

Comparative Philosophy and Cross-cultural Dialogue in the Bosnian Context

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The Bosnian paradigm is positioned in this paper in a manner diametrically opposite to current prevailing perceptions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We seek to provide a proper response to the current situation and the central issue: Are we to focus on our differences, or on what we have in common in Bosnia? It is my intention to demonstrate that this is not the true face of traditional Bosnia, but that the Bosnian tradition, rightly understood, can serve as a model not only *of*, but also *for* inter-religious relations in Europe and the world at large. As a result, I not only adhere to, but resolutely promote the idea of Bosnia as a microcosm – a paradigm – of world relations over the centuries, or as shedding light on the context of evolving cultural pluralism. In this regard, the war waged from 1992 to 1995 between competing ethno-religious particularisms, styled the “war against Bosnia,” is only its Frankenstein appearance. Support for the Bosnian model and paradigm is thus not only a question of choice, but one that makes up or breaks up the image of the modern world, enhancing or undermining our confidence in the unity of that world.

At this prestige institution of ours, the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Sarajevo, which is the cornerstone of every serious state, we genuinely foster this kind of openness as the only possible and realistic project: openness to comparative considerations, since comparative philosophy and cross-cultural dialogue are naturally about change. The fact of change within them is an indication of the need for engagement in the context of our global world and a new philosophy of education, which is badly needed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key words: Bosnian paradigm, cross-cultural philosophical pluralism, philosophy of education.

I

In their introduction to a collection of papers¹⁾ dealing with the interaction of globalizing processes, issues of equality, the value of diversity, the urgent need for educational innovation, and its prospects – issues that were the focus of my own interest during my stay as a Fulbright scholar at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa in Honolulu from August to December 2006 – the editors (who were co-organizers of the East-West conference on education in Hawai'i last year²⁾) referred to what might well have been part of the background of the congress: “Education is the point of departure for the cultivation of human culture in all of its different forms. While there are many contested conceptions of what is meant by a “good” education, not many would challenge the premise that education is a good thing and that we should invest heavily in it. In this volume, representatives

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1) *Educations and their purposes: A Conversation among Cultures*, eds. Roger T. Ames and Peter D. Hershock, University of Hawai'i Press, 2006.

2) The 9th East-West philosophical conference, co-organized by the University of Hawai'i and the East-West Center, brought together more than 200 philosophers and scholars from 35 countries in order to discuss this topic.

of different cultures and with alternative conceptions of human realization explore themes at the intersection between a changing world and the values we would choose to promote and embody in the ways in which we educate the next generation³⁾”.

The need for education, which could be described as the burning issue of the day, is nothing new: education is one of the oldest subjects of philosophical reflection, right back into antiquity. Interest in the means and meaning of acquiring, defining, evaluating and conveying knowledge has been central to practical philosophy, and these issues are inseparable from the philosophical quest for an appropriate conception and specific expression of good living standards, particularly in this age of globalization. This has invariably and inevitably left an indelible stamp on education.

Unfortunately, given the world’s tunnel vision and the herd instinct that has characterized this part of the world over the past fifteen years or so, along with the absence of any genuinely critical spirit or open, critically structured mode of thought, relevant literature and periodicals in this field⁴⁾, we are facing a situation in which grotesque criteria have been set that are entirely foreign to the Bosnian identity: “standards” of a depraved nature far from what one would hope might be the rule nowadays. However, the link between education and philosophy is certainly not limited only to the western tradition, and in this regard Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has for centuries – indeed, for a millennium and more – been a natural bridge between East and West, could play a crucial part, particularly on account of its Islamic component and an honest interpretation of Islam in the EU.

In what way, then, are we to contemplate the current intellectual diversity within the field of the philosophy of education in an authoritative and lucid manner; how are we to emphasize the diversity of opinion and, where appropriate, disagreement and debate which is essential to this field? Given the locus where this congress is being held, what is the true Bosnian understanding today of the fundamental problems of educational theory and practice, the central issues of this discipline, if we ignore the pathological separation of classrooms along national lines and the herd instinct I have already referred to? Hence, in addition to its other achievements and contributions to the field of research in this discipline, this congress could provide for the Bosnian context and the region as a whole an important project of one or two volumes of essays on a comprehensible and authoritative account of the field, which could be an incomparable guide for the philosophy of education, if not as it is, then at least as it should be in our postmodern world.

3) *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

4) By way of example, the following are some of the periodicals on this subject that are lacking, and sorely needed, in our part of the world:

- British Journal of Educational Studies published by the Society for Educational Studies, one of Britain’s foremost education periodicals;
- Educational Philosophy and Theory published by the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia
- Journal of Philosophy of Education, journal of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain.
- Philosophical Studies in Education, published annually by the Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society.
- Philosophy of Education Yearbook, a publication of the Philosophy of Education Society.
- Philosophy of Music Education Review
- Prospero
- Teaching Philosophy,
- Philosophy East/West, and in particular P4C (Philosophy for Children), and many others.

II

There is, of course, a purpose to my mention of the Hawai'i conference, since to some extent it rectified the neglect of the non-western contribution to this field of research, providing possible new lines of investigation that should supplement Bosnia's pronounced component of Islamic provenance with which I personally am concerned here. However, this would entail penetrating the thickets of the various centres of the philosophy of education, and entering the diverse landscapes that have been and are still emerging on the intellectual map of the modern world⁵⁾.

Of particular importance in this new educational pragmatism, prompted by globalization, is the question of multiculturalism, of cultural pluralism in education, the prime indicator of the state of affairs in our region and the best detector of the distortion of the traditional Bosnian philosophy of the neighbourhood, of good neighbourly relations, caused by the insanity of national particularities and ethnicities, the cult of the nation to which so many have become enslaved. Here I should like to underline the importance to us of comparative studies and of the Hawai'i programme itself as a distinguished model, since this was the reason for my post-doctoral study visit to the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa, an attempt to seek refuge in an opinion and proper stance towards the complexities of today's globalized world⁶⁾.

The ideal, then, would be for me to give an account of the part played by the Hawai'i programme, the periodical *Philosophy East and West*, the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, and various East-West philosophical conferences (dedicated to eastern and western philosophy), with reference to what could be done in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the future in this regard, always bearing in mind the question of time and my audience's tolerance levels.

Here we are taking a significant step forward, already leading us into the field of comparative philosophy – or what might nowadays better be styled “cross-cultural,” “transcultural” or, simply, “global” philosophy – which ever since its beginnings has manifested a wealth of different aims, methods and styles. Before briefly summing up the most persistent of these and setting out some of the features of what is regarded as its most valuable purpose, however, its contribution to creative philosophical critical thought, at least according to the patriarch of comparative philosophy Professor Eliot Deutch⁷⁾, whose help and mentoring was immense value to me during my stay in Hawai'i, permit me to suggest the rationale for this type of undertaking and the need to introduce this philosophical discipline in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly at the University of Sarajevo,

5) See in particular the introductory chapter to *A Companion to the Philosophy of Education* (Blackwell Companions to Philosophy), ed. Paul Standish (author), Nigel Blake (editor), Paul Smeyers (editor), Richard Smith (editor), Blackwell Publishing, 2002, pp. 1-17, which is a comprehensible and authoritative account of this field by 53 experts. The book is an introduction to the key areas of the philosophy of education, and also includes essays written by eminent experts in this field. Each chapter sets out a problem, discusses the current state of the discipline and provides a sound basis for further study.

6) See my interview with Prof. Chung-ying Cheng from the said University, published in the review *Odjek*, (spring 2007, Vol. LX, no. 1, pp. 91-94: “Postoji sve više dijaloga među filozofskim i religijskim tradicijama u svijetu danas”). There is increasing dialogue between philosophical and religious traditions in the world today.

7) See Eliot Deutsch, “Keynote Address: Comparative Philosophy: Past, Present and Future,” in: *ASIANetwork EXCHANGE, A Newsletter for teaching about Asia*, Vol. XI, No. 1, Autumn 2003, pp. 10-12.

where I have been teaching the History of Eastern Philosophy for the past twelve years.

Nowadays, to the extent that we share Professor Deutsch's rationale for the introduction of this discipline, we have become more cautious, realizing that philosophical problems, and the answers that are proffered, are highly contextualized, and one of the major creative functions of comparative philosophy is to enquire how our initial formulation of a specific problem may itself be reformulated in the light of the alternative possibilities expressed in other traditions. We have also begun to grasp the fact that the very idea of philosophy may indicate quite different things in different culture, and that there is a great deal we must learn from these other concepts, which leads us straight to comparative philosophy as creative philosophy. The assumption is that this enquiry will enable us to become open to developing new and better forms of philosophical understanding.

One of the enduring aims of comparative or cross-cultural philosophy was to make plain the foundations of the cognitive and evaluative premises of traditions that differ from our own (historical, and mainly Asiatic), in the expectation that we would gain greater clarity and understanding of the precepts that inform us concerning the tradition of another. We thereby begin to know ourselves better, in keeping with the convictions of these philosopher-comparativists, within and through the recognition of other, alternative conceptual frameworks, values and modes of organization and discovering meaning from human experience. Within comparative philosophy, the main focus of study is on the principal Asiatic (and, nowadays, many other non-western) traditions, how they disclose diverse modes of thought, and how they can be contrasted with one another and with various western forms. This would be comparative philosophy in its broadest cultural modality as encompassed by Deutsch and others from the Hawai'i circle of philosopher-comparatists.

However, in its earlier stages, there was also an underlying agenda, now regarded by many comparativists as somewhat naïve, the aim of which was to achieve a synthesis of what was regarded as finest and best in the various traditions, and to attain a degree of universal concord among philosophers, wherever they might be⁸⁾. This approach captured the attention of many philosophical pioneers in this field during the early and mid 20th century.

Other actors in this field adopted a rather universalistic approach, attempting to discern a topology of philosophical thought that could reveal universal formulae in eastern and western thought. One can see how empiricists, rationalists, theists, idealists, as Deutsch enumerates them, evolved similar positions in various traditions, as well as the differences that can be observed among them, which were also instructive. This process was in a way linked with the growing sophistication characterizing the academic study of non-western philosophical traditions where,

8) See in particular P.T. Raju, *Introduction to Comparative Philosophy*, University of Nebraska Press, 1962, where the following sentence appears in the foreword: "This need to understand is no longer a matter of mere intellectual curiosity but of survival," *op.cit.*, p. v, but so too does this: "No separate section is allotted to Islamic philosophy," *op. cit.*, p. vii. I regret to note that this trend is still with us, so that following a thorough study of all volumes of the excellent periodical of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa, I am able to state that only about two percent is dedicated to this field of research – and only then if one includes all the reviews of books from this philosophical tradition. This is inexcusably meagre, particularly after 11 September 2001.

with advanced linguistic abilities, many important technical texts were translated into English and other western languages and made much more widely available.

Another approach, which has gained prominence in recent decades, has been cobbled together to work against the background of 20th century western analytical philosophy. The focus was on questions of epistemology, the philosophy of language, and logic, where it was thought that a close and sophisticated reading of non-western texts could enrich western reflections on these issues; in short, that modern western philosophers had much to learn from traditions that differ from our own as regards their style of drawing conclusions, notions of truth, and analyses of the use and function of language.

This project could be regarded as part of a broader comparative enterprise that one might describe as a “problem-based approach,” particularly in education within a multicultural society such as Bosnia’s over its unbroken millennium-long existence, notwithstanding the current discontinuity that has prevailed over the past fifteen years or so.

Whether it be within ethics, metaphysics, aesthetics, or any other philosophical discipline, or even comparative pedagogy and a new philosophy of education, the idea is that we can identify the philosophical problems that run through different traditions and that we can make use of the resources of these traditions to deepen and broaden our own philosophical understanding and performance. It is scarcely necessary to underline the importance that this can have in the application of these standpoints in the education system of the locus of this congress.

I should like, then, to believe, along with the patriarchs of comparative philosophy, that in the approach to comparative philosophy, in its most exact and thrilling approach, there is a mass of internal philosophical value and interest in Asian philosophy, and that in keeping with this thinking it should not be viewed merely as some kind of historical (or exotic) curiosity⁹⁾. Our students should surely be able to study the Asian philosophy of education and upbringing in order to enrich their own philosophical background, so as to be better equipped to wrestle with the philosophical problems that interest them. But since intellectual curiosity is neither the acme nor the ultimate aim of comparative philosophy, without losing sight of the different and at times unique features of the tradition, we should be able to focus our attention on that same tradition, since it is the answer to a whole set of universal questions and problems, and to do so with the explicit intention of having these answers influence us spontaneously in our thinking. However, it would seem that the eastern contributions are still waiting in the cramped antechamber of western philosophical reflections, as to which I share the concern of the late Č. Veljačić¹⁰⁾.

9) See, e.g., *A Companion to World Philosophies*, ed. by Eliot Deutsch and Ron Bontekoe, Blackwell Publishers, 1997; *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Chung-Ying Cheng and Nicholas Bunnin, Blackwell Publishers, 2002; *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy*, ed. by James W. Heisig, Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, 2006; *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology*, ed. by Lawrence Cahoon, Blackwell Publishing, 2003; Hassan Ihab, *The Postmodern Turn: Essays in Postmodern Theory and Culture*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1987.

What I underline here is the need, which cannot be overemphasized, to state that this “orientalism” assumed that all philosophical traditions not defined as western presupposed something that could be identified solely on the basis of their being non-western.

10) Čedomil Veljačić (d. 1997), a true philosopher-comparatist, and a pioneer in this field in this part of the world.

The real impact of comparative philosophy, and thereby its contribution to education, is to restore the original integral framework, but in a much richer and better-articulated form, which could then become what we call a world perspective in philosophy¹¹. We are talking about cultivating a new philosophical spirit that cuts through traditional boundaries and opens their understanding to a range of cultural and intellectual histories so as to stimulate and encourage cross-cultural thinking among future generations of our younger colleagues, instead of continuing to descend into the squabbles which have left a generation of people waiting interminably for the restoration of the greater part of their heritage, which has been dealt a fatal blow¹².

III

Since, though, one of the aims of this congress is to define and perhaps to get to grips with the state of our education in the post-modern world, I should like to remind the audience that it is taking place in what has been declared by UNESCO as International Rumi Year, and that, at least as far as the Islamic context is concerned, some answers could be found in the oeuvre of this outstanding Muslim genius, and even perhaps a critical and feminist pedagogy in our quest for post-modern pedagogy itself.

Let us ask ourselves the question that Henry A. Giroux raises in one of his articles: “What does this suggest for developing some guiding principles in order to rethink the purpose and meaning of education and critical pedagogy within the present crises?¹³” Over and over again, the words of this Muslim genius instil hope in us in these dark times in which we are living. First, we need Rumi’s *ney* (the reed flute) to distract attention from the ever-louder beating of the drums announcing the supposedly inevitable clash of civilizations, and once again to illumine the relationships between human beings in this global world of ours. For every word that came from his lips is filled with love and the desire for peace, since he speaks straight to the heart, transcending all boundaries of time and space. Even now, eight centuries after his birth, Rumi is still building bridges of understanding between the Islamic world and the West, and his work is a shared foundation for coherent dialogue and sustainable peace.

As formerly, in Rumi’s day, now too we are feeling almost the same chaos and confusion, unrest and conflict wherever we turn and, instead of raising awareness of the need for mutual understanding, religious fervour is being misused in the so-called clash of civilizations, paving the way for the emergence of U-turned religion. Are we really ready and able to listen to one who is undoubtedly among the greatest teachers of universal love and peace and to instil it in our education

See his *Komparativno proučavanje indijske i evropske filozofije – stari vijek* (A Comparative Study of Indian and European Philosophy – Ancient Times) (unpublished doctoral dissertation) Zagreb University, 1962; *Razmeda azijskih filozofija*, University Press Liber, Zagreb, 1978; *Studies in Comparative Philosophy* (Lake House, Colombo), and especially *SUDESİKA: Festschrift Bhikkhu Nānajiṅvako (Čedomil Veljačić)*, ed/ Sinisa Djokic, Antibarbarus, Zagreb, 1997.

11) P.T. Raju, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

12) By which I mean the mental baggage being carried by Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims, which elsewhere I refer to as the “Frankenstein appearance” of Bosnia since the Dayton Peace Accord.

13) Henry A. Giroux, “Towards a Postmodern Pedagogy,” in: *From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology*, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, p. 384.

curricula as the spiritual inspiration for the 21st century? Mawlana Jalaladdin Muhammad Rumi himself, also known as Mevlevi, Hudavandigar, and Molla-i Rum, along with epithets such as Balkhi, Rumi and Konavi, anticipated such needs as we now have with these lines:

*I silently moaned so that for a hundred centuries to come,
The world would echo in the sound of my hayhā¹⁴⁾
It would turn on the axis of my hayhāt¹⁵⁾.*

For Rumi, in fact, every human being is an index of the entire universe: he believed that the human being is the microcosmos of the macrocosmos. It should be noted that this doctrine was expressed at a time when the Mongol terror was ruling the world, and it was in such times that this man emerged, to breathe into people's ears the song of life, the meaning of eternity, and the evidence of existence. It was a principle of love as communication with the truth, a call for peace and unity, which is the slogan of today's globalization processes. Indeed, like Eva de Vitray Meyerovitch, I am now deeply convinced that authentic Islam may best be presented to the West through Rumi's teachings and philosophy¹⁶⁾. How else, after all, are we to understand his invitation:

*Come, come whoever you are
Wanderer, worshipper, lover of living, it doesn't matter,
Ours is not a caravan of despair
Come, even if you have broken your vow a thousand times
Come, yet again, come, come.*

In Europe, and in particular over the past thirty years or so in the United States¹⁷⁾, the universal dimension of Mawlana's message is always emphasized through his teachings of the universality of Islam. He advocated pluralism and drew attention to the beauty of diversity without undermining the essence of the religious tradition to which he belonged, a point that is worthy of underlining in this age of U-turned Islam. Furthermore, any religious community (and not only the Muslim *umma*) that disapproves of unity in diversity and diversity in unity will lapse into fundamentalism, whereas the true response to this contrast lies in fact in the recognition of the equality of all and the realization that we are all equally helpless before God. Mawlana, then, demonstrated that religious belief and democracy may be complementary, and it is this critical pedagogy of his of which we are in such desperate need today, and not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as we continue to advance and evolve the democratic process. With this doctrine of his he touches every rational soul, yet it is abundantly clear that it derives from the profound notion of tawhīd, since Rumi did not construct his theology of tolerance and inclusive spirituality by

14) The words *hayhā* and *hayhāt* are variant forms with the same meaning – Alas, or Woe is me!

15) Rumi, *Divan-i Kabir*, ghazal no. 562/7.

16) Eva de Vitray Meyerovitch, *L'islam, l'autre visage*, Le Seuil, 1995, pp. 55-56 and 77.

17) See the supplement at the end of this paper under the heading Further Reading, provided that it be understood I am in no way asserting that this is a definitive list of a growing body of literature. In addition, one should refer to the newly established web site of the recently concluded international symposium on Rumi: www.semazen.net (8-12 May 2007, Istanbul and Konya).

departing from traditional Islam, but by immersing himself deeply in it¹⁸).

For this reason, at this prestige institution of ours, the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Sarajevo, which is the cornerstone of every serious state, we genuinely need this kind of openness as the only possible and realistic project: openness to comparative considerations, since comparative philosophy and cross-cultural dialogue are naturally about change. The fact of change within them is an indication of the need for engagement in the context of our global world and a new philosophy of education, which is so sorely needed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has long been heir to the tradition of this kind of universalist, inclusivist education and upbringing on the tenets of Rumi's openness and philosophy of Love, where Love has metaphysical and ontological status. For instance, the first Mevlevi tekke, built by Isa-beg Ishaković at Bentbaša in Sarajevo, was founded as long ago as 1462. The authentic, indigenous Islamic component has thus always been imbued with the tenets of teachings in line with a global civilization of love and peace, which is our present-day idea of modern and postmodern education – despite the obstacles we encounter on our path at this time. The point is whether you focus more on similarities or on differences. If one emphasizes and insists on differences, which certainly exist – it would be unreasonable to deny it – there really is no chance of hearing one another and of constructive action, since in this frame of mind one is more inclined to pick up the worm-eaten fruit that long since fell from the Abrahamic monotheistic tree common to Judaism, both eastern and western Christianity and Islam; instead of plucking the succulent fruits from the tree itself, they cling to its broken branches. If, on the other hand, you are more concerned with similarities, of which there are far more than there are differences, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, you go beyond those differences and avoid the insanity of the present reciprocalities, the national folly of the cult of ethnicity, national parochialisms and the tunnel vision image of the world that has been with us since Dayton, the most blatant expression of which is now the ghetto-school – two schools under a single roof, on the pretext of preserving the pupils' national identity. At the same time, these same champions of their own ethnos do little or nothing to preserve and present in the proper manner that which is truly of value in their tradition, making it absolutely plain that it is a matter of nothing more than ideological dictate¹⁹).

However, like the rest of the world we are going through a crisis of value orientation, and the question now is what stance we should adopt towards the social complexities of the globalized world. As I see it on the basis of my best insights into this matter, in this age of conflictual relations between differing world views, it is nonetheless a propitious moment increasingly to reach for Rumi's model of thought, since he stands for what is common ground for all of us in holding

18) Of course, the notion of individual freedom on the one hand and religious commitment on the other in the West is still an open question, with the disorientation that religious commitment generates. In this paper, I style this disorientation U-turned or modified religion, religion designed to serve ideological ends; not only U-turned Islam, then, but any religion created in that mould.

19) In support of this claim, one need only consider the attitude to one of Bosnia's greatest philosophers, Abdullah Bosnawi (d. 1644), whose grave in Konya is unmarked, who remains a foreigner in his own homeland while dozens of scholars the world over have gained their doctorates on his oeuvre, and who is the finest representative of this Rumi-style universalist and inclusivist approach. And this is to say nothing of the fact that this same Faculty lacks, say, Departments of Archaeology, of Ethnology, and much else besides.

dialogue and extensive mutual understanding, creating a promising cross-cultural dimension not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also world wide.

IV

My decision to further a deeper familiarity in the West with Bosnia's multicultural and multireligious achievements led me last year to the Department of Philosophy of the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa and the East-West Center thanks to the Fulbright academic exchange programme, which is firmly committed to the application of creative values in fostering understanding between East and West. Consequently, to make a link between the East-West conference on education held in Hawai'i and this world congress of pedagogues in Sarajevo in the spirit of philosophical cross-cultural pluralism, and with the aim of stimulating global philosophy and comparative pedagogy in Bosnia and a new philosophy of education – in line with my own views and insights – comparative philosophical and pedagogical studies and the mission to evolve a new cosmopolitan tradition can no longer neglect this old Bosnian tradition of multicultural relations, especially when there are those who are reviving and consciously articulating it here and now.

There is another reason, too, which I should like to add at this point: bearing in mind this old, millennium-long experience of multicultural relations between the Abrahamic traditions in Bosnia, we can discover there a certain salvific knowledge and solution to the current debate on and interpretation of Islam, not only in the EU, but also world wide. This could be the Bosnian Muslims' major and extremely valuable contribution to banishing U-turned Islam (in Arabic, *al-islām al-mu'addal*) from centre-stage, and could be a further reason for the EU's accepting them as soon as possible, since they genuinely possess this type of lived experience of multicultural and a so badly needed measure of equilibrium, notwithstanding all the misfortunes they have endured over the centuries²⁰.

And yet, for all that, Bosnia – located as it is on a major fault line – continues to evolve as a multinational and multicultural state in a world composed of different races, nations, religions and cultures. The author of this paper firmly believes, as does our colleague Imamović, that the current state of affairs and intermittent conflicts are just a passing phase in our progress towards such circumstances. However, as things now stand it is both the privilege and the duty of the international spokespersons of various traditions to familiarize each other and the world at large with the present unnatural state of affairs in Bosnia and the urgent need to restore the Bosnian paradigm, the old way of life in Bosnia, as seen in the wider global perspective. Only then shall we be able to state with truth what we so earnestly wish for: the major fault line has been stabilized.

It remains to be seen how much longer we shall persist in our intellectual myopia and parochialism in Bosnia, instead of immersing ourselves in what we share, as our old way of life in Bosnia, our millennium-long experience of multiculturalism: indeed, it is for us to decide. However, it is already abundantly clear that, though specific in its context, this Bosnian experience

20) See Mustafa Imamović, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Evolution of Its Political and Legal Institutions*, trans. by Saba Risaluddin, Magistrat, Sarajevo, 2006.

has implications for our increasingly globalized world by opening up greater opportunities, or even the ever more urgent and growing need for cross-cultural interaction – a need shared by the entire human community that looks to that part of the world for inspiration and leadership in attaining multireligious and multicultural peace and harmony, writing a new chapter in the history of world philosophy and the new, nascent philosophy of education that we are now witnessing.

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