Invitation of Papers for the
33rd International Course on the
The Future of Religion:
Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens

IUC, Dubrovnik, Croatia,
April 27 – May 2, 2009

By

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Call for Papers for the 33rd International Course on the

Future of Religion:

Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens

Dear Friends:

We are writing this letter to you in order to invite you wholeheartedly to our 33rd international course, the *Future of Religion: Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens*, to take place in the Inter-University Center for Post-Graduate Studies (IUC) in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from April 27 – May 2, 2009. 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 further development of our new topic.

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/May 2009, and that you can join us in our 33rd international course on the *Future of Religion: Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens*, that you can present a paper to us out of the center of your own presently on-going research-activities, experiences, interests, competence, and teaching, and in the framework of the general thematic of 2009. 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 about the *culture wars* in different countries and how to behave in them as citizens. Our course will be part of a very rich IUC Program of courses and conferences in the Academic Year of 2008/2009. 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 living world religions, and of its secular inversion into the *categorical imperative*, and into the *a priori 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 atonement and of reconciliation. All ethics and legality must – in order to have motivating power - ultimately be rooted in the longing for the totally Other than the horror and terror of nature and history: motivating the citizens to settle the culture wars in the different nations in a tolerant and more than tolerant way.
Publication

Please, prepare your paper out of the material of your present research, in the horizon of our specific theme of this year 2009 - the reciprocal treatment among citizens caught up in intense culture wars- and in the context of the present world-historical situation characterized by an enormous economical crisis. 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 and Professor Michael Ott’s most outstanding second volume The Future of Religion: Toward a Reconciled Society, which has appeared with the publisher Brill in Holland in 2007, Maybe James 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 33rd international course on The Future of Religion: Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens in the IUC Building, from April 27 – May 2, 2009. 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 global capitalist crisis; the war against terror, which is continually fought on both sides according to the Jus Talionis, without any redemption in sight, as the possible result of the praxis of the Golden Rule in personal, national, and international affairs, a praxis driven by the yearning for the totally Other, including the longing for light, friendship, love, as well as liberation and happiness, and the rescue of all the hopeless victims of society and history, who have never had their day in court; the Israeli war against the Gaza Strip; the inauguration of the Obama Administration inspired by socially modified Roosevelt liberalism rather than the abstract, atomistic Friedmann-Chicago School neo-liberalism, which is responsible for the Afghanistan and Iraq war and the present world-wide economic catastrophe.

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; Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens of 2009. One reason for such suggestions is to constitute further continuity between our 32 courses on one hand, and the coming 33rd 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. The other reason for the following suggestions is to indicate the possible direction, which our new international discourse on the Future of Religion: Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens may, or could, or should take, when we meet in Dubrovnik from April 27-May 2, 2009. 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, and a Pentagon advisor. 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: mutual tolerant human behavior in the midst of the culture wars raging inside and among nation states.

Before September 11, 2001

Before September 11, 2001, believers and non-believers were divided over the question, if modern people should engage in gene – technological self-instrumentalization or if they should even pursue the goal of self-optimalization in terms of a new post-fascist, liberal eugenics. The Torah defines religion as fear of God, and believers as those fearing God, and non-believers as those who are without such fear. According to the new dialectical religiology believers are those, who are driven by the insatiable longing for the wholly Other than the horror and terror of nature and history, while non-
believers are *unmusical* concerning such yearning and do not experience it, but are rather positivistic and naturalistic in their attitude toward the world in terms of a *metaphysics of what is the case*. Before September 11, 2001 many believers were against such self – instrumentalization in order to remove genetic illnesses, or such liberal eugenics: not against such goals like health or beauty, but rather against the ethically problematic means by which they were to be achieved. Many non-believers were for such goals and did not really mind the problematic means to reach them. The means were the price to be paid for a good cause: e.g. the killing of embryos in order to heal illnesses like Alzheimer’s disease, diabetes, etc. An intense culture war had taken place between believers, who followed an absolute biblical or natural law ethics on one hand, and non-believers who followed a positivistic or naturalistic philosophy. Natural scientists made fun of Bishops by saying that they believe, that God sits in the uterus of 10 million women in the USA every year, and puts a soul into the fertilized egg cell, and thus made the embryo into the subject of human and civil rights, and its termination after stem cell removal into a crime: murder. The natural scientists called the Bishops obscurantists, remnants from the Dark Ages, who had resisted any and every scientific and technological progress since Galileo and Copernicus and Newton, and had lost all rearguard struggles against Modernity in the past 400 years. The Bishops on their part opposed the natural scientists by blaming them, that through their positivism and naturalism they deprived the youth of the last residuals of morality and ethics. The believing and non–believing citizens treated each other mutually in a rather uncivil way in their respective civil societies and constitutional states.

**After September 11, 2001**

With and after September 11, 2001, the culture war between believers and non-believers took on an even much more radical and dramatic form. The tensions of the antagonism between the religious and the secular, the sacred and the profane, religion and secular society and state exploded in an even much more catastrophic way. Believing citizens from Islamic Saudi Arabia and other Near Eastern States decided to trans-functionalize four civil airliners into rockets containing human beings, including themselves, and steered them against the entirely secular capitalist center of the Western civilization. The Islamic believers destroyed the World Trade Center in New York as a symbol of capitalist stealing, and they damaged the Pentagon in Washington D.C. as symbol of capitalist killing, and they wanted to annihilate either the White House or the Capitol, as symbols of capitalist lying about the stealing and the killing, but were prevented from doing so through the loss of one plane over Pennsylvania. The Islamic believers performed and executed against the modern non-believers the *Jus* or *Lex Talionis*, According to Sama bin Laden, the Islamic believers wanted to give to the American infidels or non-believers a taste of what they had done against other people, when they threw the atomic and plutonium bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and when they flew terror attacks against German and European cities, and when they supported wars of Israel against Islamic states. When they struck against the infidels, the non-believing citizens of the USA, the Islamic believers took it into their own hands, to transform world-history into world-judgment. Up to the present – January 2009 – the American citizens do not see it that way, simply because they understand themselves not as non-believing but rather as believing citizens. 99% of American citizens confess to believe in God, admittedly mostly a deistic God, who after creating the world left it to itself, so that the world is as God-less as God is world-less. This deistic God differs very much from the God of Jews, Christians and Muslims, who is as world-immanent as he is world-transcendent, and looks to the believers of the three Abrahamic faith communities like a mere bourgeois abstraction and construction for the legitimation of the bourgeois revolutions against
religiously legitimated feudal lords, ignoring that September 11, 2001 was an act of retaliation according to the Jus Talionis of believing citizens against non-believing citizens, the Americans on their part took revenge according to the Lex Talionis for the tragedy of September 11, 2001 against the Islamic believers, who had attacked them, by making war against Islamic Afghanistan and Iraq, which so far has cost the lives of over a million people. The Lex Talionis was not even practiced as a limiting law: one eye for one eye! While the Torah and the Holy Qu'ran affirm the Lex Talionis, the New Testament rejects it. Christian believing citizens would have been obligated to practice the Golden Rule and abstain from the praxis of the Jus Talionis. Only non-believing American citizens could possibly engage in retaliation against the Islamic believers, who attacked them. Of course, revenge begets revenge ad infinitum. Thus after all the Islamic casualties of the past 7 years a more catastrophic September 11 may be expected, if the Islamic believers do not take the ongoing economic tsunami as a sufficient retaliation against the West: sent by Allah!

Discourse

In the perspective of the dialectical religiology, it is very doubtful if in the present world historical situation the antagonism between believers and non-believers can really be reconciled, no matter if the culture war rages around topics like stem cell research or about the democratization of Islamic states, or the separation between Synagogue, Church, or Mosque, on one hand, and the secular modern, constitutional state, on the other, not to speak of the natural sciences. One must only compare the time-line of the natural and human evolution as discovered by the natural and social sciences with the Jewish, Christian Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu or Daoist calendars, in order to see that the antagonism between believers and non-believers is still continually deepening in theory and praxis. If indeed no reconciliation between believers and non-believers is possible at this time, that must not mean that the culture wars must turn into civil wars or international wars, or even into wars between civilizations. Discourse between believers and non-believers are possible. Where there is discourse, war can be avoided. Who ever wants to have war? must only stop discourse. We define discourse as future-oriented remembrance of human suffering with the practical intent to diminish it. Discourse is based in the human potential of language and memory and anticipation as well as in the evolutionary universal of the struggle for mutual reciprocal recognition. Discourse is a privileged form of communicative action and rationality. It takes place between human subjects, who together produce texts, with a certain structure, in a particular economic, social, political and historical context, and with a specific goal or motivation. In discourse believers and non-believers can prevent the dialectic between the sacred and the profane to be closed either fundamentalistically or positivistically and naturalistically and can be kept open for the purpose of coming closer to each other, or if that may not be possible for the time being, to agree to disagree until the world religions on one hand and the natural and social sciences on the other hand, and most of all man himself, have evolved further. .

Secularization

Believers and non-believers have a different evaluation of the secularization of liberal civil society. Non-believers emphasise and celebrate the successful taming of the ecclesiastical authorities through the secular power. The believers move into the foreground and criticize the unjust act of the secular appropriation of religious property and values. According to the reading of the non-believers,
secularization means the replacement of religious modes of thinking and life forms through rational and in any case superior equivalents. The believers discredit in their reading the modern and post-modern secular forms of thinking and living as illegitimately expropriated religious goods. The non-believers give in their repression - model a progressive-optimistic interpretation of the disencharnted modern and post-modern world. The non-believers give in their expropriation - model decadence-theoretical interpretation of the homeless Modernity and Post-Modernity. In the dialectical-religiological perspective, both, the non-believers and the believers make in their kind of reading of the secularization process the same mistake. They both see the secularization process as a kind of zero-sum-game between the capitalistically unchained productive forces of science and technology on one hand, and the pattern-maintaining, stabilizing, equilibrating, integrating forces of religion and church – or also Umma or Synagogue, on the other. According to believers and non-believers, one side can only win for the price of the capitulation of the other: and that according to the liberal or neo-liberal rules of the game, which favor the secular driving forces of Modernity.

Post-Secular Society

However, this picture does not fit our present post-secular society of 2009. In spite of all bourgeois, Marxian and Freudian enlightenment movements. The globalizing post-secular society is one, that has adjusted itself to the continuation of religious communities, and to the coexistence of believers and non-believers in a continually secularizing context and environment, In such a post-secular society is faded out the civilizing role of a democratically enlightened commonsense, which in the voice confusion of culture wars seeks and paves, so to speak, its own way as third party between the positive religions and the positive sciences, between religion and positivism and naturalism, between believers and non-believers. Of course, in the perspective of the of liberal state only those believers and religious communities deserve the predicate rational, who out of their own insight renounce a violent assertion of their truth of faith and a militant compulsion of conscience against their own co-believers or members, and particularly any manipulation toward suicidal assassination attacks against other believers or non-believers. The dialectical reliologist thinks of hellenized Jews, Christians and Muslims, for whom God and his image, man, are both rational, and rational believers and non-believers can both on the basis of their logos, i.e. reason or word or speech, enter civil discourse with each other, and therefore do not have to murder each other, and rational believers can find a new way to speak about the dialectic of God and world, which may seem plausible even to non-believers. When the non-believers make this concession and speak of the post-secular society, they do of course not mean, that the secularization process has come to its end, but rather that it moves more slowly than the enlighteners - Schopenhauer, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, etc. had once believed, expected and estimated.

Three-fold Reflection

In the view of the dialectical reliology, the insight of believers to renounce violence and compulsion owes itself to their three-fold reflection on their position in a globalizing pluralistic liberal civil society.

1. The consciousness of the believer must digest critically the cognitively, ethically, and expressively dissonant encounters with other believers in other religions and religious paradigms.
2. The consciousness of the believer must adjust to the authority of the positive sciences, which
owns the social monopoly concerning world-knowledge in liberal society.

3. Finally, the consciousness of the believer must get involved with and agree to compromises about the secular premises of the constitutional state, which ground themselves in, and justify and legitimate themselves, through a profane communicative morality and ethics.

Without such three-fold push of reflection in the consciousness of the believers, particularly of the three monotheistic Mosaic faith communities, would unfold a malignantly aggressive and destructive potential in radically modernized civil societies as the before and after September 11, 2001 ongoing culture wars show only too clearly. The word push of reflection in religious consciousness should not introduce the false representation of an one-sidedly performed and concluded process on the religious side alone. In reality, this reflective work continues in every newly arising conflict between believers and non-believers in the distribution centers of the democratic public of liberal society and constitutional state.

**Existentially Relevant Questions**

In the perspective of the dialectical religiology, as soon as existentially relevant questions arise in the public sphere of civil society and on the political agenda of the constitutional state, the believing and non-believing citizens bounce and rebound against each other with their world-view impregnated opinions and convictions, and experience, while slaving away through the shrill dissonances of the public opinion struggle, the offensive fact of a worldview pluralism, which is de-hellenized as was already the nominalistic Protestant Reformation and the like wise nominalistic bourgeois enlightenment and revolution before. When the believing and non-believing citizens learn to deal with this fact of pluralism in the consciousness of their own fallibility and non-violently, i.e. without tearing apart the social bond of the political community, then they shall recognize, what the in the constitution firmly written down secular foundations of decision-making mean in a post-secular society. In the struggle between the faith-claims of the believers and the knowledge-claims of the non-believers the worldview-neutral constitutional state does namely in no way prejudge or prejudice political decisions in favor of the religious or the secular side. The pluralistic communicative, and anamnestic, and anticipatory rationality of the state-citizen – audience follows the dynamic of secularization only insofar as it compels and forces in the result toward an equal distance from stiff and rigid religious traditions on one hand, and secular world-view-contents, on the other. However, the pluralistic rationality remains ready to learn and as such it is, without giving up its autonomy, osmotically open to the religious and the secular side, to revelation and enlightenment, to faith and knowledge, to the believing and the non-believing citizens.

**From Abstract to Concrete Liberalism**

We can hope with good reason, that the new Obama Administration will create a culture of discourse through closing Guantanamo Bay; through stopping torture; through setting the innocent prisoners free; through establishing an embassy in Iran and Cuba; through putting an ambassador into the embassy in Syria; through ending the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; through speaking to the humiliated and suffering Arabic and Islamic communities of the Near East. Africa, and Asia. With President Obama the abstract, Narcistic, atomistic Friedmann-Chicago-School neo-liberalism has been replaced from power positions by a concrete, Keynesian, Roosevelt, socially modified liberalism. In the
face of the present economic tsunami many people in capitalist countries begin to read Karl Marx again. Even the German Finance Minister expressed recently with some discomfort his opinion, that Marx’s crisis theory may have been right after all. Marxism is nothing else than the self-criticism of abstract atomistic liberalism. The new Deal of the Obama Administration shall rescue capitalism as little as did the first New Deal under President Roosevelt: the war did it. The neo-liberal philosophy has failed in its policies and political and military actions, because of massive privatization and de-regulation and the lack of policing of antagonistic civil society by the democratic constitutional state. The fate of the nations can no longer be left in the hands of corrupt corporate ruling classes, which have only their own private profit in mind, instead of the common good of the people. As the Obama Administration shall continue the federalization of banks and industries, which the second Bush Administration had already started against its own will, we can only hope, that it can avoid to move to alternative Future I – a corporate or fascist society a la Peron in Argentine, in which national solidarity would swallow up personal autonomy, and to Post-Modern alternative Future II – a more and more militaristic society dominated by what President Eisenhower had called the military-industrial complex, and that it will rather strengthen the tendencies toward Post-Modern alternative Future III – a concrete-liberal or humanist-socialist society, in which personal sovereignty and universal, i.e., anamnestic, present and proleptic, solidarity will be reconciled. Such new discourse culture, as the Obama Administration will hopefully promote, would also allow for a new start in the discourse between believers, motivated by faith, and non-believers, motivated by autonomous reason, on the national and international level. Of course, the concretely liberal state will have to be neutral toward believing and non-believing citizens. But it also has the obligation to allow and secure free entrance to the public sphere for believing as well as non-believing citizens, to openly present their opinions and their arguments with good reasons, so that the better reasons may prevail, and thus to transform their ethical and socio-ethical positions into bills and compete for majorities and thus to participate in the democratic will formation and governance toward Post-Modern alternative Future III: the reconciled society.

**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 discourse on *The Future of Religion: Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens*. 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 /May 2009, 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 again in Yalta in November 2008 in our 8th international course on “Religion and Civil Society, the sister-course to our Dubrovnik course, which will continue to take place every November. A Saint Petersburg and Yalta Report is available on my website. 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, 9th international course will take place in Yalta in November 2009. 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

Rudolf J. Siebert
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IUC Course Director
Director of the WMU Center for Humanistic Future Studies
Appendix

Prof. Siebert and his colleagues will conduct a course, entitled *Future of Religion: Mutual Treatment of Believing and Non-Believing Citizens*, at the Inter University Centre, Dubrovnik, from April 27, - May 2, 2009. You are invited! If you would like to read the *Call for Papers*, please follow this link: http://www.rudolfjsiebert.org/web_publications/

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Course

Surname Mr./Ms.

First and other names

Date of birth

Citizenship

Country of residence (permanent / temporary –please indicate both)

Field of study (in humanities/social sciences)

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Scholarships will cover expenses, which occur in Dubrovnik (accommodation and meals) only. There are a very limited number of partial travel grants available for participants coming from the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kosovo, Moldova, Republic of Georgia, Russia and Ukraine.

Date: Signature:

Applications should reach the IUC Secretariat at least one month before the start of the course. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.