Bridge or Barrier

International Studies in Religion and Society

Bridge or Barrier

Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace

Edited by

Gerrie ter Haar and James J. Busuttil

TUTA SUB AEGIDE PALLAS · 1 6 8 3 ·

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

In some cases, it has not been possible, despite every effort, to locate those with rights to material that may still be in copyright. The publisher would be glad to hear from anyone who holds such rights, in order that appropriate acknowledgement can be made in future editions.

CONTENTS

PREFACE

This volume results from the International Conference on Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace that was organised at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague in May 2001 under the auspices of the Chair in Religion, Human Rights and Social Change. The revised and edited lectures were complemented with a number of commissioned papers that provide further insight into the subject matter. The editors are grateful to all authors for their valuable contribution.

The book focusses on the 'Abrahamic' religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. An additional chapter on Buddhism highlights the comprehensive vision of this religious tradition in the field of peacebuilding. The volume opens with an exploration of religion as a source of conflict on the one hand, and as a resource for peace on the other. In conformity with the aims and objectives of the original Conference the book discusses the transformative role of religion in situations of violent conflict, particularly exploring ways in which religion – or religions – may contribute to transforming conflict into peace.

The book aims at a wide international readership that includes both academics and non-academics. Consequently, the present volume also has a separate section containing documentary resources on religion, violence and peace.

The editors are grateful to the following organisations in the Netherlands for sponsoring the International Conference from which this volume emerged: the National Committee for International Co-operation and Sustainable Development (NCDO), Cordaid (Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development), The Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, and the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP). They are also grateful for the generosity of the Institute of Social Studies in facilitating and hosting both the Conference and an Expert Meeting.

The Editors
The Hague
April 2004

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

JAMES J. BUSUTTIL is Director of the External Master of Laws Programme of the University of London, and Co-Rapporteur of the International Law Association's Committee on Islamic Law and International Law. Busuttil has been Associate Professor of International Law and Organization at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, the Netherlands, Director of the British Institute of Human Rights in London, Lecturer in Law at the University of Essex, and a practising lawyer in New York City and Washington, DC. He holds a D.Phil. from the University of Oxford, a J.D. from New York University School of Law and a B.A. from Harvard University.

JAN VAN BUTSELAAR is General Secretary Emeritus of the Netherlands Missionary Council. He studied theology at the Free University in Amsterdam, obtained his Diploma in Ecumenical Studies at the Ecumenical Institute Bossey/University of Geneva and his Doctor in Divinity from the University of Leiden. After a period of pastoral work in the Netherlands, he taught Church history at Butare Theological College, Rwanda, 1975–1983. From 1985 to 1992 he was consultant to the World Council of Churches' Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME).

BENNY GIAY was born in Paniai (Wissel Lakes), West Papua. He is Lecturer in Contextual Theology and Anthropology at the Theological College Walter Post, Sentani, West Papua, and Director of the Graduate Programme "Church and Society". Giay is a member of the Presidium of the Papuan Council, charged with the task of rewriting Papuan history. He holds a degree in counselling from Cenderawasih University, Jayapura, West Papua, and an M.A. in theology from a university in the Philippines. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the Free University of Amsterdam. He was ordained in the Kingmi Church in 1988.

MARC GOPIN is the James H. Laue Professor of World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, and the Director of the Center on World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution in Fairfax, Virginia. He is the author of *Between Eden and Armageddon*

and *Holy War, Holy Peace*, both from Oxford University Press, as well as *Healing the Heart of Conflict.*

YEHIEL GRENIMANN is active in Rabbis for Human Rights based in Jerusalem, Israel, and was its Chairperson from 1999 to 2002. He is currently a member of its Executive Board. Grenimann is National Director of the Institute for Conversion, The Masorti Movement, Jerusalem, and Rabbi of the Congregation *Eshel Avraham*, Beersheva (Masorti – Conservative). He has a Bachelor of Economics and Politics from Monash University, Australia, and an M.A. in Contemporary Jewry from Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He was ordained at the Schechter Seminary, Jerusalem.

GERRIE TER HAAR is Professor of Religion, Human Rights and Social Change at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. She is Deputy Secretary-General of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) and Academic Programme Director of the IAHR World Congress in Tokyo in 2005. Ter Haar is the author of four books on religious developments in Africa. Her latest book is *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa* (2004), co-authored with Stephen Ellis. She is also the editor of four volumes of essays, and publishes widely on issues pertaining to religion and human rights.

DANIEL MÍGUEZ is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of the State of Buenos Aires, and a researcher for the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research of Argentina. He is also a member of the board of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in the Southern Cone. Míguez has published a number of articles concerning the Latin American religious field, and has published a book on the growth of Pentecostalism in Argentina. He studied sociology at the University of Buenos Aires, and obtained his Ph.D. in Anthropology at the Free University in Amsterdam.

CHANDRA MUZAFFAR is President of the International Movement for a Just World (JUST), and was founder-president of Aliran, the oldest human rights group in Malaysia, from 1977 to 1991. He is a member of the board of numerous scholarly and human rights organisations. Muzaffar has published over a dozen books on inter-religious dialogue, human rights and international and Malaysian politics. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Singapore.

JOSEPH ADERO NGALA is Director of People for Peace in Africa based in Nairobi, Kenya. People for Peace in Africa is one of the leading peace-building organizations in East Africa. Established in 1989, PPA seeks ways to bring peace and reconciliation to Africa through the empowerment of people at the grassroots level. Ngala has written for *Time* magazine and local Kenyan newspapers. He has won prizes for his work on peace in Africa.

MARIA LORENZA PALM-DALUPAN is an independent consultant on conflict resolution and peace-building processes. She previously served in peace agencies of the Philippine Government's Office of the President – as Deputy Commissioner of the Office of the Peace Commissioner during the Aquino period; under the Ramos Administration, as Executive Director first of the National Unification Commission, then of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, and concurrently of the Government Panel negotiating peace with the CPP-NPA-NDF, and first Secretary General of the Social Reform Council. She was the recipient of the 1997 Aurora Aragon Quezon Peace Award for Peace Education and Institution-building.

ALI SALMAN has worked with the Planning Commission of Pakistan, UNDP, Good Governance Group and Pakistan 2010 Programme. He has also taught Social Sciences for some time in Lahore. While running his family business, Salman continues to take an interest in development studies and practices wherein he focuses on youth development and youth policy issues. He edits a website for youth, www.jawanpakistan.org, and spearheads a Think Tank on Youth. He holds an M.B.A. from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan, and an M.A. in Development Studies from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague.

THANH-DAM TRUONG, Senior Lecturer in Women and Development Studies, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, received her Ph.D. from the University of Amsterdam. She specializes in women, gender and development issues at both the academic and policy levels. Truong was among the first scholars to provide an academic analysis of the problem of sex tourism in the fields of women's studies and international political economy. As a lay Buddhist, her current research includes gender, globalisation and human security.

PART ONE

RELIGION, CONFLICT AND PEACE

1. RELIGION: SOURCE OF CONFLICT OR RESOURCE FOR PEACE?

Gerrie ter Haar

RELIGION, CONFLICT AND PEACE

The subject matter of this volume is very topical. It concerns the role of religion in world politics today, which in recent years has drawn the attention of journalists and scholars alike. In most cases, they have been concentrating on religious fundamentalism[1] and, after the events of "9/11", on religious terrorism: terror carried out in the name of God.[2] The transnational character of these phenomena, typical of the present era, affects all parts of the globe, in the Western and non-Western world alike. Recent attacks in the West have led many people in Western Europe and North America to associate religion-related violence almost exclusively with Islam, an indication of the degree to which the so-called "war on terror" appears to be directed against the religious worldview of Islam. The uncritical equation of Islam with global terrorism has created the conviction in the Muslim world that the American-led war is in fact a war against Islam.[3]

The resurgence of religion in modern times has given religion a bad name in the more secular parts of the world, particularly where a religious revival is seen to be taking place. The resurgence of religion is not in any way limited to Islam but can be observed in all parts of the world and in all major religious traditions.[4] After decades

---

[1] Note that the term "fundamentalism" is an imposed, and not a self-chosen, label. See Gerrie ter Haar, "Religious fundamentalism and social change: A comparative inquiry", in Gerrie ter Haar and James J. Busuttil (eds), *The Freedom to Do God's Will: Religious fundamentalism and social change* (London: Routledge, 2003), 1–24, notably 1–5.

[2] Several scholarly books on the subject have been produced in the US after the event, among which Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about religion after September 11* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002), Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The global rise of religious violence* 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), and Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why religious militants kill* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003).

[3] See John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the name of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), viii.

[4] See the various contributions to Ter Haar and Busuttil, *The Freedom to Do God's*

when religion seemed to be largely relegated to the private realm, religious activists are staking out a new claim for religion as a central feature of public life. The wish to restore religion to what is considered its rightful place at the heart of society is, in fact, the most notable common denominator of today's religious fundamentalist movements. Contrary to what the name may suggest, "fundamentalist" movements are modern movements within historically known traditions, that try to revitalise their heritage by infusing it with a new ethos. Such movements can be found in all the world's major religions, including Christianity, where neo-pentecostal and evangelical movements have gained enormous popularity throughout the world. One place where this trend is particularly clear is the United States, where Christian revivalists have a major influence on the policies of the George W. Bush administration.[5] In order to achieve their aim, religious fundamentalists may employ a range of tactics, even including violence. Those who do resort to violence commonly justify this by claiming that we are not living in normal times, and that exceptional circumstances require exceptional measures.[6] As a result, an unusual alliance has been forged in many cases between religion and politics.

The attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington on 11 September 2001 and the following events – notably the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq – inaugurated the dramatic widening of a gap between different civilisations.[7] In the popular view, this gulf is often represented as a clash between the Western-Christian and the Arab-Muslim worlds; that is,

---

Will, op. cit. There are many scholarly books on the subject of fundamentalism, but the most comprehensive study is the Fundamentalism Project that has resulted in five volumes edited by Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby: *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the sciences, the family, and education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking polities, economies, and militance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The dynamic character of movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[5] Examples are US President George W. Bush himself and Attorney-General John Ashcroft.

[6] This point was made by R. Scott Appleby during a seminar at the Institute of Social Studies in May 2000. See also his contribution to Ter Haar and Busuttil, *The Freedom to Do God's Will, op. cit.*, "Religions, human rights and social change", 197–229, notably 200.

[7] This point has been argued notably by Samuel P. Huntington in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

in terms of a fundamental conflict between two major religious traditions. This image has become so much part of the political ideology of the West that it reinforces the idea that religion itself is a root cause of the numerous violent conflicts in the modern world.

The often simplistic representations of conflicts in religious terms become an impediment to the attempts of interested parties to resolve their differences. The image of the "other" that is shaped in the process often has a dehumanising effect, and may actually exacerbate a conflict. As I have argued elsewhere, the dehumanisation of others may even lead to their physical elimination.[8] The 1994 Rwanda genocide is an example that is still fresh in the memory of the international community.[9] The manipulation of popular sentiments, whether in ethnic or religious terms, is not unique to any part of the world. Probing the causes of conflict in some countries in Asia, Chandra Muzaffar shows how in recent years electoral politics and elite manipulation of religious sentiments have left harmful traces in Asian societies, contributing to tension between different social groups. Examples include India and Sri Lanka, but also his own country Malaysia.[10] The "us/them" dichotomy associated with conflict between communities of different background and persuasion is often linked to historical memory. Muzaffar shows how the constant evocation of past injustices – real or imagined – has played an important role in the negative development of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Asia.[11] Jan van Butselaar makes the same point in his discussion of the history of the Church in its relations with people of other faiths. The crusades, though centuries ago, are part of the historical memory of people in the Muslim world, influencing relations between Muslims and Christians to this day. We may see a similar process at work in the bitter conflict between Israel and Palestine, as discussed by Yehiel Grenimann.[12] The healing of memories, therefore, is one of the tasks challenging the various religious traditions.[13]

---

[8] Gerrie ter Haar, *Rats, Cockroaches and People Like Us: Views of humanity and human rights* (The Hague: Institute of Social Studies, 2000), notably 17–18.

[9] Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999).

[10] See Chandra Muzaffar, "Religious conflict in Asia: Probing the causes; seeking solutions", in this volume 60–62.

[11] *Id.*, at 66.

[12] See Yehiel Grenimann, "Bitter conflict: Can Judaism bring hope?", in this volume 169–83.

[13] One example is the programme "Reconciling Memories", developed in Northern

The emergence of interest groups that espouse violence and that seem to be inspired by a particular religious ideology has tempted many observers, notably in the West, to assume an intrinsic connection between religion and violence. Hence, it is common today to consider religion as a source of conflict rather than a resource for peace. The logical conclusion of such a perception is to try and reduce the influence of the religious factor in the political arena. Typically, in such a view, religion is deemed to be a private affair, something between individual believers and their god, a relation that should not be carried over into the public domain. Whereas religion is expected to limit itself exclusively to regulating humans' relations between the visible and invisible worlds, it is politics, on the other hand, which is deemed solely responsible for regulating people's relations with the state, as well as regulating the relations between individual states. The formal separation between the fields of religion and politics has been the hallmark of Western democracies for centuries and has been introduced to other parts of the world, notably those which were colonised by Europe, and, more generally, countries that have undergone the influence of Europe and North America. The turbulent changes of the 1990s that marked the end of the cold war, changing the political *status quo* in the world dramatically, also unleashed powers that had previously been repressed. Religion clearly is one such power, now increasingly seen as challenging the basis of the secular state.[14]

Many commentators, especially in the West, have lamented the fact that religion is reassuming a public role, bringing together again two fields of operation that, in the Western tradition of the Enlightenment, have long been kept apart. To them, this is why religion has become a deadly weapon in the political struggles fought out in so many places. The examples abound. One needs only to look, for example, at Nigeria, a country which has made international headlines with religion-related riots that have left hundreds of people dead; or at India, where many others have lost their lives in recent years in violent conflicts between Hindu and Muslim believers; or at Northern Ireland with its longstanding, bloody conflict between Protestants and Catholics, to understand the aversion that many observers feel towards

---

Ireland. See Jan van Butselaar, "The promise of the kingdom and the reality of sin: Christian religion, conflict, and visions for peace", in this volume, 147–50.

[14] Cf. David Westerlund (ed), *Questioning the Secular State: The worldwide resurgence of religion in politics* (London: Hurst & Co., 1995).

religion. We may also think of the participation of Buddhist monks in the recent political and military struggle in Sri Lanka.[15] Often, in such situations, political violence becomes legitimised through religion, if necessary with due reference to the founding charters of the respective religious traditions.

Religion and politics are always in an uneasy relationship because they are competing powers. In fact, they constitute two alternative sources of power, located in the material and spiritual spheres respectively.[16] In most societies, religion has played a role in governance at some stage of their history. However, in the northern hemisphere, notably Europe and North America, since the Enlightenment, religion has been gradually removed from the field of politics. In many countries of the south, on the other hand, the traditional governmental role of religion was only superficially effaced by colonial rule. In such countries, religion remains a social and political force of great importance. Hence, most current religious revivals, notably those occurring in post-colonial societies, have a historical basis, to the extent that they may be said to represent a form of decolonising the mind by reconnecting with the past.[17] Western writers commenting on religious involvement in conflict often appear to labour under two misconceptions, both somewhat contradictory: first that religion, by its very nature, is an obstacle to peace, evidence for which may be adduced from conflicts in the world today; and, second, that when religion does become a significant factor in a particular conflict it is in fact being used contrary to its essential nature, which is often deemed to be intrinsically good. As one can see, these are in fact two incompatible positions: while the former opinion (religion is a negative force) is based on what people may experience in practice, the latter view (religion is basically good) is based on what some commentators believe it ought to be. These contrasting positions are in fact a reflection of a common discrepancy between theory and practice, that deserves further attention.

If it is true that a widespread theoretical assumption (that religion is something good) contradicts a widespread experience (that religion

---

[15] H.L. Seneviratne, "The monk's new robes: Buddhist fundamentalism and social change", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, *The Freedom to Do God's Will, op. cit.*, at 143–58.

[16] Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, *Worlds of Power: Religious thought and political practice in Africa* (London: Hurst & Co./New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[17] Cf. *id.*, chapter 9, notably 182–7.

is in practice usually bad), then this reflects the ambiguous nature of religion itself. For religion is neither inherently peaceful, nor does it automatically or inevitably lead to conflict. From a social science perspective – which is different from the theological perspective of individual believers – religion is a human construct, something that has grown among human communities and serves human interests, which are in many cases conflicting ones. As such it becomes a tool in the hands of human beings that can be used for good or not-so-good purposes, for constructive or for destructive aims and objectives. In his contribution to this volume, Marc Gopin also points to the ambiguous character of religion. He sees religion as a system of meaning with an evolving character that embodies both promise and peril, as he puts it. It is through human agency that it can go in one or the other direction.[18] Hence, we may argue, for a scholarly analysis, it is necessary to examine religion as a social fact that can be analysed in the same way as any other important element in society, such as the economy, national education or public health. All of these are products of human endeavours aimed at regulating society, with more or less success, and with a greater or lesser degree of self-interest. By analysing religion in a similar way it will appear that religion too has the potential to be used at the expense of particular groups, or employed for the common good, just as any other social force. From a social science perspective there is nothing divine about the final outcome of such processes, which is entirely the work of humankind.

As suggested above, it is largely due to recent conflicts in which the religious factor has appeared to play a role, and notably after the events of 11 September 2001, that religion has often become associated in the West with violence. The question is, however: are we dealing here with religious conflict in the strict sense, as is so often suggested, or has religion simply become a suitable instrument for political mobilisation, providing a resource that – like any other – can be effectively exploited for rather mundane purposes? For an answer to that question, it is of vital importance to analyse the role of religion in society, and to do so from a historical perspective. This is important, first, to be able to understand today's world better; and second, in order to analyse the specific properties, and therefore the potential, of religion. Only then does it become possible to deter-

---

[18] See Marc Gopin, "World religions, violence, and myths of peace in international relations", in this volume.

mine whether religion is indeed a source of conflict, or whether it may equally be considered a resource for peace.

All the essays in this volume address that question, from different religious perspectives. The respective authors do so both in a scholarly capacity and as adherents of the particular religious tradition they discuss. In most cases, they are also individuals who have crossed the border between the insider's and outsider's stance by actively engaging in local or international initiatives to help increase the peace-building capacity of their religion.[19] In doing so, they have been instrumental in building bridges between the different religions, rather than putting up barriers to separate different worlds.

RELIGION AS A SOURCE OF CONFLICT

The tendency to associate religion rather uncritically with conflict is particularly notable in the West where, as suggested above, historical conditions have led to a separation of church and state, and of the secular and spiritual powers operating in society, thus decreasing the role of religion in the public realm. What one might refer to as the "privatisation" of religion, however, appears to have reached its limits in a world that has undergone such dramatic changes since the end of the cold war. The resulting ideological changes have created new space for the introduction of religious ideologies. While until recently the main ideological divides in the world were between secular ideologies, such as between capitalism and Marxism, today they are more likely to occur between religious ideologies. The most obvious example of the latter is the growing sense of a fundamental antagonism between Christianity and Islam.

---

[19] In the academic study of religions, combining an insider's and outsider's – "emic" and "etic" – approach is not uncontroversial, notably among Western scholars, many of whom insist on the need for academics to critically distance themselves from their object of study. Cf. Russell T. McCutcheon, *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the public study of religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001). During an oral presentation at a conference in Ghana on "The role of religion in the socio-cultural transformation of West Africa" (5–8 February 2004), Rosalind Hackett attempted to bring the two dimensions together in the concept of the "caring critic" ("Carping or *carpe diem*? The response of scholars of religion to global (religious) violence"). Several non-Western scholars have pointed to the need to reflect in their work the particular conditions in which they work and live, in such a way as to make their work relevant to the societies concerned. Most of the chapters in the present volume are exemplary of that approach.

The ideological changes that have taken place since the 1990s have profoundly altered the relationship between religion and politics, in such a way as to give substance to the widespread idea that where there is religion, there is conflict. This is not surprising, in the sense that whenever there is political conflict this becomes reflected in the dominant ideology, which today is often a religious one. Just like its secular counterparts, religious ideology has its own – theological – justification for the use of violence, which is part of its history. Christianity, for example, boasts a history in which the notion of a just war is not only generally accepted, but also, more particularly, may provide justification for current Christian revivalist groups to declare war on both their religious and secular enemies. It should not be left unmentioned, in this context, that Christian liberation theology, as frequently embraced by the political left, is in fact a modern elaboration of the just war theory, resulting in another form of "exceptionalism". Similarly, in Islam the concept of *jihad*, a spiritual idea that may be applied to the material plane under particular conditions, notably for the purpose of self-defence, has proved helpful in justifying and rationalising the use of violence in modern times. The founders of *Hamas*, for example, have expanded the notion of self-defence beyond individuals' physical well-being to include the defence of their dignity and pride. In Judaism too, allowance is made for the need to fight a just war in certain circumstances, reinterpreting historical sources in such a way as to justify, for example, the current violence against Palestinians. In fact, it appears that all major religious traditions, notably the book religions, make allowance for the use of violence.[20] This idea, we may add, has left its traces in secular societies that legitimise the use of violence in the exceptional situation known as war, including the current global "war on terror".

Yet there is no evidence that religious ideology is more harmful than any other ideology. If we look at recent history, we see that the greatest bloodshed has been associated with secular, and not religious, ideologies. The largest conflicts in the world in the 20th century, which have resulted in genocides and massacres on a previously unheard-of scale, have all been connected with ideologies that were, or in some cases still are, rooted in secular values. One may refer here to the racist ideology of Nazi Germany, which resulted in mil-

---

[20] See Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, op. cit.*

lions of dead during World War II; one may think of the millions of dead motivated by Stalinist and Marxist ideological purges notably in the former Soviet Union, or by the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia; one may refer to the countless dead in China, inspired by the political ideology of Chairman Mao during the Cultural Revolution; and – more recently – one may also think of the Rwanda genocide, which no one will seriously claim was religiously inspired. Of course, massive crimes may be religiously legitimised, but that is a different matter. Zbigniew Brzezinski, the former US National Security Adviser, esti-mated in 1993 that at least 167 million lives had been "deliberately extinguished through politically motivated carnage" since the beginning of the 20th century.[21] He noted that this was done in the service of "coercive utopias" that had largely replaced religion. Ten years and a number of politically-motivated conflicts later have significantly added to the loss of human lives.

Hence, we may conclude, historical evidence points in a different direction than many people seem to assume these days. It suggests that all ideologies, whether man-made or believed to be divinely inspired, are morally ambiguous in nature, although the precise form of this ambiguity may differ. All ideologies can be used, and are in fact used, to serve human interests. One such major interest is in the field of politics. The political manipulation of religion is probably the most frequent way in which religion is used, or in the view of others, misused, in present times. The political manipulation of religion has been evident, for example, in the recent Balkan wars in Europe, forging a dangerous link between religion and nationalism. We see a similar process at work in India, in the form of Hindu nationalism.[22] Other examples of religious extremism from other parts of the world could easily be added, and from all major religions,[23] as some of the chapters in this volume also show. Examples of religion being used to settle conflicts of interest by violent means abound. They have in common their proven capacity to create havoc through the use of violence, at times massive. In that respect religious extremists do not differ from any other ideological extremists.

---

[21] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Out of Control: Global turmoil on the eve of the twenty-first cen-tury* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), at 17.

[22] See Chakravarti Ram-Prasad, "Being Hindu and/or governing India? Religion, social change and the state", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, *The Freedom to Do God's Will, op. cit.*, at 159–96.

[23] See Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, op. cit.*

It is useful to realise that religious extremism is by no means exclusive to any one particular religion. Most religions are characterised by a great diversity of views and trends, and the vast majority of religious believers in the world is not located at the extreme ends, but rather in the centre, just as most people take a centre position in politics. Such middle-of-the-road believers may themselves become targets of their extremist co-religionists, whose means and methods they reject. Nevertheless, both moderates and extremists within any given religious group may share the same political objectives, even if they differ on methods. Thus, the "9/11" attacks were instrumental in uniting Muslim opinion around a number of unresolved political issues, including notably the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the continuing presence of US troops in Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War – and hence control of access to the Muslim holy places – and sanctions against Iraq.[24] Although US troops were subsequently withdrawn from Saudi Arabia, the war against, and occupation of, Iraq created even greater political problems. Muslims worldwide tend to feel increasingly that their political grievances are not recognised by the Western world. They see that Western governments may support oppressive and even brutal regimes, including Muslim ones, if it suits them. They are aware of the dominant power of the West in almost every aspect of life today. The global expansion of Western power has, in effect, widened the gap between the rich and the poor in the world, creating large populations that are marginalised and excluded as they have little access to sources of wealth and power. This experience or perception of exclusion has become a major reason for the rise of religious extremism worldwide.[25]

While acknowledging the importance of such mundane issues, we should avoid becoming reductionist in our explanations; it is incumbent to acknowledge the potency inherent in religion and the religious imagination. Ideas of martyrdom and self-sacrifice, for example, pertaining to an alternative world believed to exist beyond the visible one, are deep-rooted and may provide extremely powerful motives to those who feel attracted to them. Mark Juergensmeyer has coined the term "performance violence" to explain the theatrical and dramatic

---

[24] See also "A discussion on the new crusader wars: The unreleased interview with Usamah Bin Laden (21 October 2001)", published by IslamicAwakening.com (www.islamicawakening.com/viewarticle.php?articleID=977).

[25] Cf. in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.* 64–66.

character of a religious extremist act. These are dramatic statements, he argues, which are not intended to serve a particular strategic goal, but to impress the audience by their symbolic significance. Hence, they can be fruitfully analysed in the same way as any other symbol, ritual or sacred drama.[26] From such a perspective, the 9/11 attacks too can be seen as primarily a drama intended to have an impact on several audiences. The role of the media, as one of the most powerful globalising forces, is of unmistakable importance in this, a point which is also emphasised by Chandra Muzaffar in his analysis of the religious conflicts that have arisen in Asia in recent years.[27] Indeed, Juergensmeyer goes as far as claiming that such acts are increasingly performed for a television audience around the world.

The understanding of religious-related violence in terms of a sacred drama and public performance, or as a social event with both real and symbolic aspects, can be helpful in the analysis of religion as a source of conflict. It may be equally helpful, as Daniel Míguez shows, in considering ways of dealing with religious conflict. The thrust of his argument is to show that religious conflict can be managed as long as it is kept within certain boundaries that prevent it from taking violent forms. With specific reference to Latin America, he suggests that in order to avoid the type of open conflict that easily leads to physical violence, a symbolic confrontation should be allowed and, at times, perhaps even encouraged. Rather than trying to eliminate all conflict, Míguez argues, efforts should be made – both by believers themselves and non-believers, such as policy-makers and others with an interest in establishing peace – to keep conflict within boundaries by allowing for a symbolic condemnation of others through ritual and discourse. Popular religious strategies that are based on a symbolic contestation of the social order provide ordinary people with a sense of self-worth and dignity that are normally denied them. Such strategies also provide them with a set of values alternative to those prevalent in the society in which they live. In Latin America, as Míguez shows, the social order has often been contested through religious symbolism. In such cases, religion usually plays an adaptive rather than a confrontational role. One example is through devil mythology, best known in regard to Latin America through the work of Michael

---

[26] Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, op. cit.*, at 125–6.
[27] See in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.*, at 67–68.

Taussig.[28] This type of mythology is today echoed in the "spiritual warfare" theology so prominent in popular Pentecostal discourse. We may note in this context that symbolic confrontation as a means to avoid violent conflict has also been recorded in other parts of the world. The singing contests among Inuit peoples, which provide a culturally accepted way to condemn the behaviour of others without resorting to physical violence, are one example. The popularity of football around the globe, as well as other popular sports, is often explained in similar terms. The important point here is that all religious traditions have symbolic means at their disposal to fight the real and palpable evil that those who adhere to them may experience. To reflect on how these may be used in order to avoid actual violent confrontations between members of different religious traditions is a question which appears a matter of life and death in many plural religious societies today.

In analysing situations of conflict we have to be fully aware of the socio-political context in which religion comes to play a role, indeed often a negative role. As Chandra Muzaffar points out, it is often not so much religious doctrines and practices that clash, but rather those who practise them. More than cultural attitudes, he maintains, it is the interplay of economic forces that has aggravated the relations between different religious communities. He particularly draws attention to the issue of migration, a hotly debated matter in virtually all parts of the globe today. Drawing on the Asian experience, Muzaffar shows how uneven development has a bearing on such socio-economic trends as the migration of large numbers of people belonging to a particular religious community to a place populated by those of another allegiance. The dichotomy between migrants and settlers, he argues, has aggravated religious tensions between Muslims and Christians in Asia.[29] A telling example of the same from Africa is the current situation in Côte d'Ivoire, which is commonly represented as a battle between the Christian south and the Muslim north. Such an explanation is not devoid of truth, for it is the case that there have been examples of Christians and Muslims fighting one another in Côte d'Ivoire, in places where they had lived peacefully together

---

[28] See Daniel Míguez, "From open violence to symbolic confrontation: Anthropological observations of Latin America's Southern Cone", in this volume, at 94–95.

[29] See in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.*, at 65–66.

until less than five years ago. However, there are other ways of considering this conflict that are more useful because they have greater explanatory power. I am referring here to the conflicts of interest that can occur between settlers and immigrants, which is a social paradigm rather than a cultural one. In the southern part of Côte d'Ivoire immigrants from the Sahel are habitually associated with Islam. But when their mosques get burned down in the south it is not as symbols of Islam but as symbols of the migrant presence.

It is not religion, but migration, regional and international, that is the truly controversial issue of politics worldwide. Situating local conflicts in an international debate about migration not only relates these to what I would regard as probably the most important issue in politics today, but also sheds a different light on the role of religion in conflict. Migration and the presence of migrant communities, whether in Africa, Europe or anywhere else, is symbolised by religious difference, conceived of as a form of "otherness". This can be politically exploited to create in- and out-groups; or, in other words, to introduce a politics of identity. In none of these cases should religion be mistaken for the real issue. The real issue is the pressure to share resources with others, whether it is in Côte d'Ivoire or the Netherlands, in Malaysia or the United States. Without reducing the degree of social and economic inequality in the world, showing a willingness to share the world's resources, there will always be a breeding ground for extremism, whether religious or secular in its orientation.

All this is not to deny the conflictual potential inherent in religion. It is therefore important, as both Marc Gopin and Chandra Muzaffar argue, to consider how this potential can be reduced or transformed in such a way as to turn it into an instrument for peace. In view of this, Gopin provides a serious critique of conventional social science theories and practices concerning conflict resolution. These, he argues, have been unable to understand and engage religious communities where these have been the source of conflict-generating behaviour. His criticisms are particularly aimed at a school of thought known as Human Needs theory, which, in essence, explains conflict in terms of deprivation. Such a theory, in his view, ignores the individual believer's motivation, where perception of a conflict is also directed by spiritual interests. Hence, according to Gopin, it is important to develop a theory that explains why in some circumstances people act in ways that undermine the fulfilment of their basic needs, including self-destruction. In other words, the challenge is to understand

the "unpredictable and powerful nature of religious commitment".[30] He takes a similar critical stance towards psychological approaches to conflict resolution, which he considers "emotional reductionism".

The question then is: what alternatives are there to prevent and transform human conflict? Marc Gopin looks for the answer in a discussion of critical values ("lived moral values") derived from different religious traditions, that might become the basis for inter-religious conflict resolution. In his chapter he identifies a number of such critical values that can be found in many of the world's religious traditions.[31] Chandra Muzaffar first looks at the general context that may reduce the potential for conflict. But, as he makes abundantly clear, no political, economic or social reform alone will prevent religious strife between communities. It is religion itself that must change. The real problem, in his view, lies with the way in which religion is understood and practised. To effect a change in this respect, it is necessary to broaden our understanding of religion, he argues, in such a way as to understand the ultimate unity of humankind. The transformative potential of religion lies in the shared spiritual and moral heritage of humankind.[32] From his experiences with the dilemmas facing the Church in Africa, notably the reality of violent conflict, Joseph Ngala suggests that an effective mechanism for the management of conflict lies in the formation of the individual conscience. This requires a critical examination of the materials used for religious instruction, as well as of the methods that are used in the process of conscience formation. This is a priority, in his view, given that conflicts in Africa implicate men and women from different faith communities who perpetrate violence in the name of their respective religion.[33]

The ambiguous nature of religion emerges clearly from most of the chapters in this volume, suggesting that such an ambiguity is not a characteristic of one particular religious tradition, but an inherent feature of all of them. The chapters in the second part of the book demonstrate this for the three Abrahamic religions that are the main focus of this volume, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The holy scriptures that underlie these traditions have given rise to theologies that

---

[30] See in this volume Gopin, *op. cit.*, at 36–39.
[31] *Id.*, at 43–52.
[32] See in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.*, at 72–78.
[33] See Joseph Adero Ngala, "The Christian Church as a peacemaker in Africa: Challenges and opportunities", in this volume, at 154–62.

justify and defend the use of violence, notably against those who do not share the same faith, but have at the same provided their adherents with sustainable visions for peace. The paradox is expounded in detail by Jan van Butselaar in his discussion of Christian history, showing how the debate on issues of conflict and peace have been part of the Church since its beginnings.[34] Though Christian theology did not forbid violence, its use was always limited by certain prescribed conditions. Further, this limited violence must be linked to a moral obligation to work for peace. This vision greatly influenced the 16th century Reformers, who tried to define the relation between church and state, and felt the need to oppose unjust state authority. The struggle with questions of violence was in fact a problem that emerged from Christians' belief that they were living both in the city of God and in the city of this world, and led to the formulation of a theory of "just war". Since the city of God is not yet fully realised, the argument went, conflict and violence will remain present in the city of the world. Van Butselaar shows how the debate on issues of conflict and peace continued throughout the ages, developing a particular dynamic in recent times under the influence of the ecumenical movement that was born out of the missionary endeavour.

The current tendency towards fundamentalisation that can be observed notably in Judaism, Christianity and Islam seems to provide theological debates concerning the use of violence with new justifications. Commenting on the conflict between Israel and Palestine, Yehiel Grenimann suggests that we may even be dealing increasingly with a clash between political liberalism and religious fundamentalism within each of the warring factions, which indicates an internal conflict rather than just a clash between Jews on the one hand and Muslims on the other.[35] In any case, as he clearly shows, the role of religion in the conflict has been a negative one, and has led to a gross violation of human rights of individuals and groups. The human rights implications of any conflict, including religious conflict, are visible in all the chapters of the volume, even if not explicitly addressed. Ali Salman's study of religious conflict in Pakistan leads him to an explicit inquiry into the relationship between religion and human rights. In Islam, he maintains, there is often an uneasy relationship between the two. He highlights certain aspects of the relationship

---

[34] See in this volume Van Butselaar, *op. cit.*
[35] See in this volume Grenimann, *op. cit.*, at 170–73.

that he believes can be helpfully analysed in terms of a series of
dichotomies: individualism versus collectivism, universalism versus rel-
ativism, and rights versus responsibilities. In all three, he argues, we
may identify points of conflict as well as cohesion. However, as he
shows, it is one thing to consider this at a theoretical level, but quite
another to do so in the practice of human rights. His conclusion is
that, for reasons that he explains, the relationship remains highly
complex. Salman believes that, in the end, the rule of law and for-
mal education are a more important contribution to the creation of
a human rights culture than religion.[36]

   The very fact that the vast majority of people in the world are
religious in some sense is an important reason to consider religion
as a possible building-block for human rights. As the various chap-
ters in this volume demonstrate, not only are views of human rights
often influenced by people's religious beliefs, but such beliefs are also
a powerful motive for action, not necessarily for the common good.
Both from an intellectual and practical point of view it seems logical
to argue that all the human resources in a given society should be
used for the good of humanity, not only material and intellectual
resources, but also religious and spiritual ones. Although in actual
practice religion often proves an obstacle to peace, this by no means
implies that it has to be that way. Religion can also be used as
an instrument for the promotion of social harmony and peace. All
the chapters in this book are ultimately concerned with how such
a transformation may take place, and how the religious factor may
be instrumental.

Religion as a resource for peace

The modern search for peace and human rights has occurred at the
same time within both the religious and secular spheres. The Universal
Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 is itself an example of how
different ideologies, both of a secular and a religious nature, can be
harnessed for the common good. The Universal Declaration was in
fact drafted by a team of people from different religious traditions,
working together. The core group of drafters included representatives

---

[36] Ali Salman, "Human rights and Islam: Cohesions and conflicts – A study of
Pakistan", in this volume, at 200.

of such diverse countries as Australia, Chile, China, France, Lebanon, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. There was a significant influence of Muslim drafters, as well as of Latin American socialists, to whom we owe the inclusion of social, economic and cultural rights in the Declaration.[37]

In religious circles, the attempt to establish a legitimate foundation for religion as a resource for peace is pursued notably by highlighting those aspects of sacred scripture and tradition that are conducive to a positive valuation of religion in public life. The "spirit of universal unity", Muzaffar argues, exists in all religious traditions. Drawing on verses of the *Qur'an*, he shows how the concept of a fundamental unity – based upon faith and action – is present, while at the same time diversity is acknowledged. But he also recognises that such views expressing universal sentiments have always remained a subordinate trend within religion(s). It is a major challenge to try and strengthen this trend, in his view.[38]

Hence, it is important to identify and subsequently propagate those elements in a particular religious tradition that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the solution of social and political conflicts, and thus to establish peace. This is an exercise in which many religious believers are actively engaged. As part of that process, several human rights declarations or comparable statements have been drafted over the years that base themselves explicitly on a particular religious creed, such as the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, the Bangkok Declaration, containing a statement from some forty states from the Asian and Pacific regions, but also a Declaration of Human Rights by the World's Religions, to mention a few. The full text of the most important declarations issued by believers of various religious persuasions has been included in the last part of this volume.[39] Whatever one may think about the specific details of such texts, their primary importance lies in the fact that all are the result of a conscious attempt to root certain universal values in particular cultural and religious traditions.

---

[37] See Johannes Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, drafting and intent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), notably chapter 1, "The drafting process explained".

[38] See in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.*, at 74–76.

[39] See Part Four of this volume, "Documentary resources on religion, violence and peace".

If we look at the so-called book religions – those that base themselves on a written authority such as the *Torah*, Bible, or *Qur'an* and other sacred scripts – it is apparent that the humane worldview on which many people strive to base their actions today did not exist at the time that these books were written. In these texts, the use of violence is commonly accepted and even encouraged in certain circumstances, while peace and tolerance are usually limited to a particular circle of people. Those who fall outside the category of belonging can be dealt with differently, and often harshly. If we look with modern eyes at the Bible, for example, to limit ourselves to the Judeo-Christian tradition that has shaped the worldview of the Western world, we find a shocking degree of violence perpetrated in the name of a god who protects his own children but has their enemies killed, including women and children. Similar examples can be taken from other holy books. Many religious traditions are based on an understanding of the common good that originally is limited to the community of believers, or even to just one family or clan. This restrictive attitude can still incite what we would refer to today as ethnic violence. Judaism, Christianity and Islam in particular are of an exclusive nature in that they promote the worship of gods who do not tolerate the presence of any rival; their intrinsic monotheism may lead to aggressive evangelisation or conversion campaigns that are not conducive to the creation of religious tolerance. This makes the reinterpretation of sacred traditions in their present context an absolute necessity in the modern world.

On the other hand, the positive potential of religion is often underutilised, including by state actors, and it is therefore worth exploring its resources, notably those elements that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the solution of social and political conflicts. In a recent address, Hizkias Assefa, well-known for his theoretical and practical insights into the role of religion in peace-building, notably in Africa, has alluded to the huge potential of religious actors, which in his view gives them an enormous advantage over secular organs in peace-building efforts.[40] In summary, religious actors tend to enjoy institutional legitimacy, have an available methodology, and

---

[40] Hizkias Assefa, "Conflict and peacebuilding in globalising Africa: Role of religious institution and leaders", Address delivered at a conference on "Religion in African Conflicts and Peacebuilding Initiatives: Problems and Prospects for a Globalizing Africa", held in Jinja Nile Resort, Uganda (31 March–3 April 2004).

possess the structures and networks necessary for the mobilisation of people. The question is: how can that potential be realised? There are no simple answers to that question, as can be seen from the two case studies discussed towards the end of this book, West Papua and the Philippines. However, as these examples also demonstrate, pathways leading in that direction may be discerned. Assefa emphasises the exemplary role of religious leaders, who must not only lead by example and work together with their counterparts of other faiths, but should also be seen to work together, in a visible cooperation among members of different faith communities. The exploration of common values, such as justice and compassion, and the attempt to practise these in public life, will enhance the credibility of religion and may serve as an inspiration to others. The spiritual dimension of peace-building is largely neglected by secularists, who consider this more as a technical process. But, as Assefa argues, bringing the spiritual dimension into the peace-making process can create access to the more deep-seated, affective base of the parties' behaviour, enabling them to examine critically their own attitudes and actions.[41] He emphasises that although negotiation and mediation are usually rational processes, people's conflict behaviour is often based on more emotional considerations and thus may not be changed simply by rational negotiation processes and subsequent agreements. Cognitive decisions or commitments, he argues, do not necessarily translate into feelings and actions.[42]

Peace-building is not a task for religious actors only. It requires the combined efforts of religious believers and of secularists, each of whom may contribute from their own perspective. Although in the West some people feel that forging links between the two may endanger the historical separation between church and state, or spiritual and political power, the current state of the world suggests that there may be reason to rethink the precise nature of the relationship between the two, without affecting the democratic principle. To be sure, this is not a plea for introducing religion *sui generis* into the political field. It

---

[41] Hizkias Assefa, "Peace and reconciliation as a paradigm: A philosophy of peace and its implications for conflict, governance and economic growth in Africa", in Hizkia Assefa and George Wachira (eds), *Peacemaking and Democratisation in Africa: Theoretical perspectives and church initiatives* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1996), 42–71, notably 51. See also Thanh-Dam Truong, "Reflections on human security: A Buddhist contribution", in this volume.

[42] Assefa, "Peace and reconciliation as a paradigm", *op. cit.*, at 69 (note 13).

is a plea for understanding the signs of our time, which require us to consider the role of religion as one of the most important trends in society, with a high relevance for development and human rights issues.

If governments and other secular actors are to take new trends in society seriously, they should do the same with regard to one of the most significant trends in present times: religion. Considering the Asian experience, Chandra Muzaffar feels that there is a lack of empathy for religion among so-called progressives in Asian societies, partly as a result of the way in which their thinking has been conditioned by Western intellectual paradigms. They are "unsuspecting victims of Western intellectual imperialism". Freeing the mind from that bondage is in his view one of the preconditions for inter-faith dialogue, which should not be concerned only with metaphysical issues, but also with contemporary challenges.[43] The proper analysis of religion as a social trend is a prerequisite in this respect. Just as contemplating the destructive side of religion does not require an analyst to be a religious believer, by the same token, it is not necessary to believe in any religious doctrine in order to appreciate that religion can be developed as a positive resource. In the eyes of believers, religious groups are faith communities, but in the eyes of the social scientist they are structurally no different from any other social movement or organisation, and may therefore be considered in similar terms. Social organisations are the vehicle by which ideologies, whether religious or secular, find their expression. In fact, as both Ngala and Muzaffar emphasise, there is no other institution that is able to shape the worldview of individuals and groups as effectively as religion does.[44]

Religious resources are contained in the four main elements of which religions consist: religious ideas (content of belief), religious practices (ritual behaviour), social organisation (religious community), and religious – or spiritual – experiences (psychic attitudes). These various dimensions of religion can all be used in the service of a human striving for peace.

Religious ideas that contain the seeds of a peaceful resolution to conflict can be strengthened, as shown in various chapters of this volume. This can be done through identifying such ideas and by giving

---

[43] See in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.*, at 77–78.
[44] See in this volume Muzaffar, *op. cit.*, at 72–74, and Ngala, *op. cit.*, in this volume, at 154–59.

them new layers of meaning. The reinterpretation of religious ideas according to their historical and social context is a prime responsibility of religious leaders and other specialists. One pertinent example is provided in Yehiel Grenimann's chapter reflecting on the conflict between Israel and Palestine.[45] The organisation Rabbis for Human Rights, to which the author belongs, is an attempt by Jews to curtail the current trend of violence in the region and to mobilise religion for positive ends. One important focus is on the reinterpretation of prophetic and rabbinic traditions, offering a theological approach to the issue of the land in Jewish thought and consciousness that breaks the exclusive link between the land and the notion of election. Such an interpretation implies the willingness to compromise, and thus to share the land with others, in this case Palestinians.

Hence, the reinterpretation of religious ideas according to their historical and social context includes the development of new theologies that address contemporary issues. During an international workshop on religion and human rights in Ghana in 2002 it was suggested that a theology of "the other" is sorely needed, as well as a theology of "transformation". These are concrete suggestions that link up with key ideas in many religious traditions.[46] Marc Gopin refers in his chapter to the use of imagination to resolve conflicts.

He also speaks in this context of the power of myth, arguing how the Abrahamic family myth opens up new possibilities for inclusion that may lead to visions for peace. Certain people, he argues, may be reached only by offering "alternative mythic constructs of a spiritual nature which are just as compelling but decidedly more human in their ethical implications".[47] The reworking of religious mythic meaning, according to him, has as its task "the creation of viable, authentic visions for peace and social justice that ring true to the faiths involved and, at the same time, support the basic building blocks of modern civil society, human rights and democracy".[48]

One of the concepts with the potential to become such a building block is the concept of *shalom* or *salaam*, which is part of the Abrahamic family tradition. Van Butselaar in particular elaborates the concept,

---

[45] See in this volume Grenimann, *op. cit.*
[46] See the policy recommendations on p. 10 of the report of the International Workshop on Religion and Human Rights, held from 4–8 November 2002 at the Marina Hotel in Dodowa, Ghana (author's files).
[47] See in this volume Gopin, *op. cit.*, at 52.
[48] *Id.*

building his case on the Christian tradition that he knows best. He argues that the concept of *shalom* is not a romantic ideal but a concrete vision linked with the struggle for justice, forgiveness and reconciliation. In spite of all the wrongs wrought in Christian history, he maintains, such a vision for peace has continued to inform and inspire Christians worldwide to this day.[49] The difficulty of living up to the ideal contained in the vision is aptly caught in the title of his chapter. It raises the vital question of how to reconcile the promise of the kingdom, on the one hand, and the reality of sin on the other, a problem the Church has struggled with since St. Augustine. Yet, as both Van Butselaar and Ngala argue from their religious point of view, peace-making is mandatory for all Christians.

Religious behaviour, or ritual, also contains an underutilised potential. For example, it is worth exploring the ritual potential in the "rites of passage" that are known to most human societies, to enhance human dignity and status. Some charismatic churches in Liberia, for example, a country devastated by the experiences of the war, use the ritual means at their disposal to re-integrate child soldiers into the community, encouraging them to effect a change of life with the help of God. Young ex-combatants give public testimony of the often horrific acts they have committed during the civil war. Such testimonies assume the character of a public confession, providing enormous psychological relief to these young people. At the same time they are encouraged by the community of believers to make a new start with their lives with the help of God. The church opens up a new horizon for youth, providing them with spiritual tools, including such techniques as building faith through prayer and fasting, to increase their determination to effect a change of life.[50] Their acceptance by the community is of crucial significance to these young ex-fighters, whose anti-social deeds cannot easily be forgotten and forgiven. We know of similar initiatives in the traditional-religious sphere in the post-war reconstruction process in Mozambique. Outside Africa, rites of peace have been recorded as an effective instrument of conflict resolution in the Lebanon, where the indigenous ritual of *sulha* is an integral part of communal traditions throughout the Middle East, Muslim, Christian,

---

[49] See in this volume Van Butselaar, *op. cit.*, at 145–47.
[50] This is based on the author's personal observations during a research trip to Liberia in October 2000.

Jewish or Druze.[51] Daniel Míguez's anthropological research in Latin America's Southern Cone draws attention to yet another model for the avoidance of violent conflict, that of symbolic confrontation, as we noted above.[52]

These examples also suggest how religious communities, as a form of social organisation, can be used to turn conflict into peace. Their spiritual approach to conflict resolution is a valuable complement to secular approaches, which are often externally initiated. This is particularly important in circumstances where a profound breach of relations has occurred, even to the point of seeming beyond repair. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, which has been an example to many other countries,[53] although not a religious initiative *stricto sensu*, was supported by the various religious communities in the country, quite apart from being characterised by a religious approach in its dealings and procedures. Also in South Africa, the concept of *ubuntu*, a concept that cannot easily be translated into English, is explored for its conflict resolution potential. Literally, *ubuntu* means "collective personhood" or "the art or virtue of being human".[54] In other parts of the world too, traditional or culture-specific methods to manage conflicts or restore peace have been consciously revived.[55]

Religious experiences, finally, have been crucial in the foundation and subsequent spread of many religions, and a powerful inspiration notably for those who normally lack power, often women, and often the poor. One may think of divine revelation, dreams and visions, or the experience of a miracle in one's life. Examples of this abound in the history of religion and apply to its various religious traditions, indigenous and imported. All these constitutive elements of religion – ideas, behaviour, organisation and experience – can be explored and used, not only by believers but also by others who may be motivated

---

[51] Lauri E. King-Irani, "Rituals of forgiveness and processes of empowerment in Lebanon", in I. William Zartman (ed), *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African conflict "medicine"* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener, 2000), 129–40.

[52] See in this volume Míguez, *op. cit.*

[53] These include a number of African countries, including Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, but also countries outside the African continent, such as Peru and East Timor.

[54] Nomonde Masina, "Xhosa practices of *ubuntu* for South Africa", in Zartman, *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts, op. cit.*, at 170.

[55] Cf. Zartman, *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts, op. cit.*

by secular ideals. Part of a tolerant world is the acceptance that different paths may lead to the same goal, in this case a humane and peaceful society. This also applies to the *Shariʿa* debate, in which the whole world seems to have a stake today. Whereas certain aspects defy universal standards of human rights, this is no reason to suggest that *Shariʿa* as a whole should be rejected or that it cannot be made compatible with the requirements of modern times.[56]

There are many individuals and groups today who use their religious resources (located in ideas, behaviour, organisation and experience) to further the cause of peace. Well-known examples include inter-religious organisations such as the World Conference on Religion and Peace and the Parliament of the World's Religions, but also peace organisations within a single religious tradition such as Pax Christi and Justice and Peace; or peace movements that are political in nature but have been religiously inspired such as the All Party *Hürriyet* ("Freedom") Conference in Kashmir, established by a young Muslim leader (*Mirwaiz* Umar Farooq). One may also refer to the 1999 The Hague Appeal for Peace, in which many individuals, including a large number of women, participated on the basis of their individual religious conviction. In Israel and Palestine, religious women have set up peace groups, as they have also done in the long-standing conflict in Sudan. These are only some random examples of the way in which religious resources are being used for furthering peace.

Some further concrete and recent examples are discussed in the final chapters of this book. Benny Giay discusses local initiatives to transform the conflict-ridden Papua Province of Indonesia, and particularly the leading role of the churches in this endeavour. His chapter provides a detailed description of some of the human rights violations that have taken place during the last decade, from the 1990s to the present.[57] The churches' efforts to establish peace, he argues, have played an important role in creating an atmosphere in which Papuans can improve their situation. Another, remarkable, initiative took place in 2000 when a local community declared part of West Papua to be a Peace Zone.[58] The idea came from a group of Papuan students

---

[56] Cf. Abdullahi An-Naʾim, "Islamic fundamentalism and social change: Neither the 'end of history' nor a 'clash of civilizations'", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, *The Freedom to Do God's Will, op. cit.*, at 25–48.

[57] Benny Giay, "West Papua Peace Zone: The role of the Church in West Papua and local initiatives in the struggle for human rights", in this volume, at 209–13.

[58] *Id.*, at 218–22.

and other youth, but was shaped by one person, a community leader on the small island of Yapen off the West Papuan coast, who managed to involve all different sectors of Papuan society in the initiative. Giay provides a detailed account of the ceremony and rituals during which the land of Yapen was solemnly declared a Peace Zone or Zone of the Lord's Love. From there, attempts were made to take the peace initiative further, in spite of the lack of co-operation from the provincial government that feared the idea to be part of a Papuan strategy to separate itself from Indonesia. Yet, the vision for peace is still alive in West Papua, where the churches continue to take the lead in programmes of reconciliation and peace-building.

The chapter by Maria Lorenza Palm-Dalupan is another example of local peace initiatives led by religious bodies, this time in the Philippines.[59] Since 1986, when the Marcos dictatorship was toppled, a comprehensive peace process has developed, aiming to put a halt to violent conflicts in the country. This was guided by a holistic vision of peace that recognises the structural causes of violence. It implies that for peace to prevail a social transformation is required that demands efforts from many sectors of society. Palm-Dalupan focuses on the peace-building efforts of the religious sector, which has been among the most active participants in the process. This includes the Roman Catholic Church, the largest religious institution in the country, the mainline Protestant groups, and Muslim communities. She draws attention especially to four areas that highlight the constructive role of the religious sector in responding to conflict and violence: peace advocacy and constituency-building, institution-building and empowerment, promoting a culture of peace through inter-faith dialogue, and mediation towards conflict resolution. One remarkable initiative, comparable to the one discussed by Giay with regard to West Papua, was the creation of Peace Zones in the midst of a guerrilla war taking place in the hinterlands of the Philippines. Between 1988 and 1990, five Peace Zones were declared in different parts of the country by the respective local communities, with the initiative being emulated by others in subsequent years. As a result, Palm-Dalupan informs us, Peace Zones in the Philippines are recognised as an area-based, non-violent effort to arrest armed conflict and enhance community security.[60]

---

[59] Maria Lorenza Palm-Dalupan, "The religious sector building peace: Some examples from the Philippines", in this volume.

[60] *Id.*, at 246–51.

Building a culture of peace though inter-faith dialogue has been another important element of the peace initiatives in the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao. Such efforts have included the creation of a forum for dialogue between Christian and Muslim leaders, as well as local dialogue groups. Several research centres were subsequently opened that facilitate the dialogue. Palm-Dalupan discusses some of the growing number of grassroots community-based "dialogues of social engagement" that should help stop violence and animosity between different groups. Inter-faith dialogue, as we noted above, is an activity frequently undertaken by concerned believers in most religious traditions today. It generally brings together those who are prepared to engage themselves in dialogue and open their minds by listening to the other. The problem lies increasingly, however, with those taking a maximalist and unbending position. As Grenimann points out with reference to the Israel-Palestine conflict, there is a tendency towards fundamentalisation that seems to pull religious fanatics from both camps together. He suggests that the ultimate solution has to come from the side of the so-called religious fundamentalists rather than from the liberals.[61] The argument appears to apply to other places where religious believers from different persuasions are in conflict, such as Northern Ireland. This may mean that more attention should be given to the need for intra-religious dialogue, where representatives from the extreme ends within a particular religious tradition discuss their internal differences.

The roots of religious fundamentalism, as Marty and Appleby have shown in their work,[62] lie also in a lack of human security, including such psychological factors as an absence of an appropriate sense of belonging. The absence of human security, in the broadest sense of the word, is an important source of conflict and violence. This is argued by Thanh-Dam Truong, who offers a Buddhist perspective on questions of violent conflict and peace.[63] She refers to the specific spiritual teachings that relate to individuals' efforts to control their own minds, in which an essential element is interdependency, being expressed in different forms of empathy. She distinguishes three states of mind that she calls wholesome, neutral, and unwholesome. It is

---

[61] See in this volume Grenimann, *op. cit.*, at 170–71.
[62] See note 4 *supra.*
[63] See in this volume Truong, *op. cit.*

the unwholesome mind, according to the Buddhist thought described by Truong, that is unable to grasp the principle of what is referred to as "interbeing"; hence, actions derived from an unwholesome mind will result in harm to others. This is in contrast to actions deriving from a wholesome mind, which result in non-violent outcomes and may thus alleviate suffering. In other words, as Truong argues, Buddhist ontology provides us with a vision of human nature that is not geared towards power and control, but towards understanding the nature of interconnectedness, the key to empathy and compassion. These two qualities are also among the critical values identified by Gopin as important for conflict resolution theory and practice.

According to Truong, the concept of human security and the actual experience thereof are shaped by a number of factors, not only political and social but also cultural and religious ones. In debates on human security, religion is not often considered as capable of making a positive contribution. Truong, however, argues strongly that it is important to add a spiritual dimension to debates on human security. She illustrates this in her chapter by showing how Buddhist thought could contribute to the discussion of global peace and human security in the 21st century. Briefly, she argues that human security is a secular concept in need of a spiritual dimension, a view which concords with the argument previously made in this chapter: spiritual resources are necessary for building peace or indeed for any other common good. An approach that leads to defining human security in terms that recognise the role of spirituality may result, in her view, to a fuller understanding of the causes of human suffering. Three key aspects are relevant to the framing of such a "compassionate security agenda": the bio-centred approach characteristic of a Buddhist theory of human nature, a Buddhist emphasis on the awareness of interbeing as a characteristic of humankind, and the notion of *prajna* ("penetrating insight") as the fountain of compassion. The first of these two (bio-centred approach) may serve to promote unity in human spirituality, the second (awareness of interbeing) will help support the indivisibility of rights, while the third (the notion of *prajna*) may contribute to an enrichment of the theory of the person in development ethics. Compassion, Truong argues, is a form of *prajna*. It could, or should, be regarded as a "penetrating insight", necessary for just rule in the global world order. Such insight would stimulate a type of policy that will help promote a notion of difference as "different manifestation

of the same processes".[64] Her argument finds an echo in Joseph
Ngala's discussion of the role of conscience in conflict and peace.
Commenting on the historical experience of the Church in Africa
he distinguishes three types of people: people with what he calls "a
wrong identity", who perpetrate violence in the name of religion;
people "without an identity", who are therefore unable to do anything
in the name of religion, whether good or bad; and people with "a
right identity", who inculcate positive values that shun violence. It
is therefore of the utmost importance, in his view, to consider how
the religious content of a message is transmitted by considering crit-
ically the mechanisms by which conscience is formed.[65]

The above shows that a religious dimension should not be dissociated
from the social and political problems that often underlie religion-
related violence. Religious solutions, it has been observed by others,
must address the same social and psychological needs – such as for
identity and dignity – that are addressed by contemporary militant
formulations of religious traditions.[66] Secular people should be aware
of the multifold functions of religion, which provide such powerful
motives for believers to act in the way they do. Religion provides
people with an orientation in their lives and a moral point of ref-
erence. It is also a cultural anchor that provides them with a social
identity and places them in a social context that can enhance their
welfare in both a material and a psychological sense. A core problem
in the relations between believers and non-believers, or religionists
and secularists, is the lack of understanding among secularists of what
religion means to believers and the spiritual power that they derive
from it. There is a need to understand what Marc Gopin refers to as
"the psychological construct of unique individuals who both live in
a deep and primordial meaning system but also express unlimited care
beyond their own boundaries".[67] When such an understanding exists, he
believes we may be on the way to discovering a workable model of
meaningful existence for the diversity of cultures and religions today.

The latter seems more urgent than ever, with religion being on
the political agenda worldwide. The events of "9/11" appear to have
become a watershed in that respect. Rightly or wrongly, the fact is

---

[64] *Id.*, at 290–94.
[65] See in this volume Ngala, *op. cit.*, at 159.
[66] See John Kelsay and Sumner B. Twiss (eds), *Religion and Human Rights* (New
York: The Project on Religion and Human Rights, 1994), 15.
[67] See in this volume Gopin, *op. cit.*, at 56.

that many people in the West consider the 11 September attacks as the work of religious extremists who misuse their religion for political ends. One way to combat religious extremism, therefore, is for secularists to have a proper understanding of what religion actually is, what it means to people, and to ensure adequate information on religious traditions. This could be achieved through religion education as a state responsibility, not to be confused with religious education: the latter is and should remain the responsibility of individual believers and their faith communities. An interesting example in this respect is post-apartheid South Africa, where religion has been declared a responsibility of the government in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society. Rather importantly, through religion education children and youth will learn about different worldviews at an age when this may have a positive effect on their future relations with people of a different persuasion.

Conclusion

Religion itself is neither good nor bad, it is simply there. It is a reality, whether one likes it or not. Religion is a social fact, that rather than being lamented, dismissed or ignored may be turned to the advantage of humankind by considering how it can be used for constructive purposes.

Contemplating the destructive side of religion, I have argued, does not require an analyst to be a religious believer him- or herself. Nor is it necessary, by the same token, to believe in any religious doctrine in order to appreciate efforts to highlight those aspects of religion that can be developed as a positive resource. Evidence suggests that the majority of people in the world are religious in some shape or form, in the sense that they believe in an invisible world inhabited by invisible beings (such as spirits or deities) to which they ascribe an effective power over their lives. It follows then that such a power expresses itself in the life of believers, in positive or negative ways. Religion becomes a negative power, as suggested above, when it is used for the oppression and exploitation of others. But it is positive, for example, when it is used for healing purposes, or as an inspiration to resolve conflicts and bring about peace.

Religion is a powerful instrument in the hands of those who use it. These are not necessarily believers alone. They may also include others, such as politicians, who manipulate religion effectively. Many

politicians in the world, at least in those parts of the world where people are overwhelmingly religious (in the defined sense of the word), have already discovered this potential and use it for their own, often factional, purposes, in ways that prevent the establishment of peace. They are acutely aware that both the realm of politics and the realm of religion are connected with power, whether religiously defined (in terms of spiritual power, located in the transcendental sphere) or in secular terms (located in the material sphere). Politicians therefore find it important to try and extend their influence and control into the religious realm, with often disastrous consequences, as the chapters in this volume show. Religion and politics are distinct but not separate categories in the discussion about conflict and peace in the world. They are related in the sense that both of them make use of a source of legitimate power, whether spiritual or political. Hence religious and political leaders are rivals potentially, and may become so actually, as we see for example in the case of Iran, where the worldly leader Khatami and the religious leader Khamenei are competing for power. We may also think of some historical examples including Martin Luther King, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other religious leaders who made their reputation by effectively challenging worldly powers. It is no surprise, then, that both political and religious leaders are concerned with questions of conflict and peace.

This volume constitutes an attempt to analyse the role of religion in its current manifestations, as well as an attempt to provide an alternative view of it. As a result, it does not limit itself to looking at religion in its violent expressions, but considers in particular its peace-building potential. This specific focus has had a bearing on the structure of the book, which is organised into four sections.

Part One, Religion, Conflict and Peace, is primarily concerned with the role of religion as a source of conflict that often takes violent forms, thus contributing significantly to the problems in our present world. Hence, the point of departure for the authors contributing to this part is the negative manifestation of religion. However, in every case they demonstrate an awareness of the other side of religion, namely its constructive potential. Or, in the words of Chandra Muzaffar, after probing the causes, they also begin to seek solutions. The directions they suggest are a logical consequence of their analytical approach. All, more or less explicitly, highlight the ambiguous nature of religion, and therefore, by implication, the room for human intervention in the realm of religion.

Part Two, Religious Perspectives on Conflict and Peace, moves attention gradually away from questions of conflict towards questions of peace. This is done from the perspective of three major religious traditions in the world, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which are all part of the same "Abrahamic family", and seen as largely responsible for much of the trouble in the present world. We may think here of the lasting conflict in the Middle East, notably involving Israel and Palestine, the long-standing conflicts created by and through Christianity in many parts of the world, and the present conflicts emerging from increasingly larger sectors of the Muslim world. All the chapters in this part of the book have been written by scholars who are personally engaged in processes geared towards transforming religion from an obstacle into an instrument for peace. They offer new theoretical perspectives on the question of conflict and peace derived from their respective religious traditions.

Part Three, Visions for Peace, offers a number of essays that are intended as an actualisation of a vision for peace based on religion. The first two contain detailed case studies of lengthy processes that have required the foresight and determination of individuals who are even prepared to risk their own lives. The two cases presented here are those of West Papua and the Philippines, each with its own historical and political specificities, but also showing a number of similarities. The Philippines has a record of peace-making by religious bodies that dates back to the fall of the Marcos regime in the 1986. The religious sector in West Papua, on the other hand, has been able to organise itself for the sake of peace and human rights only since the end of the Suharto regime in 1998. The fall of political dictatorships has had a favourable effect on the widening of democratic space in these countries, as in many others, even though political repression may continue, as is notably the case in West Papua.

The last chapter is of a slightly different nature in that it does not contain a case study detailing a specific vision for peace. Yet it deserves a place in this section as it situates visions for peace in the wider context of human security. Here, we benefit from spiritual insights offered by Buddhism, with its long tradition of theoretical reflection on matters of conflict and peace. The search for human security, it is argued, would benefit from an approach to social ethics that integrates notions of respect and right or, in other words, the ethics of virtue and justice.

In conformity with the aims and objectives of the book, all chapters also consider the policy implications of the theoretical and practical

perspectives offered on questions of conflict and peace. This is par-
ticularly needed since so many policy-makers, both in and outside
government, are trying to come to terms with the realities of a world
in which religion has come to play a major role.

Part Four, Documentary Resources on Religion, Violence and
Peace, contains in chronological order the most important documents
that have emerged from a variety of religious groups, notably those
represented in the book, outlining their view on issues of peace and
human rights. This is important as it shows how religious believers
have in recent years engaged with questions similar to those suggested
by the principles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of
Human Rights. In bringing these documents together in this volume,
the book provides an important resource for those who are interested
in studying the views of religious believers themselves on these matters.

2. WORLD RELIGIONS, VIOLENCE, AND MYTHS OF PEACE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS[1]

Marc Gopin

Religious meaning systems evolve out of particular cultural constructs and worldviews. They are accompanied by patterns of interpersonal moral and political actions that emanate directly from these worldviews.

These systems of meaning are constantly evolving, despite the fact that conservative religious traditions like or need to present themselves to constituencies (who are starving for some form of permanent meaning in the modern world) as a changeless and ancient bedrock of certainty. It is the evolving character of these mythic universes that embodies both the promise and the peril of organised religion to influence the direction of political entities on the globe.

Turning to the world of conflict analysis, it is a fundamental assumption of those who practise peacemaking or conflict resolution that human beings are capable of doing better at conflict, with aid from others, as well as with the help of various processes of self-awareness and communication.

I argue that the same holds true of great civilisations, cultures and historical religions. Just as individuals evolve endlessly, whether for the better or for the worse, until the day that they die, the same holds true for civilisations. And what they evolve into is very much up to us, what we put into them, how we treat them, and whether we encourage their evolution along a path of peace or a path of violence.

There are numerous causes of human conflicts, and they all interact in complex ways that theoreticians and practitioners sometimes overlook. In our search for some semblance of order in the chaos and nebulae of conflicts, we search often for one overriding causal factor, in order to find a way to solve the conflict or heal damage done by it. But this skews the complex causal interactions of conflict,

---

[1] For a more in-depth study of this phenomenon, see Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The future of world religions, violence and peacemaking* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2000). For a study of its application to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, see Marc Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace: Moving the Abrahamic religions from violence to peacemaking in Israel and Palestine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

and especially has tended to obscure or ignore the role of religion and culture.

Religious texts and traditions inform far more of a culture's psychological presentation of self in critical moments of cross-cultural conflict than secular members of a civilisation might wish to acknowledge. In other words, a great deal of energy has been expended in the past century, by some analysts of human nature in the realms of psychology, sociology and biology, to distance all human phenomena from their cultural moorings, in order to see them distilled into predictable, universal patterns, bereft of all cultural or religious uniqueness.

While this has produced some remarkable results in terms of our understanding of the human being, it has also tended to obscure our understanding of human conflict. Group conflict is constituted by a series of unique human beings who evolve, for one reason or another, into complex relationships. In order to understand this we cannot suppress the roots of that human being or group of human beings in the historical cultures and religions from which they have emerged. Connecting the human being to his cultural moorings will help us understand why and when he fights and why and when he makes peace. It will give us tools to help the human being travel in the direction of peacemaking by reconnecting the individual to his cultural bases. If those cultural moorings have ways of peacemaking then they may resonate in ways that no other peace processes will. If those cultural moorings are conflict generating, then we may see what needs to change culturally and/or psychologically in ways that normal theories of conflict may not be able to perceive.

A CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORIES AND PRACTICES

Conflict resolution theory by itself has proven unable to understand and engage religious communities that have been the source of conflict generating behaviour. Let us look at why. One important school of thinking in conflict resolution that needs to be problematised is Human Needs theory.[2] Put very simply, the focus of this theory is the needs of the individual, and that needs deprivation leads to

---

[2] This theory is most closely associated with John Burton and his many writings. See, for example, John W. Burton, *Conflict Resolution: Human needs theory* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

conflict. As vital a contribution as this theory is to our understanding of conflict, there is also a reductionism about this theory that leaves little place for human behaviour motivated by other than individualised need fulfilment. This leaves little place for the religious psyche which, at least in many religions, sees itself as motivated much more by a free will, not by needs, and/or by a sense of duty to a community or an exalted being or beings, all of whom rise beyond the realm of the individual's needs. This is especially true of many African indigenous religions.[3]

It may be the case that the social scientist will nevertheless assert that religious behaviour is based on needs, not duties and not on a free will that chooses. But this is certainly not the perception of the religious actors, and one has to question the usefulness of a social conflict theory whose essence cannot be communicated honestly as conflict practice and intervention, in terms that can be agreed upon or understood, to the very people it is trying to help emerge from conflict. Whereas to a person who has no spiritual interests, one can speak about exploring his or her needs, in the context of engaging in a conflict resolution intervention, it is hard to know exactly how the intervention would proceed with those who feel that they are not acting at all on their needs, but on high ideals that defy their own personal needs. This is an obvious problem that would come up with anyone engaged in conflict for the sake of high ideals, and no doubt those who have utilised human needs theory in interventions are aware of this. But it must be stated that there is a tension here between a theory that assumes universal natural, pragmatic motivations of self-interest, on the one side, and, on the other, the self-perception of the individual or group in conflict that they are fighting for much more than the fulfilment of needs. On the contrary, most groups will probably feel insulted by the reduction of their cause to needs. That does not mean that the theory is useless, but it does require flexible and creative translation into the pragmatics of intervention and relationship building between all parties.

Human needs is also a theory deeply rooted in Western prioritisation of the individual. Once again, numerous religious traditions globally,

---

[3] Cf. "Man is regarded as intimately related to other fellow-men and beings; and the universe is conceived as a sort of organic whole composed of supra-sensible or mystical correlations and participations." Charles Nyamiti, *The Scope of African Theology* (Kampala: Gaba Publications, 1973), 21, as quoted in Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The moral traditions of abundant life* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997), 52.

in addition to cultures, centralise the community, not the individual. It is fine to critique the latter from a liberal moral point of view, and, therefore, to advocate social change and even conflict resolution that guarantees the rights of the individual and the freedom of the individual. But this must be acknowledged as a moral position of the outside intervenors.

Human needs theory that does not take into account the centrality of the communal in religious life will not deal effectively with the challenges faced by the parties to a conflict. Many people see their needs fulfilled by the guarantee of the safety and security of their group, and the continuity of their group's traditions. Many others, despite or sometimes because of their particular view of spiritual truths, consider the individual's needs to be paramount when it comes to certain fights with religious authority.

We must be able to develop a theory that would explain why so many people will go against all of their basic human needs, such as food, water, even social acceptance, in order to fulfil a religious precept. The most blatant example is religious suicide bombing, or self-directed destruction such as the self-immolating Buddhist monks, or the self-immolating wives in old Hindu tradition, all for the sake of a religious belief. One can theorise a basic need for ultimate meaning that is so fundamental to some people that all other needs collapse before it. However, this must be studied further before the theory can be an effective aid in intervention when religion and culture are deeply rooted phenomena in the conflict.

This is beside the problem, known to theorists, of the enormous variety in the attachment to needs. Most people would never dream of complete sacrifice of their human needs, while others do it regularly. Furthermore, we have to account for unusual periods of time and circumstances in which thousands of people, perhaps even most, deprive themselves of life and safety for the sake of some intangible need to do one's duty in warfare. This includes soldiers giving up their comfort and even lives, parents giving up their young sons and so on. This could be reduced to a basic survival need in a defensive war, but what about wars for glory? What need is being fulfilled? This is related to the religion question in the sense that it points to human motivations that clearly sacrifice many basic needs, thus calling into question a reductionist account of human choices regarding conflict and violence. Burton and others have clearly recognised identity needs that include religion, and there is also ample discus-

sion around the problem of creating a hierarchy of human needs.[4]

There is still a problem with not comprehending the unpredictable and powerful nature of religious commitment. There are religious commitments that can drive people to do things that are perfectly in line with some very pragmatic human needs, such as saving life, being prudent in one's monetary affairs, establishing community and so on. But religious commitment can also lead to the complete sacrifice of those very needs, in certain circumstances that demand it, such as, for example, when a group is forced by some outside enemy not to observe a particular ritual.[5] Human needs theory would have to question risking life and limb, including those of one's children, all for one ritual. Many religious individuals will forego that ritual. But others will risk their health and their children's to go on observing it. This calls into question the adequacy of human needs theory as an explanation of religious life, unless all needs are subservient, for some people, to identity needs. To complicate things, in other circumstances, the very same people, when not threatened in the way just described, might in fact act based on the full range of needs described in human needs theory! Thus, the theory needs to not be discarded but complexified and/or adjusted to each group.[6]

The same questions can be raised about social psychological and psychoanalytic approaches to conflict resolution, namely, that they tend to assume that beliefs and practices are reducible to individual emotional needs. Furthermore, hatred of, or violence toward, a specific enemy is reducible to a manifestation of traumatic injury to the psyche, or to projection, and so on.

---

[4] See John W. Burton, "Human needs versus societal needs", in Roger A. Coate and Jerel A. Rosati (eds), *The Power of Human Needs in World Society* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988), 34–58.

[5] On the Jewish legal obligation to endure martyrdom, in certain circumstances, rather than violate a Jewish law, a choice forced on many Jews in history, see Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Hilkhot Yesode ha-Torah 5. See also Ronald Agus, *The Binding of Isaac and Messiah: Law, martyrdom, and deliverance in early rabbinic religiosity* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1989).

[6] To illustrate with an example, my paternal grandmother devoted her entire life to the welfare of her children. As an Orthodox immigrant, however, during the Depression, she had great difficulty with employment. But the greatest difficulty she had was being fired every Sunday for not coming in on Saturday, the Sabbath. This clearly put her children at some risk, in terms of not making enough money to provide food and shelter in those terrible years. This is precisely the point at which many other immigrants, out of concern for their family's needs, gave up the most significant legal ritual of traditional Judaism, Sabbath observance.

This school of thought has contributed enormously to conflict analysis, and there is no argument here that it is irrelevant to religious life. On the contrary, it may well help to illuminate numerous aspects of religious culture. In particular, the work of Vamik Volkan has created a generation of activists, such as Joseph Montville, whose insights into the psychological roots of persistent, intractable conflicts, has proven indispensable to our understanding. Furthermore, this has led to creative, new approaches to intervention.[7] However, it is not the whole story, nor can it explain the hold that sacred tradition involving enemies has on people.

There are commitments in religion to systems of meaning and practice that go well beyond deep injury. For example, if a certain anti-social belief about a given enemy is inextricably related to a system of traditions and a calendar life cycle, whose structure would fall apart, from a theological perspective, if one piece was taken out, then the persistence of the anti-social belief cannot be explained simply as reaction to trauma. It may have been at one time, but now its persistence is due also to the complexity of meaning systems and how they can resist evolution and hermeneutic development. Thus, the resistance to change may not be part of holding onto an objectified enemy, but rather to a cognitive meaning structure that cannot survive without this piece.

Equally important, the authority structure of clerics is often threatened by calling into question any piece of a meaning system whose legitimacy depends on its inerrancy or on its appearance of permanence. The cleric may not be attached to the enemy image embedded in the system, as much as to his obligation, and that of his colleagues, to a meaning system under fire from secular culture. Thus, the dynamics of secular/religious belligerency may be the primary problem with

---

[7] Vamik Volkan, "The need to have enemies and allies: a developmental approach", *Political Psychology*, 6:2, 219–47 (1985); *idem, The Need to Have Enemies and Allies* (Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1988); *idem*, "An overview of psychological concepts pertinent to interethnic and/or international relationships", in Vamik D. Volkan, Demetrios A. Julius and Joseph V. Montville (eds), *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), vol. 1, 31–46; *idem, Bloodlines: From ethnic pride to ethnic terrorism* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997); Joseph V. Montville, "War and externalization of aggression", *Psychologist/Psychoanalyst*, a publication of Division 39 of the American Psychological Association, vol. XI, Special Supplement (Summer 1991); *idem*, "The healing function in political conflict resolution", in Dennis J.D. Sandole and Hugo van der Merwe (eds), *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 112–27; *idem*, "Reconciliation in America", *American Civilization* (May/June 1995), 14.

change. In the eyes of these clerics that system would lose its legitimacy if it simply removed an ancient enemy image, or an anti-social law, whose roots in hoary antiquity provide their own kind of legitimacy.

I have known many Orthodox rabbis, for example, who would be very happy to ensure that a holiday such as *Purim*, and the obligatory reading of the Book of Esther, which culminates with the slaughter of those people – including their children – who tried to exterminate the Jewish people, would never be used to justify the killing of anyone today. They certainly are deeply ashamed by Baruch Goldstein's mass murder at the Hebron mosque and Cave of the Patriarchs that was inspired in part by *Purim*. And yet, their hands are tied. They cannot simply abolish an ancient holiday, or change the reading of the text. They can and do give moralistic sermons, and can interpret the story in less violent terms. But they cannot remove the ritual without calling into question their own legitimacy as guardians of the Law. Are they frozen by Jewish trauma, or are they frozen by a meaning and authority system that gives them little room to manoeuvre?

This has critical implications in terms of a strategy of intervention. It may mean that creative religious hermeneutics on the part of leadership or even individuals may be the key to a solution. It may mean that secular intolerance and lack of support for moderate religious leadership may be a hidden contributing factor of religious intolerance.

There is no doubt about it, religious rituals are potentially dangerous. But even the rituals that flirt with violence mean much more to people than simply a rehearsal of trauma or revenge for trauma. There is a persistence of *Purim*, for example, even among many who do not have a paranoid or fearful view of the Christian world. They cling to this holiday simply because wiping out an ancient holiday would undermine the entire meaning system of rabbinic Judaism. Even the most radically pacifist religious Jews that I know, do not eliminate this holiday. Frankly, the latter group does not really know what to do with sacralised violence yet, and are only now evolving a spiritual and ritual reworking of traumatic and violent episodes, such as the Exodus and drowning of Pharaoh's armies, commemorated on Passover. Numerous progressive *Haggadahs* (the ancient textbook for recitation on Passover night) now insert a variety of new texts, including texts on reconciliation between Jew and Arab, or recounting also the suffering of Palestinians, specifically aimed at ensuring that the holiday focus on redemptive, non-violent themes, and not on the harsh

punishment of the Egyptians, and its potential political use today.[8]

Many have come to see the wiping out of evil on *Purim* as the wiping out of the wicked side of the human being as such. This internalisation of evil and reinterpretation of external evil symbols is precisely what Gandhi did with the message of the most celebrated text of the *Bhagavad Gita*, a most violent tale of Hinduism. He placed the struggle inside. The same can be said for the difference in history between Christians who hypostasised the Devil, placing him onto some demonised Other, versus those Christians who made it an internal, therefore, less powerful pretext for violence.

Thus, psychological theory can help to decipher the labyrinth of religious culture, but it must respect its internal meaning systems and values systems and not reduce everything to libidinal impulses of the individual. It is more complicated than that. Furthermore, it must help to evolve intervention strategies that respect meaning systems, in addition to addressing deep injuries that might be causing the conflictual behaviour.

Another major theory and method of practice of conflict resolution has been the problem-solving workshop as a method of shifting intractable conflicts. This too has been associated with John Burton, but has been particularly pioneered by Herbert Kelman.[9] Kelman, through his confidential workshops over the past decades, was a critical lynchpin of the Oslo peace process.

The question must be asked, however, at this sad juncture, who was left out of the Oslo process, and who destroyed it? The peace process was systematically weakened by the poor and the miserable, whose basic needs were ignored, but also by religious rejectionists on both sides, both poor and privileged. This expressed itself in many ways: the relentless ideological push for more Jewish settlements that placed a stranglehold on confidence building, the tragic deterioration in fundamentalist Islamic culture toward an embrace and implementation of international systems of terror against Israelis and Jews, a deeply religious and educated assassin of Rabin, a product of modern Orthodox Judaism who committed mass murder at the Hebron

---

[8] *Tikkun* magazine regularly publishes an example of this new literature every spring.

[9] See Herbert C. Kelman, "The problem-solving workshop: A social-psychological contribution to the resolution of international conflicts", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 13, 79–90 (1976); *idem*, "Creating the conditions for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 26:1, 39–75 (March 1982); *idem*, "Israelis and Palestinians: Psychological prerequisites to mutual acceptance", *International Security*, 3:1, 162–86 (Summer 1978).

Cave of the Patriarchs, and endless incitement from *sheikhs* and rab-
bis. All of these phenomena reinforced each other, and all were ignored
by the elite Oslo peace process.

The workshops were not designed, and perhaps could not be de-
signed, to bring into the peace process the religious communities in
question. They favoured liberal, privileged, highly secular representatives
who often loathed the religious communities, as much as they were
loathed in turn. Furthermore, the method itself was not amenable to
religious transformation, unlike the methods we suggest below. Thus,
while the Oslo process created a ray of light in the middle, it did
not, nor did it try to, emanate outward, or try to creatively include
religious cultures. The price for failure to do so was very high. Those
who are not included in future visions, such as those of Oslo, tend
to destroy that future vision. This happens in many places globally
when elitist interventions fail to include most of the population in
its vision of the future.

<div align="center">

RELIGIOUS VALUES, EAST AND WEST, AND
CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

</div>

I want to turn now to an abridged survey of religious meaning sys-
tems that have proven critical for the prevention and transformation
of human conflict. Here I want to restrict myself to lived moral val-
ues that embody meaning systems, and leave an analysis of ritual
constructs and peacemaking to other venues.[10]

There is an abundant supply of values around the globe that need
to be identified in terms of their importance for conflict resolution
theory. I would like to tentatively identify just a few of them.

<div align="center">

Empathy

</div>

The critical importance of empathy in Western religious and secular
traditions cannot be overestimated.[11] The concept or experience of
empathy could be used in religious contexts either in terms of advocacy

---

[10] See Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace, op. cit.*
[11] See, for example, Thomas Merton, "The climate of mercy", in Thomas Merton,
Love and Living, Naomi Stone and Patrick Hart (eds), (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace,
Jovanovich, 1979), 203–19; Marc Gopin, "The religious ethics of Samuel David
Luzzatto," (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1993), chs. 2, 6 and 7. The entire tra-
dition of moral sense theory, especially as it was articulated by Jean Jacques Rousseau,
is rooted in the importance of empathy.

and long-term education or more directly in the conflict workshop
setting. The advantages of its use as a basis for devising workshop
strategies is that there would be a built-in spiritual motivation to
engage in exercises emanating out of a familiar value. There exists,
however, the perennial problem in a religious context of the scope
of the spiritual commitment. In this case, for example, can the reli-
gious adherent extend the experience of empathy for a non-believer;
is the religious adherent even allowed to do so by standards of that
tradition? This has to be examined in advance, and will depend on
the type of people participating, their particular hermeneutic of their
tradition, and how far that hermeneutic can be stretched to include
non-believers.[12] For example, hearing the public testimony of parties
to a conflict at Moral Re-Armament's Caux retreat is critical to their
conflict resolution process.[13] Empathy is evoked by the painful story
of the other party, and, in this religious setting, both parties refer
to God's role in their lives. This, in turn, generates a common bond
between enemies that has often led, with subtle but careful guid-
ance, to more honest discussion and relationship-building.

Religious adherents must see that their way of looking at reality
is being directly addressed by the content and method of conflict
resolution. If, for example, relational empathy is a key concept that
informs the conflict resolution methodologies at work, one could explore
a means to view that concept in positive spiritual terms, an easy leap
for many religious value systems.[14] For example, in a dialogue or
conflict resolution workshop involving devout Christians and Muslims,
one might frame the discussion in terms of emulation of God's empa-
thy as a vehicle of understanding each others' needs and aspirations.
Allah is referred to throughout the *Qur'an* as "the Compassionate and
the Merciful", and Jesus' empathy with others in their suffering is
well illustrated throughout the New Testament. Clearly, the details
of how to operationalise this in a culturally sensitive fashion would
have to be adjusted to each situation.

The concept of empathy would need to be mediated by each side
of the conflict. Each side would have to translate the concept in terms
of its own religious traditions. Naturally, this might lead to differences

---

[12] We will discuss below the problem of the limited scope of religious ethical values.
[13] Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (eds), *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), ch. 6.
[14] On relational empathy, see Benjamin Broome, "Managing differences in conflict resolution: The role of relational empathy", in Sandole and Van der Merwe, *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice, op. cit.*, at 97–111.

and debate. Furthermore, the ensuing debate may reflect casuistic nuances that actually mask deeper issues. A skilled third party might want to work at bringing both sides together on the definition of terms, while simultaneously addressing what the outsider believes to be the underlying differences of the casuistic debate. A secular observer may quickly tire of such debates over traditions. In fact, however, these kinds of debates are critical to the way some religious people negotiate their needs and claims upon the world. It is also the way in which compromise is often achieved in very religious contexts. Furthermore, the very indulgence in such discussions has a value in itself, namely, the valuation and honouring of religious traditions that is completely overlooked in most first and second track diplomacy settings. Honouring the traditions makes compromise more possible when religious combatants are involved in conflict.

Non-violence and pacifism

A critical concept for the inner life in the Eastern traditions of Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism is *ahimsa*, non-violence, made famous in the West by Mohandas Gandhi.[15] Certainly, in an Asian context the elaboration and use of this principle could be a critical cultural tool to traverse ethnic and social boundaries.

Pacifism is a related, though different, concept that has had a profound impact on the early Christian church and many sectarian interpretations of Christianity.[16] Even for those Christians who do not subscribe to a purely pacifist view of Christianity, the pacifist writings, primary and secondary, are a powerful basis of discussion and debate. Note the critical importance of emulating God, *imitatio Dei*, in establishing an ideal model of peacemaking. This concept is a critical bridge between Jewish and Christian values, and possibly Islamic as well, in terms of emulation of the Prophet.

---

[15] Mohandas Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers*, Krishna Kripalani (ed), (New York: Continuum, 1980), ch. IV; Christopher Key Chapple, *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993).

[16] See, for example, Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), chaps. 5 and 10; Peter Mayer (ed), *The Pacifist Conscience*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), 355–410; John Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: William P. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972); *idem*, *Nevertheless: Varieties of religious pacifism* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1992). On the Mennonite/Anabaptist tradition, pacifism and the central importance of Jesus as the model human being, see Paul M. Lederach, *The Third Way* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1980).

Sanctity of life

Another central value in religion, often a source of controversy, could also be a source of reconciliation or joint commitments. The sanctity of life is a core value of Christian society, however one feels about the way it has been interpreted or the uses to which it has been put regarding abortion. What has been less obvious is that this value of the sanctity of life is shared across many cultures. For example, Muslim scholar Khalid Kishtany writes: "Although Islam urges its followers to fight and die in defence of their faith, it considers suicide a sin; the preservation of one's life, to many Muslims, takes priority over all other considerations, including the profession of the faith."[17] A Jewish rabbinic text of the first century C.E. states: "Therefore was a human being created alone, in order to teach you that everyone who wipes out a single person it is as if he has wiped out an entire world, while he who saves a single person it is as if he has saved an entire world."[18] The sanctity of life could become the basis for inter-religious conflict resolution.

Interiority

Another important aspect of religious experience that will condition the nature of conflict resolution strategies is interiority. What I mean by this is that disciplines, even in societies that are quite communally oriented, are especially focussed on the inner life of the individual. Prayer, meditation, the experience of divine love, ecstasy, guilt and repentance all reflect the central importance of the inner life.[19] This means that conflict resolution techniques applied to religious groups or workshops might consider, where deemed appropriate to both parties, the usefulness of focussing on this aspect of human experience. For example, I was witness to the work of Maha Gosananda, a Cambodian Buddhist monk, who is quite prominent in the efforts at Cambodian reconciliation, when he moved a large room of religious

---

[17] Khalid Kishtainy, "Violent and nonviolent struggle in Arab history", in Ralph E. Crow, Philip Grant and Saad E. Ibrahim (eds), *Arab Nonviolent Political Struggle in the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), 11.

[18] Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5.

[19] Note the overwhelming importance of interior experience in the classic studies by William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: The Modern Library, 1936), and Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1923).

people of many faiths practically to tears, simply by recreating with them, in a matter of ten minutes, the kind of meditational practices that help generate in him a perpetual state of *metta* – loving kindness for others; *metta* forms the basis of his work on reconciliation between enemies. Many of the people in that room were very conservative Christians. The Buddhist monk touched something quite deep in the inner life that circumvented the cultural divide and enabled a transformative moment to take place.[20]

Buddhist compassion

The Four Sublime Moods are compassion (*karuna*), equanimity (*upekkha*), joy in others' joy (*mudita*), and loving kindness (*metta*). These are an important tool of conflict resolution available in the Buddhist context; they also have important pedagogic value for the general understanding of changes necessary in internal perceptions of the other who is an enemy. "You should develop unlimited thoughts of sympathy for all beings in the world above, below, and across, unmarred by hate or enmity. . . . [T]his is called the holy state. When you hold on to opinions no more, when you are endowed with good conduct and true insight, when you have expelled all craving for pleasures, you will be reborn no more."[21] Avoiding rebirth – *nirvana* – is the great goal of Buddhist spirituality. Note the relationship between no longer holding opinions, gaining true insight, and the capacity for empathy. This has interesting implications in terms of the mental states necessary for someone to see an enemy in a new light, and the possible ground rules for an indigenous method of Buddhist interpersonal engagement.[22]

The focus of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path has been mostly on restraint.[23] For example, Right Action, one path of the Eightfold Path, expresses itself in five precepts of restraint: murder, theft, adultery, intoxication and lying. But there is a proactive character

---

[20] For more on the special contribution of Buddhism to the inner life and peace-making, see Kenneth Kraft (ed), *Inner Peace, World Peace: Essays on Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).

[21] "*Metta Sutta*", in *Suttanipata* (Pali Text Society Publications) I:8, 143–52, quoted by Luis O. Gómez in Kraft, *op. cit.*, at 40.

[22] Note also the focus on pleasures and desire in this regard and compare below on Gandhi's experiments.

[23] See, however, Sulak Sivaraksa's remarkable expansion of these concepts to a very contemporary, proactive – and daringly progressive – interpretation of the Eightfold Path, in Kraft, *op. cit.*, at 127–37.

of the Four Sublime Moods,[24] at least by implication, that make them potentially a critical tool of conflict resolution for Buddhist societies. The Moods suggest a disposition of peacefulness and compassion that create the groundwork for effective engagement in peacemaking.[25] On the one hand, Buddhist traditional texts on this matter place most of the emphasis on one's state of mind, and this would seem to be missing, or in need of, a proactive hermeneutic that contemporary activists and interpreters are providing.

On the other hand, these Buddhist texts have much to teach Western approaches to conflict resolution, which systematically ignore the inner state of peacemakers and conflict resolvers. The latter often leads to failed processes due to unexamined motives, anger and mixed emotions, that have not been dealt with internally by either parties to the conflict or by the intervenors and mediators, who themselves have inner states that affect the intervention and that, therefore, need to be examined.

RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINES AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Related to the experience of interiority in religious traditions is the great emphasis placed on discipline of the body. Experimentation with limiting personal violence has involved this aspect of religious experience, and Gandhi's experiments are instructive here. It seems clear that for Gandhi his *brahmacharya* experiments with discipline of the body were critical to his commitment to *satyagraha* and the attaining of *ahimsa*. Self-restraint of the senses was central to his conception of self-restraint in violent situations. The multiplication of wants that inheres in Western civilisation was a key for him to the understanding of political violence, repression and imperialism.[26]

The following is an example of how Gandhi combined religious discipline, pluralism and conflict resolution. Religious fasting and dietary restrictions were experienced on Gandhi's Tolstoy Farm as a means of promoting mutual respect and tolerance, as each religious community

---

[24] See Wm. Theodore de Bary (ed), *Sources of Indian Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), 117.

[25] For a Tibetan program of training in compassion, see Tsong-kha-pa (1357–1419 C.E.), "*Lam rim chen mo*", in *Ethics of Tibet*, trans. Alex Wayman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 52–57 *et passim*.

[26] See Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers, op. cit.*, ch. V.

member – be he Parsi, Hindu, Christian, Jewish or Muslim – would aid the others in the observance of the discipline of their respective traditions. Consider the effect on the participants or the witnesses to Gandhi's encouragement of Christians and Parsis to help a young Muslim to fast the whole day during *Ramadan* and to provide food at night for him. The fast itself is beyond reproach in its commit-ment to ancient Islamic tradition. Yet it is transformed, in Gandhi's hands, into a moment of inter-religious discovery of immense power that leads the participants to non-violence. Gandhi's concern was to provide a model for religious observance that simultaneously creates tolerance. There are very few models that have been generated by the world's religions that are simultaneously authentic to a religious tradition and accepting of other traditions. In a certain sense, it is India's unique contribution to inter-religious peace that Gandhi elicited from his cultural matrix. Gandhi's concept of lived religiosity that is both authentic and pluralistic needs to be examined as a model for contemporary societies that mix people of many faiths. Contemporary American examples of this include the Jewish community's organising of volunteers for soup kitchens and homeless shelters across the coun-try precisely on Christmas Eve, so that the Christian workers can spend the night with their families. The key is not the blurring of religious distinctions or categories but the peacemaking quality that inheres in enabling someone else to practice her or his religion.

Imagination

All three monotheisms have a crucial contribution to make to conflict resolution studies in the area of social criticism, envisioning of more just social constructions, and new possibilities of the human social order. The phenomenon of religious messianic dreaming and envisioning new realities should be studied in terms of how to combine it with the imaginative element that is necessary for conflict resolution. The prophetic imagination, as it expressed itself in biblical literature, may provide a critical precedent for this use of imagination.[27] "The task of innovation may not be as impossible as it seems because people and

---

[27] See Elise Boulding, "States, boundaries, and environmental security", in *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice, op. cit.*, at 198. Elise Boulding conducted a seminar sev-eral years ago at George Mason University on the uses of imagination in conflict resolution.

societies have always been capable of imagining the other and different. It is an interesting fact that the image of the peaceable garden – a localist world in which people live harmoniously with each other and with their environment, with warriors laying aside weapons, has persisted in every major cultural tradition".[28]

The power of myth

Myth is a specific instance of the use of imagination that can be beneficial for conflict resolution. The more prosaic use of imagination is in the process of brainstorming over possible solutions to conflict over scarce resources, for example. But the separate worldviews of religious and ethno-national entities require a major leap into imagination and vision that is of a very different order.

Let us turn, for an example of this, to monotheistic conflicts. Family is an essential myth of monotheistic, biblically-based traditions, and its effects on conflict and the transformation of conflict into new relationships must be explored. In general, relatives, such as father, mother, brother, sister and cousin, seem to be pervasive as metaphors for deep collective human entities and their relationships. In the Middle East, in particular, the use of the metaphor of family, specifically the family of the biblical Abraham, to describe the cultural and religious origins of people, is remarkable. In this metaphor of Abrahamic family, identities are established and old wounds are expressed. Ancient competitions and conflicts are given a quality of cosmic significance. In this metaphor victory over the forces of ignorance and idolatry is celebrated, and those forces are seamlessly conflated with whoever is an enemy of the authentic inheritors of Abrahamic religion. The latter has led to much barbaric repression of non-monotheistic peoples, in addition to endless inter-monotheistic conflicts and massacres. But in this metaphor there also reside some profound possibilities of a non-violent future.

The Abrahamic family myth lives and breathes an independent reality in the lives of hundreds of millions of Jews, Christians and Muslims. It is a critical means of organising the world and making sense of one's history, one's origins, and even one's future. However, it is a story mediated through different lenses, depending on the religious group, with innumerable variations, based on the sub-groupings and

---

[28] *Id.*

individual predilections of millions of interpreters. Yet the potentially unifying power of the metaphor is unmistakable. In a word, monotheists often act as relatives in an intense but troubled family.

Mythic meaning that is shared has a way of bringing infinitely complex problems into a manageable cognitive structure of reality. This allows problems of dizzying proportions to be understood by the human mind and absorbed by the human heart. This, in turn, is a perfect tool for motivating large groups of people to violence.

However – and here is the central point – myth also has the possibility of allowing communication to proceed by means of the myth itself expanding and developing, or extending itself, to present-day constructs. This creates possibilities in the pro-social development of human relations. And mythical possibility is the midwife of cultural conflict resolution and peacemaking. It provides the dramatic construct for thinking about and treating enemies in a fundamentally new way – which at the same time becomes embedded in familiar myth.

I have found it curious that in my many conflict resolution encounters and trainings with Arabs and Muslims, generally with the Middle East conflict as the immediate sub-text of our encounter, that talk of Abraham always comes up in some subtle way. Words such as "brother", "cousin", "father", emerge, usually at the end of the encounter, as if they form a sacred capstone, a need for the parting encounter to embrace relationship, lost brotherhood, and a special kind of intimate peace that only family reconciliation truly embodies.

The Abrahamic family metaphor seems to evoke or embody a very special kind of craving for identity and reconciliation. The words and the encounters are almost always centred on males and maleness; it is always about "father", "brother", and "cousin". Usually these words, and the facial encounter and body language that accompany them, entail looks and nuances of longing, longing for something lost. And I have been told recently that Muslims and Jews in Israel who have been working confidentially on improved relations, often call each other, in familiar language, "cousin".

I would argue that the mythic talk of family, father Abraham, and "cousins", that insinuates itself into conversations between religious Jews and religious Arabs betrays an inspired, intuitive grasp for the unique cultural envelope that can hold together this mythic relationship of Semites in the midst of a great deal of pain, argument and mortal suspicion. It is the transformation of this relationship, and the mythic recovery of the "lost brother" that suggests how important

religious meaning systems can be to the search and discovery of unique cultural approaches to the transformation of conflict.

Many religious fanatics in the Middle East are driven by profound mythic constructs of good and evil that make it impossible to enter into dialogue with them on the basis of, say, human rights. They live and breathe a selected set of texts, rituals and traditions, inculcated by clerics and elders, that makes it almost impossible to penetrate this world. Furthermore, their rather completed worldview is very appealing to young men in search of order in the midst of chaos and alienation.

This can only be countered by alternative mythic constructs of a spiritual nature which are just as compelling but decidedly more humane in their ethical implications. The tragedy of the World Trade Center attacks demonstrates that conventional approaches to counter-terrorism simply cannot succeed against extremist ideologies. Suicide bombing wherein a person gives up their life for something beyond this life do not only demonstrated a deep-seated mythic (as opposed to materialistic) substance to violence, but it also is the ultimate night-mare for the security of nations. Warfare tactics generally depend upon the fact that most soldiers want to live where possible, and will retreat when faced with overwhelming odds against them.

The liberal conventional and secular responses to ultimate religious violence generally criticise military leaders for thinking only in terms of a military response, counter-terrorism. The former, however, also engage in incomplete and myopic solutions. They assume that all one needs are economic solutions. To put it crassly, "Throw money at the poor and terrorists will lose their appeal." Their solutions are not completely wrong, but they are wrongly incomplete. Once deep mythic structures of violence have been engaged in the name of religion, one cannot simply buy people off with money. There has to be a coordinated effort of counter-terrorism, development and aid, and the purposeful reworking of religious mythic meaning, that work hand in hand to defeat the appeal of religious violence and terrorism. The reworking of religious mythic meaning has as its task the creation of viable, authentic visions of peace and social justice that ring true to the faiths involved and, at the same time, support the basic build-ing blocks of modern civil society, human rights and democracy.

Visions for peace

The following conclusions can be drawn from our study and produce the elements for a vision for peace.

Religion has a dual legacy in human history regarding peace and violence. Both its contribution to violence and its contribution to pro-social values and peacemaking need to be studied by scholars inside and outside the individual faiths, with an eye to sharing this information in as wide a venue as possible. This can then form the basis of creative strategies of conflict prevention and conflict resolution that are an integral part of evolving religious meanings systems.

Conflict resolution theory regarding religious actors must examine the latter's complex ways of making decisions about conflict and peace, including mixed motivations typical of many actors in conflict, which is further complicated by religious values and worldviews.

A close examination of religious culture can both prognosticate violence but also yield pro-social intra-communal values that could be vital for conflict resolution. They also must be studied with an eye to extending those values inter-communally, or outside the faith. We must examine what the challenges are of doing this, and who could authoritatively speak in favour of this process, and have a broad-based appeal.

There is an inordinate number of religious values among global religions, many yet to be analysed, that may provide indispensable tools in religious settings to engage in conflict prevention, conflict management, compromise, negotiation and reconciliation. They should be studied, catalogued and made available to all actors in first and second track diplomacy. Needless to say, they will be subject to hermeneutical debate inside traditional communities, but their usefulness as an adjunct aid in crises involving religious actors seems clear. At least as important, there may be strategies of peacemaking inspired by religious ethics and ways of interaction that can be applied beyond the religious world, and aid us in addressing a wider variety of intractable conflicts. There is currently such an ever-expanding number of cultural and ethnic conflicts, whose character closely resembles religious conflict, that religious methods of peacemaking (adjusted, of course, to different cultures) may have a much broader impact if applied beyond the confines of strictly religious conflicts.

The analysis of a conflict involving religion should never impose from above a set of religious values. Solutions need to emerge from

an analysis of the unique nature of every situation combined with a hermeneutical negotiation of the religious traditions affected by the conflict. This means that peacemakers and diplomats must utilise their studies of religious peacemaking not in order to impose some version of it, reformulated by the intervenors. Rather, the aim is to prepare oneself to seize upon places of confluence between conflict resolution and religious values, and to be ready, by virtue of one's knowledge base, to collaboratively work with indigenous members of the conflicting groups. It is in this collaboration and sharing of skills and knowledge that authentic and effective methods of peacemaking could be discovered, and tailored carefully to the circumstances. In this way indigenous meaning systems could be helped to coalesce in a broad range of issues with more universalist meaning systems of human rights, democracy and pluralistic co-existence.

The problem of the scope of religious ethical concern, often limited to only the faithful who are in good standing, needs to be confronted. A full analysis of how each tradition has negotiated the reality of "others" and out-groups is critical. There is great potential to utilise ethical religious systems whose values contribute more than a mere buttress for conflict resolution practice. The latter may be able to deepen current conflict resolution practice as we currently define it by utilising religious ethical practices of profound meaning. But the far greater problem is the "othering" process of many religious ethical systems that undo their good influence by eliminating from the moral agents' purview the very groups that need most to be included in the ethical system. Of course, this problem is not limited historically to religious ethics. The United States Constitution and Bill of Rights come to mind, with their extraordinary guarantes of liberty and justice for all, which happened to not include slaves before the Civil War, or the European precedents for those documents that did not include women, or the landless. Thus, in promoting human rights, for example, we should not approach religious authorities arrogantly, as if secular culture has never faced the same limitations in its cultural constructs.

The most hopeful and heroic stories of inter-religious peacemaking emerge from those rare individuals who possess a combination of deeply authentic expressions of their own religiosity together with an unconditional respect for or love of non-believers as fellow human beings. This is a relatively rare combination inside the religious personality, but it bears serious analysis in terms of how this psychological and

ideological disposition could be fostered among religious adherents around the world. We must learn the cognitive and developmental roots of such a position, and what implications this has for religious child-rearing and education. The kind of moral development that leads a Gandhi to gladly respect other peoples' faith is crucial to our long-term strategies of conflict prevention. As a species, we humans are learning more about development. We now know that emotions and emotional development are critical to the development of our intelligence.[29] Thus, it may very well be that the key to the future is not just theological sophistication, though that is important, but a kind of emotional training, so that we feel safe enough in our own faith positions that we are not threatened by others, including those who have faith in the Enlightenment conception of the world, or faith in the marketplace, or faith in the scientific method and the importance of the university. They too can either lead the way in conflict prevention or be part of the problem if they are easily threatened by, and therefore intolerant of, other paradigms of living and believing. Stanley Greenspan argues that the key emotional skills of conflict resolution include empathy with the emotions of others, an ability to deal with multiple feelings inside oneself, such as anger, an affection for others, injury, sympathy, etc., and the ability to deal with disappointment. It would be interesting to explore a "Greenspanian" method to engage religious communities, building on religious values that would dovetail the capacities that Greenspan makes essential to peacemaking.[30]

Furthermore, there seems to be some basic cognitive ability of special individuals to see themselves as, say, Palestinians, but also Arabs, but also Muslims, but also human beings, but also God's children, but also living creatures on a planet of billions of creatures, and so on. And this knowledge at some deep emotional level precludes them from dehumanising anyone or devaluing any living thing. This capacity to see ourselves in multiple identities seems to require a degree of emotional strength and maturation that we must study further. It may be the basis for the future inculcation of belief structures that do not create a world of conflict. It seems that these individuals have developed the capacity to live comfortably within their

---

[29] Stanley Greenspan, *The Growth of the Mind and the Endangered Origins of Intelligence* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1997).

[30] *Id.*, at 236–39.

own unique boundaries, but also to reach out far beyond their own boundaries. They do not just reach to the closest position to their own. Rather, solidly rooted in their own spiritual identity, they can travel anywhere with an open, benign, even loving disposition, because they know exactly where they ultimately belong. They no longer need to consume the universe in order to find the joy of religious fulfilment. This appears to embody an evolving religious meaning system of the human being that not only represents a coalescence of religious meaning and sustainable constructs of the modern state. It also points to ways in which a religious meaning system could further advance us along the difficult path to global community.

Secular constructs of human rights and democracy may not suffice to create a global community of shared meaning and shared values. There is nothing in the human rights agenda or in the nature of democracy that combats the corrosive effects of materialism on the modern psyche. And it is the latter that has driven millions to ideological extremisms of various kinds in recent centuries. If we begin to understand the psychological construct of unique individuals, who both live in a deep and primordial meaning system but also express unlimited care beyond their own boundaries, we may be on our way to discovering a workable model of meaningful existence for the diversity of cultures and religions on the globe today.

3. RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN ASIA:
PROBING THE CAUSES, SEEKING SOLUTIONS

Chandra Muzaffar

On 27 February 2002, a Muslim mob descended upon a train carrying Hindu activists in Godhra in the Indian state of Gujarat and set it on fire. Fifty-eight people, mostly Hindu women and children, were burnt alive. In retaliation, Hindus burnt, stabbed and beat to death more than 2000 Muslims all over Gujarat. After almost a week of rioting, the situation was brought under control – at least for the time being.

This Gujarat riot – the state has seen many religious riots in the past – has a certain backdrop to it. The Hindu activists were returning from Ayodhya, a northern Indian town, where India's oldest mosque, the Babri Masjid, was destroyed on 6 December 1992 by Hindu fanatics. The Hindu group on the train was apparently part of the Hindu movement to build a temple on the site of the razed mosque. It is alleged that one of the Hindu activists, buoyed by the temple construction mission, had provoked a Muslim tea vendor at the Godhra railway station and this had ignited Muslim emotions leading to the burning of the train.[1]

In the 1992 Babri Masjid incident, Hindu-Muslim massacres claimed at least 3000 lives. It was the worst inter-religious conflagration since Indian independence in 1947. In between, there have been a number of carnages involving the two religious communities.

Do these carnages reflect the reality of inter-religious relations in India today? Or, is the overall situation better than what the occasional riot suggests? Is the situation in Asia as a whole similar to India? Or, is the picture that emerges from Asia much more hopeful?

---

[1] For a preliminary analysis of the factors that may have triggered the Hindu-Muslim clashes in Gujarat, see "Old hatreds fuel killings", *New Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur), 7 March 2002.

Forbearance

Religious conflict is not the norm in Asia. Gujarat and Ayodhya, like
Maluku and Mindanao, are exceptions. Religious diversity is the quint-
essence of Asia's identity – the identity of the continent that gave
birth to all the world's religions. No other continent has so many
different religious communities, deeply conscious of their religiosity,
living cheek by jowl with one another. Most of the time these com-
munities accommodate one another, adjust to each other's rituals and
devotional practices. On the whole, they have demonstrated a remark-
able degree of tolerance and forbearance.

   And yet, religious tensions have arisen and religious conflicts have
occurred in almost every multi-religious society in Asia. What explains
religious conflicts in the continent? How can they be overcome?

   Before we address these questions, let us clarify what we mean by
religious conflict.

Clarification of issues

First, by religious conflict we do not mean conflict among religions,
their doctrines, dogmas and practices. Religious doctrines and practices,
however different they may be, have seldom given rise to actual conflict.
To illustrate this, in the protracted civil war in Lebanon in the 1970s
and 1980s it was not the strict monotheism of the Sunni and Shi'a
Muslims as against the trinity of the Maronite Christians which was
the cause of the bloodshed. In India, it is not because Muslims and
Hindus pray in different ways that there have been numerous Hindu-
Muslim riots since Independence in 1947. Likewise in Mindanao in
the Philippines it is not because the Christians consume pork which
is forbidden in Islam that there have been conflagrations between
the two communities.

   Differences in doctrine and ritual may at times create a certain
social distance between religious communities. They may, on occasions,
impede social interaction. But they do not in themselves – and this
must be emphasised over and over again – cause conflict. On the
contrary, as we have noted, for most of Asian history the different
religious doctrines, practices and symbols have co-existed without too
much antagonism or enmity.

   Second, what this implies is that religious conflict is often conflict

amongst religionists, not religions. Some followers of a particular religion may, for a variety of reasons, clash with some followers of another religion. It would be observed that we deliberately use the word "some". For most religious conflicts reveal that invariably there are individuals and groups on both sides of the divide who do not approve of the hatred and bitterness generated by the contending forces. They try to reach out to one another and to make peace. This happened in the midst of the riots following the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947.[2] It is significant that immediately after the Gujarat riot of February 2002, Hindu and Muslim leaders marched side by side for peace in the state's commercial capital of Ahmedabad. As one of the marchers put it: "This city does not belong to Muslim fundamentalists or Hindu extremists. It belongs to us citizens."[3]

It should also be noted that not all who participate in religious riots are religious, in the conventional sense of the term.[4] Studies have shown that many rioters who shout religious slogans are often totally ignorant of their religious teachings. In practice some of them may be leading lives which are at variance with the moral precepts of the religions they profess.

Third, religious conflict in pre-colonial Asia appears to have been less frequent and perhaps even less intense. There was, of course, religious prejudice among different communities. Writing about Hindu-Muslim relations in the early part of the 11th century, the Muslim scholar, Al-Beruni, for instance, observed that the Hindus looked upon the Muslim invaders as outcastes and "recoiled from the touch of the impure barbarian Muslim."[5] In spite of this early aversion – an aversion to invaders who had caused great ruination rather than to an alien people with an alien faith – Hindu attitudes towards Muslims and vice-versa improved over the next one or two centuries. By the time of the reign of the great Mughal emperor Akhbar (1556–1605), there was significant fusion of Muslim and Hindu cultures.

---

[2] For some details see Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom: An autobiographical narrative* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1988).

[3] Quoted in *New Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur), 6 March 2002.

[4] See Veena Das, "The tortured psyche: An ode to the rootless Hindu", *The Thatched Patio* No. 9/86 (Colombo: Intenational Centre for Ethnic Studies, 1986) for some insights into this.

[5] See Rajmohan Gandhi, *Eight Lives: A study of the Hindu-Muslim encounter* (New Delhi: Roli, 1986), 4.

Fourth, compared to the pre-colonial period, ties between Hindus and Muslims in general in contemporary India seem to be less harmonious. This is also true, to a greater or lesser degree, of other religious communities in certain other parts of Asia. Various political and economic developments which have brought about all sorts of changes to the human environment are largely responsible for this deterioration in inter-religious ties. It is these developments which we shall now examine.

PROBING THE CAUSES

Electoral politics and elite manipulation of mass sentiments have had an adverse impact upon religious communities in countries like India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. With the advent of competitive party politics in these multi-religious societies, party leaders try to mobilise support and maximise their popularity by exploiting the fears and hopes of this or that religious community.

It has been shown, for instance, that in India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who at the outset of her political career opposed the forces of religious bigotry, gradually changed her stance as she began to lose popular support. In order to regain lost ground, she decided, after 1980, to play the Hindu communal card.[6] This way, she hoped to retain the loyalty of the majority community, especially after the Congress (I) realised that it could not fulfil the socio-economic aspirations of the poor, downtrodden masses. Rajiv Gandhi, her son and successor, continued the same game, by projecting himself as a defender of the Hindu majority. By 1989, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a Hindu revivalist political movement, had outclassed Rajiv Gandhi in this game of communal brinkmanship. The BJP, which was a mainstay of the ruling coalition in India, dons the robe of the protector of the Hindu cause. It is perceived as the champion of the crusade to establish *Hindutva* (a Hindu polity).

Expectedly, the BJP's crusade and the campaign of other Hindu groups to assert the dominant power of Hinduism, has frightened the minorities. It has led to tension and violent conflicts as manifested

---

[6] See Asghar Ali Engineer, "Hindu-Muslim relations in contemporary India", in Kumar David and Santasilan Kadirgamar (eds), *Ethnicity: Identity, conflict and crisis* (Hong Kong: Arena Press, 1989), 163–80.

in the Babri Masjid and Gujarat tragedies. The Muslims, the largest religious minority in India, have chosen to retaliate by organising their own protests against what they see as the rising power of Hindu militancy. In the process, they have exacerbated the situation.[7]

The obsession with political power which motivates political elites to manipulate religious sentiments was demonstrated in yet another episode in recent Indian politics. Both the Congress (I) and the *Akali Dal*, a militant Sikh group, sought to win electoral support in the Punjab by fanning the embers of communal discontent until their Machiavellian politics exploded in the massacre of inmates of the Golden Temple in Amritsar on 4 June 1984. As a perceptive analyst of the Punjab episode put it, "It [the Punjab episode] has some valuable lessons to teach us. It shows, in the first place, that communalism in the country is to a large extent sustained and fomented by the unprincipled struggle for power of different political parties."[8] It was expressed more pithily by a poor village woman in the Punjab: "it is the poor who suffer when big people fight for their '*kursi*' (chair)."[9]

In Sri Lanka, the Sinhala-Buddhist dominated government, in order to enhance its appeal to the majority community, chose to give a lot of emphasis to Buddhist symbols and slogans, especially in the early 1980s. Here again, it was no accident that President Jayawardene's Buddhist posturing coincided with a widening gap between the rich and poor in an economy which denied dignity to the dispossessed and the disadvantaged. As Buddhist symbolism in state politics increased, the largely Hindu Tamil minority began to feel more and more alienated from the nation. It strengthened, in a sense, the separatist tendencies within the Tamil community.

The ruling Malay-Muslim elite in Malaysia has also, on certain occasions, exploited the religious sentiments of the majority community with the aim of preserving and perpetuating its political dominance. In the October 1990 general elections, for instance, members of this elite, fearing that their ruling coalition might lose its two-thirds majority in Parliament, whipped up irrational, unfounded Muslim fears of

---

[7] See Madhu Limaye, "The Ayodhya issue needs to be settled by mutual goodwill", 101–05, and S.K. Tripathi, "Competition in bigotry", 119–24, in Asghar Ali Engineer (ed), *Babri-Masjid Ramjanabhoomi Controversy* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1990).

[8] See V.M. Tarkunde, "Foreword", in Amiya Rao, Aurbindo Ghose, Sunil Bhattacharya, Tejinder Ahuja and N.D. Pancholi, *Report to the Nation: Oppression in Punjab* (New Delhi: Citizens for Democracy, 1985), 3.

[9] *Id.*, at 13.

a Christian-*cum*-Chinese challenge to the political position of the indigenous Malays. They succeeded in creating a "siege mentality" within their community as a result of which it rallied around the elite – and gave the ruling coalition the victory it wanted.[10] The opposition in Malaysia has also resorted to communal gambits in order to gain votes. In a by-election in November 2000, canvassers for the opposition candidate distributed among Muslim voters a doctored picture of the Christian contestant from the government party clad in the robes of a "cardinal" in order to frighten them into thinking that if they chose the ruling coalition's representative there would be active Christian proselytisation.[11]

It is not just the religious sentiments of the majority community which elites manipulate. From time to time, they also manipulate the religious feelings of minorities in their societies. It has been pointed out, for instance, that Indira Gandhi, like Rajiv Gandhi and perhaps even V.P. Singh (Rajiv Gandhi's immediate successor), sometimes found it efficacious to pander to the Muslim gallery because this assured them of the community's bloc vote. The manner in which Rajiv Gandhi capitulated to pressure from orthodox, conservative Muslim groups on the *Shah Bano* controversy has often been cited as a case in point.[12] Bloc Muslim electoral endorsement, as long as the support of the Hindu majority is also assured, is a boon to any political party in India.

Elite manipulation of majority and minority religious sentiments for electoral purposes is not the only reason why religious tensions build up and sometimes lead to religious conflicts. The modern nation-state itself may also be a factor. The nation-state has a personality of its own in the international arena. Because it has a personality, it often seeks to promote an identity which is unique and distinctive. To do this, the nation-state clothes itself in the cultural or religious garb of the majority community. The culture or religion of the majority therefore becomes the accepted identity of the nation, both inter-

---

[10] See Chandra Muzaffar, "How the Barisan retained its two-thirds majority" and "PBS and mass communal fear", *Aliran Monthly* No. 10:11 (Penang: Aliran, 1990).

[11] For reports on this, see *The Star* (Petaling Jaya, Malaysia), 25–28 November 2000.

[12] For details of the *Shah Bano* controversy, in which the Supreme Court of India overruled a Muslim personal law, granted a Muslim women alimony but threatened the limited legal autonomy granted to the Muslim minority in India, see Salman Khurshid, *At Home in India: A restatement of Indian Muslims* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1986), especially chapter 10.

nally and externally. As the state begins to promote this identity through specific policies and programmes, the minority cultures and religions feel threatened. The ensuing atmosphere of insecurity sometimes results in religious tension and conflict.

What makes it worse is when the nation-state which has identified itself with the culture or the religion of the majority community also develops authoritarian tendencies. An authoritarian state by its very character would seek to exercise maximum political control. Since the mechanics of control and dominance would be in the hands of elites from the majority community, minority cultural or religious groups would feel alienated and estranged from the political process. They would not be able to participate meaningfully in national politics even if limited avenues were made available to them. It can be argued that this has been happening in Sri Lanka, especially after 1981 when political authoritarianism grew stronger and stronger with the centralisation of power in the hands of the President.[13]

States which are blatantly authoritarian in their structure of power are even more stark examples of the marginalisation, even subjugation, of religious minorities. Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s would fall within this category. For more than 30 years, the military junta in Burma has been quite vicious and brutal in its suppression of Muslim and Christian minorities. Even states such as China and Vietnam, which have become more accommodative of their religious minorities in the last two decades or so, do, from time to time, adopt measures which create considerable uneasiness among these minorities.

So far we have looked at some of the political factors which are responsible for the deterioration in inter-religious ties. The orientation and direction of certain religious elites and certain religious education programmes have also contributed to this decline. Muslim religious elites and the curricula of Islamic religious schools – the *madrasahs* – in Pakistan, for instance, have reinforced narrow, bigoted attitudes within a segment of the Muslim populace which, in turn, have resulted in a rigid, doctrinaire view of the Muslim/non-Muslim dichotomy in various spheres of life.[14] How destructive such a view can be has

---

[13] For an analysis of the Sri Lanka situation, see International Alert, *Emergency: Sri Lanka* (London: International Alert, 1986).

[14] The philosophical roots of such bigoted thinking are discussed in Khaled Abou El Fadl, "The place of tolerance in Islam: On reading the *Qur'an* – and misreading it", *Boston Review*, 26:6 (Dec. 2001–Jan. 2002) (bostonreview.net/BR26.6/elfadl.html).

been amply demonstrated in the stances adopted by certain Muslim groups in Pakistan and elsewhere in the aftermath of September 11.

This is directly or indirectly linked to the growth of certain cultural attitudes within the populace which are inimical to religious harmony. A negative attitude towards the other in not only Pakistan but also Afghanistan under the Taliban proved how religious indoctrination can mould the cultural attitudes of the people. This is also true of Christian or Buddhist or Hindu majority societies. As a case in point, the Christian, mainly Catholic, majority in the Philippines has very little empathy for the Muslim minority. Indeed, for many Christian Filipinos, the Muslims, a majority of whom live in the southern part of the country in Mindanao, do not even exist. Their religious practices and rituals are not part of the national consciousness. This is why there are very few individuals within the Christian intelligentsia who are prepared to espouse and articulate the legitimate grievances of the Muslim minority.

Religious minorities too sometimes develop certain cultural attitudes which are antithetical to a genuine relationship with the majority community. In Malaysia, a segment of the non-Muslim community shows tremendous antipathy towards Islam. This is unfortunate, to say the least, since the accommodation and acceptance of the non-indigenous, non-Malay, non-Muslim communities by the indigenous Malay Muslim community has been a crucial factor in ensuring inter-ethnic harmony. By making this point, we are in no way underplaying some of the genuine complaints of the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Sikh minorities about the construction of their places of worship, the availability of burial grounds, the latitude for recruiting preachers from abroad, and so on.

A somewhat different situation prevails in India where sections of the Muslim, Christian and Sikh minorities have sometimes displayed exclusivist tendencies. They are reluctant to seek common ground with Hindus so that certain shared values and principles of living would evolve over time. Such shared values and principles are imperative for a heterogeneous polity like India which must maintain a degree of unity while celebrating its rich religious and cultural diversity.[15]

More than cultural attitudes, it is the interplay of economic forces which has aggravated the relations between different religious com-

---

[15] For an understanding of ethnicity and diversity, see Rajni Kothari, "Ethnicity", in David and Kadirgamar, *Ethnicity, op. cit.*, at 15–44.

munities in certain parts of Asia. We have already alluded to one of the major economic causes of religious strife: the propensity of ruling elites to manipulate religious sentiments when they fail to deliver the goods. Indeed, diverting the attention of the masses from their economic and social woes by igniting the religious emotions of the people is a favourite tactic of ruling elites in a number of countries. It is a tactic which has worked over and over again. But there are other factors too. When an economy is not growing fast enough to provide jobs to the rapidly expanding army of unemployed, it is quite likely that some of them will fall prey to the machinations of communal agitators. Riots in India and Sri Lanka in the last two decades show that it is always easy to arouse the religious passions of angry, frustrated youths who have no hope of gainful employment. This is why economic stagnation or an economy which is growing very slowly is often a bane to good relations between different religious communities. Likewise, if a religious community which has been living side by side with another community suddenly experiences rapid economic progress and outdistances its neighbour, there is bound to be some resentment which could give rise to tensions and even riots. This has happened in certain parts of India.[16]

Sometimes the economic dislocation of a certain segment of a particular community can result in religious tensions, especially if those who benefit from this dislocation happen to be members of another religious community. Uneven regional development – that is development which benefits certain strata in one region while leaving other groups in another region lagging behind – can also generate tensions if one region is more heavily populated by a certain religious group and the other region has a preponderance of another religious community.

Certain socio-economic trends have also exacerbated inter-religious ties in different parts of Asia. The migration of large numbers of people of a particular religious affiliation to another region within the same country populated by another religious community can give rise to communal tensions, especially if the immigrant community proves to be economically more successful than the settled community within a short period of time. It is this dichotomy between the immigrant and settled components of Maluku society in Indonesia, aggravated no

––––––––––

[16] See *Frontline*, 27 October–9 November 1990 (Madras) for interesting articles on the relationship between economic trends and communal riots.

doubt by political developments in the immediate post-Suharto phase, which was partly responsible for the bloody Muslim-Christian riots in that island in 2000. This would also be one of the explanations for the riots in Indonesian Kalimantan in 2002 which again saw Muslims and Christians massacring one another.

So far we have examined political, theological, cultural, economic and social factors connected to religious conflict in Asia. Isn't religious conflict sometimes also linked to historical memory? A community, or at least its elites, may choose to evoke the memory of some real or imagined act of oppression or injustice committed by "the other" community. If this event of the past is deeply etched, or consciously implanted, in the collective memory of the community, it could provoke a strong negative sentiment towards the other, leading even to ethnic turmoil. In this regard, it appears that constant evocation of the memory of so-called historical injustices perpetrated against the Hindus by Muslim rulers of yesteryear has served to harden communal attitudes among the former against the Muslim populace.

Historical memory leads to yet another factor – the colonial factor. While we may not want to give as much significance to this factor compared to all the other causes of religious conflict which we have discussed so far, we should not ignore the continuing impact of the colonial policy of divide-and-rule upon relations between different communities in present-day Asia. Even the Babri Masjid controversy has a distinct link to British colonial rule. According to one writer,

> The belief that the disputed place of worship is a mosque which Babar built after destroying a temple consecrating Rama's birthplace originated in the first half of the 16th [*sic*] century. Its origin lies in the British strategy of creating a law-and-order problem by instigating a communal conflict in the area in order to justify the annexation of Avadh [Ayodhya]. To divide the local population, the British popularised the idea that the Mughals had desecrated Hindu places of worship in Ayodhya. By propagating this view, they simultaneously sought to project themselves as 'sympathisers' of the Hindu majority, while the Mughals – the immediate predecessors of the British – were made out to be oppressors of the Hindus and enemies of Hindu culture and tradition.[17]

Just as the colonial impact upon contemporary religious conflicts in Asia merits attention, so too the manipulations of imperialist pow-

---

[17] See Sushil Shrivastava, "The Ayodhya controversy: Where lies the truth?", in Engineer, *Babri-Masjid Ramjanabhoomi Controversy, op. cit.*, at 29.

ers. Given the resurgence of different religious traditions, imperialist powers like the United States can be expected to monitor carefully trends and tendencies within these movements to see how they will impact upon their interests. For some years now – and especially after the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 – the United States has been deeply concerned about the rise of radical, revolutionary Islam. Mainstream American and Western media are determined to denigrate Islam, in particular that brand of Islam which insists on its own autonomy and refuses to acquiesce with American political and military dominance of the globe.[18] One should not be surprised if as a result of its desire to control revolutionary Islam, particularly in West Asia, which is the world's leading exporter of petroleum, the United States foments conflicts between Muslims and other religious groups. As long as suspicion, hatred and animosity exist between Muslims and non-Muslims in certain key areas of the world, it would be a little less difficult for the United States to perpetuate its dominance.

It should be observed, in this connection, that the denigration of Islam is part and parcel of a larger negative attitude towards that religion which has been an almost integral element of mainstream Western thinking for at least ten centuries. How such an outlook developed is a complex issue beyond the scope of this essay. Suffice it to say at this point that the Christian crusades which stretched over a few hundred years, the Muslim conquest and occupation of significant parts of Europe, the mastery of Islamic civilisation over science and knowledge from the 8th to the 14th centuries, which the West has always been reluctant to admit, have all shaped and sculptured the West's perception of Islam.

What is sad is that this negative, often pejorative attitude towards Islam and Muslims, reinforced no doubt from time to time by some of the foolish actions of Muslims themselves, has been transmitted to the rest of humanity in the last few decades through the powerful, influential Western media.[19] Non-Muslims in the non-Western world

---

[18] For a good discussion on this, see Edward W. Said, *Covering Islam* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981). See also his earlier work *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[19] The *fatwa* (religious ruling) issued by the late Imam Khomeini, the Iranian leader, in February 1989 on Salman Rushdie would be an example of a foolish action. The unthinking reaction of a section of the Muslim community added to the stupidity of the entire episode. For a fuller discussion on this, see Chandra Muzaffar, "*The 'Satanic Verses'*: To kill or not to kill?", in *Challenges and Choices in Malaysian Politics and Society* (Penang: Aliran, 1989).

form their views about Islam and Muslims on the basis of distorted analyses provided by Western news agencies, newspapers, magazines and of course Western television networks. Indeed even Muslims see other Muslims in other parts of the world through the spectacles supplied by the mainstream Western media. It goes without saying that the Western media, and the dominant vested interests linked to them, have contributed in no small measure to the unhealthy relationship that prevails between Muslim and non-Muslim communities in certain parts of Asia.

It is obvious from our analysis that no one factor can explain why religious conflict occurs. A variety of factors impinge upon religious conflicts in Asia. Let us now find out how we can check this kind of conflict.

Seeking solutions

We shall begin with measures which are not directly connected to religion, as the term is generally understood. After that we shall move to remedies linked to religion.

To start with, there will have to be comprehensive political reforms aimed at reducing the potential for religious conflict. The human rights of every citizen should not only be acknowledged but also observed in practice. Every citizen, whatever his or her religious identity, should enjoy freedom of expression. Every citizen, whatever his or her religious affiliation, should have the opportunity to participate in public life. Every citizen, regardless of creed, should feel that she or he can contribute effectively to the political development of the nation. Every citizen, irrespective of the faith professed, should have the right to aspire to any political office in the land.

It is not just individual rights and liberties that should be guaranteed. In multi-religious societies where every community is conscious of its identity, community rights should also be protected. Each community should be secure in the knowledge that neither the state nor anyone else poses a threat to its religion, language or culture. Every community should have the right, within the bounds of the nation's constitution, to nurture its religion for the well-being of its adherents.

Individual and community rights are one thing. What is equally important is the political structure. We have seen that multi-religious societies where power is concentrated in the hands of the executive

tend to develop authoritarian multi-religious characteristics and are sometimes insensitive to the just pleas of their minorities. Even those societies in Asia which are formally structured as federations, seem to centralise power within their national capitals. In all these countries, there is an urgent need for effective devolution of power and authority. If regions, provinces and states are given more powers to administer their own affairs, it is quite conceivable that the religious and cultural communities associated with particular provinces or states will feel that they have greater control over their own destinies. It will also be possible within such a set-up to give due consideration to the special economic and cultural needs of certain communities.

Devolution of power and authority is an acknowledgment that religious and cultural communities deserve autonomy and freedom within the framework of a larger, loosely-structured polity. Such a polity will not – as it is often feared by advocates of strong government – encourage centrifugal tendencies. It will not strengthen separatist demands. On the contrary, it is quite likely that when communities enjoy genuine autonomy and freedom, they will be less inclined to break away from a centre which may be perceived as accommodative in attitude and democratic in character. Indeed, autonomy will be meaningful only if some of the other institutions of a democratic society are strengthened and enhanced.[20] Parliament, for instance, should play its role as an effective instrument for legislation. It should function as the body deliberating on national policies and not surrender its authority to some presidential clique or party caucus. The judiciary should protect its independence and integrity, whatever the costs and consequences. The police, the armed forces and other law-enforcing agencies should at all times retain their impartiality and objectivity. The media should establish its credentials as a fearless advocate of truth and justice and never pander to religious bigotry or cultural chauvinism. Political parties, trade unions and social action groups should champion what is right and oppose what is wrong without succumbing to the pulls and pressures of communalism.

It is important to emphasise all these duties and responsibilities of the various organs of society for a simple reason. A great deal of havoc has been caused by institutions which are expected to protect the

---

[20] For some reflections on this, see the sections on "Democracy" and "Ethnic relations" in *id.*

public good but instead degenerate into strongholds for perpetuating communal dissension and strife. The police and armed forces, in particular, in a number of multi-religious societies have developed an unsavoury reputation for being biased against particular groups and for brutality.[21] So bad is the situation that one sometimes wonders whether the behaviour of security personnel in certain communal conflagrations is not one of the main causes for the continuous cycle of violence that often occurs. This is why any political reform which seeks to minimise the potential for religious conflict should have on its agenda the creation of disciplined security personnel, capable of self-restraint and of impartial administration of justice.

As important as political reform is economic reform. To curb the propensity among the unemployed to swell the ranks of rioters in communal disturbances, it is crucial that rapid, sustainable economic growth is encouraged. Economic growth which has as its main thrust the creation of jobs for the young in particular will reduce the level of social frustration. Youth, as a whole, will become less susceptible to religious chauvinism.

In fact, if the economy is growing rapidly, if it is easy to find jobs and if those who are employed enjoy social mobility, people will become much more secure and contented. The ensuing economic stability will inevitably generate the conditions for a healthier political atmosphere.

Malaysia is a good example of a multi-religious society which, comparatively speaking, has known much more inter-ethnic harmony than many other countries, partly because of its impressive economic development. For more than three decades it has registered consistently high growth rates, which have helped to keep unemployment down while expanding economic opportunities for all ethnic communities.[22] In fact, it is this reality of a growing "economic cake" which has enabled the government to give special assistance to segments of the indigenous Malay-Muslim community, without causing too much unhappiness amongst the non-Malays and non-Muslims. An active and dynamic private sector provides sufficient scope for the absorption and expansion of non-Malay, non-Muslim capital and entrepreneurial skills.

---

[21] See *Oppression in Punjab, op. cit.*, and Committee for Initiative on Kashmir, *India's Kashmir War* (New Delhi: Committee for Initiative on Kashmir, 1990) for examples of army brutality in the Punjab and Kashmir respectively.

[22] See "25 years of *Merdeka*", in *Challenges and Choices, op. cit.*, for an earlier analysis of the growth phenomenon in Malaysia.

Multi-religious societies in Asia whose economies are not expanding fast enough should devise more imaginative and creative strategies to promote growth and development. Private initiative and enterprise expressed through market relations is a vital pre-requisite for rapid, sustainable growth. But it must be a market which is at the same time responsive to ethical values and conscious of its social responsibilities.

Apart from encouraging private enterprise, attempts should also be made to increase productivity through massive investments in education and training. Effective human resource development has played a key role in increasing economic productivity in Malaysia and other successful newly industrialising countries such as South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore.

It is a pity that there are multi-religious societies in Asia burdened with colossal communal problems which have spent much more of their scarce financial resources on their armed forces and military hardware than on education and training.[23] If these countries had their economic priorities right at the time of Independence there might have been less religious strife today.

By emphasising growth and enterprise, we do not mean to downplay the importance of equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities in the endeavour to reduce religious conflict. Our analysis of the causes of religious conflict has shown quite clearly that absolute poverty and economic disparities, which sometimes assume an ethnic dimension, are serious threats to social harmony. Absolute poverty, especially when it affects substantial segments of certain communities, should be eradicated through a variety of measures ranging from agrarian reform and the establishment of small-scale industries to education and infra-structure development. In many multi-religious societies, the government lacks the will to eliminate absolute poverty. Sometimes this is because of the influence upon government of certain vested interests which benefit directly from the perpetuation of poverty.

If governments in countries such as India and Sri Lanka had the will, they would also try to reduce economic disparities, especially when they have implications for inter-ethnic ties. Much more attention would be given to the education and training of disadvantaged groups

---

[23] From 1971–79 for example, India spent US$3,192 on each soldier and only US$1.80 per capita on education and health together. See Gan Teik Chee, "Effects of the arms race on the Third World", in *The Arms Race: Humanity in crisis* (Penang: Aliran, 1984).

to enable them to catch up with the others. More employment opportunities would be created for disadvantaged groups by facilitating economic activities in hitherto neglected areas. At the same time, uncontrolled development which dislocates sections of whole communities would not be allowed. Instead, there would be a more planned approach to development which would seek to offset the negative consequences of economic change by re-locating communities in new growth centres or providing alternative employment opportunities to the victims of economic dislocation.

Through growth with equity, by integrating enterprise with justice, it should be possible to ameliorate some of the economic conditions which often give rise to religious conflict. But are these economic reforms coupled with the political changes we have discussed enough to check religious strife? If there is economic prosperity and social justice, on the one hand, and active political participation and viable democratic institutions, on the other, will it be possible for us to control communal passions from running riot? Since our concern is with communalism expressed through religion, the question we have to ask is this: Is social justice, is political participation alone, enough to check narrow, bigoted sectarian notions of religion? We don't think so. Our attitude to religion itself should change.

Religion

The problem lies with the way religion is understood and practised. It must be stressed at this point that the problem is not with religion *per se*. It is not the philosophy or the doctrines, it is not the practices or the rituals, which are the issue. To repeat, it is our interpretation of religion which constitutes the problem. It is the meaning we attach to certain doctrines and rituals which creates difficulties.

Over the centuries, most of the followers of most of the faiths in Asia have developed an exclusive view of their particular religious tradition. God is seen as the God of their particular group.[24] Truth and justice, love and compassion, are perceived as values which are exclusive to their religion. The unity that they seek is invariably the

---

[24] This parochial concept of God is lucidly analysed in S. Wesley Ariarajah, *The Bible and Peoples of Others Faiths* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989).

unity of their own kind. Their religion – they are passionately con-
vinced – is superior to other religions.

In order to project the exclusive greatness of their religion, they
emphasise the forms and practices, the rituals and symbols, which
distinguish their particular religious tradition from other traditions.
They regard these rituals and symbols as ends in themselves. It is the
meticulous application of the rituals of their faith which is their main
obsession. The devotion to rituals becomes the ultimate measure of
the piety and goodness of an individual.[25]

Because most of us are socialised from our infancy into this view
of religion, it is deeply embedded in our psyche. Besides, each of us
who belongs to a particular religion usually identifies with a whole
tradition which in turn becomes part and parcel of our socialisation
as we move from childhood to adulthood. Some of the most significant
events in our lives and in the lives of those who are dear to us are
linked to rituals and symbols derived from religion. Religion conditions
our values, shapes our thoughts. There is, in a nutshell, a deep umbil-
ical cord which attaches each of us to our religion. It explains, to
a large degree, the almost instinctive reaction to the slightest perceived
insult or injury done to one's religion. It explains why thousands and
thousands of human beings can sometimes work themselves into a
frenzy over a religious cause.

To effect changes to the way we are socialised into our religion, we
have to first deepen and broaden our understanding of religion. Almost
every religion – from the great spiritual experiences of the Australian
Aborigines and the Native American Indians to Sikhism and the Bahai
faith – is universal in the message it seeks to convey to humankind.
The Ultimate Reality, the Supreme Being, God – call it what you
will – belongs to all the universes, the whole of humanity. The values
of truth and love, of justice and compassion are eternal, universal
values. The real unity which most of the scriptures envisage is un-
doubtedly the unity of the whole of humankind, indeed the unity of
the whole of existence itself.

Rites and rituals, forms and symbols, are ways of helping us under-
stand this ultimate unity – a unity which is rooted in faith in God
and love for all God's creatures. Some of the illustrious mystics in the

---

[25] For a good discussion on the weakness of this sort of approach to religion, see
Amir Shakib Arslan, *Our Decline and its Causes* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1944).

various religious traditions understood this well, which is why they remained truly universal in outlook and attitude and refused to be sectarian.[26] They saw the differences in rituals and modes of worship among the various religions as man-made distinctions. As one of them observed, "The lamps are different, but the Light is the same."[27]

We shall now show how this spirit of universal unity exists within a particular religious tradition. Since the tradition we are most familiar with is Islam, we shall draw our arguments from that tradition, though it must be emphasised that most of the other religions have an equally strong commitment to a unity transcending the boundaries of class, community and creed.

That the primary purpose of Islam is to achieve the unity of humankind is clearly enunciated in the *Qur'an* itself. The *Qur'an* declares for instance, "Mankind were one community" and "Lo! this your religion is one religion and I am your Lord, so keep your duty unto Me."[28]

The reference to "one religion" is to that one universal divine truth revealed to humankind from the very beginning. The *Qur'an* says that this was the truth that was revealed to Abraham and to Noah and to Moses and to Jesus.[29] In fact, it makes it very clear that every community on earth has received this universal truth. In the words of the *Qur'an*,

> There is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them.[30]

And what is this universal truth? It is belief in God and doing good. This is lucidly explained in a Qur'anic verse.

> And they say, 'None entereth Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian. These are their own desires. Say: Bring your proof (of what ye state) if ye are truthful. Nay, but whosoever surrendereth his purpose to God while doing good, his reward is with his Lord; and there shall no fear come upon them; neither shall they grieve.[31]

---

[26] Examples of the universalism of the mystics can be found in Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

[27] This is a quote from the great Persian mystic Jalaluddin Rumi. It appears in S.M. Ponniah, "A Hindu perspective", in Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Tan Chee Khoon, Chandra Muzaffar and Lim Kit Siang, *Contemporary Issues on Malaysian Religions* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1984), 81.

[28] *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran.* An explanatory translation by Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall (Pakistan: Centre for Islamic Information, n.d.) 2:213; *Qur'an* 23:52.

[29] *Qur'an* 42:13.

[30] *Qur'an* 35:24.

[31] *Qur'an* 2:111–112.

It is significant that the *Qur'an* reiterates over and over again that believing in God and doing good constitutes the essence of righteous conduct. This is what all the prophets and seers urged humankind to do. This was the guidance they offered in their noble desire to unite humankind.

And yet, the *Qur'an* notes with regret, humankind destroyed this universal truth and became divided into sects.[32] It chides humankind for having "broken their religion among them into sects, each sect rejoicing in its tenets."[33] This is an unambiguous chastisement of sectarianism.

While the *Qur'an* is opposed to sectarianism, it accepts that there are different ways of reaching the universal truth. It says,

> For each we have appointed a divine law and a traced-out way. Had God willed He could have made you one community. But that He may try you by that which He hath given you. So vie one with another in good works.[34]

This concept of a fundamental unity based upon faith and action which nonetheless acknowledges diversity has found adherents among Muslim sages and mystics through the centuries. Rumi, Bistami, Ibn-Arabi, al-Hallaj, Attar, Saadi, Shabistari and Abd al-Qadir-Jilani among others were illustrious proponents of universal unity.[35] So was the famous Indian mystic Kabir.

In light of what is happening in present-day India, it is worth recalling Kabir's eloquent criticism of false religious differences. He asks,

> If God lives in the Mosque, who then lives in the rest of the world? All the Hindus think that Ram lives in the Tirth and in his images; but they have not found Ram. Those who think that Iswara is in the East and Allah is in the West are in profound error. If they want to find Him, they must seek Him in their hearts. They will find Him there.[36]

Rejection of religious exclusivism, of sectarian attitudes, and a sincere commitment to the divine truth and to universal unity, as we have hinted a while ago, are by no means the monopoly of any one

---

[32] *Qur'an* 6:160.
[33] *Qur'an* 23:53.
[34] *Qur'an* 5:48.
[35] Their contributions are discussed in Rafiq Zakaria, *The Struggle Within Islam* (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1989), especially chapter 7, "Bridge builders".
[36] Quoted in Pandit Sunderlal, *The Gita and the Qur'an* (Hyderabad: Institute of Indo-Middle East Cultural Studies), 37.

religion. It should be mentioned in passing that within Hinduism
remarkable sages from Shamkara and Ramanuja to Ramakrishna
Parama-hamsa and Mahatma Gandhi radiated this universal spirit.
They too believed that faith in God and love of humankind alone
could unite the followers of different religions. As the philosopher
Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and former President of India once put it,

> All outer names are man-made distinctions whereas the reality is faith
> in God and love of man. It is not necessary to do away with differences
> which distinguish and divide men. We must try to understand them.
> We must admit faith in the one God of all mankind who is worshiped
> in many ways.[37]

It is of course true that the universal sentiments of these Hindu and
Muslim sages have always remained a subordinate trend within their
religions. But this does not mean that we should not try to strengthen
this trend by bringing to the fore the sublime values and lofty ideals
associated with the universalists in all the religious traditions. This is
one of the biggest challenges facing all of us who are committed to
the quest for harmony and unity among the different communities
in the midst of religious antagonism and conflict.

Apart from strengthening the universal trend within our own reli-
gion, we should also try to develop a more profound understanding
of other faiths. Most of us, even within the intelligentsia, know so
little about one another's religion, though we live in multi-religious
societies where religion is a living reality. It is only when we acquire
knowledge about "the other's faith" that we will become less attached
to the "us" versus "them" dichotomy which pervades society. This
dichotomy, needless to say, is one of the most formidable psychological
barriers to inter-faith harmony.

By trying to understand other religions we will be establishing the
basis for genuine inter-faith dialogue. In multi-religious societies, torn
asunder by religious strife, there are perhaps few other tasks which
are more urgent than this.[38] It is a measure of the depth of our
moral bankruptcy and intellectual apathy that we have done so little
to promote inter-faith dialogue. Since it is unlikely that governments
in our countries will get excited about such dialogues, it is up to us,

---

[37] See Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Recovery of Faith* (Hind Pocket Books, 1967), 178.
[38] The importance of inter-faith dialogue is discussed in "Inter-religious commu-
nication: The five tasks", in Chandra Muzaffar, *One God, Many Paths: Essays on the
social relevance of religion in Malaysia from Islamic, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and philo-
sophical perspectives* (Penang: Aliran, 1980).

human rights activists, peace campaigners, environmentalists, feminists and so on, to organise these dialogues on a massive scale.

Inter-faith dialogues should be held at all levels and in all sectors of society. Unlike the political and economic reforms which we had suggested earlier on, this is something which is within our means to do. Inter-faith dialogues, properly organised, would help a great deal to transform a conflict-ridden atmosphere to a harmony laden one. It would be interesting to find out why those of us who are committed to fundamental social and political change – human rights activists, environmentalists – have shown so little enthusiasm for inter-faith dialogues. In fact, on the whole, we have not really been concerned about religion, especially the role of religion in social transformation. Some of us would even regard religion as a retrogressive force. Others amongst us would with some reluctance acknowledge that religion has a role of sorts in political change. Even when we make such a concession, we would like to see religion serve some other more "progressive" ideological goal to which we may be attached.

Why is there this lack of empathy for religion amongst so-called "progressives" in Asian societies? Part of the explanation lies in the way in which their thinking has been conditioned by Western intellectual paradigms. Marxist and socialist thought, for instance, like its liberal-capitalist counterpart, provides no role for religion. Indeed, for a long while, Western Marxist and socialist ideologies regarded religion as a totally reactionary social phenomenon which had to be discarded in the march towards a new, progressive social order. Many Asian progressives and activists absorbed, in an uncritical manner, this Western perspective on religion which was of course shaped to a large extent by the West's own unique historical evolution. It goes to show that even those who have been most vocal in lambasting Western imperialist domination continue to be dominated by Western thought categories – when our own Asian experience demands a different approach to religion. These progressives and activists are, in a sense, unsuspecting victims of Western intellectual imperialism. Freeing the Asian mind from the bondage of Western intellectual imperialism is, therefore, one of the preconditions for inter-faith dialogues. Inter-faith dialogues, it needs to be stressed, should not just be concerned with metaphysical issues. They should deal with contemporary challenges and some of the perennial social concerns of humankind. If human rights activists, for instance, held an inter-faith dialogue they could examine the question of freedom of expression or of torture from the different religious perspectives. Peace campaigners could

dialogue on how religions regard war, violence and the use of force
in international relations. Environmentalists, on the other hand, could
analyse how religions view environmental degradation and what sort
of ideas they embody on the management of natural resources.

CONCLUSION

It is quite conceivable that through such dialogues the followers of
different religions will realise that their doctrines share common per-
spectives on many of the crucial challenges confronting humanity. For
it is true that on imperialist control and domination, on the environ-
ment, on natural resources, on the function and purpose of government,
on the role of leadership, on the family, on community solidarity,
on the rights and responsibilities of the human being, and on the
values which should be at the core of an ethical society, Buddhism,
Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Taoism
and other religions hold identical positions. These positions, in a
sense, constitute the shared spiritual and moral heritage of humankind.[39]

A specific illustration of this shared heritage which is so relevant
to the materialistic thrust of our age is the way in which all the reli-
gions look upon the acquisition of riches, the accumulation of wealth.
Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims, for instance, would happily endorse the
Christian condemnation of the obsession with money. The Bible warns
us that "the love of money is the root of all evils". We are advised to
"keep our life from love of money" (Hebrews 13:5). Or, as the Prophet
Isaiah chastises, "woe to those who join house to house, who add field
to field until there is no room, and you are made to dwell alone in
the midst of the land" (Isaiah 5:8).[40] Needless to say, these are sen-
timents which echo and re-echo in the noble struggles of all the great
prophets – struggles which are part of our common spiritual patri-
mony, our shared moral heritage.

In this shared heritage lies our hope of overcoming the religious
conflicts which have pitted community against community in the Asian
continent. It is the sacred responsibility of our generation to develop

---

[39] For a fuller discussion, see Chandra Muzzafar, "Towards a spiritual vision of
the human being", in *The Human Being from Different Spiritual Traditions* (Penang: Aliran,
1991).

[40] These biblical quotes are from Warren Johnson, *The Future Is Not What It Used
to Be: Returning to traditional values in an age of scarcity* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1985).

the ideas, values and principles embodied in this heritage so that a new spiritual worldview emerges which will provide an alternative to the dominant secular materialistic worldview of our age. This secular, materialistic worldview which has always been uneasy about religion is totally helpless in the face of religious bigotry and religious conflict. It is equally incapable of resolving some of the other colossal problems of our times related to imperialism, environmental degradation, excessive consumerism, technological mystification, dehumanising life-styles and spiritual alienation.[41] In a sense, this worldview has never really been able to overcome even the more fundamental challenges of economic exploitation and political repression. This is why there is a crying need for an alternative worldview which will incorporate both the perennial wisdom contained in our religious traditions and the wealth of knowledge about political and economic relationships and structures generated by the restless quest of the human mind in the last two centuries.

Our alternative universal spiritual worldview will therefore embrace not only values such as freedom, equality and justice but also virtues such as love, compassion, moderation and restraint.[42] It will not only espouse human rights but also emphasise human responsibilities – including our responsibility to environment, to community, to family and to self. Our universal spiritual worldview will be concerned not only with political and economic structures but will also address issues of morality and ethics. It will seek not only the transformation of the social order but also the transformation of the individual self. It is a worldview that will not only celebrate the joy of life but also reflect on the sorrow of death. It will be a worldview which will not only protect the particular identities of individual communities but also pursue the universal unity of the whole of humankind. Most of all, it will be a worldview which will not only respect religious diversity but also revere the majesty of a truly universal God.

When that universal spiritual worldview triumphs in the dawn of tomorrow, we, who are witnesses to today's tragedy of religious conflicts, will finally understand what the illustrious mystic Jalaluddin Rumi meant when he said, "The lovers of God have no religion but God alone."[43]

---

[41] See "The spiritual basis of the struggle for alternative societies", in Chandra Muzzafar, *The NEP: Development and alternative consciousness* (Penang: Aliran, 1989).

[42] See "Alternative consciousness and spiritual values", in *id*.

[43] Quoted in Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), 95.

4. FROM OPEN VIOLENCE TO SYMBOLIC CONFRONTATION: ANTHROPOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS OF LATIN AMERICA'S SOUTHERN CONE

Daniel Míguez

The 1980s was a decade of transition for Latin America's Southern Cone. During that decade most of the countries of the region turned from violent and repressive dictatorial regimes to democratic governments. This political change was accompanied by profound transformations in many other aspects. For example, the levels of political violence were drastically reduced. Also, people's perceptions of the importance and value of civil rights, among them freedom of speech and thought, increased significantly. This renewed appreciation of civil rights had a strong impact on some of the religious traditions of those states; basically, it allowed for greater religious diversity and the formation of a "religious market", that is, the presence of a variety of religious offers and people feeling free to choose among the alternatives. This was a new situation for most of the countries of the Southern Cone, although there was variation among them. Brazil, for example, had experienced a situation of relative religious plurality almost since it became an independent state, while Argentina had had high levels of religious censorship for most of its modern history.

These political and religious changes altered not only the number of religious options available, but also modified the roles that the different religions played in the Southern Cone's nations. This may be clearly seen in relation to the specific topic of this book: religion and violence. With the reinstatement of democracy, religions stopped favouring institutional action at the level of government or NGOs, and undertook a kind of "grassroots" approach, working with the men and women on the street (although this should be understood more as a relative than an absolute difference). This change of strategy has been clearly related to political transformations. During the dictatorial regimes, violence was exerted from "above" by the repressive machinery deployed by the military. During the democratic period, violence has become more a problem of "sociability". That is, violence

erupts more in daily activity, such as in domestic or criminal violence, than by the direct action of the state against the populace (although police abuse against marginalised sectors of society, such as slum dwellers, is still a problem).

These changes in the way violence emerges in society, and in the way religion becomes involved with it, have introduced profound alterations. During the dictatorships, religions acted mainly at the institutional level, that is, trying to influence governmental decisions by putting pressure on state leaders. The roles played by religion during this period were ambiguous. Some religions tried to stop violence by denouncing the abuses of the military, others tried to win state favours by, in some way (sometimes more openly, and other times more implicitly), legitimising the military's repressive activities. After democracy was reinstated, religions prioritised other forms of action. Instead of trying to influence governmental decisions, they tried to influence the behaviour of common people in their everyday activities. This form of action obliges religious agents to try to influence people's perceptions of reality (the way they perceive themselves, their families, their future, society in general, etc.). Thus, this form of religious action implies that religions act at the level of identity. Identities are often constructed in opposition to other identities, that is, in a confrontational attitude that opposes one's group to other groups in an antagonistic relation. Therefore if, on the one hand, religion is contributing to peace by helping to overcome the violence that results from the problems of sociability, it is, on the other hand, reproducing the same sociability problems by creating a confrontational attitude among different religious groups.

The point of this chapter is that the kind of confrontation that stems from this type of religious action, although risky, is not very problematic as long as it is kept as "symbolic confrontation". Within these boundaries it becomes a useful resource in civil society, at no great cost. But, before developing this point further, it is necessary to explore in more detail the changes which occurred in the Southern Cone and the relationship between religion and identity that I have only mentioned here in passing.

FROM INSTITUTIONAL ACTION TO SYMBOLIC CONFRONTATION

I have used the expression "Southern Cone" as if it were not a problematic designation, but, in rigour, it may only be used in this man-

ner during a short and superficial introduction, as the above paragraphs were meant to be. In fact, the countries composing the Southern Cone (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and, to an extent, Brazil and Paraguay) are far from an homogeneous unity. Historical, economic, ethnic, social and political contrasts, among other cleavages, differentiate these states. The complex scene that these contrasts create, plus the sparse information and scientific research on the religious fields of certain regions and countries, prevent an analysis of the entire Southern Cone. Therefore, we will limit this study to just three cases: Chile, Brazil and Argentina. Still, as will be shown, diversity persists. The roles played by the Catholic Church have not been the same, and the degree of religious plurality has also been different in these three societies. However, even with all the afore-mentioned contrasts, it is possible to discern some common underlying trends when one analyses the situation in these countries since the 1980s.

What I perceive as a common element is that, with the democratic turn of the 1980s, the way religions are acting in these societies has changed. In most cases, during the dictatorships, churches were involved in what I call "institutional forms of action". This form of action had as a dominant feature the protagonism of the religious elite of the different churches, who tried to influence political and governmental leaders. In some cases, these actions were meant to promote peace and justice in the violent atmosphere of the dictatorships. In other cases, these actions were oriented towards winning favours from state authorities or, what is more or less the same thing, imposing restrictions through the state on other religious groups. Although during the dictatorial period this was the predominant form of action, especially of the more established churches, smaller and less mainstream religions worked in a different direction. Certain religious groups, such as Pentecostals, prioritised more individually oriented strategies. Although they occasionally aimed at influencing state authorities (as in the case of Chile), they had always been more concerned with "winning the soul" of the men and women on the street. This strategy proved effective especially among the poorest sectors of society, who were in many cases affected by a permanent state of deprivation or, as happened in Argentina, by an economic recession that reduced the traditional living standards of the lower and lower-middle classes. The more successful churches were those able to provide new life-projects and meaningful goals to people who were constantly being rejected by society's main institutions (job and consumer markets, the educational system, etc.).

When the dictatorships ended, and the plural character of the Southern Cone's societies (including their religious fields) became more evident, the effectiveness of this strategy became obvious for most of the religious agents, even of the more traditional churches, who then began to adopt this kind of orientation. In this way, a religious market emerged. This had an unexpected but beneficial consequence. People – especially poor people – became able to choose among different religions, and found in this significant resources to overcome some of their problems. Especially, people found in religion a means of expression; that is, ways to construct their own understanding of life, creating in this manner a meaningful existence for themselves. This religious construction of meaning has had political implications, since people have often used these religious means to contest the economic or political order. To understand how this actually happened, we need to explore more carefully the historical processes that led to this situation.

THE YEARS OF DICTATORSHIP: INSTITUTIONAL ACTION

What makes the comparison between Chile, Brazil and Argentina interesting is that these three countries are at the same time very similar and amazingly different. For example; the three countries underwent violent military regimes more or less at the same time. Chile was under the violent military rule of Pinochet between 1973 and 1990; Argentina had the most violent dictatorship of its modern history between 1976 and 1983; and Brazil was also under the rule of a military regime that committed torture and murder between 1964 and 1985. Thus, as may be observed, the three countries had similar military regimes in similar historical periods; also, the three countries re-introduced democracy more or less at the same time. What makes the comparison interesting is that, for example, the same churches did not play the same roles in the different countries during these regimes, and that, within the same church, different sectors did not assume the same attitude towards the existing political regimes. In order to further document the similarities and contrasts we need to introduce more detail of what occurred in these countries.

Chile

In 1973 the military, headed by General Pinochet, took over power in Chile, overthrowing the socialist government of President Allende. After Pinochet took power he started a violent repression, persecuting all political dissidents and committing all sorts of human rights violations. The churches in Chile did not assume a unified role in the face of these issues. Initially, a group of churches created an ecumenical organisation, the "Committee for Peace in Chile", which tried to defend human rights. This Committee was composed of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Pentecostal and Orthodox churches. But, for different reasons, mainly due to the lack of protection of the initial coalition of churches, this Committee was dissolved. Instead, the Catholic Church created the Vicariate for Solidarity as a sort of protective shell, under which also Protestant leaders of various churches played a role. On the other hand, some Pentecostal churches supported the new regime from the beginning, partly because of a deep-rooted fear of Communism, but also as an opportunity to gain prominence and favour from the Pinochet government.

The facts set out so far might prompt us to conclude that while Catholics and other religious groups defended human rights, some Pentecostals and other Evangelicals became in some sense allies of the dictatorial regime. But this would be a simplification, since what is more striking is that even within the same churches there were different views about what role should be played. For example, the historian Martin Poblete reports that while Cardinal Silva Enriquez was in favour of defending human rights, some bishops within the Catholic Church argued that they should not intervene in political matters.[1]

When Pinochet's dictatorship ended in 1990, the Catholic Church abandoned its focus on human rights and took up the cause of the poor and disadvantaged. The Vicariate for Solidarity was dissolved and a new Vicariate of the Social Pastoral was created. In this vein Cardinal Oviedo endorsed a pastoral letter entitled: "Poor people can't wait". An interesting issue is that the new orientation towards the poor put the spotlight on the fact that the Catholic Church had lost its monopoly over the Chilean poor. When in the 1990s the Church

---

[1] Martin Poblete, "Chile", in Paul E. Sigmund (ed), *Religious Freedom and Evangelization in Latin America: The challenge of religious pluralism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 229–33.

directed its action toward the poor, it found that 20.2% of the
Chilean population were Pentecostals, and that Catholics had decreased
from 90% to 75% in 1990.

Confronted with this fact, the Catholic Church has undertaken a
strategy of active evangelisation, trying to halt the increase of other
religious groups and the slow reduction of its own constituency. In this
effort, Cardinal Oviedo came to recognise that it was mainly the
spiritual language of Pentecostals that gave them the edge over
Catholics, and in that vein he instructed his own followers to regain
spiritual insight.

In addition to this missionary action, the Catholic Church pres-
sured Congress not to pass a bill of cults that would give all churches,
including the Roman Catholic, the same legal status, thus establish-
ing religious equality rather than mere tolerance. The Catholic Church
also promoted laws that, depending on interpretation, could be used
to restrict the liberty of others. This last kind of action had a para-
doxical character and a negative effect. A paradoxical character,
because it implied that the same sectors that defended human rights
during the military regime acted against one of the fundamental human
rights, namely freedom of religion. A negative effect because these
attempts to restrict religious freedom increased levels of confrontation.

We may ask here what motivated these contradictory actions in the
Catholic Church. I suggest that the motive which Catholics had to
act against religious freedom is, ultimately, similar to the motive which
Pentecostals had to associate with Pinochet's regime: in both cases they
were trying to win control of the religious field by using the state
apparatus.

Brazil

The same kind of problem may be seen in Brazil. In Brazil, just as
in Chile, the Catholic Church played a fundamental role in defend-
ing human rights as well as social rights during the dictatorship. The
Church's well known Base Communities had a vital role in defending
social rights, and the National Bishops' Conference of Brazil and the
Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission played a leading role in the
protection of human rights. Because of this, some of the Catholic
Church's members were killed, including some prelates. While the
Catholic Church opposed the military, creating a certain strain in
church-state relations, some minorities religions such as Afro-Brasilian

religions – mainly Umbanda – and Pentecostals tried to secure space in the state structure, becoming to some extent accomplices of the regime.[2]

As in Chile, when the dictatorship ended, a new situation of religious diversity manifested itself. Pentecostals had won prominence in Brazil's religious field. According to Rubem Fernandes, one new Pentecostal church was being opened in the Rio de Janeiro area every day.[3] After democratisation took place, some Pentecostal churches (especially the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God) implemented aggressive strategies to transform their new religious influence into political influence. They participated vigorously during the constitutional reform of 1986 and have since been actively involved in politics, usually using political positions to promote their religious cause and thus benefit their churches. Because of this they have been accused of crass patronage politics.[4]

This type of aggressive strategy, that goes beyond simple evangelisation, has led to significant confrontations between the Catholic Church and Umbanda, even at some points to open confrontation through the media and to almost physical attacks. Other reactions, however, have been the deployment, especially by the Catholic Church, of new evangelical strategies. For example, Catholics have promoted their own charismatic groups – with similar doctrine and ritual to Pentecostals – and this strategy has not resulted in violent confrontations.

As in Chile, what seems to spark open confrontation in Brazil are attempts to use the institutional apparatus of the state to promote religious causes, or domination of the religious field. When religious competition takes place solely through evangelical or missionary action, the levels of conflict remain low. With its own cleavages, this seems to be the case for Argentina as well.

---

[2] Kenneth P. Serbin, "Brazil", in Paul E. Sigmund (ed), *Religious Freedom and Evangelization in Latin America: The challenge of religious pluralism* (New York: Orbis Books, 1999), 214.

[3] Rubem Fernandes, "Governo das almas: As denominaçoes Evangelicas no grande Rio", *Revista do Rio de Janeiro*, 1:2, 8–22 (1993).

[4] Serbin, "Brazil", *op. cit.*, at 216.

Argentina

Between 1976 and 1983 Argentina underwent a violent dictatorship. Using as an excuse the existence of certain left-wing guerrilla movements, the Argentinean military created a repressive machinery that resembled that of Nazi Germany. The repression reached a range of social sectors that greatly exceeded the guerrillas themselves. Even the slightest difference with the military government turned people into objects of violent repression. In this way, during the dictatorship between 10,000 and 30,000 people were killed. Given the repressive methods used, the (in)famous "disappearances", the number cannot be established with greater certitude.

The roles played by the churches in this context were diverse and contrasting. Within the Catholic Church, the dominant religion in Argentina, the leadership played an ambiguous role, partly suppressing the information they had, and in some cases (such as that of the military vicariate) even giving moral support to those responsible for torture and murder. The reasons for this kind of complicity are historical. The trajectory of the Catholic Church in Argentina seems to have pushed it in two directions: first, establishing a strong alliance with the more conservative, authoritarian sectors of society; and second, distrusting its own control over the spirituality of the popular sectors and trying to use the state apparatus to guarantee this control. The Church's affinity with the military government manifested these two elements through a certain adhesion to its ideology, noticeable, as mentioned, in the action of the military vicariate as well as in a sometimes very explicit anti-Marxism, and through the tendency to restrict, through censorship and state control, the freedom of religion.

It is important to note that the role played by the churches during the dictatorship cannot be restricted to that played by the Catholic leadership. Almost as an exact opposite to this image, dissident sectors of the Catholic Church and members of the Protestant churches actively participated in human rights movements, trying to counter the political violence exerted by the military government. In this sense, the role played by the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights (made up of the Catholic Church as well as Protestant churches) was prominent. Members of different Protestant churches – usually those more closely related to the World Council of Churches which participated in the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights – also worked in secular human rights organisations like CELS (Centre for

Legal and Social Studies), the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, and the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights.

Thus explored, the Argentine case shows that the relationship between religion and violence is contrasting when the religious field is looked at as a whole. There are sectors within the religious field that favoured, or at least did not act against, the violent action of the military, and other sectors that promoted human rights, trying to stop violence and abuse. After the years of dictatorship, the religious field in Argentina followed the trend of diversification characteristic of its Southern Cone neighbours; although, since religious restrictions had been greater, the contrasts with the previous situation were starker. As in Brazil and Chile, in Argentina Pentecostals became a prominent actor in the religious field, especially among the poor and largely because of their charismatic rituals. Also other religious minorities (such as adherents of Afro-Brasilian religions) won space and visibility, remaining, however, rather small groups. These various groups, including Pentecostals, also acted, just as in Brazil and Chile, more at a grassroots level than at an institutional level (although attempts to influence state institutions were also undertaken by Pentecostals). The reaction of the Catholic Church was a combined attempt to restrict the newly acquired freedom and, when most of these efforts proved futile, to regain adepts by invigorating their own charismatic groups.

Conclusion

The cases of Argentina, Brazil and Chile show that during the dictatorships religions in the Southern Cone did not play a fixed role. The roles played by the different churches or by the same churches in different countries have alternately been in favour of or against violence. What seems to be a common trend is a change in the way religions were behaving in the region. Although the situation is not entirely homogeneous, almost in every case religions ceased to privilege institutional action – trying to influence governments and state representatives – and instead embraced the strategy of trying to influence "small people", to win the men and women on the street. This new trend has favoured the poor and disfranchised in society, but has also created new bases for conflict. We will explore this situation in the next section.

Symbolic confrontation

Before explaining what symbolic confrontation is and how it actually takes place in the Southern Cone, it is necessary to make explicit some of the theoretical elements that underlie the concept. The first thing is to show the importance of symbols in social life and how they are associated with the construction of perception and meaning. Connected to this issue are the relations between identity and power, and how religion plays a role in this. Only when the conceptual links among these elements have been made clear, will we be able to show what symbolic confrontation is and how it takes place.

The analysis of the roles that symbols play in social life has been one of the most significant contributions of anthropology to our understanding of human societies. Although it is not the purpose of this chapter to make a thorough analysis of how this emerged in the discipline, a brief overview is necessary. It was probably the prominent anthropologist Clifford Geertz who was responsible for proposing that men and women live "suspended in webs of significance they themselves have spun".[5] What Geertz was trying to explain is that societies induce in every person a certain perception of reality by attaching meaning to things. For example, we dress in a certain manner, hiding certain parts of our bodies because we consider them as "private". This is because Western societies attach a certain meaning (private, sinful, etc.) to these body parts. We then individually perceive these parts according to the socially constructed meaning of them.

Two important things should be realised here. First, there is a difference between meaning and perception. Meaning is a collective element: the socially constructed understanding of things. Perception is an individual element: the particular way an individual understands things, which is influenced by the socially constructed meaning. Societies induce individual perception through socialisation, which guides people into accepting the socially constructed meanings. Second, meanings and perceptions are not inscribed in the nature of things or in the instinctive character of human beings. The meanings societies attach to things are, in a sense, arbitrary: each society constructs an understanding of reality which is its own, but does not have an intrinsic justification in the nature of things. Since human beings' understanding

---

[5] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Washington: Basic Books, 1973), 5.

of reality is not instinctive, they depend on the socially constructed meanings (the webs of significance) to understand themselves (create an identity) and the world around them. Thus, these constructed meanings and perceptions are fundamental for human beings in order to survive and to overcome the sense of meaningless and chaos that results from not knowing (instinctively) what are the purpose and meaning of human existence.

Two more elements must be introduced before we can define symbolic confrontation and show how it occurs in the Southern Cone. First, we need to make clear what symbols are; and second, how power relations are involved in all this. As with perceptions, the webs of significance have a private existence in individual's heads: it is the way people conceive themselves (their identity) and the reality around them. But, since these perceptions are common to a group of people, they have also a public existence, which is expressed in symbols. For example, during the 1960s "hippies" used worn-out jeans to express their repudiation of consumer society; thus the jeans were a symbol of their political stance. What existed in their heads as a political ideology was expressed in an external symbol: the jeans. It is these public expressions of meanings which anthropologists understand as symbols. Thus, we may conclude that symbols are external manifestations (things or actions) that express the meanings or shared perceptions of reality present in a given social group; symbols synthesise and express meanings.[6]

But there is still another dimension of symbols that must be considered. Symbols, as the public expression of meanings, allow for communication among people. Through these communicative processes, people may also negotiate new meanings. We may use language to discuss with others our perceptions of reality and reach a new consensus; in that way we create new collective meanings. An alternative outcome of this process could be that no new consensus is reached, in which case persistent conflict between alternative perceptions may ensue. This again brings us to the issue of meanings, symbols and power, which we need to discuss next.

The fact that meaning and power are related is common wisdom today in the anthropological discipline. Usually, the meaning of things is in part constructed from the standpoint of certain social sectors.

––––––––––
[6] *Id.*, at 10.

Imposing these meanings may help in establishing social control and dominance of these sectors over other institutions. This also applies to religion. Western societies, for example, are strongly influenced by the Christian tradition. Hence, we immediately recognise that religion has played a part in the meanings Western peoples attach to things. While there is a restrictive side of religion (it may be used as an instrument of dominance), to believe that this is the only way in which religion operates in society would be misleading. Other observations show that religion, including Christianity, has served to construct a certain understanding of reality that, given the non-instinctive character of human beings, has been a positive contribution. Also, one could think of cases where submerged social groups used their religions to contest the established meanings.

In sum, religion provides a rich set of symbols that contains a certain understanding of the world and of humanity. In this way it fulfils a fundamental human need, namely to find meaning in life. But religion is also involved in power relations. It may be used to impose a certain view of reality on others, as much as to contest these efforts of domination. And, as in any symbolic system, religion may also serve to construct new meanings and perceptions. In fact, it frequently happens that efforts of domination and contestation result in the creation of new meanings and perceptions of reality through syncretism.

We have now brought in all the necessary theoretical tools to introduce the notion of symbolic confrontation, and present a brief and abstract definition. In a following section we will show how it is employed in the Southern Cone context. Hopefully, we will then be able to reach a more complete understanding of it.

In a very general sense, symbolic confrontation is the struggle that takes place when different social groups try to impose their own understanding of reality as the true one. Of course, this kind of confrontation may become more than just symbolic (for example, during the Inquisition), but at other times it remains at a symbolic level, as in the case of the gay and lesbian parade where the established understandings of the body and sexuality are contested by symbolic means only. Therefore, symbolic confrontation consists of a struggle among social groups or sectors to impose through persuasion their own system of meanings and symbols, excluding as confrontational resources both physical violence and attempts to institutionally restrict the expressive capacity of others.

Symbolic confrontation often takes place by disputing the meanings

behind the same symbols. For example, in the Afro-Brasilian religion of Umbanda certain spirits of African origin were (and still are) given the name of Catholic saints, and in fact Umbanda followers believe that the saint and the spirit are the same; moreover some Umbandists may even say that they are also Catholics. In contrast, in the official Catholic doctrine the African spirits are not accepted as saints, thus there is a dispute over the real standing of these spirits. In the case of Pentecostals, both saints and spirits receive a different interpretation. Umbanda spirits are defined as devilish and, contrasting with the Catholic tradition, saints are not viewed as intermediaries between God and his followers but as fake figures produced by human ignorance that lead Christians astray into idolatry. Thus, it becomes apparent here how the same elements (Catholic saints and African spirits) are given different meanings by different groups, and that there is a confrontation (a symbolic one) between them.

The example shows how symbolic confrontation actually may take place in several ways. If we explore the process by which African spirits came to be named as Catholic saints, we may see how this was a symbolic confrontation of the social order: African slaves tried to preserve their religious creeds by disguising their spirits as saints; in that way they resisted the enforcement of a new religion upon them. Moreover, religious symbols and rituals were often used to conspire against white slave-owners. This was the case of *capoeria*, a kind of martial art that slaves practised disguised as a ritual dance and that was frequently used as a fighting technique to escape from the *haciendas*. Thus, we see how symbolic confrontation took place between submerged sectors and the established power. This is one way in which symbolic confrontation may occur. In contrast, symbolic confrontation may also take place among the submerged sectors themselves, as when Catholics, Umbandists and Pentecostals collide over the real meaning of saints and spirits. Thus in the case of religion (although in other fields this also occurs), symbolic confrontation takes place at least in two ways. On the one hand, submerged sectors may use religion to contest, and also adapt to, the established social order. Adaptation, however, should not be taken simply as a docile kind of integration; as Hobsbawm put it, adaptation of the submitted sectors often implies "working the system to their minimum disadvantage".[7] On the other

---

[7] Eric Hobsbawm, "Peasants and Politics", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1:1, 3 (1973).

hand, symbolic confrontation may take place as a dispute among disadvantaged sectors of society.

I would like to explore now, in more detail, how these two forms of symbolic confrontation take place in the Southern Cone.

Symbolic confrontation as the contestation of the social order

There are several anthropological studies that show how in Latin America in general, and the Southern Cone in particular, the social order is contested through religious symbolism.[8] Although an exhaustive account of this matter is impossible here, I want to give several examples of the many ways in which this occurs. The examples show two types of symbolic contestation of the social order. The first set of examples shows a rather open condemnation of the social order in contexts where submerged sectors are suffering extreme forms of exploitation and manifest forms of violence. The second set of examples illustrates more adaptive roles played by religion. In these cases, although a certain condemnation of the social order does occur, it is less confrontational. In this, more tempered, type of confrontation, submerged sectors are often able to improve their condition.

A first example may be taken from Michael Taussig's account of devil mythology in Colombia and Bolivia,[9] that has striking parallels in some regions of Argentina.[10] He shows that a mythology related to the figure of the devil appeared among the tin miners of Bolivia and the peasants who became wage-workers in the sugar cane plantations of the Colombian Cauca Valley. Taussig shows how this devil mythology was used to understand and condemn the capitalist social order in Bolivia and Colombia. In the northwest of Argentina, a similar mythology was used by wage workers of the sugar cane plantations. This mythology has been analysed by Alejandro Isla, who found that devil mythology varied greatly according to different socio-historical conditions. Isla found that the basic myth was quite similar to the one described by Taussig: plantation owners become so by

---

[8] See Michael Taussig, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Cecilia Loreto Mariz, *Coping with Poverty: Pentecostals and Christian Base Communities in Brazil* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994); Alejandro Isla, "Violencia y terror en las dulces tierras del azucar", in *Identidades Nacionales Pasadas y Presentes* (La Plata: Editorial del Margen, 2001), 23–52.

[9] Taussig, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism, op. cit.*

[10] Isla, "Violencia y terror", *op. cit.*

making a pact with the devil. Because of this pact the owner becomes rich fast, but his soul is then taken by a fierce black dog called *El Familiar* – the incarnation of the devil. This dog does not only take the man's soul after his death, but also occasionally takes the life of one of the sugar cane wage workers. According to the myth, the bodies of those taken by *El Familiar* are never found; only their clothing is left behind. The variations of the myth and their correspondence with socio-historical conditions are quite striking. For example, during the government of Perón, when working conditions were improved by legislation and unions were powerful and could defend the workers' rights, a new version of the myth was created in which *El Familiar* did not eat human flesh but only animals. In contrast, during the 1976–1983 dictatorship, the new version of the myth was that *El Familiar* preferred those sugar cane workers who were political activists or union leaders. Thus, the myth was used to explain the "disappearances" of union leaders and political activists during the dictatorship. Isla has shown how the effect of this version of the myth was ambiguous. For if, on the one hand, it favoured a culture of terror that conspired against the collective organization of sugar cane workers (either in unions or parties), on the other hand, it also constituted a language in which the action of the military, the police or the private armies of the landowner (used to reprimand the workers) could be denounced. That is, people would not join unions or parties because of fear of *El Familiar*, but at the same time the mythological language was a safe way to speak out and denounce the action of the military in a context in which it was dangerous even to mention these activities. Other versions of the myth also existed. For example, in some cases it was said that *El Familiar* took lazy workers or those marginal people that had no family.

In sum, what the examples show is how religious symbolism works when it is used by submerged sectors simultaneously to adapt and to contest the social order. It is important to draw attention to two things here. First, the role of symbols in this process: the devil, as a symbol, was used to interpret new types of social relations. As Taussig demonstrates, what initially appears as unexplainable for people used to a traditional economy becomes comprehensible through the use of these traditional religious symbols. Second, the choice of the devil as a (evil) figure to symbolize capitalist economic relations is not casual; it is a "strategic" selection, used to symbolically condemn a social order felt to be exploitative.

The cases presented here were extracted mainly from rural contexts where manifest forms of violence were present (especially in the case of the Argentine northwest) and where peasants were submitted to very exploitative economic relations. Although in these cases there was a certain degree of adaptation to the social order, most of the attitude was confrontational, seeing the social order as intrinsically evil. Also, most of the examples belonged to processes that took place during the 1960s and 1970s. The roles that religion has played more recently in urban contexts of the Southern Cone are somewhat different. As stated above, in these cases there was a less confrontational attitude, although a certain degree of contestation of the social order is still present. Also, it is clear to most analysts that these forms of partial contestation of the social order are functional to submerged sectors, and particularly serve to diminish domestic forms of violence. The best way to show this is to analyse the effects of popular religions among the poor in the Southern Cone.

Brazil

The best study describing the effects of religion among the poor is probably that of Cecilia Mariz, who studied the effects of three types of popular religion (Pentecostalism, Umbanda, and Catholic Base Communities – CEBs) in the life of poor Brazilians.[11] Although Mariz conducted a thorough exploration of the contrasts among these religions, we can only examine here their more general effects. An essential component of Mariz' analysis is her perception that poverty is not solely a material issue; economic deprivation has significant consequences in other aspects of life. What Mariz shows, in concrete terms, is how poor people's sensation of being socially worthless generates in them a low self esteem and a loss of personal dignity that is often conducive to damaging types of behaviour: alcoholism, domestic violence and (although Mariz does not explicitly mention it) criminal activities are often the result of the state of psychological deprivation that poor people experience. Thus, we may conclude that certain forms of violence, like domestic violence or criminal violence, that have become the prevailing forms of violence after the dictatorships are the result of these states of deprivation. According to Mariz, popular religions provide certain means to psychologically endure the

---

[11] Mariz, *Coping with Poverty, op. cit.*

damaging effects of poverty. The essential means these religions pro-
vide are based on a symbolic contestation or adaptation to the social
order that acts to avoid the sense of worthlessness that being poor
in a consumer society produces. Mariz describes a series of mecha-
nisms that operate in this direction.

One of the elements religions provide are the "experiences of the
supernatural". Although not all popular religions permit such expe-
riences in the same manner, most of them allow for this in some way.
The effects of such experiences with the supernatural are clearly de-
scribed by Mariz:

> The possibility that ordinary people can be in touch with the supernatural
> world is a characteristic of almost all religions that are popular among
> the poor [. . .] The belief that any participant in a religious organization
> can deal directly with God fosters the development of small, autonomous
> groups. This belief also increases the self-esteem of the poor.[12]

A second mechanism by which religion contributes to improve poor
people's conditions is by "fostering experiences of human dignity".
Mariz shows how, among the religious communities she researched,
she found constant efforts to maintain dignity that were, in part, effected
by stressing a formal treatment that is not usual in everyday life, for
example by addressing other church members in formal ways: mister,
miss, etc. In the case of Pentecostals, dressing in a conservative man-
ner was also used as a way to sustain a sense of dignity that has an
important effect on people's lives. The appearance of decency and
the conservative dress protect poor women from being treated like
prostitutes and poor men from being considered thieves. As Gilkes
has shown, Pentecostal clothing also protects black women in the
United States. Gilkes' opinion is shared by many Brazilian Pentecostals.
One informant said young Pentecostal women's clothing serves as a
form of protection. Another informant chose the word *armadura*, which
means "armour", to refer to the sober clothing of a believer. Therefore,
a much criticized "repressive" aspect of Pentecostal morality may
play an instrumental role in supporting respectful treatment of the
poor and strengthening poor people's self-esteem.[13]

A third way in which popular religions may help the poor is by
allowing them to overcome a certain sense of powerlessness common

---

[12] *Id.*, at 137.
[13] *Id.*, at 142.

to their condition. Religions do this by creating the belief that mirac-
ulous interventions in their life are possible and therefore that any
obstacle (health, material, family problems, etc.) may be defeated.
Anthropological research shows that people, contrary to what it is
often believed, do not remain passive waiting for a miraculous solution
but instead engage in a persistent struggle to overcome their problems,
assured by the belief that if they do enough to deserve God's assistance
he will eventually intervene and help them to succeed. Another con-
stitutive element of the religious strategies to strive against poverty
is given by what Mariz calls a "sense of coherence", which is more
present in Pentecostal doctrine than in other religions.

In contrast with Afro-Brasilian Spiritism, Pentecostalism emphasises
the meaning of miracles and their relationship to God's will. Therefore,
if a healing fails to occur, there must be some reason, a meaning to
be ascribed. In the interpretation of one informant, the disease he
suffered from was God's way of appealing to him to dedicate himself
to religious work. Another informant interpreted her broken leg as an
opportunity to witness God's power. Faith in a divine logic that guides
and determines life offers a psychological advantage in the struggle
for survival. Israeli sociologist Aaron Antonovsky identified what he
called lawfulness, or Mariz' "sense of coherence", as the principal
psychological element that differentiated people who were able to
survive concentration camps and establish a relatively healthy life
from those who could never make this adjustment.[14]

In sum, these examples illustrate a series of mechanisms that oper-
ate to make people psychologically more resistant to their unfavourable
situation. In this sense, they are adaptive mechanisms, since they help
poor people to mentally adjust to their situation. However, there is
a certain component of rebellion, because this "adaptation" is accom-
plished by constructing a system of values that, to an extent, is alter-
native to those prevalent in society. For example, instead of gaining
self-esteem through a professional career – to which they usually have
no access – they achieve this through a "spiritual career", in which
they often feel placed above the more cultured and richer sectors of
society. This way, the dominant value system is contested and poor
people are able to feel superior in a way that they cannot experience
outside this alternative system. As Bobsin put it, strength may be

---

[14] *Id.*, at 147.

gained by shifting emphasis from material richness to spiritual gifts.[15]

All the foresaid mechanisms that create a renewed self-esteem also curb damaging habits of the Brazilian poor. For example, the sense of lawfulness, the overcoming of powerlessness and the feeling of dignity act against alcoholism and domestic violence, which Mariz describes as the most frequent problems among the poor. Such types of behaviour also affect household budgets and opportunities in the work-market. Because of this, those experiencing the beneficial effects of religious conversion are often in a good position, if not to overcome poverty altogether, at least to relatively improve their condition.

Mariz' concluding remarks are, in this sense, extremely eloquent as to how the subjective experiences induced by popular religions help the poor endure their situation.

> All religions practiced by poor people offer subjective experiences that overcome the *anomie* created by misery and, as a result, serve to support the poor in enduring material deprivation. In analysing the subjective experiences shared by Pentecostals and CEB members, however, it appears that religious experiences in these two groups may also foster a modern consciousness that is advantageous in the struggle for material survival and improvement in present day Brazilian society. Therefore, of all the religions analysed, Pentecostalism seems to offer more motivations that help the poor Brazilian individual to survive. In addition to the subjective experiences mentioned, it helps the poor endure poverty through its emphasis on the family and its fight against alcoholism.[16]

Argentina

It is striking to see how the effects Mariz mentions for Brazil are re-encountered in Argentina (in Chile similar processes happened, as will be seen later). Therefore, in conceptual terms there is not much to add to Mariz' analysis, but since I conducted a study in Argentina, I am able to introduce more detailed evidence through the exposition of Pentecostal discourse and the life stories of converts. An initial element that should be introduced before relating the life stories is that there are important contrasts between Argentina and Brazil in the social and religious contexts. With respect to the religious field, Argentina has probably had a more restrictive atmosphere than Brazil

---

[15] Oneide Bobsin, "Produçâo Religiosa e Significaçâo Social do Pentecostalismo a Partir de sua Prática e Representaçâo", Masters dissertation, Pontifical Catholic University of Sâo Paulo (1984), 45.

[16] Mariz, *Coping with Poverty, op. cit.*, at 151.

since religious minorities have been the object of discriminatory laws throughout Argentina's modern history. Although this has to some extent also been the case in Brazil, the enforcement of these laws has probably been greater in Argentina. Also, as shown in a previous section, the collusion between the Catholic Church and the state has also been more problematic in Argentina than in Brazil (or Chile), which also explains the lesser degrees of freedom in the former case. With respect to social structure differences, until the second half of the 1970s Argentina had no great social contrasts (differences between rich and poor) as compared to other Latin American countries. Although there was poverty, most of the population, including the poor, perceived this as a transitional state. That is, there was a well-founded expectation of upward social mobility, which meant an increasing reduction of poverty. When Pentecostalism and other religious minorities expanded in Argentina, these tendencies in the religious and social fields were reversed. In the religious arena, the former monopoly of the Catholic Church was challenged by an unprecedented expansion of Pentecostal churches and other religious minority groups. Parallel to this, the economic recession of the 1980s and the policies applied as a solution to it, initially stopped the expectations of upward mobility and then fractured the social structure by increasing the gap between rich and poor to levels never experienced before in Argentina. This fractured social structure has increased the levels of marginality and its social consequences: high and persistent unemployment and an increase to intolerable levels in Argentine society of crime rates and domestic violence.

In sum, the context in which the life stories took place was pervaded by two novel processes: impoverishment of the population and religious pluralisation. The following stories are eloquent in themselves as to how these two tendencies affected the lives of poor and lower middle-class Argentines and the adaptive role religion (mainly Pentecostalism) played in it. In order to fully understand how Pentecostalism produces the effects described by Mariz, we need to analyse its discourse and consider its impact in people's lives.

Pentecostal discourse
Even if there are doctrinal and ritual differences between different Pentecostal churches which will not be treated in this chapter, what is known as "spiritual warfare" theology was prominent among Pentecostals during the 1980s and is still important now. Spiritual

warfare theology is quite complex, therefore I will concentrate mainly on three topics: health, family life and economic prosperity. In spiritual warfare theology it is proposed that all misfortunes in peoples' lives are caused by evil spiritual forces (the devil or one of his angels). Therefore, poverty, sickness, family conflicts and so on are attributed to the action of these evil forces in the actual life of a person. The solution to any of the previous problems comes from the intervention of spiritual forces of a benign character (such as God, Jesus or the Holy Ghost) that counter the evil ones. The intervention of these benign spiritual forces is achieved through fervent prayer during worship. These prayers – which are usually done collectively, with a pastor having the leading voice and the laity murmuring their own personal prayers – describe a battle between the benign and malignant forces, and ask the good spirits to liberate people from the shackles of poverty, sickness, etc., with which the evil spirits have tied them.

    Although at first sight one may suspect that this kind of prayer is alienating in that it assigns spiritual causes to social problems by proposing that poverty or familial conflicts are caused by the action of evil spirits, this is not exactly so. In fact, preachers frequently merge spiritual and social factors when exteriorising the causes beyond these phenomena. In this way the two dimensions of adaptation and symbolic confrontation of the social order are brought together. The following extract from one of the prayers I heard while doing fieldwork among Pentecostals nicely illustrates the point I am making here:

> Lord, we keep on praying, we keep asking for these lives, for these families, for these people that have come here today. We want to ask for the prosperity of these households, for these persons, for those that are jobless, God help them in their needs. We rebuke the spirit of poverty, the spirit of avarice of those that have more and that is a burden to the life of these people. We rebuke the spirit of avarice that affects those in government. God, bless your people and make them prosper. God, look at these families, at these men, help them face their needs, help them feed their children, help those who need to finish their homes, those that are building their houses.

It is clear from this extract that spiritual language is used to denounce social injustice: although poverty and unemployment are attributed to the action of the "spirit of avarice", it is clear for these poor Pentecostal pastors that this spirit acts through rich people and the government. Therefore, they are not innocent of the social causes that explain their situation. So we may see how – as in the examples presented by

Isla and Taussig – here too, a spiritual language is used as a means
of symbolically confronting the social order. What makes this spiri-
tual language extremely attractive for the poor is that, in addition to
denunciation, it also incorporates adaptive mechanisms (already men-
tioned by Mariz) that help them cope with their immediate situation.
The basic mechanisms, as stated above, are those that help deprived
people to recover their self-esteem and sense of dignity. Pentecostal
doctrine fosters this by providing elements that permit people to find
new meanings in life, important for those who have lost many of the
incentives for living. Those who become Pentecostals are called the
"children of God"; they are told that God has a plan for their lives;
and they are commended to him with the purpose of spreading
God's message and saving humanity. This religious or spiritual pro-
ject becomes then a substitute for professional careers or expectations
of upward social mobility, that in the Argentine case had to be aban-
doned or postponed due to the economic processes described above.

To understand better the effects Pentecostal theology may have on
those facing critical times let us consider the emotional impact that
the following message given by a pastor may have.

> You are the children of God, all of you who are here now have been
> called by God to serve him. God has a personal plan for each of you,
> that's why you are here now. That's why you should not fear, like the
> Bible says: not even in the valley of shadows, in the worst moments
> of life, fear. God knows what he is doing, God knows why you are
> going through that. You should never forget that there is a salvation
> plan for you, you must respect God and obey him and the main man-
> date you have from him is to spread the good news of salvation, go
> out and evangelise, call those that have not yet heard the message so
> that there is not even one person in world who does not know what
> God has prepared for him.

If we follow Mariz' interpretation, it becomes clear how this message
may induce two kinds of perceptions. One is a sense of mission:
believers have a life-project, which is to act as God's representatives
on earth. This fosters a sense of dignity and self-esteem, since they
feel part of a transcendental plan, superior to any worldly under-
taking that dominant social institutions may propose. Another is the
"sense of coherence". Since every possible problem in life (the "val-
ley of shadows") may be interpreted as part of this transcendental
plan, there is always a purpose in everything, and thus hope may
be sustained in the face of misfortune.

As in the case of "spiritual warfare" theology, here too criticisms of the social order may be cast in spiritual terms. Consider the following extract from a sermon preached in a Pentecostal church:

> I know here we are all [blue collar] workers, nobody can make a check and say: 'here pastor, there you go' we all have to give with sacrifice. But not only those that have money can do things; we, the workers, also can do things for the glory of God.

Thus, the previous extract shows how the idea of a godly plan, where anybody may find a role, is used to create a sense of dignity and self-esteem among blue collar workers. Using these symbolic resources, those who are considered outcasts and worthless by main-stream institutions regain a sense of dignity by stating that in God's plan they have a paramount role and are thus worthy people.

Although more could be said in relation to Pentecostal theology and its impact on poor people's lives, enough has been advanced to see its more evident repercussions. The following life-stories will show how the effects of Pentecostal conversion among lower-class Argentineans actually occurs, illustrating further what Mariz described for the Brazilian context. Before introducing these stories, it is important to bear in mind that the cases presented here have not been selected as "special" cases, particularly well suited for our purposes. Instead, they constitute illustrations of more recurrent stories of conversion. In this sense they share common elements with 73.2% of the 65 life-stories I collected during fieldwork. These common traits are that converts come from a non-practising Catholic background; they convered between 1980 and 1989 in a context of personal and family crises associated with economic hardship and health problems; and they belong somewhere between the lower-middle and poor classes.

Julio and Marta

Julio was one of my first informants during fieldwork. He had converted to Pentecostalism during a moment of crisis in his family. Conflicts came about in 1986 or 1987 because his car shop had gone bankrupt. To compensate for the losses, Julio's wife (Marta) had found a job sewing jackets in a shop, where she worked for almost ten hours a day. The long working shift, plus the strained economic situation in the family, sickened Marta who fell into depression for long periods of time. Julio could not tolerate Marta's attitude, and became violent to his children and wife. He also recurrently abandoned

the house for long periods of time, succumbing to alcoholism. After tolerating Julio's conduct for some time, Marta herself decided to leave the house, only occasionally meeting Julio and her children. In this context of family disunion Marta's and Julio's children abandoned school, adding a new problem to the already tense situation.

Because of this persistent state of crisis, Marta and Julio begun to consult leaders of different religious groups and organisations. They went to visit faith healers, *Mâes de Santo* (from Umbanda), and they finally attended a Pentecostal church that they came to know first through television and then by personally visiting one of the churches in the neighbourhood. Marta's first visit to a Pentecostal church was, however, without clearly knowing what was actually going to happen: "we were driving near the church, and I said to Julio: stop! If God exists I want Him to show it to me." According to Marta's account, when she entered the church the pastor was praying for families facing the same problems they had, so she walked to where the pastor was praying, joining the rest of the congregation who were already at the front. There she felt touched and fell to the floor. This "experience" made her trust the pastors and want to know more about the "new" religion. Marta recalls some of the advice that was important for her at that moment:

> He [the pastor] said that we should preserve our family, and that we should not turn desperate in bad times because God took care of all his children, and that God has a plan for all of us, a personal plan for each human being. He stressed that if we remained faithful we would be finally led to a life full of blessings. And this gave us hope, and also because we had a fellowship in the community where everybody supported each other. That made me feel stronger and I didn't have that depression any more, I had hope, I was happy because I knew we would get over our problems and have a happy family and a happy life.

The effects of this message were, if not immediate, significant in the development of Marta's family. Let us see what Julio had to say:

> At first I was not convinced. He [the pastor] came and I listened, but just not to be disrespectful and because Marta wanted me to. But slowly I began to calm down and I understood that God had something for me, so I did not change overnight, but slowly I begun to see that there was hope for us, not everything was lost.

In addition to this emotional support, members of the congregation began to look for a new job for Julio. The process took some time – six months – in which Julio many times doubted the church but

Marta, with the help of the pastor, talked him into waiting a bit more: "I prayed and tried to keep my faith because, to tell you the truth, sometimes, while I was waiting, I felt like leaving everything and going back to my old life. But Marta talked to me and told me: no, let's pray, you need to have hope." After this period the congregation finally found a job for Julio, something that at the same time stabilised his faith and family:

> We are okay now, we are not rich or anything, we get through day by day, but we are far better than before. Besides, we learned in church that we are all children of God and that to be rich is not really important. What is really important is to be a good Christian. Before, maybe, I could feel less important than other people who had more than I, and that made me bitter, because it was partly for that reason that I came back home angry and sour. Now I know that there is no reason for that.

The previous account shows how, among other things, Pentecostal theology and practice help to overcome domestic violence and economic crises. However, as stated above, another way in which popular religion serves the purpose of softening violent behaviour is by becoming a deterrent to criminal conduct. How this happens can be observed in the story of Juan.

Juan

When I met Juan he was 23, had reconstructed his family, had a low-paid but stable job and was going to a Pentecostal church. Three years earlier, when he was 20, he had entered a rehabilitation programme sponsored by a Pentecostal church. His decision to enter the programme was the result of a long and appalling criminal career. At the age of 20 Juan had been jailed several times, for robbery, armed assault and drug trafficking. He had also been heavily addicted to drugs. Juan's body was impressively scarred: he had been wounded in shootings with the police and criminal gangs and also had had knife fights while in jail. Many times during his criminal career, that began when he was 14, he had tried to abandon his criminal life but had not succeeded. In his interpretation, this was because he had chosen the wrong rehabilitation programmes.

> I went to several programmes, but the only thing they give you are pills. They make you swallow those pills that make you drowsy and you walk around like an idiot, like a mummy. It's like they substitute a legal drug for an illegal drug, but you are still a junky. There are the therapists,

> psychologists, I don't know. But they are too cold, you don't feel a
> bond with them, so you really don't trust them, you actually don't
> really hear what they say. You see them as part of those that are giv-
> ing you the pills; so, even if they mean well, which I am not sure,
> you don't care what they say.

In Juan's perception, Pentecostals had been able to rehabilitate him
because he had really felt God's call while among them. The elements
that created this feeling seem quite familiar by now:

> When I first entered the programme, I didn't understand anything. I
> thought: 'these people are crazy'. But I was comfortable, I ate every
> day, I had a warm place to sleep, the police wouldn't bother me there,
> so I stayed. Then I began to notice that this place was different from
> other rehab programmes. The director was not a distant person, but
> he was like a father or, better, a big brother; well we even call each
> other that: 'brothers', so with him we could make some jokes, and talk
> about our feelings and problems, and he would really hear us. And
> also I began to understand here that I am a creature of God, and
> that He has a plan for me, there is a purpose for me, and that He
> would even forgive me for all the bad things I had been doing before.
> So, all this had an impact on me. When I first realised this, I began
> to cry, I spent like two or three days crying, I couldn't stop. That was
> because God had showed me all the bad things I had done, and I
> had to repent. Then I began to have a new life. I went back to my
> wife, I got a job and began to really take care of my child.

More details and stories could be brought in to show how Pentecostal
theology and practice have pacifying effects on troubled families and
violent individuals, and how, in this manner, it curbs domestic violence
and criminal behaviour. It must be understood in this respect that
the previously described effects of popular religions in general, and
Pentecostalism in particular, cannot be taken out of proportion. One
cannot trust that these forms of religiosity will solve by themselves
the increasing problems of poverty and domestic and criminal violence
that some regions of the Southern Cone are experiencing. They may
act as deterrents, but they are not definitive solutions to these pro-
found social difficulties.

We are only left with one remaining task before going on to the
next section and consider another form of symbolic confrontation:
confrontation between popular religions. The remaining task is to
show how similar events have taken place in Chile as in Brazil and
Argentina.

Chile

Enough has been said already about the effects of popular religions, especially Pentecostalism, in poor people's lives. As the classical study of D'Epinay shows,[17] and the more recent work of Canales, Palma and Villela confirms,[18] the effects of these religions in Chile have not been too different, in general terms, from what has taken place in Brazil and Argentina. Consequently, only a few remarks concentrating on certain unique elements will be introduced here.

The original experience I want to include shows what happens when Pentecostals become involved in programmes of social assistance. This also occurred elsewhere (Brazil and Argentina), but Chile is probably where Pentecostals have become more actively involved in this type of activity. This strategy is different from the previously mentioned cases, in that the way in which Pentecostals contribute to improve poor people's situation is not an implicit strategy contained in their symbolic perception of reality; instead it is an explicit programme to fight poverty through material aid. Although there have been several Pentecostal experiences in this respect, I want to analyse here just one case that has been documented in several texts.[19] According to the organizing agency (Evangelical Service for Development – ESD), the undertaking originally consisted of "an emergency programme to satisfy certain basic needs. Priority was given to children's nutrition through soup kitchens for small children sponsored by ESD and run by the communities [neighbourhood associations] themselves."

In a second phase, the programme broadened its scope: "given that the precarious situation persisted, the same community organisations promoted the joint acquisition of some of the basic food products that compose the *canasta familiar* [literally "family basket" – the basic set of products necessary to feed a family]. In that way, a new form of organisation, the *Centros Populares de Abastecimiento* (Popular Centres of Supplies – CPA) were formed. Each CPA opens up to all the poor families of its community, through a selection process based on the needs of each family. In this way the expenses in each family are

---

[17] Christian Lalive d'Epinay, *Haven of the Masses: A study of the Pentecostal movement in Chile* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969).

[18] Manuel Canales, Samuel Palma and Hugo Villela, *En Tierra Extraña II: Para una sociología de la religiosidad popular Protestante* (Santiago de Chile: Amerinda, 1991).

[19] *Id.*; Frans Kamsteeg, *Prophetic Pentecostalism in Chile* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

reduced, by diminishing the costs of each product (retail discounts) and of transportation."

An interesting issue is that not all Pentecostals were happy with the Church's open involvement in social assistance programmes. Those who were not satisfied saw this as too worldly; they perceived that this practice was too similar to what political parties or the Catholic Church did. Because of this they tended to reject the direct involvement of their church in such programmes as the CPA. A telling example of how the conflict developed was given by one of the CPA leaders when talking about the reaction of more traditional Pentecostals:

> They said that the Church was going to become too worldly . . . that we were worrying only about material things . . . but I said no, to me the most important things are still spiritual.[20]

The answer of those in favour of the CPA programme was that giving material help to the poor was part of the Christian mandate, and thus it was not a "worldly" behaviour but an integral part of their identity as "true Christians". In this vein a CPA leader, referring to the accusations of being too worldly, said:

> The Bible many times talks about poverty . . . God loves the poor . . . I know that God loves me as a poor person.[21]

In sum, what this Chilean case shows, in addition to what happened in Brazil and Argentina, is that charismatic religions which stress the spiritual dimension do not constitute an insurmountable obstacle to direct forms of assistance. The ESD/CPA case shows how even churches with a very other-worldly orientation may eventually create NGOs suitable to administer programmes of social assistance. However, we also see that in these contexts conflicts may arise. The reasons behind the conflicts are interesting to surmise. Those against the CPA program did not feel that poor people did not deserve assistance, or that helping in itself was a bad thing. What bothered them was that by doing this they became too worldly; meaning, essentially, that they were doing similar things to the Catholic Church or political parties. Thus, what actually annoyed them was that their feeling of being special or chosen was, in their perception, threatened if they became too similar to other religions or secular organisations. It is

---

[20] Canales, Palma and Villela, *En Tierra Extraña II, op. cit.*, at 154.
[21] *Id.*, at 155.

important to bear in mind here that, according to Mariz and several of the Argentine examples, it was exactly this feeling of being special that helped Pentecostals cope with poverty (recover their feelings of dignity and self-esteem); therefore it is no wonder that, even if unwittingly, they defended this feeling. The way in which those who defend the CPA programme do this is also very telling of the social dynamics that take place in this type of religious groups. Their strategy is to show that what they are doing is not worldly, because it is part of the mandate that Christians find in the Bible. Hence, assisting the poor is part of being obedient servants of the Lord. In this way, they can sustain social action and still feel "chosen".

The latter issues show us a form of symbolic confrontation (Pentecostals discussing the meaning of a particular activity), but this time it is not the social order that is confronted; it is a conflict that develops between members of the same religious community. As is clear from our analysis, what sparks the conflict are different interpretations among Chilean Pentecostals of what constitutes a true Christian attitude. The case also shows how difficult it is for religious people to accept the coexistence of alternative views or "truths" within a community. Why this is so and how the conflicts that this generates develop is an issue that will be addressed in the following section.

Symbolic confrontation as a search for religious truth

The fact that religion sometimes helps to promote peace and tolerance, and other times is the source of violent confrontation and hatred, has been extensively documented and may also be inferred from the examples given. The reasons for this are quite transparent. Many religions assert an ultimate and transcendental truth that in order to remain so admits no challenge by an opposing or alternative view of things. To put it simply, a true Christian believer cannot easily tolerate an atheist, since if he or she accepted that the latter might be right, his or her perception of reality and purpose in life would be in jeopardy. So, Christians must in some way negate the truth claims of atheists, and *vice versa*. For many believers these are not merely philosophical matters (as they may be perceived by many cultured middle-class intellectuals), as believing has very palpable effects in their everyday life. We may think, for example, of the outcomes that conversion had in the cases mentioned by Mariz, or of the case studies of Argentineans, presented above. In those cases, to stop believing

could have very damaging consequences, such as lapsing back into alcoholism, domestic violence or criminal behaviour. This shows why religion has such ambivalent consequences: what makes religion a formidable asset in some people's lives (providing an ultimate truth and thus a sense of purpose in life) is also what produces a certain degree of intolerance.

The question here is, evidently, can one have the best of both worlds: the good side of religion without its bad consequences? The hypothesis I hold, at least with regard to the Southern Cone, is that a certain degree of conflict is unavoidable when there is religious diversity, but that the levels of confrontation can remain low and tolerable under certain circumstances. In that way we may have the resourceful side of religion expanded to a maximum and restrict its conflictive side to a minimum. To show how this may happen, I will bring in a few examples from the Southern Cone countries.

The ESD/CPA experience presented above is a good starting point to state the case. As we saw, one of the things that bothered traditional Pentecostals with regard to the CPA program was that they were acting in a way similar to Catholics. As argued, this preoccupation was inspired by the need to feel different: to perceive that Pentecostals were the ones walking the true path, and therefore that Catholics were wrong. Behaving in the same way jeopardised this perception, since it created the feeling among certain Pentecostals that Catholics could share part of the truth; hence Pentecostals would not be the only true bearers of the Christian message. This situation exemplifies the claim that what constitutes the resourceful side of religion may also be what produces conflict. But confrontation was not only undertaken by those Pentecostals that opposed CPA; supporters of the programme also expressed themselves in competitive terms:

> Look . . . I did it, more than anything to make Evangelicals stand out . . . to make them stand out over Catholics . . . [to show] that Evangelicals have [spiritual] power.[22]

We see here that the need to feel exclusive and superior is widespread, at least among Pentecostals. However, this confrontational attitude was abandoned by some of Pentecostals who supported the CPA. In contrast to our previous quotation, another leader stated:

---

[22] *Id.*, at 134.

> Right now there is not that tension . . . that distance with Catholics
> [. . .] Now Catholics can see that Evangelicals are not bad, that
> Evangelicals help [. . .] So now things have changed a lot, we are
> respected, they support us . . . we are not any more the *canutos* [a dep-
> recatory term]; we are now called the Evangelicals . . . I have been sur-
> prised by that.[23]

The previous citation introduces two new elements. First, that com-
petition is not a Pentecostal exclusivity, since it speaks of a time in
which Catholics stigmatised Pentecostals, calling them *canutos* and
portraying them as bad ("religious fanatics" according to D'Epinay).[24]
Second, that the confrontational spirit present in contexts of religious
diversity can to some extent be overcome, but at a price. It is clear
in this last quotation that by adopting similar practises to Catholics,
Pentecostals become more easily accepted; but it is also clear, if we
look at the former quotes, that the price to be paid is to lose part
of the sense of being the only "chosen people". The contrasts between
the different interview extracts show how different people tolerate to
different degrees this loss. Probably, the varying degrees of tolerance
respond to different situations: it is easier to accept relativity when
it is just a philosophical matter than when it has very direct and
palpable consequences in one's life.

Another way in which the same means that help people to rein-
force their self-esteem sometimes produce tension between followers
of different religions has been described by Mariz. As may be recalled,
Pentecostals' perception of being a "good person" and their tendency
to dress in a conservative manner are forms of expressing their under-
standing that they are not from this world. This perception tends to
create the sensation that they are, in some sense, superior to other
people. According to Mariz, this creates resentment:

> Pentecostals perceive themselves as different and desire a feeling of dis-
> tinctiveness and superiority. This attempt at differentiation is criticised
> by non-Pentecostals, who accuse Pentecostals of thinking of themselves
> as better than others. These were criticisms made by Afro-Brasilian
> Spiritists.[25]

The two cases shown above, one from Chile and one from Brazil,
involve Pentecostals. This may create the illusion that they are the

---

[23] *Id.*, at 146.
[24] D'Epinay, *Haven of the Masses, op. cit.*
[25] Mariz, *Coping with Poverty, op. cit.*, at 141.

exclusive source of religious confrontation, but that would be a false perception. Although Pentecostals have a marked tendency to think of other religions as heretic, they are far from being the exclusive source of conflict. The following case shows how Catholics and Afro-Brasilian Spiritists also have confrontations. A first eloquent sign of conflict that I perceived when doing fieldwork in a poor neighbourhood of Buenos Aires city was that, in contrast with Catholics and Pentecostals, none of the Afro-Brasilian *terreiros* (places where their rituals take place – equivalent to Christian churches) had signs allowing their public identification. As was explained to me by a *Mâe de Santo* (Umbanda leader), this was because:

> if they know, they make fun of you, or they even put crosses made with sticks in front of my house or in the sidewalk, because I made my *terreiro* in my house's garage. This is because they are ignorant; the people, that are mostly Catholics, don't know anything about our religion here in Argentina. In Brazil they do know more, and people don't do this. And people who do this here they are Catholics, because the Evangelicals, I know they don't like us, they think we are the devil, they are also ignorant in that respect, but they are educated in that they just more or less ignore us, or they talk about us in church and criticise us, but no more than that.

The cases presented above show that confrontation among popular religions is widespread, and that the logic that lays behind this conflict is the need to preserve one's religious truth in the face of competing alternatives.

We could end this section on a pessimistic note, stating that conflict is unavoidable, but this is not necessarily so. Even if the previous material shows persistent conflict, it speaks of a conflict that has not turned into physical violence or in successful efforts to restrict the expressive liberty of others. The conflicts have been limited to a symbolic confrontation, debating about the meanings of certain practices through discourse and ritual – as when traditional Pentecostals speak of the worldly behaviour of other Pentecostals and Catholics, or when Afro-Brasilian Spiritists criticise the alleged superiority of Pentecostals, or when Catholics exorcise Umbandists by laying crosses in front of their *terreiros*. In all these cases, symbols are used to criticise others, that way preserving what people believe is their own sacred truth. The positive side of this form of confrontation is that none of the alternatives is actually eliminated. Hence, the wealth of religious symbols and meanings remain open for everyone and may be appro-

priated to create new meanings and purposes in life, or (as shown) contest the unjust components of the prevalent social order. In such contexts people may move from one belief to another in relative liberty, searching for the option that they feel is better (even going from Umbanda to Pentecostalism or the other way around) or at times, as Droogers and Rostas have shown, creating their own alternatives by merging elements of several religions.[26]

All the aforementioned elements have profound consequences for policy-making. They show how varied and complex the various contexts are (even though we have only considered three countries over a short period of two or three decades); and, consequently, how difficult it is to predict the results of any intervention – since they may vary according to different places and periods, and can even be dissimilar for different people that may be part of the same church or congregation. Even if these are unavoidable difficulties – and simplification would really be the worst possible recommendation – we are not operating in a completely barren field. There are lessons to be learned and suggestions that can be made in spite of this complexity.

Symbolic confrontation and policy making: Lessons to be learned

We are here reaching the end of our journey through a variety of situations and forms of violence and conflicts. It is time to try to find out what this tells policy-makers responsible for conceiving specific strategies in these complex fields. In order to organise this reflection, I will follow the topics that constitute the spinal cord of this book. Therefore, I will initially reflect on the constructive and destructive sides of religion, see how the constructive side of religion may help to pacify society, and see how it may enhance a culture of human rights. In a subsequent and last section I will discuss what seems the more plausible context for peace in the Southern Cone.

---

[26] André F. Droogers and Susanna Rostas, "The popular use of popular religion in Latin America: An introduction", in Susanna Rostas and André F. Droogers (eds), *The Popular Use of Popular Religion in Latin America* (Amsterdam: CEDLA, 1993), 1–16, at 3.

I) If one lesson can be learned from the material presented here, it is that religions have changing roles; that different religions play different roles; and, moreover, that the same religion may play different roles in different contexts. Therefore, when engaged in policy-making, and in order to make a serious analysis of the destructive and constructive sides of religion, a thorough and realistic analysis of the contexts and roles must be made in order to predict the possible effects of any undertaking. In the particular case of Latin America's Southern Cone during the last two decades, at least two different situations (with changing roles for different religions) must be considered: i) the context of dictatorial regimes and the roles played by different religions within them, and ii) the democratic period and the effects of religious pluralisation.

i) The dictatorial regimes in the Southern Cone were characterised by a very explicit and widespread use of physical violence. Although in some countries (Argentina) this form of violence was used more frequently and extensively than in others (Brazil), in the whole region torture, murder and disappearances were the trademark of the repressive methods used by the military dictators. This use of violence had an additional common characteristic: it was institutionalised violence, in the sense that it was the states themselves that exerted violence over certain sectors of the populace. This was, of course, a flagrant violation of human rights as well. As we have extensively shown, religions played ambivalent roles in this context. Some religions, such as Brazilian and Chilean Catholicism, played a clear and significant role in defending human rights and making efforts for peace, while other groups, such as Pentecostals, had a less transparent and more ambivalent performance. Paradoxically, the horrendous conditions caused by the dictatorships permits a simple assessment for policy-makers trying to promote peace and human rights. Things appear in black and white: it is relatively easy to discern which religious groups are promoters of peace and human rights, and which are not acting in this sense; which religions are playing a constructive role, and which a less constructive or destructive one. Two things complicate the picture somewhat. First, the dividing lines between constructive and destructive religious groups are not necessarily denominational (for example, Catholics favoured human rights in Brazil and Chile, but not in Argentina; some Pentecostals supported Pinochet in Chile, but others joined the Catholic efforts to promote human rights). Thus, policy-

makers must be careful to detect what roles each of these groups are playing in order to channel support (denominational differences are not a guarantee of the roles played). Second, this relatively transparent situation, which divides more or less between "good" and "bad" religious groups, may force intervening agencies to take "partisan" stands and to support some religious groups while ignoring others. In this extreme situation, such an option seems unavoidable, but efforts should be made to control the damage this may cause. For example, in several contexts (Argentina, Chile) those Pentecostals who played an ambiguous role during the dictatorship were heavily stigmatised. This created serious tension between different Evangelical groups, and great efforts had to be made afterwards to try to overcome resentment and distrust between them. Probably certain degrees of stigmatisation and conflict could have been avoided with a more open attitude.

ii) With the return of democracy, political violence diminished in most of the Southern Cone countries; instead, violence acquired a more surreptitious and thus less visible form. It is no longer the open violence of the state against the populace; now violence erupts in the social relations established within civil society itself. Thus, the main forms of violence are now domestic violence or criminal violence, and increasingly (and this reflects forms of state violence) the violence present in police abuse of marginalised sectors of society. Statistics show that those on the lower steps of the social ladder are the more frequent victims of crime; that it is mainly in poor households that domestic violence takes place; and that most of the policemen that commit the abuses belong themselves to the poorest sectors of society. Hence, it is violence that arises out of deprivation, victimises the deprived, and, thus, increases deprivation. It is violence exerted by the poor over the poor, a type of violence that raises the levels of social injustice by adding a new burden to already difficult life situations. This is a new way in which human rights are being violated. There is no longer a flagrant violation of civil rights as occurred during the dictatorships; instead, social rights are now being ignored, since basic needs such as proper schooling, nutrition and housing are not met for significant percentages of the population in the Southern Cone states. There are, of course, variations among the three countries considered. Brazil has had such problems for most of its modern history, the Chilean population was severely

affected by the economic policies applied in the 1980s, and in Argentina the economic policies applied since the 1970s and deepened during the 1990s pauperised to an unprecedented level a significant percentage of its population.

Many religious groups have played a constructive role in this situation. Religions provide a wealth of symbolic and institutional means through which deprived sectors may find a language to protest the social order, and also to make suitable adaptations to it. This, among other things, helps to curb domestic and criminal violence, improving the situation of the more deprived sectors and contributing to a more peaceful and happy existence. In this manner (which is often the product of an implicit and symbolic strategy), religion helps to diminish the levels of violence in society and to increase, at least in part, the levels of social justice.

Associated with this constructive role, religions are also playing a destructive one in the democratic context. This has to do with the competition and intolerance that takes place among different religious traditions. Because each religion proposes an alternative perception of the transcendent, each tends to confront the other and thus renew the basis for societal tension, creating contexts in which conflict may arise. The paradox is that the same religions that play a constructive role in helping to curb violence also play a destructive one. This is because the same element that creates a resourceful side in religion may also generate a confrontational attitude. Religions tend to provide an ultimate truth that reinforces feelings of dignity and self-esteem, but ultimate truths are also exclusive truths. Therefore they tend not to admit competing alternatives.

An obvious question for policy-makers is how to enhance the constructive side of religion and reduce the more destructive aspect. An answer to this question is possible, but necessarily complex. One of the things that may be noted in our previous accounts is that some religious groups are more tolerant than others. The situation that makes this most transparent is the Chilean ESD/CPA case. There we saw that in the Pentecostal/Catholic relationship, some Pentecostals were more tolerant and others less so. Also, it could be inferred from some of the interview extracts cited that some Catholics became more tolerant to Pentecostals and stopped calling them *canutos*. Thus, one could think that a simple solution is to enhance the more tolerant religious sectors. The problem with this strategy in the Southern Cone context is that usually the more tolerant and ecumenical churches,

or groups within a church, are frequently those with a less numerous constituency. For example, the Pentecostal church sponsoring the ESD/CPA programme, which has a very open ecumenical attitude, is one of the less numerous Pentecostal churches in Chile. Or, the Methodist church in Argentina, that also has a very open ecumenical attitude, is a very small church, far less numerous than its more closed Pentecostal counterparts. Another case, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Brazil, a very large and powerful Pentecostal ministry, takes a very strong stance against other denominations, especially Catholics and Umbandists. Therefore, if policy-makers take a partisan attitude in this context, favouring the more open and tolerant churches, they run the risk of leaving out the more numerous ones (which are also the ones that more frequently provide the symbolic means for contestation or adaptation described above). The question then remains: what to do?

One thing that should not escape the eye of a policy-maker is the complementary character of these different churches, something that may be quite productive if wisely used. Usually, the more tolerant groups have more or less fluid relations with some of their less tolerant counterparts – for example, Methodists in Argentina have quite flexible relations with some Pentecostal churches and also with certain Catholic sectors. Because of this, the more tolerant groups might be used to control the potential conflict among the more intolerant ones. Efforts should not be directed towards totally avoiding conflict, since this would probably alienate the less tolerant sectors. Efforts should not be directed at eliminating conflict, but at maintaining conflict within certain boundaries. That means: to avoid attempts to institutionally or physically restrict the liberty of others, but allowing a symbolic condemnation using ritual and discourse. Sustaining a certain equilibrium between more tolerant and intolerant religious groups can thus be instrumental in promoting a culture of human rights, since the more tolerant groups are instrumental in promoting civil rights such as religious freedom, while more intolerant groups tend to be more efficacious (even if through implicit strategies) in promoting social rights and feelings of dignity among the submerged sectors of society.

II) The premises introduced above also present a possible vision for peace. Efforts towards peace and justice in the Southern Cone should be directed towards diminishing the high levels of social contrast between the rich and the poor. During the last few decades, almost

all Latin American societies have suffered from a widening of the
gap between the richest and poorest sectors, even in countries such
as Argentina where this difference used to be relatively small com-
pared to other semi-developed countries. As shown above, these
differences are creating all sorts of problems, from increasing levels
of deprivation of the less well-off sectors, to new levels and forms of
violence emerging in civil society.

   Different religions have played, and continue to play, important
pacifying roles in this context, by helping people to endure and stay
emotionally and psychologically healthy through hard times. With this
positive role, religions create potential new bases for societal tension
since they tend to compete with one another. Thus they also play
a negative role that may eventually obliterate their contribution to
a peaceful society. In order to avoid this risk, it seems that a certain
equilibrium must be met, where more tolerant religions should play
the role of mediating among more intolerant ones, that nevertheless
tend to provide more suitable solutions for the less well-off in society.
This mediation should not aim at a total avoidance of conflict, since
this is possibly an unobtainable goal and the mediating capacities of
the more tolerant religions may even be lost if this utopian situation
is desired. A more realistic and productive aim is a "control" of the
levels and forms of conflict, retaining them within symbolic boundaries.
This admittedly is a complex state of equilibrium, but it is the kind
of situation actually taking place in the Southern Cone states for the
last ten years. Hence, the main task seems to be to sustain and deepen
this situation of controlled religious conflict, diversity and freedom.

PART TWO

RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON
CONFLICT AND PEACE

5. THE PROMISE OF THE KINGDOM AND THE REALITY OF SIN: CHRISTIAN RELIGION, CONFLICT AND VISIONS FOR PEACE

Jan van Butselaar

It is a somewhat hazardous task to write about Christian visions for peace. This is not because the word 'peace' is unknown in Christian thought. On the contrary: the vision of its spiritual leader, Jesus of Nazareth, is characterised by the commandment to love one's neighbour and one's enemy, and by the creation of peace and reconciliation between God and humankind and among human beings themselves. That was the main goal of his life. Hence, the problem for Christians and for Christianity is not that peace as a mission would not be recognised. The problem arises with Christian practice and Christian history. The moment Christians start claiming to be the true peace-builders of humanity, protests can be heard from all corners of the world, and understandably so. There are many indications that Christianity has been linked to conflict and violence rather than to peace and reconciliation – at least at first sight.

THE BIBLE

The latter seems already to be the case in the Bible, the fundamental document of Christian faith and the holy book of all Christians. Not all that is reported there can be called a story of peace. In the first part, the Old Testament (the part that Christians share with Jews), the stories of war are manifold and horrifying. The bizarre fact is that not only the 'heathen' peoples in those stories engage in cruel warfare, but that also God's own people, his chosen people, Israel, enter into violent conflict with their neighbours. For example, when Israel acquired the land of Canaan its warfare was not much different from that of other peoples in those days. Even more remarkably, it did not so on its own initiative; it operated on the command of God himself:

> Hear o Israel! Today you are drawing near to do battle against your enemies. Do not lose heart, or be afraid, or panic, or be in dread of them; for it is the LORD your God who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies and to give you victory.[1]

And so they went, the children of God, fighting their battles according to the 'rules' of that time: with little pity for the surviving enemies, with little compassion for women and children. Although the kings of Israel were considered to be merciful kings,[2] the fact remains that violent conflict was not excluded from the life of Israel – on the contrary. It was fighting wars, wars of defence as well as wars of aggression, if such a distinction can be made. Even in the historical context of the Middle East, the Bible stories present a disturbing image for the Christian faith.

In the New Testament, the story of Jesus appears at first sight to be a clear rejection of violence. The Roman soldiers who came to listen to John the Baptist were asked to convert and prepare for the kingdom of God that would take priority over the Roman Empire.[3] In the New Testament, the call for love and peace resounds on many pages. In the story of the passion of Jesus, one of his followers cut off the ear of the slave of the high priest, one of those who had come to arrest him. Even at that moment of trial, Jesus rejected violence and repaired the damage.[4] Peace and non-violence seem to set the tone in the New Testament. But there is more to be said. In the party of Jesus, his disciples, mostly fishermen, were probably carrying weapons. No wonder the Romans thought that this group was in fact a politically dangerous sect, a potential liability for the *pax romana*. Even Jesus himself could at times become verbally violent against his opponents, the Pharisees and the scribes.[5] Most telling is the story of Jesus in the Temple in Jerusalem, where he considered the ongoing commercial activities as a disgrace to God, his father in heaven. His reaction is clear:

> Then he entered the Temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; and he said, 'It is written, "My House shall be a house of prayer"; but you made it a den of robbers.'[6]

---

[1] Deuteronomy 20:3.
[2] 1 Kings 20:31.
[3] Matthew 3:3.
[4] Luke 22:50–1.
[5] Matthew 23.
[6] Luke 19:45–6.

It is almost an illustration of another rather strong statement by Jesus, when he was teaching his disciples:

> Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.[7]

The most violent act described in the New Testament is the crucifixion of Jesus, which of course cannot be attributed to him. During that occasion, his attitude is one of extreme non-violence, even at the moments when he could have responded violently in self-defence or could have called upon others to do so. The crucifixion is a unique story. Yet, as may be gathered from the above, for Jesus too, some form of violence is not incompatible with his work for peace and reconciliation.

CRUSADES

When we consider the history of the Church, there are many moments where the combination of Christianity and war seems more frequent than the combination of Christianity and peace. One of the most ominous periods in that respect was that of the crusades in the early Middle Ages. These started at the end of the 11th century and did their devastating job in the Middle East during two centuries. In the process, they also damaged Christian-Muslim relations, the effects of which are felt until today. The motivation for the crusades was presented as legitimate: to recover the holy places in and around Jerusalem from the cruel rule of Muslim Turks so that Christian pilgrims could visit them without fearing for their lives. Stories of torture, slavery and killing had reached (Western) Europe and horrified the people there: one might go to Jerusalem to pray, but before being able to perform his religious duties one's life or freedom could be taken. The crusades that were organised in response to such reports were enormous undertakings. During the first crusade, between 60,000 and 100,000 men passed through Constantinople on their way to Jerusalem. No wonder the city fell under the overwhelming power of the crusaders. The holiness of the place did not prevent its inhabitants from being brutally killed. Later crusades repeated the evils of the first, and sometimes the crusaders even turned against their fellow Christians

---

[7] Matthew 10:34.

in the Eastern Roman Empire of Constantinople. The crusaders themselves suffered no less from their misadventures. The Children's Crusade (1212) resulted in thousands of children being sold into slavery while attempting to reach the Holy Land.[8] So, crusades did not become the freedom movements they were intended to be. Rather, they became an incentive for violence and counter-violence between and within different religious groups. The whole episode seems to prove that Christians are sometimes more driven by lust for power and violence than by the vision of peace of their Lord.

<center>ANABAPTISTS</center>

Many more examples of violent behaviour stemming from 'Christian' convictions can be given. A notorious case is that of the Anabaptists, during the 16th-century Reformation in Europe. The Reformation itself was a protest movement against abuses by the clergy. The Middle Ages had produced popes and counter-popes who were fighting each other. They were active players in the political field of forces in Europe – and even beyond. At the end of the Middle Ages, the Church seemed to many a pool of power and money rather than a fountain of love and peace. No wonder that Martin Luther, and other Reformers, did their best to change that situation – peacefully, by writing pamphlets, publishing books, and translating the Bible into European vernaculars. One may ask whether they were as peaceful as they claimed to be. Luther's attitude in the Peasants' War was ultimately in support of the cruel response of the overlords against the rebellious mobs,[9] and John Calvin did little or nothing to prevent the burning of Michael Servet in Geneva.[10] In general, though, their work can be considered as a work of peaceful liberation. This liberation was not just religious, but had also a cultural impact.

Some other protesters of those days were certainly less peaceful. Their actions were triggered by their indignation about abuses in the Church similar to those that had motivated the Reformers, but their

---

[8] Paul Rousset, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris: Payot, 1957).

[9] Geoffrey R. Elton, *Reformation Europe 1517–1559* (Glasgow: Collins Sons, 1978), 59–60. Luther started out to defend the revolutionaries, but was soon horrified by the atrocities they performed using his name.

[10] *Id.*, at 230. Calvin had urged the anti-trinitarian Servet to leave the city before his trial, but Servet refused.

behaviour was far more radical. They wanted to put a definite end to sinfulness in the world by creating a heavenly kingdom. The most famous group in this category of protesters were the Anabaptists. Not all of them were violent, as can be seen in strictly non-violent churches such as the Mennonites and the Hutterites. However, some others, such as the Münsterites, were not afraid of taking up weapons. Their leaders, Jan Beukels and Jan Mathijs, invited everybody who longed for social reforms in Germany to come to the city of Münster, which became the focal scene of an eschatological *denouement*. All inhabitants of the city who refused to receive a rebaptismal rebirth were expelled. Life was restructured into a communalistic theocracy, and polygamy was instituted. Beukels became the anointed king of the 'new Zion'. Eventually, the city was betrayed by a disillusioned follower, and the newly installed theocracy was overthrown by an army led by the local Catholic bishop. The leaders of the religious rebellion were hung in iron cages from the top of the tower of the church where they had started their 'kingdom'.[11] Violence was met with violence, the one no less cruel than the other. The belligerent factions had more in common: a 'Christian' conviction, be it distorted, was the motivation for the Münsterites and their adversaries to take the path of violence instead of peace to realise their aims.

COLONIALISM

Colonialism is another humiliating example. In the 15th and 16th centuries, colonialism was closely connected with a Christian and missionary enterprise. This becomes particularly clear in the voyages of Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal (1394–1460).[12] For him, and for many of his contemporaries, the colonial enterprise was based both on the necessity to develop European commerce and the obligation to propagate the Christian faith. These early colonial endeavours were not meant to occupy foreign lands, but rather to install commercial posts along the coasts of Africa and elsewhere. Later,

---

[11] George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Kirksville, Missouri: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992).

[12] Fritz Blanke, *Missionsprobleme des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (Zürich and Stuttgart: Zwingli Verlag, 1966), chap. VI; see also Jan van Butselaar, *Africains, Missionnaires et Colonialistes: Les origines de l'Eglise Presbytérienne du Mozambique (Mission Suisse), 1880–1896* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 14.

colonialism adopted a more violent character, as can be seen from the invasions in the Caribbean and in Central and South America. The slave trade made things even worse. There was little Christian motivation to be found for this horrendous enterprise.[13] The reputation of Christian faith and ethics was tainted by the cruel violence of European and American slave merchants vis-à-vis their human cargo.

The 19th century saw the development of a new form of colonialism that introduced three different European influences: political colonialism, commercial adventure, and Christian mission. Political colonialism, initiated from 'Christian countries', often exercised extreme violence to subdue the local population, although in some cases the colonial presence was experienced as a liberation from local oppressors. However, since the colonial masters were Christians, the link between conflict, violence and the Christian faith was easily made. Commercial adventures, too, did not enhance the image of Christianity as a peaceful religion. Their introduction of strong alcohol made many victims, to the horror even of other Europeans present there.[14] In later years, when decolonisation led to a reinterpretation of the history of European presence in the southern hemisphere, missionaries were depicted as the spiritual arm of colonialism. However, missionaries were often the only group of foreigners on the colonial scene who were considered to have altruistic motives for their presence, and at times played an advocacy role in respect of the local population against colonial injustice.[15] But in general, the colonial presence of 'Christian' powers in the south established or strengthened the conviction that Christian religion had more in common with violent conflict than with visions for peace.

---

[13] Pieter C. Emmer, *De Nederlandse slavenhandel 1500–1850*, (Amsterdam and Antwerp: Arbeiderspers, 2003). An unusual defender of slavery was the African Jacobus Capitein, who could hardly have acted otherwise in the context of 18th-century Dutch society; see David Nii Anum Kpobi, *Mission in Chains: The life, theology and ministry of the ex-slave Jacobus E.J. Capitein (1717–1747) with a translation of his major publications* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1993).

[14] See Jan van Butselaar, "La culture des 'gens de la prière': La vie d'une communauté protestante au Mozambique à la fin du XIXᵉ siècle", in *Dynamiques religieuses en lusophonie contemporaine* (Paris: Lusotopie, 1999), 446–7.

[15] "Christians and colonial rule", in Richard Gray, *Black Christians and White Missionaries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 59–78.

AT SECOND SIGHT

This list of examples can easily be prolonged. Wars in Europe, pogroms and genocides, hatred and division, are among them. Although the argument in these examples tends to be rather emotional, it must be admitted that religion and conflict as a pair seemed to be as frequent in Christianity as that other combination of words, religion and peace. But is, in fact, this easy conclusion justified, or is there more to be discovered once popular emotions are matched with historical and theological research? That is the fundamental question facing us.

THE BIBLE REVISITED

As shown above, in the Bible, especially the Old Testament, conflict and violence are present on many pages. The question is whether there are also visions for peace in the Bible, and what their relation is to the more violent passages. Or, what is exactly the biblical message on conflict and peace: acceptance and even promotion of violence, or showing the way to peace and reconciliation?

To start with the Old Testament, its most remarkable contribution to a Christian vision of peace is a conceptual one. Many people consider peace to be a state of absence of war and silencing of arms. That is peace according to the *pax romana*, the peace awarded today with Nobel prizes. But for the Old (and the New!) Testament, lasting peace has to do with much more than that. The Old Testament has a special expression for this: *shalom*. It is difficult to describe fully the rich meaning of peace that is implied in this word. It indicates that peace can only be realised when all and everything is right. It is the situation when God and humankind, and humans amongst themselves, are reconciled with each other and live peacefully together.

> Give the king your justice, o God,
> and your righteousness to a king's son.
> May he judge your people with righteousness,
> and your poor with justice . . .
> In his days may righteousness flourish
> and peace abound, until the moon is no more.[16]

---

[16] Psalms 72:1–2, 7.

This text shows that *shalom* has a strong social connotation. Martin Luther King formulated it as follows: 'Peace is not merely the absence of tension but the presence of justice and brotherhood.'[17] Besides this social character, the concept also is inward-looking and concerned with the peace of heart of the individual:

> There are so many who say, 'O that we might see some good!
> Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord!'
> You have put gladness in my heart
> more than when their grain and wine abound.
>
> I will both lie down and sleep in peace;
> for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.[18]

Such a powerful image of peace as *shalom* is given in the book of the prophet Isaiah. He communicates what God has shown him as a vision of peace:

> No more shall there be an infant that lives but a few days,
> or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;
> for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth,
> and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.
> They shall build their houses and inhabit them;
> they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
> They shall not build and another inhabit;
> they shall not plant and another eat;
> for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,
> and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
> They shall not labour in vain,
> or bear children for calamity;
> for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD –
> and their descendants as well.[19]

In that context, war no longer has any function. Arms will no longer be needed:

> He shall judge between the nations,
> and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
> they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
> and their spears into pruning hooks;

---

[17] Quoted by Duane K. Friesen, *Christian Peacemaking and International Conflict: A realist pacifist perspective* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1986), 20.

[18] Psalms 4:6–8.

[19] Isaiah 65:20–3; see also Raymond Fung, *The Isaiah Vision: An ecumenical strategy for congregational evangelism* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1992).

nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.[20]

Hence, the Old Testament vision for peace is a powerful one. The continuing call of the God of Israel to his people is to work towards that vision, to love the foreigner, to do justice, to live a righteous life. This is the law of God, the basis of the covenant. This is the vision of peace overpowering all conflict and violence.

In the New Testament, the same vision returns, but even more strongly formulated by Jesus. In the Sermon on the Mount, he makes peace the heart of his preaching. He reinterprets the laws of retaliation, so common in his days:

> You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder' and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgement.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool', you will be liable to the hell of fire.[21]

Jesus asks his disciples to be peaceful, even in front of those who do evil to them. He has a vision of human relationships which is different from many other people: he is not asking an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth,[22] but for forgiveness and reconciliation. That message came through very clearly to his early followers. The apostle Paul, the theologian of the early Church *par excellence*, wrote to the people in Ephesis:

> For he is himself our peace. Gentiles and Jews, he has made the two one, and in his own body of flesh and blood has broken down the enmity which stood like a dividing wall between them; for he annulled the law with its rules and regulations, so as to create out of the two a new single humanity in himself, thereby making peace. This was his purpose, to reconcile the two in a single body to God through the cross, on which he killed enmity.[23]

For Paul it was clear what his mission, that of the church and that of all Christians, is:

> All this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ, and his given us the ministry of reconciliation.[24]

---

[20] Isaiah 2:4.
[21] Matthew 5:21–2.
[22] *Id.*, verses 38–9.
[23] Ephesians 2:14–16.
[24] 2 Corinthians 5:18.

Paul is correct in this summary of Christian teaching. In fact, in the above quoted Sermon on the Mount, Jesus presents a list of beatitudes, where peace is the fulfilment of the ideals of those who hunger for righteousness:

> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.[25]

In conclusion it can be said that in the New Testament the vision of *shalom* in the Old Testament is maintained and enriched with a strong personal ethics of peace. In both Old and New Testament, the vision for peace is not just a romantic ideal. It is a concrete vision that is linked with the struggle for justice and righteousness, with forgiveness and reconciliation, and with new relationships between God and humanity, and among humans themselves. This must be borne in mind when we consider some witnesses on the relation among Christian religion, conflict and peace in the history of the Church.

AUGUSTINE

The biblical texts all stem from a period when Christianity was not an established religion, but considered a (Jewish) sect, potentially endangering the unity of the Roman Empire and the cult of the emperor. This changed after the recognition of Christianity as an independent religion and its establishment in the year 312 C.E. as the state religion of the Empire. Questions about conflict, violence and peace were asked in the new context of a church-state relation, in which the one is under obligation to uphold the other. Christian teaching had always been to respect state authorities,[26] but they had opposed the Christian religion rather than protected it. That situation now changed. How was the Church to react in this new setting to conflicts in society and among nations, Christianity being a religion of peace and reconciliation? It was church father Augustine (354–430 C.E.), who formulated the relationship between church and state in a fundamental way. His opinions became very influential in later Christian theology.

Augustine explained his views in his important work *De Civitate Dei*. Basically, he discerns two realms, two 'cities', the heavenly city

---

[25] Matthew 5:9.
[26] 1 Peter 2:13–14.

of God and the city of this world. The first one, the city of God, is the city of the future, the city of love and grace, of peace and reconciliation. It represents the promise that lies in front of every Christian and every human being who wants to follow the call of the Lord Jesus. But this promise is not the only reality a Christian is living with. He is also engaged in another city, the city of this world. This is the realm where conflict and violence, hatred and war, or – in biblical wording – sin, are operating. In the Bible, sin is not so much the transgression of a specific rule or set of rules (although some specific acts can be called sin) but is to miss the aim of human life, which is to love God and one's neighbour. The city of this world is full of sin, and the mission of the authorities of this city is to struggle against sin and limit its damage. These two cities are intertwined, according to Augustine, because Christians are part of the one as well of the other. That poses a problem, not only for those Christians who have a role to play in the politics of the city of this world, but also for the 'man in the street': which city prevails, and at which moment? How to combine (violent) action against evil with an engagement for *shalom*?

The search for an answer to this question has led to the formulation of a 'theory of just war'. Augustine made clear that for some time, until the city of God was fully realised, one would have to deal with conflict and even allow some form of violence against evil. Since this is the case, it is better to regulate the use of violence and indicate what Christians could, and could not, tolerate. He set four conditions for the use of violence to end a conflict or to limit the power of evil:

* the evil to be fought must be of long date and strong nature;
* all possible peaceful and rational means must have proven unsuccessful;
* the degree of violence must be appropriate in relation to the evil;
* the realisation of the ultimate goal, that is the victory over the specific evil, must seem attainable.[27]

These conditions should be read on the basic understanding that violent solutions to conflicts in the city of this world must always be linked to the moral obligation of all humankind to work for peace.

---

[27] R. Coste, "Krieg", in Karl Rahner (ed), *Herders Theologisches Taschenlexicon*, IV (Freiburg in Breisgau: Herderbücherei, 1992), 256–60.

Therefore, violence may only be applied in extreme situations, when the well-being of large groups of people is fundamentally threatened, and only when through these means unbearable injustice can be ended. The concept of 'just war' is the sad acceptance of the reality of sin for people who want to live by the promise of the kingdom.

This vision of the two cities strongly influenced the 16th-century Reformers. Martin Luther formulated his teaching of two realms, the one under secular authority and the other under religious authority. The two are separated to a high degree, with the Church almost having as its only obligation to pray for the state authorities. This is based on the assumption by Martin Luther that the state, like the Church, stands on the basis of the law of God, especially the Ten Commandments.[28] This church-state relation has sometimes led to an uncritical stance of Christians and the Church vis-à-vis state authorities.[29] John Calvin, who advocated the separation of church and state in Geneva, went less far than Martin Luther. He maintained that the Church should not only pray for the state authorities, but also admonish them if necessary. The state had to oppose false religions. Although this was not the reason for the capital punishment of the 'heretic' Servet in Calvinist Geneva, his case shows the limitations of the Calvinist position on the relation between church and state. Both Luther and Calvin went a long way in indulging certain actions by state authorities. They saw no possibility to oppose state power violently, or to recognise a conflict between the two realms that might justify the use of violent means. It was one of their successors who proposed a theory that gave room to (violent) opposition to an unjust state authority.

---

[28] Exodus 20.

[29] Under the influence of Nazism, an important group called *Deutsche Christen* (German Christians) undergirded religiously the criminal regime of Adolf Hitler from the 1920s onwards. A powerful protest against this deformation of the Christian faith was launched by another group convening in the *Bekennende Kirche* (Confessing Church). In 1934, it published the famous *Barmer Erklärung* (Declaration of Barmen), proving that the Christian gospel was incompatible with the teachings of the *Deutsche Christen*. The famous theologians Karl Barth and Martin Niemöller were the spiritual leaders of the *Bekennende Kirche*. See Kurt Meier, *Der evangelische Kirchenkampf* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984).

BEZA

Theodore Beza (1519–1605) replaced Calvin as spiritual leader in Geneva in 1564.[30] In 1573, he asked the Council of Geneva to allow him to publish his lectures on the fifth commandment, traditionally considered to deal with the relation between church and state, under the title *De Iure Magistratum* ("The Right of Magistrates"). Beza's request was denied: the Council thought his ideas too dangerous for the international relations of the small city-republic of Geneva, which had to reckon with powerful neighbours. Nonetheless, it was published anonymously in Lyon, France.[31] In this booklet, Beza recognised the right to (violent) resistance against cruel dictators. Does this mean that he formulated a Christian vision of conflict rather than a vision of peace? It is important to note the date of publication of this work. It was one year after the notorious massacre of the Night of St. Bartholomew in Paris, where numerous Protestants, amongst them their most important leaders, were murdered. The French king, Charles IX, at the instigation of his mother Catherine de Medici, was reported to have taken part in the killing, which would have been contrary to his role as king. The incident could have been the beginning of total anarchy in the country, if the royal power, the state power of those days, were no longer recognised. Every individual might take up arms and start 'doing justice'. Beza therefore worked out some rules to regulate the resistance to unjust kings and unjust authorities:

* royal power is limited, not only in its ethical aspect – which is a matter for the king to decide personally – but also politically, for all authority comes from God;
* a distinction must be maintained between the tyranny from foreign conquest or usurpation, and the tyranny of legally dynastic rulers;
* the body that has the right and duty to resist such tyranny is not the unorganised mass of the people or the individual citizen, but the *magistratus inferiores* (authorities next down in the line of power) and the *magistratus populares* (people's representatives);

---

[30] Paul-Frédéric Geisendorf, *Théodore de Bèze* (Geneva: Jullien, 1949).
[31] Aart Arnout van Schelven, "Beza's *De Iure Magistratum in Subditos*", in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 1954, 62–82.

* whether the right to resistance exists or whether it only applies to religious repression, depends on the biblical word that one must obey God rather than humans;[32]
* the type of contract made between people and prince must be governed by the Old Testament model of alliance where God, the king and the people are parties;[33]
* a procedure must be established that should be followed when a competent body decides to resist the highest political authority.[34]

Clearly, Beza was not considering a vision for conflict, but a vision for peace once conflict had become inevitable. He recognised the extreme situation in the "city of this world", where injustice and evil had grown out of proportion. In such a case, resistance, even against one's own rulers, could be permitted. But this could never be the expression of a personal protest, or a mission executed by one 'visionary' person. It had to be endorsed by the highest public authority. Beza recognised the double engagement of individual Christians and the Church: they should be preparing themselves for the kingdom of God while at the same time being committed to combat the reality of sin. In clearly defining the conditions for (violent) resistance, he was developing a vision for peace.

The ecumenical debate: Mission

In the following ages, the study of conflict and peace continued, especially in the so-called 'peace churches', such as the Mennonites, the Quakers and the Brethren. Views on non-violence and visions for peace took shape and were at times translated into convincing and daring actions.[35] But, in general, the discussion did not move much forward from the classic Christian position on the relation among religion, conflict and peace since the only means of communication was through books and pamphlets; there was no platform for an open discussion on these matters.

This changed when the ecumenical movement was born. The first impetus for this movement came from the missionary movement. As

---

[32] Acts 5:29.
[33] 2 Kings 11:17.
[34] Van Schelven, *op. cit.*, at 70.
[35] For a popular history of these groups, see Jan de Hartog, *The Peaceable Kingdom* (New York: Atheneum, 1972).

long as Christians had stayed within the confinements of their own religious group, there was no obvious need to arrive at a common vision in matters of dogmatics or ethics. It was only when missionaries broke through the geographic, cultural and theological boundaries that the need for common witness was felt. In a foreign context, meetings among missionaries of different denominations produced more common understanding than in the home situation. But they also brought to light differences that required further debate. Hence the discussion started, first in informal meetings, then in national and international gatherings, and finally in the context of a new organisation: the International Missionary Council, which was founded in 1921 as the result of the first World Mission Conference in Edinburgh, 1910.[36] A deep longing for *shalom* for all humankind, through the preaching of the gospel, stamped the missionary vision.

On the concrete point of conflict and peace, the missionary contribution was limited to rather practical steps. Such actions became particularly necessary in the 20th century, when two world wars posed a serious threat to the continuation of missionary work. The colonial powers that were fighting each other generally did not accept any missionary presence of the nationality of the enemy in their overseas possessions. This caused many problems – personally, financially, but also theologically – for the missionaries and the local churches. 'National' churches and 'national' mission bodies were asked to side with their respective governments and sever relationships with their counterparts in foreign lands and in the colonies. Prominent missionaries such as John Mott and J.H. Oldham found that unacceptable and defended the international character of mission. They refused to reject any mission body or missionary on the basis of national identity:

> I am sure that the first feeling in all our hearts must be one of penitence and contrition. We need not trouble about the distribution of responsibility. We need to get behind that to the fundamental fact that Christian Europe has departed so far from God and rejected so completely the rule of Christ that a catastrophe of this kind is possible . . . Another thought that is much in our minds is that we must strive, even in this confusion of national interest, to maintain the international fellowship and love which we began to learn in Edinburgh. I have written personal letters of loving sympathy to our brethren on

---

[36] The International Missionary Council merged with the World Council of Churches at the WCC Assembly of New Delhi in 1961.

the continent, though I am doubtful whether those addressed to Germany will reach their destination.[37]

The immense danger in which we stand is the fact that what the nation is fighting is something utterly inhuman and evil may make us forget that the anti-Christ is not only incarnated in nazi-leaders, but is an active and present force among ourselves and in our hearts . . . The war will evoke tides of passion which it will be hard to stem, but if everything that matters is not to be lost, we must make from the start the utmost effort of which we are capable to rally all the spiritual forces in the nation to combat the evil in ourselves and to strive for a just, real and lasting peace.[38]

In order to deal with the practical problems of this situation, Continuation Committees were set up during the war.[39] One of their tasks was to handle the practical problems of churches, missions and missionaries in need. But secondly, they provided a powerful vision for peace in the midst of a world in conflict. They showed that there are convictions stronger than national bonds, including the bonds of faith, loving one's neighbour, and sharing a message of peace that crosses all boundaries.

At the third World Mission Conference held in 1938 in Tambaram, India, just before the start of the Second World War, these convictions were firmly upheld and played an important role in the difficult days to come. The Tambaram conference brought together participants from many nations, who later would be unable to travel and meet. It was therefore extremely important that these delegates developed together a strong conviction of a shared humanity and a shared responsibility for peace in this world. According to the Dutch missiologist Hendrik Kraemer, who was also at the Tambaram conference, no culture can claim the right to call itself Christian. Each culture and each nation must convert itself every day to live by the law of God and to the promises of his kingdom of peace:

Kraemer's book was . . . a direct repudiation of this attempt to domesticate the gospel within the western, European and American val-

---

[37] Oldham to Mott, the day after the First World War broke out, 5 August 1914. Quoted by Keith W. Clements, *Faith on the Frontier: A life of J.H. Oldham* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, and Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1999), 123.

[38] Oldham to the Moot members, 6 September 1939, quoted in *id.*, at 380.

[39] Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Ecumenical bearings of the missionary movement and the International Missionary Council", in Ruth Rouse and Stephen C. Neill (eds), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517–1948* (London: SPCK, 1954), 364–65, 370–71.

ues . . . For those of us who lived through those days it is hard to com-
municate to others the sheer liberation that this simple message
brought . . . We were part of the great confusion, the great betrayal,
which had bracketed the gospel with all sorts of causes and interests,
above all the betrayal that had led to two world wars between the so-
called Christian nations. Christians in Europe had for long confused
or conflated their Christian faith with their national identity. Throne
and altar, God and nation had been confused in one blurred image.
The phenomenon of the so-called 'German Christians' was only the
carrying to its logical conclusion of that disastrous syncretism.[40]

In this way, the missionary movement provided a vision for peace,
bringing people together, denouncing false claims on Christian tradition,
and acting in concrete cases to further peace and understanding.

The ecumenical debate:
Forerunners of the World Council of Churches

The word 'ecumenical' is closely linked with the World Council of
Churches (WCC), which came into being in 1948. However, it did
not arrive as a *deus ex machina*. Several ecumenical organisations
founded in the years before had prepared the way, and had been
engaged in questions of conflict and peace. In 1925, at the invitation
of the Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala, Nathan Söderblom, the first
Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work was convened in
Stockholm.[41] A second conference gathered in 1937 in Oxford, Great
Britain. The dates of these conferences are important in the light of
our study. The first one was held shortly after the Versailles Peace
Treaties, where Germany was presented a heavy bill for its role in
World War I; the second conference was convened at the brink of
World War II. In spite of those facts, the two conferences did not
read the signs of their time. The Stockholm conference was impor-
tant for other reasons. It brought together delegates from both sides
of the division that the war had caused in the Western world: from
the United States and England, as well as from Germany. The con-
ference celebrated this re-found unity almost exclusively in worship,

---

[40] See Lesslie Newbigin, "A sermon preached at the thanksgiving service for the
fiftieth anniversary of the Tambaram conference of the International Missionary
Council", *International Review of Mission*, Vol. LXXVIII, No. 307 (July 1988), 327.
[41] Nils Ehrenström, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work,
1925–1948", in Rouse and Neill, *op. cit.*, at 545–98.

not by developing new visions for peace in the world. At the Oxford conference, the situation was even more dramatic. The Nazi authorities prohibited most German delegates from the Evangelical Church who had taken part in the preparation of the meeting, including Martin Niemöller of the Confessing Church, from attending the conference. Only a few delegates from smaller German churches were present. The Oxford conference lacked the courage to openly denounce the Nazi regime, or to warn of the horrors that would come over the world once another war broke out. A proposed message of sympathy and solidarity with the members of the Evangelical Church in Germany, especially with those of the Confessing Church, was met with protest from the German delegates present. "Oxford sounded no clarion call of prophecy."[42] The Stockholm and Oxford meetings presented an experience of peace, but did not formulate a vision for peace.

This was different from what happened in the context of another organisation, the World Alliance of Churches for Promoting International Friendship, that would later be incorporated into the WCC. In 1915, in the midst of World War I, the World Alliance of Churches for Promoting International Friendship was founded. Two years later, in 1917, the new Alliance was able to realise a Neutral Church Conference, in Uppsala. Some 35 participants were present, from various European countries. The meeting urged nations to develop international law as a solution to international conflicts. Churches should press their governments to abide by such a body of laws so that their common life might be founded on the principles of truth, justice and love. It was the start of a Christian peace movement.

A second meeting of the World Alliance was held in the Netherlands, in 1919. The World War had just ended, and its devastating effects in human lives and material destruction had become visible. For the first time, delegates had come from countries that had been enemies until recently. No wonder that in such a setting the question of guilt came to the fore. The Germans were asked to recognise that their country's violation of Belgian neutrality was an act of moral transgression. The Germans complied, but in the view of the other participants, not in a satisfactory way. Especially the French delegates felt that the German churches as a whole should confess guilt, not just a few delegates. It was a question that was not easily dealt with.

---

[42] *Id.*, at 592.

The meeting of the World Alliance of Churches in Prague in 1928 was able to formulate *expressis verbis* a vision for peace. The delegates developed a list of priority questions that should be taken into account once peace-building was at stake:

> Among the international questions which affect moral-religious or Church interests, the following are the most important:
>   The securing of religious freedom and the rights of Churches, groups or sections of people in any country.
>   The prevention of every oppression, injury or obstruction of any Churches, congregations, schools, institutes and other works in any sphere of religious activity.
>   The elucidation of other political or church events which are calculated to endanger the good relations between the Churches.
>   The promotion of positive relations between Christians, congregations and Churches of the different lands.
>   Endeavours towards the conciliation of class and race antagonisms which become of international importance.
>   Support proposals and measures calculated to promote justice in the relations between the peoples.[43]

Today, this vision for peace may sound somewhat 'churchy', too much looking for the well-being of the Church and accentuating its central role in society. This may be the case, but that should not blind one to the important characteristics of peace as spelled out in the document. The importance of religious freedom for all religious groups, not only Christians, is underlined, and the dangers of racism and ethnicism are recognised. The statement encourages relations that cross borders and other divides. It also reflects the Christian principle that you should visit your sister or brother who might have a grievance against you before taking the conflict any further. With this agenda for peace, the Alliance was able to co-operate closely with the newly founded League of Nations, for the sake of peace in the world.

Not only questions of peace, but also questions of conflict were studied in the meetings of the World Alliance of Churches. When, after World War I, the disarmament programs were being implemented too slowly, the Alliance took a strong position on war:

---

[43] Constitution, reprinted in the *World Alliance Handbook*, 1938, at 18 ff. Quoted in Ehrenström, *op. cit.*, at 561.

(2) We believe that war considered as an institution for the settlement
of international disputes is incompatible with the mind and method of
Christ, and therefore incompatible with the mind and method of His
Church.

(3) While convinced that the time must come for the revision of the
existing treaties in the interests of peace, we maintain that all disputes
and conflicts between the nations, for which no solution can be found
through diplomacy or conciliation, ought to be settled or solved through
arbitration, whether by the World Court or by some other tribunal
mutually agreed . . .

(4) We earnestly appeal to the respective authorities of all Christian
communions to declare in unmistakable terms that they will not coun-
tenance, nor assist in any way in, any war with regard to which the
government of their country has refused a bona fide offer to submit
the dispute to arbitration.[44]

Here, the foundation was laid for an ecumenical vision on war and
peace. War is seen as a flagrant denial of the promises of the king-
dom of God: the kingdom of justice and peace. With this vision, the
World Alliance of Churches made an important contribution to ecu-
menical thinking.

The ecumenical debate:
The World Council of Churches

From all these ecumenical endeavours, the World Council of Churches
was born, just after World War II. In 1948, delegates from all over
the world gathered in Amsterdam to provide the ecumenical move-
ment with a structural instrument. The memory of the war was still
much alive, as had been the case with the Conferences for Life and
Work held between the two world wars (see above). But unlike these
conferences, which proved so weak in developing a vision for peace,
the Amsterdam assembly formulated unambiguously where it stood
in matters of international conflict and peace:

War as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching
and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The part which war plays in our
present international life is a sin against God and a degradation of man.[45]

---

[44] *World Alliance Handbook*, 1938, p. 52, quoted in Ehrenström, *op. cit.*, at 564.
[45] Quoted in Salpy Eskidjian and Sarah Estabrooks (eds), *Overcoming Violence: WCC
statements and actions 1994–2000* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000), 6.

That was a clear statement. However, this did not provide an end to the debate on 'just war'. The delegates had different viewpoints on that matter, and were in fact rather divided:

> (1) There are those who hold that, even though entering a war may be a Christian's duty in particular circumstances, modern warfare, with its mass destruction, can never be an act of justice.
> (2) In the absence of impartial supranational institutions, there are those who hold that military action is the ultimate sanction of the rule of law, and that citizens must be distinctly taught that it is their duty to defend the law by force if necessary.
> (3) Others, again, refuse military service of all kinds, convinced that an absolute witness against war and for peace is for them the will of God, and they desire that the Church should speak to the same effect.[46]

In effect the dual attitude regarding the use of violence in conflict situations was confirmed. War, especially modern warfare with its means of mass destruction, was for all delegates incompatible with the example of Jesus. At the same time, it was admitted by some that military action could become relevant when a greater evil was trying to demolish freedom and justice in society. This position was confirmed several times in ecumenical discussions after the Amsterdam assembly. At the WCC assembly in Canberra in 1991, which took place during the Gulf War, the German delegate and later general secretary of the WCC, Dr Konrad Reiser, proposed to take a radical pacifist position. After some discussion, he withdrew his proposal and the WCC maintained its original position: no to violence and war; there is just an impossible possibility that Christians may justify (limited) violence if state authorities had to decide to make use of it. This excludes nuclear warfare, always condemned by the WCC and the churches without reservation. In the 1970s, this position inspired many Christians in the Western world to participate in demonstrations of secular peace movements against nuclear armament, or to initiate Christian organisations with that aim. In the Netherlands, for example, various Christian organisations became active and even internationally famous for spreading 'the Dutch disease'.[47]

---

[46] *Id.*, at 14.
[47] See, for the Reformed action, Johannes Verkuyl et al., *Meegenomen voor de vrede: Nadere verantwoording van het Gereformeerd Vredesberaad* (Kampen: Kok, 1969).

VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

The debate on war and peace entered a new phase in the early 1970s. Shortly before that time, in 1968, the Uppsala assembly of the WCC had given much attention to social injustice in the world, especially to the evil of racism. Following that discussion, The 'Programme to Combat Racism' (PCR) was initiated. When it became known that the new programme was also supporting liberation movements engaged in violent resistance, there were many protests: how did this conform to the ecumenical statements on conflict and peace? To study that question, a consultation was called in Cardiff in 1972. It produced an important document: 'Violence, nonviolence and the struggle for social justice'.[48] There, another approach to violence was shown, different from the fierce and condemning language that could be heard in the ecumenical movement until that moment. Violence, it seemed, could also serve to further peace and justice in the world.

   The report of the Cardiff consultation does not deny the fundamental convictions of the ecumenical movement on conflict and peace and the use of violence. On the contrary:

> Violence today has become demonic in its hold on human life. In the life of some nations and among many severely oppressed peoples, it seems more like an addiction than like rational behaviour . . . In many nations military considerations increasingly dominate economic and political life. In some, military regimes have taken over . . . With such pervasiveness, violence conditions people in a fashion that makes it extremely difficult for them to see peaceful options even in personal relationships.[49]

Violence should not govern the thinking and acting of Christians, the report said. Christian behaviour should be the expression of a different vision:

> the promise of God in Jesus Christ that the future is in his hands, that his kingdom is at work, and that his power will prevail over the forces of this world. This promise gives us strength and confidence for work for

---

[48] *Violence, Nonviolence and the Struggle for Social Justice: A statement commended by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, August 1973, for study, comment and action* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1973); see also Jan van Butselaar "Geweld, geweldloosheid en de strijd om sociale gerechtigheid", *Gereformeerd Weekblad*, XXIX, 32 (8 February 1974), 210–11.
[49] *Violence, Nonviolence and the Struggle for Social Justice, op. cit.*, at 8.

relative justice, liberation and peace here and now, with hope and with integrity.[50]

This way the vision for peace was strongly rooted in the Christian conviction of the kingdom of God. The remaining question was that:

> Churches and Christians are realizing that they have too seldom been on the side of the poor and the oppressed . . . They have in the past used force when they were in power . . . The question before us then is: how do we discern God's working in this world where force and violence are so strong, and by what means can we serve him by our actions and our suffering?[51]

The report continues with illustrating situations of oppression in the world of those days. South Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and other relevant examples are given. In all those situations, those in power use violent means to defend their privileges and wealth at the expense of the poor and oppressed. Christians normally should opt for non-violent resistance in such contexts, but sometimes they see no other way than to take part in counter-violence against the power of state violence, as was the case in South Africa at the time of apartheid:

> Christians seek to oppose and change the government policies in some respects, but face well-nigh complete frustration in their nonviolent and legal efforts. In the same country many black Christians and even some whites find themselves pinning their hopes on or taking part in liberation movements which aim at the overthrow of present oppressive authority, as the way to justice and freedom.[52]

It depicts the difficulty Christians find themselves in, once confronted with the power of evil. How to end a conflict and to establish peace with justice? The Cardiff report describes the two ways from which Christians usually choose to express their hope and their obedience to Christ:

> Some argue that Jesus' renunciation of violence was incidental or situational, and that in other contexts the same commitment to justice and responsiveness to human need might lead to quite different imperatives, including violent measures either to preserve a relatively just order or to attack an unjust order. Others see in Jesus' rejection of the Zealot option a choice so basic in the definition of his ministry, so

---

[50] *Id.*, at 9.
[51] *Id.*, at 7 and 9.
[52] *Id.*, at 10.

typical of ethical problematic of every situation, and so firmly sup-
ported by the rest of Scripture and the churches' experience, as to
present guidance of continuing validity.[53]

The document does not give priority to the one option over the other
and by that it seems to create room for the acceptance of counter-
violence in order to restore justice and peace. There are firm con-
ditions though for Christians when they consider to take part in
resistance movements involved in violent or non-violent resistance:

> The goal of resistance to unjust and legitimate power should not be
> the destruction of an enemy but a more just order within which different
> groups and powers agree to live in peace reconciled to each other.
> God alone, and no human ideology or institution, is the measure of
> justice. None of us is righteous enough to seek total victory or to
> demand a society in which our ideas of justice or our ideals alone will
> prevail . . .
>   no human institution or movement is without sin. Those who uphold
> the powers that be as well as those who attack them bear their vari-
> ous measures of guilt for the evils of society. We who live by the for-
> giveness of our sins must translate this into a humble awareness of the
> judgement of God, a full sense of identity with the oppressed and an
> ongoing responsibility toward the enemies we fight.[54]

The answer of the report is 'no' to war and violence as a mean to
end conflicts, and 'yes' to a vision of peace as depicted in the life
of Jesus. Only in case of excessive oppression, when the realm of
evil seems to destroy human society, there may be room for the use
of (limited) violence. But even then, this may never be on the basis
of self-justification, for self-enrichment, or to oppress others in turn.
    Aram I, (Armenian) Catholicos of Cilicia and moderator of the
Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, recently refor-
mulated this analysis when he launched the new WCC programme
'Overcoming Violence', in 2001.[55] According to him, violence is as
old as human existence. Violence means aggression, whether in a
personal or a structural context. It is, in fact, a life-threatening evil.
How can Christians respond to this? The Bible gives the impression
to be ambiguous about violence and non-violence, but the overar-
ching proclamation of the gospel is the purpose of God in Christ to

---

[53] *Id.*, at 12.
[54] *Id.*, at 14–15.
[55] Aram I, "Report of the Moderator", *The Ecumenical Review*, 53:2, 229–41 (April
2001).

liberate, to heal and to transform the whole of humanity and cre-
ation. Violence has no place in God's economy. Violence is destruc-
tive; it constitutes evil and death. This vision for peace is echoed
throughout the ecumenical debate. But Aram too recognises the
impossibility to overcome violence once and for all, even for Christians:

> Therefore, 'limited and controlled' violence aimed at changing social
> conditions and establishing justice for all . . . is acceptable and even
> necessary. It is integral to the liberation process. Some even speak of
> 'redemptive violence'. . . . The question is under what circumstances
> and how, not whether, one should fight evil . . . Can we set an ethi-
> cal guideline to overcome violence that is faithful to the gospel and is
> realistic and practical?[56]

He sees but one way to overcome violence, that is by peace-making.
A culture of peace should be developed among and through Christians.
This is the central Christian vision: building a world of justice and
peace.

> The essential aspects of Christian peace-making are: love of enemy,
> reconciliation, healing, confidence-building, breaking down the walls of
> separation and resisting violence that may lead the enemy towards
> conversion. The churches and the ecumenical movement must develop
> a theology of peace-making . . . Such a theology must be built on repen-
> tance and forgiveness, truth and justice.[57]

After his speech at the Central Committee, Aram was criticised that
his words seemed to admit the inevitability of violence, undermin-
ing the new WCC programme rather than supporting it. In fact, his
analysis of violence in the Christian tradition and his suggestion that
the only way to get out of its grip is through peace-building, showed
a way for the programme that could save its aims.

Christian faith calls for peace and justice

After this overview of the history of Christianity and Christian theology
on issues of conflict and peace, it is time for some conclusions. The
first one must be that the vision of the "Prince of Peace", Jesus, is
fundamental to all Christian theology and should be fundamental to
all actions inspired by the Christian faith. The Christian vision for

---

[56] *Id.*, at 238.
[57] *Id.*, at 235.

peace is the promise of the kingdom of God that will govern all human relationships, including those among nations. The promise of the kingdom is an important motive to convert to peaceful ways in conflict resolution.

In the history of the Church, and especially in the history of the ecumenical movement, this vision for peace has inspired people to develop peace-building instruments. One of the first suggestions was not to discuss the differences, fighting out who is right and who is wrong, but to bring people together in worship. By concentrating on the reality of God, people can re-discover their own limitations, lack of humanness and 'sins' as the starting-point for looking at each other in a new way. Then, a way to peace and justice can be discerned that teaches people to live together peacefully. Instruments for peace have to be taken up, the 'armour of light'[58] has to be put on. This is the mission of the Christian Church.

The fundamental option for peace does not deny the reality of the brokenness of human life and human society. For not only the promise of the kingdom is a reality, but also the presence of evil. Acting for the agenda of the coming kingdom is therefore at the same time acting against the powers of evil. This task has been entrusted especially to the authorities of this world, who act as agents of God:

> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God . . . Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.[59]

This rule is reflected in many Christian teachings and confessions.[60] There is of course a possibility that the authorities do not properly fulfil this godly function and fail to form a barrier against evil in society. In that case, according to Beza, lower authorities can step into place to fulfil that mission. Individuals may never decide on the basis of their own insight to apply violent means, except perhaps in situations of self-defence.

---

[58] Romans 13:12.
[59] *Id.*, verses 1, 3–4.
[60] See for example *Confessio Belgica*, art. XXXVI. For the full text of this confession of faith, see Jan Nicolaas Bakhuizen van den Brink, *De Nederlandsche Belijdenisgeschriften* (Amsterdam: Bolland, 1976).

Conflict, even violent conflict, cannot be fully excluded from Christian behaviour. When it occurs, it should be governed by strict conditions: never on one's own initiative, never for personal or collective gain, never to continue or install oppression or exploitation. The use of violence should always be subjected to the rules and counsel of the proper authorities. The reality of sin makes it impossible to exclude all violent means; yet, the promise of the kingdom is the real vision, one of justice and peace.

How to keep these two together? How to make sure that the promise of the kingdom and the reality of sin are not mutually 'killing' each other? There is one word in Christian tradition that is holding the two together: reconciliation. The work of Jesus was to reconcile the world with God and human beings with one another. The mission of the Church and Christians is no different. Whether spelling out the promise of the kingdom or acting against evil, the fundamental question is: is it eventually furthering reconciliation, with God and with one another? Is it bringing a reconciled humanity nearer? Reconciliation is central in the Christian faith as it renews human beings and the whole of humanity.

Hence, it was a good decision of the churches in Europe, when they had to make a new start in ecumenical relations after the fall of the Berlin Wall, to call a conference on reconciliation.[61] Its predecessor, held in Basel in 1989, had concentrated on 'justice, peace and the integrity of creation', the ecumenical slogan of the 1980s. That meeting had done little more than confirming the existing divisions in Europe. The next conference, held in Graz in 1997, at least called for reconciliation:

> In Graz, we caught a glimpse of the reality of reconciliation in Christ, and the blessings to be found on the way towards it . . . This offered the opportunity of growing together and so building a common future.[62]

RECONCILING MEMORIES

Clearly, there is a powerful vision of peace inherent in Christian religion, specifically to build peace on a more durable basis. The question then becomes: does it work, or is it all mere theory?

---

[61] Rüdiger Noll and Stefan Vesper (eds), *Reconciliation, Gift of God and Source of New Life: Documents of the Second European Ecumenical Assembly* (Graz: Styria Verlag, 1998).
[62] *Id.*, at 32.

In order to discover this, it is useful to look at some concrete examples of Christian action for peace. The demonstrations by Christian peace groups against nuclear armament are still fresh in the minds of many people. Efforts of mediation such as by Terry Waite, who on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury tried to free hostages in Lebanon and almost paid for it with his own life, are examples of Christian engagement for peace by individuals.[63]

A less known programme to end violent conflict and build peace is the 'Reconciling Memories' programme.[64] This was developed in Northern Ireland, where hatred between Catholic and Protestant Christians have proven extremely difficult to eradicate. As has often been pointed out, the problem is not just a religious one. Social and political divisions play a fundamental role in this strife. But religion, it seems, can always be called upon to motivate people to take up arms. It can play such a role because people's identity is often rooted in their religious affiliation and the religious history of their country. Not only has this history made them into what they are today, it also provides them with images of the other that confirm their negative perceptions. How to get out of this imprisonment?

First, it is important to become aware that these conflicting images exist:

> The Protestants understood that God had placed them on Irish soil for a purpose. Therefore they had a relationship with God like the Covenant. They were the Covenant people and they had to remain faithful to God. No matter what trials and tribulations they experienced, no matter how many times they were under violent attack, they would remain faithful – even if they became a remnant. They therefore interpreted their experience of being constant under siege in terms of the theology of the covenant and of the remnant . . . The Roman Catholic community, because of their experience of oppression, identified their situation with the suffering of Christ. They developed a victim theology identifying themselves with the crucified Christ – always in hope of resurrection.[65]

Once this analysis is made, a second stage can be entered: the reconciliation of memories. How to do that? In this programme, a crucial role is given to the combination of memory and liberation. Concretely,

---

[63] Terry Waite, *Taken on Trust* (New York: Quill, 1995); *Footfalls in Memory: Reflections from solitude* (New York: Doubleday, 1997).

[64] Alan D. Falconer and Joseph Liechty (eds), *Reconciling Memories* (Dublin: Columba Press, 1998).

[65] Alan D. Falconer, "Remembering", in *id.*, at 13.

it means that there are two ways to remember the past and to interpret the present. The one way only confirms former experiences and strengthens the feelings and memories of conflict. The other way is to put these memories, the bitter and the sweet ones, under the overarching story of God's liberation of humankind. In the Old Testament, remembering is an act of worship. When the Israelites reached the promised land, they had to remember who it was who liberated them: not they themselves, but their God.[66] Hence, not our acts and memories, but the memory of God's liberation from slavery is the focal point. In the New Testament this can be seen when the disciples are called to celebrate the Last Supper: "Do this in memory of me."[67]

The remembering of the past has to be put in the context of the memory of God's liberating action in Christ. It is then closely linked with remission of sins. The Old and New Testament

> understanding of 'remembering', then, makes of memory-memorial a dynamic process where the past is contemporary. The identity and self-understanding of the community is celebrated, responsibility is accepted, and forgiveness of sin sought. The reconciliation that results from this way of remembering will be honest and vital, never cheap. Such reconciliation entails recognising the interdependence of our histories, even appropriating each other's histories, through which each will empower the other to be free. Through reconciliation of memories, a new identity is born.[68]

This programme has been worked out with many groups in Northern Ireland.[69] Not only there was it a tool to put conflict in a new, liberating light. Elsewhere in the world too, reconciling memories became an important programme to end conflict, prevent new hatred and open up a future of peace. The best known example is the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa,[70] which was asked by the government to help prevent a violent outburst of hatred between different groups after the end of apartheid. Its working method was clearly oriented towards the reconciliation of memories.

---

[66] Deuteronomy 26:5–10.
[67] Luke 22:19.
[68] Falconer, *op. cit.*, at 17–18.
[69] Sydney D. Bailey (ed), *Human Rights and Responsibilities in Britain and Ireland: A Christian perspective* (Hampshire and London: Macmillan, 1988), esp. ch. 7.
[70] For a personal account of this Commission, see Piet Meiring, *Chronicle of the Truth Commission: A journey through the past present – into the future of South Africa* (Vanderbijlpark: Carpe Diem Boeke, 1999).

In numerous sessions throughout the country, people were asked to share their experiences and accuse the wrong-doers, or to confess their guilt. These were moving occasions, during which it became visible that both victims and perpetrators felt liberated after testifying in front of the Commission and the entire nation. It is debatable whether the Commission was an example of specific Christian peace-building or reflecting a more general approach towards harmony and stability in the country. However, it should be borne in mind that the idea for such a commission came from the Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu. Further, all sessions of the Commission were opened with prayer.[71] Muslims, Hindus and non-religious people were members of the Commission, next to Christians from various confessions. All accepted that, for a real reconciliation of memories, more was needed than just a legal process.

Overcoming violence

The above-mentioned programme of the World Council of Churches, 'Overcoming Violence', provides another example of the concrete shape a Christian vision for peace may take. Recently, the programme was reshaped into a 'Decade to Overcome Violence'. At first sight, these labels give the impression of a rather presumptuous undertaking. We noted already that the moderator of the Central Committee of the WCC, Aram I, remarked that violence is as old as human existence and that 'limited and controlled' violence would be needed for a long time to come.[72] This is probably the reason why a sub-title was added to the programme: 'Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace'. Even then, it is far more than just a challenge to the churches to work towards this aim.[73] It is important to be fully aware of the relation between violence, conflict and peace. It is also important to bring together those who use violence with those who suffer it to discuss how to secure peace for the future. This is what the programme asks from local churches and individual Christians: to engage in a study process on violence and to involve perpetrators and victims. Pilot

---

[71] I once was invited to fulfil this task; I did it with fear and trembling. See Jan van Buselaar, "Haast te erg om waar te zijn: Het werk van de Waarheids- en Verzoenings-commissie in Zuid-Afrika", *Centraal Weekblad* XLVI, 29/30 (18 July 1997), 1, 3.

[72] Aram I, *op. cit.*, at 230 and 238.

[73] Margot Kässman, *Overcoming Violence: The challenge to the churches in all places* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1998).

projects have been organised in seven cities where violence poses a real threat to peace: the 'Peace in the City Campaign'. In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a dialogue was started between the police and civil society. In Durban, South Africa, a dialogue was initiated among different political factions. In Boston, USA, the focus is on domestic and street violence. In Belfast, Northern Ireland, a mediation programme brings opposing parties together. In Colombo, Sri Lanka, where there have been violent clashes between Sinhalese and Tamils, conferences and meetings allow voiceless victims to be heard. A similar project has been organised in Kingston (Jamaica), and in Suva (Fiji). Most of these projects were already operative before the launch of the WCC programme. The added value is that in combining these efforts, a strong vision for peace is maintained and further developed, in line with the ecumenical tradition.

Peaceful co-habitation in Central Africa

Africa has acquired the reputation that conflict is more common there than peace. At the same time, Africa has been depicted as the new 'Christian continent', due to the growth of Christianity on its soil. What is the role of the Christian religion and Church there to end violence and conflict and to work for peace and reconciliation? Churches in fact have not always operated in an appropriate way in situations of local conflict – to say the least.[74] At the same time, in Africa churches are still places where people of different ethnic and political background are sitting next to each other, and listen together to the message of the "Prince of Peace". On several occasions, this has been fruitful for peace-building. In Mozambique, churches have been able to mediate between opposing parties, Frelimo and Renamo, which has resulted in a peace agreement. In South Africa, some churches had become known as "apartheid churches". At the same time, charismatic church leaders such as Beyers Naudé, Frank Chikane and Desmond Tutu had such an influence in society that not only apartheid was overcome but also brutal (counter-) violence stopped or prevented. In Rwanda, after the genocide of 1994, church leaders were unable to mediate between the warring parties. Hence, it became the task of lay people to develop visions for peace for the deeply

---

[74] See Jan van Butselaar, *Church and Peace in Africa: The role of the churches in the peace process* (Assen: van Gorcum, 2001).

divided country. In 1996, a group of Rwandese Christians formulated a statement known as the Detmold Confession, in which they admitted their guilt and promised to work for reconciliation.[75] Another such group gathered in 1999 in Machakos, Kenya, to study together the problems of the Great Lakes region.[76] Although not officially a 'Christian' meeting, nor called by the churches, it was clear that the participants were looking to the gospel for inspiration. Conflict was seen in the light of sin and forgiveness, of justice and unity, of peace and reconciliation. Concrete visions for peace were developed and often produced tangible results.

A VISION, A DREAM

The examples show that visions for peace in Christian religion can be translated into concrete and effective actions. Three models are most frequently used: bringing people from opposing groups together, mediating between groups and individuals, and reconciling memories. In spite of the fact that the Church – or its individual members – has not always acted to end conflict or prevent violence, its vision for peace was never lost.

The use of 'limited violence' should be an exception. Glorifying violence hampers the Christian vision, which is the promise of the kingdom. This kingdom is a dream, but not a *fata morgana*. It can be translated into concrete and effective actions. These actions cannot exist without the dream: the promise of the kingdom. It is a dream that will become reality, according to Christian faith. It is a powerful vision of peace:

> For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth . . .
> no more shall the sound of weeping be heard . . .
> or the cry of distress . . .
> The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
> the lion shall eat straw like the ox;
> but the serpent – its food shall be dust!
> They shall not hurt or destroy
> on all my holy mountain,
> says the Lord.[77]

---

[75] F. Rubayize, *Guérir le Rwanda de la violence: La Confession de Detmold un premier pas* (Paris and Montréal: Karthala 1998).

[76] Emmanuel Rukangira (ed), *Actes du Colloque de Machakos* (Bruxelles: Solidarité pour l'Afrique International, 2001).

[77] Isaiah 65:17, 19, 25.

6. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AS A PEACEMAKER IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Joseph Adero Ngala

INTRODUCTION

There are several challenges and dilemmas facing the African Church as we enter the 21st century. The continent is poor and insecure and this renders the faithful vulnerable to all kinds of threats. Ministering is extremely difficult in the face of these shortcomings. It is also difficult for religion to influence society when other forces tear it apart. In the long run, faith fails to become a prime informant of attitudes and behaviour. The root causes of these limitations cannot be ascribed to a single factor. In Africa, several factors interact and interlock to form an interdependent web of conflicts. One of these challenges inhibiting development in the continent is the reality of violent conflicts in almost every region.

The greatest task facing the Church in Africa today is how to construct an effective conflict management mechanism. The dilemma for the contemporary Church therefore is how to become a credible and effective conflict manager or peacemaker. This task poses acute challenges to the African Church in quite a number of ways. The first challenge is that, while it aspires to be effective in the field of peacemaking or conflict management, it is constrained by its other face of being a conflict instigator. It is extremely difficult for the Church to be a credible conflict manager while it continues to be an instigator of conflicts. The other challenge is that the human causes of conflicts can be traced to men and women belonging to different religions or faith traditions. In fact few, if any, persons in contemporary Africa can be found not to be professing one of the religious faiths. In addition to this, many conflicts raging in Africa are also perpetrated in the name of religions.

This chapter traces the root cause of this dilemma in two related factors. The first is the way different faith traditions prepare their respective followers (to be) to identify with their religion. The second is attributed to the very content of these faith traditions – the values

and doctrines which form the corpus of a religious faith. The content is what forms the religion's boundaries and the conscience of the individuals and groups alike embracing a particular faith.

RELIGION AND CONSCIENCE FORMATION

Religious institutions are capable of forming and transforming the inner dynamics of a human person in a way that no any other institution can match. Although there is significant diversity among and within religious institutions in Africa, the power to transform the conscience and the identity of individuals and groups is a characteristic inherent in all religions. Most religions provide their adherents with a worldview that assures their place in time – past, present and future – hence satisfying their psychological stability and sense of being. In all their multifarious expressions and dimensions, they all tend to answer the individual's need of locatedness – socially, cosmologically, temporally and metaphysically. Religions define human relationships – to self, to others, to the inanimate, to the universe and to God or the transcendent which they consider being real and true. No any other institution can shape the worldview or the perception of an individual or a group more than religion.

Religion can only serve as an effective institution for peacemaking by forming rightly the consciences of its adherents. This task foreseeably can only be achieved under two main conditions. First, it has to make an individual or a group identify with its contents, that is its traditions and values. The second condition is that the construction of this content should be based on rational doctrines and positive values that mitigate all threats to human survival, while promoting respect for human rights and dignity.

How individuals and groups alike identify with their religion depends, first, on whether the individual or and group has inculcated the religious teachings and doctrines. The content of the religious doctrines and values also has implications for the religious output. This output has been demonstrated in various ways by religions and churches in Africa: fundamentalism, martyrdom, killings in the name of religion, acts of mercy and charity, and other sorts of humanitarian assistance driven by religious convictions. The way in which individual and group identities are constructed has significance for the interpretation of the individual's or group's worldview.

Individual and group conscience formation therefore is paramount in the examination of the religious output. An individual conscience is a relatively stable element of an individual's sense of self. The content of an individual conscience consists of a person's identity: values, motives, emotions, feelings, attitudes, thoughts, goals, aspirations, and the like on the one hand, and one's group memberships, social influence, social interaction patterns, and roles, on the other. The individual conscience is ever fluid, dynamic and responsive to its social context.

But how is the individual conscience constructed and maintained? Before proceeding, it would suffice to note that conscience can be formed wrongly or rightly depending on the contents of the formative principles. It is also one thing to construct a right conscience and another to maintain it. Three social processes of constructing and maintaining one's conscience have been identified and analysed: compliance, identification and internalisation.[1]

Compliance occurs when one individual conforms to another's expectations or demands in order to secure favourable regard or treatment. An example is when a child obeys its parents to avoid punishment and not because it is good in itself to do so. It contributes to conscience formation to the extent that one progressively incorporates these aspects of one's compliance – induced self-presentation – into one's self-concept.

Identification involves adoption of the behaviour of another person or a group of persons because association with the person or the group helps to satisfy the individual's need to establish a positive self-concept. For example, when an individual identifies with a football team, the individual vicariously participates in others' pre-established identities, thus gaining a sense of power and status that, as individuals, they lack.

Finally, internalisation occurs when one aligns oneself with others and adopts aspects of their behaviour. This is done because it is consistent with one's own values and beliefs. Where internalisation occurs, one does not align one's own identity with that of another person or group primarily because doing so has instrumental value

---

[1] Herbert C. Kelman, "The place of ethnic identity in the development of personal identity: A challenge for the Jewish family", in Peter Y. Medding (ed), *Coping with Life and Death: Jewish families in the twentieth century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3–26.

(a case with both compliance and identification), but because it flows naturally from one's value orientation. This is what the Christian Church ought to do to the faithful so that they can internalise its teachings and values.

Like an individual, a group has its own conscience that is borne and communicated by the group members, but it cannot be thought of as a composite of the members' respective individual consciences. Group conscience is, in essence, a manifestation of the individual identity impulse. Individuals seek to satisfy their desire for positive evaluation – rightness or wrongness – through their participation in groups. In the process, groups generate collective purposes and goals, the achievements of which are important to the maintenance of group conscience and to the group's survival. This implies a group-level conscience – a collective motivation to serve the purposes and goals on which the members' individual consciences rest and the survival of the group depends.

The group's conscience consists of the members' shared conception of its enduring characteristics and basic values, its strengths and weaknesses, its hopes and fears, its institutions and traditions, its past history, current purposes and future prospects.[2] The group's institutions, traditions and history often find embodiment in writing or other material forms, which communicate and preserve the group's identity independently of the individuals that presently comprise the group. A group's conscience is constructed, maintained and transmitted among its members through various socialisation and mobilisation processes.

Methods of conscience construction

There are several ways in which religions construct an individual's or a group's conscience. Among these are myths of common origin, doctrines of chosen-ness and holy struggles, claims of primacy with respect to values that arrive from a particular tradition's worldview, actors who sanction individual or group behaviour with sacred authority, and memorials and rituals that commemorate the sacrifices of group members. Together with these, there is usually a wide variety of religious doctrines addressing every conceivable aspect of human existence. Religious doctrines pertaining to the temporal location and

---

[2] *Id.*

continuity of the self and the group provide an interesting example of the role belief systems can play in conscience construction and the maintenance of psychological stability.

These myths – for example, the creation accounts in Genesis – explain the group's beginning in cosmological terms, thereby providing the religious practitioner with a basis for self-location, as successor to the original members, in relation to the origin of universe and the beginning of time. The same cosmologies that explain the origin of the universe frequently explain its present nature and orders, thus locating the individual and group in the present time. Daily and weekly prayers and rites, and seasonal rituals and feasts, structure time and imbue it with meaning. Finally, many conceptions of salvation in the world religions project individual and group conscience stably and securely into eternity. Therefore, religion frequently provides individuals with a sense of seamless continuity among past, present and future.

Religious texts and oral material embody, among other things, myths, lore, songs and prayers that contribute to conscience formation and reconstruction in several ways. They are partly repositories of community memory, its location and aspiration. They often provide individuals and groups with a cross-generational sense of belonging in time, as well as a sense of belonging with others in distant places. Texts and oral traditions also communicate teachings, beliefs and norms that have clear socialising effects, promoting order and enhancing a group's sense of specialness or purpose. What is significant is that these texts and oral traditions are revered as revealed or inspired sources.

Whenever texts and oral traditions are considered inspired or revealed, their sacralising potential is for many enhanced to the extent that interpretation of text and tradition is discouraged or restricted by virtue of their sacred status and the existence of a religious elite vested with exclusive interpretive authority. Texts and oral traditions may provide non-relativistic, self-validating and unassailable principles of order around which people construct their conscience and their location in time – past, present and future – and groups define their borders (who they are).

Role prescription is another key factor through which religions construct and/or reconstruct and maintain individual and group consciences. Religions readily supply such role prescriptions, ensuring that one's identity in the group is legitimated and affirmed, whether it be pope, monk, *sheikh*, mother superior, rabbi or a mere member

of the faithful. Such established norms and expectations for behaviour among members of the group give one's identity within the group a quality of super-personality by virtue of religious legitimations that conceive of the temporal order in relation to the cosmic. Religions also provide moral and spiritual models in the form of saints and holy people that embody the religion's norms and aspirations. When conscience formation or reconstruction is properly done and the religious norms are internalised, and finally permeate one's entire life, these norms lay greater claim upon individuals or groups than norms emanating from other sources.

The relationship between the temporal order as socially constructed and the cosmic order as understood by a particular tradition has a significant bearing on conflict among religious groups. As has been observed by others, when socially defined reality has come to be identified with the ultimate reality of the universe, its denial takes on the quality of evil as well as madness. This is evident in such places as the Sudan, Ethiopia, Algeria and Nigeria, to mention a few, where certain religious groups (sometimes) seek to establish a social order that is a blue-print of their worldview. Religious norms and institutions may provide a framework for governance in this respect. What would suffice to consider in this case is what kind of religious content informs the conscience of a society so that it aids in governance. It is also significant to note that fidelity to religious norms is not automatic, but highly depends on whether it has been internalised (by the individual members of a particular faith tradition) to be the driving force for every aspiration.

Mechanisms for conscience formation

Religious content is transmitted through various rites, rituals, prayers and other forms of interaction that provide individual access to religious content for the construction and the maintenance of their consciences.[3]

Religious education often is a vehicle or context for compliance and identification related conscience formation. Rites of passage are important examples of religious socialisation mechanisms that contribute to individual identity construction and maintenance, ushering

---

[3] John Paul II, *The Church in Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1995).

individuals through transitions in status or role. Many religions have established rites of passage for major age and role transition, from birth to death (and sometimes before birth and even after death). Birth and naming rituals – baptism in Christianity or the recitation of the *Shahadah* in a Muslim baby's ears, for example – begin to confer upon a child a religious identity that will affect its developing self-consciousness and its future interaction with the society at large. Other rituals, such as Judaism's *bar mitzvah* and *bat mitzvah*, invite the youth to take new responsibilities and new status in life.

The role of conscience in conflict and peace

Within the African Church, religion has displayed multiple identities. There are Christian believers who have been prepared to instigate conflict in the name of religion. They see violent conflict perpetrated in the name of religions as normal and give every justification for it. There are also those who are not able to do anything in the name of religion – be it good or bad. Finally, there are those who have managed to inculcate positive values that shun violence and other forms of intolerance in their way of life. The first group I would call people with a wrong identity and the second I would call people without an identity, while the last group can be referred to as people with a right identity.

If the Church teachings that inform one's life about values and traditions are promotive of conflicts and intolerance, then those identifying with these values will be more willing to use violence. On the other hand, if the faith is based on peace and co-existence (tolerance), an individual who has internalised these values is likely to be peaceful and a peacemaker.

Religion can only be an effective model of peacemaking in Africa if it helps individuals and groups internalise values which are positive. Unless the values to be internalised are traditions and norms based on respect for human rights and dignity, the internalised values themselves might not be enough to help religion construct itself as a peacemaker.

The dilemma in this respect is that most religions have sources inherent in their faith traditions that have been promotive of conflicts either by default or design. While Christians contend that the gospel of Christ calls them to a ministry of reconciliation and peacemaking,

the same tradition is laden with heroic acts of violence and destruction.[4] Peacemaking springs from the biblical teaching about the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, his cross, resurrection, and salvivic acts. It is based on the paramount message of Christianity: that the holy one of Israel, who can be encountered in the person of Jesus Christ, is the God of justice, love and peace. In the Bible, justice, love and peace have to do with slaves being set free from bondage, with care for widows and orphans, with kindness to strangers and sojourners, with compassion for the sick and disabled, but also with fair wages to workers, economic security, the inclusion of the marginalised, liberation from oppression, ecological justice, and the end of war.

Baum and Wells observe that "reconciliation and peacemaking are part of the Christian calling, both for churches and Christian organizations and for Christian individuals".[5] As some would put it, peacemaking is more than a way of life for the believing Christian; it should be accepted as the only way of life compatible with the message and life of Christ and his earliest followers. Peace-making is therefore a mandate for all Christians. It should play an essential role in their way of life, and it is the duty of Church leaders to speak about the demands of peace-making. To speak for peace, to pray for peace, to teach peace, to work for peace, to do whatever one can, whether great or small, to make peace is the Church's calling and must be put at the top of the priority list.

Looking at the contemporary Church in Africa, one would easily concur that the churches and their adherents have failed in this effort almost entirely. Christian people, and even Christian beliefs and practices, have been a contributing presence in many circumstances of violent conflicts. In addition, it is also evident that Christians, and more so Christian leaders, have been indifferent to massive evils, even to the point of participating as the instigators of violent conflicts[6] and not seeing the contradiction with their own beliefs and commitments. All these are painful though evident truths that the Church in Africa has to face. Linden recalls how the entire Church in Rwanda actively participated in the 1994 genocide:

---

[4] See Jan van Butselaar, "The promise of the kingdom and the reality of sin: Christian religion, conflict, and visions for peace", in this volume.

[5] Gregory Baum and Harold Wells (eds), *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the churches* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books/Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997), vii.

[6] African Rights, *Rwanda: Death, despair and defiance* (rev. ed.) (London: African Rights, 1995).

verified stories were about lower levels of leadership, such as catechists, directing or participating in mobs undertaking massacres. There is absolutely no doubt that significant numbers of prominent Christians were involved in the killings, sometimes slaughtering their own church leaders. This, perhaps more than any other aspect of the holocaust, has had a major impact on missionary congregations.[7]

The form and context of this massacre is a glaring contradiction to the achievements of the Church in Africa.[8]

The second reason explaining the polarisation noted above, and which also partly explains why religions have failed to be credible peacemakers, is that the sources of tradition that talk about justice and peace are also the sources of violent conflicts and other destructive practices. Religious sources can be a fountain of hatred and violence depending on how they are interpreted. It is tragically evident that the teaching of the churches can be insidiously destructive in its power to inspire injustice, intolerance, hatred and violence.

There are texts in the Bible that can be easily used to inspire violence and inhibit the Church's efforts as a peacemaker. When the Bible is not interpreted cautiously, both the Old and New Testaments can appear to condone violence as a way of life or to justify violence in various circumstances. There are such narratives as: conquest and annihilation of enemies (Joshua and Judges), contempt for people and their religions (Deuteronomy 7), exclusion of the disabled (Leviticus 21), the institution of slavery and the subordination of women (Ephesians 5), and passivity towards the state (Romans 13).

For Christians the Bible is the indispensable and incomparable source of the gospel. It is sacralised and functions as the Holy Scripture in the Church. Therein lies its power. But it can be misused and be co-opted for hateful and destructive purposes. Such misuse has been endemic and continues unabated.

What has been observed above about Christianity and the Bible is also true of Islam and the *Qur'an* respectively. The *Qur'an* comprises recitations recorded by the Prophet Mohammed, believed to come from *Allah*. Some of these recitations were peaceful, while others

---

[7] Ian Linden, "The Church and genocide: Lessons from the Rwandan tragedy", in Baum and Wells, *op. cit.*, at 43–55, at 50.

[8] Cf. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke (eds), *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda crisis from Uganda to Zaire* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999).

were militant. Therefore, like the Bible, either peacefulness or violence can be argued by selecting specific verses from the *Qur'an* or illustrations from Muslim history.

The peaceful interpretation held by a majority of Muslims is based on Quranic verses such as 2:256: "There is no compulsion in religion" and 5:82: "The nearest in affection to believers are those who say, 'We are Christians.'" The social regulations devised by early Muslim leaders for non-Muslim minorities within Muslim lands, which applied particularly to Jews and Christians, gave religious minorities the right to practice their faith as long as they were loyal citizens and performed their obligations to Muslim rulers.

Militants within Islam, however, base their positions on Quranic verses like 2:216: "Fighting is prescribed for you"; 2:190–92: "Fight in the cause of God those who fight you and slay them . . . for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter . . . fight them until there is no more persecution and oppression and there prevails justice and faith in God"; 9:5: "Fight and slay the infidels"; and 49:15: "The true believers are those who . . . strive with . . . their lives for the cause of God". In their pronouncement, militants like Usama Bin Laden echo the words found in these texts, suggesting that fighting and slaying is prescribed by *Allah*. According to canonical traditions, Mohammed taught that martyrs would have their sins forgiven, be shown their reward in Paradise, avoid purgatory and receive their crown of honour with *Allah*. Islamic suicide bombers thus see themselves as performing a sacred obligation for *Allah* and his community and acquiring honour and eternal reward. In fact, their experiences may have led them to believe that they lack the power to overcome *Allah*'s enemies by other means.

THE CHURCH PERSPECTIVE ON
SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL EXISTENCE

The question that haunts believers and non-believers alike in Africa is a valid one. In Africa, one wonders how is it that after so many years of Christian teaching, the Church still demonstrates an acute inability and apparent unwillingness to make a positive impact upon the conscience of its people. The faithful, particularly the more wealthy and comfortable amongst them, do not see structural social injustice as sin. They feel no personal responsibility for it and no obligation

to do anything about it. The majority has also inculcated negative values that promote conflict and war. This means the Church's social teaching has not made a difference in the conscience of the faithful in Africa. The question then is, can the Church's social teaching be removed from the high levels of doctrinal pronouncement and be forced into the conscience of African Christians, while at the same time all venues that generate conflicts are shielded from influencing the lives of the faithful? What is needed is an awareness on the part of the Church in Africa that it shares the sinful condition of humanity. From a Christian perspective, the Church itself stands under the judgment of the Kingdom in its structure, realities and attitudes. This is demonstrated clearly by Christianity's very definition of social justice.

> Social justice focuses not only on personal relationships but also on institutions, structures and systems of social organizations (keeping in mind however that these are composed of persons) which foster or impede the common good at the local, national and international levels. Social justice is the concept by which one evaluates the organization and functioning of the political, economic, social and cultural life of society. Positively the Church's social teaching seeks to apply the Gospel command of love to and within social systems, structures and institutions.[9]

The implication here is that the Church must redefine its life in favour of a preference for peacemaking and reconciliation. It must become aware of how all ideologies, and political, economic or social structure in general, form a harbinger of conflicts and tensions. The Church can mould itself in such a way that its structures reflect an embodiment of justice and tolerance.

Common sense therefore would dictate that setting of priorities around the most prominent issues of justice and peacemaking becomes a major preoccupation of the Church. It should not attempt to duplicate what other public or private agencies are already doing, but offer that which the Church can do which all other institutions cannot. The first priority would be to prepare the faithful to truly identify with it so that they can distinguish between what belongs to the Church and what does not.

The Church must construct its doctrinal content in such a way that the loopholes that give rise to conflict and oppression are closed,

---

[9] United States Catholic Conference, *Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States* (Washington, DC: USCCB Publishing, 1979).

while its resources for peacemaking and reconciliation are highlighted. Those who identify with the Church should be allowed to participate as agents of their own integral development, so that they inculcate its traditions through practice. Magesa explicitly states that the Church should construct and establish methods through which all "people of God" will be able as much as possible to participate in the entire life of the Church.[10]

One difficulty is that the outlook of the Church appears dualistic rather than integrated, its mission having both spiritual and temporal aspects. The focus of the former is primarily ecclesiastical, such as worship, preaching, religious instruction and administration of the sacraments. The focus of the latter is on social services to embrace humanity in the present time and space. The humanitarian aspects of the Church spring from this mission.

Several studies reveal that there is no homogeneity and harmony in the churches in Africa. This gives rise to scepticism about their potential as sites for effective peacemaking. The Church as an institution in many African countries displays an array of disquieting facts about its nature and role, and the way in which these are formed and transformed. They are often polarised, disorganised and differentiated in nature. This polarisation and fragmentation is dangerous because it weakens the conscience of society or influences it negatively.

There has been a lack of an autonomous and dynamic Church in Africa since the arrival of Christianity and other foreign religions on the continent. Prior to the advent of multiparty politics in Africa in the early 1990s, both the Church and civil society at large followed closely the ethnic divisions of African nationalism, giving way to further fragmentation of the Church. Several church groups, their institutions and organisations polarised further by reflecting the marked differences that underlie both politics and social life in African society.

The churches in Kenya provide a good example of the multiple and contradicting nature of the Church as a whole. In Kenya, the fragmentation of the Church has taken many forms.[11] The state has

---

[10] Laurenti Magesa, "The Catholic Church in Kenya: A time for reflection" (Arusha: Mwananchi, 1980).

[11] M.G. Ngunyi, "Religious institutions and political liberalization in Kenya", in Peter Gibbon (ed), *Markets, Civil Society and Democracy in Kenya* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1995), 121–76, at 136–43.

its own loyal churches; the opposition parties have churches loyal to them, while there are also neutral churches operating alongside these partisan church organisations. The latter seem to be genuinely representing the interest of the broader society and positively influencing the conscience of society.

The state has taken advantage of this disorientating fragmentation to undercut and further disorganise politically neutral and vibrant church groups. This is what some analysts have identified as the "ethnicisation" of the Church in Africa. For example, some of the churches in Kenya have become tribal affiliates; the National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCK) commands a following amongst the Agikuyu community; the Evangelical Fellowship of Kenya (EFK), commands respect among the Luo and Kalenjin communities.[12] The Legio Maria church is predominantly Luo and the Akurino church is mainly Agikuyu.

An illustration of this relates to the difficulties that the Church in Africa has in reference to its socio-political action. The dilemma centres on the question where the Church stands in regard to its commitment to changing society, as many people have observed. Poverty is causally linked to political structures and decisions. This implies that political action is a necessary element in evangelisation as a bridge to peacemaking and reconciliation. The Church must be in dialogue with the whole humankind. Peace-making also involves judgment and, more so, right judgment. The Church must be a liberator to the whole of society and not only those who believe in it. It would not be appropriate to remain indifferent to political actions, injustices in society and structures of sin.

The Church's ministry of evangelisation in Africa tends to avoid two hazards. First, the confusion of the proclamation of Christian Kingdom values with a particular ideology is circumvented. Second, the Church evades having to endorse a specific socio-political system: such an approval would carry the hazard of identifying the Church's witness with a specific policy. A non-partisan stance on the part of the institutional Church would increase its credibility as a moral authority in the secular world, precisely because it would eschew technical know-how in the mechanism of peacemaking and has a moral duty to freely articulate moral values.

---

[12] *Id.*, at 124–25.

Nevertheless, this dualism carries with it potential distortions of peace-making as a way of life. The absence of the Church as an institution in the social-political world is a naive political neutrality. It entails by default the risk of sacralising and further establishing the status quo. In fact, in Africa the Church is more often a significant presence within party politics. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a bishop once headed a political party, while other notable Church dignitaries are active in party politics. In Rwanda, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kigali, Vincent Nsengiyumva, became a member of the Central Committee of the *Mouvement révolutionnaire national pour le développement* (MRND) in the mid-1970s until he was forced by Rome to relinquish his party position. The same bishop was also a confessor to Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana's wife. If nothing else, the presence of Church dignitaries at party rallies gives it a legitimising rather than a prophetic role. In this context Magesa warned:

> In seeking to outline the shape from the vantage point of the present, we need to understand how we got to this present. Clearly, we have to consider, however briefly, church – state relations, which have contributed to the emergence of the situation that now calls for a courageous prophetic stand by church leaders, what I have called "a process of disengagement from wrongdoing". In sub-Saharan Africa, this process will involve restructuring church leaders' thirty years of theologically dubious association with prevailing socio-political and economic ideologies.[13]

CONCLUSION

Religion, we have argued, is the only institution in Africa that is able to construct an individual or a group conscience in a powerful and comprehensive way. This inherent quality of religion thus makes it a potentially helpful model for peacemaking. There are other forces competing with religion, such as culture, that are also likely to shape individual and group conscience. However, religion is still the most suitable institution for effective conflict management in Africa. It responds to human needs in ways that no other repository of cul-

---

[13] Laurenti Magesa, "Religious leaders, peacemaking and social change: Some theological perspectives", in Hizkia Assefa and George Wachira (eds), *Peacemaking and Democratisation in Africa: Theoretical perspectives and Church initiatives* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1996), 72–94, at 73–74.

ture can do. But the peculiar ability of religion to transform the inner self of an individual can also be very destructive if the content of the values it imparts contains threats to human survival.

It is instructive to note that there is no "quick fix" solution to the problem of violent conflicts in Africa. Reconstructing individual and group identities will also take time. When religion becomes the model for peacemaking, an all-inclusive approach is cultivated that empowers individuals to put every effort into peace-building. Religion can be effective in peacemaking and reconciliation if the norms and values that guide its doctrines and traditions are based on respect for the rights and dignity of the person. However, religion has been an instigator of violent conflicts both because the values that form the conscience of the faithful can be based on traditions and doctrines that promote violence and because religion has failed to have a real impact upon the conscience of the believers. This has led to the Church being indifferent in the face of structural and visible violence.

The nature of religion imbues it with facilities and methodologies that, if used well, can have a great impact on the conscience of men and women in society and transform them to be peacemakers in their everyday life. This is the only way in which peacemaking can become a way of life.

7. BITTER CONFLICT: CAN JUDAISM BRING HOPE?

Yehiel Grenimann

The bitter conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East is not only a conflict over land and national rights. It is also a conflict between Western political and economic liberalism and Muslim "fundamentalism". This is what makes the conflict so complex and intractable, and when you add the additional ingredient of Jewish fundamentalism, so explosive.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the internal conflict between Jews committed to the Western liberal tradition and those with a fundamentalist Jewish approach, which is intolerant of any other national claim to the land of Israel, has become a significant factor in modern Jewish political culture. The occupation of Judea, Samaria and Gaza during the (defensive) June 1967 war, with their large Palestinian population, which was kept under Israeli military administration without basic civil rights, while Jewish colonists (citizens of Israel) continued to settle in them, brought this issue to the forefront of Israeli politics, particularly after the first Palestinian uprising (*intifada*) against that occupation.

The role of religion in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (and the broader conflict between the Arab world and Israel) has largely been negative. Religious leaders on both sides have contributed to the intransigence, violence, hatred and fear that characterises the conflict in its current depressing stage of continual cycle of bloodshed, repression and brutality. The calls for blood-vengeance; the hope that the other side will leave or vanish, so the land will be held only by its "rightful" owners; the willingness to die a martyr's death in defence of the land and national and/or religious honour; the dogged determination of both sides to continue despite bloodshed; the evocation of a long history of suffering and abuse and the messianic hope for eventual victory; all these are rooted in the religious-national culture of the two sides involved.

Can the same Jewish religious tradition contribute to the reduction of violence, the respect for the needs and rights of others, and a vision for peace in the region? It is hard to be optimistic about this,

given recent history here. The answer to this question is complex and tentative, but crucial for the future of the Middle East.

The role of religion

It is clear that religious beliefs and commitments are central in the current conflict. The question is: must they be neutralised, ignored, set aside, as a first step out of the malaise here, or can they be understood differently, reinterpreted in such a way that they might become a contributing factor in a positive direction? In either case, no solution will be possible without understanding the role of the Jewish religious tradition in the conflict itself. Just as there can be no solution without a Jewish understanding of Palestinian claims and culture, including the religious dimension, so there can be no solution without a Palestinian understanding of Jewish claims and culture, particularly the religious dimension.

   The miraculous revival of the Jewish nation after two thousand years of exile and dispersion, particularly after the horrific crescendo of European anti-semitism between 1933 and 1945, cannot be understood without figuring in religious faith as part of the formula of survival and revival. It, in fact, serves to inspire others (for instance, the current Dalai Lama of Tibet), and that same faith and religious energy, although catastrophic for the Palestinians, at first can also serve to inspire them as to what is possible when a people is determined to survive and rebuild its life. Of course, in the Jewish case, this survival and rebuilding is given divine meaning.

   The energy now being expended to destroy the other in the current struggle between these two peoples could be harnessed to indeed fulfil an ancient prophetic promise, often proclaimed by Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, as a national goal – to make the desert bloom. The question remains how can that transformation from current destruction to future construction be catalysed? One possible answer is that the faith and devotion of the religious faithful on both sides needs to be focussed differently. But is that possible? At present these are the very elements which are most prominent in fanning the flames of destruction and hatred. This is a terrible paradox. The liberal periphery of Judaism and Islam here are unlikely to be able to lead their respective religious camps toward the necessary change of attitude. It will have to come from the fanatics themselves,

or those close to them, from the very elements who are the heart of the problem. But how?

Can one imagine Muslim and Jewish fundamentalists making common cause against the evils of the rampant materialism, global destruction and greed of the liberal, self-indulgent West? There are some elements amongst the West Bank settlers – particularly Rabbi Menahem Fruman of Tekoah – who have such hopes, and have let out feelers towards Muslim Arab neighbours based on such ideas. At present this phenomenon is not particularly significant numerically and has been pretty much derailed by the violent events of the past two years.

Nevertheless, the potential found in the overlap of the Muslim and Jewish religious critiques of Western decadence has been perceived by some religious thinkers.[1] It is only a matter of time until this overlap will lead to a realisation that there are reasons for Muslims and Jews of this approach to work together to preserve their way of life and religious vision, faced as they are by the powerful cultural influences which spin off globalisation. The current triumphalism of Western materialism after the fall of the Soviet bloc invites opposition of anti-materialists in both societies.

Amongst religious Jews who hold liberal and/or humanist views, there continues to be an interest in continuing dialogue with Muslim (and Christian) leaders and lay-people in the region. Rabbi Roberto Arbib of Tel Aviv, for instance, continues to work on contacts today with Sufi mystics to make common cause on spiritual matters and one hears of such contacts here and there within pre-1967 Israel. But these contacts remain limited to small intellectual circles that tend to avoid the political realm.

My own organisation, Rabbis For Human Rights (a coalition of some 100 clergy people from all the main denominations of Judaism, founded in 1988 in response to events during the first Palestinian *intifada*),[2] is one of a small group of religious organisations in Israeli public life which have been struggling to impact the public consciousness regarding alternative visions of the role of religion and religious teachings in the conflict here. It has been actively lobbying, teaching, preaching and acting in the political arena in various ways,

---

[1] For instance, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, chief rabbi of the British Commonwealth, in *The Dignity of Difference* (London & New York: Continuum, 2002).

[2] See www.rhr.israel.net.

some times with Palestinian and Israeli Arab religious leaders who are like-minded. The short-term results so far have been less than satisfying, considering the current violent reality. Nevertheless, we persist in our efforts.

Two other such organisations in the Orthodox camp are *Oz VeShalom* ("Courage and Peace") and *Netivot Shalom* ("Pathways to Peace"), which were formed by dovish religious Zionists at different times during the late twentieth century and were merged after the Lebanon war in late 1982. Their main focus, with some very limited success, has been to present the arguments for a more flexible, pragmatic approach on the issue of territorial compromise with the Palestinians to their particular social sector – modern Orthodoxy. They are very much an ideological response to the hegemony in that sector of the Greater Israel movement, and, particularly, the settler groups, such as *Gush Emunim* ("the Coalition of the Faithful"). One of the main arguments they put out is based on the primacy of *Pikuah Nefesh* ("Saving a Life") in Jewish law, and the belief that peace with the Palestinians is possible if the Jewish side is willing to compromise on territory. Unwillingness to do so, they argue is tantamount to agreeing to unnecessary sacrifice of human life for the sake of a lesser value – the sanctity of the land.

The splinter modern Orthodox party, *Meimad* (*Medinah Yehudit Medinah Demokratit*, "Jewish State, Democratic State"), whose political leader, Rabbi Michael Malchior, served as deputy foreign minister, and whose spiritual mentors, Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein and Rabbi Yehuda Amital, have some authority in this sector of Orthodoxy, hold similar views, though much more cautiously espoused. Paradoxically enough, the religious institution these last two head is situated itself in the *Gush Etzion* ("Etzion Bloc") area in Judea, over the "Green Line", which is the popular expression for the pre-1967 armistice lines (of 1949) between Jordan and Israel and Gaza and Israel. (One must understand that the *Gush Etzion* area was part of the Jewish area in the 1947 partition plan and, until recently, was pretty much considered non-negotiable by most Israelis).

The mainstream of Israeli religious life has not been particularly concerned with visions for peace in the region or interested in issues of human rights, particularly not when the focus of most human rights organisations – such as the *Agudah LeZehuyot HaEzrach* ("the Association for Civil Rights"), Amnesty International, the Coalition Against House Demolitions, the Israeli Committee Against Torture –

has been predominantly on the situation of Palestinians in the territories. Their focus has been much more on the issue of the possession and control of the land of Israel; and, secondarily, questions concerning the relationship between Israel's secular majority and Jewish religious institutions and authority. The Sefardi *Shas* party (*Shomrei Torah Sephardiim*, "Sefardi Guardians of the *Torah*"), led spiritually by Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, has increased its political power base by focussing on social issues as well.

Although the followers of the *Shas* party have a decidedly conservative and anti-Arab tendency, their chief rabbi has in the past said some interesting things about the value of human life as against possession of the entire land of Israel. In a well-known and much-quoted *halachic* (religious law) *responsa* some thirty years ago, he ruled that territorial compromise with the Arabs can be envisioned and is permitted as a preferred alternative to continuing bloodshed.[3] The value of human life in traditional Judaism has always been given priority over most of the precepts of the *Torah* (for instance observance of the holiest day, *Yom Kippur*, or the stringent rules of the sabbath), when there is a value-conflict or dilemma. There are many classical sources – both biblical and *talmudic* – which can be quoted as authority for this approach and, of course, Ovadia Yosef referred to them in his pronouncement.

Since that time the Orthodox community has moved further right, politically. This move has been toward greater nationalism and an increasingly uncompromising position regarding the occupied Palestinian territories. Ovadia Yosef has backtracked on his previously stated pragmatic position and has been recently quoted saying that the settlers across the "Green Line" are great heroes, and that the settling of all the land of Israel is a commandment equal to all the other religious commandments.[4] He has also said some very unflattering things about Palestinians, such as that they are not to be trusted to keep agreements.[5]

---

[3] Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, "An *halachic* discourse on the return of territory in a situation of saving lives", published by *Oz VeShalom*, Jerusalem, 1982 (in Hebrew), originally in "*Torah SheBal Peh* – Lectures at the 21st National Convention of the Association for Oral Law", Itzhak Rafael, ed. (Mossad Harav Kook: Jerusalem, 1980).

[4] There are such statements by some of the ancient sages in the Jerusalem *Talmud*, in particular.

[5] "Like snakes" was one well publicised comment he made to a closed forum.

THE LAND

In order to understand the depth of the religious problem facing believing Jews in the Middle East conflict, we must turn to examine the importance of the land of Israel in the Jewish religious tradition, generally, and, in particular, in the consciousness of religious leaders and thinkers of the Zionist movement in Israel.

The centrality of *Eretz Israel* ("the Land of Israel") in Jewish religious consciousness is clear to any student of Judaism, and finds expression throughout Jewish religious life. Religious Jews anywhere in the world face *Eretz Israel* three times a day when they pray, or Jerusalem, if they reside in the land itself, or the temple mount, if they reside in Jerusalem. The promise to return to the land is repeated in every prayer service, at crucial moments in the individual's life cycle, at all major festivals, and when saying grace after meals. It is well known, for instance, that the holiest services in the Jewish ritual – the conclusion of *Yom Kippur* and the end of the Passover feast – end with the promise or oath: "Next Year in Jerusalem"; and that the most joyful moment in a Jew's life, standing under the marriage canopy, ends with the breaking of a glass in memory of the destroyed temple and the recitation of the following lines from psalm 137:

> If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning,
> If do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
> If I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.[6]

Anyone reading the Bible, even superficially, will have no trouble seeing the centrality of *Eretz Israel* in the narrative there; a narrative all religious Jews read weekly in their synagogues from their holy *Torah* and which pious Jews study from one week to the next, generation after generation. The land is promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the people are led back there after their liberation from slavery in Egypt by Moses, the law-giver. The Books of Moses refer to the application of the laws given there as to be carried out in the land. The phrase "when you come into the land" is repeated numerous times in the text as a prelude to many of the commandments.

The stories of most of the rest of the Bible, loved and learned by generations of Jewish children all over the world, take place in *Eretz Israel*. The prophets gave their messages of ethics and morality there,

---

[6] Verses 5–7.

as mentioned in Israel's Declaration of Independence which is so important to those critical of the current religious directions in Israel today. The prophets also repeated time and again their promise that "the saving remnant" would return to the land from exile and re-inherit the land. And of course the land was to be the scene of the final redemption, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgement, the messianic era.

All of this, and much more, may be found in the passionate and poetic book, *Israel: An echo of eternity*,[7] about the Jewish love of Israel, written just after the Six Day War of 1967 by the late and great Jewish philosopher and human rights activist Abraham Joshua Heschel, an American Jewish leader passionately committed to the prophetic message of peace and justice. Heschel writes there: "Even before there was a people, there was a promise. The promise of a land. The election of Abraham and the election of the land came together. The promise of the land to the patriarchs is the *leitmotif* in the Five Books of Moses. Israel's claim upon Canaan goes back to the earliest period of history and was thought of as having its origin in the will of God".[8] "Our return to Zion is a major event within the mysterious history that began with a lonely man – Abraham – whose destiny was to be a blessing to all nations. . . . The Bible is an unfinished drama. Our being in the land is a chapter of an encompassing mean-ing-bestowing drama. . . . a sense of carrying out the biblical legacy".[9] For Heschel, the return of the Jews to Zion after Auschwitz has pro-found religious meaning. The revival of the people of Israel in their ancient homeland revives for them the messianic promise of an even-tual victory of faith and hope over evil. Having reclaimed the land will be a source of blessing for all, as was promised Abraham.

There is an aspect of apologetics in Heschel's book. It was written as a response to his Christian friends who could not understand the deep emotional awakening of American Jews during the 1967 Middle East crisis and war. He argues the Jewish case against the Arab claim to the land and rejects – rather apologetically and not altogether convincingly – the charge of injustice done to the Palestinian Arabs. One wonders whether Heschel would argue quite so confidently in

---

[7] Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Israel: An echo of eternity* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1969).

[8] *Id.*, at 100.

[9] *Id.*, at 221.

light of subsequent events since 1967. Nevertheless, his passionate
statement of the centrality of the land of Israel in Jewish religious
culture and the profound emotional impact of the establishment of
the State of Israel, and the 1967 victory, are worthy of study by any-
one concerned with understanding the religious aspect of the Jewish
relationship to the land.

What was true of Heschel was all the more so the case in the
thinking of Zionist and Israeli religious leaders. Although there was
some awareness of the real clash of Jewish and Arab interests in the
land of Israel ("Palestine" to the British and its Arab inhabitants), most
Zionist religious leaders, whether liberal-humanist in perspective or
Orthodox-nationalist, stressed the uniqueness of the Jewish claim to
and relationship with the land, often in somewhat romantic and mes-
sianic terms.

Professor Eliezer Schweid discusses the generational conflict between
foreign-born religious Zionist thinkers and writers (such as Aaron
David Gordon, Martin Buber and Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hacohen
Kook) and the generation born in the land.[10] In doing so, he describes
a process of re-orientation from a theological passion for the land,
tinged with messianic hopes, to one based in the love of the physical
land itself. While the young secularist Israeli writers display a degree
of alienation from their religious sources and a growing awareness
of the injustice done to the Arab population, those in the religious
camp – particularly after the startling 1967 victory – developed a
more intensely messianic approach to the land, which leaves no room
for consideration of or compromise with Palestinian claims. The pre-
State religious leadership expressed a belief that it would be possible
to compromise with the Arab inhabitants and that their human rights
must be respected. The Israel-born generation, on the other hand,
split between a majority who continues the religious passion for the
land but opposes Arab claims or rights, and a small minority whose
willingness to accept these is accompanied by an attempt to build
bridges to the secular majority.

A recently published book by Professor Uriel Simon of Bar Ilan
University, *Seek Peace and Pursue It*, exemplifies this latter approach.[11]
Simon has been active in both *Oz VeShalom* and *Netivot Shalom* for
many years, and has spoken at Peace Now rallies as a representative

---

[10] Eliezer Schweid, *The Land of Israel: National home or land of destiny* (London:
Associated University Press, 1985).

[11] Uriel Simon, *Seek Peace and Pursue It* (Tel Aviv: Hemed Books, 2002).

of a religious voice for peace. His book bewails the deep rift in Israeli society between a secular left alienated from its Jewish sources and a fundamentalist nationalist religious right. As a professor of biblical studies, he is particularly concerned about what he sees as misuse of the biblical text in the public debate over the Palestinian issue. He argues that there is a third position possible, apart from the secular, humanist approach that accepts Palestinian rights and the religious fundamentalist rejection of those rights. This an alternative reading of the biblical texts, one which hears the moral voice of the prophets there and roots an acceptance of the rights of the "other" in the very text being used to claim exclusivist rights.

Simon has been criticised in a number of literary reviews for imposing a very partisan view on the biblical text. Those who criticise him argue that the Bible must be seen as it is, and not be interpreted in order to appropriate it in political debate. Underlying most of these critiques seems to be an implication that the nationalist exclusivist understanding is in some way more authentic.

The biblical promise of the land to the Patriarchs, and the commandment to conquer the land, is indeed uncompromising. On the other hand, the message that the land must be a source of blessing for all of its inhabitants; that the stranger dwelling therein must be respected and treated equitably (a commandment repeated some 36 times throughout the holy text!), and the vision of the prophets of a time of universal peace and justice; all of which are emphasised by Simon, is certainly a central voice in the *Torah*, which must be reckoned with, even amongst the nationalist fundamentalists.

To understand the passion for the land, and its importance to traditional religious Jews, one must also consider the link between the land of Israel and another central element of Jewish religious tradition – the belief in the chosen-ness of the people of Israel.

Just as the constitutive story of the Bible is inextricably woven around the relationship of the people of Israel to the land of Israel, so too is it clearly the story of a people chosen by God. Again and again the text tells the believing Jew that his people were chosen from amongst the nations to be God's people, to be "a light unto the nations", to be "a priestly people". For instance, in the Book of Deuteronomy, it says: "You are the Children of God . . . you are a holy people to the Lord your God, who has chosen you to be a cherished people amongst all the peoples on the earth".[12]

------

[12] Deuteronomy 14:1–3.

The promise of the land is linked to this chosen-ness. The content of chosen-ness is a way of life – the way of the commandments – which is to make of the Jewish people a vehicle for God's presence and message in the world. The place marked for this divine "experiment" is the land of Israel. There the people are to live according to God's divine commandments and thus to sanctify the Lord on Earth.

The land was given to the people of Israel conditionally. If you keep my commandments, says the *Torah*, and do not stray, you will remain in the land, but if you follow other gods or defile the land by your behaviour, then the land will vomit you out. This message is repeated a number of times in the Book of Deuteronomy, and a version of it is recited twice daily by religious Jews as part of one of their most important prayers – the *Shma*.[13] The intention was clearly to establish a monotheistic enclave in a pagan world, but the same conditionality re-appears in later prophetic texts and in *talmudic* literature in the context of a moral critique of Israelite, and later Judean, society. God will not suffer injustice or bloodshed in His land.

This theological approach to the land could again today become a basis for a significant moral critique of the excesses of modern nationalism in the guise of religion. A change of heart by some of the leading religious nationalist figures, regarding dispossession of Palestinians and denial of their basic civil and human rights, would revive the relevance of this approach in the contemporary conflict. The question remains – how can one catalyse such a change of heart? The relevant religious teachings are waiting there in the tradition for just such a purpose.

The promise of peace

Peace as a religious value and teaching in the Jewish tradition has not been insignificant. The word peace (*shalom*) itself has since time immemorial been one of the most basic Jewish greetings on meeting or departing. It is common knowledge that this is also the case in Arab culture. "*Shalom*" appears in many of the daily prayers, usually as the concluding sentiment or hope, and is described as one of the names of the Lord. It is the climax of the priestly blessing, which Aaron and his descendants were to pronounce regularly in the

---

[13] *Id.*, 11:13–17.

sacrificial service. Moses teaches the people that before entering into battle, one is to offer the enemy the possibility of a peaceful resolution of conflict.[14] The prophets Isaiah, Hosea, Micha and Habbakuk abhor war and promise a time to come when there will be peace on earth amongst the nations. The area of Israel has suffered much from warfare in ancient, medieval and modern times and the hope for peace has always been a central element in the Jewish messianic vision. In the *talmudic* literature the value of peace in daily life and the importance of being pragmatic in life amongst the nations becomes paramount. "For the sake of Peace" is often given as a reason for moderation and compromise by the *talmudic* sages. It is used to modify some of the more strident anti-pagan legislation of the *Torah*,[15] and to expand the social laws to include non-Jews.

At this point it is perhaps important to explain the nature of the relationship between biblical and *talmudic* sources in Judaism. Jewish religious life is centred on the holy text of the *Torah* – the five books of Moses, but that text, which is considered the core of what is called "the written *Torah*", i.e. the Scriptures, is studied according to the normative methods of interpretation of the accompanying "oral *Torah*". This "oral tradition" which, during and after the massive Roman onslaught against Judaism after the destruction of the Second Temple, became itself sanctified to some extent and a focus of study. The teachings of the sages of old were preserved in the discussions of subsequent generations of scholars in the academies of *Eretz Israel* and Babylon, and were published hundreds of years later as the Jerusalem and Babylonian *Talmuds*.

The *Talmud* has always been of prime importance in issues of Jewish law, though Reform Judaism and modern secular Jewish nationalism have tended to return to the Bible as the base text of their religious and cultural activity. Reform Jews liked the later prophets with their universalist religious and moral message. Secular, and even some religious, Zionists returned to the Bible – particularly Joshua and the stories of King David – because of its focus on the land of Israel and its conquest. Those amongst the Zionists who wanted to link their return to the land with a universalist vision of some future socialist or religious utopia also tended to orient toward

---

[14] *Id.*, 20:10.
[15] *Babylonian Talmud*, Tractate Avoda Zarah (*passim*, particularly chs. 2 and 3).

the latter prophets in their writings and speeches. Apart from the ultra-orthodox enclave and some religious intellectuals, the pragmatic approach of *talmudic* Judaism as it had developed in the diaspora tended to be pushed aside on matters of importance in Israeli public life. A return to a little more *talmudic* subtlety would be a blessing for today's Israel.

Rabbi David S. Shapiro argues that, "The latter teachers of Israel not only continued to promulgate the prophetic readings on the significance of peace. They enlarged upon them. For the Rabbis no ideal is so glorious as peace . . . the Torah in its totality, they say, was given for the promotion of peace (*Babylonian Talmud*, Gittin, 59b) . . . Peace, unlike other religious precepts, must be sought after and pursued".[16]

Shapiro gives an erudite overview of the place of "peace" as both a guiding principle and a religious goal of Jewish life. His main points are: pursuit of peace is an aspect of *imitatio dei* since this is a divine quality and, in fact, one of the names of God; when there is a conflict between the strict application of the law and mercy, the general direction of the sages was to apply the law in a way which increases peace in the community (i.e. the merciful, gentle way); a *Sanhedrin* (a Jewish higher court of at least 23 judges) which carried out the death penalty more than once in 70 years was considered "murderous", and they found every way possible to avoid such a penalty; the *Torah* should be interpreted according to the principle of "*Kol Darcheiya Darchei Noam, vekol Netivoteya Shalom*", meaning "all Her ways are pleasant, all Her paths are Peace" – a saying quoted in numerous places in rabbinic literature and sung at every Sabbath and festival, when the *Torah* scroll is ceremoniously removed from the Holy Ark to be read.

Shapiro also discusses the approach of Jewish law to violence and war. The *halacha* (normative Jewish law, particularly Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Book of Judges) was prolific in its anti-violence legislation from *Torah* and oral tradition sources. The details regarding the building of the holy temple in Jerusalem, for instance, reveal a "repugnance for the instruments of war".[17] The *Torah* forbids the use

---

[16] David S. Shapiro, "The Jewish attitude towards peace and war", in Vol. I of *Studies in Jewish Thought*, N. Lamm (ed), (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1975), reprinted by *Oz VeShalom* in *Violence and the Value of Life in Jewish Tradition*, Yehezkel Landau (ed), (Jerusalem: Oz VeShalom Publications, 1984), 77.

[17] *Id.*, at 81.

of iron in the building of the temple and its implements.[18] Regarding this law, the rabbis explained that iron, which was made into swords, was used to shorten human life, whereas the purpose of the temple was peace. As he writes, "The priests, who were to worship in the temple of peace of the God of peace, were not to share in the booty of war, just as they were not allowed to participate in war. The temple thus became the symbol of repugnance of war and its instruments."[19]

The heroes of Jewish religious tradition have been men and women of piety and learning, not warriors. King David, who was praised for his religious poetry and piety, for instance, was forbidden the honour of building the Temple because his hands had shed blood. The *talmudic* sages omitted the name of Israel's saviour, Judas Maccabeus, from their records. His name is not mentioned in the vast expanse of the *talmudic* and *midrashic* literature. It is commonplace, known to Jewish kindergarten children, that the miracle celebrated at *Channuka* was the miraculous burning of one day's pure oil during eight days (until new *kosher* oil could be brought), rather than Judah the Maccabee's successful military revolt against Greek rulers.

This is the result of the re-interpretation of Jewish history by the rabbis. After the Roman period of brutal repression after the great Jewish revolt of 70 C.E. and particularly the Hadrianic attempt to wipe out Judaism after the Bar Kochba revolt of 135 C.E., they were concerned not to glorify war, and were keenly aware of the evil potential of such glorification.

Judaism is not a pacifist tradition. Self-defence is considered a religiously sanctified duty. Some wars are considered "just" wars – those divinely commanded in order to conquer the land and those necessary to defend it – but wars of conquest are considered evil excesses of greedy self-aggrandising rulers, and are condemned. The conquest of the land was predicated on the presumed absolute moral depravity of the seven pagan nations from whom it was conquered. The Canaanite nations are described as having performed every depravity and abomination imaginable. They are repeatedly characterised as sacrificing their children to Moloch. This is given a number of times both in the Mosaic text and in subsequent Jewish classical texts as the

---

[18] Exodus 20:22; also Deuteronomy 27:5.
[19] Shapiro, "The Jewish attitude towards peace and war", *op. cit.*, at 65.

justification for the total destruction of these peoples, which to some commentators seems to contradict other Jewish teachings, particularly the depiction of the God of Israel as Merciful – "*El Rachum*".[20]

The rabbis understood that this command was historically limited to that particular generation and that henceforth the Jewish people would inherit the land only by peaceful means and with God's aid.[21] This last point has been a bone of contention within the Jewish religious community in Israel, particularly since the June 1967 war. The ultra-orthodox segment of the population refuses to serve in the army on the basis of these teachings. The religious Zionists have had to either understand the wars of modern Israel as defensive wars – which was indeed the case for many of them – or re-interpret Jewish law to allow for a more activist, aggressive position.

Vision for peace

No one has been able to ignore the primacy of peace as a value of the prophetic and rabbinic tradition, but many have postponed its realisation to some distant utopian future, rather than seeing it as a real possibility in the present situation. The price of such a peace was and remains a willingness to compromise and share the land. We have shown just how difficult an expectation that was, considering the centrality of the land in Jewish tradition.

When the conditional nature of the promise of the land to the "chosen people" is re-emphasised in contemporary Jewish consciousness, and when the religious-Zionist rabbis reconnect to the centrality of peace in Jewish tradition, there will be a real possibility for movement of religious Jews toward a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Without such change it is hard to conceive of a solution to the conflict. Of course, some indications from the Muslim side of the conflict of a real willingness to move towards a resolution are necessary as well.

Organisations such as Rabbis For Human Rights continue to reach out and search for partners in teaching peace as a central Jewish vision today, both within the Jewish community and across religious

---

[20] See Deuteronomy 9:4–7; 12:29–31.
[21] Maimonides, *Introduction to Sefer Ha-Mitzvot*, end; *Sefer Hachinuch*, Commandment 532; *Babylonian Talmud*, Tractate Ketubot 111a.

and cultural boundaries, despite the continuing violence, cynicism and hatred in this part of the world.

Rabbis For Human Rights has been collecting signatures of religious leaders willing to sign the following statement, which was published in some of the daily Israeli newspapers:

> We, Jewish, Christian, Druze and Muslim leaders, cry out in the name of the One God to recognize one another all created in God's image. The forces of demonization and hate have taken hold not only in the Middle East but throughout the globe, and we must look into our religious traditions and speak out in the name of compassion and justice. Our task as religious leaders is to engage in self reflection and point the way to a better future for our children and ourselves. We, therefore, out of our respective religious traditions:
>
> Condemn all acts of violence and human rights violations, seeing as they contradict God's will for humanity. The suffering of Israelis and Palestinians must stop. An attack against any human being is an attack against God . . .
>
> Call upon Israelis and Palestinians to recognize each other's humanity and deep roots in this land. We must find the courage to break the cycle of violence and human rights violations . . .
>
> Call for energizing the vision of peace through negotiations, based on international legitimacy and respect for international law, and the shared ethics of our religious traditions . . .

This is an excerpt from a longer statement, but the above is sufficient to understand the general educative direction of the statement. By mid-2003, a good number of signatures had been collected (over 70), including such notable figures as Sheikh Ibrahim Sarsur (Muslim), Bishop Monib Unan (Christian) and Rabbi David Rosen (Jewish). Seminars on human rights in the Jewish and Islamic religious traditions have been conducted in a number of Jewish and Arab high schools during the past few years, with some moderate success, and we are now working at conducting similar seminars at teachers' training institutions. It is, of course, an uphill struggle to convey such a message, but some progress has been made and there is an increasing interest. There is some room for cautious hope – at least for the more distant future. Meanwhile, the bloodshed and injustices continue.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS AND ISLAM: COHESIONS AND CONFLICTS – A STUDY OF PAKISTAN

Ali Salman

The main title of this chapter is "Human rights and Islam", which signals some assumptions. I have not opted for "Human rights in Islam" because that would connote a certain type of apologetic behaviour. I have resisted the temptation of "Islam and human rights", which, by placing Islam before human rights, in a contemporary sense becomes historically questionable. This essay is an inquiry into the uneasy relationship between religion, especially Islam, and human rights as explicated by some contemporary thinkers and human rights activists. It considers both theoretical and policy perspectives, while questions pertaining to the status of human rights in Pakistani society receive special attention. The overarching question behind this inquiry is "can religion contribute to building a culture of human rights", which is addressed by delineating some points of cohesion and conflict between "human rights" and "Islam".

The first section is largely a theoretical and historical account, while the second section discusses some policies, facts and cultural patterns in Pakistan. The third section concludes the inquiry by referring to a synergetic course of action and thought.

THE CORE CONCEPT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

> Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.[1]

The core of the concept of human rights in the contemporary sense is the belief in the sacredness of the human person.[2] This sacredness

---

[1] Article 18, Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
[2] Michael J. Perry, *The Idea of Human Rights: Four inquiries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 5.

is supposedly universal and absolute at the ideal and conceptual levels at least, and it has some consequences, implying that certain choices should be made for all human beings and certain choices should be rejected for any human being.[3] The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[4] the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[5] and the 1976 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[6] – the three documents constituting "The International Bill of Human Rights" – commonly speak of "human dignity" as something which should be respected in its own right. There is also the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,[7] which is not yet considered to be part of the International Bill of Human Rights. On the grounds of "sacredness" and "dignity", a direct epistemological link can be established between human rights and religion, as religion, in the Durkheimian sense,[8] is primarily concerned with the idea of sacredness. Moreover, by giving references to biblical teachings such as "love one another" and concerning "brother/sister-hood", Perry has argued for an elaborate relationship between the religious and human rights perspectives of equality as expounded in the ideas of both human rights and religion; equality cannot be assumed unless we assume that all human beings share the same origin.[9] Obviously such teachings are also mentioned in other holy scripts, such as the *Qur'an*, which emphasises the belief that all human beings were created from Adam and Eve, and, in this sense, are tied in a natural and permanent "brother/sister-hood" or family.[10] Thus this could become an important point of cohesion between human rights and religion.

Let me now turn the idea of the sacred on its head. It is noted that in most modern sociological interpretations of religion, God and

---

[3] *Id.*

[4] UN General Assembly res. 217A (III), U.N. Doc. A/810 at 71 (1948).

[5] UN General Assembly res. 2200A (XXI), 21 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 16) at 52, U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966).

[6] UN General Assembly res. 2200A (XXI), 21 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 16) at 49, U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966).

[7] UN General Assembly res. 36/55, 36 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 51) at 171, U.N. Doc. A/36/684 (1981).

[8] Gordon Marshall, *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 575.

[9] Perry, *The Idea of Human Rights, op. cit.*, at 13.

[10] Qur'an 49:13.

other-worldliness – the pillars of most religious belief in the traditional sense – are absent or explicitly avoided. Thus we hear about "rituals", "symbols", "reverence" or "awe", and of course about the "community of believers",[11] but we do not hear about God or the other-world. It is not surprising, then, that "references to God, Nature and even Human Nature were deleted from the drafts of the 1948 [Universal Declaration of Human Rights] shortly before its adoption".[12] Thus the idea of an association between sacredness and awe, or reverence of and belief in God, is replaced with a belief in the sacredness and dignity of the human person which becomes the object of reverence, and therefore society itself becomes sacred. Religion, in the traditional sense, becomes marginalised in the human rights discourse. It seems that the advice of Nietzsche, who asserts that if the Christian God is given up, Christian morality should be given up too, as the former is the origin of latter, has been shelved. Thus if "the God-man is nothing more than an illusion, the same thing is true of the idea that every individual possesses *incalculable worth*" (read "inherent sacred-ness/dignity").[13] Thus the flip side of a cohesion between religion and human rights is actually a deep conflict.

After establishing this ambivalence of religion and human rights for dignity, I now turn to some central dialectics regarding the human rights discourse. Broadly speaking, we can consider three dichotomies, without considering them essentially as "ideal types". There is, and will remain, a peculiar tension within each dichotomy as religious and human rights perspectives seemingly suggest opposite directions in each set.

Firstly, I suggest that a dichotomy of individualism versus collectivism exists between human rights and religion. Human rights, as a modern phenomenon, are based upon the premise that every individual has the right to express their opinion and belief in all their societal rela-tionships. Thus an individual can adopt or leave a religion, marry a person of their own choice, live and earn by their own free will. This individualism is contrasted with collectivism or communitarianism,

---

[11] Anthony Giddens, *Sociology* 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 436.

[12] Robert Ombres, "The ethics of human rights", *Law and Justice*, Nr. 114/115, at 140 (1992), cited in Perry, *The Idea of Human Rights, op. cit.*, at 110, n. 8.

[13] Glenn Tinder, "Can we be good without God: The political meaning of Christianity", *Atlantic*, Dec. 1989, at 69 and 80, cited in Perry, *The Idea of Human Rights, op. cit.*, at 23 (passages re-arranged and emphasis added).

which is supposedly a pre-modern phenomenon common to all religious traditions.[14] But it is conveniently ignored that the concept of human rights is not absolutely individualistic, as it conditions the expression of individualism on certain collectivist arguments, such as "public health", "public morals", "public order", etc.[15] For example, Article 19(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which follows Article 19(2) (recognising freedom of expression), says: "The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*), or of public health or morals." What is "public morals", or what is "necessary", is left imprecise and open to interpretation in the specific situation of individual states. We can conclude, therefore, that human rights do not grant individual freedom in an absolute sense, but explicitly tie them to certain identifiable conditions. The supposedly religious objection to human rights as being too individualistic and far too little collectivist becomes feeble, if not invalid, and therefore an obvious point of conflict becomes a point of cohesion.

There is a common misperception that individualism, a cornerstone of human rights, is a Western or secular product. But the tradition of individualism, that is, persisting on one's own ideals, has a prominent place in other civilisations, such as Islam. For example, the founders of the four major schools of thoughts in Sunni Islam faced prolonged imprisonment and state torture as punishment for insistence on their personal interpretation of religion, which did not necessarily coincide with that of their rulers.[16] Similarly, schools of "heretical" thought such as the Kharijites (7th century C.E.) and Mu'tazilites (9th century C.E.) were persecuted by the state apparatus. Even now, unorthodox views are heard from individuals such

---

[14] Ann Elizabeth Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and politics* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 56.

[15] Perry, *The Idea of Human Rights, op. cit.*, at 90.

[16] That is, the Hanafi school, named after Abu-Hanifa (699–767); the Maliki school, after Malik ibn Anas (713–795); the Shafii school, after Abu ʿAbd-Allah Muhammad Idris Al-Shafiʿi (767–819); and the Hanbali school, after Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780–855).

as Nasr Abu Zaid (Egypt) and Abdullahi An-Na'im (Sudan), who live in exile from their home countries.

Another dichotomy exists in the case of universalism versus relativism, wherein a human rights perspective argues for the first and religion stands for the second. But from the human rights perspective, the very term "universal" in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights becomes misleading when we see that the exercise of these universal rights is coupled with some permissible dispensation related to the particular situation of a country. Though what is "necessary" as a precondition for this derogation remains highly controversial, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights allows those that have adopted it, that is, states, to interpret the situation. It becomes more serious and dramatic if a situation is declared a "public emergency", which allows a state to suspend the observance of fundamental human rights for legitimate reasons, as a public emergency has been acknowledged as a legitimate reason for derogation.[17] Thus, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not always universally applied. Acknowledgment of such situations in the human rights concept itself, however, further weakens the religious argument that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not respect particularities, as many states, especially Muslim states, put forward religious arguments for not respecting certain universal rights, such as the freedom of religion or belief. Instead of invoking religious arguments or an associated public morality, which may not be equally acceptable to the world, Muslim states should consider if a particular act of a person or group is hazardous for public order, which constitutes a "universally" valid reason for annulling a basic human right.

The third dichotomy is that of rights versus responsibilities, which is built upon the tension between "rights" and "responsibilities" as two distinct types of human behaviour. Many critics of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially Muslim scholars, argue that the whole idea underlying the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is "un-Islamic", because Islam stresses responsibilities and not rights.

---

[17] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 4(1), "In time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed, the States Parties to the present Covenant may take measures derogating from their obligations under the present Covenant to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with their other obligations under international law and do not involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin."

Here of course I am placing the apologist's argument aside that reminds us of the old dichotomy between the rights of *Allah* ("*Haquq Allah*") and the rights of people ("*Haquq al'Ibad*"). This is apologetic because it is difficult to prove that the idea of human rights existed in Islamic discourse much before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted. My contention is that this terminology undoubtedly existed, but in an almost opposite sense of the contemporary understanding of human rights. For example, Islamic discourse emphasizes certain "*Haquq al'Ibad*", such as rights of the neighbour, fellow traveller, parent, wife, children, etc. One eminent women's rights activist notes that the *Qur'an* puts great emphasis on the "right to justice".[18] I have no problem as far as the importance of justice is concerned in the *Qur'an*, but my point is that the verse being used as a warrant for this argument says "Be just!",[19] which is essentially an instruction, and not a question of right for Muslims. Muslim scholars may do well to insist upon the original and common-sense purpose of the Qur'anic injunction, rather than twist the interpretation to fit modern arguments, but this is a digression.

It should now be obvious that in Islam these "rights" are in fact "responsibilities" of the individual, which are owed to others, like those owed to *Allah*. Thus, nobility aside, the responsibility concept is not a "right" as far as "human rights" are concerned, an argument that is not only apologetic but also incorrect. There are some more serious arguments, which have been made by contemporary Muslim scholars, to which I will refer shortly. For now, I want to point out that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related documents are not devoid of the idea of duties and responsibility. For example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides: "The exercise of the rights provided for . . . carries with it special duties and responsibilities."[20] Therefore, the religious argument declaring human rights devoid of responsibility loses its basis. The difference between responsibilities and rights is also reflected in an interview by a famous Iranian human rights activist and scholar, Abdolkarim Soroush, who clearly states that "secularism is actually based on an

---

[18] Riffat Hassan, "Rights of women within Islamic communities", in John Witte, Jr. and Johan D. van der Vyver (eds), *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspectives: Religious perspectives* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996), 361–86, at 372.
[19] Qur'an 5:8.
[20] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19(3), referring to Article 19(2) on freedom of expression.

understanding of rights. The whole secular culture of the modern age is predicated on the basis of individual right. . . . [T]he language of rights is completely different from the language of traditional religion which is based on the notion of duties instead. The language of *fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence], for instance, is a science of obligations; it is not a discourse of rights."[21] Soroush flips the coin in an interesting way by further saying that in those societies where Muslims are a majority, it is common to say that it is a Muslim's duty to love and obey God, but where Muslims are a minority community, they say it is their "right" to follow their religion.[22] This political expediency is clearly articulated by Asghar Ali Engineer, who lives and works in India, where the world's largest Muslim minority exists. For Engineer, "one of the most attractive and redeeming features of secularism is the emphasis that it places on pluralism and equal rights for all: equal rights for men and women, equal rights between the rich and the poor, equal rights between all religious and cultural communities."[23] Thus the boundary between responsibilities and rights is further blurred, creating more space for both cohesion and conflict.

At this point, it is pertinent to mention an international attempt to emphasise responsibilities outside the domain of religion. I refer to the proposed "Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities", prepared in September 1997 by a prominent group of elder statesmen with the aim of having this document endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948. This document did not get much attention, not to mention endorsement, and was criticised for its ambiguous and soft terms, its apparent similarities with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its lack of understanding of the implications of globalisation for human rights.[24] My purpose in mentioning this experiment is to remind us that the

---

[21] Abdolkarim Soroush, "The responsibilities of the Muslim intellectual in the 21st century: Interview with Abdolkarim Soroush", in Farish A. Noor (ed), *New Voices of Islam* (Leiden: ISIM, 2002), 15–21, at 17.

[22] *Id.*, at 18.

[23] Asghar Ali Engineer, "The compatibility of Islam, secularism and modernity: Interview with Asghar Ali Engineer", in Noor, *New Voices of Islam, op. cit.*, at 29–34, at 30–31.

[24] Theo van Boven, "A Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities?", in Barend van der Heijden and Bahia Tahzib-Lie (eds), *Reflections on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A fiftieth anniversary anthology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1998), 73–79.

notion of and concern for the question of responsibility is not essentially a religious concern, and some kind of common ethical standards can be referred to as criteria. In any case, the emphasis on responsibilities overlooks the historical context in which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted: the 1940s was the decade which witnessed the culmination of totalitarian regimes such as those of Hitler and Mussolini, which were essentially built upon the belief that every individual has some duty towards the state, for nation-building and economic development.

Islamist response to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

A comprehensive response by contemporary Muslim thinkers to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the 1981 Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights published by the Islamic Council of Europe, which is largely informed by Sayyid Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi's idea on human rights in Islam.[25] Although it had been developed on lines similar to its secular antecedent, in its spirit the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights remains highly religious. Its article 12(a), on the "Right to Freedom of Belief, Thought and Speech", stipulates that "Every person has the right to express his thoughts and beliefs so long as he remains within the limits [*hudud*] prescribed by the Law [the *Shari'a*]. No one, however, is entitled to disseminate falsehood [*al-batil*] or to circulate reports which may outrage public decency [*al-fahisha*], or to indulge in slander, innuendo or to cast defamatory aspersions on other persons." Its essentialist language can be contrasted with the Qur'anic injunction that "[T]here shall be no compulsion in the religion."[26] As a matter of fact, the standards set in the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights go well beyond the conventional norms of public safety and public morals, and emphasise *Shari'a*, which is a human creation, as the criteria. What is falsehood for one party can conveniently be considered truth for another, and therefore much in the Universal Islamic

---

[25] See Documentary Resources 3, in this volume. Miriam Cooke and Bruce B. Lawrence, "Muslim women between human rights and Islamic norms", in Irene J. Bloom, J. Paul Martin and Wayne L. Proudfoot (eds), *Religious Diversity and Human Rights* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 313–31, at 322.

[26] Qur'an 2:256.

Declaration of Human Rights is left open to the will of Muslim states, which more often than not are undemocratic and authoritarian.

The "women question"

One of the most sensitive and controversial human rights issues is the status of women in Muslim societies. Here again, extremes can be observed by either totally rejecting Islamist discourse on allegations of discrimination based on sex, or by the absolute submission to *Shari'a* – not the *Qur'an* – in the question of women's rights. Issues pertaining to equality between men and women in general, laws of inheritance, the relative ease of the right to divorce for men, laws of evidence, and injunctions related to modesty in dress and public roles for women have been discussed widely. Though satisfactory answers to these burning questions are yet to be developed and established in wider Muslim thought, one important historical context should be noted that serves as a useful point of caution before taking extreme positions. The *Qur'an* was revealed in 7th-century Arabia, which was by no means a "civilised" society, especially before Islam. The legal rights of women to inheritance of property meant a revolution in that context, which provided superior rights to women compared to Europe until the 19th century.[27] Similar arguments can be presented for other aspects of sex-based discrimination allegedly associated with the *Qur'an*.

   Attempts have been made to reconcile the apparent inequalities between men and women present in the "scripture". For example, the law of evidence, which presupposes that the evidence of two women will be equal to one man, has been reinterpreted by a modern thinker, Abdulaziz Sachedina. He has argued that this difference was because of literateness: two women were called for because the level of literacy was especially low among women in Arab society. Thus, in case of evidence, if they cannot produce anything in writing, the two can do it verbally and jointly.[28] How modern this interpretation may seem is debatable, since it puts forward literacy as a principle criteria for being able to give evidence, which for law is not a requirement. The eminent feminist Riffat Hassan has also done research into the idea of equality between men and women as understood in the *Qur'an*. She has presented religious arguments proving

---

[27] Cooke and Lawrence, "Muslim women", *op. cit.*, at 325.
[28] *Id.*

that both Adam and Eve were created as separate human beings, and that likewise both of them (and not Eve alone) were seduced by Satan to eat from the forbidden tree.[29] While Hassan proves the principle of equality through her exegesis, she does not give her opinion on more controversial issues such as the law of inheritance, law of evidence, or the right of men to (conditional) polygamy. Therefore, the overall question of women rights remains a subject of contention, and it is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. The greatest impediment towards a more feminist interpretation of women issues in Islamist discourse is the almost total absence of women interpreters of traditional sources of Islamic law throughout Muslim history. The recent establishment of a women's *Shari'a* college in Qum, Iran, may prove to be an interesting development in this regard.[30]

Practice of human rights

So far we have been discussing religion and human rights within a theoretical framework. If we enter the framework of practice, obviously new possibilities of cohesion and conflict emerge. The modern birthplace of human rights is the West, which is also the birthplace of secularism; in fact human rights and secularism cannot exist without each other. But we also notice that the gravest crimes against human rights associated with the right to life have been committed in the West. Here I am referring particularly to the Nazi holocaust and Soviet Marxism-Leninism in the first half of the 20th century, and Bosnia in the latter half. Those events were built on supposedly modern and secular structures, but subsequent events have shown that secularism, as a principle alone, does not guarantee the preservation of human rights.[31] Similarly, Muslim rule, as exemplified by the Mughal empire in the Indian sub-continent and the Andulus Sultanate, does not necessarily mean outright discrimination: Muslims, in hundreds of years of constant rule in these areas, demonstrated a practice of pluralism allowing freedom to people from other religions – Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists in the former case and Jews in the latter. On

---

[29] Hassan, "Rights of women", *op. cit.*, at 383.
[30] Cooke and Lawrence, "Muslim women", *op. cit.*, at 324.
[31] See Abdullahi an-Na'im, "Muslims must realise there is nothing magical about the concept of human rights: Interview with Abdullahi an-Na'im", in Noor, *New Voices of Islam, op. cit.*, at 5–13.

the other hand, one cannot lose sight of historical facts, such as the execution of persons from groups seen as heretical such as Kharijites (7th century C.E.) and Mu'tazilites (9th century C.E.) in Muslim history and the atrocious institution of the Inquisition under the Catholic Church. Therefore we cannot identify secularism or religion as either a guarantor or oppressor of human rights.

STUDY OF PAKISTAN

> [I]t is the will of the people of Pakistan to establish an order . . . wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights, including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, *subject to law and public morality*.[32]

In the foregoing discussion, human rights paradigms have been compared and contrasted with religious – largely Islamic – paradigms on theoretical and historical accounts. This part presents a case-study of Pakistan from a human rights perspective. The selection of Pakistan is justified both for political and analytical reasons. Politically, Pakistan has become a front-line state in the post-9/11 scene and continues to occupy this position in the context of South Asia's nuclear-laden conflicts. Analytically, Pakistan offers contrasting tendencies of extremist conservatism in the form of militant organisations, and moderate modernism in the form of sprawling electronic media. In the light of its nuclear capabilities and as the breeding ground of some of the most influential Islamic movements, Pakistan is envied as a model in the Islamic world.

The analytical focus will be on explaining the human rights record of Pakistan rather than assessing it. This will be done on the basis of policies, as well as actual events and cultural patterns. From the standpoint of the analysis, two policies come to the fore. One is that of declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims, and the treatment extended to them by the state and Muslim society at large. A related issue is the existing blasphemy law,[33] under which a person convicted of having uttered, by any means, "blasphemous" remarks concerning the Prophet Muhammad, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, may be

---

[32] Preamble, Constitution of Pakistan 1973, emphasis added.
[33] Section 295(c) of Pakistan Penal Code.

punished by death. The second policy is the separate system of
elections under which, until recently, Muslims and non-Muslims had
separate voters list and Muslims could cast votes only for a Muslim
candidate, while a non-Muslim candidate could seek votes only from
non-Muslims.

Policies

The issue of the Ahmadis is a very complex and sensitive one. The
Ahmadis were founded in the early 20th century by Mirza Ghulam
Ahmed Qadiani. They refute the traditional notion of the finality of
the prophethood of Muhammad and claim that Ghulam Ahmed was
also a prophet. In 1974, the Pakistani Parliament declared the Ahmadis
to be non-Muslims, and in the 1980s further restrictions were imposed
on them to distinguish them from Muslims. The Ahmadi community
and its faith are seen as a living challenge to the sanctity of the finality
of the prophethood of Muhammad, a cornerstone in the basic belief
of mainstream Muslims. By the same token, it also tests the Islamic
notion of tolerance, personified by Muhammad himself during his
lifetime. When faced with abusive remarks, Muhammad is reported
to have never taken any revenge. But since the state has declared
Ahmadis to be non-Muslims, all the discriminations contained in the
constitutional framework of Pakistan based on religion are applicable
to them. For example, under Pakistani law, no non-Muslim can become
president or prime minister, or hold other offices of such a high
level. Though Ahmadis continue to refute this discrimination, further
restrictions have been imposed on them, under which they are not
allowed to use any Islamic symbols for their religious practices. For
example, they cannot call their place of worship *masjid* or mosque,
or their prayer *namaz*.

   This discrimination goes against the Universal Declaration of Human
Rights and even, at least in principle, against Pakistan's Constitution.
Both discourage or restrict states or state bodies from discriminating
on the basis of religion or belief. However, as the international
covenants on human rights provide for exceptions on the grounds of
public order or public morality, Pakistan can find grounds to formulate
laws such as the blasphemy law or the declaration of Ahmadis as
non-Muslims. The state can claim that any public declaration against
the traditional faith of Muslims will lead to public disorder, given
the level of emotional attachment of ordinary people to religious
symbols. Hence the state must exercise its power to prevent the cre-

ation of a situation hazardous to public safety. Thus, the Islamic state curbs freedom of expression for the sake of public order, which provides a legitimate reason.

The second important state policy is the electoral law, which divides the state into largely two constituencies: Muslims and non-Muslims. This had been called the Separate Electoral System, which was a continuation of a similar system that prevailed in British India in the last decades of colonial rule. This administrative arrangement helped the creation of Pakistan, as Muslims could geographically define a place where they lived as a majority. However, after the creation of Pakistan the demography changed, as Pakistan became a predominantly Muslim society, with barely two percent non-Muslims. Therefore the Separate Electorate System became meaningless.

It took Pakistan about 53 years to effect this change. In early 2002, under the military ruler President Musharraf, a joint system of electorate was instituted in which electoral colleges are the same for Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus candidature and voting decisions have become independent of religion, and reserved seats for non-Muslims have been abolished. The elections in October 2002 were held under this new framework. Although all religio-political parties, including the Council of Islamic Ideology, a state organ, have opposed this change, the new system is unlikely to be abandoned. This development was regarded very positively by human rights activists, as it removed the earlier official discrimination of political rights of citizens on the basis of religion. Now, candidates can seek the support of their potential voters without any religious, political, ethnic or socio-economic boundaries, which could hamper the growth of a coherent Pakistani society.

Cultural patterns

Policies and laws can be compared and contrasted with cultural patterns. Although religions, by and large, have taught tolerance, mutual respect and fear of God, cultures across the globe have established their own practices and rituals, which they may regard as sacred as religious revelations. Pakistani culture is no exception to this universal phenomenon, and many examples can be cited which show that not all rituals or beliefs in Pakistani society are necessarily inspired by Islam.

A recent event may be cited that sent waves of shock and horror across the world as it demonstrated the attitude of at least some parts of Pakistani society. In a village in southern Punjab, the traditional

local governing body, or *panchayat*, ordered that a girl of eighteen be gang-raped. Her "crime" was that her twelve-years old brother had allegedly had illicit sexual relations with a woman of a prominent family of the village (an allegation which was later proved incorrect on medical grounds). The order was carried out in letter and spirit. Had the Supreme Court of the country not taken *sua sponte* notice based on press reports, it would never have gained public attention and invited state intervention. Most of the accused gang-leaders were arrested and sentenced to death, but the event sent disturbing signals about the precepts and moral standards of Pakistani society.

In rural Sind, the second largest province of the country, there are rituals which constitute a gross denial of basic human rights especially of women. One of them is *wanni*, under which women are "gifted" in lieu of a peace deal between two tribes. Another ritual is "marriage to the *Qur'an*", under which women are "married" to the *Qur'an*, forcing them to remain unmarried. The rationale of this ritual is that if these women were married, then property – largely land – would be divided according to the law of inheritance and the power-base of the clan would be weakened. Another ritual is "honour-killing", or "*karo-kari*", in which men kill those women of the family allegedly involved in an illicit love-affair. Often, the killer is the father or brother who believe it is their right to do this, as such women bring disgrace to the family. The gravity of this ritual or tradition can be sensed from the fact that in 2001 approximately two women were killed in Pakistan every day for "honour" reasons.[34]

Such cultural patterns are shocking and show that Islam as a religion has not permeated the roots of society. The "honour", which is supposedly violated by an undesirable act of a woman, has a very weak basis in *Shari'a*. *Shari'a* legitimizes three situations in which it is permissible to take a human life: (1) a judicial or state decision, (2) during war, albeit only conditionally, and (3) if some one becomes *murtid*, that is, leaves Islam after professing it. Islam, as personified by the Prophet in similar cases, requires recourse to the law instead of taking the law into one's own hands. But cultural and historical tendencies can dominate religious teachings and it can become difficult to establish direct relationships between human rights violations and the religion of a person. These rituals, often costing human lives, also

---

[34] Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, *State of Human Rights in 2001* (Lahore: Maktaba Jadeed Press, 2002).

demonstrate that state law and the government writ do not have effect in the face of clan and tribal power.

Although the weakened writ of government cannot be automatically strengthened by introducing new laws, Pakistani governments have made some attempts to effectively net human rights violators through legislation. In 1996, the Pakistani government, under Benazir Bhutto's second regime, set up a separate ministry of women welfare and human rights. In July 2002, the Federal Law Ministry sent a summary to the President for legislation which would allow establishment of "Human Rights Courts" at district level.[35] These courts would be allowed to impose a fine or imprisonment or both for human rights violations.

Rule of law

Drafting new laws does not necessarily mean a better rule of law. The absence or weakness of the rule of law has been, and will remain, the major impediment to protection of human rights in Pakistan. The above-mentioned events and rituals point in the same direction. The influence of traditional local governing bodies, such as *jirgas* or *panchayats*, over the lives of common citizens, especially in the rural areas, has been the major cause of human rights violations.[36] If a man is lynched on the call of an *imam* because he has allegedly burned pages of the *Qur'an*, this is a sign of absence of the rule of law. Such events do not necessarily indicate that a specific culture or religion should be held responsible for extremist behaviour. The point is not to abolish the local power structures altogether, because they can also be very efficient, but to bring them under the writ of law in important and sensitive collective matters.

Conflicting tensions thrive amongst local institutions, Islamic teachers, human rights activists and government authorities in Pakistan. Earlier a dichotomy was summarized as "universalism versus relativism". It can be further suggested that the tension between the local institutions, such as the *jirga*, and Islamic teachings is a case of tension between relativism (*jirga*) and universalism (Islam). Some of these tensions will remain unresolved and some of them may merge into each other, while a few will be dissolved.

---

[35] *Daily Jang*, "News Item", 31 July 2002 (Karachi).
[36] *The Friday Times*, 2002: "Editorial", Vol. XIV, No. 23 (Lahore).

CONCLUSION

I have shown various points of cohesion and conflict between human
rights and Islam by informing my arguments both with theoretical
accounts and historical evidence. The relationship between the two
remains highly complicated: where the apparently religious idea of
sacredness may become non-religious, the apparently secular assertion
of freedom of religion or belief may become highly religious. Similarly,
one may note that the secular Universal Declaration of Human Rights
almost speaks like religious doctrine. Thus, in my view, the tension
between human rights and Islam is inherent and permanent, though
not entirely harmful. I do not favour the arm-twisting efforts of some
modern Muslim jurists trying to adapt scripture to prove human
rights in Islam. Reinterpretation is a welcome sign and it should be
continued, but Muslims should remain aware of the fact that human
rights is a 20th century phenomenon and, like any other human
invention, is liable to change. Similarly I do not favour the appar-
ent "divine" language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
as if these universal claims shall hold forever, and for everybody,
everywhere.

    This inquiry started with a simple question: can religion contribute
to building a culture of human rights? I would suggest that "yes"
or "no" is too simple a way to answer such a question. My con-
clusion is that religion cannot, and neither can secularism, contribute
to building a culture of human rights alone. Local cultural patterns
and the authority of the state to enforce the rule of law are two very
important variables, which are often ignored. Hence, we may opt either
for a religious framework or a secular framework, but we cannot
live humanly without the rule of law and without consideration of
local cultural patterns. For the creation of a culture of human rights,
then, the rule of law and formal education become more important
than religion. The question raised earlier then loses its significance.

PART THREE

VISIONS FOR PEACE

WEST PAPUA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Jayapura
Vanimo
L. Sontani
Mamberamo River Valley
Baliem Valley
Wamena
Tembagapura
Timika
Enatolao
L. Paniai
Agats
Mappi
Tanah-Merah
Fly River
Merauke
KOLEPOM

BIAK
Biak
YAPEN
Serui
Nabire
Kaimana
Ransiki
Babo
Manokwari
Sorong
WAIGEO
SALAWATI
MISOOL
SERAM
AMBON
Fak-Fak
SOUTH MOLUCCAS
KEI
ARU

ARAFURA SEA

BANDA SEA

0   150   300 km

MICRONESIA
WEST PAPUA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Port Moresby
AUSTRALIA
Darwin
INDONESIA
EASTTIMOR
MALAYSIA
Jakarta

9. WEST PAPUA PEACE ZONE:
THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN WEST PAPUA
AND LOCAL INITIATIVES IN THE STRUGGLE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS*

Benny Giay

This chapter discusses local initiatives to transform the conflict-ridden Papua Province of Indonesia into a Peace Zone, and the role of the Church in West Papua in bringing an end to the human rights violations carried out by the state, often in the name of development. The first part of the chapter serves as an introduction, which briefly outlines the history of West Papua.[1] The second part deals with the development ideology which has been used to justify a policy to destroy West Papuan culture and identity. This is followed by a brief description of the actual condition of human rights violations in Papua in the 1990s to the present.[2] The fourth part concentrates on the role the Church has played in responding to human rights violations and bringing peace in West Papua. The last part deals with Papuan initiatives to change Papua into a Peace Zone. I will argue that the commitment of the Church and NGOs to address human rights violations has supported the birth of West Papuan awareness. This in turn has motivated Papuans to take initiatives to change their condition. The idea of a Peace Zone, to be discussed in this chapter, clearly indicates this change.

---

[1] The name of the province was changed several times. The name West Papua is used in this chapter because most Papuans prefer it.
[2] See At Ipenburg, "The role of the Church in a changing society: A case for human rights action", unpublished paper. See also Neles Kebadabi Tebay, "The role of the Catholic Church in defending and promoting human rights in West Papua", *Exchange*, 31:4, 362–72 (2002).

A BRIEF NOTE ON THE HISTORY OF WEST PAPUA

West Papua is the western half of the island New Guinea. The east-
ern part of the island is the independent state of Papua New Guinea.
Known as Dutch New Guinea, it was part of the Dutch overseas
territories from 1828 to 1962, when the Dutch had to hand the ter-
ritory over to its former colony, Indonesia. It was not until 1898,
however, that the Dutch established their first three government posts
in what is now West Papua, out of fear for German and British
competition. The island remained neglected, as the Dutch had their
main centres of development in the East Indies in Java and Sumatra,
where the majority of the Indonesian Dutch lived. Only the Protestant
and Roman Catholic missions provided some education and health
care for the Papuans, mainly in the coastal areas. The interior was
opened up very late. Paniai – the Wissel lakes area – was discov-
ered in the late 1930s, and the Baliem Valley in the 1940s. Both
areas were only opened to outsiders, working for religious missions
and government services, in the 1950s. As Peter Hastings puts it,
before World War II West Papua was a lonely Dutch colonial out-
post administered by the government of the Moluccas which gov-
erned all the Dutch territories east of Madura.[3]

In 1949 Indonesia achieved political independence, after almost four
years of armed struggle against the Dutch. In discussing the territorial
limits of the new state of Indonesia that was to be declared in August
1945, Indonesia's nationalist leaders presented several options. One
option, supported by Sukarno, who became the first President of the
new republic, was that the new state would comprise the entire ter-
ritory of the Dutch East Indies, plus British North Borneo, Brunei,
Sarawak, Malaysia, East Timor and New Guinea. To Sukarno, New
Guinea referred to the whole of the island. For Mohammed Hatta,
who became the new republic's Vice-President, New Guinea meant
only the western part, Dutch New Guinea. According to him, this
should not be included in the Indonesian Republic. Hatta's view was
rejected. The position taken was that New Guinea was part of the
Dutch East Indies and should therefore be incorporated into the new
Republic of Indonesia. At the Denpasar Conference held in December
1946, the Dutch government, represented by Dr Van Mook, argued

---

[3] Peter Hastings, *New Guinea: Problems and Prospects* (Melbourne: Chesire, 1973).

that West Papua should not be part of Indonesia on the grounds that Papuans differ ethnically, culturally and historically from Indonesians.[4]

During the Round Table Conference between the Dutch and the Indonesians in August 1949, the question of West Papua was excluded from the talks leading to the transfer of sovereignty, with an understanding that the future of West Papua would be discussed at a later stage. Following this, and in response to demands of West Papuan nationalism, the Dutch issued a decree that changed West Papua from a Residency into a Territory with its own Governor and four Residents. This change sharpened the conflict between the Dutch and Indonesia in the period from 1950 to 1962. In 1962, the Dutch transferred sovereignty of West Papua to the United Nations, which in turn transferred the territory to Indonesia, with the support of the international community, especially the Dutch, Australian, British and American governments. At that time, Indonesia had already declared a total mobilisation in order to take control of West Papua. For the West Papuans, who were demanding political independence from the Dutch, the transfer amounted to an occupation. They resisted the annexation of their country from the very beginning.

In October 1962 the Indonesian army and government entered West Papua as agreed upon among the United States, Indonesia and The Netherlands earlier that year in the so-called New York Agreement. The Papuans had no voice in this agreement. Before 1962 The Netherlands had followed a policy which eventually would allow the Papuans self-rule leading to independence, as it had been doing in other overseas territories, such as Surinam and the Antilles. Since 1950 education had been expanded and adapted to Papuan culture and mentality. There was a beginning of Papuan nationalism, oriented towards the Pacific, where other Melanesian peoples were in a similar situation of being prepared for independence. But the Indonesians had a different paradigm. In their view, the Papuans had to be liberated by Indonesia from the Dutch colonial yoke, just as Indonesia had liberated itself in a heroic war for independence between 1945 and 1949. The Papuans had to be incorporated into the Indonesian melting-pot. They had to become Indonesians and were forced to adapt as quickly as possible to the new situation. Any opposition to this paradigm was ruthlessly suppressed. The Indonesian

---

[4] Ethnically and culturally Papuans belong to Melanesian population groups.

strategy created resentment among the Papuans, which was seen as further proof for the need of an increased suppression. West Papua soon became a Military Operational Region (*Daerah Operasi Militer* or DOM), which amounted to a continuous state of siege. Only in 1998, when Suharto stepped down as President of Indonesia, was the state of siege lifted. However, after the successful Papua Congress of May-June 2000, where Papuans of various walks of life came together to discuss their political future, the Indonesian army resorted to its previous methods of repression.

INDONESIAN DEVELOPMENT IDEOLOGY AND
POLICY AFTER THE ANNEXATION

Immediately after the handing over of West Papua to Indonesia in 1963, the Indonesian government introduced its "national development" policies. To Papuans this development policy was no more than an instrument to impose Indonesian national culture, a way to make Papuans think, act and behave like Indonesians, giving up their own identity and culture. Papuans have resisted the annexation of West Papua ever since.

In the course of introducing this national culture to Papuans, the Indonesian government systematically destroyed and suppressed cultural practices of the Papuans.[5] It immediately began to oppose those cultural practices that the Papuans consider as essential to their life and well-being, such as the pig feast and the use of cowry shells as money. Books written by Papuans on history, culture and Papuan religion, and the singing of Papuan folk music were forbidden. One ran the risk to be shot for wearing a T-shirt with cultural symbols, such as the Morning Star flag, the symbol of Papuan nationalism.[6] There were two basic considerations that supported the policy to

---

[5] The Office for Justice and Peace of the Diocese of Jayapura, the capital of West Papua, refers in one of its reports to the "ethnic and cultural genocide" of Papuans. See *Socio-Political Notes*, nr. 3, April 2000, 16. A recent investigation by a team of researchers from Yale University came to the same conclusion; see the report by Elisabeth Brundige, Winter King, Priyneha Vahila, Stephen Vladeck and Xiang Yuan, "Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua: Application of the Law of Genocide to the History of Indonesian Control", published by the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, Yale Law School, November 2003 (www.law.yale.edu/outside/html/Public_Affairs/426/westpapuahrights.pdf).

[6] For a discussion of the significance of the morning star in Papuan history and tradition, see Nonie Sharp in association with Markus Wonggor Kaisiepo, *The Morning Star in Papua Barat* (Victoria, Australia: Arena Publications, 1994).

destroy West Papuan culture. First, the Indonesian government views Papuan culture as primitive, backward and old-fashioned, which hinders West Papuans' participation in the process of modernisation and development. Hence it is seen as a stumbling-block to the process of integrating West Papuans into modern Indonesian society. Second, in the eyes of the Indonesian government, Papuan culture promotes a local vision of a society, history and culture that clashes with the vision of culture and history offered by the Indonesian state. In view of the latter, allowing space for Papuan culture and history means planting the seed of nationalism, which will lead to national disintegration. Therefore Papuan culture has no right to exist and must be replaced by Indonesian national culture.

The imposition of Indonesian national culture, through its national ideology of "development" and by using a security approach, received support from the World Bank and other international institutions. However, it did not provide room for Papuans to actualise their own cultural ideals. This in turn led to the birth of West Papuan nationalism with a clear vision for a new society, and for a free and independent Papuan state. The West Papuans, who resisted the Indonesian policy of taking over West Papua, from the beginning employed different strategies. These included some guerrilla activities and armed resistance, which have taken place since 1965, and some cases of hostage-taking in the 1980s and mid-1990s. The resistance also took more peaceful forms, such as dance and music groups, notably in the late 1970s and the early 1980s. From the early 1980s, the raising of the banned Morning Star flag was also used as an act of resistance.[7] Already in 1970, in response to Papuan resistance, the Indonesian government had declared West Papua a Military Operational Region. This gave the army and police supreme powers, allowing them to act with impunity to maintain order and suppress any form of Papuan nationalism or resistance.

Since the 1960s the Indonesian army has carried out a number of military campaigns in various parts of West Papua. In 1965 there was *Operasi Sadar* (Awareness Campaign), in 1968 *Operasi Bharatayudha* (Struggle in the West Campaign), and in 1969 *Operasi Wibawa* (Authority Campaign). In the 1970s, Governor Acup Zainal introduced *Operasi*

---

[7] See Benny Giay, "Against Indonesia: West Papuans' strategies of resistance against Indonesian political and cultural aggression in the 1980s", in Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhöffer (eds), *Violence in Indonesia* (Hamburg: Abera Verlag, 2001), 129–38.

Koteka (Penis Sheath Campaign),[8] which caused tens of thousands of victims in the interior Highlands. In 1977, General Imam Munander initiated *Operasi Kikis* (Scraping Campaign) in the Baliem Valley. In the 1980s, *Operasi Tumpas* (Annihilation Campaign) and *Operasi Sadar* (Awareness Campaign) took place in the Mamberamo area and the area of the north coast of Jayapura Regency. West Biak suffered under *Operasi Sapu Rata* (Clean Sweep Campaign), when the security forces tried to arrest Melkianus Awom, one of the leaders of the Papuan Freedom Organization (known as OPM, *Organisasi Papua Merdeka*). In November 2000, the police started *Operasi Tuntas Matoa* (Total *Matoa* Campaign). *Matoa* stands for the sweet fruit one finds in West Papua, which is a symbol of the province. In June 2001 the Indonesian police began a "Sweeping and Clampdown Operation" in Manokwari, Fak-Fak and Nabire, all areas where foreign companies are active. There were a number of casualties. The local human rights organisation that criticised police conduct received death threats from anonymous telephone callers. In August 2002 the police started a campaign called *Operasi Adil Matoa*, the "Just *Matoa* Campaign". The police commander announced that he was first using the "persuasive approach" and then the "coercive approach".

Numerous human rights violations have resulted from these campaigns.[9] As the Indonesian army fails to arrest the OPM fighters who flee to the jungle, ordinary village people become the victim of its military operations. Rape, torture and murder of Papuan villagers are a normal part of these. The army has a licence to interrogate, torture and kill as it claims that its actions are in response to the presumed presence of the OPM. According to the Indonesian government and the army, human rights violations are justified in this context, because the West Papuans are entertaining an ideology of an independent Papuan state. This turns them automatically into enemies of the Indonesian state. This view seems to be supported by the international community, since the United Nations recognise and support Indonesia's right to defend and protect its territorial integrity. As a result, the situation with regard to West Papua has remained virtually unchallenged.

---

[8] *Koteka* or penis sheath is the traditional dress of Papuan men in the interior of West Papua.

[9] The systematic recording of human rights violations in West Papua has only become possible in recent years, after the fall of Suharto in 1998. It has been estimated that at least 100,000 people have died in West Papua under Indonesian rule since 1963. See also Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, *West Papua: The obliteration of a people* 3rd ed. rev. (London: TAPOL, 1988).

History of human rights violations in West Papua since the 1990s

The following section briefly shows how the Indonesian concept of state security has manifested itself in the actual experience in West Papua from the 1990s to the present. It contains a select record of specific human rights violations by the Indonesian army and it elite force *Kopassus*. They are only a sample of the large number of human rights violations that have been investigated in recent years by the various human rights organisations that have emerged in West Papua in the post-Suharto era. These include both secular and religious initiatives. Among them is *Elsham*, the leading Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy, that publishes regular reports on human rights violations in West Papua. In most cases, the evidence has been supported by international human rights organisations, such as TAPOL, the London-based Indonesia Human Rights Campaign, and Amnesty International.

April 1992

In April 1992, the Evangelical Christian Church (GKI) and the Indonesian Council of Churches (PGI) published a report about the violation of the cultural, political and economic rights of Papuans by the Indonesian government during the previous two years. Below, two examples are given of the cases reported by the Church concerning human right abuses by the army.

Near Sarmi, north of Jayapura, capital of Papua Province, the Indonesian military hit the village chief repeatedly with a rifle butt on his face, causing the loss of several teeth. The reason was that the chief forbade the local girls and women to participate in a dance party during the night, organised by Indonesian army. Many village people had complained that such nightly parties were used to entice local girls and women to have sex with the soldiers. The report also mentioned that two church members were forced by soldiers to take off their clothes and have sex in public. Many men, women and children were present.[10]

---

[10] "Irian Jaya Menjelang 30 Tahun Kembali Ke NKRl: Untuk Keadilan dan Perdamaian (Irian Jaya after 30 years integration with the Unitary Republic of Indonesia: For justice and peace)" (Jayapura: GKI Synod, 1992).

July 1994–May 1995

From July 1994 until May 1995 the Amungme of Tembagapura, a copper town in the south of West Papua, resisted the policy of reset-tlement carried out by the Indonesian army and foreign companies operating under licence from the government. The Amungme also expressed their grievances over the loss of family members and the loss of their ancestral lands. Some Amungme, both men and women, were kept in containers for several months before being released in November 1994. In December 1994, the Amungme organized a number of peaceful demonstrations. They also hoisted the Morning Star flag, as a symbol of protest against Indonesia and against the presence of foreign companies on their land. In response to this, the Indonesian army arbitrarily arrested Papuan civilians, mainly women and children. This was followed by further intimidation and inter-rogation. Five relatives of OPM leader Kelly Kwalik were arrested in their homes and have not yet been returned. On 25 December 1994 the army stabbed and shot, after torture, a Papuan man. His body was thrown into a canyon. Two others died on the same day after they had been tortured by the army. On 6 April 1995 two other Papuan men were shot. A report of these incidents was published by Herman Munninghoff, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Jayapura.[11]

October 1994

Violence has been frequently used by Indonesian soldiers against Papuan women. Amungme women in Timika were raped and tortured during their detention. In October 1994 Indonesian soldiers, stationed in the town of Mimika, detained two Papuan women and three Amungme men. At midnight on 9 October 1994, seven Indonesian soldiers came to the house of one of these women. Five of them forcibly entered the house and lifted the mosquito net around her bed with the tip of their guns. She was then ordered to come to Timika. Together with another woman she was taken to a shipping container. Since this was already full with other Papuans detained by the army, the two women were held in a room flooded with water containing human faeces. During their month-long detention, they were repeat-edly tortured.

---

[11] Uskup/Bishop of Jayapura, "Laporan Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Terhadap Penduduk Lokal (Report on the violations of the rights of local people)" (Jayapura, 1995).

January-May 1996

In January 1996 the leaders of the OPM from the Central Highlands, Daniel Judas Kogoya and Kelly Kwalik, kidnapped some 25 Indonesian and international wild life researchers, taking them hostage. Following this event, many Papuan civilians from Mapnduma, Bela and Alama areas underwent intimidation, torture and sexual abuse in retaliation. After the release of the hostages between 9 and 13 May 1996, fourteen people were killed: eight Papuans were shot by the army, four were found dead, and two were killed by unidentified people connected to the Indonesian army.[12]

Biak tragedy, July 1998

During July 1998, a peaceful demonstration was held in the town of Biak on Biak island in north-west Papua, during which people demanded political and economic rights. During this demonstration the Morning Star flag was flown from the top of the water tower. In an effort to disperse the demonstration, the Indonesian army killed eight civilians. Three Papuans "disappeared", and four were heavily wounded. After the attack, 32 unidentified bodies were found and 150 other Papuans were detained and tortured. In Jayapura, at the same time, the army shot dead Stephen Suripaty, a law student of Cenderawasih University in Jayapura, while wounding seriously a school girl who was hit by a bullet.[13]

March 1999

During the whole of 1999 the Papuans experienced terror, intimidation and killings by the Indonesian army. In March 1999, Papuan leaders who had participated in the national dialogue with President Habibie were intimidated and terrorised by unidentified people during the night. The national dialogue was a Papua initiative to discuss the future of West Papua with the authorities.[14]

---

[12] "Operasi Militer Pembebasan Sanders Dan Pelanggaran HAM di Pegunungan Tengah (Military operation for the liberation of hostages and human rights violations in Central Highlands of Irian Jaya)" (Jayapura: Elsham, 1999).

[13] "Nama Tanpa Pusara, Pusara Tanpa Nama (Name without grave, grave without name), Report of Human Rights in Biak, Irian Jaya" (Jayapura: Elsham, 1999).

[14] See also Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: Human rights and pro-independence actions in Papua, 1999–2000", May 2000, 12:2 (C) (www.hrw.org/reports/2000/papua/).

The Wamena incident, 6 October 2000[15]

On 6 October 2000 the Indonesian police forcibly lowered the Morning Star flag of the Dani people in Wamena, the capital of the Central Highlands. This was in violation of an agreement reached four days earlier between the Papuans, the Provincial Governor, the Commander of the Army of the Moluccas and Irian Jaya, and the provincial Chief of Police. The agreement allowed the Papuans to hoist their flag until a final agreement concerning the flag would be reached with the central government in Jakarta. During a visit to West Papua in December 1999, President Wahid had given permission to raise the Morning Star flag. Yet before these talks with the government in Jakarta took place, the police in Wamena forced the Papuans to lower their flag. During the incident the police not only lowered the flag, but also tore this symbol of Papuan identity into pieces. Two Papuans who defended the flag were shot dead. The killings provoked a Papuan backlash, with Dani men attacking an Indonesian police station, and burning down some houses and shops. They killed more than 20 Indonesians, while the Indonesian military police killed at least six Papuans and wounded 65 others.[16]

Torture and killing of students in Jayapura, 7 December 2000[17]

On 7 December 2000, unidentified people attacked a police station in Abepura (near Jayapura). It is generally accepted that the attack took place on a pretext created by the police itself. One Papuan police officer was killed, while another was injured. In another incident a security guard was killed. In response to this attack the Indonesian police attacked five dormitories of students from the Highlands. All students in these dormitories, boys and girls, were rounded up and taken to the district police station in Jayapura, where they were tortured. Two of the students died in their cell as a result

---

[15] See Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: Violence and political impasse in Papua", July 2001, 13:2 (C) (www.hrw.org/reports/2001/papua/).
[16] "Peristiwa Tragedi Kemanusiaan Wamena 6 Oktober 2000 Sebelum dan Sesudahnya (Wamena incident: Human tragedy of 6 October 6 2000 before and the aftermath)" (Jayapura, TKW (Tim Kemanusiaan Wamena, Humanitarian Team for Wamena), 2000).
[17] See Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: Violence and Political Impasse in Papua", *op. cit.*

of beatings by the police. The others were interrogated and released two days later.[18]

The murder of Theys Eluay, Chairman of the Presidium of the Papuan Council, November 2002

Theys Eluay, Papuan leader and Chairman of the Presidium of the Papuan Council, was abducted and killed by *Kopassus*, the Indonesian special forces, while on his way home to Sentani after attending a party to celebrate Indonesian Heroes Day at *Kopassus* Headquarters. His body was found the following day near the border of Papua New Guinea. Ari Masoka, the driver, escaped and went back to the *Kopassus* Headquarters. Since then he has "disappeared". According to Made Pastika, the Provincial Chief of Police, three parties were to be held responsible for the killing of Theys Eluay. One group that formulated the idea, a second group that prepared the plan, and a third one that executed the murder. During an informal meeting with church leaders, he said he was of the opinion that *Kopassus* was behind the killing. Several teams have subsequently investigated the murder. The commander and a few soldiers of *Kopassus* were given a light sentence and were released pending their appeal. The army commander-in-chief called the killers "heroes", who were defending the national unity of the Indonesian Republic and should not get any punishment.

The cases mentioned above give an impression of the type of human rights violations that take place in West Papua under the protection of the government, often in the name of national unity and development.

THE AGENDA OF THE WEST PAPUAN CHURCH IN THE 1990s: THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The following section deals with the response of the churches to the human rights violations in West Papua and their support for Papuan demands for freedom and change.

---

[18] "Siaran Pers Elsham Papua Barat Tentang Kasus Penyerangan Polsek Abepura dan Penanganannya (Press Release Elsham about the case of the attack on the Abepura Police Station and the handling of it)" (Jayapura: Elsham, 2000).

Between 75% and 80% of the population of West Papua is Christian, while 20% to 25% is Muslim.[19] Only a relatively small number of the Papuan population, living in the south-western part of the island, are traditionally Muslim. In other places, Islam is a fairly new import and a result of the transmigration policy of the Indonesian government during the past few decades. This brought many Indonesians, mostly from Java and most of them Muslims, to West Papua. Although in a minority position, Muslims dominate public life in West Papua, including the army and the police. Only during the last few years has there been a policy of Papuanisation in the civil service, which is a slow process. The churches are almost the only section of society where Papuans dominate and where they can achieve positions of influence.

Christianity in West Papua has its origins in Dutch foreign missions. The first Protestant mission came to West Papua in 1855. Out of this early mission effort originated the Evangelical Christian Church in Papua land (*Gereja Kristen Injili*, GKI). The GKI is spread all over West Papua, but is strongest in the north (Jayapura, Biak, Yapen and Nabire) and west (Sorong, Manokwari, Teminabuan, and Fak-Fak). In 1905 the Catholic congregation of the Sacred Heart (MSC) established a mission post in the south of the island, in Merauke, to work among the Marind-anim and other southern ethnic groups. The largest concentration of Roman Catholics is still in the southern part of West Papua. The Highlands were only opened up for mission work from the 1950s, at about the same time as government posts were established. American evangelical missions became active in the interior, of which the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA) is the largest. Out of its effort originated the Evangelical Tabernacle Church of Indonesia (*Gereja Kemah Injili di Indonesia*, GKII). The already existing GKI worked among the Yali speaking people of the Highlands, while Catholic missions went to work among the Me of Paniai Regency and the Dani of Wamena.

In 1956 the *Gereja Kristen Injili*, known as GKI, became independent of the mission. The GKI is the largest church in West Papua and was until 1962 more or less the national church of the Papuans. It has over 1,000 congregations, more than 30 presbyteries, and possibly between 800,000 and 1 million members out of a population of 2.2

---

[19] Cf. N.S. Jelmau, "Data Katolik Propinsi Irian Jaya Tahun 1999 (Data of the Catholic Province of Irian Jaya for the year 1999)" (Jayapura: Department of Religious Affairs, 1999).

million (in 2003). The Roman Catholic Church has about 500,000 members, while the GKII counts some 150,000 members. The smaller churches in West Papua, such as the Baptist, the Pentecostal and the conservative Reformed churches, may have together another 150,000 members.

After being silent for decades, in the 1990s the churches began to speak out against the gross human rights violations. As the oldest church on the island, the GKI usually takes the lead in the protests, as well as in calls for peace and efforts for dialogue and reconciliation. Since the 1990s there has been close cooperation between the three largest churches, the GKI, the Roman Catholic Church, and the GKII. Often the Baptist Church and the Pentecostal churches join these initiatives. Muslim groups as well as the small Buddhist and Hindu groups in West Papua also support publicly the peace initiatives of the Christian churches.

During the last decade there has been a large number of human rights initiatives by the churches, some of which are recorded in chronological order below.

In April 1992 the GKI, in cooperation with the Indonesian Council Churches in Jakarta, released a report about atrocities conducted by the Indonesian army on the basis of information supplied by families of the victims, who had "disappeared", been tortured or killed. The Church expressed its deepest concern for these gross human rights violations, perpetrated in the name of "development", and demanded a change of policy. In December 1992, in response to this report, the army commander of the Moluccas and Irian Jaya, who has his base in Jayapura, described the church that had filed the report as a "certain organization that wants to break the unity of Indonesia and does not want to see progress in Indonesia".[20] Indonesian penal law considers "breaking the unity of the Indonesian unitary republic" as high treason (*makar*).

Three years later, in August 1995, Herman Munninghoff, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Jayapura, published a report in which he called upon the Indonesian government to review its development policy in view of the fact that Papuans had been killed, had "disappeared" and been tortured in June of that year.[21] Although the report had

---

[20] *Tifa Irian*, December 1992.
[21] Uskup/Bishop Jayapura, "Laporan Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Terhadap Penduduk Lokal", *op. cit.*

no effect on the human rights situation, it did make some impact on the international media. It also helped to raise West Papuans' awareness about their own history and about their future, a process that had already started in the 1970s among Papuan students.

Following the human rights report by Bishop Munninghoff, the churches in Papua established in January 1996 a new NGO, *Elsham Papua*, the Papua Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy, to specifically deal with human rights advocacy and education. This human rights organisation has been fairly effective. This can also be witnessed in the ongoing intimidation of its leaders, who receive death threats from anonymous callers and are threatened with court action for slandering the reputation of army and police (*fitnah*), a crime according to Indonesian law. Johannes Bonay, the director of *Elsham*, was inter-rogated at police headquarters for 24 hours after the organisation published a report about the police attack on students dormitories on 8 and 9 December 2000, which cost the lives of three students, while many were seriously wounded. In December 2002, unknown assailants attacked a minibus, which seriously wounded Bonay's wife.

In May 1998 the three mainline churches in Timika – GKI, the Roman Catholic Church and GKII – in cooperation with *Elsham*, appealed to Indonesia's National Human Rights Commission (*Komnasham*) to form a fact-finding team to investigate human rights violations in the Mapnduma area after the hostage crisis of January-May 1996 (see above). The report of this Commission confirmed the findings of the human rights report submitted by the churches. However, nothing was done to bring the perpetrators to court.

In July 1998, *Elsham* and the churches in West Papua set up *Foreri*, the West Papuan Forum for Reconciliation. The goal of this Forum was to foster a dialogue within the West Papuan community on the one hand and between Papuans and the Indonesian government on the other. *Foreri* was set up on the eve of a large demonstration to protest about the killing in Biak in July 1998 (see above), which the police had threatened to crush violently. At that stage, *Foreri* could play a role as a mediator between the Papuan community and the govern-ment in Jakarta. At the request of President Habibie, from October 1998 the Forum worked together with a government representative to organise a national dialogue with the Papuans. The dialogue at home, among the Papuans, resulted in the wish for independence. This was made known to the President and his Cabinet in February

1999 by a team of 100 Papua representatives. Papuan participants in the national dialogue were later threatened by unidentified people.

In October 1998, the Catholic Bishop of Jayapura presented a report to the military commander of the Moluccas and Irian Jaya (West Papua). The report provided evidence of human rights violations carried out in the Paniai Regency in the Highlands from January to June 1998. One of the bishop's recommendations was that the army should withdraw, because its presence created fear and unrest among the people. The bishop also called both upon the government and the army to protect the local people, and to increase their assurance of safety.[22]

This presentation of the commitment of the West Papuan churches since the early 1990s to raise the issue of human right violations shows that they began to distance themselves from the influence of the Indonesian government and the army long before President Suharto stepped down in 1998. The Roman Catholic Church has been in the forefront of the efforts to bring peace. In 1998 the diocese of Jayapura founded an Office for Justice and Peace, which publishes annual reports on the human rights situation and political conditions in West Papua. Among its first reports are *Memoria passionis* and *Socio-political notes on the current human rights situation in West Papua*. While the former is intended to bring to public attention the painful history of the Papuans, the latter provides a regular record of the human rights situation in the island. In addition, more recently, the Catholic Church in West Papua, through its Office for Justice and Peace, has made a commitment to curb human rights violations by demanding an independent investigation into the murder of Theys Eluay, by organising courses on human rights, and by mobilising students and mass media for reconciliation and peace education.

The churches' involvement with human rights in West Papua is based on their understanding that human beings are created in the image of God. They therefore have unalienable rights, as well as a responsibility for their religion, and for cultivating and conserving nature as God's creation.[23] In addition, the struggle for human rights

---

[22] "Laporan Situasi HAM di Wiliayah Paniai dan Tigi (Human rights situation in the Districts of Paniai and Tigi)" (Jayapura: Justitia et Pax, 1998).
[23] R. Scheunemann, "Theological reflections for a Christian engagement for

is seen as central to the gospel message and therefore considered a major task of the Church.[24] This has not been easy, as the Indonesian government considers the human rights issue as a form of political interference by the Church. For example, the government accuses the churches in West Papua of co-operating with local NGOs and international organisations in order to seek support for West Papuan independence. This is nothing new: the Church in East Timor was also accused of supporting independence for East Timor when it stood up to criticise human rights violations by the army. In spite of the difficulties, the churches in West Papua continue to play an important role in creating an atmosphere where Papuans can take initiatives to improve their situation.

WEST PAPUA AS PEACE ZONE OR ZONE OF THE LORD'S LOVE

The position of the churches in human rights issues has encouraged the Papuans to take more peace initiatives. One example is their plea to turn West Papua into a Peace Zone. The idea of a Peace Zone was put forward by Papuan youth and students in June 1999 at a meeting in Serui, the capital of Yapen Waropen Regency on the island Yapen in Cenderawasih Bay, to the north of West Papua. One of the points discussed during this meeting was a plan to declare West Papua a Peace Zone and to try and involve all sectors of society, including ordinary citizens, government institutions and the business community. Papuan traditional religion and myths, combined with Christian teachings, and their historical experience inspired them to introduce this idea.

The idea was further shaped by Marthen Tanawane, the Yapen Waropen Regency community leader, in the context of popular resistance against state violence and human rights violations. Marthen Jusuf Tanawane was born in Serui on 12 March 1965. Until his death in March 2001, Tanawane was vocal in expressing Papuans' demand for political independence. He was a member of the rep-

---

human rights action", paper prepared for UEM (United Evangelical Mission) Workshop on the Role of Churches in Human Rights Advocacy, Biak, 6 September 2000, at 2.

[24] At Ipenburg, "The role of the Church in a changing society: a case for human rights action", paper prepared for UEM (United Evangelical Mission) Workshop on the Role of Churches in Human Rights Advocacy, Biak, 6 September 2000, at 2.

resentative group of Papuans who entered into dialogue with President Habibie. In one of his meetings with the President, he explained that Indonesia's development ideology and policy in West Papua had alienated the Papuans from their cultural, political and economic resources, and deprived them of their rights. This, Tanawane made clear, was the main reason for them to demand independence.

In his efforts to turn West Papua into a Peace Zone, Marthen Tanawane got the support of the Presidium of the Papuan Council. On 31 August 2000 he obtained a letter of recommendation from the Presidium to carry out his mission of peace. In the letter, the Presidium declared that Tanawane's task was:

> to execute his humanitarian mission of bringing peace to the people, to defend human rights and democratic values by holding discussions and prayer meetings, and by traditional means of disseminating the message of peace throughout West Papua. As is known to all that West Papua's political struggle for independence to get back its rights and political sovereignty is a struggle by peaceful means based on the principles of truth and justice (in the areas of history, law and politics), so the Presidium of the Papuan Council opposes and rejects any means of violence, oppression, and repressive domination by the army, the police or by the people. Therefore all parties, such as the government apparatus, the Indonesian army, the Indonesian police, members of the Panel of the Presidium of the Papuan Council, all components of the Papuan community and all people who live in Papua, are called upon to help and realise this humanitarian mission to bring peace.

Tanawane started his mission at home. On 17 September 2000 he led Papuans and non-Papuans living in Serui in a special ceremony to declare Yapen Waropen a Peace Zone or a Zone of the Lord's Love. During the ceremony they publicly commited themselves to be ambassadors of peace. Thousands of Papuans from Yapen and other islands came to participate. Tanawane and other members of the Presidium of the Papuan Council were able to involve the army and police as well as the Regent of Yapen-Waropen Regency actively in the programme. The following contains a chronological and detailed record of the ceremonial proceedings.

The Ceremony of Proclamation of a Peace Zone or Zone of the Lord's Love in the Ancestral Land of Yapen Waropen, 17 September 2000

1. Opening speech
Prologue:
The call for peace: "O, Lord. You are the Peace from the beginning of the peace; and peace will return to you and we all return to that peace."

This was followed by a Papuan dance and by singing a traditional song, led by a Papuan. While this singing and dancing was taking place, two persons representing each ethnic group living in Yapen Waropen Regency came forward, joining the Papuans, as the distinguished guests from the government, representatives of the churches, and traditional community leaders took the seats assigned to them.

2. Welcoming the guests
The guests were welcomed with two folksongs, sung by students of the Junior and Senior High School in Serui. One of the songs was: "My country Papua, the land of the bird of paradise". This was followed by praise songs of peace.

3. Songs of praise (spiritual songs on peace)
The high school students sang four traditional Papuan folk songs relating to Papuan myths and traditional religious views.

4. Words of love and peace
Messages of peace were delivered by the following people:
a. Marthen Tanawane
His message was followed by the singing of *Dari ombak besar* ("From the big waves"), which is a Papuan song that was banned during the Suharto era.

b. Commander of the (Indonesian) Army in Serui
His message was followed by the singing of an Indonesian national song, *Maju tak gentar* ("Go forward without fear").

c. Chief of Police
His speech was followed by a song called "I Love Serui" (the name of the town), sung by Junior High School students.

d. Regent of the Yapen Waropen Regency

5. Foot-washing ceremony

The messages of peace were followed by a foot-washing ceremony. The washing of another person's feet is seen as a symbol of humility, openness and love, and a sign that peace in the community will be restored. Before the washing of feet started, the following passage was read from the Bible: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Then Marthen Tanawane, in his capacity as member of the Panel of the Papuan Council and head of the Papuan community of Yapen Waropen, washed the feet of the Regent of Yapen Waropen Regency.

Subsequently, the traditional community leaders washed the feet of the Commander of the Indonesian Army in the Regency.

The Army Commander washed the feet of the leader of the Papuan Task Force, who had before been very hostile towards each other.

The leader of Papuan Task Force washed the feet of the Chief of Police.

The Chief of Police washed the feet of the Chairperson of the parliament of the Regency.

The Chairperson of the local parliament of the Regency washed the feet of Tanawane.

Leaders of the Papuan traditional communities of Yapen Waropen washed the feet of religious leaders, including church leaders, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist leaders.

The religious leaders washed the feet of the leaders of the non-Papuan ethnic communities represented in Serui.

The leaders of the non-Papuan ethnic communities in Serui washed the feet of Papuan traditional community leaders.

The foot-washing ceremony was followed by singing the following song:

Beautiful as in the Garden of Eden in the beginning
Forest and woods brought forth flowers
It looked beautiful

Chorus:
Come, O glorious day
The day full of peace
In the midst of my work
Come soon, peace

6. The Ceremony for the Declaration of a Peace Zone or a Zone of the Lord's Love in the Ancestral Land of Yapen Waropen
After the foot-washing procession had ended, the ceremony to declare Yapen Waropen a Peace Zone began.

* The ceremony started with military and government officials, as well as religious and community leaders, taking their seats as prepared for them by the organising committee.
* A symbol of peace and love was presented by Marthen Tanawane representing the Papuans and the Regent of Yapen Waropen Regency, representing the Indonesian Government, in the form of cutting bamboo.
       While Tanawane and the Regent held hands, a Protestant minister cut the bamboo stick. This was followed by the singing of the hymn *Serikat Persaudaraan* ("United in Brotherhood").
* Then the text declaring the Zone of the Lord's Love in the Ancestral Land of Yapen Waropen was read, followed by the singing of "Hear o the nation", by the Teachers Association.
* Guns were then collected, followed by another spiritual song.
* The ceremony ended with a prayer for peace.

Marthen Tanawane's peace initiative had a deep impact on both Papuans and non-Papuans living in the Yapen Waropen Regency. Since then, generally speaking, this regency has been peaceful.

From Yapen Waropen, Tanawane went to Jayapura to carry out his mission of peace. He submitted letters to the Provincial Government and to the Chairman of the Provincial Parliament, requesting them to issue letters of recommendation. These letters should help him to involve government employees in his efforts to turn West Papua into a Peace Zone. Perhaps because it feared that the idea of a Peace Zone was part of a Papuan strategy to obtain independence, the provincial government refused to co-operate. In spite of this non-co-operative position, the Papuans, who had been living under this repressive government for so long, continued to discuss the idea of a Peace Zone.

Local NGOs, church leaders and students have been discussing it on several occasions. All agreed that the government and the army should participate in the initiative, since, as the saying goes, "it takes two hands to clap".

Yet, there was also scepticism. One Papuan church leader and former head of the GKI Synod, expressed his doubts about the feasibility of the project. "I doubt whether the Papuans can fulfil this dream of a Peace Zone", he said. "Because to turn this idea into reality the Indonesian army has to participate. See what the Indonesian police and the army are doing here in West Papua. They keep shooting Papuans who use peaceful means to express their aspirations. See how many people have been killed. They force the Papuans to hand in their bows and arrows, and yet they are every-where with their uniforms and modern weapons. I will buy Papuans' idea of a Peace Zone if you can get the soldiers, who are roaming around and are on every street corner, back to the barracks, and confine them to their own compound or at their guard posts."[25]

Visions for peace

This does not mean, however, that people's initiatives for peace, negotiations and dialogue should be given up or ignored. A new agenda must be set, with new priorities.

First, the churches, in collaboration with *Elsham*, the church-based NGO, should make every effort to share their experiences with other local institutions and leaders in order to transform the culture of violence in West Papua and turn it into a culture of peace. This means that the churches should continue to do what they have been doing since the early 1990s, and try to get other institutions to also take up this challenge and set a similar agenda for the future. As shown above, the Jayapura Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, through its Secretariat for Justice and Peace, has started a reconciliation and peace-building programme, which has a high priority in its work.

Second, other religious institutions, such as theological colleges, should join forces, discuss the peace-building programme, and see how these ideas could be incorporated into their own educational programmes. In the process of reconciliation and peace-building in Papuan society,

---

[25] Personal communication.

studies on reconciliation and peace-building and human rights train-
ing should be included in the curriculum of theological colleges and
other institutions of higher education in West Papua.

Third, the recently initiated activities of seminars followed by dis-
cussions about relevant books and an exhibition of books related to
peace-building and reconciliation, that are sponsored by the Catholic
Church and by the theological colleges, should be encouraged and
held regularly.

Fourth, international military aid to Indonesia should be stopped.
Such aid is interpreted by the army and the government as inter-
national support for its policy in West Papua, including the perpet-
uation of a culture of violence. In order to build peace and prevent
human rights abuses, all parties concerned with peace-building in
the world should demand an end to military aid to Indonesia. This
is even more urgent in the context of West Papua, where the army
is seen as the greatest enemy to peace.

10. THE RELIGIOUS SECTOR BUILDING PEACE: SOME EXAMPLES FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Maria Lorenza Palm-Dalupan

INTRODUCTION

The People Power Revolt of 1986 toppled the Marcos dictatorship and restored freedom to the people of the Philippines. A critical task in the process of post-authoritarian reconstruction and democratic transition was to heal the divisions within Philippine society, counter the culture of violence, and resolve the protracted armed conflicts that had grown in strength during the period of repression. It was time to build peace.

Since 1986, a comprehensive peace process has developed that has sought to end violent conflicts, address their impacts and consequences, and resolve their causes. It has been guided by a vision of a sustainable peace – more than the absence of armed conflict, or negative peace, but completed by positive peace, or the presence of structures, processes and values that ensure social justice, protect human rights, respect diversity, encourage co-operative relations, enable full human development, and support the non-violent transformation of conflict. This holistic vision recognizes that violence is not only physical and overt, but also social, personal, cultural, and covert, arising from unjust and oppressive political, economic, and social structures.[1] Thus, the attainment of peace demands nothing less than social transformation and requires multidimensional efforts engaging many sectors of Philippine society.

In the Philippines today, a comprehensive peace process is being pursued that is multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral and multi-level. It is multidimensional, as peace efforts span a broad range of initiatives pursued amidst potential, ongoing and post-armed conflict situations.

---

[1] The concepts of negative and positive peace in relation to direct and structural violence were developed mainly by Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung in his many writings. See for example, "Violence, peace and peace research", *Journal of Peace Research*, 6:3, 167–91 (1969). Also "Cultural violence", *Journal of Peace Research*, 27:3, 291–305 (1990).

There are at least five areas of response to conflict and violence: (1) structural reforms and empowerment to address the sources and causes of violent conflicts and social unrest; (2) seeking political settlement to end the armed conflicts; (3) addressing the direct impact and consequences of armed hostilities on individuals and communities; (4) de-escalating ongoing violent conflicts, and preventing escalation of other conflicts into violence; and (5) building a constituency and a culture of peace. Work in these areas is necessarily a multi-sectoral endeavour, engaging the efforts of government, civil society, grassroots communities, ex-combatants, and the international community. And it is multi-level, as the different sectors mobilise participation, co-ordination, and complementarity of roles and initiatives on national, regional and local levels. While various coalitions and networks have been formed, there does not exist any central control over the peace process. The different sectors and levels are in dialogue, debate, partnership, critical collaboration or constructive opposition, the latter characterising much of the relationship between government and the non-government sectors.[2]

The religious sector has been among the most active and influential participants in the peace-building process, with involvement of leaders down to grassroots workers. A comprehensive account of their peace efforts would require many volumes and perspectives. This chapter focuses on four areas that highlight the constructive role of the religious sector in responding to conflict and violence: peace advocacy and constituency-building; institution-building and empowerment; promoting a culture of peace through inter-faith dialogue; and mediation towards conflict resolution. To situate this discussion in its proper context, it is preceded by descriptions of the religious sector and of

---

[2] For overview accounts of peace-building in the Philippines, see the following sources: Ed Garcia, *A Distant Peace: Human rights and people's participation in conflict resolution* (Manila: National Book Store University of the Philippines Press, 1991); Maria Lorenza Palm-Dalupan, "Development of the Government's Comprehensive Peace Program", in Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (ed), *The Media and Peace Reporting: Perspectives on media and peace reportage* (Pasig City: Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process and the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, 2000), 12–60; Teresita Quintos-Deles, "Civil society as peacemaker", in *The Media and Peace Reporting, id.*, at 202–22; Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, *Peace-building and Mediation in the Philippines*, Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Occasional Papers, Series No. 94–3 (Quezon City: Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, 1994); Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (ed), *Peace Matters: A Philippine peace compendium* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and University of the Philippines Press, 1997).

the complex situation of conflict and violence in the Philippines. The chapter concludes with some reflections and recommendations on enhancing the role of the religious sector in building peace.

THE RELIGIOUS SECTOR

In the Philippines the religious sector is often equated with the Roman Catholic Church, the largest, dominant and most visible religious institution in the country. But this presents an incomplete picture, ignoring the significant contribution of religious leaders and functionaries of other faith communities, particularly the mainline Protestant groups and the Muslim communities. Therefore, this paper considers the religious sector to include the institutions, organisations, leaders, men and women religious, and lay workers of these three main organised religions in the Philippines.

1. *The Philippine Catholic Church*

The Spaniards arrived in the 16th century and succeeded in subjugating most of the politically autonomous native communities in the northern (Luzon) and central (Visayas) islands "with the sword and the cross". Conversion to the Catholic faith was an effective tool of pacification, except in the rugged Cordillera mountains, other isolated or forested areas where tribal communities retained their indigenous belief systems, and the Muslim areas in the southern Philippines.

Today Catholics comprise the majority, 83% of 81 million Filipinos, and the institutional church continues to play a key, though by no means formal, role in political and social life. It has been a dynamic, changing, sometimes ambiguous role – on the one hand, identified with ruling powers and the elite; on the other, defending the poor and oppressed, speaking out against injustice, human rights violations and abuses of political power. This reflects not only changing historical circumstances and missions, but also the non-monolithic character and differences between conservative and progressive forces within the institution.[3]

---

[3] For a discussion of how such internal differences impacted on the Catholic Church in Mindanao, see Karl M. Gaspar, "*Abante, Atras, Abante*: Patterns of the Mindanao Catholic Church's involvement in contemporary social issues", in Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (ed), *Civil Society Making Civil Society, Philippine Democracy Agenda: Volume 3* (Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, University of the Philippines, 1997), 149–70.

Regardless, the Catholic Church in the Philippines is recognised to have made a significant contribution to the movement for social change and the development of civil society. The Second Vatican Council of 1962–1965, with its emphasis on the Church's commitment to both spiritual affairs and an active role in the world towards justice and social transformation, provided the major impetus and theological justification for direct involvement in efforts addressing poverty and oppression. This led the two major bodies representing institutional hierarchies within the Church – the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) – to become advocates of social justice. A recent publication on Philippine civil society points out two significant consequences of this change in emphasis: first, "many Filipinos began to look for structural causes of the inequities within Philippine society"; and second, the Church "turned to building institutions that could challenge the structures perpetuating poverty and powerlessness, an especially important development given the fact that the church had a geographical reach comparable to [and possibly surpassing] that of the state".[4] Among these institutions is the National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace (NASSA-JP), established by the CBCP in 1966. Today it coordinates nationwide programmes for total human development, which are implemented on the ground by three autonomous regional offices (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao-Sulu), and 82 Diocesan Social Action Centres. The potential impact of such programmes can be appreciated if one considers that the Catholic community is composed of "some 2,500 parishes with networks of chapels reaching to the smallest village, more than 7,500 priests, 1,200 members of male religious congregations and 11,000 religious sisters, more than 1,000 educational institutions with hundreds of thousands of students and teachers, as well as radio stations, parish and diocesan organizations".[5]

---

[4] G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner Noble, "Citizen movements and Philippine democracy", in G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner Noble (ed), *Organizing for Democracy: NGOs, civil society, and the Philippine state* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998), 284.

[5] John J. Carroll, *Forgiving or Forgetting? Churches and the transition to democracy in the Philippines* PULSO Monograph No. 20 (Quezon City: Institute on Church and Social Issues, Ateneo de Manila University, August 1999), 51. This monograph traces the historical development of Catholic Church involvement, and to some extent that of the Protestant Churches, in social change and democratisation efforts in the Philippines.

2. *The National Council of Churches in the Philippines*

The members of numerous non-Catholic Christian denominations comprise about 11% of the population. The Protestant churches also began active involvement in social issues in the 1960s, particularly those comprising the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), an organisation of eleven churches, including both mainline churches that arrived during the American colonial period and native Philippine churches. The NCCP seeks to develop Christian ecumenism and unity of position and action on religious, civic, moral, and social issues. It is actively engaged in justice and peace work, focusing statements and programmes on protection of human rights, eradicating structural inequities, and improving living conditions for the poor and marginalised.

3. *The Islamic community*

The Muslim population comprises thirteen of the 33 ethno-linguistic groups indigenous to the southern Philippine islands of Mindanao, Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi. Islam was introduced in this area by Arab traders around the 13th century, and by the time of Spanish arrival in 1521 the largest groups had developed as Sultanates ruled by an aristocratic class and linked politically to the Muslim states in Borneo. State-sponsored programmes that began in the American colonial period and continued after independence brought large numbers of Christian settlers from Luzon and the Visayas to Mindanao, and have over the years led to the Muslim communities becoming the minority in the southern Philippines.

Today, the Muslims make up about 5% of the national population. This includes the traditional concentrations in the south and the growing communities of Muslim Filipinos in Manila and other urban centres outside of Mindanao. As in other Southeast Asian countries, the Muslim faith community in the Philippines are followers of the Sunni tradition of Islam. They do not have a formal, centralised, controlling structure of religious leadership that cross-cuts the different ethnic and geographical communities. There is also no strict hierarchical relationship between the community-based *imam*, who leads the prayer services in a mosque, the *ustadz* or Islamic teacher at the *madrasah* (Islamic school, pl. *madari*), or the *alim* (pl. *ulama*) or scholar of Islamic law. Some religious leaders have worked through Muslim organisations established to promote Muslim interests and enhance Islamic

consciousness and which, faithful to Islam as a holistic, integrated way of life, have mixed religious, social and political purposes. Many have been established mainly by traditional political leaders. But religious leaders have played major roles particularly in those whose primary orientation is towards the promotion of Islamic education and consciousness.[6]

CONFLICT AND ARMED REBELLION

Peace-building efforts in the Philippines have developed in response to a complex situation of conflict and violence. Deep-seated socio-political conflicts are rooted in structural inequities dating back to the colonial past – three centuries of Spanish rule followed by forty years of American colonialism. Colonial policies institutionalised elite control of land and economic resources, introduced exclusionary, patrimonial politics and governance, created widespread poverty, and fuelled cultural discrimination.

These inequities continued even after the Philippines gained independence in 1946. With no mechanism for the interests of the voiceless majority to be articulated at the national level, agrarian and social unrest were sustained. Martial law exacerbated the situation with state-sponsored repression, massive human rights violations, favoured treatment for "economic cronies" aligned with the dictator, and a three-fold increase in nationwide poverty.

Even as constitutional government was restored after the dictatorship, the contradictions remained, with "formal democratic appearances" masking political exclusion. To this day the Philippines remains an "elite democracy". While a middle class has grown steadily, the majority of Filipinos remain marginalised and locked in poverty. The poor are found throughout the country among all religious and cultural groups. Most are landless farmers and agricultural workers dependent on rice, corn, sugar and coconut. Others live in urban squatter settlements, in fishing villages, and in the forest, mountain and coastal communities of tribal indigenous peoples.

In the southern Philippines, multiple levels of conflict have resulted

---

[6] Wan Kadir Che Man, *Muslim Separatism: The Moros of southern Philippines and the Malays of southern Thailand* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1990), 123–24.

from national patterns of exclusion superimposed on other conflictual relations among the indigenous Muslim and Lumad (tribal) communities, Christian migrants, and the state. First, conflict between the Muslim community and the state over their historical loss of political power, disenfranchisement from land, minoritisation and cultural discrimination. Second, within the Muslim community is an internal conflict rooted in the inequities of the feudal, autocratic *datu* system. Third, social conflict manifested in intolerance and animosity between the Muslim and Christian communities founded on prejudices inculcated since the Spanish period and the long history of armed conflict between rebel groups and the central government. Fourth, conflict between the Lumads on the one hand, and Christian settlers, Muslims, the state (aligned with the elite and big business) on the other, over loss of ancestral domains and cultural discrimination. And finally, growing conflict between Mindanao as a region and the national government over centralised governance and control over the direction and benefits of the region's development.

These various conflicts have generated social unrest, unarmed responses such as civil activism and pressure politics, but also armed rebellion. Over the last half century, the country has experienced two major forms of armed opposition to the state – communist insurgency and Muslim secessionism – each one pitting several groups against the central government. These rebellions have endured and evolved alongside, at times in response to, other forms of armed intra-societal violence – state-sponsored violence and repression by a martial law regime, a series of military coups, political and electoral violence, rightist vigilante violence, localised clan feuds, and organised criminality, with some elements claiming dubious ideological goals.

1. *The armed Communist rebellion*

Marxist-inspired agrarian and labour movements, including the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (Communist Party of the Philippines) had developed as early as the 1930s, but unrest exploded into serious armed conflict in the next two decades. Government counter-insurgency operations with American support resulted in large-scale capture of rebels and disintegration of key organisations. Unresolved inequities and deteriorating socio-economic conditions led to widespread unrest in the 1960s and an upsurge of mass protest movements of various political persuasions and representing many sectors – farmers and

peasants, labour, urban poor, students, professionals, religious, indige-
nous peoples. In 1968 the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP)
was re-established by José Maria Sison based on Marxist-Leninist-
Maoist thought. Its goal was the takeover of the state through a
national democratic revolution, whose core is anti-imperialism and
social justice through agrarian revolution; its strategy, mass-base build-
ing and protracted peoples war. The CPP resumed the armed rebel-
lion against the government with its military arm, the New People's
Army (NPA) established in 1969, engaging in guerrilla warfare.

The repression under martial law and the Marcos dictatorship was
an effective "recruiter" for the armed revolutionary movement, which
increased in membership and spread throughout the country. Though
primarily agrarian-based, it established a following among most of the
marginalised sectors, including the indigenous peoples in the Cordillera
and in Mindanao. Many individuals, including Catholic and Protestant
religious and lay workers, were forced underground to avoid arrest or
summary execution, or to opt for armed struggle. For some religious,
the repression, human rights violations, and deepened economic depri-
vation of the majority created a condition that justified the extreme
response of a "just war". Within the armed movement, some had
developed a form of spirituality and a theology in which the demands
of the people's struggle became the central and defining element. Priests
have been among the most legendary NPA commanders. Some orga-
nisations, including the religious sector-based Christians for National
Liberation, formed an alliance under the National Democratic Front
(NDF), which was effectively under CPP control. To this day, the
NDF counts former religious among its highest officials.

After failed peace negotiations with the post-dictatorship Aquino
administration, the CPP-NPA suffered a major decline as a result of
an intensified government counter-insurgency campaign and internal
ideological splits. Many factions took advantage of the post-martial
law democratic space. Two regional groups – the Cordillera People's
Liberation Army and the RPM-P/RPA/ABB[7] in western Visayas –

---

[7] The Cordillera People's Liberation Army is a faction composed of indigenous
tribal members led by former priest Conrado Balweg that broke away from the
CPP-NPA-NDF's Cordillera Front on the question of indigenous autonomy within
the larger structure and goals of the revolutionary movement. The RPM-P/RPA/ABB
refers to the *Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas*/Revolutionary Proletarian
Army/Alex Boncayao Brigade, a group formed by the merger of some urban guer-
rilla units, radical labour groups and peasant-based armed units that had split from

have signed peace agreements, while others have transformed into issue-based political parties and now participate in legal "parliamentary struggle". Today the CPP-NPA still continues its armed struggle in the countryside, even as they are represented by the National Democratic Front in on-and-off-again peace negotiations with the Philippine government.

2. *The Muslim secessionist rebellion*

Armed Muslim opposition to colonial and national rule was always present, but generally scattered and sporadic. The establishment of the Muslim secessionist movement was finally triggered by developments also in the 1960s – communal violence in Central Mindanao underlain by mixed ethno-religious and class-based antagonisms and involving vigilantes armed by Christian and Muslim politicians and big business interests; biassed aggressions of government forces that created a belief among the Muslim community of a state-sponsored "genocidal policy" against them; organisations focussed on issues specific to Philippine Muslims established by Muslim scholars in Manila universities; the return to Mindanao of Middle East-educated scholars committed to work for Islamic renewal that was part of a world-wide phenomenon; and the infamous "Jabidah Massacre", in which Christian army officers had executed Muslim recruits being trained for a covert operation.[8]

A. *The MNLF and Muslim self-determination*
A number of separatist organisations were established by Muslim politicians, but it was the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) founded by young Muslim activists led by Nur Misuari that attracted the greatest following, with its ideology of Moro nationalism and goal of an independent homeland. The term "Moro" was originally applied by the Spanish colonisers to the Muslims in the southern Philippines because they shared religion with the Moors who had ruled the Iberian Peninsula. Over time the term acquired many derogatory connotations among Christian Filipinos imbibed with the colonisers' hostility towards both the Moors and the Moros. Many Christians

---

the hardcore CPP-NPA, and operated mainly in the Visayan islands of Negros Occidental and Panay.

  [8] This operation was believed to be a Marcos plan to invade Sabah.

retained the hostile, superior attitudes and prejudices brought by the
Spanish colonisers and strengthened by colonial period experiences.
Raids by seafaring Muslims on Christianised coastal communities
created fear and hostility, further deepened in the minds of Christianised
Filipinos who were sent by Spanish and American colonisers to the
Mindanao frontlines to battle fierce Muslim resistance. Plunder and
pillage, fear and hatred were vicariously re-lived through Christianised
Filipino folk theatre called *moro-moro*, in which Christians battled
Muslim villains depicted as cruel bloodthirsty pirates. Negative Muslim
stereotypes were further perpetuated in history books and insensi-
tive, sensationalist media reporting.[9] But Muslim activist ideologues
transformed this pejorative used by "outsiders" into a positive symbol
of identity, at the core of which was not only a common religion, but
also a shared and glorious history of valour and fearless resistance to
colonial and imperialist rule. These commonalities crosscut the thir-
teen different ethnic groups and were made the basis for the *Bangsamoro*,
the "Moro nation", presented as the descendants of people who had
never been vanquished, with the right to "freedom . . . national home-
land . . . and the preservation of [their] Islamic and indigenous cul-
ture and civilization".[10] It was a powerful symbol that inspired many
Muslims to support the MNLF and, following the declaration of mar-
tial law, to join its fighting corps, the Bangsa Moro Army (BMA),
in battle against the armed forces sent to wage war in Mindanao.

   The dictator's war in Mindanao was massive, brutal and costly.
About 100,000 were killed, over a million displaced, and one out of
every three or four Muslims became homeless even before the peak of
hostilities in 1974−75. By 1975, three-fourths of the Philippine army
was deployed in the South and military casualties were exceeding
100 per month in periods of intense fighting.[11] Facing growing mil-
itary dissension and threats by Arab countries to cut oil supplies, Marcos

---

   [9] For a description of how Muslims in the Philippines have been historically
depicted and the problems they have faced with ethnic labelling, see Rufa Cagoco-
Guiam, "Telling the truth of the 'Other': Images of Islam and Muslims in the
Philippines", in *The Media and Peace Reporting, op. cit.*, at 62−80. For a study on rela-
tions between Muslims and Christians in the Philippines, see Rosalita T. Nunez,
Roots of Conflict: Muslims, Christians and the Mindanao struggle (Makati City: Asian Institute
of Management, 1997).
   [10] Nur Misuari, quoted in Cesar Adib Majul, *The Contemporary Muslim Movement
in the Philippines* (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1985), 139.
   [11] Thomas M. McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday politics and armed sep-
aratism in the southern Philippines* (Manila: Anvil Publishing, 1998), 165−66.

signed a ceasefire and a peace agreement with the MNLF in 1976. Brokered by Libya, the Tripoli Agreement provided the principles for Muslim autonomy in the southern Philippines, but subsequent talks on its implementation broke down over divergent interpretations of its key terms. Marcos unilaterally established "cosmetic" autonomous structures that were exploited by traditional politicians and increased frustration and resentment among ordinary Muslims. Hostilities continued, but were less intense and not as widespread as in the first half of the 1970s. The MNLF suffered both defections of major commanders accepting lucrative settlements from government, and internal dissension leading to the creation of other separatist groups.

Post-martial law governments also engaged the MNLF in a peace process. A Final Peace Agreement that addressed the contentious issues in the Tripoli Agreement was finally signed in 1996. MNLF leaders now hold key positions in the Regional Autonomous Government, some MNLF units have been transformed into community development structures, and a number of fighters integrated into the AFP.

B. *The MILF and "Islamic Renewal"*

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) evolved from an MNLF splinter group led by *Ustadz* Salamat Hashim. Officially founded in 1984, the MILF operates within an explicitly Islamic political framework. Emphasising that religion and politics are not separate but complementary realms, *ulama* play critical leadership and advisory roles and MILF camps are both military structures and places of worship for MILF fighters.[12] The ultimate goal of the MILF armed struggle is a separate *Bangsamoro* state with a genuine Islamic system of government and way of life.

For the MILF, the core of the *Bangsamoro* struggle is Islamic renewal which in the Mindanao context, has two interrelated elements – reform of Muslim political society and religious reform.[13] The first

---

[12] Eric Gutierrez, "Religion and politics in Muslim Mindanao", in Kristina Gaerlan and Mara Stankovitch (eds), *Rebels, Warlords and Ulama: A reader on Muslim separatism and the war in southern Philippines* (Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy, 2000), 152.

[13] McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels, op. cit.*, at 203. The discussion on Islamic renewal is based on McKenna's book, Gutierrez, "Religion and politics in Muslim Mindanao", *op. cit.*, and Julkipli Wadi, "The Moro struggle and the tenets of Islam in the Philippines", paper read at the *Kalinaw Mindanaw* Peace Conference, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands, 29 September 2000.

provides an alternative ideology of moral authority in response to injustices in the *datu* system, a cultural variant of the political and economic exclusion characteristic of general Philippine political life. This system has perpetuated a mythology of sanctified inequality and a feudal structure – hereditary control over land, other productive resources and poor followers – and spawned today's political dynasties and warlords. While ideology required benevolent stewardship and paternalism, many traditional political leaders abused their position to accumulate wealth, did little to alleviate the poverty of their communities, participated in national and local politics to protect class interests, and treated political office as personal property in a manner that made them no different from other "traditional" politicians in the national arena. Such behaviour was generally uncontested by ordinary people and by those traditional religious leaders closely identified with the ruling class and dependent on their patronage.

The second element, religious reform, includes improved understanding and practical adherence to Islamic tenets among the faithful, upgrading of religious education in the *madari*, and the modification or elimination of practices viewed as adulterations of conventional Islam. The latter highlights the disjuncture between *adat* (indigenous customary law) and practices of "folk Islam", and the *Shari'a*. Because elites traditionally controlled both political and religious life, this area of reform was a challenge to their authority as well.

Islamic renewal, therefore, is the transformation of behaviour, attitudes and institutions in all levels of Moro society to harmonise them with the *Shari'a*, "the embodiment of the Divine Will according to which man should live in both his private and social life".[14] Its necessary outcome is a revitalised Islamic society in which a Muslim ruler, "(a)s guardian and administrator of the *Shariah* . . . stands as the symbol of the rule of Divine Law over human society".[15]

C. *Three strands of the armed conflict*
Over the years the armed conflict has interwoven at least three strands. The first is outward looking, articulated first by the MNLF as the struggle for social justice, liberation from external oppression of the state, and self-determination of the *Bangsamoro*. It is presented as

---

[14] MILF, quoted in Gutierrez, "Religion and politics in Muslim Mindanao", *op. cit.*, at 154.
[15] Quoted in *id.*, at 155.

a continuation of resistance to decades of colonial and national government attempts at subjugation, annexation, integration, and exploitation, which have resulted in the Muslims' minoritisation, loss of political and economic power, as well as ancestral lands. Thus the MNLF struggle was guided by a nationalist ideology focussed on liberation and transformation of the *Bangsamoro* from a dominated to a sovereign nation. Over time the originally espoused goal of an independent homeland for the thirteen Muslim communities gave way to a demand for "meaningful, genuine autonomy", mainly under the influence of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, that has mediated peace agreements between the MNLF and the Philippine Government.

The second strand is inward looking, focussing on internal reform of Moro society within a paradigm of Islamic renewal, mainly under the influence of Middle East-educated *ulama* who emphasise Islam as "the rallying point of the *Bangsamoro* struggle". While this is most developed in the MILF struggle, it is not an abandonment of the nationalist stance. University of the Philippines Professor Julkipli Wadi contends that in MILF ideology (and that of other recent radical movements) the *Bangsamoro* struggle was "reconfigured" through a "fusion" of the two strands – "[w]hat was originally a struggle of liberation and decolonisation based on justice and human rights is infused with a new dimension of struggle common in the Muslim world: the struggle for reform in line with the political ideal of Islam . . . The end of the struggle on the basis of Islam is to bring about a balanced social order".[16] Thus the nationalist goal of a *Bangsamoro* homeland must be an Islamic State as the logical outcome of Islamic renewal and the suitable vehicle to implement the *Shari'a*. It remains to be seen how this ideal can be realised through peaceful means. Peace negotiations between the government and the MILF began in 1997, were disrupted by a major outbreak of hostilities in 2000, and resumed the following year under a new government. Today a new ceasefire is in effect and talks are ongoing.

The third strand is the experience and interpretation of the conflict by different sides as one between Muslims and Christians, focusing

---

[16] Wadi, "The Moro struggle and the tenets of Islam in the Philippines", *op. cit.*, at 10. Prof. Wadi's paper explores the ideological evolution of Moro struggle anchored on reform and self-determination, including the critical factors shaping its development.

on religion as the "most obvious social identity" differentiating the conflicting parties.[17] Various forces have exploited the religious issue to direct the conflict for their own ends, such as sectarian violence instigated and manipulated by politicians, large landholders and business interests. Thus, religion has become a metaphor for other conflicts such as those "that grew out of contests for land and political power".[18] The reality that religious identity cross-cuts elite and oppressors, poor and oppressed, escapes many. At the same time, it cannot be denied that historical prejudices dating to colonial times and animosities engendered by protracted war continue to this day.

RELIGIOUS SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PEACE PROCESS

In response to this situation of conflict and violence, a comprehensive peace process has developed in the Philippines with the religious sector as a leading actor. It has contributed to the formation of a holistic vision and agenda for lasting peace, and has provided leadership, personnel, resources and moral authority in a wide range of initiatives addressing the many conflicts and the structural inequities at their core. This section focuses on four major areas of their involvement.

1. *Advocacy and constituency-building*

Peace-building needs the support and participation of the population at large. Therefore, peace advocacy is a critical undertaking that involves not just calling for an end to violence, but promoting a holistic vision of peace, mobilising a constituency around this vision and developing an agenda to actualise it.

Peace advocates have recognized the crucial role of religious leaders in this endeavour, particularly in the issuance of important statements and national appeals, and the mobilisation of their networks down to the grassroots. In particular, pastoral letters of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on the subject of peace, justice, human rights and active non-violence are recognised to have an important influence on Philippine political life. Being

---

[17] Aijaz Ahmad, "Class and colony in Mindanao", in Gaerlan and Stankovitch, *Rebels, Warlords and Ulama, op. cit.*, at 18–19. Ahmad provides a brief analysis of the expediency of religious rationality for various forces in Mindanao.

[18] Aijaz Ahmad, "The war against the Muslims", in *id.*, at 24.

read in Sunday masses, they reach the large church-going audience among the majority Catholic Filipinos. They are also widely disseminated among schools and church-based NGOs, and are sometimes even printed in leading daily newspapers, and commented on in newspaper editorials and opinion columns. Thus, a review of NGO peace-building work in the Philippines has considered them a "far-reaching mechanism for advancing the calls for peace".[19]

Although reaching a smaller constituency, the NCCP has been equally vocal and active in public pronouncements on a broad range of issues of peace, violence and justice by its General Conventions, Executive Committee, officials and various commissions. Among its critical contributions in peace advocacy are sustaining a human rights focus, both in terms of compliance with human rights principles and justice for victims, and emphasising true reconciliation that is based on justice.

In Mindanao, the democratic space after martial law provided the opportunity for Muslim religious leaders to openly preach and pursue non-violent advocacy for reform. Not only was there less military harassment, but also less elite interference, as increased foreign funding for mosques and *madari* released many from dependence on *datu* patronage. In the Cotabato area, for example, they have used Friday sermons to advance an alternative egalitarian ideology, emphasising equality and social justice in Islam. While not directly challenging the myth of sanctified inequality that underlies the *datu* system, they seek to emphasise honourable, populist behaviour as criterion for leadership and openly support good *datu* who meet their criteria.[20]

A. *The National Unification Commission*

But possibly the most important involvement of the religious sector in peace advocacy and constituency building was in the 1993 nation-wide public consultations of the National Unification Commission (NUC). The NUC was an advisory body created by President Fidel Ramos soon after he succeeded Corazon Aquino in 1992, in response to criticism and advice from peace advocates to properly situate his offer of amnesty to rebels within a larger, participative peace process. The NUC was tasked to formulate and recommend a "viable amnesty programme and peace process" based on consultations with "the

---

[19] Coronel-Ferrer, *Peace-building and Mediation in the Philippines, op. cit.*, at 6.
[20] McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels, op. cit.*

concerned sectors" of society. It was composed of government officials and two civil society representatives – the NCCP Secretary-General Dr Feliciano Carino and Roman Catholic Archbishop Fernando Capalla.

Recognising that all Filipinos had a stake in the peace effort, the NUC decided to conduct public and nationwide consultations with two important criteria: participation down to the grassroots and credibility. Facing the challenge of completing the process in six months in an archipelago politically divided into 76 provinces, the NUC sought assistance from the one institution in Philippine society that could meet its two criteria – the churches. Following their own internal consultations, both the CBCP and the NCCP officially endorsed the mobilisation and active participation of their members and organisations in the NUC consultations. It is necessary to briefly describe this process to appreciate the extent of the consultations and the significant contribution of the religious sector to this endeavour.

The NUC consultations were conducted in two steps – provincial and regional – coinciding with the political division of the country into 76 provinces organised into 14 administrative regions. Bishops of the CBCP and NCCP served as Regional Convenors to oversee the consultation process in 13 regions. This involved two major responsibilities: (1) assist the component provinces to form multi-sectoral Provincial Convenors Groups (PCG), and ensure that provincial consultations were neutral and involved as many sectors as possible; and (2) organise regional consultations where provincial delegations were to present their proposals and discuss issues with the NUC. The PCGs were composed of the governor and representatives of relevant religious sectors, the NGO sector, Peoples Organisations, and significant minority sectors such as Indigenous Peoples, where applicable. They managed a process that involved a series of local meetings and culminated in a provincial consultation at which 10 representatives to the Regional Consultations were selected in accordance with NUC guidelines to ensure balanced representation. Both the RCGs and PCGs were supported by Secretariats-Co-ordinating Centres, which in many cases were offices or organisations affiliated with the churches – Social Action Centres, diocesan offices, pastoral councils, schools run by religious orders, bishops-businessmen's conferences – and headed mostly by religious or lay church workers.

The only exception to the two-step process was the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) whose four component provinces have a majority Muslim population. Here the NUC worked

directly with PCGs to organise provincial consultations. Provincial Convenors included Muslim local government, religious and academic leaders, some of whom were also among the NUC's Council of Advisers.

The NUC held consultations with two national formations – the National Peace Conference and the People's Congress – which together represented a broad ideological spectrum, as well as with the Peace Zone Communities, church and business leaders, and the military. In all consultations, the people were asked to identify the root causes of the armed conflicts and situations of un-peace, and to recommend concrete proposals for achieving peace in their communities and the nation. On this basis, the NUC recommended the pursuit of a comprehensive peace process through the simultaneous implementation of "Six Paths to Peace": (1) social, political and economic reforms to address social injustices and the structural inequities underlying the conflicts; (2) consensus-building and empowerment; (3) political negotiations to resolve the different armed conflicts; (4) reconciliation, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants and civilian victims of armed conflicts; (5) reduction of extent and impact of continuing armed hostilities; and (6) building a climate and culture of peace. The NUC also recommended a set of policy directions and "immediate do-ables" – priority executive and legislative actions as a first step to push the reform process forward – as well as structures to implement a government peace programme.[21]

The NUC consultations were a critical point in the Philippine peace process. For the government, it led to a broadened vision of peace and a positive change in official government peace policy, as well as some concrete achievements along the different "Paths to Peace".[22] In some instances, critical partnerships formed with church-based groups yielded positive results. One significant collaboration among the CBCP's Ecumenical Commission for Indigenous Peoples, National Peace Conference, and the government's Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) was the conduct of indigenous peoples' regional and national consultations. This led to consensus on draft legislation for protection of ancestral domain,

---

[21] These are contained in National Unification Commission, *NUC Report to President Fidel V. Ramos on the Pursuit of a Comprehensive Peace Process*, 1993.

[22] For an overview of these peace initiatives, see Palm-Dalupan, "Development of the Government's Comprehensive Peace Program", *op. cit.*, at 23–51.

which became the primary basis for the landmark Indigenous Peoples'
Rights Act finally passed into law by the Philippine Congress in
1997, four years after the NUC report was submitted.

For many participants, the NUC consultations were an empowering
process as they enabled ordinary people to make direct input to deci-
sions that would ultimately impact on their lives and well-being. As
one bishop stated, these were not the voices of the traditional opin-
ion-makers – politicians, political analysts, commentators – but ordi-
nary men and women from all walks of life speaking from the "guts
of our society". And because the consultations provided a forum for
discussion of peace issues across many sectors that were part of a
single community, they helped clarify the essence of a community-
based process as not merely the expression of opinions but "the more
difficult task of building consensus among these different sectors on
an agenda and plan of action for the attainment of peace".[23]

Finally, the NUC consultation process succeeded in mobilising a
nationwide network of peace-builders on a scale that had not as yet
been achieved. While there had been previous multi-sectoral con-
sensus-building efforts, these had focused more on national sectoral
formations and agendas. The scope and enthusiasm of nationwide
response to the NUC consultations was overwhelming, prompting a
leading peace advocate to conclude that "[m]ore than any other
activity, these consultations served to consolidate and project citizen's
voices articulating the imperatives for peace from the broadest geo-
graphical and sectoral spectrum of the country. That the consultation
process was perceived as credible and invited broad-based partici-
pation from the local population was due to the careful stewardship
of its proceedings by the Church leaders".[24]

Even after the end of the NUC term and the installation of new
government peace-building structures, religious sector advocacy con-
tinued. Many bishops, other convenors and secretariat heads con-
tinued to monitor the implementation of NUC recommendations,
and regular consultations and dialogues were held with the presi-
dent and other government officials to discuss and resolve peace
issues. Some local groups organised to participate in the consulta-
tions or to provide secretariat support continued as peace advocacy

---

[23] National Unification Commission, *NUC Report to President Fidel V. Ramos on the Pursuit of a Comprehensive Peace Process, op. cit.*, at 31.

[24] Quintos-Deles, "Civil society as peacemaker", *op. cit.*, at 217.

organisations. The NCCP and CBCP also formed the Joint Peace Committee as a mechanism for sustained cooperation and joint response on peace issues. Two major areas of coordination have been in building peace constituencies and supporting people's peace initiatives, and in exerting moral pressure on the negotiation process between the government and the Communist movement. Finally, the consensus-building exercise strengthened friendship, trust and cooperation that contributed to a growth in inter-faith initiatives such as the Bishops-Ulama Forum in Mindanao.[25] The statements issued by this Forum are important modes of advocacy sending strong signals of inter-faith cooperation for non-violence and social transformation.

2. *Institution-building and empowerment*

High-profile advocacy is most effective when issues are promoted by influential leaders with a measure of moral suasion. But for peace and justice to become reality, advocacy must lead not only to conscientisation and consensus on issues, but also to social action at various levels of society.

A. *Peace-building organisations and programmes*

To mobilise, sustain, and support peace initiatives, the Christian churches have institutionalised peace-building in their social ministries, the NCCP through its Programme Unit on Peace set up in 1989, and the CBCP through NASSA-JP. Both co-ordinate multidimensional peace programmes for their separate constituencies, and often co-operate in joint peace initiatives.

The NCCP has adopted a Peace Programme with seven components: consciousness-raising through peace education; peace constituency-building and training; dialogues towards building an ecumenical agenda and unity for peace; advocacy and support for peace negotiations; ministries and sanctuaries for victims of war; human rights and international humanitarian law advocacy to reduce the costs of war; and international witness and companionship for local peace efforts. The Programme Unit on Peace serves as its action

---

[25] The contribution of the NUC process to the Bishops-Ulama Forum is cited in a comprehensive survey of inter-faith dialogue efforts in Mindanao by William LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace: The local Church of Mindanao-Sulu journeying in dialogue with the Muslim community (1965–2000)* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 2001), 408.

arm in this endeavour, providing focus, co-ordination and assistance for the NCCP, its member churches and constituencies in implementing peace-building activities. It has developed peace education modules for its member churches addressing the biblical and theological foundations of peace, the roots of war and violence, the prospects for peace in the Philippines, and the role of the ecumenical community, and conducted trainers' trainings in different parts of the country.[26] Under the peace programme, the Mennonite Central Committee has shared its recognised expertise in conflict mediation and conciliation. It has provided members of the NCCP, CBCP, and local peace groups with opportunities for skills training and interaction with its conflict resolution experts. The Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace, on the other hand, has focused on providing assistance and advocating the rights of internal refugees.

NASSA-JP, through advocacy campaigns, research, training and inter-sectoral engagement, aims to assist in processes to end the armed conflicts, address the structural factors that breed violence and cause "un-peace", and develop intensive peace consciousness. It co-operates with specialised structures created by the CBCP to implement action programmes on sectoral peace issues, such as the Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the Episcopal Commission on Inter-religious Dialogue.

Catholic educational institutions are also implementing peace education and research programmes. Peace education creates an understanding of the causes and processes of conflict and violence, cultivates values and attitudes supportive of peace and justice, and develops skills for dealing with conflict in non-violent ways. The Notre Dame University in Cotabato was the pioneer in developing peace education training modules for both formal and non-formal settings. Today many Catholic educational institutions (and some secular ones as well) have incorporated peace education in their curricula. Other Catholic universities such as Notre Dame and De La Salle University have academic centres devoted to peace and conflict research to support practitioners and policy makers.

Both the CBCP and the NCCP were leading convenors of a civil society consultation process that led to the organisation in 1990 of the National Peace Conference. Fourteen major sectors (including

---

[26] See National Council of Churches of the Philippines, *Lord, Make Us Instruments of Your Peace: Basic ecumenical course on peace* (Quezon City: NCCP, no date).

farmers, fisherfolk, labour, urban poor, indigenous peoples, women, disabled) and the three major religious faiths – Catholic, Protestant and Muslim – forged a consensus on a national peace vision, agenda of critical issues and a plan of action. The NPC has since evolved into a non-partisan, multi-sectoral citizens' assembly that engages government and other concerned parties to attain social, economic and political reforms. Today religious sector-based organisations are among its active core of about 500 coalitions and organisations.

Muslim clerics have also begun to organise for reform. Some have joined or established political parties that aim to conduct politics according to the teachings of Islam. In 1987, the Islamic Party of the Philippines was established at a meeting of *ulama* of Cotabato with objectives that included meaningful autonomy in the "*Bangsamoro* Homeland", reform in government and society, and equitable distribution of wealth, with Islam as the "complete basis for the solution of all human problems including socio-economic ones".[27] At about the same time, the *Ompia* (Reform) Party was founded by Muslim clerics to challenge the violent, corrupt, warlord-dominated, highly personalized politics in the Lanao area. Running on a strong anti-corruption platform, it succeeded in getting some of its candidates elected to local positions, including an *alim*, Mahid Mutilan, as provincial governor. Mutilan subsequently founded the Ulama League of the Philippines, dedicated to reform in Muslim political life and strongly advocating against corruption and electoral fraud. Most recently, the Ulama League has engaged its Christian counterparts in a process of inter-religious dialogue through the Bishops-Ulama Forum.

B. *Basic Ecclesial Communities*

A major approach of the Philippine Catholic Church is the building of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs), which will nurture environments for peace. Also known as Basic Christian Communities, BECs are the smallest church unit, composed of groups of households from the same geographical area that meet regularly as a community of believers to express their faith in shared prayer and discuss life's problems or opportunities in the light of scripture with a view towards commitment and action. As BEC formation and orientation involves discernment and reflection on one's situation, it can lead to heightened

---

[27] Quoted in McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels, op. cit.*, at 247.

social consciousness and sense of responsibility for others. Thus BECs have the potential to empower communities, mobilise community-based active non-violence and cooperative action to address structural inequities that impact on them and other poor communities. It is no wonder that BECs and their promoters were viewed as threats by the elite, subversive by the Marcos dictatorship, and a potential national security danger by the post-dictatorship military.[28]

Today NASSA-JP provides direction, information, and training services for the Social Action Centres of the various dioceses that are the front-liners in supporting community organising and strengthening of BECs. A 1996 survey found that majority of the 450 Mindanao parishes were already engaged in building BECs, with increasing activity in Luzon and Visayas.[29] Many are pursuing various forms of social action, such as organising co-operatives, developing communal farms, running community-based health programmes.

But the Philippine experience with BECs has also revealed their potential for liberating communities from the horror and tragedy of war and the hopelessness engendered by cycles of armed conflict. This was brought to light by community declarations of "Peace Zones" between 1988 and 1990 at the height of renewed and intense fighting between the Philippine Armed Forces and Communist New People's Army.

C. *Peace Zones*

In the midst of a guerilla war, those that suffer the most are the civilian communities in the fighting zones. They are often in the poorest parts of the country, in isolated, rugged country-sides and mountains, cut off from the most basic services. An already difficult life under the weight of structural violence is further exacerbated by war coming to their doorstep. Poverty and militarisation control their lives. Caught in the midst of the armed hostilities, they witness death and

---

[28] For a discussion of BECs in the Philippines and the impact of national security ideology on church leaders and organisers, see Alberto Cacayan and Agnes N. Miclat, *Let Your Heart Be Bold: A reflection paper on Church-workers and national security* (Hong Kong: Asian Centre for the Progress of Peoples, 1991). For a personal account and reflection on advocating active non-violence and helping communities build BECs as structures for social transformation, see Niall O'Brien, *Island of Tears, Island of Hope: Living the Gospel in a revolutionary situation* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1996).

[29] National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace, *Basic Ecclesial Communities in the Philippines: An initial survey*, 1996.

destruction of their homes and livelihood. Caught between intimidating forces in a battle for hearts and minds, they are befriended and recruited one day, and suspected and hunted down the next. As cycles of violence take control of their lives, their suffering is physical, emotional, psychological. Many remain forever victims.

But in the hinterlands of the Philippines, some communities decided they were no longer going to be passive victims of violence. They had seen too many of their children die – some caught in the crossfire, others claimed by disease in evacuation centres. They declared their communities as Peace Zones or "Zones of Life" – off limits to arms and armed violence. Tribal communities in the rugged Cordillera mountains of Northern Luzon, farming villages in the central island of Negros and in northern Mindanao – their specific circumstances and immediate triggering events differed, and their declarations came independently of each other. But they all shared one objective – to break the chain of violence and re-claim a semblance of control over their lives and the future of their children.

Between 1988 and 1990, five Peace Zones were declared in different parts of the country, with many other rural communities emulating their initiative in subsequent years.[30] Today Peace Zones in the Philippines are recognised as an area-based, people-initiated, non-violent effort to arrest armed conflict and enhance community security. While the initial basis is a people's call for the withdrawal of armed forces and operations from the delineated Peace Zone, respite from armed violence creates the space for the community to develop ways of dealing with conflict in accordance with local culture and to build positive peace. A community becomes a Peace Zone through a unilateral declaration in which they express their vision of peace, define geographic boundaries, exhort community members to enhance social

---

[30] These five are the Sagada De-militarised Zone and Kalinga Zone of Life in the Cordillera region; Cantomanyog Peace Zone in the Visayas; Naga Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in southern Luzon; and Bituan Zone of Peace in Tulunan, Mindanao. For descriptions of these Peace Zones, see Office of the Peace Commissioner, *Brief on Peace Zones*, February 1991. See also Zosimo Lee and Ma. Cecilia Gastardo-Conaco, *Peace Zones in the Philippines*, Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Research Reports 1994/No. 2 (Quezon City: Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, 1994). For a review of more recent literature on Peace Zone initiatives in the Philippines, see Maria Lorenza Palm-Dalupan, "A Review of Selected Literature on Lessons from the Philippine Peace Process", unpublished report prepared for the United Nations Development Programme in the Philippines, February 2001.

peace, and set specific regulations against fighting, arms and activities believed to contribute to community conflict, such as drinking and gambling. In some cases, community structures or mechanisms are defined "for specific peace-building tasks such as: (1) consultation with the community and decision-making on the people's peace agenda; (2) liaison/negotiation/dialogue with armed combatants; (3) monitoring of combatants activities to ensure adherence to Peace Zone guidelines; and (4) information dissemination".[31]

In declaring their Peace Zones, these communities demonstrated great courage. For they did not simply issue declarations. They also sent these declaration with written appeals to both the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the New People's Army to leave their areas, conduct their hostilities elsewhere, and respect their Peace Zones. And, most admirable of all in an atmosphere of militarisation and intimidation, they signed their names.

As grassroots initiatives, the Peace Zones have attracted much interest. Seeking to understand how a "culture of resistance" to armed groups could arise within communities, a study conducted three years after the first Peace Zone declarations concluded that three factors needed to be present: (1) a tradition of reflection and analysis within the community; (2) visionary and courageous leadership; and (3) adequate support or guidance from a recognised social institution or moral tradition within the community's social environment.[32] "For the community to reach such a resolve, despite obvious difficulties, its members must achieve a high level of trust and internal cohesion brought about by . . . a shared language and history, a shared sense of meaning and symbols, a shared sense of communal struggle both against 'nature' and against outside social forces, and a capacity to reflect on and consider significant consequences of community decisions".[33]

For the indigenous peoples Peace Zones, tribal identity, structures, processes and values facilitated solidarity, reflection and analysis, and provided the necessary leadership and moral tradition. But for the farming communities of Cantomanyog and Tulunan, it was their earlier experience with BEC formation that was the foundation of their

---

[31] Office of the Peace Commissioner, *Brief on Peace Zones, op. cit.*, at 1.

[32] Lee and Gastardo-Conaco, *Peace Zones in the Philippines, op. cit.*

[33] Zosimo Lee, "Peace zones as Special Development Areas: A preliminary assessment", in Allan B.I. Bernardo and Carmela D. Ortigas (eds), *Building Peace: Essays on psychology and the culture of peace* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2000), 114.

cohesion, guided their reflection and analysis, and provided leadership, with support and guidance of their parish priest.[34]

a. *The Cantomanyog Zone of Peace*   Cantomanyog is a small hinterland hamlet of 48 families in Negros island in central Philippines, deep in the district considered the "hotbed" of the island's armed Communist movement. In the 1970s and 1980s this was a heavily militarised area, with both AFP forces and anti-communist vigilante groups deployed in the fight against the NPA. In the 1970s, Cantomanyog began its BEC experience, known in the local language as *Gagmay'ng Kristohanong Katilingban*, or GKKs, as local priests supported by the Diocese of Bacolod began their organising work as part of their justice and peace ministry. In 1989, "Operation Thunderbolt," the largest military offensive on the island aimed to flush out the NPA with ground assaults and aerial bombardment, forced the community's displacement along with thousands. In crowded and poorly serviced evacuation centres, nearly 300 people, mostly children, died of malnutrition and a measles epidemic. Though spared of deaths (a miracle attributed to divine intervention because of their GKK activities), the community decided against all advice to return to their homes. Rebuilding their lives was not easy as they were suspected by both the military and some local officials to be NPA supporters. The kidnapping, torture and murder of one of their members, death threats to other men of the community, frequent evening incursions of armed men into the village, and rumours of another military offensive led to community protection efforts such as a night watch system. Their efforts inadequate, the community sought the help of their parish priest. It was within the context of consultative meetings that the establishment of the Peace Zone was suggested. Weeks of reflection sessions followed and enabled the community to clarify their understanding of the Peace Zone based on their own experiences and readings from the Bible. A Peace Zone resolution was drafted, and on 26 December 1989, the document declaring the *Sona sang Paghida-et* (Zone of Peace) was approved and signed by the community members.

---

[34] Lee and Gastardo-Conaco identify the BECs as a factor. The critical role of BEC formation is more fully explored in Adelfo V. Briones, "The Cantomanyog Zone of Peace: The role of the grassroots Church in local peacemaking", *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 33:2, 77–111 (December 2000).

b. *The Tulunan Peace Zones*   Tulunan is a hinterland town in the North Cotabato province of Mindanao. Like Cantomanyog, Tulunan was situated in a heavily militarised region in the 1970s and 1980s, and the people experienced similar horrors and tragedies of war – civilians killed in crossfire, local people intimidated and executed for suspected collaboration with either the AFP or the NPA, destruction of homes and fields, displacement of communities, death and suffering in evacuation centres. And as in Cantomayog, GKKs were being organised as early as the 1970s as part of the Kidapawan Diocese justice and peace programme.[35] During seven difficult months spent in a small public school building that served as evacuation centre, meetings and consultations among families from the town's different villages led to an agreement to return to their homes. Recognising the dangers of being in scattered homesteads, they negotiated for the use of an area in the village of Bituan to build new homes, from which they could easily reach their fields in the daytime, and to which they could return for safety at night. In the hope of being free from further violence, they drafted a resolution declaring this new area their "Peace Zone." On 10 February 1991, about 100 families led by their parish priest marched from the evacuation centre in an "exodus" to the site of their new homes in Bituan. There they celebrated Mass at a makeshift altar to commemorate the "beginning of an era of peace" and the community made their public declaration of their Peace Zone.

Immediate responses to the Peace Zone initiatives were mixed. The armed parties were suspicious. The AFP labeled them Communist rebel fronts, and the NPA claimed they were part of government counterinsurgency strategy. But support came from civil society peace advocates who hailed them as assertions of civilian supremacy over all armed parties. And the government's Office of the Peace Commissioner recognized them as legitimate people's peace initiatives and advocated for their respect with the military and other government bodies. Local government officials responded in different ways, some supportive, others wary.

Over the years, the life of the Peace Zones has been one of continuing challenges to preserve, maintain and sustain their vision. They

---

[35] In both areas, the same local term was used for BECs. The residents of both Tulunan and Cantomanyog trace ancestry to the island of Panay and thus speak the same language.

have had to dialogue with local officials and with representatives of both the AFP and NPA for recognition of their Zones, effectively deal with violations and resolve tense crisis situations. They had to strengthen community structures, relations, decision-making processes to manage their affairs and prevent or resolve internal conflicts. But at the same time, the respite from direct violence and the consciousness of being a Peace Zone created the space to build a better life and opened up possibilities for further peace-building and development. Still they had to sharpen their discernment in responding to various offers of assistance from government and NGOs alike. They had to re-visit the core of their oneness as *katilingban*, or community, when massive development funds poured in by government threatened to tear them apart. They had to assert their self-determination and develop new skills to participate as equal partners with government and development agencies. It has been a difficult road towards actu-alising their Peace Zone vision, their conviction tested time and again. Clearly, the support of their parish priests has been crucial. But they have endured largely because their GKK formation and orientation was the anchor of their social cohesion, deepening networks of trust and co-operation, providing a sense of community and collective pur-pose, and a basis for reflecting on and understanding mistakes, prob-lems, conflicts and solutions. The GKK formation has been one of the critical factors in the Peace Zones' resilience. As expressed by the Tulunan members, the "Peace Zone's success is not in never falling, but in rising every time it falls".[36]

3. *Building a culture of peace through inter-faith dialogue*

Mindanao has been long recognised for pioneering efforts and novel forms of grassroots empowerment even during the martial law dic-tatorship. Over the years since the return to democracy, it has wit-nessed the growth of a broad multi-sectoral peace movement comprising many networks, alliances, organisations, institutions and communities. While not centrally orchestrated, civil society peace efforts in the region are developing a common vision anchored on a "tri-people approach": peace with justice, equitable and sustainable development,

---

[36] Ronilo Villamor, "Tulunan Peace Zones: A journey to peace", Presentation at the Second International Forum on the Culture of Peace (The Manila Forum), organised by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and UNESCO, 26–30 November 1995, Philippine International Convention Centre, Manila.

empowerment and participation of all peoples of Mindanao – Muslim, Lumad, Christians/migrants; recognition and respect for cultural integrity; harmony in diversity; solidarity in common concerns, a shared future and common identity as Mindanawons. Therefore, peace work in Mindanao has involved "creating a stream of unifying ideal among a diverse population, whose basic interests may sometimes be conflicting. It is molding a common agenda and a common vision . . . seeing [them]selves as integral parts of an organic whole".[37]

The concept of a shared regional identity following the principle of "harmony in diversity", meaning in addition to and not in place of one's religious or cultural identity, is gradually gaining support and can be a powerful force for building a sustainable peace. It also emphasises the different groups' shared right to participation and ownership of official processes that affect Mindanao, as it provides a basis for acting in concert on common concerns. Realising this vision has required the involvement of many peace groups and formations pursuing multi-dimensional approaches. One area of peace-building necessitated by the many levels of conflict and the religious diversity and tensions is that of promoting inter-religious and cultural tolerance, understanding, co-existence and harmony – in which the religious sector has necessarily taken a leading role.

In the 1960s many Christian religious who came to work in Mindanao witnessed first-hand the poverty and injustice suffered by many Muslim and Lumad communities, as well as the animosity, prejudice and mistrust among the different groups, particularly between the Christians and Muslims. This led to efforts in the next two decades to promote inter-faith understanding, dialogue and harmonious relations on different levels – programmes to educate each faith community and inculcate respect and understanding of the religion, beliefs and cultures of the other; formal inter-faith dialogue-meetings and structured seminars bringing together Christians and Muslims on national, regional, provincial and local levels; ministry of presence and reconciliation; exchange visits and family stays between Muslim and Christian communities, and various forms of "dialogue in community", including joint social action work in mixed communities.[38]

---

[37] Rudy Buhay Rodil, *Kalinaw Mindanaw: The story of the GRP-MNLF peace process, 1975–1996* (Davao City: Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanaw, 2000), 137.
[38] For a comprehensive survey from a Catholic perspective, see LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace, op. cit.*

Changing political realities, including the increasing repression under the dictatorship, the war between the AFP and the Moro secessionists, and the influence of Islamic extremism had differential impact on these efforts. Some could not be sustained in the midst of violence and hate, others were re-directed to other priorities (such as human rights advocacy), yet others like institution-based dialogue efforts endured and expanded. While all these dialogue efforts could not overturn centuries of antagonism and prejudice, they did lay the basis for a regeneration of initiatives after freedom was regained. As a direct result of developments in the peace process, the 1990s saw renewed efforts in inter-faith dialogue in Mindanao. These included the creation of a formal dialogue forum composed of Christian and Muslim religious leaders, the growth of local dialogue groups, and a resurgence of community-based dialogue.

A. *Institution-based dialogue programmes*
Members of the religious sector have played leading roles in the establishment of two institutions that have become centres of inter-faith understanding and dialogue in Mindanao. In central Mindanao, Dansalan Research Centre in Marawi was founded by the Protestant missionary Peter Gowing, who sought, through education and dialogue, to build understanding of Filipino Muslims and counteract the many misconceptions held by the Christian majority. In 1968 he began a series of seminars on the social, cultural and religious aspects of Mindanao life, which helped create dialogue among the Muslim and Christian participants. The Research Centre was subsequently opened and over the years has compiled what may be the most complete collection of resources on Filipino Muslims and Mindanao-Sulu cultures. It continues to conduct research, organise Muslim-Christian dialogues and ecumenical courses in co-operation with both Muslim and Catholic institutions.

In western Mindanao, the Islamo-Christian Silsilah Dialogue Movement was initiated in 1984 by a dialogue group led by Sebastiano d'Ambra, an Italian priest who spent many years living among Muslim communities. The Movement seeks to promote deeper understanding and harmony between Muslims and Christians, guided by a vision of the two faith communities coming together in "living dialogue" as symbolized by the term *silsilah*, the word for "chain" used by Sufis (Islamic mystics) to express their desire for unity with God. Thus Silsilah members commit to a "life in dialogue" encompassing all aspects –

prayer, sharing witnessing, collaboration and action. The broad range of Silsilah activities shows that there are different ways of living and acting as "instruments of dialogue" in society. The Silsilah Dialogue Centre in Zamboanga City facilitates these activities and serves as a venue for Muslim-Christian dialogues and prayer. It houses an open library with a collection of references on Islam, Christianity, dialogue and Filipiniana. Silsilah programmes include research and publications on inter-religious dialogue, Muslim-Christian relations and peace. Silsilah Solidarity involves social action programmes incorporating community organising, basic human services, and livelihood and economic development programmes in mixed Muslim and Christian communities. The Silsilah Dialogue Institute provides dialogue formation and education, and facilitators' training for individuals who wish to be "instruments of dialogue" in their communities. It also conducts the Summer Course on Muslim-Christian Dialogue, an intensive study programme on Islamic and Christian traditions and cultures, with a special course on issue-focused dialogues. The Students in Dialogue programme focuses on dialogue education in schools involving both students and teachers. Finally, Silsilah is attempting to bring dialogue to the grassroots by developing Basic Dialogue Communities, adapting the reflection-sharing-formation-empowerment concept of BECs to mixed Muslim-Christian communities.[39]

B. *The Bishops-Ulama Forum*

The Final Peace Agreement signed by the government and the MNLF in 1996 was envisioned to end the decades-long armed struggle. But while the terms of the Peace Agreement were welcomed by many, they were looked upon with suspicion by some and even rejected by others. Many Muslims felt the arrangements for autonomy provided neither full self-governance nor assurances of political control over the geographic area claimed. Many Christians, on the other hand, were apprehensive about the prospect of Moro rule, and feared that MNLF control of the transitional structure created by the Peace Agreement – the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) – would lead to Islamisation. Thus, the Peace Agreement that hoped to begin a process of healing instead high-

---

[39] Sebastiano D'Ambra, *Life in Dialogue: Pathways to inter-religious dialogue and the vision-experience of the Islamo-Christian Silsilah Dialogue Movement* (Zamboanga City: Silsilah Publications, 1991).

lighted the divisions in Mindanao society, activated religious identities, and led to open expressions of mistrust, fanned by politicians who feared losing their power.

In the midst of the emotionally charged atmosphere leading up to the signing of the Final Peace Agreement, there emerged voices of support for the SPCPD from religious leaders of both the Christian and Muslim communities. Bishops, priests, religious and lay people participating in a Peace Congress of the Catholic Churches in Mindanao, issued a statement supporting the SPCPD as a "significant step along the tortuous road to peace", committing to organise "regional bodies to co-ordinate local support for the peace process with the MNLF", while expressing their perspective and hopes for peace with justice.[40] This was followed by separate expressions of support by the NCCP and the CBCP. The Ulama League of the Philippines issued their "Open Letter to Our Peace-loving Brothers and Sisters" to the Muslim community emphasising peace and development notwithstanding religious affiliation and calling for dialogue among religions.

Leaders of the different faith communities recognised the urgent need for sobriety and an understanding of the peace agreement. Not only was the country faced with alarming outbursts of prejudice from both political leaders and ordinary citizens, but also the threat that the peace agreement itself, while bringing about a compromise settlement between the armed parties, might instigate further sectarian violence. Thus, on 16 July 1996, five Catholic bishops, led by the chair of the CBCP's Ecumenical Commission on Inter-religious Dialogue, Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, and ten *ulama* led by the Ulama League president, Dr Mahid Mutilan, met at a Catholic university in Manila to discuss the prospects for peace. This led to the first Bishops-Ulama dialogue later the same year, then to subsequent dialogues that brought in the participation of the Protestant Bishops of the NCCP as full partners, and finally the founding of the Bishops-Ulama Forum (BUF).

Today the BUF is a dialogue forum consisting of Mindanao bishops of both the Catholic and Protestant churches and the Muslim *ulama* "who, in the spirit of inter-religious dialogue, affirm their common

---

[40] "Journeying Together into the Way of Peace: Statement of the Participants in the Peace Congress of the Catholic Churches in Mindanao, Davao City, June 24–27, 1996".

commitment to the peace process".[41] The BUF focuses on "the spiritual bases for peace from their respective religious traditions, grounded in the belief in one God, a common origin, and a common destiny for all". While the bishops and *ulama* recognise the importance of the ongoing political process of negotiations and socio-economic development, they see their effort as bringing in "the missing component in many failed peace efforts – an affirmation of the convergent spiritual and cultural bases for peace." Thus, their goal is to build peace and promote mutual understanding, respect and reconciliation among Christians, Muslims and Lumads that is sustained, enriched, permeated and completed by a spiritual foundation. They seek to achieve this goal through first, regular dialogues between bishops and *ulama* "on areas of common concern to promote a culture of peace". Second, encouragement and support for the localisation of dialogue fora and their expansion to include Lumad religious leaders, to address local issues of peace and conflict, and to build inter-cultural solidarity. And third, promotion of peace education through community-based culture of peace workshops and in formal school curricula, in co-operation with peace centres, schools and NGOs. Thus, the BUF clearly recognises that they must work in partnership, and in complementary ways, with other peace-builders. To sustain these efforts, the BUF has become a formal organisation with three Convenors representing each of the member faith communities, an office, full-time Secretariat and newsletter.

The major BUF activity is the holding of quarterly formal dialogues in various locations in Mindanao. These dialogues have explored the meaning and foundations of peace and development in Islam and Christianity. Seminar-workshops on conflict transformation and a historico-cultural overview of four centuries of Muslim-Christian relations provided context for discussions on Islamic and Christian foundations for dialogue; religion as both source of conflict and resource for peace; the importance of sacred scriptures – the *Qur'an* and the Bible – in the life of Muslims and Christians, respectively, and their messages for peace; the role of Mary as revealed in the

---

[41] "Primer on the Bishops-Ulama Forum", in Antonio Ledesma, Hamid Barra and Hilario Gomez, Jr. (eds), *Journeying Together Towards a Culture of Peace in Mindanao: The Bishops-Ulama Forum 1996–98 (A report of the first two years)* (Iligan City: Bishops-Ulama Forum Secretariat, 1999), 1. The discussion of the BUF is based on this report, supplementary information on the dialogues from the *Kalinaw Mindanaw* website, www.mindanaw.com/kalinaw, and documents provided by the BUF Secretariat.

sacred scriptures; and Christian and Muslim perspectives on peace and development. Presentations are made by members of the three faith communities, followed by discussions and exchange of reflections that highlight the positive and the shared, and seek to inculcate understanding and respect for differences.

The dialogues have provided the opportunity for symbolic gestures of religious leaders' respect and friendship. After the third dialogue, the participants visited the King Faisal Mosque on the Mindanao State University campus "to highlight inter-religious respect for places of worship". The following day, Dr Mutilan invited Archbishop Capalla to be the guest speaker at the graduation of 1,500 Muslim *imam* and *ulama* scholars. At the ninth dialogue, talks on the importance of the sacred scriptures in the life of the respective faith communities were followed by a solemn "rite of exchange" of the Holy *Qur'an* and the Holy Bible by the three BUF Convenors. During the 1999 celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace, priests from the Christian city of Iligan joined Muslims' Friday prayer in their mosques in the Muslim city of Marawi and shared lunch hosted by Dr Mutilan; *ulama* went to Iligan on Sunday to observe Christian prayer and share lunch at the bishop's residence.

The dialogues also try to link the spiritual reflections and understandings to the current situation and issues of peace and conflict. Providing context for this was a session on the "Mindanao problem" that began with three presentations of the problem as viewed from the differing perspectives of the Muslim, Christian and Lumad communities of Mindanao, and concluded with commitment to a common approach for building a culture of peace as the BUF's "distinct contribution". External resource persons have also been invited to discuss various peace issues and provide insights on ways to build peace. These have included high officials such as the Secretary of National Defence and the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, as well as civil society peace advocacy groups and Peace Zone communities. Thus, guided by both spiritual reflections and external input, the BUF dialogues have addressed problems of militarisation, violence of paramilitary vigilante groups, internal displacement, social injustice, the land question, sustainable development, and the situation of the Lumad community. The BUF also closely monitored developments in the official peace process, particularly the implementation of the Peace Agreement between the government and the MNLF and the negotiations with the MILF. In February 1999, as the opening

of formal talks between the government and the MILF seemed immi-
nent, the BUF was invited by both Negotiating Panels to act as
"advisers" in the negotiations.

The BUF dialogues are high-level, often high-profile events, some-
times with large groups of observers, both religious and non-religious.
Statements of common positions and actions are issued at the end
of each dialogue and have a significant impact as moral pronounce-
ments. Throughout the dialogues, the BUF members consistently
reaffirm their "common commitment to work towards a culture of
peace, based on the deepest spiritual aspirations of both religions
which project a stronger message of faith and hope than mere reliance
on political agreements and economic programmes alone".[42] The
BUF statements have also sought to prevent intensification of ongo-
ing violence, or escalation of conflict into violence, particularly in
times of crisis. And over the six years of its existence, the BUF has
weathered many crises that have threatened its apostolate, including
a series of kidnaps and murder of Catholic religious leaders and lay
workers, the resurgence of war between the AFP and the MILF, and
the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

In spite of these challenges, the bishops and *ulama* have continued
their dialogues with greater resolve and called for concrete actions.
The BUF condemned the attacks on Catholic religious, called on
their communities to seek redress of grievances without resort to vio-
lence and on the government to respond to issues of poverty, devel-
opment, and lawlessness. It condemned the formation of both Christian
and Muslim vigilante or fanatical groups, and resolved to work for
"the security of minority Muslims living in Christian-dominated areas,
as well as minority Christians living in Muslim-dominated areas".
The BUF also called for efforts to build inter-religious understand-
ing and respect, such as "multi-religious local level structures to
ensure a continuing dialogue and action towards a culture of peace",
information programmes on Islam and Christianity for mutual under-
standing, respect for religious traditions and literature of Muslim stu-
dents in Catholic schools, and freedom of religious expression for all
Filipino students. The BUF statements called for co-operation based

---

[42] "Joint Statement in the Service of Peace and Development in Mindanao".
Joint Statement of the BUF on their Third Dialogue, Marawi City, 6 May 1997,
in Ledesma, Barra and Gomez, *Journeying Together Towards a Culture of Peace in Mindanao*,
op. cit., at 12.

on shared spiritual foundations of peace, non-violence and harmony, with reference to the Sacred Scriptures: "We are again reminded by the Noble *Qur'an* and the Holy Bible, and the teachings and histo-ries of our faiths, that Islam and Christianity are religions of peace. It is the will of the Almighty God that we live in peace . . . that we work together for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace".[43]

The resurgence of war between the government and the MILF in the summer of 2000 was of great concern, recalling the experience of the 1970s and early 1980s under martial law. A few weeks after the fighting began and caused massive evacuations, the BUF held its thirteenth dialogue and addressed the escalating armed hostilities and the Abu Sayyaf hostage situation. The BUF issued a strongly-worded joint statement that questioned the moral justification for a return to war, called on the government and the MILF to stop hos-tilities and return to negotiations, emphasized that the armed con-frontations threatened the people and economic development of Mindanao, as well as the peace and reconciliation process that the BUF had been trying to build, and condemned the violence of the Abu Sayyaf, making a clear distinction between them and the MILF. It reiterated that "total peace" based on justice, mutual understanding and economic development is the answer to Mindanao's problems. Towards this goal the BUF resolved to intensify peace-building in their local communities, start the healing process through prayer ral-lies, inter-cultural dialogues, and creation of Zones of Peace, and re-double efforts at peace education and peace-building through schools and local communities. They expressed their readiness to work with women leaders of Mindanao and other members of civil society, and called for responsibility in media reporting on the Mindanao situation.[44]

In response to the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the BUF saw the need to encourage sobriety in the mixed faith communities and prevent any backlashes. Together with its local peace partners and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, it organized Interfaith Solidarity Conferences in Mindanao which brought together different sectors (including religious, academics,

---

[43] "Joint Statement", Eighth Dialogue of the BUF, Pagadian City, 16–17 November 1998, in *id.*, at 28.

[44] "Statement of the Bishops-Ulama Forum on the Mindanao Situation, 13th Bishops-Ulama Forum Assembly, Cagayan de Oro City, 18 May 2000", accessed from *Kalinaw Mindanaw* website, www.mindanao.com/kalinaw/peaceproc/statement-buf.htm.

professionals, NGOs, peace groups, indigenous peoples, government) representing the different faith communities, to condemn terrorism, reflect on the repercussions of the attacks, and agree on actions to enhance dialogue and peace-building efforts, to foster understanding and calm religious tension and fear.[45]

C. *Localised dialogues*

The BUF acknowledges that it is building on earlier efforts, and also appears to be learning from those past experiences, particularly the recommendation of the National Muslim-Christian Dialogues of the 1980s to bring the dialogues to the grassroots.[46] After its first year and a half, the BUF brought together over 40 heads or convenors of various peace and dialogue initiatives, organisations and institutions, Catholic dioceses, NCCP organisations, and Ulama League centres. A sharing of experiences and proposals for co-operation resulted in a network of partners who work to advance dialogue at the local level and throughout Mindanao, to address local peace issues and build intercultural solidarity. Today there is a resurgence of local dialogues efforts. While some began even before the BUF was formed, others have been inspired and encouraged by the unequivocal and visible support of high-ranking religious leaders. A few examples suffice to illustrate the variety of initiatives.

Recognised as having a direct influence on the establishment of the BUF is the Lanao Muslim-Christian Movement for Dialogue and Peace, which traces its beginnings to 1992 as a response to violent incidents seen as deliberate efforts to sow enmity between Muslims and Christians. Initially focused on improving peace and order, it has become a forum of religious leaders from the two provinces of Lanao del Sur and del Norte who promote dialogue and peace in the belief that religious and cultural diversity should not be a source of division, but treasured and respected "as a great asset for mutual

---

[45] Two meetings were held in different Mindanao cities, as noted in a report of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, *Peace Initiatives in Southern Philippines*, 2001. The conduct of the first meeting is described in a news feature by Carolyn O. Arguillas and Jowel F. Canuday, "Interfaith Solidarity Conference Convened in Davao", *CyberDyaro*, 19 September 2001, www.codewan.com.ph/CyberDyaryo/features/f2001_0919_03.htm. Available unpublished documents are "Interfaith Solidarity Conference Statement, Davao City, 18 September 2001"; and Grace J. Rebollos, *Interfaith Solidarity Conference II: Synthesis*, Zamboanga City, 2 October 2001.

[46] For a summary of these dialogues, see LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace, op. cit.*, at 363–65.

enrichment".[47] The Movement's bi-monthly meetings alternate between Marawi and Iligan, involve 30 to 40 people, half Christians and the other half Muslims. Catholic lay people and Muslim women are included and the Movement has encouraged the formation of other groups, such as the Interfaith Peace Builders of Lanao del Norte and the Mindanao State University Marawi Women's Group. It has also facilitated meetings of Muslim and Christian local government officials to discuss common concerns and promote understanding and peace.

The Social and Literacy Agenda for Muslims Foundation (SALAM), was formed in 1995 "to be a force for peace that is specifically Muslim" by focusing on Muslim education and development and promoting understanding with Christians. It works in close collaboration with the Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ), a Catholic group formed in 1994 that has facilitated their church's direct involvement in the peace process and "in healing the tensions in the ethnic and religious relations that influence peace". Four years later, the Zamboanga archdiocese formally adopted inter-religious dialogue as part of their vision-mission, created a Commission on Ecumenism and Inter-religious Dialogue, of which PAZ is the action arm. Today PAZ and SALAM constitute a joint secretariat for the Zamboanga-Basilan Bishops-Ulama Forum. They jointly conduct culture of peace seminars for various groups, including MNLF leaders. They meet monthly to discuss issues of concern to their respective faith communities, as well as the larger community. They jointly conceived and successfully mobilized the Zamboanga community to celebrate an annual Week of Peace to raise peace consciousness through such activities as parades, art exhibits and contests, poetry, oratorical contests, a media discussion on peace issues, and peace awards. Upon their suggestion, the BUF endorsed its Mindanao-wide celebration in 1999, and the President has declared a yearly celebration of the Mindanao Week of Peace from 25 November to 1 December. This has generated a consciousness, atmosphere and opportunities for tri-people cooperation in promoting peace as various communities, from the largest cities to the smallest towns, design their own peace activities. The PAZ and SALAM partnership is "proof that mutual respect, recognition of, and the freedom to pursue our respective cultural and religious

---

[47] Moctar Matuan, "The Lanao Muslim-Christian Movement for Dialogue and Peace", in Ledesma, Barra and Gomez, *Journeying Together Towards a Culture of Peace in Mindanao, op. cit.*, at 55.

identities was possible within a broad community that . . . had long
been torn by cultural and religious divisions".[48]

In the spirit of the BUF pronouncements, the Davao Catholic Arch-
diocese, the NCCP, and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines
(an NCCP member) organized in 1998 an inter-religious dialogue
among *imam*, pastors, and priests from the Davao region. This was
followed by a series of dialogue-conferences bringing together *imam*
and priests from different parts of Mindanao and providing oppor-
tunities "to deepen knowledge of each other, and to reflect on pos-
sible action for peace, development and dialogue".[49] There have since
been a number of local-level *imam*-priests dialogues that have addressed
more localised issues and helped build relationships facilitating joint
action on these issues. In the Kidapawan Diocese, for example, the
relationships developed through dialogues of the local Ustadz, Priests,
Imams Forum enabled them to meet and issue a joint appeal for
peace in response to the resumption of war between the AFP and
MILF, and to launch a co-ordinated humanitarian relief effort among
the displaced families within their jurisdiction. "The majority of the
evacuees were Muslims and the presence of Muslims and Christians
working together to distribute the relief goods and conduct medical
missions offered a visibly united effort in the midst of armed violence,
lack of trust and anxiety".[50]

Consistency with the tri-people peace vision for Mindanao requires
inclusion of the Lumad in the dialogue process. The BUF sees this
as task of its "partners" in the peace process, such as the CBCP's
Episcopal Commission on Inter-religious Dialogue (ECID), which has
been facilitating dialogues with Lumad leaders. A significant meeting
in 1997 brought together Lumad and Christian leaders for a candid
exchange. The Lumad spoke of their oppression by both Christians
and Muslims, and their resulting poverty and cultural deterioration.
Archbishop Capalla, ECID chair, asked forgiveness for the "wrongs
of the past" committed by the Church. The dialogue resulted in a
Christian commitment to respect and educate their clergy about
indigenous beliefs and a Lumad vow to take decisive action to pre-
serve and regenerate their cultures and environments. To support

---

[48] Peace Advocates Zamboanga, quoted in LaRousse, *Walking Together Seeking Peace,
op. cit.*, at 393–94.
[49] *Id.*, at 388.
[50] *Id.*, at 388–389.

this endeavour the BUF, ECID and OPAPP are cooperating in research and development of training programmes for diocesan personnel on Lumad belief systems.

On another level, the Interfaith Forum for Solidarity and Peace formed in Pagadian City in 1996 seeks to unite Muslims, Christians and Subanen, the Lumad group indigenous to the province. Dialogue participants include the Catholic bishop, priests, pastors, *ulama*, Subanen leaders, and lay Christians and Muslims. Dialogues include prayer, sharing of faith experiences, discussion, and action planning on shared social concerns, a shared meal and fellowship activities to promote deeper friendships. The group has translated their plans into action, such as an interfaith prayer rally against drugs and a march against gambling. A Priests-Imam Conference has also begun in the city.

D. *Dialogue in community*

The advocacy for peace and justice should be supported by social action to destroy structures of violence, build structures of peace, and transform conflict on all levels, down to the everyday life of grassroots communities suffering poverty and injustice. In the same manner, high-level visible dialogues and symbolic acts of religious respect and reconciliation need to be translated into harmonious communal life. Dialogues, it might be argued, are all talk in artificial situations – where the situation itself influences the atmosphere. In many cases, persons who participate are challenged by the real life situation of divisiveness, prejudice and animosity when they return to their communities. Thus, goodwill, understanding and respect also need to be built in the real day-to-day life of communities. One approach to dialogue in community or "dialogue of social engagement"[51] is exemplified by social action efforts of the early churches in Mindanao and Sulu and the Silsilah Solidarity programme. Today there are a growing number of similar grassroots efforts supported by religious organisations which are "grounded in the concept of reconciliation and relationship building through community action, involving different religious and cultural groups in the process. Communities are brought together around an activity, ideally an integrated development

---

[51] "Dialogue of social engagement" is one of several forms of dialogue identified by Francis Cardinal Arinze in his article, "Interreligious Dialogue", *Silsilah*, Vol. 2, Jan. 1988, 1–5.

project, to build social cohesion and harmony while fostering a viable economic initiative".[52] These projects symbolise solidarity, while enhancing the economic situation of community members.

Two such projects are funded by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Sultan Kudarat Province.[53] In Myriamville, a settlement of 250 Muslim and Christian families, a community bakery has become a unifying factor. Established in 1997 with CRS support and managed by a Muslim, the bakery project sought to strengthen community relations, provide employment and an opportunity for Muslims and Christians to work together. It has since become the focal point for efforts to promote inter-religious understanding and harmonious community relations, including multi-faith activities, conflict resolution workshops, and informal dialogues between Muslims and Christians about their religious traditions. After two years, the bakery is succeeding financially, as well as in promoting greater openness, collaboration in community activities such as the Mindanao Week of Peace celebrations and in forming a Peace and Order committee for peaceful conflict resolution, a day care centre, health and education programmes and even joint participation in religious celebrations. While relations are not perfect, the bakery serves as "a reminder of the past and of the vision for the future, supporting the consciousness of a culture of peace".[54]

A broader approach is taken in the community solidarity initiative in Barangay Bual, municipality of Isulan. This community of Muslims and Christians had been scarred by violence stemming from inter-communal land conflict – a 1996 raid killed six people, burned 177 Muslim homes, and displaced 630 families. Most have returned to their homes and a healing process is evident, supported by the collaborative efforts of Kaduntaya Foundation, Inc., a Muslim NGO, and the CRS Mindanao Regional Office. The earlier humanitarian and reconciliation efforts have evolved into a long-term peace and development programme, with the active participation of the com-

---

[52] Reina Neufeldt, Sarah McCann and Jaco Cilliers, *Explicit and Implicit Peacebuilding: Catholic Relief Services in Mindanao, Philippines and Bosnia-Herzegovina*, CRS Peacebuilding Case Study 1, draft 21 September 2000, at 6, accessed at www.catholicrelief.org/what_we_do_overseas/peace/Case_Study.PDF.

[53] These community projects are described in *id.*, and in Karl M. Gaspar, Elpidio A. Lapad and Ailynne J. Maravillas (eds), *Mapagpakamalinawon: A reader for the Mindanawon peace advocate* (Davao City: Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao and Catholic Relief Services, Philippines, 2002).

[54] Neufeldt, McCann and Cilliers, *Explicit and Implicit Peacebuilding, op. cit.*, at 6–7.

munity that has organised into a formal association. Socio-economic development projects, including community social services, farming and economic enterprise development, are integrated with peace-building activities such as Muslim-Christian dialogues, joint cultural celebrations, and forums around important religious events such as Holy Week and *Ramadhan* to share their meaning and relevance for the communities. Education to reduce prejudice and promote non-violent resolution of conflict is provided, including mediation and conflict resolution skills training for community leaders, and advo-cacy workshops with local government members, military personnel from the locally-based detachment, and MILF members from nearby camps. A possible measure of the positive impact of these efforts is the community's decision in 1999 to declare Bual a Zone of Peace, their declaration calling for "peaceful means to settle disputes, non-display of firearms in the village, joint efforts against peace sabo-teurs, joint efforts to improve the socio-economic conditions of the community and peace-related activities".[55]

Other initiatives sprouted in the aftermath of the renewed hostil-ities between the government and the MILF in May 2000. The intense fighting destroyed homes and farms, displaced over 143,000 Lumad, Muslim and Christian families from 85 municipalities in nine provinces, and forced 300,000 evacuees into 420 evacuation centres. The Cotabato and Kidapawan Dioceses, Jolo Vicariate and Isabela Prelatures mobilised Social Action Centres and volunteers, both Christian and Muslim, who worked side by side to provide human-itarian services for the evacuees. They became partners with other civil society groups in the Tabang Mindanaw Integrated Return and Rehabilitation Programme which aimed to repatriate, rebuild and secure the displaced communities. Based on the tri-people concept, the programme seeks to assist the war victims to rebuild and rediscover their communities as "Sanctuaries of Peace" through an integrated human development programme within the framework of a com-prehensive peace process. It enables refugees to return to their homes after the armed parties agree to respect the community as a "Sanctuary of Peace". For the pilot community of Barangay Nalapaan, in Pikit, North Cotabato province, the agreement was forged by a mediation group composed of church leaders, representatives of the community

---

[55] *Id.*, at 7.

and members of Tabang Mindanaw in separate dialogues with local military and MILF commanders. With some assurances that armed conflict will be kept away from their area, the community has now been participating as partners in peace and development. As in Myriamville and Bual, the programme integrates peace education and conflict resolution trainings with organising and development work, the latter including land tenure security, sustainable agriculture, community based livelihood, and basic social services of housing, health care and child-feeding, and water supply. It also includes efforts to address the psychosocial impact of violence on the families, especially women and children. Finally, it attempts to enlist the co-operation of various sectors, including local government, in the development efforts.[56]

These are only three examples of a growing number of grassroots community-based "dialogues of social engagement" spreading throughout the island in response to experiences of violence and inter-cultural animosity.[57] They give concrete witness to the vision of a shared future based on inter-cultural solidarity, and provide hope that peace and humanity will prevail.

4. *Mediation towards conflict resolution*

A number of church members and Muslim clerics have contributed to the resolution of conflict or the prevention and/or reduction of violence by taking the role of mediators or some form of "third party" at different points of a conflict settlement or negotiation process. This is possible mainly because of the moral authority they carry, as well as perceptions of their integrity and trustworthiness.

While they have never functioned as official third party in the context of formal political negotiations between the government and the different armed revolutionary movements, the CBCP, NCCP and Muslim *ulama* have on some occasions used their moral suasion to

---

[56] "Tabang Mindanaw Integrated Return and Rehabilitation Program (IRRP) for the civilian war victims in Mindanao: Program description", Integrated Return and Rehabilitation Program, Field Visit Report No. 3, January 2001. See also Roberto Layson, "Something beautiful in Pikit", paper presented at the gathering of Asian Journey, Kuala Lumpur, August 2000. Accessed from *Kalinaw Mindanaw* website, www.mindanao.com/kalinaw/peaceproc/pikit.htm.

[57] Examples of other dialogues in community and grassroots peace-building initiatives in Mindanao are described in Gaspar, Lapad and Maravillas, *Mapagpaka-malinawon, op. cit.*

help convince parties to come to the negotiating table, or return to talks after the many suspensions and breakdowns. Individual religious leaders have also served in structures created by the negotiation processes. Bishop Antonio Fortich chaired the National Ceasefire Committee established to monitor the short-lived ceasefire agreement between the government and the Communist movement in 1986. Regional and provincial Ceasefire Committees were also headed by bishops and priests. In the Ramos period negotiation process between the government and the CPP-NPA-NDF, the CBCP-NCCP Joint Peace Committee in co-operation with the World Council of Churches, functioned as the third party "protector" of identities of NDF personnel participating in the negotiations and consultations using pseudonyms. More recently, the NCCP and the Interfaith Network for Justice and Peace have organised for a bringing together peace advocates and representatives of the government and NDF Panels in support of a sustained negotiation process.

For the negotiations between the government and the MILF, Fr Eliseo Mercado, an Oblate priest and president of Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, chaired the Independent Fact-Finding Committee monitoring compliance with preliminary agreements. He and Archbishop Capalla are also among the convenors of the Citizens Peace Council, a newly formed body that shall function to support, facilitate and exert moral pressure on negotiation processes between the government and armed rebel groups.

Religious leaders have also contributed to the resolution of conflict situations. Church representatives perceived to be neutral were part of teams of intermediaries that successfully negotiated a peaceful end to three of the seven military coup attempts against the Aquino administration.[58] In Mindanao, religious leaders have participated in local multi-sectoral councils set up to address crisis issues arising from infrastructure and development projects in armed conflict areas. Finally, some religious leaders have also helped in negotiating the release of captives held by armed groups.

---

[58] Cristina J. Montiel, "Peaceful termination of unsuccessful coup attempts in the Philippines", *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, Vol. 3, 215–27 (1995).

SOME REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous discussion has provided a glimpse of the more significant and recent involvements of the religious sector in the effort to build a holistic, sustainable peace in the Philippines – seeking not merely to end the armed rebellions, but to address the interrelated inequities of Philippine political, economic and social structures that are at the heart of deep-seated social conflicts. This effort involves breaking down unjust and oppressive structures of exclusion, alienation, poverty, discrimination, prejudice; building structures and processes of positive peace, including an empowered citizenry, authentic democracy, good governance; and reinforcing negative peace and creating capacities for non-violent resolution and transformation of conflict. Thus, peace-building calls for nothing less than social transformation – a slow, long-term process of seeking and sustaining non-violent processes of change across multiple levels and perspectives – personal, relational, structural and cultural.[59]

Within this long and complex peace-building process, the various initiatives of the religious sector form only part of a larger comprehensive effort. But like those of other peace-builders, they must be recognised for their contribution to chipping away at unjust structures and painstakingly moulding "pieces of peace". Constituencies for peace and reform, BECs, Peace Zones, dialogue communities, and mediation efforts are building blocks with a transformative force and potential to shape a society in peace.

Over the years, since the People Power Revolt in 1986, the Philippine peace process has seen both successes and failures. Peace-building has been pursued in the context of a dynamic, changing situation of conflict and violence. Thus, assessment and learning are vital components of the peace-building endeavour to understand the effects of interventions, enhance effectiveness in relation to peace goals and responsiveness to changing needs, and prevent perpetuation of actions that are ineffective, negatively affecting others or, worse, unintentionally creating conflict. Therefore, processes of reflection, assessment and learning from peace-building should be given serious attention and resource support by the religious sector, other peace-builders and funding agencies as well.

---

[59] This conceptual framework for building peace is elaborated in John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998).

The following are only some of the possible areas for reflection and learning towards enhanced peace-building that are related to the previously discussed religious sector initiatives.

1. *Actualising the transformative potential of BECs*

Some studies and accounts of BECs in the Philippines have emphasised that in itself a BEC does not guarantee social change, even as the formation of personal character, organisation of a community, and the questioning of injustice provide the "right background and seedbed" for active non-violence.[60] To be a force for change, BECs have to overcome the passive acceptance of one's situation and "evolve from liturgical to developmental and transformative action", as did the Peace Zones. To enhance the possibilities for BECs to become structures for social transformation, it would be useful to understand the factors that facilitate and constrain this evolution in other circumstances as well. Equally valuable would be to identify support mechanisms to help strengthen and sustain BEC commitment and social action. Practical lessons could be drawn from field research and sharing of experiences among BECs, which could then be consolidated and disseminated to involved organisers, communities and practitioners in a systematic and useful format.

2. *Inter-faith dialogue towards structural transformation and reconciliation*

Similar points can be made about the objective and impact of inter-faith dialogue. In general, it is considered an important process for developing positive attitudes on which respect for diversity, inter-group harmony and co-existence are built. But in a society where religious and cultural differences are so inter-woven with deep-rooted inequities, attitudinal change is only one level of the social transformation needed to build sustainable peace. The Mindanao experience hints at the potential of inter-faith dialogue to contribute to structural change.[61] Some of the efforts strive to move beyond personal and

---

[60] Patricia B. Licuanan, "Basic Christian Communities as a force for social change", in Gabino A. Mendoza, Juan Miguel Luz and Jose T. Deles, Jr. (eds), *Church of the People: The Basic Christian Community experience in the Philippines* (Manila: Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development, 1988), 28–34. Also O'Brien, *Island of Tears, Island of Hope, op. cit.*

[61] A reflection on the lessons and prospects of dialogue for leading to a more just and humane society is presented in Hilario M. Gomez, Jr., *The Moro Rebellion and the Search for Peace: A study on Christian-Muslim relations in the Philippines* (Zamboanga City: Silsilah Publications, 2000), 220–27.

attitudinal transformation, and to mobilise dialogue groups for inter-faith collective actions that address injustice, poverty, and seek reform. Again it would be important to identify the factors and understand the processes enabling such a development.

Because oppression and armed conflicts have victimised and scarred thousands of people over generations, one process that needs deeper understanding is reconciliation, an oft-stated objective of inter-faith dialogue in Mindanao. The vision of sustainable peace challenges the dialogue process to address such basic questions as: What is the meaning, essence and basis of true reconciliation? Is sustainable reconciliation possible without truth-telling, acceptance of responsibility, repentance, forgiveness, healing and justice? What does healing entail and on what levels must it be experienced? What does justice involve and on what levels must it be served? Shouldn't dialogue bring about shared acknowledgement of the experience of injustice? Does justice require retribution, and the righting of historical wrongs, such as the land question? How can justice serve the aggrieved without creating new conflicts and tearing apart the tri-people community that dialogue seeks to build? Shouldn't dialogue unmask those manipulating differences and animosities? Is a "restorative justice" possible that can also promote harmonious relationships between formerly conflicting parties? Hizkias Assefa, founder of the African Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Network, contends that "Justice and equity are at the core of reconciliation. The central question in reconciliation is not whether justice is done, but rather how one goes about doing it in ways that can also promote future harmonious and positive relationship between parties that have to live with each other whether they like it or not . . . the approach known as 'restorative justice' as opposed to 'retributive justice' brings us closer to the point where justice can be done but at the same time the possibilities for reconciliation are enhanced".[62]

Inter-faith dialogue efforts can contribute to sustainable peace in Mindanao by not just sharing the meaning of reconciliation in different religions, but also by enabling people to articulate and together explore the essence and requisites for a reconciliation process. They

---

[62] Hizkias Assefa, "The meaning of reconciliation", in European Centre for Conflict Prevention, *People Building Peace: 35 inspiring stories from around the world* (Utrecht: European Centre for Conflict Prevention, 1999), 44. For a discussion of reconciliation as an integral process of building peace by a leading figure in the conflict transformation field, see Lederach, *Building Peace, op. cit.*

can help map out a process of restorative justice that can facilitate healing on different levels and provide a basis for building a common future. By helping to define an acceptable resolution of historical inequities, inter-faith dialogue can also help clarify the link between reconciliation and structural reform in Mindanao, as well as in the national context where contradictory meanings of reconciliation result from the lack of retribution in Philippine political life.[63]

The transformative potential of inter-faith dialogue needs to be realised in all its dimensions. There is great value when inter-faith dialogue "plants seeds of goodness" and understanding. But there is also a danger that without parallel and interrelated efforts to redress past and present injustice, all the best efforts at nurturing respect, tolerance and harmonious relationships may be construed as, or result in, pacification and creating social amnesia. And, in the words of Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, "It is amnesia that makes history repeat itself . . . as a nightmare".[64]

3. *Developing mediation and conflict transformation skills and responsibility*

Moral authority, independence and neutrality are commonly cited as attributes that make religious leaders well-positioned to undertake mediating roles. Many conflicting parties also look for trustworthiness and the capacity for empathy with their cause. In the personalistic Philippine culture, friendship, or at least being able to establish some connection through friends or family, is also an important factor. But the grave responsibility placed on mediators makes it equally critical for them, regardless of their sector, to be equipped with appropriate understanding of relevant conflict issues and skills to attain a positive outcome.

---

[63] Through an historical analysis in his monograph *Forgiving or Forgetting?, op. cit.*, Carroll attempts to identify the cultural and social structural realities that have led to contradictory meanings of "reconciliation" and a lack of retribution in Philippine political life. For a similar analysis and conclusions regarding this pattern of "easy reconciliation" or re-entry into mainstream politics of perpetrators and collaborators with colonial, occupying and dictatorial regimes, see Carl H. Lande, "Collaboration and reconciliation in a no-fault polity: A Philippine approach to conflict management", *Solidarity*, No. 143–144, 125–37 (July-December 1994).

[64] From a talk given to Guatemalan church workers coordinating the Inter-diocesan Project to Recover the Historic Memory which sought to record testimonies of citizens who suffered from violence during the period of internal conflict. Quoted in "Working for Peace in Guatemala: Many roles, one goal", in European Centre for Conflict Prevention, *People Building Peace, op. cit.*, at 228.

Faced with possibilities for providing inter-faith mediation, some BUF members have received formal training in conflict transformation. But the development of such skills and responsibility is also important for local-level religious functionaries and church-related leaders who can have a strong influence on their communities, and are often more trusted than other sectors in a locality. Some studies recommend enhancement of their peacemaking effectiveness through development of conflict analysis, mediation and transformation skills, as well as appropriate "personality disposition", including integrity and adeptness in handling social power.[65] Religious institutions might consider integrating such training in the curriculum and processes of their formation programmes. Actual experiences in a variety of mediation situations could also be documented to provide case studies and lessons for use in these formation programmes.

Clearly, peace-building is no easy task. Therefore, voices of experience and encouragement would help immensely in ensuring that good practices are emulated and built upon, and mistakes not repeated; that capacities for peace are maximised and conflicts not exacerbated; that those who embrace the challenge can persevere even in the midst of continuing violence and changing political circumstances, inspired by "pieces of peace" emerging around them, sustained by faith and hope that vision will one day become reality.

ACRONYMS

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AMRSP	Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Community
CBCP	Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CPLA	Cordillera People's Liberation Army
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
ECID	Episcopal Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue
GKK	*Gagmay'ng Kristohanong Katilingban* (lit. "Small Christian Community")

---

[65] Cristina J. Montiel and Adelfo V. Briones, *Cry Out for Peace: Social psychological notes on peacemaking in local governance* (Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs, 1995). Also Briones, *The Cantomanyog Zone of Peace, op. cit.*

MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
NASSA-JP	National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace
NCCP	National Council of Churches in the Philippines
NDF	National Democratic Front
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NPA	New People's Army
NUC	National Unification Commission
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
PCG	Provincial Convenors Group (for NUC Consultations)
RPM-P/RPA/ABB	*Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas* (lit. Revolutionary Labourers Party-Philippines)/ Revolutionary Proletarian Army/Alex Boncayao Brigade
RCG	Regional Convenors Group (for NUC Consultations)
SPCPD	Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development

GLOSSARY

adat	Indigenous customary law
alim (pl. *ulama*)	A scholar of Islam; one qualified to teach Islamic law
Bangsamoro	Moro nation
datu	Traditional political ruler or leader, person of rank
datu system	An indigenous pre-hispanic Philippine political system based on hereditary rank currently still operational among some Muslim and Lumad communities
Gagmay'ng Kristohanong	Term for Basic Ecclesial Community in the Ilonggo Katilingban dialect; literally, "small Christian community"
imam	Muslim prayer leader; one who leads prayer services in a mosque

katilingban	Ilonggo term for community, both as social unit and in the sense of "oneness"
Lumad	Non-Muslim indigenous tribal communities of Mindanao, today comprising about 20 ethno-linguistic groups
madrasah (pl. *madari*)	An Islamic school
Moro	Philippine Muslim
Moro-moro	Christianised Filipino folk theatre originating in the Spanish colonial period which depicted the defeat of Muslim pirates by Christian heroes. This form of folk theatre survived until the post-colonial period.
Qurʾan	The Holy Book of Islam
Shariʿa	Islamic Law, lit. the "Way" or "Path" of Islam
Sona sang Paghida-et	Ilonggo term for Zone of Peace
ustadz	An Islamic teacher; also a title commonly used in the Philippines to address an *alim*

11. REFLECTIONS ON HUMAN SECURITY:
A BUDDHIST CONTRIBUTION

Thanh-Dam Truong

Encouraged by an apparent peace dividend, resulting from the demise of East-West tension at the end of the cold war, when, on a global scale, military spending was cut by one quarter, from nearly US$1 trillion in 1987 to US$767 billion in 1994, in 1991 prices,[1] the United Nations has been trying to work towards a new approach, addressing issues of global peace and development as inexorably linked phenomena. The emerging concept of human security encapsulates various proposals to handle security issues as inclusive of, but extending beyond, traditional security concerns. The concept itself hinges on the view that beyond the military defence of state interests and territory, the societal conditions that pose a threat to the daily security of ordinary people constitute an equally legitimate domain for security concern. Covering many overlapping dimensions – such as economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security – the concept tends to place religion as a promoting force at the margins of these concerns. Events in world affairs – prior to and following the attack on New York's World Trade Center on 9/11/2001 – have led to an urgency to find an approach that gives adequate analytical space to the role of culture and religion in shaping the politics of identity, representation, resource and human security claims. As with any experience, human security is not immune from political, cultural and social shaping. Every dimension of human security involves a direct or indirect mediating role of cultural and religious institutions, from the most local and historically specific experience of individuals and groups to the most global level of politics over territorial and resource control.

---

[1] Mahbub ul Haq, *Reflections on Human Development* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 126.

A discussion of the relationship between religions and human secu-
rity requires the recognition of three different aspects of significance
which religions have:

– an epiphenomenon, an experiential state of communion with a
  life force;
– a symbolic representation of the life-world, the norms and insti-
  tutions which reproduce it;
– a construct adhered to by individuals and groups through social-
  isation or deliberate choice for identity creation, protection and
  salvation.

As an epiphenomenon, the religious experience is not about the process
of formation of self, rather its dissolution into another state of being –
in communion with God or a life force – however defined. By con-
trast, as a symbolic representation of the life-world, religion lies at
the core of processes of identity formation and historically constitutes
a discourse of power – the power to control the morality of followers.
The entry by individuals/groups and adherence to this symbolic rep-
resentation – a social and historical process of identity formation –
derives from the need for affinity or security regarding selfhood.

In the current context of global disorder, security of identity and
well-being has been undermined by a complex interaction among
different sets of factors – arisen from a greater integration of capital
and production on the one hand, and polarisation and disintegration
of the socio-cultural world on the other. The search for peaceful
means of conflict resolution through an appropriation of the values
upheld by a given spiritual tradition is also a search for ways to link
them with those of other traditions. Such has been aptly described
as the art of climbing down the well in one's homestead as deeply
as one can, in order to find the underground water shared by the
well of one's neighbour.[2] In this vein, I seek to illustrate how Buddhist
thinking may contribute to the discussion on global peace and human
security in the 21st century. By adding a spiritual dimension to the
debate on human security, my hope is to open the space for inter-
paradigmatic learning on ethics, rights and human interaction.

---

[2] The metaphor was suggested by Professor Kinhide Mushakoji, former Vice-
Rector of the United Nations University and now Director of the Centre for Asia-
Pacific Partnership in Tokyo, during discussions with the author on inter-faith
dialogue and inter-paradigmatic learning.

HUMAN SECURITY:
A SECULAR CONCEPT IN NEED OF A SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

The framing of human security issues was first initiated in conjunc-
tion with concerns for ethics in resource use in development activities.
Within the disarmament and development nexus, Mahbub ul Haq
queried the ethics of governments giving budgetary-allocation prior-
ity to armaments over and above providing milk for children.[3] 'We
need today a new concept of human security – reflected in the lives
of the people, not in the weapons of their countries'.[4] To him, switch-
ing spending from military to development activities constitutes an
ethical action which all governments should be encouraged to pur-
sue. In an endorsement of the neo-liberal principle of individualism,
he argued that channelling resources in the direction of human devel-
opment – the enhancement of human capabilities – would contribute
to a levelled playing field, currently distorted by class, gender, ethnic
and religious divisions. An improved level of human development,
he suggested, would lead to better economic performance by devel-
oping nations and a more healthy competition in the global market.

Since this intervention, the concept of human security has been
subject to new debates from a variety of angles. Caroline Thomas urges
us to think about neo-liberal reforms worldwide in the 1980s and
1990s as a phase of transition of capitalism – from national to global
– which has generated new forms of human insecurity for which
collective responses are required.[5] In her view the human security
project cannot succeed if based on neo-liberal individualism, which
she regards as the problem rather than solution. Thomas sees the
proliferation of forms of human insecurity that have emerged since
the 1990s (such as intra-state violence, forced migration and envi-
ronmental destruction) as the result of a newly polarised global social
structure. Her way of resolving the human insecurity question would
involve a taming of the neo-liberal ideology at the global level, along
with fostering collective efforts to protect and enhance the human
development of vulnerable groups – the latter in combination with
a rights-based approach to extant political systems.

---

[3] Ul Haq, *Reflections on Human Development, op. cit.*
[4] *Id.*, at 116.
[5] Caroline Thomas, *Global Governance, Development and Human Security: The challenge
for poverty and inequality* (London: Pluto Press, 2000).

From another perspective, Sverre Lodgaard sees the links between state security and human security as a matter of legitimacy.[6] Failed states, he suggests, are states that no longer provide effective governance and therefore invariably have fallen down in respect of the provision of human security. His view on human security is based on the rule of law, public order and peaceful management of conflicts. To maintain its legitimacy, the state has to comply with an expanding body of international law that seeks to provide – from a plethora of rights-platforms – protection of citizens from torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, gender-specific violence, child abuse, mishandling of refugees, organised crime and the results of armed conflict between factions within a state.[7] He places the concept of human security within the framework of governance, wherein it is defined as the daily security of groups of people vulnerable to violence during conflict situations. Ensuring human security is a matter of identifying and targeting problematic states, and protecting groups of people living under problematic conditions – generated by the failure of governance. In his view, policies for security (state as well as human) are future-oriented; hence the objective should be prevention. The key phenomenon that needs preventing is man-made physical violence; therefore the concept of human security should be narrowed down to direct and personal violence.[8] The absence of human security as an outcome of a global economic disorder does not appear very prominent in his argument. He places economic security in the definitional boundaries of human development which, he believes, cannot be mixed with human security. The Human Security Partnership among Canada, Norway, Austria, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand backs his position. This Partnership promotes a nine-point agenda covering: land-mines, the International Criminal Court, human rights, international humanitarian law, women and children in armed conflict, small arms proliferation, child soldiers and northern co-operation.[9]

From the perspective of many societies in Asia affected by the

---

[6] Sverre Lodgaard, "Human security: Concept and operationalization" (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2000).

[7] *Id.*, at 3–7.

[8] *Id.*, at 8.

[9] Amitav Acharya, "Human security: East versus West", *International Journal*, 65:3, 442–60 (2001); Roland Paris, "Human security: Paradigm shift or hot air", *International Security*, 26:2, 87–102 (2001).

1997 financial crisis and subsequent economic meltdown, the concept of human security depicts a vision of inter-connectedness rather than compartmentalisation. A statement by the Japanese Foreign Ministry notes: 'In Japan's view, human security is a much broader concept. We believe that freedom from want is no less critical than freedom from fear. So long as its objectives are to ensure the survival and dignity of individuals as human beings, it is necessary to go beyond thinking of human security solely in terms of protecting human life in conflict situations.'[10] As Acharya emphasises,[11] this view is also echoed by Amartya Sen in an approach to development policy which he labels 'development as freedom'.[12] Sen brings out the indivisibility of the three generations of human rights (political, socio-economic, and cultural) and provides empirical illustration of the causal relationship between freedom and human flourishing, and between the absence of freedom and human misery.

Indeed, East and Southeast Asia's experience of the social and political impacts of the financial crisis reveals a reality of human security that is systemic rather than compartmentalised. In the aftermath of this crisis, societies experienced the spiral effects of economic failure on the different dimensions of human security. At one level the crisis has set back the high performance in human development achieved through previous years of growth and investment, causing new forms of poverty and re-enforcing old forms.[13] The rise in communal violence, illegal migration, human trafficking and organised crime in the region – which has been exacerbated by the economic downturn – has brought to the fore the inter-state character of human security, when it mainly affects the least protected (and especially migrants, women and children). It is evidently not possible to approach human insecurity as a matter of the failure of individual states, but

---

[10] Statement by Director-General Yukio Takasu at the International Conference on Human Security in a Globalised World, Ulan-Bator 8 May 2000 (http://www.mofa.go.jp).

[11] Acharya, "Human security", *op. cit.*

[12] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1999).

[13] International Labour Office, *The Social Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis*, Technical Report for Discussion at the High Level Tripartite Meeting on Social Responses to the Financial Crisis in East and South East Asian Countries, Bangkok, 22–24 April 1998; Thanh-Dam Truong, "A feminist perspective on the Asian miracle and crisis: Enlarging the conceptual map of human development", *Journal of Human Development*, 1:1, 159–64 (2000).

as a collective failure – to protect economic and social systems from adverse forces of globalisation.

Against this backdrop, governments and civic groups in Asia have become more aware of the significance of economic and societal security, and not just security as assured income and physical protection for particular individuals and groups. More specifically, religious and ethnic tensions, most dramatically expressed in Indonesia, reflect the ease with which religious identity can become a rallying point for oppositional politics and violence that can spread like bush fire, quickly spilling over to new issues and new states. Religious tension in Indonesia initially erupted between Muslim Indonesian and Christian Chinese, targeting initially Chinese women as objects of sexual violence. Gradually, all women including Muslim women became the epicentre of male violence. The attack in Bali in October 2002 and threats of similar attacks in tourists resort in Thailand, allegedly linked with *al-Qaeda*, reveal the weakness of a secular approach to human security that ignores issues of subjective religious identity in conditioning acts of violence.

The experience of the Asian crisis shows that human insecurity in daily life can be the result of economic insecurity, that intensifies inter-community competition and promotes personal insecurity. Violent responses for self-protection or self-enhancement can be deployed as the annihilation of the other and generate a process by which different identities – religious, gender, ethnical – one by one become an object of attack.

Therefore, from the above perspective, security policy (state and human) cannot but take serious notice of issues such as structural inequality, unstable economic systems and identity politics. To follow Lodgaard's definition of the objective of security policy (state or human) as prevention, the experience of the Asian crisis tells us that prevention does not rest only with problematic states or with the violation of rights of groups of people living under problematic conditions. Prevention also concerns the problematic environment in a global political economy characterised by the ease of capital mobility that can abruptly destabilise the performance of economic systems and the livelihoods of populations. The issue is not just a matter of the failure and legitimacy of individual states; the failed legitimacy of global neo-liberalism as an economic doctrine is also an issue.[14]

---

[14] Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002).

Placed in its original context of development ethics, the equation in the human security framework for the Asian case would extend beyond the choice between armament and human development to cover also the choice between a widening of economic liberalism and social protectionism. To rephrase Mahbub ul Haq's equation, we need to fashion a concept of human security that is not just reflected in the fluctuations of the stock exchange, but also in the consolidation of harmony and co-operation among different communities in society, to build locally rooted social arrangements that can assure income and protection for the most vulnerable, particularly in times of economic distress.

In all the perspectives of human security discussed so far, the ontological dimension of human security – closely related to identity politics – has not been fully addressed. Coined by Anthony Giddens, ontological insecurity refers to the threat to the notion of the self and the questioning of self-identity.[15] The notion of the self as an abstract system and the notion of self-identity as a psychic process embedded in daily interaction have been under threat by forces of globalisation, which Giddens defines as de-traditionalisation and re-traditionalisation. These are processes by which local customs are being attacked and reconstituted in different forms. New values and practices are emerging, but are bound to be experimental and to have uncertain outcomes. This uncertainty is one of the major sources of anxiety, which gives rise to new waves of violence and cruelty.

From a cultural standpoint, since the 1960s the notion of the self as an abstract system in humanist philosophy has been destabilised by identitarian movements. These movements have adopted a socially embedded approach to ontology, which is based on a definition of a self, its knowledge and action as being encumbered by historical and cultural bearings (gender, race, colonial and post-colonial experience), to serve four main purposes. One is to decentre the abstract self as a privileged self. Two is to challenge its claim to knowledge and rights. Three is to highlight the exclusionary character of norms of legitimacy and rights that have been restricted to a specific privileged group – e.g. the white middle-class male.[16] Four is to show how an

---

[15] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity: The self and society in the late modern age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

[16] Jane Flax, "Post-modernism and gender relations in feminist theory", in Linda Nicholson (ed), *Feminism/Post-Modernism* (New York: Routledge, 1990) 621–43.

overvaluation of masculine traits such as autonomy, competition, reason and impartiality had been put into effect at the expense of other equally valuable traits such as interdependence, care and co-operation.[17] The criticism directed at the abstract self in humanist ontology seeks to expose the dimension of social power in which it is embedded.

Through this approach, identitarian movements try to integrate the experience, insight and struggle of particular social groups, which are deprived of recognition and respect by wider currents of social interaction, into alternative visions of egalitarian politics. Their aim is to promote psychic emancipation and political empowerment and to build visions of morality informed by the social histories of the disfranchised. These visions are expected to contribute to the prescription of norms and principles of action that are responsive to the needs and demands of constituencies on the margins of society.[18] They believe that the recognition of different insights and perspectives into the problem of legitimacy and rights may help improve the vision of a just society.

In this struggle for social recognition, identitarian movements have diverged in two directions. One direction is to work within the normative humanist approach and forge a framework of rights that is sensitive to the needs of specific groups (such as women, *dalits*, and indigenous people). There is one ethic that represents all people, but it must remain at the same time more responsive to different right claims. The other direction is the rejection of normative humanism and the celebration of difference, characteristic of the post-modern approach to cultural and political resistance. In this approach, a singular ethic is considered as domination and an obstruction to emancipation; it should be resisted. Instead, the idea is to support a deliberate construction of an ethic that focuses on specific groups of people whose voice, experience and knowledge have been historically under- or over-written. Such a construction is expected to yield cultural innovation and new ethical frameworks that redefine moral responsibility for the transformation of relations of dominance.[19]

---

[17] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological theory and women's development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

[18] Rose Mary Hennessy, *Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993).

[19] Rosemary Tong, "Feminist ethics", in Edward N. Zalta (ed), *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2000) (http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2000/entries/feminism-ethics/).

From a political standpoint, attempts to reconstruct a civil society based on the principle of non-domination and inclusion of all identities in the cultural and legal domain have not been able to resolve the tension between norms accepted as universal and the specific process of their codification. Political resistance based on the insistence of the recognition of differences has tended to overemphasise the bearings of history and culture on the subject, without offering an alternative referent to what constitutes the human being when undressed of history and culture. The avoidance of such a referent reflects the awareness among the elites of identity politics about the danger that underlies the logic of reductionism. Historically, variants of biological reductionism that proposed a definition of the human species based on a number of essential biological traits have justified social domination on the basis of gender and race.[20] Regrettably, this avoidance also left the political arena in a vacuum and therefore vulnerable to a gradual shift towards cultural reductionism or a line of argumentation that privileges an overdetermining role of culture that eventually lapses into a neo-liberalist form of pluralism. The political arena of post-modern cultural emancipation has been increasingly characterised by a competition between different selves, loyalties and affinities, and a total neglect of broader structural issues and social forces conditioning differences.[21] As Hennessy writes, identity politics ultimately fragments struggle by sending groups off in search of their sectional identities, leaving the system of relations upon which they rely unscathed.[22] An overemphasis on the role of culture and diversity of identity runs the risk of discontinuity in the search for sameness as an intellectual and social project.

A socially embedded approach to ontology for the purpose of psychic emancipation and political empowerment of disfranchised groups shows its limits when unable to recognise the human being (male or female, white or coloured) beyond the cultural subject. The stress on uniqueness of specific groups and difference with other groups has led to an involutionary turn among identitarian cultural movements. As illustrated by Ananta Giri, identitarian movements are displacing

---

[20] Janet Sayers, *Biological Politics: Feminist and anti-feminist perspectives* (London: Tavistock, 1982).

[21] Shirin Rai, *Gender and the Political Economy of Development: From nationalism to globalization* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002); Lourdes Beneria, *Gender, Development and Globalization: Economics as if all people mattered* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003).

[22] Hennessy, *Materialist Feminism, op. cit.*, at 136.

many of the emancipatory goals adopted earlier.[23] He notes an absence of a self-critical and dialogical move towards others to negotiate boundaries of co-existence and collective learning. In conflict situations, the assertion of uniqueness and rights can become internally repressive, more concerned with the collective identity than individual members, irrespective of intra-group domination, or externally destructive, capable of fuelling cleansing campaigns once identities become intertwined with issues of material power such as resource and territoriality.

    Against this background, ontological insecurity may be considered at the same time a psycho-social and a historical problem. The challenge is to find ways to resolve cultural conflicts as problems that are intertwined with overt as well as discrete processes of domination. At this time, the ethical equation in human security as ontological security may be framed as the choice between the promotion of plurality of standpoints of cultural subjects or the search for a communicative subject with a heart, as depicted in the writing of Saint-Exupéry, 'It is through the heart that one can see rightly, the most essential things are invisible to the eyes'.[24] To put the message in another way, the choice is between an endless struggle for widening of the rights-platforms beyond core rights, or a collective protection and enhancement of essential virtues such as compassion, patience, modesty and respect for others. Rights cannot function when these virtues are not present. These virtues serve to enhance communicative action in order to acknowledge the frailty and strength of all human beings behind their cultural and historical dressing.

<center>ONTOLOGICAL SECURITY AND BUDDHISM[25]</center>

Buddhism as a body of spiritual teachings may be understood as a vehicle – a means to reach an end rather than an end in itself. The Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh and the Thai social activist

---

[23] Ananta Giri, *Civil Society and the Limits of Identity Politics* (Madras: Madras Institute of Development Studies, 2002).
    [24] Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince* (1943), trans. by Richard Howard (Fort Washington: Harvest Books, 2000).
    [25] This section is mainly drawn from the teachings of parents through the use of texts, parables and action over many years – from childhood through and into activist adulthood and womanhood.

Sulak Sivaraksa – both being peace workers – have pointed out that a deep insight into Buddhism would speak of this spiritual tradition without the capital 'B', beyond and above the specific orientations specified as vehicle. Consciously attaching a small 'b' to this tradition conveys a renouncement of socially constructed identity, and the acceptance that there can be a diversity of means to spirituality and peace that may not necessarily be mutually opposed. So long as the means share the same end, the identity ascribed to a means is not a matter of great consequences.

The Buddhist tradition, as other traditions, is neither monolithic nor devoid of tension and violence. It has undergone several moments of transformation, manifested in the three main historical vehicles – *Hinayana* or Narrow Vehicle, *Mahayana* or Great Vehicle, and *Vajrayana* or Diamond Vehicle. Since the post-World War II period there has been an upsurge of different forms of Socially Engaged Buddhism, leading some scholars to propose that we may be witnessing the emergence of a fourth vehicle, *Navayana*, which is also called *Lokayana* or Global Vehicle. As Christopher Queen notes, Socially Engaged Buddhism – the contemporary application of the *dharma* (or Buddhist teachings) to the resolution of social problems – has emerged in a global conversation of human rights, distributive justice and social progress.[26] This application requires a renewal of ancient teachings to serve the needs of a globalising world, a world which compels us more and more to accept ethics as the indispensable interface between 'my desire' and 'your desire'.[27]

In line with this interface, Buddhist thought may be apprehended through the principle of nonduality, backed by all the Buddha's deliberations (*sutras*) on issues related to knowledge and spiritual wisdom. Nonduality may be traced through the main ontological principles of Buddhism – themselves being derived from a bio-centric approach to human life, nature and the cosmos. Buddhist thought defines human life as a micro-organism that is interlinked with other organisms. The human being differs from other organisms in nature owing to the endowment of mind,[28] the essential quality of which is formed

[26] Christopher Queen, "Introduction: A new Buddhism", *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, Number 7 (2000) (http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/7/queen001.html).

[27] His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for the new millennium* (London: Abacus, 2002).

[28] An introduction to Buddhist theory of mind and its meeting-point with the

by this interdependency and expresses itself in different forms known as empathy, also defined as interbeing by Thich Nhat Hanh.[29]

As the Dalai Lama illustrates, the first level of consciousness a child develops is through experiencing the protection and compassion of others, without which survival is not possible. The flourishing of human life is nurtured by affection and care, therefore the constitution of humans is more inclined towards feelings of empathy/compassion.[30] From this basic inclination, other types of constitution also arise as directed by different states of mind. These may be categorised into wholesome, neutral, and unwholesome mind. Neutral mind is neither wholesome nor unwholesome; it is as a white sheet of paper on which marks can be made. Neutral mind can be shifted into becoming wholesome or unwholesome.

Unwholesome mind is guided by conceptual errors, failure or misdirection of perception and is unable to grasp the principle of interbeing. Such mind tends to cling to an unchanging notion of self and its craving (*tanha*). *Tanha* is created simultaneously by bodily instincts and the formation of ego. The ego (*samkhara*) acts like a bog that sucks the mind into conceptual errors. These conceptual errors may be considered as a veil (*maya*) that prevents the mind from perceiving interbeing as 'suchness' (*tathagata*). An unwholesome mind may be even considered as a form of optical illusion (*avidaya*) that is capable of distorting one's self-understanding and the understanding of other, thus negatively affecting social action and relations.[31] A wholesome mind is capable of discerning errors of perception in order to remove the veil of illusion and to emerge from the state of *avidaya*. To transform an unwholesome mind into a wholesome one requires meditation or the training of mind, according to specified methods on the ethics of restraint, virtue and compassion.[32]

The following statement of a Tibetan nun may help illuminate the Buddhist view of the mind and consequent action:

---

field of psychology is best found in the conversation between the Dalai Lama and Howard Culter. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler, *The Art of Happiness* (London: Coronet Books, 1998).

[29] Thich Nhat Hanh, *Interbeing: Fourteen guidelines for Engaged Buddhism* rev. ed. (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1993).

[30] Dalai Lama and Cutler, *Art of Happiness, op. cit.*, at 38–39.

[31] Thanh-Dam Truong, "'Asian' values and the heart of understanding: A Buddhist view", in Josiane Cauquelin, Paul Lim and Birgit Mayer-König (eds), *Asian Values: An encounter with diversity* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998), 43–69.

[32] Dalai Lama, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World, op. cit.*

The one who tortures me is made to believe that what he is doing is right. He must stay blind to my pain in order to carry on. At the end of the day, he returns to his family; with arms that beat me he embraces his women, wraps loving arms around his child, protecting her with his strength. . . . Through my prayers, I ask that those who imprison us be free from the darkness of ignorance, and that the clouds that obscure the truth give way to clarity.[33]

A key message in this deliberation is the acknowledgement that what comes between self and others are unwholesome minds, not the specific biological traits of the self or the other. The 'evil' torturer is also capable of love, albeit currently limited to his family. His inability to extend this love to the nun as another being is suppressed by his social identity. The nun – through her meditation to overcome physical sufferings – is capable of seeing the broader and deeper causes of her own suffering specifically and Tibetan suffering more generally. Clarity here refers to the interconnectedness of all human beings, and darkness means the ego. The identity of the torturer expresses the ego of a collective Chinese identity formed by territorial boundaries and the Han culture. The suffering Tibetan nun is an identity capable of dissolving ego, apprehending interbeing and being aware of *karmic* consequences of violent action. Meditation in this regard becomes an ethical activity and not an individual pursuit of a 'transcendental bliss' – a stereotypical label commonly assigned to this practice.[34]

The notion of *karma* may be understood in ways other than its colloquial fatalistic meaning (rebirth is determined by action in one's life). It can also be seen from an epistemological standpoint: one conceptual error, if not corrected, leads to imbalanced action, causing imbalanced responses leading to other conceptual errors, and the chains of error and imbalanced action continues. *Karma* may be understood as action (verbal, physical, thought) which has result. Actions derived from an unwholesome mind will result in harm. Actions derived from a wholesome mind perpetrate non-violent outcomes and may thus alleviate suffering. *Karma* depicts relationships and interaction, a self and other selves that mutually interpenetrate. From the principle of

---

[33] Vincanne Adams, "Suffering the winds of Lhasa: Politicized bodies, human rights, cultural difference and humanism in Tibet", in John Xavier Inda and Renato Rosaldo (eds), *The Anthropology of Globalization: A reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 381–409.

[34] Georges Dreyfus, "Meditation as ethical activity", *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, Vol. 2 (1995) (http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/2/dreyfus.html).

interbeing can be derived the notion that at the primary level the concepts of self and not-self are not socially but organically embedded. Human beings are thus organically linked both together and with the nature in which they find themselves. Knowledge is what gives an awareness of the interactive nature of mind and matter, plus the ability to discern the negative dimensions of the socially embedded self.

Nonduality is also referred to as *prajna*, or penetrating insight – the ability to understand the nature of the interbeing of all forms of life. This penetrating insight has the capacity to transform individual and collective memories of trauma and sufferings (caused by conceptual errors of the self) into a release of compassion. *Prajna* stands for the image of a fountain from which compassion as a non-violent life-force emerges: a fountain that requires skilful methods of mind training to tap. Effective reflection of mind can help achieve a transformative shift of consciousness to attain what are referred to as the four abodes – caring and friendliness (*maitri*), empathy with those who suffer (*karuna*), sympathetic joy for others without envy (*mudita*), and equanimity or constitutional balance (*uppeka*). The four abodes function like a spinning wheel. A change of perception through *prajna* (penetrating insight) leads to a change of emotional structure (from hostility to caring and friendliness), a change of attitude (from anger to empathy), a change of behaviour (from desiring to take to a willingness to give, from readiness to cause grief to willingness to bring joy), and a change of the constitution of the self (from being averted by unwholesome mind to maintaining the constitutional balance of nonduality).

From an epistemological perspective, knowledge produced by a bio-centric approach to human life, nature and the cosmos is neither anthropocentric nor egocentric. It seeks to apprehend the interconnection between human life and other organisms. Wholesome knowledge may be considered as a type that is fully capable to comprehend this interconnection. Unwholesome knowledge perceives myopically – as far as the context of its concepts enables. The following parable may help illustrate:

A turtle meets a fish in the sea. The fish greets him:

– Hello! Turtle, welcome back! Where have you been?
– Hello! Fish, I have been on earth.
– Really? Is there something beyond water? What does it look like?

Turtle hesitates, trying to find the right means to express his experience. Impatiently, Fish asks:

– Is earth like water?
– No, *replies Turtle while trying to find a means to describe what he knows.*
– Do you feel pressure when you go deeper?
– I don't know . . .
– How far can the sun light shine down?
– I don't know, *says Turtle patiently.*
– Can you swim in it?
– No, I don't think so.

At this point Fish turns to swims off, and in a huff says:

– To all the essential questions I asked, you can only say no or that you do not know. As far as I am concerned your earth does not exist!

The message attached to this parable has two aspects to it. It is important to recognise the contextual boundaries of our conceptual knowledge. Universalising our contextual knowledge can raise barriers to other ways of knowing. Bounded by context, the human mind ceases to apprehend interconnectedness and may even deny the larger universe. The denial or fear of the larger universe beyond one's own can lead to ontological insecurity since one cannot understand how other creatures can come and leave our universe, seemingly sharing another universe with other creatures which one does not know and can hardly accept. Also, it is important to recognise that when the mind functions in one epistemic order it cannot see truth in wisdom. Wisdom, as symbolised in the turtle that has a longer biological life than the fish, is the ability to function in different epistemic orders and thereby have empathy with others who (through conditioning and habituation) cling to a singular order of the self. Wisdom would transform the will to knowledge into the will to assist others to apprehend different ways of knowing, thus preventing mutual confrontation and mutual negation.

Buddhist ontology provides us with a vision of human nature embedded in a bio-centric world view. Organically embedded in the universe in which it exists, the mind functions in a two-fold interaction: intra-species and inter-species. For this reason, there is a constant struggle with condition and habituation – an unfolding process of knowing. The mind is capable both of drowning itself in

conceptual errors or liberating itself from these. Liberating the mind from its conceptual errors can lead to the capacity for generosity and appreciation of other universes. The will of mind (determination) in Buddhism is not geared towards power and control, but towards understanding the nature of interconnectedness which is the key to release empathy/compassion. In this regard, ontological security is not derived from the notion of a fixed stable self (socially or morally defined). It is derived from the ethical ideal to perceive oneself in relation to others and, indeed, as others.[35]

Towards a compassionate human security agenda

Owing to its bio-centric approach to human nature, Buddhist social ethics begin with humankind's moral responsibility to maintain social harmony – by nurturing empathy/compassion and penetrating insight (*prajna*). For this reason, in Buddhist social ethics, respect for others tends to be primary; law is secondary. Law functions as a form of protection when respect fails. For example, in early state formation (10th to 12th century) in the lower Mekong region, rulers and their servants in public administration had to learn the techniques of meditation to ensure the role of *prajna* in decision-making. Disasters, including social and ecological, were often explained by the loss of *prajna*. Pasanathamo's study[36] on early state formation in Thailand shows that Buddhist social ethics were translated into five realms of respect for various rights: (a) those of animals and other transient beings, (b) those of other people's spouses and loved ones, (c) those of other people's property, (d) that of access to true information, and (e) the right to 'mindful communication'.

The last of these five realms is the one which most illustrates the principle of ethical responsibility to others in both a personalised and collectivised manner. Based on the belief that reality constitutes different parts of an interconnected whole, 'mindful communication' refers to an attitude or a posture in a dialogue that does not seek to assert the legitimacy of one's own view over another, but instead tries to find the seed of disharmony in each other's position, to reach a wise and balanced view on a given matter as a primary goal, and to

---

[35] Adams, "Suffering the winds of Lhasa", *op. cit.*
[36] See Truong, "'Asian' values and the heart of understanding", *op. cit.*, at 56–58.

restore harmony. Furthermore, given that Buddhist social ethics expect each and every individual to struggle for their own moral development with support from each other and the community, the daily well-being of individuals was regarded as primary. The following scripture on governance in early state formation in the lower Mekong region testifies to this point: 'Wealth can belong to a private ownership when its owner serves the basic needs of society. If this is not so, wealth is not of value, and the wealthy are worthless. The accumulation of wealth becomes unrighteous . . . if private wealth does not become the wealth of society and does not bring goodness, society should attempt to manage or re-organize the ownership system of that wealth and distribute it to make it reach all members. This is the basis for individual development and moral attainment of all members in society.'[37]

The lack of concern for social power has always left Buddhist ethics vulnerable to politics and gave it a weak commanding role in economic justice, except perhaps in the event of disasters. As pointed out by Yash Ghai, societies based on respect for, and duty towards, others tend to be status-oriented and hierarchical.[38] Enforcing duty before rights in non-egalitarian societies often means the preservation of the status quo. Under such circumstances, well intentioned principles are vulnerable to corruption and transformation into mechanisms of power and control. A case in point is how meditation as the training of mind and a requirement for all public officials disintegrated into mechanistic rituals; formal recognition of such training has been used to provide legitimacy for access by male members of communities to the civil service and to social mobility.[39]

Furthermore, James Whitehill suggests that Buddhism provides a weak body of social ethics because it cannot propose policy-generating principles that can be institutionalised on a wide scale.[40] Buddhist philosophy does not offer a theory of social power since it places full trust in the good nature of human beings. It provides the techniques

------

[37] See *id.*

[38] Yash Ghai, "Rights, duties and responsibilities", in Cauquelin, Lim and Mayer-König, *Asian Values, op. cit.*, at 20–42.

[39] Craig Reynolds, "Civic religion and national community in Thailand", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 36:2, 267–82 (1997); Charles Keyes, "Millennialism, Therevada Buddhism and Thai society", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 36:2, 283–302 (1997).

[40] James Whitehill, "Buddhist ethics in Western context: The virtues approach", *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, Vol. 1 (1994) (http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/1/white1.html).

to uncover this optimum nature both individually and collectively, but is rather unconcerned about what is required to apply it to the polity in ways that do not reinforce social hierarchy. Because the philosophy is thoroughly mindful of the constitutive dimension of the object towards which action is directed, Buddhist principles can only effect societal transformation by a slow permeation of a collective consciousness of nonduality – also metaphorically described as the "*dharma-drizzling rain*".

The Buddhist definition of 'community' is either too wide – as when referring to all sentient beings – or too narrow when used for the *sangha*: a body of monks or like-minded laity who devote themselves to the practice of Buddhist ethics. *Sangha* communities tend to replicate society's gender divisions. The Buddha's guidance in this respect remains ambivalent, particularly regarding the division of labour in the household. On the advice of his disciple (Ananda), Buddha Gautama decided to accept women into the *sangha* while expressing his reservation – given the implications for the maintenance of households and the general domain of care should women enrol in great numbers. Thus, despite the tenet which recognises a natural Good – latent in all and activated through nurturing and caring – the social responsibility for this goodness has primarily been placed on women. The result has been a social hierarchy – doctrinally defended – within which a man's role is to develop a wholesome mind, and so become (wholesomely) cognisant of nonduality; and the women's role is to practice this nonduality in everyday life through a balancing of her multiple identities of self (a female being), self-for-others (mother and wives), self-as-others (suffering bodies who must comprehend the action of its torturer).

The Buddhist path of non-violence, being more concerned with preserving systemic balance in societies/communities, has often left its subjects helpless in the face of naked force and massive violation of rights. When the virtue of a disciplined mind cannot stand up to the destructive nature of socio-political power, self-destruction may be the only alternative to violent resistance. Cases in point are the suffering monks, nuns and lay people of Tibet; and the self-immolation of monks during the height of the militarised conflict in Vietnam (1963–1973) when the country suffered from uninterrupted internal insurgency, the destruction by American air war technology, and ground search-and-destroy missions that wiped out entire towns and villages. A renewal of Buddhist social ethics in the service of human secu-

rity must come to term with such issues; also with the apparent fact
that, in the face of industrial-military complexes, global markets and
currency trading which daily involves trillions of US dollars and
eruptions of violence at every group level (from localised communi-
ties to regional and global associations), it will yet only be modest.

Three key aspects can be singled out, as relevant to a framing of
the human security agenda. First, the bio-centred approach in Buddhist
theory of human nature may serve to promote unity in human spir-
ituality. Religious expressions of human spirituality are variant man-
ifestations of a meta-reality in which heart and mind are integrated.
Different historical backgrounds, ecological settings and forms of
social organisation will inevitably produce differences in the way the
human spirit is ideally expressed. Collective learning shared among
different religions (or groups within a religion) should therefore not
be a competition as to whose god is more holy or more omnipotent,
or whose interpretation of holiness is more correct, but should focus
on exchanging experiences as to how the integration of heart and
mind is reached; how to be open for a renewal of self and others.
Inter-paradigmatic exchange about the nature of human spirituality
may help encourage movement away from fundamentalist positions
at all levels – family, school, and community – to transform dual-
ity (which is oppositional) into interbeing.

Secondly, Buddhist emphasis on awareness of interbeing as a char-
acteristic of human kind would support the principle of indivisibility
of rights and the function of economic justice as a deterrent against
structural violence towards specific identities – of nation, religion,
gender, ethnicity or age. Global human insecurity reflects the lack
of awareness of humankind's interconnectedness with each other and
other life forms. In this regard, interbeing as a concept may serve
as a source of moral reflection to perceive the reality of the world
through the consciousness of heart; a perception that can help to
alter priorities in the global agenda based on a notion of the self
that is inclusive of all other selves. Accepting ethics as the interface
between the self and the others is the basic requirement to enhance
the capability of institutions for self-reflexivity. This would require
governments to respect the right to 'mindful communication' of indi-
viduals and groups. The locating and removing the seeds of dishar-
mony in government policy as well as in societal relations should be
a collective exercise, using and improving existing means – such as
public hearings, consultations, and referenda in decision-making.

Third, the notion of *prajna* as the fountain of compassion may contribute to an enrichment of the theory of the person in the field of development ethics and its affiliated human development framework. In Nussbaum's[41] and Sen's[42] theory of the person, the moral relevance of compassion as an emotion may be found in the choice of the right rule and direction of public action. An extended view of compassion as a penetrating insight would recognise the moral relevance of a collective shift of consciousness to transform unethical into wholesome behaviour – spanning an interpersonal level through inter-group to inter-state levels. Two centuries of institution-building to nurture the principle of equality and individual freedom have created state-based parameters of rights more and more disconnected from essential virtue – empathy/compassion – which precisely engineers the realisation of rights.

Enforcement of the right rule in the global world order requires the moral voice of empathy/compassion not just among decision-makers but also among and between social groups. In this regard, policy seeking to enhance human capabilities through education may consider promoting not just marketable skills but also individual and collective skills for self-reflexivity and empathetic communication to promote more awareness on local/global issues that affect us in our daily lives. This capability would help foster 'mindful communication' as a political act among civic groups seeking to free communicative action from the boundaries of interests grounded in specific social identities in order to promote a notion of difference as different manifestations of the same processes that individuals and groups are part of. Such a notion of difference lies at the core of the collective will to find a solution to destructive processes to avert violence.

Conclusion

Contemporary conflicts are often caught in dynamics of power and identity, material interests embedded in the hierarchical nature of human societies – the by-products of history and political economy. These conflicts demonstrate the immense difficulty to promote the

---

[41] Martha Nussbaum, "Compassion: The basic social emotion", *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 13:1, 27–58 (1996); Martha Nussbaum, "Human functioning and social justice: In defense of Aristotelian Essentialism", *Political Theory*, 20:2, 202–46 (1992).

[42] Amartya Sen, *On Ethics and Economics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

notion of a single humanity beyond the specific identities constructed through time, space and location. Yet, our socially constructed identities and sense of self are truly fragile in the light of the global transformation of violence. The search for human security on a global scale can well benefit from an approach to social ethics that integrates notions of respect and right, or the ethics of virtue and justice. Justice is a vehicle driven by the energy of virtue. The virtues of a disciplined mind and of empathetic communication are apposite to proper resolution of most conflicts. An approach which acknowledges the presence of empathy in all of us may lead – through fuller understanding and awareness of the causation of suffering in human society – to a defining of a concept of human security that gives greater recognition to spirituality and the causal relationship between its absence and human misery.

PART FOUR

DOCUMENTARY RESOURCES ON RELIGION,
VIOLENCE AND PEACE

1. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADOPTED BY UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 217A (III) OF 10 DECEMBER 1948

WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

WHEREAS disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

WHEREAS it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

WHEREAS it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

WHEREAS the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

WHEREAS Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

WHEREAS a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore, The General Assembly Proclaims

THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote

respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

1. Everyone charged with a penal offense has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

2. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offense was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.

2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression: this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

2. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remu-
neration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of
human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of
social protection.

4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the
protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable lim-
itation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the
health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food,
clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and
the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, dis-
ability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circum-
stances beyond his control.

2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assis-
tance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy
the same social protection.

Article 26

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at
least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary educa-
tion shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall
be made generally available and higher education shall be equally
accessible to all on the basis of merit.

2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human
personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and
fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and
friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall fur-
ther the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that
shall be given to their children.

Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of mortality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

3. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

2. THE PRECEPTS OF THE ORDER OF INTERBEING

The First Precept

Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology, even Buddhist ones. Buddhist systems of thought are guiding means; they are not absolute truth.

The Second Precept

Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views. Learn and practice non-attachment from views in order to be open to receive other's viewpoints. Truth is found in life and not merely conceptual knowledge. Be ready to learn throughout your entire life and to observe reality in yourself and in the world at all times.

The Third Precept

Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever, to adopt your views, whether by authority, threat, money, propaganda or even education. However, through compassionate dialogue, help others renounce fanaticism and narrowness.

The Fourth Precept

Do not avoid contact with suffering or close your eyes before suffering. Do not lose awareness of the existence of suffering in the life of the world. Find ways to be with those who are suffering by all means, including personal contact and visits, images, sound. By such means, awaken yourself and other to the reality of suffering in the world.

The Fifth Precept

Do not accumulate wealth while millions are hungry. Do not take as the aim of your life fame, profit, wealth or sensual pleasure. Live simply and share time, energy and material resources with those who are in need.

The Sixth Precept

Do not maintain anger or hatred. As soon as anger and hatred arise, practice the meditation on compassion in order to deeply understand the persons who have caused anger and hatred. Learn to look at other beings with the eyes of compassion.

The Seventh Precept

Do not lose yourself in dispersion and in your surroundings. Learn to practice breathing in order to regain composure of body and mind, to practice mindfulness and to develop concentration and understanding.

The Eighth Precept

Do not utter words that can create discord and cause the community to break. Make every effort to reconcile and resolve conflicts, however small.

The Ninth Precept

Do not say untruthful things for the sake of personal interest or to impress people. Do not utter words that cause division and hatred. Do not spread news that you do not know to be certain. Do not criticize or condemn things that you are not sure of. Always speak truthfully and constructively. Have the courage to speak out about situations of injustice, even when doing so may threaten your own safety.

The Tenth Precept

Do not use the Buddhist community for personal gain or profit, or transform your community into a political party. A religious community, however, should take a clear stand against oppression and injustice and should strive to change the situation without engaging in partisan conflicts.

The Eleventh Precept

Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature. Do not invest in companies that deprive others of their chance to live. Select a vocation which helps realize your ideal of compassion.

The Twelfth Precept

Do not kill. Do not let others kill. Find whatever means possible to protect life and to prevent war.

The Thirteenth Precept

Posses nothing that should belong to others. Respect the property of others, but prevent others from enriching themselves from human suffering or the suffering of other beings.

The Fourteenth Precept

Do not mistreat you body. Learn to handle it with respect. Do not look on you body as only an instrument. Preserve vital energies (sexual, breath, spirit) for the realization of the Way. Sexual expression should not happen without love and commitment. In sexual relationships, be aware of future suffering that may be caused. To preserve the happiness of others, respect the rights and commitments of others. Be fully aware of the responsibilities of bringing new lives into the world. Meditate on the world into which you are bringing new being.

Thich Nhat Hanh, 1964

3. UNIVERSAL ISLAMIC DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
21 *DHUL QAIDAH* 1401 (19 SEPTEMBER 1981)

Contents

This is a declaration for mankind, a guidance and instruction to those who fear God. (*Al Qur'an, Al-Imran* 3:138)

FOREWORD

Islam gave to mankind an ideal code of human rights fourteen centuries ago. These rights aim at conferring honour and dignity on mankind and eliminating exploitation, oppression and injustice.

Human rights in Islam are firmly rooted in the belief that God, and God alone, is the Law Giver and the Source of all human rights. Due to their Divine origin, no ruler, government, assembly or authority can curtail or violate in any way the human rights conferred by God, nor can they be surrendered.

Human rights in Islam are an integral part of the overall Islamic order and it is obligatory on all Muslim governments and organs of society to implement them in letter and in spirit within the framework of that order.

It is unfortunate that human rights are being trampled upon with impunity in many countries of the world, including some Muslim countries. Such violations are a matter of serious concern and are arousing the conscience of more and more people throughout the world.

I sincerely hope that this Declaration of Human Rights will give a powerful impetus to the Muslim peoples to stand firm and defend resolutely and courageously the rights conferred on them by God.

This Declaration of Human Rights is the second fundamental document proclaimed by the Islamic Council to mark the beginning of the 15th Century of the Islamic era, the first being the Universal Islamic Declaration announced at the International Conference on The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and his Message, held in London from 12 to 15 April 1980.

The Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights is based on the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* and has been compiled by eminent Muslim scholars, jurists and representatives of Islamic movements and thought. May God reward them all for their efforts and guide us along the right path.

Paris, 21 *Dhul Qaidah* 1401, Salem Azzam
19th September 1981 Secretary General

O men! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him. Behold, God is all-knowing, all aware. (*Al Qur'an, Al-Hujurat* 49:13)

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the age-old human aspiration for a just world order wherein people could live, develop and prosper in an environment free from fear, oppression, exploitation and deprivation, remains largely unfulfilled;

WHEREAS the Divine Mercy unto mankind reflected in its having been endowed with super-abundant economic sustenance is being wasted, or unfairly or unjustly withheld from the inhabitants of the earth;

WHEREAS *Allah* (God) has given mankind through His revelations in the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of His Blessed Prophet Muhammad an abiding legal and moral framework within which to establish and regulate human institutions and relationships;

WHEREAS the human rights decreed by the Divine Law aim at conferring dignity and honour on mankind and are designed to eliminate oppression and injustice;

WHEREAS by virtue of their Divine source and sanction these rights can neither be curtailed, abrogated or disregarded by authorities, assemblies or other institutions, nor can they be surrendered or alienated;

Therefore we, as Muslims, who believe

a) in God, the Beneficent and Merciful, the Creator, the Sustainer, the Sovereign, the sole Guide of mankind and the Source of all Law;

b) in the Viceregent (*Khalifah*) of man who has been created to fulfill the Will of God on earth;

c) in the wisdom of Divine guidance brought by the Prophets, whose mission found its culmination in the final Divine message that was conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) to all mankind;

d) that rationality by itself without the light of revelation from God can neither be a sure guide in the affairs of mankind nor provide spiritual nourishment to the human soul, and, knowing that the teachings of Islam represent the quintessence of Divine guidance in its final and perfect form, feel duty-bound to remind man of the high status and dignity bestowed on him by God;

e) in inviting all mankind to the message of Islam;

f) that by the terms of our primeval covenant with God our duties and obligations have priority over our rights, and that each one of us is under a bounden duty to spread the teachings of Islam by word, deed, and indeed in all gentle ways, and to make them effective not only in our individual lives but also in the society around us;

g) in our obligation to establish an Islamic order:

i) wherein all human beings shall be equal and none shall enjoy a privilege or suffer a disadvantage or discrimination by reason of race, colour, sex, origin or language;

ii) wherein all human beings are born free;

iii) wherein slavery and forced labour are abhorred;

iv) wherein conditions shall be established such that the institution of family shall be preserved, protected and honoured as the basis of all social life;

v) wherein the rulers and the ruled alike are subject to, and equal before, the Law;

vi) wherein obedience shall be rendered only to those commands that are in consonance with the Law;

vii) wherein all worldly power shall be considered as a sacred trust, to be exercised within the limits prescribed by the Law and in a manner approved by it, and with due regard for the priorities fixed by it;

viii) wherein all economic resources shall be treated as Divine blessings bestowed upon mankind, to be enjoyed by all in accordance with the rules and the values set out in the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*;

ix) wherein all public affairs shall be determined and conducted, and the authority to administer them shall be exercised after mutual consultation (*Shura*) between the believers qualified to contribute to a decision which would accord well with the Law and the public good;

x) wherein everyone shall undertake obligations proportionate to his capacity and shall be held responsible pro rata for his deeds;

xi) wherein everyone shall, in case of an infringement of his rights, be assured of appropriate remedial measures in accordance with the Law;

xii) wherein no one shall be deprived of the rights assured to him by the Law except by its authority and to the extent permitted by it;

xiii) wherein every individual shall have the right to bring legal action against anyone who commits a crime against society as a whole or against any of its members;

xiv) wherein every effort shall be made to

(a) secure unto mankind deliverance from every type of exploitation, injustice and oppression,

(b) ensure to everyone security, dignity and liberty in terms set out and by methods approved and within the limits set by the Law;

Do hereby, as servants of *Allah* and as members of the Universal Brotherhood of Islam, at the beginning of the Fifteenth Century of the Islamic Era, affirm our commitment to uphold the following inviolable and inalienable human rights that we consider are enjoined by Islam.

I. *Right to Life*

a) Human life is sacred and inviolable and every effort shall be made to protect it. In particular no one shall be exposed to injury or death, except under the authority of the Law.

b) Just as in life, so also after death, the sanctity of a person's body shall be inviolable. It is the obligation of believers to see that a deceased person's body is handled with due solemnity.

II. *Right to Freedom*

a) Man is born free. No inroads shall be made on his right to liberty except under the authority and in due process of the Law.

b) Every individual and every people has the inalienable right to freedom in all its forms – physical, cultural, economic and political – and shall be entitled to struggle by all available means against any infringement or abrogation of this right; and every oppressed individual

or people has a legitimate claim to the support of other individuals and/or peoples in such a struggle.

III. *Right to Equality and Prohibition Against Impermissible Discrimination*

a) All persons are equal before the Law and are entitled to equal opportunities and protection of the Law.

b) All persons shall be entitled to equal wage for equal work.

c) No person shall be denied the opportunity to work or be discriminated against in any manner or exposed to greater physical risk by reason of religious belief, colour, race, origin, sex or language.

IV. *Right to Justice*

a) Every person has the right to be treated in accordance with the Law, and only in accordance with the Law.

b) Every person has not only the right but also the obligation to protest against injustice; to recourse to remedies provided by the Law in respect of any unwarranted personal injury or loss; to self-defence against any charges that are preferred against him and to obtain fair adjudication before an independent judicial tribunal in any dispute with public authorities or any other person.

c) It is the right and duty of every person to defend the rights of any other person and the community in general (*Hisbah*).

d) No person shall be discriminated against while seeking to defend private and public rights.

e) It is the right and duty of every Muslim to refuse to obey any command which is contrary to the Law, no matter by whom it may be issued.

V. *Right to Fair Trial*

a) No person shall be adjudged guilty of an offence and made liable to punishment except after proof of his guilt before an independent judicial tribunal.

b) No person shall be adjudged guilty except after a fair trial and after reasonable opportunity for defence has been provided to him.

c) Punishment shall be awarded in accordance with the Law, in proportion to the seriousness of the offence and with due consideration of the circumstances under which it was committed.

d) No act shall be considered a crime unless it is stipulated as such in the clear wording of the Law.

e) Every individual is responsible for his actions. Responsibility for a crime cannot be vicariously extended to other members of his family or group, who are not otherwise directly or indirectly involved in the commission of the crime in question.

VI. *Right to Protection Against Abuse of Power*

Every person has the right to protection against harassment by official agencies. He is not liable to account for himself except for making a defence to the charges made against him or where he is found in a situation wherein a question regarding suspicion of his involvement in a crime could be reasonably raised

VII. *Right to Protection Against Torture*

No person shall be subjected to torture in mind or body, or degraded, or threatened with injury either to himself or to anyone related to or held dear by him, or forcibly made to confess to the commission of a crime, or forced to consent to an act which is injurious to his interests.

VIII. *Right to Protection of Honour and Reputation*

Every person has the right to protect his honour and reputation against calumnies, groundless charges or deliberate attempts at defamation and blackmail.

IX. *Right to Asylum*

a) Every persecuted or oppressed person has the right to seek refuge and asylum. This right is guaranteed to every human being irrespective of race, religion, colour and sex.

b) *Al Masjid Al Haram* (the sacred house of *Allah*) in Mecca is a sanctuary for all Muslims.

X. *Rights of Minorities*

a) The *Qur'anic* principle "There is no compulsion in religion" shall govern the religious rights of non-Muslim minorities.

b) In a Muslim country religious minorities shall have the choice to be governed in respect of their civil and personal matters by Islamic Law, or by their own laws.

XI. *Right and Obligation to Participate in the Conduct and Management of Public Affairs*

a) Subject to the Law, every individual in the community (*Ummah*) is entitled to assume public office.

b) Process of free consultation (*Shura*) is the basis of the administrative relationship between the government and the people. People also have the right to choose and remove their rulers in accordance with this principle.

XII. *Right to Freedom of Belief, Thought and Speech*

a) Every person has the right to express his thoughts and beliefs so long as he remains within the limits prescribed by the Law. No one, however, is entitled to disseminate falsehood or to circulate reports which may outrage public decency, or to indulge in slander, innuendo or to cast defamatory aspersions on other persons.

b) Pursuit of knowledge and search after truth is not only a right but a duty of every Muslim.

c) It is the right and duty of every Muslim to protest and strive (within the limits set out by the Law) against oppression even if it involves challenging the highest authority in the state.

d) There shall be no bar on the dissemination of information provided it does not endanger the security of the society or the state and is confined within the limits imposed by the Law.

e) No one shall hold in contempt or ridicule the religious beliefs of others or incite public hostility against them; respect for the religious feelings of others is obligatory on all Muslims.

XIII. *Right to Freedom of Religion*

Every person has the right to freedom of conscience and worship in accordance with his religious beliefs.

XIV. *Right to Free Association*

a) Every person is entitled to participate individually and collectively in the religious, social, cultural and political life of his community and to establish institutions and agencies meant to enjoin what is right (*ma'roof*) and to prevent what is wrong (*munkar*).

b) Every person is entitled to strive for the establishment of institutions whereunder an enjoyment of these rights would be made possible. Collectively, the community is obliged to establish conditions so as to allow its members full development of their personalities.

XV. *The Economic Order and the Rights Evolving Therefrom*

a) In their economic pursuits, all persons are entitled to the full benefits of nature and all its resources. These are blessings bestowed by God for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

b) All human beings are entitled to earn their living according to the Law.

c) Every person is entitled to own property individually or in association with others. State ownership of certain economic resources in the public interest is legitimate.

d) The poor have the right to a prescribed share in the wealth of the rich, as fixed by *Zakah*, levied and collected in accordance with the Law.

e) All means of production shall be utilised in the interest of the community (*Ummah*) as a whole, and may not be neglected or misused.

f) In order to promote the development of a balanced economy and to protect society from exploitation, Islamic Law forbids monopolies, unreasonable restrictive trade practices, usury, the use of coercion in the making of contracts and the publication of misleading advertisements.

g) All economic activities are permitted provided they are not detrimental to the interests of the community (*Ummah*) and do not violate Islamic laws and values.

XVI. *Right to Protection of Property*

No property may be expropriated except in the public interest and on payment of fair and adequate compensation.

XVII. *Status and Dignity of Workers*

Islam honours work and the worker and enjoins Muslims not only to treat the worker justly but also generously. He is not only to be paid his earned wages promptly, but is also entitled to adequate rest and leisure.

XVIII. *Right to Social Security*

Every person has the right to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care consistent with the resources of the community. This obligation of the community extends in particular to all individuals who cannot take care of themselves due to some temporary or permanent disability.

XIX. *Right to Found a Family and Related Matters*

a) Every person is entitled to marry, to found a family and to bring up children in conformity with his religion, traditions and culture. Every spouse is entitled to such rights and privileges and carries such obligations as are stipulated by the Law.

b) Each of the partners in a marriage is entitled to respect and consideration from the other.

c) Every husband is obligated to maintain his wife and children according to his means.

d) Every child has the right to be maintained and properly brought up by its parents, it being forbidden that children are made to work at an early age or that any burden is put on them which would arrest or harm their natural development.

e) If parents are for some reason unable to discharge their obligations towards a child it becomes the responsibility of the community to fulfill these obligations at public expense.

f) Every person is entitled to material support, as well as care and protection, from his family during his childhood, old age or incapacity. Parents are entitled to material support as well as care and protection from their children.

g) Motherhood is entitled to special respect, care and assistance on the part of the family and the public organs of the community (*Ummah*).

h) Within the family, men and women are to share in their obligations and responsibilities according to their sex, their natural endowments, talents and inclinations, bearing in mind their common responsibilities toward their progeny and their relatives.

i) No person may be married against his or her will, or lose or suffer diminution of legal personality on account of marriage.

XX. *Rights of Married Women*

Every married woman is entitled to:

a) live in the house in which her husband lives;

b) receive the means necessary for maintaining a standard of living which is not inferior to that of her spouse, and, in the event of divorce, receive during the statutory period of waiting (*iddah*) means of maintenance commensurate with her husband's resources, for herself as well as for the children she nurses or keeps, irrespective of her own financial status, earnings, or property that she may hold in her own rights;

c) seek and obtain dissolution of marriage (*Khul'a*) in accordance with the terms of the Law. This right is in addition to her right to seek divorce through the courts.

d) inherit from her husband, her parents, her children and other relatives according to the Law;

e) strict confidentiality from her spouse, or ex-spouse if divorced, with regard to any information that he may have obtained about

her, the disclosure of which could prove detrimental to her inter-ests. A similar responsibility rests upon her in respect of her spouse or ex-spouse.

XXI. *Right to Education*

a) Every person is entitled to receive education in accordance with his natural capabilities.

b) Every person is entitled to a free choice of profession and car-eer and to the opportunity for the full development of his natural endowments.

XXII. *Right of Privacy*

Every person is entitled to the protection of his privacy.

XXIII. *Right to Freedom of Movement and Residence*

a) In view of the fact that the World of Islam is veritably *Ummah Islamia*, every Muslim shall have the right to freely move in and out of any Muslim country.

b) No one shall be forced to leave the country of his residence, or be arbitrarily deported therefrom without recourse to due process of Law.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. In the above formulation of Human Rights, unless the context provides otherwise:

   a) the term 'person' refers to both the male and female sexes.

   b) the term 'Law' denotes the *Shariʿah*, i.e. the totality of ordi-nances derived from the *Qurʾan* and the *Sunnah* and any other laws that are deduced from these two sources by methods considered valid in Islamic jurisprudence.

2. Each one of the Human Rights enunciated in this declaration carries a corresponding duty.

3. In the exercise and enjoyment of the rights referred to above every person shall be subject only to such limitations as are enjoined

by the Law for the purpose of securing the due recognition of, and respect for, the rights and the freedom of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare of the Community (*Ummah*).

The Arabic text of this Declaration is the original.

Glossary of arabic terms

SUNNAH – The example or way of life of the Prophet (peace be upon him), embracing what he said, did or agreed to.

KHALIFAH – The vicegerent of man on earth or succession to the Prophet, transliterated into English as the Caliphate.

HISBAH – Public vigilance, an institution of the Islamic State enjoined to observe and facilitate the fulfillment of right norms of public behaviour. The "*Hisbah*" consists in public vigilance as well as an opportunity to private individuals to seek redress through it.

MAʿROOF – Good act.

MUNKAR – Reprehensible deed.

ZAKAH – The 'purifying' tax on wealth, one of the five pillars of Islam obligatory on Muslims.

ʿIDDAH – The waiting period of a widowed or divorced woman during which she is not to re-marry.

KHULʿA – Divorce a woman obtains at her own request.

UMMAH ISLAMIA – World Muslim community.

SHARIʿAH – Islamic law.

4. THE CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM
5 AUGUST 1990

The Nineteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Session of Peace, Interdependence and Development), held in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, from 9–14 *Muharram* 1411H (31 July to 5 August 1990),

Keenly aware of the place of mankind in Islam as vicegerent of *Allah* on Earth;

Recognizing the importance of issuing a Document on Human Rights in Islam that will serve as a guide for Member states in all aspects of life;

Having examined the stages through which the preparation of this draft Document has so far, passed and the relevant report of the Secretary General;

Having examined the Report of the Meeting of the Committee of Legal Experts held in Tehran from 26 to 28 December, 1989;

Agrees to issue the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam that will serve as a general guidance for Member States in the Field of human rights;

Reaffirming the civilizing and historical role of the Islamic *Ummah* which *Allah* made as the best community and which gave humanity a universal and well-balanced civilization, in which harmony is established between hereunder and the hereafter, knowledge is combined with faith, and to fulfill the expectations from this community to guide all humanity which is confused because of different and conflicting beliefs and ideologies and to provide solutions for all chronic problems of this materialistic civilization;

In contribution to the efforts of mankind to assert human rights, to protect man from exploitation and persecution, and to affirm his freedom and right to a dignified life in accordance with the Islamic *Shari'ah*;

Convinced that mankind which has reached an advanced stage in materialistic science is still, and shall remain, in dire need of faith to support its civilization as well as a self motivating force to guard its rights;

Believing that fundamental rights and freedoms according to Islam are an integral part of the Islamic religion and that no one shall have the right as a matter of principle to abolish them either in whole or in part or to violate or ignore them in as much as they are binding divine commands, which are contained in the Revealed Books of *Allah* and which were sent through the last of His Prophets to complete the preceding divine messages and that safeguarding those fundamental rights and freedoms is an act of worship whereas the neglect or violation thereof is an abominable sin, and that the safeguarding of those fundamental rights and freedom is an individual responsibility of every person and a collective responsibility of the entire *Ummah*;

Do hereby and on the basis of the above-mentioned principles declare as follows:

Article 1

(a) All human beings form one family whose members are united by their subordination to *Allah* and descent from Adam. All men are equal in terms of basic human dignity and basic obligations and responsibilities, without any discrimination on the basis of race, colour, language, belief, sex, religion, political affiliation, social status or other considerations. The true religion is the guarantee for enhancing such dignity along the path to human integrity.

(b) All human beings are *Allah*'s subjects, and the most loved by Him are those who are most beneficial to His subjects, and no one has superiority over another except on the basis of piety and good deeds.

Article 2

(a) Life is a God-given gift and the right to life is guaranteed to every human being. It is the duty of individuals, societies and states to safeguard this right against any violation, and it is prohibited to take away life except for a *shari'ah* prescribed reason.

(b) It is forbidden to resort to any means which could result in the genocidal annihilation of mankind.

(c) The preservation of human life throughout the term of time willed by *Allah* is a duty prescribed by *shari'ah*.

(d) Safety from bodily harm is a guaranteed right. It is the duty of the state to safeguard it, and it is prohibited to breach it without a *shari'ah*-prescribed reason.

Article 3

(a) In the event of the use of force and in case of armed conflict, it is not permissible to kill non-belligerents such as old men, women and children. The wounded and the sick shall have the right to medical treatment; and prisoners of war shall have the right to be fed, sheltered and clothed. It is prohibited to mutilate or dismember dead bodies. It is required to exchange prisoners of war and to arrange visits or reunions of families separated by circumstances of war.

(b) It is prohibited to cut down trees, to destroy crops or livestock, to destroy the enemy's civilian buildings and installations by shelling, blasting or any other means.

Article 4

Every human being is entitled to human sanctity and the protection of one's good name and honour during one's life and after one's death. The state and the society shall protect one's body and burial place from desecration.

Article 5

(a) The family is the foundation of society, and marriage is the basis of making a family. Men and women have the right to marriage, and no restrictions stemming from race, colour or nationality shall prevent them from exercising this right.

(b) The society and the State shall remove all obstacles to marriage and facilitate it, and shall protect the family and safeguard its welfare.

Article 6

(a) Woman is equal to man in human dignity, and has her own rights to enjoy as well as duties to perform, and has her own civil entity and financial independence, and the right to retain her name and lineage.

(b) The husband is responsible for the maintenance and welfare of the family.

Article 7

(a) As of the moment of birth, every child has rights due from the parents, the society and the state to be accorded proper nursing, education and material, hygienic and moral care. Both the fetus and the mother must be safeguarded and accorded special care.

(b) Parents and those in such like capacity have the right to choose the type of education they desire for their children, provided they take into consideration the interest and future of the children in accordance with ethical values and the principles of the *shari'ah*.

(c) Both parents are entitled to certain rights from their children, and relatives are entitled to rights from their kin, in accordance with the tenets of the *shari'ah*.

Article 8

Every human being has the right to enjoy a legitimate eligibility with all its prerogatives and obligations in case such eligibility is lost or impaired, the person shall have the right to be represented by his/her guardian.

Article 9

(a) The seeking of knowledge is an obligation and provision of education is the duty of the society and the State. The State shall ensure the availability of ways and means to acquire education and shall guarantee its diversity in the interest of the society so as to enable man to be acquainted with the religion of Islam and uncover the secrets of the Universe for the benefit of mankind.

(b) Every human being has a right to receive both religious and worldly education from the various institutions of teaching, education and guidance, including the family, the school, the university, the media, etc., and in such an integrated and balanced manner

that would develop human personality, strengthen man's faith in *Allah* and promote man's respect to and defence of both rights and obligations.

Article 10

Islam is the religion of true unspoiled nature. It is prohibited to exercise any form of pressure on man or to exploit his poverty or ignorance in order to force him to change his religion to another religion or to atheism.

Article 11

(a) Human beings are born free, and no one has the right to enslave, humiliate, oppress or exploit them, and there can be no subjugation but to *Allah* the Almighty.

(b) Colonialism of all types being one of the most evil forms of enslavement is totally prohibited. Peoples suffering from colonialism have the full right to freedom and self-determination. It is the duty of all States peoples to support the struggle of colonized peoples for the liquidation of all forms of and occupation, and all States and peoples have the right to preserve their independent identity and control over their wealth and natural resources.

Article 12

Every man shall have the right, within the framework of the *shari'ah*, to free movement and to select his place of residence whether within or outside his country and if persecuted, is entitled to seek asylum in another country. The country of refuge shall be obliged to provide protection to the asylum-seeker until his safety has been attained, unless asylum is motivated by committing an act regarded by the *shari'ah* as a crime.

Article 13

Work is a right guaranteed by the State and the Society for each person with capability to work. Everyone shall be free to choose the work that suits him best and which serves his interests as well as those of the society. The employee shall have the right to enjoy safety and security as well as all other social guarantees. He may not be assigned work beyond his capacity nor shall he be subjected

to compulsion or exploited or harmed in any way. He shall be enti-
tled – without any discrimination between males and females – to
fair wages for his work without delay, as well as to the holidays
allowances and promotions which he deserves. On his part, he shall
be required to be dedicated and meticulous in his work. Should
workers and employers disagree on any matter, the State shall inter-
vene to settle the dispute and have the grievances redressed, the
rights confirmed and justice enforced without bias.

Article 14

Everyone shall have the right to earn a legitimate living without
monopolization, deceit or causing harm to oneself or to others. Usury
(*riba*) is explicitly prohibited.

Article 15

(a) Everyone shall have the right to own property acquired in a legit-
imate way, and shall be entitled to the rights of ownership without
prejudice to oneself, others or the society in general. Expropriation
is not permissible except for requirements of public interest and upon
payment of prompt and fair compensation.

(b) Confiscation and seizure of property is prohibited except for a
necessity dictated by law.

Article 16

Everyone shall have the right to enjoy the fruits of his scientific, lit-
erary, artistic or technical labour of which he is the author; and he
shall have the right to the protection of his moral and material inter-
ests stemming therefrom, provided it is not contrary to the princi-
ples of the *shari'ah*.

Article 17

(a) Everyone shall have the right to live in a clean environment,
away from vice and moral corruption, that would favour a healthy
ethical development of his person and it is incumbent upon the State
and society in general to afford that right.

(b) Everyone shall have the right to medical and social care, and to
all public amenities provided by society and the State within the
limits of their available resources.

(c) The States shall ensure the right of the individual to a decent living that may enable him to meet his requirements and those of his dependents, including food, clothing, housing, education, medical care and all other basic needs.

Article 18

(a) Everyone shall have the right to live in security for himself, his religion, his dependents, his honour and his property.

(b) Everyone shall have the right to privacy in the conduct of his private affairs, in his home, among his family, with regard to his property and his relationships. It is not permitted to spy on him, to place him under surveillance or to besmirch his good name. The State shall protect him from arbitrary interference.

(c) A private residence is inviolable in all cases. It will not be entered without permission from its inhabitants or in any unlawful manner, nor shall it be demolished or confiscated and its dwellers evicted.

Article 19

(a) All individuals are equal before the law, without distinction between the ruler and the ruled.

(b) The right to resort to justice is guaranteed to everyone.

(c) Liability is in essence personal.

(d) There shall be no crime or punishment except as provided for in the *shariʿah.*

(e) A defendant is innocent until his guilt is proven in a fair trial in which he shall be given all the guarantees of defence.

Article 20

It is not permitted without legitimate reason to arrest an individual, or restrict his freedom, to exile or to punish him. It is not permitted to subject him to physical or psychological torture or to any form of maltreatment, cruelty or indignity. Nor is it permitted to subject an individual to medical or scientific experiments without his consent or at the risk of his health or of his life. Nor is it permitted to promulgate emergency laws that would provide executive authority for such actions.

Article 21

Taking hostages under any form or for any purpose is expressly for-
bidden.

Article 22

(a) Everyone shall have the right to express his opinion freely in such
manner as would not be contrary to the principles of the *shari'ah.*

(b) Everyone shall have the right to advocate what is right, and prop-
agate what is good, and warn against what is wrong and evil accord-
ing to the norms of Islamic *shari'ah.*

(c) Information is a vital necessity to society. It may not be exploited
or misused in such a way as may violate sanctities and the dignity
of Prophets, undermine moral and ethical values or disintegrate, cor-
rupt or harm society or weaken its faith.

(d) It is not permitted to excite nationalistic or doctrinal hatred or
to do anything that may be an incitement to any form or racial dis-
crimination.

Article 23

(a) Authority is a trust; and abuse or malicious exploitation thereof
is explicitly prohibited, in order to guarantee fundamental human
rights.

(b) Everyone shall have the right to participate, directly or indirectly
in the administration of his country's public affairs. He shall also
have the right to assume public office in accordance with the pro-
visions of *shari'ah.*

Article 24

All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are sub-
ject to the Islamic *shari'ah.*

Article 25

The Islamic *shari'ah* is the only source of reference for the explana-
tion or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.

5. THE BANGKOK DECLARATION

The Ministers and representatives of Asian States, meeting at Bangkok from 29 March to 2 April 1993, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/116 of 17 December 1991 in the context of preparations for the World Conference on Human Rights.

Adopts this Declaration to be known as "The Bangkok Declaration", which contains the aspirations and commitments of the Asian region:

Emphasizing the significance of the World Conference on human Rights, which provides an invaluable opportunity to review all aspects of human rights and ensure a just and balanced approach thereto,

Recognizing the contribution that can be made to the World Conference by Asian countries with their diverse and rich cultures and traditions,

Welcoming the increased attention being paid to human right in the international community,

Reaffirming the commitment to principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights,

Recalling that in the Charter of the United Nations the question of universal observance and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms has been rightly placed within the context of international cooperation,

Noting the progress made in the codification of human rights instruments, and in the establishment of international human rights mechanisms, while expressing concern that these mechanisms relate mainly to one category of rights,

Emphasizing that ratification of international human rights instruments particularly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights, by all States should be further encouraged,

Reaffirming the principles of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States,

Stressing the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of all human rights and the need to avoid the application of double standards in the implementation of human rights and its politicization,

Recognizing that the promotion of human rights should be encouraged by cooperation and consensus, and not through confrontation and the imposition of incompatible values,

Reiterating the interdependence and indivisibility of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, and the inherent interrelationship between development, democracy, universal enjoyment of all human rights, and social justice, which must be addressed in an integrated and balanced manner,

Recalling that the Declaration on the Right to Development has recognized the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights,

Emphasizing that endeavors to move towards the creation of uniform international human rights norms must go hand in hand with endeavours to work towards a just and fair world economic order,

Convinced that economic and social progress facilitates the growing trend towards democracy and the promotion and protection of human rights,

Stressing the importance of education and training in human rights at the national, regional and international levels and the need for international cooperation aimed at overcoming the lack of public awareness of human rights,

1. Reaffirm their commitment to the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as the full realization of all human rights throughout the world;

2. Underline the essential need to create favourable conditions for effective enjoyment of human rights at both the national and international levels;

3. Stress the urgent need to democratize the United Nations system, eliminate selectivity and improve procedures and mechanisms in order to strengthen international cooperation, based on principles of equality and mutual respect, and ensure a positive, balanced and non-

confrontational approach in addressing and realizing all aspects of human rights;

4. Discourage any attempt to use human rights as conditionality for extending development assistance;

5. Emphasize the principles of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as non-interference in the internal affairs of States, (and the non-use of human rights as an instrument of political pressure);

6. Reiterate that all countries, large and small, have the right to determine their political systems, control and freely utilize their resources, and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development;

7. Stress the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of all human rights and the need to avoid the application of double standards in the implementation of human rights and its politicization, and that non-violation of human rights can be justified;

8. Recognize that while human rights are universal in nature, they must be considered in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds;

9. Recognize further that States have the primary responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights through appropriate infrastructure and mechanisms, and also recognize that remedies must be sought and provided primarily through such mechanisms and procedures;

10. Reaffirm the interdependence and indivisibility of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights and the need to give equal emphasis to all categories of human rights;

11. Emphasize the importance of guaranteeing the human rights and fundamental freedoms of vulnerable groups such as ethnic, national, racial, religious and linguistic minorities, migrant workers, disabled persons, indigenous peoples, refuges and displaced persons;

12. Reiterate that self-determination is a principle of international law and a universal right recognized by the United Nations for peoples under alien and colonial domination or foreign occupation, by

virtue of which they can freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and that its denial constitutes a grave violation of human rights;

13. Stress that the right to self-determination is applicable to people under alien and colonial domination or foreign occupation, and should not be used to undermine the territorial integrity, nationalism, apartheid colonialism, and political independence of States;

14. Express concern over all forms of violation of human rights, including manifestation of racial discrimination, racism, apartheid colonialism, foreign aggression and occupation, and the establishment of illegal settlements in occupied territories, as well as the recent resurgence of neo-nazism, xenophobia and ethnic cleansing;

15. Underline the need for taking effective international measures in order to guarantee and monitor the implementation of human rights standards and effective and legal protection of people under foreign occupation;

16. Strongly affirm their support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people to restore their national and inalienable rights to self-determination and independence, and demand an immediate end to the grave violations of human rights in the Palestinian, Golan and other occupied Arab territories including Jerusalem;

17. Reaffirm the right to development, as established in the Declaration on the Right to Development, as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights which must be realized through international cooperation, respect for fundamental human rights, the establishment of a monitoring mechanism and the creation of essential international conditions for the realization of such right;

18. Recognize that the main obstacle to the realization of the right to development lie at the international macroeconomic level, as reflected in the widening gap between the North and the South, the rich and the poor;

19. Affirm that poverty is one of the major obstacles hindering the full enjoyment of human rights;

20. Affirm also the need to develop the right of humankind regarding a clean, safe and healthy environment;

21. Note that terrorism, in all its form and manifestations, as distinguished from the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation, has emerged as one of the most dangerous threats to the territorial integrity of States and destabilizing legitimately constituted governments, and that it must be unequivocally condemned by the international community;

22. Reaffirm their strong commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of women through the guarantee of equal participation in the political, social, economic and cultural concerns of society, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination and of gender-based violence against women;

23. Recognize the rights of the child to enjoy special protection and to be afforded the opportunities and facilities to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity;

24. Welcome the important role played by national institutions in the genuine and constructive promotion of human rights and believe that the conceptualization and eventual establishment of institutions are best left for the States to decide;

25. Acknowledge the importance of cooperation and dialogue between governments and non-governmental organizations on the basis of shared values as well as mutual respect and understanding in the promotion of human rights, and encourage the non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to contribute positively to this process in accordance with Council resolution 1296 (XLIV);

26. Reiterate the need to explore the possibilities of establishing regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights in Asia;

27. Reiterate further the need to explore ways to generate international cooperation and financial support for education and training in the field of human rights at the national level and for the establishment of national infrastructures to promote and protect human rights if requested by States;

28. Emphasize the necessity to rationalize the United Nations human rights mechanism in order to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency

to ensure avoidance of the duplication of work that exists between the treaty bodies, the Sub-Commission of Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Commission on Human Rights, as well as the need to avoid the multiplicity of parallel mechanisms;

29. Stress the importance of strengthening the Untied Nations Centre for Human Rights with the necessary resources to enable it to provide a wide range of advisory services and technical assistance programmes in the promotion of human rights to requesting States in a timely and effective manner, as well as to enable it to finance adequately other activities in the field of human rights authorized by competent bodies; in the field of human rights authorized by competent bodies;

30. Call for increased representation of the developing countries in the Centre for Human Rights.

6. TOWARD A DECLARATION OF A GLOBAL ETHIC

The Initial Declaration is printed below. The Principles were written as explication of the Declaration. As you read, please keep in your mind that this is a document created by fallible women and men. It is an attempt to articulate principles, common to the ancient guidelines for human behavior found in the teachings of all the religions of the world, that are pertinent for today and the time to come. Consider its words from your own perspective, remembering the guidance imparted to you by the wise ones of your tradition, whatever that may be.

THE DECLARATION OF A GLOBAL ETHIC

The world is in agony. The agony is so pervasive and urgent that we are compelled to name its manifestations so that the depth of this pain may be made clear.

Peace eludes us . . . the planet is being destroyed . . . neighbors live in fear . . . women and men are estranged from each other . . . children die!

This is abhorrent.

We condemn the abuses of Earth's ecosystems.

We condemn the poverty that stifles life's potential; the hunger that weakens the human body, the economic disparities that threaten so many families with ruin.

We condemn the social disarray of the nations; the disregard for justice which pushes citizens to the margin; the anarchy overtaking our communities; and the insane death of children from violence. In particular we condemn aggression and hatred in the name of religion.

But this agony need not be.

It need not be because the basis for an ethic already exists. This ethic offers the possibility of a better individual and global order, and leads individuals away from despair and societies away from chaos.

We are women and men who have embraced the precepts and practices of the world's religions:

We affirm that a common set of core values is found in the teachings of the religions, and that these form the basis of a global ethic.

We affirm that this truth is already known, but yet to be lived in heart and action.

We affirm that there is an irrevocable, unconditional norm for all areas of life, for families and communities, for races, nations, and religions. There already exist ancient guidelines for human behavior which are found in the teachings of the religions of the world and which are the condition for a sustainable world order.

We Declare:

We are interdependent. Each of us depends on the well-being of the whole, and so we have respect for the community of living beings, for people, animals, and plants, and for the preservation of Earth, the air, water and soil.

We take individual responsibility for all we do. All our decisions, actions, and failures to act have consequences.

We must treat others as we wish others to treat us. We make a commitment to respect life and dignity, individuality and diversity, so that every person is treated humanely, without exception. We must have patience and acceptance. We must be able to forgive, learning from the past but never allowing ourselves to be enslaved by memories of hate. Opening our hearts to one another, we must sink our narrow differences for the cause of the world community, practicing a culture of solidarity and relatedness.

We consider humankind our family. We must strive to be kind and generous. We must not live for ourselves alone, but should also serve others, never forgetting the children, the aged, the poor, the suffering, the disabled, the refugees, and the lonely. No person should ever be considered or treated as a second-class citizen, or be exploited in any way whatsoever. There should be equal partnership between men and women. We must not commit any kind of sexual immorality. We must put behind us all forms of domination or abuse.

We commit ourselves to a culture of non-violence, respect, justice, and peace. We shall not oppress, injure, torture, or kill other human beings, forsaking violence as a means of settling differences.

We must strive for a just social and economic order, in which everyone has an equal chance to reach full potential as a human being. We must speak and act truthfully and with compassion, dealing fairly with all, and avoiding prejudice and hatred. We must not steal. We must move beyond the dominance of greed for power, prestige, money, and consumption to make a just and peaceful world.

Earth cannot be changed for the better unless the consciousness of individuals is changed first. We pledge to increase our awareness by disciplining our minds, by meditation, by prayer, or by positive thinking. Without risk and a readiness to sacrifice there can be no fundamental change in our situation. Therefore we commit ourselves to this global ethic, to understanding one another, and to socially beneficial, peace-fostering, and nature-friendly ways of life.

We invite all people, whether religious or not, to do the same.

Given at the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions, 4 September 1993, in Chicago, Illinois, United States of America.

7. A UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF A GLOBAL ETHIC

I. Rationale

We women and men from various ethical and religious traditions commit ourselves to the following Universal Declaration of a Global Ethic. We speak here not of ethics in the plural, which implies rather great detail, but of ethic in the singular, i.e., the fundamental attitude toward good and evil, and the basic and middle principles needed to put it into action.

We make this commitment not despite our differences but arising out of our distinct perspectives, recognizing nevertheless in our diverse ethical and religious traditions common convictions that lead us to speak out against all forms of inhumanity and for humaneness in our treatment of ourselves, one another and the world around us. We find in each of our traditions:

a) grounds in support of universal human rights,

b) a call to work for justice and peace, and

c) concern for conservation of the earth.

We confirm and applaud the positive human values that are, at times painfully slowly, but nevertheless increasingly, being accepted and advocated in our world: freedom, equality, democracy, recognition of interdependence, commitment to justice and human rights. We also believe that conditions in our world encourage, indeed require, us to look beyond what divides us and to speak as one on matters that are crucial for the survival of and respect for the earth. Therefore we advocate movement toward a global order that reflects the best values found in our myriad traditions.

We are convinced that a just global order can be built only upon a global ethic which clearly states universally-recognized norms and principles, and that such an ethic presumes a readiness and intention on the part of people to act justly – that is, a movement of the heart. Secondly, a global ethic requires a thoughtful presentation of principles that are held up to open investigation and critique – a movement of the head.

Each of our traditions holds commitments beyond what is expressed here, but we find that within our ethical and religious traditions the world community is in the process of discovering elements of a fundamental minimal consensus on ethics which is convincing to all women and men of good will, religious and nonreligious alike, and which will provide us with a moral framework within which we can relate to ourselves, each other and the world in a just and respectful manner.

In order to build a humanity-wide consensus we find it is essential to develop and use a language that is humanity-based, though each religious and ethical tradition also has its own language for what is expressed in this Declaration. Furthermore, none of our traditions, ethical or religious, is satisfied with minimums, vital as they are; rather, because humans are endlessly self-transcending, our traditions also provide maximums to be striven for. Consequently, this Declaration does the same. The maximums, however, clearly are ideals to be striven for, and therefore cannot be required, lest the essential freedoms and rights of some thereby be violated.

II. Presuppositions

As a Universal Declaration of a Global Ethic, which we believe must undergird any affirmation of human rights and respect for the earth, this document affirms and supports the rights and corresponding responsibilities enumerated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. In conjunction with that first United Nations Declaration we believe there are five general presuppositions which are indispensable for a global ethic:

a) Every human possesses inalienable and inviolable dignity; individuals, states, and other social entities are obliged to respect and protect the dignity of each person.

b) No person or social entity exists beyond the scope of morality; everyone – individuals and social organizations – is obliged to do good and avoid evil.

c) Humans are endowed with reason and conscience – the great challenge of being human is to act conscientiously; communities, states and other social organizations are obliged to protect and foster these capabilities.

d) Communities, states and other social organizations which contribute to the good of humans and the world have a right to exist and flourish; this right should be respected by all.

e) Humans are a part of nature, not apart from nature; ethical concerns extend beyond humanity to the rest of the earth, and indeed the cosmos. In brief: this Declaration, in reflection of reality, is not just anthropo-centric, but cosmo-anthropo-centric.

III. A Fundamental rule

We propose the Golden Rule, which for thousands of years has been affirmed in many religious and ethical traditions, as a fundamental principle upon which to base a global ethic: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others," or in positive terms, "What you wish done to yourself, do to others." This rule should be valid not only for one's own family, friends, community and nation, but also for all other individuals, families, communities, nations, the entire world, the cosmos.

IV. Basic principles

1. Because freedom is of the essence of being human, every person is free to exercise and develop every capacity, so long as it does not infringe on the rights of other persons or express a lack of due respect for things living or non-living. In addition, human freedom should be exercised in such a way as to enhance both the freedom of all humans and due respect for all things, living and non-living.

2. Because of their inherent equal dignity, all humans should always be treated as ends, never as mere means. In addition, all humans in every encounter with others should strive to enhance to the fullest the intrinsic dignity of all involved.

3. Although humans have greater intrinsic value than non-humans, all such things, living and non-living, do possess intrinsic value simply because of their existence and, as such, are to be treated with due respect. In addition, all humans in every encounter with non-humans, living and non-living, should strive to respect them to the fullest of their intrinsic value.

4. As humans necessarily seek ever more truth, so too they seek to unite themselves, that is, their "selves," with what they perceive as the good: in brief, they love. Usually this "self" is expanded/transcended to include their own family and friends, seeking the good for them. In addition, as with the Golden Rule, this loving/loved "self" needs to continue its natural expansion/transcendence to embrace the community, nation, world, and cosmos.

5. Thus true human love is authentic self-love and other-love co-relatively linked in such a way that ultimately it is drawn to become all-inclusive. This expansive and inclusive nature of love should be recognized as an active principle in personal and global interaction.

6. Those who hold responsibility for others are obliged to help those for whom they hold responsibility. In addition, the Golden Rule implies: If we were in serious difficulty wherein we could not help ourselves, we would want those who could help us to do so, even if they held no responsibility for us; therefore we should help others in serious difficulty who cannot help themselves, even though we hold no responsibility for them.

7. Because all humans are equally entitled to hold their religion or belief – i.e., their explanation of the ultimate meaning of life and how to live accordingly – as true, every human's religion or belief should be granted its due freedom and respect.

8. In addition, dialogue – i.e., conversation whose primary aim is to learn from the other – is a necessary means whereby women and men learn to respect the other, ceaselessly to expand and deepen their own explanation of the meaning of life, and to develop an ever broadening consensus whereby men and women can live together on this globe in an authentically human manner.

V. MIDDLE PRINCIPLES

The following "Middle Ethical Principles" are in fact those which underlie the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, formally approved by almost every nation in the world.

1. Legal Rights/Responsibilities:

Because all humans have an inherent equal dignity, all should be treated equally before the law and provided with its equal protection. At the same time, all individuals and communities should follow all just laws, obeying not only the letter but most especially the spirit.

2. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Conscience and Religion or Belief:

Because humans are thinking, and therefore essentially free-deciding beings, all have the right to freedom of thought, speech, conscience and religion or belief. At the same time, all humans should exercise their rights of freedom of thought, speech, conscience and religion or belief in ways that will respect themselves and all others and strive to produce maximum benefit, broadly understood, for both themselves and their fellow humans.

3. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Speech and Information:

Because humans are thinking beings with the ability to perceive reality and express it, all individuals and communities have both the right and the responsibility, as far as possible, to learn the truth and express it honestly. At the same time everyone should avoid cover-ups, distortions, manipulations of others and inappropriate intrusions into personal privacy; this freedom and responsibility is especially true of the mass media, artists, scientists, politicians and religious leaders.

4. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Participation in All Decision-making Affecting Oneself or Those for Whom One Is Responsible:

Because humans are free-deciding beings, all adults have the right to a voice, direct or indirect, in all decisions that affect them, including a meaningful participation in choosing their leaders and holding them accountable, as well as the right of equal access to all leadership positions for which their talents qualify them. At the same time, all humans should strive to exercise their right, and obligation, to participate in self-governance as to produce maximum benefit, widely understood, for both themselves and their fellow humans.

5. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning the Relationship between Women and Men:

Because women and men are inherently equal and all men and women have an equal right to the full development of all their talents as well as the freedom to marry, with equal rights for all women and men in living out or dissolving marriage. At the same time, all men and women should act toward each other outside of and within marriage in ways that will respect the intrinsic dignity, equality, freedom and responsibilities of themselves and others

6. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Property:

Because humans are free, bodily and social in nature, all individual humans and communities have the right to own property of various sorts. At the same time, society should be so organized that property will be dealt with respectfully, striving to produce maximum benefit not only for the owners but also for their fellow humans, as well as for the world at large.

7. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Work and Leisure:

Because to lead an authentic human life all humans should normally have both meaningful work and recreative leisure, individuals and communities should strive to organize society so as to provide these two dimensions of an authentic human life both for themselves and all the members of their communities. At the same time, all individuals have an obligation to work appropriately for their recompense, and, with all communities, to strive for ever more creative work and re-creative leisure for themselves, their communities, and other individuals and communities.

8. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Children and Education:

Children are first of all not responsible for their coming into existence or for their socialization and education; their parents are. Where for whatever reason they fail, the wider community, relatives and civil community, have an obligation to provide the most humane care possible, physical, mental, moral/spiritual and social, for children.

Because humans can become authentically human only through education in the broad sense, and today increasingly can flourish only

with extensive education in the formal sense, all individuals and communities should strive to provide an education for all children and adult women and men which is directed to the full development of the human person, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the promotion of understanding, dialogue and friendship among all humans – regardless of racial, ethnic, religious, belief, sexual or other differences – and respect for the earth.

At the same time, all individuals and communities have the obligation to contribute appropriately to providing the means necessary for this education for themselves and their communities, and beyond that to strive to provide the same for all humans.

9. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Peace:

Because peace as both the absence of violence and the presence of justice for all humans is the necessary condition for the complete development of the full humanity of all humans, individually and communally, all individuals and communities should strive constantly to further the growth of peace on all levels, personal, interpersonal, local, regional, national and international, granting that

a) the necessary basis of peace is justice for all concerned;

b) violence is to be vigorously avoided, being resorted to only when its absence would cause a greater evil;

c) when peace is ruptured, all efforts should be bent to its rapid restoration – on the necessary basis of justice for all.

At the same time, it should be recognized that peace, like liberty, is a positive value which should be constantly cultivated, and therefore all individuals and communities should make the necessary prior efforts not only to avoid its break-down but also to strengthen its steady development and growth.

10. Rights/Responsibilities Concerning Peace:

Because things, living and non-living, have an intrinsic value simply because of their existence, and also because humans cannot develop fully as humans, or even survive, if the environment is severely damaged, all individuals and communities should respect the ecosphere within which "we all live, move and have our being," and act so that

a) nothing, living or non-living, will be destroyed in its natural form except when used for some greater good, as, for example, the use of plants/animals for food;

b) if at all possible, only replaceable material will be destroyed in its natural form.

At the same time, all individuals and communities should constantly be vigilant to protect our fragile universe, particularly from the exploding human population and increasing technological possibilities which threaten it in an ever expanding fashion.

Last revised: 17 September 1998

8. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

WHEREAS human beings are led to affirm that there is more to life than life itself by inspiration human and divine;

WHEREAS the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10, 1948 bases itself on the former;

WHEREAS any exclusion of the world's religions as positive resources for human rights is obnoxious to the evidence of daily life;

WHEREAS the various communities constituting the peoples of the world must exchange not only ideas but also ideals;

WHEREAS religions ideally urge human beings to live in a just society and not just in any society;

WHEREAS one must not idealize the actual but strive to realize the ideal;

WHEREAS not to compensate victims of imperialism, racism, casteism and sexism is itself imperialist, racist, casteist and sexist;

WHEREAS rights are independent of duties in their protection but integrally related to them in conception and execution;

WHEREAS human rights are intended to secure peace, freedom, equality and justice – and to mitigate departures therefrom – when these come in conflict or the rights themselves;

Now, therefore, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Faculty of Religious Studies, at McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

The signatories to this Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the World's Religions, as legatees of the religious heritage of humanity do hereby propose the following as the common standard of achievement for the followers of all religions or none, on the 10th day of December, 1998, as all people are brothers and sisters on the face of the earth.

Article 1

All human beings have the right to be treated as human beings and have the duty to treat everyone as a human being.

Article 2

Everyone has the right to freedom from violence, in any of its forms, individual or collective; whether based on race, religion, gender, caste or class, or arising from any other cause.

Article 3

1. Everyone has the right to food.

2. Everyone has the right to life, longevity and liveability and the right to food, clothing and shelter to sustain them.

3. Everyone has the duty to support and sustain life, longevity and liveability of all.

Article 4

1. No one shall be subjected to slavery or servitude, forced labour, bonded labour or child labour. Slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all its forms.

2. No one shall subject anyone to slavery or servitude in any of its forms.

Article 5

1. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, inflicted either physically or mentally, whether on secular or religious grounds, inside the home or outside it.

2. No one shall subject anybody to such treatment.

Article 6

1. Everyone has a right to recognition everywhere as a person before law; and by everyone everywhere as a human being deserving humane treatment, even when law and order has broken down.

2. Everyone has the duty to treat everyone else as a human being both in the eyes of law and one's own.

Article 7

All are equal before law and entitled to equal protection before law without any discrimination on grounds of race, religion, caste, class, sex and sexual orientation. It is the right of everyone to be so treated and the duty of everyone to so treat others.

Article 8

Everybody has the duty to prevent the perpetuation of historical, social, economic, cultural and other wrongs.

Article 9

1. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile by the state or by anyone else. The attempt to proselytize against the will of the person shall amount to arbitrary detention, so also the detention, against their will, of teenage children by the parents, and among spouses.

2. It is the duty of everyone to secure everyone's liberty.

Article 10

Everybody has the right to public trial in the face of criminal charges and it is the duty of the state to ensure it. Everyone who cannot afford a lawyer must be provided one by the state.

Article 11

Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty.

Article 12

1. Everyone has the right to privacy. This right includes the right not to be subjected to arbitrary interference with one's privacy; of one's own, or of one's family, home or correspondence.

2. Everyone has the right to one's good name.

3. It is the duty of everyone to protect the privacy and reputation of everyone else.

4. Everyone has the right not to have one's religion denigrated in the media or the academia.

5. It is the duty of the follower of every religion to ensure that no religion is denigrated in the media or the academia.

Article 13

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence anywhere in the world.

2. Everyone has the duty to abide by the laws and regulations applicable in that part of the world.

Article 14

Everyone has the right to seek and secure asylum in any country from any form of persecution, religious or otherwise, and the right not to be deported. It is the duty of every country to provide such asylum.

Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.

2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of one's nationality nor denied the right to change one's nationality.

3. Everyone has the duty to promote the emergence of a global constitutional order.

Article 16

1. Everyone has the right to marriage.

2. Members of a family have the right to retain and practice their own religion or beliefs.

3. Everyone has the right to raise a family.

4. Everybody has the right to renounce the world and join a monastery, provided that one shall do so after making adequate arrangement for one's dependents.

5. Marriage and monasticism are two of the most successful institutional innovations of humanity and are entitled to protection by the society and the state.

6. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. It is the duty of everyone to extend special consideration to mothers and children.

7. Everyone shall promote the outlook that the entire world constitutes an extended family.

Article 17

1. Everybody has the right to own property, alone as well as in association with others. An association also has a similar right to own property.

2. Everyone has a right not to be deprived of property arbitrarily. It is the duty of everyone not to deprive others of their property arbitrarily. Property shall be understood to mean material as well as intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual property.

3. Everyone has the duty not to deprive anyone of their property or appropriate it in an unauthorized manner.

Article 18

1. There shall be no compulsion in religion. It is a matter of choice.

2. Everyone has the right to retain one's religion and to change one's religion.

3. Everyone has the duty to promote peace and tolerance among different religions and ideologies.

Article 19

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, where the term expression includes the language one speaks, the food one eats; the clothes one wears; the religion one practices and professes, provided that one conforms generally to the accustomed rules of decorum recognized in the neighbourhood.

2. It is the duty of everyone to ensure that everyone enjoys such freedom.

3. Children have the right to express themselves freely in all mat-
ters affecting the child, to which it is the duty of their caretakers to
give due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the
child.

Article 20

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of assembly and association,
and the duty to do so peacefully.

2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association, or to leave
one without due process.

Article 21

1. Everybody over the age of eighteen has the right to vote, to elect
or be elected and thus to take part in the government or gover-
nance of the country, directly or indirectly.

2. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in one's
country and the duty to provide such access.

3. It is the duty of everyone to participate in the political process.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has a right to social security and
a duty to contribute to it.

Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to same pay for same work and a duty
to offer same pay for same work.

2. Everyone has the right for just remuneration for one's work and
the duty to justly recompense for work done.

3. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the
protection of one's interests.

4. Everyone has the right not to join a trade union.

Article 24

1. Everyone has the right to work and to rest, including the right to support while seeking work and the right to periodic holidays with pay.

2. The right to rest extends to the earth.

Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to health and to universal medical insurance. It is the duty of the state or society to provide it.

2. Every child has the right to a childhood free from violence and it is the duty of the parents to provide it.

Article 26

Everyone has the right to free education and the right to equality of opportunity for any form of education involving restricted enrollment.

Article 27

1. Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community and the right to freely contribute to it.

2. Everyone has the right to share scientific advances and its benefits and the duty to disseminate them, and wherever possible to contribute to such advances.

3. Everyone has the right to the protection of their cultural heritage. It is the duty of everyone to protect and enrich everyone's heritage, including one's own.

Article 28

Everyone has the right to socio-economic and political order at a global, national, regional and local level which enables the realization of social, political, economic, racial and gender justice and the duty to give precedence to universal, national, regional and local interests in that order.

Article 29

1. One is duty-bound, when asserting one's rights, to take the rights of other human beings; of past, present and future generations, the rights of humanity, and the rights of nature and the earth into account.

2. One is duty-bound, when asserting one's rights, to prefer non-violence over violence.

Article 30

1. Everyone has the right to require the formation of a supervisory committee within one's community, defined religiously or otherwise, to monitor the implementation of the articles of this Declaration; and to serve on it and present one's case before such a committee.

2. It is everyone's duty to ensure that such a committee satisfactorily supervises the implementation of these articles.

Last revised: March 2000

9. UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE CHARTER (2000)

The United Religions Initiative (URI) is a growing global community dedicated to promoting enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, ending religiously motivated violence and creating cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.

Working on all continents and across continents, people from different religions, spiritual expressions and indigenous traditions are creating unprecedented levels of enduring global cooperation. Today, at its birth, people's hopes are rising with visions of a better world. It is a world where the values and teachings of the great wisdom traditions guide people's service, where people respect one another's beliefs, and where the resourcefulness and passion of people working together bring healing and a more hopeful future to the Earth community. The URI, in time, aspires to have the visibility and stature of the United Nations.

Since 1996, thousands of people have shared their visions and worked together to create the URI. It is an organization for global good rooted in shared spiritual values. People from many different cultures and perspectives are working to create an organization that is inclusive, non-hierarchical and decentralized; one that enhances cooperation, autonomy and individual opportunity. This co-creative work offered by people of many cultures is producing a unique organization composed of self-organizing groups which operate locally and are connected globally.

URI's Charter has been spoken into being by a myriad of voices from around the world. Its essential spirit, values and vision are expressed in the Preamble, Purpose and Principles. Together, they inspire, ground and guide all URI activity.

Preamble – the call that inspires us to create the URI now and continue to create it everyday;

Purpose – the statement that draws us together in common cause;

Principles – the fundamental beliefs that guide our structure, decisions and content;

PREAMBLE

We, people of diverse religions, spiritual expressions and indigenous traditions throughout the world, hereby establish the United Religions Initiative to promote enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.

We respect the uniqueness of each tradition, and differences of practice or belief.

We value voices that respect others, and believe that sharing our values and wisdom can lead us to act for the good of all.

We believe that our religious, spiritual lives, rather than dividing us, guide us to build community and respect for one another.

Therefore, as interdependent people rooted in our traditions, we now unite for the benefit of our Earth community.

We unite to build cultures of peace and justice.

We unite to heal and protect the Earth.

We unite to build safe places for conflict resolution, healing and reconciliation.

We unite to support freedom of religion and spiritual expression, and the rights of all individuals and peoples as set forth in international law.

We unite in responsible cooperative action to bring the wisdom and values of our religions, spiritual expressions and indigenous traditions to bear on the economic, environmental, political and social challenges facing our Earth community.

We unite to provide a global opportunity for participation by all people, especially by those whose voices are not often heard.

We unite to celebrate the joy of blessings and the light of wisdom in both movement and stillness.

We unite to use our combined resources only for nonviolent, compassionate action, to awaken to our deepest truths, and to manifest love and justice among all life in our Earth community.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the United Religions Initiative is to promote enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.

PRINCIPLES

1. The URI is a bridge-building organization, not a religion.

2. We respect the sacred wisdom of each religion, spiritual expression and indigenous tradition.

3. We respect the differences among religions, spiritual expressions and indigenous traditions

4. We encourage our members to deepen their roots in their own tradition.

5. We listen and speak with respect to deepen mutual understanding and trust.

6. We give and receive hospitality.

7. We seek and welcome the gift of diversity and model practices that do not discriminate.

8. We practice equitable participation of women and men in all aspects of the URI.

9. We practice healing and reconciliation to resolve conflict without resorting to violence.

10. We act from sound ecological practices to protect and preserve the Earth for both present and future generations.

11. We seek and offer cooperation with other interfaith efforts.

12. We welcome as members all individuals, organizations and associations who subscribe to the Preamble, Purpose and Principles.

13. We have the authority to make decisions at the most local level that includes all the relevant and affected parties.

14. We have the right to organize in any manner, at any scale, in any area, and around any issue or activity which is relevant to and consistent with the Preamble, Purpose and Principles.

15. Our deliberations and decisions shall be made at every level by bodies and methods that fairly represent the diversity of affected interests and are not dominated by any.

16. We (each part of the URI) shall relinquish only such autonomy and resources as are essential to the pursuit of the Preamble, Purpose and Principles.

17. We have the responsibility to develop financial and other resources to meet the needs of our part, and to share financial and other resources to help meet the needs of other parts.

18. We maintain the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct, prudent use of resources, and fair and accurate disclosure of information.

19. We are committed to organizational learning and adaptation.

20. We honor the richness and diversity of all languages and the right and responsibility of participants to translate and interpret the Charter, Articles, Bylaws and related documents in accordance with the Preamble, Purpose and Principles, and the spirit of the United Religions Initiative.

21. Members of the URI shall not be coerced to participate in any ritual or be proselytized.

10. RELIGION AND VIOLENCE
A World Council of Churches conference
Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida, USA
8–12 February 2002

We, members of five religious traditions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism – came together with deep concern about the growing violence in the world today. Our own traditions give us our ethical values and offer us a vision of peaceful co-existence predicated upon justice and harmony with the earth. We are conscious of the need to be self-critical and to go beyond a discourse shaped by narrow political, national, economic or military objectives. We endeavor to go beyond religious idealism and explore concrete modes of expression and action.

FACES OF VIOLENCE

In attempting to identify the many faces of violence, we are conscious of the complexity of the phenomenon and the need to develop deeper understandings of it. Identifying the different faces of violence will help us to discover relevant and effective ways of overcoming them. In accounting for the sources of violence, some of our traditions see it as an integral part of nature, while others locate it in human greed, hatred, and ignorance.

The following are some of the faces of violence that we identify:

Physical Violence – Warfare, the use of brute force such as battering and domestic abuse, terrorism by individuals, groups or states.

Political Violence – Such as when laws are enacted that militate against the recognition of each person's dignity, worth and equality with another.

State-sponsored Violence – Such as extra judicial killings, torture, and detention/incarceration without due legal process.

Structural Violence – Violence that is built into social, political, and economic structures such as caste, patriarchy, etc.

Ecological Violence – The destruction of environment resulting from irresponsible use of natural resources.

Liberative Violence – When individuals or groups – as a last resort – seek recourse to violence to respond to the above listed forms of violence and achieve liberation from oppression.

The relation between religion and violence

Religious traditions can be resources for building peace. At the same time, religious communities often play a role in advocating and justifying violence. In the face of structural violence, religious traditions should help us to overcome the lust for power, control, and possession of material goods that are the driving impulses of violence and violent systems.

The following are some of the ways in which we characterize the relationship between violence and religion:

Silence: Religious communities often maintain silence in the face of violence. There are many reasons for such silence, including, the concern for the survival of their own communities and structures. Some may also see their role helping their adherents feel satisfied in the status quo and in their own material prosperity without a concern for the marginalized.

Sanctification: Religious communities justify the use of violence by the state or extra state entities or by other agencies. Examples of this would be when a religious tradition attaches itself to the militaristic objectives of the state and the textual/canonical legitimization of violence against women.

Expansion: Religious communities use violence for purposes of spreading themselves or of ensuring their own growth.

Images of God: Some religious traditions have violent images of the Divine, which may have problematic implications for the self-understanding of their believers.

Images of Self: Religious traditions promote violence by framing the worth of their adherents in terms of the – lesser worth – of others.

While the above list exposes some of the problematic aspects of the relationship between religion and violence, the following point to constructive forms of engagement:

Unmasking/Opposing: Religious communities have played a role in opposing violence both within their own community and when others are injured.

Models of Non-Violence: Each religious tradition has also had significant individuals and groups that have lived lives testifying to the peaceful impulses in religion.

Limiting Violence: Religions have often played a role in checking the levels of violence or humanizing it. In most of our traditions, limited use of violence is permitted for the defense of good but with the understanding that we are falling short of the ideal and thus in need of forgiveness.

Challenges to religions by violence

Our discussion identified some of the challenges that our religious traditions face in our common struggle to overcome violence.

Critique: To engage in an ongoing critique, from within our own traditions, of our understandings of mission, chosenness, salvation, and the relationship between religion and land. Our traditions offer alternative understandings that promote wholeness, justice for all people, and the recognition of our responsibility towards all forms of life.

Means and Ends: To challenge our own communities on the link between violent means and non-violent ends and the way violent means compromise the value of human life and in the long run promote a culture of violence.

Conversation, Encounter, and Solidarity: To move towards greater and deeper conversation, encounter and solidarity with people of other traditions. In our solidarity with the victims of violence and injustice, the strength and value of our traditions become manifest.

Non-violence as Resistance: To promote discourse on peace that deals with injustice, and to practice non-violence as an active mode of resistance.

Countering Extremism: To counter the disproportionate voices and influences of extremists within and outside the religious traditions.

Healing of Memories: Many of us have painful memories of victimhood. These memories at times obscure the reality that victims can themselves become victimizers. We are challenged to deal with those memories and try to find other sources for a more positive identity.

A Shared commitment to peace

We invite our religious traditions to:

– Collectively acknowledge that violence is dehumanizing to the perpetrator, victim and bystander.

– Revisit the multiplicity of understandings within the core of our traditions and formulate new understandings that lead to a more inclusive self-identity.

– Provide a moral critique of the structures of power within and outside of our traditions.

– Engage in improving a religious literacy that allows for more informed responses and helps to create a culture of mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance.

– Create educational settings in which one discovers that the stories and prophetic figures of other traditions sensitize one to ways of reshaping and renewing one's own tradition.

– Facilitate meaningful healing of past memories in a framework of understanding, which may include compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation.

– Help recover creative alternatives to violence and offer opportunities for the use of non-violence as a mode of conflict transformation.

11. RABBIS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
PRINCIPLES OF FAITH 2003

What we pray for

We, members of Israeli Rabbis For Human Rights, affirm in our daily prayers and blessings that:

G-d and human beings

G-d is sovereign over the universe. All humankind is created in G-d's image and is an active partner with G-d in perfecting the world. (*Shabbat* 10a, 119b).

Abraham

When G-d chose our father Abraham, G-d promised,

"All the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you" (Genesis 12:2)

and that he would instruct his children and posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right" (Genesis 18:19). As descendants of Abraham, we must fulfill his legacy of

"compassion, generosity and sensitivity" (*Yevamot* 79b)

In accordance with our Torah tradition, the world will declare in admiration,

"what great nation has laws and rules as just as all this Teaching that I set before you this day?" (Deuteronomy 4:8).

Torah

The essence of *Torah*, as summarized by Hillel:

"What is hateful to you, do not do to others",

reflects the historic experience and ethical consciousness of the Jewish people. Both this historic experience and ethical consciousness must sensitize us to defend the right of all who dwell among us.

"When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens: you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your G-d" (Leviticus 19:33–34).

KIDDUSH HASHEM

Exemplary conduct of Israel is a sanctification of G-d's name (*Kiddush HaShem*): shameful conduct is a defamation of G-d's name (*Chilul HaShem*).

PRESERVING LIFE

G-d's name is sanctified through the respect we show for the human worth and dignity of all G-d's creatures.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Our *Mishnah* teaches:

"Therefore was Adam created single, to teach you that the destruction of any person's life is tantamount to destroying a whole world and the preservation of a single life is tantamount to preserving a whole world" (*Sanhedrin* 4:5).

And again in the words of Rabbi Akiva:

"Beloved is Man who was created in (G-d's) image" (*Pirkei Avot* 3:18).

Our ideal state being when

"We shall beat our swords into plowshares . . ." (Isaiah 2)

and with our concern for human dignity and the preservation of life, be they Jews or Arabs, we are deeply disturbed by and seek to remove excesses and abuses such as:

* Expropriation of land.
* Uprooting of trees.

* Demolition of homes.
* Torture through the use of "moderate physical or psychological pressure".
* Coercion and torture to extract confession or to incriminate others.
* Bullying and humiliating, which is demoralizing both to perpetrator and victim: and we wish to save our children from the temptation to these vices.
* The exercise of double standards by, or the granting of relative immunity to those who wield political or military power and authority, in the pursuit of criminal proceedings in general, through delay, evasion, and protection.
* Shooting to kill when life is not in immediate danger.
* Collective punishment of "children for the sins of their parents" and "parents for the sins of their children".
* Imprisonment without trial in administrative detention.
* Removing the rights of residence through confiscation of identity cards.
* Sale of weapons to aggressive regimes.
* Undercover killings.

As Rabbis of Human Rights in Israel, we are committed to the principles stated in Israel's Declaration of Independence

"to foster the development of the country for the benefit of all the inhabitants, based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel: to ensure complete quality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race, and sex: to guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; to guard the holy places of all religions: and to be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the UN."

We pray to bring nearer the day for the fulfillment of the prophecies

"The remnant of Israel will not act iniquitously, nor speak falsely; neither shall there by found in their mouths the tongue of deceit" (Zephaniah 3:13)

"When nation will not lift up sword against nation, and no longer train for war." (Isaiah 2)

"Who is mighty? One who transforms one's enemy into one's friend". (*Avot D'Rabbi Natan* 23)

[Used by permission.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acharya, Amitav, "Human security: East versus West", *International Journal*, 65, 3 (2001), pp. 442–60.

Adams, Vincanne, "Suffering the winds of Lhasa: Politicized bodies, human rights, cultural difference and humanism in Tibet", in John Xavier Inda and Renato Rosaldo (eds), *The Anthropology of Globalization: A reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, pp. 381–409.

Adelman, Howard and Astri Suhrke (eds), *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda crisis from Uganda to Zaire*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999.

African Rights, *Rwanda: Death, despair and defiance*. London: African Rights, 1995 (rev. ed).

Agus, Ronald, *The Binding of Isaac and Messiah: Law, martyrdom, and deliverance in early rabbinic religiosity*. Albany: State University Press of New York, 1989.

Ahmad, Aijaz, "The war against the Muslims", in Gaerlan and Stankovitch, 2000, pp. 21–37.

——, "Class and colony in Mindanao", in Gaerlan and Stankovitch, 2000, pp. 1–19.

An-Na'im, Abdullahi A., "Muslims must realise there is nothing magical about the concept of human rights: Interview with Abdullahi An-Na'im", in Noor, 2002, pp. 5–13.

——, "Islamic fundamentalism and social change: Neither the 'end of history' nor a 'clash of civilizations'", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, 2003, pp. 25–48.

Appleby, R. Scott, "Religions, human rights and social change", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, 2003, pp. 197–229.

Aram I, "Report of the Moderator", *The Ecumenical Review*, 53, 2, (April 2001), pp. 229–41.

Ariarajah, S. Wesley, *The Bible and Peoples of Other Faiths*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989.

Arinze, Francis Cardinal, "Interreligious Dialogue", *Silsilah*, 2 (Jan. 1988), pp. 1–5.

Arslan, Amir Shakib, *Our Decline: Its causes and remedies*. Lahore: Ashraf, 1944. New revised edition, Islamic Book Trust, 2004.

Assefa, Hizkias, "Peace and reconciliation as a paradigm: A philosophy of peace and its implications for conflict, governance and economic growth in Africa", in Assefa and Wachira, 1996, pp. 42–71.

——, "The meaning of reconciliation", in *People Building Peace*, 1999, pp. 37–45.

—— and George Wachira (eds), *Peacemaking and Democratisation in Africa: Theoretical perspectives and Church initiatives*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1996.

Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, *India Wins Freedom: An autobiographical narrative*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1988.

Bailey, Sydney D. (ed), *Human Rights and Responsibilities in Britain and Ireland: A Christian perspective*. Hampshire and London: Macmillan, 1988.

Bainton, Roland, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979.

Bakhuizen van den Brink, Jan Nicolaas, *De Nederlandsche Belijdenisgeschriften*. Amsterdam: Bolland, 1976.

Baum, Gregory, and Harold Wells (eds), *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the churches*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books/Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997.

Beneria, Lourdes, *Gender, Development and Globalization: Economics as if all people mattered*. New York and London: Routledge, 2003.

Bernardo, Allan B.I., and Carmela D. Ortigas (eds), *Building Peace: Essays on psychology and the culture of peace*. Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2000.

Blanke, Fritz, *Missionsprobleme des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*. Zürich and Stuttgart: Zwingli Verlag, 1966.

Bloom, Irene, J. Paul Martin and Wayne L. Proudfoot (eds), *Religious Diversity and Human Rights*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Boulding, Elise, "States, boundaries, and environmental security", in Sandole and Van der Merwe, 1993, pp. 194–208.

Briones, Adelfo V., "The Cantomanyog Zone of Peace: The role of the grassroots Church in local peacemaking", *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 33, 2 (December 2000), pp. 77–111.

Broome, Benjamin, "Managing differences in conflict resolution: The role of relational empathy", in Sandole and Van der Merwe, 1993, pp. 97–111.

Brundige, Elizabeth, Winter King, Priyneha Vahila, Stephen Vladeck and Xiang Yuan, "Indonesian Human Rights Abuses in West Papua: Application of the law of genocide to the history of Indonesian control", published by the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic, Yale Law School, November 2003 (www.law.yale.edu/outside/html/Public_Affairs/426/westpapuahrights.pdf).

Brzezinski, Zbigniew, *Out of Control: Global turmoil on the eve of the twenty-first century*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993.

Budiardjo, Carmel, and Liem Soei Liong, *West Papua: The obliteration of a people*. London: TAPOL, 1988 (3rd revised ed).

Burton, John W., *Conflict Resolution: Human needs theory*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.
——, "Human needs versus societal needs", in Roger A. Coate and Jerel A. Rosati (eds), *The Power of Human Needs in World Society*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988, pp. 34–58.

Cacayan, Alberto, and Agnes N. Miclat, *Let Your Heart Be Bold: A reflection paper on Church-workers and national security*. Hong Kong: Asian Center for the Progress of Peoples, 1991.

Cagoco-Guiam, Rufa, "Telling the truth of the 'Other': Images of Islam and Muslims in the Philippines", in Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, 2000, pp. 62–80.

Canales, Manuel, Samuel Palma and Hugo Villela, *En Tierra Extraña II: Para una sociología de la religiosidad popular Protestante*. Santiago de Chile: Amerinda, 1991.

Carroll, John J., *Forgiving or Forgetting? Churches and the transition to democracy in the Philippines*. Quezon City: Institute on Church and Social Issues, Ateneo de Manila University, 1999 (PULSO Monograph no. 20).

Cauquelin, Josiane, Paul Lim and Birgit Mayer-König (eds), *Asian Values: An encounter with diversity*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998.

Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (ed), *The Media and Peace Reporting: Perspectives on media and peace reportage*. Pasig City: Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process and the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, 2000.

Chapple, Christopher Key, *Nonviolence to Animals, Earth, and Self in Asian Traditions*. Albany: State University of New York, 1993.

Clements, Keith W., *Faith on the Frontier: A life of J.H. Oldham*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark/Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1999.
——, "Human needs versus societal needs", in Roger A. Coate and Jerel A. Rosati (eds), *The Power of Human Needs in World Society*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988, pp. 34–58.

Cooke, Miriam, and Bruce B. Lawrence, "Muslim women between human rights and Islamic norms", in Bloom et al., 1996, pp. 313–31.

Committee for Initiative on Kashmir, *India's Kashmir War*. New Delhi: Committee for Initiative on Kashmir, 1990.

Coronel-Ferrer, Miriam, *Peace-building and Mediation in the Philippines*, Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Occasional Papers, Series No. 94–3. Quezon City: Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, 1994.

—— (ed), *Civil Society Making Civil Society, Philippine Democracy Agenda: Volume 3*. Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, University of the Philippines, 1997.

—— (ed), *Peace Matters: A Philippine peace compendiu*m. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and University of the Philippines Press, 1997.

Coste, R., "Krieg", in Karl Rahner (ed), *Herders Theologisches Taschenlexicon*, IV. Freiburg in Breisgau: Herderbücherei, 1992, pp. 256–60.

Dalai Lama, His Holiness the, *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for the new Millennium*. London: Abacus, 2002.

——, and Howard C. Cutler, *The Art of Happiness*. London: Coronet Books, 1998.

D'Ambra, Sebastiano, *Life in Dialogue: Pathways to inter-religious dialogue and the vision-experience of the Islamo-Christian Silsilah Dialogue Movement*. Zamboanga City: Silsilah Publications, 1991.

Das, Veena, "The tortured psyche: An ode to the rootless Hindu", *The Thatched Patio*, No. 9/86. Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 1986.

David, Kumar, and Santasilan Kadirgamar (eds), *Ethnicity: Identity, conflict and crisis*. Hong Kong: Arena Press, 1989.

D'Epinay, Christian Lalive, *Haven of the Masses: A study of the Pentecostal movement in Chile*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1969.

De Bary, William Theodore (ed), *Sources of Indian Tradition*. New York: Colombia University Press, 1988.

De Hartog, Jan, *The Peaceable Kingdom*. New York: Atheneum, 1972.

Des Forges, Alison, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999.

Dreyfus, Georges, "Meditation as ethical activity", *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 2 (1995) (http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/2/dreyfus.html).

Ehrenström, Nils, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work, 1925–1948", Rouse and Neill, 1954, pp. 545–98.

El Fadl, Khaled Abou, "The place of tolerance in Islam: On reading the *Qur'an* – and misreading it", *Boston Review*, 26, 6 (Dec. 2001–Jan. 2002) (bostonreview.net/ BR26.6/elfadl.html).

El Saadawi, Nawal, "The right to life", in Van der Heijden and Tahzib-Lie, 1998, pp. 268–73.

Ellis, Stephen, and Gerrie ter Haar, *Worlds of Power: Religious thought and political prac-tice in Africa*. London: Hurst/New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Elton, Geoffrey R., *Reformation Europe 1517–1559*. Glasgow: Collins Sons, 1978.

Emmer, Pieter C., *De Nederlandse slavenhandel 1500–1850*. Amsterdam and Antwerp: Arbeiderspers, 2003.

Engineer, Asghar Ali, "Hindu-Muslim relations in contemporary India", in David and Kadirgamar, 1989, pp. 163–80.

—— (ed), *Babri-Masjid Ramjanabhoomi Controversy*. Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1990.

——, "The compatibility of Islam, secularism and modernity: Interview with Asghar Ali Engineer", in Noor, 2002, pp. 29–34.

Eskidjian, Salpy, and Sarah Estabrooks (eds), *Overcoming Violence: WCC statements and actions 1994–2000*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2000.

Esposito, John L., *Unholy War: Terror in the name of Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Ethics of Tibet (trans. Alex Wayman). Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.

Falconer, Alan D., and Joseph Liechty (eds), *Reconciling Memories*. Dublin: Columba Press, 1998.

Fernandes, Rubem, "Governo das almas: As denominaçoes Evangelicas no grande Rio", *Revista do Rio de Janeiro*, 1,2 (1993), pp. 8–22.

Flax, Jane, "Post-modernism and gender relations in feminist theory", in Linda Nicholson (ed), *Feminism/Post-Modernism*, New York: Routledge, 1990, pp. 621–43.

Friesen, Duane K., *Christian Peacemaking and International Conflict: A realist pacifist perspective*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1986.

Fung, Raymond, *The Isaiah Vision: An ecumenical strategy for congregational evangelism*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1992.

Gaerlan, Kristina, and Mara Stankovitch (eds), *Rebels, Warlords and Ulama: A reader on Muslim separatism and the war in southern Philippines*. Quezon City: Institute for Popular Democracy, 2000.

Galtung, Johan, "Violence, peace and peace research", *Journal of Peace Research*, 6, 3 (1969), pp. 167–91.

——, "Cultural violence", *Journal of Peace Research*, 27, 3 (1990), pp. 291–305.

Gan Teik Chee, "Effects of the arms race on the Third World", in *The Arms Race: Humanity in Crisis*, Penang: Aliran, 1984.

Gandhi, Mohandas, *All Men Are Brothers* (Krishna Kripalani ed). New York: Continuum, 1980.

Gandhi, Rajmohan, *Eight Lives: A study of the Hindu-Muslim encounter*. New Delhi: Roli, 1986.

Garcia, Ed, *A Distant Peace: Human rights and people's participation in conflict resolution*. Manila: National Book Store University of the Philippines Press, 1991.

Gaspar, Karl M., "Abante, Atras, Abante: Patterns of the Mindanao Catholic Church's involvement in contemporary social issues", in Coronel-Ferrer, 1997, pp. 149–70.

——, Elpidio A. Lapad and Ailynne J. Maravillas (eds), *Mapagpakamalinawon: A reader for the Mindanawon peace advocate*. Davao City: Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao and Catholic Relief Services, Philippines, 2002.

Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Washington: Basic Books, 1973.

Geisendorf, Paul-Frédéric, *Théodore de Bèze*. Geneva: Jullien, 1949.

Ghai, Yash, "Rights, duties and responsibilities", in Cauquelin et al., 1998, pp. 20–42.

Giay, Benny, "Against Indonesia: West Papuans' strategies of resistance against Indonesian political and cultural aggression in the 1980s", in Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhöffer (eds), *Violence in Indonesia*, Hamburg: Abera Verlag, 2001, pp. 129–38.

Giddens, Anthony, *Modernity and Self-identity: The self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

——, *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997 (3rd edition).

Gilligan, Carol, *In a Different Voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Giri, Ananta, *Civil Society and the Limits of Identity Politics*. Madras: Madras Institute of Development Studies, 2002.

Gomez, Jr., Hilario M., *The Moro Rebellion and the Search for Peace: A study on Christian-Muslim relations in the Philippines*. Zamboanga City: Silsilah Publications, 2000.

Gopin, Marc, "The Religious Ethics of Samuel David Luzzatto", Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1993.

——, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The future of world religions, violence and peacemaking*. New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2000.

——, *Holy War, Holy Peace: Moving the Abrahamic religions from violence to peacemaking in Israel and Palestine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Gray, Richard, *Black Christians and White Missionaries*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990.

Greenspan, Stanley, *The Growth of the Mind and the Endangered Origins of Intelligence*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1997.

Gutierrez, Eric, "Religion and politics in Muslim Mindanao", in Gaerlan and Stankovitch, 2000, pp. 145–61.

Hammarskjöld, Dag, *Markings*. London: Faber & Faber, 1964.

Hanh, Thich Nhat, *Interbeing: Fourteen guidelines for Engaged Buddhism*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1993 (rev. ed).

Hassan, Riffat, "Rights of women within Islamic communities", in Witte and Van der Vyver, 1996, pp. 361–86.

Hastings, Peter, *New Guinea: Problems and prospects*. Melbourne: Chesire, 1973.

Hennessy, Rose Mary, *Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse*. New York and London: Routledge, 1993.

Heschel, Abraham Joshua, *Israel: An echo of eternity*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1969.

Hobsbawm, Eric, "Peasants and politics", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1, 1 (1973), pp. 3–22.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, *State of Human Rights in 2001*. Lahore: Maktaba Jadeed Press, 2002.

Human Rights Watch, "Indonesia: Human rights and pro-independence actions in Papua, 1999–2000", 12, 2 (C) (May 2000), (www.hrw.org/reports/2000/papua/).

——, "Indonesia: Violence and political impasse in Papua", 13, 2 (C) (July 2001) (www.hrw.org/reports/2001/papua/).

Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Huxley, Aldous, *The Perennial Philosophy*. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

International Alert, *Emergency: Sri Lanka*. London: International Alert, 1986.

International Labour Office, *The Social Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis*, Technical Report for Discussion at the High Level Tripartite Meeting on Social Responses to the Financial Crisis in East and South East Asian Countries, Bangkok, 22–24 April 1998.

Isla, Alejandro, "Violencia y terror en las dulcas tierras del azucar", in *Identidades Nacionales Pasadas y Presentes*, La Plata: Editorial del Margen, 2001, pp. 23–52.

James, William, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: The Modern Library, 1936.

John Paul II, *The Church in Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1995.

Johnson, Warren, *The Future Is Not What It Used to Be: Returning to traditional values in an age of scarcity*. New York: Dodd, Meade, 1985.

Johnston, Douglas, and Cynthia Sampson (eds), *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Juergensmeyer, Mark, *Terror in the Mind of God: The global rise of religious violence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003 (3rd ed).

Kamsteeg, Frans, *Prophetic Pentecostalism in Chile*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

Kässman, Margot, *Overcoming Violence: The challenge to the churches in all places*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1998.

Kelman, Herbert C., "The problem-solving workshop: A social-psychological contribution to the resolution of international conflicts", *Journal of Peace Research*, 13 (1976), pp. 79–90.

——, "Israelis and Palestinians: Psychological prerequisites to mutual acceptance", *International Security*, 3, 1 (Summer 1978), pp. 162–86.

——, "Creating the conditions for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 26, 1 (March 1982), pp. 39–75.

——, "The place of ethnic identity in the development of personal identity: A challenge for the Jewish family", in Peter Y. Medding (ed), *Coping with Life and Death: Jewish families in the twentieth century*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 3–26.

Kelsay, John, and Sumner B. Twiss (eds), *Religion and Human Rights*. New York: The Project on Religion and Human Rights, 1994.

Keyes, Charles, "Millennialism, Therevada Buddhism and Thai society", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 36, 2 (1997), pp. 283–302.

Khurshid, Salman, *At Home in India: A restatement of Indian Muslims*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1986.

King-Irani, Lauri E., "Rituals of forgiveness and processes of empowerment in Lebanon", in Zartman, 2000, pp. 129–40.

Kishtainy, Khalid, "Violent and nonviolent struggle in Arab history", in Ralph E. Crow, Philip Grant and Saad E. Ibrahim (eds), *Arab Nonviolent Political Struggle in the Middle East*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990, pp. 9–24.

Kothari, Rajni, "Ethnicity", in David and Kadirgamar, 1989, pp. 15–44.

Kpobi, David Nii Anum, *Mission in Chains: The life, theology and ministry of the ex-slave Jacobus E.J. Capitein (1717–1747) with a translation of his major publications.* Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1993.

Kraft, Kenneth (ed), *Inner Peace, World Peace: Essays on Buddhism and nonviolence.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.

Lande, Carl H., "Collaboration and reconciliation in a no-fault polity: A Philippine approach to conflict management", *Solidarity*, 143–144, (July-December 1994), pp. 125–37.

LaRousse, William, *Walking Together Seeking Peace: The local Church of Mindanao-Sulu journeying in dialogue with the Muslim community (1965–2000).* Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 2001.

Latourette, Kenneth Scott, "Ecumenical bearings of the missionary movement and the International Missionary Council", in Rouse and Neill, 1954, pp. 353–402.

Lederach, John Paul, *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies.* Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998.

Lederach, Paul M., *The Third Way.* Scottdale: Herald Press, 1980.

Ledesma, Antonio, Hamid Barra and Hilario Gomez, Jr. (eds), *Journeying Together Towards a Culture of Peace in Mindanao: The Bishops-Ulama Forum 1996–98 (A report of the first two years).* Iligan City: Bishops-Ulama Forum Secretariat, 1999.

Lee, Zosimo, "Peace zones as Special Development Areas: A preliminary assessment", in Bernardo and Ortigas, 2000, pp. 113–21.

——, and Ma. Cecilia Gastardo-Conaco, *Peace Zones in the Philippines*, Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Research Reports 1994, 2. Quezon City: Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, 1994.

Licuanan, Patricia B., "Basic Christian Communities as a force for social change", in Gabino A. Mendoza, Juan Miguel Luz and Jose T. Deles, Jr. (eds), *Church of the People: The Basic Christian Community experience in the Philippines*, Manila: Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development, 1988, pp. 28–34.

Limaye, Madhu, "The Ayodhya issue needs to be settled by mutual goodwill", in Engineer, 1990, pp. 101–05.

Lincoln, Bruce, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about religion after September 11.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002.

Linden, Ian, "The Church and genocide: Lessons from the Rwandan tragedy", in Baum and Wells, 1997, pp. 43–55.

Lodgaard, Sverre, "Human security: Concept and operationalization." Paper prepared for the Expert Seminar on Human Rights and Peace, 8–9 December 2000 (Geneva, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights).

Magesa, Laurenti, "Religious leaders, peacemaking and social change: some theological perspectives", in Assefa and Wachira, 1996, pp. 72–94.

——, *African Religion: The moral traditions of abundant life.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997.

Majul, Cesar Adib, *The Contemporary Muslim Movement in the Philippines.* Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1985.

Man, Wan Kadir Che, *Muslim Separatism: The Moros of southern Philippines and the Malays of southern Thailand.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1990.

Mariz, Cecilia Loreto, *Coping with Poverty: Pentecostals and Christian base communities in Brazil.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994.

Marty, Martin E., and R. Scott Appleby (eds), *Fundamentalisms Observed.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

—— (eds), *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the sciences, the family, and education.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

—— (eds), *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking polities, economies, and militance.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

—— (eds), *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The dynamic character of movements.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

—— (eds), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Masina, Nomonde, "Xhosa practices of *ubuntu* for South Africa", in Zartman, 2000, pp. 169–81.

Matuan, Moctar, "The Lanao Muslim-Christian Movement for Dialogue and Peace", in Ledesma, Barra and Gomez, 1999.

Mayer, Ann Elizabeth, *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and politics.* Boulder: Westview Press, 1999.

Mayer, Peter (ed), *The Pacifist Conscience.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966.

McCutcheon, Russell T., *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the public study of religion.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001.

McKenna, Thomas M., *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday politics and armed separatism in the southern Philippines.* Manila: Anvil Publishing, 1998.

Meier, Kurt, *Der evangelische Kirchenkampf.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984.

Meiring, Piet, *Chronicle of the Truth Commission: A journey through the past present — into the future of South Africa.* Vanderbijlpark: Carpe Diem Boeke, 1999.

Merton, Thomas (Naomi Burton Stone and Patrick Hart, eds), *Love and Living.* San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979.

Montiel, Cristina J., "Peaceful termination of unsuccessful coup attempts in the Philippines", *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management,* 3 (1995), pp. 215–27.

——, and Adelfo V. Briones, *Cry Out for Peace: Social psychological notes on peacemaking in local governance.* Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs, 1995.

Montville, Joseph V., "War and externalization of aggression", *Psychologist/Psychoanalyst,* a publication of Division 39 of the American Psychological Association, Vol. XI, Special Supplement (Summer 1991).

——, "The healing function in political conflict resolution", in Sandole and Van der Merwe, 1993, pp. 112–27.

——, "Reconciliation in America," *American Civilization* (May/June 1995).

Morsink, Johannes, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, drafting and intent.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999.

Muzaffar, Chandra, *One God, Many Paths: Essays on the social relevance of religion in Malaysia from Islamic, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and philosophical perspectives.* Penang: Aliran, 1980.

——, *Challenges and Choices in Malaysian Politics and Society.* Penang: Aliran, 1989.

——, *The NEP: Development and alternative consciousness.* Penang: Aliran, 1989.

——, *The Human Being from Different Spiritual Traditions.* Penang: Aliran, 1991.

—— (ed.), *Human Wrongs: Reflections on Western global dominance and its impact upon human rights.* Penang: JUST World Trust, 1996.

National Council of the Churches of the Philippines, *Lord, Make Us Instruments of Your Peace: Basic ecumenical course on peace.* Quezon City: NCCP, n.d.

Neufeldt, Reina, Sarah McCann and Jaco Cilliers, "Explicit and Implicit Peacebuilding: Catholic Relief Services in Mindanao, Philippines and Bosnia-Herzegovina", CRS Peacebuilding Case Study 1, draft 21 September 2000 (www.catholicrelief.org/what_we_do_overseas/peace/Case_Study.PDF)

Newbigin, Lesslie, "A sermon preached at the thanksgiving service for the fiftieth anniversary of the Tambaram conference of the International Missionary Council", *International Review of Mission,* LXXVIII, 307 (July 1988), pp. 325–31.

Ngunyi, M.G., "Religious institutions and political liberalization in Kenya", in Peter Gibbon (ed), *Markets, Civil Society and Democracy in Kenya,* Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1995, pp. 121–76.

Noll, Rüdiger, and Stefan Vesper (eds), *Reconciliation, Gift of God and Source of New Life: Documents of the Second European Ecumenical Assembly*. Graz: Styria Verlag, 1998.

Noor, Farish A. (ed), *New Voices of Islam*. Leiden: ISIM, 2002.

Nunez, Rosalita T., *Roots of Conflict: Muslims, Christians and the Mindanao struggle*. Makati City: Asian Institute of Management, 1997.

Nussbaum, Martha, "Human functioning and social justice: In defense of Aristotelian essentialism", *Political Theory*, 20, 2 (1992), pp. 202–46.

——, "Compassion: The basic social emotion", *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 13, 1 (1996), pp. 27–58.

Nyamiti, Charles, *The Scope of African Theology*. Kampala: Gaba Publications, 1973.

O'Brien, Niall, *Island of Tears, Island of Hope: Living the Gospel in a revolutionary situation*. Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1996.

Otto, Rudolf, *The Idea of the Holy*. London: Oxford University Press, 1923.

Palm-Dalupan, Maria Lorenza, "Development of the government's comprehensive peace program", in Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, 2000, pp. 12–60.

Paris, Roland, "Human security: Paradigm shift or hot air", *International Security*, 26, 2 (2001), pp. 87–102.

People Building Peace: 35 inspiring stories from around the world. Utrecht: European Centre for Conflict Prevention, 1999.

Perry, Michael J., *The Idea of Human Rights: Four inquiries*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Pickthall, Muhammad Marmaduke, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*. Pakistan: Centre for Islamic Information, n.d.

Poblete, Martin, "Chile: From the *patronato* to Pinochet", in Sigmund, 1999, pp. 220–34.

Putra, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tan Chee Khoon, Chandra Muzaffar and Lim Kit Siang, *Contemporary Issues on Malaysian Religion*s. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1984.

Queen, Christopher, "Introduction: A new Buddhism", *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 7 (2000) (http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/7/queen001.html).

Quintos-Deles, Teresita, "Civil society as peacemaker", in Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, 2000, pp. 202–22.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli, *Recovery of Faith*. Hind Pocket Books, 1967.

Rafael, Itzhak (ed), *Torah SheBal Peh – Lectures at the 21st National Convention of the Association for Oral Law*. Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1980.

Rai, Shirin, *Gender and the Political Economy of Development: From nationalism to globalization*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002.

Ram-Prasad, Chakravarti, "Being Hindu and/or governing India? Religion, social change and the state", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, 2003, pp. 159–96.

Rao, Amiya, Aurbindo Ghose, Sunil Bhattacharya, Tejinder Ajuha and N.D. Pacholi, *Report to the Nation: Oppression in Punjab*. New Delhi: Citizens for Democracy, 1985.

Reynolds, Craig, "Civic religion and national community in Thailand", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 36, 2 (1997), pp. 267–82.

Rodil, Rudy Buhay, *Kalinaw Mindanaw: The story of the GRP-MNLF peace process, 1975–1996*. Davao City: Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanaw, 2000.

Rostas, Susanna, and André F. Droogers (eds), *The Popular Use of Popular Religion in Latin America*. Amsterdam: CEDLA, 1993.

Rouse, Ruth, and Stephen C. Neill (eds), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517–1948*. London: SPCK, 1954.

Rousset, Paul, *Histoire des Croisades*. Paris: Payot, 1957.

Rubayize, F., *Guérir le Rwanda de la violence: La Confession de Detmold un premier pas*. Paris and Montréal: Karthala 1998.

Rukangira, Emmanuel (ed), *Actes du Colloque de Machakos*. Bruxelles: Solidarité pour l'Afrique International, 2001.

Sacks, Jonathan, *The Dignity Of Difference*. London and New York: Continuum, 2002.

Said, Edward W., *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

——, *Covering Islam*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

Sandole, Dennis J.D., and Hugo van der Merwe (eds), *Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and application*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993.

Sayers, Janet, *Biological Politics: Feminist and anti-feminist perspectives*. London: Tavistock, 1982.

Schweid, Eliezer, *The Land of Israel: National home or land of destiny*. London: Associated University Press, 1985.

Sen, Amartya, *On Ethics and Economics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.

——, *Development as Freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1999.

Seneviratne, H.L., "The monk's new robes: Buddhist fundamentalism and social change", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, 2003, pp. 143–58.

Serbin, Kenneth P., "Brazil: Religious tolerance, Church-State relations, and the challenge of pluralism", in Sigmund, 1999, pp. 204–19.

Shapiro, David S., "The Jewish attitude towards peace and war", in N. Lamm (ed), *Studies in Jewish Thought*, Vol. I, New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1975; reprinted by *Oz VeShalom* in *Violence and the Value of Life in Jewish Tradition*, Yehezkel Landau ed., Jerusalem: Oz VeShalom Publications, 1984, pp. 56–103.

Sharp, Nonie, in association with Markus Wonggor Kaisiepo, *The Morning Star in Papua Barat*. Victoria, Australia: Arena Publications, 1994.

Shirima, Valerian, "Challenges to the Church in East Africa", in Cecil McGarry, Rodrigo Mejia and Valerian Shirima, *A Light on Our Path: A pastoral contribution to the Synod for Africa*. Nairobi: St Paul Publications, 1993, pp. 38–48.

Shrivastava, Sushil, "The Ayodhya controversy: Where lies the truth?", in Engineer, 1990, pp. 28–55.

Sigmund, Paul E. (ed), *Religious Freedom and Evangelization in Latin America: The challenge of religious pluralism*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999.

Silliman, G. Sidney, and Lela Garner Noble (ed), *Organizing for Democracy: NGOs, civil society, and the Philippine state*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998.

Simon, Uriel, *Seek Peace and Pursue It*. Tel Aviv: Hemed Books, 2002.

Sivaraksa, Sulak, "Buddhism and contemporary international trends", in Kraft, 1992, pp. 127–37.

Soroush, Abdolkarim, "The responsibilities of the Muslim intellectual in the 21st century: Interview with Abdolkarim Soroush", in Noor, 2002, pp. 15–21.

Stern, Jessica, *Terror in the Name of God: Why religious militants kill*. New York: Harper Collins, 2003.

Stiglitz, Joseph E. *Globalization and Its Discontents*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002.

Sunderlal, Pandit, *The Gita and the Qur'an*. Hyderabad: Institute of Indo-Middle East Cultural Studies.

Taussig, Michael, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

Tebay, Neles Kebadabi, "The role of the Catholic Church in defending and promoting human rights in West Papua", *Exchange*, 31, 4 (2002), pp. 362–72.

Ter Haar, Gerrie, *Rats, Cockroaches and People Like Us: Views of humanity and human rights*. The Hague: Institute of Social Studies, 2000.

——, "Religious fundamentalism and social change: A comparative inquiry", in Ter Haar and Busuttil, 2003, pp. 1–24.

——, "What is religion for? A Papuan perspective", in Joseph Bulbulia and Paul Morris (eds), *What is Religion For? Refereed Proceedings of the NZASR/IAHR 2002 Conference*. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, 2004, pp. 93–112.

—— and James J. Busuttil (eds), *The Freedom to Do God's Will: Religious fundamentalism and social change*. London: Routledge, 2003.

Thomas, Caroline, *Global Governance, Development and Human Security: The challenge for poverty and inequality*. London: Pluto Press, 2000.

—— and Peter Wilkin (eds), *Globalization, Human Security and the African Experience*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999.

Tong, Rosemary, "Feminist ethics", in Edward N. Zalta (ed), *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2000 (plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2000/entries/feminism-ethics).

Tripathi, S.K., "Competition in bigotry", in Engineer, 1990, pp. 119–24.

Truong, Thanh-Dam, " 'Asian' values and the heart of understanding: A Buddhist view", in Cauquelin et al., 1998, pp. 43–69.

——, "A feminist perspective on the Asian miracle and crisis: Enlarging the conceptual map of human development", *Journal of Human Development*, 1, 1 (2000), pp. 159–64.

Ul Haq, Mahbub, *Reflections on Human Development*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

United States Catholic Conference, *Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States*. Washington, DC: USCCB Publishing, 1979.

Van Boven, Theo, "A Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities?", in Van der Heijden and Tahzib-Lie, 1998, pp. 73–79.

Van Butselaar, Jan, *Africains, Missionnaires et Colonialistes: Les origines de l'Eglise Presbytérienne du Mozambique (Mission Suisse), 1880–1896*. Leiden: Brill, 1984.

——, "La culture des 'gens de la prière': La vie d'une communauté protestante au Mozambique à la fin du XIXe siècle", in *Dynamiques religieuses en lusophonie contemporaine*, Paris: Lusotopie, 1999, pp. 439–50.

——, *Church and Peace in Africa: The role of the churches in the peace process*. Assen: Van Gorcum, 2001.

Van der Heijden, Barend, and Bahia Tahzib-Lie (eds), *Reflections on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A fiftieth anniversary anthology*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1998.

Van Schelven, Aart Arnout, "Beza's De Iure Magistratum in Subditos", in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 1954, pp. 62–82.

Verkuyl, Johannes et al., *Meegenomen voor de vrede: Nadere verantwoording van het Gereformeerd Vredesberaad*. Kampen: Kok, 1969.

Volkan, Vamik, "The need to have enemies and allies: A developmental approach", *Political Psychology*, 6, 2 (1985), pp. 219–47.

——, *The Need to Have Enemies and Allies*. Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1988.

——, "An overview of psychological concepts pertinent to interethnic and/or international relationships", in Volkan et al., 1990, pp. 31–46.

——, *Bloodlines: From ethnic pride to ethnic terrorism*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997.

——, Demetrios A. Julius, and Joseph V. Montville (eds), *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships. Volume I: Concepts and theories*. Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990.

Waite, Terry, *Taken on Trust*. New York: Quill, 1995.

——, *Footfalls in Memory: Reflections from solitude*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Westerlund, David (ed), *Questioning the Secular State: The worldwide resurgence of religion in politics*. London: Hurst, 1995.

Whitehill, James, "Buddhist ethics in Western context: The virtues approach", *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 1 (1994) (http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/1/white1.html).

Williams, George Huntston, *The Radical Reformation*. Kirksville, Missouri: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992.

Witte, Jr., John, and Johan D. van der Vyver (eds), *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspectives: Religious perspectives*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1996.

World Council of Churches, *Violence, Nonviolence and the Struggle for Social Justice: A statement commended by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, August 1973, for study, comment and action*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1973.

Yoder, John, *The Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: William P. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972.
——, *Nevertheless: Varieties of religious pacifism*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1992.
Zakaria, Rafiq, *The Struggle Within Islam*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1989.
Zartman, I. William (ed), *Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African conflict "medicine"*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener, 2000.

INDEX