DIALOGUE FOR SURVIVAL

COMMUNICATOIN ETHICS FOR ABRAHAMIC COMMUNITIES

AND FOR THE WORLD

WRITTEN BY HILARIE ROSEMAN

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30 METUNG ROAD, METUNG, 3904

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yarrayarra@net-tech.com.aui

PhD STUDENT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

ABSTRACT

"The ability to understand other cultures may represent the cornerstone of international understanding and world peace. " (Mowlana 1997:157) Mowlana, a communication scholar who writes from a Muslim point of view, highlights the present necessity – making friends with different cultures. He understands that, from a communication ethics point of view, when one person calls out to the other, and the other answers the call, the horizons of their minds open up to the Wholly Other. It is just not interesting to have our horizons opened up to new realities, it is also a matter of survival. It is through sending and receiving messages that "human beings assure their psychological survival and define their personal identity." (Willet 1989) The core research question in my thesis is "How are people of Abrahamic faiths, faiths that are implicated in a geopolitical confrontation, able to cooperate within religious organizations.?" Theories of conflict and cooperation at international and intra-group levels have as their background the work of Huntington and his theory of a clash of cultures. As well, Ralph White informs with his diabolical enemy imagery, Galtung on peace theory, Sheff on shame and revenge theory, Lindner on dignity, Enright, Worthington and Murphy on forgiveness and reconciliation.

Interfaith Encounter Groups of Jews, Christians and Muslims are coming together all over the world. Their aims, broadly, are to hear and understand people from

other religions, where, in a framework of respect, there is an opportunity to build personal relationships and to discover and recognize similarities as well as differences. I will research these encounters with focus groups. I will use comparative analysis, and I expect to see the beginning of friendships.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation theory, which looks at the judgement of what is right and wrong, forces us to look longer and deeper into the Muslim mind. "Because in the Islamic ummah the sovereignty of the state belongs to God and not to the ruler nor even to the people themselves, the leaders are only acting executives chosen by the people to serve them according to the law of Islam; therefore, communication on both interpersonal and social levels becomes both basic and vital to the functioning of the ummah, for it sustains and encourages the integral and harmonious relationship among God, the individual, and society. Thus, the special concept of social responsibility theory, designed around the ethical doctrine of "commanding to the right and prohibiting from the wrong" establishes the boundaries of communication in society and especially in the affairs of the state." (Mowlana 1996:149) When the secular meets a religious boundary there is much necessity for truthful dialogue to find a way forward.

Pope Benedict XVI and 138 Muslim scholars have joined their faithful in listening and sharing. Pope Benedict wants the religious knowledge to be accepted as true knowledge, if not totally scientifically proven, and the Muslim scholars warn that we will not be at peace if Muslims and the Christians are not at peace, as they comprise 55% of the population of the earth. Jews, Christians and Muslims believe

that they are to love God with their whole heart and their neighbour as themselves. This axis, this fixed reference for love, God and neighbour, is the keystone that enables a peaceful alignment of hearts and minds. Mowlana's work has been set in a framework of the Catholic Church losing its memory of forgiveness and McLunan's understanding that our evolution of consciousness involves comprehensive awareness – we are to centre ourselves in the arena of interplay between the two modes of perception and analysis. We are to dialogue with ourselves first, and then with others, for survival.

Keywords: understanding, culture, world peace, Jews, Christians, Muslims

I   Introduction

My purpose for further research revolved around the issue of "forgiveness", which I had studied in various ways. When it was put to me that I should expand my vision, and research "Remediations, Truth, Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Multi-Ethic Abraham organizations" I was taken aback. I knew nothing about the Muslim community, except that information which I received through the mass media. My first thought was to find a Muslims scholar who would teach me what it was to me a Muslim, and also show me how I could look at International Communication through new eyes. I will share with you now my journey of opening myself up to new theory, new thoughts – a whole new culture. It

is a journey that many of us will take, if the world is to come together to cooperate and survive.

II   Core Research Question

The core research question in my thesis is "How are people of Abrahamic faiths, faiths that are implicated in a geopolitical confrontation, able to cooperate within religious organizations?"   Theories of conflict and cooperation at international and intra-group levels have as their background the work of Huntington and his theory of a clash of civilizations. As well, Ralph White informs with his diabolical enemy imagery, Galtung on peace theory, Sheff on shame and revenge theory, Lindner on dignity, Enright, Worthington and Murphy on forgiveness and reconciliation

III   Background Theorists.

III.1   Huntington has imaged the basis for many conferences when he speaks of a clash of civilizations. The West will increasingly have to accommodate these non-Western modern civilizations whose power approaches that of the West but whose values and interests differ significantly from those of the West. The West will be required to develop a more profound understanding of the basic religious and philosophical assumptions underlying other civilizations and the ways in which people in those civilizations see their interests. "It will require an effort to identify elements of commonality between Western and other civilizations. For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilization, but instead a world of different

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civilizations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others."
(Huntington 1993)

III.2 Phillips. In this endeavour we will need to be reflexive and interactive.
"The idea of reflexivity directly contradicts a bureaucratic worldview and cultural
paradigm, indicating an alternative worldview and cultural paradigm. More
specifically, it seems to illustrate an interactive orientation...and this
perspective...appears to support Gouldner's view that reflexivity is the key to the
transformation of self and society." (Phillips 2002:57)

III.3 Ross DeWitt's research is about power sharing and change. "The focal point
of system change...occurs in the socioeconomic sphere, where attitudes and
motivations are directly affected by power bases that reflect social and need
structure....Referent and reward power may be exercised (by self and others) by
manipulating symbolic reminders of the accepted requirements for receiving
approval and satisfying needs, as happens, for example, in religious worship." (Ross
DeWitt 2000; 178) The media is also used in system change.

III.4 Mattelart. Views propaganda and disinformation as weapons. The era of
the information society and industry is the era where the mental states, the
colonization of the mind, are produced.   Under these conditions, political freedom
cannot remain simply the right to exercise one's will; the increasingly fundamental
problem is how that will is formed. "Unless we abandon the well-established belief
that the fate of democracy resides completely in the media, we can scarcely hope to
begin answering the question left up in the air by Deleuze, regarding the "gradual

and diffuse institution of a new regime of domination" and the uncertainty concerning forms of resistance." (Mattelart 1994:.229)

III.5   White, in his book "Fearful Warriors"   argues that a rational approach is insufficient to explain the arms race. As a psychologist, he turns to psychological analysis to examine the psychological fallacies which underlie the arms' race. One is that the image of the enemy is made to be inhuman, and that one's own country is always morally justified in its actions. Inaction would create a bad outcome, but decisive action will prevent that outcome. (White 1984)   "White's thesis is that the fundamental cause of these incorrect perceptions is fear. "   Paul Miceli (reviewer) http://archive.peacemagazine.org/v01n1p31.htm

 Enemy images can affect any group, whether racial, ethnic, economic or international.   "Enemy images lead people to selectively attend to and remember negative aspects and actions of enemies. Enemy images lead people to pay attention to and remember criticism of enemies more than they attend to and remember statements supporting enemies. (Psychologists for Social Responsibility, *Dismantling the Mask of Enmity* : www.psysr.org)

III.6   Wolfsfeld The news media construct frames for conflict by fitting the information they are receiving into a package that is culturally familiar. Enemy images can be put into the frame of "bad guys."   The news media changed the balance of power between Israel and the Palestinians during the *intifada,* which was a "struggle over world opinion." (Wolfsfeld 1997) By writing Palestinian "victim" narratives the news media placed the Palestinians on a more equal footing with

Israel. "The entire Middle East conflict is a struggle over who is the bigger victim." (Wolfsfeld 1997:119)

III.7   Scheff has studied the effects of shame. Shame is the master emotion because it has many more social and psychological functions than other emotions, and it is the key component of conscience, the moral sense, since it signals moral transgression even without thought or words, and signals trouble in a relationship." (Scheff 2002:268/9)   Hidden shame triggers anger spirals between the two people who are communicating.   Scheff defines shame "as a class name for a large family of emotions and feelings that arise through seeing self negatively, if even only slightly negatively, through the eyes of others.'" (Scheff 2002:266)

III.8 Lindner's research is on humiliation. "While political scientists analyse what underlies cycles of violence and terror, they usually speak of individual depravity and social deprivation, both of which play critical roles. But if we look at the evolution of these human disasters, whether in Europe, Africa, Asia, or anywhere around the world, we consistently find that the force that keeps fuelling the extremists, silencing the moderates, and driving the conflict to spiral out of control is humiliation." (Lindner 2004:xv1)

IV   Communication Vision of Hamid Mowlana, from an Islamic perspective

It is within this framework of clash of civilisations, and enemy images, shame and the need to treat human beings with dignity that we now shine the light on the vision of Hamid Mowlana. "The ability to understand other cultures may represent the cornerstone of international understanding and world peace. " (Mowlana

1997:157) Mowlana, an international communication scholar who writes from a Muslim point of view, highlights the present necessity – making friends with people of different cultures. But "In the area of international and intercultural communication, the culture and human components of international and societal relations have been overshadowed by technical, political and economic aspects." (Mowlana 1988:1) While power and money fill up the pages of our newspapers, the communication of culture, which is deep communication allied with memory, has to be brought into focus. Mowlana sees culture and communication as integral parts which cannot be broken. His belief is that "mass communications, information technology and intercultural communication should not be arbitrarily separated, but should be united, as they are all inextricably linked." (Mowlana 2004:11) Perhaps it is time for us to start to put back all the fragments that we can find from our cultural memory, which includes our religious rememberings, to begin a new vision of the world. How could we do this? Mowlana puts words to his vision when, against a bleak background of world struggle, he says that the "border between philosophy and religion must be rethought," (Mowlana 2003:19) Naren Chitty asks, in reply "can we assume that the path of academic secularisation is for ever correct? Certainly we should from time to time re-examine our core beliefs." (Chitty 2004:54) It is then that Mowlana talks about the Wholly Other. It is by "[e]stablishing the lines of communication between philosophy and religion, from within the abysmal centre of the western philosophical tradition, I conceived of a transcendental dimension of a communicative ethics as the horizon opened in-between the proximate other and the Wholly Other." (Mowlana 2003.33) He goes

on to say "the transcendent dimension of a communication ethics is of the sublime imperative and demand which, disclosing the limits of reason alone, opens the critical reflex to its movement beyond its self. Responding to the call of the other…is nothing other than an ethics of communication" (Mowlana 2003:18) which takes us to the limits of reason, as the horizon which opens thought and being to the inappropriable other.   "Does not the concern with the other broach the boundary with philosophy and religion? Does not an ethical limit of reason broach the boundary between philosophy and religion? The conception of religion as a horizon which has yet to be opened, and a gap which haunts the history of international communication discipline with its "forgotten" is the poetic way Mowlana presents the problem and question haunting our present juncture, where the border between philosophy and religion must be rethought.   "Conceived in reference to the call of the other and the transcendent dimension of a communicative ethics, the philosophical significance of religion, and the religious significance of philosophy, is of a border which has yet to be crossed" (Mowlana 2003: 19)   He also asks the question – what is religion?

To answer that question Hervieu-Leger, a sociologist, believes that religious leadership is important, that religion exists when the authority of tradition supports the act of believing. "*As our fathers believed, and because they believed, we too believe*…Seen thus, one would describe any form of believing as religious which sees its commitment to a chain of belief it adopts as all-absorbing." (Hervieu-Ledger: 2000:81) This opens up a whole new vista, because she says that the sacred is everywhere, and is not just attached to religion. But do we recognise it? Has it

been overcome by technology and economy?   Do we, each one of us, listen to the authoritative messages of our religion and put them into action?

V   Authoritative messages – fading memories of forgiveness

I actually felt very much at ease with the work of Herviu-Ledger because she originally wrote *Religion as a Chain of Memory* round about the same time period as I was researching the Catholic Church on issues of human sexuality and the media. (Roseman 2000) I took my interviews in 1991. I recorded, in a total message environment of the mind, every human sexuality message from secular news and entertainment, religious and family sources from 84 men and women randomly chosen from seven Catholic parishes. From all this information, drawn from people aged from 18 to 80, only eight people were able to speak of forgiveness within the framework of human sexuality, and indeed of Catholic belief as a whole. I began to wonder whether the authoritative message of forgiveness was being taught in the Catholic schools, and then found, in the Catholic Catechism, 1994 edition, that there was not even an index for forgiveness. The imprimatur was given by the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI). The people in my research were listening, but many were not acting on the authoritative human sexuality messages coming from the Catholic Church. The conclusion to be made from 208 questions, many with multiple parts was that:

1.   (i)   From their responses Catholics say that they take into their memory mass media messages not in tune with authoritative Catholic teaching.

(ii) There is a subsequent belief change perceived by the respondents and from correlating their responses this belief change would come from not only their access of mass media news and entertainment, but also from their Catholic formation in the Catholic school system.

(iii) There is public affirmation of second marriages and cohabitation, with the understanding by many that this behavior is not wrong.

2.   (i)   The Melbourne Catholic Church sends its messages on human sexuality through the mass media by way of celibate male sources.

   (ii)   The laity are either married or interested in marriage, define their important human sexuality issues as relationships, and agree that men and women communicate differently and interpret and talk about religious issues differently.

(iii)   The mass media messages from the Catholic sources are still traditional teaching but hardly ever concern marriage

3.   (i)   Catholics according to this research are, on the whole, are not accepting the authoritative messages from the Church. Over half of the research sample did not access them at all. Of those who did, just over a quarter accepted them.

(ii)   This engenders a perception of the community "falling apart"

        (a) The respondents perceive a "No Mass Going" behaviour

        (b) A lack of understanding theological language

        (c) A diminishing feeling of belonging to the Catholic Church

(iii) The respondents are recorded as showing a fading memory of the person of

        Jesus Christ.

 (iv)   The respondents perceive that this schism is caused by priests giving confused teachings and who lack understanding of family life, want to get married and who do not do enough for the young.

With regard to the future, even though 82% see a belief change in the Catholic Church, 76.1% give a qualified "yes" answer to the question "Has the church the right to advise you how to live?" The Church as a guide is more acceptable to the respondents today than a Church who demands us to obey and submit. The body of Christ today is opposed by the body of the mass media, a body which incorporates print, radio, television, and interactive computer networks, a body which gains power by setting the agenda for discussion in the world, gate-keeping knowledge about motivation, and using controlling, persuasive messages. (Roseman 2000)

There are clearly many factors giving rise to the changes in the laity of the Catholic Church. International media enables us to be 'there' and experience whatever is happening in the world. The older people have gone international in the lounge room, the younger ones on the computer in the study, with the added help of their mobile phones. Mowlana says that if we want to use the international as a framework to address the social, political, cultural and economic problems of our day, then it is up to us to reflect on and question the design, structure and border of this framework. As denoted by the inter- in interpersonal, intercultural and international, there is a communication "space" between persons, between cultures, and between nations. In this space, cracks and crevices between different peoples, languages and cultures open up and deconstruct the unity assumed by the global field theories of our new world information-communication order. There is a flux, tension and movement which both precedes and exceeds the sovereign geometrics of the nation-state. "Hence the space opened with the international should not be conceived as a mediating term between the national and global, but instead as the

spatio-temporal cracks and crevices which resist and subvert the totalities, identities and oppositions assumed by this mediation." (Mowlana 2003 23/24)

Our thought horizons are too narrow, too constricting. Bordering philosophy and religion, the transcendent dimension of communication open thought to another horizon, the horizon opened with communication and by the inappropriable other. He conceives of "the border crossing between philosophy and religion as an adventure which recognises the finite of thought, opening our journey to the unthought, if not unthinkable hope of a future-yet-to-come. (Mowlana 2003:26)

Why is it so dangerous, and unacceptable to think like this – that there is a future yet to come? International communication is the juncture and crossroads of the present, but our journey is not guided by the maps through which the discipline imposes its preconceptions on the field. Instead there is "the danger and anxiety of an intellectual encounter which accepts its transcendental and metaphysical homelessness as it de- and re-constructs itself in the absence of clear-cut origins and boundaries." Mowlana 2003:27) We are haunted by all the historic master-narratives with ruins of futures-past, the phantoms of the dead, and we sense their presence in the silence of other histories. Mowlana talks about the homelessness of discarding part of our make up, our belief in God. Where is our faith today?

Does not faith in technology bear witness to the transcendental dimension of communication, and our desire to sacrifice our sense of self to something other and beyond our identity? "From within this context, it is not simply we who are homeless, but instead we are haunted by the ghosts and spectres of those dead souls,

languages, philosophies who, devoid of proper burial, have not passed away,

continuing to claim hold over our imagination. Can we not hear the ghosts of

religion knocking at the door of international communication, calling upon us

…from a strange and foreign land – demanding of our community a sense of

hospitably, rather than exorcism?" (Mowlana 2003:29)

The homelessness of the Christian, if "forgiveness" is forgotten, is the letting go of

the basic belief in Jesus Christ, who was born, lived and died to bring forgiveness to

homo-sapiens. "Forgiveness", now from international communication, knocks on

the door of the academic world. As also does the commitment to change –

especially from humiliation people, to treating them with dignity..

For the last ten Evelin Lindner has been formulating a theory of humiliation and helping

to create a new multidisciplinary field in academia that incorporates principles and

scholarship from the disciplines of anthropology, history, philosophy, political science,

social psychology, and sociology.

A contemporary definition of humiliation can be based on the human rights ideal of equal

dignity for all. The first paragraph of article 1 of the Universal declaration of Human

rights, which was adopted by the United Nations general assembly on December 10,

1948, reads: "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are

endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of

brotherhood." In this context "humiliation" is the enforced lowering of any person or

grop by a process of subjugation that damages their dignity: "to be humiliated" is to be

placed in a situation that is against one's interest (although, sadly not always against one's will) in a demeaning and damaging way; aand "to humiliate" is to transgress the rightful expectations of every human being and of all humanity tht basic human right will be respected.

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When a humiliated mind is left to reflet on its own destruction, it may become convinced that it must inflict even greater pain on the perpetrator. So begins a vicious cycle of violation an vindication that both sides believe they are obligated to pursue. Terror, war, ad genocide can result if this belief is fed by "humiliation entrepreneurs" who exhort their followers to exact revenge with gran narratives of humiliation and retaliation.

VI   Hospitality to religion

In this paper we give hospitality to issues of religion, in the issue of forgiveness of ourselves and others, and also the issue of losing our very souls if we are not ready to make peace.

Interfaith Encounter Groups of Jews, Christians and Muslims are coming together all over the world. Their aims, broadly, are to hear and understand people from other religions, where, in a framework of respect, there is an opportunity to build personal relationships and to discover and recognize similarities as well as differences. I am going to research

these encounters with focus groups. The purpose of my research is therefore to find out specifically how members of Jewish, Christian and Islamic multi-faith organizations address intra-organizationally the extra-organizationally unresolved questions of reconciliation/forgiveness in local and world wide settings.

Communication as survival is explained by Willet as; "life is characterised by its intrinsic capacity to send and receive messages to and from the different parts that make up an organism, as well as between the organism and its environment. It is through this ability that human beings assure their psychological survival and define their personal identity." (Willet 1989) He goes onto explain that it is a myth that we communicate on a common basis. "Each situation and each context is experienced differently by each person and that allhuman relations aretinted with ambiguity as wellas being in a permanent state of flux." (Willet 1989) Even if one day we might all use a single currency and a single language, (especially for telecommunications) cultural differences will still be important, giving us a large new area to gain knowledge of different ways of thinking and doing things.

Comparative analysis will be used, when examining the output of the focus groups, and I expect to see the beginning of friendships. In some interfaith groups they use conflict theory as a basis, but in others, they, as Mowlana is asking, bring back the religious framework for discussion, so that in his words we are not "homeless." But we need to understand the theory of forgiveness and reconciliation. First though, a particular philosopher mentioned by Mowlana. He goes back to begin at the beginning, with repentance. We are at the border crossing again, specified by

Mowlana.   The philosopher, Derrida, has already crossed it. He says that when we talk about forgiveness, we need to address repentance as well. "The scene of repentance and forgiveness seeking is today becoming globalized, presented on a world wide stage. Enigmatic though the concept of forgiveness, in the strict sense, remains, the scene, the form, and the language that people attempt to adjust to it belong within a religious heritage, which we may call Abrahamic, in order to group together Judaism and the various forms of Christianity and Islam." (Derrida 2001)

V1I   Forgiveness and Reconciliation theory

Forgiveness and Reconciliation theory, which looks at the judgement of what is right and wrong, forces us to look longer and deeper into the Muslim mind. "Because in the Islamic ummah the sovereignty of the state belongs to God and not to the ruler nor even to the people themselves, the leaders are only acting executives chosen by the people to serve them according to the law of Islam; therefore, communication on both interpersonal and social levels becomes both basic and vital to the functioning of the ummah, for it sustains and encourages the integral and harmonious relationship among God, the individual, and society. Thus, the special concept of social responsibility theory, designed around the ethical doctrine of "commanding to the right and prohibiting from the wrong" establishes the boundaries of communication in society and especially in the affairs of the state." (Mowlana 1996:149) When the secular meets a religious boundary there is much necessity for truthful dialogue to find a way forward.

VII.1 Dialogue

"It is the quest for dialogue that underlies the current revolutionary movements around the world." (Mowlana 1996:96) Here is Mowlana agreeing with Burton (1990) and his human needs theory – society is going to be changed to meet human needs by truthful dialogue. Contemporary movements around the world, whether in groups, communities, or nations, are constructing more humane, ethical, traditionalist, antibloc, self reliance theories of societal development. "It is the quest for dialogue that underlies the current revolutionary movements around the world." (Mowlana 1996:96)   The ultimate ethical power of communication institutions within this context is to serve the public, and the zenith of serving that public is reached when a communication entity succeeds in raising a group, a community, a public, or a world to a higher level of understanding and insight. (Mowlana 1996:98)

When we dialogue,   interactions are communicative when participants coordinate their plans of action consensually, with recognition of validity claims. "Those claims are claims to truth, claims to rightness, and claims to truthfulness, according to whether the speaker refers to something in the objective world(as the totality of existing states of affairs), to something in the shared social world (as the totality of the legitimately regulated interpersonal relationships of a social group), or to something in his own subjective world….in communicative action one actor seeks rationally to motivate another by relying on the illocutionary binding/bonding effect of the offer contained in his speech act." (Habermas 1990:58)   Hamelink argues that moral standards cannot any longer be authoritatively imposed upon all members of pluralist and multicultural

societies. In dialogue it is to be explored upon which 'minima moralia' societies can find

basic and common agreement. Ethical reflection should not focus on identifying the

single correct solution, but should rather concentrate on the due process of the moral

argumentation. "The ethical dialogue does not depart from a consensus on fundamental

moral values, but seeks those solutions to moral dispute that optimally accommodate the

parties' interests and principles." (Hamelink 2000:5) The world has different cultures –

different thinking mechanisms, and Edward T. Hall reminds us that culture is not innate

but learned. To cooperate we need to know each other's way of thinking. . Today,

constantly in the position of interacting with strangers, and not knowing what other

people are going to do next, means that the next step for humankind is to transcend …

culture. (Hall :1976, 1981:16) We will need models for this to happen.

VII.2 Sherif – Superordinate goals   From his many years of research, Sherif

recognizes that intergroup hostility arises from conflicts over vital interests, and this

hostility can be changed when the groups are directed toward superordinate goals.

"Relationships within and between human groups, which form the context for frustration

and associated aggression toward others because of their group membership, set limits for

the degree and targets of aggression and chart the direction of what is desirable, or even

ideal, in intergroup action." (Sherif 1967:59)

VII.3   **Linder – reaching out** "In the new world, belonging requires individual

proactive action. Reaching out to the neighbour and creating a relationship that

provides the sense of belonging requires skills that our forefathers rarely needed.

Humility is a precondition of these new skills…warmth, loyalty, solidarity, mutual

recognition, dialogue, and humble acknowledgement of equal dignity – this is friendship." (Lindner 2006 147/8)

VII.4 **Enright - forgiveness**

One of the skills needed to reach out is to forgive. Robert Enright has spent many years researching the issue of how to forgive and he believes that forgiving is an act of mercy toward an offender, someone who does not necessarily deserve our mercy. It is a gift to our offender for the purpose of changing the relationship between ourselves and those who have hurt us Forgiving is more than; accepting what happened, ceasing to be angry, being neutral toward the other, making oneself feel good We need an attitude change toward the offender, we need to feel positive feelings for the offender. "Forgiving is not condoning or excusing, forgetting, justifying, calming down, pseudo forgiving… forgiveness is related to but different than reconciliation. (Enright 2001: 25/26)

 VII.5 Everett Worthington is another psychologist who has studied forgiveness and reconciliation.   Reconciliation entails risks. It might be unhealthy or unsafe to try to reconcile. It may be not desirable if the perpetrator shows no remorse. However, if you want to reconcile you must decide. Justice rarely leads to reconciliation. Stop hostilities – agree to disagree – think of the other person. Forgive ourselves! We too need to be forgiven. We need to find out that we are forgivable. Apology is the best way to start reconciliation. Worthingon   2001:224)

 VIII   Communication as a prelude to cooperation -

Communication between the religious hierarchies of the Abrahamic communities has begun – the horizons, as Mowlana speaks of them, have widened to infinity.

VIII.1 Papal Address of Pope Benedict XVI.

Pope Benedict cited critical dialogue from the 13th century in Regensburg. "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached." This became a conflict narrative in the press, and the Pope apologized for this ancient text. He tells us in this address that violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul, he argued. God is not pleased by blood – and not acting reasonably is contrary to God' s nature. "God acts with logos. Logos means both reason and word – a reason which is creative and capable of self communication, precisely as reason." He says that "the modern concept of reason is based, to put it briefly, on a synthesis between Platonism (Cartesianism) and empiricism, a synthesis confirmed by the success of technology." He argues that firstly, only the kind of certainty resulting from the interplay of mathematical and empirical elements can be considered scientific. Hence the human sciences such as history, psychology, sociology and philosophy, attempt to conform themselves to this canon of scientificity. By its very nature this method excludes the question of God, making it appear an unscientific or pre-scientific question. And joining the global dialogue of ethics, he says that attempts to construct an ethic from the rules of evolution or from psychology and sociology, end up being simply inadequate. His attempt, at a critique of modern reason from within (has) the intention to

broaden our concept of reason and its application. Reason and faith come together in a new way if we overcome the self imposed limitation of reason to the empirically falsifiable, and if we once more disclose its vast horizons. "Theology is an inquiry into the rationality of faith. Only thus do we become capable of that genuine dialogue of cultures and religions so urgently needed today. Listening to the great experiences and insights of the religious traditions of humanity…is a source of knowledge, and to ignore it would be an unacceptable restriction of our listening and responding. " *Papal address at University of Regensburg* www.zenit.org/asrticle-16955?1=english

VIII.2   Muslim Response.

138 Muslim Scholars responded to this address with their own message to the Christian Church, entitled *A Common Word Between Us and You.* They warn that without peace and justice between Christians and Muslims, who together make up more than 55% of the world's populations, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. They say that "The basis for this peace and understanding already exists. It is part of the very foundational principles of both faiths: love of the One God, and love of the neighbour. These principles are found over and over again in the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity." They also focus on the forgiveness of God (God is Forgiving, Merciful (Aal 'Imran, 3:31) in Islam saying that the relationship between Muslims and Christians is "the most important factor in contributing to meaningful peace around the world. If Muslims and Christians are not at peace, the world cannot be at peace. With the terrible weaponry of the modern world, with Muslims

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and Christians intertwined everywhere as never before, no side can unilaterally win a conflict between more than half of the world's inhabitants. Thus our common future is at stake. And to those who nevertheless relish conflict and destruction for their own sake or reckon that ultimately they stand to gain through them, we say that our very eternal souls are all also at stake if we fail to sincerely make every effort to make peace and come together in harmony." 138 Muslim Scholars: (www.acommonword.com/index.php?lang=en&page=option1) There are more people in the world who believe in One God than in No God. The debate about whose law to use has begun. The Archbishop of Canterbury has suggested that the introduction in Britain of some aspects of Islamic law was unavoidable." (Croft 2008;7) There are now more Muslims than Catholics, but according to the Vatican, Christians are now 33% of the world, with Muslims 19.2%, making their figure 52.2% of joint world population. (Kington April 2008:10)

VIII.3   A culture of peace.

In reply to the Muslim scholars the President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Cardinal Tauran, presented a *Message for the end of Ramadan 'Id al-Fitr 1428 H. /2007 a.d. Christians and Muslims: called to promote a culture of peace.* It raises religious freedom, and renunciation of violence which can never be motivated by religion, since it wounds the very image of God in man, and then brings up the subject of education. "Religious authorities…have a duty to pay attention to the spread of a just teaching. They must provide everyone an education appropriate to his or her particular circumstances, especially a civic

education which invites each young person to respect those around him or her, and to consider them as brothers and sisters with whom he or she is daily called to live, not in indifference, but in fraternal care. It is thus more urgent than ever to teach to the younger generations, those fundamental human, moral and civic values which are necessary to both personal and community life." He concludes "To achieve this, I appeal to you with all my heart to heed my words, so that, by means of encounters and exchanges, Christians and Muslims will work together in mutual respect for peace." Cardinal Tauran

(www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interel g_doc_200705_en.html)

VIII.4 Pope's response to Muslim Leaders

Vatican City, Nov 29, 2007 - On October 13, for the occasion of the end of the Muslim month of Ramadan (Eid al-Fitr), a group of 138 Muslim
religious leaders sent an open letter to the Holy Father Benedict XVI and to other Christian leaders. The letter was entitled: *A Common Word between Us and You.*

The Holy Father has replied with a letter of his own, signed by the Cardinal Secretary of State and addressed to Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal, president of the Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought and one of the signatories of the original letter. In expressing his thanks and appreciation for this significant initiative by the eminent group of Muslim figures, the Holy Father reaffirms the importance of dialogue based on effective respect for the dignity of the person, on objective knowledge of the other's

religion, on the sharing of religious experience, and on joint commitment to promoting mutual respect and acceptance.

The Secretary of State's reply also mentions the Holy Father's willingness to receive Prince Ghazi and a delegation of the signatories of the letter, and also highlights the readiness of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, in collaboration with other specialized pontifical institutes, to organize a working meeting. (Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission, http://www.einews.blogspot.com)

Dialogue is a precursor to cooperation.

IX   Theories of cooperation at the international level

IX.1   Galtung.

First things first for psychologist Galtung. First the focus is on peace, not on security. Compatible goals lead to ever higher levels of peace, and conviviality, while incompatible goals and conflict, are handled peacefully.   Peace is a "culture of unity of human beings, (with) the way of identifying legitimate goals by mutual inquiry; in other words, by dialogue, and diversity as a source of mutual enrichment. There would be a preference for a structure of equality, and a culture of practice of non-violence countervailing power, based on a strong identity, high level of self-reliance and much courage." (Galtung 2007:24)

IX.2   Sherif.

The decisive encounters in intergroup disputes are, sooner or later, confrontations of their respective spokesmen. We can see this happening in Muslim/Christian/Jewish groups. It is good to remember that the leader of a group is part of the group, not outside it. He/she is not immune to the corrective sanctions applied to any member who steps out of the acceptable bounds of outlook and the developing trends in his group. The Abrahamic religious spokesmen are dialoguing. If a leader is to negotiate effectively, his delegate must remain a part of his group and 'prepare the ground' before taking steps toward expanding intergroup commitments. Sherif vocalises the ultimate superordinate goal for all peoples in all places that leaders can cultivate within the bounds of any human system of living. It is the goal of human survival. The role of leadership in this distinctly modern situation should be clear: to prepare and cultivate the ground within their groups toward human survival. Preparing the ground requires more from leaders than just making decisions and entering agreements for their people. It requires leaders to see that people are informed about the decision-making and about the means they have at their disposal to implement decisions. "The details of the grim consequences of pursuing armed conflict in the modern world should be frequent topics at meetings of parents, of teachers, of writers. Education in the modern world should include as an integral part the realities of modern arms and the means of transporting them." (Sherif 1967:142)

X   **Communication for human survival**

X.1 Communication as survival is explained by Willet as; "life is characterised by its intrinsic capacity to send and receive messages to and from the different parts that make up an organism, as well as between the organism and its environment. It is through this ability that human beings assure their psychological survival and define their personal identity." (Willet 1989)   Lindner says Reaching out to the neighbour and creating a relationship that provides the sense of belonging requires skills that our forefathers rarely needed.. Mowlana has identified where, in philosophy, religion can be introduced back into the conversation about survival and communication. When one person calls out, and another answers, their horizons are oepened to the Wholly Other. I want to tie this up with the kind of evolutionary thinking of some young authors, Sheldrake, McKenna and Abraham on language and also of an older theorist, Marshall McLuhan.

It is said that language should somehow be capable of imaging the extension and interconnection of all and everything but maybe language as it evolves in our context has somehow become impoverished.   It could be that that is why we are all so attracted to visual technology. " Language is an impoverished metaphor. I think we sense that the way out of the language trap is through the image". Sheldrake, McKenna and Abraham 2005: 143

X.2 Evolution of communication

 McLuhan taught his version of comprehensive awareness, or consciousness, which came from the brain itself. The brain operates in three parts, left hemisphere and right

hemisphere, together with the corpus callosum which provides linkage. It is when both brain hemispheres are used together that there is what he calls comprehensive awareness of a situation. McLuhan saw that "man's nature was being very rapidly translated into information systems which would produce enormous global sensitivity and no secrets....(and we)...must do what the artist does: develop the habit of approaching the present as a task, as an environment to be discussed, analyzed, coped with, so that the future may be seen more clearly."[McLuhan & Power: 1989: viii] McLuhan saw a titanic cultural change "that the entire world was in the grasp of a vast material and psychic shift between the values of linear thinking, of visual, proportional space, and that of the values of multi-sensory life, the experience of acoustic space." [McLuhan & Power:1989: ix] Our cultural situation, the way the Western world thinks, he perceives as having been more dependent on the left hemisphere of the brain, (linear thinking) while other cultures favour acoustic space, depending on the right hemisphere.

McLuhan pointed out repeatedly that the passion of the visual space mind-set leaves little room for alternatives or participation. "When no provision, for example, is made for two entirely different points of view, the result is violence. One person or another loses his identity" [McLuhan & Power 1989 ix/x]

McLuhan's belief that there is such a thing as comprehensive awareness, that we can use our mind to make decisions about accessing messages while consciously using both hemispheres of the brain, the visual and the acoustic, influence this work. Is there any evidence that people are making conscious efforts to holistically assess the information that they access with images? It is also understood by the researcher that we can make

decisions as to the territory of our mind; we can refuse to act on information laid down in our memory that we feel is no longer helpful, but we must be conscious about what is happening in our brains, and we must have access to information that is truthful and accurate, especially in the area of the motivation of the source.   McLuhan's terms for the brain are:

"Left hemisphere of the brain - lineal, visual and analytic (quantitative)

Right hemisphere of the brain - simultaneous and acoustic (qualitative)

No matter how extreme the dominance of either hemisphere in a particular culture, there is always some degree of interplay between the hemispheres, thanks to the corpus callosum." [McLuhan & Power 1989 :62] His definition of comprehensive awareness is: "To center ourselves...in the arena of interplay between the two modes of perception and analysis." [McLuhan & Power 1989:49]

We have been talking about relationships between different cultures- and the new horizons they open up – McLuhan went even further than this, and deeper. He says that the comprehensive awareness of the human being is "the focus on the relationship between the cortical hemispheres …(which)…in our view is the projection of consciousness, consciousness being the sum interaction between one's self and the outside world." (McLuhan & Power 1989:52).   It cannot be said that he has been listened to in the academic world – because Scrimecca, for instance reminds us that "Nowhere in the laws of physics or in the laws of derivative sciences, chemistry and biology, is there any reference to consciousness or mind. Regardless of the complexity of electrical, chemical, or biological machinery, there is no statement in the "natural laws" that there is

an emergence of this strange nonmaterial entity, consciousness or mind (Scrimecca 1900:. 209)

The single brain is in relationship with itself, as also are the Abrahamic religions. McLuhan discovered that "all media and technologies have a fundamentally linguistic structure. Not only are they like language, but in their essential form they are language, having their origins in the ability of man to extend himself though his senses into the environment." [McLuhan & Power 1989:,.x] For him "the meaning of meaning was relationship." [McLuhan & Power 1989:.xi] A relationship is "a state of being connected..and can indicate a strong emotional association." [Hornby Ed 1989:1062] McLuhan quotes .E. Bogen that "the type of cognition proper to the right hemisphere has been called appositional, a usage parallel to the common use by neurologists of propositional to encompass the left hemisphere's dominance for speaking, writing, calculation and related tasks" [McLuhan & Power 1989:187] There are strong appositional theories in this work- apposition can be described as "an explanation" [Hornby 1989:.48] in a grammatical sense or "placing side by side" [Turner 1989:34]. McLuhan describes "Acoustic and visual space structures... as incommensurable, like history and eternity, yet at the same time, as complementary, like art and science or biculturalism". [McLuhan & Power 1989:45] We need to be bicultural in a primary thinking way before we can be bicultural in our every day world. Acoustic space requires neither proof nor explanation but is made manifest through its cultural content and "the present electronic age, in its inescapable confrontation with simultaneity, presents the first serious threat to the 2,500 years dominance of the left hemisphere." [McLuhan & Power:.62]. For comprehensive awareness, for true consciousness, the communication of

the Abrahamic communities must be able to be discerned separately, and then combined

for a humanity that can move forward with hope. The Jewish, Christian and Muslim left

and right centers of the brain must be able to communicate – and then seeing clearly

where they are, they pool together their knowledge and understanding. Therefore, in my

focus groups, the participants will begin with their own "story" of what it is to be a Jew, a

Christian, a Muslim.

McLuhan tells us that "the ancient sense of logos, even before Aristotle, postulated that at

the moment of utterance the artefact was created in the mind, even though its physical

form had not yet appeared.[McLuhan & Powers 1989:.181] . The mind includes

memory, "and memory as well as other aspects of the mind, are stored over a large

portion of the nervous system.[McLuhan & Powers 1989:182]   Mind/memory enable us

to be conscious. Paul Davis quotes Wheeler "The precise nature of reality, Wheeler

claims, has to await the participation of a conscious observer. In this way mind can be

made responsible for the retroactive creation of reality. [Davies 1990:.11] He says "We

seem to approach closer to an understanding of the self by noting a point made by many

philosophers that human consciousness does not consist merely of awareness, but of self

awareness...we know that we know." [Davies 1990:.92] **And this knowing brings**

identity. Davies says "One of the most fundamental properties of the perceived self (is)

that it is indivisible and discrete." [Davies 1990:.88] He comes to the conclusion that "It

is largely through memory that we achieve a sense of personal identity, and recognize

ourselves as the same individual from day to day." [Davies 1990:.98]

This memory that Davies talks about, McLuhan says "is now informed as never before, free from fragmentary specialism as never before, since with electricity we extend our central nervous system globally, instantly interrelating every human experience...total interdependence is the startling fact." [McLuhan 1964:.358]

Interdependence requires relationships, and relationships are reflected in the very building blocks of nature. Davies says that "the world is not a collection of separate but coupled things; rather it is a network of relations." [Davies 1990:112] He says that the essential ingredient of the mind is information. "It is the pattern inside the brain, not the brain itself, that makes us what we are. We are more like messages in circuitry." [Davies 1990:.98] and that Bohm echoes the words of Werner Heisenberg: "the common division of the world into subject and object, inner world and outer world, body and soul is no longer adequate." [Davies 1990:112]   And in this framework – the Abrahamic religions, as well as the whole world, need to learn how to dialogue. To speak, to share, to find a way together in a world that has become "one."

On the other hand, McLuhan sees our inside circuitry of messages being put outside, with an immediate loss of identity. "We are translating our central nervous system into electronic circuitry...we stand on the threshold of outering our consciousness into the computer." [McLuhan & Powers 1989.94]   If we lose our **consciousness**, our **self awareness as Davies sees consciousness, how then can we experience comprehensive awareness?** This outering of consciousness, or outering of self awareness is given

positive attributes by Katz who considers that "social integration of the highest order is thus achieved via mass communication." [Dayan, & Katz 1992:.15]

It is true that the media give us an opportunity to achieve a higher degree of union by 'knowing' all. But knowing is mythologised in the Bible as being ultimately the knowledge between good and evil, and the province of God The tree of good and evil was not to be picked of its fruit. The woman, who was able to communicate with a spiritual being, was told that if she disobeyed the divine command and took the fruit that she would become like unto God. What is to be 'known' in the mass media is decided by others, not by ourselves. It does not reflect a complete 'knowing'. There is much material that is held back by those in power, informants, journalists, editors. Communication, one to one, face to face, is very important in a global world of images.

The negative side of the media is propaganda. Propaganda is not an ideology or content of any medium, but is the operation of all the media at once. For McLuhan the satellite is being used as a prime instrument in a world of propaganda war for the hearts and minds of men..which will be a war of icons. This "satellite turns the user into discarnate information, the user is everywhere at once." [McLuhan & Powers 1989:.118] On the air you're everywhere but without a local point of definition.. Messages carried on the ether can fragment into diversity a community. McLuhan says that in world affairs "decentralisation will highlight diversity and fragmentation." [McLuhan & Powers 1989:.116] Fragmentation brings fundamentally different understandings, or should we

say that different groups are fragmented to make up a new global group. Cardinal Hume

believes that:

> Those who have long since abandoned belief in God or have radically
>
> different concepts of him have by that very fact a fundamentally different
>
> understanding of what constitutes human nature and the proper ordering of
>
> society. It is here that we experience with considerable pain the
>
> fragmentation and lack of cohesion present in our society. These radically
>
> different concepts result in contradictory approaches to marriage and
>
> family life...It is here that the spiritual and moral drama of our time is
>
> being played out....The soul of this generation will be won or lost over the
>
> basic moral issue of life and love. [Hume 1990 13]

This is the battle that is being fought in our day, and especially in the media. To

understand more clearly how McLuhan thinks, we have to join with him in his major

concern, the thinking apparatus itself, the brain. In communication today McLuhan sees

no continuity or connection in the figure ground relationship and that "knowing itself is

being recast in acoustic form" [McLuhan & Powers 1989:14]. He wants us to "centre

ourselves..in the area of interplay between the two modes of perception and analysis

which is comprehensive awareness." [McLuhan & Powers 1989:.48] We need to do this

because he quotes Jacques Ellul's *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* that

direct propaganda and must be preceded by propaganda that is sociological in character,

slow, general, seeking to create a climate an atmosphere of favorable preliminary

attitudes. We need to be awake and aware as the press, the radio, TV, movies, posters, meetings, door to door canvassing, are changing the whole cultural ground, and are forms of language.

He gives the witness of a blind man to explain "I knew very well that it was enough to take from a man a memory here, an association there, to deprive him of hearing or sight, for the world to undergo immediate transformation, and for another world, entirely different, but entirely coherent, to be born...when this happened all the hierarchies they called objective were turned upside down, scattered to the four winds, not even theories but like whims. [McLuhan & Powers 1989:.28]

Even though the mass media is a language itself it must be remembered that Pettman says that The power of language makes possible both memory and imagination – the capacity to recall the past and to anticipate the future." (Pettman 2000:31) And the past, as Mowlana has told us, includes religious understanding. We started making our world with foundations of knowledge which were ancient and durable. We need to reconstruct our world today.   In the words of Onuf "Constructivism begins with deeds. Deeds done, acts taken, words spoken – these are all that facts are." (Onuf 1989:36)   His dictionary tells him that "Logos", the word, is the rational principle that governs and develops the universe and the divine word of reason incarnate in Jesus Christ. He considers "the triumph of epistemology finds the "rational principle" as a permanent home in the mind, and in so doing satisfies several presumptions, namely, that humans as

language users are uniquely affiliated with the divine, that cognitive activity is pulled toward reason, that the mind finds, or makes, the order in the world." (Onuf 1989:39)

X   Conclusion

It is the belief of Mowlana that the crossroads of our present juncture demand of international communication a border crossing between philosophy and religion. As mapped by the north-south axis of international communication, the philosophic foundations of western civilisation must open the horizons of its thought and unthought to religion-as-other. "To conceive of religion as the other and spectre of western philosophy is not to oppose the irrationality of religion to the rationality of philosophy and science, but instead to evoke the uncanny reckoning of a border which was not firmly established in the first place." Mowlana 2003: 33   We have seen that his thoughts have been reflected by Pope Benedict XVI – the question of God is unscientific but reason and faith can come together in a new way if we overcome the self imposed limitation of reason to the empirically falsifiable, and if we once more disclose its vast horizons.. The 138 Muslim Scholars resonate with all Abrahamic religions when they call to the other and remind them that we all are to Love God and Neighbour. This I think, is what Mowlana means when he conceives of the transcendental dimension of a communicative ethics as the horizon opened in-between the proximate other and the Wholly Other. The border is crossed when the call of the other opens the Western tradition to various currents in Islamic and other traditions and civilizations.

Jews, Christians and Muslims believe that they are to love God with their whole heart and their neighbour as themselves. Together they are more than half the world's population. This axis, this fixed reference for love, God and neighbour, is the keystone that enables a peaceful alignment of hearts and minds. Indeed, as Mowlana says " The ability to understand other cultures may represent the cornerstone of international understanding and world peace. (Mowlana 1997:157)

Those theorists who have gone before Mowlana would remind us that before we call out to the "other" – we should have a working relationship with our own selves – between our left and right hemispheres of the brain – between logical and patterned thinking – to come to full consciousness. The evolution of consciousness is to"centre ourselves..in the area of interplay between the two modes of perception and analysis which is comprehensive awareness." [McLuhan & Powers 1989:.48] This evolving consciousness must also include memory, for without memory we have no consciousness at all. And for humanity to move along in dialogue the memory of forgiveness must be retrieved, ratified and born anew so that we can use our language without blame, hatred and humiliation, but speak clearly of understanding, knowledge and friendship. This way we will use dialogue for survival in a world that is recognizing its "oneness." Language has brought cooperation before, and will again, when we fully realize that without one another we will not be able to live life at all.

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