AN ECCLESIOLOGICAL PARADIGM TO THE PROBLEM OF TERROR AND VIOLENCE IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD: AN ORTHODOX CONTRIBUTION

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The events in New York after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre and the escalation of violence in the world of recent time have, once again, focused Western societies to discuss the subjects of violence, terrorism, and war. The discussion is being strengthened even more after the recent escalation of violence in Lebanon, Israel, and India. It is only to be expected that the subject of war and violence will be a subject of discussion for the generation to come. For us it is important to examine the subjects of violence, terrorism, and war from the Orthodox perspective focusing on the past as well as on contemporary theological thought. It must be stressed at the beginning that this analysis is not exhaustive in its treatment of the material. By emphasizing the reality of violence, terrorism, and war in the theological perspective, I shall lead the discussion to a different dimension of our analysis, which includes a possible paradigm for the solution for this problem in today's globalized world that is based on Trinitarian theology.

The contemporary world finds itself in a state of spiritual anarchy.[1] Even the most democratic societies of the Western world are facing a decay of the spiritual life of our existence. The spiritual stagnation, nihilism, and the disintegration of the whole civilization might explain the reason for wars among the nations, religions, and denominations. Vigorous hatreds, cruel animosities and the struggles to control the natural resources of the planet between the nations and communities of the globe are destroying our contemporary civilization. According to some contemporary philosophers, today's decline of morality and the value of life reminded us of the situation in Germany before the Second World War where the birth of Fascism was inevitable.[2] What is very interesting in the discussion of the contemporary state of our world is the fact that although our world becomes a "global village" with the pluralism of diversity of faiths, cultures and ideologies, the same world witnesses an explosion of violence and wars of fundamentalism in conjunction with ethnic and religious exclusivism.

According to contemporary Orthodox thought, war is an ethical failure and a moral denial of the rights of the other.[3] In other words, war is an absence of solidarity and unity among men.[4]

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[1] Nicholas Berdyaev, Towards a New Epoch, London, Geoffry Bles, 1949, p. 35. Also look in: Nicholas Berdyaev, The Beginning and the End, London, Geofrey Bles, 1952, p. 148. It is very interesting to note that the spiritual crisis mentioned by Nicholas Berdyaev is not only responsible for the escalation of violence in the world. It is also responsible for the environmental disaster, look in: Anestis G. Keselopoulos, Man and the Environment, St. Vladimir's Press, Crestwood, 2001, p. IX. According to Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou, pluralism implies difference, diversity, and choice, look in: Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou, "Orthodox Christianity, Democracy and Multiple Modernities", http://www.goarch.org/en/special/hchc_conference/speeches.asp

[2] Nicholas Berdyaev, Towards a New Epoch, op. cit., p. 32.

[3] Stanley Samuel Harakas, Living the Faith: The Praxis of Eastern Orthodox Ethics, Minneapolis, Light and Life Publishing Company, 1992, p. 289. The definition of war made by Fr. Stanley Harakas is slightly

It is an absence of creativity and life.[5] War is the most extreme form of violence.[6] It is a phenomenon, which continues to exist despite all the efforts of mankind to coexist in peace. The use of force upon the individual is violence committed on others.[7] It is a violence that denies the aspects of freedom and liberty. The denial of freedom and liberty in war might even be compared to the denial of freedom and liberty within a culturally developed and sophisticated society, where people are not even aware of this fact or really believe that they actually do live in a free society. An individual might be denied his freedom by the control of media or a denial to the access of information tightly controlled by the government.

Violence implies an attitude towards man which treats him as an object and not as a subject. In addition, the same can be applied to the commercial/economic-dominated society that constantly treats man as an object. In war, man ceases to be a human being and regards the other human being not as man.[8] In multicultural and multi-denominational societies that generates quite high rates of racism, xenophobia, etc., the worship of terror and violence might be transformed into a religious cult or a form of idolatry, as is evident in predominantly fundamentalist countries or found in the Christian fundamentalism of Western societies. In the context of idolatry, a specific group to achieve the ultimate goal transforms the traditional beliefs in deity into an instrument. In recent events in Palestine and Israel, we saw the Palestinian god and the Israeli god at war with each other. Many of the "terrorist" groups involved in contemporary violence and war may have a Muslim base, but are in fact motivated by political aims. Contemporary "terrorist" groups of the fundamentalist Islamic background are as dedicated to their "god" as the IRA or even the ETA are dedicated to a "god" because their membership base is Christian. What might be very interesting about a cult is the fact that the cult creates its own god of its own value.[9] The denial of a traditional god by the cult and the worship of violence and force by the state, is in fact a denial of man.[10] In the state, where terror and violence is the ultimate ideology of the state, human life is

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different from the other definitions made by the contemporary philosophers and Christian theologians. Where Fr. Stanley Harakas emphasizes the suppression of the rights of the individual, La Civilta Cattolica puts emphasis on the external suppression of the rights of the individual: "True, war remains fundamentally the same: Mortal combat, nourished by hatred, in which physical violence in all its brutality is let loose with the intention of "subduing", look: La Civilta Cattolica, Modern war and Christian Conscience", in: Paul T. Jersild and Dale A. Johnson, Moral Issues and Christian Responses, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, Orlando, 1990, p. 215.

[4] Nicholas Berdyaev, The Faith of Man in the Modern World, The University of Michigan Press, 1961, p.15

[5] Donald A. Lowrie, Christian Existentialism, Harper Touchbooks and the Claster Library Herper and Raw Publishers, 1965, p. 300.

[6] Op. cit., p. 301.

[7] Nicholas Berdyaev, Towards a New Epoch, Geoffrey Bles, London, 1949, p. 3.

[8] Nicholas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1944, p. 156 and 160; also look: George Seaver, Nicholas Berdyaev - An Introduction to His Thought, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1950, p. 83.

[9] Nicholas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, op. cit., p. 62.

[10] Ibid., p. 12. In a similar manner, the contemporary Orthodox theologian John D. Zizioulas also testifies that:" If God does not exist, the person does not exist", in: John D. Zizioulas, Being as Communion, St.

cheapened and the personality of an individual is diminished to the role of an instrument. A similar conclusion from the other perspective can be derived from the materialistic state of the developed world where the human value of life is derived from economic stability. The evidence of the first argument is found in the German concentration camps, where in the name of the ideology of Fascism, we find the ultimate act of dehumanization. In reality, it is an ultimate dehumanization of society. The cult of violence and terrorism and the approval of bloodshed by the state for the higher cause of war are extreme forms of anti-personalism.[11] At the same time, the use of violence, terror and murder is an indication of a weakness in the system.[12] In application to the contemporary situation of the world, this might be the indication of the weakness not only of the countries of the fundamental ideology (fundamentalism of Islam) but also of contemporary democracies of the Western world with their use of force and violence. From another side, the extreme worship of terror and violence for the sake of the state, creates the reality of fanaticism. The reality of religious fanaticism is so strong and dangerous that additional analysis needs to be done in order to understand this phenomenon.

Christianity, with it's emphasis on the free will of the individual, is radically opposed to the worship of violence and force.[13] Freedom and the will of an individual have a higher value for Christianity. According to the New Testament and Orthodox theology, we ought to love our enemies and reject hatred and vengeance.[14] The main core of the message of the New Testament regarding war, violence and terrorism is seen in the writings of the Early Church Fathers. In the writing of Origen we read: "For we no longer take up "sword against nation", nor do we "learn war any more", having become children of peace, for the sake of Jesus, who is our leader".[15] Hippolytus of Rome, who advises the soldiers in the ranks not to kill anyone, took a similar approach to the subject of war. According to Hippolytus of Rome, anyone who disobeys the teaching of the Church should be excommunicated.[16] Although the Early Church Fathers rejected any aspect of violence in the life of the early Christian Church, the situation changed drastically in the fourth and fifth centuries with the Christianisation of the Roman Empire.[17] Because of the fundamental changes Christianity in the Roman Empire, the Church accepted war and the use of violence as a "regrettable necessity" to prevent greater evil. The Church developed a theory based on the ethical argument of self-defence. The acceptance of the "necessity of violence" by Christianity never abolished the core of it's evangelical teaching. Because of this reason Nicholas

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Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, 1985, p. 43; also look: Nicholas Berdyaev, The Faith of Man in the Modern World, op. cit., p. 30.

[11] Nicholas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, op. cit., p. 156.

[12] Op. cit., p. 67.

[13] Nicholas Berdyaev, Towards a New Epoch, op. cit., p. 5.

[14] Nicholas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, op. cit., p. 160.

[15] Origen, Against Celsus, V,33.

[16] Hippolytus of Rome, La Tradizione Apostolica, 16 in: Paul T. Jersild and Dale A. Johnson, Moral Issues and Christian Response, op. cit., p. 217.

[17] Paul T. Jersild and Dale A. Johnson, Moral Issues and Christian Response, op. cit., p. 217.

I in the ninth century denounced war as "always satanic in its origin".[18] In cases when the Church condemned offensive war, the Church found it impossible to condemn defensive war in order to protect the innocent and children.[19] An identical approach has been maintained in the Orthodox Church up to this time.

We must strongly emphasize that the development of the Christian theory of "regrettable necessity" is the last and imperfect resort to prevent the self-destruction of individual. This rather painful and often misunderstood theory developed by Christianity, cannot be basis for the justification of the use of violence and terrorism. The theory of self-defence cannot be a basis for the escalation of violence against innocent children, women and the elderly. Any contemporary theories of "regrettable necessity" developed by modern states in order to justify the use of violence and war are in complete contradiction to the intention of Christianity. The use of self-defence war, as seen in today's Christian world, is an abuse and deformation of the principle of life that allowed people to coexist for centuries. The abuse of this theory by modern states to justify their military activity in order to exploit or to secure natural resources is, from the Christian perspective, atrocious. We must avoid reductionism of the utilitarian nature that reduces the well-intended phrase "regrettable necessity" to a useful instrument that sanctifies the political agenda and action. It is regrettable that it was Christianity that developed this theory, which has become a justification for the horror and violence in modern society.[20]

The use of violence, according to the Orthodox Church, is understood as a lesser evil in order to prevent a greater evil. Sometimes, man has to commit a sin of violence in order to protect the highest values of life.[21] The destruction of human life, injuries, destroyed families and material lost is seen, in any of war, as a consequence of evil.[22] Although there are among contemporary theologians many theories of evil, we can not contribute all the aspects of violence of contemporary war to evil alone. In fact, the escalation of war in Afghanistan as evil, has to be partially contributed to the policy of the Western developed countries, who armed the Taliban and Osama bin Laden and contributed to the emergence of the "black hole" in Afghanistan that has existed there over the past 20 years. In effect, contemporary states contributed heavily to the rise of evil in the form of violence and war in the world.[23] Although violence is used in order to prevent greater evil, it is never blessed as such and never identified with perfect Christian

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[18] Op. cit., p. 218.

[19] Stanley Samuel Harakas, Living the Faith; The Praxis of Eastern Orthodox Ethics, op. cit., p. 289.

[20] Lowel O. Erdahl, Pro-Life/ Pro-Peace. Life-Affirming Alternatives to Abortion, War, Mercy Killing and the Death Penalty, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1986, p. 58; similar affirmation might be found in the writings of Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis who advises us not to reduce Eucharist to the "useful event" that justifies political couse, look in: Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, The Eucharist as Missionary Event in the Suffering World, in: Your Will Be Done. CWME Consultation of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, Neapolis, Greece, April 16-24, 1988, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1989, p. 168.

[21] Nicholas Berdyaev, The Destiny of Man, Geoffrey Bles, 1954, p. 195.

[22] Op. cit., p. 289.

[23] Asahi Shimbun, September 24, 2001.

morality.[24] This is the position of the Orthodox Church regarding violence, terror, and war. A position that denounces violence in order to maintain the peace and vision of the Kingdom to come.

Based on the above, allow me to present some possible paradigms as solutions to the problem of violence and war in a globalized society. The Orthodox Church, by proclaiming the Trinitarian aspect of our God, has the potential and responsibility to give the directives for the stability of the world.[25] It is a stability based not on individual speculation, but stability derived and oriented towards the ultimate and eschatological value of life. These paradigms are not ready solutions for the problems of violence, terrorism and war in the world. They merely allow us to look beyond our rational mind in order to find the solution to the problem.

For the first paradigm we have to affirm that Church is life in God and "...not of this world" (John 18:36). Church is not an idea or philosophical, political, or ideological thought which could be put under discussion and classified as any other human concept. Because the Church is the "living icon of the Holy Trinity" in the world, the entire world, with all its complexities and problems, is the domain of the Church. According to Maximos the Confessor "...the Church is the print and image of the whole world, which consists of visible and invisible substances".[26] Although the Church has a distinctive identity with a specific mission in the world, actions for justice, peace, and the stability of the world are constitutive dimensions of the Church is mission.[27] Because of this distinctive mission of the Church in the world, indifference and excessive detachment are excluded from the theology of the Orthodox Church.[28] The Church is the image and likeness of the Holy Trinity and as such the Holy Trinity constitutes her being in the world. The Church reflects God's unity in the Holy Trinity.[29] In other words, the Church mirrors the communion and otherness that exists in the Holy Trinity. The Three Persons are one in nature, but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are absolutely different.[30] If the Church is the mirror of a Triune God, the Church, in parallel, also represents a multiplicity of persons in unity of life. There is absolute interdependence among the members of the Church, which also testifies that together with the

[24] Fr. T. Hopko, Meeting the Orthodox, OCI, New York, 1972, p. 29.

[25] Emmanuel Clapsis, Politics and Christian Faith, in: The Greek Orthodox Theological Reviev 37(1992)1-2, p. 102.

[26] In: John Karmiris, Catholicity of the Church and Nationalism, in: Proces - Verbaux du Deuxieme Congres de Theologie Orthodoxe a Athens 19-29 Aout 1976, Publies par les soins du Professeur Savas Chr. Agourides, Athens, 1978, p. 466; Alexander Schmemann, Problems of Orthodoxy in America, in: St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly 9(1965)4, p. 177.

[27]Emmanuel Clapsis, Politics and Christian Faith, op. cit., p. 100.

[28] Stanley S. Harakas, The Orthodox Theological Approach to Modern Trends, in: St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 13(1969)4, p. 204; Thomas Hopko, The Narrow Way of Orthodoxy, in: St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 40(1996)7; Emmanuel Clapsis, Politics and Christian Faith, op. cit., p. 101.

[29] George Dragas, Orthodox Ecclesiology in Outline, in: The Greek Orthodox Theological Review 26(1981)3, p. 185.

[30] Metropolitan John (Zizioulas)of Pergamon, Communion and Otherness, in: Sobornost 16(1994)1, p. 12.

unity there is diversity. Each member of the Church is different and because of this diversity they need each other. Unity of the Church is achieved in the diversity of its members with the natural, society, and spiritual complexities.[31] The diversity of the members of the Church is being transfigured and existentially transcended to the higher and only idea of unity of Church: "Where there is neither Greek, nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Slave nor free: but Christ is all and in all" (Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:14).[32] According to St. Paul, the Church presents herself as an eschatological "globalized" society, which transcends the reality of the world. The respect to the identity of each specific country or society is necessary in order to achieve the goal of stability and peace. The unification of the world does not mean the unification and codification of the particular identities of the world into a unified global ideology or belief. Any attempt to unify the identity of the diverse groups or societies, using for example the economic factor, will only result in the resistance and violence against such an attempt.

Based on this ecclesiological argument, the Church presents to the modern world a model of life. If there is a strong tendency among the developed countries of the world to globalize the world, we have to maintain in the unified world the diversity of identities. Globalized society cannot exclude cultural identity, tradition, national patriotism and love for the specific country. Although in the globalized world all the cultures flow across territorial boundaries, they cannot be reduced to one of the elements of technological developments or aspects of world economy. The process of unification of the world cannot abandon the reality of the diversity of humankind. We are different only on the basis of the acknowledgement of diversity. In today's globalized society there is no room for isolationism, fundamentalism, or exclussivism just as there is no place for political, cultural, or intellectual domination.[33] Globalization increases the inclusiveness of national and cultural diversities giving meaning to their existence. In the reality of the unity of the world, human beings have to learn how to respect the other person with all his identity and experience of life. From the Christian perspective, there should be a challenge to globalization from a faith perspective and resistance to the unilateral domination of economic and cultural globalization.[34] Based on the evidence of violence in the world in the last couple of years, we have to agree that the world will not be ready for unification until the basic principle of cultural, religious, and national diversity is not acknowledged and preserved. The imposition of the will of the minority of the developed world, which just happens to have the majority of power, upon the individual undeveloped countries and the disregard of the value of the identity to the specific community will bring future conflicts and violence. Globalization cannot lead to a common vision of globalized world societies based on the choices of the powerful disregarding the specific

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[31]Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon, The Church as Communion, in: St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 38(1994)1, p. 9; John Zizioulas, The Local Church in a Eucharistic Perspective - an Orthodox Contribution, in: In Each Place: Toward a Fellowship of Local Churches Truly United, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1977, p. 56.

[32] Christos Yannaras, The Freedom of Morality, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, 1984, pp. 217-218; John Zizioulas, The Local Church in a Eucharistic Perspective, op. cit., pp. 56-57; John Karmiris, Catholicity of the Church and Nationalism, op. cit., p. 467.

[33] Archbishop Demetrios of America, The Keynote Address of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, http://www.goarch.org/en/special/hchc_conference/speeches.asp

[34] Diane Kessler (ed), Together on the Way: Official Report of the Eight Assembly of the World Council of Churches, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1999, 183.

characteristic of cultures, religions, languages or form of expressions.[35] According to the last analysis of the linguists, due to globalization, the number of distinct languages in the world will shrink at the end of this century from above 6000 to around 3000- a loss of some thirty languages each year.[36] Religious, cultural and linguistic syncretism, as it is seen from the perspective of the new trends in the world, cannot be the solution to the diversity of humankind. The violent expressions in some parts of the world are legitimate expressions of the globalized world. An irony lies in the fact that when many so-called fundamentalist societies are ready to compromise with the process of globalization, the democratic nations, with the influence in the world, are not ready to meet them halfway. On the other side, the democratic countries of the West will turn a blind eye to fundamentalist/despotic governments as long as they are granted access to natural resources. In order to reduce future violence and war among the nations, ethnic groups and major religions in the globalized world, there has to be an assurance of equality among nations and religions - without exception. The horrific events of September 11th in New York have to be seen in the entire spectrum of globalized society. Tragic events after the September 11th might be the culmination of the misconception of Western developed countries to treat this aspect so marginally. We might be at the point where we need to create a new politics for our governments, which will think anew and act anew in a new globalized reality. The globalized world needs a new concept of life and a new inclusive politics that is of yet undeveloped in most of the countries. Man needs a new type of thinking if humankind is to avoid violence, survive and to move toward a higher level of globalization. In the process of globalization we need to create a network of cultures which does not exclude diversity, but embraces all the diversities of cultural systems.[37]

The second paradigm, also based on the dogma of the Holy Trinity, is directed to the equality of the individual. In the Holy Trinity there is an equality that penetrates all the aspects of Trinitarian life. The Three Persons of the Holy Trinity are equal and one in nature.[38] If we mirror analogically the equality of the Holy Trinity into our daily life, we have to strongly emphasize that all human beings and societies are equal in honour. The identity of the individual being as well as the identity of the communities or countries has to be recognized as equal in honour and respect. Although our communities and countries might be different in the context of technological

[35]Christodoulos Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, Rooting of Joy and Hope: The Word and the Role of Orthodox in the European Union, Synodal Committee for Matters Pertaining to the Media, Information and Public Relations, 2001, 14.

[36]Archbishop Demetrios of America, The Keynote Address of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, op. cit., 3.

[37]Ulf Hannerz, Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture, in: Mike Featherstone (ed.), Global Culture, Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity, Sage Publications, London, 1990, 237; Lowel O. Erdhal, Pro-Life / Pro-Peace, op. cit., p. 56. A very interesting comment on the subject of globalization is given by Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis who says: "The process of globalization is contingent and dialectical in nature in the sense of embracing contradictory dynamics, unevenly experienced across time and space. Globalization simultaneously universalizes as well as it particularizes. It intensifies homogenization as well as differentiation. It integrates as well as fragments, it centralizes as well as decentralizes, it juxtaposes as well as syncretizes", look in: Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, Christianity in a Global World, http//www.goarhc.org/en/special/hchc_conference/speeches.asp

[38]George Dragas, Orthodox Ecclesiology in Outline, op. cit., p. 185.

achievements, they are equal in their identity. The technological development of the particular country cannot be a leading factor to the cultural, religious, or social domination in the world. The Western World cannot force unto other societies an economic ultimatum to become part of the global market economy by becoming democratic and reforming the economy. The utilization of the market economy of the specific society cannot be an ultimatum of their inclusion into a globalized world. Equality among the particular nations or cultures requires the need of assistance and respect. Modernity has to embrace and honour the national heritage of every human being.[39] In globalized society, man has to avoid any form of superiority of culture or tradition above the other. We have to emphasize the fact that culture, which embodies beliefs, values, attitudes, and rules of behaviour, enables the specific cultures or nations to express their own identities, so fundamental for their own existence. In the unified world, societies, cultures and ethnic groups need the diversity and equality of each other in order to appreciate and understand each other. It is fundamental for the globalized world to learn how to appreciate the "personal pluralism" so important in the contemporary world.[40] It is a call that needs to be heard and implemented. Although the economical factor is very important in the globalized world, it cannot be the leading or the only factor for the unification of global society. Human beings cannot be reduced to factors of economy or wealth. The diversity of mankind is derived not from the economic platform of life but from the inner world of man. The identity of people develops regardless of the economic development at particular society. Because of this, in the unified world, we have to safeguard the identity of an individual in order to see a prosperous globalized society.

Another very important factor in the discussion of globalization, which relates to our analysis, is the distribution of the material wealth of the world. While it is true that the average income of people has been growing, there is a growing income gap between rich and poor countries.[41] In the majority of the poor countries, people live in poverty and have less than one dollar of income per person per day. Despite the promises made by the Western economically developed countries in the last decade of the twentieth century to deal with the economic situation of the third world, the number of people living in poverty has increased by almost 100 million. According to the report of the World Bank, in 1990, 2,718 billion people were living on less than $2 per day.[42] Economic globalization is blamed for the increasing poverty around the world and the heightened sense of vulnerability and insecurity.[43] The reality of today's world indicates that attention is given to the opposite. The escalation of violence in the world will continue until those very essential questions are not discussed and resolved.

The third paradigm presented is also based on the Trinitarian principle, and is directed to the concept of openness. In the Orthodox perspective, God reveals Himself to the world. In Trinitarian life, there is an idea of openness that allows human beings to participate in the Divine. We have to acknowledge the fact that, in globalized society, there is a need for interdependence

[39]"Islam's Arc Is Ripe for a Meiji Period", in: International Herald Tribune, January 9, 2002.

[40]Archbishop Demetrios of America, The Keynote Address of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, op. cit. 2.

[41]Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, Christianity in a Global World, op. cit..

[42]World Bank, Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries 2000, World Bank, Washington, 2000, 29.

[43]Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, Christianity in a Global World, op. cit..

and acceptance of "the other". The Western world, with its policies, feels uncomfortable with this idea. In today's tightly controlled world, the developed countries are in control not only of their borders but they are also in control of global human resources. If there is to be an honest approach of the Western developed countries to the process of globalization and unification of world, let us not see developed Western countries placing themselves above the globalized society. In an open globalized society we have to learn how to listen and respect each other.[44] Although the idea of openness might be very difficult to achieve, it is crucial for the stability of peace in the world.

Another very important factor in the context of openness, is the idea of the preservation of the specific historical borders of countries regardless of the multinational dimension of their societies and their religious affiliations. Recent escalations of conflict between Israel and Palestinians represent the best evidence of this dilemma. In the contemporary world, with massive migration of peoples and the creation of multinational societies, the use of force, violence, and terrorism negates this reality. The openness of our societies towards other national groups and cultures is a necessity that cannot be disregarded. In the contemporary globalized and multidimensional society we cannot apply outdated strategies with the basic principle of preserving my own identity. The preservation of its own borders, regardless of the reality of the contemporary world, cannot be identified in the globalized world as the preservation of the identity of specific nations. Even the creation of artificial borders or walls separating specific nationalities or ethnic groups will fail as a negation of a process of globalization. This is one of the reasons why we have to develop a new concept of coexistence and openness among the nationalities and religions that are needed for the preservation of peace among the nations. The notion of openness towards other nationalities and cultures within its own borders in not an utopian concept that is to be disregarded. According to the Orthodox theology, this utopian concept of today's globalized world is actualized in the eschatological reality of the "Kingdom of God", that transcends all borders and human limitations. In the concept of the Eucharistic ecclesiology, the Orthodox Church embraces and transcends human categories of thinking. The openness towards the globalized society is a reality happening every day that the Orthodox Church affirms in its doctrine and life. If the contemporary world is not in a position to respond to this new reality, we might find ourselves in a position of conflict between the past and the new paradigms of life. Because of the multiple dimension of the problem, we are in position to create a new strategy for the preservation of our identities, without traditional concepts of land and borders. The identity of humanity is built on the basis of inner response to surrounding realities. It is a human inner ability to accept and to transform the exterior reality in order to define the inner identity. The attachment to geographical or historical places has to be excluded from the concept of modern openness. We will still live in the same lands or cultural environments but enriched by the presence of the inevitable otherness. The nostalgia for the past, in disregard for the globalized reality of the interrelationships of cultures and religions, will deepen the crisis of terrorism and war. The concept of openness is possible only on the basis of the two paradigms discussed earlier.

Let me conclude my presentation by saying that the concept of violence and terror is an abnormal phenomenon for human beings. We are created for a peaceful coexistence and tolerance towards each other. We have the potential and will to transfer this world into an earthly paradise. How beautiful and unique are the words of the Greek philosopher Themistocles who wrote: "When I

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[44] A contemporary Orthodox theologian Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis in his analysis concludes that if all cultures in the globalized world are involved, this might create a new cosmopolitan culture and a new class of civilizations may burst out, in: Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, Christianity in a Global World, op. cit., 5.

wish, I become an angel, and when I wish, I am a Devil".[45] Let us hope that the subject of violence and terror continues to be an object of our concern and possible action. The Orthodox Church offers humanity a concept of the Holy Trinity, based on which, a future unified world can find a model of prosperous life. If the concept of equality and diversity among nations, as it was presented in the context of the Holy Trinity, is not taken seriously by the developed Western countries, the world will miss an opportunity to resolve this problem. The solution to the problem of violence and terrorism in the world, based on the Trinitarian concept of God, is not an utopian imagination. Although it might be difficult to be integrated, the Orthodox Church urges the world to move beyond the reality of the daily struggle in order to achieve the true nature of the world.[46] The Orthodox Church also urges the Western World to redefine the contemporary outlook at economic globalization that at the present time does not embrace the fundamental principles of peace and development. Because of the performance of the "free market economy" in the globalized world and basic presuppositions of Orthodox theology, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew expressed the objections of the Orthodox Church against the injustices in the world. It is very interesting to admit the fact that according to the study "Freedom in the World Agency" in 2002, the Orthodox Church was listed very highly on the lists considering the ideational and institutional bases of Orthodoxy's public role in the pluralistic world.[47] Everything is possible, even the application of the Trinitarian formula in the context of violence, as long as we realize that the entire world with its future is at stake.[48]

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[45]Constantine Tsatos, Dialogues in a Monastery, Hellenic College Press, Brookline, 1986, p. 57.

[46]Emmanuel Clapsis, Politics and Christian Faith, op. cit., p. 101; Emmanuel Clapsis, Ecclesiology and Ethics. Reflections by an Orthodox Theologian, in: The Greek Orthodox Theological Review 38(1993)1-4, p. 76.

[47]Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou, "Orthodox Christianity, Democracy and Multiple Modernities", op. cit., 2.

[48]Norman Cousisns, in: Lowel O. Erdahl, Pro-Life / Pro-Peace, op. cit., p. 81.