

### **Task Force 3: Interreligious Dialogue and Understanding – Deusto Assembly, Bilbao, July 2018**

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Conversation 3.1  
The University in an Age of Religious Pluralism.  
Moderator: Augustine Perumalil

Identified by country when possible. SEE BOTTOM FOR SOME POSSIBLE POINTS OF CONSENSUS.

(Ireland) Superficial religious pluralism leads to no real learning (as in Ireland). We need to differentiate between religious tolerance and authentic dialogue, which requires serious engagement with texts and traditions.

(India): Referring to the four dialogues: Most are ok. For example: Common celebrations of major feasts in particular religions. In these common celebrations, there is a healthy level of shared experience. The most difficult level of dialogue is on the level of dogma, as among Semitic religions, where differences can be identified with causes of conflict.

Beirut: In Lebanon, there is an effort to train people to engage in Interreligious dialogue. About 150 people who have been through training (half Christian, half Muslim). This is a healthy experience for us, reflecting good relations between Christians and Muslims.

Southern India: See Christians, Hindus, and Muslims trying to understand one another. The challenge is to be beyond tolerance to friendship: especially between Hindus and Muslims, who find it difficult to discover collegiality. This is because the religious polarization occurring from political turmoil.

(Indonesia): Largest Muslim population in the world. 90 percent are Muslim. When we talk about interreligious dialogue, it is more on the academic level. We see more segregation because on social media people can say what they want. Government has imposed a law against Interreligious marriage, resulting in more segregation. We are moving toward disengaged co-existence. Again, we see some groups dogma-based conflict. We are having some success getting students to work across religions by having a choral competition. This way, students can work together and become less fundamentalist. This is the dialogue of action at work. See rising

Northern India: in the 1970s, there were some dialogues but they were not well participated in because of fears about conversion. So, dialogue was not successful into the 1990s. Now we see the question arising: what is the purpose of the dialogue? We are arriving at the idea of harmony instead just understanding. Then the university can begin to work to action;

In India: Good fellow-feeling and friendship, and understanding as fellow Indians. sharing of gifts at mutual celebrations;

France: Conception of laicite; religious dialogue is not welcome in public spaces. The presence of Muslims in France and even Europe are making for serious apprehensions. We are also seeing a rise in religious indifference. What is new: we are getting more faculty religious diversity among the faculty.

We were speaking about religious differences, but the real problem is rising religious indifference. Interestingly, we are seeing more interest in interreligious prayer services than in Mass among Catholics.

German situation: no strict separation state and religions. More and more young people, though, are becoming more secularist, especially in the east—not unlike in France. In Western Germany, we had good Christian-Jewish dialogue especially after Vat II, though it seems to be fizzling out a bit. Rising need to have Christian and Muslims engaged in dialogue.

Note: “secular” in the west means indifference. In India, “secular” means equal respect. This causes a problem when our documents are online

India: We have many religions and many cultures. This makes things very complex. Each group wants to see their represented and appreciated. In the past, there was more harmony. But today, political parties are using culture and religion to polarize and gain political power. See growing fundamentalism among Christians and not just Muslims or Hindus. Increasing numbers of people, including Christians, are suspicious of dialogue because they feel it will undermine their identity. On campus there is more harmony among the religions but that gets lost when students move into the public sphere. We also are seeing emerging calls for religious loyalty among fundamentalists.

So, dialogue, though needed, is made tough because of concerns about conversion.

Korea: small country but long history; shamanism (in the dna)—Buddhism arrives—Confucianism from China—Catholicism—Protestantism. In the University, no visible conflicts or tensions; good relations among Catholics and Buddhists, for example. The most important thing for interreligious dialogue is to practice one’s religion. So, we need to practice: to show mercy, compassion, etc.

Oxford: A complex set of university cultures within a complex British society. A bit suspicious of interreligious dialogue. It happens at an academic exercise and is fine. When it politicized, though, we have religion being used to demonize the other. See now, the emergence of policies that are resulting in emerging starting to demonize some groups. We need to realize that as religions we share the fact that we are exploited by the media and can be misunderstood, especially when we engage in demonization of the other. Another more fundamental problem we need to be dealing with in British society are the built in inequalities: though Britain is formally a secular state, it widely privileges the Church of England. So, to engage in real dialogue, we might need, first, to learn how to have a dialogue with a secular state;

It is very important to develop a philosophy of education that is shared by other world religions. We also need a deeper theological foundation of our own faith.

We need to give some basic information about each religion so we can avoid misunderstanding and then build on it and learn more about them.

Note: we need to recognize that the idea of self-reflection differs among the major religions.

## SOME TAKEAWAYS/ CONSENSUS:

- 1) We need to avoid using “secular” in our documents because in India, for example, it means “treating all religions equal” and not religious indifference.
- 2) Dialogue of Action seems to be mostly successful on our campuses. Our students are working together well and experience some sense of Harmony. For example, some schools in India see interest in common celebrations on major feasts of a particular religion.
- 3) However, there is an emerging place for a dialogue at the level of doctrines because of emerging difficulties resulting from politicization of religious difference (as in to gain political power by demonizing the “other” on religious grounds) and concerns about fundamentalism indoctrination or sensationalization resulting from the wrong interpretation of doctrines.
- 4) There is a shared concern that superficial religious tolerance, as well as a lack of understanding of one’s own religion are working against our ability to work toward greater understanding and even harmony. To this end, we need a shared philosophical approach to talk about religions difference.

Conversation 3.2  
Formation of interreligious leaders for and in the academic community.  
Moderator: Michaela Neulinger

Possible candidates for good interreligious dialoguers:

Gandhi (Andrew Francis)	trust for everyone, respect	simplicity
MLK (from UDetroit Mercy)	persuasive	fearless
Mother Teresa (Paul Fernandes, India)	mother of all	affection, love, compassion
Matteo Ricci (Philip Geister Sweden)	his ability to repair clocks, friendship	ability to establish friendship
Rowan Williams (Philip Endean Paris)	brilliant intellect allied to holiness	ability to take the other absolutely seriously
M. Sadr (Carla, Lebanon)	communication, convincing	communication skills
Anam Mokrani (Micaela herself)	knowledge, spirituality	empathy, silence

**Emerging Ideas:**

1. Acknowledge that the Ignatian background is one background among many for being open to interreligious relations.
2. Differences between Western Europe (post-Christian); Lebanon; India; USA – the interreligious question plays itself out in very different ways, and we need to form people differently.
3. Compassion, integrity, prudent tentativeness, tolerance, respect, friendship, humility, positive behaviour. The one who wants to be an ‘interreligious leader’ needs to be discouraged.
4. We need a serious discussion about what ‘interreligious dialogue’ can mean in different contexts.
5. You can’t separate the religious from wider political and cultural agenda. Can we do religious dialogue without hidden agendas in the background.

**Question of the group:** Do we really want "leaders"? -->suspicion against those who want to be the "leaders", are usually the worst. Do we need integrative people, real authorities (auctoritas vs. potentia).

### Conversation 3.3

#### La formación de líderes interreligiosos para y en la comunidad académica

Moderadora: Birgit Weiler

#### **A summary of the group discussion**

The members came from very different contexts: Denver (Colorado), First Nations University in Canada, University Unisinos (Brazil), Faculty of Philosophy (Dominican Republic), Saint Sevre (France); Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya (Peru)

All of the members are not in favor of training interreligious leaders but prefer other ways and means to foster the interreligious dialogue in their institutions. They came from very different contexts, Shared about the practices of interreligious dialogue in their institutions they stressed the following:

In the university of Denver the dialogue begins among the students who belong to very different religious communities like jewish, muslim, buddist, christian (mainly catholic). The Vice-rector for Mission convokes the students for dialoguing among themselves. He does it together with a team of students from different religions who then together with the Vice-rector prepare the activities for fostering an interreligious dialogue.

In the University of UNISINOS (Brazil) there is a plurality of religions. A good number of students belongs to religions “Afro-descendientes” and to indigenous religions. There is no specific formation for the interreligious dialogue; “ecumenism is just lived and put into practice.” It is like “learning by doing”. In the university two principles a very much promoted: respect and tolerance. One of the regular academic courses is about the different religions. It is a course which students are asked to take. Within this course the interreligious dialogue is an important topic. The “Instituto Humanitas” of the university Unisinos plays an importante role in promoting reflections and debates on very different topics including topics common to the different religions and the interreligious dialogue. The Institute does this by publishing reflections on the website, organizing events etc.

Among the students of Center Saint Sevre (Paris) the majority are christians. At the same time there is a group of muslim students studying philosophy in Saint Sevre. In the curricula there are obligatory courses about the different so called world religions. Normally they are given by two teachers, one of them being an active member of the religious community whose religion will be the topic and content of the respective course. It has shown to be very helpful and enriching to organize courses in the field of interreligious dialogue together with professors from different religions about a common topic which will be reflected upon reflected upon from the religious traditions and practice in each one of the religions presented in the course. Topics are for example “Prayer / Reconciliation/ Truth in Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christian faith. Those courses are very much appreciated by the students. Experience over a long time also showed that it is very helpful to offer opportunities to students for an immersion into a context where people of different religions are present and where common actions, for example, in solidarity with children living in conditions of poverty and marginalization, can be realized. It also has been observed that it is very important to generate an appropriate setting which allows the students to open up and allow themselves to be touched by what they experience during their immersion and to discover within themselves which ate the deep questions arising thru this experience, which changes in their way of thinking, feeling, interacting does the experience provoke in them?

The experience in the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology in the Dominican Republic is very different. The vast majority of the students are seminarians. In the Faculty there is a minimal presence of students from religions other than the Christian one. In this context it is very important to offer students the possibility for gaining a basic knowledge of other religions. It can be easily observed that many students have erroneous ideas e.g. about Islam.

Another important topic is the ecumenical dialogue. It is not easy in the case of several of the Christian churches with a very fundamental worldview. This can make a dialogue impossible. Many students do not know much about the non-Christian religions in the country including Wudu which is wide spread. Courses and seminars are offered to learn more about Wudu and to reflect upon interreligious dialogue with members from this religious community. "Santería" is also a wide spread religious practice in the Dominican Republic and it is a topic in one of the courses which are given at the Faculty.

Another member of the discussion group came from a very different experience, namely the dialogue with representatives of the indigenous communities in Canada. The University run by the Jesuits is a First Nation University and College. Close by there are huts where people – Christians and members of indigenous religions – meet and share religious experiences and services. In the place close to the University there is also a Muslim community. The continuous contact and dialogue of life with the Muslim community has shown that the Muslims often speak about experiences and that Christians tend to share first about ideas and abstract concepts linked with the Christian religion. It proved to be really helpful to create a space for sharing about religious experiences.

The Archdiocese of Virginia dared to explore innovative ways in the field of religious encounter and dialogue. They invited Jews, Christians and members from other religions to get to know more about the spirituality and religious experience in Judaism via the music of Leonhard Cohen.

The members of the group considered it very important:

- To address in our efforts for interreligious encounter and dialogue the question: Can we use art a tool? It was stressed that this opens up another dimension in people. It is not just a theoretical intellectual reflection about another religion.
- To facilitate an environment in which people can get to know each other more, begin to develop friendship and to talk to each other from the heart.
- To create an environment of mutual respect and dialogue.
- To help the students to develop a certain curiosity about other religions with their world views, values and specific religious culture.
- To name differences among the religions but to stress more the importance of identifying what do we have in common, what can unite us in practice to confront shared problems in the neighborhood, town, region and/or country.

It was noticed that often the encounter with another religion, different from one's own, motivates students to get to know more about their own religious traditions, values and practices.



### Conversation 3.4

#### Promoting Inter-religious dialogue and understanding in the wider society.

Moderator: Dominic Irudarayaj SJ

How can the University promote religious tolerance and understanding in the wider society? Are there effective models of this? Is this an important mission of the Jesuit University? How widely would this perspective be shared? How can the Jesuit community become more involved in assisting with such programmes? Is their participation an involvement essential? How can the Jesuit University widen the circle of dialogue to include minority voices?

The group proceeded with discussion between members just to find out what the different institutions represented in the room are doing.

Discussion was centered around the theme of 'encounter' and under the GC-inspired subheadings of "life, action, experience, and theological reflection" the promises as well as the challenges

1. Regular times for prayer that include texts from different religions within institutions
2. Suspicion: in India, for example, Hindu vs Christian
3. 'Equal respect to all religions' – Gandhi – prayers that are inclusive in a common prayer room. 'Namaste' – I bow to the god within you – a way of facilitating encounter – 'to build not to break'
4. Theological reflection in theology faculty – most of the courses given consider the perspective from other religions.
5. Bringing faculty members from different religious backgrounds to a retreat place where they live together for a few days and share their experiences of their faiths.
6. Encouraging research by both faculty members and students.
7. Myanmar – Jesuits started a leadership school – allowing students to share their stories given that there was no safety for three generations to tell stories. This practice opened up the realisation that they were people from very different religious backgrounds, but because of the relationship of friendship and trust the fear is fast waning.
8. South Korea – mutual respect – Catholics, Buddhists, and Protestants studying and working together in harmony.
9. Celebrating the major religious feasts together as a way of breaking barriers
10. Indonesia (250m people – 90% are Muslims) – Wahhabi Muslims want to make Indonesia only an Islamic nation. Lecturers are invited to teach religion so that students learn the heritages of various religions. There is also encouragement for inter-religious dialogue
11. Saskatchewan (Canada) – Campion College (Jesuit ) – invited the Muslim community to pray with the College in the community chapel – this sharing of sacred places is significant in creating dialogue as well as provided immense support in times of crisis and mourning.
12. Cincinnati, Ohio – Xavier University – a champion of inter-faith alliances. This is done around particular social issues, e.g., refugees and immigration. Refugee soccer tournament at the University soccer field for about two weeks
13. Regis College – requirement for a World Religion course. Including also ethics, inter-faith dialogue, in the teaching of courses
14. The 'just in case' moment – how in the African context the major religious tend to wipe out the indigenous religions. But the latter thrive, especially in times of life crisis.



### Conversation 3.5

#### Promoviendo el diálogo y el entendimiento interreligiosos en la sociedad.

Moderator: Gonzalo Villagrán

It was clear that interreligious dialogue is not yet an important issue for the Spanish speaking universities because we weren't many. The conversation was more focused on secularization, laicism and religion in the public life. Therefore, the concerns were more connected with the identity of the institutions and how to convey it. However, we spoke also a little bit on dialogue with Islam because of the Spaniards and French in our group.

The interventions mention the lack of formation in their own tradition of our students as well as the difficulties to make explicit references to the Catholic tradition in our institutions in secularized countries. We also mention how in these contexts of secularization, religion, and Islam, may appear as an attractive contracultural project. This supposes a risk of fundamentalism. We identified as a goal for our institution offering a strong and well rooted presentation of Christian faith that remains open to the other.

We discuss on how to express our Jesuit and Ignatian identity to the different publics we have: Ignatian people, Church people in general, no believers. We spoke of three levels: Ignatian, Catholic, humanist. However, we recognize that at the humanist level many times we do not get to show the need for openness to God.

We mention the need to have a deeper understanding of our identity, so it allows us to dialogue with more easiness with secularization and to be able to articulate an interreligious focus and clear catholic identity in our institutions.

Finally, we also mention that a good way to introduce people to tolerance and dialogue with the other is to approach the poor. Reflecting on theology from the stories of the poor and the diminished obliges us to change our categories and be open to the other. Many times, approaching the religious other is already approaching to the poor, especially in European societies.

Conversation: 3.6  
Promoting inter-religious collaboration.  
Moderator: Michael Neulinger

**Contextual challenges:**

1. nationalism and the instrumentalization of religion (India, Europe, US, South America) --> "the Christian" against the (Muslim) "other"; Hindu nationalism regards Christians as Western enemy
2. rivalling anthropologies: religious anthropologies / technological considerations of the human being
3. Losing governmental funds if you are not on the "religiously" right side
4. radical evangelical groups --> particularly South and Central America, Africa; refusing dialogue (the other is the devil)
5. Mixture of discourse: migration - religious identity - cultural identity --> nobody talks about more severe challenges like ecology, climate, economy, the future of the next generation (discourse is shaped by right wing populists)

**2 questions:**

1. How do you survive economically and socially in a politically hostile environment? --> the
2. How do to be open to all students from all faiths of the country (without losing your Christian identity)? Can our institutions be a place of unifying the country (--> citizenship education in religiously plural contexts)?

**Concrete Programmes:**

- Seminar on the Common Good in Mexico --> now regularly offered, discover the common humanist tradition
- celebrating faiths of all religious traditions present on the campus; visits of the faculty to each other's feasts at home
- Georgetown Programmes - ministers of several faiths cooperating, how to go beyond mere coexistence? --> course offered to them: introduction to Ignatian spirituality as Georgetown is a Jesuit space
- HEST (European Jesuits): one cluster dedicated to Christian-Muslim relations --> Can there be Ignatian foundations for interreligious dialogue? How can we bring together theology of religions and concrete social action? Started in 2017, first workshop in October 2018
- apart from concrete programmes: talk about values, not about strong ideas.

### Conversation 3.8

#### The Role of Departments of Departments and Schools of Theology.

Mark Bosco – There is a Desire for IRD in US universities. IRD is not religious studies dialog – needs a strictly theological home to have a real conversation that involves Catholic heritage. Religious studies have conversations across religions but without an ecclesiological consciousness. In such dialogues, we need to be clear of our own viewpoint, viz who is inviting whom

Gonzalo – there is a need developing a more confessional Catholic theology for IRD. More explicit expression of one's one faith commitment actually helps deepen dialogue.

Gordon Rickson (? Canada). There are different kinds of dialog. We need to differentiate more between religious studies and theology. There is a tendency to think that credibility comes from religious studies. In N America we can make We can make use of comparative theology and spirituality

Augustine (Delhi). The consensus is that what is going to succeed are dialogs of action and life. But there also has to be dialog at the theoretical level. This is not a matter of study other religions: we also need to go out to engage others at the doctrinal level. But the question is whether potential dialog partners be open to people of different faiths than their own -- presupposes that participants are open.

(name?) Pune: Within the Christian community, an inter-religious mentality helps to teach Christianity. Taking for example its motivation from Hindu philosophy or using Hindu constructs in comparison with other religions gives horizon, teaches intellectual humility,

(name?) Ireland. There is not sufficient theological formation for people to be able to engage in IRD. Participants need to know their own tradition, and then to engage theologically – e.g. Islamic theology.

Joseph (Vidyajyoti). We can learn from deploying contextual theology. First, the emphasis is on encounter – (living with people of other religions, lived religions); second comes theolog reflection – presenting Xtn theology and spirituality from the church's point of view and then considering how it would look from other religions. In Vidyajyoti, we use indigenous philosophies to articulate Christian faith contextually. The aim is that that when students get ordained they can they use these understandings *pastorally* for all people. Interreligious dialog should not be limited to the faith domain. Multifaith celebrations are common – sharing in each other's feasts and even hosting them. Harder is to engage at dogmatic level since we are dealing with Semitic vis a vis Hindu mindsets. We Have to work too within framework of Catholicism.

John (Vidyajyoti). Contextual theology has to be both interreligious and include the option for the poor in every subject, which is a challenge. Christian theology has to be challenged by other religions. Currently, the intellectual dialog, is stale. Dialog is much richer at the experiential level, – through religious immersions, personal relationships, in which we enter physically into the spaces of others.

(Name. A study of young Catholics' religiosity in Slovakia reveals a need for serious Catholic education, a catechization of the young in serious theology: we don't know our own roots. We need to turn to our young people and educate them – as they don't have enough religious education to live in a multiconfessional world. There is also a fear of overtly confessional theology, an academic vs. pastoral tension.

Xavier – Madras

Has been involved in interfaith work for 15 years. To bring students to understand the symbols and myths of other religions, the college hosts and celebrates all religious festivals, with an expert from the particular faith explaining the symbols. An interreligious Fellowship helps this at an experiential level

Threats to IRD include fundamentalism, both Christian and Hindu, the latter being associated with cultural nationalism. We need to enlighten our students: a course on world religions also helps them better relate

Nuno – Gregorian. They have two centers for the study of other religions – the Cardinal Bea Center of Judaism and a Center for Interreligious Studies, which offer courses for external students too. They have a Muslim professor in the Faculty of Missiology, and the Bea Center has professors from the Italian Jewish community in Italy and elsewhere. The aim is to promote knowledge, understanding and dialogue.

Xavier – St Josephs, Tamil Nadu. The Indian context is completely different, as it is multireligious in all aspects of daily life. As institutions, we have to do more in our academic programs – impart knowledge about other religions to students. We do organize celebrations/festivals of other religions, e.g. Ramadan. We have two institutes – Cultures and Religions – which invite scholars from other religions. We seek to teach respect for other religions and the rejection of fundamentalism.

Pune – IRD happens in spirituality and counseling classes. We send students for Vipassana; learning from others to become better Christians through the religious practices of people of other faiths. – e.g. silence.

Gonzalo (Granada): in Europe we see a tension between openness and Catholic identity, because of secularization. There is also reticence among some theology professors to get involved in dialogue with Muslims, due to political tensions.

Cornelius (Trinity Coll) Ireland is a secular country. Their students claim to “know” world religions and have conceived their own religion through the lens of world religions. We need to find a way of communicating Catholic wisdom – in a way which is meaningful in a new context.

Bosco -who is the host for all faiths? Theologians are not doing the work – rather the faith practitioners. Have to know who we are - to be able to be generous,

Ed Peck – Dept of Theology in J Carroll. Practices driving theology. Camp Min started interreligious dialog around certain topics, e.g. ecology. Need to host the discussion from a Catholic theological discussion – one of the most important things for students. Equip students for talking across religious diffs.

Vidyaoti - 3% Xtn pop, 97% “like Jesus”. God in history, in Church, and mission – problematic of specificity and exclusivity of Xty. Pastoral/contextual. Begin with experience – then to SS and tradition. See-judge-act-reflect. Minority experience.

Canada – use art. Engage affectivity – the aesthetic as a door into intercultural dialogue. Theology should be engaged and transformative.

Theology emerged from interaction faith and culture. Can continue today. E.g. Advaita as explaining dual nature of Xt – indigenous, concrete, and makes sense.

IRELAND – wider agenda of role of dept of thiol in a university. Can dialog with law, medicine.

Ireland – mission theology – inculturation – challenging culture as well. Other religions need too to be challenged. How to critique? Question of truth comes up all the time - relativism. What is the story of Xt as the unique savior? How to allow to contextual difference. Need for confidence in Xty, know our own. Courage to critique and to learn from each other.

Context – Gonzalo – doubts about IRD from Bps, or other academics.

Vidyajyoti - Within SJ univ – how to take forward GC 36 dialog of reconciliation - interreligious aspect of this.

Conversation 3.9:  
IRD in the context of Extremism and Materialism  
Moderator: Gilbert Mardai SJ

The session began with a welcome note, followed by a moment of silence. Then, there was a self-introduction of the members (13 were present).

The chair read aloud the guiding questions and invited sharing from the floor.

- Extremism can occur in many forms, including political. This was substantiated by a recent crisis in one of the university campuses and how it got resolved.
- The subtle distinction between fundamentalism and extremism (from a research perspective) was introduced: the latter being “using religion to get political power.”
- The tendency to homogenization (as opposed to the existing reality of plurality), leading to polarized society and increased violence—particularly against the minorities. An extreme form, expressed by a student: “when it is not easy to engage in rational talk with the ‘other,’ better eliminate him/her.”
- In the European context, two extremes play out: (i) no role to religion, nor are there any transcendent desires (ii) political and politicized Christianity. Also, public display of longing for meaning is often shunned.
- If extremism is “valuing ideas over the people,” materialism is “valuing things over people.” As such both are counter to the person-centered Gospel values.
- When most students don’t care for religion, our call to provide integral religion needs to be revisited, deliberated and planned for. All the same, the details of the same remain elusive.
- The desire to do away with the religion has created a void. We need to learn what fills that void and address it. To this, another member responded that the task of theology is to keep this space “empty.”
- Religion is an answer to a question. However, if the question itself disappears, then religion ceases to have any more relevance. Its impact cannot but be serious to theological departments.
- In this context, we need a rearticulated anthropology. “Who is a good human being”? needs to be wrestled with.
- Social immersions can be of great help to ask this question contextually and affectively.
- Even as we are questioning the new (current) generation, they may be questioning us in turn – on our worldviews, paradigms and metaphors.
- While there is a perceptible commitment to cherished values such as love, hope, fight for justice etc., the explicit and avowed God-and-transcendence-disconnected disposition presents itself as an urgent concern—at least in some parts of Europe.
- Extremism often arise out of situations of injustice and poverty. The example of poor farmers being armed by the communist rebels in Philippines ... is an example here. All the same, another member cautioned that rather than poverty it is marginalization that that directly correlates with extremism.
- While one suggested that (i) identity crisis and (ii) slow death of liberal arts (lack of aesthetics) are causes for the rise of fundamentalism, other member said that even where art appreciation persists, the tendency to distance oneself away from transcendent is a serious crisis.