

THE RHETORIC OF “TERROR” AND THE RHETORIC OF “JIHAD”: A PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL EVALUATION¹

By Caner Taslaman

In this article, I will try to demonstrate the misuse of the rhetoric of “terror” and “*jihad*” and the fact that this rhetoric avoids the formation of a “communicative process.” With the word “rhetoric” I mean the persuasive use of language especially for political means.

Optimism about globalization was the dominant trend everywhere when the cold war ended. However, with September 11, a Pandora’s Box was opened and the optimism collapsed along with the two towers in the heart of United States of America, the Leviathan² of the globalizing world. With this event, people who were already skeptical about optimism because of the 1991 Gulf War, and who defended the thesis of “clash of civilizations” now had a stronger hand. The debates focusing on this subject have drawn attention to many different areas from the philosophy of religion, to the philosophy of politics, from the philosophy of language to ethics and hermeneutics, from international relations to theology.

I want to begin my article with a quotation of Derrida on September 11. “*A philosopher would be one who seeks a new criteriology to distinguish between ‘comprehending’ and ‘justifying.’ For one can describe, comprehend, and explain a certain chain of events or series of associations that lead to ‘war’ or to ‘terrorism’ without justifying them in the least, while in fact condemning them and attempting to invent other associations. One can condemn unconditionally certain acts of terrorism (whether of the state or not) without having to ignore the situation that might have brought them about or even legitimated them*”³

¹ I completed most of this article while I was a visiting scholar at The University of Tokyo, Department of Islamic Studies. I am grateful to The University of Tokyo, to the Department of Islamic Studies and to professors Masataka Takeshita and Harun Anay in helping me to complete this study.

² Leviathan is a sea monster of which is mentioned in the Old Testament. It is famous as the name of one of Hobbes’ books on politics and philosophy. With “Leviathan”, Hobbes justifies the absolute power of a sovereign ruler as a lesser evil than chaos.

³ Jacques Derrida, *Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides, A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida*, The Interview by Giovanna Borradori, in *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, revised by Jacques Derrida, (The University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 106-107.

TERROR AS RHETORIC

In a study, it is stated that there are 109 different definitions for the word “terror”.⁴ We hear sentences like “The real definition of terror...”, “The real terrorists are...”, They call us terrorists, but in fact...” very often. In all of these definitions, “terror” is treated as if it were a Platonic idea, really existing in the world of “ideas”, and as if its “idea” is what guarantees its “real meaning”⁵. In fact, we must be careful about the nature of language as it has been shown by Wittgenstein that it is a collection of “tools” and is “shared” by the public and “learned” in a public and we are all part of a big “language-game”.⁶ After comprehending the sociological structure of the language, we should rephrase our sentences like this: “With the word ‘terror’ people usually mean”, “According to the FBI’s description, terrorists are”, or “According to Hezbollah’s description terrorists are.....” In this way we will see that these definitions are not innocent, that they are related to certain benefits and ideologies. As Foucault says ‘*we are subjected to the production of truth through power.*’⁷ Dictating how language should be used is one of the ways through which power is exercised.

The word “terror” was first used during the French Revolution of 1789.⁸ In contrast with our everyday usage, it was used by the Jacobins with a positive connotation, since the violent acts they performed were seen by them as necessary acts in order to achieve a “peaceful” environment. In our time, the word “terror” is used with a negative connotation as we all know. Because of this negative connotation, everybody is eager to label his opponent with this word. This situation ends up with someone’s being called “freedom fighter” for one group and a” terrorist” for the other. For example; the founder of Hezbollah, which some consider as a terror group, Fadlallah says: “*We do not see ourselves as terrorists, because we do not believe in terrorism. To fight against the people who are invading our lands is not terrorism. We see ourselves as mujahits who are fighting for a holy war.*”⁹ Fadlallah legitimizes the actions of his organization as “fighting for freedom”.

⁴ Nezhir Tavlas, *Teroru Taniımlamak*, (Strateji Journal, 2, 1995), p: 125.

⁵ Although many use the meaning of terror” in that sense unconsciously, I think no one would argue that there is a corresponding “idea” to “terror” in a Platonic world.

⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, (Blackwell Publishing, 2001 . This book reflects his later period’s philosophy and it is one of the most effective philosophy books of the 20th century’s philosophy.

⁷ Michel Foucault, *Power, Right, Truth*, in *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ed: Robert E. Goodin and Philip Pettit, (Blackwell Publishers, 2002), p. 543

⁸ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, (Columbia University Press, 1998), p: 15.

⁹ Bruce Hoffman, *ibid*, p: 31.

On the other hand, the FBI defines terrorism thus: *“Terrorism is the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.”*¹⁰ The reason for the FBI’s definition’s emphasis on the term “civilian population”, rather than stressing the term “innocent people” or its emphasis to the actions against government is related to its position. Yet, historically, the first usage of the word “terror” was to define a government terror. In addition, international agreements such as the Hague Conventions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the Geneva Conventions of 1949 show that states can commit criminal acts. Then terrorism becomes a moral problem that stems from the nature of its victims and the methods, not identity, of its agents.¹¹ It is immoral to attack civilians because while the armies are equipped with strong guns and cannons, the civilians can only fight back with their weak, bare hands. But on the other hand, many militants or soldiers fighting against high-tech armies are in the same predicament, as they are in the same hopeless situation, as are the civilians against the armies, since they are also powerless against the heavy artillery. Habermas stresses the moral problem of this asymmetry like this: *“However, the asymmetry between the concentrated destructive power of the electronically controlled clusters of elegant and versatile missiles in the air and the archaic ferocity of the swarms of bearded warriors outfitted with Kalashnikovs on the ground remains a morally obscene sight.”*¹²

America declared the Afghan *mujahids* as “holy warriors” and assisted them in their fight when they were fighting against the Soviet invasion.¹³ This is one of the best examples of how terror is used as rhetoric. When the Taliban’s attacks turned towards America, the “holy warriors” turned into “terrorists,” and they became the first targets of the “war on terror.” Every violent act avoids the formation of a dialogue between the sides; every death of a civilian or an innocent person incites revenge among the people or the tribe of the victim and this causes a vengeful reaction. Derrida is right when he says that every “terrorist” in the world claims to be responding in self defense to a prior “terrorism” on the part of the state, one that simply went by other names and covered itself with all sorts of more or less credible

¹⁰ www.fbi.gov/publications/terror/terror2000_2001.html (28 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 0.85)

¹¹ Tomis Kapitan, *“Terrorism” As A Method Of Terrorism*, ed: G. Meggle, in *The Ethics of Terrorism and Counter Terrorism*, (ontos-Heusenstamm, 2000), p 23.

¹² Jurgen Habermas, *Fundamentalism and Terror: A Dialogue with Jurgen Habermas*, The Interview by Giovanna Borradori, in *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, translated by Luis Guzman, revised by Jurgen Habermas, (The University of Chicago Pres), 2003, p.28.

¹³ Mehmet Ali Civelek, *Kuresellesme ve Teror, Saldirganlik Gercegi*, (Utopya Yayınevi), 2001, p. 288.

justifications.¹⁴ The poem quoted by Coady in his article “The Morality of Terrorism” ironically questions the rhetoric of terrorism:

Throwing a bomb is bad,
Dropping a bomb is good,
Terror, no need to add
Depends on who’s wearing the hood.¹⁵

Coady explains that motivation behind “linguistic habits” for justification depends on whether “they” are with “us” or not.¹⁶ An American philosopher, Tomis Kapitan, comments on the damage caused by the use of the rhetoric of terror: *“The rhetoric serves to silence meaningful political debate. Those normally inclined to ask ‘why?’ are fearful of being labeled ‘soft’ on terrorism, while the more militant use the ‘terrorist’ label to deface the distinction between critical examination and appeasement. Those who succumb to the rhetoric contribute to the cycle of revenge and retaliation by endorsing violent actions of their own government, not only against those who commit terrorist actions, but also against those populations from whose ranks the terrorists emerge, for the simple reason that terrorists are frequently themselves civilians, living amid other civilians not so engaged. The consequence has been an increase in politically motivated violence against civilian targets – ‘terrorism’ under any other name- under the rubric of ‘retaliation’ or ‘counter-terrorism.’ The rhetoric of “terror” knows only the language of force. As long as they perceive themselves to be victims of intolerable injustices and view their oppressors as unwilling to arrive at an acceptable compromise, they are likely to answer violence with more violence.”*¹⁷ Research conducted among suicide bombers reveals that many of these bombers have lost a family member or a loved one in the war.¹⁸ This shows how world peace is endangered with every violent act which will cause a chain of revenge.

One other danger of “terror’s” being used as rhetoric is that this can cause totally different and even hostile groups’ forming coalitions for violent actions. For example; Al Qaeda had

¹⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Ibid*, p.103.

¹⁵ C.A.J. Coady, *The Morality of Terrorism*, (Philosophy 60, 1985), p. 47

¹⁶ C.A.J. Coady, *ibid*, S.63-64

¹⁷ Tomis Kapitan, *Ibid*, p.28, See also Tomis Kapitan, *The Rhetoric of Terrorism and Its Consequences*, (Journal of Political and Military Sociology, Summer 2002)

¹⁸ Deniz Ulke Aribogun, *Tarihin Sonundan Barisin Sonuna*, (Timas Yayinlari, 2003)p:78

used “*jihād*” and other Islamic concepts as rhetoric against Shiite Muslims - like they used these terms as rhetoric against America- and massacred many Shiites in Afghanistan. If the Shiites and Al Qaeda are combined under the label of “Islamic terrorists” and the “war on terror” is perceived as the other camp against all of them, would not it cause new disasters if Iran who is thought to have weapons of mass destruction, decides to share those with Al Qaeda? It is very uncommon for Muslim countries to share the same views on political matters, and one of those rare unifying subjects is the Israel and Palestinian conflict. The Muslim countries think that the Palestinians are treated unjustly in this conflict by the Israelis. To lump Al Qaeda in with the Palestinian groups fighting the Israelis under the same umbrella as “terrorists,” may cause tougher reactions towards Palestinians on one side of the world, but at the same time it may also increase the number of supporters and sympathizers of Al Qaeda who see violence as the only solution in some parts of the world.

It is philosophically unacceptable to make an action undebatable by labeling it with the terms “war on terror” or “*jihād*”. People using violence with such rhetoric, claim that their actions are above any kind of questioning. However, by labeling or describing the concepts according to their own benefit, they can not decide whether an action is ethically just or unjust. Every violent action has to be considered separately from the other violent actions, and then has to be examined analytically. To put all violent actions under the same heading into one basket, is wrong, because each action has a different cause (some can be just while others are unjust) and different targets and each action is a consequence of different circumstances. People who think that they can affect public opinion in this way must realize that they could be increasing the number of their enemies inadvertently.

JIHAD AS RHETORIC

No doubt, many concepts from the religion of Islam -especially “*jihād*”- have been used as rhetoric just like the word “terror” has been used as rhetoric. But there is an important difference between the ontological status of Quranic concepts and humanly fabricated concepts for Muslims. We can investigate the meaning of the word “terror” only sociologically. It is also necessary to have a sociological and a historical investigation and to clarify political-public relations in order to understand how the Islamic terminology was used. But the Islamic terms, as different from the term “terror”, were used in an original text –the

Quran- from which we can learn the “real meaning” of these concepts. A coherent hermeneutical approach to the Quranic text can decode these terms. According to Islam, the Quran is the text through which God established his relationship with men, and the main duty of the Prophet Muhammad is to transmit this message. The source of the Quran is transcendental- because it is God-but with its language, letters and sentences it is for humans. Its transcendental dimension is a guarantee for the “real meanings” of the religious terms. Yet it does not guarantee all human interpretations.

Even though personal benefit, misunderstanding, influence of existing traditions and political need have caused the Quran to be misunderstood and misinterpreted, or to be suppressed by the other sources (*hadiths*, or *fatwas*), the Quran exists as the source protecting the original meanings. Although there are big differences among them, it is very common among modern Islamic scholars to criticize *hadiths* because they surpassed the authority of the Quran. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, Mehmed Akif, Ahmad Amin, Tavfik Sidki, Mahmud Abu-Rayye, Muhammad Ghazali, and Fazlurrahman are just a few of those critics.¹⁹ We see in the Islamic sources that this criticism was also very common during the first and the second centuries after the death of the Prophet. The point in contention is not that of the Prophet’s words being considered above the Quran, because according to Islamic beliefs the Prophet would not say a word contradicting the Quran: it is that three or four centuries after the death of the Prophet, many of the collected *hadiths* were fabricated either for political reasons or by mistake or for various other reasons. The only way to solve problems is to establish a coherent hermeneutical view, and eliminate the incorrect Quran interpretations which were produced for political reasons, along with fabricated *hadiths* and the *fatwas* (religious authorities’ decisions on legal matters) and clarify Islam’s real position towards subjects such as *jihad*, and war and freedom of belief.

In order to prevent the use of religious concepts for politically-motivated rhetoric, we should clarify the “real meanings” of these concepts. In the 12th and 13th centuries, Hassan Sabbah and the Assassins also used religious terminology rhetorically for their own political benefit.²⁰ During the Gulf war in 1991, Muslim leaders obtained *fatwas* to legitimate their participation

¹⁹ M. Hayri Kırbasoğlu, *İslam Düşüncesinde Hadis Metodolojisi*, (Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 1999), p. 14-15

²⁰ Abdulkerim Ozaydin, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume 16 (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1997), p. 348 -350

in the American-led coalition against Saddam Hussein.²¹ On the other hand, Osama bin Laden declared that one of the reasons for his fighting with America was the Gulf War.²² These events are just a few of the examples of how “*jihad*” and other Islamic concepts are used as rhetoric. In fact in the Middle East, declaring war without Islamic justifications is very difficult. This is because from the first days of Islam until our time with no intervention, Islam has been the most important factor of the regional culture. Even the most secular of people have used religion in order to generate public support in the case of war. David Rapoport explains how Saddam Hussein, who was a secular leader fighting against the fundamentalists, used “*jihad*” when he wanted to mobilize the Iraqi people: “*He called for a jihad to expel the (Western) infidel and to liberate from evil and occupation the sacred sites in Saudi Arabia. A color photograph depicting a shirtless President Hussein kissing the shrine at Mecca and another of him in full military dress kneeling in prayer at of that most sacred Islamic shrine alternated in the back round as his speech was read. Since the crisis began in August 1990, his language has become saturated with religious references. The ironies here abound: a Christian founded Hussein’s party (the Arab Baath Socialist Party), the party made great strides in transforming Iraq into a secular state, and finally Hussein had just concluded a very costly war against Islamic fundamentalism.*”²³

TAKING THE QURAN SERIOUSLY ON JIHAD

The term “*jihad*” means “to strive” according to the Quran. The word “*jihad*” has psychological, intellectual and sociological dimensions. Wars fought in the name of God have also been called “*jihad*” because they contained strife in the fight against the enemy.²⁴ Quranic verse giving this meaning is quoted below:

O believers, go out in the cause of God, whether light or heavy, and strive (*jihad*) in the service of God, wealth and soul. This is better for you if you understand.²⁵

9- Repentance, 41

²¹ John L. Esposito, *Unholy War*, (Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 34

²² Michael S. Swetham, Yonah Alexander, *Bir Terorist Aginin Profili: Osama Bin Laden*, (Guncel Yayincilik, 2001) p. 129-130

²³ David C. Rapoport, *Some General Observations on Religion and Violence*, (Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence, No:3, 1991), p.122

²⁴ Bekir Karlıga, *Cihad ve Teror*, (Karizma, Mart 2002), p. 118-119

²⁵ *The Quran*, I used two Quran translations: *A Contemporary Translation* by Ahmed Ali, (Princeton University Press, 1994), and *Translation and Commentary* by A. Yusuf Ali, (Islamic Propagation Center International)

The words “*qital*” and *harb*” are also used to emphasize war in the Quran. But the word “*jihad*” has become a subject of primary importance in the books written on this issue and as a result of this, all the wars in the name of “Islam” have been called by this name. But a person studying “the war/*jihad* in Islam” must take into consideration all the verses in which these words are used in the Quran.

Most people agree on the issue that –even though it was often different in practice- the Muslims are told to fight only in wars which are in the name of God and that they can not fight only for their own interests. However, the most important difference occurs when this question arises: “Is *jihad* a defensive war for Muslims or is it a war against the members of another religion just because they are not from the same religion?” If we look at the Quran as a whole, it is crystal clear that the war verses are only directed toward the people who have attacked Muslims. The two verses clarifying this subject are:

So if you are oppressed, oppress those who oppress you to the same degree, and fear God and know that God is with those who are pious and follow the right path.

2- The Cow, 194

To those against whom war is made, permission is given, because they are wronged.

22- The Pilgrimage, 39

So, the Quran gives permission to fight only against the aggressor. Hanafi jurists and some Hanbali and Maliki jurists are of the same mind with this view. But on the other hand, Shafii jurists and some other jurists from the Hanbali and Maliki sects agree that having beliefs in a religion other than Islam is reason enough for war.²⁶ The Shafii jurists tried to back their belief with the 9th sura, verse 5:

But when these months prohibited for fighting are over, slay the idolaters wheresoever you find them and take them captive or besiege them and lie in wait for them at every likely place.

9-Repentance, 5

²⁶ Ahmet Ozel, “Cihad” maddesi, *Turkiye Diyanet Vakfi Islam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume 7, (Turkiye Diyanet Vakfi Yayinlari, 1993), p. 528-529

But if this verse is read to the end of the sura it will be understood that it refers to the people who first attacked the Muslims, and that they were the ones who disobeyed the treaty. Let's look at the first verse of this sura:

Immunity is granted those idolaters by God and his Apostle with whom you have a treaty.

9- Repentance, 1

And from the continuation of the sura, it is understood that they were the first who attacked:

12-But if they violate their oaths after their covenant, and attack you for your faith, fight the chiefs of unfaith. For their oaths are nothing to them: that thus they may be restrained.

13-Will you not fight people who violated their oaths, plotted to expel the Messenger, and attacked you first? Do you fear them? Nay, it is God Whom you should more justly fear, if you believe!

9- Repentance 12, 13

If the Shafii jurists had not removed the verse from its context, they could easily have understood that a person's being an unbeliever would not be a justification of war.²⁷ According to a coherent hermeneutic approach to the Quran, the most important principle is that the wholeness of the Quran has to be taken into consideration, and the verses have to be evaluated along with their previous and following verses (*siyaq-sibaq*). The Shafiis tried to support their thesis by claiming that the verses which give permission to fight only the people who attack first are abrogated, and they used some of the hadiths to support their view.²⁸

In my personal opinion, these two problems, the claim that some part of the Quran abrogated another part and that the hadiths surpass the authority of the Quran, are two very important issues that should be looked into seriously. Ahmet Ozel says that claiming that there is

²⁷Hasan Elik, *Dini Ozunden Okumak*, (Marmara Universitesi Ilahiyat Fakultesi Vakfi Yayinlari,2004), p.165-182

²⁸ Ahmet Ozel, *ibid*, p. 529; For these *hadiths* you can look into; Bukhari-*Iman*-18 and Abu Dawud-*Jihad*-104.

abrogation between the verses on *jihad* has no scientific point.²⁹ I think the claim that one part of the Quran abrogates the other turns religion into a game in the hands of the jurists. Since we do not have a list showing how many of the verses are abrogated verses and how many of those are not, the people who put forward this claim have left the choice of selection to the jurists, and have left the religion to the mercy of those jurists in order to avoid a chaos. Muhammad Asad says that the abrogation claim has no Quranic basis, and in fact there is not a single reliable *hadith* which supports this idea.³⁰ We must remember here that the allegation which tells us to punish a woman who has committed adultery by stoning her is derived from abrogation claims, although the sentence contradicts the Quran completely. If we wish to understand every subject within its context, we can achieve this only by preserving the wholeness of the Quran which requires us to oppose the abrogation claims. In order for some verses of the Quran to abrogate the others, there should be discrepancy between the Quranic verses. This allegation is in opposition with the verses claiming that there is no discrepancy in the Quran:

Do they not consider the Quran? Had it been from other than God, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy.

4- The Woman, 82

As I mentioned before, there are many fabricated *hadiths* even in the most ‘trustworthy’ *hadith* books. This issue is especially important for our debate here. The authority of the jurists, who say that the verses which are against their ideas are abrogated, and who choose only the *hadiths* supporting their ideas from among the politically fabricated *hadiths*, has surpassed the authority of the Quran. We have to try to understand the interpretations of the jurists by considering the political environment they lived in. In the first centuries of Islam the politicians wanted to unite the tribes which were fighting each other in tribal wars, by making them fight with outside enemies. Also, they wanted to use the potential of these people to make new conquests. We can say that the formation of the rhetoric of *jihad* is mainly the result of developing political issues. This rhetoric was not used only against the people who were not Muslims, but even by some Muslims who declared each other infidels. The abrogation claims and the fabricated *hadiths* have played a very important role in *jihad*'s

²⁹ Ahmet Ozel, *ibid*, p. 529

³⁰ Muhammad Asad, *Kuran Mesaji*, Translated by Cahit Koçak, Ahmet Ertürk, (Isaret Yayınları, 1996), p.30-31.

losing its Quranic meaning of a defensive war, into a fight with unbelievers; which means, in fact, perpetual war.

Other serious problems caused by fabricated *hadiths*, *fatwas* and abrogation claims are about freedom of belief: judgments such as the one that Muslims who convert to another religion or who refuse to pray should be killed; that people who do not fast should be beaten are such problems. To the contrary, two verses about freedom of belief are as follows:

There is no compulsion in matter of faith.

2- The Cow, 256

Remind them; you are surely a reminder.

You are not a warden over them.

88- The Overpowering, 21-22

If we can clarify that, according to Islam, being an unbeliever is not a cause for war and that there is no compulsion in Islam, then this will pave the way for forming a better communication between the cultures. The reason for the previous point is clear, this claim (fighting with infidels) would mean being at war all the time, which would make any communication impossible. As for the latter, the effect of freedom of belief is indirect. At the first glance, it is perceived as an internal problem of the Islamic communities alone. But, we should remember that to call men unto the path of God (*dawah*) is a religious duty.³¹ If you kill the people who convert to other religions in Islamic countries, while calling the “others” to Islam, it will be impossible to have communication under these conditions. Because of such beliefs, a person who converted to Christianity in Afghanistan, in 2006, was sentenced to death (but was not killed because of international pressure). Despite to the Quranic verses, this kind of *jihad* comprehension within a religious package and compulsion of belief will lead us to a “communicative pathology.” It is not hard to imagine that a world with no communication will be full of violence.

³¹ : Ismail Al-Faruqi, *The Nature of Islamic Da'wah*, in *Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wah*, (The Islamic Foundation, 1982), p: 33-38.

THE QURAN AND THE ETHICS OF WAR

There are many debates on whether the approach of the Quran to war is ethically acceptable or not. There are four possible ways to approach the “other”. The one who asserts that the Quranic approach is not acceptable should show which of the alternatives is. I think that the Quran’s attitude- not the attitude of all Muslims throughout history- towards war is ethically acceptable.

1) To fight without a rational or reasonable cause: This is against what the Quran says as we have shown. The “Thugs” in history provide a good example of this attitude. They were used to kill the trespassers as offerings to goddess Kali.³² It is thought that the Thugs have murdered about one million people in 1200 years they have existed.³³

2) To fight for rational causes: There is no doubt that wars mostly have been fought for rational causes, like economic reasons, between nations. According to this approach, preserving and gaining power is usually the target; considerations of justice and injustice have to be put aside. Although this approach had been applied extensively throughout history, this attitude has not been approved from a philosophical perspective. What makes Machiavelli famous is his open defense of this kind of approach³⁴ and after him there had been many philosophical approaches which supported this view. The verses of the Quran which gives permission to fight only in the cases of an attack (such as 22-The Pilgrimage, 39) are against this approach. But like the examples we have seen already, especially those of the politicians, and the jurists and *muftis* who are under their influence by presenting the rational causes as reasonable causes have surpassed the authority of the Quran with false interpretations, abrogation claims and fabricated *hadiths*.

3) Passivism in every circumstance: Although the Quran is against a passivist attitude, forgiveness is preferable to punishment according to the Quran. We can understand that from the verses below:

Good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with what is good. Then you will find your erstwhile enemy like a close, affectionate friend.

41- Adoration, 34

³² Walter Reich, *Origins of Terrorism*, (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1990), p. 121

³³ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, (Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 89

³⁴ Niccollo Machiavelli, *Discourses*, Translated by Leslie J. Walker , (Penguin Books,1955) p. 135

But he who bears with patience and forgives, surely complies with divine resolve.

42- Consultation, 43

According to the Quran forgiveness is superior, but the Quran does not approve of passivism in every condition. A small group's or a individual's passivism such as Gandhi's should be considered from a different perspective than passivism effected when there is an effort to destroy the whole of a community. Muslims are asked to fight when their religion or societies are attacked or when there is an aim to destroy them. An absolute passivism would increase the attackers' fierceness. This would mean allowing the children, women and elderly to be murdered which is morally unacceptable and against "common sense".

4) To fight for reasonable causes: The verses of the Quran give permission to fight under conditions of just cause and this just cause is being attacked. People who approve of fighting against everyone who is not Muslim have destroyed the idea of "just cause." In this way they are free to declare war on whomever they wish. We witness many events in history in which Muslims have declared even each other unbelievers and started "*jihad*" between themselves.

The Quran's moral attitude linking the declaration of war with the reasonable cause of being attacked is the most consistent option ethically of the options listed above. Even in international law, self defense is accepted as an "inherent right." According to the United Nations' 51st article people who face aggression have a right to self defense.³⁵

It should be clearly understood from the Quran whether killing in a war is permitted or not. Because Islam prohibits murder; if war is not presented as an exceptional situation wherein killing is permitted, then it can be concluded that Islam is supporting a total passivism.

According to the Quranic approach there are other important matters regarding war, which I would like to emphasize. One of the most important of these is that the Prophet Muhammad is the only person sanctioned by the Quran in his time and after his death, there is no one whose decisions are guaranteed. No man can claim that he is epistemologically superior to

³⁵ Huseyin Pazarcı, *Uluslararası Hukuk*,(Turhan Kitabevi, 2005), p. 512-513

the rest and that his decisions to declare war are undebatable. Throughout history, there had been many religious authorities from different religions who claimed to have a different epistemological situation than the rest of the public. For example, the Church claimed that its decisions were under the protection of the Holy Spirit (Gabriel) and its epistemologic situation was different from that of the common people. Even though there are no claims like those in the Quran, there have been similar assertions in Islam, too. Many people believe that some people are saints (*awliya*) and that every decision of these people is incontestable; that these people have special protections from God and that they -because of their epistemologic situation- can have special knowledge which ordinary people can not attain. In addition to the claims of being *awliya*, if one of these *awliya* turns out to be *Mahdi*, then the devotion to the religious authority increases considerably. This belief can and has caused these leaders' declarations of war to be accepted without hesitation and bypassing discussions as to whether those wars were just or unjust.

It is widely believed both in Sunni sects and Shiite sects that by the end of the world a man who is going to be *Mahdi* will come and fight against the unbelievers and he win over all of them. The Shiites believe in general that this person has been hiding more than 1100 years. This *Mahdi* belief is such an important issue for the Shiites belief that even the power behind Ayatullah Khumayni's rebellion was the belief that Khumayni was representing the *Mahdi* until he comes back. In Sunni belief, leaders of a thousand different sects have declared themselves to be *Mahdis*. The person who is believed to be *Mahdi* gains a huge political power among his followers. From the Weberian perspective *Mahdis* form the most absolute type of charismatic authority. Hasan Sabbah, who is always mentioned in every debate on the roots of terrorism, has also used this belief.³⁶ In fact, there is not even one verse in the Quran about *Mahdi*. Many investigations of the *hadiths* have proven that the *hadiths* about *Mahdi* are fabricated and were created to achieve political goals.³⁷ If we remember that there are whisperings circulating that Osama Bin Laden may be the *Mahdi*³⁸ we can understand the importance of the situation. As a result the Quran does not approve anybody's epistemological superiority after the Prophet Muhammad. So, by attributing to some people special epistemological properties, an unjust war declaration can not be justified.

³⁶ David C. Rapoport, *Fear and Trembling: Terrorism In Three Religious Traditions*, (The American Political Science Review, Volume 78, 1984), p.665-668; Ali Coskun, *Mehdilik Fenomeni*, (Iz Yayincilik, 2004), p.343-345

³⁷ M. Hayri Kirbasoglu, *Alternatif Hadis Metodolojisi*, (Kitabiyat, 2004), p.369-370

³⁸ Timothy R. Furnish, *Bin Laden: The Man Who Would Be Mahdi*, (The Middle East Quarterly, Spring 2002)

In addition, aside from the commencement conditions of a war, the manner in which that war is conducted (*jus in bello*), is also important when we consider the ethics of war. A war can be an unjust war at the beginning and be conducted justly, and the opposite of this may also happen; a war can start with just causes and be conducted unjustly. The verse of the Quran below is important for this subject:

Fight those in the way of God who fight you, but do not be aggressive: God does not like aggressors.

2- The Cow, 190

As we can see clearly, while the Quran gives permission to fight back against those who start a war, after the war, the Muslims can not act as they like, they can not be aggressors after the war, according to the Quran. Every war creates new phenomena. The difference between the tools of the old war and those of the new war makes the debates about how the war is going to be conducted harder. The Quran, by giving the principles, but not the details on how to conduct a war, gives us the flexibility to improve new methods of conduct for every age. As John Kelsay who studied the topic of “Islam and War” as a study in comparative ethics, says: “*Islamic contribution to the rules governing the conduct of modern war is still very much in process.*”³⁹ As I will present in the following pages, the Quran’s stress on making agreements with the “others” can be combined with the issue of the conduct of war.

As there are principles in the Quran about the commencement and the conducting of war, the Quran also tells Muslims to cease the war if the opposite side wishes to have peace. The following verses are important on this issue:

But if they are inclined to peace, make peace with them.

8-Spoils of War, 61

God does not forbid you from being kind and acting justly towards those who did not fight over faith with you, nor expelled you from your homes. God indeed loves those who are just.

60-The Woman Tried, 8

³⁹ John Kelsay, *Islam and War*, (John Knox Press, 1999), p.76

John Rawls says “No state has a right to war in the pursuit of its rational, as opposed to its reasonable, interests”⁴⁰ and the majority who study the ethics of war are of the same idea. This is in line with Islam’s orders. However, we have to have a clear separation between Islam and Muslims. Even if Muslims are supposed to be followers of Islam, they have their rational interests, which many cases have surpassed their religious duties; in fact these interests were mainly the interests of the political elite. Jurists or *muftis* announced that the wars were necessary for religious reasons (*fatwa*). To have those *fatwas* was important, first of all because they meant to legitimize the war in the eyes of the people who were going to fight. Secondly, in order to motivate the people, they tried to use the ontology and eschatology of Islam. According to Islam’s ontology and eschatology, there is one God who created everything and He has the power to do anything and this God has prepared a perpetual life in the Hereafter (*ahirat*) after this world. Everybody’s position in the Hereafter will be determined by his actions in this world. And apart from this, in Islam the martyrs who die in a just war in the name of God will be rewarded in the Hereafter with an everlasting life full of pleasures (*cannat*). As a result, Islam offers transcendental causes that are related to an ontology and eschatology which should overcome the worldly rational causes based on worldly interests. According to this belief, the martyrs, by sacrificing their short worldly lives, have the possibility of having an excellent perpetual life. The people who are conducting the wars for their rational power calculations want to use this ontology and eschatology for motivating masses. As a result, *jihad* has been used as a persuasion mechanism; that is why I say that *jihad* is used as rhetoric.

MAKING AGREEMENT ACCORDING TO THE QURAN AND THE COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

Kant, who follows Hobbes’ rationale, states that, “*The state of peace among men living in close proximity is not the natural state(status naturalis); instead, the natural state is one of war, which does not just consist in open hostilities, but also in the constant and enduring*

⁴⁰ John Rawls, , *The Law of Peoples* ,(Harvard University Pres,2002), p.91

threat of them. The state of peace must therefore be established.'⁴¹ But, without any communication, establishing peace and overcoming the state of war is impossible. So it is of paramount importance to understand the view of Islam about communication with the ‘others’ and particularly with the enemy.

The Prophet Muhammad had signed the Hudaibiyya Treaty with the idolaters, and despite the dissatisfaction of those around him, he had applied this treaty.⁴² But when the idolaters failed to honor the treaty, the Muslims also stopped obeying their agreement. Even in this case, the Muslims did not discard the agreement with all of the idolaters, but continued to act according to the treaty towards the idolaters who continued to obey it.⁴³ We can witness this from the verse below:

Except those idolaters with whom you have a treaty, who have not failed you in the least, nor helped anyone against you. Fulfill your obligations to them during the term of the treaty.

9-Repentance, 4

The verses in the Quran which tell the Muslims to be loyal to their oaths are important when we think about the agreements. The verse below is an example:

So do not make your oaths a means of deceiving one another.

16-The Bees, 94

It is of such importance that Muslims obey their treaties, that they have to consider their prior agreements even before they assist other Muslims. The two verses on this subject are:

Except those who take refuge with a people allied to you, or those who, weary of fighting you or their people, come over to you. If God had so willed He would surely have given them power over you, and they would have fought you. If they keep aloof and do not fight, and offer peace, God has left you no reason to fight them.

4-The Women, 90

⁴¹ Immanuel Kant, *To Perpetual Peace A Philosophical Sketch*, Translated by Ted Humphrey, in *Perpetual Peace And Other Essays*, (Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), p.111

⁴² Muhammed Hamidullah, “*Hudeybiye Antlaşması*” maddesi, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume 18, (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1993) p. 297-299

⁴³ Elmalılı M. Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kuran Dili*, Volume 4, (Zehraevyn), p.278-279.

In case they ask for your help in the name of faith, you are duty bound to help them, except against a people with whom you have a treaty; for God sees all that you do.

8-Spoils Of War, 72

The importance of the Quran's stress on treaties is not understood clearly enough when we think about the problems of our age. One of the reasons why this article was written was to emphasize this point. We see from the verses of the Quran that an agreement had been reached even with the enemies of the Prophet and that the Muslims had obeyed the conditions of the treaty. The principle we can derive from this incident is that there can be no enemy with whom Muslims cannot have a treaty; the personality of the enemy cannot be accepted as a reason for not making an agreement.

According to Islam, the Prophet was under the special protection of God and his justness against the enemy was approved by the revelation of the Quran. Apart from the Prophet, the idea that other people can have epistemologically special situations is not justified by the Quran. The principle we can take from this is that no one's charisma may supersede the Quran's pronouncements, which prefer peace instead of war, and no one's charisma should stop the process of making agreements which build and maintain a peaceful environment. Whether this person be Imam Shafii, a charismatic leader from history or Bin Laden, a living charismatic figure, should not change the situation.

Every disagreement is a new phenomenon; we should of course consider and evaluate the similarities between current disagreements and the events described in the Quran. But at the same time, we should keep in mind that these disagreements are not a hundred percent the same as the ones in the Quran. In a case of necessity, the declaration of war is only possible with the application of the primary principles of the Quran. Yet, we should know that individuals' interpretations that a war is necessary will not be considered with as much weight as the pronouncements of the Prophet, since they do not have revelation. Since the revelation to Muslims through the Quran has ended, none of the declarations of *jihad*s now can claim to be as just as the Prophet's declarations of *jihad*. His declarations were against the people who were trying to destroy them, and were meanwhile supported with revelations. We can conclude from this situation that Muslims should improve a critical approach against the

interpretations which claim that war is necessary. And this criticism is needed very much to avoid the presentation of political and personal goals as religious goals.

Muslims, because of their ontology and because of their epistemological approach to revelation, believe that there are universal truths; at this point, the Muslim's approach is different from Habermas' approach, which does not accept transcendental ontological assumptions. But Muslims know that the universal truths they accept are not going to be universally accepted truths. Then, is it possible to have communication with the "others" for Muslims? The verses we quoted above show that this is possible and furthermore, they tell us that it is possible to have communication even with the worst enemy if necessary. To have a treaty is to have a communication with the "other" through language, and to accept that the "other" may still be the "other"; it also refers to having an agreement despite the different ontological and epistemological beliefs of the "other", and to be loyal to the agreement. In philosophy, Habermas is famous for communicative action. According to him, for communicative action language should be used as a medium for reaching solutions, and actors should seek achieving agreement.⁴⁴ To reach agreement, is the goal to be achieved by the end of the communication process. Because of this, it is especially important that making agreements with "others" has been stressed in the Quran, in this way, the legitimacy of the process before the agreement is clear.

IS RELIGION THE SOURCE OR THE MOTIVATOR OF VIOLENCE

Rapoport is right when he says religions have an essential violence-reducing element, but that they also have a violence-producing dimension.⁴⁵ Still, I believe that it is not fair to think that most of the wars in history were fought because of religion as many people claim. First of all, the biggest part of history is the history of wars, yet there are many situations in which wars have been prevented; but these are not mentioned in the history books. If we are going to put the blame on religion for the wars, then why do we not praise religion for all of the prevented wars? Is it not true that while the religious institutions were sometimes responsible for wars, they were often responsible for peace at the same time? This is never done,

⁴⁴ Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Translated by Thomas McCarthy, Volume 1 (Beacon Pres, 1985)

⁴⁵ David Rapoport, *ibid*, p.118

unfortunately, because prevented wars generally do not get written into history. Since we know only the history of the wars actually fought, from a logical point of view it is not possible to have a view other than that. Secondly, it is in the 20th century that religion has had the least importance in known history, but it is the century in which the most people died because of wars. Thirdly – and I think the most importantly – for the biggest part of human history, religions have been the most important determinant in human lives. That is why, whatever the real reasons for the wars might be, people have had to use religious rhetoric in order to mobilize the masses to fight. Without this rhetoric, fighting would have been impossible in many cases. As historians have proven in many cases, the real reason behind wars with religious rhetoric is, most of the time, to increase economic and political power. As Hans Morgenthau presented in his theory of political realism, people's rational, objective and unemotional power calculations are the sources of war.⁴⁶ Religious morality's preventing amorality of realism has been overcome by the interpretations of the jurists, and surely the jurists' relationships with the political authority have played a great role in it. Kant points out a difference between the "moral politician" and the "political moralist". The "moral politician" is the one who so interprets the principles of political prudence that they can be coherent with morality. On the other hand, the "political moralist" is the one who forges a morality to suit the statesman's advantage.⁴⁷ The main intention of the "political moralist" is protecting and increasing power. The concepts of religion have become rhetoric which is used as an instrument of political realism, by the 'political moralists.' So I think in many cases in which the wars seem to be religious wars, in fact they were political wars which used religious concepts rhetorically for motivating the masses. Even though there have been cases in which morality was victorious, as we have mentioned above, because history is mainly the history of wars, we are unable to know of those events. I think that the religions' claims that there are interests higher than the worldly interests, should be more advantageous than the political realism which states that gaining power in this world is above all moral values and which says that wars need to be fought in order to gain power when necessary. That is why in the communication process of forming institutions to make and keep the peace, it is a must to make use of the major religions, which can help prevent the impact of political realism- the true major source of violence.

⁴⁶ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (Alfred A. Knopf, 1978).

⁴⁷ Immanuel Kant, *ibid*, p.128.

I think it is of paramount importance to distinguish clearly whether Islam is the source or used as the motivator of violence acts. Most people, without making this separation, present a list of violence acts as if Islam is their source whereas in fact Islam was just used as the motivator. If Islam is the source of violence, then that would mean violence occurs only because Islam orders it. Islam is a resource for Muslims with its orders like “you should pray to God”, “you should fast for God” and prohibitions like “you should not eat pork”. The only resource for Muslims regarding performing the prescribed activities and staying away from the prohibitions, is Islam. So we can say clearly that the reason of Muslims’ praying, fasting and not eating pork is Islam. But if we do not take into consideration the defensive wars, we can conclude that behind almost every war they have fought there have been political or economic reasons. Furthermore, even in the wars which were supposedly defensive, we can not claim that Islam plays a source role like it plays in praying and fasting. It is not hard to say that many societies, when attacked will fight a defensive war even though they are not Muslims. Furthermore, if certain political and economic problems had not occurred, we could easily say that many wars in the name of Islam would not have been fought. So in those wars Islam is not the source of war and violence, but is used as a motivator.

Besides the theological, ethical, and philosophical arguments building a case for communication between the civilizations, we should also try to solve the concrete issues at the core of the real problems. According to Huntington, the main problem between the civilizations is not economic, but cultural and religious, so this means that being from different religions is the cause of the clash of civilizations.⁴⁸ This kind of approach causes us to miss the economic dimensions of the problems between the West and the Muslim countries. Habermas rejects Huntington’s approach, because he thinks that the cause of the communicative ailment brought about by globalization is not cultural, but economic.⁴⁹ Even though the Muslim countries have the richest petroleum and natural gas reserves in the world, they are among the poorest countries overall. Although 22% of the world population is Muslim, only 3.8 % of the world revenue is produced by Muslim countries.⁵⁰ The feeling among many Muslims that they are being economically exploited and that the Palestinians in the war with Israelis are being treated unjustly, causes hate towards the West. (I am not going

⁴⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and The Remaking of World Order*, (Simon and Schuster, 1997)

⁴⁹ Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, (The University of Chicago Press, 2003), p.65

⁵⁰ Ahmet Sozen, *Kuresellesmenin Getirdikleri ve ABD'nin İkilemi*, (Karizma, Ocak-Mart, 2002), p.55.

to discuss whether Muslims are exploited or not, or whether or not they are treated unjustly in this article. But it is clear that without understanding the general sentiment of the majority of Muslims, it will not be possible to form a communicative process to solve these problems.) Hatred destroys the communication between civilizations and this hatred is used by the groups or states which organize violent actions.

As Habermas points out, regarding violence performed in our time, the main problem is economic. Actually, from the perspective of belief and cultural heritage, the Western and Islamic civilizations which derive from Abrahamic tradition are closer to each other than to other civilizations in the world. If some Islamic groups were performing violent acts against the West just because of their differences in religion and culture, then probably they would attack first the Japanese people or the Chinese, who are more different from their religions. Or if they were performing violence against certain countries just because they were Westerners or Christians, then they should be devoting the same attitude they applied towards the United States or Britain, to Sweden or to Brazil. According to Huntington, the underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism, but is Islam.⁵¹ People who share Huntington's approach can try to alter the Muslim world's culture by force, or by imposing their own culture, but then these kinds of efforts can trigger new acts of violence. As Abdul Aziz Said and Meena Sharify Funk reported in one of their articles, "*Huntington's model manifests widespread cultural-triumphalist assumptions which stipulate that the whole world needs to conform to only Western norms and values to ensure a secure orderly and stable world. If 'others' fail to comply, then problems and/or clashes are inevitable.*"⁵² People who think like Habermas, on the other hand, should try to solve the economic problems. If we make a wrong identification of the problems, then the cure will not be right either. Many people try to see Islam as the real problem, and the clash of civilizations thesis is used for making a real clash of civilizations.

SUPREME EMERGENCY EXEMPTION

People who do not want to give up violence, in order to persuade the masses that the wars are legitimate, and to motivate the masses against the enemy, use "terror" in one circumstances

⁵¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *ibid*, p.258.

⁵² Abdul Aziz Said, Meena Sharify-Funk, *Dynamics of Cultural Diversity and Tolerance in Islam*, in *Cultural Diversity and Islam*, ed. Abdul Aziz Said, Meena Sharify-Funk (University Press of America, 2003) p.19

and “*jihad*” in the other as rhetoric. While people on one side of the world benefit from the media, economic power and guns with the latest technology, on the other side, people try to fight against the countries which actually are prepared to fight with fully equipped armies only by guerilla warfare. Just as the people who use “terror” as rhetoric want all their actions to be accepted without debate, the people who use “*jihad*” as rhetoric also claim that any opposition to what they say would be disobeying Islam. As the countries do not want their politics to be questioned, these groups do not want their interpretations of Islam to be debated either, both try to suppress any objections with their respective rhetorics of “terror” or “*jihad*”. One side- just because they can not seize the activists who hide among the civilians- in order to restore its pride declares war on other countries and causes the civilians there to die, and the other side in order to take revenge from its technologically unchallengeable enemy, attacks civilian targets and kills thousands of people. As a result the casualties from both sides are: children, women and generally people who are unaware of what is going on. Kant’s “*No nation at war with another shall permit such acts of war as shall make mutual trust impossible during some future time at peace*”⁵³ principle has been undermined continuously. The real danger may come when today’s events cause bigger and unavoidable incidents. In order to get out of this very dangerous predicament, we have to have fruitful communication between the civilizations.

People who cause the death of civilians, either by using the rhetoric of “*jihad*” or “war on terror”, use various arguments to justify their actions. These are usually the kind of argument which Michael Walzer calls back-to-the-wall arguments: that when conventional means of resistance are hopeless or worn out, anything goes (anything that is necessary to win).⁵⁴ Walzer gives Great Britain of the 1940s as an example from history: Because the Nazi threat could annihilate them, there was a “supreme emergency,” in which one might well be required to override the rights of innocent people and shatter the war convention.⁵⁵ Walzer says “*They bring us under the rule of necessity and necessity knows no rules*”⁵⁶ Rawls’ perspective on the issue is, “*This exemption allows us to set aside –in certain special circumstances- the strict status of civilians that normally prevents their being directly attacked in war.*”⁵⁷ As Andrew Fiala states, one of the philosophical principles used to justify

⁵³Immanuel Kant, *ibid*, p109

⁵⁴ Michael Walzer, *Just And Unjust Wars*, (BasicBooks,1992), p.252

⁵⁵ Michael Walzer, *ibid*, p.259

⁵⁶ Michael Walzer, *ibid*, p.254

⁵⁷ John Rawls, *ibid*, p.98

the “war on terror” is the “supreme emergency exemption”.⁵⁸ However, in a “back-to-the-wall” situation, the supporters of “terror” as well as the supporters of “war on terror” can use the “supreme emergency exemption” thesis to justify their actions. On the other hand, for the supporters of Kantian ethics⁵⁹ who do not accept the “exemption”, both sides are wrong no matter what their justifications are, because they cause civilians to die. This will lead us to philosophically ironic results. While the “supreme emergency” approach is the thesis for both sides used to justify their rightness, on the contrary, the Kantian approach can be used by each side to blame the other. Actually, there is no practical difference between claiming both sides’ rightness and both sides’ wrongness. Of course, we must discuss whether the acts of violence are ethically acceptable or not from a philosophical perspective, but it seems very unlikely to reach a consensus or to have practical results that will stop the violence. That is why it is more useful to focus philosophical discussion towards the areas from which we can derive some concrete results. First of all, we must work on how to form a communication between the civilizations, and then we must find out concrete institutions which will help us to build and to maintain universal peace.

Hannah Arendt points out that the best way for individuals to be protected from harm is to actively join in the political process.⁶⁰ That is why Muslims, where they live as minorities, should participate in the public/political sphere, and the same is true for other minorities within the Muslim nations. What is more important still is the frequent participation of countries whose public is majority Muslim in international organizations. As a result, Muslims can benefit more from the international organizations’ protections, and these organizations can become legitimate in the eyes of the Muslim masses. The needed reform of the veto of the permanent Security Council members is important.⁶¹ It should be proved that this organization is not on the side of the strong but on the side of the right. And this organization, after taking concrete steps to improve its legitimacy, should prepare agreements, which would include the Muslim countries -as active and equal contractors- on how to avoid and to conduct war.

⁵⁸ Andrew Fiala, *Terrorism and the Philosophy of History: Liberalism, Realism, and the Supreme Emergency Exemption*, (Essays in Philosophy, April 2002)

⁵⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique Of Practical Reason*, Translated by James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978)

⁶⁰ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins Of Totalitarianism*, (Harvest Books, 1973)

⁶¹ Jurgen Habermas, *America And The World*, Interview with Eduardo Mendieta, www.logosjournal.com/habermas_america.htm

The communicative process can be formed on many levels without the limitations of the United Nations. There would be people on both sides who would not want communication, but those who are eager from each side should ignore the others and try to improve this process. Derrida draws attention to those on the Muslim side, who are trying to build communication instead of violence: *“We must help what is called Islam and what is called Arab to free themselves from such violent dogmatism. We must help those who are fighting heroically in this direction on the inside, whether we are talking about politics in the narrow sense of the term or else about an interpretation of the Quran.”*⁶² The same approach, selecting those who are making a concerted effort at communication in the West, should be used by Muslims.

We can improve the communicative process by criticizing the wars caused by economically determined rational goals, and by encouraging the language of dialogue instead of the language of violence. If we can free ourselves from the rhetoric which is used as a marketing instrument for violence, we can get rid of a big obstacle on the road towards dialogue and peace. The biggest philosophical success on this subject will be to show, even when “political moralists” are in power, which concrete institutions should be built to keep the world peace, and which sketch of the communicative process will achieve this.

⁶² Jacques Derrida, *ibid*, p.113

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