Invitation of Papers for the
31st International Course on the
Future of Religion:
From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule
IUC, Dubrovnik, Croatia,
April 23 – 28, 2007

By

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Call for Papers for the 31st International Course on the Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule

Dear Friend:

We are writing this letter to you, in order to invite you wholeheartedly to our 31st international course on The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule, to take place in the Inter-University Center for Post-Graduate Studies (IUC) in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from April 23 - 28, 2007. We invite you to our discourse, because we are convinced that you as a scholar are most competent to contribute to the clarification, understanding, explanation and development of our new topic.

Anniversary

Last year we celebrated the 30th Anniversary of our international course. We are the second oldest course of the IUC. We have met since 1977 without interruption. We met even during the terrible war years in the protective basement of Hotel Argentina not only, in order to have discourses on Kant’s project of eternal peace, but also in order to help the suffering people through money and medicine. In order to celebrate the great event, we made a beautiful exhibition of pictures from our past 29 meetings. Thanks to all of you, who have participated in our course through the years, and who sent pictures to the Secretariat of the Inter-University Center. We are particularly grateful to the friends from the Dubrovnik Secretariat and from Zagreb, who received and ordered the pictures and arranged the exhibition. We are thankful to our great friend for many years, Berta Dragicevic, and to the whole leadership of the IUC for the celebration in the Institute, for the speeches, and for the honors and decorations, and the wonderful painting of Dubrovnik, which now has the best place in my library for everybody to see, and for our common meal high on the top of the romantic mountain above the Dubrovnik airport, through which we arrived year after year for three decades. Our friend, Professor Dr. Gottfried Kuenzelen, gave his great festive address, which summed up all our experiences. We also set aside some mornings, during which particularly the senior members of our course presented some of their most exciting memories concerning our course. Our Professor Dr. Ott presented to us the manuscript of his book The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society, containing our presentations of recent years. In the meantime, Michael has found the publisher...
Brill in Holland, and delivered the book to him after long and hard work. We hope that the excellent book will be in our hands in April. Thanks to Berta and her staff and to all of you for our wonderful anniversary celebration.

**Dedication**

We shall dedicate our 31st international course on the *Future of Religion: From Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule* to our great friend, Professor Dr. Vrcan, who has died in Split in December 2006 after a long illness. He was not a Jus Talionis man: he was a Golden Rule man! For many years Professor Vrcan served as co-director of our course. He legitimated and protected our course in the former socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, and thus made its continuation possible. Professor Vrcan was a great sociologist, particularly sociologist of religion with worldwide recognition. He was amazingly objective, truthful, honest and tolerant in his academic work in an always changing and often very difficult context. He had many friends at home and abroad, not only in Italy, but also in Germany and in other European countries as well as in America. Professor Vrcan was not only an outstanding scholar, but also a great human being, who deserves our warm remembrance, as well as our admiration, and our love forever. He will be with us in spirit in our courses to come. Few people have worked so hard in their lives to overcome the *Jus Talionis* and redeem us from it, and to promote and practice the *Golden Rule* as Professor Vrcan. We remember him in deepest gratitude.

**Presentation of Papers**

We hope very much, that you can follow our invitation, and that you can come to the IUC in beautiful Dubrovnik in the last week of April 2007, and that you can join us in our 31st international course on *The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule* and that you can present a paper to us out of the center of your own presently on-going research-activities, interests, competence and teaching, and in the framework of the general thematic of 2007. Of course, you are also very welcome, if you do not want to be a resource person and to read a paper, but rather prefer to appear as participant and thus contribute as such to our, to be sure, very lively discourse. Our course will be part of a very rich IUC Program of courses and conferences in the Academic Year of 2006/2007. Dubrovnik and the IUC are indeed alive and well and even growing again in spite of all the tragic events of the past decades! We hope very much, that the whole region of the former Yugoslavia will soon become part of the European Union, We hope, that the further trials in Den Haag will be guided not by the *Jus* or *Lex Talionis* and by the motive of retaliation, but rather in the perspective of the Golden Rule, which is present in all the living world religions, and of its secular inversion into the *categorical imperative*, and into the *apriori of the universal communication community*, and of a global ethos built on these religious and secular principles, and of *an international law*, which is rooted in it and will, therefore, never be without mercy and the power of at-onement and reconciliation.
Publication

Please, prepare your paper out of the material of your present research, in the horizon of our specific theme of this year, and in the context of the present historical situation. It must not be perfect. Nobody is perfect! You can still complete your paper to the level of publication-maturation after you have presented it, and after we have discussed it together, and after you have returned home. Our discourse may help you, to complete your paper, and to make it ready for publication. Finally, we would like to collect our research papers once more for a third volume, following Professor Reimer’s excellent first volume - The Influence of the Frankfurt School on Contemporary Theology: Critical Theory and the Future of Religion - Dubrovnik Papers in Honor of Rudolf J. Siebert. Lewiston, New York, Queenston, Ontario, Canada, Lampeter, Dyfed, Wales, United Kingdom, and Professor Michael Ott’s most outstanding second volume The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society, which is forthcoming with the publisher Brill in Holland. Maybe Jim Reimer and Michael Ott will assist us once more with their great publishing experience to bring out our third volume in the not too distant future.

Resource Persons and Participants

Thus, we - the Director, Professor Rudolf J. Siebert, Western Michigan University, and the Co-Directors, Professor Mislav Kukoc, University of Zagreb, Professor Gottfried Künzelen, University of the Federal German Army, Munich, Denis Janz, Loyola University, New Orleans, Professor Michael Ott, Grand Valley University, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Dr. Dinka Marinovic-Jerolimov, Institute for Social Research Zagreb, and the Coordinators Professor Tatiana Senyushkina, Taurida National University, Simferopol, Ukraine, and Dr. Goran Goldberger, Institute for Social Research, Zagreb, invite you very personally in the name of the IUC, to join us as resource persons or participants in our 31st International course on The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule in the IUC Building, from April 23 - 28, 2007. We chose this year's course title once more in a democratic procedure. It grew almost logically out of the texts and the contexts of our previous discourses on the Future of Religion. This year’s theme is certainly once more of highest actuality considering the present world situation: the so-called war against terror, which is continually fought on both sides according to the Jus Talionis, without any redemption in sight, following the praxis of the Golden Rule.

Addresses: Home, Secretariat, and Hotels.

In case you have any further questions, please address them to me at the following addresses and through the following media. My home address is: 630 Piccadilly Road, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49006, USA. My home telephone number is: 269-381-0864. My e-mail address is RSieb3@aol.com. My Fax address is: 269-381-1935. My website is: http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org/. If you plan to come, please also contact directly the Secretariat of the Inter-University Center, Don Frana Bulica 4, HR 20000 Dubrovnik, Croatia, Tel.+385 20 413626/7; Fax +385 20 413628. Please, also contact either Hotel Argentina, Tel + 385 20 440 555, Fax + 385 20 432 524, or Hotel Lero, Tel. + 385 20 411 455, Fax + 385 20 432 501, or any other hotel or private pension of your choice in Dubrovnik for
room and board. Hotel Lero is the less expensive one. Hotel Argentina is the more expensive one. Most of us will probably stay at Hotel Lero. For further information concerning the broader context of our international course on the Future of Religion, please look at my web site: http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org/. You can probably get a lower hotel price, if you make your reservation through the IUC Secretariat.

Suggestions

Please, allow me to make a few more concrete suggestions concerning the content of our discourse on The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule of 2007. One reason for such suggestions is to constitute further continuity between our past 30 courses on one hand, and the coming 31st discourse, on the other. In fulfilling this task of continuity, we are greatly supported by Professor Reimer's book The Influence of the Frankfurt School on Contemporary Theology, Critical Theory and the Future of Religion. Dubrovnik Papers in Honor of Rudolf J. Siebert, and by Professor Ott's new book The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society, which he may bring along right from the press for everybody to see. The other reason for the following suggestions is to indicate the possible direction, which our new international discourse on The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule may, or could, or should take, when we meet in Dubrovnik from April 23 - 28, 2007. The few suggestions may indicate the possible level and goal for the texts, that we shall produce in writing or orally in and for the new Dubrovnik - and world-situation, and toward the goal of further human emancipation as reconciliation on the long road of human kind from animality to post-modern, global alternative Future III: the reconciled, free, just and therefore peaceful society, instead of alternative Future I – the totally administered society as predicted by Huxley, Orwell, Kafka, Horkheimer, Adorno, Fromm, Marcuse, etc., or alternative global Future II – the entirely militarized society continually engaged in conventional wars and civil wars, and in the preparation of ABC wars, and the consequent environmental disasters, maybe in the framework of a collision of religion-guided civilizations as predicted by Samuel Huntington, a disciple of Carl Schmitt, Adolf Hitler’s political theologian and main jurist. The following suggestions are, of course, only that - suggestions - and you may feel entirely free, to follow your own dialectical imagination and creativity, and to move in other directions as well, inside, of course, of the wider framework of the general thematic.

The Neo-Conservative Period

Our new theme The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule is certainly of highest actuality in the present globalized, rather oppressive and troublesome world-historical transition - and crisis – situation, It is dominated by Right-Hegelian, neo-conservatives, or neo-liberals, or conservative revolutionaries, or better still very successful counter-revolutionaries, and their economic, political, and military agenda, rather than by deconstructionists, or post-modernists, not to speak of the Left-Hegelian praxis philosophers in Europe and America. We don’t have to start with a definition of religion, or of modernity, or of post-modernity. We remember the warning by Friedrich Nietzsche, not to define anything, which has a history and is still moving. Religion, certainly, has a long history and is still developing.
Also what is called civilization – Jewish civilization, Christian civilization, Islamic Civilization, etc. has a history of hundreds of years, and is still in process. Even the second Bush Administration has found out, that Francis Fukuyama was wrong, when he stated, that history had come to its end with the climax of the victorious neo-conservative counter-revolution: the fall of the Soviet Empire. Recently Fukuyama, a Hegelian on the Right, was, nevertheless, intelligent enough, to leave the neo-conservative movement and think tanks in time. Obviously the Jihadists have helped to re-started history again. In any case, the second Bush Administration seems to continue history for better or for worse toward a clash of civilizations guided by Christianity and Islam. It was not post-modern, but rather still very modern, as it engaged in Machiavellian style in globalization, a very old modern phenomenon, as neo-imperialism to the point of imperial hubris, and as neo-colonialism in the service of the oil magnates, not to speak of nationalism and fundamentalism. It seems, that critical religion and critical theology as well as modernity and enlightenment are still - as communicative and critical praxis - unfinished projects.

Jus Talionis

As we plan our new discourse The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule in the beautiful city of Dubrovnik, the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq continue undiminished and fiercely, and even escalate further. Over 3000 American soldiers have been killed, while they were killing others in Iraq alone. Over 20000 American soldiers were wounded and crippled for life in body or soul, or both, while they were wounding and crippling others in Iraq alone. Already in the first Iraq war over 400 children had been incinerated by a single rocket in one bunker in Baghdad alone. Between the first and the second Iraq war, 500 000 children were killed by the international embargo. U.S. Secretary of State at the time, Albright, took responsibility for the death of the children. She stated, that the death of the children had been necessary and worthwhile as a means for changing President Saddam Hussein’s regime, In the meantime, Albright has many times regretted and apologized for her statement, but not for the fact, that the children have been killed. So far 600000 civilians have been killed in Iraq, since the beginning of the second war. Thousands of civilians, among them many children, have been killed during the recent Israeli invasion into Lebanon. A new war against Iran may be possible, probable, and even imminent, since the psychological warfare and the attack fleet of carriers are in place since quite some time. Daily the most necrophilous Jus Talionis has been practiced in recent years on both sides in Palestine, in Israel, in Lebanon, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in the Sudan, and elsewhere. Friedrich Nietzsche hoped toward the end of the 19th century, that human kind would be redeemed from the urge of revenge and retaliation some day, But the spell and the ban of the most primitive, and mythological Jus Talionis, - including terroristic rocket-bombardments, suicide bombardments, aerial saturation bombings, imprisonments, tortures of all kinds, hangings, decapitations, shootings - continues unbroken into our present historical situation. Crime is committed against crime, without the order of morality and of law being restored. As crime is committed against crime, criminality is only multiplied and escalated into the future in terms of a bad infinity. Deeper and deeper becomes the abyss between political, military, and historical facticity on one hand, and religious as well as secular-humanistic ethical and moral validity, on the other. As the unholy trinity of stealing, killing, and lying continues
from day to day, the guilt connection among individuals and nations intensifies, and spreads, and enslaves them more and more.

**Transition**

Our discourse on *The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule* will be concerned with the possible transition from the Jus Talionis - *Eye for eye and tooth for tooth* in the Torah, *freeman for freeman, and slave for slave* in the Holy Qur’an - to the most biophilous *Golden Rule* in the New Testament - *So always treat others as you would like them to treat you: that is the meaning of the Law and the Prophets* - in personal and collective, national and international relations and behavior. Daily the *Jus Talionis* has been practiced in the most cruel way by Jews, Christians, and Muslims on both sides of the front in recent years: in Palestine, in Israel, in Lebanon, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in the Sudan, and elsewhere. Seven million years ago we separated from the Chimpanzees, who also were used to practice furious retaliation. Much has changed since then in our long march from animality to alternative Future III – the realm of freedom beyond the realm of natural necessity: particularly since the great civilizations at the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers, at the Nile River, at the Indus River, and at the Yellow River. We went to the moon and we shall go to Mars. Why should it not be possible for us, to abolish the Jus Talionis, and to make the transition to the Golden Rule?

**Causes**

In our discourse on *The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule* we want to explore the possible biological, psychological, economic, sociological, anthropological, and theological *causes*, which prevent us from moving to alternative Future III – the free and reconciled society, and which force us to move toward alternative Future I - the totally administered society, and toward alternative Future II — the entirely militarized society, producing always new wars and civil wars, and instigating the collision of religion - based civilizations, and preparing World War III to be fought with weapons of mass destruction. Not at least and not at last we want to discover the causes, which compel us to the always-new application of the most archaic Jus Talionis without end. Why has the Christian attempt to abolish the Jus Talionis through the fourth commandment of the so called Sermon on the Mount not worked universally so far through the centuries, in spite even of the moral compromise of the *Seven Point Just War Theory* of St. Augustine, the initiator of the Roman Catholic Paradigm of Christianity. It was honestly practiced by Christian heads of states only twice in 1600 years. Why, to the contrary, were the Hindu Mahatma Ghandi and his followers able to break the ban of the Jus Talionis, and instead to practice the Golden Rule successfully, while so many members of the Abrahamic religions have such a hard time to realize it? Of course, if the Golden Rule is not practiced, the bloody praxis of the Jus Talionis is the unavoidable and necessary consequence, in private and collective life.
Golden Rule

All living world religions share the Golden Rule. It has also been inverted, translated, sublated, rationalized and secularized in modern, post-modern, and post-metaphysical philosophical and social-scientific discourses into the principle of - what Immanuel Kant had called - the categorical imperative - Act in such a way, that the maxim of your will can at any time also be valid as principle of a universal legislation, or Act in such a way, that you use the humanity in your own person as well as in the person of every other human being always also as purpose, never merely as means - and into - what Charles Peirce, Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas have called - the apriori of the unlimited communication community - Your action is ethically valid, when it finds the consensus of the universal communication community, particularly of the possible victims.

Global Ethos

The Golden Rule in its religious and secular forms is not merely a hypothetical, conditional, but rather a categorical, apodictic, unconditional norm. It is also practicable and doable in modern and post-modern highly complex situations in globalized, very antagonistic civil society, in which individuals and groups have to act communicatively or instrumentally only too often. The Golden Rule could very well become the foundation of - what Hans Küng has called - a global ethos, and which he has presented to the United Nations in New York, and for which there he has reached complete consensus. Such global ethos could inform the actions of teachers, economists, businessmen, politicians, generals, as well as the masses of the people in such a way, that the application of the Jus Talionis would become for them more and more implausible and unacceptable. It is the purpose of our discourse to contribute to such enlightenment and emancipation as reconciliation and at-onement.

Public Use of Reason

To be sure, the realization of the Golden Rule and the global ethics is not possible without religious faith and without - what John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas have called - the public use of reason. Certainly, the modern separation of synagogue, church or mosque on one hand, and the secular neutral state, on the other, influences deeply the role which religious faith, traditions, communities, and organizations are allowed to play in antagonistic civil society, and in the political public sphere, above all in the political opinion- and will - formation of the citizens. In our discourse, we shall try to explore, where in the opinion of the neo-conservative revisionists the dividing line should be between religion and state. We shall have to find out, if the neo-conservative or fundamentalist Jewish, Christian, or Islamic opponents, who are currently engaged in a culture war against the liberal standard version of an ethics of citizenship, are actually only championing the pro-religious meaning of the secular state held to be neutral, versus a narrow secularist notion of a pluralistic society. It is also possible, that the neo-conservative and fundamentalist opponents are more or less inconspicuously trying to change the liberal agenda from the bottom up, and thus are already arguing from the background of a completely different self-understanding of modernity. On the answers to such questions it
depends, which chance the Golden Rule or the global ethos may have to be actualized in the public forum of modern states and among them. In any case, there will be no peace among the nations without peace inside and among the world religions.

Post-Secular Society

We shall discuss the liberal premises of the modern constitutional state and the consequences, which the liberal conception of the public use of reason has on the religious or secular ethics of citizenship. We shall treat the most important objections to the rather restrictive liberal idea of the political role of religion. Through a critical discussion of neo-conservative and fundamentalist revisionist proposals that do touch on the very foundations of the liberal self-understanding, we shall try to develop a conception of our own, which gives the Golden Rule, the categorical imperative, the apriori of the unlimited communication community and the global ethos a chance to assert and actualize themselves against the archaic and mythological power of the Jus Talionis. We shall be ready to admit, that religious and secular citizens can only fulfill the normative expectations of the liberal role of citizens, if they likewise fulfill certain cognitive conditions and ascribe to the respective opposite the corresponding epistemic attitudes. We shall have to explain, what this means by discussing the change in the form of religious consciousness, which was a response to the challenges of modernity. In their response to the process of modernization, religious communities have often differentiated themselves in themselves between those believers, who wanted to resist it, and those who were willing to accommodate themselves to it, and assimilate themselves to it. Thus, in Judaism we find orthodox, conservative and reformed Rabbis. In Christianity we find conservative and liberal believers. By contrast, we shall discover, that the secular awareness that one is living in a post-secular society takes the shape of post-metaphysical thought at the philosophical level. Post-secular does, of course, not mean, that religion is returning for good, but rather that it disappears much more slowly than some of the secular enlighteners had predicted and hoped for. We shall see, that the secular and neutral liberal state faces the problem, that religious and secular citizens can only acquire those mutual epistemic attitudes through complementary learning processes, while it remains a mute point, whether these are learning processes at all, and ones, which the state cannot influence by its own means of law and politics anyway. In any case, our discourse wants to promote epistemic attitudes in religious and secular – humanist citizens of modern liberal and even of still historical-intermediate states, which make the Jus Talionis obsolete, and which promote the Golden Rule and the global ethos.

General Orientation

We hope very much, that those few concretizing suggestions may give you some general orientation for your own preparatory work for our international course on The Future of Religion: From the Jus Talionis to the Golden Rule. You can make your own comments and objections to those suggestions and to this general orientation, when we come together in Dubrovnik. We hope very much, that you shall be able and willing to come to our discourse, and that you shall, if possible, present a paper, or papers, concerning aspects of our general theme, unfolded in the above suggestions and orientation, or not. The general theme is broad and gives
you much freedom to adjust your paper to it. If you have a hard time to connect your paper to our general theme, we shall do that for and with you in our discourse. Please, let me know as soon as possible, if you shall join us in Dubrovnik in the last week of April 2007, and if you like to give a paper during the week available to us in the IUC Building? Tell me also, if you desire to give your paper at a specific day and hour, and how much time you would like to have. I shall do what I can, to give you as much time as possible.

Yalta

In conclusion, I may happily report to you that we met in Yalta from November 1-3,2006 in our sixth international course on “Religion and Civil Society: Main Challenges to the Civilizations and their Responses,” the sister-course to our Dubrovnik course, which will continue to take place every November. We had once more a wonderful experience at the shores of the Black Sea: academically and socially. Our friend Tatiana did an excellent leadership – job: in terms of academic and organizational skills! Thank you again from all of us! Our next, seventh international course will take place in Yalta in November 2007. From now on we have the opportunity to meet for international discourse twice a year, in Dubrovnik in April, and in Yalta in November. You have a standing invitation for both events.

I am with all my best wishes for you and for your dear family, and for your good work, your

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