The Contribution of Buddhism and Christianity to Peace in the World

Karl M. Woschitz

Exposition of the Topic

THE matter of peace as a "global utopia of survival" (G. Picht) has, in consideration of the open and structural violence of wars, and the "organized lack of peace," taken on a new urgency. The question of peace appears to have become a question of avowal for both the most significant and most widely spread religions, Christianity and Buddhism. This is because in both religions, peace is a basic value and a radical challenge to appear as a power to bring about peace in the middle of peaceless world circumstances. Peacelessness, with the chronically experienced endangerment of the individual as well as groups of people, accompanies their history like a long, dark shadow. Furthermore, a glance in the history of religion of peoples can show that along with the deities of growth, the earth, and the heavens, which were revered as being close to the lives of the people, there were also always gods of war. Simultaneously, the utopia of the "golden age" counted among the people's hopes and aspirations, in which neither violence nor dispute exists.

Problem Indication

However, a glance at the histories of both world religions, Christianity and Buddhism, oppressively shows that during the course of their historical paths, both, the one more, the other less, have also created a considerable factor of peacelessness. In the tradition of both religions, the discrepancy between the basic messages on one hand meets their empirical historical manifestations on the other. A consideration of the history of both therefore seems to obviously suggest the differentiation between the theological determination of the "Christian" and "Buddhist" on one side, and their historical form of appearance on the other, with all the entanglement in military aggressions and wars. Against this background, therefore, the question of the peace—competence of Buddhism and Christianity arises anew, which also means questioning their contribution to the sociopolitical realization of peace. How much does a repressive, authoritarian, punitive, and dogmatic way of thinking play a

role as a peace inhibiting potential? It is also not surprising that the religions' contribution is not only generally ignored by some circles of scientific peace research, but also their competence to be entitled to have a say is refuted—even disqualified as being system stabilizing, and is therefore written off as hostile to peace.

The Buddhist and Christian Voices on the Topic of Peace

How is the topic of peace (and human rights) developed in the second large Buddhist school, the Mahayana ("large vehicle," from the 1st century b.C.), which, thanks to its diversity, wants to open the path to redemption to a multitude of people, even all beings? The goal of Buddhahood is aimed at the attainment of enlightenment, to be able to be effective for the benefit of all. There are three significant concepts for this, namely

aa) the attainment of Buddhahood, which is the birthright and highest goal of all beings;
bb) the teaching of "mutual dependence," i.e., the teaching of the "relationship" or "relativity" of all beings; and
cc) the teaching of Karma as a concept of the causality of action.

To aa)

According to mayanistic teachings, the Buddha nature (Skrt.: Buddhatā) is the true unchangeable and eternal nature of all beings, and thus the basis for the possibility of becoming a Buddha, i.e., of attaining enlightenment. Enlightenment (bodhi, literally "awaken") is attained through the realization of the four levels of the transcendent path, and through the perfection of the 37 things belonging to enlightenment—among them the eightfold path (Skrt. āryāṣṭāṅgo-mārgo) and the abolition of ignorance (avidyā), i.e. through realization of the four noble truths.

According to the highest teachings of Buddhism, as their expression is found, e.g., in Zen, every living being and every thing is and has always been Buddha nature or Buddha-being (Jap. Busshō), so that it is necessary to experience this assumption of original perfection and to achieve it in daily life. According to the Nirvana sutra, every human has the potential to become a Bodhisattva, an "enlightenment being." The path there is the systematic practice of perfections of virtues while striving for Buddhahood. To the "paramitā" (literally: "that, which reaches the other shore," the transcendent), count virtues such as willingness to donate, morality, patience, energy, meditation, and wisdom, among others. The decisive characteristic that determines those who strive for

Buddhahood is compassion (karuṇā), that is, active sympathy and tender affection. It extends to all living beings, and is based on the experience of the unity of all beings in enlightenment (bodhi). However, karuṇā must be accompanied by wisdom (prajñā), in order to be able to be effective in the correct way. A Bodhisattva initiates active help, and is willing to take the suffering of all beings on itself and to transfer karmic merit to other beings.

The virtue of compassion (often translated as pity or sympathy),—karuṇā as an aspect of active help,—is personified in Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. This was one of the most important Bodhisattvas in Mahayana. His name means: "The one who perceives (answers) the sounds (screams) of the world" or also as "The sound, which enlightens the world." I.e., he embodies one of the two essential aspects of Buddhahood, compassion. Therefore, he also often carries the epithet "mahā-karuṇā," the great compassion. The other essential aspect of Buddhahood however, is wisdom (prajñā), which is personified by the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Mañjuśrī (Jap. Monju) literally means: "The one who is noble and gentle."

Avalokiteśvara is active power of the Buddha Amitābha and appears as one of his helpers. Amitābha, also Amita, (Jap. Amida) literally means "Boundless light" and symbolizes compassion and wisdom. His boundless compassion is directed especially at needy beings. In Japan, Avalokiteśvara is worshiped under the name of Kannon (also Kanzeon or Kwannon) and is predominantly regarded as being feminine.

To bb)

The idea of the mutual dependence of all sees all things in their relation to each other. In the collection of Pali canons, the Majjhima-nikāya, it says: "If this exists, that exists. If this is not there, that is also not there. Because this comes into being, that comes into being. Because this disappears, that disappears."

Behind that lies the idea that everything in this world stands not by itself, but only in relationship to others. That, however, implies an active mutual respect of the potential for the Buddhahood inherent in each individual person. Regarded positively, it means "pity" in the sense of compassion. In the Lotus Sutra (Skrt. Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, i.e. "Sutra of the Lotus of the Good Law"), which contains the essential concepts of Mahayana with the teaching of the transcendental being of the Buddha and the possibility of universal redemption, is the speech on the practice of pity by Bodhisattva Sadāparibhūta, who worshipped all people due to their potential of Buddhahood. To attain this means to lib-

erate oneself from egocentric dependency and illusion; to devote oneself to others in solidarity and consideration. This sutra is supposed to have been spoken by the Buddha at the end of the time of his teaching, but was written down only in the year 200.

Miao-Io (711–782), who stood in the tradition of the Lotus Sutra, developed the principle of "inseparability of subject and its environment" and therewith the symbiotic relationship of person and nature.

The Tibet form of Avalokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva of compassion, is Chenresi (Tibet, literally: "Beholding with clear eyes"). He is considered to be the founder of the Tibetan people and the patron saint of the "Snow Country." One of his incarnations is the Dalai Lama (Dalai blama; Mongol.-Tibet, literally: "Teacher, whose wisdom is as large as the ocean").

To cc)

The karma concept of the causality of action says that everyone carries the ethical responsibility for his actions; every one creates his karma though thinking, speaking, and acting. The Sanskrit word karma means action, and according to the Buddhist opinion, is the universal law of cause and effect. It works in the way described by A. Bareau: "The act (karma) creates a fruit (phala) under certain circumstances; if it is ripe, then it falls on the responsible. So that an action bears fruit, it must be morally good (kuśala) or bad (akuṣala) and be caused by a willful impulse, which, by leaving a trace in the psyche of the perpetrator, steers his destiny in a certain direction due to the retribution of the action. As the duration of ripening usually exceeds that of existence, the retribution of the actions necessarily result in one or several rebirths, which taken together determine the cycle of existence (Saṃsāra)."

In the conception of karma, the outside and inside of people is made a subject of discussion, as well as the noting of the internal records in their significance, because only they ensure a peaceful and harmonious cohabitation.

An additional central term in Mahayana Buddhism is void, śūnyatā. Here all things are seen as non-intrinsic, i.e., as being void of an own nature. They are understood as being free of a self-sufficing independent existence or a permanent substance. That does not mean that they do not exist, but only that they are nothing but mere appearances, and do not represent the true reality. I.e., they do not possess a substantiality (svabhāvatā). All dharmas are fundamentally without independent, permanent substance; are nothing but pure phenomena, which do not exist outside of the void. Śūnyatā carries and permeates all phenomena and is

that which makes their development possible in the first place. All things represent nothing more than appearances. In Mahayana, in many cases śūnyatā is identified with the absolute, as it is free of duality and empirical forms.

Buddhist Analysis of the Human State of Mind

The teachings, which lay at the foundation of these two religions, reflect the preaching and teachings of the Buddha and of Jesus, which were collected and handed-down by the respective community of disciples. Even in early Buddhism, along with the "Buddha-word," other traditions were also regarded as binding. The substantial parts of the "Buddha-word" are preserved in the Pali canon. This concerns the spiritual revolt, which starts out with a fundamental analysis of the human state, the conditio humana, and offers it a therapeutic spiritual path to salvation. The first sermon, held in Varanasi (Benares) sets the "Wheel of the Teaching" in motion with the basic analysis that everything is sorrowful, transient and "not the self," because the five forms of human existence, i.e., its bodily form of existence, its feelings, its perceptions, its physical "construction," and consciousness are transient. The reason for the creation of suffering, however, is human greed ("thirst"/tṛṣṇā) for existence, which bans one to the cycle of reincarnations.

In the Buddhist concept, the individual being is defined by the greediness of its desire for wanting to-be-self, its clinging to itself, and the correlation to all things to itself. It is the "thirst" (Skrt. tṛṣṇā), in which simultaneously the "ignorance" of the truth (avidyā) and persistence in the transient-apparent (māyā) is expressed. Along with this option for triviality of the world, the goal of salvation lies in nirvana. One could name a Christian parallel to the term "thirst" in the term "concupiscentia."

With the help of the so-called "eightfold path," the basic substance of the Buddhist teaching, this cycle of human suffering within the interminable reincarnations could be brought to peace, i.e. to knowledge, to awakening, and to fading away (nirvana). The starting point of this teaching is a humanitarian attitude with a deep psychological and ethical experience as well as an intensive spiritual search, which is kept up through all the various forms of the teaching. All additional forms of the teaching in all their differences are characterized by this original search for overcoming suffering.

In the secession from the religion of the Brahmans and their Vedic tradition carried out by Buddha, the question that stands in the center is: "Is it possible to exert dominion, without conquering or being conquered" (Saṃyutta-nikāya 4,20)? Along with the diagnosis of the basic

conditionalities of people with the so-called "four noble truths" of suffering and the underlying causes of suffering factors, Buddha initiates the therapeutic path, which is also full of consequences for the topic of "peace." In the Buddhist ethic, which oscillates between the two supporting pillars of the "four noble truths" on the one hand and nirvana as the "place of rest" on the other, the idea of peace is fundamentally anchored in a two-fold way: in the form of "non-injuring" (ahiṃsā),— initially as a radical regulation for the monk community, later however as prohibition against every use of force, even for the others—and in the form of the positive commitment to the love of all beings (maitrī) and to compassion (karuṇā). As a prerequisite for the experience of salvation, both contain a potential of peaceful conflict management and thus exceed the individual interest for salvation of the person endeavoring for perfection.

Can this peace potential actually be translated into social and political practice, and is it generally universally applicable? The notion of ahiṃsā as a form of non-violence that would prefer to suffer rather than repudiate violence with violence leads to the question of whether new approaches for the present that go beyond the traditional stance of the early Buddhist religion can exist. Sarvodaya is such a program developed from the Buddhist context, which is aimed at religious and social-ethic activation of the individual.

Furthermore: in how far can these traditional ideas be newly interpreted and continue to be interpreted so widely that they serve as an understanding of peace, which is aimed at an extensive ethic and social reform, and is simultaneously based on a change of the consciousness of the individual?

The traditional concept of maitrī (mettā) as respect for all living beings can create the beginning and starting point to participate actively as compassionate action (karuṇā) in the removal of the cause of suffering. It should lead via muditā, i.e. the selfless sympathetic joy to serenity (to upekkhā/upekṣā), and thus to a harmonious personality.

Through transcontinental exchange the Buddhist teaching reached China through the eastern ends of the Silk Road, in the eastern Asian area and to Japan, to develop new spiritual perspectives and dimensions there. Buddhism could then adapt to the most varied social orders, for example, the rural societies of south-east Asia, but also to the modern industrial society of Japan, so that we can speak of a universal phenomena of human culture.

Nichiren (1222–1282), in his reform movement, sees the all-inclusive

truth in the Lotus Sutra, by pronouncing the Namu-myōhō-renge-kyō, "homage is rendered to the Lotus Sutra of the wonderful dharma" to attain the condition of the highest state of awakening of Shakyamuni, from which all morally correct behavior spontaneously results. All practice must be connected to this "title incantation" (shōdai). A country in which this ideal is realized is to be the true "world stage of the law" (kaidan). From the Lotus Sutra, Nichiren applies the religious message to his time and his country, and draws energy and self-confidence from that. Even if other Buddhist directions have emphasized the salvation of the individual, Nichiren went even further and strove for a social-religious reform at the level of the entire country.

The neo-Buddhist movement Soka Gakkai ("Society for the Creation of Values") seeks to continue this path. Soka Gakkai stands under the motto: Promotion of peace, culture, and education through Buddhism, whereby the blatantly worldly is viewed together with that which is spiritual. The movement derives its fundamental inspiration from Nichiren and the Lotus Sutra and considers itself to be lay-oriented and socially engaged. The force field of the spiritual practice includes

1. faith in the power of the Gohonzon, as the spiritual convex point;
2. the study of the Buddhist teaching in the later and effected history of Nichiren. He understood himself as a manifestation of Bodhisattva energies, and in the Lotus Sutra as the key to redeeming-enlightenment. The entirety of the teaching is said to be already contained in Namu-myōhō-renge-kyō, the title and the formula to be repeated. The goal is Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, here and now. The Lotus Sutra, "White lotus of the true dharma" from the Mahayana-writings is the king of the sutras and the epitomic mystical source, because it alone includes the essence of all other teachings, and is the perfect boat for that which can bring all people over the ocean of saṃsāra to the shore of enlightenment. With that, errant thinking is brought to an end. At the same time, the practice of noble virtues and the formation of peaceful ideals are especially important. Currently, Daisaku Ikeda (born 1928) is the president of the Soka Gakkai International.
3. Belonging to the religious practice is the performance of Gongyo twice daily; the singing of Namu-myōhō-renge-kyō in front of the Gohonzon, and reciting parts of the second and the entire 16th chapter of the Lotus Sutra. In spiritual friendship, the members should positively open themselves to each other.

Buddhism, Christianity, and World Peace

The plural diversity of worldviews and the global shift with the lowering of the threshold of violence challenges both religions to reorient themselves between tradition and renewal in a new and radical way. In the meantime, it is just such a question of peace that then becomes an important catalyst and indication, also of religious change including the challenge that presents itself anew,—exactly in the sense of Toynbee— "challenge" and "response." The topic of "peace" itself among the religions thus becomes a pressing mission, including maintenance of tolerance as well as the search for models of constructive commonalities among the diverse religious positions.

Soon after the conquest of Constantinople in the year 1453, Nikolaus Cusanus, e.g., wrote the paper "Oe pace fidei," and in the 2nd chapter wrote: "So you, to whom you give life and being, are the one who is apparently sought for among the various religions in differing ways and are called with diverse names, because you stay hidden and inexpressible in your true being." Cusanus, the man on the threshold to the new age, therein tries to attribute "all difference of religions to the one true faith" (chap. 3).

An ethic of peace must reflect the supraindividual norms of behavior, which are of the highest moral relevance. Etymologically, the word can be traced to ethos, and originally meant the habitual place of life; that is, home, furthermore habit, character, custom, tradition. To the historicity of humanity belongs that it is predetermined and simultaneously resigned to being a being, i.e. it finds itself confronted with a naturally created world toward which it reacts and realizes itself (in freedom). At the same time, it lives in a world of fellow man, into which it knows itself to be socially integrated. I.e., it always simultaneously stands in a world of binding criterion of meaningfulness (values) with its validity and obligations, thus between is and ought to be. The actual problem is making a topic out of the-ought, i.e., which accentuation this morality should have. A peace ethic must look for an answer to three questions:

1. What is the structure of a keeping of the peace?
2. Which character of commitment does it have (evidence)?
3. How is the content of "peace" as a moral standard to be determined and legitimized?

Peace and Righteousness

The societal and especially the political experienced reality of history

have been marked over and over by human violence. This is a latent or manifest happening, which the moral, psychic, or physical use of violence develops in the form of individual (right to resistance) or "collective" self-defense (bellum iustum) with the "commensurability" postulate. The theoretical basic hypothesis exists, according to which violence is simply a given and therefore necessary function of every historic social order. It is indispensable, in order to defend a "liberal" legal system, or to free suppressed social classes. The alternative of "the use of violence and nonviolence" is a "fictitious problem." The completely impersonal nobody's—reign of bureaucrats, upon whose functioning the satisfaction of even the most vital, basic needs of daily life within the modern industrial societies depends in turn also develops expansionist tendencies and a momentum of its own, which brings forth forms of new types of violence. Political acts of terror thereby become the modes of despair in political processes. The irrationality of their motives finally culminates in the effort of connecting the pure destruction of will to reform with meaningful worldly wisdom. War as a genuine possibility of every political policy further provokes an increasing armament, which is seen as a prerequisite of a genuine securing of "peace."

The axiom is valid: no peace without righteousness. But, righteousness can be seen from multiple vantage points: that means from the viewpoint of virtue, then again as a basic idea of law, furthermore as a fundamental state of social life with each other, and as a religious idea, as well as a theological concept. All these aspects overlap each other. However, behind their different expressions stands the unity of the content of the "acknowledgment of the others exactly in their being different" (F. Böckle). Seen historically, this concerns a progressive self-explication of the moral common sense of humanity and its entity, the professed "being human" as a mission to be sought for a lifetime, namely to become human.

In a Christian ethic, the question is posed as to how people can be righteous and how they should act righteously. The first reaches into a theological dimension when the apostle Paul first lets the people be "life-justified," if they are made "god-justified" through the share of salvation. Here, an advance of the grace of God is used as an example, which is ahead of, respectively surpasses human righteousness, discernable as defective.

However, the base and measurement of righteousness as the fundamental condition of social life together is, on the one hand, the constant will of letting each be given his rights, (ius suum unicuique tribuere), as well as the will to love, in which the other person is seen as more than

the sum of his behavioral patterns (velle alicui caritatem). Righteousness as a principle of order must be "compensatory" righteousness under the parts of a social whole (balancing of interests, contract, exchange). Furthermore, it is "apportioning" righteousness in proportion of the whole to its parts through it ensuring the just portion of public welfare, and it is "lawfully" righteous (iustia legalis) in the behavior of the individual towards its communal entity (legal system, duties toward the public welfare). As a cross sums of these various aspects, one can then speak of social justice, which allows space for the evolvement of the person. Thus, belonging to a "responsible society" are the primary prevalent efforts in order to dispense social righteousness and in order to effect a participatory and viable interaction; and furthermore, the rejection of all racist and discriminatory tendencies, then the respect for human dignity and human rights, as well as the basic freedoms, including freedom of religion.

In the ceremonious declaration of human rights, the "freedom from fear" is raised as one of the most important demands. Existential angst plays a large, even often decisive role in the individual as well as in people's lives, and overcoming this would be one of the greatest gifts, a utopia, since primeval times. Peace promoting factors are a deepening of international cooperation between ethnic groups, of neighboring states, on cultural, humanitarian, and educational levels, e.g., through cultural exchanges and increasingly getting-to-know each other at social levels as well as through religious dialogue. At the international level, "development" is a new, to the topic of peace essential, name which must especially face the problem of the growing impoverishment in the countries of the so-called "third world."

Peace and Tolerance

Despite some distortions of itself, tolerance has become a necessary maxim exactly in the times of the multifarious hazards of social existence. It is an expression of overall human solidarity in as far as the field of globalization and problems of a pluralistic society is concerned in that it affirms the right to life and the will to evolve of those who have a different opinion—especially of minorities and fringe groups. The escalations of violence, of intolerant fanaticism of racist or religious taint can only be overcome if the life philosophies and religions respect each other and express esteem towards each other. Tolerance as a basic attitude of societal policy does not allow itself to be institutionally ordained, but is an urgent mission of religious existence, motivated by the conviction of the unobtainable dignity and freedom of the individual

as well as the acknowledgment of the freedom and individuality of others. Seen in its execution, it has nothing in common with the "nihilism of the acceptance of the epitome of all" (A. Gehlen) or the view of Lawrence, who held it for a "malicious modern disease" ("The Snake").

Tolerance does not demand the surrender of one's "own ideals" in any way, but assumes the existence of such. However, it does not make them absolute, but is willing to allow the other his otherness and to protect it from threats. In accordance with the gospel Lk 6:36, God, the father in heaven, let his sun rise above the righteous and the unrighteous and is kind toward those unthankful and evil. Naturally, tolerance cannot be unlimited if the other gravely ruins himself and human coexistence through his behavior. In such a case, rebukes, reprimands, protest is appropriate and required.

Peace—Humanity—Love

The question of a supportive humanity is posing itself to become degraded and trivial anew precisely on the horizon of the superiority of the scientific-technical thinker (compare to the speech about "Presumptuous People"); furthermore in consideration of the overwhelming weight of the anonymous apparatus, institutions and ideologies of the modern (secular) world, furthermore in consideration of the endangerment of humanity to become some kind of dispositional object, as well as in consideration of the functionalization of the human affinity to life.

Both religions are called upon to contribute to humanize humanity, to contribute to its humanization and thus to the overcoming of inhuman powers. Seen positively, the tasks of humanization mean the confirmation of the will to live, which includes mutual respect, and furthermore the will to prevent people becoming degraded to merely a means. Concretely, it concerns the willingness to reduce the negative factors and potential of suffering, to increase welfare and prosperity for all, to secure the right to life for everyone, to humanize the realm of work, to extend social measures and the health system, to abolish torture and the death penalty.

Because human ethics is a given part of being human, both religions are appealed to, to interact to protect that which is human, i.e., to act in moral consent as far as possible in order to create validity for those basic forms of humanity which are recognized as elementary and indispensable (namely, renewed for each generation). Seen from Christianity, the true liberation and humanization of humanity has a basic relationship to the reconciliation with God due to human distress, which is fault. Simultaneously, the believer necessarily understands the necessity to

care for all, who are affected by suffering and misery, and the endanger-
ment of their individual personal being.

Love as an integral consummation of the human person, however,
absolutely commits humanity whereupon, according to the understand-
ing of Christian humanity, there is no value to whose favor the "com-
mandment" of love may be disregarded. Being a person does not simply
mean being such just for its own sake, but to find oneself and to realize
this in the being-with, i.e., in being for the others and for the sake of
others (compare Mt 10:39 par): Such a "dialogue-like" view toward the
"you" (comp. Martin Buber; Ferdinand Ebner) breaks through the idea
of mere autonomy of the self as a moral subject. In accordance with the
Christian understanding, there is a conveyance connection between
charity and the love of God. God sets out with the beginning of love, so
that Christian love is love answering to this advance of love. "A new
commandment I give unto you; That ye love one another; as I have
loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34).

The Struggle for Peace: Seen from Christianity

Over 30 years ago, the "World Conference of Religions for Peace" was
called into life in the struggle for world peace. It wants to confront the
acute problems and tasks of how a just and permanent peace can be
ensured.

— Justice is an indispensable central value belonging to peace.
— Another maxim is that war-like use of violence must not be
viewed as a political means, but as an indicator of its failure. The
CSCE records of Helsinki 1975 see a path to the reduction of
political tension in the "Confidence Building Measures." Concepts
of peace education should be promoted and further developed,
thus awakening an international mentality to secure peace, also
from the perspective of a religion-overlapping formation of judg-
ment and cooperation.
— Individually, this concerns the questions: Which absolutely-com-
mitting criterion of meaningfulness or values should be taken as a
starting point? What is worth striving for, what enriches, makes
happy, is valid as beneficial and promoting for the people? In
terms of content, various value-groups can be differentiated, e.g.,
religious, aesthetic, moral, artistic, economic, and others, to which
humanity knows to relate itself, which it affirms, respects, desires.
Because it is significant to it, awakens its interests, challenges and
motivates it, it influences its thinking and acting. As non-values,

however, is that which is experienced as threatening and harmful etc., i.e., rejected or repelled. In such recognition and such repelling, the people form the baseline of their moral existence and behavior in mentality, conviction, attitude and acting. Justice, truth, freedom, co-humanness, life are the patterns, which must be practiced over and over again. Its importance lies in that it is formative for the intersubjective and personal area. Furthermore, the realization of the increased and non-abandonable acceptance of responsibility belongs to its concrete construction.

The biblical revelation makes a connection between the creation of motive through faith in the God of love and the Metanoia, the morality and the creation of the brotherly congregation. If the theological ethic is not to erroneously reinterpret Jesus' peace initiative (Mt 5,38–41; 43–45) and not to put it back into the service of violence, it must be fundamentally. Only in the reality of a thusly understood Christian ethic can the message of the gospel of the God of love, who respects the people's freedom, appear in the modern consciousness as a real alternative to the autonomous legitimacy of new age violence.

Jesus' proclamation of God and the already-forming rule of God in his works aim at the change of human behavior (Metanoia). It is the proclamation of the love of God (comp. Mt 20,1–15) which exceeds that of all human measure. If reflects itself in the call for salvation ("blessings") and the characteristic prayer address "Abba," "beloved father." Compared to this salvation-giving God, the posture of the child itself the only adequate one (Mk 10:15). It is the one trustful (Mt 6:25f.28–30; 10:29.31) and undivided heart (Mt 6:24par.). Jesus concentrates God's will in the unification of god's love and charity (Mk 12:28–34) and promotes people's inner being, which is not reached by any "law." The Lord's Prayer does not only ask for forgiveness for those who have joined, but also for protection from new guilt. I.e., the experienced love of God achieves its goal only in the "answer" of forgiveness from person to person—really in the last consequence of the love of the enemy. Only thus is the devil's circle of hate in all dimensions of existence broken through.

In diverse scripts of the New Testament, witnesses from about three generations have a say with all their differing reflexivity. The moral commandments of the Decalogue are radicalized through Jesus' demand for love, and this is understood as the epitome of all commandments, even as the "fulfillment of the law" (Rom 13:8–10; Gal 5:14). In his theological thoughts, in the end Paul understands Jesus' death (1 Cor

15:3b) as the unparalleled manifestation of the love of God which reaches out for humanity and the loving devotion of Jesus Christ for us (Rom 5:6–8; Gal 2:20). A believer baptized into such a religious background is therefore "a new creation" (2 Cor 5:17). The indication of this appropriated salvation occurrence, however, simultaneously implies the imperative of its existential completion (Rom 6:1ff; 8:1ff). Therefore, the fruit of the spirit of "joy" and "peace" and the other moral ways (Ga I 5:13ff), which are not conceivable without active love ("the law of Christ," Gal 6:2) (1 Cor 8:10.13) are embraced. For the Christian, moral behavior is founded on Christian-pneumatics. Paul picks-up on socio-political relations in his Philemon letter in 1 Cor 7,17ff, but in Agape-terms (1 Cor 13), bursts and betters the contemporary material ethical judgments and orients the existence of the believer in the force field of the love of Christ.

Conclusion

Because the catastrophes of history initially occur in that which is mental and moral before they are displayed in warring quarrels and material power struggles, a formation of the moral consciousness is one of the most urgent missions. This concerns the power and lack of power of the spirit, the power and lack of power of conscience.

At the end of his peace-publication, the Kalingrad teacher of the people, Immanuel Kant, talked about the lie. It is the originator of all quarrels. Peace, he says, would not only be brought about but even secured, if the commandment "Thou shall not lie" would become a principle. Veracity is such an important work of peace. The uniqueness of Kant's writing is that it connects the "is," the empirical history and politics with the "should," the morality. Peace is the removal of possible causes of war and can only—considering the "hellish arts"—be peace of the world. The leading intellectual power of our time appears to be the natural sciences with their growing possibilities of the wizard's apprentice. Inventions run around the world, the atomic firebrand can also fall into the hands of ideologies, which strive for tyranny and subjugation.

Language is also divided on this side and that side of the words peace, freedom, and righteousness.

In an autobiographical note, Reinhold Schneider writes: "The saint rose ever more decisively as an adversary of violence. The problem of power, the question: what is imperative? What is allowed? does not leave me a minutes rest. I see an answer only in sacrifice, be it administration of power or requital. The more clearly I felt, that in history missions, which cannot be compatible, knock against each other, the more

humanity is unveiled as the arena of violence: the more convinced I became of the indestructible freedom of humanity—its freedom in Christ—and from the Christian responsibility for all, what occurs in thoughts and actions, in dreams and wishes. ...my work is not a construction or a system, but a way; it ends in a collision of the radical Christian ethos with the worldly power and every effort to deify it."

Reinhold Schneider pleads for a radical, never before realized Christianity, which cannot bloom in one of the confessions, but will find its way in the world, so that "peace" can arise out of it. Schneider enlarged and radicalized a European tradition of wrestling for peace, as connected with the names Erasmus, Sully, Leibniz, Kant, Hermann Hesse, Leopold Ziegler, Albert Einstein, Rousseau and many others.

Also the value-world of F. Dostojewskijs is more radical than that striven for by Friedrich Nietzsche, when he emphasizes that not he who spills blood proves to be strong, but he, whose blood is spilled. The moral, however, is entrusted with personal freedom and lifelong mission.