

**The 30th Anniversary
of the Religious Summit Meeting
on Mt. Hiei**

Symposium Theme:

Terrorism and Religion:

***How can people in faith accept and work
to combat violent radicalism?***

By

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Theological Dilemmas

CRITIQUE OF PURE FAITH

[How can I believe?]

[How can I act?]

[How can I be saved?]

Eminences!

Excellences!

Dear brothers in humanity!

Dear friends in destiny!

Dear Mr. DOYU TODA,

Secretary General, Japan Conference of Religious Representatives (JCRR)

President, Tendai Buddhist Denomination,

Thank you for this great opportunity to speak at the 30th Anniversary of the Religious Summit Meeting on Mt. Hiei.

I am Muslim from Europe. Precisely, I am Muslim from Bosnia, a small land by size, but a big country by significance of its religious and cultural history. I am, indeed, a survivor of Genocide because of my religion, but also I am wanted to speak out against terrorism because of my religion of Islam. And I am willing to do just that. I am willing to speak out against religious violence as a victim of Genocide as well as one who is called to clean his faith from the violence claimed to be in the name of Allah, God Almighty. Hence, I have decided to speak out today at this noble gathering of good will in the way of a critique of pure faith. Indeed, I thought that it is the most appropriate for me to speak about this matter in order to show you what is in my mind as I am reflecting, together with you, on one of the most challenging issues of our times, i.e., the global terrorism and its relation to religion.

Let me say though that the attempt of a critique of pure faith is by no means an act of anti-faith. On the contrary, the critique of pure faith is a spiritual and cognitive effort to measure the power of faith in its transcendental and immanent manifestation. If the critique of pure reason, as Immanuel Kant has imagined it, is derived from questions such as: what can I know? What can I do? And what can I hope for? then the critique of pure faith is derived from the questions such as: how can I believe? How can I act? And how can I be saved? Indeed, the critique of pure faith is on the trail of a clear Qur'anic warning: – *Do people think that they*

will be let go merely by saying: “We believe,” and that they will not be tested... (Qur'an, 29:1)].

As a Muslim I would like to point out that long before the German philosopher Emmanuel Kant (1724 – 1804), the Muslim philosopher al-Ghazali (1058-1111) demonstrated that the human mind strives to gain the power of self-measurability in order to prescribe for itself the high moral imperatives and be its own judge and jury. Indeed, al-Ghazali intimated that the human mind may be God's measure on Earth¹. However, faith is not the mind. Faith is more than the mind and therefore the mind cannot ultimately be the measure of faith. I know that the mind is called upon to be the measure of everything, even faith, but it cannot measure it with a finality. Faith cannot even measure itself. Pure faith is dependent on the transcendental measure of its value. This means that faith accepts the measure of the higher, or rather the highest judge, who is not necessarily „here“ and „now“. Therefore, we mindful humans should not judge each other about our each other's faith here and now. – *God will judge us on the Day of Judgement concerning that over which we used to differ*(Qur'an, 22:69)]. Therefore, the mind is not over faith. Faith is higher than the mind, but this is exactly what the mind doesn't really comprehend. The mind wishes to impose itself to be the ultimate measure of faith, but it cannot be as its power depends on the power of faith. The mind feels the superiority of faith when it comes to its end on Earth. For, faith remains the only man's salvation in the Hereafter.

As we know, man has three imminent powers through which the transcendental power of faith is manifested: the power of heart, the power of mind and the power of hand. The heart has the human power of belief; the mind has the human power of thought; the hand has the human power of action. Together, these three human powers have one single “superhuman power”, namely the pure faith in God. The shortage of one of these three powers in the entirety of a man's spiritual, mental and physical being destabilizes man's success and salvation. The critique of pure faith is the individual questioning of each of these three powers. However, more important than this is the questioning of the complete “superhuman power”, as a coordinated manifest of the transcendental deity of the spirit and the imminent human soul.

The soul originates from the root of the spirit of God. Therefore, the human soul is a reflection of the spirit of God: – *God has shaped man and breathed into him from His spirit* (Qur'an, 32:9)]. Although it comes from the spirit of God, the human soul is not equal to the spirit of God. The fruit of the apple comes from the root of the apple, but it is not the same as the root of the apple. Equally, as there is no fruit of the apple without the root of the apple, there is no human soul without the root of human soul, which is the spirit of God. Pure faith is „the spirit of God“, which touches the human „heart“, the human „mind“ and the human „hand“. The power of the heart is the power of faith, the power of the mind is the power of reason and the power of the hand is the power of moral. The heart conceals the power of

¹ (سلطان العقل الذي هو ميزان الله في الارض) [الغزالي، مشكاة الانوار، 17]

orthodoxy or heresy, the mind conceals the power of knowledge or ignorance, and the hand hides the power of justice or injustice.

In accordance to an Islamic cosmology, *Insān/Man* is earth (“*turāb*”); *Malak/Angel* is light (“*nūr*”); *Satan/Lucifer* is fire (“*nār*”). On the Earth we have light and fire; the light comes on and the fire is inflamed. The man is from the earth, he is on the earth and he is under the earth; man is the synthesis of the Angel’s light (“*nūr*”), which is turned on and Lucifer’s fire (“*nār*”), which is inflamed. The Angel’s light (“*nūr*”) is man’s mind; Lucifer’s fire (“*nār*”) is man’s passion. Man is the earth from which light is turned on and fire is inflamed; Angels turn on man’s mind with their light-*nūr*, while Satan inflames passion in man with his fire-*nār*; man is earth between the Angel’s light-*nūr* and Lucifer’s fire-*nār*. Seemingly, this is just a play on word, but in fact light-*nūr* and fire-*nār* are the two paths of man – the path of light and the path of fire. On the path of light man sees all around himself, behind and in front of him; on the path of fire man sees only the fire in front of him and the darkness and ashes behind him. Fire is more powerful and destructive than light; fire is exciting and terrifying. Light is humble, gentle, predictable and sometimes boring, but never malicious, never leaves a man in the dark, nor sprinkled in ashes.

I will never understand why man has regretted for not being created from fire? Because if he had not regretted it, Satan / Lucifer would not have provoked him by his racist rhetoric by saying: “I am better than you because I was created from fire while you were created from clay”?! Also, I will never understand why man likes to imitate Satan / Lucifer, who hates man more than anyone else because God had asked Satan/Lucifer to prostrate himself before him? Indeed, I wonder why man listens to the dictate of Satan / Lucifer, who pushes him into the fire, and refuses to listen to the dictate of the Creator, who leads him to the light? Yes, it is this truth that I want to be understood here, which is that man has no choice but to accept the dictate. Indeed, the dictate is his fate. It is not his independent nature, nor his independent will, but rather it is his nature and his will that are also the dictate, which defines the essence of his being. And the essence of his being is the power of his knowledge, which is not hereditary, but every man and woman begins from the beginning to read, learn and get to recognize his/her own knowledge in himself/herself. Man has the freedom to choose one or more dictates but he has no choice to live without dictates at all.

The idea of pure faith as a dictate of belief in God is hardest thing to be held clean of half-truths and half-lies. A pure lie is clear and man can protect himself from it; pure truth is pure and man can easily agree with it. But, half-truths and half-lies are vague and unclean and therefore are difficult for man to be protected and defended from. That is why we need a “critique of pure faith” through which we can learn how to fight half-truths and half-lies, the phenomena which are today most burdening to our Muslim Community all around the world. The Muslim scholars must pay close attention to these phenomena. Not only not to become victims of half-truths and half-lies, but also for the Muslim scholars themselves not to consciously or unconsciously produce half-truths and half-lies for personal gain. The Muslim scholars have never been in greater temptation as they have today to fall into the trap of half-truths and half-lies. We do not know what has worse: half-truths or half-lies, although half-

truths are more poisonous and dangerous. It is not said in the Holy Quran without a reason that “half-truths and half-lies are worse than murder”(“al-fitnetu ashaddu min al-qatli”). Even Dante Alighieri, who studied in the Muslim Andalusia, placed the traitor immediately next to the devil in the ninth circle of Inferno, Hell, whereas the murderer was left in the eighth circle. In a time of half-truths and half-lies (“fitnah”) it is essential to preserve “pure faith”, as well as “a clear conscience”. And this is my main message of today in Kyoto.

Thank you!