

Fethullah Gülen and the 'People of the Book': A Voice from Turkey for Interfaith Dialogue

Zeki Saritoprak

*John Carroll University
Cleveland, Ohio*

Sidney Griffith

*The Catholic University of America
Washington, D. C.*

The term "People of the Book" or *Ahl al-kitāb* is mentioned in the Qur'ān twenty-four times, referring to Christians and Jews in particular. The context of these Qur'ānic references varies. Some of these verses praise the People of the Book for their righteousness and good deeds and faith in the Afterlife (Qur'ān 3.113). Others rebuke the People of the Book for not following the way of God (Qur'ān 3.99). A group of these verses invite the People of the Book to a common ground between Muslims and themselves (Qur'ān 3.64). Another group of these verses indicates an intimate relationship between Muslims and Christians (Qur'ān 5.82). The relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book, Jews and Christians, has been a subject of discussion among Muslims throughout the centuries. Islam's long-time ecumenical roots are easily traced to the famous verse in the Qur'ān:

Say (O Prophet Muhammad): Oh People of the Book! Come to an agreement between us that we will not worship other than God, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside God . . . (Qur'ān, 3:64)

This verse, revealed in the ninth year of the Hijra (629 CE), is one of the greatest ecumenical calls of Prophet Muḥammad's time. The sources of Islamic law have dedicated certain chapters to explain the legal status of the People

of the Book in Islam. The Ottoman Empire presented a great example of the Islamic understanding of tolerance towards non-Muslim subjects, in particular, the People of the Book. In our contemporary world, the issue has become even more relevant because of a tremendous need for interfaith dialogue and understanding. We aim to elaborate on the ideas of the contemporary Turkish theologian Fethullah Gülen in this article. His ideas are of paramount importance as far as Muslim/Christian dialogue in the modern world is concerned.

Gülen, known as one of the pioneers of inter-religious understanding since the early 1980's, has laid the groundwork for an Islamic approach to interfaith dialogue.¹ To fully appreciate the significance of this accomplishment, one must understand the perspective from which Gülen approaches this subject. Accordingly, the purpose of this article is first of all to introduce this important Islamic thinker to a Western audience, and then to set out in some detail his ideas about the encounter of the world's major religions in modern times, concentrating in particular on Muslim/Christian dialogue.

A Thoughtful Preacher

Throughout the 1960's and 70's increasingly large congregations were gathering on Fridays in mosques in Edirne, Izmir, and Istanbul to hear a young, itinerant preacher who had the gift of speaking of the traditional values of Islam in a modern idiom that recognized the importance of the sciences and the culture of the colleges and universities that many in his audience were attending. Gülen himself had a very traditional Islamic education. He was born in Erzurum in eastern Anatolia on April 27, 1941, the very day when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of modern Turkey, died in faraway Istanbul. According to his biographer, as a young man Gülen accepted the new Turkish national identity; he was also searching for ways to incorporate the life-style of the companions of the Prophet of Islam into modern society.² This concern of his was due in no small part to the influence of his father, who was very much involved in the Sufi circles of Erzurum, as well as to the piety and prayer of some of Said Nursi's (1876–1960) disciples, who were achieving a wide popularity in Turkey in the middle of the twentieth century. In fact, in his early twenties Gülen began to systematically read the works of Nursi, an experience which would prove to be of no small significance in the development of his own thought.

Gülen's mother Rafî'a was his first Qur'ân teacher; in the local educational institutions he attended alongside the public grammar school he came under the tutelage of Muhammad Lutfi Efendi, a member of the Qadiri Sufi order. Although we no longer know much about this man, it is clear that he was an inspiration for the young Gülen. He awakened in him the desire to live his

whole life in accordance with Islamic values and it was under his direction that Gülen committed the Qur'ān to memory, an accomplishment that serves him well to this day. His father, Ramiz Efendi, who had many connections with the Naqshbandi Sufi order, also exerted a major influence in his son's life, being his first Arabic teacher and the one who gave him a wider entree into the world of the classical thinkers of Islam. In addition to the ideas of early religious figures such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 728) and Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 857), al-Ghazzālī (d. 1111), and Jalāl ad-Dīn ar-Rūmī (d. 1276), Gülen avidly read the more recent works of two Indian writers, Aḥmad Faruqī Sirhindī (1564–1624) and Shāh Wali Allah al-Dihlawī (1703–1762) as well as some Western classics such as Victor Hugo, William Shakespeare, and Honore de Balzac.

For Gülen, the writings of Aḥmad Sirhindī were important because of the emphasis this writer put on the observance of the practice of Islam in the true spirit of the Prophet Muḥammad. Sirhindī came from within the Naqshabandi Sufi tradition and many of his letters and other writings were concerned with the renewal of the spiritual teaching of this tradition by insisting on the primacy of following the way of the Prophet in the cultivation of spiritual endeavors, rather than the more esoteric methods of some earlier Naqshabandi teachers.³ In fact, for a long time he used to teach the books of these prominent Muslim scholars, such as Sirhindī's monumental book, *al-Maktūbāt*, to students who attended his learning circle. In this endeavor he did not abandon Sufism, but found a way to renew it for his day. This is the insight that excited Gülen. They did not so much follow the teaching of Sirhindī as they were inspired by his discernment of the centrality of following the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muḥammad, even in the realm of the personal, spiritual growth and development.

In this connection, another idea that Sirhindī explored in his writings was the concept of loving friendship (*khillab*)⁴. Yohanan Friedmann has explained the centrality of this concept for Sirhindī. He says that in his works the Indian teacher spoke of the task of each believer as being connected "with the spiritual relationship between Ibrahim and Muḥammad and with the Sufi concept of friendship (*khillab*)."⁵ He went on to say:

This friendship, which is the highest manifestation of love (*ḥubb*), is the principal force responsible for the creation of the world and its continued existence. Originally it belonged to Ibrahim, the Friend of Allah (*khalīl Allah*). Having reached this exalted stage, Ibrahim was made the *imām* of all, and even Muḥammad was ordered to follow him.⁵

This idea, as we will see below, would in due course inspire many Sufis, including contemporary Turkish writers and spiritual leaders such as Nursi and Gülen, to cultivate a spiritual friendship with all those who profess the faith of

Abraham, even those outside the Islamic community among the "People of the Book."

From Shāh Wali Allah al-Dihlawī, Gülen would have learned how to think about the role of traditional Islamic mysticism in the modern world.⁶ In particular, Shāh Wali insisted that Muslim thinkers should always incorporate the lessons learned from the Sufi masters of the past into the framework of the traditional Islamic teachings. He said, "Sufis without knowledge of Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, and scholars who are not interested in mysticism, are brigands and robbers of the *dīn* (religion)."⁷

Nursi's books were widely available in the Sufi environment in which Gülen grew up.⁸ His writings, particularly the *Risale i Nur*, or the *Treatises of Light*, had by the middle of the twentieth century already become the most popular Islamic reading in the country after the traditional *Hadith* collections of Bukhari and Muslim. Gülen began reading them in the 1960's, when he first met the disciples of Nursi in his hometown of Erzurum. These disciples were the backbone of the then emerging Nur movement. While Gülen was never formally associated with the movement, and therefore he was not, strictly speaking, a follower of Nursi, he nevertheless began to incorporate many of Nursi's ideas into his own teaching,⁹ especially in his sermons and informal talks when he became a preacher in the mosque in Edirne in the early 1960's.

Islam and the Dialogue of World Religions

In modern Turkey, a number of prominent Muslim figures have promoted the ideas of tolerance and dialogue with the adherents of different religions. The Ottoman experience, with its *millet* system, has left behind a remarkable memory of more harmonious inter-religious relations. The Empire was composed not only of Muslims, but of many Christian and Jewish groups, and even some Zoroastrians. Until the emergence of modern nationalistic ideas, Muslims, Christians and Jews had managed to live together more peacefully and productively in Ottoman times than has been possible more recently in the twentieth century. This legacy of mutual recognition between members of different faith communities can arguably be claimed to have been, at least partially, the result of the teaching of some Turkish Sufi masters, such as Ahmed Yesevi (d. 1166), Yunus Emre (d. 1321), Haji Bayram-i Veli (15th cent.), and Aksemseddin (15th cent.), the Sufi master of Mehmet II, the Fatih (Conqueror).¹⁰ All of these teachers, in this very early period, espoused ideas of inter-religious tolerance, and to some extent even of interfaith dialogue. Gülen is one the modern beneficiaries of this Sufi tradition. A close examination of his thinking shows that he is one of the few Muslim scholars of the present day who promotes dialogue and tolerance between the several

Muslim communities who differ among themselves in many important ways, as well as between Muslims and the adherents of other religious traditions.

Examining Gülen's teaching on interreligious dialogue, one notices in the first place that he traces the idea back to basic Islamic themes. As a student of the Qur'ân, Gülen took the "*basmala*," the beginning of almost every chapter of the Qur'ân, as a point of departure. In this phrase, God's attributes are recorded as "the Compassionate and the Merciful." The recurrence of this phrase over and over again in the Qur'ân, one hundred and fourteen times, must be taken seriously, according to Gülen.¹¹ He proposes that by this means, God wanted to teach Muslims, among other things, to be compassionate and merciful in their relations with their fellow human beings, and with nature. In one of his articles on compassion Gülen says:

Compassion is the beginning of being; without it everything is chaos. Everything has come into existence through compassion and by compassion it continues to exist in harmony. . . . Every thing speaks of compassion and promises compassion. Because of this, the universe can be considered a symphony of compassion. All kinds of voices proclaim compassion so that it is impossible not to be aware of it, and impossible not to feel the wide mercy encircling everything. How unfortunate are the souls who don't perceive this . . . Man has a responsibility to show compassion to all living beings, as a requirement of being human. The more he displays compassion, the more exalted he becomes, while the more he resorts to wrongdoing, oppression and cruelty, the more he is disgraced and humiliated, becoming a shame to humanity.¹²

Gülen's understanding of the quality of compassion can best be seen in what he said during an interview conducted by Turkish Journalist Eyup Can. In the interview it is clear that Gülen's compassion extends all the way from a physically draining reaction to the plight of the innocent human victims of chemical weapons in northern Iraq, to a deep sensitivity to the need to respect the life of such an insignificant creature as an insect. In the tradition in which Gülen was brought up, his understanding is that no matter how small, every creature praises God in its own tongue, and therefore deserves its proper respect and compassion.

One can argue that there is a similarity between the traditional Sufi teaching about nature, and that of Gülen in our day. Yunus Emre, for example, is said to have been asked, along with other *murids*, to bring a bouquet of flowers to his master. The master wanted to appoint a successor, which is why he wanted to test those of his students who were considered among the candidates for his succession. In the evening when everyone had brought a bouquet of flowers, Yunus Emre happened to come with empty hands. Answering the master's question as to why he had no flowers, Yunus said

that whenever he wanted to pick a flower, he heard its voice praising God. For that reason he was unable to cut any flower. This well known story illustrates the spiritual approach towards nature that is characteristic of the Sufis and of Gülen.

Having said that Gülen's teaching of compassion resonates well with traditional Sufi doctrine, we can now turn our focus to the concept of love as we find it in his writings. Speaking of love in the Sufi tradition, Gülen focuses his attention on one of the "beautiful names" of God, *al-Wadūd*, the Beloved One.¹³ By implication, he points out that Muslims are expected to reflect this attribute in their lives by being a people of love. In fact, Said Nursi, Gülen's predecessor, made love the motto of his own philosophy. Gülen says, "There is no weapon in the universe stronger than the weapon of love."¹⁴

Gülen's understanding of love is evident in the following quotation: Love is the most essential element in every being, a most radiant light and a great power that can resist and overcome every force. Love elevates every soul that absorbs it, and prepares it for the journey to eternity. Souls that have made contact with eternity through love exert themselves to implant in all other souls what they receive from eternity. They dedicate their lives to this sacred duty, for the sake of which they endure every kind of hardship to the end. Just as they pronounce 'love' with their last breath, they also breathe love while being raised on the Day of Judgment.¹⁵

Clearly, then, the concepts of compassion and love are basic principles of Gülen's teachings. With a strong voice, he advocates tolerance, forgiveness and humility as central Islamic ethical values. They are interrelated and the one requires the other. In a recent article, Gülen has the following to say about tolerance.

Those who close the road of tolerance are beasts who have lost their humanity. . . . Forgiveness and tolerance will heal most of our wounds, but only if this divine instrument is in the hands of those who understand its language. Otherwise, the incorrect treatment we have used until now will create many complications and continue to confuse us.¹⁶

Gülen finds the roots of these themes in the teachings of the Prophet of Islam himself, from whom he quotes the following tradition, "Whoever is humble, God exalts him; whoever is haughty, God humiliates him."¹⁷ In this thought, which is at the heart of Islamic ethics, Gülen finds the basis for interreligious dialogue. He believes that dialogue will be the natural result of the practice of Islamic ethics. Someone who believes in his own superiority will never come to the way of dialogue. The opposite is the case for one who humbles himself willingly; this person will be more likely to settle differences by dialogue with others.

After Gülen's meeting with former Pope John Paul II in February 1998, he was severely criticized by a group of young Islamists who argued that he

should not have humiliated himself to the extent of going to the Vatican and meeting with the Pope. Gülen responded by saying that humility was an attribute of Muslims, and gave an example of an incident that occurred between Rûmî and a Christian priest. According to the story, a priest visits Rûmî and wants to kiss his hands out of respect. Yet, Rûmî is quicker and he kisses the hands of the priest first. Regarding this story, Rûmî says that even in humility, he wants to be the first. According to Gülen, therefore, dialogue with adherents of other religious traditions is an integral part of an Islamic ethic that has been neglected for a long time.¹⁸ In this connection too Gülen quotes Jesus's saying in the Gospel, on the occasion when some people brought to him a woman caught in adultery, asking what was to be done with her. Jesus said, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7). By this, he means that people should not think of their superiority over others. Instead they should be humble.

Fethullah Gülen and Interreligious Dialogue

Turkey, from the perspective of the Vatican, is very significant. For this reason, after becoming the Pope in 1979, John Paul II visited Turkey as his first visit to a foreign country. Fethullah Gülen's visit to Pope John Paul II in 1998 marked an important step forward in Muslim/Christian relations, especially in Turkey. But at the same time it brought into focus the full spectrum of the opinions of those who oppose Gülen's point of view. Gülen's visit came at a time when interfaith dialogue was necessary to stave off conflict. Samuel Huntington's¹⁹ idea of the alleged "clash of civilizations" was gaining prominence, but Gülen, despite this, saw the need to further efforts to establish dialogue.

Through this meeting, Gülen and his associates had received wide public support in his native country, Turkey. Yet, at the same time, he was severely criticized by two groups — hard-line secularists and a minor radical group of Islamists. The two differed in the way and reasons they criticized Gülen. He has also been criticized by radical Muslims for talking less about an "Islamic State" than he does about a fly. Referring to this criticism, Ali Ünal, one of Gülen's associates, says, "Yes, the Qur'ân speaks of a fly, spider and ant as evidences of His existence by their very creation, and names its chapters after them.²⁰ Yet, it does not speak of an Islamic state."

Hard-line secularists have rebuked him based on the contention that absolute authorization is necessary.²¹ Since Gülen was not appointed by the state, he had no right to speak to someone like Pope John Paul II on his own behalf. This was the result of a government desire of its own outstanding control on all kinds of personal enterprises. Therefore, according to this group of secularists, Gülen required governmental permission to meet with prominent foreign religious leaders, even to promote interfaith dialogue.

The radical Islamists' reaction to Gülen's visit was slightly different. They considered it a humiliation. A Muslim should not go and visit non-Muslims. They also believed that the visit of a prominent Muslim religious leader to a Catholic religious leader would to some extent cause some Muslims to convert to Christianity.

From Gülen's perspective, this is not real Islam, which has promoted and practiced dialogue with adherents of other religions since its beginning. It is important that people rid their minds of this idea, for this kind of fear of dialogue is completely invalid. This attitude, Gülen says, stems from lack of trust in the religion of Islam.²² Gülen says that humanity is entering the age of knowledge and sciences. Sciences will rule the world to a larger measure in the future. Thus, the adherents of a religion like Islam, whose principles are supported by reason and science, should not be doubtful or find difficulty in dialoguing with adherents of other religions. According to Gülen, dialogue is not a superfluous endeavor, but an imperative. Gülen believes that dialogue is among the duties of Muslims on earth to make our world a more peaceful and safer place.²³

The two groups who oppose Gülen are in fact marginal, comprising only a small percentage of Turkish society. The majority was supportive of Gülen's meeting, which arguably had very positive results. One fruit of their efforts came in the form of an interfaith conference organized by an interfaith dialogue organization, the Foundation of Journalists and Writers in Turkey. This conference, called the Abraham Symposium, was held in southeast Turkey in the city of Urfa, believed to be the birthplace of Prophet Abraham. Another potential fruit is the establishment of an interfaith university in the same city, currently under consideration among members of the interfaith dialogue community backed by Gülen and Pope John Paul II. Gülen's visit to the Pope has continued to bear fruits of dialogue among various groups. Recently, a Chicago based organization which is inspired by the teachings of Gülen invited about thirty members of religious communities in Chicago to Turkey for an inter-religious dialogue conference. Again, one of the fruits of this visit is that the Vatican representative in Turkey has worked actively to realize Muslim/Christian dialogue in more appropriate ways.

The necessity of Christian-Muslim dialogue is evident, according to Gülen, for the purposes of re-establishing good relations between science and religion. Science in the West has been an enemy of religion for several centuries. Christianity has suffered very much from this. Through Muslim-Christian dialogue, both religions will be able to once again reconcile religion and science. Gülen says, "If there were no other reason for promoting Muslim-Christian dialogue other than this, this reason would be enough to engage in that dialogue, as being of utmost importance."²⁴ Gülen asks Muslims to be

self-critical and maintains that they should not make the religion of Islam an ideology. Making Islam an ideology in fact has brought it to the political arena, thereby preventing Muslims from entering dialogue with adherents of other religions. "Ideologies are divisive rather than uniting. This is a social and historical reality."²⁵ He sees that Islam must be seen as a religion, exemplified in mind, heart and daily life, and should not be a means of selfish partisanship, personal or national hatreds, and feelings of enmity.

Pointing to a historical event that occurred at the time of Caliph 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz or Omar II, Gülen asserts that the Muslims' reference-point should be based in Islamic principles. The story states that Umayyad governors were taking *jizya* (poll-tax) from their non-Muslim subjects, even from those who had embraced Islam, claiming that they had embraced it in order not to have to pay the tax. When Omar II came to power, he vetoed legislation supporting this practice. The governor of Egypt, Ayyub bin Shurahbeel Al-Ashbahi, wanted exemption from this rule, and Omar II replied with a letter stating, "You will not take taxes from (former) non-Muslims who embraced Islam. God, the Almighty, did not send Prophet Muḥammad as a tax-collector, but as a guide."²⁶ Referring to a prophetic tradition, which says "Make it easy (*Yassiru*) do not make it difficult (*wala tu'assiru*). Make it beloved (*habbibu*) and give good news (*bashshiru*). Do not make it hated (*walatunaffiru*)," Gülen says, "Fulfillment of this prophetic tradition can be achieved only through love and dialogue with followers of other religions."²⁷ Gülen frames his idea of dialogue around the following Qur'anic verse: "all mankind, we have created you from male and female and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another" (Qur'an 49.13).

One can see in Gülen's writings that the ecumenical aspect of Islam and its theological foundations for dialogue are under focus. His point of view is that the religion of Islam, beyond accepting the formal origin of other religions and their prophets, requires Muslims to respect them as fundamental Islamic principles. A Muslim is the follower of Muḥammad at the same time that he or she is a follower of Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus and other Biblical prophets. From Gülen's perspective, not to believe in the biblical prophets mentioned in the Qur'an is enough of a reason to place someone outside the circle of Islam.

Gülen's good relations with minority leaders in Turkey also lends support to his reputation for evenhandedness and openness. Two examples are enough to give an idea about his efforts in creating peace among nations. First, it is well-known that the situation of Greeks in Turkey is affected by Greek and Turkish politicians almost daily. In the late 1980's, Gülen initiated dialogue, and he has become a hope and a guarantor for Greeks in Turkey. Jewish and Christian minorities are very supportive of Gülen. He established

good relations with the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew. Second, in spite of much opposition, he has worked to set up an educational program in Armenia. He exhorted some Turkish businessmen to establish a high school in Yerevan, the capital city of Armenia, to serve the younger generation in the country. Another group of Turkish businessmen established a high school in Moscow at Gülen's behest. Today a similar effort is being made to establish a high school in Greece. Gülen's efforts show that he wants to establish bridges between people and cultures in order to decrease enmity. Even in Turkey, he believes that only well-educated Turks will be able fully to participate in the progress of humankind. According to him his activities are not nationalistic: "Our ongoing activities are for the good of all humanity. They should not be considered limited to our own country, Turkey."²⁸ Gülen is looking for an inter-civilizational dialogue.

Gülen perceives that all humans are servants of God regardless of their ethnic or religious background. "The religion of Islam gives the same value to all humans, and calls them servants of the Most Compassionate One (*'Ibād al-Rahmān*)."²⁹ It also accepts universalism by which it announces the Prophets' rejection of superiority on the basis of color, nationality, race, geography or profession. The Prophet of Islam says that there is no superiority of Arabs over non-Arabs, and of non-Arabs over Arabs.³⁰

Gülen holds that the tendency toward factionalism exists within human nature. A pointed goal should be to make this tendency non-threatening and even beneficial. Without a positive channel for its outlet within humans, this tendency will develop in a negative direction. This is especially the case when ignorance, uncivilized behavior and extremism help by fomenting social diseases such that societies come to severely and incessantly fight each other. On the other hand, as knowledge, gnosis and tolerance spread, society will approach the "line of peace" toward understanding and social reconciliation.³¹

In conclusion, one can arguably say that although Gülen is criticized for his dialogue efforts by some radical Islamists, the Qur'ānic teaching provides much support for his approach towards People of the Book and adherents of other traditions. Gülen, being very pious in his personal conduct, finds this to be an essential element of the teaching of Islam. Especially now, a time when hatred is widespread and the clash of civilizations is predicted, Gülen's efforts are of paramount importance for modern humanity.

Endnotes

1. Selcuk Camci & Kudret Ünal (eds.), *The Climate of Tolerance and Dialogue in the Speeches and Writings of Fethullah Gülen* [Turkish] (Izmir: Merkur Yayinlari, 1998).

2. L. Erdogan, *Küçük Dünya* (Istanbul: Milliyet Yayinlari, 1995), 46.
3. See Y. Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi: an Outline of his Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity* (Montreal & London, 1971); J. G. J. ter Haar, *Follower and Heir of the Prophet; Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624) as Mystic* (Leiden: Het Oosters Instituut, 1992).
4. Nursi considers the concept of Khillah as his *masbrub* (modus operandi) in his treatise on sincerity. See Nursi, *Risale-i Nur Kulliyati*, Vol. 1, 668–672. (Istanbul: Nesil, 1996).
5. Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, 18–19.
6. See J. M. S. Baljon, *Religion and Thought of Shāh Wali Allah Dihlawī 1703–1762* (Studies in the History of Religions, XLVII; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 7.
7. Quoted in Baljon, *Religion and Thought of Shāh Wali*, 78.
8. Şerif Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey; the Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1989); Şukran Vahide, *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi; the Author of the Risale-i Nur* (Istanbul: Sozler Publications, 1992) and I. Abu-Rabi, ed., *Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003). See now the special issue of *The Muslim World* 79, nos. 3–4, (July–October, 1999), in which articles by more than a dozen authors study the life and teachings of Nursi.
9. See M. Hakan Yavuz, "Towards an Islamic Liberalism? The Nurcu Movement and Fethullah Gülen in Turkey," *The Middle East Journal* 53 (1999), 584–605, where the author loosely uses the expression 'neo Nurcu' movement to describe Gülen and his followers. See also Hakan Yavuz and John Esposito (editors), *Turkish Islam and the Secular State: The Gülen Movement*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003).
10. On these and other Sufi masters of the time, see Annemarie Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun; a Study of the Works of Jalaladdin Rumi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 10.
11. The phrase is mentioned at the beginning of all chapters in the Qur'an, with the exception of al-Tawba (ch. 9). The phrase also is mentioned in its complete form in another chapter, al-Naml, (27:30). This makes the total 114.
12. M. Fethullah Gülen, *Towards the Lost Paradise*, (London: Trustar, 1996), 40–2; see also M. Fethullah Gülen, *Fatiha Uzerine Mulabazalar* (Considerations on the Chapter Fatiha), (Izmir: Nil Yayinlari, 1997), 90–95.
13. M. Fethullah Gülen, *Kalbin zümrüt tepeler* (Pirlanta Kitap Serisi; Izmir: Nil Yayinlari, 1994), 215.
14. Compare this to when Nursi said that "We are devotees of love and don't have time to hate," Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, *Divan-i Harbi Orfi*, in *Risale-i Nur Kulliyati*, vol. II, 1930. See also Fethullah Gülen, *Hosgoru ve Diyalog Iklimi* (ed. Selcuk Camci & Kudret Unal; Izmir: Merkur Yayinlari, 1998), 132.
15. *Ibid.*, 59.
16. M. Fethullah Gülen, "Forgiveness," *The Fountain* 3 (April–June 2000), 4–5.
17. M. Fethullah Gülen, *Key Concepts in the Practice of Sufism* (Fairfax, Va.: The Fountain, 1999), 76.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Samuel P. Huntington, *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997).
20. See Qur'anic chapters al-Nahl [the bee] (ch. 16), al-Naml [the ant] (ch. 27), and al-'Ankabut [the spider] (ch. 29). For radical Islamicist criticisms of Gülen, see Mehmet Sevket Eygi, "Papalikla Gizli Anlasma" ("Secret Agreement with Papacy"), *Milli Gazete* (*National Gazette*), May 26, 2000.

21. See Necip Hablemitoglu, *Yeni Hayat (New Life)*, Issue 52.
22. Fethullah Gülen, *Hosgoru ve Diyalog Iklimi*, eds. Selcuk Camci and Kudret Unal, (Izmir, Merkur Yayinlari: 1998), 37.
23. *Ibid.*, 38.
24. *Ibid.*, 31. See Gülen's ideas on the subject in Osman Bakar's article in this current issue.
25. See details of Gülen's opinion on this in *Ibid.*, 23–26.
26. See Gülen *Ibid.*, 26.
27. *Ibid.*, 38.
28. Fetullah Gülen, *Bahari Soluklarken*, (Izmir: Nil Yayinlari, 1993), 39.
29. *Ibid.*, 32.
30. Ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, Vol. V, 441.
31. *Ibid.*, 72–73.