

Reconciliation of Opposites: Triki's Vision of War and Coexistence

التوفيق بين الأضداد: رؤية تريكي للحرب والتعايش

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Abstract:

The contemporary mode of living constitutes a profound political and ethical challenge, and a philosophical approach that critically examines this way of life is certainly deserving of attention. To rethink social bonds or explore the possible conditions for coexistence is, at its core, a reflection on the authenticity of our behaviors and whether these behaviors and practices embody the true art of living together. Fathi triki insists that coexistence is not a matter of choice or luxury, but rather a necessary condition for the creation of sound and just societies. However, if coexistence and solidarity are vital necessities between nations, how does Triki's philosophy grapple with the apparent contradiction between the aspiration for coexistence and the harsh reality of war and conflict and what philosophical mechanisms does Triki propose as a foundation for a rational and coherent vision that bridges coexistence and peace?

Keywords: philosophy, rationality, identity, coexistence, living together, War, Peace, Hospitality, Awareness, Violence, Domination, Philosophy of Coexistence, Friendship.

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Introduction :

To philosophize is to reflect on what we know, what we desire, and how we live. Have we ever paused to ask ourselves: how do we live, and in what ways can this form of living be realized? How can we prove ourselves worthy of such a life? The question of coexistence is neither ordinary nor self-evident. Yet, it has remained marginal—perhaps even unexamined—within the framework of Arab intellectual discourse. In reality, the contemporary mode of living constitutes a profound political and ethical challenge, and a philosophical approach that critically examines this way of life is certainly deserving of attention. To rethink social bonds or explore the possible conditions for coexistence is, at its core, a reflection on the authenticity of our behaviors and whether these behaviors and practices embody the true art of living together.

The concept of coexistence stands at the heart of Triki's philosophical project. He has succeeded in offering a comprehensive philosophical vision of coexistence one that seeks to move beyond conflict and war, and calls for rationality and peaceful coexistence. Triki insists that coexistence is not a matter of choice or luxury, but rather a necessary condition for the creation of sound and just societies. However, if coexistence and solidarity are vital necessities between nations, how does Triki's philosophy grapple with the apparent contradiction between the aspiration for coexistence and the harsh reality of war and conflict? How can we, today, engage with questions of communication, identity, difference, and diversity questions rooted in the recognition of and encounter with the Other while simultaneously overlooking the various forms of violence, and the escalating conflicts and wars whose geographic, political, and ethical boundaries have become increasingly impossible to delineate?

Furthermore, can we still find hope in a life salvaged by the community, when even at its best, communal life has guaranteed only the most fragile form of happiness? And above all, what philosophical mechanisms does Triki propose as a foundation for a rational and coherent vision that bridges coexistence and peace?

1. Coexistence: Between Necessity and Possibility

Fathi Triki begins his explanation of the concept of coexistence by stating that humanity has become isolated even in the most crowded places societies themselves. This, he argues, is a strong reason to reconsider what should be shared among us and to give it a vital and timely space. In fact, self-awareness is what distinguishes human life, and this awareness calls for attention to the existence of the Other, caring for them, and, most importantly, recognizing them as fellow participants in existence, life, and living in general. Human existence can only be realized within a community, for life in any society is not merely a choice among options; as Rousseau famously stated, "Man was made to be social." Throughout human history, the common good or shared interests have driven the meeting and coexistence of peoples, leading to the formation of human society in its early form from simple life to civilization, from migration and wandering to stability, and ultimately to the establishment of civilization.

Because, as Al-Tawhidi puts it, humans are incomplete by nature but made whole by desire, humanity seeks to attain its full potential, free from any deficiencies or interruptions. Thus, it must compensate for its limitations by drawing from the Other when necessary. In this regard, we are "indebted to others for our very existence; our need for them signifies a lack and highlights our incompleteness." This aligns with Rousseau's assertion that "If any of us had no need of the others, we would never think of uniting with them." (Todorov, 2009, p31)The genius of humanity lies in its ability to transform "its life from disbelief, fear, and

conflict into unity and closeness to the Other through a new invention: the law, which must be respected.” (Abu Taleb, 2006, pp24-25)

Hobbes questioned the need for individuals to live in a community and whether social life was necessary. He argued that the transition from a state of constant conflict (all against all) led humans to create an artificial person the state. However, under this very state, wars continued, and still do. Schopenhauer raised similar questions about the individual's need for society, observing that humans are driven by their will, yet seek to overcome it through reason in order to achieve a sense of fulfillment and self-liberation. Regardless of the motivations for this social contract, the truth remains that we live in society because no other form of existence is possible for us. Thus, the equation of shared life rests on the duality of the self and the Other. “Humanity, in the end, is the union of two,” which means that the goal of living together in dignity is continuously aimed at, no matter the circumstances, to reveal the humanity within each individual. (Triki,2021, p. 136.)

This coexistence does not necessarily require love for the Other; it demands, rather, a vigilant awareness based on responsibility, stemming from the understanding that we share humanity. “The self, as wisdom, as awareness, or as agency, must simultaneously maintain its independence, freedom, and act as a responsible citizen in the environment it inhabits, working to avoid being completely absorbed or dissolved in society.” (Triki,2021,p 39)Thus, as conscious beings, we realize that coexistence requires building a possible relationship with the Other, based on awareness and responsibility. In the absence of this, society turns into a mere space governed by the law of chaos and randomness.

Triki, in constructing his vision of coexistence, refers to four philosophical landmarks as foundational events for the self’s move towards living together. He begins with the Socratic

event, which he considers the foundational moment for establishing a universal, rational, and communicative ethics. If philosophy embodies the human quest to reflect on itself and understand it more deeply, then Socrates was the first to play this role through the interrogation of the self, the soul, and the application of reason to guide human behavior. He then moves on to Islamic philosophy, specifically Al-Farabi, who offered a vision of human happiness as human perfection, blending ethics with politics. Al-Farabi stated: "Human things, when they occur in nations and cities, bring them happiness in this life and ultimate happiness in the afterlife. These include four types of virtues: theoretical virtues, intellectual virtues, moral virtues, and practical arts." (Farabi, 2021, Paragraph 1)

The aim of practical virtues was to build a city in social harmony, where the desire for happiness would lead to a better life through the creation of a communicative social space based on love, cooperation, and justice—through which the city is managed and happiness achieved. This is the essence of rationality: one can only be rational when "their morality aligns with their intellectual reasoning." (Triki, 1998, p, 39)

In this, Triki distinguishes between intellect and rationality, relying on Al-Farabi's message of combining theoretical and practical meanings, bringing politics closer to ethics. Additionally, rationality is seen as a virtue of practical virtues, described by Al-Farabi as "the ability to discern and deduce what is best and most beneficial, so that humanity may attain great goodness." (Al-Farabi, 2021, Paragraph 1). Triki views rationality not as excluding reason, but as a means to humanize reason and open it to what is human.

The Kantian event is also essential in this framework, as Kant's efforts to explore the nature of the human being and the value of life, in general, emphasize the need to link human action with moral obligation. Kant repeatedly stated that "The greatest evil that affects

civilized nations stems from war—not in terms of past or present wars, but in terms of the perpetual preparation for future wars.” Therefore, his project of perpetual peace was a call to humanity to establish world peace as a necessary condition for shared life. The fourth landmark is the philosophy of Deleuze, who emphasized the value of diversity and difference, solidifying “the concept of individuality as a form of resistance against any form of closure, exclusion, integration, and marginalization.” (Triki,2021, p43) According to Deleuze, we must live with others in a harmonious way, which requires my identity to be reconciled, cultivated, and compatible with the identities of others, without establishing my existence through the rejection or eradication of the Other. This is ensured by living together—this is what we hope to become.

In the same context, Foucault’s concept of “care for the self” is viewed as a form of “activity and practice...not only a conscious attitude towards the self or a form of attention we give ourselves, but an organized concern...seen as an obligation, a technique or art.” (Foucault 2011, p 457) The culture of self-care includes ways and practices of caring for the self and body, in an attempt to shape the individual as a moral self, in harmony with a life that is ethical and shared with the Other. “Thus, the self, once again, becomes human, alive, willing, loving its own desires without objection to the rights of the Other to do the same. And through this, we uphold the ethics of life and the aesthetics of existence.” (Triki,2021, p 44).

2. Reason in the Face of Violence and Domination

Talking about shared life is no longer a simple matter today, especially in the face of growing religious, ethnic, and even intellectual differences that mark our societies and nations in particular. Today’s world reveals unsettling contradictions under the dominance of a unipolar order—an order fueled by conflict, self-interest, egotism, and the rejection of

equality in humanity, dignity, and rights for others. If war, in the end, has become the law of life, then what is the fate of a shared life governed by war?

War emerges as the ultimate witness to the fragility of human existence. While in the past it was confined to the frontlines of battle, today it has expanded to encompass political and social conflicts. Whether war is understood as the driving force of history, a tool of power and domination, an inevitable result of conflicting national interests, or an expression of the inherently dualistic human nature torn between good and evil it remains, as Triki describes it, "the sharpest vision of the human condition, for it is the machine of killing humans and destroying the inhabited world." (Triki, 2021, p137)

In Triki's thought, reflecting on violence, conflict, and war necessarily leads to reflecting on peace. Philosophically addressing the question of war, for him, is inseparable from the attempt to understand its causes in order to overcome it and seek alternatives. The ultimate goal is to end wars and foster the conditions for solidarity and closeness among peoples. Philosophy, as a pursuit of wisdom, stands against all forms of oppression and tyranny. However, despite the existence of theories of war within the philosophical tradition, philosophy, in Triki's own words, remains "incapable of formulating a clear and definitive concept of war." Furthermore, it is not philosophy's role to either negate or affirm war itself, because "every philosophy that reflects on war ultimately finds peace to be the solution and the outcome." (Triki, 2015, p115)

In his book *Philosophers and War*, Triki affirms that societies without war are impossible to conceive: "Violence... is a structural feature of both individual and social life." (Triki, 2021, p83) To better grasp the nature and form of conflict, Triki draws on Hobbes' view, which sees conflict as an expression of each individual's desire to preserve themselves or assert their

existence by seeking and acquiring power. When such conflict intensifies, it inevitably escalates into war. Hobbes' proposed solution was a social contract where individuals agree to relinquish part of their freedoms in favor of a central political authority. However, the power and dominance of this authority itself becomes both a deterrent to violence and a generator of violence at the same time "it existentially presents the choice between the coercive order of society and the anarchy of every man's war against every man. In seeking to prevent the latter, it itself turns into a form of sanctioned violence and legitimate oppression." (Triki,2021, p90)

In reality, violence and war have become defining features of contemporary political thought, with ideologies playing a central role in creating environments that perpetuate conflict to serve the interests of ruthless capitalism and justify the repressive and aggressive policies of states. On this point, Triki distinguishes between what he calls "legalized violence" and "violence outside the law." He emphasizes that "all countries seek to legalize their means of violence; on a global level, wars are now justified through an ideology rooted in the fight against terrorism a new form of violence that has slipped outside the legal frameworks that once regulated the use of force, and that aims to dismantle order and establish totalitarianism." (Triki,2015, p13)

Violence, too is a form of encounter and communication with the Other, even if built upon rejection and hostility. In this context, Hegel views war as "a means of communication between adversaries for example, through armament, money, and other forms of exchange, as well as through the mutual recognition of both parties as free, possessing legal personality, and jointly submitting to the pressures of power balance and the laws of the market." (Triki,2021,p92) In this sense, we are presented with a vision of "violent coexistence" in which war is seen as both necessary and existentially meaningful. Through war alone,

freedom is realized freedom that can only be grasped through struggle and sacrifice. War, as a shared danger, plays a unifying role by bringing people together and restructuring them into cohesive communities. However, what this view overlooks is the possibility of alternative means to resolve conflict such as appealing to international and humanitarian law, rather than resorting to war as the only path forward.

War remains an inhumane event as long as technology is its weapon and victory is not determined by who is right, but by who possesses the means of strategic and technological superiority. For “the one who wages war is the one who monopolizes the mechanisms of control over it and its scope, and is the one who imposes their conditions before engaging in it.” (Triki, 2015, p16)

Triki points out that the question of war today is a particularly embarrassing one, and the source of this embarrassment lies in the nature of war itself and the ways in which it is justified. The discourse surrounding war exposes ethical contradictions that make it difficult to justify war morally. War is also a difficult question. Thus, it is crucial for the philosopher to have the courage to engage with such difficult questions in order to avoid exaggerating the dangers that threaten the state, which could otherwise be used as a pretext for war. Philosophical critical thinking must also prevent the use of emotions to incite violence and spread hate speech between individuals. The philosopher's primary task is to contribute to the building of a better world by understanding ourselves and the world around us in order to achieve a just peace.

In this regard, Triki believes that peace emanates from knowledge, and that war is a product of our failure to understand ourselves and build relationships based on respect and tolerance. In his comparison between peace and war, he suggests that they resemble the

relationship between reason and folly. War, for him, is an expression of irrationality—described as madness and stupidity that perpetuate chaos and violence, undermining the security and tranquility of individuals and communities.

Thus, rejecting folly is, literally, rejecting war and reaffirming the importance of reason. “If reason is lost in human society and rationality fades in addressing human affairs, then war expressed through Kant’s terms can take the place of what reason normally does” (Triki,2015, p10) However, the concept of living together requires both parties to accept the principles and ethics of coexistence. It is impossible to coexist with someone who rejects me or seeks to exclude me. Ultimately, “War, violence, and hatred represent the antithesis of the Other, which is the truest, most authentic version of the Other more human and even more catastrophic.” (Triki,2021, p138)

A clear example of this is seen in the conflicts in the Arab world today. What is happening in Gaza transcends the concept of war, as wars have their own set of rules and norms. What we are witnessing is a form of evil, horror, and degradation that we have never encountered before. It has reached the point where the humanity of the Other is stripped away, making it easier to destroy and annihilate them. In this context, Triki clarifies that war can only occur within the framework of justice and fairness, against all forms of oppression and tyranny. The ultimate goal of war must be humanitarian. Triki refers to what he calls “just violence” as a struggle for human freedom and humanity: “Violence is a form of injustice, and justice demands it in return, for this saves humanity.” (Triki,2015, p71)

Triki draws the ethical basis for just war from the philosophy of Al-Farabi, who stated that the legitimacy of war stems from “self-defense in the case of aggression or harm.” (Jafar 1980, p. 152) War, he argues, is only justified when all peaceful methods have been

exhausted. Al-Farabi states: "War can either be waged to defend against an enemy or to reclaim something the city deserves from an external force. It can also be waged to compel people to act in a manner that is better for them, when they fail to recognize it themselves, or to fight against those who refuse to live in service to others when it is better for them to be in such a position." (Al-Farabi, 1993, pp. 76-77)

For Triki, just war is not an injustice because it is subject to ethical merit. It must meet certain ethical criteria. Moreover, living together, according to Triki, is neither defeat nor surrender, nor is it passivity. He argues that rationality does not mean passivity or accepting half-measures, nor does it mean resignation to the status quo. "Rationality can be a means of resisting injustice, oppression, and arrogance." (Triki,1998,p112), True coexistence is impossible if it does not provide its members with security. There can be no peace when common laws are violated and not binding on the members of society.

It is time to recognize that with the growing rates of violence, the expansion of its scope, and the increasing human misery that it generates leading to the degradation and violation of human dignity and a desire for revenge we must expect more terrorism. No matter how governments claim they are ready to deal with it forcefully, terrorism is the weapon of those who have been collectively disarmed, those who have been rendered powerless individually... Peace is not only based on respect for human rights, but also on the rights of peoples." (Zygmunt Bauman & Leonidas Donskis, 2019, p 68)

Triki emphasizes the importance of philosophy in fostering a culture of sharing existence, a culture that encourages coexistence among individuals and different groups, regardless of their cultural, ethnic, or religious differences. Even the most violent encounters can be transformed into opportunities for recognition and understanding through dialogue and constructive communication. Cultural diversity and positive interaction between cultures strengthen human bonds and lead to a more peaceful and humane world.

It is evident today that Western rationality has not been able to fully comprehend the Other, nor has it successfully tied its own existence to the Other's, in order to create a universal, communicative, and just space for all. Our reality today requires a new approach to living together and a shift in how we understand philosophy as a free thought process grounded in dialogue and mutual respect for the rights of all parties. This calls for an enhanced educational role to build peaceful societies by instilling the values of tolerance, cooperation, and respect for the Other in future generations, while also changing the political and media discourse to dismantle hate speech. This endeavor requires a collective effort from individuals, societies, and states to build lasting, just peace, rather than relying on fragile balances.

Free thought, for Triki, is the solid ground on which a philosophy of living together can be anchored, as it is a form of resistance. Therefore, the focus of our questioning should not only be how we can share existence in peace, but also how we can be worthy of survival. For "survival, in a state of awareness, vigilance, and movement, both for the people and for the individual, is a means of resistance against extinction and the threats of death. Killing has, in a way, become a currency of our era" (Triki, 2021, p.16) If shared life is a destiny, then survival, or the worthiness of survival, must be a choice.

3. Philosophy of Coexistence and Resistance

Triki calls for the construction of a tolerant global society that promotes shared human values and helps build bridges of communication and understanding with different cultures. He advocates for a rational critique of ideas, beliefs, and various ideological, religious, and intellectual systems that may lead to fanaticism and hatred, as such systems render peaceful coexistence violent and distorted. Hate speech, in this context, is a direct threat to the concept of coexistence. Philosophically speaking, it represents division and intolerance toward the Other. Hatred emerges as an intentional and irrational feeling, fueled by contempt and enmity, expressing a desire to destroy or replace the hated entity. As Aristotle articulated, hatred is the desire for the annihilation of the disliked being. Hate becomes a psychological war targeting social behavior, transforming hatred into an ideology before it manifests as aggressive, extremist behavior fueled by resentment and the desire for vengeance.

Triki firmly believes that more understanding, achieved through knowledge and communication, must inevitably lead to more friendships or, at the very least, greater tolerance among people. He quotes Augustine, who said, "It is madness for a person not to love people as they are" For this reason, Triki identifies two systems governing the meeting between the self and the Other: the system of hospitality, which represents openness and recognition of the Other, and the system of enmity, which is defined by conflict, exclusion, and the desire to destroy anything different. He explains that any negative stance toward the Other reflects a lack of true knowledge about them. Understanding other cultures, therefore, can serve as a bridge to move from a world of difference to a world of mutual understanding. Strengthening cultural exchange and education about different cultures is vital for building more peaceful and tolerant societies.

In this regard, Triki says: "Meeting the Other happens through rationality, realized via sociality and love, which manifests not only as social justice but also as possible understanding between people and as a humanistic sharing and true coexistence." (Triki,2021,p110) Under the banner of agreement and love, -Triki includes concepts such as friendship, camaraderie, and familiarity, considering them expressions of agreement and harmony. These concepts reveal "the human ability to transform their natural sociality into rational socialization." (Triki,2021,p113) Based on this understanding, Triki introduces the idea of coexistence as a desire for the encounter with the Other, in contrast to solitude, which represents isolation and sadness. He draws on Ibn Khaldun's idea of coexistence as a form of civilization, opposed to barbarism, which reflects the nature of tribal life. (Triki,2021,p113) Human beings cannot transcend their individuality except through interaction with others. In essence, they are creatures of connection and communication.

The philosophy of living together acknowledges the diversity of individuals and affirms the necessity of individuality and, consequently, the necessity of selfhood. Unlike Habermas' philosophy, Triki's approach explores the re-establishment of the ethics of relations and concern for both the self and the Other through conflict, struggle, freedom, and liberation. "Through creating a space for coexistence, sharing, and exchange, the values of communal living are revealed." In this sense, Al-Treikinotes that "living together is achieved through familiarity, love, and community. Love, etymologically, implies an affectionate readiness that can be defined by the Arab philosopher Al-Mas'udi as passion, friendship, longing, and affection." (Triki,2021,p77) Friendship, as emotional communication, forms the basis for relationships between the self and the Other. As he puts it, "among friends, everything is shared." Friendship is the sharing of the givens of existence; it is a form of commitment in which the friend's responsibility toward their friend takes precedence over responsibility

toward themselves. If sharing and exchanging are not the foundation of friendship, then there is no need for the friend. Friendship is the potential for communication and openness toward others. Once this is achieved, the individual discovers their own self and deeply experiences the values of their humanity, such as love, cooperation, compassion dimensions that connect them to social life as a social being.

The same applies to the concept of hospitality. Triki notes that, in light of the crises the world is witnessing today, especially in the Arab region, with ongoing divisions and the resulting scenes of forced migration and displacement, it has become clear that we are unable and unprepared to accept and host the Other. While we have always understood hospitality in terms of brotherhood, respect, and proximity, why not also understand it as an encounter or a journey, in which the self moves beyond itself to meet the Other? Hospitality, as Kant suggests, does not belong to the realm of charity but is rooted in the right of the stranger, upon entering another land, to not be treated as an enemy" (Kant, 1991, pp93-94) Hospitality as a human value is connected to concepts of citizenship, rights, equality, and belonging. It becomes a vision of the possibility of living together a question of the Other and the Self, and a search for both, for the potential for closeness and meeting without erasing difference and specificity. Thus, hospitality becomes an act of rebellion against any form of identity-based belonging, turning it into a meeting or an experience of encounter, where we meet the Other without seeking to transform them, as Sartre put it.

The self differs from the Other as much as it shares a similarity with them in essence or human nature. Accordingly, the correct attitude toward the relationship between the self and the Other is one of fraternity and affection, founded on dialogue, respect, and tolerance. Only when this is achieved, when the shared human values are recognized, do differences cease to be barriers to communication between people. Instead, they become tools and

means of communication, and our view of the Other is one based on respect, recognizing and appreciating the diverse artistic expressions of our cultures and ways of expression. "Philosophers," as Triki puts it, "are always those travelers who have never been silenced by anyone and who have dared only to redraw the space where philosophical words can be inscribed, where the philosopher can find a delicate network of voices in our dealings and speeches." Gradually, this network will develop as we seek to introduce rationality, critique, freedom, distribution, generosity, and, in short, coexistence into our various social interactions" (triki, 1998 ,P24) Ultimately, the future can be shaped, even though our time may seem increasingly turbulent.

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