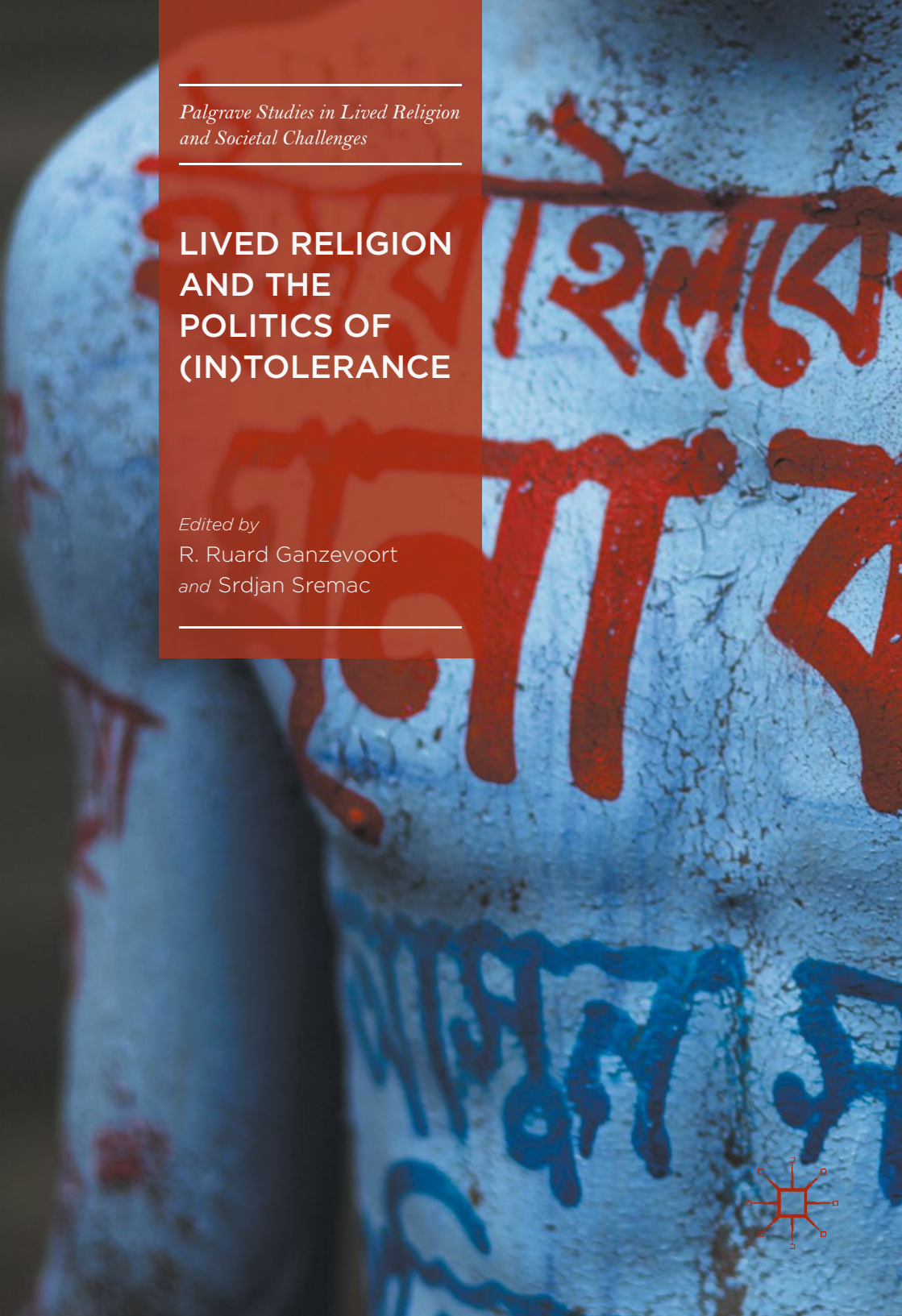

Palgrave Studies in Lived Religion and Societal Challenges

LIVED RELIGION AND THE POLITICS OF (IN)TOLERANCE

Edited by
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Palgrave Studies in Lived Religion and Societal Challenges

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Lived Religion and Lived (In)Tolerance

Srdjan Sremac and R. Ruard Ganzevoort

Once long ago G.K. Chesterton boldly declared: "Tolerance (or what he generally termed 'impartiality') is the virtue of the man without convictions." In a similar manner he described modern tolerance as a tyranny (Chesterton 1908, p. 25). Contemporary theorists use similar discourse in describing tolerance. Building on Marcuse's notion of "repressive tolerance," Žižek (2008) sees tolerance as an ideological category and "post-political ersatz." Other theorists argue that our modern society has gone "beyond toleration" (Stepan and Taylor 2014). Habermas (2003, p. 3), for example, considers tolerance as a foundation of liberal political culture. It seems that liberal and secular democracies need more than ever a serious reconsideration of the concept and everyday practice of tolerance as a response to the new models of intolerance, social exclusion, and religious violence. A critical discourse on toleration and tolerance

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seems to have a particular weight in the context of political secularism and religion.[1] There has been an acceleration of interest in the relationship between religion, (in)tolerance and politics in modern societies. Numerous cases of contemporary debates in our multicultural and multireligious societies are perceived as problems of intolerance—the present waves of Islamophobia, anti-migration sentiments, religiously inspired terrorism, blasphemy and free speech debates, various forms of religious and ethnic nationalism, racist and discriminatory behavior towards minorities, conflicts about religion and sexual diversity—these are just some of them. The question of tolerance and religion addresses some of the most challenging and persistent features of peaceful and equal coexistence in the world "risk society."

In today's world fueled with faith-based—or at least faith-legitimated—violence, tolerance and religion become deeply contested notions and profoundly important aspects of societal and political life. The politics of (in)tolerance become a public and often political and/or religious platform that contributes to the production and construction of people's identities and belonging in highly charged political contexts. The topics of lived religion and lived (in)tolerance are thus immensely relevant both from a societal and an academic perspective. Accordingly, the notions of tolerance and intolerance have become increasingly prominent among philosophers, religious scholars, and political theorists. Religious arguments are often instrumental and conflicting boundary markers in political discursive spaces regarding sexuality (Sremac and Ganzevoort 2015; Young et al. 2015), nation-based religious intolerance (Grigoriadis 2013; Geyer and Lehmann 2004; Juergensmeyer 2008; Strenski 2010; Djupe 2015), race (Price 1999), and ethnicity (Claire 2006; Rogobete 2009).

Building on constructionist interpretations of religion, this volume investigates the complexities, negotiations, performances, and identity configurations of lived religion and the strategic use of (in)tolerance at a micro-level. The dynamics of tolerance and intolerance, exclusion, violence, and persecution or reconciliation and mutual understanding are pertinent cases for this investigation. The concept of lived religion can

[1] Here we distinguish the term "tolerance" as a form of practices from "toleration" as the legal act (see Habermas 2003).

help us to understand religious practices (taken broadly) in complex cultural constellations and their connection to the politics of (in)tolerance. It will also allow us to better comprehend the micro-politics and aspects of religio-political identity configuration in the public space.

Lived Religion and the Politics of (In)Tolerance carefully analyzes and critically investigates the ways in which lived religion encourages and contributes to conflicts,[2] as well as fosters tolerance, in the interlocking rural, urban, and virtual social spheres. It intends to address some of the shortcomings in analyses of the relationship between lived religion and societal challenges and, theoretically (and empirically) offers a more nuanced understanding of the micro-politics of (in)tolerance and its connection to lived religion. Unlike other studies that have focused on institutionalized forms of the intersection between religion and the politics of (in)tolerance, the contributors in this volume consider how communities and individuals are able to articulate their everyday religious expression and practice at the micro-level of experience that effects meaning, power, and identity construction. In other words, we try to understand the ways in which people turn their religious values, norms, attitudes, stories, and experiences into everyday social and political actions. Against critics who often argue that the study of lived religion is politically irrelevant and preoccupied with intimate, domestic, or private spaces, this volume aims to explore the logic and forms of (in)toleration in different cultural, religious, and political contexts and to investigate the ways in which lived religion and lived (in)tolerance are articulated, perceived, and performed in the realm of the political and the everyday. We focus on online and offline settings and on rural and urban contexts.

What are the limits of tolerance when it comes to religion? What are the emerging meanings of the concepts of tolerance and intolerance in ordinary/lived discourses? What are the ways in which cultures of (in) tolerance are sustained or spread through social media? What are the urban (multicultural) and rural shapes of religious identity and (in)tolerance? What is the role of lived religion in between public and private

[2] This volume emerged from an international research network sponsored by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) under the title *Transforming Religious Identities and Communities at the Intersections of the Rural, the Urban, and the Virtual*.

(in)tolerance? What are helpful and harmful aspects of lived religion in fostering lived (in)tolerance? Which shapes of lived religion are conducive and instrumental to violence and which shapes are supportive for tolerance? And how do lived religion and lived (in)tolerance intersect? These are questions we tried to answer in this volume.

Lived Religion

In recent years, a framework for studying religion from the perspective of ordinary people covers a broad field of scientific discourses and gained popularity mostly within religious studies, (practical) theology, and social sciences in general. The very fact that the discussion on lived religion calls for both empirical reflection as well as conceptual clarification makes it an interesting area for multi- and interdisciplinary research.[3] Over the last decades the perspective of lived religion has emerged to remedy the shortcomings of earlier perspectives that approach religion as stable systems and that focus more on the official positions, traditions, creeds, and hierarchal structures (McGuire 2008; Maynard et al. 2010; Hall 1997; Talvacchia et al. 2015; Orsi 1985; Ammerman 2007, 2013; Tweed 1997; Ganzevoort and Roeland 2014; Streib et al. 2008; Dessing et al. 2004; Koepping 2008; Failing and Heimbrock 1998; Wanner 2012; Winston 2009). Taking up "the lived impulse" provides a foundation for critical hermeneutical examinations and an empirical analysis of religious–spiritual practice and expression outside the doctrinal and liturgical theatre. However, recent developments in the study of lived religion emphasize the importance of lived religion not merely in individual everyday religious–spiritual practices and experiences (or what is called "privatized religion" or "non-affiliated spirituality") but also in the articulation and unfolding of traditions (Talvacchia et al. 2015, p. 6). This includes dual focus on the macro (sociocultural) and micro (individual or private)

[3] Streib et al. (2008, p. iv) argue that the very concept of lived religion "suggests to leave it to the people as to what they understand as religion." Similarly, Beck (2010, p. 16) argues that religious individualization or what we call here lived religion is a highly ambivalent process, and this has to be understood and explained "not only by the conceptual fuzziness of theory but by the complex nature of the real world."

levels of lived realities and lives of actors in concrete situations. In other words, lived religion as an empirical cultural hermeneutics aims to understand the everyday habitus of religious actors ("religion from below") and forms of appropriations and negotiations of the repertoire people encounter in religious and cultural tradition. Nancy Ammerman (2014, p. 190) cautioned against emphasizing solely a privatized form of religion, stating: "[w]hat happens inside religious organizations counts, too. Those who wish to 'de-center' congregations and other traditional religious communities will miss a great deal of where religion is lived if those spaces are excluded from our research endeavor." Orsi (1985, p. xix) forcefully claims that a rethinking of religion-as-lived as the specific forms of cultural work "directs attention to institutions *and* persons, texts *and* rituals, practice *and* theology, things *and* ideas,—all as media of making and unmaking worlds." The "subjective piety" of the "everydayness" and institutional religiosity are not mutually exclusive but may well reinforce each other.

The study of lived religion as a fluid and multilayered practice takes its starting point in what people actually do, experience, desire, think, imagine, touch,[4] live, and share.[5] Religious studies scholars have deployed the conceptual framework of lived religion as a hermeneutical tool that provides new insights to the body, experience, space, imagination, meaning-making, private/public boundaries, relationships, everyday life, and biography (Streib et al. 2008). Building on Husserlian phenomenology, Heimbrock (2010, p. 169) has pointed out that the lived-religion approach opens up to a refreshed understanding of human (religious) behavior and an analysis of "the culturally shaped forms and symbolic representations of life in order to describe religious experience as rooted in 'lived experience'."[6] Adopting the general framework of everyday lived

[4] The material/physical dimension of lived religion is often a neglected area of study. It is important to investigate religious/spiritual everyday practicing through, for example, doing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling. See Meyer's (2014) material approach to religion.

[5] Orsi (2003, p. 174) points out that the study of lived religion is—in Jamesian terminology—the discipline of "radical empiricism." It holds "the possibility of disentangling us from our normative agendas and defamiliarizing us in relation to culture."

[6] In his phenomenological approach, Husserl tried to grasp an "original" lived experience and reach "the things itself" in its "pure manifestation." Heimbrock has made major theoretical contributions to the understanding of lived religion.

religion as the ethnographic and hermeneutical background for understanding the performative dimensions of "religion-in-action" as it functions in people's ordinary lives will serve a better understanding of the interface of (in)tolerance and religion and how they interact with each other on the level of meaning and power. In this way, the lived religion approach identifies how religious actors use and articulate their experiences of (in)tolerance with political, cultural, and social realities.

Lived (In)Tolerance

The next step in constructing our theoretical and methodological framework is to make the connection to lived (in)tolerance. Tolerance itself is not a coherent entity. It is a multilayered and multidimensional conceptual variable. As Sudita Kavirak (2010, p. 339) argues, like religion, toleration/tolerance refers to a variety of institutional fields (and we would add a range of non-institutional fields), crossing "an ethical order, a social order, philosophical systems, political institutions." Tolerance always involves power relations where "the powerful make decisions about how to tolerate the 'intolerable'" (Barkley 2014). Or in the words of King (1971, p. 197): "A person will be said to be tolerant only where he has the power not to be tolerant." This does not mean that only those with structural power positions can be (in)tolerant. Marginalized and minority groups can resort to violence or appeal to courts of justice and/or public opinion to fight what they consider to be intolerable (e.g. in debates about blasphemy or in the aggression against refugees). In these cases the struggle is first about developing the degree of power that is necessary to express and effectuate intolerance.

As a profoundly contested concept, tolerance can vary significantly from religious or secular postures (based on a different religious or secular discursive regimes) and its often complex doctrinal and/or ideological configurations and dimensions. Barkley (2014, p. 205) argues that toleration is "an organizational by-product of relations between public authorities and communities (or individuals) and relations between communities with regard to how to coexist, refrain from violence and persecution of the other, and ensure their livelihood." In a similar vein, Katznelson (2014)

argues that if we want to assess toleration, we must do so in institutional contexts. Although we acknowledge the importance of institutional dimensions in (in)tolerance, this volume argues that we need to move beyond the institutional/social arrangements in order to understand the complexity of (in)toleration. We argue that (in)tolerance and its connection to religion cannot be fully understood unless analyzed from below, which means that the focus needs to be not *only* on public institutions or religio-political spaces but on (in)tolerance of ordinary people and their performativity, practices, and interests in non-institutionalized spaces. Focusing solely on institutions and social networks rather than individuals does not provide a complete account of the complexity. In the context of (in)tolerance, lived religion can be seen as a strategic–political performance of values taken to be sacred that connects the "everydayness" of ordinary people with the structural institutional relations and discursive regimes that provide context and meaning within which lived experience is performed, and which leads to (in)tolerance.

The Structure of the Volume

The convergence of lived religion and lived (in)tolerance is highly context-dependent. The analyses in this volume are therefore explicitly framed in concrete social, national, and religious contexts. The case studies focus on nation-based religious intolerance, between religious and secular authorities in the context of minorities debates, between secular and religious paradigms of reconciliation, transitional justice, and so on. The volume is divided into two parts. The first part examines cases of lived religion fostering intolerance. The second part analyzes lived religion factors in fostering tolerance.

Part I: Fostering Intolerance

To begin with, in "Paradigms of [In]Tolerance? On Sri Lanka's Bodu Bala Sena, #prezpollsl2015, and Transformative Dynamics of Lived Religion," Chamindra Weerawardhana focuses on the evolving roles of

the Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist movement in shaping and reshaping the politics of post-war Sri Lanka. Exploring the dynamics of state deployment of Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism as a political tool to reinforce its power on the one hand, and outlining the ideological cleavages within the Sinhala-Buddhist establishment on the other, Weerawardhana demonstrates how the Buddhist clergy's political engagement has intensified in post-war Sri Lanka, to a level of active engagement with policy issues, bargaining, party politics, and coalition-building. Against a backdrop of ideological cleavages and differences in political allegiance, the chapter argues that the post-war Sinhala Buddhist establishment collectively plays a decisive role in shaping the politics of ethno-religious (in)tolerance, diminishing the prospects for inclusive political reform.

In "Notes on the Christian Battle to End the 'Abortion Holocaust,'" Katharina von Kellenbach elaborates on the rhetoric of genocide and Holocaust that increasingly permeates the campaign literature of the Christian pro-life movement, especially in the United States of America. Focusing on right-wing Christian websites with names such as "Genocide Awareness Project," "Babykaust.de," and "abortionsurvivor.org," Kellenbach shows how the differences between mass murder and women's reproductive control are discursively erased. The chapter examines the appeal of this trope in constituting a Christian pro-life politics that is beginning to move from the extreme fringe into the mainstream. This makes the worldwide pro-life movement important for any ethical and political analysis of the politics of (in)tolerance.

Based in Northern Ireland's violent conflicts, "Lived Religion and the Intolerance of the Cross" deals with the hostility and intolerance behind the incident of "Harry McCartan's crucifixion," linking it to the wider context of sectarian intolerance and violence in Northern Ireland. David Tombs draws on this incident to reflect upon Roman crucifixions as even more extreme acts of theatrical violence and intolerance. Tombs argues that even though the cross is one of the most widely recognized symbols in the world, the reason that it was unspeakable is rarely examined, and the link between sexual violence and crucifixion is invariably omitted and evaded in Christian memory of the cross. The consequence of this amnesia—Tombs claims—is that the true scandal of the dehumanizing violence and intolerance of the cross is unlikely to impact on lived religion.

The extreme violence and intolerance of Roman crucifixions may be seen in the light of its link to sexual violence as an intolerance of life; an intolerance of memory; an intolerance of the victim's humanity and standing before God. Finally, Tombs asks how the dehumanizing violence of the cross might be more appropriately recognized and remembered in lived religion, and how might it empower action and advocacy against violence and social intolerance in Northern Ireland and other societies.

In "The Patriarch and the Pride: Discourse Analysis of the Online Public Response to the Serbian Orthodox Church Condemnation of the 2012 Gay Pride Parade," Dubravka Valić-Nedeljković, Ruard Ganzevoort, and Srdjan Sremac explore the complex field of lived religion, nationalism, sexual diversity, and intolerance by analyzing the online public responses to the Serbian Orthodox Church Patriarch Irinej's comments on the Belgrade Gay Pride Parade in 2012. The authors identify several discursive strategies found in the material and organize them in three main categories that highlight the content of the interactions: relational, linguistic, and argumentative strategies. This analysis thus highlights how online lived religion plays a part in furthering a public discourse of intolerance.

In "'Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol': Lived religion, conflict and intolerance in Brazilian films," Julio Cézar Adam discusses how the theoretical perspectives of Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan may contribute to the understanding of lived religion, nationalism and (in)tolerance in the multireligious and multicultural societies of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Jeftić argues that the (non-)existing Bosnian identity operates through "jouissance" of nationalism, intolerance, and religion. Accordingly, the main discourse of power functions with both sexuality and religion in order to establish the "jigsaw puzzle of Bosnian identity" and to restrict the enigmatic encounter with the Real, which is replaced by a surplus of imprisoned tolerance and understanding.

In his article, Júlio Cézar Adam analyzes the relationship between religion, conflict and intolerance present in the Brazilian cinematic context. The films were chosen taking into account the evidence of the relationship between conflict and intolerance present in the plot and their relationship with religious elements. Adam's chapter proposes three types of sociocultural-religious conflict: a) the socio-political conflict with developments in the religious field; b) the conflict and intolerance both within the religious field; and, c) conflict of hopelessness and life perspective.

Part II: Fostering Tolerance

In her historical analysis in "God, Government, and Greenbelt: Lived Religion and the Cultural Politics of (In)Tolerance in the Social Engineering of a Cooperative New Deal Resettlement Town, 1937–1940," Sally Sims Stokes examines the efforts of the US government and the Federal Council of Churches to establish religion in the public cooperative community Greenbelt (a typical example of social engineering in the New Deal era), and of Greenbelt's idealistic clergy's efforts to achieve interfaith understanding among Protestants, Catholics, Mormons, and Jews. It also examines the projection of a lived religion, through cooperation and tolerance, in the new town, and assesses how well these hopes for tolerance played out in the first few years before the US entered World War II.

In "Uncanny Landscapes of Memory: 'Bosnian Pyramids' and the Contemporary World-Making in Bosnia and Herzegovina," Maja Lovrenović gives an anthropological account about the extraordinary case of the "Bosnian Pyramids" in central Bosnia-Herzegovina (a pseudo-archeological narrative which claims that the largest human-made ancient pyramids on Earth have been discovered in Bosnia and Herzegovina). Lovrenović argues that the "pyramid craze" highlights the pivotal role of *landscape* in the reconstruction of the post-war and transitional subjectivities and people's struggles to rebuild daily routines in search of a meaningful future, as well as to situate and make sense of their experiences of the violent past. Ethnographic accounts of people's everyday lives situated within Bosnian post-war landscape point to the necessity of grounding the debate on lived religion and tolerance in Bosnia-Herzegovina within these intricate patchworking processes of remembering and forgetting ("memory studies" approach), concealing and revealing (objects, representations, silences/"public secrets"), imagining the future in relation to the past ("historical imagination," fantasy), and dealing with experiences of violence and intolerance. With this approach, the chapter argues for the urgency of developing a new perspective into the physical and metaphorical "landscapes of memory" in post-conflict societies.

In "Reconciliation, Justice and (In)Tolerance Hijacked by Religious Apathy: Transforming Reconciliation 20 years after the TRC in South Africa," Christo Thesnaar engages with the context of post-apartheid South Africa. He claims that the concept of lived religion can assist faith communities

to be part of an active citizenry within a post-apartheid era in order to continue to become an advocate for reconciliation, justice, reparation, and healing. He argues that only as a community of hope can the Church contribute to the reduction of intolerance, repetition of violence, xenophobia, and radical nationalism that has become evident in South African society.

In "The Politics of Intolerance, Lived Religion, and Theological Reflection around Belfast's Separation Barriers," Jonathan examines how the intolerance that is deeply entrenched in the history of the city of Belfast can be transformed. Utilizing a reflective model informed equally by the legacies of Latin American liberation theology and by theologies of reconciliation, the barriers in the city can be interpreted as examples of idolatry as described in the biblical text: physical objects constructed to provide safety, security, and identity in place of traditional sources deemed unreliable. By developing such practical, contextual theological reflections, Hatch argues that churches and faith communities in Belfast can begin to expand their vision of their lived religion in their social context and reimagine their role in its transformation.

Finally, in "Fostering Religious Tolerance in Education: The Dutch Perspective," Gerdien Bertram-Troost and Siebren Miedema address the question: What role can lived religion play in education concerning the way pupils perceive religious diversity in the Dutch context? They elaborate on different hypotheses connected to this question on the basis of both empirical findings and theoretical reflections. They show that not all schools in the Netherlands have seriously taken up their pedagogical–political responsibility to fully prepare children for a religiously diverse society. The authors discuss the possible consequences of the current situation for the development of religious (in)tolerance among Dutch children and youngsters.

Reflections

The ten case studies collected in this volume represent highly divergent contexts, with varying levels of religiosity and different dominant religious traditions (Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Buddhism in Sri Lanka, and Christianity in other contexts). The conflicts differ from ethical issues in public debate to political struggles, and civil war. Still, some common themes and factors can be observed throughout.

The chapters of this volume show that the relationship between lived religion and the politics of (in)tolerance is socially and politically more significant than many scholars assume. A central issue for many contributors in this volume is how social actors and their networks of relations and institutions interact with the everyday experience that provide the context and the meaning within which they act and live. When religious empowerment is constrained by the state with a sacred source of legitimation, individuals and groups are exposed to the practices of (in)tolerance on the micro level. In Part I—focusing on narratives and practices of fostering intolerance—Weerawardhana and Tombs argue that religion is a marker of ethnicity that contributes to the formation of identities, communities, and politics. In post-conflict societies, such as Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, religion has positioned itself to represent a decisive component of national and/or ethnic identity that can endorse intolerance. In these societies of "frozen conflict," the religious ethos can be invoked to reinforce the identity of particular ethnic, racial, and religious groups.

Two case studies in this section focus on the connection between lived religion, sexuality, and intolerance in the virtual space. Valić, Ganzevoort, and Sremac (in the case of Belgrade Gay Pride) and von Kellenbach (in the case of anti-abortionists) show how moral ideologies serve to connect the religious discourse to the discourse of national identity and values. Religious discourse on demographic and ethnic issues, in particular when related to LGBT issues and abortion can be read as an attempt to directly promote intolerance especially in the virtual sphere. For example, Valić, Ganzevoort, and Sremac show how religio-sexual nationalism in Serbia has been shaped in antagonism to the "liberal" discourse of human rights, associated with national values, which it interprets as the centering of all that is traditional, patriarchal, and ethnic. All chapters in the first part of the volume thus testify to lived religion's potential to be instrumental in the development of intolerance, exclusion, and violence. In each case study it is clear that the relationship between lived religion and intolerance should not be interpreted as unidirectional or causal. Lived religion cannot only serve to develop intolerance, but is also part of the group identity construction that results from this intolerance.

In Part II the contributors demonstrate that there are multiple variations of the emergence of tolerance and that in the "everydayness" where

tolerance becomes possible, lived religion can function as a vehicle for the fostering of tolerance. The authors show the possibility of fostering tolerance and non-discrimination through public religious education (Bertram-Troost and Miedema), reconciliation (Lovrenović, Hatch, Thesnaar), and interfaith understanding (Stokes). In that sense lived tolerance is the fundamental conviction and commitment of many actors in concrete situations where diversity and difference are the norm, where tolerance becomes the important aspect of identity politics, and therefore remains a core vehicle to the practices of tolerance and peaceful coexistence with mutual respect on the micro-political and societal level.

The everyday politics of tolerance and its connection to lived religion both reflects and critiques the values and trajectories of its societal, cultural, religious, and ideological realities. This perspective no doubt informs our understanding of how lived religion penetrates everyday life in order to promote the individual's political and theological paradigms of tolerance.

As the contributors show, the micropolitics of lived religion to some extent shape and form individual behavior, moral and political value systems that are constituted and reproduced through the social, cultural, political, and religious engagements of the individuals. Taken together, these chapters, therefore, help us to understand the micro-political engagement of (in)tolerance at the level of both lived religion and identity construction in specific national, cultural, and religious contexts. By negotiating alternative theoretical and methodological approaches and diverse religious, social, and cultural traditions, we hope that this volume will open dynamic debates that facilitate critical analysis on the relationship between lived religion and lived (in)tolerance.

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Part I

Fostering Intolerance

Paradigms of [In]Tolerance? On Sri Lanka's *Bodu Bala Sena*, #prezpollsl2015, and Transformative Dynamics of Lived Religion

Chamindra Weerawardhana

In 2012, three years after the end of Sri Lanka's long-drawn-out secessionist war, a new Sinhala-Buddhist advocacy group led by Buddhist monks came to being. *Bodu Bala Sena* (BBS, Sinhalese බොදු බල සේනා), defines its mission as that of protecting Sinhala Buddhism, that is, the Buddhist faith as practised by the majority of Sri Lanka's largest ethno-national and linguistic community. BBS leaders purport to protect their faith from external 'threats', especially emanating from Christian and Islamic proselytization, and what they describe as a growing influence of Wahhabi discourses among segments of Muslims, Sri Lanka's second largest ethnic minority. Having built a strong public image as a radical defender of its cause within a short period, BBS supported ex-President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the January 2015 presidential election, and is contesting the

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August 2015 general election under the emphatic banner *Bodu Jana Peramuna* (Buddhist People's Front).

Primarily focusing on the BBS saga, this chapter explores how ethno-religious political groups exploit aspects of lived religion to their political advantage in the electoral politics of a deeply divided society. Since its inception, BBS has deployed features of lived religion to propagate its political views, anchored on Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism and a discourse of 'protecting' the Sinhala-Buddhist establishment. BBS's majoritarian-nationalist discourse met with a substantive popular and, to a certain extent, 'political' backlash by late 2014 and early 2015, with new political developments that followed the declaration of a snap presidential poll and a resulting political rift within a segment of the Sinhala-Buddhist polity. The latter, principally represented by staunchly Sinhala nationalist *Jatika Hela Urumaya* (JHU: National Sinhalese Heritage) made a strategic U-turn in endorsing the 'common candidate' of a broad opposition front, which included pro-Western, liberal democrats, primarily ex-President Chandrika Bandaranaike and Ranil Wickremesinghe, the leader of the United National Party (UNP). After a brief reflection on the vital relevance of the concept of lived religion to the study of ethnic conflict in deeply divided societies, I will examine the making of BBS in post-war Sri Lanka. This will be followed by an examination of BBS's functional dynamics, which amalgamate perceptions, practices, and rituals of lived religion to political propaganda. This section includes a discussion of BBS's main campaign targeting Muslims and the Islamic faith.

As witnessed at the 2015 presidential campaign, and as opposed to the popular interpretation of being homogeneous in its majoritarian excesses, today's Sinhala-Buddhist 'political' lobby is inclined to create new political alliances, focused on securing their power at the highest levels of government. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how Buddhist monks have moved from an influential advisory and pressurizing role to being agents of power politics-proper, as evidenced in the developments preceding and following the January 2015 presidential election. Focusing on the primary target of ensuring their frontline political influence, they effectively deploy their influence as religious leaders, via day-to-day religious practices and rituals, as well as ethno-religious prejudices, to their political advantage.

Lived Religion: A Theoretical Framework?

Approaching and rethinking religion as lived experience and as a form of cultural work, the study of 'lived religion' directs attention to institutions and persons, texts and rituals, practice and theology, things and ideas—all as media of making and unmaking worlds (Orsi 2003, p. 172). Lived religion is grounded in the local, and is an analytical tool that enables one to delve into the counter-intuitive realities of how religious beliefs, practices, ethno-religious prejudices and perceptions play a crucial role in shaping the course of politics in deeply divided societies. As an analytical tool, lived religion has strongly enhanced the ontologies and epistemologies of the sociology of religion, itself a cross-disciplinary meeting point. A growing body of influential research has deployed lived religion approaches in delving into the impact of religious practice on sociopolitical and cultural life (see, for instance, Hall 1997; Orsi 1997, 2003, 2012; McGuire 2008; Nabhan-Warren 2009; Rubin et al. 2014). This chapter seeks to demonstrate the vital relevance of the concept of lived religion to the study of the politics of ethno-national contention in deeply divided societies, a research field that strongly developed in the post-Cold War years, as the international community sought to address issues of violent conflict through liberal peacebuilding approaches. Indeed, scholars of ethnic conflict concur on the vital importance of religion and religious activism to conflict escalation. Aside from a large corpus of research on religion and conflict, a number of specialized research centres, such as the Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, have been created with the specific objective of exploring the impact of religion on the rise of violent conflict and its relevance to peace projects. In a similar vein, government-funded think tanks specializing in the areas of conflict resolution and peacebuilding also accord the highest priority to studying the impact of religion on the rise of armed conflict (see, for example, Smock 2008; see also Durward and Marsden 2009; Clarke et al. 2013; Dalsheim 2014). While some studies strive to adopt a critical stance by questioning the tendency to bluntly associate violent conflict with religion (Lewis et al. 2009), others focus on the role of religion in developing processes of transitional justice, truth recovery, and reconciliation (Helmick and Peterson 2001; Liechty and Clegg 2001; Philpott 2006; Shore 2009; Brewer et al. 2013).

Despite this universal consensus on the importance of religion with regard to conflict escalation, there has been less effort to explore, and critically assess, the crucial relevance of the concept of lived religion to the rise of violent conflict. In the large majority of cases, it is the multitude of ways in which religious faiths are 'lived' by their followers that lies at the heart of conflict escalation. In his plenary address at the 2002 conference of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Professor Robert Orsi explained the relevance of lived religion in the tense post-9/11 context. The following remarks are worth quoting at length, given their relevance to this article's focus on the intersections of the study of lived religion and ethno-national politics in a deeply divided society:

> A lived religion approach identified what is urgent and pressing in a religious culture—what doctrines, rituals, or signs have taken on special and pointed immediacy—and it knows this because these are the doctrines, rituals … taking us well beyond empty claims about what a religious culture "means" or what "religious" men and women "believe" or have been taught … The contribution of lived religion is to confound certainties, to unearth hidden agendas, to qualify judgments, to call attention to the desires and fears we bring to other religions, and, above all, to encounter and engage religious practice and imagination within the circumstances of other people's lives and within the contexts of our own, at all the places where these lives meet, in the archives, in the field, in political crisis, and in contemporary distress. (Orsi 2003, pp. 172–173, 174)

The primary focus of governments, defence strategists, think tanks, and most importantly, perhaps, mainstream media, on the role of religion in conflict often tends to be convoluted, with less effort spent in grasping the complex nuances of how religious faiths are 'lived' and experienced in specific sociocultural contexts, and the impact of such lived experiences on ethno-national antagonisms and violence. In this light, it can be stated that there is a clear dearth in the existing literature in terms of analysing the overlapping and inextricable interrelationship between lived religion and ethno-national contentions. An increased focus on the concept of lived religion is therefore an analytical focal point that could tremendously enrich the interconnected research fields of politics in deeply divided societies and violent ethno-national conflict. Most

importantly, and as will be highlighted below in relation to BBS in Sri Lanka, lived religion bears special relevance to the ways in which state authorities in deeply divided societies deploy (religious) spoiler groups for political objectives. Focusing on a society recovering from a 30-year war and grappling with the sociopolitical, cultural, and economic challenges of—to borrow from Sharma (2009)—*jus ad bellum*, this chapter aims specifically to highlight the vital relevance of lived religion to the (tacitly state-sponsored) promotion of a political agenda of intolerance.

Saffron Politics and the Advent of BBS

Analysts generally tend to contextualize the rise of Sinhala nationalist groups in the 1990s and early 2000s such as *Jathika Sangha Sabhāva* or *Jathika Hela Urumaya* (JHU)—as a reaction to the emphasis on peace negotiations, the preferred approach in addressing the Tamil secessionist question under the Kumaratunga administration (1994–2005, see De Silva 2006, pp. 206–208), robustly pursued by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's UNP-led coalition government (2001–2004), which signed the 2002 Ceasefire Agreement, strengthened Norwegian facilitation in the peace process, and took the internationalized liberal peacebuilding drive to a new level of intensity (Molakkattu 2005; Sørbø et al. 2011). The JHU developed as the most prominent exponent of an influential Sinhala-Buddhist protest campaign against the peace process, which perceived the externally facilitated initiative as infringing national sovereignty, and leading to the Sri Lankan state's dismemberment. In developing its ideology, the JHU effectively exploited the Buddhist clergy's historic image as 'protectors' of the (Sinhala-Buddhist) nation, who provided guidance and moral strength to rulers at times of external invasion. This image of the Buddhist 'Sangha' is deeply ingrained in Sinhala-Buddhist culture, through monk-authored historical chronicles such as the *Mahavamsa* (Geiger 1908, 1912), that detail the heroic feats of Sinhalese rulers against invading forces (most often from Southern India), providing pride of place to the Buddhist faith and in a few cases bringing the entire island under a single Sinhala-Buddhist king. Sinhala nationalist parties deploy the legacies of historical chronicles, myth and

folklore as means of sustaining their political discourses, a strategy at the heart of their influence over the Sinhala-Buddhist electorate. Such narratives were also widely used in justifying the anti-Tamil Tiger military offensive of 2006–2009, which, since its inception, was conceptualized as a patriotic leader's heroic feat to 'reunite' the country.

A first in Sri Lankan electoral history, the JHU fielded Buddhist monks as candidates at the 2 April 2004 general election, securing nine parliamentary seats (Edirisinha 2006; Deegalle 2006; DeVotta 2007; DeVotta and Stone 2008). The JHU subsequently entered President Rajapaksa's coalition, with a senior lay MP holding a cabinet ministerial post. As opposed to the comparatively low-profile Sinhala nationalist organizations of the mid/late 1990s, the presence of monks in active politics, as MPs and leaders of advocacy groups, helps dramatically increase the public appeal and marketability of such groups. The *Sinhalé Maha Sammatha Bhumiputha Pakshaya* (Party of the Erstwhile Sons of the Soil), a Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist party active in the 1990s, for example, did not include Buddhist monks in its frontline leadership and remained a fringe party. In a somewhat similar vein, the no less Sinhala nationalist *Mahajana Eksath Peramuna* (MEP) long remained at the margins of electoral politics, until it entered the ruling coalition in 2004.[1] The support of monk-led political groups, especially the JHU, was instrumental in promoting Mahinda Rajapaksa's presidential campaign in 2005. The JHU signed a memorandum of understanding with candidate Rajapaksa, with a promise from the latter to pursue a military solution to the ethnic question. As an influential member of Rajapaksa's first coalition government (2005–2010), the JHU played a pivotal role in promoting mass endorsement of the 2006–2009 war, conceptualizing it as a 'just war' and incorporating religious observances to pro-war campaigning. Indeed, the entire saga of Eelam War IV (2006–2009) can be described as one of mass ritual, in which day-to-day religious rituals (such as *Bodhi puja*) were extensively deployed across the country as a means of harnessing popular support to the war effort. Juxtaposing elements

[1] This decision, however, has not increased the MEP's public appeal. It has only enabled its leaders to hold ministerial portfolios and related privileges.

of regular religious practice, a political discourse of Sinhala-Buddhist patriotism, and an emphasis on reuniting a divided country were instrumental in obliterating the extent of the war's human cost and post-war atrocities in the Sinhala (especially Sinhala-Buddhist) community.

BBS: A Radical Outfit?

BBS emerged in 2012, criticizing the JHU of ineffectiveness in defending Sinhala-Buddhist interests. After the 2009 war victory, President Rajapaksa's undisputed credentials as the leader who won the war resulted in the Executive appropriating the JHU's political clout, and consequently, the JHU'S influential position in the ruling coalition witnessed a relative downturn. It was in this backdrop that BBS was initially formed under the patronage of a senior prelate, Kirama Vimalajothi, who, as the organization emerged into media limelight, took a back seat, allowing more vocal, energetic, and younger monks to take the lead. By June/July 2016, BBS had extended its work to electoral politics, contesting the August 2015 general election. BBS enjoys a prominent position in comparison with other Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist outfits such as *Rawana Balaya* (RB) and *Sinhala Ravaya* (SR). RB and SR leaders maintain cordial ties with BBS, as demonstrated by their presence at BBS's 2014 annual convention. Mainstream Buddhist organizations such as the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress (*Samastha Lanka Boudda Maha Sammelanaya*—ACBC), a Buddhist organization dating back to the days of British Ceylon, have sought to distance themselves from BBS. Since its inception, BBS has been directly entangled in a series of highly publicized political controversies, in some cases being extremely critical of several government ministers (*Lanka E News* 2014a; Peiris 2014). Despite its controversial reputation, BBS has nevertheless been relatively successful in garnering a sense of trust within the Buddhist establishment's higher echelons (*Colombo Telegraph* 2014). Apart from its support base within the Bhikkhu community, BBS has also sought the endorsement of Buddhist scholars (*Bodu Bala Sena* 2014).

Beyond the Comfort Zone? BBS's External Interactions

In addition to the aforementioned particularities, BBS also differs from other Sinhala nationalist outfits in yet another important respect. BBS is the first and so far only Sinhala-Buddhist organization to have benefited from Western funding. At the onset, one of its key focus points was that of providing assistance to displaced Tamils in Northern Sri Lanka and developing partnerships with Tamil diaspora groups. BBS developed links with the Norwegian non-governmental organization (NGO) sector, and a delegation visited Oslo (and a few other European capitals including Paris), meeting representatives of Tamil nationalist organizations (*Asian Tribune* 2014). The failure of this initiative and the post-war political context eventually prompted BBS to increasingly turn towards Colombo's defence apparatus as well as to prominent Sinhala-Buddhist businesspeople to consolidate its financial strength. According to some critics, BBS benefited from national security-related secret budgetary allocations under the Rajapaksa regime (Samaraweera 2014).

BBS has developed international links with like-minded groups, especially Myanmar's 969 organization. Gnanasara visited Myanmar in March 2014, meeting 969 leader U. Wirathu. Wirathu was the chief guest at BBS's 2014 convention, held in Colombo on 28 September 2014. The Secretary of the International Buddhist Association and several Buddhist delegates from Nepal and India also attended this event. Soon after the convention, BBS and 969 signed a memorandum of understanding, pledging to work together to protect the Buddhist faith, and expand their work to other Asian states with Buddhist traditions.

Inspirations and Functional Dynamics: Deploying Lived Religion for an Agenda of Intolerance?

> "Over 443 years, our ancestors fought, oftentimes violently, against colonialism for the benefit of our motherland and our rights. This soil is enriched by our ancestors' blood, shed in their patriotic feats. Our venerable Buddhist

> clergy was closely involved in such defensive measures in a far-sighted spirit. Let's recall that in 1849, the Ven. Miggettuwatté Gunananda called for an end to violent and armed anti-colonial measures, launching an ideological campaign, which culminated in [engagements such as] the Panadura debate of 1873, in which we [Sinhala-Buddhist nationalists] emerged victorious. That victory was facilitated by the united endorsement of thousands of Buddhists. We are happy to tell you that today, some 140 years later, for the first time since the Panadura debate, Sinhala Buddhists have once again won … without throwing a single stone … and we shall continue to win".
>
> —Galagoda-atté Gnanasara[2]

In articulating its priorities, BBS leaders regularly evoke the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century movement of Buddhist revivalism, which emerged with the central objective of resuscitating Buddhism, the Sinhala language, and Sinhala-Buddhist culture after three centuries of Western colonization. Buddhist revivalism had a transformative impact on Sinhala-Buddhist society, triggering a popular rapprochement towards and rediscovery of Sinhala-Buddhism (Malalgoda 1976; Dharmadasa 1992; Tambiah 1992; Harris 2006). In nearly each of his public orations, Gnanasara proudly refers to the key figures of Buddhist revivalism, such as Migettuwatté Gunananda (best known for his oratorical feats at the *Panadura-vadaya*, a debate between Buddhist and Christian clergy, held in 1873), Hikkaduwé Sri Sumangala, and Anagarika Dharmapala (Capper 1955; Gurugé 1965; Blackburn 2010; Kemper 2011). Their collective legacy of contributions to revive the Buddhist establishment, Buddhist education, the Sinhala language, and literature are evoked with deference, admiration, and a profound sense of (Sinhala-Buddhist) national pride.

[2] This reference pertains to BBS's successes in triggering a national campaign against the issuance of Halal certifications on Sri Lankan products by the *All Ceylon Jamiyyathul Ulama* (ACJU). BBS called for the government to take charge of such certifications and campaigned for a 'non-halal' category, meant for non-Muslim customers. At public meetings, BBS also expressed agreement on the maintenance of the halal certification on export items. The quoted statement was made on 17 March 2013, when BBS was the object of considerable media attention over this campaign (which died out in the subsequent months, with the ACJU continuing to remain the sole authority in charge of Halal certifications. Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikuZKkrQ98I [accessed 15 June 2014]. For the exact quote, see sequence 12:48 to 13:10. My translation.

BBS leaders raise a parallel between BBS's present-day mission and that of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Buddhist revivalists. This is evident, for instance, in Gnanasara's constant reiteration in his public speeches that BBS represents 'the great Migettuwatté Gunananda tradition'. BBS's penchant for Buddhist revivalist analogies was amply apparent in the visual and verbal imagery used at its September 2014 Convention. Gnanasara was introduced prior to his long oration as the present-day incarnation of Miggettuwatté Gunananda. The analogy was reinforced when it was followed by the adulatory 'lion-orator of our times' (*apé kalé Vadhibhasinhayaneni—Vadhibha-Sinha*, or 'lion orator', being a popular reference to Gunananda's famous debating skills). References of this nature are closely associated with the historical memory of Sinhala-Buddhism, with monk-leaders of colonial Ceylon canonized in public memory as patriotic pioneers who fought for the preservation of the faith, culture, and language. Effectively exploiting such elements deeply ingrained in Sinhala-Buddhist historiography facilitated BBS's successful emergence to the forefront of public life within a short time span.

Outreach Initiatives: Mingling Practices of Lived Religion with Political Influence

In 2012–2013, BBS enhanced its public outreach through a series of Buddhist Conventions (*Bodu Maha Samulu*). In terms of structure and organization, these meticulously planned public meetings closely resembled political rallies, with the presence of a considerable security detail, a security distance between the stage and the audience, large makeshift stages, and impressive acoustics. Such measures were juxtaposed with elements of day-to-day religious ritual, exploiting aspects of 'lived religion'. A *Bodu Maha Samuluwa* would typically begin with BBS's patriotically worded theme song followed by regular prayers administered by a monk. The theme song highlights the historic role of Buddhist monks in protecting the *Buddha Sasana*—the [Sinhala] Buddhist establishment. Speeches, especially by General Secretary Gnanasara, evoke prejudices ingrained in the 'lived experience' of Sinhala Buddhism, such as the argument of an imminent threat to the *Buddha sasana* from other religious groups.

Conceptualizing the 'Threat': On BBS and Muslims

> "Main Roads surround the Temple of the Tooth Relic [in Kandy, central Sri Lanka], but have you ever noticed a single signpost saying 'Please be Quiet in the vicinity of the Temple"? There are some 11,000 [Buddhist] temples in this country, there's no such signpost requesting silence in front of a Buddhist place of worship—such signposts are only seen in front of courts of justice and hospitals. However, in Mawathagama, a signpost [in front of a mosque] states 'Be quiet in front of the Mosque'. Who gave them [the Muslims] the permission to put up such signs? Where are the relevant administrative and political authorities?… Similar signs can also be seen in front of mosques in the Katugastota area in Kandy … how dare they do so? This kind of practice is simply not on. Such signposts should be taken off. There can't be a separate law for the Muslims of this country. There should be only one law for all. This is not ethnocentrism or racism. What will happen if such practices continue undisturbed? The future will be bleak with violent confrontations, which, by all means, we earnestly seek to avoid".
>
> —Galagoda-Atté Gnanasara, speaking in Kandy, 17 March 2013 (my translation)[3]

BBS has primarily taken issue with Muslims and Islam, conceptualizing both as the 'new enemy' of Sinhala-Buddhist interests. In so doing, BBS has given powerful expression to anti-Muslim prejudices that have long existed in Sri Lankan society. By way of demonstrating how BBS deploys sociocultural prejudices in shaping its ideology, the following section includes a brief evocation of the key strands of BBS's anti-Muslim activism. The issues BBS raises could be broadly categorized into three strands: matters of genuine concern (e.g. the atrocious working conditions of Sri Lankan (largely Sinhala and Buddhist) female migrant workers in the Middle East), expressions of 'religious' concern (the proliferation of Wahhabism as a threat to Buddhism), and thirdly, ethno-demographic fearmongering, highlighting that Muslims are on a steady path to outnumber the Sinhalese. BBS resolutely opposes special

[3] Gnanasara's speech at the BBS convention in Kandy, 17 March 2013. Full speech: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QLUF13tCo4 [accessed 14 June 2014].

provisions to accommodate specific Muslim demands. At BBS's first anniversary convention on 11 May 2013, for example, Gnanasara vehemently condemned health authorities for allowing Muslim nurses in government hospitals to wear a uniform that corresponds to Islamic dress codes.[4] Popular anti-Muslim prejudices in Sinhalese society, which shape ways in which segments of Sinhala-Buddhist society perceive the ethno-religious 'other', are thus revived and deployed in propagating an agenda of intolerance.

The most devastating of incidents in the line-up of BBS's anti-Muslim propaganda took place in June 2014, when a local incident in Aluthgama, a south-western township, in which a Buddhist monk was allegedly assaulted by two Muslim youth, led to a large-scale public outcry. Days after the incident, BBS held a precipitately planned public meeting in Aluthgama with Gnanasara expressing deep anguish at what he described as a venomous example of Islamic aggression on Sinhala-Buddhists.[5] Gnanasara sternly warned Muslims to avoid such collisions in future, and that they would bear dire consequences if such incidents were to be repeated. This public rally was followed by a violent confrontation between Sinhala-Buddhist protesters and Muslim groups, causing a string of violence that led to the torching of a mosque and Muslim-owned properties worth millions, nine deaths, and the displacement of over 250 Muslim families (Bastians 2014).

The Aluthgama violence provides proof that propagandist activity carries a strong potential to hinder ethnic relations and trigger interethnic and interreligious violence. Despite the extent of violence, it did not emanate from the Buddhist or Islamic establishments proper. Instead, it was the result of a politically influential group exploiting intolerant perceptions of one religious group towards another.

BBS has also been strongly critical of a number of places of Islamic worship. The case of Kuragala, an ancient Sufi shrine, is a prime example. Buddhist groups have long claimed the rock cave to be a historic Buddhist site, an argument BBS revived, triggering much public interest. BBS

[4] Gnanasara's speech at the first anniversary conference: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZCA2mLm7W0 [accessed 13 October 2014].

[5] Full speech: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEwxeTnJ2eM [accessed 13 October 2014].

called for all Islamic shrines and connotations to be completely removed from Kuragala, a position that was reinforced by ex-Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, during an April 2013 fact-finding visit.[6] Several attacks on mosques have taken place over the past three years, with BBS often being accused of being the perpetrator (*Observatoire Pharos* 2013). BBS, for its part, has systematically denied such allegations, maintaining that acts of violence committed by other Sinhala nationalist groups have been attributed to BBS because of its popularity.

BBS's claims about the rise of Wahhabi Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka are worth some discussion. Sri Lankan Muslims represent a diverse panoply. While some 92 % are Moors, or descendants of Arab traders, other significant Muslim communities include the Malays and Indian Muslims (a group that comprises Memons, Bohras, and Khojas), as well as manifestations of transnational forms of Islam, mainly the *Tablighi Jamaat* (TJ).[7] The latter has faced opposition from within the Muslim community as a foreign Wahhabi force (Gugler 2013, pp. 166–173). In January 2012, immigration authorities expelled 161 foreign Muslim preachers who had entered the country on tourist visas and were connected to TJ (BBC News 2012). According to some analysts, efforts to proliferate Wahhabism in Sri Lanka have received funding from the Middle East (Imtiyaz 2012, pp. 58–59; see also Ali 2014). BBS despises the *Sri Lanka Thawheed Jamaath* (SLTJ) as the main propagator of radical Islamic ideas in Sri Lanka.[8] Accusations against SLTJ range from an alleged tacit drive to sterilize young Sinhala Buddhist females, proselytize Sinhala-Buddhist employees in Muslim-owned businesses, and the funding of abortion clinics by Islamic fundamentalists that target Sinhala-Buddhist females, to Islamic efforts to proliferate drug abuse among Sinhala-Buddhist youth. SLTJ is also accused of propagating derogatory

[6] See, for example: GR's interaction with Sinhala and Muslim groups at Kuragala: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3CdLpqRgIs [accessed 27 October 2014].

[7] For a discussion on the pluralities of Muslim identity in Sri Lanka, see, for example, De Munck (1998) and Ali (1997).

[8] To date, the SLTJ website (http://www.sltj.lk) appears only in Tamil, the primary language of the large majority of Sri Lankan Muslims. For a detailed analysis of the growth of Islamic orthodoxy among Sri Lankan Muslims, see Ali (2014, pp. 308–312).

views of Buddhism.[9] Opinions collide on whether SLTJ is only committed to encouraging increased devotion to the faith or whether its motives take an extremist and fundamentalist leap. Affirming the aversion of a majority of Sri Lankan Muslims to extremist drifts, Muslim political representatives often reiterate the community's longstanding moderate credentials.[10] The ambiguity surrounding extremist currents within Islam provides BBS with a powerful weapon for scaremongering among its Sinhala-Buddhist audience. BBS distinguishes between an invasive and inherently violent Islam emanating from the Middle East, and what BBS describes as *Saampradaika Muslimvaru* (traditional Muslims), moderate Sri Lankan Muslims who have long coexisted with the Sinhalese. BBS repeatedly highlights its aversion of the former and apparent tolerance of the latter.

Countering BBS? Early 2015 Developments

Speaking at the BBS general convention in September 2014, Gnanasara called upon Buddhist monks to momentarily set aside their pious lifestyles and be part of a more aggressive brand of BBS-type activism. This statement, powerfully expressed before a (largely young) gathering of nearly 3000 monks and nuns, was intended at highlighting that the 'monk-activist' (as opposed to the monk who abides by Buddhist philosophy and ecclesiastical traditions) was the necessity of the day. The social meaning of this distinction is of crucial importance because—to borrow from McGuire (2008)—making distinctions involves trying to delineate acceptable from unacceptable beliefs and practices, desirable from denigrated identities and statuses, and worthy from unworthy ideals and values. It served to add value and justification to BBS's stated mission. Some analysts also described the BBS convention as tacitly sponsored by ex-President Rajapaksa and sibling Gotabaya, and that it was an early step in harnessing the Sinhala-Buddhist credentials of an imminent Rajapaksa

[9] The public domain is replete with examples of BBS's statements of such views. See, for example, a televised interview with Gnanasara: http://bit.ly/1tXQ5uh [accessed 16 August 2015].

[10] Interview with retired senior politician from the Muslim community, Colombo, April 2014.

presidential campaign. State support was evidenced in the provision of a substantial security detail from the Presidential Security Division for special guest U. Wirathu of Myanmar (*Lanka E News* 2014b). As the presidential campaign advanced, it appeared that the Rajapaksa camp was intent upon capitalizing on the Sinhala-Buddhist vote, with all its strength deployed on the Sinhala majority areas. At the 8 January 2015 presidential election, this twin strategy of consolidating political power by reinforcing religious extremism on the one hand, and engaging in majoritarian politics on the other, proved to be an electoral miscalculation.

The Maitripala Sirisena victory was the result of a basic electoral calculation. While Sirisena benefitted from the near entirety of the Muslim vote, the TNA's endorsement of the Sirisena candidacy resulted in a landslide victory for Sirisena in the Tamil majority constituencies as well as in constituencies with large non-Buddhist majorities, such as predominantly Christian Negombo. This, together with a considerable vote base in the rest of the island, provided Sirisena with a majority over his rival Rajapaksa. However, a crucial reality of the election results was that, with the exception of Polonnaruwa, Sirisena's home electoral district, candidate Rajapaksa 'won' in the large majority of Sinhala-Buddhist majority constituencies.[11] This is what prompted the ex-president to declare that in the absence of elections in northern Sri Lanka, he would have been reelected.

The 2015 presidential campaign was marked by a comparatively less acknowledged phenomenon. For the first time in Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist politics, a staunchly Sinhala-nationalist party—the JHU—defected from the equally Sinhala majoritarian Rajapaksa administration and extended its support to the opposition candidate, whose support base primarily consisted of the liberal democratic and Western-oriented UNP, the policies of which the JHU despised throughout the 2000s. JHU leaders demonstrated a departure from more hardline brands of Sinhala nationalism (such as that of BBS), by appearing at public meetings side by side with ministers of religion from other faiths, and an assortment

[11] For comprehensive electoral results and district-level summaries, see http://adaderana.lk/presidential-election-2015/index.php [accessed 15 June 2015].

of politicians representing a broad ideological range from centre-right to radical left. In civil society, a leading monk, Maduluwavé Sobhitha, lobbied to bring together opposition groups under a common banner, entitled National Movement for a Just Society.[12] This movement gained momentum at a rapid pace, filling in the void caused by the absence of a powerful opposition in the political sphere. As it is customary in Sri Lankan politics, Buddhist religious ritual played a vital role throughout the Sirisena campaign, and continues to be a vital element in the Sirisena administration.[13] The JHU's U-turn would have prompted analysts to assume that the party had entered a process of reviewing its non-compromising positions on the national question. However, the JHU's post-election role in the Sirisena administration has demonstrated a different reality. In fact, its decision to quit the Rajapaksa regime was a strategy of consolidating its own power base. Soon after the election, the JHU placed its senior members in the presidential staff and in a senior cabinet portfolio. The JHU has been far from favourable to key policy priorities in the Sirisena manifesto, opposing a reduction of presidential powers and forcing President Sirisena to avoid dissolving parliament after the first 100 days in office, yet another major campaign pledge. The JHU has thus reinforced its position as a decisive player in power politics. As opposed to its earlier strategy of prioritizing a Sinhala-nationalist discourse, the party's new orientation involves adapting more nuanced and tactful strategic turns, with the primary target of ensuring its power in high politics.

Soon after the June 2014 anti-Muslim violence in Aluthgama, a young Sri Lankan staged a solo act of resistance near the BBS head office in Colombo. Seated on the pavement with a banner that read 'Aluthgama was not a Buddhist act', the protester, a Business Management graduate of Oklahoma University, used social media to diffuse his opposition to the anti-Muslim atrocities. In explaining his rationale for the choice of place and mode of protest, he noted 'I chose this place because it is right next to a Buddhist center. I'd rather take action myself instead of waiting

[12] Sinhalese '*Sadharana Samajayak Sandaha voo Jatika Vyaparaya*'.

[13] A cursory glance at President Sirisena's official website and social media would demonstrate regular religious events that the President attends.

for others to act.'[14] This was an early expression of public opposition to BBS propaganda and resulting violence, which primarily emanated from the urban, English-speaking, and internationally exposed upper middle classes. In the latter part of 2014 and especially in the course of the presidential campaign, this opposition to Sinhala-Buddhist supremacist propaganda extended—albeit parsimoniously—to the wider Sinhala community. The resulting electoral drift from the Sinhala nationalist side to the more tolerant and pluralist camp was partially evident, for instance, in the reduction of ex-President Rajapaksa's share of the Sinhala vote from 65 % in 2010 to 55 % in 2015.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to briefly evoke the rise of BBS, its discourses of intolerance, deployment of aspects of lived religion in its campaigns, and the rise of a political challenge to its ideas and ambitions from within the Buddhist establishment itself. Being endorsed by segments of the Sinhala-Buddhist political sphere—especially the JHU—enhanced the Sirisena presidential candidacy's strength and marketability, empowering Sirisena to compete with Rajapaksa. This Sinhala-Buddhist endorsement of the Sirisena candidacy—despite being politically calculated—represents a changing juncture in religious politics. Sirisena's share of the Sinhala-Buddhist vote, although lower than that of Rajapaksa, marks a significant departure in Sinhala-Buddhist politics and electoral mobilization. Most importantly, it is suggestive of the fact that Sinhala-Buddhist political parties and civil society groups are not static or homogeneous in their articulation of Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism. Their decisions are guided by strategic concerns of power politics, for which their influence as religious leaders and opinionmakers, as well as religious ritual and traditions are all deployed. A lived religion approach thus proves to be most insightful in understanding Sri Lanka's political developments in the latter half of 2014 and early 2015, which *Time magazine* emphatically

[14] Video footage of the protest: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=799GsrNUnT4 [accessed 18 April 2015].

dubbed 'little big island' (Kumar 2015). The political developments of early 2015 do not, however, imply an enfeebling of BBS activism, as suggested by BBS's active public voice in the post-election months, critical of the Sirisena administration, considerably supportive of Rajapaksa and also seeking to reinforce their ideology beyond party-political affiliations. Yet, the gradual rise of a semblance of strategic diversity in the Sinhala-Buddhist polity may indeed signal the emergence of a slow process of longer-term political and ideological transformation.

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Notes on the Christian Battle to End the "Abortion Holocaust"

Katharina von Kellenbach

In 1981, John Powell, SJ, professor of Catholic theology at Loyola University in Chicago, published a book titled *Abortion: The Silent Holocaust*. He was not the first to draw the analogy between legalized abortion and the Holocaust in the aftermath of Roe v. Wade in 1973 when the US Supreme Court overturned restrictions on abortion in the USA. In fact, Ronald Reagan published *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* (1983), which included a chapter on "The Slide to Auschwitz," written by Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, and "The Humane Holocaust" by Malcolm Muggeridge. And in the same year, William Brennan, Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court, published his book on the *Abortion Holocaust*, which he would later have to defend in a Florida courtroom.

Powell writes in a calm and reasoned voice and appeals to the political and ecclesial mainstream as he sets out to demonstrate that the "Nazi

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nightmare" has infiltrated "the American Dream." He recounts his visit to the concentration camp of Dachau, where he arrived at the conclusion that "America is rushing along the same depersonalizing and dehumanizing course" once the Supreme Court "opened the floodgates of death and released the fury" (p. 39). He asks, "How does one pretend to be an innocent bystander at a mass murder? How does one in good conscience pay tax monies, knowing that some of that money will be used to finance killing?" (p. 43). He quotes Martin Niemöller's well-known poem decrying his failures as a silent bystander (p. 30) and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's conspiratorial resistance (p. 23) to urge his readers to begin to "care" and to "get involved" in the political movement against abortion. This movement can be considered one of the "largest protest movements in American history" (Mensch 1993, p. 47) and has mobilized individual Christians and Church bodies to engage in political lobbying, civil disobedience, the creation of pro-life counseling and crisis pregnancy centers, as well as sporadic acts of terrorism. Since 1977 tens of thousands of pro-life activists have been arrested, the majority among them in the course of 743 clinic blockades, but also for the murder of 8 doctors, the attempted murder of 17 individuals, in 41 bombings, 175 arson attacks, 96 attempted arson and bomb attacks, 1400 acts of vandalism, 100 butyric acid attacks, 659 anthrax threats, and 642 bomb threats (Baird-Windle and Bader 2001).[1]

The American pro-life movement has become a global player and Kulczycki speaks of its "two epicenters in the USA and Rome" (Kulczycki 1999, p. 27) in his analysis of the legal battles in Kenya, Mexico, and Poland, all three majority Catholic countries. But it is not only the Roman Catholic Church but also American Protestant and Orthodox denominations that are heavily invested in the creation of transnational pro-life networks that distribute educational materials, logistical advice, and legislative blueprints to countries ranging from Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and Tanzania to Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Chile as well as to post-socialist countries, including Poland, Serbia, and Russia (Razavi and Jenichen 2010). The pro-life movement is an ecumenical and transnational Christian movement that is engaged in a global battle to end the "abortion holocaust."

[1] [Online] http://prochoice.org/wp-content/uploads/violence_stats.pdf [Accessed: June 30, 2015]. These statistics were compiled on the basis of law enforcement agency classifications.

Social Activism as Lived Religion

As a conservative grassroots movement, the pro-life movement blends Christian faith commitments with political action and is highly successful in building activist communities that transcend denominational differences, and to some extent, national, ethnic, class, and political boundaries. It has long escaped the control of clerical hierarchies and practices a Christian politics that is compelling to thousands of activists who dedicate their time, energy, and resources to pro-life campaigns. Several empirical studies of the movement, most often conducted by sociologists, use in-depth interviews or questionnaires to document and analyze the religious and political world view of adherents. Not all of these studies use the perspective and methodology of "lived religion."

The pro-life movement lends itself to the study of lived religion because of its dynamic use of religious symbolism and ritual to generate fellowship in faithful action. The concept of lived religion demands that scholars take seriously what ordinary people think and do. Robert Orsi, one of the originators of the concept, calls on religious studies scholars to practice "radical empiricism" and openness to

> what people do with religious idioms, how they use them, what they make of themselves and how, in turn, men, women, and children are fundamentally shaped by the worlds they are making as they make these worlds. There is no religion apart from this, no religion that people have not taken up in their hands. (Orsi 2002, p. 172)

The study of lived religion is radically democratic and critical of scholarly and religious elites who tend to mistrust the religious creativity and cultural work of ordinary people of faith who engage with "texts and rituals, practice and theology, things and ideas—all as media of making and unmaking worlds" (Orsi 2002, p. 172). For thousands of ordinary American men and women, pro-life activism has become the principal way to give meaning to their lives and to find common purpose in communities engaged in political action to end abortion (Seaton 1995; Risen and Thomas 1998; Munson 2002; Steiner 2006; Burack 2014).

Sociologist Ziad Munson, who does not use the concept of lived religion, observes that pro-life activists "found their religious faith either contemporaneously with or after their mobilization into the pro-life movement" (Munson 2002, p. 156). His ethnographic study of pro-life chapters in Boston and the Twin Cities comes to the startling conclusion that the majority of activists did not enter the pro-life movement with strong convictions about abortion but rather developed their ideological positions and ethical principles as a result of their social activism. On the basis of hundreds of in-depth interviews Munson concludes that "an individual's first steps into activism are seldom rooted in a long-standing or deep-seated moral opposition to abortion" (p. 47). Instead, he proposes a four-step mobilization process that begins with "contact with the movement at a turning point in one's life, initial activism, the development of pro-life beliefs, and finally sustained activism" (p. 47). Significantly, it is only in the third phase that people's ideas begin to harden into ideologically consistent anti-abortion positions.

Most of Munson's subjects reported that they were drawn into the movement as a result of personal contacts in their local congregations. Vague feelings of unease and discontent with contemporary popular culture turned into pro-life convictions as people engaged in political action. Munson shows that the social activism looks a lot like congregational life, as people pray together, organize memorial services for the "victims of abortion," erect crosses to create symbolic cemeteries for the aborted, and organize processions and protest marches. Local pro-life chapter blend religious practice with political action, while providing social support and individual counseling. Like congregations, they build support networks that help individuals overcome isolation and that are mutually supportive in practical, political, social, and spiritual ways. For many people in Munson's study, pro-life activism surpassed their engagement in local congregations, which they perceived as watered-down, bland, and less compelling. This finding is confirmed by psychologists Maxwell and Jelen who found in their study titled "Commandos for Christ: Narratives of Male Pro-life Activists" that

> men overwhelmingly acknowledged a desire to belong, to join a group of peers. … A large majority of men explained their activism as a manifestation of their Christianity, their desire to belong to a group, and their need

> to act on their beliefs. Most men used war imagery to describe their activism and considered themselves to be countering a threat to our nation. (Maxwell and Jelen 1995, p. 127)

Local pro-life organizations become spiritual homes for activists. Prayer, song, and observance of religious holidays and rituals create bonds of trust among fellow fighters who face angry public reaction, police harassment, and arrest during vigils and protest marches. Such political action is experienced as an extension of Christian faith commitments and depends on tight-knit and supportive communities that arise from the conviction of "doing God's work" together. Munson identifies four sets of activities that he defines as "religious":

> Prayer, rituals of birth and death, gathering of the flocks, and doing God's work—activist practices in the pro-life movement possess the important quality of also being recognizably religious practice. Practice in these cases is polysemous, being part of religious and activist spheres of action at the same time. (Munson 2002, p. 176)

Observing memorial ceremonies and funerals, "counseling" pregnant women in crisis pregnancy centers, and "compassionate care" for post-abortive women is all experienced as faith practice (Burack 2014). The strength of this faith is enhanced by the immediacy of active engagement. This interrelationship between practice and theory points to the importance of lived religion. As Munson put it, "ideas about action—what people actually *do*—turn out to be more consequential in the pro-life movement than the underlying basis for that action." One does not wake up with a belief in a particular religion or politics. Rather, people are drawn into relationships and shaped by daily practices and observances. Pro-life activism is both source and validation of activists' Christian identity and practice in fellowship.

As people radicalize, the costs of commitments increase, and the ideological foundations firm up. The higher the costs entailed by certain practices, the more people feel bound to the underlying legitimating principles. The bonds created by shared activism become more compelling than other theological, political, and personal loyalties, which

explain the striking ability of the pro-life movement to unite politically diverse and theologically conflicting individuals and organizations. It is not only the shared vision to end abortion but the "practical cogency" of activism that binds white extremist Protestants to liberal Jesuits and connects Mormons with Catholic nuns in protest. The theological differences between these divergent religious communities are bridged in pro-life political practice. As Meredith McGuire pointed out, "religion-as-lived is based more on such religious practices than on religious ideas or beliefs, it is not necessarily logically coherent. Rather it requires a practical coherence: It needs to make sense in one's everyday life, and it needs to be effective, to 'work,' in the sense of accomplishing some desired end" (McGuire 2008, p. 15). In that respect, the pro-life movement is a form of Christian lived religion that transcends denominational divisions and national borders.

The strength of this unifying practice, however, makes it hard for the pro-life mainstream to disassociate from the violent, extremist fringe. In mobilizing morally sensitive people into battle against an atrocity of the stature of the Holocaust, the pro-life movement opens the door to the possibility of various forms of resistance. The Holocaust was ended on the military battlefield, and reflexively most people condone the use of force against radical evil, such as the one exemplified by the Holocaust. The call to stand up and "do something," as Ronald Reagan did in his national speech, invites consideration of a range of strategies that include not only counseling but also civil disobedience, not only legal and political change, but also sabotage and murder. The young activists of the Gideon Project used his plea in their defense during their criminal trial for the murder of a medical doctor in Florida (Blanchard 1993, p. 295).

Strategies of Resistance

Sociologist Aaron Winter provides an exhaustive overview of the burgeoning scholarly literature on anti-abortion extremism and develops three categories to distinguish the **mainstream** from the **militant** and **extremist** wings of the movement (Winter 2014, pp. 218–248). A liberal Catholic theologian such as John Powell represents the mainstream that

urges followers to engage politically and to exert public pressure for legislative reform.[2] In the USA, this mainstream movement is ecumenical and comprises the National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCP), Christian Coalition of America, Americans United for Life, and the National Pro-Life Religious Council, which according to their website, represents Anglicans for Life, Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, Lutherans for Life, National Right to Life, Presbyterians Pro-life, Priests for Life, and the United Church of Christ. Mainstream activists stay within the confines of the law and organize mass demonstrations, such as the annual "March for Life," which is replicated in cities around the world, memorials for the aborted, public displays of crosses on church property, and prayer vigils, as well as "crisis pregnancy centers" that counsel women to bear their pregnancies to term and/or to mourn their aborted "children." But mainstream pro-life organizations also consider civil disobedience in order to stop the "abortion holocaust." Drawing on the moral authority of Martin Luther King and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Manhattan Declaration, a statement signed in 2009 by 168 Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox religious leaders, including 17 Roman Catholic bishops, warns:

> We must be willing to defend, even at risk and cost to ourselves and our institutions, the lives of our brothers and sisters at every stage of development and in every condition. … Because we honor justice and the common good, we will not comply with any edict that purports to compel our institutions to participate in abortions, embryo-destructive research, assisted suicide and euthanasia, or any other anti-life act. (http://manhattandeclaration.org)

Noncompliance with the law is costly for mainstream Churches such as the Roman Catholic Church. But the signers of the Manhattan Declaration wanted to keep the door open for the more militant and extremist wings of the movement. Winter uses the word **militant** to refer to organizations that engage in sit-ins and clinic blockades, as well

[2] Ironically, Powell (1925–2009) faced multiple lawsuits for sexually abusing and harassing young women starting in 2003. [Online] http://snap-national.blogspot.com/2008/11/new-lawsuit-is-filed-against-high.html [Accessed: June 30, 2015].

as so-called "sidewalk counseling," in which "Sidewalk Advocates for Life" try to verbally and physically prevent women from entering abortion facilities (http://sidewalkadvocates.org).

Militant organizations include Randall Terry's Operation Rescue, (http://www.operationrescue.org), the Lambs of Christ, and Rescue America. Pro-life Action Network (PLAN) adopts strategies that include physical intimidation and verbal harassment of patients and employees at clinics. Their confrontational and disruptive tactics led to the passage of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1994, which erected wide buffer zones around abortion clinics. In court appearances, "rescuers" who had been arrested for blocking clinic entrances, would routinely quote Pastor Martin Niemöller's famous poem in their defense:

> Your Lordship, it was this quotation, which occurred to me when I heard about the death camp in the city. Now they have come for the unborn, who cannot speak out even in a silent scream. I must speak for them. I must seek justice for the unborn by proclaiming the truth as a Christian and as a human being. (Seaton 1995, pp. 7, 82)

This person felt driven to civil disobedience by the sudden realization of the presence of a "death camp" in his city. The growing "certainty that the contemporary United States is but a mannered reincarnation of Nazi Germany, that the abortion holocaust is merely a continuation of the Nazi Holocaust" (Kaplan 1996, p. 145) serves to radicalize people. Individuals involved in clinic blockades eventually took the next step from desperate "rescue" to "defense of the unborn" by destruction of property and eventually "justifiable homicide." For **extremists**, the Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer became the "undisputed model" (Kaplan 1996, p. 145). Over the course of his opposition to Nazism beginning in 1933, Dietrich Bonhoeffer changed his position as a radical Christian pacifist to join a conspiracy to assassinate Adolf Hitler. "Indeed," writes Kaplan, "so intense is the lionization that a distinct form of hagiography is beginning to appear" (Kaplan 1996, p. 143) in which activists style their choices as *imitato Christi* modeled on Bonhoeffer's life. The escalation into violence began with "imprecatory prayer to call down the wrath of God onto the head of the abortionist" (Kaplan 1996, p. 145), graduated to damage against property, and ended

with lethal force used against persons. According to Kaplan, the steady drumbeat of the need to resist Nazi Germany as well as intense emotional identification with the suffering of the "pre-born" and "unborn" in prayer, meditation, and supplication were twin motivators of violence. Rescuers were convinced they "had heard the cries of unborn babies from within the walls of the abortion clinic" (Kaplan 1996, p. 147) and developed an "intensely mystical sense of unity with the unborn" (Kaplan 1996, p. 147). At the same time, the rhetoric of Nazism permeates the pro-life universe in organizations, such as The Nuremberg Files, which listed the private addresses of medical doctors and crossed off their names when they were murdered,[3] and names such as Genocide Awareness Project,[4] Babykaust.de, or abortionsurvivor.org. The metaphoric linkage conveys the message that extreme methods, including vandalism, arson, bombing, chemical attacks, and assaults on homes, cars, families, and lives of abortion providers, may be legitimate means to stop "mass murder." To quote from the Army of God Manual, which first surfaced in the early 1980s on the Internet:

> Beginning officially with the passage of the Freedom of Choice Act—we, the remnant of God-fearing men and women of the United States of Amerika (sic), do officially declare war on the entire child killing industry. After praying, fasting, and making continual supplication to God for your pagan, heathen, infidel souls, we then peacefully, passively presented our bodies in front of your death camps**,** begging you to stop the mass murdering of infants. Yet you hardened your already blackened, jaded hearts. We quietly accepted the resulting imprisonment and suffering of our passive resistance. Yet you mocked God and continued the Holocaust. No longer! All of the options have expired. Our Most Dread Sovereign Lord God requires that whosoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. Not out of hatred of you, but out of love for the persons you exterminate, we are forced to take arms against you. Our life for yours—a simple equation. Dreadful. Sad. Reality, nonetheless. You shall not be tortured at our hands. Vengeance belongs to God only. However, execution is rarely gentle. (Jefferis 2011, p. 30)[5]

[3] [Online] http://www.christiangallery.com/atrocity/ [Accessed: June 30, 2015].

[4] [Online] http://www.abortionno.org/college-campus-outreach-gap/ [Accessed: June 30, 2015].

[5] Text available (http://prochoice.org/education-and-advocacy/violence/anti-abortion-extremists/) [Accessed: June 30, 2015]. Several of the original signers have since been convicted of murder.

Tolerance is not an appropriate response to mass murder. Once people have become convinced that abortion equals mass slaughter, tolerance becomes ethically indefensible and ambiguity, equivocation, and doubt must cease. The metaphor has the power to recruit and mobilize people into radical action, which makes it dangerous. It also has the uncanny ability to bridge political incompatibilities and strategic inconsistencies and cross between mainstream, extremist, and militant discourses. For instance, when the signers of the Manhattan Declarations vowed "to protect the weak and vulnerable against violent attack" they probably did not intend to condone Paul Hill's radically different response to his own question "Should we Defend Born and Unborn Children with Force?" (Maxwell and Jelen 1995, p. 118; Winter 2014, p. 235). He murdered Dr John Britton and James Barret and is now considered a prisoner of conscience among extremists (Reiter 2000, pp. 263–253). The shared commitment to halt "mass murder" provides a platform for "lone wolf terrorists" (Simon 2013) to find common ground with ordinary Christians who advocate a "seamless garment" of non-violence, first proposed by Cardinal Joseph Bernadin of Chicago.

> With regard to the Christian right's sexuality politics, much of the efficacy and versatility of the movement stems from its ability to tolerate and incorporate diverse modes of worship and theological beliefs. Likewise the movement derives strength from its ability to tolerate and incorporate different systems of motivation and action as long as these systems converge in a set of common political goals. (Burack 2014, p. 162)

Belief in the necessity to end a holocaust becomes the glue that holds the alliance between disparate and divergent groups together. But this common enemy is constructed on the basis of a falsified history of both National Socialism as well as abortion. The trope of the abortion Holocaust creates the fiction that abortion began at a particular point in time and can therefore be ended. For the pro-life movement in the USA, "the mass murder of babies" began in 1973, when the Supreme Court decriminalized abortion. Before that moment, the movement suggests, abortions did not occur. For instance, the Manhattan Declaration dates the beginning of the "culture of death" to the Roe v. Wade decision:

> A culture of death inevitably cheapens life in all its stages and conditions by promoting the belief that lives that are imperfect, immature or inconvenient are discardable. As predicted by many prescient persons, the cheapening of life that **began** with abortion has now metastasized … We will be united and untiring in our efforts to roll back the license to kill that **began** with the abandonment of the unborn to abortion.[6]

According to this view, the culture of life ended when the Supreme Court issued its ruling on abortion in 1973. Once a succinct beginning has been established, the practice can be "rolled back" if enough people are mobilized in opposition to the law. But unlike the Holocaust, which is a discrete event in modern history, abortion has never not existed and will always remain an integral aspect of women's embodied lives. While the methods of abortion have changed over time, women's responsibility to space and limit pregnancies in order to care for their children has not (Maguire 2003). The legalization or criminalization of abortion has no observable effect on national birthrates, as global studies have shown consistently. However, maternal morbidity rates improve markedly as do women's overall health and survival (www.guttmacher.org). By comparing abortion to the Holocaust, the impression is created that abortion is an exceptional practice that can be stopped. "Like the Nazi holocaust," Mark Allen Steiner notes, "the current abortion 'holocaust' is a historical anomaly, a unique and horrific exigence (sic) that demands a particular and compelling set of responses" (Steiner 2006, p. 87). The Holocaust was ended by the victorious Allied troops on the military battlefields of World War II. The comparison not only validates the assumption that military means can accomplish moral ends, but also suggests that the practice of abortion can be ended. But abortion has no historical beginning and cannot end—by force or persuasion, law or compassion.

The History of Abortion in Nazi Germany

The historical analogy ignores the fact that Adolf Hitler, the newly installed Reich Chancellor, moved with lightning speed to criminalize abortion, and a year later, homosexuality (Mosse 1985). Three years

[6] [Online] http://www.manhattandeclaration.org/man_dec_resources/Manhattan_Declaration_full_text.pdf [Accessed: June 30, 2015].

before coming to power, delegates from the National Socialist Workers Party (NSDAP) to the German Reichstag introduced a bill on March 12, 1930 to strengthen Paragraph 218:

> Whoever undertakes to artificially block the natural fertility of the German *Volk* to the detriment of the German nation, or promotes such endeavors by word, publication, picture or any other means, or who by mixing with members of the Jewish blood-community or colored races contributes to the racial deterioration and decomposition of the German Volk or threatens to contribute to such endeavors, will be punished with a penitentiary sentence for racial treason. (cited in Henry et al. 1988, p. 89)

National Socialism pursued a racist vision that depended on the stimulation of "healthy Aryan" women's birthrate as much as on the prevention of the births of babies deemed undesirable. The Nazi state systematically curtailed all of its citizens' choices in matters of sexuality and reproduction, compelling healthy Aryan women to bear babies while forcing "eugenically unfit," Jewish, "Gypsy," and Afro-German women to undergo compulsory sterilization and involuntary abortions. Shortly after taking power in May 1933, the government prohibited voluntary abortions and sterilizations for "racially valuable" Aryan women. By September 9, 1933, the Berlin Council of Physicians vowed that the practice of abortion "shall be exterminated with a strong hand," and proceeded to convict a 62-year old abortionist to eight years in penitentiary (Henry et al. 1988, p. 90). By 1935, midwives and doctors were required to report any and all miscarriages to the Regional State Health Office for investigation (Lisner 2006, p. 286ff). Medical doctors assumed that 60–99 % of miscarriages were abortions and suspected unmarried women, married women with children, women who had expressed a desire not to have children, and women who developed infections of having procured abortions. In 1937, the *Kripo* (criminal police) centralized a database for miscarriage reports and began to streamline criminal prosecutions. For instance, during the first six months of 1937, the health department of the city of Hannover received 1490 miscarriage reports, and opened 600 investigations, which led to the conviction of 169 women for having had abortions and 217 persons for assisting in abortions. By 1942, 39,899 "Aryan" Germans

had been convicted. Their punishments ranged from losing licenses to practice midwifery and medicine to prison terms and transfer to concentration camps (Lisner 2006, p. 288; Bock 1993, p. 166; Usborne 2007, pp. 216–223).

Shortly after criminalizing abortions for able-bodied "Aryan" women, the Nazi government passed the Law for the Prevention of Hereditary Diseases in Future Generations (July 14, 1933). This law mandated abortions and sterilizations for eugenic reasons as sanitary measures to ensure the "health" of the nation. People deemed eugenically and racially unfit could now be "forced to abort against their will or without their consent and … were compulsorily sterilized" (Bock 1991, p. 242; 1993, pp. 161–186). While voluntary sterilizations were prohibited, about 1.5 million people were forcibly sterilized upon recommendation of panels composed of doctors, psychiatrists, and other officials who came together to discuss petitions in order to determine the eugenic fitness of individuals. 94 % of petitions for eugenic sterilization were granted (Bock 1991, p. 235; Henry et al. 1988, p. 93). Of the 5000 people who died from complications of the surgery, 90 % were women. German Jewish women were expressly allowed to seek voluntary abortions or sterilizations. German Jewish women who lived in psychiatric or medical facilities because of disabilities were included in compulsory sterilizations until 1942, when a new law stated that "no more applications for sterilizations of Jews need to be made," a chilling acknowledgment that the extermination of Jews had been determined at the Wannsee Conference in January of the same year (Bock 1993, p. 173).

For non-Jewish able-bodied German women, the exigencies of war increased the pressure to reproduce. On the basis of an "Ordinance for the Safekeeping of German Military Potential," the prosecution of people suspected of providing illegal abortions "skyrocketed from 1909 in 1940 to 4345 in 1941 and 9108 in 1942. On January 21, 1941, a Police Ordinance prohibited "the importation, manufacture, or sale of methods, materials, or instruments likely to prevent or interrupt pregnancy" (Henry et al. 1988, p. 96). Contraceptives were now included, although the ordinance explicitly exempted condoms, which were freely distributed among German soldiers in order to prevent venereal disease. And in a separate secret decree of September 1940 the state retained its right

to perform eugenic sterilizations and abortions on prostitutes, women of inferior character, and those of "alien race" (Bock 1993). Prostitutes who "served" Wehrmacht soldiers and concentration camp inmates were monitored and forced to abort pregnancies (Sommer 2009), while others could be executed for providing abortions. By March 29, 1943, the state imposed the death penalty in "extreme cases" of abortion:

> Whoever kills the fetus of a pregnant woman will be punished by a penitentiary sentence, in milder cases by prison. If the perpetrators through such deeds continuously impair the vitality of the German Volk, the death penalty can be imposed. (Reichsgesetzblatt 1943; cited in Henry et al. 1988, p. 96)

At least four women were executed on charges of performing illegal abortions (Henry et al. 1988, p. 98). The point of this sordid history is the state's complete disregard of individual rights and personal choice. The Nazi state claimed "primacy of the state over all the spheres of life, marriage and family," as Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Frick had vowed when he signed the original abortion restriction in 1933. It was the state's presumption of total control of women's bodies along with its racist and eugenic vision that lies at the heart of Nazi atrocities.

The Politics of Holocaust Memory

The contemporary Christian pro-life movement, while ostensibly opposed to Nazism, does not oppose state intervention in matters of sexuality and reproduction but demands more state control over women's bodies. When Powell denounces contemporary America under the heading "Forty Years after Hitler: Yes Again" (p. 41) he is outraged because the state relinquished control over women's reproductive and sexual lives. The language of the "abortion holocaust" obscures the ethical dilemma of Nazi history, such as its lethal racism and anti-Semitism as well as its reach for total control over its citizens' health, reproductive choices, life, and death.[7] The Nazi state's anti-natalism was intrinsically linked to its

[7] The authoritarian regimes in Spain, Romania, and China, to name only a few dictatorships, also combined anti-natalism and pro-natalism in cynically coercive control of citizens' bodies.

pro-natalism, and both depended on the restriction and elimination of individual moral agency and personal choice.

For some of the more extremist supporters, the racial dimension of genocidal rhetoric is precisely what is appealing about this language. Despite self-proclaimed opposition to Nazism, some in the movement apply pro-natalism selectively to "our own people" while fearing the birthrates of "others." For instance, a German website declares:

> We publish the names of doctors and clinics that participate in the "democratic" crimes of murdering pre-born children. We want to show, which "doctors" collaborate in the genocide (*Völkermord*). We should all be ashamed when we denounce the crimes of Nazis but tolerate and justify the genocide *against our own people.* (emphasis added)[8]

Neo-Nazi proclivities are evident in the denunciation of "democratic" (in quotation marks!) reproductive freedoms as well as the racist restriction to "the genocide against our own people." Such intentional and unintentional continuities with Nazi ideology are common on racist extremist websites. In Germany, laws prohibiting Holocaust denial allow the state to shut down such websites.[9] However, individuals and groups find numerous ways to circumvent such restrictions. For instance, the German Catholic news service *kat.net* reported from Moscow under the headline "abortion is the worst holocaust in the history of mankind … and claimed more human lives than all the world wars taken together," summarizing a speech made by Russian Orthodox Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin to a pro-life rally on July 11, 2012.[10] Other websites resort to coded references to "genocide" (*Völkermord*) to argue that the murder of Jews is dwarfed by the mass murder of "babies." Such rhetoric is especially irritating in

[8] [Online] http://www.abtreiber.com/index.htm [Accessed: June 30, 2015].

[9] Google returns the following message: "A URL that otherwise would have appeared in response to your search was not displayed because that URL was reported as illegal by a German regulatory body." [Accessed: December 15, 2014].

[10] Katnet 11. Juli 2011 [Online] http://www.kath.net/news/37315. The same report appeared on [Online] https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/russian-orthodox-spokesman-abortion-is-the-most-terrible-holocaust-in-human [Accessed: June 30, 2015] Pope John Paul II on his visit to Radom, Poland, in 1991 also demanded that the cemetery of the unborn be added to the "cemetery of the victims of cruelty in our century."

countries that were directly involved and affected by the murder of Jews, such as Germany, Poland, or Russia. In these countries, the memory of what was done to the Jews remains conflicted by personal and institutional complicity in discrimination, expropriation, deportation, and killings of Jews. Questioning, trivializing, and minimizing the horrors of the events, as well as the numbers of the dead, allows exoneration and exculpation of troubling memories. By eclipsing the difference between the born and the unborn, the enormity of the Holocaust is relativized and normalized into an ordinary reality. Such revisionism is integral to the agenda of extremist racist groups that dream of the triumph and supremacy of the white race (or nation) and defend it against presumed threat posed by brown, black, immigrant, Muslim populations (Perry 2004).

In America, Holocaust memory is less conflicted by histories of complicity and collaboration. Observing Holocaust remembrance reassures Christian America of the nation's military glory, moral superiority, and victory over the "axis of evil."[11] The Holocaust is emptied of ideological and political complexity and used as a cultural icon that applies to political opponents. "Nazi" is an insult that can be hurled without precise understanding of the German party's program or practice. Without historical details and critical self-reflection, references to the Holocaust construct simplified and dualistic worldviews in which the forces of good fight against evil.

For pro-life supporters, National Socialism proves the failure of modernity and the enlightenment values of individualism, rationality, science, and secularism. According to Catholic theologian John Powell, Nazism subscribed to a "New Ethic" epitomized by the "undisguised usefulness theory of Hegel," which must be repudiated in favor of an alleged "Old Ethic," which protected the "sanctity and value of human life" (Powell 1981, p. 56). Similarly, Everett Kopp, the former Surgeon General of the USA, claimed that the Holocaust occurred because of the "Hegelian bent toward utility" which also drives the "abortion mentality" (Condit 1990, p. 51; Kopp in Reagan 1983). Both suggest that a return of Christian values and governance of the state can somehow thwart a "culture of

[11] US President George W. Bush used this term to rally the country for the invasion of Iraq in his State of the Union Address 2002.

death." Needless to say, the history of the Christian Church provides little evidence that the sanctity of the lives of heretics, witches, Jews, Muslims, homosexuals, or women has been robustly upheld.

Moreover, National Socialism saw itself as an anti-modern movement directed against Western liberalism and Anglo-Saxon capitalism. In the early twentieth century, the voices of the disaffected and downtrodden of modernity's rapid changes were gathered in fascist, nationalist, and communist movements. It was only after the global collapse of these regimes that fundamentalist religion became the primary vehicle of discontent toward the end of the twentieth century. As Nancy Ammerman observed for the rise of the Christian Right in the USA:

> the intrusive force that precipitates a fundamentalist response is what we have come to call 'modernity.' … As the lessons of history would suggest, a fundamentalist movement should be expected in the times and places where cultural disruption is most prevalent. (Ammerman 2008, p. 71)

It is the disillusionment and alienation of ordinary people that drives religious fundamentalism into politics, where decades earlier, National Socialism had mobilized opposition to modernity with its brand of visionary faith (*Weltanschauung*). James Jones rightly places the Christian pro-life movement alongside Maoism and Nazism as a "totalizing religion" in his book *Blood that Cries Out from the Earth*:

> To say that religions are 'totalizing' … means that they deal uncritically in absolutes and in overidealizations. A devotee may demonstrate his devotion to an overly idealized object by committing extreme acts of violence and murder … Totalistic visions erase all doubt and ambiguity and provide a claim of absolute certainty. (Jones 2002, p. 140)

Totalizing religions defy compromise and conciliation and fight apocalyptic battles in what Condit calls a "uni-dimensional universe." In this universe, opponents are "depicted as devil figures and supporters become saints" (Condit 1990, p. 160). Although conservative German church leaders supported Nazi pro-natalist and anti-homosexual policies, such political alliances are conveniently forgotten in order to demonize and

delegitimize adversaries.[12] Emptied of ideological content, Nazism becomes a code word for radical evil that recruits conservative Christians into a "culture war" against modernity, enlightenment thinking, and secularism. Religious terrorism, explains Mark Juergensmeyer, is a rejection of

> the efforts of secular culture and its forms of nationalism to replace religion. They [religious activists] have challenged the notion that secular society and the modern nation state can provide the moral fiber that unites national communities or the ideological strength to sustain states buffeted by ethical, economic, and military failures. Their message has been easy to believe and has been widely received because the failures of the secular state have been so apparent. (Juergensmeyer 2003, p. 229)

For conservative Christians, the Holocaust epitomizes the failings of secular society to normatively regulate the behavior of individuals in modern nation states. But despite self-proclaimed opposition to National Socialism, the pro-life movement shares the Nazi party's hostility to liberalism, tolerance, and pluralism as well as its embrace of authoritarian order, patriarchal control, and restrictions on personal liberty. This political continuity coupled with rhetorical discontinuity constitutes a distinct form of Christian Holocaust revisionism. The metaphorical appropriation of the Holocaust also condones the use of violent resistance methods. Once the case has been made that abortion constitutes a form of mass murder, any ethically sensitive person is obliged to intervene by whatever means necessary and effective under the circumstances. In the face of genocide, tolerance becomes intolerable. This makes the worldwide pro-life movement a dangerous instance of lived religion that is ideologically and theologically committed to a politics of intolerance.

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[12] A Google search for "Obama" and "National Socialism" returns 1.2 million hits [Accessed: June 30, 2015].

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Lived Religion and the Intolerance of the Cross

David Tombs

Introduction

In the early hours of 2 November 2002 on the outskirts of Belfast, Harry McCartan was severely beaten and left in the dark, nailed to a wooden fence stile with his arms outstretched. Six inch nails had been driven through his hands, and then bent back round the wood so that he could not free himself. He barely survived his injuries. Firemen had to cut through the fence to release him and he was taken to hospital with his hands still nailed to the wood. His legs had been broken as part of the attack so he could not properly support himself. Newspapers reported what had happened under the headline 'Crucifixion'.

His face was so badly disfigured that when his father saw him he was only able to identify him by a tattoo on his arm with the name of his

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five-year-old daughter. His jaw was broken and his speech was still heavily distorted when he tried to speak to journalists a few days later. The attack took place in a low-income Protestant area known as Seymour Hill and was widely seen as the work of 'Loyalist' paramilitaries.[1] McCartan was a 23-year-old Catholic who lived in the nearby low-income Nationalist neighbourhood of Poleglass. He had recently been released from a spell in prison for car crimes and had previously been beaten by Loyalist paramilitaries with hammers for 'joy-riding'.[2] The police reported that crucifixions had featured in some similar punishments before but never with such severity. Nonetheless, at least some people in Seymour Hill approved of what had happened, and graffiti appeared on a wall nearby which read: 'Crucify the hoods—South Belfast UFF' (Moriarty 2002).[3]

Punishment attacks against people accused of anti-social behaviour had been relatively common occurrences in areas of the city plagued by crime and controlled by either loyalist or republican paramilitary groups. After the violence of 'the Troubles' (1969–1998), Northern Ireland's social transition towards a new and more peaceful society remained slow.

[1] Northern Ireland is a divided society with two historically opposed communities, which are politically committed to Irish Nationalism and British Unionism respectively. Unionists identify themselves as British and are committed to the continued union between Northern Ireland and Great Britain within the United Kingdom, rather than a united Ireland. During the 400 years of British settlement and rule in Ireland, political allegiances and ethnic identities became closely entwined with religious traditions. British Unionism was historically linked to Protestantism and Irish Nationalism to Catholicism. In the same way that the term 'Republican' came to be used for Irish Nationalists who accepted the legitimacy of armed struggle, the term 'Loyalist' typically refers to a militant Unionist who affirms staunch loyalty to the British crown, and Loyalist paramilitary groups were willing to take up arms to preserve the Union. During 'the Troubles' (1969–1998) Loyalist paramilitaries explained their existence and justified their actions as the defence of Protestant communities against attacks from the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA). However, in practice, Catholic civilians presented a much softer sectarian target than the IRA. On the dynamics of conflict in Northern Ireland, see Ruane and Todd (1996).

[2] 'Joy-riding' is a common term used when cars are stolen to be driven for entertainment and excitement, often by youths at night. The cars are then abandoned, but only after they have often suffered significant damage, and in some cases after being involved in crashes. 'Knee-capping' was a form of punishment favoured by paramilitaries, and was carried out with bars, hammers, or baseball bats, or with a bullet to the knee. Knee-cappings were used as a form of severe punishment. They were not intended to be fatal, but would be extremely painful and when done with a bullet they often left their victims with a permanent limp. After the peace process put political pressure on paramilitaries to decommission their guns, there were reports of knee-cappings being carried out with electrical drills from behind the knee.

[3] The UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters) were a loyalist paramilitary group.

Many of the neighbourhoods which had been most affected by earlier violence remained under the *de facto* control of paramilitaries. Punishment beatings helped paramilitaries to impose their authority and assert social control over the areas which they claimed to represent and defend. The victims had most usually been members of their own community rather than belonging to the other side of the communal divide. The day before, a related Loyalist organisation, the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) in north Belfast had shot one of their own senior political representatives in both legs (Cowan 2002). Known locally as a 'knee-capping', it was apparently a punishment for his maligning of the organisation by saying it was against the peace process.

In 2002, four years after the 1998 Good Friday Peace Agreement, Belfast was still a deeply divided city with high levels of sectarian violence.[4] The then British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, was quoted as saying that reports of the attack on McCartan made him 'physically sick', and he used it to condemn both loyalist and republican paramilitary violence (*The Guardian* 2002). Yet despite the political and media interest in McCartan's crucifixion there are plenty of questions about that night which cannot be answered. Was the attack on McCartan a conventional paramilitary punishment for 'anti-social behaviour' taken to an extreme level? Or was its ferocity in some part motivated by the added element of sectarian anti-Catholic hatred? If so, was the choice of crucifixion in some way influenced by a sense that the crucifix is seen more as a Catholic symbol than a Protestant symbol (since Protestants typically use the bare cross)? Was there some perverse religious reference to Catholic images of suffering in the paramilitary punishment?[5]

[4] In June 2001 major violence had flared at the Glenbryn–Ardoyne interface area of north Belfast when Loyalists blocked access to the Holy Cross Catholic primary school. The dispute attracted worldwide attention and lasted until nearly Christmas. In June 2002 the focus of attention shifted to the loyalist Cluan Place and nationalist Clandeboye Drive in Short Strand, East Belfast. Even with a 30 foot high 'peace wall' between the roads, violent incidents at the East Belfast interface continued to be reported on an almost daily basis through early November 2002.

[5] The iconography of Christ-like suffering sometimes gave rise to very powerful images during the Troubles, especially in the Catholic community. For example, images of bearded and long-haired Republican prisoners wrapped only in a blanket were seen by some Catholics as a reminder of Christ's suffering. It is possible that hostility to this association might have influenced the nature of the attack on McCartan. Likewise, the reported crucifixion of Armenian girls by the Ottoman Turks in 1915 might reflect an intentionally sectarian form of execution in a religiously divided

To what extent the nature of the attack and the use of crucifixion were sectarian will probably never be known. In any case, McCartan himself said he remembered nothing about the attack and thought he was dreaming when he woke up in hospital. It is reported that he broke down in tears when he finally saw photos of his disfigured face in the newspapers and realised what had happened.

One of the legacies of The Troubles is that 'not knowing' is a familiar difficulty. Almost any story about what really happened is likely to be disputed, and the truth is hard to judge. There are usually at least two versions of what happened, and these tend to divide along political lines. Just as the geographic spaces in the city are divided, in many cases with so-called 'peace walls' dividing neighbourhoods from each other, so perceptions about events and the motives behind them are often starkly divided. In this case, the police downplayed the suggestion of a sectarian motive for the attack, whereas McCartan's father believed that sectarianism had played an important part.[6]

Regardless of an explicitly sectarian motivation, the McCartan case offers insight into where intolerance can lead, and how this might be expressed in the cruelty of crucifixion.[7] Viewed in this way, the disturbing violence

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society. Muslims recognise Jesus as a prophet in Islam, but do not believe he was crucified. The use of crucifixion against the girls may therefore have been seen as an apt form of death, which parodied the Christian belief in crucifixion.

[6] I suspect that McCartan's father is right, but for the purposes of this chapter will have to leave that question on one side. On the role of sectarianism in the confict in Northern Ireland, see Joseph Liechty and Ceclia Clegg (2001). Liechty and Clegg note that there is no commonly accepted defintion of the term sectarian, and that Catholic and Protestants will often disagree as to whether an act is sectarian.

[7] Other examples of recent crucifixion, which might have been examined for this purpose, include the reports of crucifiixon of Armenian girls in 1915 mentioned above. Dating from the same period, there is also a report of a Canadian soldier being crucified by the Germans in Belgium in 1915. More recent instances include accounts of Guatemalan women being crucified during the counter-insurgency wars of the 1980s, and crucifixion of the men by Islamic State or IS (formerly Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS) in 2014. Each one of these examples has its own distinctive features and merits careful attention. Sensationalist media headlines rarely address the similiarities and differences in these crucifixions. For example, the IS did not normally use crucifixions to execute, but to display the corpse of a victim who had already been hanged. Alternatively, IS might use a crucifixion device to punish and publicly display a live victim, but stopped short of killing him. As regards a sexual dimension to Roman crucifixions discussed below, IS crucifixions (in which all the known victims so far have been men) did not involve enforced nudity or sexual violations. By contrast, the crucifixions in Armenia and Guatemala involved extreme penetrative violation of girls and women.

of the McCartan case provides a contemporary reference point for the presentation below of Roman crucifixions as acts of 'extreme intolerance'.[8]

Roman Crucifixions, State Terror, and Sexualised Violence

The violence against McCartan appears to have been calculated to send a message of fear and intimidation to a wider community about what would, and would not, be tolerated. In ancient times, too, crucifixion was about sending a message. Roman crucifixions signalled that opposition to Roman power would not be tolerated. Any act of defiance or resistance in the provinces (or closer to home by slaves) could expect an unspeakably harsh retribution.[9]

At its root, in practices in the ancient world, crucifixion was an extreme expression of intolerance. Crucifixion was considered one of the most degrading punishments possible in the ancient world, and it is difficult to appreciate the horror and humiliation associated with it.[10] Even though crucifixion was a public punishment, it seems that the Romans did not view crucifixion as an appropriate subject to discuss in any detail. Roman historians and writers make frequent references to crucifixions happening, and to the horror associated with them, but give little detail

[8] Presenting crucifixion in terms of intolerance promotes connections between crucifixion and the forms of intolerance discussed in other chapters in this volume. It would also be appropriate to develop a more detailed analysis of crucifixion in terms of contempt, humiliation, and degradation, but these will only be touched on indirectly in what follows.

[9] Whilst crucifixions were primarily directed at those that the Romans considered as 'other' and inevitably lesser to themselves, crucifixions might also have served as an indirect warning to Roman citizens and soldiers as well, as examples of what they should expect if they defied the power of the State. As a general rule, Roman citizens were not subjected to the shame of crucifixions, but under the Empire, the scope of crucifixion was extended more widely than during the Republic. It could be used as punishment for treason, or for soldiers who deserted, or for other serious offences committed by lower classes.

[10] Roman practice was more extreme and far more degrading than the suffering of devotees in some Catholic countries, especially the Philippines, who voluntarily submit themselves to a mock form of crucifixion on Good Friday. These crucifixions, which involve being tied or nailed to crosses and suspended, can be extremely painful but are not intended to be fatal.

about what was actually involved.[11] The Gospel narratives give the fullest sequential account of an act of crucifixion, and even these leave many open questions about what was involved.

The reticence of the Romans in writing about crucifixion appears to have been matched by a sense that crucifixion should not be spoken about, or even mentioned, in respectable society. Sensitivity around the punishment was especially strong if there was any suggestion of it being used to punish a Roman citizen. Crucifixion was typically used as severe punishment against slaves, brigands, or rebels. By contrast, a Roman citizen could normally expect more honourable forms of execution, such as beheading or falling on his own sword. The shame associated with crucifixion cannot be overstated, and reinforced its effectiveness as a threat. Crucifixion was probably the greatest fear that a Roman citizen might have for his body, and his honour, and hence to even mention the word crucifixion alongside the name of a Roman citizen was seen as reason for rebuke.

What made crucifixions so horrifying and shameful as to be virtually 'unspeakable' in Roman society? The most likely, but rarely discussed, answer is the frequent use of extreme sexual abuses and sexual violations in Roman crucifixions, and the particular significance this had when directed against male victims.[12]

In what follows, this chapter offers a brief summary of my research on crucifixions as instruments of sexual violence. This will then be linked to a discussion of intolerance by suggesting that the connection between Roman crucifixion and sexualised violence can be read as an enactment of four forms of extreme intolerance for the victim. This reading might open up new

[11] On the historical evidence and writings, see especially Martin Hengel's authoritiative 1977 work. This has recently been updated and supplemented by an even more comprehensive survey of ancient writings by John Granger Cook (2014). Other recent significant scholarly studies include David W. Chapman (2008) and Gunnar Samuelson (2011).

[12] There is debate on whether crucifixion was a punishment that was exclusively reserved for men, but there appear to be at least some reports of women being crucified. Josephus mentions the crucifixion of a freed woman in Rome (Ide), who collaborated with Priests of Isis to deceive a woman of the equestrian order (Paulina). Tiberius had Ide and the Priests crucified and the Temple of Isis destroyed; see Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.79–80. Josephus reports this immediately after his well-known passage on the life of Jesus, whom Pilate condemned to the cross and who gave his name to 'the tribe of Christians' (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18.65–66). The common assumption that most victims of crucifixion were men is probably correct, though the absence of definitive records leaves room for some uncertainty. If women were also crucified, it is quite possible that the number of women who suffered in this way has been dramatically underestimated.

insights that are significant for Christian faith as lived religion: in particular, how Christians can best live their religion in relation to the cross, and how Christians might find inspiration and encouragement in the extreme cruelty of the cross to respond more pro-actively to social intolerance today.

My article 'Crucifixion, State Terror, and Sexual Abuse' drew upon reports of sexual abuses that are common in past and present torture practices to offer a new reading of the Gospel accounts of crucifixion (Tombs 1999).[13] The article was heavily influenced by the insights and inspirations of Latin American liberation theology. The liberationist method encourages a starting point in contemporary events and lived experience to provoke new thinking about ancient texts and about lived faith today. The results of this approach to a reading of crucifixion can be summarised in four brief points.[14]

First, that the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth was a form of sexual humiliation, since a key part of crucifixion was to strip the victim and display the victim in public. Second, this enforced nakedness and humiliation needs to be named as 'sexual abuse' if its significance is to be more properly understood. Third, this sexual abuse was not accidental or incidental to crucifixion as a form of torture and execution, but rather it was intentional and integral. Crucifixion should therefore be recognized as a form of sexual torture and sexual violence. Fourth, it would not have been unusual if Jesus' crucifixion had been preceded by other forms of sexual violence, such as rape with an object or other physical forms of sexual assault or mutilation.[15]

My experience in sharing these findings is that many Christians have found these points to be initially distressing to consider, but finally, thought-provoking and helpful to lead to new insights about lived faith. In terms of evidence and support, the first claim, in relation to sexual humiliation, rests on direct evidence from the Gospels as well as from a wider study of Roman practices. The second claim, in relation to sexual abuse, is primarily a claim about terminology and language, and was reinforced by the Abu Ghraib

[13] This investigation takes up and elaborates the main lines of my 1999 article.

[14] On the significance of liberation theology, and its value for this sort of interpretative approach, see Tombs (2002); Hayes and Tombs (2001).

[15] It is evidence of the stigma around sexual violence and the degree to which the understanding of the cross has been sanitised and distorted over nearly 2000 years of Christian history that the strong and explicit links between crucifixion and sexual violence have not been recognised or addressed in either lived religion or in academic scholarship. There is no discussion of sexual violence in Hengel's work, and even the recent and informative studies by Chapman, Samuelson, and Cook (noted above) are silent on it.

scandal in 2004, in which humiliating photos of naked Iraqi prisoners were readily, and rightly, recognized as photos of sexual abuses (Tombs 2008). The third claim, that crucifixion should be recognized as a form of sexual torture, also involves a claim about terminology and a greater awareness of how crucifixions operated in practice. This is significant in linking crucifixion to the many different forms of sexual torture that are documented by human rights observers today. Particularly important here is the relationship between Roman crucifixions and previous impalement punishments. The fourth claim, that Jesus may have suffered prisoner rape or some other form of violent sexual assault preceding crucifixion, is more speculative and open-ended than the first three claims. The Gospels do not provide direct evidence to confirm or to refute what may have happened, and therefore no definitive judgement can be offered. There is substantial evidence that prisoners in the Greco-Roman world often suffered sexual violence of many different sorts. It would not have been unusual if Jesus had suffered in this way; on the contrary, the impression is that it would have been unusual if he did not suffer in this way. Given the practices of the time, it is a much more likely possibility than is normally acknowledged, but of course it is not possible on the evidence available to arrive at a definitive conclusion.

The sexual violence in the torture and execution of Jesus, which is attested in the Bible, is almost never mentioned in church, or in theology, or in Christian ethics (Tombs 1999, 2014; Trainor 2014). A significant reason for this is that the common perception of crucifixion is shaped by Christian art, rather than the texts. In the vast majority of cases, Christian art depicted Jesus as wearing a loincloth on the cross. This has served to hide the sexual humiliation involved and mask its significance.

It was not new to say, in the 1999 article, that Jesus was exposed naked on the cross. This has been widely recognized for a very long time. What was new about it was to say that this should be named as 'sexual abuse'. Strangely, the public crucifixion of a naked man had never before been named as sexual abuse, or seen in terms of sexual violence.[16]

My subsequent research on Roman crucifixion has pointed towards a much stronger link between crucifixion and sexual abuse than I had

[16] Despite an extraordinary amount of material that has been published since the 1990s on the clerical sexual abuse scandal, and the suffering of clerical abuse victims, the significance of Jesus as a victim of sexual abuse and whether this might be helpful or not to other victims of sexual abuse still has barely been explored. An important exception to this is the recent book by the Australian priest Michael Trainor (2014).

initially recognized. In addition, it has also suggested that the ritualised elements of crucifixion might merit much greater attention. To capture these aspects of crucifixion more clearly, the following description of crucifixion might be helpful:

> Roman crucifixions were ritualised public performances of punitive violence, intended as instruments of state terror, and enacted as prolonged spectacles of degrading and dehumanising execution-torture, frequently involving sexualised violence to humiliate and shame, and to inscribe memories of the victim with a permanent stigma.

This close relationship between the cross and sexual violence offers a new perspective for reading the Passion narratives, and has profound implications for Christian theologies of the cross and soteriology. This more thorough discussion of the implications of this reading of the cross for Christian doctrine and thought is beyond the scope of this chapter and will need to be addressed in other work. Instead, the next section has a more modest objective in exploring how such readings might be developed in terms of the cross as an expression of intolerance.

Roman Crucifixions as Displays of Extreme Intolerance

Jean-Jacques Aubert points to one of the political messages of crucifixion in terms of the victim's legal and civil status:

> [Crucifixion's] primary purpose is to emphasize the victims final irrevocable rejection from the civic and international community and the total denial of any form of legal protection based on rights guaranteed by *ius civile* and *ius gentium* and attached to any legal status above slavery. (Aubert 2002, p. 117; cited Cook 2013, p. 2)

To understand the different elements of this message of rejection more fully, the intolerance represented by Roman crucifixions can be examined as four related elements. First, as intolerance and termination of the victim's life, through a slow and painful death. Second, as intolerance and

attack on the victim's humanity, through dehumanisation of the victim. Third, as intolerance and despoliation of a dignified memory of the victim, through unspeakable shame and degradation. Fourth, as intolerance of the victim's religious identity, and their standing in relation to the sacred, through a ritualised act of desecration.

Intolerance of the Life of the Victim

First, crucifixion was intended to be an agonisingly slow death, which involved a prolonged and ultimately intolerable physical stress on the body. The word 'excruciating' (derived from the Latin *crux/cruciare*) is a reminder of the extreme physical pain associated with death through crucifixion. The suspended position of the body gradually made exhaling difficult, and the need to breathe therefore forced the victim to raise himself (or herself) to relieve the pressure on the lungs, so as to exhale and then inhale. This was difficult to do, and even more difficult to hold. After each success, the victim then slumped back down into the suspended position. Eventually physical exhaustion, reinforced by shock, dehydration, and loss of blood, doomed the victim to death by asphyxiation, if death through some other cause did not come before this.

There has been extensive discussion, but not yet a definitive conclusion, on the medical cause of Jesus' death. Since crucifixion involved different elements, the cause of death may well have varied between different victims. The different practices associated with crucifixion make this possible, not least because of the mistreatment that took place prior to affixing the victim to the cross. The physical strength and resilience of the victim would vary between individuals, and make them more or less susceptible to different impacts. The way the victim was nailed or bound to the cross would also make a difference, whether the arms were outstretched to the side or attached straight above the head, and whether there was a footrest or seat peg (*sedile*) to provide some support to the body and thereby extend the process. Given all these variables, it is probably better to see crucifixion as associated with a range of different related causes for death, rather than a single cause.

Compared to the other impacts of crucifixion discussed below, the physical impact of crucifixion as a cause of death has received the overwhelming

amount of attention in most treatments of crucifixion, and therefore requires least attention here. However, very little of this discussion has explicitly engaged with modern studies of torture techniques. Recent work on torture practices, especially in terms of 'enhanced interrogation techniques' has focused on stress positions as a form of torture. Crucifixion should be recognized as a form of stress torture, which would prove lethal if the victim was not released from it. Whilst some victims in the ancient world were released from crucifixions and survived, the usual Roman practice was to use crucifixion as a form of execution.

Furthermore, as a stress torture, the mechanics of crucifixion ensured that the victim inflicted the pain and ultimately the execution *on himself or herself*. Recent studies of torture point to the psychological impact of enforced stress positions, where the victim's own body is used against himself or herself. One consequence of this is that victims have more difficulty in maintaining their psychological sense of separation between themselves and the torturer. This is especially marked if the torture is sustained for an extended period, or frequently repeated. It can also be reinforced by what the torturer says to the victim, for example, that the torture is really their own fault, and that the victim is in a position to stop it. Torturers often work to inculcate a sense of self-blame for suffering in their victims. This can both increase the psychological stresses for the victim and also deflect moral responsibility from the torturer. Stress positions can serve this purpose, since the torturer can remain one step removed from the source of pain. A crucifixion that lasts anything from a few hours to a few days would be different from the prolonged but non-fatal use of stress positions in torture centres. Nonetheless, the psychological element of the victim being forced into a position of self-torture is worth further consideration. In this context, the jeers and insults from those at the foot of Jesus' cross suggesting that he might free himself have not received as much attention as they might merit. If there was more awareness of the psychological impact of torture on a man trapped in an acute stress position, more attention might be paid to role of the onlookers and bystanders, and the jeers directed at Jesus on the cross, in the same way that Lamb (2014) has scrutinised insults, jeers, and trash talk in some Hebrew Bible passages.

Intolerance of the Human Dignity of the Victim

Second, Roman crucifixions were designed to inflict more than death and intolerable pain. The severity of degradation associated with crucifixion suggests that Roman crucifixions were intended to destroy the victim's human dignity and reduce the victim to a dehumanised state. Dehumanising abuses are very common in the torture practices of recent decades. These abuses include verbal insults, some of which cast the victim as an animal or subhuman being. In some cases, live animals are used to reinforce this point, and to further terrorise or torment victims. For example, one of the enduring images of Abu Ghraib released in 2004 shows a naked prisoner on his knees being terrified by a dog straining on a leash close to his face. In other cases, prisoners are forced to imitate or behave like animals. Another Abu Ghraib image from 2004 features a US female military guard leading a naked Iraqi male prisoner on a leash like a dog. At the far end of the spectrum, animals can be used to inflict physical injuries on prisoners, and even as a means for sexual violation. In Roman times, one of the punishments on a similar level of severity to crucifixion was to condemn prisoners to the beasts (*ad bestiam*). These prisoners might be exposed to beasts in the arena, whilst the crowd watched (Kyle 1998). In some cases, male or female prisoners were tied to wooden stakes so that they were defenceless and easy prey for the beasts. Alternatively, the prisoners might be given a chance to entertain the crowd by being allowed to try and evade the beasts, or even use weapons to fend them off. In some cases, the prisoners were even dressed in skins and furs so that the spectacle took on the appearance of beast against beast. A common element in all these punishments was that the condemned prisoner was no longer viewed as a person but was more akin to an animal, and this debasement was an integral part of their humiliation and punishment.

Likewise, with crucifixion, prisoners were subjected to dehumanising treatment to reinforce the point that their human dignity was being stripped from them. The victim did not just lose his life, but also his dignity and reputation. Crucifixions were intended to leave no doubt that the victim was dishonoured, degraded, and defiled. Yet despite the widespread scholarly acknowledgement that crucifixion was seen as a violent and most shameful death, very little attention has been given to the reason why it was seen as so shameful. Physical pain and tribulation is not enough to explain the sense of

abhorrence and obscenity associated with crucifixion in the Roman world. For example, according to Origen, one of the reasons that led Celsus to dismiss Christianity was that Jesus had been 'punished to his utter disgrace' (Origen 1953, p. 324). The language is of superlatives, as if words can barely convey the degradation and indignity involved. Although we are dependent on Origen for these words, and there is no reason to think that Celsus would have had direct evidence of the specifics of Jesus' crucifixion, his language is evidence of the extremity of shame associated with crucifixion.

The sexualised violence of the crucifixion, in which a naked victim was subjected to this prolonged theatre of public death and public abuse, was a key element in this. Sexual violence is a supremely powerful weapon for humiliation, and can be used to target victims where they are especially vulnerable in their sense of self. Sexual violence can be used to degrade and dehumanise victims in the eyes of others, and also to undermine the victim's own sense of himself or herself.

The opportunities to link crucifixion to extreme forms of sexual violation might explain why it was considered inappropriate for ancient writers to go into close detail about crucifixions. Despite fairly frequent references to crucifixion in Roman writers, the common practice was to report the bare fact that an individual or group had been crucified. It was unusual to give much detail of what crucifixion itself involved, and sometimes even an alternative phrase such as 'slave's punishment' was substituted. The Jewish historian Josephus and the Roman writer Seneca are partial exceptions to this. Their writings reveal disturbing details that challenge the conventional image of the cross which has shaped Christian imagination and the wider western tradition. There are sufficient references in the work of Josephus and Seneca to suggest that Roman crucifixions remained much more closely connected to ancient impalements than is often realised, and that impalement could often take on an explicitly sexual form. Thus Seneca reports on what he saw in Bithynia:

> I see crosses there, not just of one kind but fashioned in many ways: some have their victims with head down toward the ground; some impale their private parts; others stretch out their arms on their crossbeam. (Seneca, cited by Hengel 1977, p. 25)[17]

[17] Hengel offers no comment on whether the impalement of genitals might have been widespread, and what it might suggest about other forms of sexual abuse as part of crucifixion.

In view of this, it is not surprising Christian art avoided physical depictions of Jesus on the cross until the fifth century CE (Harries 2004; Jensen 2000). This was long enough after Constantine had abolished crucifixion as an offical punishment in 337 CE for the more visceral memories of sexual violence in crucifixion to have faded. Recognising that this desexualised memory creates a false visual history is a critical step in confronting the cross more honestly.

Intolerance of Memory of the Victim

Third, part of the reason that dehumanising acts were incorporated into crucifixions was that otherwise the victim's death and physical pain might provide an opportunity for heroic resistance. Although the mechanics of crucifixion meant such resistance would ultimately be overcome, the Romans had no wish for any prolonged defiance by a victim to be claimed as a moral victory, or valorised by supporters. A key purpose in the Roman use of crucifixion was to punish defiance, not to provide it with a public platform. If crucifixions allowed the possibility that a victim might be remembered as suffering heroically, it would defeat the prime purpose of the elaborate execution.

To prevent any heroic endurance of crucifixion, the Romans linked the physical punishment with public degradation in the eyes of all who saw it or came to know about it. The stigma associated with sexual violence, especially when used against male victims in patriarchal societies, made it almost impossible to remember the victim or speak of him without recalling this sense of shame.[18] Crucifixion therefore had a powerful legacy even after the death of the victim. It attacked the memory of the victim in people's minds. The shame and degradation associated with crucifixion was so traumatic that it made it almost impossible to speak of the victim's death, and also hard to remember the victim's life without bringing this overwhelming image to mind. Crucifixion could therefore serve as a *damnatio memoriae*, a way to erase and prevent memory.

[18] On the continuing relative invisibility of male victims of sexual violence in contemporary conflicts, see Apperley (2015).

Intolerance of the Victim's Standing Before God

Fourth, there might be a further possibility that crucifixions also reflected elements intended to separate the victim from their sense of God, or make them believe that God would reject them and that they would die alone. Melissa Raphael's insightful work on Jewish women at Auschwitz is very suggestive here (Raphael 1999, 2003). Raphael notes that at Auschwitz the Nazis sought to destroy the Jews even before their death, and that this destruction was intended to be in some ways even more comprehensive than death itself (Raphael 2003, p. 63). This involved the degradation and defilement of whatever might in ordinary life be cherished and valued. Raphael examines the different ways that women's bodies were systematically subjected to dirt and filth, and how the Nazis prevented them from keeping themselves clean. She highlights the impact this had on women's sense of dignity and identity, as well as a physical toll on their health (Raphael 2003, pp. 63–70). The loss of cleanliness was a threat to their sense of relation with God, and their experience of God's presence. Raphael notes that this might have been part of what the Nazis intended:

> Once the divine image of the Jewish person had been defaced, it would no longer reflect the face of God. Literally covered in filth and sores, Jewish bodies would be (as the word 'cover' once implied) possessed or owned, here by a power other than God. These contagious bodies would have been deported geographically and ontologically: to the East and into the realm of the profane. Here, the soiled, irredeemably material Jew would have become, or so the Nazis might have intended, repellent even to their own, Jewish, God. (Raphael 1999, pp. 61–62)[19]

[19] Whilst it is not possible to do justice to Raphael's full argument, it should be noted that it relates these experiences to the wider debate in post-Holocaust theology on the presence or absence of God at Auschwitz, and discussions of God's hiddenness. Raphael suggests that the question 'Where was God in Auschwitz?' needs to be looked at alongside the question 'Who was God in Auschwitz?', which she answers in terms of God's accompanying holy presence as Shekhinah. The word Shekhinah (from the root *shakan*) is grammatically feminine, and has been a focal point for Jewish feminist writing. Raphael argues that recognition that God was present as Shekinah, and shared in the degradation experienced by Jewish women, is crucial for the wider discussion on where God was at Auschwitz. Despite the powerful forces of destruction ranged against the women, and against Shekinah, supportive acts of relational care, cleaning, and compassion towards each other meant that Shekinah remained present, despite the Nazi efforts to the contrary.

Raphael also mentions reports of sexual abuses in the camps, and notes that sexual violations were even less susceptible than the pervasive dirt to being washed away (2003, p. 67). Although Raphael does not develop the link between defilement by dirt and defilement by sexual abuses at any great length, she includes a significant footnote to works on this subject (2003, p. 183 n. 48).[20] When Raphael was writing, reports of sexual violence in the Holocaust were still largely undiscussed. As she points out, many survivors were reticent about speaking out on sexual violence, and most historians had shown little interest in it (2003, p. 183 n. 48).[21] Yet even without sustained attention to sexual abuses, Raphael persuasively argues that the cumulative impact of the dirt and defilement for many women was a sense of impurity and humiliation, which profoundly impacted on their sense of spiritual identity and how they viewed their standing before to God.

In response to Raphael's work, the likely sense of spiritual pollution and defilement experienced by victims of crucifixion might receive more attention. To what extent would an observant Jew in the first century who was a victim of crucifixion have been likely to feel a sense of defilement before God, and possible abandonment by God?

Jesus' cry of dereliction on the cross (Mark 15.34 and Matthew 27.46) might take on deeper meaning in this context. Jesus' cry is one of the few sayings in the text where Jesus' words are given in his Aramaic mother tongue, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?', 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?'[22] This is usually seen as a reference to Psalm 22, attributed to King David:

> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel. In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you

[20] In light of the discussion in the previous section on the use of animals to dehumanise, it is noteworthy that this mentions reports of dogs specially trained to sexually violate girls.

[21] Since then, an important collection by Sonja Hedgepeth and Rochelle Saidel (2010) has provided extensive documentation of a wide range of sexual abuses endured by Jewish women and children during the Holocaust.

[22] Matthew appears to amend this slightly to 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani', probably to explain why the bystanders thought Jesus was calling to Elijah (Mt. 27.47). Both Mark and Matthew record that the time was the ninth hour (about 3 pm) and shortly before his death.

> they trusted, and were not put to shame. But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; 'Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver—let him rescue the one in whom he delights!' (Ps. 21.1–8; NRSV)

Since the Psalmist ultimately appears to reaffirm continuing faith in God, the use of the Psalm in Jesus' words is open to different possible interpretations. However, the most straightforward reading of this passage is that Jesus felt an agonised sense that God had turned away from him. It is entirely understandable that a Jew subjected to crucifixion would react in this way. Roman crucifixions may well have been intended to make victims experience a sense of separation from God, as a further punishment before death.

Lived Religion and Uncritical Tolerance of the Violence of the Cross

The cross is a central symbol of lived Christian faith. Precisely because it is so prevalent, and so widely displayed, it is easy to take it for granted and ignore the disturbing violence behind it. If crucifixion demonstrated the profound intolerances suggested above, an intolerance of life, of human dignity, of memory, and of standing before God, it raises questions as to why the symbol of the cross is not more often experienced by Christians as a disturbing and offensive image. How has a symbol of such torture, which was associated with such extreme intolerance, lost its offensive associations and become religiously respectable?

Part of the answer to this is that the cross is not viewed or valued in lived religion for what it meant historically. Rather, it is more likely to be seen in spiritual and salvation terms as a great redemptive moment that forms part of God's providential work. Exactly how the redemptive significance of the cross is to be understood as salvific is a subject for lively theological debate.[23] For the lived religion of most Christian believers, however, these

[23] Powerful critiques have been offered of the violence which is often implied and sometimes explicit in traditional theories of the Atonement. Feminist scholars have offered particularly strong

theological debates take place at a significant distance from their experience of faith. The understanding of atonement in lived religion is likely to be mediated through hymns or liturgy rather than through theological debates. Theologians might question the widespread view of the cross as part of a providential plan for salvation. However, as long as conventional interpretations of the cross as divine providence are implicitly or explicitly embedded in the hymns and liturgy of worship, they are likely to remain prevalent. Whether, and how, the reading of the cross developed in this chapter might impact on lived religion in positive ways remains a challenging question.

If the ancient 'intolerance' of the cross used sexual violence to obliterate the person at multiple levels, the modern 'tolerance' of the cross is based on amnesia and denial, rather than memory and truth. As the sexualised violence of Roman crucifixions becomes better known, the centrality of the cross in lived Christianity, and in the prevalent interpretations of its salvific significance, will need careful thought. Greater recognition of the sexualised violence of the cross will most likely raise questions over interpretations of atonement which rest on a providential plan, and especially penal substitution theories.

This may be disconcerting for the lived faith of Christian believers who are firmly attached to these interpretations and can only make sense of the cross in these traditional terms. However, to avoid these questions would be irresponsible, for two mutually reinforcing reasons. First, it avoids facing the historical facts of crucifixion, and the realities of the lived experience at the heart of the Christian Gospel. Second, it can fail to address the reality of sexualised violence for women and men in subsequent centuries, including our own. The willingness to acknowledge and reflect on sexualised violence in the ancient world may increase the willingness to acknowledge it in the contemporary world as well, as a fundamentally Christian concern. Whilst the initial impact of the questions may be disturbing, they can also open up new possibilities for lived faith in understanding the cross and what significance it might have for the contemporary world.

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criticism of the patriarchal violence that is taken for granted in some of these Atonement theories. See especially Brock and Parker (2002). Adding an awareness of the sexual violence to the power behind these critiques is likely to make the questions that they raise all the more urgent.

During the last decade, sexualised violence in conflict has attracted international attention as an intolerable issue that demands urgent action.[24] Some faith-based organisations are part of a worldwide campaign to make this a key issue for action. However, there is still a danger that many churches do not see this as a priority for their attention, because they see sexual violence only as a social issue and not also as a faith issue with a theological dimension. In this context, greater awareness of the sexual violence of crucifixion 2000 years ago, and the intolerances it was meant to express and reinforce, might help churches to recognize the importance of sexual violence and sexual abuses today, and the need for both a practical and a theological response (Tombs 2014, pp. 142–160).[25]

Conclusion

Drawing on previous work, this chapter has argued that the violence of Roman crucifixion is only fully appreciated when the commonly ignored aspects of sexual violence are acknowledged. Seen in this fuller perspective, Roman crucifixion might be viewed in terms of four interrelated aspects of intolerance: an intolerance for the victim's life; an intolerance for the victim's dignity and humanity; an intolerance of memories of the victim; an intolerance for the victim's standing before God. The final section of the chapter suggested that Christianity as a lived religion uncritically tolerates the extreme intolerance of crucifixion by ignoring its sexual violence. It suggested that the understanding of the cross in lived

[24] See, for example, We Will Speak Out (WWSO), a global coalition of Christian-based NGOs, churches and organizations working to address sexual violence as a global problem. The coalition was established in March 2011, at the launch of a Tearfund research report, *Silent No More: The Untapped Potential of the Worldwide Church in Addressing Sexual Violence* (Teddington, Middlesex: Tearfund, 2011). This report highlights the untapped potential and challenges of the worldwide Church to prevent and respond to sexual violence, based on research in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. The coaltion also participated in the Global Summit to End Sexual violence in Conflict that took place in London, 10–13 June 2014. See also the Inter Faith Declaration on Mobilising Faith Communities to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, Lancaster House, London, 9–10 February 2015.

[25] This article (Tombs 2014) takes up the challenge presented by the Tearfund report and suggests ways in which it might be addressed in biblical studies and theology to address sexual violence against women and children, and also against male victims.

religion is distorted and sanitised to avoid any link to sexual violence. This points to the need for a much wider debate on how the violence of the cross might be more appropriately recognized and remembered in lived Christianity, with a view to greater action and advocacy against all forms of violence and social intolerance.

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The Patriarch and the Pride: Discourse Analysis of the Online Public Response to the Serbian Orthodox Church Condemnation of the 2012 Gay Pride Parade

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Introduction

This chapter tries to understand the complex field of lived religion, nationalism, and sexual (in)tolerance by analyzing the online public responses to the Serbian Orthodox Church Patriarch Irinej's comments on the Belgrade Gay Pride Parade 2012. The aim is to identify discourse strategies of commenters on the most visited online multimedia portals in the Serbian language who responded to the news items published on October 3, 2012 concerning Patriarch Irinej's open letter to the Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić, urging him to ban the upcoming Pride Parade. The discursive strategies found in the material are organized in two main categories. *Relational strategies* (focus on online intolerance) emphasize the

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direct interaction between speaker and audience, in this case between the Patriarch and the commenters. *Argumentative strategies* (focus on online lived religion) highlight the content of the interactions. The concept of lived religion will serve here as an analytical and epistemological tool for understanding online religious practice and its perspectives on the politics of intolerance in Serbia. Lived religion is understood as the patterns of meaning, experience, and action of religious and spiritual persons and groups that emerge from and contribute to their relation with (what they consider to be) the sacred. The focus of a lived religion approach is neither on the canonical sources of a religious tradition nor on the doctrinal calibration of religious convictions but on the day-to-day ways in which religion is lived. Religion then is also understood in a broad sense, including the major traditions and denominations as well as post-modern spiritualities, indigenous cultural habits, and civil religion or implicit religion (Ganzevoort and Roeland 2014). More specifically, in this chapter we will not be looking at the theological debates about religious diversity (*theologia religionum*), nor at those about sexual diversity. Instead we will focus on the ways the debates are played out in public discourse at the societal level. Recent developments in the study of lived religion mostly focus on the importance of lived religion in individual everyday religious/spiritual practices and experiences in specific sociocultural contexts; less effort is spent in grasping the complex subtleties of how religion is lived in virtual spaces. For that reason, there is a clear shortfall in the existing literature in terms of analyzing lived religion in the virtual (online) spaces.

Lived Religion and Sexual Nationalism in Serbia

With the fall of communism and the strengthening of the civil war in the Western Balkans, a revitalization of religion occurred in the Serbian public and political sphere, exemplified by the prominent place of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the public space (Drezgić 2010). The rise of religious nationalism in Serbia today is partly attributable to current post-conflict and economic problems, notably the conversion from communism to nationalism, the establishment and expansion of religion as a

new dominant ideology, and the failures of secular politicians to distance themselves from the church leaders. Despite the constitutional warrants for secularity and strict separation of Church and State, in reality this separation does not exist. The Serbian Orthodox Church constantly blurs the boundaries between the ethnic or national and the religious, thus contributing to the process of "ethnogenesis and national jockeying" (Kalaitzidis 2012, p. 67). Indeed, nationalism, especially in its ethno-centric and religiously driven manifestations, is certainly one of the greatest problems that the Serbian Orthodox Church faces today (Džalto 2013). In this context, sexual diversity has become a pivotal issue of contestation and a topic on which strong nationalist and religious identities amalgamate. A theologically Orthodox piety that seeks to protect traditional values and aspires to national power sits uncomfortably with issues of sexual diversity. Moss (2002, p. 338) argues that nationalism in Serbia has "reaffirmed the traditional gender roles: men are macho warriors, women are at home, caring for the extension of the nation by giving birth to children; homosexuals are traitors to the nation." Along the same lines of argument, Isanović (2007, p. 52) notes that in post-conflict societies of the former Yugoslavia gender differentiation was polarized to the extreme, in ways that "men are perceived as warriors and women as mothers and victims, thus contributing to the strengthening of traditional power relations, social and cultural roles and norms." This polarized gender system is put to the test, leading to a 'crisis of masculinity' in the post-socialist and post-conflict Serbia and an ensuing ambivalent attitude towards sexual diversity. Because of a huge unemployment rate in Serbia and the devastating consequences of ongoing transitions, men struggle to find a new sense of identity beyond the one that was defined by the socialist labor and the "warrior" type of masculinity during the war (Zorgdrager 2013). In a way, we can say that masculinity is in transition as well.

Religion and sexual diversity (and especially their problematic interaction) have gained great public importance in the last several years. Public debates have shown a high level of homonegative attitudes, including hate speech and strong discriminatory attitudes by leading religious leaders and politicians (Sremac et al. 2015). The interplay between traditionalism, nationalism, Orthodoxy, and homonegativity is confirmed by a research of the Gay Straight Alliance (2010), which showed that out

of the total number of respondents who were categorized as traditionalists, only 5 % are not homophobic and 76 % are homophobic, and that nearly eight out of ten nationalists have homophobic attitudes. This study unfortunately made no distinction between the sexes. Moss (2002, p. 337) describes how attackers of participants of the 2001 Belgrade Pride Parade chanted *Srbija Srbima, napolje sa pederima!* ("Serbia for the Serbs, out with the gays!"), implying that homosexuals cannot be Serbs. Moss points out another bias that is widely prevalent in Serbia in this context, which is also confirmed by the study of Gay Straight Alliance (2010), which reads that homosexuality comes from the West and, as such, undermines traditional and patriarchal values. In a similar vein, church leaders interpreted homosexuality as a Western threat to the traditional and spiritual values of national and religious identity.

The history of attempts to organize a Gay Pride Parade in Serbia highlights the tension. The first attempt was in 2001 with the slogan "*Ima mesta za sve*" ("There's room for all of us"). The parade was shattered. The second Parade was announced in July 2004, but canceled for security concerns. The 2009 Parade with the slogan "*Vreme je za ravnopravnost*" ("Time for equality") was banned one day before it was supposed to take place. The parade was officially organized for the first time in 2010 with the slogan "*Možemo zajedno*" ("Let's walk together"). It took place under strict police protection, suffered numerous attacks of nationalist organizations and hooligans, and barely managed to transfer participants of the Parade to a safer place. In 2011, under the slogan *Podrška unutar porodice*" ("Support from the family"), it was canceled. In 2012, the Parade was banned after a letter that Patriarch Irinej sent to the Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić, only six days before the scheduled walk. The letter focused on the photo exhibition *Ecce homo* of a Swedish artist Elizabeth Ohlson Wallin. Here we present the patriarch's letter in Serbian and in English (Table 1).[1]

The concoction of nationalism, ethnocentrism, religion, and anti-Westernism targets homosexuality as an internally unifying enemy (Van den Berg et al. 2014). Sremac and Ganzevoort (2015), in their volume

[1] http://www.rtk.co.rs/drustvo/item/4542-patrijarh-trazi-zabranu-prajdam/4542-patrijarh-trazi-zabranu-prajda.

Table 1 The patriarch's letter on Ecce homo

Nisam pretpostavljao da ću i ove godine biti primoran da vam se u ime SPC, njenih vernika koji predstavljaju dominantnu većinu Republike Srbije, kao i u ime brojnih članova drugih religija, obratim sa molbom i zahtevom, da autoritetom predsednika vlade, onemogućite skandaloznu izložbu fotografija švedske umetnice Elizabete Olson Valin.	I did not assume that I would again be compelled, on behalf of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its believers who are the dominant majority of the Republic of Serbia, and on behalf of many members of other religions, to address you with the request that you, in the authority of the Prime Minister, prevent the scandalous photo exhibition of Swedish artist Elisabeth Ohlson Wallin.
Ovu dubokovređajuću izložbu propagiraju homoseksualci, organizatori gej parade, planirane za 3. oktobar ove godine". Na isti način, molimo i zahtevamo da se onemogući i održavanje nagoveštene tragično-komično nazvane 'parade ponosa', a čije je pravo ime 'parada srama', koja baca tešku moralnu senku na naš grad, našu vekovnu hrišćansku kulturu i na dostojanstvo naše porodice, kao osnovne ćelije ljudskog roda.	This deeply insulting exhibition, promoted by homosexuals, organizers of the gay parade, is scheduled for 3 October this year. In the same way, we ask you to also prevent the above mentioned event, both tragically and comically called "Pride Parade," better called by its real name "shame parade," which casts a moral shadow on our city, our centuries-old Christian culture and the dignity of our family as the basic cell of the human race.

Religious and Sexual Nationalisms in Central and Eastern Europe: God, Gays and Governments, show that the debates about religion and homosexuality in Central and Eastern Europe are produced by much more multifaceted and multidirectional discursive framings of culture, nation, and gender. The interplay between religion and homosexuality, according to that volume, is not only defined by specific moral, philosophical, or spiritual presuppositions. These positions emerge from discursive negotiations in a wider public arena, in which cultural and national identities play a crucial role. These negotiations are as much about sexual morality as they are about national identity, anti-EU sentiments, and the effort of religious institutions to regain power in post-communist societies. Thus the discursive negotiations of (homo)sexuality in Serbia not only rely on religious and/or theological arguments, but on a combination of religious, sexual, political, and nationalistic discourses. This chapter

will contribute to the understanding of the complex field of lived religion, (in)tolerance, and sexual diversity by analyzing the responses to the Patriarch's comments on the Gay Pride Parade 2012.

Media Context

Following cultivation theory, it is assumed that exposure to media presentation of homosexuality can lead to improved attitudes about homosexuality, but also to less acceptance. As the development of consumer attitudes about homosexuality matches those shown in the media, regular exposure to negative stereotypes dominating the consumed media leads consumers to accept models of unfavorable impressions (Calzo and Ward 2009). Individual beliefs and values (in particular the level of religious belief) and the use of certain types of media influence attitudes toward homosexuality (Calzo and Ward 2009; Hicks and Lee 2004). One of the factors correlated with homophobia is low frequency in reading newspapers (Hicks and Lee 2004).Mass media have always striven to achieve interactivity with their audience. At the same time the audience showed no less interest to state its position on media content, especially about the event, occurrence, or the actors of social practices that are the subject of media engagement. Interactivity is a possibility that the Internet is giving the users, to directly, without the intervention of editors, influence the content and form of the new digital media. Users enter into a virtual dialogue with each other, whose outcome can be the creation of a virtual public opinion on a particular topic. If there is an administrator's intervention on a media portal, it is usually conducted after the publication of content and after an intervention by other users. This makes the Internet the most democratic type of media that fully meets the demand for freedom of thought, expression, reception, and dissemination of information as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006, Article 46) on the basis of international conventions and declarations. It is believed that this is its main feature and value. At the same time, it also makes the Internet an unregulated space that allows unlimited discrimination against those who are different.

Miller (2011, p. 16) identifies three models of interactivity. The first one is already there on the implicit level in the technical and technological structure of computer-mediated communication, the second one is sociological and takes care of the social context in which messages are exchanged, and the third, psycho-socially oriented, aspect of interactivity lies in direct relation to the perception of users and is related to taking a "passive" or "active" role in the participation in digital media content. Miller (2011, p. 25) further argues that new media are produced in the post-industrial information capitalism and facing "individual preferences, as opposed to mass consumption" of traditional media. They are in constant change (updates), in repeated redesign, and "in a potentially infinite number of versions." This makes them timeless and spaceless and in a constant process of change, where commenters on online media content are directly influencing this change. It is therefore necessary to consider the media message made by a media professional and the comments by individual users as a whole, as a unique content, in the analysis because they are conditioned by each other. The article that was published online depends directly on the context of editorial policy, and is provoking Internet users to leave their comments below the text or to respond to someone else's comment. In this sequence, the order is clear. The professional media text always comes first, followed by the comments posted to that text. The text provokes comments, whether we speak about the journalistic content, or the event or occurrence, or the people that are in the news article that is informing the public. Almost never do the authors of news articles engage in a virtual dialogue with commenters, so the last comment is the last seen content in this interdependent thread. Online audience is considering the text of the journalists and the accompanying comments as a unique whole. It has been observed that users often first look to see whether there are some comments on the text, and if their number is sufficient they read the text.

The real impact of commenters on the formation of public opinion regarding virtual events, phenomena, and people is difficult to assess and has not been studied in Serbia to date. We can, however, consider the contents posted on the Web, regardless of whether the message creators are professionals or commenters, as part of the public sphere, and interpret the materials as such. The comments become part of the text, and thus contribute to the formation of public opinion on certain issues that are of interest to a particular community.

Vesnić-Alujević (2011, p. 85) argues that the development of communicative technology could easily contribute to the development of (e-) democracy. This democracy implies the inclusion of Internet users in a public dialogue with policymakers and/or representatives of the centers of political power, not only their being informed about policymakers' activities, which was the main task of the traditional media. Therefore, the interactivity that the Internet provides in the field of online multimedia portals is an extremely important subject in the study of new possibilities in the field of social interactivity.

Aim, Method, Corpus

Aim

The aim of this chapter is to identify discourse strategies of commenters on the most visited online multimedia portals in the Serbian language who responded to the news items published on October 3, 2012 concerning the Serbian Orthodox Church Patriarch Irinej's open letter to the Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić, urging him to ban the upcoming Pride Parade.

The relevance of this investigation rests in the fact that three fundamental issues are at stake. First, the open letter implies a direct encounter between Church and State, which, according to some, infringes upon the secular nature of the Serbian constitution. Second, the open letter challenges basic human rights: the right to self-determination and the right to publicly express opinions, freedom of movement, and to assemble. Third, the open letter expresses a conservative lived religion and morality that can be read as intolerant, stigmatizing, and alien to the Christian message of love, peace, and acceptance. It is therefore worthwhile to establish the public opinion by looking at multimedia commenters' responses.

Method

The basic method used in this research is a critical discourse analysis that focuses on the abuse of power or domination of the centers of political

and economic power, and its consequences. The researchers are interested in: social inequality and how it is reproduced discursively, the relation of discourse and society, and the relation of discourse and power (Van Dijk 2008).[2]

In the case of mass media it is important to explore the discourses that regulate power over the public domain. The investigations must answer the question of who can produce news programs in print and electronic media and who controls the selection of events and the production of news. Powerful elites decide who can participate in a communicative event, when, where, and with which purpose (Van Dijk 2008, pp. 32, 36), and how the media disperses that in accordance with their editorial policies. Hung-Chun Wang (2009, p. 722) claims that the discursive style and content of news are often formed and determined by the audience. As a reflection of what the audience wants, "media can 'reflect "reality" … 'co-orchestrate' dominant beliefs … [and] create 'reality'."

This analysis is particularly appropriate when analyzing basic human rights, in this case a violation of the rights of the LGBT population in the media, because who controls the media discourse can indirectly control public opinion. Domination of media discourse is essential to power in society, which in this case includes not only professional posts in the online editions but also the responses by commenters.

Corpus

A scan of multimedia sites in the Serbian language for entries dated October 3, 2012 and mentioning Patriarch Irinej's demand to ban the Pride yields 16,500 hits. For this study we selected 500 of the most popular ones. Out of this number, a corpus of 64,193 words was selected, which existed of 16 published texts and 892 comments. These comments referred to 682 unique signatures. See Table 2 for an overview of multimedia portals and comments.

[2] See also: Van Dijk (1987, 1991, 1992, 1998, 2001, 2005).

Table 2 Multimedia portals and comments

	Nr of comments
www.rtk.rs	0
www.vesti.rs	0
www.b92.net	331
www.republikasrpska.net	0
www.politika.rs	32
www.b92.net	43
www.novosti.com	97
www.politika.rs	3
www.b92.net	137
www.rtv.rs	1
www.danas.rs	11
www.news-online.com	41
www.kurir.rs	26
www.telegraf.rs	1
www.blic.rs	198

Results

The analyzed texts essentially contain the open letter written by Patriarch Irinej addressed to the Prime Minister of Serbia, processed by journalists, and the statements of the main stakeholders for the occasion. Only two of the 16 articles were signed by a journalist; the others were signed by the source media agency (Tanjug, Beta, FoNet, Reuters). The texts are very similar, differing only in length and very sporadically in their choice of quoted persons. Therefore, we have not observed them as separate entities, but chose to focus on the user comments posted on the Internet in response to these journalistic interpretations. Owing to space limitations, we cannot provide extensive examples of all the discursive strategies found in these comments, but we present enough content to corroborate our categorization.

The overall response in the comments was relatively favorable towards the Patriarch's open letter. Only every tenth user of the multimedia portals that were analyzed in this corpus condemned the act of the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, whereas 70.9 % of the online public explicitly supported him. This may come as a surprise to those who would expect the constitutional secularity of the nation and its State–Church separation to imply that prelates should not interfere with the work of state bodies, nor influence decisionmakers. More than

an incorrect interpretation of State–Church separation in Serbia, this expectation is falsified by the apparent support of the most frequent Internet users for the Patriarch's letter.

This is an important finding, because of the discrepancy between the letter's intolerant, homonegative, and anti-modern perspective of exclusion of the "Other" (in this case the LGBT population) on the one hand, and the modern, highly educated, urban nature of frequent Internet users.[3] The question raised is to what degree Serbia has embraced the discourse of tolerance and human rights as part of a set of European values, or is still a traditionalistic, patriarchal, exclusivist society, loaded with nationalism and religious intolerance that are rooted in the late twentieth-century Western Balkans wars. The analysis will therefore attend to indicators of sexual and religious nationalism in order to better understand how lived religion plays into the politics of (in)tolerance.

Relational Discursive Strategies: Online Intolerance

In the analyzed corpus several relational discursive strategies were observed. Most widely used is a direct condemnation, which is present in 29.1 % of all user comments (260 of 892). This condemnation in many cases takes the shape of disqualification, either of the Church and the Patriarch or of the State.

Intolerance and Disqualification Toward the Church/Patriarch

Of the 260 posts that express direct condemnation, 67.3 % disqualify the Patriarch and/or the Serbian Orthodox Church. These disqualifications do not pretend a serious critical response to the content of the

[3] According to Vukmirović et al. (2012, pp. 14–18), the largest representation of Internet connections is in Belgrade (60.5 %), followed by the northern province of Vojvodina (49.3 %), and it is the lowest in central Serbia (40.6 %). The share of computer users, according to the level of education, is 83 % of those with tertiary education, 71.8 % of those with secondary education, 29.7 % of people with education lower than secondary.

Patriarch's letter but question his authority even to write the letter. In some comments this disqualification and intolerance are given without further reasoning:

> Shame on you and your gray beard! You should be ashamed! *RKoma*[4]
>
> Sexual orientation is a choice, you either feel as a homosexual or you don't. It's a scandal that the Patriarch is responding. Like we are in the Middle Ages. Human rights are violated because we are narrow-minded, intolerant and uncivilized. *Miško*
>
> The Patriarch is not a Christian because he is not committed to the protection of the oppressed, but he leads their persecution! *Zaki*

Using the beard as *pars pro toto*, RKoma addresses the Patriarch directly not using his title nor the monastic name but only the basic attribute to the function. The beard becomes the identification mark and the icon for shame. In other comments the disqualification is based on the Church's or Patriarch's actions in completely unrelated issues. The effect is that the Patriarch is framed as untrustworthy, and consequently his letter should be disregarded.

> So this guy wants to ban the gay parade, but he was not able to purge his own ranks of genuine illness … Let us remember the reverent and sublime pedophile, Pahomije. *DueSu*[5]

Not naming Patriarch Irinej by his title and/or the monastic name that he carries (Irinej), but calling him the colloquial "this guy," which has a pejorative slang meaning "insufficiently competent but despite this cocky," challenges his authority to speak out. This is made more explicit through the reference to sexual abuse cases (as we will see in more comments):

> Wow dude, I do not support the parade itself, I'm not a homophobe, but this is too much. Priest, mind your own business and shame on you as long as you are not paying taxes. *Pedu*

[4] The signature of the author of the comment is stated in the text. All comments are presented in their original form, that is except for the English translation; no other intervention in terms of spelling, style, and shortening were made.

[5] Pahomije is a bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church who had been charged with the sexually molesting five teenage boys.

> O, good day, priest! Where have you been, priest, to make a proclamation to ban the rape of children by your colleagues? After that, you failed to ask for the ban of the shameful rehabilitation center in Crna reka… So you should be ashamed![6] I am ashamed that you are our Patriarch! *Nemanja*

Calling the patriarch "priest" is particularly insulting in the Serbian language. This goes back to the communist era when clergy of all religious communities were completely marginalized and condemned as "reactionary social forces" and when religion was called "the opium of the people" which had to be "eradicated" by hook or by crook. In the same vein, 30.4 % of the comments contain more general disqualifications of the Church—especially the Orthodox Church and its servants—as a negative actor in the public life of society.

> It's time for the marginalization of the church. They are just sowing hatred and by that, aggression. It wouldn't hurt to ban churches, at least their public appearances. *Hm*
>
> Here, my dear buddy patriarch, we will immediately forbid it, you just say what you like and what you do not like and who you like and who you do not like, we will immediately prohibit all that is not in your taste. We can incorporate your taste into the Constitution, just say the word. *LLL*

The commenter M.N. Lazar asks a question that the Serbian Orthodox Church has failed to answer in the last decade; the public has not only been deprived of this answer, but the Church has even protected the controversial bishop Kačavenda[7]:

> But, your Holiness, why haven't you taken away bishop of Vranje Pahomije's rank? *M.N. Lazar*
>
> Is it all right that the church went and consecrated rifles and guns that sowed death on the battlefields? Is it all right that the church finances the

[6] The commenter refers to priest Branislav Preranović—a former director of the Orthodox drug rehabilitation program, Crna Reka—who killed a drug addict by hitting him in the head with a bar. Part of the centre's treatment involved violent beatings of patients to help cure them of their substance addiction.

[7] Kačavenda is an influential bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church who retired after a sex scandal; a video appeared to show him engaged in sexual activity with young men. Kačavenda also endorsed violence against Muslim civilians during the Bosnian war of 1992–1995.

> Obraz,[8] the 1389 and others similar to them from donations and other sorts of church racket? Are priests supposed to sanctify the scum above and go with them to ruin and burn the cities with all the crosses and cassock? Is it all right for the Patriarch that the churches are protecting abusers that are priests, pedophiles, and not abusers of female children but of small boys? Is that gay or did it "just happen"? Dear Patriarch, is it okay for the church to support and protect Kačavenda who is charging consecration of churches 5000 Marks and is driving expensive cars, motorcycles and owns brothels and casinos around Brčko? *Shame on the church*

In this example, "Shame on the church" lists all the problems plaguing the credibility of the Serbian Orthodox Church through questions for which the Serbian public has also been denied answers.

Intolerance and Disqualification Toward the State/ Society

Disqualification and intolerance of the State and/or society were found in only 9.6 % of the condemnation posts. These disqualifying comments targeted either the opponents of the Pride Parade (8.5 %), its supporters (6.5 %), or more specifically those who were attacking the Patriarch (3.9 %).

> Ouch, brother Serbs, why did we come down from the trees when we belong there? *Banana*
>
> Keeping people in uncertainty so that everyone is disgusted by everything for as much as them to give up …:) What a crappy "state." *ELAFITI*

[8] The Obraz and the SNP NAŠI 1389 are the right-wing nationalist groups that organized protests against Pride participants. One of the main program principles of the SNP NAŠI 1389 is the protection of family values. On their website can be found a vivid example of militant hate speech against LGBT: "The family is the sanctuary and the first unit of society in which every individual is formed, so that is why our Orthodox tradition plays a major role in forming the personality of the child, in order to be protected from the invasion of anti-culture coming from certain western countries, and which is embodied in sectarianism, drug addiction, materialism, individualism, the ideologies of the gay movement, and other deviant groups" (SNP 1389 [2012]).

Disqualification sometimes comes under the guise of an expression of support for the opposite position. The following example starts as a message of support for Pride but turns into a vehement disqualification of society:

> Full support to the parade, which is the last cry for sobering up, a protest against murderous fascism and oppression to which we condemned ourselves. *Angry worm*

Another comment clearly distinguishes between different actors in the political realm, thereby personalizing the support and intolerance:

> Bravo Tadić, should have done it earlier, and as for Dačić, there is no justification and excuse. *Kiki*

Kiki supports the President of Serbia and condemns the Minister of Interior Affairs, who accepted the recommendation of the Patriarch and banned the parade. Since they are very well known and highly visible in the media, the commenter believed that their functions do not have to be stated, but he/she takes a model of "private" direct communication, addressing the President of the country as if they were acquaintances.

In other comments, the Church is seen as the more trusted party:

> If our church was in the government, we would live better than with these politicians that spit on the church when it interferes and when they need it, when elections are coming they kiss their clothes. Bravo to the Patriarch Irinej, you are a great man and I would just like to ask you to in the name of our people to appear more when important decisions need to be made because you are the only one we believe, not the politicians. *What kind of people are we?*

To underscore the text of this comment, the commenter has chosen a signature in the form of a question ("What kind of nation are we?") to make sure that his critique not only applies to the state but to society as a whole. This type of comment reflects the present levels of trust that various societal institutions entertain. According to Strategic Marketing research, the most trusted institutions in Serbian society

are the army (42 %) and the Serbian Orthodox Church (41 %). It is worth noting that people don't recognize the institutions of democratic society as most trustworthy (the judiciary, the education system, the parliament), but the institutions of direct force (the army) and ideological power (the Church).

Intolerance and Disqualification of the Pride

Some disqualifications are focused neither on the Patriarch nor on the state but target Gay Pride itself. In an example of what has previously been described as a "hot-and-cold" strategy (Valić Nedeljković 1998), we find an alternation of positive and negative attitudes that offers a more layered intolerance and condemnation:

> I am in favor of the exhibition not being forbidden! My faith cannot be shaken by every artist or quasi-artist. I personally do not want to see the Lord Jesus Christ as a transvestite and I consider it to be a pretty cheap trick aimed only to provoke. *Janko*

The commenter first gives a general affirmative statement about the controversial photo exhibition *Ecce homo* (Elizabeth Ohlson Wallin), which should not be forbidden according to him. To avoid being categorized as pro-pride, however, he changes "position" ("footing"—Goffman 1979). He disqualifies the "quasi-artist" and states that his view is not based on sentiment or hurt. In fact, he claims to have a strong personal faith that "cannot be shaken." Finally he is outspoken in his condemnation of the exhibition that he defended and of the artist's "pretty cheap trick." In this way the commenter blurs the lines between the opposing perspectives and claims moral superiority over both sides.

Relational Strategies: Discussion

The relational discursive strategies use condemnation and support to strengthen or disqualify the parties involved in the conflict. This is sometimes personalized by focusing on one of the representatives, and

sometimes generalized by targeting the Church, State, or society as a whole. The personalized strategy supports or attacks the Patriarch, the President, the Minister of Interior Affairs, or the artist. If it becomes a personal attack, it easily functions as a degrading of personal integrity and values. A generalized attack turns it into a more systemic critique. In the end these are minor differences, as the person symbolizes the institution or the group. The Patriarch represents the Church; the politicians the State, and the artist the Pride.

On the level of relational strategies, the controversy does not center on the moral debate between the Church and the gay activists. Instead, it focuses primarily on the relationship between Church and State. The conflict, as it appears from the analysis of this corpus, involves a partnership between Church and State that is closer to a Byzantine theocratic state than to a modern secular one. Notwithstanding the formal State–Church separation, there is a clear and direct influence of the Serbian Orthodox Church on the policies of the—officially neutral—state. Many comments containing relational discursive strategies in fact negotiate these changing Church–State relations, claiming either support for a stronger influence of the Church or for a clearer demarcation.

Argumentative Discursive Strategies: Online Lived Religion

These discourse strategies, focusing on content as a strategy of persuasion, have been observed in other places (Valić Nedeljković 1998, 2014). Argumentative lived religion discursive strategies, including authority claims, comparison, "Facts," and thesis replacement imply explicit references to content, which commenters use in their interaction on multimedia platforms. In each of these four models the commenters used either a citation of an indisputable source, or quotation of material data ("facts"), or comparison with other relevant examples. They also set up—in their opinion—more relevant topics for public discussion on the Internet platforms. Therefore, *conversational implication* does not have to exist at the implicit level for the message to be deconstructed entirely. These strategies

are based on the strength of factuality, where "facts" speak for themselves. In this way, recipients of the message and other commenters do not dispute these "facts" because they are undeniable, but rather because of their selection, although this also happens infrequently. As we will show, discursive strategies prove to be very effective, and for that reason commenters use them often.

Authority Claims

The most frequently quoted authority was God, then the holy books, notably the Bible, followed by prominent public figures from literature, philosophy, or—less often—famous statesmen. The commenter is posting his or her own opinions in the guise of the words of a person with undisputed authority, aiming at better acceptance of these opinions. The quoted text is always pulled from a person's memory, so it is in fact a direct transposition of the citations into a text that is aimed at accomplishing the particular goal of the person who is speaking. The exact reference for the quote is rarely stated; only the author is mentioned, either in the comment itself or in a signature below the comment. When the exact source is specified, the credibility of both the citation and the impact of the message on the audience is significantly enhanced on an implicit level. It has been observed that when an Internet user names the source of the quote, he/she usually signs his/her full name, which again lends more credence to the whole comment in comparison with anonymous comments.

When it comes to unquestioned authorities from religious histories, the most common was Jesus Christ and never Muhammad, even though the Islamic religious community supported the public standpoint of Patriarch Irinej regarding the Pride.

> What did Jesus Christ say "let him who is without sin cast the first stone" on these sinners. What kind of traditions and Serbs and Orthodoxy?? All this is a large nebula for the Serbs. Do any of these advocates of this madness and know at all anything about the history of Orthodoxy and the Serbian state? Somebody should have a serious talk with the Bishop; he really is not completely normal. *Non-party individual*

The reference to God as the authority in settling this controversial situation is present here, and also in other contexts that have religious content (Valić Nedeljković 1998).

> All these quasi-Christians should better pray that God does not exist. Because if he does, and he is as he is presented in the Bible, they will all be taking the first train to hell. *Clyde*

In this example the commenter refers to an extreme phenomenon in everyday life from all over the former Yugoslavia. In the late 1980s, the sudden opening of the State to the Church and the Church to the State in the service of awakening nationalism, after 70 years of aggressive atheism, led to an explosion in new believers (as a counterpart to the new rich). Suddenly, they all turned to their traditional churches, began to be baptized and married in the church in later years, started cherishing rituals, going to churches and monasteries for holidays, and so on. This upswing in lived religion doesn't necessarily reflect a deep spiritual revival, as many proved that they belonged to their nation by blind belief and by distancing themselves from others (other nations and another faith). The uncritical, violent secularization has now received a counter-movement in a uncritical desecularization, which can be seen in the populist and nationalist overt practice of religion for political purposes. Therefore, the interplay between ethnic and religious identities in the Western Balkans shows how religion can become "the fabric of ethnicity" (Mitchell 2006, p. 1141) and the main catalyst of nationalism.

> I, like the vast majority of citizens of Serbia, feel very vulnerable. Not because we doubt our sexual identity, but because this threatens our security, our religious and national feelings. *Medo Brundo*
>
> Most people in Serbia do not support this "walk" and parading, it does not mean they do not support these people, but they do not support the parading and the desecration of what is sacred—the family! A family is made up of mums, dads and kids! If the government allowed the "parade of shame" it would have violated all rules of what is holy! *Jelica*

Of the religious books, the Bible is referred to most frequently, either in indirect mentions or in direct quotations.

> Open the Bible, Leviticus 20:13 that reads: If a man also lies with a man, as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them. *Vukosava Makarin*

This statement, phrased in biblical language—including a reference to Leviticus—refers to an explicit call for violent punishment. Whether or not this is intended to justify violence against the contemporary LGBT community is not clarified. Other references to the Bible allow for much more ambiguous or even positive perspectives:

> According to the Bible, a great sin is separating man from God and other men and also his own over-valuation. That is a danger to all man in general, not specifically to the homosexuals. The Bible does not even mention homosexuality because the term had not yet been introduced at the time, that is why the Church decided to formulate the words in its own way, the way it suits them, so if some people think that by listening to the "statements" by some of these figures they are doing the "right thing" then they are sadly mistaken. It should be the "patriarch" who is a little more abiding what their religion preaches … *Mim*

Apart from the holy book as the undisputed authority, commenters referred to another undisputable document, the Constitution, albeit with contradictory interpretations.

> The Patriarch "overlooked" the assumption of a democratic civil society: all citizens have the right of free association. *Nikola Andric*
>
> When so many of you are referring to the Constitution, at least read it. Article 54 of the Serbian Constitution states that freedom of assembly can be restricted if that is necessary to protect public health, morals, safety, or rights of the Republic of Serbia. So the prohibition is legal under the Constitution. *Jovan*

Facts and Comparisons

Commenters' use of "facts" fits well in the context of responding to a journalist's article. Their comments, however, usually come without much preparation but are based on a spontaneous response and available

knowledge. It is aimed at the online audience rather than at the journalist. Therefore, in referring to "facts" they usually do not quote specific sources or discuss the credibility of the quoted information.

> Anthropological studies explain that the rise of homosexuality is correlated with an increase in general promiscuity […] and that most sexually semimature teenagers lose their benchmark to sexual orientation. This is unfortunately associated with for example, child pornography on the Internet or lowering the age of consent for sexual relations. This phenomenon should be viewed from more sociological aspects and not through an ideological prism of the fight for "rights and freedoms" as is usually imposed on us. *Milunkadottir*

Similarly, the comparison with other countries provides a "factual" interpretation of the situation that soon turns out to be moral rather than factual:

> When I think about the differences between Iran and Serbia I see there are none! We are narrow-minded idiots and that is what we will always be! *Tanja*

In Serbia, the stereotype of a closed, religiously intolerant, and very religiously conservative society is Iran. A comparative discourse strategy is very picturesque. Serbia is compared to Iran using the common denominator of religious conservatism. "Tanja" expresses it in implicit hate language: "We are narrow-minded idiots."

Thesis Replacement

Thesis replacement strategy is frequently used. The implicit meaning of messages formatted in this discourse is the minimization of the problem by stating another problem that challenges a society, one which is in the opinion of the commenter far more important. Basically, this strategy also represents a kind of hate speech. Refusing that the issue exists, the denial of the problem, is a way of denigrating the problem and the actors, in this case the organizers of the Pride and the LGBT population. A demonstration of their identity is qualified as totally "inappropriate" at a time when the country is faced with, for example, a serious economic crisis, unemployment, poverty, and so on.

> It is a disgrace for a country where a huge number of the population is literally starving, where hospitals lack basic tools for care for the sick, in which patients suffering from cancer (children) do not have medication, which runs hundreds of soup kitchens so that people would not die from hunger. Now we want to pay the police to secure a shameful exhibition of some perverted freak Swede who is insulting millions of believers and admirers of Jesus in her "works of art"! And you, gay provocateurs, should take a hoe in your hands! Disgrace. *Sanja*

Argumentative Discursive Strategies: Discussion

The argumentative discourse is a discourse of performance with a certain religious persuasive strength capable of placing it in the matrix of proof and authority. Persuasive strategies are important in allowing arguers to pursue their rhetorical goals (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, p. 93). As such, the argumentative discursive strategies are persuasive strategies that discriminate at an implicit level. In our corpus, the rules of argumentative performance and its logic structures manifest themselves as "pragmatic effects" of the argumentative intervention that aim to discriminate. From a lived religion perspective, the argumentative discursive strategies serve to negotiate the collectively shared religious perspectives, and—even more perhaps—to position oneself firmly in those negotiations. Whether one takes the stance of defending traditional values or of promoting equality and tolerance, the argumentative strategies are examples of identity politics: they define a powerful ideological enemy (be it "immoral secularism" or "conservative bigotry") over against which one defends and performs a virtuous cultural or religious identity. To protest against this "enemy" serves to bolster one's own identity.

Conclusion

From the foregoing we can see that discursive strategies represent prototypical methods of sending out additional meanings of messages on an implicit level, that is, those meanings that are not expressed in an explicit

way, openly. Some of these strategies are unique and create the hallmark style of individual communicators. Others are used by a number of different communicators and are prototypical for a specific cultural and social context. Deconstruction of the discourse strategies provides a thorough understanding of the text, with its hidden meanings that the author has constructed consciously or sub-consciously. It helps us to not just to realize the processes of denotation but also of connotation of messages, and it also helps to avoid communication noise. If communicators share similar or the same values, knowledge, information, experience, or personal opinion on certain matters of communication, that deconstruction will be more successful. In addition, there is also a form of communication with the basic intent of influencing others to change their opinions. Such communication is achieved primarily through designing messages in a certain way, by choosing the appropriate discourse strategies which will load the additional meaning of the message, but on an implicit level, except for those that will be clearly stated on an explicit level. Discourse analysis using deconstruction of discourse strategies in communication suggests that communicators' persuasive intentions are often motivated by a desire for manipulation, persuasion, and indoctrination.

The application of discourse analysis to this online corpus of public debate about homosexuality, lived religion, and the nation state highlights the ways in which religious and anti-religious arguments are used to fortify one's own perspective and undermine the position of one's opponent. Lived religion in the context studied here functions as a powerful language of intolerance. At the same time, the activation of intolerance and opposition bolsters the identity politics of the participants, and can therefore also be a powerful expression and reinforcement of lived religion.

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"Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol" Lived Religion, Conflict, and Intolerance in Brazilian Films

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Introduction

The intention of this study is to analyze the relationship between religion, conflict, and intolerance present in the Brazilian context, based on the way in which this relationship occurs in pop culture, more specifically in Brazilian films. The hermeneutic principle adopted is the concept of *lived religion*; that is, "the actions and meanings operating in the ways in which people live, interact and relate to the divine" (Ganzevoort 2009). In this study, lived religion is seen as a form of perceiving and reading elements, contents, and forms in the sphere of pop culture and of everyday and common life: outside the religious institution, outside worship, outside the sacred sphere itself, and outside dogmatic religion. In the case of the films chosen, we have at least two types of access to lived religion:

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the way in which it is experienced, expressed, and created within the film plot; and the way in which the public watching the film experiences and understands the religion expressed in the cinematographic work and relates it to their beliefs and religiosity, in other words, how the person views and is viewed by religion as expressed in the movie.

My purpose is not to present great reflections on the context of social and political conflict nor on the religious dynamic in the Brazilian context. It is rather to seek to observe how these relationships occur in the plots of the films themselves and, based on this perspective, come to a few conclusions.

The films were chosen taking into account the relationship between conflict and intolerance present in the plot and the relationship with the religious element. It was surprising to see how much religion is present in Brazilian movies, as in the case of the films chosen, and to what extent religion is related to social conflicts or those of a religious, cultural, or human nature. In other words, I will especially analyze this relationship in the meanders of the film itself, as a peculiar space in which is shown what more specifically constitutes a culture and a religion, as pointed out by Roberto DaMatta:

> […] to discuss the peculiarities of our society is to also study these zones of meeting and mediation, these squares and courtyards given by the carnivals, by the processions and cases of mischief, zones where time is suspended and a new routine must be repeated or innovated, where the problems are forgotten or dealt with, because here—suspended between automatic routine and the feast that reconstructs the world—we touch the realm of freedom and of the essentially human. It is in these regions that the power of the system is reborn, but it is also here that one can forge the hope of seeing the world turn topsy-turvy. (DaMatta 1997, p. 18)[1]

In this study I will take films as a meeting point for looks and a space where lived religion presents itself. According to Dos Santos, "films should be of interest to theology for a very simple reason: since the last century, there has been no other more effective manner of producing and

[1] All translations from Portuguese were made for the present publication.

telling stories than films" (Dos Santos 2014, p. 242). In his reflection on film today, Santos talks of at least two efficacies of film from a theological standpoint. The first efficacy bears a clear relationship to the myth, content, and languages of which the films are made up: "… by the stories they tell. The recurrent themes; the genres that are disseminated; characters and artists that become icons; mythologies that are invented or revived" (Dos Santos 2014, p. 248). The second efficacy is related to the dynamics that occurs in the films, to the rite: "… films reveal something specific to our time through their mediation between the subject and object of the look" (Dos Santos 2014, p. 249.). Explaining this idea, Dos Santos says that one of the marks of modernity is the action of the subject on reality and nature, in the sense of viewing them and dominating them. With films there arises a new relationship, through which the subject is dominated by what they look at. According to him, "a film is always a point of view and of listening that is in full activity" (Dos Santos 2014, p. 249), which reaches the subjectivity of those who watch, suffer, and participate in a film, which is in itself something that approaches a religious phenomenon. For this reason, movies cause something in the person who watches them. They provoke an exchange of views, a relationship, and an experience, something that to a great extent corresponds to the theological and religious universe.

Brazil's Cultural and Religious Context: A Religious Context of Conflict and Intolerance

According to Brazilian common knowledge, Brazilian society is peaceful—"here we have no war" is an often heard statement—and tolerant towards religious differences: God, besides being Brazilian, is the same God, no matter which religious denomination. This narrative of social pacifism and religious tolerance drains away when the everyday reality is even slightly observed or when a brief analysis of the context is performed. Brazilian society is marked by social conflict and by disputes in the religious field, even if these are often veiled and discreet (Cunha 2016a, 2016b).

Space does not permit an extensive description of Brazilian society, but we can highlight three characteristics as the background for this study. (DaMatta 2004; Ribeiro 1995). The first has to do with the miscegenation of the Brazilian people. According to José Honório Rodrigues,

> … we are a republic that is ethnically and culturally mixed. We are neither Europeans nor Latin-Americans. We are influenced by the Brazilian indigenous peoples, by Africans, by Orientals and Western people. The synthesis of so many antitheses is the unique and original product that is Brazil today. (Boff 2000, p. 19)

The second characteristic is the profound, chronic, social inequality that has been perpetuated throughout the centuries and is marked above all by a refusal to see this very inequality (Adam 2005):

> We are a society with a slow history, because the moments are out of synch, in a kind of historical schizophrenia. If, among us, there were a political awareness of the unequal development and the desynchronization between the mismatched instances of the historical process, our rate of change and the update of these instances would be faster, the inequalities would be overcome faster and, probably, with greater social justice. (De Souza Martins 2012, p. 294)

A last characteristic, resulting from the first two, is the permanent state of conflict, of crisis, and of violence in a society organized around individual and group interests (De Souza Martins 2012, p. 298), leading to massive death tolls. If we take only premeditated murders (so without considering domestic, physical, and sexual violence, violence against minors, robberies and thefts, traffic violence), around 143 people are killed daily in Brazil, adding up to about 52,000 people in the year 2014.[2]

As for religion, we can say that the three characteristics listed above are mirrored in it. Religion in Brazil has essentially and constitutively to do with diversities and miscegenation (syncretism, hybridism) and conflict

[2] "Brasil had an average of 143 murders a day in 2014." Online: http://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2015/07/brasil-teve-em-media-143-assassinatos-por-dia-em-2014.html. Accessed July 14, 2016.

(fundamentalism) (Cunha 2016b). There have always been clashes involving religion. It is known that religion was part of the everyday life of the native inhabitants of Brazil. The Portuguese invasion in 1500 was marked by a field mass, held right after the Ibero-Europeans disembarked, and what followed this mass in the relationship with the native religions, with the religions of the Africans brought here as slaves, the religions that came with the other immigrants, has been a great process of disputes, syncretism, and religious mobility.[3]

Adilson Schultz proposes a way of thinking about the theological structure based on the Brazilian religious imaginary, which he defines as a *nebula*. He uses the term because he believes that there is no base on which the religions or the Brazilian religious matrix is constructed, but rather meanings that move between the religions and their matrices (Schultz 2008, p. 31). According to the author, at least three references feed this nebula.

> The main references of the Brazilian religious matrix are the religious meanings that come from Catholicism, from African-Brazilian religions and from Spiritualism—besides the indigenous meanings in the aspects in which they influence Umbanda, Spiritualism and Candomblé. (Schultz 2008, p. 28)

According to him, this nebula, forged in a slow historical process, hovers over the country and is constantly repeated in a continuous process of resignification of values and principles (Schultz 2008, p. 28). The author complements his idea by taking the rhizomatic theory from Gilles Deleuze. As it is different from roots, which are connected to the same point, "the logic of the rhizome operates at the same time by ruptures and interconnections" (Schultz 2008, p. 33).

Exploring this idea of the nebula and the rhizome, Schulz discusses some of their characteristics. Belief in the presence of God amid life is one of these characteristics. The invisible world, God's world, is imbricated in the visible world, of people. In the same way, the Devil and evil are part of this scenario. Besides God and the Devil and their presence amid everyday life, other forces and entities are part of the nebula: "… the belief in spirits,

[3] In order to understand this dynamic of religions in Brazil it is useful to see the film *Santo Forte*, by Eduardo Coutinho, 1999.

in sacrifices, in communication with the beyond, in praise, in ecstasy, in the incorporations, in worship, in the hope for eternal life, in the Bible, in processions, in charity, in prosperity, etc." (Schultz 2008, p. 35).

According to Schultz, this is

> … a nebula of ambiguities and simultaneities; everything seems mixed; everything has more than one possibility, good and evil are not easy to discern; God and evil are transcendent and at the same time immanent; God is in the church, but also in the *terreiro* [the place where Umbanda and Candomblé worship takes place], faith is confessed out loud, but lives from underground, unrevealed meanings. (Schultz 2008, p. 35)

All these elements form what we can call lived religion present in the movies that will be analyzed below, and this lived religion is completely imbricated in the conflicts, intolerances, and forms of violence that form the scenarios of real life.

The Lived Religion in Films: An Analysis

In this section I intend to analyze the context of social conflict and religious intolerance based on Brazilian movies from the perspective of lived religion, a view and experience of religion that go beyond the frontier of institutional and dogmatic religion. In some cases the conflict occurs precisely because the way in which religion is lived is in contrast and friction with the presuppositions of official religion and/or of the sociopolitical context.

Based on these cinematographic materials belonging to Brazilian pop culture, one might say that there are basically three types of socio-religious conflict: (a) sociopolitical conflict with consequences in the field of religion; (b) conflict and intolerance within the religious field itself; and (c) the conflict of the lack of hope and prospects for life.

Sociopolitical Conflict Imploring Religion

For this type I have selected two films with connotations of religion and conflict in their titles: *God and the Devil in the Land of the Sun* and *Blood Baptism*.

The film *Deus e o Diabo na terra do Sol* [*God and the Devil in the Land of the Sun*, also known as *Black God, White Devil*], directed by Glauber Rocha in 1964 (the year the military dictatorship began in Brazil) discusses social conflict in the Brazilian Northeast. The conflict occurs between *sertanejos* (the people who inhabit the backlands), people who are poor, deprived of any power, and with minimal resources to stay alive, aggravated by the permanent situation of dry weather and droughts, and those who hold the resources and power, which in Brazil's history is constituted as *Coronelism* (Adam 2005). The religious element is present very explicitly, both on the side of the dispossessed and of the *colonels*, represented mainly by the hegemonic religious institution (Cunha 2016), in this case the Catholic Church.

The movie tells the story of Manoel (Geraldo Del Rey) and his wife Rosa (Yoná Magalhães). The initial scenes of the film indicate the profound poverty and misery, a typical scene of the Northeastern backlands, showing the dry vegetation and the death of the cattle, the hard labor of the couple to ensure what little food there is. Also at the beginning of the film one sees the incipient messianic movement of the region, around Beato [Saint] Sebastião, who recruits very poor people promising them that the Portuguese King Dom Sebastião will return, which impresses Manuel. The messianic movement called Sebastianism indeed occurred in the backlands of Pernambuco in the nineteenth century (Barreira Jr. & De Almeida Barreira 2013). Poverty and religion share the scene, so to speak.

Manuel is a cowman and has just taken the cattle of Colonel Moraes (Mílton Roda) to town, and it has been agreed that they will share the profits from the sale of the cattle. The cowman intends to use the funds obtained to buy a piece of land. Some animals die on the way to town. When the time of sharing the profits comes, the colonel says that he will not give the cowman his share in the profits, because he considers the cattle that died on the way as Manuel's share, whereas those that arrived alive are his. Manuel is profoundly angered at the injustice and abuse of the colonel, so he kills him and flees home. Without money and now persecuted, the couple join the followers of Beato Sebastião (Lidio Silva), who promises an end to suffering by the fulfillment of the prophecy that the backlands will become a sea and all his followers will live on an island of plenty and abundance, when Dom Sebastião, King of Portugal, returns.

The movement gathers thousands of dirt-poor *sertanejos* on a mountain, at the small chapel of Pedra Bonita, waiting for a rain of gold and for the fulfillment of the prophecy. Besides the sacking and pillaging by the followers of the movement in the surrounding area, sacrifices have to be made for the promise to come true. Manuel climbs the long staircase of the church with a huge rock on his head. Since the promise is not fulfilled, Beato Sebastião asks for a child—innocent blood—to be sacrificed on the steps of the church, and demands that Rosa, who is against the movement, be killed as she is, according to the saint, possessed by demons. Rosa then stabs him to death inside the sanctuary.

At the same time, far from Pedra Bonita, life in the village is threatened by the Sebastianist movement. The priest bewails the fact that the faithful have abandoned the regular mass and condemns the movement as religious fanaticism. Supported by the local elite, the colonels who are large landowners, the priest himself pays Antonio das Mortes (Anthony of Deaths, played by Mauricio do Valle), a killer for hire, to exterminate the followers of Beato Sebastião. Thus there is a real massacre. All the followers of the movement are murdered.

Manuel and Rosa manage to stay alive and get away, and then they join the *cangaço*—a movement of bandits/vigilantes in the Brazilian backlands. The small group of *cangaceiros* attack, with extreme cruelty, the small villages in the region, stealing all they can, raping and killing mercilessly, in the name of a new social order based on making justice with their own hands. Manuel can be interpreted as someone who seeks a life with dignity: first as a cowman, using the unjust social system itself, then as a penitent through faith and hope in the fulfillment of a prophecy, and lastly, when the two other mechanisms fail, by becoming a *cangaceiro*, deliberately creating justice with his own hands, himself being a bit of God and a bit of the Devil amidst the sorrows of life under the violent sun of the backlands. In all three movements there is faith, conflict, and violence.

This example clearly shows the endemic Brazilian conflict: the social conflict between those who are deprived of any resources to live a life with dignity and the few who concentrate power in their hands, and the mechanisms that the latter have created to preserve their goods and

prevent the destitute from having access to them.[4] Religion accompanies the conflict. For the destitute, religion ultimately serves as a subterfuge, like the Sebastianist messianism. The religion sought is outside the limits of institutional religion and is of a radical and violent nature. Institutional and hegemonic religion supports the status quo. It is interesting in the film that after the violent end of the messianic movement Manuel finds shelter in the *cangaço*. The *cangaço* invades and violently destroys a wedding feast, clearly attacking both the official religion and the hegemonic social culture. Thus there is a constellation of social conflict, political and religious power, fanaticism, messianism, and violence.

The film *Batismo de Sangue* [Baptism of Blood], based on the homonymous book by Friar Betto (1983), was directed by Helvécio Ratton in 2007 (Da Silva Velasco et al. 2013). Here we have a clear ideological conflict involving Catholic religious identified with Liberation Theology and the repressive forces of the military dictatorship. In São Paulo, at the end of the 1960s, the convent of the Dominican friars is a space of resistance against the military dictatorship. Moved by Christian ideals systematized in the then nascent Liberation Theology, the friars, including Friar Tito (Caio Blat) and Friar Betto (Daniel de Oliveira), politically and logistically support the guerrilla group Ação Libertadora National [National Liberating Action] led by Carlos Marighella (Marku Ribas). The friars are finally arrested and tortured by policemen of the DOPS (Department of Political and Social Order, of the military dictatorship) in São Paulo and forced to denounce the guerrilla movement. Friar Tito is exiled in France and is unable to overcome the psychological consequences of torture, later committing suicide.

Besides the shocking torture scenes, the film is marked by scenes of the friars' religious devotion, such as the scene in which they perform Eucharist in prison, using soluble grape juice and biscuits, and share the elements both with their political opponents and with the police who tortured them. Friar Tito begins the reflection before the Eucharistic prayer by reciting from the prophet Isaiah the verse that says "But with

[4] Currently this discussion is coming to the screens in film productions that show the access of young people to universities through quotas for low-income, black, and indigenous people, and the conflict this has generated. A good example is the film *Que Horas Ela Volta?*, by Anna Muylaert, 2015.

righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isaiah 11:4). Friar Betto goes on to say: "There is no conciliation possible between oppressors and oppressed. On the inside of these bars are communists and Christians. It was the love for our people and the struggle for justice that approached us and united us. One day, all will live like brethren, around the same father. There will be an equal sharing of food and of drink, as here at this Eucharistic table."

The film very explicitly shows a new religious concept of a social and political nature: critical theology. Here we do not have the view of popular Catholicism or of another religiosity, but a new, rational, and committed position, prepared not only to transform the theological understanding itself, but mainly the social context, through the struggle against the dictatorship as an agglutinant of the forces of oppression and political domination present in this period of Brazil's history. Therefore, here too political power, conflict, institutional religion, and committed faith are at stake.

In both films the social and political conflict present in the Brazilian context can be very clearly seen, and the role of religion is also evident. Religion permeates the social and political conflict. What brings the friars to torture and prison is religious conviction, resistance to the dictatorial regime based on the Christian faith, as a true sacrifice, a baptism of blood. Here too it is a view of religion, in this case a critical theology of a political nature, that clashes with the hegemonic and absolute system of the dictatorship.

Internal Religious Conflict

For this second type I have selected three films: *O Pagador de Promessas* [Keeper of Promises], *O Auto da Compadecida* [A Dog's Will], and *Ó Pai Ó* [Look at This, Look]. These three films characterize another kind of conflict and intolerance present in the Brazilian context, that is, the internal conflict and intolerance in the religious field itself. Disputes here take place between popular Catholicism, religious syncretism, and religions

of African origin, on the one hand, and the Romanized official Catholic Church (Steil 1996) or the Pentecostal Protestant Church, on the other.

The film *O Pagador de Promessas* was made in 1962, directed by Anselmo Duarte and based on a play by Dias Gomes. The story is about religious syncretism, as part of popular Catholicism, and the religions of African origin and intolerance of institutional Catholicism.

The film begins with the conga drums [*atabaques*] and dances of Candomblé worship, thus setting the tone of the conflict. It shows the story of the keeper of promises, called Zé do Burro [Joe of the Donkey] (Leonardo Villar), a humble man, naïve and kind, who faces the intransigence and doctrinal severity of the church as an institution when he tries to fulfill his promise to Saint Barbara (who is syncretized as Yansã in Candomblé). The promise consists of carrying a heavy cross, the size of Christ's cross, seven leagues, all the way to the Saint's sanctuary, the Santa Barbara church in the city of Salvador, capital of the state of Bahia, and of sharing his small piece of land, in the countryside, with the poorer neighbors. His best friend is a donkey, called Nicolau. When the latter is wounded by lightning and becomes ill because of this, Zé do Burro makes a promise to Saint Barbara (the Saint who is the protector during storms) at a Candomblé *terreiro*, to the Orixa Iansã. As soon as the donkey improves, Zé do Burro, together with his wife Rosa (Gloria Menezes), begins his trip.

There is a conflict with the local priest, Father Olavo (Dionísio Azevedo), who represents the authority of the official and hegemonic religion. After the priest hears that the promise was made to save a donkey and that it was made at a Candomblé *terreiro* to Iansã—who is parallel to Saint Barbara in the African-Brazilian religiosity—and that Zé do Burro finds no problem in his syncretic view of religion, he forbids Zé do Burro from entering the church with his cross and thus from fulfilling his promise. Besides, the way the land is shared out by Zé do Burro allows interpretations by the sensationalist press that he might be a Communist. Zé and Rosa are thus barred at the steps of the church of Saint Barbara, which is where practically the entire film takes place.

People try to exploit the naiveté and kindness of Zé do Burro. They use the conflict that was created: Those who practice Candomblé want to use him as a leader against the discrimination they suffer from the church,

as they can access only the church steps; sensationalist newspapers and politicians transform his promise of giving land to the poor into a cry for land reform; an author of books wants to make money by writing the story of the keeper of promises; his wife, Rosa, tired of waiting, betrays him with the neighborhood pimp (Geraldo Del Rey).

Zé insists on going into the church and receives the support of the poor people who believe that he has the right to keep his promise, thus creating a situation of conflict with the priest. Sick and poor people come to Zé asking to be cured. Once the conflict has begun, the police are called to prevent Zé from entering the church, and he is finally killed in a violent confrontation between the police and the demonstrators who are on his side. In the last scene of the film, the poor demonstrators place Zé's dead body on top of the cross and force their entry into the church. Finally, Zé do Burro fulfills his promise, but for this he had to pay with his own life.

Here we have a religious conflict par excellence. The dispute occurs between the official religion, concerned with the orthodox doctrine and maintaining the institution itself, and the African-Brazilian religiosity, in this case Candomblé, but also the popular religiosity of Zé do Burro, which is a magical, pragmatic religiosity, useful to cure animals, attuned with a social ethics of sharing and a syncretic theology. In this film we see a clear struggle between the hegemonic religion and the repressed religions, something that Cunha has analyzed in her studies. It is a discrete intolerance, but it has taken on a greater proportion, such as in the case of a girl stoned after leaving worship in an Umbanda *terreiro* (Cunha 2016a, 2016b).

O Auto da Compadecida was directed by Guel Arraes and launched in 1999. It is also based on a play with the same name by Ariano Suassuna (1955), combining elements of *O Santo e a Porca* [The Saint and the Sow] and *Torturas de um Coração* [Tortures of a Heart], both by the same author.

The story is about two main characters: João Grilo (Matheus Nachtergale) and Chicó (Selton Mello). Both are poor, like most of the inhabitants in the region. Their lives revolve around small businesses, small scams, cleverness, and mischief. Practically the entire film is about the scams organized by João Grilo and Chicó for their own benefit.

The plot begins when Chicó and João Grilo try to convince the local priest (Rogério Cardoso) to bless the sick dog of their female boss (Denise Fraga), the wife of the baker (Diogo Vilela). Since the priest refuses to bless the dog and it dies, the baker and his wife demand that the priest perform the animal's funeral. João Grilo tells the priest that the dog had a will, and left 10,000 *réis* (a former Brazilian currency) to the priest and three to the sacristan if they would perform the dog's funeral in Latin. When the bishop finds out, Grilo makes up a story that actually 6000 *réis* would go to the archdiocese and only four to the parish, so that the bishop would not cause any problems.

Thus the two characters continue to create cases of scams and mischief, until the place is invaded by *cangaceiros*. We hear shots and shouting outside. It is the *cangaceiro* called Severino (Marcos Nanini). During the conflict he kills the bishop (Lima Duarte), the priest, the sacristan, the baker and his wife. When time comes to kill João Grilo, the latter gives him a harmonica blessed by Father Cicero (the protector and patron saint of the Brazilian Northeast) which is said to have power to bring people back to life. In order to make the *cangaceiro* believe him, João stabs Chico, staging his death using a balloon containing blood. João Grilo plays the harmonica while his friend gets up to dance to the music. Severino then orders his henchman to shoot him and then play the harmonica, so that he can go and meet Father Cícero and then return. The henchman obeys, shoots, but when he plays the harmonica nothing happens.

In heaven, all meet for the judgment of the dead. The Devil (Luis Melo) and a black Jesus (Maurício Gonçalves) present the accusations and the defense. João then calls Our Lady (Fernanda Montenegro), the Compassionate, to intercede for them. That is what she does. This scene with the discussion about human life, fear of death, guilt and forgiveness, and references to the life and death of Jesus Christ is certainly one of the most beautiful and significant theological pieces of an authentic Brazilian theology, a beautiful sample of lived religion. The priest, the bishop, the sacristan, and the baker and his wife are sent to purgatory. Severino and his henchman are acquitted and sent to paradise. João simply returns to his body. When he returns he sees Chicó burying him, stands up, and gives his friend a fright. After managing to make Chicó believe that he is alive, the two cheer up and make plans for the funeral money.

But then Chicó remembers his promise to Our Lady that he would give away all the money if João survived. After discussing the possibilities of getting around the promise made, they decide to give all the money to the church.

In this dramatic comedy we see a lot of the relationship between conflict and religion. Conflict, as in the previous film, is between popular belief, full of subversion, subterfuges, and mischief, the official religion of the bishop and priest, which is also corruptible, and the violence of the *cangaceiros*, who also believe. The latter, before killing each of the characters, cross themselves and ask for the priest's absolution. In heaven, on the day of judgment, Jesus Christ and Mary, the Compassionate, corroborate this theology lived in everyday life and in mischief, a theology that justifies human life and struggle. Against the devil's protests, all are absolved or are given another chance. The religious conflict and violence find redemption in heaven, before Christ himself.

Ó Pai Ó is a film directed by Monique Gardenberg, based on the play by Márcio Meirelles; it was released in 2007. The film tells the story of the people who live in a lively tenement in the historical center of the city of Salvador, in the so-called Pelourinho. The entire story occurs on the last day of Carnival, with lots of dancing, sex, music, and joy. This is so until Dona Joana (Luciana Souza), the tenement manager, a Pentecostal Protestant, bothered by all the residents' carousing and feasting, decides to end the party by shutting off the building's water supply.

The lack of water makes the aspiring singer Roque (Lázaro Ramos); the cab driver Reginaldo (Érico Brás) and his wife Maria (Valdinéia Soriano); Reginaldo's transvestite lover Yolanda (Lyu Arisson); the woman who reads conch shells [*búzios*] Raimunda (Cássia Vale); the bar owner Neuzão; a lesbian (Tânia Tôko) and her sensual niece Rosa (Emanuelle Araújo); Carmen (Auristela Sá), who performs illegal abortions and at the same time maintains a small orphanage in her apartment; Psilene (Dira Paes), Carmen's sister who is visiting after spending some time in Europe; and Baiana (Rejane Maia), the *acarajé* vendor, from whom all of them buy, confront each other, and make common ground regarding the problem.

Religious elements of popular Catholicism and African-Brazilian religiosity do not create mutual friction; they also do not create friction with the atmosphere of partying and excesses, nor with the explicit sexuality, the

homosexuality, the practice of abortion, or syncretism, which are all issues that encounter strong criticism and resistance in religious institutions such as the church. The only real point of friction is with Dona Joana, who condemns not only the Carnival festival, but above all the free and dynamic religiosity that is involved in the characters' life, sex, and partying. For her, Carnival is an opportunity for the Devil to possess people and make them err from the true path, the true faith, represented by her Evangelical church. Shutting off the water is her way of fighting evil in the name of the faith.

Her two small children trick their mother and also have fun on Carnival. They hide their Bibles under the tenement stairs before going onto the streets and having fun. One of the Pelourinho tradesmen, bothered by the presence of the so-called *trombadinhas*—children who live on the streets and commit petty thefts and crimes, something which is harmful to trade—asks a policeman who owes him money to give the children a fright. In order to carry out this task, the policeman in the end kills Dona Joana's two boys.

Highly relevant for this study is the scene, almost at the end of the film, when Dona Joana, worried because her children are taking so long to come home, goes to Dona Raimunda, whom she usually accuses of being a follower of Satan, and asks her to cast the conchs to see what has happened to her children. Raimunda, in a trance, collapses at the news given to her by the conches: the boys have been killed. The final scene shows everyone, with their different beliefs and values, gathered around the two dead boys, crying in solidarity with Dona Joana's sorrow.

We thus see that there is a religious conflict between the Pentecostal Protestant faith, with its exclusivism and intolerance towards other religions, especially those of African origin, and the profane, mundane, and sexual practices, such as Carnival. On the other hand, Dona Joana herself uses the conches to find out where her children are. With the tragic, violent death of the boys, religious differences become relative.

In the three movies we have a comical element and a tragic element. In all three we see the people involved in organizing their beliefs in their own way, independently of the religious institution. In all three, conflict, violence, and death are present. Through this construction of lived religion and (in)tolerance, the three films portray how religious differences can become problematic especially through the use of (institutional) power.

Lack of Hope and Intolerance Toward the Invisible

In this third type I focus on *Linha de Passe*, directed by Walter Salles and Daniela Thomas and launched in 2008.[5] *Linha de passe* in soccer is the right moment and place where a player must pass the ball to another, thus enabling them to fulfill their purpose of scoring the goal. The film of this name is precisely about this: the pass line in the lives of people on the periphery of the world in seeking to survive (Canassa, R.D (n.d.)).

The film is characterized by a realism that sometimes makes it appear to be the film of a news story. It tells the story of four brothers and a mother who live in Cidade Líder, a low income neighborhood on the outskirts of the metropolitan area of São Paulo. They are all fanatical supporters of Corinthians, a soccer club (Sport Club Corinthians Paulista). Their father is absent, so they must fight for their dreams. One of them, Dario (Vinícius de Oliveira), sees in his talent as a soccer player the hope for a better life. At the age of 18, he sees his idea receding, since players are usually discovered at an earlier age. Reginaldo (Kaique de Jesus Santos), the youngest, looks obsessively for his father, who is a bus driver. Dinho (José Geraldo Rodrigues) has converted, and worships at a Pentecostal Protestant church, abandoning a mundane life in which he often went on drinking sprees. Dênis (João Baldasserini), father of a boy, with a girl with whom he no longer lives, has trouble earning enough money as a motorcycle delivery boy to pay his son's allowance.

All of them, apparently, are sons of different fathers and were brought up by Cleuza (Sandra Corveloni), their mother, who works as a household servant and is pregnant again by another father. Cleuza struggles on her own, as father and mother at the same time, to support her sons, maintain the precarious house on the outskirts, where the sink is always blocked, capturing a reality that occurs very often in Brazil today. Although she is pregnant, she smokes and drinks to relieve tension. She also a fan of the Corinthians. In some scenes she is shown making wishes and praying for her favorite team.

[5] The film received nine minutes of applause during the Cannes Festival, besides Sandra Corveloni winning the best actress award.

The conflict here is not of one religion against another, nor of religion with a given life situation, ideology, or movement. There is no religion that permeates the entire plot of the film, as in the previous examples. Soccer here is the most religious element that frames the entire drama (Canassa, R.D (n.d.)).

The conflict and intolerance in *Linha de Passe* is social marginality, social invisibility, and the lack of prospects. The conflict is about the pass line in real life that appears never to be implemented. The conflict is with the lack of hope and the human impossibility of having a life with dignity in a city and society that renders most of its citizens invisible. The possible "pass lines" are: to manage to play soccer in an outstanding team and thus rise socially, which is the dream of thousands of youths in Brazil (Dario); to achieve prosperity through faith and spiritual conversion, waiting for a miracle that does not happen (Dinho); to get work or an activity—whether it be as a criminal, as a robber—with a wage that allows one to live a minimally decent life and support a small son (Denis); to look for one's father (Reginaldo); and to manage to ensure the survival of one's children—finding their pass line—and hope (in the great game of life, counting on luck), so that they will survive the cruelties of the big city (Cleuza).

Practically all these possibilities go wrong. Dario does not manage to stand out sufficiently to build a career as a soccer player. Dinho goes back to drinking, loses his job, and appears to lose faith. Denis steals and, as he flees, abducts someone. Cleuza feels the birth pangs of one more child that is arriving. Reginaldo steals a bus and drives off aimlessly through the city. This last may be the most plausible possibility, even if it is absurd. The only place where it seems there is an actual pass line is in watching the favorite, beloved soccer team, adored like a religion.

Dinho's moments in the church are significant for this study. This is one of the many small churches in low income areas, a Pentecostal Protestant church, with a clear theology of prosperity and cure. The faces of the few people who attend the services show the marks of poverty and of daily problems. In one of the first scenes, the gathered congregation devotedly sings a hymn that says "you are important to God." Another scene that clearly illustrates the theme of the film is the one that shows the attempted cure of a paralyzed woman. Despite the praying and blessings, the woman does not walk again. Two attempts, one on the day of

her baptism in the river, fail. The only people who seem to realize the impossibility of a cure are Dinho and the woman herself.

Linha de Passe, 44 years after *God and the Devil in the Land of the Sun*, appears to place its protagonists in the same place—with regard to their lack of prospects. The difference here, however, is that neither religion, nor marginality, nor soccer seems to really point to a solution, even if temporary. *Linha de Passe* ends without hope. In *Linha de Passe* religion and conflict are summarized in a single word: lament.

Significant in this sense is when Dinho, halfway through the film, reads to a sister in the faith, Dona Rosa, a verse of what appears to be Psalm 13 and Psalm 102: *How long, wilt thou forget me, o Lord?* While he reads to his sister in the Christian faith, the narrative focus continues, through the audio, on the discourse of the Devil, and focuses, in another scene, on the suffering face of his mother Cleuza … who is waiting for a bus that will take her from the downtown area back to Cidade Líder. Dinho goes on reading: *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Another close up of Cleuza's face, who despite her aged appearance cannot be more than 40 years old; she smokes cigarettes profusely, as though they might relieve her of her tension after repeating a fatiguing day of work. And Dinho goes on: *For my days are consumed like smoke and my bones are burned as a hearth.* A new focus on the mother's face: her serious and focused look suggests that she really appears to feel pain and fatigue. Be it working at a "family's home," be it in her own home in the low income area, Cleuza is shown many times smoking cigarettes and/or drinking beer. This brings us back to the voice of her son, as though his words were Cleuza's days, burned together with that smoke or consumed in a single gulp. Dinho continues to read, and a new shift in the scene shows us Dario (Vinícius de Oliveira) sitting on the sofa at home, watching television, with a discouraged expression on his face, after being left out in a new selection, in a "sieve," as pre-selections in amateur soccer are commonly known. Dinho preaches: *My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread*. Next, after showing the film's protagonists, the camera points heavenward on a cloudy day and comes down slowly giving us a panoramic, but no less gray, image of the city of São Paulo, a metropolis of stone and concrete which appears impenetrable when seen from above. The city also appears to be the main character of the film, because it is with its image

that Dinho ends the reading of the psalm: *My days are like a shadow that declineth and I am withered like grass*. … A sudden shift of scene and now it is Denis, the other son, who appears riding his motorbike hurriedly along the main avenues of the city (De Lima and Da Silva 2009).

Findings

According to Ruben Alves, "Religion is the proclamation of the axiological priority of the heart over the raw facts of reality. It is the refusal, by human beings, to be digested and assimilated by the world that surrounds them, in the name of a vision, a passion, a love" (Alves 1988, p. 19). Indeed, it is not by chance that religion is something so basic and constitutive in Brazil, in a context marked by such a great conflict, injustice, violence, and lack of prospects. In this context the films analyzed here present a lived religion that seeks to face a reality or that contributes to relieve or to further conflict and violence.

What characterizes this lived religion that is present in this context of conflict and violence? It is certainly a religion that is highly attuned with what Schultz calls a nebula. It is a religion that does not despise the presence of God, even when God appears to be more at a soccer game than in church, as in the case of *Linha de Passe*. There is intimacy with God and with the divine, as we see in the relationship between João Grilo and Mary and Jesus, in heaven. God, God's powers, the divine are not limited to the churches. They are in the *terreiros*, on the church steps, in curing people and animals, in people, and in places. If God is present, so is the Devil (Schultz), as one perceives in *God and the Devil in the Land of the Sun*. The same person, Manuel, goes very easily from penitent to *cangaceiro*. Likewise, in *Auto da Compadecida* we have a particularly outstanding place for the Devil, who knows human personalities and their dilemmas. Evil is very present in the institutional church itself, which is intolerant and allied with power, as one sees in the *Keeper of Promises* and in the work of Glauber Rocha. Evil is related to political power, as in *Coronelism*, in the military dictatorship, in violence against children in *Ó Pai Ó*, or in the periphery of the world, in the lack of prospects in *Linha de Passe*.

In this religion the visible world, the harsh and cruel reality that is often considered fate, destiny, divine precept (Manuel, Zé do Burro, Severino, Friar Tito and Friar Betto, Dinho and Cleuza), and the invisible world, the world of the dead, heaven or the sphere of the *Orixás*, interact permanently. In *Auto da Compadecida* one goes easily from one place to another. Incorporation, ecstasy, the manifestation of a cure show the relationship between the human and divine dimensions, as in the case of reading the conch shells, in the case of Beato Sebastião who considers himself to be a prophet, in the expectation of cure in an evangelical worship service.

Religion in films is a hybrid, variegated, rhizomatic religion, a religion that is in-different to the dogmas and institutional liturgies (Schultz 2008, p. 50). It is a mixed, syncretic, ambiguous religiosity, as in the case of Zé do Burro and in the plot of *O Auto da Compadecida*. Animals—donkey and dog—are as important as people in the divine economy. Even *Orixás* and the evangelical faith become close to each other if a threat to life knocks at the door, as in *Ó Pai Ó*. Resignifications are freely created, as for instance the prophecies and messianic interpretations in *God and the Devil in the Land of the Sun*; sacking and pillaging, sacrificing children are combined with the apocalyptic hope of the backlands that will be transformed into an ocean and a rain of gold.

Sacrifices, the search for perfection, and the ideal of holiness are also present in this Brazilian religious nebula. We see sacrifice in the messianic movement of Dom Sebastião, in the keeper of promises, who almost reproduces the sacrifice of Christ, in the abstemious life (drugs and sex) of Dona Joana and Dinho, in the torture to which the Catholic priests are submitted in the sociopolitical commitment, in Cleuza's struggle to support her family. There is not much holiness in the priests and bishops, rather more in the pious, the cowmen, the *cangaceiros*, João Grillo, the priestess of African-Brazilian religions [*mãe de santo*].

A question that can be asked is to what extent this lived religion present in the films analyzed here is the result of the conflictive, violent, and ambiguous context of Brazil, and to what extent this religion contributes—or not—to human dignity and social change in this context. Everything leads to believe that it is so. Although the lived religion may not seek to overcome violence and its generating forces, it seeks to placate

them and points to paths, subterfuges for survival, even if sometimes violently. Religion here is a form of dissimulation, as effective forms of change inside and outside the field of religion are not available, as pointed out by Schultz:

> Those who dissimulate generally are in a non-privileged position, and the structure of dissimulation ultimately becomes a strategy for survival, and not precisely an experience. … in the context of the religious imaginary, it appears inevitable to consider this dissimulation … not only as a form of resistance to the imposition of hegemonic religions, but above all as a kind of passive resistance of the faithful people against the dualistic and exclusivist discourses of religions. (Schultz 2008, p. 56)

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Part II

Fostering Tolerance

God, Government, and Greenbelt: Lived Religion and the Cultural Politics of (In)Tolerance in the Social Engineering of a Cooperative New Deal Resettlement Town, 1937–1940

Sally Sims Stokes

Greenbelt, the Federal Government's Suburban Experiment in Tolerant Cooperation

Thirteen miles from the White House lies Greenbelt, Maryland, a town developed by the US government. In April 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) established the Resettlement Administration (RA), a New Deal relocation program directed toward rural populations battered by the Great Depression. At Greenbelt, under Rexford Tugwell and his deputy, Will Alexander, a staff of planners, architects, and civil servants fulfilled another aim: transforming depleted tobacco farmland into an innovative suburb of Washington, DC.

In June 1935, Tugwell, a Protestant, and housing specialist Ernest Bohn, a Catholic, convened a conference at the Inn at Buck Hill Falls,

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Pennsylvania (BHF). More than 50 delegates—Protestants, Catholics, and Jews among them—discussed populating and managing the government's cooperative communities, including Greenbelt. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt (ER) was present (NYT.d). The original tenants, who referred to themselves as "pioneers," moved to Greenbelt in the autumn of 1937. Greenbelt became independent of Federal control in the 1950s. Its historic district was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1997. For 80 years, Greenbelt has been studied as a 1930s planning assay: a new way of living for white, low- to moderate-income families willing to be part of a suburban cooperative experiment.

A housing crunch was the result of a wave of newcomers to Washington in the 1930s. At Greenbelt, many incoming "heads of household" were among these young, married, male Federal office workers. Tenant selection criteria for Greenbelt homes ranged from a need for better housing to a spirit of cooperation—Greenbelt's watchword. Sociologist Cedric Larson remarked in 1939: "Persons of tolerant outlook were … at an advantage … [;] participation in community activities was … expected to be high, and each family would … 'rub elbows' with neighbors" (p. 29). In this modern moment, tolerance was—noting Karen Barkey's example of premodern Western European empires—in the interest of the state (pp. 207–210, 216). Protestantism, melded with tolerance, would be Greenbelt's implicit state religion. Tolerance would expand and contract as Greenbelt formed its civic soul through a lived religion of cooperation.

By May 1936, Tugwell's staff was considering quotas for Greenbelt "based on income, employment, family size, family composition, etc." (NAL.a.). Fundamental to this study are covert quotas, perhaps falling under "etc.," based on religion. Greenbelt application forms featured checkboxes for a family's religious preference. No declaration of faith or belief was required; applicants could check "none" if they wished. The resulting data were nonetheless eloquent. Religion as a selection tool has escaped inquiry for Greenbelt's entire history, as have bureaucrats' motives for nurturing the tolerance that persists in Greenbelt today. That applicants not of European descent were excluded from Greenbelt affirmed the prevailing ideal of a white suburban middle class. That Jews were not excluded was suppressed until just before the pioneers moved in.

It is tempting to credit a religiously diverse Greenbelt to Clarence Stein, consultant to the project, who had been raised in the Ethical Culture teachings of Felix Adler. Stein's theories of neighborhood clusters and community centers were doctrinal among 1930s "housers." No evidence of Stein's favoring faith-based diversity in Greenbelt has materialized, however. Nor did the religious amalgam of the BHF delegates—and Stein was one—have any precise effect. The idea for a diverse new town might have arisen in August 1935, when Max Blitzer, director of Jersey Homesteads, New Jersey, a rural colony for garment workers, met with Federal officials to discuss expanding that community. Most Jersey Homesteads residents identified culturally or ethnically as Jewish. To Albert Einstein, an advocate of Jersey Homesteads, Blitzer suggested that additional families should represent "all races and creeds, and … a cross-section of the population in the [New York] metropolitan area" (Danhof 1942, p. 142). Perhaps Blitzer, unawares, sowed the seeds of Greenbelt as a suburb nourished by toleration. For Greenbelt's planners, inspiration could also have come during a random whisky and cigars confab. In any case, the origins of Greenbelt tenant selection by religion remain obscure.

In this chapter, I examine the formative years of Greenbelt through lived religion and (in)tolerance, focusing on Will Alexander; other Federal agency staff; members of the clergy; and Eleanor Roosevelt. I explore political and religious relationships operating at Greenbelt's genesis, from 1937 to 1940, that reinforced the march to establish religion and cultivate tolerance in Greenbelt, even as intolerance found its niche.

Church and State

Barkey frames toleration as "an organizational by-product of relations between public authorities and communities … and … between communities with regard to how to coexist …" (p. 204). Helping citizens establish Protestant and Jewish congregations would be crucial to Greenbelt's political success, with toleration the desired by-product emanating from a social engineering studio in which some (Beach 1937; Cook 1937) perceived the specter of eugenics. On September 1, 1937, the Farm Security

Administration (FSA) superseded the RA; Alexander became Director. He endured scrutiny from Congress and taxpayers about costs, and insinuations that "Tugwelltown" would be a socialist enclave. To allay suspicions that the FSA was "hankering for a hive of communism" (Grover), Alexander needed to ensure Greenbelt would be composed primarily of people who would embrace mainstream American religion.

Photographing Everyday Religion in America

While Greenbelt was being developed, the RA-cum-FSA was conducting photo documentation of American life, including religion. Colleen McDannell suggests the photographs show that "[f]aith … is entangled in families, leisure pursuits, class pretensions …," referring to renowned FSA photographer Dorothea Lange's photos that "stylistically emphasize [faith's] ordinary character" (pp. 33, 277). These images of lived religion prefigured "ordinary" behavior in Greenbelt; but as McDannell observes, the photographers were "critical of organized religion and did not participate in its rituals" (p. 4). The photo project's aim was to educate America about the plight of its rural poor (p. 5).

Quaker and Catholic Initiatives

Christian relief was tied to 1930s Federal aid programs. Quaker minister Clarence Pickett, Executive Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), met with Eleanor Roosevelt in 1932 to discuss a Friends child-feeding initiative in West Virginia. ER visited that state in 1933 to observe conditions in mining communities. Arthurdale, West Virginia, a Federal subsistence homestead, became a preoccupation of ER's. Before year's end, Pickett was named Chief of the Stranded Mining and Industrial Populations Section of the US Department of the Interior's Division of Subsistence Homesteads (DSH), a predecessor of the RA.

Father Luigi Ligutti began a ministry to miners near Granger, Iowa, in 1926. A member of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference (NCRLC), Ligutti secured DSH monies to house 50 families on 225 acres; Granger Homesteads came under Federal direction in May 1934

(Conkin 1959, p. 297). Social welfare drove Ligutti, but NCRLC tracts expressed concern that urban Catholics were falling away from the Church. Fortifying Catholicism among the agrarian multitudes was central to Ligutti's mission (Carlson 2000).

Protestants Test (In)Tolerance

Arthurdale and Granger reflected government interest in faith-based efforts to alleviate poverty and despair, but did not imply cultivation of religious toleration. That had been ineffectually tested in 1931 at Boulder City, Nevada, a Federal reservation for Boulder (Hoover) Dam construction workers and families, when representatives of the Home Missions Council (HMC; it promoted cooperation among Christian missionary organizations in the USA) and Federal officials discussed a building for Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, on land to be purchased from the government. The impetus, however, was weighted toward keeping a potentially rowdy town sin-free. The Catholic bishop forbade Catholic involvement. The Protestant Episcopal bishop was also unenthusiastic (Handy 1956, p. 143), but his Catholic counterpart was bound by *Mortalium Animos*, the 1928 encyclical of Pius XI: whereas "all who invoke the name of Christ should abstain from mutual reproaches and … be united in mutual charity," Catholics must forswear non-Catholic ecumenical schemes. Ground was broken in 1932 for an interdenominational Protestant building, paid for by members. Catholics, Mormons, and Episcopalians had commissioned individual buildings. There were not enough Jews in southern Nevada at the time to form a congregation.

Tenant Selection in Resettlement Projects

FSA sociologist John Holt's 1937 study of the agency's methods shows that selectors considered "religiosity" in applicants for farming cooperatives. For the FSA, religiosity connoted not spirituality, but willingness to take part in a cooperative community. "Devotion to … soil conservation," for example, was desirable in a farm colony tenant. Moreover, Holt quoted Azile Aaron, selection director for Dyess Colony, Arkansas: "Because of the need of close

community participation, families … were not to have extreme or singular economic, political, religious, or social views" (pp. 13–15, 18, 45–50). Holt neither explained how selectors estimated extremes nor addressed population-building by applicants' religious preferences—a technique that BHF delegate Abraham Goldfeld, with coauthor Beatrice Rosahn, denounced in *Housing Management* (p. 35), also published in 1937. By September of that year, Mrs. Aaron was in Washington, supervising tenant selection for Greenbelt (WP.f.), evidently considering applicants' religiosity and—setting aside Goldfeld and Rosahn's judgment—applicants' religions.

(In)Tolerance, Goodwill, and Protestant Triumphalism

Benny Kraut's work has shown that, by the 1920s, America saw rising intolerance—"[allegations of] a world Jewish conspiracy, and … anti-Catholic fervor"—countered by an "invigorating … impulse" toward "interreligious understanding and harmonious relations …" and "[channeling] the moral fervor of the religious conscience into … politics. … '[G]oodwill' … served as a cultural cue in Protestant, Jewish, and some Catholic circles …." The Central Conference of American Rabbis, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the National Council of Jews and Christians, and the Federal Council of Churches (FCC; a federation of mainline Protestants) were "goodwill" organizations of the era. Protestant goodwill professed "disgust with … bigotry," but Jews and Catholics were uneasy about Protestant "religiocultural triumphalism" (pp. 196–202), which would sweep briskly into Greenbelt in 1937.

On December 24, 1938, Abram Simon, senior rabbi at Washington Hebrew Congregation (WHC; a Reform congregation dating to 1852), died after delivering a Christmas radio message of peace. Anson Phelps Stokes, Resident Canon of Washington National Cathedral (Protestant Episcopal), spoke at Simon's funeral (WP.a.). Stokes was a pious man who believed in both ritual and righteousness. Simon and Stokes typified the Washington interfaith establishment, and had collaborated to stimulate temple and church membership. Stokes also knew Will Alexander. A Methodist clergyman who had left the pastorate to help tenant farmers and improve race relations, Alexander in 1919 became director of the newly

formed Atlanta Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC), which received grants from the Stokes family foundation, the Phelps-Stokes Fund. Stokes and Alexander were associated in social service with Jewish entrepreneur/philanthropist Julius Rosenwald. Alexander was named to the Rosenwald Fund board in 1930. Rosenwald's daughter Edith's husband was the Jewish humanitarian Edgar Stern, with whom Alexander partnered to found Dillard University, a Christian institution in New Orleans intended primarily for African Americans. Alexander was Dillard's Acting President in 1935 and 1936, concurrently serving as Assistant Administrator of the RA. By 1937 Alexander, as Administrator of the FSA, was in a position to shape Greenbelt's population on religious lines.

Stokes had donned his "best clerical garb one day" in 1934 to call on the iron-willed Catholic Archbishop of Baltimore, Michael Curley, whose resistance to ecumenism was legendary (Spalding 1989, p. 57). At the time, Curley's archdiocese extended into Washington, DC. Stokes desired Curley's endorsement of "a plan to have the Churches get in contact with new arrivals in the Government service …." Curley received Stokes "kindly, but said, 'Canon Stokes, I have … expressed sympathy with your … plan, but … 90 % of all Catholics coming to Washington attend Mass the first Sunday after their arrival.'" Stokes then named three priests, any of whom he hoped Curley might appoint to an outreach committee. "[S]omewhat to my surprise, [Curley] said: 'Well, Canon Stokes, … [y]ou seem to know the best men in our archdiocese. …'" Curley then handed Stokes $60 ($1081 in 2017) for the cause (Stokes 1958, pp. 176–177).

By March 1935, Stokes had prepared a pamphlet citing FDR's proclamation, "'[S]tate and church are rightly united in a common aim, … a more abundant life'" (Stokes 1935). Simon and the rest of Stokes's Committee on Religious Life in the Nation's Capital (CRLNC) headed well-heeled white Washington congregations. With only one Jewish member (Simon) and one Catholic member (Msgr. Edward Buckey, of St. Matthew's Cathedral, one of Curley's "best men"), the committee epitomized white Protestant dominion in Washington. Stokes intended that "Colored churches be invited to cooperate" (Yale.a.), but surely he realized that the postcards he anticipated placing in government cafeterias, to help new hires find a church, would have little impact on Catholic or Jewish Federal workers. Stokes would have the opportunity in 1938 to forward Protestant triumphalism in Greenbelt.

Bureaucrats, Benign Quotas, (In)Tolerance, and the Census of Religious Bodies

In September 1937, intrepid international correspondent Preston Grover, whose syndicated "Washington Daybook" column ran in hundreds of American newspapers, interviewed Wendell Luther Lund, head of the FSA Family Selection Section. Eyeing documents in Lund's office, Grover scooped two choice Greenbelt tidbits: the FSA's plan to use religious quotas, and the projected percentages of Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. Until Grover's exposé appeared in newspapers throughout the country, hardly anyone in or out of government knew that religion would figure in populating Greenbelt, although applicants must have suspected that all checkboxes were on the forms for a reason.

Lund's background is pertinent. He was the son of a Lutheran pastor serving working-class Swedish immigrants in a Michigan town where "religion and churches were of enormous importance. … [A]cceptance of people … and of their religions and other differences, was practiced in our home" (Lund 1995, pp. 40–41). Lund had coordinated the selection of residents for Arthurdale, the relief community championed by Pickett and ER. Lund's Columbia University MA thesis concerned Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Norwegian defender of the Alsatian Jew Alfred Dreyfus. Lund also held a PhD in English from Princeton University; his period was 1200–1650. He must certainly have read More's *Utopia*, and absorbed its themes of religious tolerance (whether *Utopia* was satire is still debated). For Maryland's utopia, Greenbelt, Lund became the population engineer (Lund 1995, pp. 118–128).

A young woman named Rose Alpher joined the selection team. Whether she had to clear decisions with her superiors is unknown. She was only slightly older than the average couple desiring a Greenbelt home; like most (male) applicants, she was a white-collar government employee of modest rank; and, like some whom she helped select, she was Jewish. Pioneer Greenbelters considered her "capable and understanding." In 1938 she was made director of adult education and community activities in Greenbelt (GC.s.). Her implied duties included encouraging religion as vital to the Greenbelt experience (CWRU.a.), in the milieu of the "benign quota"—allocating residential units by limiting minorities in proportion to their numbers in a representative population.

The benign quota can be seen as a means to achieving a population balance mirroring that of the immediate region. It can also connote "(in)tolerance," rendered with parentheses that silently query how many members of a minority the dominant population will "tolerate" before a tipping point is reached. Northwood and Klein's 1964 survey of American tenant selection personnel demonstrated a range of opinions on the moral rectitude of the benign quota as a path to racial integration (pp. 113–114). Among those surveyed, respondents who accepted quotas "did not … seem comfortable with their positions …" (p. 119).

According to his daughter Judith, Wendell Lund opposed real estate covenants, prevalent in Washington in the 1930s, to exclude Jews. He "not only believed in respecting religious differences, but went out of his way to express that belief in his daily life" (personal correspondence, May 12, 2009). This suggests that, to Lund, the Greenbelt quotas were tools for access, and that Lund's developing them was a facet of his lived religion. To assume that individual Protestant denominations, or Mormons, or applicants stating no religious preference were the intended minorities, however, would be ingenuous. Minority status fell to Jews. Alpher's son Barry has remarked that his mother mentioned the Jewish quota, but his impression was that the ban on African Americans distressed her more (personal correspondence, September 4, 2007). It is not certain whether Rose Alpher was responsible for the fact that, at the end of the one-year period during which the quotas were applied, Greenbelt's Jewish population was close to the mark, but numbers for other groups were skewed. If Alpher was accountable, she must have been careful not to modify the Jewish allocation in either direction.

The *United States Census of Religious Bodies* (*CRB*) would seem a sound source for Greenbelt's religious quotas. Begun in 1850, discontinued in the 1940s, the *CRB* documented membership counts of congregations—i.e., "religious bodies." To fill places in Greenbelt, FSA personnel relying on the *CRB* would have referred to 1926 figures for the Washington region. The 1936 data were not released until 1940. Its sheer bulk and its Federal imprimatur made the *CRB* something with which few were likely to argue, but scholars were aware of its flaws (Kincheloe 1937, pp. 118, 131). *CRB* census-takers did not visit homes to record religious preferences. With a significant exception in 1926, data came from congregations' membership rolls. How congregations calculated households is not clear. Some churches, and most synagogues, did not enumerate women and children.

Uriah Zvi Engelman, in 1947, evaluated the *CRB*'s data collection methods regarding Jewish congregations. He revealed that the 1926 *CRB* "identified population statistics [in the immediate neighborhood of a synagogue] with congregational membership." Engelman contended that the "number of Jews living in a community was arrived at in most cases by methods bordering on guessing" (pp. 127, 159). If he was correct, then 7 % as a goal (or cap) for Jews, based on the 1926 Washington *CRB*, was invalid [see Table 1]. Regardless of whether the 1926 *CRB* accurately reflected Washington-area synagogue rolls, most Jewish applicants

Table 1 FSA 1938 final tenant selection report of religious quotas, transcribed in Cedric Larson's thesis, with apparent permission of Rose Alpher (Larson, pp. 30, 159)

	Greenbelt, Maryland families			
	Quotas		Accepted	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Roman Catholic	305	34.5	177	20.1
Episcopalian	150	16.9	51	5.8
Methodist	140	15.8	139	15.8
Presbyterian	44	5.0	59	6.7
Jewish	62	7.0	66	7.5
Baptist	53	6.0	71	8.1
All others (includes none)	131	14.8	316	36.0
Total (family heads)	885	100.0	879	100.0

The first families arrived on September 30, 1937. All quotas were discontinued after one year. Methodist numbers, for unknown reasons, stuck to the mark. Many fewer Episcopalians and Catholics were admitted than the quotas allowed. Lutherans were not indicated separately, perhaps because Lutherans were only consultative members of the Federal Council of Churches, a major player in this story. Wendell Lund, who devised the formula, was a Lutheran of the American Swedish Augustana tradition. No distinctions seem to have been made within any given denomination (e.g. Southern or Northern Methodist or Baptist; or, among Jews, Reform, Conservative, or Orthodox); nor any numerical adjustment for mixed marriages. That 36 % of those accepted constituted "All others" is wide open to interpretation; it is conceivable that the bulk of this group had checked "none." Presumably Mormons fell within "all others, including none"; one wonders how those ticking "none" were distributed in the projected and actual counts. Religious quotas were not apparently applied in Greenbelt's sister towns, settled in 1938 and 1939, respectively: Greenhills, Ohio; and Greendale, Wisconsin, whose tenant pool was primarily Catholic and Lutheran, setting up a different tolerance dynamic altogether

for Greenbelt homes had probably not lived in the region in 1926. If they had, they would have been minors. Nevertheless, the defective quota stood, closing just 0.5 % up by 1938.

Will Alexander, Lived Religion, Tolerance, and Political Expediency

Inquiries about organizing churches in RA/FSA projects placed Alexander under political and Protestant pressure. US Senator Jimmy Byrnes wrote in November 1936 on behalf of a constituent—a Sumter, South Carolina clergyman who noted that the government provided chapels and chaplains for prisons and military bases. The minister wanted a church for the rural project near Sumter (NARA.c.). In March 1937, the Rev. Rufus Weaver (whom Alexander had probably known in Nashville, Tennessee), Executive Secretary of the Columbia Association of Baptist Churches in Washington, requested a conference with Alexander to discuss "Baptist churches in connection with your resettlement program" (NARA.d.). Alexander told Byrnes, "We have never taken any part in the religious activity of … the communities in our charge and feel that this … should be left to the individuals …" (NARA.a). He advised Weaver, "[The] people … will make all decisions regarding religious facilities, and assume all responsibility for providing therefor." Alexander granted, however, that information on applicants' religious preferences was "available to the officers of any religious denomination who desire it" (NARA.b.). When and how such data might have been collected from RA farm community tenants is beyond the bounds of this study.

Alexander's lived religion entailed not merely questioning intolerance, but risking his life to combat the Ku Klux Klan. He had not wanted to be a minister; his family expected it of him. Shortly after becoming a Nashville parson in 1912, he realized that many outside his white middle-class flock needed his care. With the unexpected support of his congregation, he persuaded influential businessmen to administer loans to Nashville's unemployed, black and white. In about 1914, a Jewish pawnbroker and his wife, the Shyers, began quietly making monetary

donations. Alexander understood that, in his astonishment at the Shyers' generosity, he was guilty of stereotyping Jews as cheap or stingy. This was a sharp awakening for the future vice-president of the Rosenwald Fund (CUCNY.a., pp. 100–102, 113, 119).

Alexander's lived religion also demanded proactive collaboration. By the time he became head of the FSA, he had rallied Catholics to lobby for tenant farm aid; brought together white and black educators and civil rights advocates in the South; and worked with Jewish humanitarians such as the Sterns. A racially integrated Greenbelt did not come to pass during the period of this study; Alexander's opinion on the matter is not known. His work stressed interracial dialogue, not integrated housing. But Alexander must have approved the religious mix in Greenbelt. He liked arranging situations in which people of differing views could achieve mutual respect. He enjoyed playing the puppeteer, but he was sincere about kindling tolerance.

It would have been awkward had Alexander not been able to assure Jewish colleagues that Greenbelt was open to Jewish tenants. While Greenbelt applicants were being screened, the FSA was negotiating with the Consumer Distribution Corporation (CDC); its founder, Edward Filene, who was Jewish, died within a month of the FSA's obtaining CDC funding to establish Greenbelt's commercial center as a cooperative (NYT.b.). In 1936, Filene had addressed a Presbyterian group about religion as service to God, and consumer distribution as service to mankind: "The co-operative development, having nothing to do with religion, is essentially religious … [and] designed to achieve a more abundant life for each by … achieving a more abundant life for all" (Filene 1939, pp. 1, 14). For political and moral reasons, Alexander needed to include Jews in Greenbelt, where cooperative businesses would be Filene's legacy.

Protestantism on the March

Archbishop Curley's 1934 advice to Canon Stokes also applied in Greenbelt, whose first Catholics immediately attended Mass—at Holy Redeemer in nearby Berwyn, and eventually in that parish's mission site, the Greenbelt cinema. Protestants, however, planned an interdenominational church.

As Alexander had foretold, some Greenbelters were forming a congregation, and would seek the sort of data Alexander had mentioned to Weaver. But Alexander was more involved in Greenbelt's Protestant advance than his correspondence with Byrnes or Weaver suggests.

In the school/community center gymnasium, on November 14, 1937, to about 150 Protestants, the Rev. Worth Tippy preached Greenbelt's first sermon for what would become the Greenbelt Community Church (GCC). Tippy stressed the now-familiar prophecy of a more abundant life. Anson Phelps Stokes provided hymnals and the altar cloth (Bessemer; WP.b.; GCCA.c). The concept of an allied Protestant assembly for Greenbelt had been gathering momentum for months within the Washington Federation of Churches (WFC), the local arm of the FCC. Tippy, a Methodist minister, had been Secretary of the FCC's Commission on Social Service for 20 years. The Commission's scope included "the relation of the churches to … departments and bureaus of the Federal Government … [and] cooperation in social action with … Catholic, Hebrew, and other religious bodies" (Tippy 1922, p. 36). Greenbelters would soon learn that Worth Tippy had long been a friend of Will Alexander's (Bessemer).

GCC members, meeting on February 19, 1938, decided that, to expand their numbers, they needed the names of all Protestant Greenbelters. Conveniently, Tippy had a friend, Martha Allen, on the Greenbelt selection staff. He asked Allen to "agitate an interest in the church"; she apparently supplied the Protestant roster (GCCA.b, .h.2, .d.). Tippy, acting through the WFC's Committee on Comity, had convened the organizational meeting of the GCC in December 1937, in the office of Greenbelt town manager Roy Braden, hired by the FSA (GCCA.h.1.). This venue signifies that handshakes between the government and the FCC/WFC had been exchanged all around.

Rufus Weaver, now on the WFC's committee to establish the GCC, was scheduled to preach on December 26, 1937 (GC.a). In February 1938, Canon Stokes himself led a service in the gym. Among the eminent Protestant clergy who officiated at Greenbelt during the spring of 1938 was the Rev. Mark Dawber, a nationally known radio preacher and executive secretary of the HMC. Stokes returned on May 29 (GCCA.a.). Robert Kincheloe, a recent graduate of the Baptist Rochester-Colgate

Seminary, gave his first sermon as pastor a week later. The HMC apparently approved Kincheloe's appointment, and underwrote his salary (GCCA.3.). Protestantism now had a foothold in Greenbelt.

Rose Alpher, Jewish Greenbelt's Martha Allen

Pioneer Ethel Rosenzweig recalled in the late 1970s,

> When a member of one of our first families, Mrs. Ethel Morganstein, went to pay her rent …, she was approached by Mrs. Rose Alpher, … who asked her why the Jews did not have a congregation, when all other denominations were already organized. … Ethel was very much embarrassed. She got a list of Jewish residents from Mrs. Alpher…. [Ethel] and her husband Sam visited us to find out how we could organize a Hebrew congregation. … Mrs. Alpher was instrumental in getting us our first rabbi [,] … Leon [Elsberg], a Reform rabbi (E. Rosenzweig 1979).

There are many possible explanations for Jewish Greenbelters' delayed start, about a year after the GCC was organized: choosing a denomination (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox); not wanting to call attention to themselves as Jews; or feeling unsettled by the "triumphal" eagerness of Washington's Protestant leadership and the FCC's commanding advocacy of the GCC. This diffidence would be detailed in participant-observer William Form's 1942 dissertation.

Ethel Rosenzweig called Alpher "instrumental" in obtaining Elsberg, in 1939, for the GHC; but how Elsberg came to Greenbelt is not clear. In April 1938, a Cooperative Organizing Committee (COC) had formed, to map transferal of Greenbelt's businesses to a citizens' cooperative. In October, the COC sponsored an interfaith symposium on economic, moral, and spiritual benefits of cooperation. It could have been through this event that Alpher learned of Elsberg, whose involvement in the symposium is also rather a mystery. Elsberg had taken the stage with the Federal Council's Mark Dawber (who not only helped found the GCC, but was also a proponent of cooperatives to counter Fascism), and Charles Hogan, of Catholic University. "'If spiritual solace and salvation

may be bought,'" Elsberg avowed at the symposium, "'they can best be bought through tolerant cooperation'"(GC.b.).

Tolerant Cooperation Becomes Greenbelt's Lived Religion

In May 1939, Roy Braden hailed the newly formed "Permanent Conference on Religious Life in Greenbelt" (WP.d.). The members were Elsberg; Kincheloe; Fr. Leo Fealy, of Holy Redeemer; and Elder Donald Wagstaff, a Greenbelt resident representing the Mormons, whose numbers had more than quadrupled from nine original families. The *Washington Post* reported, "[The conference's purpose is to] sponsor interdenominational services and joint attendance at denomination services, curb religious prejudices and antisemitism, and … discuss social problems at Greenbelt" (WP.c.). Elsberg, Greenbelt's iteration of Atlanta's Rabbi David Marx, was at the forefront (FDRPL.c.). Braden's delight in Greenbelt's "Permanent Conference" could have resulted from consulting with Alexander, who perhaps felt Elsberg would model the noteworthy tolerance work Marx had been carrying out in Atlanta for decades.

During 1939, the GHC heard Elsberg's eulogy on the death of Pius XI, and endorsed a sympathy telegram to Fr. Fealy on the pontiff's passing; GCC members attended GHC services; Elsberg offered the invocation at Mormon services; GHC congregants listened to Elder Cleon Skousen's comparison of Mormonism and Judaism; and Fr. Fealy was invited to address the GHC at Sabbath services (GC.e, .f, .g, .h, .i, .j.). Jewish, Mormon, Catholic, and Protestant spiritual leaders held a June symposium on tolerance and social justice; 500 Greenbelters attended (WP.e.). In August, Rose Alpher helped organize a festival featuring an exhibit on Greenbelt's religious diversity (GC.k.; GC.l.). In October, the "Permanent Conference" positioned the session "Religion and Cooperatives" as the finale of a two-day institute, "Greenbelt's Place in Cooperative America" (GC.o.). Urging all to save the date, Kincheloe, in the *Greenbelt Cooperator*, memorialized Filene, "who would be wholeheartedly behind this symposium" (GC.m, .n.). In 1940, Jewish and

non-Jewish Greenbelters welcomed European Jewish refugee children into their homes. The *Washington Post* ran a front-page story about these young visitors to "Utopia" (WP.g.).

Shall Tolerance Prevail?

Compelling moments of interfaith cooperation endure in Greenbelt's later civic memory: the Greenbelt Jewish Community Center (GJCC)'s gift of the lectern for the GCC's new building in 1951 (GCCA.e.); non-Jewish Greenbelters' helping construct the GJCC building in 1953, brick by brick; community support for Jewish Greenbelter Abraham Chasanow, a Navy civilian suspended in 1954 during the anti-Communist panic. But intolerance was alive in Greenbelt's early days. William Form, then a University of Maryland doctoral student, conducted his research with FSA permission, as had Cedric Larson. Form's analysis of Greenbelt, where he lived for two years, ascribed tensions to gentiles' wariness of Jews. Ethel Rosenzweig's husband Ben, originally from New York, commented in 1980 that he perceived "inculcated hostility" toward Jews as a Southern trait, a contention with which some Southern Jewish historians would disagree. In contrast, Form saw an "incipient form of anti-Semitism among some [non-Jews] of rural [US] western origin" (B. Rosenzweig 1980, p. 11; Form, i, 6, 8, 219, 220). The larger question is whether the perceived intolerance was of Judaism, the religion, or of "Jewishness," as an undefined collection of attributes.

Form presented a "status stratification" in which "[t]he position of the Jews … demands special attention." Greenbelt's Jews were "over-represented" in cooperative/civic roles, but excluded from social organizations such as the Woman's Club (pp. 218, 349–351). The GHC "helped increase the self-awareness of the group, but did not provide the main cementing force." Attracting more Jewish Greenbelters were B'nai B'rith, Mah Jongg, and a hiking club (pp. 218–219). Form described discord in the Greenbelt Health Association (GHA). A Catholic doctor, after resigning under pressure, "began a campaign vilifying doctors he labeled 'those Jewish communists.' … [T]he Catholic priest [Fr. Fealy] denounced the

Health Association … . He was especially opposed to the inexpensive birth control information and devices [GHA] made available … ." Form also cited antagonism between GHA board members and a Jewish "Dr. M.," who "despised those who disagreed with him" (pp. 303, 304, 316).

Braden was the invited speaker at GHC services on April 7, 1939. Elsberg officiated. "[Braden] admonished his hearers to believe that there was only a desire for neighborliness and cooperation … and begged that the members of the [Hebrew] Congregation mingle with the citizenry to learn this truth …" (GC.j.). To Braden, a Protestant, were Jews outside "the citizenry," or was this an innocuous use of the term, or a reporter's paraphrase? Braden's wife would become a founding member of the Woman's Club in November (GC.p.), and Jewish women would be blackballed. Braden's perceptions are hard to pinpoint, but it is conceivable that his address inspired Elsberg to generate the Permanent Conference.

Kincheloe's Dream: A Temple of Religious Tolerance

Disharmony had probably festered all along, but Greenbelt's Jews, and possibly its Mormons, might have found two 1938 letters to the *Cooperator* unsettling. In the letters, published in November and December, Greenbelter Harry Ribbons wondered whether the government might provide an "experimental" Protestant/Catholic building (GC.c., GC.d.). Meanwhile, GCC member Earl Swailes had asked Kincheloe to assemble the church's board to consider a government-built Protestant chapel (GCCA.h.4.).

In March 1939, Kincheloe, with an introduction from Ohio Congressman William Ashbrook, who represented the district in which Kincheloe had attended college, wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt (FDRPL.i.). Kincheloe did not appeal for a Protestant church, but solicited ER's help to obtain an organ for the Greenbelt school/community center gymnasium. His letter had a Protestant bent, however: at the time, only Protestants worshiped in the gym. Mrs. Roosevelt, a Protestant, was noncommittal (FDRPL.a, g.).

Having approached Alexander about "looking into our Greenbelt religious situation," Kincheloe contacted ER again in November, with a fresh proposal: a four-faiths "Temple of Worship" (FDRPL.c.). He had in mind a sanctuary with a revolving dais (GCCA.f.). Undoubtedly familiar with Mrs. Roosevelt's, Pickett's, and Lund's work in his home state, West Virginia, he engaged Pickett in his crusade. Kincheloe and Pickett corresponded about summoning a committee to a tea at the White House to "explore … financing" the Temple. (AFSCA.a, b, c; FDRPL.b.). Kincheloe conducted his own Greenbelt census of religious bodies, reporting membership (whether households or individuals is not indicated) as 250 Protestant, 400 Catholic, 85 Hebrew, and 38 Mormon (FDRPL.c).

Kincheloe's determination shows in the composition of his potential committee, which included Maurice Sheehy of the Catholic University of America. Sheehy seems a strategic pick: he was an FDR enthusiast and had organized a 1938 radio broadcast decrying the horrors of Kristallnacht (WP.i.). Sheehy had also helped start a movement among Catholic clergy in 1936 "to offset the vicious tirades" of the anti-Semitic Fr. Charles Coughlin (CUA.a.). This had not pleased Curley (Beckley 2001, p. 8). Sheehy was by now a member of Stokes's CRLNC; involvement in additional tolerance work in Greenbelt could further irritate Curley. Sheehy sent regrets, suggesting Msgr. Joseph Nelligan, Curley's Chancellor. Nelligan accepted (FDRPL.b.). Utah Senator Elbert Thomas, FDR Democrat and Mormon, was to be invited, as was Canon Stokes, whom ER knew well. Alexander, who had known ER and Pickett for some years, would represent the FSA. Baltimore rabbi Morris Lazaron was first choice as the Jewish delegate.

Pickett suggested that Kincheloe bring one lay Greenbelter. Kincheloe chose Linden Dodson, a GCC member, which signals that Kincheloe was operating within his congregation only. The "Permanent Conference" was by now transitory: Elsberg had departed, to study under FDR's friend and counselor, Rabbi Stephen Wise (NYT.c.), leaving the GHC without steady ministry, and the interfaith leadership group in limbo. At the end of January 1940, the *Cooperator* would advocate a four-faiths building

(GC.r.); but it is not clear who, other than Kincheloe and the *Cooperator* editors, favored this solution.

Hollywood Angel, Hollow Hopes

A month before the December 12, 1939 White House tea, Kincheloe received electrifying news: Pickett had described Kincheloe's idea to another in the Roosevelt circle, Harry Warner, of Warner Bros Pictures. Pickett thought Warner might fund the Temple (AFSCA.a). Humanitarian, devout Jew, outspoken against Nazism, Warner would assert, in 1940, "We must unite … and not allow anyone to say anything against anybody's faith … because we are confronted with the greatest organized machine … the world has ever had" (Snow 2004, p. 63).

Projecting Warner as angel for the worship center was complicated. Anti-Semitism plagued the movie industry. Harry's protestations notwithstanding, Warner Bros. had been a target of the Catholic Legion of Decency's campaign against "immoral" films, and Worth Tippy, representing the FCC, had backed this agenda. By 1935 Tippy had deemed the censorship code, administered by lay Catholic Joseph Breen, "too restrictive"; but Warner Bros. and other studios were, according to film historian Gregory Black, "susceptible to economic blackmail" by a Protestant/Catholic anti-movie coalition (pp. 167, 185). Warner's funding the building might feed FDR critics' impressions that the President had too many Jewish advisers and was too chummy with Hollywood. Possibly FDR or ER softly discouraged Warner's involvement.

Another underlying complication was Morris Lazaron's shaky relationship with Curley. A founder of the Military Chaplains Association, Lazaron had toured the country with a Catholic priest and a Protestant minister as the "Tolerance Trio," a program Curley disliked. Yet Curley and Lazaron had jointly supported a Maryland relief bill (FDRPL.e.; Hayes 2000, p. 330; Lazaron 1938, pp. 296–297).

In his recent book, *Common Ground: A Plea for Intelligent Americanism*, Lazaron had cast "intelligent Americanism" as a coming together "in the

name of the Living God" to preserve human rights and "cherish human personality" (p. 327). Kincheloe may have suggested to Lazaron that Greenbelt was a laboratory of intelligent Americanism as lived religion. Lazaron, who admired Kincheloe, declined the invitation to the White House tea, perhaps sensing that his presence would not give Kincheloe an advantage with Curley. The rabbi instead designated Morris Lieberman, his associate (FDRPL.e, f.). Lieberman accepted, but whether he or any Jewish representative was present is uncertain. The Mormon slot ultimately went unfilled. Stokes had retired to Massachusetts to prepare his opus, *Church and State in the United States*; in his absence, the only senior Protestant clergyman at the meeting was Alexander. Kincheloe must have hoped to walk out onto Pennsylvania Avenue that chilly afternoon with the blessing of the first lady, committee-wide encouragement, and a monetary promise from Warner, but he received no assurances that his dream would materialize.

Twilight of the Temple of Tolerance

In January 1940, Catholic Greenbelters listened as Fr. Fealy read "the report … of the recent meeting held with Mrs. Roosevelt." They then voted unanimously to plan for their own church building. (GC.q.). Fealy advised, "[The] … combined building has not been thrown out the window, … attested by the fact that [Kincheloe is] scheduled to confer" with Nelligan on January 30. A decision on Catholic involvement would rest with Archbishop Curley (GC.t.). Even Canon Stokes had found Curley intimidating. By cold feet or cancellation, Kincheloe's audience with Nelligan apparently did not transpire.

Facing impending Catholic rejection, Kincheloe soldiered on. In April, he wrote to ER that a set of blueprints for a structure with four sanctuaries had "been distributed to the four groups for their alteration and approval." The drawings, dated April 1, 1940, had been ordered by none other than Will Alexander (FDRPL.d.). The reluctant medium for Protestant deployment in Greenbelt, Alexander perhaps liked the notion of a shared building. If he wrestled with church/state issues, maybe he reckoned there was no harm in having the FSA—the architect was likely

O. Kline Fulmer, Braden's assistant manager—(Fulmer, p. 34) produce drawings for a facility that had no chance of being built.

Kincheloe remained hopeful that ER would suggest benefactors. In the end, however, she withdrew. Her secretary informed Kincheloe on April 29, 1940, "Mrs. Roosevelt … agrees … that it would be a fine thing if a Religious Center could be built at Greenbelt, but … [how] does your Committee plan to raise the necessary funds?" (FDRPL.h.). Kincheloe had no plan**.** And change was coming to the FSA: Alexander left his post on July 1 to become vice-president of the Rosenwald Fund. Alpher took maternity leave; after a time, she resigned (GC.s.). Lund went back to Michigan to run for Congress. In a January 1941 *Cooperator* column, Kincheloe reviewed other events of 1940: despite the fact that Catholic University architecture students had been engaged to produce elevations and perspectives of the worship center, Nelligan had informed Kincheloe at some point that Catholic participation could not continue because the Archbishop lacked confidence that Greenbelt's population would remain stable (GC.u.). An equally plausible explanation is that Curley had bowed to *Mortalium Animos*.

God, Government, Greenbelt

Social engineering in Greenbelt involved politics, piety, paternalism, and principle. Pressing a belief in "God" as a supreme being was not part of the FSA's agenda, but guarding against accusations of Communist overtones was. Bureaucrats and clergy launched the experimental cooperative town of Greenbelt as a "normal" community, of Judeo-Christian conformation, with Protestants poised to advantage, Catholics and Mormons in position according to their teachings, and Jews functioning with assistance from Rose Alpher. Those who crafted Greenbelt's population understood the potential for religious intolerance, and were committed to furthering an atmosphere of a lived religion of devotion to cooperative pluralism. Still, the question of how Greenbelt's religious quotas came about remains unanswered. Fear of backlash might have driven the FSA's attempt to keep details of the population plan confidential. Form stated that a few Jewish

Greenbelters disliked the religious quotas, but he recorded no complaints to FSA officials (pp. 367–368). Had a fuss occurred, Alexander could always have called forth the *CRB*.

As Braden informed the *Washington Post*, "The government cannot build churches" (WP.h.). Braden was referring to buildings, not congregations; but his statement could apply to both. "The government," however, could staff an agency, design the physical components of a community, decide that cooperation and tolerance should define its spirit, choose its inhabitants, and place faith-based resources within reach of its pioneers. Ever inscrutable, Alexander declared in 1952: "We had very able [staff] … I have no apology … for any part that I may have had" (CUCNY.a., pp. 409–412). Alexander, of course, had been director and producer of the performance of tolerance in Greenbelt, with organized religion as the backdrop.

Robert Kincheloe, the last of the principal players, left Greenbelt in November 1941 to join the Maryland–Delaware Council of Churches (GCCA.g.). The lights of tolerance had dimmed, but were not extinguished. With Kincheloe's exit, the future of a lived religion of tolerance in a cooperative community had to stand or fall on its own.

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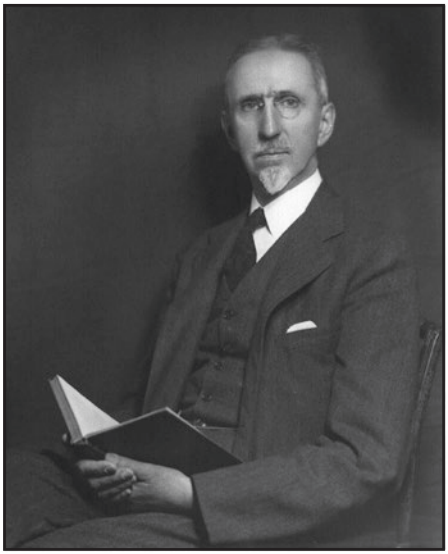
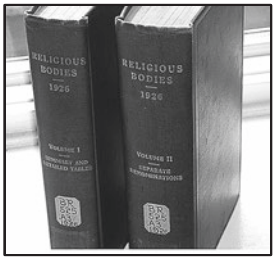
President Franklin Delano Roosevelt tours the Greenbelt construction site with Resettlement Administration Head Rexford Tugwell (L) and then-Assistant Administrator Will Alexander (R), November 13, 1936. Alexander, a former Methodist minister, was in charge of the RA's successor, the Farm Security Administration, during the period in which tenant selection quotas, including those based on religion, were applied in Greenbelt. Wendell Luther Lund developed the formula. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-USF34-015446-C.*



Anson Phelps Stokes, Resident Canon of Washington National Cathedral, in 1939. Stokes founded the Committee on Religious Life in the Nation's Capital. He was a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt's and Will Alexander's, and was among influential clergy who helped the Washington Federation of Churches establish a strong Protestant presence in Greenbelt. He retired from the Cathedral in 1939 after 15 years of service. His three-volume work, Church and State in the United States, was published in 1950. *Courtesy of the Washington National Cathedral Archives.*

The Rev. Maurice Sheehy, head of the Catholic University of America's Department of Religious Education, was an admirer of FDR. He was a voice for tolerance and against anti-Semitism in the1930s. Sheehy chaired the committee on racial attitudes of the Catholic Association for International Peace. By the time of Anson Phelps Stokes's retirement in 1939, Sheehy was a member of the Committee on Religious Life in the Nation's Capital, as was Patrick Shehan, a future Archbishop of Baltimore. Greenbelt Community Church's Pastor Robert Kincheloe had hoped Sheehy would serve on the committee for a four-faiths worship center in Greenbelt. In this 1938 photo, Msgr. Sheehy (R) and Bishop James Ryan of Omaha (L) leave the White House after paying their respects to the President prior to a goodwill tour of South America. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Harris & Ewing Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-hec-25662.*

Arthurdale, West Virginia, was a cooperative homestead project of the U.S. Department of the Interior, and was one of FDR's New Deal economic relief efforts that provided housing for poor and "stranded" populations, as well as construction work opportunities for the unemployed. Eleanor Roosevelt, Clarence Pickett, and Wendell Lund were all involved in its planning. In this Elmer Johnson photo, children play near their new Arthurdale home in 1934. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-USF34-001050-C.*



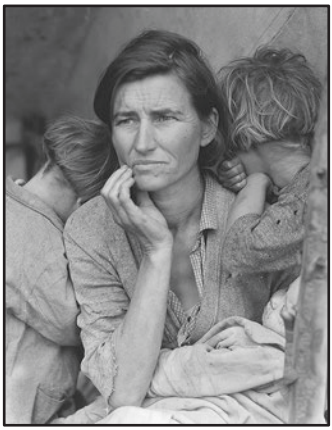
The 1926 Census of Religious Bodies (CRB) indicated that of all Washington, D.C. congregants, 65% were Protestant, 28% were Catholic, and 7% were Jewish. Most Washington Protestants were African American, but African Americans were not considered for housing in Greenbelt. Samuel Kincheloe, of the Chicago Theological Seminary, in 1937 dismissed the CRB as a means by which to calculate religious identity. Uriah Zvi Engelman, in 1947, exposed deficiencies specific to the 1926 data concerning Jewish congregations. *Photo by Sally Sims Stokes.*

Women wheel babies along a walkway in the direction of the Greenbelt tenant office, November 1937. For many low-to-middle-income white families, Greenbelt represented a step up from crowded Washington housing conditions. With services such as stores, schools, playgrounds, pedestrian underpasses, a movie theater, a gas station, and a swimming pool, Greenbelt, as Avery McBee of the Baltimore Sun put it on August 28, 1938, "sprang full panoplied from a scrubby wilderness." Early Greenbelters referred to themselves as pioneers, a term still used to describe them today. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-fsa-8a02948*.

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt paid a surprise visit to Greenbelt on December 9, 1937. Here, she visits a primary grades classroom in the Greenbelt elementary school/community center with Town Manager Roy Braden (L) and the Farm Security Administration's Will Alexander (R). Protestants, Jews, and Mormons would soon begin holding regular services in this building. *Courtesy of the Greenbelt Museum.*

This 1939 Dorothea Lange photo for the Farm Security Administration illustrates Colleen McDannell's point regarding the portrayal, in the government's photography program, of the ordinariness of lived religion. The women are pausing from "clean-up day" at their North Carolina church. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-fsa-8b34031.*

Another photo by Dorothea Lange for the Resettlement Administration that depicts the ordinary quality of American religion is this 1936 group portrait of Jewish women and children on the cooperative farm at Jersey Homesteads, New Jersey. Max Blitzer, director of Jersey Homesteads, expressed to Albert Einstein in 1935 a desire to see that community's population diversified to include all races and creeds. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-fsa-8b29542.*



Perhaps Dorothea Lange's best-known photograph, this 1936 image for the Resettlement Administration (reborn as the Farm Security Administration in September 1937) is popularly known as "Migrant Mother." It satisfies the RA/FSA photodocumentation project's goal of awakening America to the desolation of the rural poor. It could be said to profess a humanistic lived religion in its heartrending entreaty to America's conscience. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-fsa-8b29516.*

Aerial view of Greenbelt, ca. 1939. A "green belt" of undeveloped land was intended to protect the town from encroachment. Housing units are arranged in neighborhood clusters, or courts; there are also flats. The L-shaped facility at left is the school/community building. The complex to its right is the town center. Except for the need to place some Catholic families in a section with larger houses, there seems to have been no deliberate grouping of families by religious preference in a given court or apartment building. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-USF344-007483-ZB.*

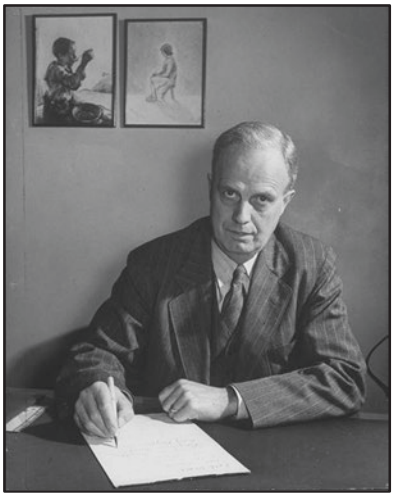
Greenbelt Community Church services were held in the gymnasium of the Greenbelt school/community center from 1937 until 1951. Before Robert L. Kincheloe was called as pastor in 1938, prominent clergy such as Worth Tippy, Mark Dawber, and Anson Phelps Stokes conducted interfaith Protestant services in this space. Jews and Mormons worshiped in the building's classrooms. While it is not uncommon today for church groups to meet in school or civic buildings, holding religious services in this facility underscored the fluidity of daily, lived experiences in Greenbelt regarding religion, government, tolerance, and cooperation. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-fsa-8b36296.*

Greenbelt Movie Theater, in the town center, ca. 1938. The theater opened September 21, 1938, with a screening of the Shirley Temple film *Little Miss Broadway*. Roman Catholic services were held here as a mission of Holy Redeemer Parish in Berwyn/College Park, Maryland. *Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, reproduction number LC-DIG-fsa-8a38573.*

From 1927 to 1961, Leo Fealy, a native Washingtonian, was the pastor of Holy Redeemer Parish in Berwyn/College Park, Maryland. Greenbelt became a mission of Holy Redeemer. Once the Greenbelt movie theater was completed, Fr. Fealy celebrated Mass there. Some worshipers knelt in popcorn spilled by the previous night's filmgoers. Fr. Fealy was the Roman Catholic member of the Permanent Conference on Religious Life in Greenbelt. He oversaw the transition in 1947 of the Greenbelt mission to its own parish, St. Hugh of Grenoble Catholic Church. *Courtesy of Holy Redeemer Parish, College Park, Maryland.*

Greenbelt Hebrew Congregation services usually took place in the school/community center's music room before Mishkan Torah synagogue (Greenbelt Jewish Community Center) was completed in the 1950s. In this photograph, which appeared on the front page of the May 18, 1939 *Greenbelt Cooperator* , Leon Elsberg pronounces a blessing as Lillian Schwartz pins a carnation on Frieda Feig at a GHC Mother's Day ceremony during Friday night services. Jenna Weissman Joselit, in *The Wonders of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994, 73–75), notes that American Jews embraced Mother's Day, and that synagogues across the country in the 1930s were instituting their own services and ceremonies to commemorate it. *Courtesy of the* Greenbelt News Review.

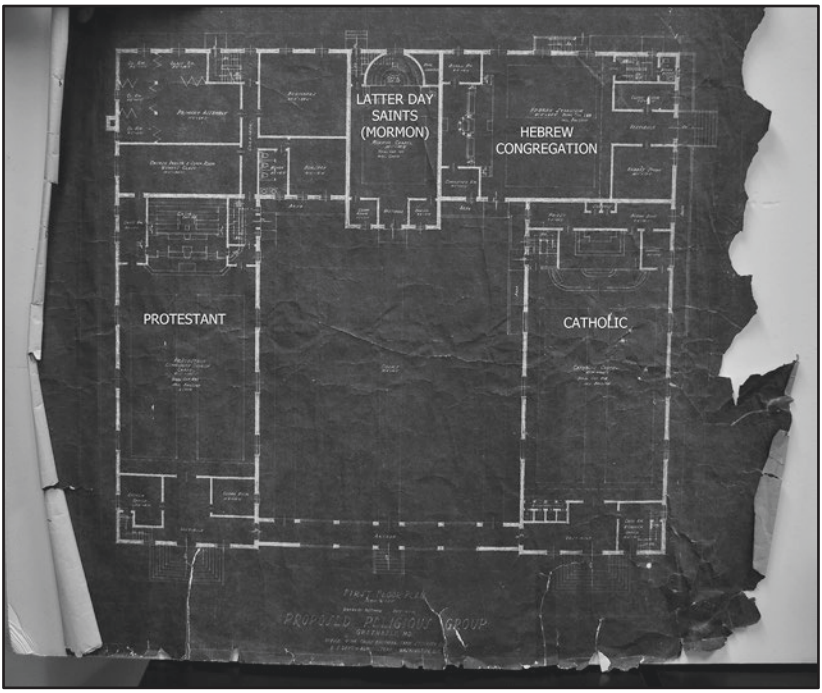
Leon Elsberg, ca. 1950. Elsberg was the son of a Baltimore jeweler. He was educated at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and American University in Washington, D.C., where he was a member of the debate team. In Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he later became rabbi of Temple Beth Sholom, he was well known for his interfaith work. In 1951, the *Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star* reported on March 10 that he would address the Lutheran Sunday School on the topic of Passover; on September 18, the same newspaper announced that he had been invited to be the first-ever Jewish speaker for Religious Emphasis Week at what is now the University of Mary Washington, in Fredericksburg. *Courtesy of the Elsberg Family.*



Clarence Pickett (R) was Executive Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee which, jointly with the British Friends Service Council, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947. Pickett also served in the U.S. Department of the Interior's Division of Subsistence Homesteads. Pickett encouraged Robert Kincheloe's efforts to seek Eleanor Roosevelt's support for a four-faiths worship center in Greenbelt. Friends (Quakers) were not represented among the involved religious groups. *Courtesy of the Archives of the American Friends Service Committee.*

Robert L. Kincheloe (L) had just completed his theological studies in 1938 when he was called to the pastorate of the Greenbelt Community Church. A native of West Virginia, he was trained in the American Baptist tradition, which traces its roots to Roger Williams in the 1630s. By the 1930s it was one of the mainline denominations. Kincheloe was responsible for ministering to all Protestants in Greenbelt, but along with Leon Elsberg he sought to expand religious tolerance and cooperation among Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and Mormons. *Courtesy of Margot A. Kincheloe.*

Donald H. Wagstaff (R) was a government clerk and an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS; Mormon). It is estimated that there were nine Mormon families among the Greenbelt pioneers; that number had risen to 38 within two years. The *Greenbelt Cooperator* of April 24, 1942 reported that the Washington branch of the LDS Church became a stake (administrative unit; comparable to a deanery in the Catholic Church) in 1940, with Greenbelt, under Wagstaff's leadership, an independent branch. Sunday School and Sacrament Meetings were held in the home economics room of the Greenbelt school/community building. Wagstaff served with Elsberg, Kincheloe, and Fealy on the PermanentConference on Religious Life in Greenbelt. He and his family left Maryland for Utah in 1942. *Courtesy of Darol Wagstaff.*



The Farm Security Administration's Office of the Chief Engineer produced conjectural plans for a four-faiths worship center for Greenbelt in April 1940. Spaces were arranged around a forecourt. Square footage allocated to Protestants was greater than that for Catholics, Jews or Mormons. The synagogue concept included a balcony, probably intended as a mehitzah (women's gallery). The demilune element in the Mormon chapel is the choir.

Photo by Sally Sims Stokes of blueprint in the Tugwell Local History Room, Greenbelt Public Library, with block-letter area designations PROTESTANT, LATTER-DAY SAINTS (MORMON), HEBREW CONGREGATION, *and* CATHOLIC *added by the photographer for clarity.*

Uncanny Landscapes of Memory: "Bosnian Pyramids" and the Contemporary World-Making in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Maja Lovrenović

In the past two decades, the debate on the role of religion and (in) tolerance in contemporary Bosnian-Herzegovinian society has not moved beyond the "top down" approach, both in the academic production of knowledge and in the public discourse. Focusing almost exclusively on religion as a collective phenomenon, correlated with historical processes of ethnic and national group identity and heritage formations, framed debate thus omits the critical "from below" view of the everyday experiences and beliefs, grounded and lived in specific immediate surroundings. Based on ethnographic research in central Bosnia, this chapter gives an anthropological account of a contemporary transitional and post-war landscape that is simultaneously the material world of people's present everyday lives, the world of their efforts to make sense of experiences of the violent past, and the world in which they seek a meaningful future. It argues for the urgency of taking such grounded world-making and its

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subjectivities into consideration not only within the scholarly production of knowledge about Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also within discourses of reconciliation and (in)tolerance in the country.

One of the most striking features of this debate on religion, identity, and (in)tolerance, since and in the light of ethnic violence of the 1990s, is that it continuously fails to acknowledge and account for its own paradox: how is such violence possible in a multireligious society with a long tradition of multicultural tolerance and coexistence? The failure to scrutinize this paradox at the very foundation of the contemporary debate on post-war reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina leaves the public discourse domain wide open for powerful political and religious actors to claim the historical evidence of multicentennial tolerance as the highest ethical achievement, while, in the same breath, laying blame for the breach of this tradition outside their own ethnic-religious group. In this manner, the reconciliation debate in contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina remains deadlocked in the power relations dynamics indicated in the introduction to this volume, with the main narratives on tolerance monopolized by those who have the power not to be tolerant (King 1971).

This chapter seeks to explore how this paradox of religion, (in)tolerance, and the violent past in Bosnia and Herzegovina unfolds beyond the official discourses, namely, in a human world-making realm grounded in immediate surroundings and lived experiences. The point of departure in this exploration is the extraordinary case of the "Bosnian Pyramids", which illuminates the scope of the meaning-making struggles in a post-war and a transitional society.

The Miracle of Discovery

It was exactly ten years after the end of the devastating 1992–1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter BH) that the country found itself in the grip of extraordinary news. In the spring of 2005, a Bosnian returnee from the USA announced an amazing archaeological discovery that would change not only the future prospects of the country, but also the history of the entire planet as we know it. Semir Sam Osmanagich, a

Fig. 1 Visočica Hill—Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun, March 2010 (author's photo)

self-proclaimed researcher from Houston, Texas, revealed to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian media that several hills surrounding the central Bosnian town of Visoko are actually the biggest and the oldest pyramids in the world (Fig. 1). Soon after this initial announcement, the Bosnian Pyramids became the hottest and most debated public affair in the country, almost overshadowing the commemorative events related to the tenth anniversary of the July 1995 massacre in Srebrenica.

The spectacular discovery of these ancient man-made structures, according to Osmanagich, was going to turn the perceptions of BH in the world upside down. The country would no longer be associated with the images of violence and destruction that flooded the global media during the 1990s, but become known as the cradle of all humanity and achieve an economic boom from tourism, as millions of people from all over the world would come to see this wonder. His idea that a small country,

known to the world only through the gruesome events of its war-ridden past, could be miraculously transformed into a respectable and well-off society, gained a firm hold on the attention of Bosnian-Herzegovinian audiences in 2005. Soon after making his discovery public in the media, Osmanagich established a non-profitable organization in Visoko, called The Archaeological Park: Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun Foundation, dedicated to excavations and research in the so-called Bosnian Pyramid Valley. During that summer, day after day, the country's printed newspapers and news websites continually reported fresh news and updates about the Foundation's work. Even the disbelief and skepticism expressed by several of the country's historians and archeologists seemed only to generate more attention. Internet forums were buzzing with excited debates about this spectacular happening. Several dozen unemployed men from Visoko were engaged in the excavations, stripping layers of vegetation and soil from the slopes of the pyramid hills.

Immediately after the first patches of stone and conglomerates began to appear, presented in the media as "pyramid blocks", Visoko became a hub for various visitors, ranging from ordinary people curious to see the "ancient megaliths" to a procession of politicians and religious leaders who wanted to congratulate Osmanagich on his research and show support for his project. Osmanagich's messianic appeal was confirmed even by the Grand Mufti of BH, Dr Mustafa Cerić, who visited the excavation sites on several occasions from 2005. The Grand Mufti declared Osmanagich a visionary, stating that the ongoing research in the "Bosnian Pyramid Valley is the story about us, story about Bosnia and an attraction that can bring hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people who will transform Bosnia into a tourism country".[1]

This chapter explores the ways in which this seemingly bizarre and phantasmagoric reimagining of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian landscape seized the attention and imagination of various audiences in, at times very heated, public discussion about its reality and believability. The "pyramid craze" highlights the pivotal role of landscape in the reconstruction of these post-war and transitional subjectivities. The widespread appeal

[1] Federal News Agency FENA, July 30, 2007, "Mustafa Ef. Cerić Visited the Bosnian Pyramid Valley".

of the quest for and belief in pyramids in the contemporary context of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society urges us to move beyond the conventional categories of ethnic and religious identities, and to address this role of landscape in post-war and transitional subjectivities, as well as the struggles of dealing with experiences in and memories of the violent past and ideas about a better future. The extraordinary case of the Bosnian Pyramids will show us how perceptions of time and space enmesh with experiences of the war-ridden past and the (im)possibilities of envisioning new social horizons.

"The Greatest Discovery of the Millennium"

In his numerous presentations about the Bosnian Pyramids, held all over BH as well as abroad, Sam Osmanagich elaborated upon the impact that his discovery would have on the future of BH. The presentations outside the country predominantly attracted BH's diaspora and were often arranged by various diasporic organizations, in many cases supported by the embassies of BH in those countries. Taking Mexico and Egypt as examples of countries that live on profits from tourism based on pyramids, Osmanagich envisaged the economic, infrastructural, and political rebirth of BH:

> What we have in this little tiny country, which you only knew for the bad news, we have probably the greatest discovery if not of the millennium, than of the century. Now, imagine the impact: everything is *the*, the biggest, the oldest. So, you know, with the flow of tourists that I expect in the next five, ten, twenty years, the millions of people will be coming.[2]

These tourists and their money, Osmanagich said, would turn BH into a "different country".[3]

This messianic possibility that the war-ridden Bosnian-Herzegovinian landscape holds as-yet undiscovered truths that can miraculously

[2] Presentation held in Amsterdam, on March 29, 2010; URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PD6axZD_q2c.

[3] Ibid.

transform both the country's past and its future quickly gained widespread appeal after the initial media announcements about Osmanagich's discovery. Popularly dubbed "the Bosnian Indiana Jones" for his hat and khaki pants, he daily shared his views about the Bosnian Pyramids with the media, explaining how the pyramids would change the history of not only Bosnia-Herzegovina, but of humankind as a whole. The most frequent assertion he made in his public statements, appearances, publications, and articles on the Foundation's and other websites was that "almost everything they teach us in schools are half-truths, when it comes to ancient history, or completely false".[4] He was convinced that nature does not make such perfect geometric shapes as the strangely triangular-shaped Visočica Hill, and there are many more "anomalies" of the same kind in the landscape around Visoko.

Throughout his work, Osmanagich declared that these anomalies were the traces of a so-far undiscovered and unknown past civilization, and he proposed that an "alternative history" needs to be written. He invited his audiences to "think outside the box" of official archaeology and realize that the real truth about history still needs to be discovered.

In one of his presentations, he supported this claim by a series of PowerPoint graphics layered over Google Earth imagery of the landscape around Visoko.[5] These graphics were drawn by connecting all the "anomalies" and "ancient structures" he had discovered. The patterns produced by these drawings, he claimed, show that they could not have been made by nature nor by any of the civilizations known to us (Figs. 2, 3, 4, and 5). Osmanagich presented these patterns to the audience as a "sacred geometry" that clearly indicates the traces of an unknown and technologically superior civilization, much older than any that have so far been discovered.

Finally, towards the end of the presentation, he revealed another sign that points to this civilization, namely, that the electromagnetic measurements conducted by his team of researchers showed the presence of a beam of energy, emanating from the top of this biggest pyramid in the world and pointing directly towards the center of our galaxy (Fig. 6).

[4] Ibid.

[5] Presentation at the Shaman Art Society, Amsterdam, April 2012.

Fig. 2 The Visočica Hill/The Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun (author's photo)

"There are no coincidences, only signs that need to be followed," Osmanagich concluded. We still do not know what all of this means, he argued, but we need to explore these signs further in order to discover the real truth about our past.

However, not everybody in BH was enthusiastic about this "'discovery", or the underlying radical critique of known history, which gained such popular appeal in the country. A few Bosnian-Herzegovinian historians, archaeologists, and geologists put forward their own interpretations of the "patterns" and "artifacts" excavated in the Bosnian Pyramid Valley. They expressed concern over sporadic and unprofessional diggings by Osmanagich's team at the Neolithic and medieval archaeological sites around Visoko.

Their skepticism notwithstanding, they too were drawn into the media spectacle that revolved around the Bosnian Pyramids phenomenon. Each rebuke from established scholarship provided Osmanagich with an

Fig. 3 "Sacred Geometry" inscribed in the landscape around the town of Visoko (author's photo)

opportunity to restate his argument that knowledge about the past produced by "rationalist science" is false. The website for The Archaeological Park: Pyramid of the Sun Foundation clearly shows that Osmanagich sought to move away from "old-fashioned elitist scholarship" and open up a space in which we can imagine a new kind of history. It invites all "open-minded researchers" as well as "ordinary curious people" to engage with the "pyramid project" and "become participants, not just observers of history in the making".[6] The clash with the archaeological authorities made Osmanagich's project even more popular, as it became a contest between those who believed that the rewriting of history will bring about a better future to the country, and those who denied such a possibility.

[6] "The Archaeological Park: Pyramid of the Sun Foundation" website; URL: http://www.piramidasunca.ba/.

Fig. 4 "Flower of Life" inscribed in the landscape of the broader Visoko area (author's photo)

In this outline of the Bosnian Pyramids phenomenon, we have seen how it managed to capture the imagination of a variety of audiences. It strongly appeals to those Bosnian-Herzegovinians who seem to be genuinely persuaded by Osmanagich's story, those who want to change the war-tarnished image of their country in the world, those who want to make profit from tourism, as well as those who want to score political or publicity points. Still, some very important questions remain open. These questions concern the appeal of an "alternative history" as a galactic promise that is yet to be literally unearthed in a country where the three main ethnic–religious discourses have already given their last words on its "real" history and the role of the past in the 1990s wars. The tensions that repeatedly arise from these narratives about ethnic, cultural, religious, and historical identity formations have been routinely addressed, since the end of the war in 1995, as "contested histories", "contested

Fig. 5 "Sacred Cube" inscribed in the landscape of the broader Visoko area (author's photo)

memories", "contested heritage", and so on, both in public debates on ethnic–religious (in)tolerance and reconciliation, and in scholarly works about post-war societies. The imperative of 'facing the past' and establishing the "historical facts" as a prerogative for reconciliation can often be heard in these public and academic debates, yet they leave unaddressed the way in which the world can be transformed within the context of persistent encounters with the dominant narratives on 'history'.

Here, I argue that the Bosnian Pyramid phenomenon, the appeal of its fundamental rejection of existing knowledge about the past, and its radical resignification of the central Bosnian landscape points to this unaddressed everyday world-making confronted with recurrent revelations of incommensurability between the established historical facts and its experiences of the most immediate surroundings. This argument understands "landscape" as a particular relationship between the "foreground"

Fig. 6 "Energy Beam" (author's photo)

of people's concrete, material actualities and the "background" of the perceived potentialities of the future (Hirsch 1995, p. 3). It provides stable points of recognition and reference for people's everyday routines, making sense of the world in which they live, and plays a crucial role in the emergence of a specific "landscape of memory", "the metaphoric terrain that shapes the distance and effort required to remember affectively charged and socially defined events" (Kirmayer 1996, p. 175).

Along these lines, more recent anthropological accounts of social–cultural "landscaping" argue against seeing landscapes as mere final products, but rather as imaginative processes of "our fantasy, imagination and indeed foregrounding of a scenic future" (Etnofoor 2006, p. 34). However, the violence of the 1992–1995 war brought the world-making possibilities within the Bosnian-Herzegovinian landscape to its limits, and the traces of the war-ridden past still present in the landscape continually disrupt people's efforts to reconstruct their everyday routines. This chapter explores how these disrupted world-making possibilities put the very notion of history at stake, and how a miraculous intervention of a fantasy such as the Bosnian Pyramids may appear and appeal as an opening beyond the impasse of history.

Impossibility of History

Along the northeast foothills of the Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun, in a valley between it and the Bosnian Pyramid of the Moon, are the Visoko graveyards (Fig. 7).

The care of these town cemeteries is undertaken by the Visoko funeral company. Its funeral services extend far beyond the town, and play an important part in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian two-decades-long post-war procession of dead bodies that are being exhumed from mass graves and taken to their final resting places.

Most notably, the Visoko funeral home is the penultimate stage of the journey for the bodies of the Bosnian-Muslim victims of the East Bosnia massacres, which are laid to rest in an annual burial ceremony at the Potočari memorial cemetery near Srebrenica. Each July, trucks loaded with the *tabut* coffins depart from the Visoko funeral home,

Fig. 7 The Visočica Hill, Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun, casting shadow over the Visoko cemeteries, towards the Pljesevica Hill, Bosnian Pyramid of the Moon, Visoko, July 2013 (author's photo)

and on their way to Srebrenica pass through Sarajevo. There, the main city streets are closed to traffic and people gather on the sidewalks to pay their last respects in tears and silence, as the slow procession of trucks decorated with girdles of white lily flowers heads east, to end the long journey from mass graves in East Bosnia, through forensic and juridical procedures in Tuzla and Den Haag, and back to Visoko.

During fieldwork in July 2012, I visited part of the Visoko town cemeteries, the pre-war Serb-Orthodox graveyard, which is next to the white marble tombstones dedicated to the military and civilian casualties of the Visoko Bosnian-Muslim population in the 1992–1995 war,. In 1999, 20 bodies were exhumed here and identified as local Serb civilians who had been listed as missing since the summer of 1992 (Velimirović 2012). Imprisoned, tortured, and murdered by the local members of the army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, their bodies were wrapped in plastic bags and buried in the existing burial plots of the graveyard,

in an attempt to conceal the war crime (Ibid.). After the identification process, most of the remains were reburied elsewhere in BH, in the places where family members of the victims had been exiled since the beginning of war (Ibid.). Thereby a graveyard, a space envisioned as sacred—the eternal resting place of peace for the soul, as well as a place of mourning and closure for the living—became an accomplice in another kind of world-making, that of murder and sacrilege. In his work on "defacement", anthropologist Michael Taussig seeks to sensitize us to the strange, mysterious forces that emanate from such wounds of sacrilege that are wrought by desecration (Taussig 1999, p. 1).

These rough ethnographic outlines serve as an indication of a yet unexplored contemporary Bosnian-Herzegovinian enmeshment of spaces and movements of death and everyday life. Both are inscribed in one and the same landscape, simultaneously providing sources of meaning as well as disruptions of it. Post-war narratives that seek acknowledgment and closure—of martyrdom, suffering, and heroism during the war—seem to be immediately contested and disrupted not only by analogous counter-narratives, but by the very ground upon which one lives. How does one hold onto a memory, let alone inhabit and navigate, in such an "unhomely" reality, "uncanny" in the sense of Freud's sense of that which is familiar yet also estranged and threatening (Freud 1919)?

This question brings us back to the themes outlined in the introduction to this volume. The dominant Bosnian-Herzegovinian post-war narratives revolve around three, to evoke Benedict Anderson, historically imagined ethnic-religious communities, and are as such upheld and reproduced by their respective political and religious institutions and authorities. The academic production of knowledge about post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite constructionist efforts to show how these normative understandings of the countries' histories, cultures and identities came to be, in an overwhelming number of cases takes the same normative frames as its starting point of inquiry. Thus, the scholarly and public debates, even when the historical tolerance and peaceful coexistence of different ethnic–religious groups is invoked, fail to fully acknowledge the complexities and struggles of everyday coping with the more recent past. Some of the most telling examples of this conundrum are the public occasions on which the leaders of the country's religious communities

have praised the values of tolerance and reconciliation, while reaffirming their positions within the power dynamics of contested narratives and truth claims about the violent past. Still, no examples illustrate so well the gap between discourses on tolerance and reconciliation and practices of intolerance than the popular high regard for convicted war criminals as heroes, and the warm homecomings organized for them once they have served their prison terms.

On the one hand, the post-war discourses of reconciliation require that the violent past should be faced in the sense of a "historical record" of facts, such as those compiled by the ICTY (the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia).[7] In the view of the ICTY, the "establishment of truth" is accomplished by compiling historical facts, which in turn opens a straightforward route to justice and reconciliation. However, the compiled details about violence during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, organized and compartmentalized as evidence material for separate war crimes, barely manage to capture a broader, contextualized, and multidimensional view of the dynamics of war and violence, let alone the aftermath. Recent critical social science research in BH shows that the local perceptions of established historical facts and truths are highly ambiguous, and that they often produce further tensions between groups and communities, in stark contrast to the premises of international justice (Mannergren-Selimovic 2010; Eastmond and Stefansson 2010).

On the other hand, the "historical record" of facts about war crimes in the former Yugoslavia barely acknowledges the subjectivities and experiences of the violent making of such facts. Following the presumptions about group identity formation from discourses on history, religion, and culture, and reproducing them as categories of social science research, the subjective realities are at best taken as evidence of war traumas that can be overcome and reconciled by a properly established sequence of the 1992–1995 war. A troubling question arises here about the circularity of our production of historical truths, as the war in BH was mobilized by particular narratives of historical and cultural "facts", namely regarding particular ethnic groups that were identified around their religious backgrounds. During the 1990s, this enabled the redrawing of the BH

[7] "About the ICTY", the ICTY official website; URL: http://www.icty.org/sid/324

landscape by means of "ethnic cleansing" and the systematic destruction of historical heritage. Just as much as memory studies of post-war BH need to go beyond the narrative and memorialization approach to people's experiences of the violent past, by looking into how they navigate everyday life, researchers of religion in this part of the world must go beyond a normative approach to the manifestations of these experiences, and embrace the notion of "lived religion", as "practices and understandings only have meaning in relations to other cultural forms and in relations to the life experiences and actual circumstance of the people using them" (Orsi 2002, p. 38).

This circular truth-establishing process that remains inscribed in the landscape and the everyday life in contemporary BH indicates an unacknowledged gap between *knowing* the truth, in the form of historical records of facts established beyond reasonable doubt, and *living* the truth, in the form of challenges that people face when foregrounding these historical facts in their post-war everyday routines and strategies for living together after mass atrocities. This gap further suggests that there is something with "history" which seems to somehow escape our efforts and expectations in collecting and producing knowledge about it.

In his explorations of Afro-Cuban modernity and tradition, Stephan Palmié takes up this issue by showing how the production of linear, discursive knowledge about the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade is not only unable to tap into the historical subjectivities effected by the immense scope of inflicted violence, but also, by objectifying the slave trade as historical facts, it also effectively obliterates these past realities (Palmié 2002). With this, Palmié urges us to realize that such "history" has its dimension of the unexplorable (Ibid., p. 9), and that the historical subjectivities that go unacknowledged in the discursive "historical organization of things" (Ibid.) nonetheless remain present in particular forms of non-discursive historical imagination, as "ghosts" of the unspoken relationality between the past and the present (Ibid., p. 11).

These haunting non-discursive traces of the violent past are similarly addressed by Taussig in his explorations of how the historical, missionary, and political events of the conquest and colonization in South America reemerge in shamanic healing repertoires (Taussig 1984). For him, these repertoires point towards a special kind of knowing about social

relationality, constituted by that unexplorable dimension of "history" discussed by Palmié (Taussig 1984, p. 87). The unacknowledged historical subjectivities of the colonial conquest reemerge as "evil winds" coming at "evil hours" from particular places within the local landscape, in which the pre-colonial world-making organization of the space of the dead and the space of the living was obliterated and resignified into a new "colonial space of death" (Taussig 1984, pp. 94–95).

Here we are already getting a glimpse of the inextricable linkages between space, memory, and the impossibility of "history" in the aftermath of violence. It leaves traces, writes Katharina Schramm in the introduction to *Landscapes of Violence*, not only on people's bodies and minds, but also inscribed on space: "Such landscapes are never uniform or fixed, but rather emergent and contested; they are constantly re/produced by the different people who are engaged in memory work in various ways" (Schramm 2011, p. 5). She formulates these landscapes as a continuously "shifting interface between symbolic forms, narrative strategies and material practices in the politically charged realm of commemoration" and draws our attention to the relationship between presences and absences in the construction of such landscapes (Schramm 2011, pp. 6, 10). Invoking Primo Levi's reflections on scarcely discussed ambiguities between the positions of perpetrators and victims, she too notices the uncomfortable "gray zone" which characterizes the space in between "unequivocal positions" in the narratives accompanying the commemoration of violence.

What needs to be added here is that such world-making processes, involving various relationships between violence, memory, body, and landscape, take place in a realm where earlier taken-for-granted points of recognition and reference have been unhinged, disrupted, and stripped of their previous significations, and, as in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are continuously resignified in the post-war ethnic–nationalist discourses. How do people make sense of such recent past and their experiences in this ruptured world? And how does that inform their knowledge about the world?

The "Absent Truth" and the Need for Miracles

The familiarity yet strangeness of the central Bosnian landscape ruptured by violence, as indicated earlier in this chapter, was one of the central themes that emerged during my fieldwork in the municipality of Kakanj in 2010. Even in the smallest of villages in the area, this paradoxical relationship between people and their surroundings seemed to permeate their everyday world-making. The area is well known for its medieval ruins and legends, and some of the oldest religious edifices in the country. Inextricably linked to the mountainous landscape, the steep canyons carved by fast rivers and sudden openings of vistas over the forest-topped hills, fields, and pastures, these legends, ruins, and edifices provided the local inhabitants with the notion of eternal belonging to these particular sites. Most of the post-war efforts to make sense of the world again and to recover this notion of continuity with the landscape in this area revolves around claiming and reclaiming it as heritage, "the ancient hearths", and the "ancestral homes". However, the very same sites also continuously reminded people of the recent violence, their experiences of war, and being torn away from their homes.

Notions of betrayal and deception, informing the post-war world-making efforts from the unspeakable "gray zones" of violence in central Bosnia, can be also found in the local attempts to put the origins of the 1992–1995 war into words. In a book about the municipality of Kakanj, published in 2001, the local journalist and writer Raif Čehajić reflects on the late 1980s, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of communism, and the rise of nationalist territorial claims in former Yugoslavia:

> And while others were speedily working on their projects for greater states, we thought that Kakanj and Bosnia-Herzegovina would always remain the way we were naively taught about it at school. The aggression came on our newly recognized state and, overnight, we were abandoned by some friends (who probably never were our friends, but only skillfully staged so) and neighbors with whom we grew up. (Čehajić 2001, p. 60)

This notion of double-faced, deceitful yet friendly and neighborly relations, and the naïveté of having taken them as real, points towards what

Mattijs Van de Port observed in Serbia at the very beginnings of the violent collapse of Yugoslavia. With the war vacating the previously taken-for-granted worlds of their meaningful relations, people become painfully aware of the constructedness of their realities (Van de Port 1998). The fragility of the constructedness of post-war identities based on premises of ethnicity and religion reflects itself in the incessant public discourses about permanently threatened and contested ethnic–religious identities. Produced by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian political, cultural, and religious elites, these discourses hinge on the notion of the "imminent threat" of the repetition of violence.

The perpetuated "ecology of fear" in turn fuels further quests to buttress the notion of unquestionable ethnic–religious identities through the "politics of authentication" (Meyer 2009), revolving predominantly around commemorative practices that insist on particular narratives of history, heritage, and landscape. These dynamics of perpetual skepticism and doubt about reality indicate the impossibility of closing the gap between the discourses of ethnic–religious identities and the unspeakable experiences of violence. It appears that the deceitful, treacherous history within such a landscape of memory cannot be solved by rationalist premises about the straightforward relationship between established "historical facts" and "truth".

Put another way, that which is unaddressable within this landscape of memory poses a "constant threat to the stability of cultural definitions of what is possible, normal, credible or true" (Van de Port 2011, pp. 252–253), which in the post-war Bosnian-Herzegovinian public discourses results in a yet more assertive insistence on framing particular cultural definitions and their categorization in society. This impasse indicates what Van de Port formulates as the "absent truth", that of which it is impossible to speak, but which nevertheless intrudes on people's lives as the "spectral radiance of the unsaid" (Taussig 1999, p. 3).

The extraordinary phenomenon of the Bosnian Pyramids and the messianic promise it brings seems to provide a possibility that this post-war skepticism about reality and the impinging "absent truth" can be addressed in a special way. This phenomenon's radical proposal that our entire knowledge of the history of humankind is false incorporates the notion of treacherous, deceitful "history" on a far larger scale. However, it also seems to

suggest a possible way out of the impasse of such history by proposing that even the untrustworthiness and the unspeakable nature of the post-war realities are just another such falsehood. The "real truth", or, as Semir Sam Osmanagich calls it, the "alternative history", needs yet to be discovered. It is in this "promise of the infinite" (Van de Port 2011, p. 53) that we need to realize the appeal of the Bosnian Pyramids and begin to grasp how a notion of a fantastic galactic miracle manages to capture people's imagination and subjectivities as being more real, more possible that that which is generally perceived as the reality of historical facts and records.

The Bosnian Pyramid fantasy seems to open the possibility that underneath the deceitful and paradoxical landscape there could be another one, an unknown realm that may yet reveal reality and bring things back into a meaningful order (Van de Port 2011). In that sense, it appears that the phenomenon's radical resignification of the central Bosnian landscape is quite literally an imaginative process of "our fantasy, imagination and indeed foregrounding of a scenic future" (Etnofoor 2006, pp. 3–4). It is possible to grasp, in this sense, the appeal of Osmanagich's redrawing of the Visoko deathscapes with "Sacred Geometry" and the "Flower of Life" over the failed narratives of historical–cultural identities in BH.

This chapter has addressed some of the questions about post-war realities and world-making subjectivities in central Bosnia. We have seen how these post-war subjectivities involve certain modes of knowing about the world that are often overlooked in the research into post-conflict settings. Debates on the state of contemporary Bosnian-Herzegovinian social realities, whether they deal with the role and perceptions of history, heritage, religion, or violence, barely take into account subjectivities like this.

Contrary to the notion that the people of BH naively believe in instant riches, miracles, pseudoscience, and galactic fantasies because of their traumatic experiences in the violent past, what emerges is the "ordinary" people's deep distrust of the official and authoritative framing and interpretations of BH's past. In this uncanny post-war and transitional world, where all existing narratives fail to provide closure for people's experiences or a new horizon for their aspirations, and draw their power from the authoritative figure of a politician or an expert rather than being grounded in people's everyday struggles and challenges, the question of whether there really is or is not a Pyramid is of lesser importance than the

possibility that beyond such world could be another one, which could overturn the struggles of the deadlocked present and open up future horizons. Belief in wonders, or desperate reverie, even by way of phantasmal trickery, demand to be taken seriously, and to be seen as real as the truth of the historical facts.

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Reconciliation, Justice, and (In)Tolerance Hijacked by Religious Apathy: Transforming Reconciliation 20 Years After the TRC in South Africa

Christo Thesnaar

Introduction

In a recent publication edited by Danie du Toit on Jaap Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177), Durand raised what is probably the most fundamental question regarding the current role of the church,[1] within the context of a post-apartheid and post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)[2]: "Can the church demonstrate to the rest of South Africa what real unity, reconciliation and justice mean as stated in the Belhar Confession?

[1] Church here refers to both the institutionalized church, as well as to the lived experience of every Christian engaging in the world they live in.

[2] During the transition from apartheid to liberation, South Africa opted for a process to deal with its past and to contribute to uniting the country. In South Africa, this process was called the Truth and Reconciliation process. The TRC was officially established and maintained by Parliament in July 1995 with the task of finding the truth of what happened in South Africa between March 1, 1960 and December 5, 1993. Also see the TRC Report of South Africa, Vol. 1.

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And thus give hope to the future?" This question, in particular, exposes the Christian fraternity in terms of the core of its own confession regarding unity, reconciliation, and justice. The second part of the question alerts the church to the role it has to play in the public domain in terms of its eschatological task of being a bearer of hope, both now and in the future.

This fundamental question is followed by a further significant question: "Can the church today accompany the politicians and the men of power with this message of hope, or do we despair, because in our own midst neither unity, reconciliation nor justice prevails? Love does not prevail?" (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177). This question exploits the church fraternity in terms of its calling in the public domain, its ability to engage with political and social leaders, and its ability to practice what it preaches in terms of unity, reconciliation, and justice within our own midst. Historically, it is fair to say that the church was not only the voice for the suffering, for the victims of intolerance and injustice, but it was also the instigator and supporter of injustice and intolerance in the world. This was evident in the history of apartheid in South Africa and in the liberation struggles that took place in El Salvador, Chile, and Argentina, to name but a few. It therefore seems, now more than ever, that the church needs to seriously reconsider the concept and everyday practice of tolerance, unity, and justice. In other words, it needs a serious reconsideration of its identity and the way in which it lives out that identity in everyday life.

Although these questions were addressed to an audience of Christian church leaders, it is nevertheless significant to the broader religious society within South Africa. What is even more significant is that these questions were raised in 1990, 25 years ago; yet they remain just as relevant within our current context, 20 years after the start of the new democratic dispensation in South Africa.

In relation to the role of the faith communities during the apartheid years, the TRC called a special hearing in 1997 in East London to create an opportunity for the religious society to conduct submissions on human rights violations during apartheid.[3] With this special hearing, the TRC recognized the fundamental role that faith communities played

[3] See the TRC Report of South Africa, 1998, Vol. 4; and Meiring, in Chronicle of the Truth Commission (1999, pp. 96–97).

throughout South African history, either in creating or dismantling apartheid. Although all faith communities were invited to present a submission to the TRC, the vast majority represented were those faith communities who formed part of a united and active citizenry that fought apartheid.[4] It was revealing that most of these submissions included firm commitments to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance within South African society. Even some of the faith communities who played a major role in creating and upholding apartheid, such as the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), also made submissions to the TRC that included firm commitments to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.

Sadly, very few of these commitments materialized after the conclusion of the TRC's mandate. This could be, amongst other reasons, related to struggle fatigue, passivity, and apathy as a result of the great impact on members of those faith communities, as well as the faith community itself, in support of the struggle against apartheid with its commitment to freedom and democracy. Was the TRC process perhaps implemented too soon after the end of apartheid? Rosoiix (2013, p. 489) is of the opinion that reconciliation, justice, and tolerance "processes should not be imposed on a population that is still deeply hurt by stigmata of the past." She further explains, "The shorter the delay between the conflict and the reconciliation process, the sharper the resistance within the population" (Rosoiix 2013, p. 489). This reinforces that the deep wounds caused by apartheid and the timing of the TRC process contributed to struggle fatigue, passivity, and apathy. Those faith communities in support of apartheid were so overwhelmed by the political change, as well as by the findings of the TRC, that they continue to grapple with redefining their identity in a post-apartheid and post-TRC context. The uncertainty of redefining their role within the current reality continues to contribute to passivity and apathy.

Passivity and apathy are indicative of a society that lacks the impetus to continue to deal with its past, despite all the work done by the TRC. It has become evident that the faith communities lacked the impetus to actively contribute to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance during the 15 years that have elapsed since the conclusion of the TRC process.

[4] See the TRC Report of South Africa, 1998, Vol. 4.

This has contributed to the notion that the past conflicts and their impact on South Africa today have become "frozen," and therefore continue to paralyze the present, limiting the potential for a better future. Within this context, it is as if religious apathy has hijacked the continuation of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance processes that were started by the work of the TRC. As a consequence, reconciliation, justice, and tolerance have almost disappeared off the agenda of most religious, non-governmental, and governmental agencies. A further consequence is that there has been a significant increase in intolerance, rather than a growth in tolerance, at all levels of society. Given the current challenges facing society, there is a real need to recommit religious society to the process of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance. The former minister in the presidency, Trevor Manuel, confirmed on September 19, 2013 that the South African citizenry are passive and not engaged with current society, specifically with regard to issues of healing.[5] For democracy to flourish there has to be a strong, active and vocal non-governmental sector, frequently interacting with a responsive government.

The role of an active and committed citizenry is to ensure that the core issues of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance remain on the faith communities', and subsequently on the nation's, agenda. Van der Borght (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 179), the Desmond Tutu Chair of Theology and VU University Amsterdam, in a sense echoes the call of Mr Manuel when he argues that the nation state requested the faith communities to lead the way in reconciling our society, restoring justice, and creating tolerance amongst its citizens. However, the lack of faith communities to lead this challenge not only fails South African society at large, but fails their own faith tradition as well.

Based on the above, the inability of faith communities to be actively involved in processes of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance over the last 20 years has confirmed their identity crises in terms of their role within the public domain. As a result of this passivity and apathy, the impact of past injustices and conflicts has not been addressed, the recommendations

[5] Minister Manuel was the speaker at the second annual lecture of the Institute for Healing of Memories. (Available from: http://www.healing-memories.org/news/lectures. Accessed April 22, 2015.)

by the TRC have not been attended to,[6] and neither have their own commitments to reconciliation, justice, and unity formed part of their main agenda. Hence, this chapter will attempt to focus on how the church can address this vacuum caused by the "frozen"' conflict, the injustices of the past, and the growing intolerance amongst the races, in order to regain its commitment to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance. The purpose is to break through the frozen conflict by revisiting the core content of their confession and calling, in order to embody hope and recommit themselves to their prophetic and priestly task of fostering reconciliation, justice, and tolerance within the public domain.

This chapter will, therefore, firstly attempt to provide a short description of the current situation regarding the challenges of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance 20 years after transition. Secondly, it will attempt to reestablish what the role of the faith communities is, more particularly the role of the church in the public domain; and lastly, it will engage with the foundations upon which the church builds its calling to be a church of hope in the world, as well as how it should play out its role of contributing to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.

Understanding Reconciliation, Justice, and Tolerance 20 Years After the TRC

During a recent symposium on the challenges of reconciliation in a post-TRC South Africa, held at the University of Stellenbosch, Dr Fanie du Toit, the director of the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation (IJR),[7] indicated that there seems to be a shared faith in the power of the word "reconciliation," and the power of words in general to transform reality. According to him, South Africa "gave this word (reconciliation) to the

[6] See the Report of the TRC, 1998, Vol. 5, p. 316 ff.

[7] One of the key tasks of the IJR is to track what (all) South Africans think the meaning of reconciliation is. This is done in different ways: for example, Idasa's so-called "Afrobarometer" is now run by IJR in 40 African countries, measuring public attitudes on economic, political, and social matters on the continent; work in communities to see what they do, what works in communities with regards to reconciliation; and it does comparative analyses in Africa on national approaches to reconciliation and on public engagement with media (the dissemination of key considerations regarding reconciliation by the public media).

world," and now this word is being used across Africa in formal documents and legislation (from the United Nations (UN), to the African Union (AU), to many individual countries across the continent), and today "has an international life of its own" (Symposium report 2014b, p. 2). This was confirmed in recent research by Palme (2014, p. 1) from the Center for Reconciliation in Jena, Germany, when she indicated that the new requirements and moral principles of "truth seeking" and "reconciliation" established by the Truth Commission model could not only be adapted in developing countries but also in Asian countries such as South Korea, and also in the Americas, in countries such as Canada.

Although reconciliation and different ways of understanding truth could indeed be one of our proud export products, brought about by the liberating change and the salient work done by the TRC,[8] we humbly need to acknowledge that this momentum has trickled down in the post-TRC context. In an attempt to understand this development 20 years later, following the initial widely acknowledged success of the TRC, one is tempted to look for superficial reasons and causes of why the momentum created by the TRC process and the recommendations made by the TRC have not been taken further to address the issues of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance. This, however, does ask for more considerable engagement. Almost ten years ago, Stevens (2005, p. 35) predicted that "Reconciliation is unlikely to be experienced as a widespread phenomenon when social relations remain fundamentally unequal in post conflict context."[9]

For the purpose of this chapter it is helpful to inquire what the current status of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance are, based on statistics provided from research done by the IJR (Wale, Reconciliation Barometer survey report 2013). The statistics indicate that the greatest sources of division in South Africa are poverty and economic inequality. This does not deny that issues concerning race, culture, or gender are a continuous challenge but rather that poverty and economic inequality are currently the primary causes of division in our society, and are thus a notable challenge facing the country today. Although, generally speaking, the black middle class has grown extensively in recent years, this needs to

[8] See the TRC Report of South Africa, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 110.

[9] See Koopman (2015, p. 13), "Geen toekoms sonder geregtigheid nie."

be put into perspective given the demographics of the population and the unjust past that took place during apartheid. Black people still form the majority of the poor in our society, by far, with white folk still constituting the majority of the wealthy (Wale 2013, p. 16).

There has been, secondly, a steady decrease in the general populace's trust in government (Wale 2013, p. 24). During Mandela's presidency, trust in government was at its very peak, but in recent years it has dwindled into a systemic and sustained loss of citizen confidence in government. Contributing to the dwindling levels of trust in government is the 12.7 % decline (since 2012) of public trust in the South African Police Service (SAPS) due to, amongst other reasons, increased police brutality, which is also an indication of growing intolerance within society. Interestingly enough, while political parties enjoy the least amount of trust, the current public protector enjoys the second highest (64.4 %) and religious institutions the highest percentage of trust (67 %) amongst South Africans (Wale 2013, p. 24).[10]

Thirdly, the majority of South Africans agree that apartheid was a crime against humanity (60 %); therefore, most people accept the need to reconcile (Wale 2013, p. 37). The majority of people think some degree of reconciliation has occurred and that people actually want to reconcile with one another, restore justice, and be a tolerant society, but in reality commitment towards reconciliation, justice, and tolerance continues to decline. However, at grassroots level, therefore, at the level of interpersonal reconciliation, people in the highest income group in South Africa readily feel that society has been reconciled (as is evident in mixed marriages, mixed neighborhoods, schools, etc.). However, having said that, this view is not shared by economically deprived groups, or by those who live in almost total isolation from others. It seems, therefore, that reconciliation is something that is limited to those with careers and employment. Yet when one scrutinizes the statistics even further, including those relating to the high income group, it seems that contact between the different groups mostly takes the form of mere chitchat rather than actual socializing (Wale 2013, p. 36).

[10] See Ganiel and Tarusarira (in Leiner et al. 2014, p. 73), as it is similar to the situation in Zimbabwe.

Fourthly, although a generally high percentage of South Africans may say that one should forget about apartheid, forgive, and move on, there are more marked differences of opinion regarding redress, restitution, reparation, and other justice issues. From the statistics in the abovementioned report (Wale 2013, p. 38), it is clear that whites in particular are less keen on talking about economical (financial/material) redress. According to Wale (2013, p. 38), "… the lack of interracial contact between poor black South Africans and other race groups may provide an explanation for why white South Africans show less agreement with the need to support victims of apartheid and redress the economic imbalance which plagues poor black South Africans."

Fifthly, the current economic division has the potential to destroy young people in our society, as well as future generations to come. In terms of the extent of the economic divide, some statistics that have been collated are a cause for concern. According to the Reconciliation Barometer (Wale 2013, p. 28), there are currently 19.5 million youth (younger than 35) of whom 70.9 % are unemployed. Unemployment was indicated as one of the driving forces behind the 2012 brutal xenophobic attacks in South Africa.[11] The escalation of these attacks could be seen as a true expression of the absence of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance within our society.[12]

Finally, with regard to how people comprehend reconciliation within the current reality, it is relevant to observe real life experiences of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance. In this regard, Dr Deon Snyman, from the Restitution Foundation (RF),[13] presented a case study at the symposium that related to community-led reconciliation within a local context, namely the town of Worcester in the Western Cape.[14] The following

[11] Xenophobic violence should be understood as violent attacks on foreign nationals living and working in South Africa by mostly black South Africans.

[12] See the article on xenophobic violence in democratic South Africa in South African history online.

[13] Restitution Foundation, a non-governmental organization in Cape Town, which was started by white, colored, and black businesspeople who felt that the churches did not take the challenges and recommendations of the TRC faith hearings seriously enough.

[14] See Snyman (2014a) on the work done by the Restitution Foundation; and Snyman (2013) on the restitution toolkit; as well as the Doctoral dissertation by Hills (2014) on Restitution in the Reconciliation Process in Worcester.

aspects from this real life experience further deepen this quest for a more insightful understanding of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance within our communities:

- Faith communities in the rural areas did not escape the harsh impact of apartheid in the way they operated within the current context. This is in accordance with the observation made by Van der Borght (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 159), that "… many faith communities mirrored apartheid society, giving the lie to their profession of a loyalty that transcended social divisions."
- According to Snyman (Symposium report 2014b, p. 5), it is appropriate to assume that most rural communities are very religious and devoted communities, and are therefore willing to participate in reconciliation processes. However, Snyman asks us to be aware of the consequences of a bad theology, which is shared by many faith communities owing to the legacy of apartheid, impacting on the processes of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.
- Reconciliation, justice, and tolerance are more than a relational process. Snyman (Symposium report 2014b, p. 6) explained that within the Worcester community there was at first a very specific emphasis on relational matters between the different groupings. This was soon followed by a specific attempt to address the socio-economic challenges within the community by means of concrete initiatives such as restitution financing.
- Many faith communities and churches are still deeply divided by historical conventional disagreements, as well as by racial segregation based on the legacy of apartheid. This was particularly affirmed by many of the church leaders during the re-enactment of the TRC faith hearing consultation. Dr Vicentia Kgabe (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 203), the rector of the College of the Transfiguration, describes the division in a painful but honest way: "Our divisions have turned us to voiceless spectators on our own turf."

Based on an interpretation of the above statistics and real life experience, the conclusion can be drawn that in spite of the efforts of the TRC process and (to a large extent) the structural and institutional religious

society to create a reconciled, just, and tolerant society, it is more and more clear that there is a disconcerting increase in intolerance, a lack of reconciliation, and a hesitation in dealing with justice issues amongst South Africans. This prompts a search for ways in which the faith communities, particularly the church, can engage in the public domain so as to contribute to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.

The Role of the Church in the Public Domain

The role of the church within the public domain is indeed a deeply theological, and in particular a practical theological endeavor, as it is related to the identity, task, and role of the church in society. When arguing from the premise that practical theology is the discipline that is most able to assist the church in engaging in the public domain, we need a clear understanding of practical theology. In this regard, Ganzevoort (2009, p. 3) proposes that practical theology should be described as the hermeneutics of lived religion, with the terms "hermeneutics," "lived," and "religion" together forming the heart of practical theology. For the purpose of this chapter it is necessary to briefly describe Ganzevoort's understanding of these terms as they form the center of the argument about the role of the church in society. Ganzevoort (2009, p. 3) is adamant that practical theology should always focus on religion, "either on the level of the phenomena we study or on the level of theological reflection about these phenomena." Practical theology is the discipline that works with the "praxis," or rather with lived religion, "the actions and meanings operant in the ways humans live interact and relate to the divine. The main question is what happens and how we can live life more adequately in relation to the sources of religious tradition and to the ideas about the divine" (Ganzevoort 2009, p. 4). In terms of the third term, practical theology is essentially hermeneutical; therefore, Ganzevoort (2009, p. 4) states "we study the field of lived religion in a hermeneutical mode, that is, attending to the most fundamental processes of interpreting life through endless conversations in which we construct meaning." When practical theology is understood in this way it can truly contribute to changing the world we live in.

When practical theology is understood in this way, it raises the fundamental issue of responsibility. This is essentially about the way practical theology engages with what Ganzevoort (2009, p. 11) calls the audience of practical theology, namely academia, the church, and society, in order to liberate the world we live in. I concur with what Ganzevoort (2009, p. 12) refers to as "our responsibility toward the three audiences and the unavoidable conflicts between them gives the discipline its hybrid character, but also its sense of urgency." It is precisely this hybridity and urgency that needs to be responsible as practical theology engages with lived religion in order to assist the church within the public domain.

South Africans have grappled with what the identity and role of the church should be after apartheid. Would it be able to practice a hermeneutics of lived religion? Would it be able to function within hybridity and with urgency to be true to its responsibilities? In grappling with these questions the well-known theologian and leader Jaap Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 175) said to an ecumenical gathering 24 years ago, during the time of political negotiations in South Africa, "The church of Christ is the vehicle of hope in South Africa. As the vehicle of hope, it is co-responsible for the social-political future of this country."[15] He said this against the backdrop of the active role the church played in spreading the "… message about the immorality, and wickedness of apartheid …" (Du Toit 2014a, p. 176). This is an affirmation of the statement at the beginning of this chapter, and again emphasizes the significance of a united ecumenical front against injustice. During the same meeting, Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 178) was outspoken in his statement that the church had not only been prominent in ending apartheid but that it was equally coresponsible for the current negotiation process and for the future of the country, and therefore "there can be no doubt about the role of the church in these times of negotiations" (Du Toit 2014a, p. 178). According to Durand, church leaders are not politicians who need to sit around the negotiation table to negotiate the future of this country. The church has a deep, priestly, and prophetic responsibility to engage and

[15] Message delivered on Sunday May 6, 1990 in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, at an ecumenical gathering of mainly black Christian churches during a time of political negotiations by Jaap Durand.

participate in processes regarding reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.[16] Apathy and passivity are the result of denying responsibility. Based on this premise, the fundamental question is what should the role of the church be in order to be a vehicle of hope as it engages in the process of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance within the public domain.

Coresponsibility and engagement are key to the calling of the church in the public domain.[17] However, they require the church to reposition itself in terms of rediscovering its core identity within the changing political and social context. They also raise the issue of how the church should engage with social and political issues. On the brink of the new democratic and free South Africa, Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 175) explains that the church within its current and future context is not to act like politicians in the political arena, like economists in the economic world, or like lawyers or judges in the legal fraternity. The role of the church is to engage within these and other spheres of life via the members of the churches who live and work in these spheres so as to make sure that they act according to their calling as Christians in society (Du Toit 2014a, p. 178).[18] Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 178) further indicates the content of the church's identity when he explains that the church should at all costs take the situation of the poor and suffering as its point of departure, and by doing so be true to biblical expectations, and therefore to its identity. Although we always need to be aware of idealizing the role of the church, we also need to be prophetic,[19] in terms of the role the church as a hermeneutist within lived religion can play as a vehicle of hope amid poverty, suffering, abuse, discrimination, and dehumanization, within the public domain. This is the church's duty. We cannot escape from it (Du Toit 2014a, p. 178).

[16] See Hall (2010, p. 39) in this regard.

[17] See Smit (2007, pp. 1–8) on the Notions of the Public—and Doing Theology? Tentative Theses for Discussion; and Koopman (2010, p. 134).

[18] See M. Leiner and S. Fläming (Eds.) (2012, p. 11) as they plead for a trans-disciplinary approach to reconciliation.

[19] See Van der Borght (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 193).

The Church as the Embodiment of Hope

In order to avoid the dangers of being hijacked by apathy and passiveness, and in order to adhere to its calling, the church can only embody hope if it has based its involvement on the premise that it has a message of hope for the world. We need to be reminded that the message of hope is based on the resurrection power of Christ, because through the resurrection God guarantees the future.

In this regard, Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177) states that the prophetic message of hope is combined with the deed of anticipating the new heaven and earth of righteousness, justice, and love. Although in his contemplation he is aware of the fact that the new earth has not yet fully come and that there is always a creative tension between the "not yet" and the "already," he emphasizes that true hope is realistic in the time and world we live in. True hope is neither an optimistic attitude nor a risk we have to take. True hope is always realistic because God is our future. True hope is intrinsically resurrection hope. Because of the resurrection dimension, immortality and new life in Christ are inseparable (Louw 2008, p. 203).

The church must, however, never forget that its message of hope, based on the resurrection of Christ is, as Durand states, ignited at the cross (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177). In his discussion he deliberately links the cross to the suffering we endure in this world: "The cross is central to understanding Christ's passion for the suffering world we live in. Christ rules as the crucified Lord in the midst of suffering, poverty and death" (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177). This immediately raises the following questions. How does this impact on the role of the church within our current post-apartheid and post-TRC context? How can the church embody hope for people who are suffering in the present in order to create a hopeful future? Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177) is frank when he argues that the only way is for the church to identify with the suffering and the poor. He states, "In doing so the cross-bearing church takes upon itself the guilt, death and suffering of the world" (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177). If the church embodies Christ's suffering on the cross, and thereby takes the suffering of the world upon itself, it will need to understand and repent of its own weaknesses and contributions towards creating suffering and intolerance in society. This requires the church to become self-critical of the role it

plays in society and a willingness to reexamine the mistakes and weaknesses of church members, especially those of its leaders, in causing conflict. It will further need to realize that if it wants to become a prophetic voice against suffering, injustice, and intolerance, it will have to stand in solidarity with those who suffer no matter the price.[20] The church within the current South African context can therefore only become a church embodied with hope if it manages to totally identify with the poor, the unemployed, the youth, the marginalized, and so on.

Earlier in this chapter, I referred to those predominantly white minority churches that supported apartheid, and explained that they are still struggling to understand what it entails to be a church in a post-apartheid context. When Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177) addressed the mainly black churches at the ecumenical meeting in 1990, he stated in no uncertain terms that prosperity makes hope impossible, and in the same vein he added that a prosperous church has no message of hope. Expanding this statement, he explained that those who are prosperous are prone to despair because they fear that situations could turn to the worse in the future, and they have a lot to lose. He particularly indicated that many prosperous white South Africans are pessimistic about the future because they have never really known what it means to suffer and be miserable (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177). They have forgotten their own suffering through extensive poverty at the turn of the nineteenth century.

I have previously referred to those churches that were extensively engaged in ending apartheid and continue to suffer from struggle fatigue. These churches are in need of rediscovering the fact that the crucified Christ overcame death and rose again to bring us hope. They are the churches that have the ability to understand suffering, and can thus show solidarity with the poor, the oppressed, and the suffering, and in turn can open the doors of hope. It is for the hopeless in South Africa that Christ brings hope (Du Toit 2014a, p. 178). These churches are therefore in the best position to lead the way in the current context by embodying a message of hope, not only because they understand but also because they can interpret suffering.

[20] See the role of Archbishop Romero in the liberation of El Salvador (Tombs 2012, pp. 41–56).

Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177) continuously argues that all churches (those who supported apartheid and those who struggled to end apartheid) will need to rediscover that in unity with the Lord they can recognize the selfishness of people, and the injustice, hate, and oppression (one can also add intolerance) that go along with that. But, says Durand (Du Toit 2014a, p. 177), the church also knows the way in which guilt can be removed and the way in which suffering can be relieved.

During the recent reenactment of the TRC faith hearing in Stellenbosch (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 183), Durand was invited to share a prophetic voice for the future.[21] With a stern and serious voice he reflected on the role of religious society in healing our country: "How many opportunities have we squandered to embrace each other in the name of God, opportunities to thank God for what God has given us … by reaching out to each other?" By grappling with why we as a religious society have squandered so many chances, he comes to the conclusion that we are perhaps too religious, because we do not manage to express what we profess to believe. He rightly asks: "Have we depended on our religiosity to pull us through instead of relying on God?" This confirms the argument made in this chapter that the church has allowed religious apathy to hijack its calling to the reconciliation process.

Nevertheless, Durand does not end his reflection on a negative and pessimistic note (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 184). He passionately shared his wholehearted belief that God is a God of second chances. He said, "If I did not believe this, I would have given up hope for South Africa and hope for us all" (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 184). In no uncertain terms he confesses that God is our future and that it is God's promise. With a sense of urgency he adds that we need to be clear that there are conditions attached to God's promise. Van der Borght (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 193), in his contribution to the reenactment hearing, affirms the tremendous potential the churches have to contribute to civil society, but that they also need to be aware of the huge responsibility that this brings. One of the central aspects of responsibility is accountability, and especially accountability to God and to humankind. In this regard,

[21] The reenactment consultation of the TRC faith hearing took place 24 years after Durand addressed the ecumenical church gathering referred to in the introduction of this chapter.

Ackermann (1996, p. 50) states: "Accountability is, however, not limited to being faithful only to the values and vision of the community from which one comes. But accountability is ultimately tested in the reality of the well-being of all. I am accountable for your welfare, and yours, and yours, in the sense that I may not act in any way which places it in jeopardy." Taking responsibility and being accountable is, according to Ackermann (1996, p. 51), a wake-up call for humans and a deliberate move away from apathy. She states that we need to be aware that "We are accountable for our lack of awareness. Equally we are capable of waking up. Being awake means that we will hear the truth, accept accountability and dedicate ourselves to reconciliation" (Ackermann 1996, p. 52).

It is precisely on the issue of our lack of awareness that Bishop Kevin Dowling (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 27) from the Roman Catholic Church pleaded for a coalface theology. This is all about having our feet firmly fixed on the ground, listening to the needs of the people situated at the grassroots of our society. It is these "stories of the poor (that) are written on their bodies, inscribed in souls and captured in the histories of dispossession and humiliation" that the church needs to listen to, says Maluleke (2011, p. 89). It is also here on the ground that it will encounter the extreme level of anger still present in our nation. Maluleke (2011, p. 89) further states that we will not only hear the voices of angry black people but also of angry white people, as "… some of the most violent people on earth are to be found here." When the church manages to hear these intense and intolerant voices it requires a theology of vulnerability and not of arrogance. In this regard, Ganzevoort (2009, p. 12) states that we need to develop a theology from below that has the ability to acknowledge the perspectives of those who are marginalized, and to develop theological discourses and resources that support their emancipation. In this sense, tolerance and intolerance and their connection to religion can be fully understood if we are able to analyze the (in)tolerance of ordinary people and their performativity, practices, and interests in non-institutionalized spaces.

To become true hermeneutists within lived religion, churches should keep their feet firmly on the ground and be accountable to their calling as they engage within the public domain. This will help them to remember

that the processes of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance are always painful, and that they are not only about the healing of individuals, but also more deeply about healing communities. The whole community needs to buy into these processes to ensure that restitution takes place, and this in turn contributes to ensuring that reconciliation, justice, and tolerance become a reality. Snyman (Symposium report 2014b, p. 5) helps us when he proposes a new strategy called community-led restitution,[22] which has two elements: trauma recovery (relating to all South Africans traumatized by apartheid and colonialism) and socioeconomic justice. The church cannot merely acknowledge that reconciliation is predominantly about healing the emotional, spiritual, and physical wounds of the past but it is also principally about socioeconomic justice. The church needs to actively participate in these processes, as it is what God expects it to do as it travels along the road of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance. In this sense, it has to take into account the lived experience of ordinary Christian people, as well as that of the structural institutional policies and leadership that will pave the way for reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.

Conclusion

During the closing remarks of the reenactment consultation of the TRC faith hearing, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 209) stated that South Africans need to remember that "this country has been chosen by God specially, a country that is meant to show the world how we are to be the family of God. Go away from here knowing, yes, we have been sinners. We are sinners, but we are sinners who are repenting and God is going to be blessing us. We will get angry with each other yes, because sometime there is pain we cannot

[22] Snyman (Symposium report 2014b, p. 5) explains the motivation leading up to engaging in the process of community-led restitution as follows: "One of the limitations in this work was that the ecumenical movement was in dire straits and in most of the country there seemed to be little energy towards ecumenical work in the last decade. Furthermore, many of the post-apartheid church leaders did not have the charisma of apartheid era church leaders such as Beyers Naudé, Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak and Dennis Hurley. Therefore, the vehicle had to be refocused and although the mission stayed the same, the vehicle was now to be ordinary church members or not even church members, but a bottom-up, grass roots vehicle."

control. But if we fail in South Africa there is very little chance for the rest of the world … very little chance." These harsh words were addressed to the religious community, and to the churches in particular, to encourage them to adhere to their calling in life and to take up their responsibility of reconciling the nation of South Africa.

This call by the Archbishop is a call for the church to get involved in the public domain of our society in such a way that it regains society's faithfulness, thereby regaining its agency as an advocate of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance. Similarly, Nico Koopman stated that religious communities, especially the churches, should guard against generalizing, stereotyping, and stigmatizing each other (Re-enactment report 2014, p. 199).[23]

This chapter has argued that the church can once again regain its fundamental core identity by engaging in society as a vehicle of hope. This is only possible if the church can embody a theology of vulnerability by identifying and engaging more deeply with the needs of the poor and the suffering. This implies that as the church of the resurrection, the church needs to engage with the poor and suffering with hope, by taking their suffering upon itself. Thus, by identifying with the suffering, the church engenders hope.

This chapter has also argued that in its endeavor to identify with the needs of the poor and suffering, and to become a church of hope, it will need to engage with the challenges of reconciliation, justice, and tolerance within the context of poverty and suffering. As indicated, it is not only about caring for and alleviating the suffering of the poor owing to the trauma of apartheid but it is also predominantly about justice, and in particular economic justice. In this regard, it has been emphasized that the process of community-led restitution is a way in which the church can once again become a church of hope and be true to its core identity. This will, however, need leadership that has the courage, the wisdom, and the ability to engage in the public domain in order to contribute to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance.

[23] Prof Nico Koopman is Dean of the Faculty of Theology at Stellenbosch University and Director of the Beyers Naudé Centre.

Based on the above, the church of hope can break through the "frozen" past by becoming involved in addressing the challenges of our society. Dr Snyman (Reconciliation Symposium report 2014a, p. 5) bears witness to this when he states that when faith communities succeed in identifying a core social issue that has an impact on the whole community, they can succeed in creating unity across racial, faith, and conventional boundaries, and therefore contribute to reconciliation, justice, and tolerance in a constructive way.[24] By being a hermeneutist of lived experience, the church will be able to limit the transmission and embodiment of past traumas to subsequent generations, and therefore contribute to the reduction of intolerance, violence, xenophobia, and radical nationalism that have already become tragically evident in our society. Nagy (2004, p. 650) describes that we need to strive for a society "where 'being fellow citizens' entails positively valued belonging and interdependence." With this hope in mind, I also believe, along with Durand, that God is a God of second chances. May God forbid that we as a people of faith once again squander this opportunity!

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[24] See the example of Archbishop Romero and the role he and the church played in El Salvador (Tombs, in Leiner and Fläming 2012, p. 55).

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The Politics of Intolerance, Lived Religion, and Theological Reflection Around Belfast's Separation Barriers

Jonathan Hatch

Everything looks different on a bicycle, even sectarianism.

When I first moved to Belfast, my home for 13 years, a bike was a much cheaper and more convenient mode of transport than a car, and it was in the context of cycling that I had my first experience of the miles of separation barriers winding through the city. In a car, navigating the barriers is fairly easy; on a bike, the barriers are much more immediately noticeable.

For instance, if I went to a friend's house across the barrier in the evening, I needed to be aware of how late I stayed; if I were to stay beyond when the gates were locked for the night, my cycle ride home became three times longer.

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I also became conscious of the barriers' effect on my religious life. There were times when I wanted to attend Mass at Clonard Monastery, off the Falls Road. However, on Sunday mornings, the gates near my house were locked, and a ride that would normally have taken me five minutes now took fifteen. The barriers certainly didn't affect if I *could* worship, or if I *did* worship, but they did affect, in ways noticeable to me, *how* and *where* I worshipped. If the barriers were affecting my social and religious life, I reasoned, they must be affecting the social and religious lives of others.

While perhaps not being the most important—or even the most disturbing—aspect of the Northern Ireland conflict, the separation barriers are certainly one of the most perplexing: constructed to reduce violence, the majority have been built since the paramilitary ceasefires in 1994 and the Good Friday Agreement of 1998; designed to make people feel safer, the vast majority of deaths during and after the conflict have occurred within sight of them; constructed and maintained at considerable cost from public funds, they run through some of the most economically deprived areas of the city; stretching for miles and often six or more metres high, they are unnoticed and go unmentioned in most of Ireland's social, political, and religious discourse.

Yet they are part of our social reality, our lived religion, and the politics of our intolerance. How the lived religious experiences of the people of faith in Belfast might engage more effectively with the reality of the barriers—as well as help facilitate a politics and theology of transformation—is the subject of this chapter.

The Social Reality of the Separation Barriers

Belfast's separation barriers are not one thing; there are many different types, made of many different materials, and serving a variety of functions. Some are concrete walls; some are fences; some are metal sheets; some combine all three of these into a single structure. Some are gates that are almost always locked; some are gates that are more or less always open. Some are simply functional, topped with barbed wire or smashed glass bottles set into cement; some are beautifully sculpted and landscaped with trees, shrubs, and topped with flower boxes. Some have been in place for decades; some appear seemingly overnight.

For our purposes, then, a 'separation barrier' is a constituent part of this complex network of walls, fences, gates, commercial properties, and empty 'buffer zones' that run through many—but not all—areas of Belfast.

The barriers function primarily as a method of civil pacification and a means to address a variety of complex issues surrounding 'interface' community relations in Belfast. Early recordings of the use of separation barriers date to the rioting in 1920 and again in 1935 (Downing 1980). The most recent phase of conflict in Northern Ireland (roughly 1968–1998) saw the use of separation barriers expand considerably. Attacks on neighbourhoods, rioting, and intergroup violence led to local people constructing ad hoc barricades of wood, scrap metal, and burned-out vehicles. Once the British Army was given overall responsibility for security operations in August 1969 (McKittrick and McVea 2002), the army removed these and began constructing the first semi-permanent barriers along well-known flashpoints such as Cupar Way and Bombay Street between the Shankill and the Falls areas of West Belfast (Strain and Hamill 2009).

The official government line was that the expanded use of separation barriers was an emergency measure. British Army GOC Sir Ian Freeland was famously quoted at the time: 'The peaceline will be a very, very temporary affair … We will not have a Berlin Wall or anything like that in this city' (McDonald 2008).

This was not to be the case. Instead, the conflict 'bedded down' and moved from sporadic civil unrest to sustained insurgency and political stalemate ('Operation Banner' 2006). Over time, the army's corrugated sheets were slowly replaced by more permanent constructions, which have been reinforced, heightened, and lengthened as the perceived need arose.

The Separation Barriers as a Manifestation of Intolerance

Many factors led both to the initial construction and the subsequent expansion of the barriers. There was the nature of the conflict itself, a civil conflict of assassination, street fighting, urban disorder, improvised explosive device-type bombing, and arson, which compelled the security services to

seek to control space and movement around the city. Additionally, there is the nature of the city, with its relatively compact geography, densely populated working-class areas, and many 'interfaces', areas of the city where territory perceived as belonging to one community adjoins that of another. These interfaces have served as convenient staging grounds for disorder, both spontaneous and orchestrated, and this type of sectarian-related criminal action has left embattled residents demanding ever more 'concrete' measures to ensure safety and security. Finally, there is the long history of structural sectarianism in Ireland, with its zero-sum understandings of culture, religion, and nationality.

The barriers can be seen as a physical manifestation of three psychological dynamics on the parts of the communities around them: a desire for security; fear and lack of trust for the 'other' community; and a desire to reinforce the identity of one's own community in the face of what they perceive as a well-organized, threatening 'other'. The desires themselves are perfectly understandable and in many social situations would be perceived as healthy. However, what has not been adequately explored, either in the public media, in government, or in academia, is if publicly funded, physically- reinforced segregation is the best way to provide for those desires, and if the solution might actually be producing unforeseen consequences.

The majority of residents of Belfast's interface areas indicated that they felt that the primary purpose of the barriers was to stop violence—51 % overall—and to help people feel safer—67 % overall (Interface Poll 2008). What is notable from the research is that the reasons for the barriers' presence is *not* a specific desire by residents of one area to segregate themselves from the other community, but to prevent or lessen antisocial behaviour associated with certain elements in the other community. This point should be stressed; the barriers foster and exacerbate intolerance through their continued presence even if their presence was not initially a direct consequence of intolerance.

However, the two communities on either side of a barrier very often have divergent interpretations of its purpose. Working-class Protestant/Unionist residents, owing to long-term demographic changes and declining numbers of urban Protestants, express fears of being 'overrun' by what they perceive to be a larger, better organized, and more politically savvy Catholic community (Heatley 2004). Therefore, the barriers are more often perceived as

a 'necessary fact of life' to counteract what is seen as a coordinated Catholic expansionist campaign into what are perceived to be Protestant areas. This belief complements a broader post-Good Friday Agreement urban Protestant narrative that the Catholic community and the Housing Executive conspire to 'move the Protestant working class out of the city as a process of political appeasement' ('Fear, Mobility, and Living' 2000).

Catholic/Nationalists, on the other hand, had more of a tendency to see the barriers as a mechanism of the British government to keep them 'hemmed in', frustrating the ability for natural growth and expansion by pandering to Protestant intransigence (Heatley 2004). To working-class Catholics, then, the barriers feed into a broader narrative of British mismanagement of Ireland and intolerance toward their community.

These differences go some way to dispelling the simplistic notion that the barriers are an inevitable consequence of two intolerant communities unable to live in close proximity in peace. Simply put, the barriers exist out of a desire for security, and also reinforce insecurity; they exist because of fear, and also reinforce the need to be fearful; they exist because of communities' desire to maintain a cohesive identity, yet also reinforce those identities in static, antagonistic, and threatening ways. Moreover, the separation barriers perpetuate the belief that violent acts are still possible, that the 'other' community is basically unchanged, and that the government is in some way either ignoring the problem or making it worse (Liggett 2004; Doherty and Poole 1997).

The Politics of Intolerance and the Separation Barriers

In 1999, after years of escalating violence in the previously stable Whitewell and White City areas of North Belfast, the decision was made by then-Security Minister for Northern Ireland Adam Ingram to erect a 60 metre long, 9 metre high separation barrier between the two communities, the first to be erected in Belfast since 1994. Explaining the decision, Ingram said:

> I have based my decision solely on the pressing need to maintain the safety of both communities living in this area. I very much regret the need to take such a decision … I believe however, there is no other option available in the circumstances … (Heatley 2004, pp. 47–48)

Attention should be given to Ingram's phrase 'no other option available' which, in many ways, encapsulates the sociopolitical inertia evident surrounding security provision around Belfast's interfaces. It also serves as an example of how the policymaking, planning, and budgetary allocation all play a role in the sectarian system, and how they then affect the dynamics of community relations. Simply put, the barriers are a policy decision; they are a choice and a funding allocation. For this reason, though they are invariably relegated to the realm of security, they must also be thought of as a social and political issue, even if they rarely figure in the public discourse as such. Any security measures implemented in a context of sectarian intolerance that then foster or perpetuate the very intolerance they were supposedly designed to ameliorate must be identified as a component of a 'politics of intolerance'.

This complexity goes back to the earliest days of the conflict. In April 1971, Northern Ireland's Minister for Home Affairs John Taylor submitted a secret report to the Prime Minister entitled 'Future Policy on Areas of Confrontation' (Garbutt 2014). Its purpose was to scrutinize 'existing areas of confrontation and peace lines and to advise as to future policy'.

While acknowledging that the government had made 'no conscious effort' to segregate Belfast or had any 'grand segregationist plan', the reality of segregation of certain areas from others had been prevalent since the nineteenth century; the report pessimistically concluded that 'the problem has been persistent and recurrent and may not be eradicable even if some conscious central policy were designed to promote integration'. Unfortunate as this may have been in abstract terms, security had to be the paramount consideration: 'forces of lawful authority should everywhere be seen to be in command of the situation'.

To that end, Taylor proposed that all future redevelopment of the city should ensure 'the maximum natural separation between the opposing areas' through 'some sort of *cordon sanitaire*'; commercial properties, housing developments, and of course walls should be positioned to 'form natural barriers'; access roads between the Falls and Shankill should be 'substantially reduced'; most ambitiously, the Westlink motorway and other roadways then under planning should be situated to create 'natural' divisions between contested areas.

Ultimately, Taylor favoured 'increasing, rather than discouraging segregation through the creation of natural barriers.' None of this, of course, was made public.

What can be surmised is that British government policymakers saw the long-term necessity of physical segregation; what also became clear is that there might also be benefits. One of the few times this notion was aired publicly was in an interview given in 2003 by then-Lord Mayor of Belfast Martin Morgan. First describing the barriers as 'regrettable, but understandable and necessary', he then went on to question their overall effectiveness:

> First, (the barriers) don't guarantee peace, because … a terrorist can get into a car and drive through the walls, and they do so. And how high do you build the wall, to block things from being thrown over? (Sadeh 2003)

At the same time, Morgan admitted that the barriers represented a cost-effective security alternative to large-scale security operations:

> Instead of sending dozens of policemen and army personnel, we close the gates and have two policemen patrol the area…. The structure itself is maybe 400–500 metres. It costs £200,000, paid by the British government, and has a gate in the middle, and it requires only two police officers to open the gate. It is locked at night, and if there's an incident during the day the police come and lock it … In terms of human resources, the fences save a lot of money and resources. (Sadeh 2003)

Morgan's comments are an example of a fundamental disconnect between social policy and security policy in the sectarian context:

> On the one hand general government social policy would theoretically favour a mix. But then security policy would probably prefer a separation because it keeps things distinct and easier to control. (McKittrick 1993)

What is troubling about this position is that it takes no account of how short-term security policy undermines longer-term visions of post-conflict stability and social transformation. Ongoing issues such as recreational

rioting, flags, and parades continue to undermine both the short-term and long-term policies, and the state's undergirding of division makes reconciliation and a shared future more difficult to envision (Anderson 1998.)

In this regard, the presence of the barriers at least opens up the implication that, in Belfast, the British government's security policy—based in part on publicly funded physical segregation—is failing to provide public spaces in large areas of the city where all residents would feel relatively safe and, as Taylor's report and subsequent security policy confirm, has more or less accepted ethno-sectarian segregation as a reasonable long-term solution. This in the face of evidence such as that the Whitewell/White City barrier mentioned earlier, the solution made most readily available to residents—and only after local community relations had irreparably deteriorated—failed to reduce the number of sectarian attacks in the area, even in the short term. Catholic residents, who had been slowly returning to the area over the intervening years, began to move out again, culminating in an exodus during extensive rioting in the summer of 2001.

The Nature of Lived Religion in Belfast

The context of religion in Ireland and Northern Ireland can only be understood through understanding the context of sectarianism in which it is lived. To be identified with the identity of 'Protestant' or 'Catholic'—however tenuously—carries much broader social, political, and cultural significance than in the rest of the UK or the rest of Europe. The terms, in variously subtle and overt ways, determine one's place in the social and political structure (Mitchell 2006). Since Northern Ireland has traditionally lacked more obvious physical, linguistic, or racial divisors, religion—specifically, religious *difference*—historically became, and continues to be, the primary lens through which all other differences are understood (Mitchell 2006).

It is for this reason that boundary definition and maintenance has historically been a key public role for the institutional churches. Throughout Irish history, churches played—and continue to play—a significant role in establishing the boundaries of contact and engagement with groups deemed to be 'outside' their own community or church. Similarly, the role has also included boundary *explanation*, suggesting to their communities

what the boundaries meant for them, and ceremonially framing religious people's civic engagement and cultural remembrance. By doing so, churches help to establish and maintain their communities' politics and culture and interpret how both shaped and affected them (Ganiel 2008).

However, because of Northern Ireland's history of structural sectarianism, a legacy of civil conflict and political violence, and deeply divided social structures, there has also been a noticeable phenomenon of boundary *hardening*, meaning the leadership of the various churches very often actively frustrated individual and communal contact and interaction they deemed inappropriate or unacceptable.

The churches' other main reinforcement of a politics of intolerance regards their contributions to the ideas of peacemaking and reconciliation. During the conflict, hierarchies and faith leaders of all denominations uniformly denounced violence. However, *which* particular violent acts were denounced reveals not only the effect of the divided context on the institutional churches themselves and their public role in the midst of conflict, but also their underlying philosophy about what constituted 'peace' in Northern Ireland. Thus, while the mainline denominational churches never directly *supported* violence in the modern period, 'they did little to dismantle the structures of sectarianism in which it was embedded'. Neither did the churches display any particular commitment to developing a social gospel which might have addressed social structural conditions in the underprivileged areas of Belfast where social structural conditions fed support for violence (Brewer et al. 2013).

The churches' understanding of reconciliation, what it entails, and what role they might have in fostering it are also factors. A broad survey of clergy in Ireland and Northern Ireland indicated they found that reconciliation was an important topic for preaching and teaching. Most, however, indicated reconciliation was best understood as between individuals and God; any other understanding (such as reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics) was of secondary importance. Moreover, the study found that clergy were more likely to preach about reconciliation between different ethnicities and nationalities than between Catholics and Protestants. Overall, reconciliation was approached primarily in either spiritual terms (humanity and God) or individual terms (between specific persons) rather than in social and communal terms.

What this points to is that the main contribution of the churches to peacemaking has tended to be 'negative' peacemaking: working to end violence. However, more positive peacemaking—'structural positive' peacemaking—philosophically, '*dialogue* instead of penetration, *integration* instead of segmentation, *solidarity* instead of fragmentation and *participation* instead of marginalization' (Galtung 1996)—were far less forthright and were often carried out by dedicated individuals and small groups in relative secrecy rather than by the institutional churches in public (Wells 2010).

This goes some way to explaining the churches' lack of engagement with the issue of physical barriers: while they are a cyclical *result* of violence, and indeed have often served as *venues* for violence, they are not, in and of themselves, a *manifestation* of the type of violence to which the church has historically seen the need to respond. By perceiving the problem of Northern Ireland primarily as the violence—and in particular, *paramilitary* violence—and channelling the majority of their peacemaking efforts into denouncing it, more positive visions of peace and more structural visions of reconciliation did not emerge from them.

How Lived Religion Might Address the Issue of the Separation Barriers

Out of this exploration, a number of conclusions become evident:

- The separation barriers are an integral, physical manifestation of Belfast's politics of intolerance;
- The institutional churches have historically contributed to that intolerance through their maintenance of a structural sectarianism;
- The institutional churches have confined the majority of their understanding and engagement with reconciliation to the spiritual realm rather than the sociopolitical;
- The churches have struggled to foster a lived religion that might effectively engage with the physical, structural aspects of sectarianism and intolerance.

What is evident from this exploration of the barriers and their place in the politics of intolerance is that local theological reflection has been largely silent as regards their effect on conflict, peacemaking, and reconciliation. At this point, we can ask: how might the lived religion in Belfast engage with the politics of intolerance manifested in the separation barriers? How can theology be done with integrity in the midst of a social reality of publicly funded, physically- reinforced segregation?

A possible way forward is to foster the development of new forms of rigorous local theology and new methods of theological reflection that will enable faith communities—if they so desire—to better face their social reality and its effects on the lived religion of the people of faith. Out of new theological methodologies can emerge new readings of and reflections on the biblical text in the light of the social reality of physically reinforced segregation.

The specific methodology I propose is one with a dual commitment to both liberation and reconciliation. The liberation aspect is based on the legacy of Latin American liberation theology, which represented a specifically practical and contextual attempt to 'do' theological reflection in a new way, theological reflection with a distinct focus, priority, method, and direction: Firstly, the immediate social context was seen as the beginning of theological reflection. Theology is understood as not simply 'done', but 'done here and now'. Biblical themes—love, salvation, redemption, forgiveness—are reflected upon contextually, in the light of the immediate experiences of the people of faith.

Next, a liberation focus gives priority to acknowledging the value of the lived experience of the community involved in the reflection, particularly that part of the community that is marginalized, poor, or of little social or political value. Ideally, this helps to invert traditional models of social, political, and ecclesial hierarchies when approaching the biblical text and fosters a new consciousness in the people of faith as their lived experiences become a key component of the theological process.

A liberation focus emphasizes an attention to praxis, an ongoing cycle of reflection and action. Theological praxis highlights the Christian revelation of God's love encountering the reality of structural poverty and oppression—the way things should be as opposed to the way things are. Theological reflection is seen as action and reflection aimed at the transformation of the oppressive situation.

Finally, a liberation focus views the theological process as done in a particular direction—in the direction of the most poor and the most marginalized. There is an understanding that the poor and the marginalized needn't simply accept their poverty and oppression, and a primary purpose of the theological process should be to foster an understanding that the God of the biblical text doesn't accept it either.

In Northern Ireland, the church has existed in a context of violent conflict in the past and ongoing sectarianism and deep social division in the present, with both physical and social structures underpinning it all. Having a liberation focus based on these four methodological commitments can benefit theological reflection in such a context by focusing pointedly on the need—and the opportunity—to do theology with full regard given to the structural aspects of the social reality in which it is being done. It liberates the full spectrum of the people of faith in Belfast to engage with the issue and see it as a shared experience; wealthy, poor, Protestant, Catholic—*all* live in a city physically divided.

However, the language of 'liberation' is insufficient for a thorough reflection in the sectarian context; the attitudes, actions, and structures of oppression and marginalization are not only 'vertical'—emerging from an authoritarian elite and extending downward—but also 'horizontal'—emerging from all social levels and extending outward. For this reason, 'liberation' must be equally informed by a vision of reconciliation.

The working definition of 'reconciliation' employed here is one developed by conflict researchers Brandon Hamber and Gráinne Kelly who, while working with Belfast-based think tank Democratic Dialogue, proposed five mutually related components that the people of Northern Ireland would need to address if they hoped for meaningful 'reconciliation':

- Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society;
- Acknowledging and dealing with the past;
- Significant cultural and attitudinal change;
- Building positive relationships;
- Substantial social, economic, and political change. (Hamber and Kelly 2005)

Such a detailed and comprehensive understanding of post-conflict reconciliation complements our understanding of 'liberation'. Conceived of in such a rigorous, but hopefully flexible manner implicitly communicates that, ultimately, 'reconciliation' must entail an ongoing process of social, relational, and political transformation, taking appropriate measures to ensure that the conflict does not recur, and addressing the structural conditions that led to the conflict in the first place.

Through an equal commitment to these understandings of liberation and reconciliation, we arrive at a synthesis—a commitment to 'transformation'. From the former, we envision the transformation of society and structures of oppression; from the latter, the transformation of human relationships and the structures of estrangement. The term in Greek is *εταμορφόω* (*metamorphoō*) from which English receives the term 'metamorphosis' and, via the Latin, 'transformed': to change or to transfigure.

The term occurs four times in the biblical text, the most familiar being Romans 12:2:

> Do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God; what is good and acceptable and perfect.

The Greek term translated 'conformed', σνσχηματίζω (*syschēmatizō*), means to fashion from an identical pattern—an archetype (*archétypon*)—or to make a copy from what had been fashioned before. On the other hand, εταμορφόω (*metamorphoō*) carries an implication of *disregarding* the archetype; a *change* in the original design into something completely new.

In terms of both the liberation, reconciliation, and their interrelation, the term 'transformation' embodies an understanding of a definitive movement from one structural shape of things to a new structural shape of things. Transformation' alludes to a situation that transcends reforming, repairing, or rebuilding; 'transformation' embodies redesigning.

A transformational theology, then, is the ongoing process of exploring theological reflection in the light of liberation and reconciliation, and represents a possible way forward to help a 'transformational' reading and reflection of the biblical text.

'Make Gods for Us': Examining Social Reality Through a Transformational 'Lens'

The biblical 'lens' through which I propose developing a 'transformational' reading for reflection on the separation barriers is idolatry. In contrast to a more modern, commonly accepted definition of an 'idol'—any desire, object, thought, or feeling made more important than devotion to God—this methodology focuses on the ancient Hebrew understanding, which saw an idol as something specifically *made*, something physically *constructed*. The Hebrew terminology of 'image' in Exodus 20:4 (פֶּסֶל, '*pesel*', 'hewn') specifically denoted making, crafting, or building. The late anthropologist Mary Douglas emphasizes that the terminology is carefully chosen; the writers were not overly concerned with 'mental or verbal images'; they 'did not seduce the eye or compete with the thought of God for the worshipper's attention' (Douglas, pp. 57–58).

To construct an image of Yahweh—or any deity—implied that Yahweh could be made visible and knowable. It implied that a god could be *located*, placed in one place or another, depending solely on the human's desire. The god could be made present and available, attributes Yahweh had made clear were absolutely beyond the Hebrews' control. The constructed image gave the people the ability to worship Yahweh as *they* desired—it allowed the possibility of controlling the deity.

It is this understanding of what an idol is that serves as the theological 'lens' through which we will look at the separation barriers in Belfast. Focusing on an idol as a physical structure—something we build or set up to take the place of God in our lives or to compel God to do what we want—will help us focus on the barriers, reflect on why they are there, what we want them to do for us, and what they are doing to us.

We begin with Exodus 32, probably one of the most familiar biblical texts concerning idolatry, and almost certainly the one most commonly cited for popular ideas about idolatry. Such reflections have emphasized 'true' worship giving way to idolatrous worship—worshipping something other than the true God—making an object more important than God, and the sin and debauchery that is the result. In keeping with the liberation/reconciliation ethos, the 'transformational' refection focuses on the

people's relationship with those in authority and vice versa, the people's relationship with those deemed to be 'others', and how actions taken affect those relationships.

As the story opens, there are intimations that it is a time of uncertainty and crisis in the minds of the people. After the trauma of years of slavery and oppression, their liberation comes through Yahweh in the person of Moses. Now Moses was gone, disappeared up a mountain covered with fire and cloud (Ex. 24:17–18). The one man on whom they have become entirely dependent has disappeared; is he coming back? Behind them is slavery; ahead of them are hostile foreigners. What are they to do?

So, in this reading, the impetus towards idolatry was a critique, both of Moses and, indirectly, of God. The people specifically note that Moses 'delayed' (בּשֹׁשׁ, *voshesh*), which is synonymous with 'shame'; Moses' absence was directly implied to be an embarrassment, a shame, a sin against the people.

In Moses' absence, the people then round on the symbol of authority in closest proximity: Aaron. The people, faced with calamity and unreliable leadership, are an angry mob demanding action. They demand that something be done—something immediate and conclusive—in the face of the supposed crisis. The English translation 'gathered around' in Ex. 32:1 is, in the Hebrew, 'gathered over, against, or above' (אָלָיו); the people are literally 'piling on' Aaron. Likewise, the first word out of their mouths to him—'Come' (קוּם)—is not a polite salutation, but a forceful command ('get up!'; 'do something!').

The unreliable Moses—and Moses' God—must be replaced with something tangible and reliable. The people demand 'gods' to do what God and Moses have, for whatever reason, stopped doing. The people are not demanding a *representation* of Yahweh; they want new gods, different gods altogether. 'Make gods for us', the people demand. These new gods will 'go before'; 'go ahead' ('*asher*'; אֲשֶׁר), as into battle (Fox 1997, p. 441; Alter 2004, p. 493). Yahweh was invisible; he had no name (Exodus 3:13–15); a nameless, invisible god might be an interesting novelty, but now—alone, surrounded by enemies, and with a military campaign to occupy Canaan drawing ever nearer—there is a tacit implication that the people want to meet their adversaries on an equal footing.

Aaron's position as Moses' spokesman and the nation's priestly embodiment is well established by this point (Ex. 4:10–17; 24:14; 28:4). Yet in this situation he is completely overwhelmed; the people want new gods, and he will deliver them. He asks the people to give up their gold and their jewelry and he 'formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf'. The word 'formed' or 'made' (*Haret*) implies that Aaron's actions are performed deliberately, conforming to Douglas' understanding of idolatry.

At the sight of the calf, the people declare that '*these* are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt', a provocative recasting of God's declaration at the giving of the Law: 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt …' (Ex. 20:2). The people declare that the calf—the thing *they* have made—is the one who brought them out of Egypt. Even more provocatively, Aaron builds an altar in front of the calf and declares a feast dedicated to Yahweh.

But it is not Yahweh. Whatever Aaron offers them at this point will not be the security and safety of Yahweh. Nevertheless, the people welcome the imitation; it is fulfilling the role of Yahweh and Moses, but in a manner that they see fit. *This* god will not disappear; the calf will be immediate, visible, and permanent.

When Moses does finally return, in a fury he interrogates Aaron. In contrast to the text's insistence that Aaron deliberately constructed the calf—planning, crafting, executing—he tries to imply that the calf was either an accident or something entirely different from what he intended ('out came *this* calf!'). His motives, of course, can only be speculated upon. What is clear though is that the situation is beyond anyone's control; responsibility and blame for the situation is vague and circular—Moses turns on Aaron; Aaron turns on the people ('you know the people, that they are bent on evil').

The moment is grave and out of the control of any of the actors. The people are 'running wild' ('*para*', פָּרַע; 'uncovered', 'shamed', 'let loose', 'uncontrolled', 'unrestrained') and are now a laughing stock in front of their enemies. The risks to the people were not simply spiritual, but strategic. The situation is a fiasco. What the people had hoped would bring them security and identity has, in Moses' mind, put them in a situation of insecurity and greater disorganization. The consequences were now to be seen: they had sinned in the sight of God and had weakened their position in the sight of their adversaries.

This reflection draws several similarities between the situation of the people of Israel in the desert and the people at the interfaces of Belfast. Fear in what they believe is a desperate situation, as well as disdain of and lack of trust in the established authorities, are visible in both. Both peoples demand security in the face of a threatening 'other'. In addition, both have a desire for strong identity reinforcement and the desire to construct mechanisms to 'go before' them, to identify them, and to deter attacks.

When those who have been charged with providing security and leadership seem far away or unreliable, the need for visible, permanent, and immediately located sources of security seems completely reasonable. The complicity of the authority figure—Aaron in the text; the security establishment in Belfast—and of the people is also an important point, helping to illustrate the cyclical conundrum of the demand for—and the enabling of—the idol and the barriers. Interface communities demand the barriers; the authorities provide them, with no critical reflection on the consequences, nor other alternatives proffered.

A reflection that exposes the complicity of 'Aaron' allows us to formulate a more reasoned reflection on a way forward, beyond simply waiting for interface communities to 'feel secure enough' to explore other options for moving forward. Irish theologian Enda McDonagh certainly alluded to this in his critique of the political authorities regarding the conflict in Northern Ireland:

> If the political power refuses sustained creative activity and depends on delegation to a repressive group or insists again that Law and Order is all that matters, then, of course, it will evoke a chaotic response … We have to get our governments, the people with the responsibility for creating an enabling society, to look to non-violent ways of creating the peace and not just keeping the lid on. (McDonagh 1986, pp. 143–144)

In this reflection, then, 'Aaron' can embody two roles: the authorities who enable the barriers; and the churches who have historically fostered a lived religion that ignored them. In the temporal role, 'Aaron' has the responsibility to do more than 'keeping the lid on'; in the spiritual role, 'Aaron' must help to foster an experience of lived religion that reflects—however difficult that process may be—on what might be being constructed 'in the place' of the God of liberation, reconciliation, and transformation.

Reflection to Praxis

Out of this type of reflection comes the moment of action. How might the lived religion of the local church be nourished and the politics of intolerance positively affected by a 'transformational' theological approach?

To begin with, it can hopefully refocus attention on the theological principle that the God of the biblical text is identified with liberation and reconciliation; that creation, the incarnation, redemption, the action of 'being' church, and eschatology all involve transformation—social, spiritual, and relational.

It can help in developing a recommitment to seeing afresh the centrality of social and relational transformation in the Christian narrative, and rebuilding a commitment to praxis into the Irish churches' approach to the peace and reconciliation process.

With this in mind, the Irish churches might be better able to consciously, publicly acknowledge that they exist and worship in a physically- divided city, and begin to explore how that reality affects their own lived religion. What have they built—or allowed to be built—through a lack of safety and security, out of fear, and in hopes of reinforcing communal identity? How is it affecting their historical and spiritual mandate to foster liberation and reconciliation?

From this might come a formal and public declaration from the churches that public policy surrounding the perpetuation of physically-reinforced segregation is a specific matter of concern to them, and voicing their desire to play a proactive role in practically addressing the local issues that lead to the construction and spread of the barriers.

Dedicated clergy and laypeople might employ contexts such as services for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, joint carol services at Christmas, and ecumenical clergy gatherings to address physically reinforced segregation. Joint worship services and other gatherings might take place at significant barrier locations.

If any or all of these practical suggestions are deemed by them to be outrageous, too difficult, or simply out of the question, churches might ask why they believe that to be so—and begin the reflective cycle again from that place.

Such reflection and action represents a unique contribution the churches can make to the ongoing peace process; it can come from no one else. A transformational reflection is an invitation to people of faith to find themselves in the politics of intolerance, confront it, and address it—as well as to live their 'lived' religion differently.

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Fostering Religious Tolerance in Education: The Dutch Perspective

Gerdien Bertram-Troost and Siebren Miedema

Introduction

Most western societies have become religiously diverse, and these differences are quite often an important aspect of tensions and conflicts regarding religious tolerance as well as intolerance (Schweitzer 2007, p. 89). How can we learn to live together in peace with people who hold opinions and beliefs which we personally and sometimes also collectively (strongly) disagree with? And how can we teach our youngsters to do so and develop a modus of behaviour that is compatible with this? Especially after the terrorist attacks in Paris in January 2015, the urgency of these questions needs to be emphasized again. As in many cases when negative things happen in society, people are inclined to underline the importance of education in general and the role of schools in particular as places where solutions can or even should be found for such

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societal problems. In the Netherlands the terrorist attacks in Paris were a strong trigger for the Minister of Education (Jet Bussemaker) to stress the important societal role of schools. In her view, teachers need to take their responsibility when they come across signs of radicalization among pupils in their schools. Teachers should not look away when pupils develop radical views, but they need to respond actively and take their societal role very seriously (Abels 2015). But is it realistic to think that schools can prevent pupils from radicalization? Or, to state it more positively, can schools stimulate (religious) tolerance amongst youngsters and provide an important counterweight to the possible dangers of radicalization?

Dijkstra (2012) states that 'an appeal to the school should be associated with knowledge of where education can be of importance (and where not), and how this contribution can be realized' (p. 26). Dijkstra makes clear that social outcomes of schools are very difficult to measure adequately. In fact, picturing the cognitive outcomes of education is quite complicated. School effects are generally low, and research has shown that the influence of school explains about 10 to 20 % of the cognitive achievements of pupils (Bosker and Scheerens 1989). Regarding religious tolerance as a social competence, and thus not a cognitive competence, the measurable effects of religious education are expected to be even lower.

Taking into account that school cannot compensate for society as a whole, and that social outcomes of education have hardly ever been measured successfully, does not mean, however, that a question about the role religious education can play in fostering religious tolerance amongst youngsters should not be asked. Even if it is not just in order to prevent radicalization, the fostering of religious tolerance can be seen as an important educational goal. Children and youngsters need to be prepared for life in a (religiously) diverse society. This preparation can be seen as part of the socialization function of education but also of the subjectification function of the school (Biesta 2010). Qualification is another important function of education. However, this is greatly emphasized today, and to the detriment of the other two functions. Fortunately, there is a growing awareness that the socialization and subjectification functions of education should not be forgotten. The balanced interrelation of these functions should be conceptualized and in effect be concretized. In the Netherlands the law on citizenship education (2006) emphasizes this

importance, and also offers the possibility of fruitfully linking religious or world view education and citizenship education (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008).

In this chapter we will ask about the role that religious and world view education can play in fostering religious tolerance amongst youngsters, and how this can be concretized.

To answer these questions, we will focus on the Dutch context. Therefore we start by providing some important background information on education in the Netherlands in general and religious education in particular. Then we will describe some empirical findings of the European REDCo study, the main aim of which was to scrutinize and compare the potentials and limitations of religion in the educational systems of European countries. One of the hypotheses of this study was: 'Students who have encountered religious diversity in education are more tolerant' (Friederici 2009). It is not our aim to describe the methodology of this and the other studies we refer to at length. Our aim is to reflect on (some of the) outcomes of the studies in the light of the abovementioned questions, which are central to this chapter.

After describing the context and findings of the REDCo research (with a focus on the outcomes in the Netherlands), we will critically reflect on empirical research into whether religious tolerance can be stimulated in education. Then we will describe ways in which religious tolerance may be enhanced in education. Even if the effects of stimulating religious tolerance in education cannot be clearly measured, and the role education plays regarding religious tolerance should always be seen in the light of other influencing factors (such as family background), there are good reasons to be open to ways in which religious tolerance in education may be enhanced. Finally we will formulate some conclusions and present some recommendations.

Context: Religious Education in the Netherlands

In order to go further into the question about the role religious and world view education can play in fostering religious tolerance amongst youngsters, it is first of all important to know more about the context of

religious and world view education in the Netherlands. Elsewhere we have described this context in detail (e.g. Ter Avest et al. 2007). Here we will only give a broad overview.

While the pillarized character of Dutch society as a whole (meaning it was divided along religious lines) has (almost) disappeared, the Dutch educational system is still characterized by what we term a form of 'quasi-pillarization' that is based on religious diversity (Ter Avest et al. 2007, p. 208). Important for the Dutch context is that both public and denominational education are treated and financed by the government equally. Most public secondary schools do not include religious education in their curriculum. Religious denominational schools differ in the way they specify the content and the teaching of religious education. Because of the 'freedom of education' that is formulated in article 23 of the Dutch Constitution, denominational schools are, amongst other things, free to give shape to religious education. As a result, it is impossible to describe denominational education as a whole. Even between schools which officially hold the same (religious) identity, for instance Christian schools, there are many differences (see for instance Bertram-Troost 2006; Bertram-Troost et al. 2007, 2015). Schools differ, for instance, in the religious background of teachers and pupils, in the role religion plays in school, and the aims they formulate and practise regarding religious education. As an example we quote some passages of school guides in which the formal identity of the school is described. These guides are from schools which participated in a research on inspiration, motivation, and world view of teachers in Christian secondary education (Bertram-Troost et al. 2015); so they are all officially Christian. In total eight schools participated. Although they are not representative of Dutch Christian secondary education, the 'reasoned sample' (based on earlier research in Dutch primary Christian education, see Bertram-Troost et al. 2012) shows a useful picture of the diversity between Christian secondary schools in the Netherlands. From the short passages quoted it becomes clear that the schools give shape to their (religious) identity in different ways:

> The school has protestant-Christian roots, with a very open character. We are inspired by the norms and values related to the Christian tradition.

> At school the personal development and the broad education of pupils is core. We are a learning community with a world view which is ingrained in the Christian tradition. This has consequences for our daily school practice. Next to knowledge and the development of skills, we also focus on ethical, social, cultural, emotional, and religious education. In this way, we prepare our pupils for a place in society and for continuing education.
>
> The bible is the foundation of our school. We adhere to one specific (Christian) denomination, but meanwhile we have grown into a school community fully located in the twenty-first century, with the word of God, the baptismal promise, and the three forms of unity as our starting point. Education at school is the extension of a biblical upbringing at home. Our Christian identity and qualitatively good education are our two cornerstones.

As well as the fact that the descriptions of the formal (religious) identity vary from school to school, the daily practices in the schools are different. These differences are partly related to the religious backgrounds of school principals and teachers, but the pupil population has an influence on school practice too. Owing to processes of secularization, globalization, and individualization, religious diversity in the Netherlands has grown enormously (Bertram-Troost and Miedema 2012). As a result, religious diversity in schools has also grown. Only a few schools, those that practise a strict hiring procedure for staff and admittance policy for pupils, can be described as segregated or 'monoreligious' (Markus 2013).

In relation to our present research question on religious tolerance, it is interesting to see to what degree attention is explicitly paid to religious diversity. In our study (Bertram-Troost et al. 2015) we interviewed, next to the school principals, four or five teachers (from different subjects) per participating school. One of the questions focused on what teachers see as important learning goals. From our findings it is striking that many teachers underline that in our times it is important that pupils learn to respect people with different religions and that knowledge about different religions is needed. However, their arguments about why this is important differ. The principal of a school which can be described as monoreligious tells that contacts with people of other religions and world views are used in order to help students to defend their own Christian belief in contact with others:

Cor: We think about, and we have done it once, bringing our students into contact with other cultures. Then they have to have a discussion together. We think that is important for their future.

Interviewer: Why do you want to stimulate the discussion amongst pupils?

Cor: Well, they can get questions like: 'What is a bible, a Christian school, and on Sundays you are not allowed to….' (…) They should not just answer: 'Well, that's simply how it is.' But they should be able to put into words why they act like that and why they believe so.

For some religious education teachers the knowledge of Christian expressions such as praying before meals has a similar explanation, because not all pupils have these experiences at home:

Femke: … When our pupils are for instance on their internship, they experience a lot. I hope that they can reflect a little on what we taught them in religious education. So that they come back at school and say: 'Well, at my internship I had a colleague who took always a moment of silence before the meals. (…) Probably that was someone who said his prayers. Well, as I know about that now, I stopped talking myself as well.' Not everybody knows all these kind of things, but that can be very useful in life outside school (…)

Another reason for providing knowledge about different religions and world views is that it can help to get rid of prejudices. This teacher purposely seeks contacts with people of different religions. He introduces his pupils to people of different religions and, by organizing excursions, gives students experiences with different religions:

Albert: With the topic 'Islam' we went to the mosque. We participated in a service and then had a conversation with the imam. That was brilliant … We got so much positive feedback. (…) The same in relation to a church. In small groups they had to visit a church and did the same as we

> did in the mosque. As a result, prejudices disappeared … (…) Some of them (= the prejudices, GBT and SM) were confirmed as well, because there are also churches who are in line with their views. But okay …

From these examples it becomes clear that teachers and school principals have different ideas on how to deal with religious diversity and to foster tolerance, both inside and outside schools. Because of the freedom of education there are indeed many possibilities for schools to make their own decisions on how they want to prepare their pupils for a life in a religiously diverse society. However, despite this freedom, all schools need to stick to the national educational goals as laid down by the government. Regarding (religious) diversity, core objective 43 for secondary education is especially relevant: 'The pupil learns about agreements, differences and changes in culture and religion in the Netherlands, learn to connect his or her own, as well as someone else's lifestyle with these, and learn that respect for each other's views and lifestyles will enhance society' (SLO, http://www.slo.nl/downloads/documenten/Citizenship-and-social-integration.pdf). This core objective can be linked to the law on citizenship education (2006), which indicates that the tasks schools have in promoting and stimulating active citizenship and social integration are as follows:

> Education:
>
> a) departs from the assumption that pupils grow up in a multiform society;
> b) aims to promote active citizenship and social integration, and
> c) is directed towards pupils' understanding of and acquaintance with the various backgrounds and cultures of their fellow pupils.

Both the law and the mentioned core objectives can be directly linked to the recent call of the current Dutch Minister of Education on schools to play an active role in preventing radicalization. Clearly, the government believes that education can somehow positively affect the social development of young people (see also SLO). However, is this a realistic expectation? In the next section we will, on the basis of empirical data, further elaborate on this question.

European Research on Religious Tolerance and Education

A quantitative study within the framework of the European REDCo project sheds light on how students in different European countries, amongst them the Netherlands, in the 14–16 age group, perceive the (ir)relevance of religions with regard to dialogue and conflict in their daily lives, in the school environment, and in society as a whole (Valk et al. 2009). One important research question in the REDCo project (which is still being continued with follow-up studies) is 'What role can religion in education play concerning the way pupils perceive religious diversity?' (Bertram-Troost et al. 2014). Several hypotheses with regard to this question are dealt with, from different perspectives (both qualitative and quantitative). Some of the hypotheses explicitly focus on tolerance in relation to education. With regard to our current research question on the role of religious education in fostering religious tolerance amongst youngsters, the following hypothesis is very relevant: 'Students who have encountered religious diversity in education are more tolerant.' The assumption which lies behind this hypothesis is the contact hypothesis of Allport (1954). The premise of Allport's theory states that under appropriate conditions interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members. In the REDCo project, however, the underlying assumptions are not explicitly confirmed. This was also because the research concepts—amongst others the concept of 'tolerance'—were not very well described from a theoretical perspective. (In the next section we will elaborate on that.) Nevertheless, the empirical findings are very useful as a starting point for reflections related to our current question regarding the role of religious education in fostering tolerance.

On the basis of the different national contributions to the REDCo quantitative questionnaire (as described in Valk et al. 2009) Bertram-Troost (2009) elaborated on the question of how European pupils perceive religion in school. She also elaborated on the hypothesis regarding religious diversity in education and tolerance. In the Dutch sample 'no significant differences were found with regard to the extent to which

pupils respect other pupils who believe, between pupils who have more or less experiences with religious diversity in school. There are also no significant differences with regard to the item "I don't like people from different religions and I do not want to live together with them". Next to that, an indication was found that pupils who do not have much experiences with religious diversity in education (…) are less negative about the possible effects of disagreement on religious issues than pupils who have experiences with religious diversity. The impression is that pupils who do not have much experience with religious diversity, do not have so much an idea of what could possibly be difficult in contacts with people of different religions' (Bertram-Troost 2009, pp. 417–418).

In general, Bertram-Troost (2009) concluded, 'till now it is impossible to state to what degree a certain attitude ((in)tolerance) of a pupils is the effect of his or her personal background and the importance of religion in his or her life or of the fact that this pupil is (not) confronted with religious diversity in school'. In line with this conclusion, the impressions of the German REDCo researchers (Josza, Knauth, and Weisse) are also important. 'On the basis of their data they have the feeling that religious diversity in education as such is not so much a matter of influence. Personal encounters (in classroom) with people of different religions might have a much bigger influence on the degree to which pupils are tolerant towards others and/or open to dialogue on religious issues' (Bertram-Troost 2009, pp. 421–422).

In 2012 a follow-up study to the REDCo project was carried out (Bertram-Troost et al. 2014). In the Dutch component 347 pupils of five different schools participated. This sample is not representative but pictures the diversity in the Dutch school system, as it included both public and (a variety of) denominational schools (Bertram-Troost and Miedema 2014). On the basis of this new REDCo data, Bertram-Troost and Miedema (2014) considered the question whether (the preference for) going around with youngsters of different religions or world views (both at school and after school) is related to, amongst other things, the school the pupils attend. Significant relations were found. However, we also found significant differences between pupils to whom religion is not important and pupils to whom religion is very important. 'In general, there is a reasonable preference for going around with youngsters of

different opinions both at school and after school. Only amongst pupils to whom religion is very important are the preferences to meet religious diversity, both at school and after school, not so clear' (p. 29). Except for pupils who attend a school which can be described as 'monoreligious' (with strict admittance procedures for pupils and strict hiring policies for teachers to secure that everyone has the same world view), the percentages of pupils who prefer to go around with youngsters who have the same ideas are higher or the same with regard to 'after school' in comparison to 'at school'. This is very interesting when we further reflect on the impact of religious diversity in education. The findings suggest that when there is religious diversity in school, pupils prefer less diverse contacts in their spare time. We need more (qualitative) empirical research to understand these findings, also in terms of religious tolerance. Another conclusion we drew is that 'it is not possible to state in general that secondary schools in themselves are places where pupils meet more religious diversity then they are used to in their own lifeworld context. In some cases it might even be the other way around' (Bertram-Troost and Miedema 2014, p. 28).

On the basis of empirical research in the REDCo framework, we have all in all some indications of when and how education can foster religious tolerance. However, there are still a lot of questions which need closer attention. This is also needed because it can be concluded that there are several critical notes that can be made in relation to (empirical) research into religious tolerance in education so far. In the next section we will elaborate on these critical notes.

Some Critical Notes on Research So Far

In a reflection on the REDCo project, which was primarily explorative by nature and a very important step in the research on the role and impact of religion in education, Bertram-Troost (2011) makes clear why scrutinizing the impact of religious diversity in secondary schools is such a challenging exercise. Analogously to these reflections, it is our contention that these challenges are also at stake when trying to map the role of religious or world view education in fostering religious tolerance amongst youngsters. First of all there is the already mentioned fact that it is hardly

possible to separate 'school influences' from other influences like family background, personal experiences, and so on. This is in line with the conclusions of Dijkstra (2012), already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, who made clear that social outcomes of schools are very difficult to measure and that school effects are generally low. Measuring school effects is even more complicated when the outcome or dependent variable is not clearly described. This seems to be the case for 'religious tolerance'. Knauth (2011) makes it clear that 'the notion of tolerance is in itself manifold and conflictive. Examples in history as well as recent cases show that the call for tolerance arises in conflicts, but it is not always clear which conception of tolerance is being advocated' (p. 19). It is striking that although there were some hypotheses in the REDCo project that explicitly dealt with (religious) tolerance, no clear definition of this concept is given. In general, the lack of conceptual clarity has an enormous effect on the usefulness of empirical research. Bertram-Troost (2011) states that 'The risk of drawing invalid conclusions is very high, especially if terms are not used explicitly' (p. 277).

In the REDCo questionnaire the term 'tolerant' has been explicitly used only once. Students had to indicate, on a five point scale, to what degree they agreed with a number of statements. One of these was 'Religious people are less tolerant towards others'. This appears in the section of the questionnaire which deals with the opinions of students regarding the role religions play in different relationships and contexts, and is not explicitly related to the role of (religious) education. There are some other items in the questionnaire that are (implicitly) related to (religious) tolerance (according to the tree of variables which has been constructed to operationalize the hypotheses, see Friederici 2009, p. 20). Several items represent possible reactions pupils might have when a student of a different religious faith wants to convince him or her that his or her religion is the best one (for instance 'I try to ignore him', 'I listen but their views do not influence me', or 'I try to explain that my own opinions about religion are the best ones'.) Other items which are related to (religious) tolerance are the statements 'I don't like people from other religions and do not want to live together with them', 'People with different strong religious views cannot live together', 'I respect other people who believe', 'At school, I prefer to go around with young people who

have the same religious background as me', 'In my spare time, I prefer to go around with young people who have the same religious background as me', and 'Without religion the world would be a better place'. However, a clear definition of (religious) tolerance and how the selected items are explicitly linked to (religious) tolerance is lacking. With hindsight this is a serious omission of the REDCo project. In the items mentioned different conceptions of tolerance seem to be stressed. However, this is not formulated explicitly nor is it reflected upon by different national teams when they are responding on the basis of their national data to the hypotheses on tolerance.

One important recommendation for further empirical research on fostering religious tolerance in education is therefore that key concepts need to be clearly conceptualized and operationalized. But even if this occurs, the difficulty of mapping the effects of education is still an issue. From that perspective, the approach of Petty and Green (2007) is very interesting. They introduce the idea of the perceived curriculum from the student's viewpoint. Information on the learning process collected by the students themselves might be a good way to gather insight into the process of education, and the relationships between what a school does and the long-term outcomes for individual students (p. 68). When aspects of 'learning for life' are at stake, in particular, it might be good to focus on process indicators instead of outcome measures. Bertram-Troost (2011) states: 'Petty and Green developed an instrument "The Essential Skills Access Test" to measure the opportunities pupils have (from their own perspective) to learn the Essential Skills of their school curriculum. Pupils have to indicate to what degree certain statements apply to them. Some examples of statements, which could also be related to citizenship education, are "At school I am taught to be kind to others", "The people at my school respect each other" and "I will be a better citizen because of things I learn at school". Especially because it is very difficult to "objectively" separate the influence of school on how youngsters learn to be citizens of a plural society from other factors of influence, it might be very helpful from the perspective of our research topic to make use of the pupils' own perspectives. Pupils are often clearly aware of what is going on in school (De Winter 1997). Thus, they are the ones par excellence to involve in the research on the impact of religious diversity in education as well' (p. 278).

We suggest that regarding research into the role of religious and world view education in fostering religious tolerance, this approach would also be fruitful. In addition to a quantitative test, qualitative interviews with pupils could be added in order to better understand patterns of response.

Despite the critical notes regarding research on religious tolerance in education so far and the conclusion that it is very difficult, if possible at all, to find strong empirical evidence for any school effects on social outcomes, we want to describe some (mainly theoretical) ways in which religious tolerance in education can be enhanced. Today, the issue of how to learn to live together in a religiously diverse society is, especially given the strongly negative outcomes of religiously driven terrorist attacks, too serious not to address.

Ways in Which Religious Tolerance in Education Can Be Enhanced

When describing the context of the Netherlands we made it clear that schools have a lot of freedom to shape religious or world view education, and they are not obliged to teach a formal subject that addresses religious issues. In practice, only a few public secondary schools explicitly offer religious education to their pupils. In addition, denominational schools give shape to religious education in many different ways. However, since 2006 all these schools have been obliged to give shape in daily school practice to the law on citizenship education. Elsewhere we have made clear that here we see chances for what can be coined 'religious citizenship education' (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008). Human rights education can also be intertwined with religious education and citizenship education. (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2014).

We argue that both state schools and religious-affiliated schools have to take the impact of globalization seriously by preparing students for their encounter with cultural and religious 'others'. In our perspective, both from a societal as well as pedagogical point of view, all schools should be obliged to foster a religious dimension to citizenship. This education around religious citizenship should be based on the formation of the identity of the students 'through processes that require them to

negotiate with the perspectives of 'others' and integrate such perspectives into their own actions and reflections' (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008, p. 130).

Both public schools and 'open' denominational schools, which both deal with a plurality of religious backgrounds of pupils and often also of teachers, have ample possibilities to function as 'religious meeting places' (see also Bertram-Troost 2006). Within the school context pupils can experience religious and cultural differences and learn to position themselves in relation to 'the other'. The aims for (religious) education should therefore mainly be to 'foster an international, global and dialogical attitude in their students'. (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008, p. 128, see also Schweitzer 1999). By fostering this attitude, (religious) education can enhance religious tolerance amongst youngsters.

An important question is whether segregated or 'monoreligious' schools are also able to take plurality in society seriously enough, and 'whether they are really able to prepare their students for the plural cultural and religious society in which the public debate on religion and the religious inspiration of individuals, groups and institutions can be at stake and is legitimised in the public domain' (Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008, p. 128). In the Dutch context, the empirical research of Markus (2013) will add more empirical insights to this discussion.

Schweitzer (2007) also elaborates on the question if and under what conditions religion and religious education can become sources of tolerance. He considers different models of religious education in Germany and other European countries. He concludes, and we agree with him on this point (see e.g. Miedema and Bertram-Troost 2008), that merely giving objective knowledge about different religions is not enough to 'produce sufficient motives for tolerant attitudes that go beyond the impersonal rule that everybody is supposed to be tolerant' (Schweitzer 2007, p. 95). Therefore Schweitzer is looking for possibilities in education for tolerance that are 'intentionally based on religion and that includes the identification of religious values as a basis for tolerance' (p. 95). He presents a model of religious education that supports the development of religious identities and, at the same time, also supports dialogical attitudes. This model that he coined as 'co-operative religious education' 'combines elements of separate denominational or religious

groups and elements of an interdenominational or inter-religious type of religious education by alternating between different groups and settings' (p. 97). This co-operative model also includes settings or phases in separate denominational groups. Schweitzer explains that this is important in order to give children (in the case of his research in the age group seven to nine) the possibility to develop identifications with an adult teacher with the same 'religious background' of the child. Although Schweitzer does not presuppose that children have a clear religious identity, he takes as his starting point that most German parents at least loosely identify with a certain denomination. In Schweitzer's view the development of religious 'thick' identities is an important task for education with regard to tolerance. An important presupposition of this view is the hypothesis that tolerant attitudes can never be imposed upon people from outside and that religious traditions can become resources for tolerance. Next to the focus on developing religious identities, an attitude of dialogue and openness needs to be fostered amongst children and youngsters. Schweitzer underlines that the empirical observations of his research team 'do not support (…) the popular assumption that, as a matter of principle, the most advanced model of religious education should not allow for separate denominational or religious groups'. He states that 'as long as dividing up classes into smaller units is handled as a pedagogical method—just as in the case of separate groups for boys and girls on certain occasions or of separate groups based on ability—and as long as such divisions do not turn into segregation boosted by prejudice, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with working in separate groups' (p. 98). Although we agree with Schweitzer that personal, intrinsic motivation for tolerance is crucial and that 'thick religious identities' can be important resources for this intrinsic motivation, we seriously doubt to what extent his cooperative model would work in the Dutch context. Many parents nowadays would not identify themselves with a particular organized religion or world view, not even loosely. What would then be the basis used to divide their children into separate denominational groups, even if it is only for specific moments of the day or week? However, both for schools that are now segregated and schools that do have a substantial group of parents (and children) who adhere to different religions, world views, or denominations, the cooperative model clearly has some possibilities that are worth considering more seriously.

Most important, in our view, is that all children and youngsters, independent of the school they are attending, are actively prepared to become competent members of our religiously diverse society. This preparation focuses both on socialization and individuation. In the transformative paradigm in pedagogy, which we are strongly in favour of, the aim of education is formulated as personhood formation (Miedema 2014). Education is about the cultivation of the whole person and should not only be training for external purposes. This also has consequences for the way we see religious (world view) education. In our view, world view education should include both teaching and learning about and from world views. Elsewhere, Miedema conceptualized the notion of 'worldview education' as follows (Miedema 2012, pp. 78–79):

> Worldview education is that part of personhood education of children and youngsters that focuses on the more or less systematic intentional as well as non-intentional meaning-making processes, relationships and practices. Here different aspects come into play, be it cognitive, affective-emotional, volitional, as well as aspects dealing with action (…) Fostering worldview education can be pedagogically considered as an integral part of personhood education and can form a substantial and integral part of the curriculum of every school. Worldview education should not be conceptualized exclusively in knowledge-based or cognitive terms. (…) Personhood formation through worldview education can be supported by the encouragement of a critical-evaluative attitude on the part of the students. Unquestioned acceptance, or non-reflective, full identification with the views of the teachers is not an appropriate practice for the development of successful worldview formation on the basis of personhood education. Rather, the focus should be upon the growth of the potentiality for an active and critical reconstruction of different and differing perspectives in terms of ideals, norms, values, knowledge, narratives or beliefs. Such practices and processes in school will enhance the capacity of the students to integrate these perspectives into their own personality, promote the ongoing organization and re-organization of their perspectives, and form resources for the reconstruction of the self, for self-transcendence.

It is our contention that such a focus on personhood formation through world view education, which is supported by the encouragement of a critical–evaluative attitude on the part of the pupils, can positively influence

pupils' views and attitudes towards people with different religious views. The development of pupils' own views is taken seriously and they are stimulated to reflect on different perspectives as well. Enhancing the capacities of pupils to integrate different and differing perspectives into their own personality seems to be creating a fertile soil in which tolerance can be fostered. In the final section we will formulate some conclusions and present some recommendations.

Conclusions

We started this chapter with a question about how we can live together in peace with people who hold opinions and beliefs which we personally and sometimes also collectively (strongly) disagree with, and what the role of education can be in teaching youngsters how to do this. There are strong (political) voices indicating that schools have a clear task in providing an important counterweight to the possible dangers of radicalization. In order to investigate whether it is realistic to expect that schools can stimulate (religious) tolerance amongst youngsters, we elaborated on questions about the role that religious and worldview education can play in fostering religious tolerance amongst youngsters, and how this could practically be concretized. In answering these questions, we focused on the Dutch context, in which the distinction between public education and denominational education (in all its diversity) is very important. Even schools of the same formal religious identity (for instance Christian schools) differ greatly, and religious education can take many different shapes in respect to the underlying thoughts about the aims of religious education. Empirical research also shows that teachers and school principals have different ideas on how to deal with religious diversity, both inside and outside schools. Despite the freedom of education, which makes this variety between schools possible, they all need to stick to the national educational goals as proscribed by the government. Since 2006 all schools have also needed to take into account the law on citizenship education. This stimulates schools to actively prepare their children and youngsters for a life in a (religiously) diverse society. We see

possibilities here for linking religious education with citizenship education. Religious citizenship education should be based on the formation of identity of students, in relation to the perspectives of 'others', both inside and outside the classroom.

Research on tolerance in education has hitherto been limited, and research that has been carried out has its limitations; we also know that social outcomes of education are in general very difficult to measure. We need to be aware of the fact that influences of informal education in the life world outside school (including the influence of family, friends, and media) are interfering with the possible influences of education in school. However, this cannot and should not be used as a reason for not paying attention to possible ways of enhancing religious tolerance in education. We see it as a societal and pedagogical duty for all schools, both public schools and denominational schools, to prepare pupils for their encounter with cultural and religious 'others'. This preparation should definitely not be reduced to a cognitive level. Mere knowledge about different cultures and religions does not lead to the kind of personhood formation that is necessary for attitudes which can be linked to tolerance. Instead, taking a transformative paradigm in pedagogy offers fruitful possibilities for stimulating personal development, including attitudes towards others. More research is needed to investigate how this can be done in practice and under which conditions the outcomes are optimal. Till then, all schools should at least take their societal and pedagogical responsibilities seriously, and find out in their specific context with their specific teacher and pupil population in what way they can contribute to religious citizenship. Even if it is uncertain how this affects the way in which pupils think about and interact with 'others', the issues at stake are too serious to not pay attention to them. We agree with the Dutch Minister of Education, Jet Bussemaker, that schools should not look away. However, in order to be able to take up their societal role seriously, more room should be made for transformational educational processes. This implies that schools should not only be measured and paid on the basis of their cognitive quantifiable outcomes. Only then will schools really be able to offer their contribution to solving the serious problems of intolerance in society today.

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