ Bernard Lewis, Kultur und Modernisierung im Nahen Osten. Lecture at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, 1999 (Vienna 2000)

*traditionally restricted the power of the state were weakened: the provincial nobility and local administrations, urban patrician classes, the ulema and the venerable military corps such as the janizarians.*⁹⁰

This development can also be observed in some of the Gulf States. The discovery of oil propelled the former British-controlled Trucial States out of an existence based on pearl fishing. Although the ruling families tried to retain the traditional tribal loyalties of their respective subjects, the equilibrium based on the reciprocity of rights and duties between ruler and ruled had been upset. Subjects no longer enjoy the protection and care that were their due under the old system, but do not yet enjoy the rights of modern citizens either.

For Bernard Lewis this is the best illustration that "no place or people has or ever had a monopoly on cultural innovation. The same holds for resistance to it."⁹¹

No modernisation without secularisation?

The failure of western ideologies in decolonised states

Modernist ideologies are not a patent solution: in newly independent former colonies nationalism and socialism led to bankruptcy wherever they were tried. Just as today globalisation has generated a sense of homelessness - even in the established democracies of Northwest hemisphere - modernisation in the post-colonial years caused a similar feeling of loss among people in the Third World. Where once the Baath Party's specifically Arab version of socialism or that of the Tanzanian ruling party appeared to offer a new homeland full of promises that were not kept, the ideologies of salvation of religious movements of the last quarter of the twentieth century have established themselves as alternatives.

After the "totally unexpected" Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, this development could not come as a great surprise. Writing about the nationalist movement in Algeria, Theodor Hanf noted:

*"The "pieds noirs", the French settlers in Algeria, called themselves Algerians. In Algeria, the name of the country, elsewhere an important symbol of awakening nationalism, had been taken by colonists. Hence, the first nationalist societies, student movements and trade unions referred to themselves as associations of Muslims in Algeria. Religion became a symbol of identity in a situation in which all other expressions of identity, even language, had been occupied by the French policy of assimilation."*⁹²

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 50

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 78

⁹² Theodor Hanf, op. cit.

The relevance of Islam for Algerians' identity is highlighted by the anecdote told of an Algerian who met Arab Christians for the first time on a visit to Lebanon in the 1970s and noted with surprise: "I didn't know there were Christian Muslims."⁹³

The conjecture that Theodor Hanf expressed in 1986 that the Algerian case could be a model for many other conflicts in the Third World for which nationalism and socialism had failed to provide solutions has proved accurate.

Calls for the own way of modernisation - "own" meaning rooted in the specific religion and culture - grew louder and louder. The objective was modernisation without secularisation. Hanf explains this development with reference to the different process of modernisation and industrialisation in the Third World, where the large families and tribal associations have survived the flight to the city partly intact. In addition, owing the lack of democratic institutions, opposition voices began to articulate themselves almost exclusively in religious associations.⁹⁴

A study of developments in the Philippines, where the war of separation waged by the Moros, Muslims of the archipelago of Mindanao, Palawan and Sulu, who are of a different origin from the majority of Filipinos, has intensified with the kidnapping of local and foreign tourists, also reveals that growing frustration has led to an increase in Islamic ideology and connections with Arabian financial sources. The separatists' political goal is the creation of an Islamic federal state under Islamic law covering about 40 percent of the territory of the Philippines and "finally throwing off the tutelage of a government that denies us the right to live differently".⁹⁵

Developments from North Africa to Southeast Asia have borne out Hanf's conclusion that we could be on the verge of a new age of wars of religion.

Violence

We are witnesses of a comprehensive deregulation of warfare. War is being privatised; in the past three decades this instrument of pursuing political interests and will has increasingly become a free-market means of income and the accumulation of wealth.

Lengthy wars, such as those in Lebanon, Afghanistan and the Sudan, lead to a state of permanent violence characterised by kidnapping, drug-dealing and other forms of organised crime.

In Columbia, a country that has suffered almost a century of uninterrupted warfare - and where, interestingly, despite the efforts of all paramilitary, terrorist and guerrilla groups, the institutions of state still function and regular elections take place - the

⁹³ Conversation with Theodor Hanf, 1 December 2002

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142

⁹⁵ *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 2000: Islam contestataire aux Philippines

particularly bloody period of internal violence from 1948 to 1957 is known simply as the "violencia".

The use of the concept war is increasingly complex. The European reaction to President George W. Bush's declaration of a "war against terrorism" after the events of 11 September 2001 demonstrates differences in language. In the media political scientists never tired of explaining to the German, French and Italian public that "war" in American English is not necessarily the same "Krieg", "guerre" or "guerra". How else can one explain concepts such as the "war on drugs", "war on crime", "war on terrorism", "war on want", etc.?

Thanks to globalisation, martial terminology has also established itself in economics and social policy. "Attack" and "eliminate" are now completely normal terms in the financial sector. Apparently it is acceptable to perceive competitors as adversaries. German uses "conflict" instead of "war", but this does not deny a trend towards rougher, more aggressive terms in every language. The US declaration of war after 11 September 2001 is another twist to the screw - much to the discomfort of the Europeans. "Hate speech", expressions of general prejudice and defamation, is gaining ground in what was until recently the bastion of hypocritical political correctness. Moreover, to speak of a "monumental struggle against evil" as the US administration now does, is in itself a risky undertaking.

Wars and their religious justification

Religions that claim universality - as the major world religions Christianity and Islam do - were in a certain sense the first global players. With book and sword, they tried to carry their teachings and their claims to absolute truth around the world. Unlike ancient Phoenicia and the Roman Empire, which incorporated the gods of other peoples into their cults, the God of the new religion has to extirpate all traces of other gods.

"Deus vult" - "It is the will of God". With these words Pope Urban IV summoned the Christian princes to a crusade. On 4 March 1933 the Austrian Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss ended his speech abrogating parliament and introducing authoritarian rule with the same words. Divine intent was also a fixed part of Adolf Hitler's repertoire. And the holy warriors in the Islamic world are convinced that divine intervention will decide conflicts in their favour. One can find examples for all places and times: the tendency to cloth political intent in holy and progressively uniform garments is not restricted to any specific country or period of history.

In considering references to religion in current and past conflicts, Reverend Helmick is less concerned with the element of revelation as with what he calls the anthropology of the legal system:

Each side is afraid of the other's legal system. Whether in the Philippines, Lebanon or Serbia, people are afraid that conquest will mean the imposition of an alien legal system. In Lebanon, for examples, Muslims still perceive the Code Napoléon as a

*colonial influence. And the introduction of the Islamic sharia is a source of conflict from West Africa to Southeast Asia.*⁹⁶

The Catholic liturgy at the burial of IRA fighters turns every funeral into a political action, a patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church that has the icon of St Lazarus carried through Serbian villages to commemorate an historical event that took place 600 years ago to turn it into explosive contemporary politics and an ethnocentric "casus belli" in the late twentieth century, a fatwa that bans books and calls for the death of their authors because their writings offend the religious feelings of Muslims around the world: all tragic examples of a new religious century that we have stumbled into without realising it.

Some of the statements of the Maronite Order in Lebanon were as much war propaganda as those of Shiite clerics in Iran in the 1980s. The role of educational institutions in such instances is particularly tragic. Instead of representing and defending humanistic values of education and, in our specific cases, the Christian teaching to love one's neighbour, in Beirut and Belgrade teachers in soutanes are guilty of intellectual sins against their students.

In the Balkans, church and mosque have tended to inflame rather than calm down conflict. The nationalist involvement of the Serbian Orthodox Church was the most explicit; its clergy openly supported President Slobodan Milosevic, even in topical political issues.⁹⁷ Christian symbols regularly played a part in the horrific massacres of Bosnian Muslims.

There is no doubt that the effects of the common, difficult legacy of the multiconfessional empires and their specific laws of religion are still felt. The individual groups are still very aware of the tradition of "dhimmi, the protected, inferior subject of another", a position all want to avoid.⁹⁸ This is true of all the heterogeneous states of the Middle East, in particular Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, as well as of the mixed territories of Southeast Europe. These people appear to share a traumatised collective subconscious, with their fears of being destroyed or ruled by others. These fears are nourished not only by myths and tales of war. Regular conflicts supply new tragic material to feed these fears.

The paradox of the major monotheistic religions is their message of love, peace and justice on the one hand and the realities they create in its name.⁹⁹ At the same time, all books of revelation contain a wealth of calls to violence. The books of the Old Testament describe military campaigns in great detail. God is a military commander who scatters the enemies of His people in all directions. As Albert de Pury, a

⁹⁶ Reverend Helmick in his presentation, 20 September 2002

⁹⁷ Zlatko Dizdarevic in his presentation, 20 September 2002

⁹⁸ Arnold Hottinger, "Das schwere Erbe der östlichen Großreiche - Bedrohte Minoritäten", in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 31 January 1990

⁹⁹ Zlatko Dizdarevic in his presentation, 20 September 2002

theologian, explains: "Historical biblical critique is a relatively young discipline, just 50 years old, and we have not yet solved the question of how to deal with religious texts that preach violence."¹⁰⁰

By contrast, in the late nineteenth century, radical American Christians, the first fundamentalists, showed what one can achieve with the Bible in politics. The so-called Bible Belt did not get its name from the rejection of modern science in the notorious "Monkey Trial".¹⁰¹

For militant Jewish settlers in the Israeli-occupied Palestine territories, the Bible is both atlas and spiritual guide. For this reason, Albert de Pury cautions:

*To use the Bible to justify territorial sovereignty or victorious battles is historically unacceptable. Rather, Biblical stories should be interpreted in the historical circumstances of the Jewish people. The reports in Chapter 1 of Deuteronomy about the expulsion of the Canaanites from Palestine and the subsequent settlement of Jericho are pure invention. The story takes its form from the resistance literature as written under Assyrian rule in that epoch in the 7th century B.C.*¹⁰²

National religious currents in Zionism, which have had a growing influence on Israeli politics under Likud governments since 1976, use the Bible to justify creating settlements where they do in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. They are supported by Christian Zionists, fundamental evangelical groups that interpret the Jewish occupation of the Promised Land as a sign that the Second Coming is nigh.

The largely secular West was and is stumped by religiously motivated calls to violence and the justification of acts of horror by members of religious institutions such as the Serbian Orthodox Church in the 1990s. But no society is immune to mass movements and a relapse into pseudo-religious criteria of inclusion and exclusion.

This is especially clear in the collective panic generated by the new quality of terrorism: in their fear, people are looking for string-pullers and scapegoats. In his philosophical masterwork, "Crowds and Power", Elias Canetti describes the crowd he terms a mob, descendants of the archaic hunting crowd, in the following manner:

An important reason for the rapid growth of mobs is the absence of danger mobs face. There is no danger because the crowd has the strength of numbers of their side. (...) The permitted murder stands for all murders that one cannot commit because of the serious punishment one must fear. (...) The disintegration of the mob that has its victim is particularly rapid, Endangered rulers are well aware of this. They cast victims to the crowds to slow their growth. (...) On the other hand, the spokesmen of radical parties are often not aware that in achieving their goal, the public execution of a dangerous enemy, they hurt themselves more than the opposition party. It can happen that after such an execution, most of their

¹⁰⁰ Albert de Pury in his presentation, 20 September 2002

¹⁰¹ Reverend Helmick in his presentation, 20 September 2002

¹⁰² Albert de Pury in his presentation, 20 September 2002

*supporters disperse and it a long time before they regain their former strength, if ever.*¹⁰³

In autumn 2002, the Russian population willingly supported President Vladimir Putin's new Chechen campaign after the Russian leadership made Chechen terrorists responsible for a series of bomb attacks on apartment blocks caused civilian casualties during the preceding summer. No group has ever admitted responsibility for the attacks. Since this time, Caucasians living in Russia have suffered from the collective suspicion of terrorism, which has made life very difficult for them. In addition, in response to the media's reporting on the Moscow Theatre hostage affair in mid-November 2002, President Putin introduced further drastic restrictions on the freedom of the press. Almost anything can be justified in the name of fighting terrorism.

Canetti's statements on the properties of crowds and the mechanism of compulsion that obviously operate in every society have general validity. There are many examples in history of mass behaviour in which crowds ignore their commanders and take power into their own hands. The combination of the power of the media and the fear of terrorism makes it difficult to overestimate the importance of the mob in our age.

Terrorism

Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, the global community has been searching for a definition of terrorism. The UN General Assembly has not come up with a solution either.

On 28 September 2001 the UN Security Council, by contrast, passed Resolution 1373, which creates obligations for UN members in the fight against terrorism. The core of this very detailed resolution deals with the financing of terrorist network and the obligation of all UN members to charge or extradite persons suspected of terrorism. States' quick and comprehensive compliance in presenting to the Security Council reports on legislative and executive measures taken to fight terrorism demonstrates the how seriously the community of states takes this new obligation.¹⁰⁴ This compliance could have consequences for governments that have tacitly tolerated the use of their territory as bases by terrorist groups in the hope that these terrorists would not attack them. Evidence of this is tougher and more consistent action by French authorities against the ETA, a Basque terrorist organisation.

For the moment, views differ about what terrorism is and what national resistance is, and whether terrorism is an ordinary crime or a special form of political violence. The debates at Mzaar reflected these uncertainties and open questions.

On the basis of his empirical study of Tamil terrorism in Sri Lanka, Jakob Rösel suggested the following criterion to distinguish terrorism from national resistance:

¹⁰³ Elias Canetti, *Masse und Macht*, pp. 56-58 (27th impression 2001)

¹⁰⁴ Conversation with D. Walter Gehr, member of the Task Force and advisor of the UN Branch on Counter Terrorism, in Vienna, 18 November 2002

*Terrorists usually attack civil targets, either civilians or civilian installations. The purpose is to intimidate the survivors. The unpredictability of attacks is intended to create a general state of fear.*¹⁰⁵

In his paper, Sadik al Azm demanded a clear definition of terrorism.¹⁰⁶ From his point of view - which may be taken as the perspective of the Arab and Muslim world - the USA is actively working on extending the concept of terrorism in a way that will include any form of violence, also uprisings, rebellions and civil war, that the West generally disapproves of. In al Azm's opinion, this would selectively and arbitrarily remove any distinction between terrorism and different forms of armed resistance to foreign occupation on the part of national liberation movements and uprisings against national oppression.

Al Azm captures the essential point of this critical perspective:

Terrorism becomes an arbitrary concept to serve the immediate interests of the powerful. At present the powerful are not interested in a precise definition of a differentiated concept. Their war against terrorism is more than a fight against terrorist actions, organisations and structures. This in turn generates further violence.

Hence, it is extremely important to continue to search for a definition, regardless of how complex and insoluble it may appear. For, as Jack Gibbs put it in 1989, "an implicit definition leads to obscurantism".¹⁰⁷ This is the direction in which the community of states appears to be moving with great speed since 1 September 2001.

As far as the attacks of 11 September 2001 were concerned, al Azm sees them as the "desperate attempt of Islamic fundamentalists to overcome the historical stagnation and the crisis in which the Islamist movement is stuck". By treating this development as the opening move of the end of militant Islamism, he is in agreement with the assessment of Gilles Kepel, who spoke of the decline of Islamism even before these acts of terrorism.

In this view, terrorism is less a huge ideological undertaking to achieve specific political objectives through complete intimidation than contempt for any principles - terrorism as a murderous form of nihilism and despair?

One can still get through to fundamentalists somehow; it is possible that their own religious community will accept them back as "lost sheep". Projects to reintegrate former Yemeni fighters in Afghanistan, some of whom had been through the training camps of groups linked to Osama bin Laden, into normal life are one example. At any rate, the measures of the Yemeni government, in cooperation with Islamic scholars, are

¹⁰⁵ Jakob Rösel in his presentation, 20 September 2002

¹⁰⁶ Sadik al Azm in his presentation, 20 September 2002

¹⁰⁷ Jack P. Gibbs, Conceptualisation of Terrorism, in *American Sociological Review*, 54 (1989), p. 329

a courageous effort.¹⁰⁸ But there does not appear to be any way of influencing people who kill without any motive. It is possible that their models are the Rambo films that Rösler identified as an example for the Tamil terrorists.

Psychopathy or despair?

In his studies, Walter Laqueur does not so much emphasise the ideological trigger of violence as treat terrorism as a psychopathological phenomenon of pleasure in killing, a motive that is above all timeless:

*"Of course, blind rage needs a focal point; but biographical coincidence might have kept a left-wing terrorist ... from landing in a rightwing or sectarian group (and vice versa). Carlos is a case in point; the same hold for mercenaries in Afghanistan who are now involved in terrorist activities from Algeria through Bosnia to the Philippines, or for the young Islamists who shot up tourists in Luxor in 1997. As it so turned out, these Islamists were not at all desperate, deeply religious people, but inhumane middle-class students looking for an outlet for their aggression."*¹⁰⁹

Important though the psychopathological is, it does not explain the biographies of those women who entered a Moscow Theatre in November 2002 to demand the withdrawal of the Russian army from Chechnya.¹¹⁰ They had decided that they were ready to die as "martyrs" after surviving ten years of war in Chechnya in which they had lost their families in the most horrible ways.

Nor do Laqueur's conclusions agree with the results of a study commissioned by the Israeli National Security Council in autumn 2002. This investigation analysed the motives of potential suicide bombers. It is based on the statements of people who had recorded their testaments on video. The preliminary results read:

*Most important are ideological motives based on the desire to kill as many Israelis as possible. The large degree of attention that spectacular suicide commandos attract in the Palestinian public is often the main argument. In addition, most of the potential bombers mention being traumatised by the loss of a close family member. A further reason for martyrdom in a terrorist attack is the financial help that their survivors receive from the Palestinian authorities and other providers, such as the Iraqi government and Islamic charitable foundations."*¹¹¹

According to this, terrorism cannot be abstractly explained by a single category of killing. The circumstances behind each terrorist act are too varied. Those of the Tamils

¹⁰⁸ Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 21 December 2002, and in conversation with the writer Angela Schader, who visited these projects in Yemeni in December 2002.

¹⁰⁹ Walter Laqueur, *Die globale Bedrohung: Neue Gefahren des Terrorismus*, p. 338 (Munich 2001)

¹¹⁰ Some short biographies appeared in *inter alia* the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 21 December 2002, in der arte documentation "Vergessenes Tschetschenien"

¹¹¹ Haaretz, 28 December 2002

have little in common those of Palestinians in 2002. The anarchists of the late nineteenth century may serve as models for some small groups nowadays that carry out violence for the sake of violence. The perpetrator profile of Timothy McVeigh, who bombed a US-government building in 1995 and killed more than 200 people, is very different from those of the members of the Ahmed Jibril group in Damascus. The media treated McVeigh as a "frustrated soldier" who, according to the US security authorities, acted alone. His execution in spring 2001 was a media spectacle.

Apocalyptic sectarian groups like the Japanese "Aum Shinri Kyo" movement believe in specific end-of-the-world conspiracies and thus do not have any ideological or national goals. What Laqueur calls psychopathological elements undoubtedly predominate in these cases. Thanks to their charismatic leaders, these sects also attract technically trained, intelligent people, which enables them to obtain weapons of mass destruction. In 1995 the Aum sect carried out a poisonous gas attack on the Tokyo underground, killing 12 people and injuring more than 5000.

In view of these different cases, it seems sensible at this point to provide a short history of concepts ranging from nihilistic acts of terror to guerrilla.¹¹²

Terror, terrorism, guerrilla warfare and guerrillas

Terror and terrorism are not synonyms. Terror is used to describe state terrorism, while "terrorism" is reserved for politically motivated violence "from below".

Applying this distinction, the term terror describes "the use of intimidation as an instrument of domination by the powerful", whereas terrorism describes "the imitation and practice of methods of terror" used by (still) "powerless, outlawed and desperate persons" that "believe that terrorism is the only way that they will be taken seriously". Basically, people that carry out and approve of acts of terror and terrorism signal that in principle "everybody everywhere and at all times can always be threatened and affected by terror".¹¹³

One of the roots of the concept of "terror" in its meaning as a instrument of state repression goes back to that phase of the French Revolution known as the Reign of Terror. By the Reign of Terror, the young revolutionary state sought to secure its power by intimidating anybody who thought differently; as "enemies of the people", they were to be eliminated. This peak of this system of institutionalised terror was reached under Robespierre. Admirers include Stalin, Hitler, Pinochet and the Iranian Ayatollahs.

The term terrorism describes a form of politically motivated threat of violence, usually associated with complete disregard for the basic dictates of humanity. The object is intimidation. It is a dynamic political phenomenon capable of constantly

¹¹² Much of what follows has been borrowed from the study by Hubert Mader, Edwin Micewski and Andreas Wieser, *Terror und Terrorismus: Grundsätzliches; Geschichtliches; Reflexionen und Perspektiven* (Schriftenreihe der Landesverteidigungsakademie, Vienna 2001)

¹¹³ Friedrich Hacker, *Terror: Mythos-Realität-Analyse*, p. 27 (Vienna 1973)

mutating into new and always more threatening forms - e.g. the use of weapons of mass destruction.

As a rule, terrorists have nationalist and/or revolutionary goals. The aim of so-called national terrorism is to get rid of foreign rulers by illegal violence, primarily by attacking civilian targets. Systematic Palestinian suicide bombings on Israeli territory since autumn 2000 shows that creating of a state of permanent insecurity can indeed achieve political results: immigration to Israel has fallen sharply.¹¹⁴

In the 1960s, the attacks of South Tyrolean activists on the Italian government installations and infrastructure speeded up the start of negotiations on the autonomy status of the province. While condemning criminal attacks on civil institutions, in particular massacres of civilians, without reservation, in purely objective terms it must be noted that these very acts of violence can bring about political change. The aircraft hijackings by PLO commandos in the early 1970s created international awareness of the Palestinian question. The 1974 decision of the Austrian government to recognise the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to allow the PLO to open an office in Vienna drew sharp protests from the international community on account of acts of terrorism committed by the PLO. The opening of the Oslo peace talks between PLO leader Yassir Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin was belated recognition of Chancellor Bruno Kreisky's diplomatic coup.

Revolutionary terrorism seeks to overthrow a particular regime or bring about fundamental social change in an existing order. This applies to the actions of the RAF terrorists in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1970s and the "action directe" in France in the 1980s. The Baader-Meinhof Group was international to the extent that it had links with the PLO and other Middle Eastern groups and training camps in West Beirut, at the time under the control of the PLO. Sadik al Azm interprets this as the desperate attempt of leftwing terrorism in Europe to overcome "the historical stagnation and final structural crisis that communism, radical trade unions, Third-World movements and all revolutionary trends were in" - terrorism as the expression, so to speak, of utter powerlessness, as the last coup before the final collapse? Gilles Kepel interprets the attacks of 11 September 2001 in this sense, as the last rebellion of a movement whose armed struggle in the sense of genuine guerrilla warfare was a failure.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Israel is extremely concerned about the massive decline in immigration, "Aliyah", which is vital for the Israeli state for demographic and economic reasons. The principle of on-going immigration is included in the 1948 declaration of the state of Israel. The immigration figures since the beginning of the *intifada* in September 2000 speak for themselves: more than 60,000 immigrants in 2000 and 44,000 in 2001. Up to 1 August 2002, only 18,000 immigrants had arrived, 27 percent and 45 percent fewer than in the same periods in 2001 and 2002, respectively. The reasons for the decline are security concerns and the high level of unemployment. The Jewish Agency and Israel are doing all they can to encourage immigration.

¹¹⁵ Gilles Kepel in his contribution to the debate on 20 September 2002

Guerrilla warfare is the struggle of irregular forces against an enemy army; guerrillas are members of such forces. The roots of this political phenomenon go back to Spanish resistance against the Napoleonic army in Spain from 1808 to 1814. In the twentieth century the term was resurrected for the wars of independence of Asian and African peoples against colonial rule. Gradually, guerrillas transferred their bases from the countryside to the urban centres, giving rise in Latin America in particular to the urban guerrilla.

Terrorism: war or crime?

The borders between terrorism and guerrilla activities are fluid. A basic distinguishing criterion is the object of attack: the targets of guerrillas, fedayeen or whatever name fighters use are supposed to have a mainly military, not civilian, purpose. Guerrilla fighters that bear weapons openly are regarded as combatants under the 1949 Geneva Convention and thus enjoy the status of prisoners of war.¹¹⁶ By contrast, the rules of international law laid down in the 1949 Geneva Convention do not apply to perpetrators of terrorist acts; they are subject to criminal law on principle.

Accordingly, in the 1990s Hezbollah used suicide bombers in the so-called security zone of the Israeli army in southern Lebanon only against Israeli military targets, not settlements on Israeli territory. In April 1996 Israel and Hezbollah accepted a ceasefire mediated by the UNO, the USA and France under which both sides agreed not to attack civilian targets.¹¹⁷

The USA and the European Union differ on whether Hezbollah, which has sat as a political party in the Lebanese parliament since 1992, should be treated as a terrorist organisation or not. The USA thinks it should: it included Hezbollah on the third revised list of early November 2001 of terrorist movements whose bank accounts are to be frozen. There was a long tug-of-war behind the scenes in Washington before Hezbollah was placed on the list. US Secretary of State Collin Powell hesitated to put pressure on the government in Beirut by demanding that it freeze the bank accounts of the Shiite

¹¹⁶ Dieter Fleck, *Handbuch des humanitären Völkerrechts in bewaffneten Konflikten*, p. 66 (Munich 1994)

¹¹⁷ The ceasefire is notable in that it reveals the Israeli assessment of Hezbollah as a military adversary that cannot be knocked out quickly. The negotiations were preceded by a heavy Israeli air bombardment of a UN refugee camp in Qana in which about 100 Lebanese civilians were killed. The core element of the ceasefire was an agreement by the two adversaries, the Israeli army and Hezbollah, to attack only military targets in the future. UNIFIL reports confirm that the adversaries have in principle observed the provisions of the agreement. Any diplomatic questions are interpreted by an international arbitration commission. The interesting aspect of this ceasefire *sui generis* is the mutual recognition. For Hezbollah Israel was always anathema, and for Israel Hezbollah was a Tehran-controlled extremist group. This agreement made clear that the two sides indirectly respected each other as military adversaries. Both sides undertook to apologise through the arbitration commission for any operations that occurred outside the agreed rules.

people's party. Although Hezbollah has traditionally been on the terrorist list of the US state department, up to now this has not had any consequences for Lebanon.

The list of terrorist organisations that the European Union published on 28 December 2001 does not include Hezbollah. Despite differences of opinion among EU governments, the preliminary conclusion of the EU is that this Lebanese political party does not qualify as a terrorist organization.

The decision about whether one is dealing with a terrorist or guerrilla group determines the reaction. Christopher Daase pleads for a sharp separation between the two forms of violence, otherwise one "gives up the possibility of continuing to insist on more moderate forms of military violence". Daase writes:

*To maintain that guerrilla war is always and necessarily associated with terrorism is not only empirically false, but also politically questionable. For this either legitimises terrorism as normal military behaviour, or it delegitimises guerrilla warfare, which of necessity is waged outside of established norms.*¹¹⁸

It has already been mentioned that the US declaration of war on terrorism in autumn 2001 caused confusion and uneasiness in the rest of the world. The declaration is more than a matter of semantics. All states whose security was threatened by terrorists in the past already have experience in dealing with it. In doing so, they mobilised their security forces, their intelligence service and special units, but not their armed forces as though it were a military operation.

The decision of whether to treat terrorism as a form of war or a form of violence sui generis is in the final instance a political decision with all its motives and intents.

Terrorism and disinformation

Sun Tze, a Chinese military theorist writing 2,400 years ago, was already aware of the strategic importance of disinforming the enemy:

*"The art of war is based on cunning. The great art of war is to attack the enemy's plans. Those who have mastered this can defeat the enemy without a fight."*¹¹⁹

Disinformation campaigns have played a part in war in all ages. Goebbels was a past master at using external and internal propaganda during World War II. Hence, the report in spring 2002 that the US defence department had a section to feed their allies false information about the danger of terrorism so as to maintain their willingness to collaborate in the war against terrorism should not have come as a surprise.

It is really nothing new. The term disinformation could be found in any Soviet dictionary: desinformatsiya was defined as the technique the capitalist powers used to try to harm the people's democracies.

¹¹⁸ Christopher Daase, Terrorismus - Begriffe, Theorien und Gegenstrategien, in Die Friedens-Warte, Vol. 76, No. 1, p. 65

¹¹⁹ Gérard Chaliand, Anthologie Mondiale de la Stratégie, pp. 307 ff. (Paris 1990)

The CIA always knew how to play with the methods of deliberately misleading information.¹²⁰ Obviously all had read their Sun Tze.

Naoum Farah has studied disinformation as an instrument of destabilisation to complement terrorism. Disinformation is the indirect and soft form of violence, terrorism the direct and hard form.¹²¹

Disinformation in the shadow of terrorism poses an obvious threat to the stability of international relations. Daase talks of the "empirical resistance" of any theory that has taken root in the head of a decision-maker.¹²² Just as the "Communist Connection" was an obsession with a global network of Soviet informers, perhaps today the concept of "al-Qaida" is misleading.

The organisers of the attack on the USS Cole in October 2000, the men behind the attacks on 11 September 2001, and the terrorists of Bali and Mombassa in autumn 2002 have not called themselves members of an organization named al-Qaida. The media, secret services and politicians call them that. They may have made a mistake.

One characteristic of even the terrorism of Palestinian suicide bombers in such a small area as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is that the individual perpetrators act independently of one another. It is this mushrooming of terrorist cells that the Israeli security forces find particularly worrying. The hierarchies of a discernible structure, such as may still exist in Hams, are breaking down.

"Drying out" terrorists' finances

A systematic inventory of terrorist operations in 1988 showed that the financial sources of terrorism included the drug and arms trades, kidnapping and prostitution, and that terrorism itself had potential as an economic activity.¹²³

Resolution 1373 of the UN Security Council deals with this aspect of terrorism in detail. Yet, this resolution must be criticised: it has come far too late and steps taken under it will prove to be inadequate and ineffective.

Financial transactions take place far too quickly nowadays. It is very possible that the men behind terrorist attacks make money speculating on stock market movements during the succeeding panic. Already enough is known to show that the financial arrangements behind attacks such as those of 11 September 2001, which may never be unravelled completely, are an interesting mix of Mafia-like and legal bank accounts.

At this point it is worth recalling the quickly forgotten scandal surrounding the BCCI, the Bank of Commerce and Credit International, in the 1980s, with which the Windsors

¹²⁰ Bob Woodward, *CIA - The Secret Wars 1981-1987*, Washington 1987

¹²¹ Naoum Farah, *Terrorism and Disinformation or the "Divine Skein"*, quoted in *The Political violence in the world: 1967-1987*, in *Panorama de l'actualité* No. 51 (1988), p. 9

¹²² Daase, *op. cit.*, p. 73

¹²³ *Ibid.*, Naoum Farah, *The Political violence in the world: 1967-1987*, Beirut 1988, *op. cit.*, p. 9

and Iranian revolutionaries held accounts. For years the odd concerned lawyer and Interpol have been warning that not only business, but also organised crime is becoming networked and globalised. Washington is quick to point fingers whenever the question of money-laundering arises. But the connections between the Bank of New York, the Albanian mafia and the disappearance of loans from the International Monetary Fund to Russia were never properly explained after the scandal flitted through the media in 1998.

Observers are amazed that governments, e.g. those of the USA and the EU, did not start to examine the financial sources of dubious organisations more closely much earlier. Popular vehicles for depositing money from illegal sources include anonymous savings accounts and securities deposits, such as some EU member states continued to offer customers without the evidence of identity up to the late 1990s, despite the warnings of public prosecutors and police authorities. For instance, it was only through the arrest of the wife of the financial head of Abu Nidal, a Palestinian splinter group, early in 2000 that the Austrian authorities learnt that the group held savings accounts with financial institutions in Vienna.¹²⁴

The FATF, Financial Action Task Force, which is answerable to the Paris-based OECD, has been treated with greater respect by governments since autumn 2001. Governments are taking their international and national obligations to fight money-laundering more seriously so as not to undermine the general campaign against terrorism. How long this rigour will continue is an open question. Criminal organisations have deep financial roots, and not only in the transition states.

This combination may have fatal consequences in places where the central administration is traditionally weak, or can lose authority overnight in an armed conflict.

This raises the question of "failed" or "failing states". Be it Liberia, the oldest independent republic in Africa, which collapsed in chaos in 1990, or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, whose territory would be the stage of a bloody European implosion at the end of the twentieth century, these states are examples of the horrific wars of our age. Attributes such as "rotten", "criminal" and "imploding" obviously apply to them.

For conflicts in the name of culture or religion involve fighting that does not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants in the classical sense of warfare. Ethno-nationalism and the politicisation of religious affiliation have redefined ethnic cleansing. And the perpetrators have been brought before or are sought by the War Crimes Tribunal for ex-Yugoslavia in The Hague.

¹²⁴ Österreichischer Rundfunk, 20 January 2000: Austrian business police arrest accomplice of Abu Nidal as she withdraws millions from an anonymous saving account at Bank Austria.

New wars and imploding states

The CIA report "Global Trends 2015" presented in December 2002 highlighted the collapse of states as the most serious threat in the future. Terrorism and organised crime are closely connected with this spreading phenomenon. Regions of anarchy and chaos offer ideal conditions for both to set up their headquarters.

The primacy of religion has fundamentally changed the rationale of the state. The potential is enormous and we can only grasp a small part of it.¹²⁵ But it has already had far-reaching consequences for foreign policy. The new national security doctrine of the current administration in Washington reflects US concern is about the collapse of statehood in imploding states in that it contends that there is a direct connection between failing states and the threat of terrorism. For this reason it has developed its doctrine of pre-emptive action to deal with any potential risk. This latter step, however, is not part of international law. The Charter of the United Nations admits a right to self-defence on the basis of certain clearly defined criteria as the only exception to the general prohibition on violence in Article 2, Paragraph 4, which forbids any state from not only using violence but also threatening violence, and thus goes far beyond the ban on war.

It appears that the new age in which the "just war" is fought in the name of religion has already begun. This could lead to rescission of the achievements of international law since the eighteenth century that have replaced the "just war" with the "law of war" - clear rules about when and how wars are to be fought. Modern warfare and violence have new qualities. Archaic aspects mix with science fiction, and not only in Hollywood productions that put laser weapons in the hands of medieval knights. Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defence, sees US soldiers of the future as elite fighters who can successfully reconnaissance in mountains on unsaddled horses and then upload the data to headquarters on portable computers in their rucksacks.¹²⁶ He and the media have obviously been inspired by what they see as the successful Afghanistan campaign in autumn 2001, when US units equipped with high technology road through the gorges of Afghanistan on horses and donkeys.

But after all that, who do these heroic pipe-dream Rambos face: child-soldiers, civilians, terrorists, guerrillas or the remnants of disintegrated armies? In any case, they will be people who have learnt the bitter lessons of living with and from violence.

War as a state, not as a means

"They live from violence as other people from work." Cornelio Sommaruge made this perceptive observation on the occasion of his retirement as chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross in June 2000. During his term of office, the ICRC was faced with dangerous new challenges in Bosnia, Serbia and Rwanda.

¹²⁵ Peter Molt in his presentation, 20 September 2002

¹²⁶ The Economist, 25 May 2002: Rumsfeld's budget speech to the senate committee

Clausewitz's definition of war as the pursuit of politics by other means has long since ceased to be valid: only eight percent of all armed conflicts are wars in the classic sense. In the overwhelming majority of cases the state does not have a monopoly on fighting. The trend is towards the privatisation of war, as mentioned above.

The phenomenon of mercenaries, last widely experienced on European soil in the seventeenth century, is spreading. These "soldiers of fortune" kill for own account or on commission for others, e.g. the South Lebanese Army that Israel supported in southern Lebanon from 1978 to 2000.

Although the existence of highly paid private armies is not a novelty, the "outsourcing of war" is spreading. It often makes things easier to let people outside one's own constituency do the fighting. For one thing, it obviates the ominous body-bags containing the corpses of "our boys", the by-product of unpopular foreign interventions such as Vietnam. In particular, the increasingly risky UNO missions, whether for peace-keeping or peace-enforcement, require increasing numbers of professional soldiers. Yet the UN member states cannot keep up with these demands. Private military enterprises help out. Most of them are based in South Africa, the UK and the USA, but some in France and Israel, too:

*"They all share essentially the same goals: to improve their client's military capability (...) Direct involvement in combat is less common, although two companies, Executives Outcomes (EO) of South Africa and Sandline Internationals of Great Britain, advertise their skills in this area. EO has provided training and strategic advice to the armed forces of Angola and Sierra Leone; its apartheid soldiers have fought in both countries. (...) Military companies are unfettered by political constraints. They view conflict as a business opportunity and have taken advantage of the pervasive influence of economic liberalism in the late twentieth century. They have also been quick to adapt to the complex agendas of civil wars."*¹²⁷

These complementary partners - the militiamen of failed states and the professional fighters of foreign private armies from established democracies - operate in a fragmented world of international relations that can take the form of a very militant globalisation.

Ghassan Salamé locates the causes of "belligerent globalisation and molecular wars", as he terms post-Cold War warfare, above all in the fact that the states on the periphery were abandoned by their former protectors, Moscow and Washington.¹²⁸

It was also noted in Mzaar that the rise of the territorial states led to the collapse of the order created by the Peace of Westphalia - the general topic of "culture, religion and conflict" raises many questions about the role of the state as protector of law and order through its monopoly of power.

¹²⁷ David Shearer, *Outsourcing War*, p. 73, in *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1998, No. 112, pp. 68-83

¹²⁸ Ghassan Salamé in *Les guerres de l'après-guerre froide*, p. 295, in Marie Claude Smouts, *Les Nouvelles Relations Internationales*, pp. 281-308 (Paris 1998)

Perhaps the rush of governments, even declared enemies of the US such as Iran, to declare solidarity with the US after the attacks of 11 September 2001 was a reflex in favour of the territorial state. Only the structures of statehood can prevent the world from sliding into total chaos.

But what is the future of the state as a category? Is it as outdated today as the multicommunal empires were in 1914?

The legitimacy of the nation-state

Despite the erosion of the power of the nation-state, Paul Kennedy regards it as the "primary source of identity for most people".¹²⁹ This is partly explained by the citizen's role as taxpayer and passport holder. But this presupposes regulated, normal relationships. In a time of international relations between integration, fragmentation and the primacy of the global market, the state has lost, or given up, many of its original functions.

Peter Molt criticises the current concept of nation-building, in which from Bosnia to Afghanistan the attempt is being made under the auspices of various international organisations to reverse the collapse of statehood:

*The new foreign policy concentrates on nation-building and fighting terrorism. But how can this succeed? All states have only a limited capacity for intervention. At best a certain degree of superficial statehood will be restored.*¹³⁰

Hence, Molt wonders:

Must the nation-state in its current borders be defended at all costs?

This touches on contentious question of the inviolability of the colonial boundaries that states took over at independence as the borders of their new territorial sovereignty. Up to now, this principle of "uti possidetis" (Latin: as you possess) has spared the states of Africa, for example, dozens of border conflicts.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia show just how quickly borders can change. In Africa, too, the redrawing of frontiers is no longer as taboo as it once was; after decades of civil war Eritrea finally seceded - peacefully at the time - from Ethiopia in the early 1990s. But subsequently a bloody border dispute tipped the two into exhausting trench warfare in the desert.

But here too the maps were eventually redrawn. A domino effect is conceivable, who can say whether new borders will be a better solution than the old concept of nation-building. The successor states of the former Yugoslavia, for instance, have taken very different paths to statehood.

Only now that they have achieved sovereignty and the wounds are starting to heal have their representatives taken the first steps towards dialogue. But it is probably still too early to find a settlement acceptable to all.

¹²⁹ Paul Kennedy, In Vorbereitung auf das 21. Jahrhundert, p. 176 (Frankfurt 1996)

¹³⁰ Peter Molt in his presentation, 20 September 2002

Dialogue between religions and cultures

*"Dialogue is an extremely boring matter. If you really want people to argue you need a proper culture of conflict".*¹³¹

The wish of the Grand Mufti of Sarajevo was warranted, but at first nobody took it seriously. The list of round tables, colloquia, and other forums on intercultural and/or interreligious dialogue has been growing for a number of years, particularly since 11 September 2001. It is impossible to avoid the impression that desperate diplomatic efforts of this nature, whether bilateral or in a multilateral framework of the Council of Europe, the EU, etc. serve to cover up a spreading political vacuum. Instead of clear, open statements and controversial debates, the common leitmotif is professions of tolerance. Instead of serious foreign policy initiatives in the Middle East, the Caucasus or the no less fragile Southeast Europe, diplomacy is stuck in the dialogue between civil societies. The latter is known as Track II, attempts at rapprochement between societies parallel to the political process.

This recourse to dialogue between academic institutions, civil societies and churches is reminiscent in some ways of efforts to deal with the difficult subject of "humanitarian intervention" at the beginning of the 1990s. The politicians' helplessness was the moment of the NGOs and charitable organisations. In the light of the crises in Bosnia, Somalia and Afghanistan, Roni Braumann, then president of Médecins Sans Frontières, accused the politicians of a fatal failure and criticised the media-focused activities of the many western politicians who saw aid missions as photo opportunities: "We can distribute blankets ourselves; what we expect from governments is political action."¹³²

The same arguments could be used today: there is no need for any more EU or government dialogue forums as these emerge from own initiatives anyway. What are needed from the EU and member states are coherent foreign and security policies. The role of politics is to provide the basic orientation. It is widely felt that politics in the strict sense is missing, and that much of what passes for politics is just PR.

Despite the undoubtedly genuine intentions behind the initial meetings, scepticism about the current inflation in dialogue events is justified. Alois Mock, former Austrian foreign minister, proposed a dialogue between Muslims and Christians in 1991 - during the UN Security Council-approved *Operation Desert Storm*. Acting on the insight that the political and military confrontation should not be allowed to slide into a struggle between civilisations, he invited dignitaries of both religions to Vienna for an exchange of ideas. In other words, years before Samuel P. Huntington published his first article -

¹³¹ Mustafa Ceric in the debate on 20 September 2002

¹³² Karin Kneissl, "L'ingérence entre le devoir humanitaire et l'action politique", ENA report December 1992; published in the documentation of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, Paris.

the one with the question mark in the title -, some politicians and intellectuals were already speaking out against a conflict between cultures.¹³³

There is nothing to be said against politics, in particular foreign policy, acting as a catalyst and organising dialogue events of this nature and restricting its activities to the roles of host, provider of ideas and attentive listener. But this political function becomes more problematic when it does not go any further.

Practical dialogue

Past experience has shown often enough that discussions on technical questions that have absolutely nothing to do with everyday politics are much more likely to produce sustainable mechanisms for coexistence than conferences between religious and political leaders on the difficulties of coexistence in a specific zone of conflict, say Cyprus or Indonesia. In practice, dialogue that starts by focusing on religion or culture usually does not get very far.¹³⁴

Ambassador Gunter Mulak also took a line in favour of practice-oriented dialogue.

*Cooperation in the field of justice, of education and similar projects is what brings us further in civilised coexistence.*¹³⁵

The reciprocal reactions to the tragic earthquakes first in Turkey and shortly afterwards in Greece in summer 2002 impressed many observers. The natural catastrophes were the stimulus for the first steps towards serious rapprochement between Ankara and Athens. Emergency supplies and rescue teams created unsuspected opportunities for dialogue and cooperation at the political and human levels.

In spring 2002, the foreign ministers of the two countries visited Premier Ariel Sharon and PLO chief Yassir Arafat during a major Israeli offensive in the autonomous Palestinian territories to explain how they had entered into their political dialogue and to offer their good services in diplomatic mediation.

It would appear that a natural catastrophe really is necessary in Israel/Palestine to before the parties there learn from the Greek-Turkish example.

*And is not European Union an on-going practical dialogue, a laboratory of intercultural dialogue, initially to counter the "inner enemy" with the object of strengthening democracy and weakening nationalistic tendencies?*¹³⁶

Unfortunately, it took two world wars and the deaths of millions to reach this insight. The ideas behind Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's pan-European movement were not

¹³³ See *inter alia* Esprit und Les Cahiers de l'Orient, June 1991: "Paysages après la bataille - Contre la guerre des cultures"

¹³⁴ Johannes Müller in his presentation, 19 September 2002

¹³⁵ Gunter Mulak in his presentation, 21 September 2002

¹³⁶ Jean-Michel Baer in his presentation, 21 September 2002

enough in the 1930s. His values and ideals would reappear later in the European Acts. But before that nations had to fight again until they were completely exhausted.

Diplomats and psychologists - side by side

An ideal starting point for dialogue is innovative diplomacy that takes account of the political realities of a crisis and can also explain the fundamental mentalities and cultures of the parties to the conflict and incorporate them in the search for a solution.

Since 1990, there has been a growing awareness of the role that crowd psychology plays in international relations and its influence on legal, economic and military matters in the real world.

Arab-Israeli dialogue forums in the aftermath of the Camp David Accords led to the founding of the "Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction CSMIH" in 1988. The centre is attached to the University of Virginia School of Medicine. The spiritual father of the centre is Harold Saunders, a former US Middle East expert and presidential advisor. He felt it was time to rethink the question of how nations and ethnic groups interacted: "If the old lenses cannot see the world clearly and traditional vocabulary cannot describe it precisely, it is both realistic and sensible to grind new lenses and introduce new language."¹³⁷

The CSMIH has dedicated itself to "grinding new lenses" in preparation for conflict mediation. Here, psychoanalysts, scholars in the humanities and diplomats research collective behaviour together.

More innovation is indeed necessary to bridge the gulf between psychoanalytical concepts and the worlds of conventional diplomacy and political science. In view of the crisis surrounding official government diplomacy, small non-state actors are often in a better position to get discreet glimpses of what is going on behind the scenes. One case in point is the opportunity provided by the platform of San Egidio in Italy, which had some success in encouraging dialogue in forgotten African conflict zones. Similarly, "elder statesmen" have furthered the creation of specialised research institutions and societies that function as parallel structures to the established diplomacy of states and international organisations. Their reports, assessments and on-the-spot activities are drawing more and more attention. The International Crisis Group may serve as representative of this body of organizations.¹³⁸

Economic exchange is a prime form of cooperation that encourages dialogue, which brings us back to the controversial subject of the globalization of markets. A closer look at free trade agreements of the European Union or the World Trade Organisation reveals that in many cases liberalisation of markets does not function because the

¹³⁷ Vamik D. Volkan, *Das Versagen der Diplomatie: Zur Psychoanalyse nationaler, ethnischer und religiöser Konflikte*, p. 24 (Gießen 1999)

¹³⁸ For mandate and reports, see www.crisisweb.org

corresponding corporate culture and institutions are lacking. The consequences are often chaos or a relapse into isolation.

The absurd 2001: Dialogue between civilisations and attack on civilisation

Hardly anybody noticed that the UN had declared 2001 as the Year of Dialogue between civilisations. The General Assembly chose the topic as leitmotif at a solemn ceremony, but the decision had few consequences. This changed overnight on 11 September that year: suddenly everybody was talking about the opposite: the struggle between civilisations. Self-proclaimed experts in all fields stood up to pronounce on whether and to what extent the attacks of 11 September were an attack on western civilisation. Paradoxically, the UN year dedicated to dialogue was transformed into the opposite.

During 1995, the UN Year of Tolerance, national UNESCO commissions and all sorts of associations competed to organise the most densely packed calendar of events. In many places schoolchildren produced impressive projects on tolerance. The most popular themes were civil society and the universal promotion of human rights. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's working group of "eminent persons" was a veritable who's who.¹³⁹ In 2001, the Italian Giandomenico Picco, a proponent of building together, whether institutions or physical projects, was responsible for the coordination of the largely unnoticed undertaking of intellectuals from North and South. But what should Picco promote and how? He had neither deadlines nor a budget for meaningful projects. If Pope John Paul II had not built his New Year's address in St Peter's Square around dialogue, perhaps only a small circle of initiates would have undertaken anything.

The reason for this pussyfooting may lie in the genesis of the UN decision. Since the mid-1990s Iran had been pushing for a UN year of this nature - as a reaction or echo to Huntington's thesis. There were various reasons for Iran to take the initiative. First, Shiite Iran is the only Islamic state that has a genuine clergy and is thus on the same footing as a Christian hierarchy. Second, since 1997 the reform movement under President Muhammed Khatami has timidly been trying to lead Iran out of its diplomatic and economic isolation. In the religious talks in Weimar in July 2000, President Khatami expressed his conviction that dialogue between cultures was compatible with the assumption of objective truth and its discernibility. He emphasised that dialogue is a way of approaching truth. This appeared to break the ice of taboos and apodictic dogmas of faith.

¹³⁹ *Inter alia* former Federal German President Richard von Weizsäcker, the theologian Hans Küng, the former French prime minister and chairman of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, the Egyptian politician Kamal Abdulmagid, the Palestinian Hanan Ashrawi and the writer Nadine Gordimer.

In Mzaar, Sadik al Hussein of the Iranian Centre for Dialogue between Civilisations appealed for the recognition of the diversity in Islam. His central statement, laced with quotations from Goethe and Hölderlin, read:

*"The Koran does not lead to one's self, but is the means between me and the other."*¹⁴⁰

Bishop Georges Khodr took a nuanced view of the dialogues between cultures and those between religions:

*Culture is where people come together. Yet the saints have always recognised one another.*¹⁴¹

How serious is the dialogue?

Only history will show to what extent these events are genuine evidence of tolerance or astute PR efforts on the part of an Iranian regime that makes no real effort to defend liberal thinkers in the media or universities when the Iranian justice cracks down on undesirable intellectuals. Only the Iranians can judge how much space pluralism is allowed in Iran. Despite the revolutionary confusion, Shiite Iran is more diverse and tolerant toward other religions and political ideas than orthodox Saudi Arabia. For one thing, Iran has held regular elections for the past 20 years. But it is definitely not an open society with wide-ranging freedom of expression. The country is also ruled by fear, generated in part by the fate of journalists sentenced in show processes to years in jail because they criticised the regime.

Yet, small cogs appear to be turning. For some years now there have been diplomatic contacts behind the scenes between Teheran and the Vatican. In mid-February 2001 Cardinal Schönborn, archbishop of Vienna, was the first Catholic dignitary to visit Iran since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. His was a delicate mission, organised against the background of the UN Year of Dialogue. In his presentation at the Imam Sadik University, followed by an open debate that raised many difficult questions, Schönborn interpreted the historical context as an important element in the dialogue between cultures.¹⁴² Among the common approaches, he mentioned the great moral questions in a globalised world and talked about the "technological excesses" of the West, e.g. in medicine. The visit of the doctor of theology and Dominican monk was an enormous success, also for Schönborn's Iranian hosts.¹⁴³ In

¹⁴⁰ Sadik al Hussein in his presentation, 21 September 2002

¹⁴¹ Bishop Georges Khodr in his presentation, 21 September 2002

¹⁴² For a slightly shortened version, see *Spectrum*, supplement to *Die Presse*, 3 March 2001

¹⁴³ Cardinal Schönborn evaluated the interreligious dialogue with Islam, which was continued in Vienna in autumn 2002, as an "encouragement and obligation". According to Schönborn, there is no alternative to dialogue. The cardinal had high praise for Khatami's statement that "force is incompatible with the essence of religion". That is also the theory of the Holy Book of Islam, the Koran.

Teheran there is a centre called "Dialogue between the Civilisations", which is closely involved in the revival of diplomatic travel. Representatives of this centre are regular speakers abroad, as in Mzaar in Lebanon and in Alpbach in Tyrol. The repertoire includes a set performance, larded with quotations from German or French writers, depending on the audience. It is difficult to say whether the Iranians are instrumentalising the subject of dialogue for the goals of their power politics or not.

Hard on the heels of Cardinal Schönborn followed the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Jean Louis Tauran. Vatican diplomacy works discreetly behind the scenes through the narrow channels of dialogue, be it with the Islamic world or with China. So far, the high point of the rapprochement between Christianity and Islam has been Pope John Paul II's trip to Syria early in May 2001. John Paul II is also the first pope to visit a mosque. The pictures of his historic steps in the Omayyad Mosque in Damascus were flashed around the world; reactions in the Vatican were not only positive. The fact remains that over the past 20 years the princes of the Church have reacted more quickly and more sensitively than many heads of state and government to the challenges raised by the growing significance of Islam-inspired political movements.

One explanation for this is that, as Hans Küng, a member of the commission of the UN Year, formulated, without peace between religions there can be no peace between civilisations. In rejecting both religious fundamentalism and rigorous moralism, the theologian promotes a "world ethos" that both believers and non-believers can approve of, whatever their dogmatic differences. This brings us back to the ideal of universalism, which insistence on cultural particularities threatens to water down.

Enrique Banus believes that culture can make a special contribution to dialogue.

*The more cultured a person is, the more topics he can discuss with others. People complain too much about institutions and what they have not done. Intercultural dialogue is first and foremost a dialogue between people. Dialogue means sitting still and listening. And these are the qualities that we have lost in modernising.*¹⁴⁴

The Mediterranean dialogue

Most people know where the Mediterranean begins: the Straits of Gibraltar, itself much disputed for territorial and strategic reasons. But where, from Brussels' point of view, the Mediterranean ends is considerably less clear.¹⁴⁵ Alone the debate over membership of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) illustrates the problems Europe has with its geographic definition. This security club, founded in 1975 on the basis of the Helsinki Act to promote dialogue in Europe during the Cold War now has 57 members, some of which from Central Asian border on the People's Republic of China.¹⁴⁶ How involved Mediterranean partners should be the

¹⁴⁴ Enrique Banus in his presentation, 21 September 2002

¹⁴⁵ Yves Méry in Mzaar, 21 September 2002

¹⁴⁶ Reflecting this expansion in members and tasks, OSCE is said to stand for the

European dimension is just as unsettled. Israel competes in the Eurovision Song Contest and plays in the European Handball League, Malta and Cyprus are joining the EU in 2004, but Lebanon has little hope of closer relationships with the European circle than those under a watered-down association agreement. In the final analysis, the connection between the eastern Mediterranean and Europe has been reduced to the myth of how the continent got its name from a Phoenician princess from the Lebanese city of Tyre whom Zeus found all too attractive. So much for the legend. Relations between the 15 member states of the EU and the other 12 Mediterranean states were institutionalised in the "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership" (EMP) in 1995, better known as the Barcelona Process. With ambitious aims and a full calendar of events, the EMP was the beginning of "transparent, open and equitable" relations. So far, the results of this process are meagre, as the participants at Mzaar also established.

In the course of time, the *mare nostrum*, which the ancient Greeks and Phoenicians noisily colonised from Sicily through the Ebro estuary to Carthage - like frogs around the pond - to quote Aristotle, has changed from being a means of communication to being a means of separation: from Muslim pirates along in the South and Christian fleets in the North, European gut-boat diplomacy off Tangiers, and, since 2002, northern travel restrictions for southern and eastern Mediterranean states. Less than an hour separates the consumer paradise of Madrid from the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the Moroccan coast, where the barbed-wire barrier brutally highlights the urge to migrate. Thanks to TV and "All Inclusive Magic Life Clubs" on the beaches of North Africa and Turkey, Europe is a nearby paradise of prosperity and freedom. At the same time, the diversity of barriers between the EU Mediterranean states and the Arab Mediterranean states grows more and more formidable. The freedom to travel, regarded as an essential prerequisite of humanistic education, is only a dream for the "downtrodden majority" of young people of the southern and eastern Mediterranean.¹⁴⁷

The European nightmare is immigration from precisely these lands, whether by pedal boot across the Straits of Gibraltar or in a cutter of Albanian people smugglers to the coast of Italy. Populist politicians make their name demanding harsher controls against illegal immigrants. In Italy, signs of antagonism between Christianity and Islam are already apparent.¹⁴⁸ Premier Silvio Berlusconi's statements in autumn 2001 about the inferiority of the Islamic civilisation or those of Michel Houellebecq, a French author who chimed in with similarly demographic remarks, reflect the malaise of affluent western enlightened society. It is a regrettable fact that in this situation any intellectual and human exchange becomes the victim of executive lapses.

To judge by its efforts to stem the flow of migrants from southern to northern shores, Europe should have a strong interest in political and economic stability in the Mediterranean states as a way of discouraging this flow.

Organisation of a Seriously Confused Europe

¹⁴⁷ Hélé Beji in her presentation, 21 September 2002

¹⁴⁸ Yves Méry in his contribution on 21 September 2002 *inter alia* the reintroduction of crucifixes in public schools in Italy

The protracted Barcelona Process

The noble goals that the 27 participant states¹⁴⁹ set themselves in Barcelona in November 1995 are far from being realised. Miguel Angel Moratinos, the EU's special envoy for the Middle East and the power behind the Barcelona Process was more forthright at the dialogue in Mzaar: "We have failed."¹⁵⁰

A glance at the files of the EMP Conference reveals the deadlines and ambitious projects at the start of this initiative, Europe's answer to the regional *pax americana* that followed the Gulf War of 1991.

The Barcelona Declaration focused on three pillars of partnership:

- 1) the peace and stability partnership with regular political dialogue and greater cooperation on security matters;
- 2) the creation of a free-trade area by 2010, an economic and financial partnership with the goal of integrating the Mediterranean partners into the EU's economic system; and
- 3) the social, cultural and human partnership to promote rapprochement and understanding between the peoples and civil societies of the region.

The Process evolves at two institutional levels: bilateral association agreements between the EU and the individual Mediterranean partners on the one hand and a multilateral permanent regional dialogue on political, economic and cultural cooperation on the other. The EU provides most of the funding through the MEDA Programme set up to organise these bilateral and multilateral activities. In addition to the MEDA resources, the European Investment Bank (EIB) can provide loans.

Seven years after this enthusiastic start, the results of the Barcelona Process are meagre. The EU has signed association agreements with the following states:

- Tunisia (July 1995)
- Israel (November 1995)
- Morocco (February 1996)
- Palestinian Authority (February 1997)
- Jordan (November 1997)
- Algeria (April 2002)
- Lebanon (June 2002)

An enthusiastic supporter of the notion of "special relationships" with the region, the EU announced an open-market policy to help the partners attain the following objectives: gain access to the EU market; gradually integrate their economies into the European system; adjust to global competition and the rules of the World Trade Organisation; and

¹⁴⁹ 15 EU member states and 12 states bordering the Mediterranean Sea: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and Cyprus

¹⁵⁰ Ambassador Miguel Angel Moratinos on 21 September 2002: "On a eu un échec."

receive EU assistance for reforms; all these connections with the EU economy were expected to encourage foreign direct investment.

Across the Mediterranean, though, such rapid liberalisation is viewed with scepticism. The advantages for the North are obvious and immediate: cheap labour, cheap production locations, and access to new markets. Few of the Mediterranean partners believe that EU trade restrictions will be dismantled soon, especially as the EU insisted on excluding agricultural products from the free-trade negotiations. Many critical observers see the EMP as a one-way street to flooding their national markets with western goods and stores. In the hope of cushioning the negative effects of a market opening, a growing number of voices have been calling for additional European measures to restructure labour markets, improve education and training, etc. to smooth economic transformation. Given the lack of democratic institutions and the prevalence of nepotism and systemic corruption, the transition is likely to be considerably more difficult than even in less advanced Central and Eastern European states such as Ukraine. The hurdles in the way of meeting the deadlines of the EMP process can be summarised as follows: the non-European Mediterranean partners are primarily concerned about the unpredictable negative social and economic consequences of the structural adjustments and tax reforms necessary for a free-trade area, on the one hand, and the expected decline in government revenues as customs duties are progressively reduced until they disappear in 2010 on the other.¹⁵¹

If fears and the structural conditions of the region cause the economic programme to fail, the association agreements as carrot and stick for changes at the political level will not succeed either. The agreement with Israel offers one particularly absurd example. After the Israeli military offensive in the Palestinian territories in early 2002, the EU sought to mediate, in vain. The EU's main bargaining chip with Israel is the association agreement; the EU takes 60% of Israel's exports. However, the EU chose not to call a meeting of the appropriate council as provided for in the agreement for fear that Israel would not attend, which would compromise the EU still further.¹⁵²

A conference of the Research Centre for Security Policy and Conflict Analysis at the Institute of Technology, Zurich, concluded that owing to a lack of clear objectives, motives and suitable instruments, the EMP has contributed little to stability in the Mediterranean region since 1995.¹⁵³ One reason for this is the hesitant implementation of European security and defence policies. Another factor is the different perception of threats to security. The North emphasises controls on migration and trade in drugs and people, whereas the South is more concerned with solving various territorial disputes.

¹⁵¹ Samira Attallah (ed.), *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Fiscal Challenges and Opportunities* (Beirut 2000, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies and the Conrad Adenauer Foundation)

¹⁵² Lecture by Dr. Stefan Lehne, advisor to Javier Solana, Diplomatic Academy, 19 April 2002

¹⁵³ Fred Tanner (ed.), *The European Union as Security Actor in the Mediterranean* (Zurich 2001, *Züricher Beiträge zur Sicherheitspolitik und Konfliktforschung*, No. 61)

The limits to Europe's political involvement

This is not the first EU attempt to establish political and diplomatic credentials beyond the cheque-book in the Mediterranean and Middle East. The 1988 Venice Declaration was a small milestone in a series of European mediation initiatives that the new EU hoped would gain greater legal and political clout as the body moved towards a common foreign and security policy. A Mediterranean dimension to the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe and a new European shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East were potential fields of activity. However, early efforts failed because of the lack of EU decision-making mechanisms to enable it to act as a single entity.¹⁵⁴

The ambitious programme and detailed deregulation calendar of the Barcelona Process started in 1995, almost at the same time as the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations under the Oslo Agreement of 1993. At the time, political solutions in the Middle East appeared to have a real chance; the investment climate was good and everything pointed to an easing of tension.

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was not an isolated event. It was the signal for renewed European involvement in a region that had been consolidated as a US monopoly from Morocco through Suez to the Gulf. The overthrow of the shah in Iran deprived the US of its local policeman. But first Anwar al Sadat in Egypt and then the Palestinian Authority through the Oslo Process adopted pro-Washington positions. Saudi-bashing after the attacks of 11 September 2001 signalled strains in the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the US, with unforeseeable long-term consequences. Since the US declaration of war on terrorism in September 2001, Algeria's military regime, once viewed with suspicion as pro-East, has been regarded as an "ally of the USA".¹⁵⁵

At the same time, it is clear that since the beginning of the second *intifada* in autumn 2000 progress in the EMP is linked to progress in finding a solution to the Middle East conflict. This in turn highlights the significance of the USA, which is not part of the EMP, in stable relations between the South and East Mediterranean and the EU.

Since the Sharon government prevented a high-ranking European delegation from entering Ramallah and rejected active European mediation - apart from the odd sideshow - European governments have had to face the question of just how much room the EU has to manoeuvre. There has been a shift in Germany's policy towards Israel inasmuch as all political parties are increasingly critical of the Sharon government. To underline this detachment, arms exports were suspended for a while - until the war in Iraq in March 2003, when Germany supplied Israel with Patriot anti-missile batteries. The Israeli government, for its part, accuses Europe with increasing stridency of denying its responsibility for the situation in the Middle East, a

¹⁵⁴ Karin Kneissl, Europe's Horizons in the Middle East, in *The Beirut Review*, 1 (1991)2, p. 20

¹⁵⁵ *The Economist* 13 July 2002: President Bush congratulated the Algerian ally and the Bouteflika government on the election result.

consequence of the Holocaust. In his address to Aipac, the American-Israeli Political Action Committee, Sharon spoke of a "convergence between the growing terror and anti-Semitism".¹⁵⁶ The Israeli press regularly publishes analyses of the contradictory role of the EU, which is widely viewed as pro-Palestinian. According to one survey, in the US more than 40 percent are pro-Israeli, whereas in Europe this is true of only 17 percent on average.¹⁵⁷ Given such facts, it is very difficult for the EU to play a role as an "honest broker".

But Europe is diplomatically marginalised in more places than the Middle East.

Tension between Morocco and Spain over the Parsley/Leila Island in summer 2002 revealed the depth of the gulf between the North and South over the sense and purpose of the EMP.¹⁵⁸ As Miguel Angel Moratinos pointed out in Mzaar, the EU still lacks the mechanisms to deal with such conflicts quickly.¹⁵⁹ It took the mediation of Colin Powell, US Secretary of State, in July 2002 to defuse this 11-day petty war between Madrid and Rabat. The USA and France (both interested in maintaining their privileged relations with Morocco) put pressure on Spain to seek a peaceful negotiated solution and not to retake the islands by force. But Spain would not accept the mediation of third parties. Owing to the already tense situation between the Arab states and the West, there was little understanding for Spain's lightning military operation. The prompt US initiative should be seen against the background of its recent cooperation with Morocco in the search for al-Qaida operatives. In June 2002, Morocco arrested a dozen people who were suspected of planning to attack US ships in the Straits of Gibraltar.

Long before this dispute, various circles in North Africa and the Middle East had criticised the EMP as a cover for interference in their internal affairs. However, the EU had already shown that demands for greater respect for the rule of law and civil society were toothless. Moreover, it continued to cooperate with authoritarian

¹⁵⁶ Haaretz, 23 April 2002

¹⁵⁷ The Economist, 20 April 2002

¹⁵⁸ On 11 July, Moroccan police occupied islands 200 metres off the Moroccan coast known as "Leila" in Arabic and "Isla Perejil" (Parsley Islands) in Spanish. These outcrops of rock cover 14,000 sq. m. The only creatures on them are goats; they were never used as a military base, nor had military equipment ever been installed there. Spain treated the police landing as a violation of its claim to sovereignty over the islands. On 17 July Spanish troops supported by several warships cleared the islands of Moroccan police. Through US mediation, Madrid and Rabat agreed on 20 July to restore the situation prior to the Moroccan occupation of 11 July. Under the compromise, the islands, which both states claim, are de facto neutral territory. They may not be occupied militarily and no national flag may be flown. However, this is not a definitive solution. Bilateral relations between the two countries reached a low point in October 2001, when both recalled their ambassadors amidst disputes over Spanish fishing rights and illegal immigration.

¹⁵⁹ Ambassador Miguel Angel Moratinos on 21 September 2002: "We do not possess the instruments to solve such conflicts, and there is no sign of us possessing any soon."

*governments. In "Notre ami le roi", Gilles Perret, a French writer, documents the - at times extremely questionable - political links between Paris and Rabat in the late 1980s and the systematic violation of human rights in Morocco. The sheer number of special bilateral relationships between EU members and Mediterranean states - e.g. between the former colonial powers France and Italy on the one hand and the Maghreb and Libya, respectively, on the other - demonstrates the EU's inability to speak with a common voice in this region.*¹⁶⁰

In Miguel Angel Moratinos' opinion, the fundamental reason for the weak position of the EU in the region is the inconsistent policies of the governments concerned: "The Arab world is happy to knock on Europe's door, yet at the decisive moment it turns to Washington and EU diplomacy is given the cold shoulder"¹⁶¹ - a sober, but realistic assessment of the causes of European impotence in the Middle East conflict. In Moratinos' view, the European governments must decide whether in the long term they want a Mediterranean region in dialogue with Europe or under a pax americana.

An essential factor that was touched on only indirectly in Mzaar is the question of energy supplies. A white book on this subject presented in summer 2002 came to the conclusion that the EU still does not have a coherent energy policy. The EU states are the second largest importers of oil and natural gas from North Africa and the Gulf, after Japan, but before the USA. Most deliveries are regulated by bilateral agreements. Thus, in respect of oil supplies - a decisive factor in foreign and security policy - the European economic power is unable to take a single line, a situation that cannot fail to shape the EMP.

New start to dialogue: education and civil society

At the Valencia meeting of the Barcelona European Council in March 2002, the president of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, called on the EU member states to revamp the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to establish a more dynamic European presence in the Mediterranean. Recent Brussels declarations of intent have focused on education and civil society.¹⁶² To this end, the EU wants to promote the exchange of academic and artistic representatives of civil societies in the Mediterranean partners.

¹⁶⁰ Illustrative of this was the trial of Khaled Nezzar, an Algerian general, in Paris in 2002. "La Sale Guerre", a book by Habib Souaidia, a junior officer resident in France since fleeing Algeria, caused a sensation by describing how in the early 1990s soldiers disguised as Islamists massacred civilians to turn the mood against the Islamists in Algeria. His accusations focused on General Khaled Nezzar, the power behind the scene in Algeria at that time. The Algerian army took its former member Souaidia to court in Paris for libel. Witnesses called by Nezzar's defence lawyers have argued that the army saved the country from falling into the hand of "barbaric hordes", i.e. Islamists.

¹⁶¹ Moratinos on 21 September 2002 in Mzaar

¹⁶² Message of welcome from Romano Prodi, Daily Star, 20 September 2002

There is, however, the question of how the trial of Saadeddin Ibrahim, an Egyptian sociologist and political scientist will affect this dialogue. At his EU-financed institute Ibrahim organised empirical research that so displeased the Egyptian government that he was sentenced to several years' hard labour. Behind the scenes the EU-15 and the European Commission have discreetly been working to obtain the intellectual's release, so far without success. The USA acted directly and cancelled some planned cooperation programmes. That European interest in the welfare of Egyptian civil society has lost credibility - at least in the eyes of local freethinkers - is obvious.¹⁶³

The problem lies in the exclusion of the elites

The high rate of unemployment among university graduates in the Arab states would seem to indicate that further educational programmes are not the magic key to a stable, prosperous future - one of the objectives of the Barcelona Process. Rather, the crucial problem is the exclusion of many groups in the population from economic and political decision-making. It is hardly surprising that those that drift towards extremist ideas on account of unemployment and political repression are drawn from mainly young, male, highly qualified and long familiar with western ideas via education and the media.

It would be worthwhile for EU decision-makers to look more closely at the genesis of the crisis in Algeria before organising further education conferences. In the 1980s, unemployment among young graduates averaged 25 percent. Ageing military revolutionaries clinging to power worsened the latent economic crisis, despite revenues from oil exports, and thereby drove people towards the Islamic opposition.

Dispirited by poverty, social need and terror, an already quasi-apathetic population had little reason to expect the elections of 30 May 2002 to improve their situation. In the Berber province of the Kabylie they were boycotted. As expected, the government's majority was reaffirmed. The National Liberation Front of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was in any case the favourite to win. At just under 48 percent, the turnout was the lowest since independence from France in 1962; five years earlier 63 percent of the 18 million registered voters had cast their ballot.

The Algerian authorities are not alone in exploiting the struggle against terrorism to suppress political opposition. Jordan and Egypt are in a similar dilemma. The Jordanian parliament was dissolved in summer 2001 and a new one elected only in June 2003. In the interim, King Abdullah II used "temporary laws" to pursue a hard line against Islamists and to severely curtail the freedom of expression and of the press.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Shlomo Avneri at the European Forum, Alpach/Tyrol, 27 August 2002

¹⁶⁴ Ed Blanche, Arab regimes crack down on Islamists, in *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 14, No. 3, March 2002

In view of the current fight against terrorism, long overdue political reforms in the Arab states have been put on ice. In the long term, this development will promote regional instability and extremism.

Dialogue about democracy

For years, international financial institutions have been aware that all efforts to promote change and economic development are useless if important national actors feel excluded. They speak of "good governance". In plain language this means democracy.

Dialogue makes sense only if it includes all the relevant actors and all of them call a spade a spade, which is also a prerequisite for democracy. The feeling of disorientation in a globalised world, of uncertainty in the explosive mixture of cultures and religions, fear of violence and war - the only way to alleviate or avoid these is to put people in a position to decide their own fate. For people to talk about this assumes that they have some knowledge and understanding of other people's cultures and mentalities, that they are able, so to speak, to translate them. What it requires above all is plain honesty that can virtually never be misunderstood.

Conclusion - Seven theses on conflict potential in cultures and religions

"Lessons learned" and open questions

The conclusion to this overview of the Mzaar Conference takes the form of a list of relatively sure insights on the one hand and open questions on conflict potential in cultures and religions on the other. It was written by Theodor Hanf, who formulated the seven theses.

1. Globalisation, cultural reactions and resistance

There is ample evidence that globalisation processes challenge traditional cultures, generate mutation and possibly fusion, and that these effects meet with resistance. But we know little about why some cultures are more resistant to disintegration than others or which components are conducive to cultural survival and why.

Therefore, it may be rewarding to examine analogous evidence, viz. the results of migration research. Immigrants quickly drop most of their old habits under the pressure of their new social environment. They stick to their traditional eating habits longer, and give up their particular religion last, if ever. Could the same process apply to entire societies under the pressure of growing international influences and changing economic conditions? Is it possible that even when consumption habits adapt to multicultural, but similar products in a global supermarket differences in religion will persist, that religion represents the hard core of culture? Or will they too - after a few final fundamentalist twitches - finally succumb to general ecumenical norms?

If some cultures are more resistant globalisation than others, is this indicative of a certain consistency - which would then have to be investigated - or simply of backwardness in modernising? To answer these questions it is necessary to distinguish precisely between "westernisation", "Europeanisation" and "Americanisation", on the one hand, and modernisation-promoting social change on the other. There are plenty of examples from the ancien régime of feudal Europe, through theocracies, to asseverations of "Asian values" in which the potential losers in modernization processes seek to retain their privileges by clothing them in cultural legitimacy.

It is probably sensible to critically question normative cultural concepts authoritatively defined by people who have a vested interest in doing so. After all, culture is what people in a specific place at a specific time think culture is, and the way they live. Culture is not what biased cultural gurus tell them it should be, or how they should live. It is very possible that individual opinions on what is worth preserving and what not will differ considerably from the normative codes. It would be a rewarding exercise to test the hypothesis that culture as it is experienced and desired by most people is far more syncretistic and contains far less conflict potential than would appear from the exaggerated ideals of standardised cultural stereotypes.

2. Culture and religion

There is evidence that religion is the "pièce de résistance" of many cultures. If that is true, does the erosion of religious convictions and waning of religious convictions also signify an erosion of culture, or only cultural change? Is the fear of losing one's religion primarily the fear of losing one's culture, or vice versa? Can values originally rooted in religion persist when the religious convictions on which they were based disappear? Can such values retain their generally binding character in modern, predominantly secular societies?

In many societies, debates about culture are first and foremost debates about secularisation. Often, no attempt is made to distinguish between two very different concepts of secularisation. Secularisation is a decline in faith and religious practices on the one hand and the separation of religion and state on the other. The two concepts may, but need not, be interlinked. There are very religious societies in which there is strict separation of spiritual authority and state power and others in which the existence of an official, established religion has not prevented religion from losing its influence on people's behaviour.

Secularisation in the first sense of the word is frequently overrated. Modernisation theorists were convinced that with the advent of industrialisation, urbanisation, easier communication and mass education the relevance of religion would inevitably, and probably irreversibly, decline. Seduced by the logic and elegance of their own model, these theoreticians took it for reality. The findings of sociologists of religion have convincingly refuted their assumptions. Modernisation is possible without secularization in this sense. Whereas western and Central Europe are widely secularised, this is not

the case with North America, let alone the rest of the world. In most societies religion is not making a comeback; it never went away. Thus, the phenomenon that needs explaining is not the absence of secularisation in most of the world, but the European exception.

Secularisation in the second sense - the separation of spiritual and temporal power - has greater conflict potential. Sometimes the conflict arises from a lack of conceptual clarity. Modern Arabic has the concept of "al-almaniya"; it refers to precisely this separation, without any sense of a loss of faith. Urdu speaks of "la-diniya", which unites both concepts. Literally it means the lack of religion - the concept is confusing in itself, and as such understandably can let believers fear that the institutional separation of religion and state will lead to exactly what they reject. Hence, at the start of any debate is it advisable to establish precisely which sense of secularization one is talking about.

There are solid reasons to assume that misconceptions about secularisation are widespread. As Jack Straw, the British foreign minister has remarked, the Islamic world thinks the West is institutionally far more secularised than it is and the West that the Islamic world is far more religious than it are. A comprehensive comparative study of how relations between religion and state are regulated in different countries could make a fundamental contribution to more objective dialogue in the future. In Europe alone, practices range from the French model of strict constitutional separation of church and state, through the German tradition of "incomplete secularisation" - in which the constitutional neutrality of the state in religious matters goes hand in hand with a cooperative relationship between the state and the churches - and various forms of concordats, to the established churches of Scandinavia and England. In the Islamic world, too, the relationship between religion and state runs the gamut of nuances from theocratic Saudi Arabia to secular Turkey.

3. Identification markers and their politicisation

According to research, any type of distinction - religious, linguistic, real or suspected common origins, ideological - can be used to create group identity. Furthermore, although every one of these characteristics can be politicised, this need not be the case. The reasons and circumstances of politicization call for careful empirical research.

Economic interpretations held sway throughout the 1980s, going as far as to categorise cultural characteristics as "false consciousness". In the 1990s, culturalistic explanations came into their own, with a trend towards treating cultures as essentialistic and their politicisation as compulsive. It would be more useful to reformulate questions about interests that can lead to the politicisation of identities.

4. Conflict potential of "sacred markers"

Is the delineation of religious identity a particularly powerful source of conflict? Are the teachings of some religions more accepting of conflict and conflict situations than others? The Holy Scriptures of all religions of the Book can be used and misused for all

sorts of interpretations. Therefore, it is advisable to ask who has the power of authoritative interpretation and who uses it to what ends.

5. What is terrorism?

Since September 11, 2001 there has been a global and often confusing argument over the meaning of terrorism. Jakob Rösel has presented a clear proposal: the arbitrary use of violence against civilians with the purpose of influencing entire groups and populations. This operational definition raises another question: can it be applied to the actions of states?

Citing nineteenth-century anarchism, there have been calls for a narrower definition of terrorism. In this view, terrorism would be the use of violence not to achieve a specific goal, but purely for its own sake.

Be that as it may, in either case, terrorism is a crime - which begs the question of whether it is meaningful to speak of a "war against terrorism". Crime is normally a matter for authorities of the state concerned with the maintenance of law and order and the prevention of crime, i.e., the police and the courts, not governments and armies. This raises the issue of whether it would not be more suitable to reflect upon the regular processes of the rule of law in democracies than to apply concepts and behaviour more appropriate to a state of emergency.

6. What is dialogue and what is the purpose of dialogue?

The concept of dialogue is currently overtaxed. Perhaps it is time to return to the literal meaning of dialogue? Dialogue, "dia logon", is the exchange of words with the purpose of searching for the truth.

This is first of all the basis of all science: scientists propose hypotheses and others try to disprove them - particularly those proposed by colleagues. Dialogue in this sense has a clear purpose and is governed by rules about which there is general consensus.

Apart from this, there are many other forms of dialogue about which rules are less clear. Often it is not obvious who is speaking for whom with what authority. The main arguments in favour of such dialogue even under uncertain conditions are first that it is better to exchange words than bullets, and second that as a rule discussions help both sides understand each other better. There is nothing to be said against the first argument. The second, however, is more problematic. Discussions under uncertain conditions can lead to mistakes, and in the end participants may have less respect for one another than at the beginning. One cannot help wondering whether greater insistence on dialogue between elected and therefore unequivocally legitimate representatives of groups or states would not serve everybody better.

7. Culture and democracy

Democracy research has come to some well-substantiated conclusions. Mature democracies tend not to go to war, at least have not for more than half a century.

Economic development is not a prerequisite for democracy, but the two can be of benefit to each other. There is general consensus on the three essential characteristics of democracy, regardless of formal structure: the rule of law, effective control of those who govern by those who are governed, and a mechanism to allow those who are governed to replace those who govern peacefully when they want to.

On the other hand, the relationships between culture, and in particular religion, on the one hand and democracy on the other are very controversial. The hypotheses of Samuel Huntington, and the even more simplistic ones of his co-worker Lawrence Harrison, are very popular. They are quoted with growing enthusiasm by Islamists and other fundamentalists. Unless they are refuted they could become self-fulfilling prophecies.

It does not help to denounce these hypotheses as a new ethnocentrism done up in intellectual clothing. An assumption is not disproved by setting another against it. What is needed is a careful empirical study of many cases before making any generalisations. If culture is not what self-proclaimed seers, sign-readers and prophets define as culture, but what a specific population in a specific place at a specific time understand by culture, then it can be measured empirically - and population's attitudes toward democracy can also be measured empirically. A question asked with increasing frequency is whether different cultures are compatible with democracy or not. This question has to be answered on the basis not of conjecture but of empirically determinable facts.

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