

UNDERSTANDING 'THE OTHER': ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN TURKEY*

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SUMMARY

In this study, firstly, the short history of "interreligious dialogue" in Turkey is discussed. Afterwards, different attitudes are given place to perception of that concept. The attempt of Christian world which supports the idea of dialogue reflected lately in Turkey because of politics and social reasons. Initially, despite some reactional attributes toward dialogue, afterwards different approaches developed. Insufficiency of transition of dialogue materials into Turkish and their prejudicially evaluations have an influential function in the formation of these attitudes. In this frame, three approaches to the concept of "interreligious dialogue" are studied. Radical one of these attitudes accepts the idea of dialogue as a missionary method. But the other approach emphasizes on that the dialogue is necessary for social justice, tolerance and peace between religions in Turkey. According to last approach, the dialogue is necessary for a dialogistic relationship between believers. For this attitude, the dialogue should be done in individual level.

Key Words: Interreligious Dialogue, Turkey, Nationalism, Peace, Culture of Living Together, Islam and Christianity.

'ÖTEKİ'Yİ ANLAMAK: TÜRKİYE'DE DİNLERARASI DİYALOGA DAİR TUTUMLAR

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada öncelikle "dinlerarası diyalog"un Türkiye'deki kısa tarihi ele alınmaktadır. Daha sonra bu kavramın algılanmasına yönelik farklı tutumlara yer verilmektedir. Diyalog fikrini destekleyen Hıristiyan dünyanın çabası, siyasi ve sosyal nedenlerden dolayı Türkiye'de daha geç yankı buldu. İlk diyaloga yönelik bazı tepkisel tutumlara karşın, sonraları farklı yaklaşımlar gelişti. Diyalog materyallerinin Türkçeye intikalindeki yetersizlik ve onlara yönelik önyargılı değerlendirmeler, bu yaklaşımların teşekülünde temel bir etkiye sahiptir. Bu çerçevede, "dinlerarası diyalog" kavramına yönelik üç yaklaşım incelenmektedir. Bu yaklaşımların radikal olanı, diyalog fikrini bir misyonerlik metodu olarak kabul eder. Fakat diğeri diyalogun Türkiye'de dinler arasında sosyal adalet, hoşgörü ve barış için gerekli olduğuna vurgu yapar. Son yaklaşıma göre ise,

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inananlar arasında diyalojik bir ilişki için gereklidir. Bu yaklaşıma göre diyalog, bireysel seviyede yapılmalıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Dinlerarası Diyalog, Türkiye, Milliyetçilik, Barış, Bir Arada Yaşama Kültürü, İslam ve Hıristiyanlık.*

I. A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN TURKEY

Since more than fifteen years, various attitudes towards the discourse of interreligious dialogue have been taken place in Turkey. Catholic Church especially in the second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and then Protestant Churches (World Council of Church) initiated interreligious dialogue with different purposes. Due to diverse religious traditions gradually start to live all together, The Western churches wanted Christians to adopt dialogue in their relations with non-Christians. In the many church documents, besides being of the piece of mission, dialogue is also regarded with the form of coming together with *the other* for common problems of human being.

Owing to undeveloped mass communication devices and especially with the effect of politic situation, this discussion has become a current issue in the beginning of 1990's in Turkey. Since that time, with help of social and political stabilization, conferences, symposiums and other works about interreligious dialogue increasingly have continued.¹

In this frame, dialogue and dialogue activities have been dealt with different approaches. In the beginning, the discourse of interreligious dialogue has taken place with transposition of western church's dialogue understanding and then meetings in Turkey. Beneath the supporting of some civil society organizations and institutions, there have been done symposiums in limited quantity.

¹ Some of these meetings: *Asrımızda Müslüman Hristiyan Münasebetleri*, İslami Araştırmalar Vakfı, İstanbul 1993; *Hz. İbrahim'in İzinde*, Urfa-Harran 2000; *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu* 7-8 Mart 1998 İstanbul; *Medeniyetlerarası Diyalog Uluslararası Sempozyumu*, 18-19 Eylül 1998; *Barış İçin Diyalog Uluslararası Sempozyumu*, Sivas 2002; Necati Can, "Dinlerarası Diyalog Tartışmaları", *Jeopolitik*, Vol. 27/5 2006, pp. 59-62.

In these meetings, it has been treated to be in dialogue against the clash of civilization thesis rather than what and how of the dialogue discourse.

By 2000, different attitudes towards dialogue started to appear. Firstly, at the end of 1990's, an approach is in favor of dialogue which sees dialogue is necessary for tolerance and world peace, further more social justice in the global world, has been developed. The matter attracts attention here is the identifying the activities of that attitude with certain religious community, F. Gulen group. Besides, this attitude which establishes "intercultural dialogue platform" on behalf of dialogue, has signed so many meetings.

Particularly after 2000's, an opposite manner which defends in nationalist character that interreligious dialogue is only a method of mission in absolute meaning, has appeared. This attitude has a negative outlook about all activities of dialogue. In addition to these two mentioned approaches, a more academic attitude, which accepting particularly the necessity of dialogical relation between believers in different religions in Turkey, has come in to being. Briefly, these three attitudes towards interreligious dialogue will be coped with in descriptive manner here.

II. ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN TURKEY

A. Accepting the Necessity of Dialogue for Social Justice, Tolerance and World Peace between Religions

Particularly in last decade, an attitude towards interreligious dialogue, which is in opposition to assertion that interreligious dialogue is only a missionary method and accepts the necessity of dialogue for tolerance, world peace and moreover for social justice in global world, has grown up in Turkey². One of the

² Hayrettin Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, Ufuk Kitap, İstanbul 2005, pp. 13-15, 51-52.

interesting cases of this attitude is the identifying dialogue labors with civil society organizations which have sympathy for M. Fethullah Gülen community.

They insist on that the conception of dialogue is not a newly-made conception. In the despite of that, dialogue is described as understanding, learning and knowing the other by means of tolerance, honesty and love without coercion. Furthermore, it's seemed as an encounter which provides cooperation in common matters of global world for religious leaders in the name of world peace³. Taking Abraham as a center name in the point of faith, they embrace that it must be spoken of similarities and common values rather than differences⁴. Even though it is prescribed that interreligious dialogue is not an endeavor to convert the other, mission or call for İslam, it is inculcated not to be exaggerated missionary effort in the sense of religious proclamation. For example, it is emphasized that it is not to be mentioned the mission with its bad fame related with 19th century colonialism.⁵

³ Thomas Michel, "İnançlararası Diyaloğa Çeşitli Yaklaşımlar", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 7-8 Mart 1998, pp. 44-46; Hüseyin Hatemi, "Müslümanların Diyaloğa Girmelerinin Şartları ve Amacı", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 181-182; İzak Haleva, "Dinlerarası Sevgi". *Uluslararası Hoşgörü Kongresi Bildirileri*, (10-12 Haziran 1995), Bil-Kav, Antalya 1995, pp. 126; Niyazi Öktem, "11 Eylül Olayı ve Dinlerarası Diyalog", *Karizma*, Vol. 9/2002, pp. 59-60; Davut Aydın, *Tarih Boyunca Dinler Arası Diyalog*, Işık Yayınları, İstanbul 2005, pp. 11-16; Ahmet Kurucan, *Niçin Diyalog: Diyalogun Temelleri*, Işık Yayınları, İstanbul 2006, p. 11; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 23-25, 30-33, 37-38, 56-59; Kerim Balcı-Adem Yavuz Arslan, "Kitabımı Saldırı Malzemesi Yapmasınlar", *Aksiyon*, Vol. 588/2006, pp. 24-27. Compare, Yünni Sezen *Dinlerarası Diyalog İhaneti (Dini-Psikolojik-Sosyolojik Tahlili)*, Kelam Yay., İstanbul 2006, pp. 36-39; Yaşar Hacısalihoğlu, "ABD Stratejisinde "İlimli İslam" ve Dinlerarası Diyalog", *Jeopolitik*, Vol. 27/5 2006, p. 2.

⁴ Mehmet S. Aydın, "Değerlendirme" *Kültürler Arası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 203-211; Suat Yıldırım, "Dinler ve Barış Sempozyumundan Gertye Kalan", *Yeni Ümit Dergisi*, Vol. 64, pp. 6-10; Emanuel Adamakis, "Yahudilik, Hıristiyanlık ve İslam Arasında Diyalog: Bir Ortodoks Bakış Açısı", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 52-53; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 94-96, 100-103; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 248-249, 252.

⁵ Niyazi Öktem, "11 Eylül Olayı ve Dinlerarası Diyalog", *Karizma*, Vol. 9/2002, pp. 61-62; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 73-74, 78-80; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 21-22, 184-185, 221-222; Kurucan, *Diyalogun Temelleri*, pp. 18-22.

Dialogue sympathizers, who allege that both of Quran and Bible have been read in churches throughout Muslim-Christian dialogue, express many Christians begin to see Mohammad as prophet increasingly. Besides, it is accepted that dialogue is the most powerful alternative against the clash of civilization.⁶

This attitude especially declares that Abraham is the common father in Jews-Christian-Muslim dialogue and Abraham is the unifying element of bases of three monotheistic divine religions⁷. Alongside this helpful data of dialogue, it is asserted that dialogue is a necessity because of creation of people in different nations by Allah as mentioned in the Quran⁸. This manner of dialogue thinks that Quranic verses have discussed by breaking off their historical and political contexts. Therefore it considers that it is claimed that Quran is against dialogue. The attitude asserts that there are common points between Muslims and People of Book. it accepts that prophet is in dialogue with People of Book unlike his relationship with "Kafir"⁹. That approach, which exemplifies Quranic, propheti-

⁶ Michel, "İnançlararası Diyaloğa Çeşitli Yaklaşımlar", pp. 39-41; Hatemi, "Müslümanların Diyaloğa Girmelerinin Şartları ve Amacı", pp. 182-183; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 24-25, 278-280; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 12, 30, 46-49; Kurucan, *Diyalogun Temelleri*, pp. 130-135. Compare, Sezen, *Dinlerarası Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 79-99; Kerim Balei, "Bediüzzaman'dan Çağın Aşan Çözümler", *Aksiyon*, Vol. 589/2006, pp. 54; Fatih Uğur, "İlle de Diyalog", *Aksiyon*, Vol. 585/2006, pp. 30-31;

⁷ Yıldırım, "Dinler ve Barış Sempozyumundan Geriye Kalan", pp. 6-10; Thomas Michel, "Kuran'da ve İslam Geleneğinde Hz. İbrahim Tasviri", *Hazreti İbrahim'in İzinde*, Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı Yay., İstanbul 2001, pp. 17, 24-25; Tark Mitri, "İbrahimi Gelenek ve Dinler Arası Diyalog: Vaadler ve Belirsizlikler", *Hazreti İbrahim'in İzinde*, p. 290; İzak Haleva, "Dinlerarası Sevgi", p. 125; Emilio Platti, "İbrahimi Dinlerin Birleştikleri Temel Hususlar", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 73-77; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, p. 30, 206; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 45-46, 90-92.

⁸ *Al-Quran*, 49/13; 5/48; 29/46. Also See, Ökten, "11 Eylül Olayı ve Dinlerarası Diyalog", pp. 61-62; Lütfi Doğan, "İslam'da Dinlerarası Hoşgörü", *Uluslararası Hoşgörü Kongresi Bildirileri*, pp. 129-130.

⁹ Mehmet S. Aydın, "Medeniyetler Çatışmasını Tartışmak", *Medeniyetler Çatışmasından Diyaloğa*, Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı Yay., İstanbul 2000, pp. 41-42; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 16-21, 53-54, 81-85; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 44-47, 56-59, 192; Kurucan, *Diyalogun Temelleri*, pp. 22-23, 27-29, 30-32; *Al-Quran*, 11/99; 49/13; 28/55; 45/14; 3/64; 20/44.

cal and historical basis of dialogue, defends that the Vatican's dialogue expansion in twentieth century actually has become a reality in history of Islam since fourteen ages.¹⁰

In the beginning, meetings related with dialogue have been carried out by different surroundings. But afterwards, these have been begun to be remembered only with activities of civil organizations which sympathize with certain circle, Gulen community.¹¹

As a followers of this attitude, Niyazi Oktem alleges that dialogue meetings is done between equal sides and accepts Department of Religious Affairs as representative of Muslim society in Turkey. Moreover, this approach gives an example the Gulen's meeting with Greek Patriarch, Barthalemous and Pope John Paul the second to prove Muslims don't stand behind in interreligious dialogue activity. Even Oktem suggests establishing a dialogue secretary. Because, it is expressed that the other's prejudices for Islam have changed slowly in conclusion of dialogue works.¹²

¹⁰ Mehmet Aydın, "Türk Toplumunda Dini Hoşgörünün Temelleri", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 64-68; Doğan, "İslam'da Dinlerarası Hoşgörü", pp. 131-133; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 37-41, 43-44, 74; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 11, 88-90, 137-138; Kurucan, *Diyalogun Temelleri*, pp. 60-61, 71-76; Also See Passim, *Osmanlı'da Hoşgörü, Birlikte Yaşam Sanatı*, Gazeteci ve Yazarlar Vakfı Yay., İstanbul 2000; Levent Öztürk, *Asrı Saadetten Haçlı Seferlerine kadar İslam Toplumunda Hıristiyanlar*, İz Yay., İstanbul 1998, pp. 118-119; M. Süreyya Şahin, "Osmanlı Devletinin Hıristiyanlarla Münasebetleri", *Asrımızda Hıristiyan-Müslüman Münasebetleri*, İSAV, İstanbul 1993, pp. 116-119; Mehmet Aydın, "Hz. Muhammed (a.s) devrinde Müslüman Hıristiyan Münasebetlerine Bir Bakış", *Asrımızda Hıristiyan-Müslüman Münasebetleri*, pp. 85-95.

¹¹ Kurucan, *Diyalogun Temelleri*, pp. 99-104, 106-111; Karaman, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Nedir?*, pp. 62-63, 66-70; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 35.

¹² Mehmet Kamış, "Medeniyetler Buluşması", *Aksiyon*, 14-20 Şubat 1998, Vol. 167, pp. 26-31; Öktem, "11 Eylül Olayı ve Dinlerarası Diyalog", pp. 63-64; Adamakis, "Yahudilik, Hıristiyanlık ve İslam Arasında Diyalog: Bir Ortodoks Bakış Açısı", pp. 55-58; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog*, pp. 182-185, 209-210; Kurucan, *Diyalogun Temelleri*, p. 82.

B. The Perception of Interreligious Dialogue only as a Missionary Method

In recent years, mainly, a party which is taking side against interreligious dialogue activities has come into being in Turkey. According to followers of this idea, dialogue and all labors about it provide contributions to church missionary activities. These nationalist sympathizers claim that works about dialogue conception and its practical experience don't comport with Qur'an, Sunna and related tradition. Therefore, this conceptualization is called by them as a new face of missionary.¹³

They assert that interreligious dialogue is just an impossible discourse, further more there can not be a common area between religions. Because of religions have immutable principles. In this way, it is accepted that conceptions such as "Abrahamic religions", "common ancestor Abraham" and "garden of religions" are produced in order to alienate Muslims from their religion and to negate truth discourse of Islam. That opposite group indicates that the fact lies beneath the demand of dialogue is just "Mission", though there are common anxieties which related with violent, unjustness, poverty, etc.¹⁴

That group passionately rejects/disagrees the dialogue attitude which claims dialogue has Quranic, prophetic and historical roots. The opposites believe that the conception of People of Book is not different from "Kafir" term. They

¹³ Yümnü Sezen, *Dinlerarası Diyalog İhaneti* (Dini-Psikolojik-Sosyolojik Tahlili), Kelam Yay., İstanbul 2006, pp. 1-5; Ahmet Tekin, *Diyalogcılara Kuran Dersi*, Kelam Yay., İstanbul 2006, pp. 9-10, 226-228, 236-238; Lütfü Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği ve Dinlerarası Diyalog*, Rağbet Yay., İstanbul 2005, pp. 199, 206-210; Mehmet Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tızağı ve Dinde Reform*, Arı-Sanat Yay., İstanbul 2003, pp. 18, 20-22; Arslan Bulut, "ABD'nin İslam'da Reform Stratejisi, Dinlerarası Diyalog ve Mesih Meselesi!", *Jeopolitik*, Vol. 27/5 2006, p. 24; Uğur Yıldırım, "Noel Baba'ya Yasin, İnkültürasyon ve Diyalogun Seyri", *Jeopolitik*, Vol. 27/5 2006, pp. 36-40, 45-47.

¹⁴ Mustafa Erkal, "İktisat Kaynaklı Misyonerlik ve Diyalog", *Jeopolitik*, Vol. 27/5 2006, p. 14; Bulut, "ABD'nin İslam'da Reform Stratejisi, Dinlerarası Diyalog ve Mesih Meselesi!", p. 22; Tekin, *Diyalogcılara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 18, 44, 66-67, 194-197, 233-234, 246-247, 318-320; Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 10-13, 38; Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 203-204, 219-221, 232-234, 238-240; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tızağı*, pp. 25-26, 35-36, 103-108.

assert that there is no common shared characteristic/ground between Muslim and People of Book in the terms of faith, by giving examples of Quranic verses¹⁵. According to this attitude which refuses the examples of dialogue, the Medina vesikası/document is manifesto, the immigration to Ethiopia is taking refuge, the letters sent to neighbor kings are call for Islam/tablig and the relationship with Jewish and Christian groups is the message for Islam¹⁶. In respect of history of Islam, the opposite group also believes in that the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims has no unfavorable situations¹⁷. In spite of that, as a newly produced/made conception, the interreligious dialogue is just a current appearance of mission which all ways are considered permissible by Paul.¹⁸

That group accepts dialogue as the most obvious reflection of anxiety of global world hegemony of Christian world. Moreover it has interrogated to be restricted the interreligious dialogue only by People of Book. This attitude claims that call for Islam and dialogue are different from each other. Also it has regarded some Quranic verses which seem to criticize People of Book¹⁹. Additionally, in respect of opposite attitude, supporting the dialogue only by certain group and determining the frame of dialogue activities by Non-Muslims is conspicuous. It is mentioned that the inequality/unfairness between sides appear in the non-existence of Muslim clergy which is similar to Christians'. Be-

¹⁵ Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 50-56; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 41-50, 147-160, 170-181, 248-255, 260-266; Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 201-202; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı*, s. 27-28, 42-44, 60-62, *Al-Quran* 2/103, 105; 5/72-73; 3/64.

¹⁶ Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 216-217; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 19-20, 60-64, 240-245; Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 61-68.

¹⁷ For Muslim-Christian relations in Ottoman Empire: V. Arus, Yumul, "Dinlerarası İlişki: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Müslüman-Hıristiyan ilişkileri", *Uluslararası Hoşgörü Kongresi Bildirileri* pp. 149-154; Mesrob Mutafyan, "Türkiye'de Dinlerarası Hoşgörü", pp. 123-124, *Uluslararası Hoşgörü Kongresi Bildirileri*.

¹⁸ Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 27-30, 32-33, 72-73, 147; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 12-14, 228-230; Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 211-214; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı*, pp. 17, 50-52.

¹⁹ Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 269-272, 300-315; Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 224-225, 227-228; Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, p. 25; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı*, pp. 92-94; *Al-Quran* 109/1-6; 29/46; 4/44; 5/51.

cause of that, it is asserted that sympathizers of dialogue are being an instrument to Christian missionary.²⁰

Antagonists, who touch on impossibility of religious dialogue, have claimed that there are no any concrete developments in social themes²¹. In addition, they dwelled on places of meetings that are made by supporting of dialogue followers in Turkey. In respect of opposite attitude, chosen the holy lands in terms of People of Book like Antioch, Edessa, Harran, Tarsus, Izmir, etc. and worn the religious dress indicate what real intention of *the other* is²². Because of all these reasons, this attitude has alleged that interreligious dialogue is a new method of evangelization. Furthermore, it has accused of supporter of dialogue by giving support to global powers which destroy national and religious values and damage to national identity in Turkey²³.

C. Accepting the Necessity of Interreligious Dialogue for a Dialogical Relation between Believers in Various Religions

In recent years, in addition to the mentioned attitudes above which are concerning with the frame of dialogue in Turkey, a new mode/manner has come into being. In particular, this attitude that develops in academic circles looks like closer than others for composing a Muslim theology for religions about dialogue.

²⁰ Bulut, "ABD'nin İslam'da Reform Stratejisi, Dinlerarası Diyalog ve Mesih Meselesi!", p. 26; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 16-19, 28-30, 275-276; Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 200, 225; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı*, pp. 17, 45-47; Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 100-117, 143, 137-146, 150-156, 161.

²¹ Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 236-237; Sezen, *Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 147-149, 163; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 24-27.

²² Sezen, *Dinlerarası Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 141-145; 165-167; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 10-13, 22-23, 34-37; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı*, pp. 48-49, 72-74.

²³ Erkal, "İktisat Kaynaklı Misyonerlik ve Diyalog", p. 13; Özşahin, *Kaosun Jeopolitiği*, pp. 199, 203, 210, 222-226, 245-250; Tekin, *Diyalogculara Kuran Dersi*, pp. 32-33, 230-235, 272-274, 318-326 327-332; Bulut, "ABD'nin İslam'da Reform Stratejisi, Dinlerarası Diyalog ve Mesih Meselesi!", pp. 28-32; Sezen, *Dinlerarası Diyalog İhaneti*, pp. 159-162, 163-169; Oruç, *Dinlerarası Diyalog Tuzağı*, pp. 29-30, 111-116, 37-39, 67-76.

Representatives of this manner especially scrutinize the contemporary inter-religious dialogue discourse that implies a missionary frame in Catholic and Protestant churches' attitudes²⁴. In addition to this institutional attempt, they try to put individual dialogue endeavor on agenda unlike the approaches above. In respect of this, it is accepted that assembling believers of different religions to provide solutions to common problems is possible with the help of individual dialogue activities more than the institutional works. Because, though they highlight dialogue in the solution to common problems of humanity churches don't be purified mission anxiety and also see the dialogue necessary for evangelization of *the other*²⁵. In this context, that attitude suggests to develop dialogue that is not surrounded by mission and a dialogue understanding which is the means of living all together and social peace.²⁶

According to believers of a dialogical relation, dialogue mustn't be an attempt which regards its reality/truth as absolute/ultimate reality throughout supposing *the others'* truth doctrine insufficient. Differences which make each religion distinctive themselves must be preserved²⁷. In spite of that, dialogue must

²⁴ Mahmut Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Yeni Bir Misyon Yöntemi Mi? –Kurumsal ve Bireysel Diyalog Faaliyetleri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme", *İslamiyat*, Vol. 5/3 2002, pp. 18-22; Mustafa Alıcı, *Müslüman-Hıristiyan Diyalogu*, İz Yay. İstanbul 2005, pp. 43-54; Muhammed Talbi, "Medine Mescidinde Dinlerarası Diyalog", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 127-128.

²⁵ Şinasi Gündüz, *Küresel Sorunlar ve Din*, Ankara Okulu Yay., Ankara 2005, pp. 73-75, 78, 99; Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Yeni Bir Misyon Yöntemi Mi?", pp. 25-29; Mahmut Aydın, *Monologdan Diyaloga*, Ankara Okulu Yay. Ankara 2001, pp. 92-96, 190-197; Abdurrahman Küçük, "Dinlerarası Diyaloga Niçin İhtiyaç Vardır", *Dini Araştırmalar*, Vol. 1/1 1998, pp. 38-39; Alıcı, *Müslüman-Hıristiyan Diyalogu*, pp. 140-185, 218-223; Lütfullah Göktaş, "İl. Vatikan Konsili Belgelerinde Müslümanlara İlişkin İbarelerin Çevirisi Üzerine", *İslamiyat*, Vol. 3/4 2000, pp. 181-194.

²⁶ Gündüz, *Misyonerlik*, DİB. Yay., Ankara 2005, pp. 99-100; Mustafa Alıcı, "Müşterek Kelimeler ve Aykırı Oluşlar: Al-i İmran 64. Ayeti ve Müslüman-Hıristiyan Diyalog Sürecine Pratik Bir Bakış", *Köprü*, Vol. 93/2006, pp. 23-24; Küçük, "Dinlerarası Diyaloga Niçin İhtiyaç Vardır", p. 41; Talbi, "Medine Mescidinde Dinlerarası Diyalog", pp. 130-131; Gündüz, "Turistik Faaliyetler...", *İnanç Turizmi Günleri II, 16-18 Nisan İzmir 2004*, pp. 158-159; Gündüz, *Küresel Sorunlar ve Din*, pp. 76-78.

²⁷ Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Üzerine", *Tezkire*, 11/23 2001 pp. 129-131, 139, 141; Aydın, "Dünya Banşısı...", *İnanç Turizmi Günleri II*, pp. 142; Küçük, "Dinlerarası Diyaloga Niçin

be a purchase of opinion that information about *the other* is compared, exchanged and arranged with new knowledge. Moreover, this process must be valid for *the other* side. Therefore, it is desired that individual tries to understand the truth and religion perception of *the other* by taking himself for *the other* in dialogue process.²⁸

Discourse about the other's religious understanding will get validity, throughout accepting it by *the other* personally. So, seeing the idea of truth and salvation as ultimate reality by believers of a religion is the indispensable distinctive component of that faith or tradition. To take this circumstance as a difference will make this dialogical relation healthier/more reliable.²⁹

Especially, it is defended that common ethical and practical situations must be spoken in dialogue activities. To tell the truth, getting together me and *the other* for solution against problems which threat future of humanity like starvation, poverty, unemployment, ethical destruction, unbelief, health, education and law is to be counted as fundamental duty for dialogue³⁰. It is emphasized that having been cooperated for solving such common problems more than theological themes and having been looked at contributions of religion in the frame of dialogue. However, ignoring religious matters or disregarding them

İhtiyaç Vardır", pp. 37; Talbi, "Medine Mescidinde Dinlerarası Diyalog", pp. 129-130; Alıcı, "Müşterek Kelimeler ve Aykırı Oluşlar", pp. 26-27.

²⁸ Ömer F. Harman, "İslam ve Diğer Dinler", *Kültürlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumu*, pp. 82-88; Alıcı, "Müşterek Kelimeler ve Aykırı Oluşlar", pp. 24-25, 29-30, 33; Mahmut Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Üzerine", pp. 129; Gündüz, *Küresel Sorunlar ve Din*, p. 78; Gündüz, "Turistik Faaliyetler.", p. 157; Yasin Meral, "Dinlerarası Diyalog Sempozyumundan Genel İzlenimler", *Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. 9/2004, pp. 229-235.

²⁹ Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Yeni Bir Misyon Yöntemi Mi?", pp. 30-31; Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Üzerine", p. 134; Aydın, "Dünya Barışı...", pp. 137-138; Alıcı, Müslüman-Hıristiyan Diyalogu, pp. 20-22, 26-27.

³⁰ Gündüz, *Küresel Sorunlar ve Din*, p. 79; Talbi, "Medine Mescidinde Dinlerarası Diyalog", pp. 131-133; Küçük, "Dinlerarası Diyaloga Niçin İhtiyaç Vardır", p. 37; Aydın, "Dünya Barışı...", p. 140.

may affect the relationship with *the other* in negative sense. At least, solutions offered by religions have importance in solving mentioned common themes.³¹

Representatives of this attitude have thought that equality between sides of dialogue is necessary for making dialogue healthy. Further they believe that's impossible in institutional measure. In this context, it is mentioned inequality situations in recent dialogue activities: (i) it is talked about that agenda and themes off/for dialogue are determined by Christians. (ii) It is expressed that while Christians speak on behalf of their institution, Muslims remain individual. (iii) It is stated in particular that Muslims couldn't express them sufficiently owing to formal speech language is English.³²

This approach that is in side of individual dialogue activities, want sides to try to be in agreement as far as possible and to avoid definite decisions. Firstly, it is taken basis to discover common points after that to state different points and than to express both common and different matters. The most important pre-condition of these meetings is the entering sides into dialogue without bias.³³

Some followers of that attitude prescribe that it must be a criterion which all people accept it as common value in regarding on evaluation the matters other suggests. For instance according to Mahmut Aydın, human self-respect and humanly values occupy a place in center of this ethical criterion. Therefore, faith bases which religious traditions put forward, have acquired validity, accuracy

³¹ Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Yeni Bir Misyon Yöntemi Mi?", pp. 42-45; Alıcı, *Müslüman-Hıristiyan Diyalogu*, pp. 68-69; Küçük, "Dinlerarası Diyaloga Niçin İhtiyaç Vardır", pp. 42-43; Aydın, "Dünya Barışı...", p. 141.

³² Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog Üzerine*, p. 134; Alıcı, "Müşterek Kelimeler ve Aykırı Oluşlar", p. 28; Alıcı, *Müslüman-Hıristiyan Diyalogu*, p. 23; Aydın, "Dinler Arası Diyalog Yeni Bir Misyon Yöntemi Mi?" p. 29.

³³ Gündüz, "Turistik Faaliyetler...", p. 155; Aydın, "Dünya Barışı...", pp. 138-139; Alıcı, "Müşterek Kelimeler ve Aykırı Oluşlar", pp. 25-26; Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog Üzerine*, pp. 133-134, 136, 139.

and importance in proportion to suitability to benefit of humanity and humanly values.³⁴

CONCLUSION/EVALUATION

First approach that expresses dialogue only with mission is seemed to ignore some cases. Having been claimed that the cases which church counts as world common problems absolutely is for mission and furthermore, Christian world has no any anxiety and curiosity/concern about them, gives an attempt to comprehend intention. Whereas, dissimilar to institutional dialogue enterprise of Catholic and Protestant world. There is found individual dialogue endeavors which consist of world peace and social themes without associated with missionary.

Nationalism and national identity discourse constitute the main point of this attitude. In respect of that, globalization and West that defends it, try to change the Turkish national culture and its religious understanding throughout components that may be in contrary to national culture like interreligious dialogue. Since, the opposite attitude advocates that dialogue is a newly-made conception and West invents it. It defends that Muslim Non-Muslim relationships is so affirmative in historical context.

The approach, which defends dialogue passionately, is seemed to advocate assertions of Vatican/Church. However, the relationship between dialogue and mission has never negated in development period of Vatican dialogue understanding and moreover it has spoken that this relation is how it must be. In point of view of being comprehended of Catholic Church's dialogue understanding, it may look at the dialogue documents about expressions towards Muslims. When it is made, it could be seen that Catholic Church puts forward its standpoint throughout a Muslim description in spite of Muslims.

The discourse of common father Abraham doesn't make the distinctiveness of theological differences and the separated prophetic understandings which

³⁴ Aydın, *Dinler Arası Diyalog Üzerine*, pp. 137-140.

stems from theological differences. However, the Abraham's description of Judaism, of Christianity and of Islam and conceptual frame that lay on him, is absolutely different from each other. Other than that, Islam has intended to purify the *tawhid* understanding/perceptiveness which is distorted, from untrue/superstitious matters.

Claiming that the current interreligious dialogue discourse was in Quran, in life of prophet and in the historical frame/background so many centuries ago, before Vatican expresses it, the attitude that desires dialogue has fallen into error by appropriating a newly modern conception or a pattern which is fulfilled its content by churches to Islamic history and terminology.

The assertion that sides of two edges of dialogue are equal in contemporary dialogue activities is seemed untrue. Since, that equality is come to mean to establish an Islamic institution against Vatican which is unique competent authority of Western Catholic world in religious matter and expresses the current interreligious dialogue. However, such an institution isn't in question in standpoint of Islam.

The manner which adopts the necessity of dialogical relation, unlike other attitudes, has presented a wider perspective in dealing with the frame of dialogue discourse. In this context, the attitude, which mentions individual dialogue and cares about it, is in favor of being treated ethical and social themes further than theological ones by believers. Despite of that, to be ignored the religious-theological themes damages dialogical relation. Also, the period of dialogue will not be damaged as long as the absolute truth and salvation discourse which emerge from own faiths of believers are accepted valid/meaningful in its own religious traditions.

At last analysis, beyond these three attitudes, these three cases have significant in constituting a Muslim theology for religions. (i) Firstly, a relationship, that is purposed being purified the prejudices about *the other* and being aimed for understanding of *the other*/collocutor and learning some things from him, is necessary. (ii) Secondly, in the same way, the purpose of explaining and presenting himself to *the other* has formed another face of this relation. (iii) Lastly,

it must be come together to resist in common problems and to find solutions for them. Existing of these three dimensions together will make dialogue activity possible.