

Jean Monnet Network

PEACE, WAR AND THE WORLD IN EUROPEAN SECURITY CHALLENGES

Workshop: “Religious Fragmentation as factor of conflict”

University of Goettingen (UGOE)

23.-24. April 2019



- WORKING PAPER -

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Workshop:
**„Religious fragmentation
as factor of conflict“**

23 April 2019

Room VG 2.102



- 13.15 Prof. Martin Tamcke (Göttingen) „**Religious fragmentation and migration**“
- 13.30 Dr. Ertuğrul Şahin (Frankfurt a. M.) „**Minorities from an islamic perspective**“
- 14.00 Dr. Sevgi Cilingir (Izmir) „**The Issue of Historical Christian Minorities in EU-Turkey Relations: The Case of Armenians**“
- 14.30 Lilit Sargsyan (Göttingen) „**Religious Identity and Integration of Armenians as an Ethnic Group in Germany**“
- 15.00 Rima Atoyan (Göttingen) „**Syrian-Armenian refugees in Armenia**“
- 16.00 Arne Worm (Göttingen) „**Escaping the Syrian Civil War. Biographical trajectories and self-presentations of Syrian refugees**“
- 16.30 Dr. Gülay Türkmen-Devisoglu (Göttingen) „**Beyond Religious Identity: Fault Lines among Muslim Immigrants in Germany**“
- 17.00 Sinem Abka (Izmir) „**The EU's Impact on the Changing Status of Greek Minorities in Turkey**“
- 18.00 Natalia Zhurbina (Voronezh) „**The integration policy of Russia towards the migrants' children (an example of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Armenia)**“
- 18.30 Majid Hassan Ali (Dohuk) „**Religious Minorities in Early Republic Iraq (1958-1968): Between granting rights and discrimination**“
- 19.00 **Presentation from the „Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker“ (GfbV)**

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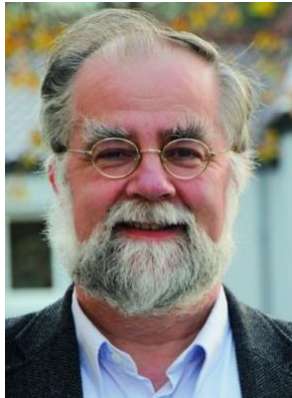
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1. Preamble by Prof. Dr. Martin Tamcke

During the workshop, the discussion on religious fragmentation was mainly conducted based on specific case examples, such as Armenians and Greeks in Turkey, Armenians in Syria and Armenia, Christian refugees from Syria, Armenians in Germany, Islamic migrants in Germany and migrants in Russia. The individual discourses were followed by a general discussion about Etrugul Sahin's paper on "Islamic minorities" and the question of religious fragmentation. There was common consent that the religious fragmentation of societies is not the sole cause of conflicts or unbalanced social structures in the societies that were discussed. In the mentioned paper are hard-to-resolve contradictions within the Islamic concepts regarding contact with minorities. Otherwise, the paper argues the potential for a completely different evaluation and attitude of Islamic theology, as long as it seeks to connect to the context of the debates on religious freedom and protection of minorities. The question, whether such concepts can become legally effective in Islam-dominated societies, remains open. The discussed minority concepts were considered problematically by the participants from the Middle East because they are too static and ultimately involve the risk that representatives of the minorities could be prevented from taking on responsibility for their societies in a governmental leadership position. At the end of the workshop, the example of the Yazidis gained importance because it pointed out that not only Christian minorities were at risk of becoming victims of religious fragmentation, but that all religious minorities are affected. A representative for that fact is the oppression of Sunni and Shiite rule in Iraq. All participants urgently required further reflection on current questions of religious fragmentation, combined with profound field research on individual minorities, who appeared to be particularly affected by oppression and migration.

2. Participants

2.1 Prof. Dr. Martin Tamcke – University of Goettingen, Department of Ecumenical Theology and Oriental Church and Mission History, Goettingen (Germany)



Martin Tamcke is the Director of the Department of of Ecumenical Theology and Oriental Church and Mission History, Director of Studies both in the international “Intercultural Theology” M.A. programme and in the Erasmus-Mundus “Euroculture” M.A. programme. Both programmes of study were co-founded by him. He is Assistant Director of the Centre for the Study of the Cultures of Europe and the Mediterranean in Antiquity, Editor in Chief of Studies in Euroculture and Erasmus Departmental coordinator at Faculty of Theology at UGOE. The focus of his research lies on the Christian cultures of the Near and Middle East with special emphasis on interreligious coexistence and oriental-occidental relations. He serves as Visiting Professor at universities in North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. He is member of several academic societies and is appointed to different functions for the Evangelical Church of Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland). Prof. Tamcke is connected in a well developed network of international and inter-confessional contacts to leading personalities in religion, politics, and culture.

2.2 Dr. Ertuğrul Şahin - Goethe Universität, Frankfurt am Main (Germany)



He studied political science at the University of Istanbul and is a recognized political science graduate there. He also studied Political Science, Economics and Ottoman Studies in Freiburg and Heidelberg. He was a doctoral student at the University of Heidelberg and a scientific assistant at the Selcuk University in Konya (Turkey). Since 01.04.2007 he is scientific assistant at the Endowed Professorship “Islamic Religion” and at the “Institute for Studies of Culture and Religion of Islam”. In December 2013 he completed his disputation (title of the dissertation: Euro-Islam in the field of tension between Universality and historicity). His research interests are: political theology, political rule and democracy in the Islamic world, Islam in the modern age, modernization and reform theories and processes, sociology of religion of Islam, Islam and Muslims in the European context, approaches to European Islam / Euro-Islam.

2.3 Dr. Sevgi Cilingir – Dokuz Eylul University, Department of International Relations, Izmir (Turkey)



Sevgi Cilingir currently works at the Department of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University. Sevgi does research in EU politics, Politics of migration, Race, Ethnicity and Politics, Comparative Politics and International Relations. Their most recent publication is 'Kriz Gündeminde AB Göç Politikasının Yetkiler, Hedefler ve Araçlar İtibariyle Değerlendirilmesi: Sınır Yönetimi Örneği'.

2.4 Lilit Sargsyan – University of Goettingen, Department of Religious Studies, Goettingen (Germany)



Lilit Sargsyan from Armenia did her Masters-degree in Intercultural Theology at the University of Goettingen. She finished her PhD-Thesis on Armenian Migrant communities in Germany, with a special focus on their existens as an ethnic group.

2.5 Rima Atoyan – Yerevan State University, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Yerevan (Armenia)

Rima Atoyan from Armenia is a Master-Student of Intercultural Theology at the University of Goettingen. Her lecture at the workshop was related to her Master thesis.

2.6 Gülay Türkmen – University of Göttingen, Institute of Sociology, Goettingen (Germany)



She is a comparative-historical and cultural sociologist with research interests that stand at the intersection of religion and politics. She is specifically interested in how certain historical, cultural and political developments inform questions of belonging and identity-formation in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies. Under that rubric, her research focuses on how religious, ethnic and national identities intersect, intertwine and compete with each other, especially in Muslim communities in the Middle East and in

Europe. She also conduct research on cultural politics of nationalism and national identity formation through a comparative-historical lens. She mainly employs qualitative methods, such as interviews, ethnography, and archival research. In addition to academic publications she occasionally write opinion pieces for non-

academic outlets. She received her PhD in Sociology from Yale University in 2016. Currently, she is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Goettingen's Institute of Sociology.

2.7 Sinem Abka – Dokuz Eylul University, Department of International Relations, Izmir (Turkey)



Currently, she is working as a Research Assistant in the Division of European Union Policy and International Relations at the Department of International Relations. Her research interests are European integration, Europeanization, Turkey-EU relations and minority rights.

2.8 Dr. Natalia Zhurbina –Voronezh State University, Head of International Cooperation Department, Voronezh (Russia)



She is responsible for the coordination and administration of projects (European and national), international partner conversation, statistics and evaluation, networking & consulting, developing learning scenarios and learning material and holding of seminars at the Head of International Cooperation Department of Voronezh State University. In 2008 she finished her PhD in History and International Relations.

2.9 Dr. Majid Hassan Ali – University of Duhok, College of Humanities/ Department of History and Sociology, Dohuk (Iraq)



Majid Hassan Ali, completed his doctoral research with a focus on Religious minorities in Iraq, at the University of Bamberg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Bamberg Graduate School of Near and Middle Eastern Studies (BaGOS), Bamberg, Germany. He is a lecturer at Duhok University in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. He is also a board member of the Yezidi Theological Academy (YTA) in Tbilisi, Georgia. His research interest include difficulties and challenges faced by ethnic and religious minorities in Muslim majority countries in the Middle East.

3. Summaries, Abstracts and Speeches

3.1 “The religious fragmentation migrates” – Prof. Dr. Martin Tamcke

The religious fragmentation of societies from Egypt to Iraq has a longstanding tradition of coexistence. In times when a peaceful coexistence failed, pogroms, massacres, and genocides ensued, which targeted religious minorities such as Christians. The tense and unstable structure of this religious fragmentation was intentionally exploited during recent wars and upheaval. On the one hand, by secularists or regimes who wanted to prove the danger posed by Christians, Alawites, Yazidis, and Druze – should Islamists seize power. On the other hand, by Islamists and ISIS who wanted to show that the West – the "other" – is vincible by vicariously displacing and degrading Christians. The actual knowledge about the lives and doctrines of these religious minorities is often limited and overshadowed by mechanisms of social exclusion and established stereotypes. Some of which have been part of societal conditioning on both sides for centuries and these preconceptions follow them into migration. This brings about consequences, which require serious attention.

It is a subject of heated debates, whether there is indeed a religious factor contributing to the tensions and wars in the Middle East, and if so, how religion is involved specifically. In the wake of Islamist activities, the press often calls numerous acts 'cases of religious violence', seemingly without questioning the actual motivation behind the tragic events. When Christian prisoners are asked to convert, when Christian houses in Mosul are marked as such before ISIS invades and addresses Christians in particular, when Yazidis are persecuted, when crucifixes are pulled from churches. There are without a doubt numerous other incidents that could be added to this list. The question is, are these cases of violence motivated by religious principles or do these examples rather show how religion is exploited to act as a deterrent – as a means of ethnic rather than mere religious cleansing – a means of cultural cleansing? With regard to extremists it is openly discussed, whether their utilisation of religion can be described as misguided and whether it is sufficient for more moderate or even liberal voices to argue that members of ISIS are extremists, not Muslims. The reasons to act against Christians are by no means new. They are the result of a longstanding unstable coexistence of the two religious communities in that region. Historically, the status of Christians as second-class citizens can be traced back to treaties of protection that were followed by the millet system, which undoubtedly had an effect on the religious fragmentation in the region, an effect that is visible to this day. Secular experiments could not overcome the effects of these longstanding living arrangements. And Christians have actively participated in many of these experiments: socialist and communist movements, the Arabic revival, as well as the advent of Arabic nationalism. Such experiments promised – at least to the intellectuals among them – a future outside of religious fragmentation on the basis of a united state, a nation, an idea, a social order that granted equal rights and access to higher offices of state to all people regardless of their denomination. They hoped that secular laws would replace the Sharia laws that governed, amongst other things, matters of personal law, such as marriage and family law. It seems that efforts of this kind have reached their limits in the region. Contrary to expectations, the Arab Spring has led to an even greater fragmentation in most countries and increased alienation between religious communities. And it is not the western spectators who are most exasperated by this situation, but the local population. Secular experiments in the region often failed due to inadequate implementation, a lack of penetrating effects, and the dual demands that should have followed from a secular approach and from those who opposed them

owing to their religious affiliations. At the moment, it seems like attempts at secularisation do not have a great chance of success. The propaganda that is currently used to increase and exploit the religious fragmentation will certainly affect the situation. It remains to be seen, whether their slogans have a lasting effect. It is possible that some of their rallying cries, like "Christians into the sea", could have originated in government circles, in order to make minorities believe that only Assad's government can keep them safe. The frightening alternative would be Islamism. But it is also possible that some hate campaigns were initiated by Islamic fundamentalists who wanted to pave the way for driving out Christians. There are misrepresentation on both sides: there are those who paint an overly harmonious picture of a trouble-free history of coexistence and, on the other end, there are those who emphasise the conflict and cast Christians exclusively in a victimised role. Both versions are one-sided and give a distorted view of the situation, sometimes with a political agenda, like for example the writing of Egyptian-born Jewish author Bat Ye'or. These writings make sweeping accusations against the Islam. They question the integrity of Christians who abandoned their native language in favour of Arabic and accuse them of collaboration.

The reasons behind Oriental Christians migrating to Europe, America, and Australia are still to be determined, but certain facts speak for themselves. Since the US invasion of Iraq, the Christian population has been reduced to a quarter of its former size. Many Syriac Orthodox Christians of Tur Abdin in southeast Turkey migrated to Europe during the conflict between Turkey and the PKK. From 1961 onwards Germany attracted migrants to enter the country, promising work as *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers). Today, a hundred times more Syriac Orthodox Christians live in Sweden and Germany alone, compared to the small community that remains in Tur Abdin. Claims made by the Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan of Mount Lebanon that 70% of the Christians have left Syria due to the civil war should be taken with a grain of salt. These claims are politically charged and probably intend to highlight the situation of the Christian minority. Nonetheless, it is true that a large part of the Christian population fled Syria. Not all of them have left the country under such dramatic circumstances as did those who fled from ISIS in Mosul or south of the Khabur, where ISIS forces took entire Christian villages of Assyrians prisoner. When I visited a refugee centre near Beirut, Lebanon with my students, they were very interested in whether these young refugees would be able return to their home region south of the Khabur once ISIS had been defeated. The refugees replied in the negative. They had the impression that they were

not welcome in that part of the world. A few months later, they were gone. They had left for Australia. It was striking how their people's history of trauma affected their decision process. The massacre of 1848 in the Kurdish Mountains surrounding the then seat of the Patriarch in Konak/Qodchanis/Kotschannes; the genocide of 1915 in southeast Turkey and on Iranian soil near Urmia; the Simele massacre committed by Iraqi forces in 1933 – all these events are part of the collective Assyrian memory. Add to this the experience of inadequate legislation concerning basic human rights and living space that religious minorities such as the Assyrian Christians face on a daily basis.

Migration is not necessarily religiously motivated, as in refugees following the desire to live as full members of a society that allows them to practice their specific form of religiousness freely and live it openly. Occasionally, there is no religious motivation whatsoever. Such is the case with Sargon Boulus. Born into a family of Assyrian refugees on 19 February 1944 close to the Habbanya lake near Baghdad, he later moved to Kirkuk in Northern Iraq with his family. In 1962 he went to Baghdad, in 1967 he crossed the Iraqi-Syrian border on foot and – with no money or identification – reached Beirut, where he took an active part in the revival of the leading Arabic literary magazine. From 1969 on he lived in the United States of America most of the time. After a long illness he died on 22 October 2007 in Berlin. Sargon Boulus wrote his poems in Arabic, a language he had learned from his mother amidst a family speaking “Syrian”. His life was marked by seemingly irreconcilable differences even previous to his arrival in America. On the one hand there were the early days of suffering for his family as refugees (his father was a carpenter, ironed laundry and worked as a traditional healer), they were living in a makeshift clay and tin hut, in which four families lived separated only by sheets hanging on ropes. This stands in stark contrast to his life as a professional who translated the works of poets of the Beat generation into Arabic. The man who said about his emigration to the United States that it gave him the opportunity for a new dream. The migration to America, however, did not put an end to the past, he did not simply leave his home behind in Iraq. “I never left Iraq. As far as you may go, you will return to the same sources, to their origins in childhood and in relatives, to drink from them. You do not stop returning to the past while living in the present.”

A crucial experience during his childhood was his first encounter with English women. The British occupying forces in Iraq had gathered the Assyrians close to their military base in Al Habbaniya, after their accommodations had repeatedly been the target during pogroms. Sargon Boulus's father was among those working for the English. He often brought his son to the English camp. "My father used to work for the English and one of my first and very cherished memories is when as a kid my father used to take me to the place of his work, which was a camp where only the English lived with the Iraqi workers (mostly Assyrian). We used to see these English ladies in summertime among their flowers and lawns, a totally different woman from the women that I knew like my mother, my sisters and the other women in my family. Here was another type of image of humanity, let's say, and I was like sneaking a view through the trees, from far away into these gardens. For me, I think now, that's a vision of paradise, paradise meaning something very flowery, full of colour." The cultural distinctiveness of the West fascinated him and found his approval. While his own Christian oriental culture, surrounded by Islamic culture, seemed restrictive, the western world appeared to be liberated. His emotional ties to the West led him to follow his yearning for paradise. He travelled through the desert on foot, without a passport, was incarcerated as an illegal migrant in Beirut, and finally, with the help of the American embassy, he departed for America, never to return permanently to Iraq or the Middle East. Asked about how he could just leave his Arab home, he replied "I believe it is the imagination. When I read something, I can imagine it. My reading has filled me with dreams. I followed my imagination." Belonging to two worlds is a familiar feeling for most oriental Christians from early childhood on.

The desire to emigrate to the United States and Europe has increased even after the US occupation of Iraq, even though, at the same time, Christians all over the country feel disillusioned with the United States. The wish to emigrate has not grown smaller. The difficult situation for Christians in the Middle East and their orientation towards the United States occasionally finds its expression with explicit references to hell and paradise. Hell, that is Baghdad, the Iraqi home. America is paradise.

The Latin Archbishop of Baghdad, Jean Benjamin Sleiman, who was born in 1946 in Lebanon, uses the metaphor "paradise" repeatedly in his book on the situation of Christians in his country. "Since ancient times the West has been taken for a kind of paradise, a place of retreat and refuge."

The relocation to a distant country, chiefly the United States, is getting increasingly difficult. People are starting to lose hope that emigration is still possible. At the same time, the pressure against Christians is increasing in their own country, because they are seen as secret allies of the Americans. "While Christians in Iraq are being discriminated against ever more vehemently, the 'paradise', into which they want to emigrate, moves further and further away from them every day." But it is precisely because of the increasing difficulty to leave the country that people become more hopeful to be among the few who succeed to emigrate. "To escape the 'lost paradise', one is willing to use all means necessary to reach a new 'paradise' like the USA, considered the 'promised land' par excellence." Experiences of religious fragmentation stay in the background and are merely the starting point of migration. The descendant of a genocide survivor of 1915 might use religious terms to express his yearning in contrast to his actual reality, even though he is not particularly religious himself.

It is very difficult to evaluate reports of tension between Christian and Muslim migrants in German refugee accommodations. In some cases, state governments had to intervene. There have been indications that certain conflicts were brought over to Germany from the Orient, albeit transformed. Balci's novel "Arabboy" shows this quite explicitly. She is adamant that she, a Kurdish-born, has gathered her information first-hand during her time as a social worker in Berlin. Similar patterns can be found in literature by Muslim migrants in Germany and in observations by Christian minorities from the Orient. It is not surprising that migrants come bearing this kind of emotional and psychological baggage. There are already attempts at treating trauma. But how can Christians talk about the situation without fear? How can they report on genocide or pogroms without causing controversy and get into conflicts with fellow Muslim migrants from the same region? How can Armenians, Aramaeans, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Pontic Greeks speak of their historical "baggage" – past genocides that date back a hundred years – without facing denial or even retaliation, which would make them victims once again? In order to act responsibly among these religious minorities from the Orient it requires knowledge that is rarely found in their countries of origin. It is a knowledge that has to be established together with refugees from these communities as a significant factor with historical roots. A first step could be to explore migrant literature that deals with this subject – literature that is traditionally used to pass on and reform this knowledge. The new setting will bring about new narratives.

The process of exploring these narratives together to the benefit of a religious coexistence will surely affect everyone involved.

3.2 “Minorities in Islam” – Dr. Ertuğrul Şahin

Due to sickness Ertuğrul Şahin could not appear to the workshop. Nevertheless, he send his paper “Minorities in Islam” (see attachment: **4.1 “Minoritäten im Islam” – Dr. Ertuğrul Şahin**). The main theses of the text have been translated and discussed in English. Sahin thematises Muslim minorities policy and the role of Sharia. The paper focused on the dilemma of Sharia interpretation. He suggests that it is not able to solve the issue of Muslim recognition of the Situation of minorities in muslim majority countries as long as there is no common ground in seeing Sharia as a) divine revelation or b) an historical and therefore context dependent law. Unless the chasm between those two positions cannot be overcome, his outlook on the improvement of lives for minorities is grim.

3.3 “The Issue of Historical Christian Minorities in EU-Turkey Relations: The Case of Armenians” – Sevgi Cilingir

Since the declaration of its candidate status in 1999, Turkey is closely monitored by the EU to ensure its progress in its fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria, formulated to ensure that its political, economic, administrative and institutional structures comply with EU standards and the country is ready for membership.

The situation of Turkey’s historical minorities are related to this monitoring process through the political criteria ensuring a democratic regime that guarantees human rights and protection of minorities, and the evaluation of the candidate’s capacity to adapt to EU Common Foreign and Security Policy - including relations with states with connections to these minorities such as Greece and Armenia.

This paper aims to present a long-term overview of the EU’s evaluation of Turkey’s political institutions and foreign policy choices regarding the Armenian minority in Turkey. The methodology rests on content analysis of progress reports published by the Commission since 1998 to inform the Council, member states and the candidate

state. Since the Commission makes use of various sources of information (Turkish government, European Parliament, inter-state and non-governmental organisations), these reports provide reliable material for discerning the EU's institutional position on the situation. The paper makes use of additional sources such as declarations by the Turkish government and various EU institutions in order to contextualise developments over time.

3.4 “Religious Identity and Integration of Armenians as an Ethnic Group in Germany” (PhD) – Lilit Sargsyan

The research has been initiated with the aim of broadening and enriching the literature and information about the Armenians in Germany and putting emphasis on other issues than the Armenian Genocide, namely, to investigate their life experiences in view of their identities, sense of belonging, religion and integration.

The research answers the broad question: What are the religious, cultural and ethnic identities of Armenians, living in a different culture, and how integrated are they into the German society? It involves Armenians that have migrated to Germany from Armenia, Iran and Turkey, which in its turn entails first and second generations, that is to say, Armenians who were born and have grown up in other countries before arriving in Germany, and Armenians who were born or were very young when they arrived in Germany. The research sheds light upon differences between the two generations and the Armenians from the three regions in various aspects, concerning self-perceptions, practice of religion, sense of belonging, integration, etc.

Three methods have been applied in the research:

1. Participant Observation
2. Semi-structured interview
3. Questionnaire: the Centrality of Religiosity Scale

Even though the dissertation consists of various theories, it is more empirically oriented, since a special emphasis is put on the life experiences of the research participants. It evolves in the following succession of theories and empirical findings in

the framework of the concepts globalisation and hybridisation, religion and migration, integration, diaspora and ethnic groups.

Lilit Sargsyan was able to show the diversity within the Armenian minority in Germany. Focussing on chances and difficulties for the Armenian minority to integrating into German society. In her conclusion, she states that Armenians may have an advantage over other minorities integrating due to their Christian heritage. Though she makes the case that some Armenians struggle with an identity crisis, feeling disconnected from a national or cultural base, their religious identity could be helpful in creating an identity for themselves within German society.

3.5 “Syrian-Armenian refugees in Armenia” – Rima Atoyan

Rima Atoyan discussed one contemporary topic, which nowadays is widely analysed by many researchers - the refugee crisis, which began in Syria, 2011. As soon as the Civil War broke out, many people became refugees. In fact, most of them started searching safe places as to flee refugees. Inside these refugees were also Armenians who have started living there, since centuries ago, mostly their number grew up after the Armenian Genocide, when many survivors found safe shelter among Syrians. Against this background Rima Atoyan described the relocation of 25,000 Armenians from Syria to Armenia, their settlement in sometimes difficult regions, work on language and cultural issues between Western and Eastern Armenian traditions, the effort to move from relative prosperity in Syria to economic development less favourable situation in Armenia and the tendency to move from Armenia to third countries in America and the EU.

3.6 “The EU’s Impact on the Changing Status of Greek Minorities in Turkey” – Sinem Abka

Turkey-European Union relations have officially been started after Turkey’s application to the Union in 1959. Despite the interruptions in the bilateral relations due to the political problems Turkey had to struggle during 1980s they again gained momentum after Helsinki Summit of 1999 which gave Turkey the official candidacy status.

According to the concept of conditionality which refers to the compliance of the candidate countries to the Copenhagen Accession Criteria, Turkey was encouraged to start a radical reform process including the reform packages and amendments in the constitution.

In this regard one of the policy areas Turkish Republic intended to make amendments was on minorities. Turkey's minority definition has been based on *millet* system inherited by the Ottoman Empire. Due to its narrow-scoped minority definition, the minority communities who could benefit from the minority rights and the provisions that protect minorities guaranteed under the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 were limited to Orthodox Greeks, Armenians and the Jews, in other words to the non-muslim communities.

Since the early years of new established Turkish Republic the non-muslim communities had always been regarded as the components of external powers and the threats to national security. The government policies followed within this framework allowed the nationalization of the capital, remaining unresponsive to the organized attacks towards these communities and interposing their rights to keep their religious and cultural values alive and in the end resulted a sharp decrease in the numbers of non-muslim minorities by implicitly forcing them to migrate.

The aim to harmonize the minority policies with the EU and its democratic values has contributed to the status of these communities by providing them improved rights on the basis of the equal citizenship. The main objective of this study is to analyse the changes in the minority policies considering its evolution since the early years of Turkish Republic and to introduce the EU's impact on the status of Orthodox Greek minorities. The subsidiary sources that represent and analyse government policies towards minorities will be the main resource of this study and the case will be limited to the Orthodox Greek communities.

3.7 “Beyond Religious Identity: Fault Lines among Muslim Immigrants in Germany” – Gülay Türkmen

Dr. Gülay Türkmen introduced the Muslim perception in Germany in her presentation. According to her studies, Muslim minorities are perceived far too homogenous. This misconception leads to further problems. By observing the Muslim minorities, she

states that what should be kept in mind is the analysis of conflict potential between Muslim immigrants and refugees as well. Also, religious identity should not be seen as the only defining identity of Muslims unless they say so themselves.

3.8 “The integration policy of Russia towards the migrants' children (on migrants from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Armenia)” – Natalia Zhurbina

The aim of the lecture is to identify the specific and main problems of the migration policy in Russia towards the migrant's children on the example of immigrants from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Armenia.

The biggest number of immigrants are coming to Russia from the Post-Soviet area and namely from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, *Kirghizia* and *Armenia*. The main reason for their immigration to Russia is labour. This reason can be explained essentially by the socioeconomic problems in the countries of the Post-Soviet area after its collapse. The demographic growth in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan has led to an excess of supply over the demand on labour market. The opportunity of access to international labour market, in particular to Russia, contributes to territorial and social mobility.

The reasons for emigration from Armenia according to the Armenian research center “Region” are high level of unemployment, lack of well-paid jobs, disparity among the educational programs in HEIs and requirements of the labour market, big Armenian diaspora which helps compatriots in host-countries.

There are about 1,5 million children who came to Russia in 2016 r. aged 18 and more (it's about 10 % of the general migrant's flow. There are 7 to 16% of migrant's children from the total number of children in Russian schools (in central part of Russia) and most of them are in Moscow and its regions - 16,2%.

According to the informal sources about 60 thousand migrant's children are studying in Moscow nowadays¹ **and half of them - in Moscow schools. How many of them are not studying is unknown. And there can be two possible reasons for that: not knowing the Russian language and no registration.**

Migrants' children have low language level that's why they are accepted to schools and HEIs with a loss of 1-2 years (during this time they are learning the Russian

¹Кожанова Е. Исследователи впервые подсчитали число детей мигрантов в российских школах//Комсомольская правда. – 05.04.2019. - URL : <https://www.kp.ru/daily/26926.4/3973119/>.

language). This case is relevant especially for children from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The social surroundings of migrants' children whose parents have not been given Russian citizenship is restricted to their compatriots which makes the process of integration and adaptation of their children more difficult.

According to the results of the research Russian and migrants' children get on well. Children, whose parents are on good terms with Russian children's parents in the kindergarten and school, integrate better. Better results are usually shown by the parents from Armenia, less successful in this case are the parents from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The same situation is on the question of the communication with neighbors in a host country.

Migrant groups covered by this report integrate into the Russian society differently. Armenians integrate better than the Tajik and Uzbek. This is due to different reasons. Firstly, most of them are going to earn money and come back home, and that's why they think they don't have to learn the Russian language and to communicate with the Russian people closer. Besides they work hard and haven't got enough time to study. Russians perceive them as "strangers" more often especially in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg, which is their most popular destination. One of the reasons of this perception is the image of construction workers who are nicknamed in Russian "Jamshids". This image is supported in mass media, especially in comedy shows.

One more reason is their religion and fear of spreading radical Islam among them. These fears are strengthened gradually in mass media especially when we hear the news about disclosed terrorist groups which were planning terrorist attacks in the Russian Federation. And people from Central Asia are often members of these groups. According to the Attorney General's Office in Russia, there were prevented 19 terrorist attacks just in half a year of 2018.²

As it is claimed by Muslim priests, the citizens of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan coming to Russia are active believers. They go to mosques and practise all ceremonies regularly. In this respect mosques are not only a part of migrants' homeland but they help them with money and different useful information. That's why mosques must be one of the main actors in solving the Muslim migrants' radicalization problems.

²В России в 2018 году предотвращено 19 терактов//Известия. – 03.08.2018 г. – URL : <https://iz.ru/773948/2018-08-03/v-rossii-v-2018-godu-predotvrashcheno-19-teraktov>.

And in this case the youth and children need special attention of the state. A big number of migrants come to Russia from the countryside and get the first experience of the city life. And they perceive it differently. Somebody can't cope with daily life and becomes an easy prey for extremists.

One of the problems is the direction of integration programs, most part of them take place within the migrants' community and don't help them to better integrate to a host society (in real life).

To change that it's needed to:

- develop the detailed migrants registration system and common approach to migrants' children integration and adaptation programs with attention to specific regional experience
- delineate the competences between the federal and regional levels

on the regional level:

- to introduce the lessons of Russian as a foreign language for migrants' children because not knowing the language leads to their isolation from Russian children
- to organize retraining programs for school teachers dedicated to the work with children of other ethnic groups and to pay special attention to the integration programs not only for migrants and their families but also for Russian families (especially when there is good experience of such programs in Germany)
- to form the positive or neutral background on migration questions.

Natalia Zhurbina pointed out, that most migrants are coming to Russia from the Post-Soviet area. The main reason for immigration is labour. She focussed specially on immigrants childrens, who don't necessarily learn russian. This effects isolation from Russian children. The importants of learning the language is not to underrate. Specific support in this field is necessary in order to establish a common ground for communication to enable each other to remove prejudices. She allocates this also as a challenge for the religious communities to solve the Muslim migrants' radicalization problem. She describes both sides, the one of the minority, aswell as the side of the

majority. Problems on both sides determine the present in Russia. A common dialog could be a first step. She is pursuing a moderate discours oriented approach.

3.9 “Religious Minorities in Early Republic Iraq (1958-1968): Between granting rights and discrimination” – Majid Hassan Ali

Majid Hassan Ali summarized in his contribution the results of his dissertation. He compared the policy of the Iraqi government to religious minorities in the early Iraqi Republic after the fall of the monarchy (1958-1968). He focused especially on the situation of the Yezidis.

3.10 “The Impact of the Current Political and Social Developments on the Witness of the Churches: A Time for Spiritual Rebuilding?” – George Sabra

Dr. George Sabra is the President of the Evangelical Near East School of Theology in Beirut (NEST). He spoke at the opening of the SIMO-consultation, which was attended by the workshop participants.

[...] When we first began planning this conference together, some two years ago, we eventually came up with the current title. I distinctly remember that the German side suggested the first part: “The Impact of the Current Political and Social Developments on the Witness of the Churches”, and NEST inserted the subtitle, “A Time for Spiritual Rebuilding?” with a question mark. We had hoped, at the time, that the war in Syria would be over by April 2019, and we could talk about spiritual rebuilding, as other sectors of society in our region are beginning to talk about the material, political, economic, and social rebuilding of that war-torn nation. Of course, our concern was not only with Syria but with Lebanon and the neighboring countries as well, for the whole region has been and continues to be affected by political and social developments impacting the witness of the churches. As we can all see, although many things have changed militarily and politically over the past two years, the crisis in Syria is not yet over, and this makes our discussions here more difficult. We are still in the midst of it, and so it is not easy to draw lessons or make sense of it all and to analyze and come up with ideas for the future, for the outcome is not yet at hand. Nevertheless,

we are not completely in the dark, and we can still say some things about it which, hopefully, would lay out the impact on the churches and contribute ideas and insights to spiritual rebuilding.

Allow me to begin by briefly stating facts about the impact of the recent political events on the Christians of the region:

- Christian presence has been drastically affected in the countries of Syria and Iraq. It is estimated that at least half of Syria's Christian population has left the country; two thirds of Iraq's Christian population have left. Lebanon and Palestine are not faring much better, where the situation may be compared to the slow bleeding of a wound, compared to massive loss of blood in the cases of Syria and Iraq. Christian physical and numerical presence has been severely reduced.
- Christians who leave do not, on the whole, come back. Those who left did not plan a temporary absence; they pulled out everything and left. Once you settle in countries that accept you and offer you better conditions of life, you do not normally want to come back and reverse your better situation. The absolute majority of Syrian Christians are not refugees in Lebanon, Turkey or Jordan. They are mainly in western countries and Australia, and it has not been our experience that such emigrants reverse their movement. Lebanon, a country of continuous and long experience in emigration, is a witness to that.
- Those Christians who have stayed – whether in Syria or Iraq - are on the whole frustrated and deeply disappointed; they were living under what they had believed to be the strong and firm reality of one cohesive society bound together by nationalism and Arab identity that united them with everybody else in the country, only to discover that this cohesion and common identity quickly evaporated when religious passions surged.
- Wounds won't heal quickly at all. The experience of one's life-long neighbors and supposedly co-citizens turning against one because of religious and ethnic differences – experienced in some parts of Iraq and some places in Syria, shocked many Christians, in many cases, beyond repair and reconciliation! The inability of the region to embrace true pluralism; the perception of the different Other – especially the religiously different Other

(and this does not apply to Christians and Muslims only, but also to Muslim versus Muslim) as the enemy reawakened the old fears that the region has not been able to deal adequately with the problem of minorities. Whether one likes the designation 'minorities' or not, the events and developments in the region are proving once again that the problem of minorities has re-asserted itself as the main problem. It is now put in terms of accepting the Other. What have been destroyed are the attempts at pluralism, and this is what needs rebuilding. I will come back to this later.

- What has also emerged very clearly in these events, although not something new, but it has become more manifest and even dangerous, is that Christian communities in the region have had different historical experiences in their different political states, and they have interpreted their being Christian in those states in different and often conflicting ways. To date, there is no agreement among the Christians and churches of the region on the main roots(s) of their problems and, consequently, no consensus on solutions to their predicament.
- The future of Christians – Christian communities and individuals – is inextricably linked to the future of Islam. There is no need to dwell on the fact that the Middle East is a region of the world where religion plays a central role in the whole of life. Islam, the religion of the overwhelming majority, is not just a religion in the narrow sense of the word, namely, revolving around, and restricted to, spiritual precepts and worship instructions and relation to God of the soul and the community; Islam is a total outlook on life which includes the spiritual, the political, cultural, social and even economic aspects of life. Islam, whether in its Arab, Persian or Turkish versions, is a total outlook that shapes all aspects of peoples' lives. The future of the region depends on the future of Islam in its different forms. This is not new, for it has been the case for centuries, but it is again clear and manifest today precisely because there is an Islamic religious resurgence in the region – Turkish, Persian and Arab.
- The future of Islam in the region is not yet clear. "Where to Islam?" is not yet visible, but what is clear is that there is at present a twofold battle over Islam in the region today which is not only affecting the Middle East but also the rest of the world. There is a battle over the body of Islam and a battle over

the soul of Islam. The battle over the body of Islam is manifest in the inter-Islamic political, military, and economic struggle in the Middle Eastern - a struggle for power between states and political and militant groupings. It is represented in the rivalry and polarization between Iran and Saudi Arabia, in the ambitions of Turkey and Iran to be the superpowers of the region; in the projects of militant and extremist organizations and projects such as al-Qaeda and its descendants and ancestors: ISIS, Muslim Brotherhood, and all that falls under militant, political Islam. This is a struggle for power and control of states and territories. It is a struggle between Sunnis and Shi'is, but also among Sunni's themselves. This is still going on, of course, and it is apparent, for example, in the war in Syria, in Iraq, in the Saudi and Arabian Gulf States versus Qatar, in Bahrain itself, in Yemen, in Egypt, in the political tensions in Lebanon, among the Palestinians themselves (between Hamas and the Palestinian authority), and in the split among Arab and Islamic countries concerning the attitude to and perception of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The battle for the soul of Islam, however, is of a spiritual, theological, intellectual and cultural nature. It is between conservative, fundamentalist political Islam on the one side, and reformist, revisionist, renewed or transformed Islam on the other. One hears less about this battle perhaps because it is overshadowed and threatened by the noisier and physically more destructive political, military and economic battle over the body of Islam.

In light of the facts stated above, what can we say about the witness of the churches and about spiritual re-building?

Our role as Christians and churches has a lot to do with re-building, but it is on the level of spiritual re-building. Spiritual re-building involves many things, but I would here like to focus on two most essential things:

First, to have a role in spiritual re-building, we must be able to remain and persevere. There can be no spiritual rebuilding if there are no Christians left to participate in it, to have a role. This is an obvious fact and prerequisite, but it needs to be said and underlined because the drastic decline in the number and abilities of Christians in the region threatens their very survival and mere existence. Christians in the Middle East

cannot remain and persevere without the understanding and support of the worldwide Christian communities and churches. It would not be too difficult to demonstrate, though we don't have time for it here, that, historically, the Christians of the Middle East, have never been unrelated to Christian churches and institutions outside the region, and that, notwithstanding some negative effects of that relationship, much good and many benefits have accrued to Middle Eastern Christians as a result of this relationship beyond the region: ecclesiastically, spiritually, theologically, socially, educationally, culturally, and materially. The same remains true today. Spiritual rebuilding in the Middle East today and in the future cannot be undertaken by the Christians of the region alone without the partnership and support of our sisters and brothers worldwide. The whole SiMO program, and our presence here today, if I may add at this point, falls under this concern.

Second, survival and spiritual rebuilding involve and depend on the ability and willingness of the Christians of the Middle East to participate in the battle for the soul of Islam. Clearly, Christian communities and churches in the region cannot and should not get directly involved in the battle over the body of Islam. To be sure, Christians, as communities and as individuals, suffer great collateral damage because of the inter-Islamic struggle, but Christians have no role there as Christian communities. There are no Christian states in the region and churches are not political parties; their role and witness are not directly in the political arena of the struggle for power and the struggle for the body of Islam. Christians are, as I said, definitely adversely affected by this struggle, but they have no role as churches. In the battle over the body of Islam we have no place; we have no business; we have no mission. We ought, however, to be able to participate in the battle over the soul of Islam, but: with Muslims, not against them; with their consent, not in spite of them; and out of genuine concern for the future of Islam, and therefore our future.

The events which have occurred in the Islamic world of the Middle East since the last two decades of the 20th century – beginning with the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the assassination of President Sadat by militant Jihadis in 1981, the participation of the Jihadis in the fight to oust the Soviet Union from Afghanistan (and the rise of Bin Laden and Al-Qa'eda) up until ISIS and all that took place in between – all these developments have gradually awakened some Muslim thinkers and religious leaders to the need for a radical critique of these developments and prompted them to call for

a reconstruction of “a new Islamic religious and cultural narrative”³, to quote the words of Radwan el-Sayyed. El Sayyed, a prominent Muslim Sunni scholar, well-respected in many part of the Islamic world, to mention but one example, calls for precisely this critical and radical campaign to build a new religious and cultural narrative on three bases, which he elaborated in a lecture held at N.E.S.T. earlier this academic year: 1. Regaining religious tranquility by abandoning that deadly duality of Islam as both a religion and a political state; 2. Renewal of the experiment of the national state, the state of good governance in order to pull away the youth from the illusions of an Islamic religious state; and 3. Correcting the relation of Islam to the world by not treading the road of terrorizing the world or being afraid of it, but by hoping and working to enter into its order and interact within its norms and rules so as to safeguard the stability and interests of Islamic nations and peoples and states that are a positive and constructive part of the world order.⁴ I mention this not in order to go into the details of a current discussion in Islam, but to highlight that in that very lecture, Prof. El-Sayyed said that in order to achieve these three things, Muslims need the cooperation and the experience of their fellow Christians, for they have been through this and are still going through it. And this is not just a lone voice that we hear, although such voices are not always heard loudly. In this regard, I would like to mention a very interesting lecture that was given by a Lebanese Muslim (Shi’ite) journalist and intellectual in the Kingdom of Bahrain some weeks ago entitled: “Beyond Fundamentalist Islam: The Reforming Role of Islam of the West.” Jihad el-Zein expressed his disappointment that a whole century of attempted reforms in Middle Eastern/Arab Islam have failed, which has led to a profound crisis. None of those attempts were able to stop the onward march of fundamentalist Sunni and Shi’ite Islam. Therefore, says el-Zein, it is a legitimate, practical and effective project to look to the Muslims of the west – those who are living in western countries and under western civilization – in hope for reform and renewal. The Islamic East has exhausted itself, and it cannot achieve the requisite change. “The liberating oxygen comes today from the western academic experience...Will the Muslim elites who are involved in western culture be able to lift Islam out of its present crisis? That is the decisive question today.”⁵ Here is a possible role for Christians in the West to participate, along with their Muslim compatriots, in this project of reform

³ Radwan el-Sayyed, Ad-Din wal Dawla wal Ihya’at al Islamiyyah” Paper presented at the “Forum of Christian-Muslim Thought” at the Near East School of Theology, Nov. 13, 2018.

⁴ Ibid., p 2 f.

⁵ J. el-Zein, “Beyond Fundamentalist Islam” *An-Nahar*. Feb. 28, 2019, p. 9.

and renewal, but again, with Muslims, not against them, with their consent, not in spite of them. I would like to point out here that these are courageous voices that are speaking in the region, not in the relative security of the West by what may be labeled Muslim dissidents.

Spiritual rebuilding of the Middle East, and not just of the churches in the lands of crisis, requires a change in the spiritual, intellectual and cultural climate of the region. The main task and initiative are to be undertaken by the religious majority, the Muslims, but there is also a role for their Christian co-citizens in their relationship with Muslims and their positive attitude to efforts for reform and renewal. There are calls for “renewal” and re-presentation among some Muslim leaders and thinkers, as we have seen. The term “reform” may not be acceptable to many Muslim thinkers and leaders today, though some do not shy away from it. Acceptance of the Other as Other is the main problem. Recognition of pluralism and equality and freedom of belief and conscience are the heart of the matter. Thus, all efforts working towards that goal contribute to spiritual re-building. What we witnessed in the United Arab Emirates last February – the encounter between Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, in the presence of a host of Christian and Islamic leaders, and the declaration of a joint statement on “Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together”, is precisely what is needed. That encounter and the declaration that it produced is an excellent illustration of the kind of Christian participation with Islam on the journey of spiritual re-building in the Middle East, as well as the rest of the world. This is not the place to go through that document in detail, but suffice it to say that in its form and content, it provides grounds for hope, if it is heeded and followed up. It was not simply a major Christian leader and a major Islamic leader coming together to speak about, and to, Muslims and Christians about Christian-Muslim relations. It was a statement by high-ranking officials in those two religions addressed to all peoples – an invitation to all “who have faith in God and faith in human fraternity” to unite and work together, to advance a culture of mutual respect, tolerance, pluralism and dialogue. It spoke, not primarily in the name of a Pope and an Imam, but in the name of the poor, the marginalized, the downtrodden, the refugees, the victims, and it highlighted situations of injustice and exploitation and discrimination, and called for the promotion of peace, freedom, justice, acceptance of others, full citizenship, human rights, freedom of conscience, etc. If the region of the Middle East walks on that road, we are definitely on the path of spiritual re-building.

That is precisely what I had in mind when I said that Christians must be able and willing to participate in the battle for the soul of Islam, assuming of course that we remain true to the soul of Christianity.

3.11 Opening Speech: SIMO-Consultation – Prof. Dr. Martin Tamcke

[...] Standing here today, I near the end of my professional career and find myself in a time of farewells and I am ruminating about the things I have done at the university over the past 40 years, particularly with regard to the Orient. So let me first of all take this opportunity to thank my colleagues for the years of cooperation and mutual trust. I never took it for granted and I consider it an unwarranted gift. I also want to thank the EMS who took care of management for all these years, as well as everyone who supported the programme. My grateful thanks go out to the staff of the scholarship programme of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) which now belongs to "Brot für die Welt" (Bread for the World), without whom this programme would not have stood a chance.

For the most part, I was involved in setting up study programmes like Euroculture and Intercultural Theology, but the beginning of my work also marked the end of certain enterprises. It was impossible to keep up all the activities that the professors from Göttingen had set up for Christians in the Orient over the decades. Three professors worked with a focus on Christians in the Orient from the faculty of theology alone – Werner Strothmann, Gernot Wießner, and Wolfgang Hage. They were accompanied by colleagues from other departments with research in the same field: Heinrich Hussmann who studies liturgy particularly in the Syriac Orthodox Church, Guntram Koch whose research concerns aspects of Christian archeology, and Ulrich Berner who is interested in syncretism in this region. When I started my work here in Göttingen it transpired that I would be doing it alone. Inevitably some of the projects we had established and build up for decades came to an end. From then on I was the only professor of theology with a job description that officially included the Christian Orient, which meant I could and should spend a third of my time on this responsibility. I had to learn what it meant to be the remnant of a great tradition – an epigone so to speak – of previous generations of researchers. But such personal parallels should not pull our attention away from the serious topic we were given by our Lebanese friends.

Can something truly be rebuilt after it has been destroyed? Buildings can be reconstructed, of course, but are they the same as they have been before? Can things return to the way they were, as if nothing happened? If we consider human relationships, we usually observe that a failed marriage, a broken-up family, or a friendship that has drifted apart often causes a tear that cannot be fixed. When things fall apart it does not necessarily translate to simple destruction. In many cases, destruction indicates that the conditions have not been ideal to begin with. So it might not be such a good idea to erase any sign of destruction, because this would also take away any chance for future generations to learn from the relics of previous failures. Whenever there is a need to fix and rebuild there are also people who prefer easy solutions and would rather cover up the unbearable aspects of the past. They want to avoid painful reminders of a time of destruction that could stir things up again. But it is part of the harsh reality that separates the "before and after" that some things are irretrievably lost. Will this apply to Syria and the fact that a majority of the Christian population has left the country? In Iraq it seems likely that only a minority of the Christian population will return. In Turkey the case is already clear: the Christians who fled 50 years ago during the war between the Turkish government and the PKK have not returned to the region, except for a few individuals. This has dire consequences for the Christian minority that stayed in Tur Abdin. The situation changes for a community that is no longer significant in numbers with reference to the overall population. And it affects the entire diaspora, which is notably larger than the remaining Christians in the Orient. The situation holds painful consequences for both sides: one side feels abandoned by those who left and never returned, the other side feels cut off from the homeland that shaped them.

Under these circumstances, how can church be revived instead of just tending to its remnants? How can we apply a forward-looking approach to all these destructive forces of ignorance and distrust, these attempts at reducing the suffering or one's own guilt with explanations for these outbursts of brutal violence?

Each semester I talk to my students about the current situation Christians face in the Orient. We have turned to literature, read authors from the region – predominantly texts that have been translated to German. The student tried to grasp the piety these authors showed in the face of chaos. In Egypt we can observe a significant rise in martyr theology, particularly after the execution of 21 young Copts in Libya. Theologians who support this approach as an adequate way of dealing with current events state that this

was the only way of making sure that love rather than destruction had the last word. This love should include the perpetrator as well. These are big thoughts and they evoke strong feeling. But do they really contribute to rebuilding and recovery?

About two years ago the EKD and the Oriental Orthodox Churches started a dialogue here in Germany. Whenever we have such an exchange with Eastern European partners, we like to include representatives of our associated Protestant Churches. Not, however, on this occasion. Maybe it was due to the variety of geographical locations they would have had to cover, or it was due to the fact these partners were primarily affiliated to the Protestant Church in the United States and not so much to the EKD. Whatever the case might have been, when the chairman of the EKD council expressed his delight at welcoming the patriarchs to Germany for the anniversary of the Reformation, the Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church reacted quite strongly: if he had known this, he would not have come. He thought they had gathered for prayers of intercession on behalf of persecuted and oppressed Christians in the Near East. According to him, the Reformation had only brought schisms and disagreements to their homelands. "Naturally", this difficult phase of the meeting – and it was not the only one – is not included in the official publications of the EKD. Hence, the awkward silence that followed this moment was never recorded either. At our conference on the Reformation at the Near Eastern School of Theology in Beirut our Orthodox representatives showed a more positive reaction. Essentially, they acknowledged the existence of Protestants as an established historical fact. Such oppositions are innocuous compared to violent conflicts of war. But war does not only give vent to oppositions, it can also create them and in turn exclude people from a community. The individual is no longer in focus, but instead becomes a representative of something alienating, which again, opens a door for violence.

Now, how can we restore trust? I am not sure such a trust ever truly existed between the religious groups before. In the past, the relationship between these groups usually took the shape of a mere acquaintance. In practice, this often amounted to simply accepting the reality of each other's existence but this did not suffice as a basis for potential cooperation. How often have I listened to troubling and sweeping remarks about Muslims in Christian circles in the Orient, and how often have I been likewise astounded by the lack of knowledge about Christian communities among Muslims.

On occasion, it was a third level – the secular, political level – that brought Christians and Muslims together; be it for the renewal of the Arabic language, culture, and literature or in order to organise a secular state system. For centuries, a judicial framework was provided by the treaties of protection, followed by the millet system, which governed the contact between Christians and the Sunni majority population. This mentality still influences decisions, as can be seen for instance in the words of Pope Shenouda, who kept issuing warnings not to join the Muslim protestors in their attempt to overthrow the president. It is not just in Egypt that young Christians could be seen pushing their way forwards further than their real circumstances would allow. These historical circumstances have established roots, but there are other roots to be considered alongside them, such as the knowledge of centuries when Christians and Muslims worked side by side on Arabic renewal, socialism, Arabism, and Secularism. Renewal must entail regeneration on both the inside and the outside. If the churches cannot restore their vigour and vitality for the remaining Christian community, they cannot expect to play a pivotal role in the region considering their small numbers. It is not important which of the numbers given by Oehring is actually correct – whether there are 300,000 or 700,000 Christians left in the country. Both numbers show only too clearly how significantly the number of Christians has dropped. Protestants have experience in being a minority. Others could learn from them. In some regions of Syria, which have been under ISIS rule for a long time, the continued existence of many churches is at stake. For instance, the Apostolic Church of the East, particularly the congregation south of Khabur, realised how vulnerable their situation was and still is.

It transpires today that the church in Germany was too eager to return to old ideals when they started to rebuild after the Second World War and they stayed on that path until the early 1960s. It seemed to them that everything was better that came before the disastrous events of violence and the extermination of minorities, especially Jews. Everything that had been fought and disparaged for over 12 years now seemed to be the right direction for the future. There is a reason why we call this phase of rebuilding our church "restoration". In the East this was only possible rudimentary, because the church soon came under pressure from the state. In the West on the other hand, the plan seemed to work. Although the church bore its own share of guilt under the Nazi regime, it suddenly became an institution of moral guidance and political influence again. But the sons and daughters of the next generation soon put

an end to this fiction in the 1960s. They exposed sympathisers and proved that followers of the regime stayed in their offices or returned to their positions by indirect means. There was another impelling force that brought new life to the church: peace movements, ecological efforts, and aspirations for worldwide justice grew inside church circles. Slowly but surely old values were replaced by new ones, particularly with regard to the way of life. Finally even the last Lutheran Church had introduced the ordination of women and crucial changes in law had been imposed with the support of people involved in the church. This change, however, was also accompanied by more people leaving the church. People felt there was a rift between the appealing aspects of the church and the institutional framework that was necessary to ensure its survival. More and more often they took the liberty to withdraw from this community of faith and solidarity. Yet two things have contributed to the survival of the church to this day: on the one hand, the sensible use of traditional practices, like church music or established forms of meditation or bible studies; on the other hand, the participation in processes of social change, be it the welcoming culture towards migrants or World-shops. It requires both: a connection to passed millennia as well as a complete devotion to current issues. The Christian communities in Syria will only have a chance at a public future if they also consider the future of their Muslim neighbours. The German Christians will likewise have to consider the future of their fellow citizens without religious affiliations. Any universal success also serves to strengthen the churches that contributed to it. The peaceful revolution in the former GDR with its prayers for peace is just one example, the anti-nuclear movement and its sympathisers in the church is another. These activities bear the risk of dissolving externally which makes devoted care for the internal foundation all the more necessary. It is among the challenges of a new beginning to further the knowledge of the soul, which has been ruined by destruction and violence or the spiritless devotion to a mechanical life that weakens the individual instead of strengthening them. To help the individual find wealth against all internal and external constraints, to support them in their perceptions and their sociality, to exercise them in a way of life that strives for what is above (spoken according to the Epistle to the Colossians): so joining in the original Christian experience of dying and being born again every day seems to me a way in which the new does not deny the terrible old, but sets the past aside for the benefit of a new beginning, thus setting out on a path to a future that is yet unknown.

4. Attachments

4.1 “Minoritäten im Islam” – Dr. Ertuğrul Şahin

1. Einführend: allgemeine Anmerkungen

Wenn in Medien, Politik oder in der Öffentlichkeit im Westen von Minoritäten im Islam gesprochen wird, sind hauptsächlich die Probleme der nichtmuslimischen Minderheiten gemeint. Die Rede ist von der Verletzung ihrer Menschenrechte, Unterdrückung, Verfolgung, Ermordung u. ä. m. und weitestgehend der Überpolitisierung der Islamdiskurse seit gut zwei Jahrzehnten geschuldet. Der inhaltlich-diskursive Fokus intensiviert die Wahrnehmung, dass es die Verletzung der Minderheitenrechte in außermuslimischen Teilen der Welt kaum gäbe. Der Eindruck ist kaum zu bändigen, dass die Minderheitenproblematik das Alleinstellungsmerkmal der muslimischen Länder und des Islam wäre.

Diese verbreitete, öffentlich-mediale Wahrnehmung hat drei grundsätzliche Defizite in der Problemdiagnose, die dem Minderheitenthema nicht angemessen sind und somit zur Lösung bestehender und in Teilen gravierender Problemlage nicht beitragen können. (1) Die Minderheitenproblematik ist kein Alleinstellungsmerkmal der muslimischen Länder: Überall auf der Welt, von USA bis China, von Russland bis Südafrika; gibt es Verletzung der Menschen- und Minderheitenrechte; die insgesamt in die Reflektion und Analyse aufgenommen werden müssen. Hier sei an die aktuelle Unterdrückung und Vertreibung der Muslime in Myanmar oder in China erinnert. Die einseitige Betrachtung führt unvermeidlich zur überhöhten, apologetischen Abwehrhaltung. (2) Sie ist auch nicht einzig und allein eine der *religiösen* Gruppen. Die Auffassung von Minderheiten muss auch in theologisch geführten Diskursen auf die ethnischen, kulturellen und unterschiedlichen sozialen Gruppen und Milieus wie Gender und Geschlecht mit gleicher Intensität ausgedehnt werden. In der Gesamtdiagnose darf die Einbeziehung der Notlage der Minderheiten innerhalb derselben Religion (innerislamisch, innerchristlich etc.) auch nicht fehlen. (3) Die Minoritätenproblematik ist nicht nur ein religiöses, politisches oder juristisches Phänomen. Sie hat eine soziopsychologische Dimension, die durch ein multikausales Faktorenbündel (destruktive Geschichtsschreibung, Nationalismen, Fremdenhass, Existenzängste etc.) strukturell verursacht sein kann und in formal-institutionellen Analysen oft übersehen wird. Sie ist nicht minder relevant und drückt sich im

umfassenderen gesellschaftlichen Umgang mit Minderheiten aus. Hierzu gehören soziale Diffamierungen und Ausgrenzungen, die die lebensweltliche Chancengleichheit und gesellschaftliche Teilhabe verhindern. An der Bezeichnung „Ausländer“ lässt sich dieser Aspekt exemplifizieren und in den Benachteiligungen bei der Arbeits- oder Wohnungssuche paradehaft aufzeigen.

Um einer unzulässigen politischen Überladung und Missbrauch des Religiösen – schließlich der Offenbarung und der heiligen Schriften – vorbeugen zu können, dürfen diese Dimensionen nicht vernachlässigt werden. Im Hintergrund folgender Überlegungen und Ausführungen liegt der Gedanke, dass das Verständnis der religiösen Quellen und insgesamt die Religionsauffassung sowie die religiöse Praxis der ständigen Wandlung unterworfen sind. Infolge dessen können sie ohne die Erkundung der Historizität und Kontextualität nicht nur der Offenbarung sondern auch ihrer Auslegungen nicht erfasst werden. Nach diesen allgemeinen Anmerkungen bietet sich an, drei Analyseraster zum Status der Minderheiten im islamischen Kontext und dem aktuellen Umgang in islamischen Ländern zu berücksichtigen: (1) Die philosophisch-ethischen Grundsätze, (2) das Regelwerk der Scharia bzw. das kanonisierte Recht der Jurisprudenz (fiqh) und (3) das historische Erbe bzw. die geschichtliche Entwicklung.

2. Philosophisch-ethische Grundsätze

Die *Kernbotschaft* der Offenbarung, die man als den „Kategorischen Imperativ des Islam“ bezeichnen kann, lässt sich in philosophisch-ethischen Grundsätzen mit einem universalistischen Charakter subsumieren. In aller Kürze sollen drei Prinzipien angesprochen werden, die die Grundlagen für Menschen- und Minderheitenrechte bilden.

Die Gleichheit der Menschen geht sowohl aus dem Koran hervor, als auch aus der späteren Lehre und Praxis. Wenn ich es behaupte, meine ich, dass andere Deutungen und Verlautbarungen und die negativen Anteile des historischen Erbes, die es ohne Zweifel auch gibt, nicht darüber hinwegtauschen sollten. Diese koranische Position, wie ich sie verstehen möchte, wurde von vielen Gelehrten der philosophischen und mystischen Denkrichtungen vertreten.

Die Menschheit wird durch die koranische Kernbotschaft angesprochen, auch wenn viele andere Stellen die entstehende kleine Gemeinde der muslimischen Gläubigen ansprechen. Diese inklusivistisch anmutende Sicht, in der sicherlich der Aufruf zum

monotheistischen Glauben (*tauḥīd*: Einheit und Einzigartigkeit Gottes) zentral ist, betrachtet die Menschen ohne Ausnahme vor Gott gleich. Dass die Ungläubigen oder Andersgläubigen später anders behandelt wurden, ändert an diesem Grundsatz nichts. Es ändert auch nichts daran, dass die Ungläubigen (*mušrikūn*) ständig zur Rechenschaftspflicht ermahnt werden. Grundsätzlich gilt: Die Ermahnung ist in der Hauptsache auf die jenseitige Rechenschaft bezogen und nicht auf diesseitige. Die Koranstellen, die den Zwang in der Religion verbieten und auf die die Muslime bei jeder Gelegenheit verweisen, deuten darauf hin.

Der Grundsatz wird untermauert durch ursprüngliche Bedeutung der Umma, die aus den Koranstellen mit unterschiedlichen Verwendungszusammenhängen des Begriffs und aus der Praxis des Vertrags von Medina herausgelesen werden kann. Auch die Überlieferungen vom Propheten deuten darauf hin, so auch nachdrücklich seine historische Botschaft (Abschiedspredigt) mit den Worten:

„O ihr Menschen! Euer Gott ist der eine, gleiche Gott! Auch euer Vater ist ein- und derselbe! Ihr seid alle aus Adam hervorgegangen, und Adam ging aus Erde hervor! Vor Gott ist jener von euch der Beste, der am gottesfürchtigsten ist. Es gibt keine Überlegenheit der Araber über Nichtaraber und der Nichtaraber über Araber, ebenso wenig der Schwarzen (Roten) über die Weißen oder der Weißen über die Roten, es sei denn, sie seien gottesfürchtiger! Wisset, dass ich euch dieses kundgetan habe! Gott, du sei mein Zeuge! Daher ist ein jeder von euch Anwesenden verpflichtet, jenen, die nicht anwesend sind, dieses zu überbringen.“

Nächstenliebe: Die Liebe und Achtung der Schöpfung Gottes können im Ausdruck der Nächstenliebe wiedergegeben werden. Hierfür gibt es unzählige Überlieferungen vom Propheten (*hadīth*), die die Grundlage des berühmten Spruchs vom großen Mystiker Rumi bilden: „Ich liebe das Geschöpf um des Schöpfers Willen“. Dieses ethische Prinzip ist ohne Zweifel zu den zentralen Handlungsmaximen im Umgang mit allen Menschen zu zählen:

Gerechtigkeit: Sie gilt als das grundlegendste Ordnungsprinzip in der Gesellschaft. Trotz aller unterschiedlichen inhaltlichen Verständnisse in den Schulen der Glaubenslehre (*‘aqīda*) ist es so zentral, dass es als die Gerechtigkeit für alle Menschen verstanden werden muss.

Weitere ethische Prinzipien: In allen – zumindest in sunnitischen, aber auch darüber hinaus – sind ethische Prinzipien kanonisiert worden, die für alle Menschen gelten: Schutz des Lebens, Schutz des Glaubens, Schutz des Verstandes, Schutz der Ehre

und Schutz des Vermögens. Der muslimische Menschenrechtsdiskurs in unserer Gegenwart konnte und kann über diese Prinzipien nicht hinwegsehen, auch wenn in diskursiven Details unterschiedliche Positionen vertreten werden und die praktische Umsetzung in muslimischen Ländern alles andere als normkonform ist.

Betrachtet man die konkrete juristische Kanonisierung einzelner Handlungsfelder, die geschichtliche Entwicklung und die frühere und gegenwärtige gesellschaftliche Praxis – auch die des Propheten (*sunna*) näher, kann sicherlich ein anders Bild entstehen. Hierfür ist dennoch eine nüchterne und reflektierte Betrachtung notwendig, die die historischen Kontextbedingungen stärker ins Blickfeld rücken muss.

3. Status der Minoritäten in der islamischen Geschichte und im Regelwerk der Scharia⁶

In islamischen Quellen der ersten Generationen finden wir kein Regelwerk, welches ein *Minderheiten*konzept nach unserem heutigen Verständnis, in dem die individuellen Rechte als die kollektiven im Vordergrund stehen, anbieten könnte. Die koranische Offenbarung, die als interaktive Kommunikation zwischen dem Sender und Empfänger, daher in ihrer Sprache unter den Zeit- und Kontextbedingungen der arabischen Halbinsel des 7. Jahrhunderts verstanden werden sollte, redet in konkret adressierten Aussagen von denjenigen, die vor Ort zu treffen sind: Gläubige, Ungläubige bzw. Polytheisten (*mušrikūn*) und Glaubensgemeinschaften (*ahl al-kitāb* / Leute der Schrift).⁷

Die Aussagen des Korans zu den Schriftbesitzern sind ambivalent bzw. so mehrdeutig, dass bei jedem Vers genau nachgeschaut werden muss, welcher Offenbarungsanlass möglicherweise dahinter stand. Während an einzelnen Stellen die religiösen Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Leuten der Schrift und Muslimen betont werden (z.B. Koran 3:64 und 29:46), wird an anderen Stellen deutlich gemacht, dass viele Angehörige der Schriftbesitzern „Ungläubige“ sind. Ähnlich zum Heiluniversalismus im Christentum wird unter muslimischen Gelehrten bis heute diskutiert, wie dies genau zu verstehen ist, ob sie z.B. mit ins Paradies gelangen oder nicht.

Hier lässt sich auch eine Unterscheidung zwischen mekkanischen und medinensischen Suren machen. Während die mekkanischen Suren in der Hauptsache

⁶ Der Hinweis auf die doppelte Bedeutung des Begriffs ist immer angebracht, wenn über die Scharia gesprochen wird: (1) Scharia als der rechte Weg zum Gott, (2) das islamische Recht der Jurisprudenz.

⁷ Darüber, welche Religionen bzw. Glaubensgemeinschaften außerhalb der Christen und Juden zu den Leuten der Schrift (*ahl al-kitāb*) gehören, wird bis heute gestritten.

den monotheistischen Gottesglauben betonen und keine konkreten Angaben über den gesellschaftlichen Status machen, werden die späteren medinensichen Suren in dieser Hinsicht konkreter. In Sure 9:29 wird zum Kampf gegen diese Ungläubigen aufgerufen, bis sie den Tribut (*ǧizya*) entrichten. Die *ǧizya* deutet bereits auf die Kontextbedingungen in Medina hin, wo der Vertrag von Medina vorliegt. Es ist anzunehmen, dass die medinensische Vereinbarung durch die Offenbarung als gesellschaftliche Gegebenheit angenommen wird, ohne sie aber als unveränderlich zu erklären. Eine weitere Ausführung der einzelnen koranischen Verhältnisbestimmungen zwischen Muslimen und Leuten der Schrift lässt sich hier mit dem erneuten Verweis erübrigen, dass die einzelnen Offenbarungsanlässe und auf die Ambivalenzen zwischen den Versen sowie auf die Ambiguität der einzelnen Verse ins Visier genommen werden müssten.

Die Praxis des Propheten und der ersten Generationen lassen den Schluss zu, dass der Umgang mit „Anderen“ im ethischen Zeichen der koranischen Botschaft aber unter den Gegebenheiten des historischen Kontexts praktisch gestaltet wurde. Sowohl die Abkehr des Propheten von den Bräuchen der *ahl al-kitāb* als auch sein Versuch der vertraglichen Abmachungen mit den Leuten der Schrift deuten mehrfach auf diesen doppelten, ethisch-praktischen, Focus hin. Die Praxis der ersten Kalifen sah nicht anders aus. Unter dem 1. Kalifen Abū Bakr (reg. 632-634) kam z.B. der Vertrag zwischen ihm und den Christen in Nadjran, im heutigen Grenzgebiet zwischen Jemen und Saudi-Arabien zustande. Aus den erhaltenen Formen des Vertrags geht ausdrücklich hervor, dass die Christen nicht erniedrigt und vor Beleidigungen geschützt werden sollen. Der Vertrag von Nadjran zeigt, wie sich Muslime und Christen in der Anfangszeit ihrer Koexistenz zu verständigen suchten. Bereits zu Zeiten des Propheten gab es Kontakte, einen theologischen Austausch und die Verständigung darüber, dass jeder bei seinem Glauben bleibt. Sie erklärten sich bereit, ein Vertragsverhältnis einzugehen, in dem ihre Rechte und Pflichten – inkl. finanzieller Abgaben – bestimmt werden sollten. Auch die Ahndung und die Folgen der Vertragsbrüche verdeutlichen eher die Spuren der Zeit als die *unveränderlichen* Bestimmungen eines Regelwerks. Ein bekanntes und viel beachtetes Beispiel hierfür ist der Umgang des zweiten Kalifen ‘Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb mit Juden, der von der Praxis des Propheten abwich. ‘Umar hatte die Abgabe der Almosensteuer an Juden mit der Begründung abgeschafft, dass die Muslime zahlenmäßig stark genug geworden seien,

weshalb es nicht mehr notwendig sei, die Bindung und Unterstützung der Juden dadurch sicherzustellen.

Diese und spätere Vertragspraktiken und Umgangsformen belegen eindeutig die Zeitgebundenheit (Partikularität!) einzelner Handlungen und Regelungen: Die Verträge wurden zwischen den „Siegern“ und „Besiegten“ abgeschlossen. Sie reglementierten die Pflichten der Besiegten (Minderheit!) und brachten doch ihre Rechte unter Schutz. Betont werden muss ist also ein Werdungsprozess, in dem die Verhältnisse zu anderen Religionen und Gruppen stetig aufs Neue gestaltet werden. Beim Thema der Minoritäten sollte auch eine weitere Entwicklung nicht übersehen werden. Sowohl der innermuslimische Zwist als auch die rasante Verbreitung des islamischen Glaubens (auch durch die Expansion der Herrschaftsgebiete) brachten neue Herausforderungen und religiöse und soziale Fragen mit sich. Bereits in der Phase der ersten Kalifen führten politische (Stammes-)Konflikte wie der Anspruch auf das Kalifenamt zu innermuslimischen Spaltungen (Schiiten und Sunniten etc.), infolge derer eine neue Minderheitengruppe entstand. Die Rede ist von innermuslimischen „Minderheiten“ in zweifacher Hinsicht: (1) diejenigen neuen Muslime, die außerhalb der Herrschaftsgebiete lebten und (2) diejenigen, die (politische) Gegner sind und fortan als Abtrünnige (*munāfiqūn*, *hāriġiten* etc.) genannt und bekämpft werden.

Die genannte Entwicklung hatte zur Folge, dass ab dem 11. Jahrhundert ein spezifisches Rechtsgebiet (*fiqh al-aqalliyāt*) entsteht, das als „Islamisches Minderheitenrecht“ zu verstehen und in zwei Richtungen zu trennen ist: Muslimische Minderheiten außerhalb des islamischen Gebiets (*dār al-ḥarb* / Gebiet des Krieges) und außermuslimische Minderheiten innerhalb des Gebiet unter einer islamischen Herrschaft (*dār al-islām*). Die spezifische Kanonisierung des islamischen Minderheitenrechts ist unmittelbar mit der ebenso strikten territorialen Trennung des islamischen von dem des nichtislamischen Gebiets verbunden. Begründungen, den dauerhaften Aufenthalt von Muslimen und seine Voraussetzungen unter nichtmuslimischer Herrschaft zu rechtfertigen, gingen in Teilen auch heute noch von diesem territorialen Konzept aus. Um den Status der muslimischen Minderheiten außerhalb der islamischen Territorien zu bestimmen, gab es allerdings über die Jahrhunderte hinweg ständige Versuche, das außerislamische Gebiet genauer zu

bestimmen. Die Unterscheidung des klassischen islamischen Rechts ist auch nicht bei der einfachen Teilung geblieben.⁸

Bei den Nichtmuslimen in Minderheitensituation innerhalb des islamischen Gebietes ging es darum, das Verhältnis zu ihnen und die Koexistenz auf der Basis der vertraglichen Vereinbarungen zu bestimmen. Im Grundsatz hat sich der Status der Schutzbefohlenen (die sog. *ḍimmī*) durchgesetzt. Die Schutzbefohlenen werden zur Zahlung eines Tributs (*ḡizya*) verpflichtet und als Gegenleistung von Militär- bzw. Kriegsdiensten befreit.

In beiden Fällen gilt die Zugehörigkeit zum Glauben (zur Glaubensgemeinschaft) für den *Minderheiten*status als das maßgebende Kriterium, wobei oder gerade deshalb der Begriff Minderheit (also *aqalliyā*) für Schutzbefohlenen (*ḍimmī*) umstritten geblieben ist. Mit Bezug auf den koranischen Wortlaut und auf die Sunna sind die Bezeichnungen „Schriftbesitzer“ (*ahl al-kitāb*) oder „Verbündete“ (*ahl al-ḍimma*) geläufig. Wollen wir bei dem Begriff der Minderheiten bleiben, müssten wir sie im strikt islamischen Sinne als eine Gruppe oder Gemeinschaft verstehen, deren religiöse Traditionen Grundlage für ihr Gemeinschaftsgefühl sind und die innerhalb der islamischen Gesellschaft neben der muslimischen Mehrheit eine eigene soziale Einheit darstellen. Ein Rechtskonzept für die Minderheiten auf der Grundlage der Abstammung, Sprache, Rasse usw. hat sich nicht entwickelt. Der Status der Schutzbefohlenen hingegen wurde und wird von Muslimen (Rechtsgelehrten) vielmehr als Garantie für die Rechte der Minderheiten im Sinne der koranischen Gebote angesehen; also als Garantie dafür, dass ihre religiöse und kulturelle Autonomie und Identität bewahrt und sie vor jeglichem Assimilationsdruck geschützt sind. Als Begründung wird weiter ausgeführt, dass eine friedliche und gerechte Koexistenz aller gesellschaftlichen Gruppen nur auf der Basis der Wahrung der spezifischen Merkmale von Minderheiten verwirklichen lasse.

4. Das Erbe der jüngeren Geschichte

Darüber, ob und inwiefern diese friedliche und gerechte Koexistenz in der langen Geschichte erreicht wurde und dauerhaft war, kann man nach wie vor heftig streiten. Mit Udo Steinbach lässt sich dennoch resümieren, dass die Muslime im Zuge der

⁸ Zu nennen sind andere Modelle wie „Gebiet des Vertrages“ (*dār al-ahd*), „Gebiets des Waffenstillstandes“ (*dār al-ṣulḥ*), „Gebiet der Gerechtigkeit“ (*dār al-‘adl*) oder „Gebiet des Glaubens“ (*dār al-‘īmān*).

Expansion keine systematische Islamisierung betrieben haben. Nur so lässt sich es erklären, dass das Christentum über einen sehr langen Zeitraum in Teilen des Reiches die Mehrheit stellte. Dennoch ist es anzunehmen, dass wirtschaftliche (mögliche hohe Steuerbelastung der Schutzbefohlenen) oder auch politische Erwägungen viele Christen und Juden zum Übertritt zum Islam bewegt haben könnten. Der Status des Schutzbefohlenen erscheint aus heutiger Sicht sicherlich als weitgehende Einschränkung ihrer Rechte. Sie waren sozusagen Bürger 2. Klasse. Andererseits kann ihre Stellung für die Verhältnisse bis zum 19. Jh. im Vergleich zum christlichen Europa (erinnert sei an die innerchristlichen Konflikte, Religionskriege oder Kreuzzüge, Feindseligkeiten zwischen der byzantinische Staatskirche und der europäischen Invasoren) als weitgehend besser eingestuft werden. Eine relativ freie Religionsausübung, ihre weitgehende Eigenständigkeit in rechtlichen Belangen, ihre wirtschaftliche Entfaltungschancen, ihre wissenschaftlichen Tätigkeiten gar die Beschäftigung als hohe Amtsträger u. a. M. lassen sich historiographisch belegen. Im sog. Milletler-System des Osmanischen Reiches genossen z.B. die Christen der unterschiedlichen Konfessionen und die Juden freie Ausübung der Religion und Respektierung ihres Rechts. Wir wissen aus Dokumenten z.B., dass die christlichen und jüdischen Religionsführer die Ansprech- und Verhandlungspartner der osmanischen Verwaltung im Sinne der Vertragsabschließung mit den Schutzbefohlenen waren

Das 19. Jahrhundert gilt aus der Sicht der Minderheitensituation sowohl als Katastrophe als auch Neuanfang. Angesichts des in Europa fortschreitenden Nationalismus mussten die Minderheiten neu definiert und ihr Status und ihre Rechte neu verhandelt werden. Auch im arabischen Raum machte sich eine Bewegung von christlichen Arabern sichtbar, die das nationale Erbe des Arabertums hinter dem Stillstand der Osmanen wieder sichtbar machen wollte und als bald die muslimischen Araber ergriffen hatte. Hierdurch entstand etwas, was die islamische Geschichte in dieser Form nicht kannte: Die Annäherung und Verbrüderung der christlichen und muslimischen Araber in der national-ethischen Identität. Schließlich war das relativ friedliche Zusammenleben, also die bestehende Symbiose seit Jahrhunderten zum Ende des 19. Jh. und Anfang des 20. Jh. prekär geworden. Der Verfall des osmanischen Reiches ließ eine neue Weltkarte im Nahen Osten entstehen, die heute in noch größerem Ausmaß zu Lasten der Minderheiten von Konflikten und Krisen belastet ist. Nationalismen, jüdisch-palästinensischer Konflikt, religiöser Radikalismus

und westliche Invasionen in islamischen Staaten können zu den Faktoren gezählt werden, die die neue Lage der Minderheiten enorm belasten und verschlechtern. Diese kurze Schilderung der Entwicklungen der jüngeren Geschichte (19./20. Jh.) dürfte ausreichen, die aktuelle Minderheitenproblematik in den muslimischen Ländern gezielter anzusprechen und solche Fragen erneut zu stellen: 1) Kann die katastrophale Lage dem Islam zu Last gelegt werden, obwohl viele andere Faktoren dazu gekommen sind? 2) Inwiefern gilt die Scharia noch als Grundlage und in welcher Konstruktion? 3) Wie können der Umgang und die Lage der Minderheiten (Minderheitenrecht) deutlich verbessert werden? Allenfalls gibt es in der Gegenwart unterschiedliche Rechtssysteme in der islamischen Welt, auch wenn viele Länder die Scharia als Grundlage präsentieren. Viele haben ebenso säkulares Recht übernommen oder zumindest inkorporiert. Diese Fragen können hier nicht ausführlich behandelt werden. Anhand der Verbesserungsversuche, die den Geist des Vertrags von Medina wiederbeleben wollen, sollen die Breite des Problems und die Notwendigkeit eines grundlegenden Perspektivenwechsels geschildert werden.

5. Versuche, eine islamische Menschenrechtecharta zu entwerfen und die Minderheitenrechte voranzubringen!

Auch auf der internationalen Ebene gab es Versuche von muslimischen Länder mit Bezug auf die internationalen Entwicklungen, ihre Rechtssysteme und auch die Minderheitenrechte anzupassen: Die *Kairoer Erklärung der Menschenrechte im Islam* von 1990 ist die bekannteste muslimische Deklaration mit dem ausdrücklichen Verweis auf die Scharia. Sie wurde durch die Organisation der Islamischen Konferenz als das islamische Pendant zur *Allgemeinen Erklärung der Menschenrechte* verabschiedet. Die Liga der arabischen Staaten gab wenige Jahre später die *Arabische Charta der Menschenrechte* von 1994 (2004 überarbeitet) heraus. Beiden Erklärungen zuvor gegangen ist die *Allgemeine Erklärung der Menschenrechte im Islam* aus dem Jahr 1981, die vom Islamrat von Europa mit Sitz in London deklariert war. Grundsätzliche Probleme in diesen Erklärungen und in Rechtsauffassungen der einzelnen Länder bestehen weiterhin im Verständnis der kollektiven Rechte gegen die individuellen und in der Beschneidung der Minderheitenrechte aufgrund der wie auch immer konzipierten Scharia. Anhand der Wiederbelebungsversuche des Vertrags von Medina lassen sich die Komplexität und Schwierigkeit aufzeigen und diskutieren.

5.1. Wiederbelebungsversuche des Vertrags von Medina

Der Vertrag (das Dokument) von Medina war lange Zeit in Vergessenheit geraten. Nach einer längeren Phase der Vergessenheit in der muslimischen Welt nahm zuerst Muhammad Hamidullah den Vertrag von Medina wieder auf und verhalf ihm zu seiner Aktualität im zeitgenössischen islamischen Diskurs. Seit dem ist der Vertrag immer wieder zum Anhaltspunkt für interessante Diskussionen gemacht worden. In den 1990er Jahren, lange vor der Marrakesch-Deklaration von 2016, ist z.B. in der Türkei eine lebhafte Diskussion über das Dokument entstanden, in die neben religiöse auch säkulare und linke Intellektuelle involviert waren. Neben religiös bestimmten Begriffen und Themen wie die Bedeutung und Funktion der Scharia und Umma wurde konfrontativ über die Zivilgesellschaft, die Menschen-, Bürger und Minderheitenrechte, die Möglichkeit eines pluralen Rechtssystems, das Zusammenleben in der pluralen Gesellschaft, u. Ä. m. debattiert. Zwangsläufig musste der Fokus auf die Frage nach dem „Souverän“ gerichtet werden: Wem gebührt die Souveränität, wem steht die politische Autorität zu und welchen Platz ist der Religion (Islam/Scharia) einzuräumen? Ali Bulaç, der das Dokument von Medina zuerst publikmachte,⁹ vertrat die Meinung, dass der Islam keine totalitäre Religion und auch keine Theokratie sei und daher keinen Anspruch auf die politische Herrschaft formuliere. Von der im Dokument von Medina Mohammad zugeschriebenen Stellung ausgehend argumentierte er, dem Islam stehe lediglich die Funktion eines *Schlichters* (gemeint ist eine Beratungsinstanz) und nicht die des *Souveräns* zu. Der Islam sehe ein pluralistisches Herrschaftssystem vor, an dem die gesellschaftliche Vielfalt partizipieren könne.¹⁰ Diese Position wurde von religiösen und säkularen Kreisen scharf attackiert. Mehrere islamistische Intellektuelle wiesen ein politisches Gemeinwesen ohne Gesetzgebung, die aus der Offenbarung heraus dem Islam zustehen müsse, zurück und warfen ihr vor, den Islam in die Ohnmacht zu befördern und der westlichen Demokratie zu opfern.¹¹ Die Fortsetzung der Diskussion hätte die Frage erörtern müssen, welcher Bedarf an einen Schlichter noch besteht, wenn ihm jegliche Herrschaftsgewalt und dadurch das gesellschaftspolitische Gewicht aberkannt werden.

⁹ Vgl. Bulaç, Ali, *Medine Vesikası Hakkında Genel Bilgiler*, Birikim, 38, Juni 1992.

¹⁰ Vgl. Bulaç, Ali, *İslam Niçin Bir Teokrasi Değildir?*, Kitap Dergisi, 58-60, Februar 1991 sowie ders. *Medine Vesikası Üzerine Tartışmalar* (2), Birikim, 47, März 1993 sowie ders. *Medine Vesikası Üzerine Tartışmalar* (2), Birikim, 48, April 1993.

¹¹ Siehe zur Kritik: Sırma, İhsan Süreyya, *Medine Vesikasının Mevsukiyeti ile İlgili Bazı Veriler*, Bilgi ve Hikmet Dergisi, Vol. 5, Winter 1994; Ağırakça, Ahmet, *Medine Vesikası'nın Değeri*, Haksöz, 23, Februar 1993; Çekmegil, M. Sait, *Bir İçtimai Mukavele; Medine Vesikası*, Panel, 48, März-April 1993.

5.2. Marrakesch-Deklaration von 2016

Das in aller Kürze wiedergegebene Beispiel der Auseinandersetzung über das Dokument von Medina zeigt eindrücklich, welches breite Spektrum von Themen und Fragestellungen aufgenommen werden muss, um es in der Komplexität des (postmodernen!) Zeitalters aktualisieren und mit der außerreligiösen und außerislamischen Welt kommunizieren zu können. Die Unterzeichnerinnen der Marrakesch-Deklaration sind sich anscheinend dessen bewusst, wenn sie von der Wiederbelebung der „Prinzipien“ der Charta von Medina sprechen. Diese stünden mit der Charta der Vereinten Nationen und der *Universellen Erklärung der Menschenrechte* im völligen Einklang. Die in der Erklärung genannten, wenigen „Regelungen in Form von Prinzipien einer verfassungsrechtlich-vertraglichen Bürgerschaft“ (constitutional contractual citizenship)¹² stellten „eine geeignete Basis für nationale Verfassungen in Staaten mit muslimischer Bevölkerungsmehrheit“ dar. Insofern ist der Aufruf an die Politiker und Entscheidungsträger in muslimischen Ländern folgerichtig, „die notwendigen politischen und gesetzgeberischen Schritte zu ergreifen, zwischen den Bürgern eine verfassungsvertragliche Beziehung zu etablieren“. Schließlich sollen diese Schritte, so eine weitere Aufforderung, „den gerechten Umgang mit religiösen Minderheiten“ ermöglichen.

Solche Erklärungen entstehen auf der Grundlage des kleinstmöglichen Konsenses. Dass die formulierten Appelle der Deklaration aussichtslos sind, zeigt bereits die nüchterne Lektüre des Textes. Gleich zu Beginn ist von der Autorität *legitimer* Regierungen die Rede, die gegen „kriminelle Gruppierungen“ in Schutz genommen wird. Welchen Sinn hat es, von Regierungen verfassungsvertragliche Schritte zur vollständigen Bürgerschaft der Minderheiten zu erwarten, wenn sie sich selbst durch ihre Bürger nicht legitimieren lassen? Werden diese in allermeisten Fällen autoritäre Königshäuser und Regierungen jemals zulassen, dass die religiösen Minderheiten am Entstehungsprozess des Verfassungsvertrags gleichberechtigt teilhaben können, wenn sie die Teilnahme nicht mal ihren Glaubensbrüdern und -schwestern gewähren? Wird der Umgang mit den Minderheiten gerecht, wenn sie zum entscheidenden ersten Schritt – Verfassungsvertrag! – nicht zugelassen sind? Die Ratlosigkeit der Verfasser der Deklaration ist offenkundig: Ohne über die Konsequenzen nachzudenken, wollten sie offensichtlich auf die moderne Benennung nicht verzichten, die den Vertrag von

¹² Genannt sind die Freizügigkeit, das Recht auf Eigentum, die gegenseitige Solidarität und Verteidigung wie auch die Prinzipien der Gerechtigkeit und Gleichheit vor dem Gesetz.

Medina zum Rang einer Staatsverfassung aufwertet. Im Übrigen: Die aufgerufenen Regierungen müssten vermutlich als erster Schritt einen Konsultationsrat von islamischen Gelehrten und Intellektuellen einberufen – oder eine solche internationale Kommission akzeptieren –, weil diese ja ein Rechtskonzept der Bürgerschaft im erwünschten Sinne erst entwickeln sollen, wie es in einem anderen Appellsatz zum Ausdruck kommt. Die Gelehrte und Intellektuelle bekommen in der Tat eine Mammutaufgabe, da das Rechtskonzept „in der islamischen Tradition und auf den islamischen Prinzipien wurzeln sowie die globalen Veränderungen mitberücksichtigen“ solle, das dann noch in die nationalen Verfassungen einfließen müsse.

Eine aufmerksame Durchsicht der Deklaration kann noch weitere kritische Fragen formulieren. Die islamische Welt hat bereits die oben genannten Erfahrungen mit Erklärungen für Menschenrechte, die sich sowohl auf die *Allgemeine Erklärung der Menschenrechte* als auch auf die eigene Tradition und islamischen Prinzipien (Scharia!) beziehen. Abgesehen von erheblichen Einschnitten mit Bezug auf die Scharia ist ihre Umsetzung in der politischen und juristischen Praxis der einzelnen Staaten sehr dürftig geblieben.

5.3. Ist der Vertrag als das Vorbild für ein modernes und alternatives Gesellschaftsmodell zu sehen?

Der Vertrag von Medina ist ein gutes Beispiel dafür, dass der Prophet sein staatsmännisches Handlungsgeschick unter jeweiligen Kontextbedingungen zum Einsatz bringt, um soziale Konflikte zu lösen, für Ordnung und Frieden zu sorgen und eine Gemeinschaft zu bilden. Aus dem Wortlaut ergibt sich jedoch kein Regelwerk, das ohne zeitgemäße Deutung einsetzbar wäre. Möglich und sinnvoll ist die Herleitung von Prinzipien, von denen auch die Marrakesch-Deklaration ausgehen möchte. Die Benennung allgemeiner Grundsätze allein reicht allerdings bei weitem nicht aus, weil diese der zusätzlichen Klärung für die Gegenwart bedürfen. Hinzu kommt die Knappheit der aus dem Vertrag ableitbaren Prinzipien, weshalb die gegenwärtig erhobenen Ansprüche unbegründet und unberechtigt bleiben, aus dem Vertrag von Medina den vorbildlichen Umgang mit einer pluralistischen Gesellschaft, menschenrechtlichen Freiheiten, Minderheiten und Andersgläubigen herauslesen und in ihm das Vorbild für ein modernes und/oder alternatives Gesellschaftsmodell entdecken zu können.

Die Gegebenheiten und Anforderungen der Gegenwart sind viel zu komplex, so dass jede solche Behauptung zuerst nachvollziehbar erklären muss, ob überhaupt und wie strukturelle und funktionelle Parallelen zwischen der Gemeinschaft damals und der Gesellschaft heute gezogen werden (können). Erklärungsbedürftig werden auch die Vermittlungs- und Verflechtungsversuche zwischen den Traditionsbeständen und den gegenwärtigen Erfordernissen sein, sowie die unvermeidbaren Abweichungen von der Scharia aufgrund unterschiedlicher Verständnisse enorme Überzeugungskraft erschöpfen müssten. Ein kritischer Blick auf die islamische Geschichte wird schnell erkennen, wie vielfältig solche Kombinationen ausgefallen sind, die aber nicht durchgehend eine Ambiguitätstoleranz genossen, sondern auch mit härtester Gewalt bekämpft wurden. Der der Marrakesch-Deklaration zu entnehmende Zeitgeist dürfte sich mit dem später entwickelten Status der Schutzbefohlenen für religiöse Minderheiten nicht zufrieden geben, falls die Aufforderung zum gerechten Umgang auf der Basis einer verfassungsvertraglichen Bürgerschaft ernst gemeint ist. Es darf heute weiterhin bezweifelt werden, ob jemals ein tragbarer Konsens z.B. über den Status der Abtrünnigen oder über die Gleichberechtigung der Anders- und Nichtgläubigen erzielt werden wird.

6. Schlusswort

1) Die Erneuerungs- bzw. Reformnotwendigkeit des islamischen Rechts ist notwendig! Eine Reform ist allerdings vom Scharia-Verständnis abhängig, also von der Frage wie Verbindlichkeit das religiöse Recht sein kann und darf. An diesem Punkt treffen sich zwei grundunterschiedliche Geisteshaltungen (Spaltungen auch) aufeinander, die keine Lösungen zulassen:

- a) Scharia maßgebend, weil Gottes Gesetz
- b) Scharia ist historisch, kontextgebunden

Jegliche innerislamische Diskurse, Aktualisierungsversuche oder Lösungsangebote, die ein Staats-, Rechts- oder Gesellschaftsmodell zum Ziel haben, stecken somit in einem großen Dilemma. Dieses entsteht, wenn einerseits jegliche Begründungen aus der Vielfalt und Ambiguität der Text-, Scharia-, Tradition- und Geschichtsdeutungen heraus zulässig sein müssen, andererseits aber noch kein – politisches oder juristisches – Methodenangebot in Sicht ist, um den notwendigen politischen Grundkonsens – z.B. über den „Verfassungsvertrag“! – herstellen zu können. Solange

dieses Dilemma nicht gelöst wird, kann der notwendige Basiskonsens in Grundsatzfragen auch nicht erzielt werden. Ohne diesen Basiskonsens kann von einer klar umrissenen, inhaltlich gesättigten und umsetzungsfähigen Alternative zu anderen (westlichen) Gesellschafts- und Bürgerschaftsmodellen keine Rede sein. Um ein alternatives islamisches Rechts- und Gesellschaftssystem entwickeln zu können, bedarf es zuerst einer Diskursethik, die unerlässlich ist, um die vielfältigen Begründungen und Geltungsansprüche in einem friedlichen Austausch- und Aushandlungsprozess miteinander wetteifern zu lassen.

Eine letzte Schlussfolgerung:

2. Globale Anstrengung für Gerechtigkeit:

Ohne Gerechtigkeit auf globaler Ebene, keine Überwindung der Menschenrechts- und Minderheitenprobleme in der islamischen Welt auf absehbare Zeit, wenn überhaupt.