Invitation of Papers for the
Sixth International Course on

“Religion and Civil Society:
Main Challenges to the Civilizations and their Responses”
In Yalta, Crimea, Ukraine,
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Dear Friend:

We are writing this letter to you, in order to invite you wholeheartedly to our sixth international course on “Religion and Civil Society: Main Challenges to the Civilizations and their Responses,” to take place in Yalta, Ukraine, from November 1-3, 2006. It is a sister course to our international Dubrovnik course on the “Future of Religion.” Our new theme in Yalta is certainly of highest actuality in the present world-historical transition from Modernity to Post-Modernity: What are the main challenges which religion-based civilizations have to face at this moment in history? How do they or how can they best respond to these challenges? We are thinking e.g., the Jewish civilization, or the Christian civilization, or the Islamic civilization. Even if such civilizations have been secularized, they are nevertheless rooted in religious interpretations of reality and religious orientation of action. Even their secularization process cannot be understood without reference to their religious background: the secular categorical imperative or the apriori of the unlimited communication community not without the religious Golden Rule; the secular solidarity not without neighborly love. The following few thoughts and ideas may help us to stimulate and give guidance to our discourse, and may inspire our papers.

Communities of Faith

According to the critical theory of religion, religious communities and traditions have gained a new political importance in the public sphere of nations since the neo-conservative and neo-liberal counter-revolution of 1989, which had not been expected by thinkers of the bourgeois, Marxian and Freudian enlightenment movements. A de-secularization seems to take place. Sociologists speak of a post-secular society. Suddenly we are facing different variations of religious fundamentalism not only in America and the Middle East, but also in Africa, South East Asia, and in the Indian Subcontinent. These fundamentalisms are often interconnected with national and ethnic conflicts. Today they also constitute the seedbed for a decentralized form of religious terrorism that operates globally and provokes a secular counter-terrorism of freedom and democracy. The root course of the religious terrorism is not terrorism but the deepening antagonism of the poor and rich classes on a national and international level. Globalization, world market, empire-building, and competition ignore human rights and human dignity, and disappoint the equality-expectations of human beings, and separate the winners from the losers, the successful from the failures, the actors from the victims in the recognition-drama of globalized antagonistic civil society. The religious terrorism coming from the Third and Fourth World is directed against the perceived insults and injuries caused by the Western Civilization, which is to a large extend secularized and demythologized, and which is superior in terms of instrumental rationality, particularly economically and politically and militarily. In Iran the protest movement against a corrupt regime set in place and supported by America has given rise to a veritable rule of Mullahs, who promote a traditional Islamic theocracy with modern means – a French constitution and advanced weaponry. This regime of Mullahs serves other fundamentalist movements in the Near East and elsewhere as a model to follow. In several Muslim countries the Sharia, particularly religious family law either an alternative or a substitute for secular civil law. In Israel the Torah, specifically the religious family law I also an alternative or a substitute for the modern civil law. In Afghanistan and in Iraq the application of a more or less liberal version of the American constitutions must be limited by its compatibility with the Sharia, while at the same time civil war is raging among Shiites, Sunnis, Baathists, and Kurds. Religious conflicts are
squeezing their way into the international arena: as e.g. the provocation of the Hezbollah movement against Israel and the war of Israel against Lebanon.

Multiple Modernities

In the perspective of the dialectical theory of religion, the hopes associated with the political agenda of multiple modernities are fueled by the cultural self-confidence of those world religions that to this very day still unmistakably shape the physiognomy of the mayor civilizations in spite of secularization tendencies: Daoism in China, Hinduism and Buddhism in India, Islam in the Near East, Africa and Indonesia. In the West, the perception of international relations has changed in light of the fears of what the Harvard Professor Samuel Huntington has called a clash of civilizations. Today nothing makes the global antagonism between the sacred and the profane clearer to the critical theorist of religion, than the US political scientist ‘s new foreign policy paradigm of the clash of civilizations. Huntington is the student and disciple of Carl Schmitt, Adolf Hitler’s main former jurist and political theologian. Schmitt defined the essence of the political as the identification of the enemy. Schmitt’s disciple Huntington is also Pentagon adviser. Huntington conceives of alternative Future II - the struggle among the cultures, as being unavoidable, and of alternative Future III – the reconciled free and just peace society as being illusionary and abstract-utopian. Not only from the New Testament, but also through Schmitt and Huntington, President Bush junior received the strong statement: who is not with me, is against me, which he made, when he started the second Iraq war with the Alliance of the Willing, but without the consensus of the United Nations. The second Bush-Administration’s notion of the axis of evil in remembrance of the evil axis Berlin-Rome Tokyo – is merely one prominent example of the change of perception of international relations in the light of the fears of a clash of civilizations, which at the same time threatens to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. For scholars from Canada and other countries in the American influence sphere as far as the Ukraine and Central Asia and the Near East, behind Huntington’s thesis of the culture wars stands nothing else than American imperialism, colonialism and militarism. Of course, culture wars have a long history. Already 27 000 years ago the classical Neanderthal fell - after the Ante-Neanderthal, who appeared 350 000 years ago, and the early Neanderthal who lived 180 000 – 90 000 years ago - victim to a civilization war between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea, which was won by our ancestor, the Homo Sapiens, who had migrated north from Africa, and who could speak and organize better, and who had better tools, and most of all better weapons. Even Western intellectuals, who up to 2006 had been self-critical in regard to the fears of a clash of civilizations, are starting now to go on the offensive in their response to the image of Occidentalism, that the Orientalists have of their enemies in the West. But it is not true, that the political actors of Islamism have no demands, which could be negotiated. Bin Laden has never made a secret of his agreement with Huntington’s diagnosis of the war of the cultures, and he has characterized expressively as being right the territorial division and partition of the world into different circles of civilization. It is also not true that terroristic movements can not achieve economic or political successes. Recent decades have shown that terror and wearing down tactics can be worth it, when the support of the population is correspondingly great. Often former terrorists have become presidents of states.
Fascism

Recently the American President Bush junior has started to speak of Islamic fascists without - as usually - clarifying the precise notion with which this name is supposed to be connected. The government - conform Fox News, which proclaims itself to be fair, balanced, and unafraid, echoes the President, when it also names the so-called terrorists Islamic fascists. It has become customary in national and international relations to call one’s political opponents: Hitler, the archetype of evil. In reality, religious terrorists are people without tanks, helicopters or fighter planes, who therefore use primitive weapons and themselves in order to retaliate – jus talionis from Torah and Koran - against what they perceive as the exploitation, occupation and oppression by the West, and doing so kill unjustly large numbers of civilians: what the American military calls collateral damage. The Former American President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated once, that the liberty of a democracy is not safe, if the people tolerate the growth of private power to the point, where it becomes stronger than the democratic state itself. That in its essence is fascism – ownership of government by an individual, by a group, or by any controlling private power. . Unfortunately, today in 2006 – half a century after President Roosevelt - in some Western democracies, civil society and in it some neo-conservative or neo-liberal economically powerful individuals and groups are no longer under the control of the democratic constitutional state, but rather control it, and have decided to counter the religious terror of fundamentalists with the secular terror modern freedom and democracy. That may not be the right response: Lex Talionis against Lex Talionis. Retaliation always leads to escalation and makes the one who retaliates too similar to the enemy he retaliates against and thus only increases the injustice. Particularly German fascism was a very retaliatory movement.

Dynamic and Differentiation

Unlike his opponents, the critical theorist of society, Jürgen Habermas, and the ecumenical Christian theologian, Hans Küng, who recommend a discourse among the civilizations and religions, Huntington has studied little the inner dynamic and differentiations of the particular civilizations, and religions, Huntington obviously knows little about complex historical connections, flowing transitions, mutual cross- fertilizations, and peaceful living together of civilizations and religions. Thus, Huntington made the prognosis, that the collision between the modern secular Western civilization and the Islamic civilization would be particularly dangerous. In this way, Huntington gave ideological support to the neo-conservative and neo-liberal American Administrations, when after the end of the cold war in 1989 they replaced the enemy image of communism by the enemy image of Islam, or even combined them and thus made the discourse and the cooperation among the civilizations very difficult. Today American Rightwing television programs, like Fox News, escalate Huntington’s thesis of the clash of civilizations into the observation that World War III had already begun with the catastrophe in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, five years ago.
Fundamentalism

In the view of the critical theory of religion, religious fundamentalism, itself being a modern phenomenon like nationalism, constitutes the main challenge to historical - intermediate as well as to modern civilizations, and will, if not being responded to adequately, be a threat and will do great damage to them, to say the least. Fundamentalism in all corners of the world can be understood in terms of the long – term impact of violent forms of colonialism and imperialism and failures in external or internal decolonization as well as in the reduction of modern, Western imperialism. The globalization of antagonistic civil society and the penetration of different forms of capitalism into pre-modern societies from the outside elicit social uncertainty and cultural upheavals. Then religious fundamentalist movements process the radical changes brought about by globalization and capitalist modernization in the traditional economic and social structure and the cultural dissynchronies. Under conditions of an accelerated or failing modernization the individual may experience these economic and social changes and this cultural contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous as a sense of being uprooted and of being dislocated and of having lost all hold. For outsiders most surprising is the political revitalization of religion at the heart of the United States, where the dynamism of modernization seems to unfold most successfully. Certainly in Europe ever since the days of the French revolution people have been aware of the power of a religious form of traditionalism that understood itself as counterrevolutionary: Orthodox Traditionalism, Roman-Catholic Authoritarianism, Protestant Fundamentalism, and Liberal Modernism. However this evocation of religion as the power of tradition implicitly revealed the nagging doubt, that the vitality of that which is already reflexively passed down as tradition may have been broken. By contrast, so it appears at least to Europeans, the political awakening of an ongoing strong religious consciousness in the United States has not been affected by such doubts. Of course, also in the United states the dynamism of modernization has not reached all social classes to the same extend: certainly the farmers and the workers and the low bourgeoisie less than the middle and upper bourgeoisie. Religious and political fundamentalism as well as fascistoid tendencies and authoritarian personalities are located more in the lower classes. From its very start the American civil society was characterized by the antagonism between people of religious faith and people who were influenced by the bourgeois enlightenment. When the American colonial bourgeoisie emancipated itself from the bourgeoisie in England in the so-called American Revolution, bourgeois enlighteners produced the most outstanding American Constitution, which implied the separation of church and state. Thus also in the United States, people have been aware of the power of religious tradition, which up to the present understands itself as counterrevolutionary and opposes the scientific enlightenment, e.g. the teaching on evolution, which is situated more in the middle and upper bourgeoisie. Clerico-fascist radio and television preachers, who have addressed the masses of framers, workers and low middle class people from the 1930s to 2006 show this only to clearly. Particularly the fanaticism of the fundamentalist preachers betrays the fact, that also in America there exists the nagging doubt that the vitality of the Christian tradition may be broken. That a born - again American President can practice the lex talionis with two wars and masses of collateral damages – over 100 000 civilians in Iraq alone - and can thus break the fourth commandment of the Sermon on the Mount, the very foundation of Christianity, and that nevertheless large numbers of Roman Catholics and Protestant Evangelicals voted for him even a second time, does not necessarily show the vitality of genuine Christian religiosity, but rather its utter hypocrisy and phoniness. By their fruits you shall know them!
**Combination of Images**

Thus some fundamentalist friends of the second Bush Administration have indeed tried, not only to replace but also even to combine the enemy images of communism and Islam. On Monday, August 22, 2005, the Christian fundamentalist preacher, politician and broadcaster with close ties to the Bush Administration, Reverend Pat Robertson, has called - in the old tradition of fascist radio and television evangelists since Martin Luther Thomas and Charles Coughlin, who always used religious motives, devices and tricks, in order to achieve rightwing political purposes - for the assassination of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Robertson issued his Mafia-like appeal to the US government, to take out Chavez, on his television show, the 700 Club, broadcasting to over one million viewers, through his own Christian Broadcast Network and Disney’s ABC Family Network. After a ten-minute news clip aimed at portraying Chavez’s Venezuela as a major threat to the United States, Robertson proceeded to make the case for assassination:

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He has destroyed the Venezuelan economy, and he’s going to make that a launching pad for communist infiltration and Muslim extremism all over the continent. You know, I don’t know about this doctrine of assassination, but if he thinks we’re trying to assassinate him, I think that we really ought to go ahead and do it. It’s a whole lot cheaper than starting a war... and I don’t think any oil shipments will stop. This man is a terrific danger, and this is in our sphere of influence.
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Robertson continued,

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Without question, this is a dangerous enemy to our south, controlling a huge pool of oil that could hurt us very badly. We have the ability to take him out, and I think the time has come that we exercise that ability. We don’t need another $200 billion war to get rid of one, you know, strong-arm dictator. It’s a whole lot easier to have some of the covert operatives do the job and then get it over with.
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Like in the flash of lightening in Robertson’s statements on assassination of a foreign head of a sovereign state become visible the otherwise hidden connections between positivism and neo-positivism, neo-conservativism and neo-liberalism, and fascism and neo-fascism, particularly clerico-fascism. Such type of extreme right-wing rhetoric can, of course, only intensify the tensions among the civilizations and lead to further explosions, like September 11, 2001, and prevent the start of any rational discourse and cooperation among the civilizations.

**Critical or Uncritical Nationalism?**

The Roman Catholic Priest and President of the Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Robert A. Sirico, counseled Reverend Pat Robertson and all the other Evangelicals through The Detroit News of September 3, 2005, to rethink nationalism. Catholics and Evangelicals had substantially contributed to the reelection of President Bush junior in November 2004, after he had already as Governor of Texas executed 150 prisoners against Catholic teaching and Papal intervention attempts, and after he had initiated two wars, which had been characterized as
being unjust on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount and the Augustinian Seven Point Just War Theory not only by Pope John Paul II, but also by members of the World Council of Churches, and which by that time had cost already the lives of over 1000 American soldiers and of close to 100 000 civilians. After the Presidential election, Catholics and Evangelicals concluded even a closer, more formal alliance, in order to continue their nationalistic political cooperation: my country, right or wrong! Father Sirico, the Catholic, of course, hates the socialists Chavez and Castro as much as the Evangelical Robertson does, in spite of the fifth commandment of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, which demands not only the love of the neighbor, but also the love of the enemy, in imitation of God and also of the Nazarene himself. Sirico agrees with Robertson’s goal, that Chavez and, of course, also Castro, and the Chinese communists, and all other socialists, like Hamas or Hezbollah, and of course all Islamic fascists must be removed from power, no matter if they have been voted in democratically or not, or if they have strong popular support or not. Father Sirico differs from Robertson only concerning the means. Following the Medieval Roman Catholic Paradigm of Christianity and the traditional, pre-modern, first Stoic and then baptized natural law, including the Augustinian Seven Point Just War Theory, Sirico wants to use war against Venezuela or Cuba, etc, only as a last resort: defensive, proportional and limited. Thus Sirico recommends trying first cultural exchange, moral example, diplomatic pressure and free trade as tools, in order to oust Chavez, or Castro, or other socialists, including the Chinese communists, and to bring the old bourgeois nationalists back again. Thus, such ousting is to be done in the name of bourgeois and even Christian, or Catholic, or Evangelical nationalism: a contradictio in adjecto. Father Sirico has completely forgotten the horror and terror of pre-fascist liberal nationalism, fascist nationalism, and post-fascist neo-liberal nationalism of the 20th and 21st centuries, the Lateran Treaty with Benito Mussolini and the Concordat with Adolf Hitler, which is still valid in Germany today. He has forgotten, that the Europeans paid with two world wars and over 60 million casualties their victory over nationalism in the form of the European Union. He has forgotten, that nationalism as such is not a medieval, or a Catholic, but rather - like the nation state, or religious or political fundamentalism - a very modern phenomenon.

**Tyrannicide**

But Father Sirico does remember, that – not the Rabbi Jesus – but the medieval natural law affirms the idea of tyrannicide - killing of tyrants - but only after every other alternative has been exhausted, and with some assurance, that the cure would not prove worse than the disease. As a matter of fact, the permission of tyrannicide is rooted in the first of the four natural laws: the inclination, and the right, and the duty to preserve life. Thus, ultimately Robertson and Sirico agree after all: Chavez, or Castro, or the Chinese communists, etc. could be assassinated or made war against, if nothing else works. Father Sirico wants to replace Reverend Robertson’s uncritical with his critical nationalism. For the critical nationalist Sirico, Christianity does *not regard every enemy of the nation state as worthy of execution*. Thanks be to God! We all, believers and humanists, are really happy about that. Of course, Reverend Robertson as well as Father Sirico are both very well paid by the bourgeois power elite for their uncritical or critical nationalism. The same was true already for their predecessors in the 1930s and 1940s, e.g. the radio evangelists Reverend Martin Luther Thomas or Father Charles Coughlin, who also functionalized religion for secular nationalistic and capitalistic purposes contrary to it, and the same remains true for Opus Dei today, That is of course also most helpful financially for Evangelical and Catholic parishes and dioceses alike. But it is obvious, that any form of uncritical or critical nationalism will necessarily undermine and destroy
any discourse or cooperation among the civilizations, and thus will promote not only the trend toward alternative Future I – the authoritarian, totalitarian, totally administered, one-dimensional, and technocratic society, but also toward alternative Future II – the collisions, assassinations, and wars among civilizations, and thus will weaken the tendencies toward alternative Future III – the reconciliation of the civilizations and an autonomous as well as solidary, and friendly, and helpful living together of human beings. Of course, the whole modern history of the West proves most conclusively, that there is not such a thing as critical nationalism. To deny this would mean to suffer from extreme amnesia. Most recently – August 2006 – the very nationalistic, neo-liberal Bush-Administration has set aside millions of dollars for regime change in Venezuela, for the removal of President Chavez and his democratically elected socialist government, against American and international law, not to speak of the Mosaic Decalogue or the Jesuanic Sermon on the Mount. Church – at least the Christian Right a la Robertson and Sirico – and state – at least that of the second Bush-Administration - cooperate very well with each other at least in counterrevolutionary matters; and that not only concerning socialistic Venezuela, or Chile, or Cuba, or North-Korea, but also in Palestine, where the Islamic Hamas and in Lebanon where the Islamic Hezbollah have been voted into the government democratically by their people. In the meantime religious and secular neo-liberals identify - in terms of Carl Schmitt’s definition of the political - as enemies very different people: communists, socialists, national socialists, fascists, Islamic fascists, etc. in order to mobilize the fear factor in the masses and thus to move from one war to the other: who will be next after Afghanistan and Iraq - Syria, Iran, Venezuela, Cuba ??? Only recently – September 1, 2006 - Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney have once more defended their present war policies against Iraq and Afghanistan and terrorism in general by reminding the American people of the failed appeasement policies towards Adolf Hitler: terrorists can not be appeased!!! It is either discourse or war!!! Such warrior-attitude is indeed a great challenge to all civilizations, to which they have to respond first of all through distancing and differentiation.

Wave of Secularization

According to the critical theory of religion, there is statistical evidence of a wave of secularization in almost all European countries since the end of World War II. This secularization goes hand in hand with social modernization. By contrast, for the United States all data show that the comparatively large proportion of the population – farmers, workers and low middle class people are the majority - is made up of religiously active citizens and that it has remained constant over at least sixty years. It seems to Europeans that the Religious Right in the USA is not traditionalist. Precisely because the Christian right unleashes a spontaneous energy for revivalism, it causes paralyzing irritation among its secular opponents. However at the same time the antagonism between the sacred and the secular, religion and politics is deepening also in the United States. Again and again fundamentalists must notice with great disappointment, that American Presidents and politicians, who had promised them to realize their religious agenda - concerning traditional values and norms in relation to abortion, birth control, gay marriage, religious symbolism, prayer in public schools, stem cell research, pornography, etc.- in order to get their votes, behave quite secular gain as soon as they are in office, and don’t keep their religious promises. Masses of believers simply ignore their religious authorities and their traditional teachings, e.g., on birth control, and simply behave like their secular neighbors do while at the same time they continue to go to church.
**Political Division**

In the perspective of the dialectical theory of religion, the movements for religious renewal at the heart of the Western civilization are strengthening, at the cultural level, the political division in the European and American populations that was prompted by the first and second Iraq War. The Iraq wars – the second more than the first – have split not only Europe and the USA, but also Americans and European among themselves. The divisive issues are (1) the abolition of the death penalty; (2) more or less liberal regulations on abortion; (3) setting homosexual partnerships on a par with heterosexual marriages; (4) an unconditional rejection of torture; (5) the just war theory; and (6) the prioritization of human and civil rights over collective goods, like social security. The Europeans have the impression that the European states keep moving forward alone on that path which, ever since the American and the French constitutional revolution of the late 18th century, they had walked side by side with the United States. The significance of religions used for political ends even opposed to their ethos has meanwhile grown far beyond the boundaries of the Western civilization into other civilizations as well. Against this background, the Atlantic split in the Western civilization appears to the Europeans as well as to the Americans as if Europe were isolating itself from the rest of the world. Seen in terms of world history as the critical theorists of religion is used to understand it, Max Weber’s *Occidental Rationalism*, including the bourgeois, Marxian and Freudian enlightenment, now appears to be the actual deviation.

**Traditional and Modern Civilizations**

According to the revisionist, positivistic, neo-conservative viewpoint, religious traditions appear to continue with undiminished strength. They seem to wash away or at least to level the thresholds hitherto assumed by the enlighteners and their followers to pertain between traditional and modern civilizations. In this way the Occident’s own image of modernity seems, as in a psychological experiment, to undergo an inversion: the normal model or the future of all other civilizations – global, post-modern alternative Future III - a free and just, society, in which personal autonomy and universal solidarity would be reconciled - suddenly becomes a special-case scenario. Even if this revisionist, neo-conservative Gestalt –inversion does not really bear up to the scrutiny of the critical theory of society and religion or of any other critical social science and if the contrasting evidence can be brought into line with more conventional explanations of secularization, it must be admitted and there is no doubting the evidence itself and above all the symptomatic fact of divisive political moods crystallizing around it. Representatives of the more conventional secularization theories defend the classical hypothesis that secularization wins out to the extent that along with improved economic and social conditions for life it also spreads the feeling of existential security. Alongside the demographic assumption that fertility rates in developed countries and civilizations are falling, this hypothesis initially explains why secularization today has all in all seized root in the West and to some extent in other civilizations colonized by it. The United States seems once more to constitute an exception because of three reasons: 1.a rather blunt and brutal form of capitalism has effects which are less cushioned by a welfare state, in spite of the on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity socially modified Roosevelt – liberalism, which admittedly is even slowly abolished by powerful neo-liberal groups. This largely unmitigated monopoly and oligopoly capitalism exposes particularly the lower classes to a higher degree of social uncertainty. - 2.The comparatively high rate of
immigration from traditional civilizations - recently 12 million illegal mostly Roman Catholic immigrants from Mexico and other Central and Latin American countries- where the fertility rates are correspondingly high explains the stability if the relatively large proportion of religious citizens in the USA. -3.The religion in the Americas is - with a few exceptions – the basic Christian communities and their liberation theology – not a critical but rather a conformist religion, not a liberation but domination religion, not a revolutionary but an authoritarian religion, which is rather opiate of and for the people than the outcry of the oppressed creatures and the heart of a heartless capitalistic world, and thus keeps masses of badly educated people in passive conformity to the prevailing system, no matter how unjust it may be.

The End of Enlightenment

The critical theorists of religion agrees at least to some extend with the American historian G. Wills, who characterized two days after the last American presidential election, which returned the War-President into power with the help of millions of Roman Catholics and Evangelicals, the election day as the day the enlightenment went out. Will asked rather desperately the question, if a people that believes more fervently in the Virgin Birth than in evolution can  still be called an enlightened nation? Will remembers that America was the first real democracy in world-history and that as such it was the product of the values of the bourgeois enlightenment. Though the founders of the American Republic differed on many things, so Wills argues, they shared nevertheless these values of the Enlightenment and the bourgeois modernity. Respect for evidence, so Wills complaints, seems not to pertain anymore, when a poll taken just before the Presidential election in November 2004 showed that 75% of President Bush’s supporters believed Iraq either worked closely with al Qaeda or was directly involved in the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. President Bush was voted for by 60 % of the Spanish-speaking Roman Catholic voters, by 67% of the white Protestants, and by 78% of the Evangelical or Born Again Christians. Even among the Roman Catholics, who had been taught by Pope John Paul II, that the two Iraq wars were unjust and that death penalty and torture were wrong, and who had previously tended to vote Democrat, President Bush turned around the traditional majorities. The fact that a large number of American Catholic Bishops took the side of President Bush is astonishing, for all the concurrence on the question of abortion, if the critical theorist of religion bears in mind that unlike the Roman Catholic Church, the second Bush Administration defends the death penalty and torture and put the lives of tens of thousands of US soldiers and Iraqi civilians at risk for a war of aggression that violated the American constitution as well as international law, for which it could only cite dubious reasons if not Orwell Ian or Huxley an lies, like the presence of weapons of mass destruction in the Iraqi an arsenals. In the perspective of the critical theory of religion, there are of course people not only in Europe, but also in America, who are like the critical theorists of society driven by the insatiable longing for the wholly Other than the slaughterbench of nature and history, which once was expressed and supported - and for some still is- by the belief in the virgin birth, and who have no overwhelming difficulties with the bourgeois, Marxian or Freudian enlightenment, or with the theory of evolution. Here it must not be forgotten, that of course millions of people in the USA as elsewhere are neither guided by faith or reason, revelation or enlightenment, but rather by fear and greed, and that greed often overcomes fear.
Cultural Division

According to the critical theory of religion, irrespective of how one evaluates the facts, the analyses of the American Presidential Election of November 2004 confirm that the cultural division of the Western civilization runs right through the American nation itself. Conflicting value orientations – God, gays and guns – have manifestly covered over more tangible contrasting interests. President Bush junior has a coalition of primarily religiously motivated voters, Catholics and Evangelicals, to thank for his victory in November 2004. This shift in power indicates a mental shift in antagonistic American civil society that also forms the background to the academic discourses on the political role of religion in the constitutional state and in the public sphere not only in America but also in Europe and thus also in our sixth Yalta discourse on religion in civil society.

First Amendment

In the perspective of the dialectical theory of religion, in the USA once again the battle is over the substance of the first sentence to the Bill of Rights and the first Amendment to the Constitution: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The United States was the political pacemaker on the way to establishing a freedom of religion that rested on the reciprocal respect of the religious freedom of the others. This concept of respect is ultimately rooted in the human potential of the struggle for recognition, mediated through the evolutionary universal of language and memory. The marvelous bourgeois achievement, which tangentially transcends all class and national boundaries, the Article 16 of the Bill of Rights penned in Virginia in 1776 is the first document of freedom of religion guaranteed as a basic right that democratic citizens accord to each other across the divides among the different world religions and their historical paradigms. It took the largest and best organized religious community, the Roman Catholic Church almost 200 years, up to Vatican II, to accept this basic human right of the freedom of religion. Unlike in France, dominated by the Roman Catholic Paradigm of Christianity, the introduction of the freedom of religion into the United States of America, determined by the Protestant-Evangelical Constellation, did not signify the victory of laicism over an authority that had at best shown religious minorities tolerance in line with imposed standards of its own. Here, in the United States, the secularization of state powers did not serve primarily the negative purpose of protecting citizens against the compulsion to adopt a faith against their own will. This accounts for the rather friendly separation between Church and State in America, which leaves open chances and possibilities of cooperation. In America the secularization of state powers was instead designed to guarantee the settlers who had turned their backs on Old Europe the positive liberty to continue to exercise their respective religion without hindrance. Unfortunately liberal theory and praxis, validity and facticity did not always agree and religious minorities, e.g. the Roman Catholics were sometimes persecuted. How ever, for the reason of this positive liberty to follow one’s own religion, in the present American discourse on the political role of religion all sides have been able to claim their loyalty to the constitution. It remains a question to what extend this claim is valid
The Gihadists

According to the critical theory of religion, in any case in spite of the bourgeois enlightenment and its fruit, the Bill of Rights and the introduction of the right of the freedom of religion, on September 11, 2001, the tensions in the modern dichotomy between religion on one hand, and the secular modern civil society and liberal constitutional state on the other, became so great, that it exploded. The 19 fundamentalist-Islamic Gihadists, or God-fighters in the holy war for the defense of Islam, were ready for collective suicide and mass murder. Their attack was directed against the infidels of the bourgeois modernity, who supposedly threatened Islam’s all-embracing religious way of life, with its enlightenment innovations: particularly the separation of religion and secular state, the privatization of religion, the spreading of the doctrine of natural and social evolution, and a corresponding entirely secular education. The infidels of the younger, socialist modernity were supposed to have done the same, and had supposedly been broken and conquered by the Gihadists and Islam in Afghanistan with the help of the older bourgeois form of modernity. Now this older form had its turn to be destroyed! Thus, the Gihadists trans-functionalized four civil airliners into living rockets and guided them against the World Trade Centers in New York and into the Pentagon in Washington D.C. and abortively into the Congress Building, as symbols of the profane, capitalist Western world and its engagement in stealing, killing and lying. The Gihadists used contemporaneous, very secular and very modern high-tech means, in order to achieve non-contemporaneous, pre-modern, traditional religious goals.

Motivations and Goals

The critical theorist of religion knows through Mohammed Atta’s testament and Osama Bin Laden’s pronouncements, that the attacks against New York and Washington D.C. were driven through religious, i.e. Islamic motivations and goals. The Gihadists acted in conformity to the jus talionis, which is present in the Koran as well as in the Torah. It says in the Torah:

Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stroke for stroke.

It says in the Koran:

Free man for freeman, slave for slave.

But the lex talionis is cancelled in the New Testament: through the fourth commandment of the Sermon on the Mount:

You have learned how it was said: Eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you: offer the wicked man no resistance. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; if a man takes you to law and would have your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to anyone who asks, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away.
There are Jewish and Islamic scholars, who while they consider this commandment to be impractical in national or international politics, would nevertheless recommend forgiveness as a matter of personal charity and interpersonal relations. In a secular perspective this commandment seems to be a matter of utter irrationality until one experiences the insanity of the bad infinity of retaliation and counter-retaliation, terror and counter-terror and the endless spell and curse it puts on generations, e.g. in the Near East. Then it becomes obvious, that the breaking of the lex talionis is by far more rational than the addiction to it. Certainly the cancellation of the jus talionis does in no way mean to shortchange justice in To the contrary, it is the better way to justice, as the example of Mahatma Ghandi shows only too clearly. The breaking of the jus talionis could contribute substantially to the discourse and cooperation among the civilizations and could help them to respond more adequately to the great changes they face at this moment in world - history.

**Operation Iraqi Freedom**

The Bush Administration started the second war against Iraq – Project Iraq Freedom following Project Dessert Storm - after having failed in its efforts to gain the consent of the World Security Council and after an almost Orwellian or Huxleyan lying campaign concerning the reasons for and the goals of the war. This campaign pointed more toward alternative Future I – the totally administered society and alternative Future II – the entirely militarized society, than toward alternative Future III – a free and just civilization. The campaign followed the Future I - motto:

- War is Peace
- Freedom is Slavery
- Ignorance is Strength.
- Two and Two makes Five
- God is Power

It remains still inconceivable for the rest of the world, why an intelligent person like Prime Minister Tony Blair from the British Labor Party supported this campaign. The second war against Iraq began on March 18 or 20, 2003 with an intense bombardment of Baghdad: an open city, and thus in violation of the Geneva Conventions. The war continued with massive military force for three weeks against international law and against world public opinion. The war was won very fast, but only apparently so. The Iraqi an military, trained in General Zhukov’s dialectical warfare, had decided long before the American invasion started, not to resist with obsolete weapons the invading high-tech army in open battle, but dissolved its forces and reorganized them for partisan and guerilla warfare drawing the enemy into the cities: as once the Spaniards did successfully against Napoleon, and the Russians against Hitler, and General Giap and the Vietnamese against the French Foreign Legion, which consisted to a large extend of former SS troops, and finally against the American army. This Iraqi an partisan warfare against the so called crusaders continues up to the present – September 2006 - with the support of many foreign volunteers from other Islamic countries and has in the meantime turned into a civil war, which costs daily the lives of large numbers of civilians.
Alienation of the Civilizations

The second Bush-Administration, instead of conquering the terror campaign of the Gihadists, helped its expansion in Afghanistan, in the Near East and around the globe, and thus produced the further alienation of the civilizations, which recently climaxed in the 34 Days War of Israel against Lebanon, which cost the lives of over 1000 civilians. More Lebanese children were killed than Hesbalah fighters. Further tragedies followed the Afghanistan and Iraq war: on Bali, in Casablanca, in Riad, in Istanbul, in Madrid, in London, in the Egyptian resort town of Sharmal El Sheikh. In Madrid, on March 11, 2004, and in London on July 7, 2005 the massacres touched Europe, and became a warning signal for all European countries, including those who had not participated in the Iraq war, that the world crisis had dramatically sharpened.

World Crisis

According to the critical theory of religion, this world crisis reached its most recent climax in the 34 Days War of Israel against Lebanon, which cost the lives of over 1000 civilians. More Lebanese children were killed than Hezbollah (Party of God) fighters. The tensions of the worldwide antagonism between the religious and the secular have led to permanent explosions. This was so, because the war against two Islamic countries, Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the decades of Western application of double standards in reference to the degrading and despising occupation policies of the State of Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories under disregard not only of the Mosaic Decalogue and the 613/614 Mitzvoth, but also of all UN – resolutions, had thrown the whole Islamic world into an indescribable rage and fury, embitterment, and hardening. In 2004, a high official of the Sharon Cabinet in Jerusalem saw a picture of an old Palestinian grandmother, who crawled on the dirty floor of her bulldozed-down home and searched for her pills: she reminded him of his relatives in Auschwitz. Now Huntington’s clash of civilizations appears as self-fulfilling prophecy. On July 24, 2005, Pope Benedict XVI offered a public prayer in Rome, that God might stop the terrorists. God may not do that without the so - called Christian West removing the factors, which have produced the religious terror of the Gihadists in the first place, and which continue to do so: particularly the secular terror, e.g. the massacres of Talibans after the siege of Kunduz in Afghanistan, or the torture and humiliations of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, and at Guantanamo Bay, and the bombardments of open towns and villages in Iraq, which produce high numbers of civilian casualties, the so called collateral damages, e.g. in Fallujah, and the use of cancer-producing down-graded uranium in weaponry in Basra and elsewhere, without cleaning it up afterwards, etc. .

The Non-Concluded Dialectic

In the perspective of the critical theory of religion, there are obviously hardened and petrified religious orthodoxies not only in the Near East and the Far East, but also in the West. There are hardened orthodoxies in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and in their particular paradigms, as well as in other world religions. Whoever wants with Küng or Habermas, and against Huntington, avoid alterative Future II - a collision of civilizations and conventional wars and civil wars, and finally a third world war, has to remember, that the dialectic of the occidental process of modernization and enlightenment and secularization has not yet been completely decided and concluded. On one hand,
the present American war against terrorism is no war at all, since a war can take place only between nations, and not between a nation and a global Islamic movement, of which al Qaeda is only a small part. On the other hand, in the religious terrorism expresses itself also the fateful-speechless collision of cultural worlds, which must develop a common language, beyond the silent and dumb force of the religious terrorists, as well as of the secular rockets, directed against them. Already years ago the great Iranian leader Chatami wished, that the Americans had more communicative rationality, so that one could talk with them. Americans appear as being completely overcome by instrumental rationality. They continually speak about either tools or weapons of all kinds in terms of functional rationality, instead of language-mediated relationships between persons or nations or civilizations. Diplomacy seems to have died. In a Frankfurt newspaper Chatami expressed his appreciation for the great accomplishments of modernity, but also insisted on Islamic identity. Should there not be a possibility of reconciliation, or at least mutual openness? However, neither the Christian-Democratic nor the Social-Democratic German Government answered Chatami. The answer came finally from Jürgen Habermas, when at the occasion of receiving the Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels 2001 in Frankfurt’s St. Paul’s Church, he spoke on the old theme of faith and knowledge, and recommended an open dialectic between the religious and the secular, between Islam and the secular West. More recently the President of Iran sent an 18 page long letter to President Bush junior, in which he, the Muslim, told the born again Christian what the Christian principle of neighborly love – the fifth commandment of the Sermon on the Mount requires. So far - September 1, 2006 - the letter of the President of Iran has not yet been answered, which would be at least a matter of simple decency. Discourses, not expensive bombs and rockets are the more adequate response to the great challenges, which the civilizations of the present world are facing.

Post-Secular Society

In the perspective of the critical theory of religion, without doubt the post-secular civil society finds itself in an awkward and thorny key - situation for the new formation of the international relations: of the relationship between the secular Western civilization and the Islamic civilizations; and also of the relationship among the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Nevertheless, the options have become quite clear: either alternative Future II - rivalry of the religions, collision of the cultures, wars among the nations and civilizations, or alternative Future III - discourse and cooperation among the cultures and peace among the civilizations. Hans Küng has stated rightly many times: There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without discourse among them. There will be no discourse among the religions, without foundation research in the religions. In this research, religious and secular public education should and can cooperate. Religious thinkers like Hans Küng, or secular thinkers like Jürgen Habermas, are fully aware, that such discourse is the most fragile form of mediation among the religious communities as well as between them and the secular world. Every encounter in the secular and disenchanted life world of civil society among members of different faith communities as well as between them and secular people, demonstrates concerning each topic discussed – wars, death penalty, stem cell research, abortion, gay marriage, euthanasia etc. - the vulnerability of such discourse through different forms of irrationality and collective insanity: be it nationalism, or racism, or religious or secular fanaticism. But such discourse is, nevertheless, the only healthy alternative to alternative Future II – the more and more militarized society, more and more conventional wars and civil wars, and finally the clash of whole civilizations, and a third world
war with real weapons of mass destruction on all sides. An American public opinion poll of July 24, 2005, discovered, that 6 out of 10 Americans firmly believe, that a third world war is unavoidable, and that it will break out in the not too distant future. Fox News announces since month that the World War III has started already. That would indeed be the end of discourse and cooperation among the civilizations: maybe their own end.

**Mutual Openness**

In the view of the dialectical theory of religion, it is obvious, that the explosion of the antagonism between the religious and the secular, which happened on September 11, 2001, and which has continued ever since in the form of retaliation and counter-retaliation, terror and counter-terror, concerns more than just the separation of church and state, religious and secular education, or the privatization of religion, or creationism versus evolutionism, or vice versa, or stem cell research, abortion and euthanasia. We must admit, that in the present world - historical situation no real reconciliation between the religious and the secular, revelation and autonomous reason is possible. Precisely, therefore, we suggest, that the discourse between the sacred and the profane should at least not be closed up fundamentalistically, or scientistically and positivistically. To the contrary, we suggest an open dialectic between faith and knowledge, revelation and enlightenment, in order from there to derive guidance also for the relationship between church and state, religious and secular education. Such openness does not hope for the return from mysticism to religious orthodoxy, or from secular enlightenment to mysticism. The secular may concretely supersede the religious: the secular may not only critique the religious, but it may also preserve, elevate and fulfill it in alternative Future III – the reconciled society.

**Golden Rule**

We start our sixth international discourse in Yalta once more from the conviction, that the world - religions have an important role to play in the establishment of peace among the civilizations. We are also convinced, that the world-religions can have this positive function for peace among the civilizations only, when they enter discourse with each other, and explore together the moral values and norms which they may have in common, and the possibilities of their application to different civilizations. In such discourse, Hindus, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians, Muslims or Bahai may find out, that they share - if also in different formulations - at least one ethical norm: the Golden Rule. Already in the present transition period from modernity to post-modernity an open dialectic between the religious and the secular, revelation and autonomous reason, faith and knowledge can make possible the cooperation between religious and secular people, believers and enlighteners toward a project world ethos. It could be centered in the Golden Rule; The Golden Rule embraces not only the whole Hebrew Law and the Prophets, but also the New Testament and the Koran. Surely the Golden rule is a religious principle and it is not the secular categorical imperative or the likewise profane apriori of the universal communication community. But these secular ethical principles determinately negate the religious one: they do not only critically negate it, but also preserve it, elevate it and fulfill it. Therefore also many enlighteners and humanists have no problem to accept the Golden Rule in its religious or secular rationalized as the foundation of a global ethos. The Golden Rule states in its Chinese form:
Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.

The Golden Rule says in its Hindu Form:

This is the sum of duty: do nothing to others, which would cause you, pain if done to you.

The Golden Rule teaches in its Buddhist form:

A state that is not pleasant or delightful to me must be so for him also; and a state which is not pleasant or delightful for me, how could I inflict that on another?

The Golden Rule of Jainism says:

A person should treat all creatures as he himself would be treated.

The Golden Rule says in its Jewish form:

Do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you.

The Golden Rule teaches in its Christian form:

In everything do to others as you would have them do to you.

The Golden Rule states in its Islamic form:

No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.

Enlighteners may invert the Golden rule in terms of the categorical imperative L Act in such a way that your particular axiom can be the foundation of a universal legislation or treat nobody as a mere means. They may translate the Golden Rule in terms of the apriori of the unlimited communication community: a norm is ethically valid and acceptable, when it is based on the consensus of the universal communication community. One may even extend the Gold Rule to non-human living beings: men would do to animals, as men would have animals do to them: e.g. pull the ox out of the fountain even on the Sabbath. If men would not like to be eaten by sharks, or lions, or bears, they should not eat them neither. Before Noah all people were vegetarians. If men would respect animal rights in terms of the Golden Rule, could they still establish zoos, or keep domestic animals, not to speak of having huge slaughterhouses?

The End of the Lex Talionis

The Golden Rule in all its different forms and in its secular inversion and translation can conquer the jus talionis, which separates the civilizations. The practice of the Golden rule would be
the end of the lex talionis. The analysis should not stop with the realistic assertion, that the Golden Rule cannot be practiced, and thus the lex talionis cannot be broken, Why not? Men like Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa, and Archbishop Romero and many others have practiced the Golden Rule even in its extreme form, by following the first, fourth and fifth commandment of the Sermon on the Mount. It is rather so, that the psychoanalytical and critical sociological and critical theological analysis must begin precisely with the question: why is it not possible for some people to practice the Golden Rule, and why must they remain under the spell of the mythological jus talionis, when others can liberate themselves from this ban and curse and are able to do to others, as they want to be treated. In any case, who does not want to lose his eye, should not take it from his brother. Who does not want to be stolen from, should not steal, or engage in usury, or colonialism, or imperialism. Who does not want to be murdered, should not murder, or engage in war, or torture, or terror, religious or secular. Who does not want to be lied to, should not lie and engage in false advertisement, or false propaganda, or ideology understood as false consciousness, the masking of national, or racial, or class interests, shortly the untruth. Whoever does not want his personal autonomy or national sovereignty to be violated, should not attack that of other persons or nations. Whoever does not want his own country to be devastated by natural or historical agents, should not devastate other peoples’ countries: otherwise New Orleans of August/September 2005 and the surrounding states, cities, towns and villages suddenly look with their thousands of wounded and dead, and refugees, and homeless, and hostages, and fires, and shootings, and killings, and rapes, and disorganization, and chaos like Hiroshima, or Dresden, or Baghdad, or Basra, or Kabul. Who does not want other life forms, or civilizations or cultures to intervene into his own, should also not intervene into those of other people. Whoever does not want other nations to have, or to use weapons of mass destruction, should also not have, or use them he. The Israelite, Hebrew, Jewish, Christian and Islamic prophets and the Hebrew Psalmists, would have said: repent! As one hurricane after the other - Katrina, Ophelia, Rita - are approaching, hitting and damaging the Gulf coast and Eastern coast of North America, the President sees in them entirely natural events, as every secular modern man would do. But the born-again President, nevertheless, also ordered a day of prayer for the whole nation after the hurricane Katrina and declared the suffering from the storms to be undeserved. This theodicy is certainly true for the poor classes and the children, who do most of the suffering. However, the Hebrew Bible speaks of a God, who hardened the heart of the Pharaoh, as one plague after the other strikes his country, because he was unwilling to set his slaves free. The Lutheran Christian Hegel taught that world-history is world-judgment. The Black Muslim Malcolm X declared after the assassination of President Kennedy, that the chickens are coming home to roost, and he was then assassinated himself. No religious man, being aware of his sinfulness, would be entirely sure, that his suffering was undeserved: no Antigone, and no Job. As one hurricane after the other hit the coast of North America, entirely secular members of the second Bush Administration, had the impression, that they were under attack and that somebody was after them. A believer from the Abrahamic or prophetic religions would have no difficulties to affirm this. The wars against Afghanistan and Iraq may have cost the lives of up to 2000 American soldiers and 100 000 noncombatants or civilians. Recently, i.e. September 2005, mothers, wives and children of fallen American soldiers have appeared on television and have asked President Bush in public to explain, for what purpose their sons and daughters and husbands and fathers had to die in Iraq, and not to sacrifice more young men and women for his mistake. There has of course existed at least since Noah and the great flood and since Abraham and Lot and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah the awful theodicy problem, the antagonism between God’s infinite Power, perfect Justice, and unconditional Love on one hand, and the injustice that the innocent and good people, who do not deserve their
suffering must suffer with the bad and evil people, who deserve it, on the other. There are e.g. the 90 innocent orphans and ten nuns, who drowned in the hurricane of Galveston, Texas, in 1900; the thousands of innocent children, who were swallowed up by the Tsunami in the Indian Ocean on Christmas 2004; and the hundreds of innocent children who got lost in the hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and along the American Gulf Coast in August and September 2005, and the many children who died in the Lebanese War of 2006. Of course, the new movie on the assassination of an American President, who is still in office, shown the first time on September 11, 2006, is not only tasteless, but it is also an expression of the lex talionis, and not of the Golden Rule.

Egalitarianism

The Golden Rule implies a true egalitarianism among individuals, and nations, and civilizations, without which there cannot be any true discourse and cooperation, or any personal and social morality, or for that matter any adequate response to any of the challenges any civilization faces today. Whenever the Golden Rule is not actualized, the lex talionis will take its place. If we do continually do to others, as we would not have them do to us, then there will necessarily be endless retaliation. Wars of revenge can not be won, except through the total annihilation of the other, the enemy. If the wars of retaliation are not directed against another state, but rather against a worldwide religious movement, then - since they are no wars at all in the first place - those non-wars can be won even less. There remains only either the practice of the Golden Rule, and thus the inclusion of the other, or cold, universal despair, and finally alternative Future II: a third world war among the civilizations, a la Samuel Huntington. Hans Küng has presented such project world ethos, centered in the Golden Rule, to the World - Parliament of Religions as well as to the United Nations, and found full and universal acceptance. While Huntington’s prophecy of the clash of civilizations has admittedly and unfortunately at this moment in world history the tendency to fulfill itself, the critical theorists of religion, nevertheless, side with Küng’s project World Ethos, and with Habermas’ communicative ethics and try to engage in the discourse and cooperation among the civilizations. That is the only promising response to the challenges of the civilizations: shalom!

Courage

The critical theorist of religion remembers, that the first Jewish-Christian-Apocalyptic Paradigm was characterized by devotion, the longing for the totally Other, readiness for sacrifice and even martyrdom. Remembering the policies of the Roman Empire gives a deeper meaning to the preaching and the resistance of Jesus of Nazareth, who announced the coming of God’s reign in a Palestine colonized by the Romans, and called for the creation of an alternative, entirely other society based on love, justice and peace, and died for it. To die for a great cause and to exchange one’s worldly against a spiritual life, was considered among saints and martyrs not only of Christianity, but also of Judaism and Islam, and of other world religions as greatest challenge, which life offered them. Still Georg W.F. Hegel, who belonged to the much later Protestant-Evangelical Paradigm of Christianity made a precise analysis of the courage to dare the extreme, when he stated in his Phenomenology of Mind, that not the life, which shies away from death, and which preserves itself pure from the devastation, but which endures it, and maintains itself in it, is the life of the spirit. To look the negative into the eye, and to stay with it and to dwell on it, is the energy, which the subject
must muster and procure, in order to gain him or herself. Since Hegel this energy, which promises a life on the boiling point has been forgotten in modern civil society. Into the place of this energy has moved the privatized New Testament care for one’s own personal, existence or salvation of the soul. The affluent - society- bourgeois has decided for the political zero-position and against the freedom of All. According to the young Hegel, in the fruits of peace and of acquisition, and in the compete security of consumption and pleasure the bourgeois finds the corresponding substitute- replacement- and compensation – actions. The need for protection and a secure existence, which the bourgeois seeks and which the bourgeois state tries to grant him or her, explains the trend in late civil society toward post-heroism. Such bourgeois post-heroism may no longer be sufficient in order to meet the challenge, which the different civilizations have to meet in the present transition period from Modernity to Post-Modernity: i.e. to move to global alternative Future III – a free, just and reconciled culture of peace, rather than to global alternative Futures I – a totally mechanized, computerized, robotized, signal society, or to global alternative Future II – a culture of death, the collision of civilizations, and world war III.

Information

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Best wishes,

Yours truly,

Rudolf J. Siebert
from the
House of Shalom

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