


Toward Interfaith Understanding: Dialog on Religious Tolerance Between Muslim and Christian Scholars

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ABSTRACT

Religious tolerance remains the most discussed topic in contemporary religious thought. As it plays a significant role in maintaining the public order and social harmony between people of different faiths in both Christianity and Islam, well-known religious thinkers, such as Rowan Williams, have expressed their views on religious tolerance in the contemporary world. This paper explores and presents Williams' ideas on religious tolerance, stating that tolerance should be discussed on the basis of analysis and reasoned arguments rather than strictly on religious identity, suggesting that it is vital to establish constructive interfaith dialog in democratic society. To achieve this aim, this paper concentrates on three primary areas relating to tolerance—exclusivist truth claims, excessive fanaticism, and the state model. The first section of this paper examines the claims of exclusivist truth, a perspective that has led to fierce debates between religions. Following it, the second section investigates excessive fanaticism and the violence that this can induce. The conclusion highlights the importance of a balanced approach to these issues, ensuring that tolerance fosters true understanding and respect among different religious communities. Finally, the last section of this article discusses the role of the state in religious tolerance. Thus, an analysis of the state model related to Williams's interactive pluralism is conducted to determine its applicability in current times.

Keywords: Islam, Christianity, Tolerance, Religious Tolerance, Contemporary Scholars

INTRODUCTION

Some scholars claim that the understanding of tolerance is elusive and bears the paradoxical character of being impossible but necessary to practice. The pursuit of suitable interreligious dialog is considered unnecessary by some religious scholars, and some even advocate its utter rejection. This paper examines the significance of

constructive interreligious dialog, although tolerance is debatable and elusive in understanding and may stem from pragmatist calculations and contextual compromises. Sincere believers in one religion tend not to convert to or embrace the beliefs of another. However, dialog on religious tolerance is important for upholding peace and acknowledging that adherents of other religions may choose to stick to their beliefs, whereas demonstrating tolerance in terms of faith is associated with a person's inner self. The well-known religious thinker Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, never challenges the veracity of non-Christian faiths. Instead, he skillfully employs the language of tolerance and respect, while remaining silent regarding the tenets, stories, and ethics of non-Christian religions.

Williams considers that interreligious dialog initiatives are not hindered by Christ's uniqueness and final nature. He also argues that where Christians do consider Christ in this way, it would not entail that they would become intolerant or claim that adherents to all other religions will burn into hell. By this means, Williams refrains from lumping non-Christian faiths in a single category. He does not consider religions to be true if they contain true beliefs or false if they contain aspects of falsity. In a speech on the Christian goal of interfaith dialog, Williams made similar points. He asserted that:

You might disagree and discover areas of great strangeness between you; the words the other person utilizes about God may not be the words you use. You will still, however, want to claim that 'I will find out something of God in that stance to the other'. When I describe dialog at its best, I usually describe it as an activity in which I attempt to 'look at the face of another person turned toward God'- not a face turned toward me in a quick, possibly antagonistic relationship, but rather to look at their face as they pray and take in the reality of God, after which I converse and listen to them (Williams, 2012: 250).

Williams contends that, rather than hoping that individuals will change their opinions, the value of interfaith dialog lies in its capacity to educate us (Dag, 2017:66). Religious tolerance, which is crucial to understand, can be defined as the practice of adopting other people's religious belief system (Gasser, 2022: 413). This concept is particularly important for the adherents of Christianity and Islam in their daily lives. More than 55% of the world's population adheres to these two religions (Litonjua, 2009: 317). Therefore, the ability to show respect between faiths could lead to peaceful relations between the adherents of these two large religions. This could lead to a more peaceful world in itself. Hans Küng (Litonjua, 2009: 317) states, "there can no peace among the nations without peace among the religions; there can no peace among the religions without dialog between the religions." This paper does not criticize or denounce any religion; rather, it seeks to contribute to the development of a more nuanced and constructive dialog, such that individuals who have different worldviews and are integrated with one another through globalism, can live together in peace. According to Chapman (2011: 61), "a healthy society is established through dispute and dialog between such groups rather than strong centralized power." There must, therefore, be discussions on the basis of analysis and reasoned argument rather than on strict religious identity (Litonjua, 2009: 316). Williams's theology emphasizes the distinctions among religions instead of pronouncing that all religions are fundamentally similar. For Williams, differences cannot be reduced to the sameness or be used as a justification for disallowing another religion from existing. He characterizes difference as "neither (at any time) last, a matter of common exclusion, a matter of misunderstanding to be solved by either a return to the same or a cancellation of one term before the Other" (Lamptey, 2014: 77). Williams's perception of difference mirrors his thinking on religious difference, although he does not articulate this opinion in relation to religious variety. This suggests that difference forms the core of tolerance. The first, second and third sections of this paper contain a reflective discussion on issues such as the claim of exclusivist truth, excessive fanaticism and violence, and the state model and religious tolerance. That is, an analysis of the state model is conducted based on interactive pluralism to ascertain its applicability to current times, as well as to assess the possibility of the development of religious tolerance between Islam and Christianity. This paper examines the relevance of dialog on religious tolerance between Muslim and Christian scholars. To achieve this, a comparative research was conducted to develop comparative analysis of arguments and statements on religious tolerance between Muslim and Christian scholars and their suggestions for the promotion of religious tolerance. Furthermore, a systematic literature review was performed to critically review and evaluate a range of opinions from both the Christian and Muslim perspectives. The findings of this paper suggest the establishment of constructive interreligious dialog and the application of Williams' interactive pluralism in religious communities. Thus, this paper examines how the state can protect against what has been referred to as repressive tolerance, or as an intelligently idle and ethically frivolous prevention against uncomfortable questions. In summary, it is necessary to maintain the condition for dialog to occur between minority communities in a country and based on the claims of Williams suggest the creation of a multicultural society in which interactive pluralism takes on its full form.

Claim of Universal Truth

In *Finality of Christ*, Williams (2000: 95) seeks to break away from the established exclusivist thesis that Christ is the only revelation, acknowledging the debate in the theology of faith. Absolutist truth claims have sparked many confrontations between the world's two dominant religions. A significant share of the discussion on this topic centers on the notion of religious exclusivism (Harris, 2016: 47). Meister (2011: 355) describes religious exclusivism as the position in which a single, specific doctrinal faith is considered to have exclusive possession of the truth. In other words, an exclusivist position considers that only one religion has access to the truth about the existence and nature of God, and this religious doctrine aligns entirely with an absolutist and universalist claim to truth (Meister, 2009: 125). Contemporary pluralist theologians consider this claim to truth to frequently form the basis for profound discussion and analysis; thus, a number of contemporary Muslim and Christian theologians show a willingness to examine and revise absolutist doctrines of truth. The tendency to adopt exclusivist positions is arguably more common among those with an Islamic religious identification. Esposito (2011: 86) suggests that the five pillars of Islam and the broader teachings of the faith allow for a full, comprehensive guide on the conduct of social, cultural, economic, and political affairs, a theological suggestion that is further supported by McKim (2012: 89). The exclusivist nature of Islam is also reinforced by the fact that the Muslim faith considers the Quran to be the actual word of God, which was handed down to the Prophet Mohammad (Harris, 2016: 53). Because the Quran thus actually contains God's words, Aslan (2013:156) argues that the claim of universal truth in Islam is credible and allows for a full and complete exposition of the relationship between man and God. As such, there is a strong tradition of exclusivist thinking in Islam, which assumes that the Muslim faith contains universal and necessary truth. In Christianity, the focus on exclusivist and absolutist positions is more complex. In particular, Netland (2015: 39) notes that Catholic traditions tend to adopt an exclusivist position, arguing in favor of a universal truth, whereas Protestant outlooks are often less dogmatic. Nonetheless, in approaching analysis from a theological position, Pratt (2017: 124) suggests that Christianity can provide a theological framework of certainty that supports its claim for a universal truth that emanates from the teachings of Jesus. Moreover, throughout much of its history, Christianity has assumed an exclusivist position, by this token conforming to the idea that it is possible for it to provide a claim to universal truth (Kaplan, 2009:98). Thus, the exclusivist position assumed by both religious outlooks concurs with the idea that universal truth claims can be advanced and that one specific religion (the religion of the theological protagonist in question) can exclusively advance and successfully sustain this position. Therefore, although both faiths invariably assume identical positions in terms of their exclusivist and absolutist nature, they adopt geometrically and dialectically opposing positions regarding the capacity of their own religion to offer this truth. The theological position assumed by both faiths thus tends to focus on dialectical sentiments that do little to instill or propel any measure of tolerance or acceptance across religious divides. Therefore, it can be credibly concluded that most of the theological arguments offered represent deterministic, exclusivist, and absolutist paradigms, harboring little potential for interreligious harmony and understanding. The perspective of political theology on this topic is held by the Muslim contemporary pluralist thinker, Tariq Ramadan (as cited in Khalil, 2013: 211), asserts that developing a democratic society is hindered by the claim that absolute truth can only be available to a certain set of people. This indicates that a distinct difference should be drawn between public and private life, and it would be disrespectful to publicly argue that other people are excluded from salvation. We must protect the right to maintain private thoughts while speaking openly, without restricting others (Khalil, 2013: 212). In other words, religious faith would have never been possible if it were not for democratic and secular environments that permit freedom of thought and action. Democracy and secularity provide freedom for people to believe in what they wish, enabling religious freedom for all of those who seek it. Williams supports this position in his compelling theological and political assessment of the topic. He indicates that in the 21st century, religious perspectives must take on a more pluralist position and not hold to exclusivism. Williams (2012: 30) considers a position that significantly depends on the academic analysis of universal truth claims, arguing that the lack of empirical evidence for the doctrine of universal truth means that it cannot be sufficiently validated. According to Williams, based on this perspective, universal truth cannot be claimed for any single religion. Here, it is argued that no specific religion can hold transcendental truth, that is, a truth unaffected by space or time, and therefore this, along with the lack of empirical validity of absolute truth, leads to Williams's proposal to pursue a pluralist approach to the present barriers against peaceful coexistence between Islam and Christianity. Williams (2012:28) is eager to emphasize the high degree of variability and divergence of pluralism in contemporary political and theological discourse, which enables a range of conclusions to be drawn regarding pluralism. Williams's position argues in favor of a pluralistic response to the problem of division caused by the claim that the single universal truth is the particular possession of a specific religion. Williams asserts that many global religions, including Islam and Christianity, have elements of truth; however, none can put forward an unequivocal claim to hold absolute truth. Bearing this in mind, Williams (2012: 30) posits that everyone is equal in these terms, regardless of their religious beliefs, and that all have been created in God's image. There is a need

for modern political structures to devise more pluralistic positions that permit all citizens to freely follow their religion without impediment. Thus, it is crucial for the state, as the main form of political organization, to ensure that citizens are able to practice their faith in an open and respectful environment. This is certainly an appealing approach, as a pluralist standpoint positioned within a theological and political framework, particularly when considering ways in which religious debates may be resolved in the 21st century. Thus, this paper examines the political and theological solutions proposed by Williams (2012: 33), along with the main pluralist principles with which it is associated, taking them to be relevant and appropriate. The 21st century is characterized by complex and diverse cultural and social interactions owing to the progression of humankind and increasing globalization, which are now occurring at the local, national, and international levels (Boase 2013:96). Williams's (2012: 32) position has significant potential to provide a pluralist framework that can be used to develop solutions to the problems of debate and discord that so often typify the discourses of Christianity and Islam. It is crucial to support discourse that shifts discussions away from a wholly exclusionist perspective and toward an outlook that reinforces mutual understanding, respect, and tolerance for other religious positions (Danca, 2023: 9).

Terrorism and Violence

Political viewpoints are another source of discord. From this viewpoint, if Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God, then this validates the crusades and colonialism, as well as serves as a good excuse for the suppression of any statements deviating from Christianity. The feminist theologian Ruether illustrates this criticism, contending that the exclusivity of Christian doctrine gave rise to the crusades, acts of religious violence, and the chauvinistic legacy of Christianity (Dag, 2017: 65). Williams responds by relating it to his conception of the act of revelation. He considers that the New Testament does not make any claims regarding governmental protection; rather, it discusses a particular connection between the members of the Trinity. He asserts that human might cannot impose the mystery of maturation in human fulfillment and fruition through the Son and Spirit. This is a part of God's deeds. The stronger your conviction is that God exists as he truly is, the less likely you think it is that God requires human protection from the results of his own carelessness. While these notable initiatives support religious harmony and peace, they also, unintentionally, foster the false belief that discussing differences between religions will inevitably spark conflict, undermining social harmony and cohabitation. Samuel Huntington, for example, argued in his 1993 book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* that the primary cause of conflict in the post-Cold War world will be the divergence of world cultures, such as the Muslim-Middle East versus a Christian-Western sphere. He described Christianity and Islam as two competing faiths contending to be the only authentic religion, as both are missionary and universalist in scope (Dag, 2017: 84). This oversimplified separation may force us to decide between insisting on differences that could divide "us" from "them," "good" from "bad," and "true" from "false" and supporting commonalities that could dissolve the barriers between religious communities. Throughout history, both Christianity and Islam have assumed an exclusivist outlook (Long, 2012: 5). The second issue centers on terrorism and the degree to which Islamized terrorism is the antithesis of the pluralist position advanced by Williams (2012:32). Regarding theological positions, McKim (2012: 98) suggests that an exclusivist paradigm conforms to the idea that universality in religion spreads religious affinity further. The terror group Islamic State, in addition to Iran, provides an example of where this universality is applied in practice (Rajan, 2015:123). On the other side, extreme Christian positions assume similar dialectic arguments that, again, rest on an exclusivist rather than pluralist paradigm. For this analysis, it is essential to perform a detailed exploration of how extreme sentiments in both Islam and Christianity can propel division and reduce the potential for tolerance. A number of texts have found that the outset of the 21st century was marked by a key event that has dictated much of the rhetoric and debate taking place between Christianity and Islam from that point (Tripathi, 2011: 200). The terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, established a clear and overt tendency to view Christianity and Islam as being geometrically opposed to one another. This assumption of a constant state of conflict is common and pervades extremist conceptions of the relationship between the two faiths. Meister (2011: 153) points to the fact that extreme sentiments in both Christian and Islamic doctrines witness a situation in which nation states stand in opposition to one another on the basis of religious identification. This is an important assumption. Many texts point to the fact that identification with religious extremism on both sides of the divide has conceptualized the last two decades of interfaith conflicts as being geometrically opposed. Halliday (2003:15) provides useful insight into this area of analysis, discussing how extreme positions in both Christianity and Islam perpetuate the idea that the two faiths are fundamentally at odds. Halliday (2003:146) argues that the dialectical positions on both sides seek to support the ideological and theological position that is assumed by the other. Thus, for the Muslim world, Christianity and its leading proponent nations in the West represent a clear and present danger to both Islam and the Islamic world. The policy agendas of Christian countries over the last two decades embody the idea that leading Western powers seek to engage in a new era of crusades in opposition to the Islamic world, thus referencing historical invasions of the Islamic world by extreme Christian doctrine in Europe. Islamist extremists thus provide

credence to extreme Christian outlooks in countries like the United States, where the latter are in full agreement that conflict is both necessary and desirable (Halliday, 2003: 165). For their part, extreme Christian positions argue that Islam represents a threat to Christian values, traditions, and authority and that Islamic groups seek to attack Christians wherever possible and to attack the Christian faith at a general level (Halliday, 2003: 123). This extreme position is supported by Islamist groups, who concur with the idea that Islam must attack and defeat Christianity wherever and whenever possible. Thus, Halliday's (2003:189) contention that extreme sentiments on either side serve to support those on the other is credible. Ultimately, with respect to the nature and characteristics of the conflict between Christianity and Islam, the extreme sentiments found on both sides appear to be in full agreement. The theological and political analysis offered above paints a bleak picture with respect to the development of religious tolerance between Christianity and Islam in the 21st century. Nevertheless, the undesirability of this outcome is certain, and in proffering a determined solution to the problems highlighted above, this analysis relies again on Williams's pluralist position Williams (2012: 35). Dag (2017: 198) suggests that for an Islamist outlook, interaction between Christians and Muslims is undesirable in any national context. This is reinforced by Pratt (2017: 154), who noted that, over recent decades, the religious tolerance of other faiths in Muslim countries has fallen significantly. In the West, previous analysis has noted the social assumption that Muslim and Christian positions are dialectically opposed, and indeed, extreme Christian views in the United States also argue against integration with, tolerance for, or acceptance of Islamic beliefs (Netland, 2015:36). Williams calls for religious tolerance between the Christian and Muslim faiths through the conduit of a liberal nation state. Thus, to proffer a possible outcome of tolerance to the present divisions, the position assumed by Williams (2012: 35) appears to be the best available option. To counter the extreme religious sentiments that do not provide any potential for religious tolerance to develop, Western states need to reassert the principles and benefits of multiculturalism, maintaining at all costs the legal frameworks that ensure freedom of religion and religious identification. In addition, foreign policy agendas in the West must move dramatically from their previous positions of military intervention in the Islamic world and instead adopt collaborative positions that are conducive with the development of pluralist mentalities in Islam (Gurr, 2015: 369). The support of moderate Muslims is key to success in overcoming the problems posed by terrorism, resentment, and division between religions in the 21st century. The enhancement of a pluralist agenda that ensures that the state provides protection for all religious outlooks to propel toleration, conversation, and mutual understanding is vital. For the West, this requires that additional credence be offered to the need to ensure that social cohesion gains the ascendancy over the eagerness to propose and support the existence of transcendental truth. As with the analysis that was offered previously in a review of the relevant literature, the thesis that is proposed and supported here concurs with that developed by Williams (2012:35) and the pluralist agenda with which he concurs. Therefore, this paper agrees with Williams's (2012:36) proposal that the state must be fair and unbiased in providing civic space for debate and discussion in the pursuit of the truth.

Religious Tolerance within the Context of the State

The third key theme centers on the manner in which religious tolerance is to be advanced within the framework of the 21st-century nation state. The state plays a vital role in providing civic space that allows tolerance and hospitality to flourish across diverse groups. However, this raises questions regarding the types of model that can be offered to countries around the world. Most theological debate in this regard rests on the interpretation of the Quran and, in particular, the variations that exist between liberal and conservative interpretations of it. For the latter, Aslan (2013: 132) suggests that the potential for religious tolerance and mutual respect is doubtful. Philpott (2019:119) makes the argument that conservative Islamic outlooks invariably adopt a position based on universal truth, suggesting that Islam directs outcomes in every major aspect of life. Thus, economic, social, political, and cultural practices interact in an overt manner. This highlights the degree to which many Islamic states fail to recognize or do not accept, reasoning to support a division between religion and the state. Many sources cite examples in the Muslim world where religion and state are fundamentally linked, not just in terms of moral identification but also with respect to the practical processes of state activity (Harris, 2016: 47). Thus, Iran and Saudi Arabia exhibit a direct and unequivocal link between an interpretation of Islam and its application in the political, social, and legal frameworks of the state (Gurr, 2015:32). In this context, the capacity to ensure religious pluralism is reduced, and the possibilities of open and honest debate regarding interfaith relations are reduced, as proposed by Williams (2012: 29) show only limited potential for success. It is also important to note that Islamic states that have a historical tradition of secular political functions and a division between religion and state have, in recent years, begun to shift toward positions that are more similar to those of Saudi Arabia and Iran. Long (2012: 6) suggests that Turkey is a very effective example of a state where religious pluralism once existed across the nation with a strong secular tradition that ensured a clear division between Islam and the operations of the state. The potential for this religious tolerance can develop within the nation state is open to question. Williams (2012: 17) suggests that India is the epitome of religious tolerance, where

multiculturalism and pluralism are practiced in a society that is independent of authoritative religious bodies. No religious establishment enjoys the right to legally enforce their claims. He argues that the role of the state there is in liaising between communities while remaining ideologically impartial, suggesting that each community must understand that, as they argue for the truth, their claims are subject to scrutiny, dispute, and attack, so that the profound analysis of truth arguments are distilled in constructive dialog. Williams (2012: 14) further discusses India in its appearance as a secular state with no liberal individuals, exclusive societies, or nationalities, only interconnectedness. The role that a pluralist state can play is in sustaining the healthy coexistence and socialization of different faith groups through showing understanding and loyalty toward them. He calls this type of system universally legal and morally serious, where “civic space” is provided so that representatives of each group can put forward their ideas and discuss concerns in common. His argument can be challenged, in that while it is true that it exhibits no compulsion to any communal identity, India cannot be a model as majority of the population hold the Hinduism, do not have authoritative sacred books like the Quran and the Gospels. Here, Williams (2012: 21) counters, arguing that religious pluralism can take on different forms of expression for the truth. For example, Christianity includes the doctrine of the Trinity, whereas Islam has complete devotion to the last revelation—the Quran. However, sacred reality is not limited to this, such that human beings have a natural ability to comprehend the divinity through meditative or ascetic practices that lead to a recognition of the divine character. All of these can access the truth in a way that is appropriate to the state of particular human beings. However, these cannot be considered the only universal truth for everybody. Williams’s vision of the pluralist state suggests that the truth does not only belong to one group of people, and, on the basis of this, it can be assumed that universal truth is found within every human being. Therefore, this becomes a matter of spirituality rather than rationality. Chapman (2011: 61) claims that the model of a state requires justice, and that this balance should be regulated by the state whose role is that of a mediator and not a command-giving dominator. This implies that a state cannot be powerful by itself or by nature, but instead becomes powerful and authoritative due to the support of minority groups to provide security and stability in the multicultural society, without being biased or showing partiality to any group. According to Williams (2012: 25), the political system replaces the sovereign state, which entails negotiation and pluralism, not absolutism and centralization. It functions within the law and acts only on the basis of negotiation and unanimous agreement. Chapman (2011:36) reports George Carey’s assessment of the Muslim population share in England: 3%. However, his assertion is countered by Chapman (2011: 38), who argues that the number of practicing Muslims is higher than that of practicing Anglican Christians. Williams claims that Christianity is also a minority religion, along with other faith groups. Therefore, it might be assumed that Williams (2012:36) and his interactive pluralism entails that each individual living in a society enjoys a right to be protected, irrespective of race, sex, and faith. This is because all human beings are equal and were created in the image of God, which entails that the happiness and peaceful existence of humans must be given priority over other concerns, such as faith, rituals, and moral values. If diverse communities exist in England, Islam exists along with the Christian community, with its laws and moral codes recognized or accepted, and the state is recognized as an unbiased, fair mediator (Williams, 2012: 30), the state must accept and include the laws that fit those minority groups. This would mean that England would be the first country that not only preaches in theory, but practices in real life. To consider the issue realistically and offer a practical solution, something beyond mere theory is, in the words of Chapman, “to live with reality [rather] than to cling on to some imaginary past.” Therefore, Williams (2012: 33) proposes that sharia law be incorporated into British law, suggesting this practice of this theory, and supporting its extension to other countries. This paper agrees with Williams’s proposal, offering an interactive pluralism theory that says that a healthy and cohesive society can be built in a democratic state. The role of the state with its laws is to serve as an arbitrator by enabling the negotiation of different communities. It does not advocate one group over another but supports the transparency and justice that encourage the contribution and participation of all groups in society.

CONCLUSION

The assessment offered in this work clearly concurs with the conclusions of Williams (2012: 35) with respect to the need to engage in constructive interreligious dialog in the 21st century. This is because some conflicts between adherents of different religions arise from the absence of religious exclusivism and religious plural communities. For example, Dada and Oyelami reported that religious confrontations frequently occur between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, citing 105 cases of religious violence between them in Nigeria (Dada & Oyelami, 2023: 173). This indicates the need to establish constructive interreligious dialog in the 21st century. Williams never addresses the question of whether theological doctrines of non-Christian religions are authentic or understandable in the context of their believers’ cultures or languages. As a result, he does not acknowledge the possibility of redemption through another religion. Instead, he primarily focuses on engaging in productive conversations with members of non-Christian religions to accept and respect them for who they are and how they express themselves. The communities, in all their diverse forms across the world, advance a pluralist agenda that views people as equal

in the eyes of God, avoiding exclusivist sentiments and placing social cohesion as the key priority, over that of transcendental truth. It is not possible for a single religion to claim universal truth; thus, a pluralist position, both theologically and politically, is the only potential means of religious tolerance emerging between two of the world's largest religions. The freeing up of civic spaces in which dialog can occur in a way that reduces tension is vital in providing a framework on which tolerance can develop as the 21st century progresses. Williams's thinking has been particularly examined here, including his interactive pluralism theory in the context of applying the proposal at a state level. Based on Williams's suggestion, this paper claims that Williams (2012: 33), as a sincere pluralist, puts forward his statement in spite of criticism, meaning that he was willing to create a multicultural society where interactive pluralism exists in its full form. Therefore, the dream multicultural community or society is one where diverse groups of people co-exist with different convictions but a single identity. This means that neither any individual nor any group can claim exclusivity for a belief or idea. Here, the role of political theology or plurality is to maintain the conditions for the dialog to take place between minority communities in the country. He suggests that, by practicing this, Europe could show its heritage and truly construct pluralism. It should not be assumed that Christian theology should be replaced by democracy and tolerance but rather that the Christian Church offers this to Europe and from Europe to the broader world, showing its loyalty to the convention of Christian freedom to other sovereign states. Today, Muslims and Christians live close to each other, meaning that they share same societies, workplaces, and friendships, as well as the same cultural, social, and political milieus.

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