

Interreligious dialogue in the views of Turkish historians of religions

Authors:

Resul Çatalbaş¹
Kenan Çetinkaya¹

Affiliations:

¹Faculty of Theology, Bozok University, Turkey

Correspondence to:

Kenan Çetinkaya

Email:

kenancetinkaya@yahoo.com

Postal address:

Bozok Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, Yozgat, Turkey

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In our global world the term 'interreligious dialogue' has become a powerful fact that promises mutual understanding and learning among the adherents of religions. The issue is becoming a popular subject among the religious circles and theological discussions and studies. One of the significant portions of scholars who discuss it presents opinions and offers suggestions for the historians of religions. The Turkish historians of religions provide significant material in terms of the place of interreligious dialogue within the Turkish context. Their perceptions of the concept will also give a clear picture about its implications within the Muslim world. Therefore, the article analyses and criticises the opinions of historians of religions about the concept of dialogue and its propositions in a critical manner. It also focuses their reactions to dialogue and provides suggestions for a healthy dialogue.

Introduction

The concept of 'interreligious dialogue' takes a significant place in the contemporary world in which the fact of coexistence presents itself in a very deep and strong way. A true and unbiased dialogue will contribute to eliminating the factors that preclude coexistence. Although dialogue among adherents of religions happened on different levels, it is possible to state that the modern organised dialogue movement was started at the end of the 1960s by Catholic Christians after the Second Vatican Council. Their call for dialogue was perceived and was responded to differently by people around the world. In Turkey, the Christian call for dialogue was responded to by individuals, academicians and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) differently. Initiatives, supports or rejections of the Christian call for dialogue by individuals and NGOs made dialogue a significant issue for the Turkish people. Besides them, Turkish scholars' works on dialogue significantly contributed to the issue. One of the significant sections of the scholars who discuss, explore, present opinions and offer suggestions is historians of religions. Therefore, the article examines opinions of historians of religions in Turkish academia about the concept of dialogue and its propositions. It also discusses their reactions to dialogue and suggestions for a healthy dialogue. When taking the points that the article sets forth into consideration, a healthier environment for dialogue, in which a mutual understanding and respect would occur, can be sustained more straightforwardly.

The discipline of History of Religions in Turkey, which has been taught at universities since the beginning of modern Turkey, is a significant, scholarly area that explores the practice, theology, philosophy and foundations of world religions. In Turkish academia, the faculties of Theology provide undergraduate level education about religions other than what Islam is, and this is taught in the course named History of Religions. This is a fundamental course in the state-based faculties in Turkey. Besides the ancient and the vanished religions such as Canaanite religions, Ancient Egyptian and Roman religions, world religions are also taught in terms of their history, rituals, theologies and community structures. The issue of interreligious dialogue is among the subjects taught in the History of Religions in Turkish academia, which usually takes place between the issues of religious pluralism and missionary activities. The article focuses on the views of prominent historians of religions in Turkey such as Abdurrahman Küçük, Mahmut Aydın, Mustafa Alıcı, Mustafa Erdem and Baki Adam. These scholars are among the most prominent and influential scholars of religions who approach interreligious dialogue in different ways. Among them Abdurrahman Küçük, Mahmut Aydın and Mustafa Alıcı authored books which basically explore the nature, problems and future of interreligious dialogue. In fact, their approaches and critiques that we analyse in this article present a general picture of dialogue among the Turkish historians of religions. Hence, the article explores the reasons behind these scholars' cautious approaches to dialogue and sets forth the general principles offered by them, which should be followed for a correct dialogue activity.

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The reasons for approaching dialogue cautiously

The concept of interreligious dialogue is a highly sensitive and promising term in Turkey. Yet, besides its positive and bridge-building implications, there are also negative meanings and implications that are embraced by the term and which make it an ambiguous and unclear concept. It is observed that historical experiences, geographical location of Turkey, Muslim-Christian theological polemics, ongoing missionary activities, religious approaches, sympathy and socio-cultural boundaries all are influential factors that ensure the term to be perceived either positively or negatively.

When we examine interreligious dialogue within the works of Turkish historians of religions, we come across the fact that dialogue is generally understood and discussed within the scope of the Christian-Muslim dialogue. Even though the term refers to much broader implications, presenting it within a Christian-Muslim context reduces its higher values of the socio-cultural-historical-political barriers of the followers of the two religious traditions, even though they represent half of the world. Since Turkish Muslim scholars handle the issue of dialogue within the Christian call for dialogue, they usually approach it cautiously. There are basic motivations and reasons that must be set forth.

First of all, almost all of the historians of religions draw our attention to the relationship between dialogue and spreading Christianity, even though they differ about its order of importance. A significant number of them also believe that the chief goal of dialogue is spreading Christianity. The main bases for this approach are the official documents of the Roman Catholic Church and the papal encyclicals. They usually point to the third chapter of the 'Lumen Gentium' (The Holy See 1964) which motivates the Roman Catholic Church mission as it states:

Finally, those who have not yet received the Gospel are related in various ways to the people of God. In the first place we must recall the people to whom the testament and the promises were given and from whom Christ was born according to the flesh. On account of their fathers this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues. But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Muslims, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and all things and as Saviour wills that all men be saved. Those also can attain *[sic]* to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does Divine Providence deny the helps *[sic]* necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God and with His grace strive to live a good life. Whatever good or truth is found amongst them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the Gospel. She knows that it is given by Him

who enlightens all men so that they may finally have life. But often men, deceived by the Evil One, have become vain in their reasonings and have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, serving the creature rather than the Creator. Or some there are who, living and dying in this world without God, are exposed to final despair. Wherefore to promote the glory of God and procure the salvation of all of these, and mindful of the command of the Lord, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature', the Church fosters the missions with care and attention.

In addition, the New Testament's statements about spreading Christianity are also perceived as a challenge in front of engaging interreligious dialogue with Christians by the Turkish scholars who made earlier studies about the issue. These verses are: Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:18-20; John: 20:21; Acts: 1:8; 1 Corinthians 9:16 (Tümer & Küçük 2002). When exploring the verses at stake, it is clear that the main focus is the salvation through faith in Christ and spreading the message of Christ to people in the most efficient way. When looking from the perspectives of Küçük and Tümer, it is not difficult to reach the conclusion that these exclusivist statements about the New Testament have deep cognitive influences when Christians engage in interreligious dialogue and finally push them to consider dialogue as the only means of preaching their faith.

Abdurrahman Küçük, emeritus professor from Ankara University's Faculty of Divinity and the head of 'the association of the Turkish history of religions', refers to an account that Pope Paul VI, in his talk during the Second Vatican Council, presented in which he stated that:

[T]he Gospel declares that every creature should go all around the world preaching the Gospel. I am adding the following: we have to prepare new ways for missionary, explore new tools and create new energies *[for preaching the Gospel]*. (Aydn 1991:60)

Küçük, after pointing out these statements which create strong bridges between preaching the Christian faith and dialogue, reassures that dialogue was among the subjects of the Church, besides its chief missionary task, to be enacted until everyone on earth converts to Christianity.

Küçük asserts that the Christian missionary duty will be fulfilled when all people acknowledge that Christianity is the only true way for salvation through Christ. According to him, one of the prompting statements in the gospel in which this fact is set forth is Paul's statement that: 'For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!' (1 Cor 9:15). Küçük believes that Paul is a personality who usually behaves in dual roles in order to preach the gospel more effectively. For instance, he behaves like a Jew when he is among Jews and behaves like a slave among slaves in order to 'share in the gospel's blessings' (1 Cor 9:19-23). Küçük is persuaded that Paul's dual roles, words and actions become role models for later Christian missionaries, crystallised and used by them for reaching their missionary goals (Küçük 2011).

Another important reaction to the concept of interreligious dialogue comes from Mahmut Aydın, a professor from On

Dokuz Mayıs University. He examines the Christian call for dialogue basically within two different categories. These are individual dialogue activities and institutional dialogue activities (Aydın 2008). Aydın claims that when exploring the official documents and pronouncements of the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, the two chief institutions of the Christian world, it is clear that in the institutional dialogue activities, the main goal of the Church is practicing its missionary duty. Moreover, the main goal of the Second Vatican Council definitely was not developing good relations with non-Christians (Aydın 2008). Even though the *Nostra Aetate*, one of the official documents of the Council, at first sight seems to confirm that non-Christian religions comprise good and holy facts, these are good and valid as long as they are compatible to Christian realities (Aydın 2008). In this respect, Aydın's opinion regarding the official documents seems to be to perceive documents from the perspective of exclusivist Christian ways. Hence, when looking from this framework, he is convinced that one can observe that the Catholic Church's perspective regarding other religions transforms from an exclusivist attitude to inclusivism (Aydın 2008) and that inclusivism basically means considering good things in other religious traditions to be gleaned from one's own religious truths.

In this context Aydın (2008) states:

[The] Roman Catholic Church aims to present the Christian message more influentially and present it to non-Christians by creating friendly relations, learning about them in the best way possible and after having good relations, presenting the message to them. (pp. 89–90)

Even though Aydın underscores the missionary nature of the Christian call for dialogue similar to that conveyed by Küçük, he also states that there are some positive and constructive statements in the official documents. Yet, according to him, these statements are overshadowed by the evangelisation mission of the Church (Aydın 2008).

Similar to his views regarding the interreligious dialogue within the Holy See, he believes that the World Council of Churches (WCC) also considers dialogue as part of its missionary duty. Mahmut Aydın, throughout his writings, stresses that dialogue is discussed within the WCC through its meetings as a new requirement for the current age. Similar to the Roman Catholic Church, strong relations between dialogue and mission makes the issue of dialogue an important subject for the organisation. In this respect he states: 'According to officials of the WCC interreligious dialogue is a part of missionary and it must be performed by all Christians' (Aydın 2008:95).

Aydın presents individual, pluralistic, Christian scholars' understanding of dialogue and works as alternatives to the institutional dialogue activities. He believes that individual dialogue activities are more constructive and sincere. He classifies the insights of individual dialogue into three groups. Firstly is the philosophical-historical approach, which is led

by John Hick. According to this pluralistic approach, religions are limited by socio-cultural-linguistic barriers therefore perceiving the transcendental reality differently. Therefore, each religion is a reaction to the Real, the name Hicks gives for God in the Semitic religions. The second group, which focuses on the common mystical experiences in religious traditions and considers these commonalities as basis for dialogue, is led by Raimun Panikkar. The third group has a moral-practical approach which asserts that members of religious traditions should cooperate by helping individuals and communities in order to develop peace. This view is led by Paul Knitter (Aydın 2008).

When considering these views it is remarkable that Aydın believes the individual dialogue perceptions to be basically more sincere attempts because they have distinctive pluralistic components. Moreover, he is convinced that the individual scholars do not have a hidden agenda when they enter into dialogue. It seems that the basic criteria for being sincere or having a hidden agenda is in keeping with a pluralistic or exclusivist approach. Aydın considers individual scholars' works as sincere because they all state that their religion is not the single representation of reality. So, when they come to the dialogue table they would not have any intention to convert others; compared to the institutional dialogue activities where they consider themselves as the only representatives of the true religion, coming with the hidden agenda of converting the dialogue partners. This view, which reduces the hidden agenda to the issue of conversion, does not give any concrete clue about our dialogue partner's hidden agendas, because people may come to the dialogue table not just with the intention to convert others but also with other hidden agendas such as personal prestige, economical means and political goals. Sincerity cannot be reduced to a single component, because in the very essence of humanity lie endless personal ambitions. The stress on sincerity and isolation from any hidden agenda should be understood in terms of minimising all types of ill intentions. Nevertheless, limiting sincerity to pluralism excludes almost 99% of the faithful adherents of religions because most people believe their religion as being the only true religion. If one reduces dialogue to theological pluralism, it will be almost impossible to make the dialogue movement an applicable model since it includes so many types, such as spiritual, moral, theological, social and political issues and that will also address exclusivists and pluralists as well.

Now we shall turn back to our observation of Aydın's views regarding institutional and individual dialogue activities. For him, although institutions preserve their traditional approach by manipulating only some issues, individuals work for developing theology of religions (Aydın 2008). Therefore, Aydın strongly encourages participants of dialogue to make distinctions between the institutional and the individual dialogue attempts. Nevertheless, he does not ask institutional dialogue activities to be ended. In this respect he says:

[W]e think that the institutional dialogue activities should be performed just politically and as a means of courtesy; the

individual dialogue activities should be supported in order to make it stronger. (Aydın 2008:197)

Another significant criticism that is directed at Turkish historians of religions regarding the Christian context is that while the Church develops and steps up its dialogue activities, it evidently does not suspend its missionary activities. Even though the Papacy condemns immoral attempts for converting non-Christians, especially in Central Asia and Anatolia, it continues its missionary activities in a very organised way. Mustafa Alici, professor at Erzincan University, states that even a missionary organisation called 'Faith and Christianization of Peoples' was created by the Vatican (Alici 2005). Similarly, Mustafa Erdem, professor at Ankara University, also stresses that the Church leaves its old-fashion strategies when it works for reaching its goals. In this respect Erdem believes that Pope John Paul II accepted other religious communities as facts, yet stresses the necessity of converting them to Christianity. Moreover, Erdem, referring to Cardinal Marella, the first director of the Dialogue Secretariate, states that in the Church, dialogue is used for performing its mission in places and environments where missionary activities are prohibited legally (Erdem 2005).

Turkish scholars also believe that Christians' aim to ameliorate the wicked image of Christians in the Muslim world is another important reason for their desire to enter into dialogue with Muslims. Suat Yıldırım, a professor of exegesis of the Qur'an and one of the first scholars who handled the issue of interreligious dialogue, contributes to the discussions on dialogue. According to Yıldırım, the Church wants to continue its existence and to spread around the world, so it uses dialogue as a significant tool in an attempt to improve the bad images Muslims have of Christians and thus to calm down the reactions from Muslims, in order to reach this goal (Yıldırım 2005).

Professor Alici furthermore underscores the fact that the Qur'anic verses that present negative Christian images also cause Muslims to have negative perceptions regarding dialogue with Christians. For him, Muslims also view dialogue as a new type of modern orientalism, so they believe that Christian orientalist may be biased when they enter into dialogue. Moreover he believes that Christians use dialogue, which is formed at the hands of Christianity, as a tool for broadening Western influence, increasing its number of followers and spreading imperialism (Alici 2005). Colonising Christian states use dialogue in order to break down propagandas and reactions that are made by colonised Muslim states such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. Based on these points Küçük asserts that colonisation and dialogue are understood as synonymous terms. Hence, Western Muslims are deceived by hidden agendas of Christians because they do not treat Muslims equally (Tümer & Küçük 2002).

The backgrounds of the Christian participants who engage in dialogue as official representatives of the Christian institutions also are questioned by the Turkish scholars.

According to them, Cardinal Pignedoli was the secretary of the Community of the Christianization of Folks before being assigned as the head of the Secretary for non-Christian Religions during 1973–1980. And the secretary's director of the Islam department, Fr. Couq, was a member of African Missionary Society (Tümer & Küçük 2002). Küçük (2011) strikingly asks a question about this issue: 'Is it ever possible for the persons who were trained to be missionaries to remove their missionary identities when they enter into dialogue with non-Christians?' (Küçük 2011:443). For him, it is not possible to give a positive answer to this question, because the Christian side did not take the necessary steps to remove these doubts that are embedded in Muslims' minds. Therefore, the dialogue activities of the Church remained merely a show (Küçük 2011). His critiques nevertheless oversimplify the subject of mission-faith relations which are at the very heart of Christianity. Instead of expecting a rejection of mission activities from Christian officials, he should clarify what type of immoral missionary activities Christians practice. In this way his call for honest dialogue may find a positive answer from the Christian side and more steps can be taken on this road.

In order to strengthen their position regarding dialogue as the new face of missionary activities the scholars bring examples from the writings of Christians also. One of the popular referred statements is from an article published in the academic journal *Islamo-Christiana*. Taylor (1975) says that:

[M]issionary activities among Muslims have shown the importance of dialogue. The dialogue here is not an alternative to missions, but certainly it is a missionary effort modified according to the conditions. (p. 97; see also Tümer & Küçük 2002:444)

According to Tümer and Küçük, with these statements Taylor sets forth how dialogue should be understood within a Christian context.

Political statements of the popes are considered within the context of interreligious dialogue. In this respect, for instance, Tümer and Küçük (2002) point out Pope John Paul II's negative statements about Turkey's bid for the European Union (EU) which are understood as his disapproval of accepting Muslims into the EU. Moreover, they believe that the pope supports the Church Union's activities which work for dividing the state of Turkey. They perceive Pope Benedict XVI's views in a similar manner.

Some scholars also do not find the Orthodox Christian call for dialogue to be sincere. Tümer and Küçük criticised the silence of Damaskinos Papandreou, a foremost supporter of dialogue and the head of the Switzerland Orthodox Center Metropolitan Bishop, about Greece's oppressive politics regarding its Turkish Muslim citizens. Tümer and Küçük believe that the Greek Metropolitan and the priests play leading roles regarding the state's negative politics towards Muslim Turks (Tümer & Küçük 2002).



Küçük (2011) also stresses that with the help of the dialogue meetings, Christians spread discourses such as 'some Muslims are converting to Christianity because of their dissatisfaction with Islam.' For him, this is another method of missionary activities developed by Christians. Moreover, using a sincere atmosphere during the dialogue meetings, by attempting to bring some quotations from the Qur'an, some Christians claim that their scriptures are not deformed. Christians continue to intensify their missionary activities by spreading flyers and booklets in Turkey about the defamation of the Bible. Such activities constitute significant clues in Küçük's mind that dialogue is a veil for missionary activities (Küçük 2011).

Another significant criticism and assertion is that interreligious dialogue in the Christian world is practiced only by a limited number of scholars. Moreover, it is the belief that Christians invented the dialogue movement and they are well-prepared; yet, Muslims are not ready for dialogue. In this respect Turkish scholars believe that even though there are so many Christian scholars who are well-educated about other religions, there are not so many in the Muslim world. Moreover, there are no international Muslim organisations, which are well-prepared, fluent in other languages and have educated members (Alicı 2005; Yıldırım 2005).

According to Mustafa Alicı (2005), one of the biggest problems of dialogue is that it is according to the initiative and under the control of Christians. Furthermore, the scholars emphasise that the definitions and classifications that are being made by the Christians are still vague and unclear. This vagueness of the definitions convinces Turkish scholars that the outcomes of dialogue meetings bear results that are compatible with and are in the service of the Christians' goals. The gaps between vagueness of the definition and the goals of Christians seem to be another result for the distrust in the Christian's motivation for dialogue. Yet, Turkish scholars should pay more attention to the fact that dialogue is a developing and discussed concept within the Christian context also. Moreover, the promotion of missionary activities by the Church, besides its dialogue call, is also a significant problem for Turkish scholars. Considering the vagueness of the definition and the nature of the missionary dialogue, some scholars understand dialogue as a modern style of orientalism. Within the political implications of the Christian call for dialogue scholars also view that Christians use dialogue in order to preserve the rights of minority Christians in African and Asian countries (Alicı 2005).

Last but not least, according to Turkish scholars, Muslims believe that they are 'the best nation' (Qur'an 3:110) and so it will not be helpful to participate in dialogue meetings (Alicı 2005).

Above we explored the reasons of Turkish historians of religions' cautious approach to dialogue. Yet, as Abdurrahman Küçük and Günay Tümer state, the dialogue process is still in progress so 'Muslims will have profit from dialogue which are [sic] based on sincerity and real' (Tümer &

Küçük 2002:445). Similarly Mahmut Aydın, after mentioning dialogue's strong relations with the missionary involvement, states that 'we do not imply that all dialogue consist [sic] of missionary' (Aydın 2008:296) because according to Aydın, besides institutional dialogue there are dialogue activities practiced by the NOGs and individual scholars. Therefore in order to be active in these meetings there should be well-educated historians of religions present (Aydın 2008). Similarly, after pointing out the danger of missionary dialogue, Baki Adam and Mehmet Katar, professors from Ankara University, also state that 'there is no objection for Muslims to participate in interreligious dialogue that is brought into the agenda by Catholic Christians in the contemporary world' (Adam & Katar 2006:189).

After our analysis of the views of historians of religions about interreligious dialogue, we can now introduce the common principles of interreligious dialogue that they agreed on.

Principles of healthy dialogue activities

Aforementioned scholars agree with the following points for healthy dialogue activities:

1. Sincerity should be the basic ground for any dialogue activities. Any hidden agenda should be removed. Moreover, according to Küçük, if Catholics are sincere, they should openly state that: 'Interreligious dialogue is not missionary activity. We condemn Christians who consider dialogue as missionary. We condemn oppressors from any religious traditions who oppress people from any religious traditions' (Küçük 2011:221).
2. Avoiding extreme interpretations regarding religious law or making them compatible to the dialogue partner's views.
3. Dialogue meetings should also handle the issues of faith, worship, law and moral provisions of religions. They should not be limited to artificial subjects such as mutual respect and friendship.
4. Concepts regarding dialogue should not be misused. In a Turkish context it should be 'dialogue among followers of religions' (Turkish: *din mensupları arası diyalog*) instead of 'inter-religions dialogue' (Turkish: *dinlerarası diyalog*).
5. Dialogue should first be practiced among different schools and denominations of the Muslim world.
6. Missionary activities in the Muslim world should be ended immediately.
7. Supporters of dialogue should be supportive of the oppressed Muslims and people of other religions.
8. Dialogue should be performed on equal grounds and conditions.
9. Outcomes of dialogue should be observed carefully. The outcomes should be helpful for Muslims who live as minority groups.
10. Dialogue should include all religious traditions.
11. Dialogue should be performed by specific official institution(s). The institution should have the capacity to represent all Muslims. For instance, the institution or the

Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey should enter into dialogue. The officers in these institutions should know the languages Hebrew, Greek and Latin in order to learn the basic resources of Christianity.

12. When professionals in these institutions engage in dialogue, dialogue will be saved from being a tool for Christian missionary activities.
13. Muslim scholars, similar to Christians, should develop a theology of religions which explores the phenomena of religions in a theological way. The interpretation of Quranic verses should be made by experts from the area of interreligious dialogue.
14. Dialogue partners should acknowledge that each believes that their religious convictions are true and real.

We believe that these points, that the majority of historians of religions support, can be considered as significant suggestions for vigorous dialogue activities not only between Christians and Muslims, but also between followers of other religions. One of the common tensions of these points seems to be the issue of sincerity. When considering the centuries-old enmity and hostility between Muslims and Christians, it seems reasonable for Turkish scholars to bring up the issue of sincerity. Moreover, there is a strong conviction for the practice of dialogue instead of just talking about dialogue.

Conclusion

As we already observed, Turkish historians of religions explore the issue of dialogue deeply, discuss it from all angles of significant frameworks and propose suggestions for having more applicable and fruitful interreligious dialogue, especially between Muslims and Christians. We believe that the points and critiques of Turkish historians of religions are important in terms of developing a movement for dialogue. We also observed that there are many motivations (such as theological, historical and cultural) behind their cautious approaches to dialogue and also their support for dialogue.

The Turkish scholars agree that dialogue is necessary for our age and Muslims should also take part in it. However, according to the scholars, Muslims should be just as well-prepared as their Christian dialogue partners. The scholars also believe that Christian-Muslim dialogue should be organised by official institutions in Turkey and should be practiced by experts who know Christianity very well. However, it is striking that even though Turkish scholars have supported interreligious dialogue for more than 20 years within certain principles that we set forth above, they did not establish a dialogue centre nor did they work for developing dialogue within the Turkish context, if we do not take their participations in some academic events and publishing articles into consideration.

On the other hand, advocates of dialogue, individual or NGOs, have been working for their goals of making the dialogue movement more effective and helpful. Indeed the supporters and developers of the issue of dialogue have passed through challenging tracks since the beginning of the second half of the 20th century. Their aspirations for building bridges between followers of religious traditions in order to create a peaceful environment among them have been challenged by ongoing clashes between extremes from each side. Since religion has a strong relationship with politics also, ongoing political tensions hamper the steps that have been taken in the dialogue activities. In this context, Muslim Turkish historians of religions aptly search for positive outcomes of dialogue in the contemporary world where people are suffering from violence that is based on religious hostilities and political motivations. We believe that not only Christians but also supporters of the interreligious dialogue movement from all other religions should lend their ears to the Turkish historians of religions for a while and ask them this question: Really, what positive developments did occur with the dialogue movement since the Second Vatican Council!? While the answer to this question is not the specific topic of this essay, the answer is a subject requiring exploration and research.

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Authors' contributions

We confirm that the article is authored by R.Ç. (Bozok University) and K.C. (Bozok University).

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