Prospects and challenges for the ecumenical movement in the 21st century : insights from the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute

Global 12

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Insights from the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute

Editors **David Field / Jutta Koslowski**

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Dedicated to Nugent Field (25 March 1933 – 16 September 2015)
whose life embodied the virtues that foster ecumenical progress
– firmness of conviction, a readiness to learn from others,
the humility to change his mind and above all
a devotion to Jesus Christ and his Church.

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FOREWORD

FORMING YOUNGER ECUMENICAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Dietrich Werner

The Heritage of GETI

It is remarkable that two years after the Assembly of World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan (South Korea) the impact, vitality and global outreach of a project like the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) from 2013 can still be felt. This publication which was brought together by the bold initiative and untiring efforts of both David Field and Jutta Koslowski (a faculty member and a student participant of GETI) provides evidence of continued networking and ongoing theological learning from both the WCC Assembly as well as major thematic areas which are currently discussed in the global ecumenical movement.

We are extremely grateful for this documentation which also underlines the significance of initiatives to engage in forming the next generation of ecumenical leaders for the 21st century.

Looking back from some more distance one can only marvel that something like GETI actually took place:

- a high level leadership training and ecumenical formation seminar for 15 days for younger lecturers and students of theology from all over the world;

- the bringing together of 200 participants in Seoul and Busan from around 60 countries and more than 80 Christian denominations for a global academic learning initiative under the umbrella theme *The Future of Ecumenism and the Transformation of World Christianity in the 21st Century*;
- a consortium of several major institutional partners involving the Ecumenical Theological Education Programme (ETE) of the WCC, the Ecumenical Institute Bossey, a consortium of American Theological Schools, key partners from Christian universities in South Korea (such as Hanshin University, Busan Presbyterian University and Honam Theological University);
- an international group of advanced ecumenical scholars involving 24 international professors of theology and some 30 international guests lecturers and key-note speakers from a wide variety of different backgrounds;
- three major excursions (to Seoul, Busan and Gwangu);
- all this alongside the 10th Assembly of WCC with its broad programme and agenda.

How could all this be achieved with very few staff, almost no budget provisions by WCC and within a comparatively short time span of only one and a half years for preparations and organisational work?

We ought to give glory and gratitude to God for having enabled this project which in many dimensions seemed to be beyond normal human capacities. It was a lot of enthusiasm, a very committed small executive group and strategic step-by-step planning plus the coincidence of real ecumenical solidarity which has made GETI possible. There were phases in which we almost despaired as problems appeared to be insurmountable, but there also were other phases where the enthusiasm of supporting partners, ecumenical colleagues and high level academic friends from all over the world gave us a new push to be inspired with hope, to carry it through and to move ahead.

GETI was not perfect: the programme alongside the assembly sometimes was too demanding, there were some intercultural tensions on the way and also some (though not major) organisational challenges. But GETI on the whole was a huge success and many returned home being transformed for their lives. The video which was produced afterwards by the gifted young American videographer Candice Eloby provided some images, interviews and original scenes which are still moving once people watch this short documentary of GETI.[1]

A few months later, a partial documentation appeared in a thematic issue of Ecumenical Review.[2]

The GETI project understood itself as an answer to the growing needs for strategic leadership formation in world Christianity, as an attempt for intergenerational dialogue between the younger and the older ecumenical pioneers and as a visible expression of the increased attention for theological education both within the WCC, in many of its member churches and much beyond in the different church traditions of world Christianity. If the WCC and other regional and ecumenical Christian bodies want to safeguard the rich heritage and new profiles of the ecumenical movement, they have to invest more into strategic leadership formation and into cooperation with leading institutions. They should be present in teaching handbooks and curriculum plans of higher education all around in the world.

This follow up documentation of several research papers from GETI, related to some of the plenaries and ecumenical conversations and some cross-sectoral topics discussed during the Busan assembly of WCC, underlines the theological contributions which younger scholars from the GETI community have made. Several of these papers were also pub-

[1] https://vimeo.com/92442340.

[2] See: Schifter, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich: "An Innovative Pilgrimage of Ecumenical Formation – The GETI Experience", in: *Ecumenical Review* 66 (1), 2014, 4–7 (a thematic issue with saeveral key-note contributions and student papers).

lished in other regional journals. The ongoing relevance of the ecumenical discourse on crucial topics is presented here from a variety of cultural and denominational backgrounds.

Two major initiatives are under way to continue the heritage of GETI in new shapes: one is the Kirchentag in Berlin in 2017, another one the joint World Conference of Faith and Order and Mission and Evangelism in WCC with a consultation in 2018. We hope and wish that both initiatives can create a new momentum and give visibility for younger scholars in ecumenism, missiology, interfaith dialogue and development studies.

In the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War (as currently is experienced in Europe as a result of unsolved conflicts in other countries and regions) it has become evident how deeply the world is interconnected and how much humanity is dependent on close cooperation, dialogue and common research for solving some of the most burning conflicts in this world. The younger generation has to carry the burden of the unsolved problems which were left behind by their predecessors. They should therefore also be given priority in strategic programme planning of WCC, major ecumenical bodies as well as mission and development organisations to unfold their potential and to establish close links of dialogue between North and South, East and West. Strategic leadership formation of theologians and concerned Christians of other disciplines is a priority for the 21st century!

May the story and vision of GETI continue and take fresh forms in the decades ahead!

Berlin, September 2015

Dietrich Werner
Former Director of the ETE programme of the WCC
and international coordinator of the GETI project

PREFACE

David Field and Jutta Koslowski

The Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) was held in Seoul and Busan in South Korea from 25 October to 9 November 2013. It brought together young theologians (mostly graduate and doctoral students) from around the globe to discuss the future of ecumenism in the context of the changing face of Christianity in the 21st century. It provided a unique opportunity for the students to engage with world Christianity not only on a theoretical level but through personal encounter and experience. Part of the programme ran parallel to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC), allowing the participants of GETI to share in aspects of the WCC Assembly – thus further broadening and deepening their engagement within the ecumenical movement. The Assembly theme *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace'* was an important focus.

A key part of the academic programme was the writing of papers in which the students reflected what they had learned, both academically and through their personal encounters. These papers showed a rich diversity of insights. One of the goals of GETI was that the participants should share their ideas with a wider audience. As part of this dissemination it was decided to publish a small selection of these papers.

They cover a wide range of issues discussed at GETI and derive from a diversity of ecclesiastical, ethnic and geographical backgrounds. Each of the texts represents the interests and impressions of the authors. As editors we made no attempt to prescribe a particular format but have

rather respected the approach taken by each writer. However, common to most of the papers is a combination of personal and academic reflection and an attempt to relate it to the particular context. This *combination of the personal, the academic and the contextual* provides for rich contributions that open up new outlooks on the issues addressed.

The *introduction* gives a statistical overview of the developments in world Christianity. The dramatic shifts in the 20th century have caused mayor changes, creating new challenges and opportunities for the churches. This introduction thus forms the background for all other chapters.

The *first chapter* offers a reflection of the message of the WCC Assembly focused on the theme of *pilgrimage*. The concept of pilgrimage may integrate the different issues that emerge within the WCC, but not in a final or conclusive way. It rather points to an open future and the challenge to be taken up by all who participate in the ecumenical movement.

The *second chapter* examines the key themes from the Assembly plenary sessions: Asia, mission, justice and peace. The first section of this chapter looks at Asian christology, especially the contextual character of the christologies of Kazoh Kitamori, Choan-Seng Song and Kim Young-Bok.

This is followed by a section about mission, exploring the WCC document *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes.* More particularly it raises the question of how the shift of the centre of gravity of Christianity to the Global South reshapes the understanding of mission.

The third section is that of justice and the focus is to reflect the problem of food insecurity. It develops a theological response drawing on the works of Gustavo Gutierrez and Nicholas Wolterstoff.

The final plenary theme was peace. This section discusses the issue of *just peace* firstly by looking at it in the context of the history of the

WCC and then arguing that it needs to be reconsidered from the perspective of the underside of history – that is from the perspective of those who suffer.

In addition to the plenary sessions there were smaller ecumenical conversations dealing with particular concerns, so the *third chapter* of this book takes up a selection of these subjects. The first section in this chapter has the title *Towards an Inclusive Church*. It proposes that it is important for the church to live as an inclusive community, including all kinds of people. It also looks at the biblical healing stories and argues that they need to be primarily understood as enabling the inclusion of people who were previously excluded from their communities.

The second section in this chapter is concerned with a problem that is constantly present in South Korea, the host country of the 10th Assembly of the WCC: the struggle for peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula. It notes various contributions to this issue during the Busan Assembly. Arguing that peace making is a Christian imperative, it describes the often unrecognised WCC involvement in facilitating discussions between Christians in North and South Korea.

The final section turns to another major conflict area – the Middle East. It begins by describing how the ecumenical conversation about the Middle East brought together diverse Christians from this region to discuss the origins of the political tension. It was proposed that if Israel and Palestine were reconciled this could be an important model for the encounter of the West with Islam. Reflecting on the *Kairos Palestine* Document, it is argued that the way forward is love for the enemy together with resistance of injustice. Hopefully, this may lead to a decline of islamophobia and an acknowledgement of western powers of their complicity in the conflict.

In *further reflections* the book takes up diverse themes which emerged in the discussions at GETI and the WCC Assembly. The first section addresses the issue of pentecostalism and social responsibility

from a Filipino context. It thus represents a tradition that has not often been heard in ecumenical circles and adds a particular dynamic with its context in the Global South. Rooting its theology in Luke's understanding of the Holy Spirit, it calls for a pentecostal theology which sees social engagement as an outworking of the presence of the Spirit within the church.

The next section examines the subject of *diakonia* in a Chinese context, focusing on the Amity foundation as a case study. Relating this to perspectives that have arisen in the WCC, it argues that *diakonia* should be understood as the churches' participation at God's work in the world. It must be understood from the perspective of those who have been the traditional recipients of relief. Finally, *diakonia* is about the realisation of God's vision for the world.

The third section deals with the issue of migration. It provides important information about this theme and argues that migration has the potential to greatly enrich the church, as well as the societies in sending as well as in receiving countries. In addition, biblical perspectives on migration are presented.

The fourth essay turns to the question of human rights, giving an overview of the concept of human rights in ecumenical discourse. It continues with a more detailed look at the issues of religious freedom, stateless people and economic and earth rights, arguing that the terminology of human rights still has a role to play in ecumenical ethics.

The final essay in this section picks up the problem of religious freedom and examines it in the context of Indonesia and Sri Lanka. It shows that religious fundamentalism is a major cause of tension between religious groups and argues for inter-religious dialogue. Besides, it explains that mission is to be understood as service to humankind.

At the end of this book, there is a *personal reflection*. Drawing from the experience of GETI it argues that at its core ecumenism is about the heart – a living relationship between Christ and the church and between

the members of the church. It proposes that ecumenism is to be conceived as an exchange of gifts where each tradition brings what it has to offer and at the same time humbly and self-critically seeks to discover what it can learn from others.

An *appendix* describes the GETI project more detailed: how GETI was prepared, carried out and followed up; who the participants were and from which countries they came; and which aims have been pursued by this endeavour.

As is clear from our brief summary of the various chapters, they offer a rich and diverse set of perspectives. They reflect the political, social and theological contexts from which the authors come. Yet this diversity does not obscure the common commitment to the church, its mission and its ecumenical task.

It is our hope that these reflections will be used in various settings within the church and the academy, as starting points for discussion and as alternative perspectives to established texts. These voices are fresh, diverse and challenging. We hope that the readers will be envisioned and stimulated – and will be inspired to join the ecumenical pilgrimage to discover what it means in practice to be part of world Christianity. More than that, we hope that you will join us as we pray '*God of life, lead us to justice and peace'*.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

1

THE CHANGING FACE OF CHRISTIANITY AND NEW OUTLINES OF ECUMENISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Gabriel-Viorel Gardân (Romania, Orthodox)

1.1 Introduction

At the global level the map of Christianity has experienced major changes during the 20th century. The ecumenical movement, in turn, encountered profound changes during this century and has reached a place considered by many to be a turning point, with regard to both its organization and its agenda. With such realities as starting points I intend to present the main elements of the evolution of Christianity across the 20th century, and the challenges as well as the major questions that the ecumenical movement is facing.

From a demographic point of view, a series of research results were published during the last few years, and offered clear images of the evolution of Christianity during the previous century.[3] From an ecumenical

[3] We will mention the results which are connected to our analysis: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R (eds.): *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009; Johnson, Todd M. (ed.): *World Christian Database. Global Christianity. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population. Christianity in its Global Context*, 1970–2020. Society, Religion, and Mission; Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*; Johnson.

perspective, we will make reference to a series of official documents of the World Council of Churches (*A Changing World: Reflection on the Changing Landscapes of World Christianity*;[4] *Ecumenism in the 21st Century*[5]), to the opening speeches of leaders of the World Council of Churches (Olav Fykse Tveit – general secretary of the WCC;[6] Walter Altmann – moderator of the central committee of the WCC[7]), and to lectures of ecumenical personalities at the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (Michael Kinnamon, *New Contours of Ecumenism in the Twenty-First Century*; Konrad Raiser, *The Busan Assembly in the History of WCC Assemblies and as an Occasion to Unfold a New Ecumenical Vision*; Rodney Petersen, *Reconciliation as an Ecumenical Key Mandate: Is Forgiveness Possible?*[8])

1.2 Christianity in the Actual Global Religious Configuration

Where is Christianity positioned in the actual global religious configuration? This is the first question the present study intends to address. Within the religious global configuration, during the 20th century, Christianity experienced a decrease, although the number of Christians

[4] "A Changing World: Reflection on the Changing Landscapes of World Christianity – Report from WCC's 9th Assembly, Porto Alegre, 2006", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 363–369.

[5] "Ecumenism in the 21st Century – Final report of the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century*, 369–381.

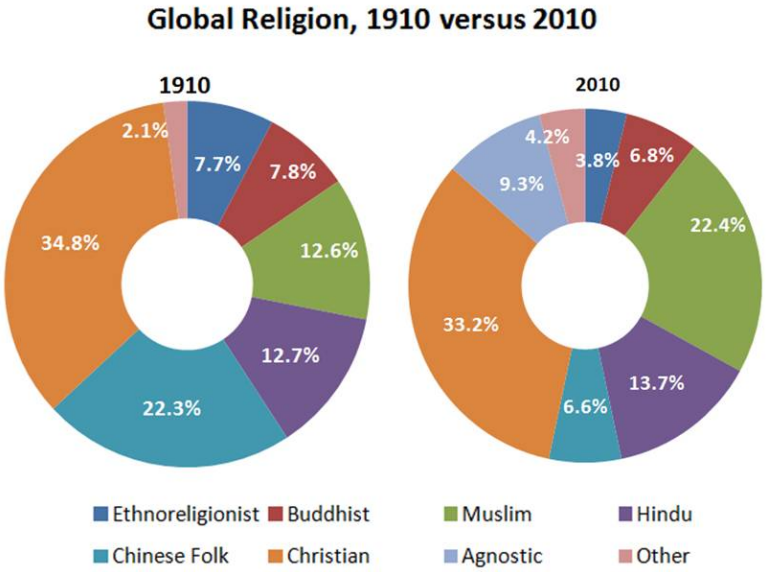
[6] WCC 10th Assembly – Report of the General Secretary, http://oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/3013-busan/plenary-presentations(report-of-the-general-secretary (accessed 11 February 2014).

[7] WCC 10th Assembly – Report of the Moderator or the Central Committee, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/ plenary-presentations/report-of-the-moderator-of-the-central-committee (accessed 11 February 2014).

[8] The texts are accessible on the globethics.net portal. Copyright for all graphics in this publication: David Field.

increased as a result of the demographic expansion. Therefore, if in 1910 Christians represented 34.8 % (612,028,000 adherents[9]) of the total population of the world population, in 2010, the 2,292,454,000 Christians represented 33.2 % of the world population. Interestingly enough, the annual growth rate of the Christian population experienced a continuous decrease, till 2000, when it reached 1.33 %, in order to register a slight increase in the next ten years, roughly up to 1.35 % in 2010.

Graphic 1: Global Religion



At the global level,[10] Christianity still remains the religion with most adherents, and it is anticipated that this position will be maintained in the decades to follow. It is estimated that by the year 2050 the number

[9] The data is taken from the previously mentioned papers. Their value is relative and can differ from one document to the other, without significant differences.
[10] All the graphics in this paper are based on data from: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R (eds.): *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*.

of Christians will reach 3,220,348,000 adherents, representing 35 % of the world population.

The dynamic development of other religious groups was emphasized during the 20th century. The Muslims registered a spectacular increase from 12.6 %, respectively 220,895,000 adherents, in 1910, to 22.4 %, 1,549,444,000 adherents, in 2010. It is anticipated that by the year 2050 (and according to some estimates even sooner) the number of Muslims will pass the 2,500,000,000 threshold, which is 27.4 % of the world population.[11] If we analyze each continent, we notice that the number of Muslims increased from 32 % to 40 % in Africa, from 16.6 % to 26 % in Asia, from 2.3 % to 5.6 % in Europe, from 0.1 % to 0.3 % in Latin America, from 0.0 % to 1.6 % in North America, and from 0.2 % to 1.6 % in Oceania.

A significant increase in numbers was registered by Agnosticism[12] and Atheism.[13] Both atheists and agnostics are considered nonreligious, and several similarities were apparent in their demographics over the past 100 years. At the global level, the agnostics registered an increase from 0.2 % (3,367,000 adherents) in 1910, to 9.3 % (639,582,000 adherents) in the year 2010. The most spectacular growth was registered in Asia (from 0.0 % to 11.8 %), in Europe (from 0.4 % to 11.1 %) and in North America (from 1.2 % to 11.8 %). The atheists represented 2 % of the world population, for their number grew from 243,000 in 1910 to

[11] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 74. For more details regarding the historical and demographic evolution of Islam see Ruthven, Malise, *Historical Atlas of the Islamic World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; *The Future of the Global Muslim Population. Projections for 2010–2030*, Washington: Pew Research Centre, 2011.

[12] Agnostics lack religion or profess unbelief in a religion. The term includes (1) classical agnostics who hold that it is impossible to know for certain whether God – or a deity of any kind – exists; (2) those who profess uncertainty as to experience of God; and (3) other non religious persons such as secularists and materialists. See Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 28–29, 325.

[13] Atheists, unlike agnostics, reject the idea of any deity. See Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 30–31, 325.

138,532,000 in 2010. The majority of the eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, and others) experienced such changes at a slower rate, and were able to maintain, with few variations, the same global demographic structure. The most significant drop in numbers was among adherents of the popular Chinese religions (Chinese folk-religion[14]) and ethno religions (ethno religionists[15]): they went from 22.3 % to 6.6 % in 2010, respectively from 7.7 % to 3.8 %.

One of the outcomes of globalisation and of the growth of many religious movements was the degree of religious diversity worldwide. There are two kinds of religious diversity: inter-religious diversity and intra-religious diversity.[16]

1.3 The Demographic Evolution of Christianity during the 20th Century

At the beginning of the 20th century, Christianity was the dominating religion in Europe and in the Americas, with growing Christian communities on the rest of the continents as well: 66.3 % of the Christians were living in Europe, 14.9 % in North America, 12.2 % in South America, and only 4.5 % in Asia Pacific, 1.4 % in Sub-Saharan Africa and 0.7 % in the Middle East and in North America. A century later,

[14] Chinese folk-religion is unlike any other world religion. Although the roots of this tradition are deeply ingrained in Chinese history, there is no centralised leadership, no single text and no founder. In that respect, it is similar to indigenous religions, but without a set of unified beliefs. Instead, it is an amalgamation of Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist traditions. Those who follow this all-inclusive religious system are open to borrowing, mixing and applying various Eastern religions collectively. See Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010,* 16–17, 325.

[15] Ethno-religionists is a collective term for primary or primitive religionists, animists, spirit-worshippers, shamanists, ancestor-venerators, polytheists, pantheists, traditionalists and local or tribal folk-religionists. See Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010,* 18–19, 325.

[16] This realities are illustrated by Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010,* 32–33; Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 65–92 and 93–120.

Christianity became a global religion in its own right, with significantly more people than other faith communities. However, its centre of gravity shifted towards the Global South.[17] By 2010, 25.6 % of the Christian population were living in Europe, 23.9 % in Latin America, 21.6 % in Africa, 15.4 % in Asia, 12.3 % in North America, and 1.2 % in Oceania.[18]

If we analyze the evolution of Christianity on each of the continents, we will easily notice the continents that registered a drop in numbers among Christians, and the continents where the numbers were growing. At the global level, as previously mentioned, 34 % of the world population was Christian in 1910, and by 2010, the percentage was 33.2 %. In Africa the percentage changed over a period of 100 years from 9.4 % to 47.9 %. Asia registered an increase from 2.4 % to 8.5 %. As for the rest of the continents, the numbers dropped. For instance in Europe, we see a decline from 94.5 % to 80.2 %, in North America from 96.9 % to 81.2 %, in Latin America from 95.2 % to 92.5 %, and in Oceania the change is not significant, from 78.6 % to 78.5 % of the entire population. Therefore, the regions in which Christianity experienced significant changes were North America with a 15.7 % decline, and Europe with a 14.3 % decline.

The most spectacular growth of Christianity took place in *Africa*. With a 3.84 % annual growing rate during the years 1910–2000, respectively 2.55 % during the years 2000–2010, the Christian population of Africa reached 494,668,000, representing 47.9 % of the entire population.[19]

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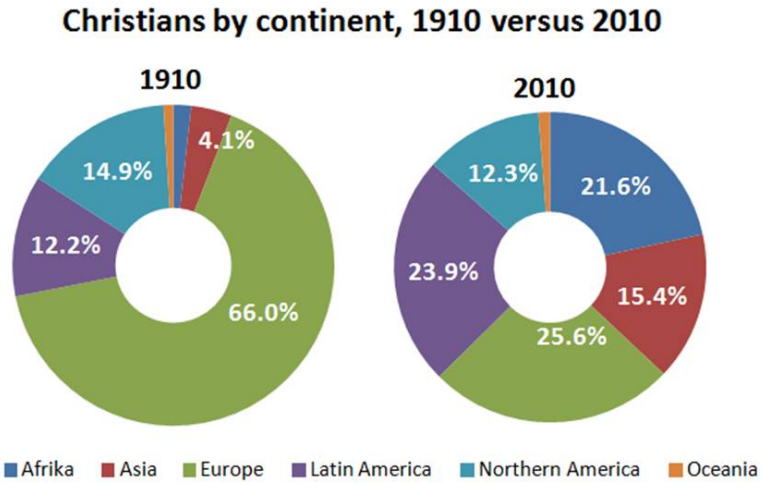
[17] Robra, Martin, "The Ecumenical Movement in the Context of World Christianity in the 21st Century", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century*, 7.

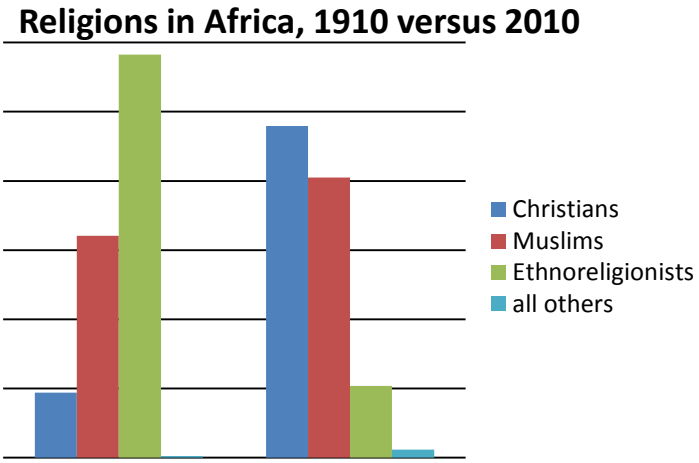
[18] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 8–9.

[19] For more complex analyses see Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 110–133; Anderson, Allan, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century*, Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001; Baur, John, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa. From An-*

Graphic 2: Christians by Continent



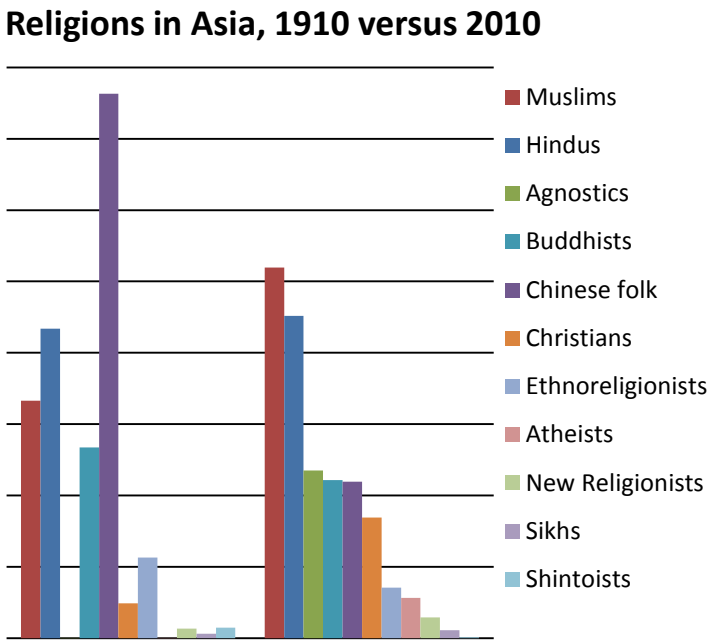
Graphic 3: Religions in Africa



tiquity to the Present, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995; Horner, Norman A., A Guide to Christian Church in the Middle East. Present-Day Christianity in the Middle East and North Africa, Elkhart: Mission Focus, 1989.

Although the Christian population in *Asia* increased number wise, it is still not as significant as the one in Africa. If in 1910 the number of Christians was of only 25,123,000, representing 2.4 % of the population, whereas in 2010 8.5 % of the people of Asia were Christians, respectively 352,239,000. The annual growing rate was 2.68 % until 2000 and 2.38 % from 2000 until 2010.[20]

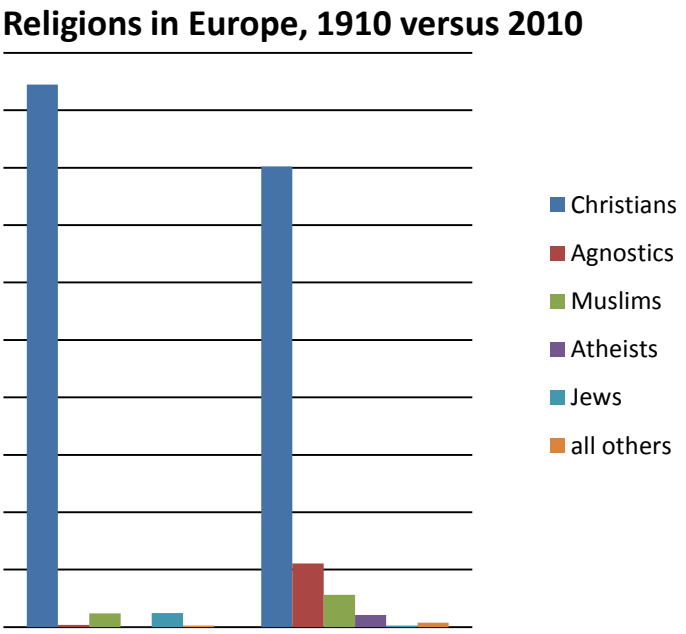
Graphic 4: Religions in Asia



[20] For more complex analyses see Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 134–153; Sunquist, Scott W. (ed.), *A Dictionary of Asian Christianity*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001; Moffett, Samuel Hugh, *A History of Christianity in Asia*, 2 vol., Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998–2005; Angold, Michael (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 5: Eastern Christianity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Over the past 100 years, *Europe* became more diverse in its religious demographics. In 1910, nearly 95 % of Europe's population professed some form of Christianity, and by 2010 this figure was lowered to 80 %. The main gains were made by agnostics and atheists, who made up for more than 13 % of Europe's population (starting from 0.5 % in 1910). Their annual growing rate was only 0.37 %, while from 2000 until 2010, it lowered to 0.23 %.[21]

Graphic 5: Religions in Europe

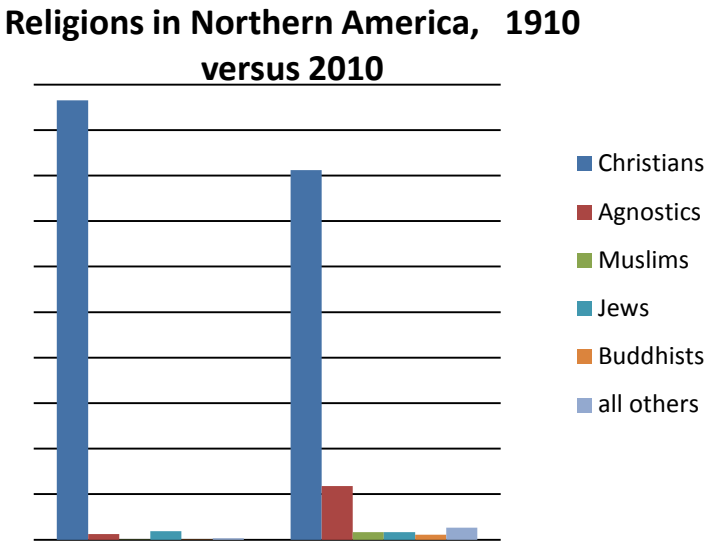


Over the past 100 years, *North America* has changed significantly its religious demographics. The region was 96.6 % Christian in 1910, but it

[21] For more complex analyses see Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 154–173; Greeley, Andrew, *Religion in Modern Europe at the End of the Second Millennium*, London: Transaction Press, 2003.

reached only 81.2 % in 2010. Two main trends are responsible for this decline. First, various forms of secularisation brought about the defection from Christianity of a large number of adherents. Second, the immigration had significant effects, as well. Large numbers of Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus moved to North America, especially in the second half of the 20th century.[22]

Graphic 6: Religions in Northern America



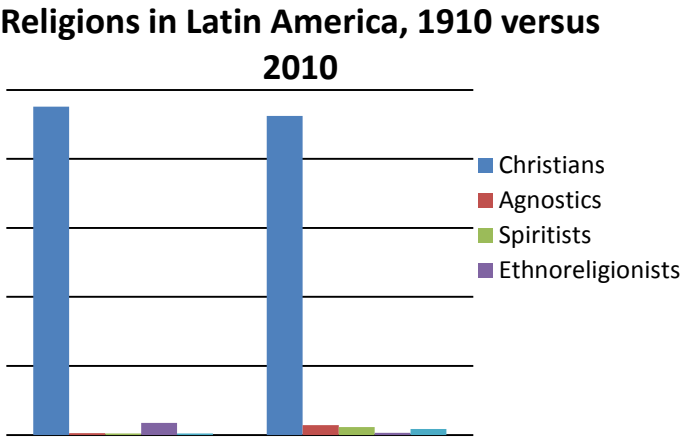
At a first glance, the religious demographics of *Latin America* appear to have changed very little over the past 100 years. In 1910 the population was 95.2 % Christian; by 2010 it was still 92.5 % Christian.[23]

[22] For more complex analyses see Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 190–193; Noll, Mark A., *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1992; Gaustad, Edwin Scott/ Barlow, Philip L., *New Historical Atlas of Religion in America*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

[23] For more complex analyses see Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 176–189; Gonzalez, Ordina E./ Gonza-

In 1910 *Oceania* was 78.6 % Christian, dropping slightly to 78.5 % in 2010. This small change in the overall percentage in Oceania, however, marks significant changes within this region.[24] In order to better understand the dynamics of the demographic evolution of Christianity, we must talk about the factors that made this mechanism work. The first variable of each set (birth, converts, immigrants) measures gain, while the second (death, defection, emigrants), measures loss. Christian communities experience a constant flux through the births and the deaths of the members of their churches. Conversion to a new religion involves defection from a previous one. The waves of migration of people from different regions to the Western world generated a significant impact on religious affiliation.[25]

Graphic 7: Religions in Latin America

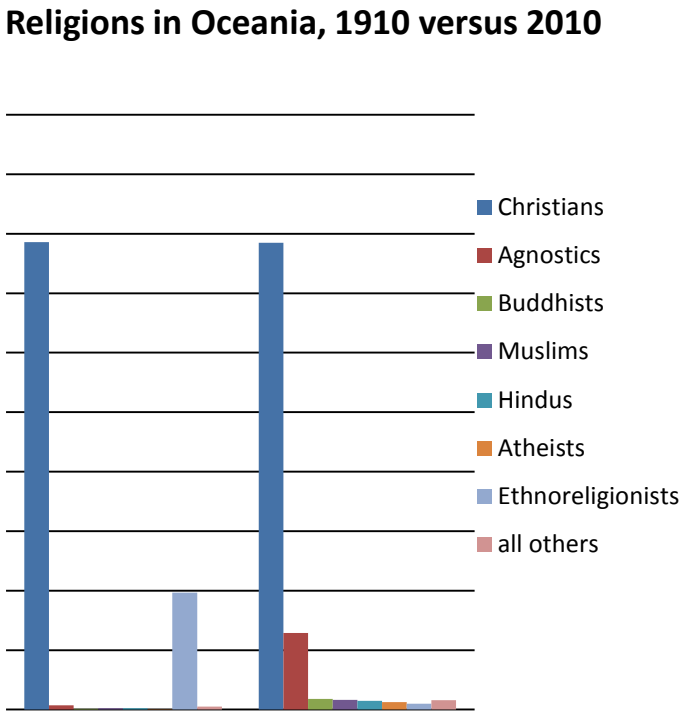


lez, Justo L., *Christianity in Latin America: A History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

[24] For more complex analyses see Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 194–207; Breward, Ian, *A History of the Churches of Australasia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001; Ernst, Manfred, *Globalization and the Re-Shaping of Christianity in the Pacific*, Suva: Pacific Islands Theological College, 2006.

[25] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 58–65.

Graphic 8: Religions in Oceania



1.4 The Diversity of Global Christianity

Most authors divide global Christianity into six major traditions[26] based on ecclesiastical and cultural differences. These traditions are Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Independent and Marginal. The Orthodox tradition includes all the ethnic divisions of the Orthodox Church. The Roman Catholic tradition includes both the Western church (the Latin rite) and the Eastern Catholic churches. The Anglicans are defined as those within the Anglican Communion, mean-

[26] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 100–103.

ing the communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Protestant tradition includes all denominations which developed from the Protestant reformation in the 16th century. Independents are Christians who choose to disassociate from any other tradition and are separate from the historical denominations of Christianity. The Marginal tradition is represented by Christians who have different, sometimes unorthodox, views on specific Christian doctrines.[27]

According to this scheme, Global Christianity today has 6 major traditions, 302 minor traditions, 41,082 denominations and 4,850,000 congregations. Christianity is fragmented. Moonjang Lee observes: 'Christianity has become too fragmented. Existing in a fragmented world, churches fail to show a united front. There are so many divisions within Christianity that it is an intriguing task to clarify a Christian identity. At the beginning of Christian history, the designation of a person as a *Christian* was sufficient to tell about his or her social, religious and cultural identity. Today, however, we have to supply subcategories to tell about whom we are as Christians, for there are many different and conflicting forms of church life.'[28] We must note that the vast majority of denominations are found in the Independent and Protestant traditions. By 2025, there will likely be 55,000 denominations.[29]

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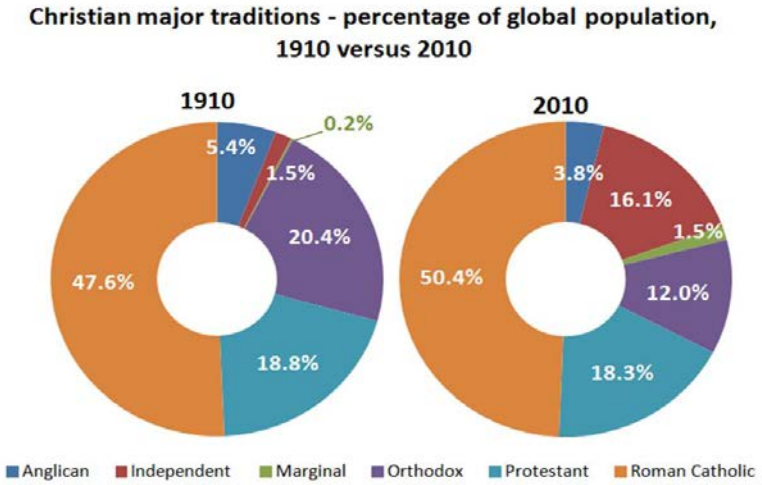
[27] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 70; *Global Christianity. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population*, 10.

[28] Lee, Moonjang, „Future of Global Christianity", in: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 54.

[29] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity. Its Findings*, http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/papersdocumentsd4bd.pdf (accessed 11 February 2014).

Graphic 9: Christian Major Traditions



By 1910 the weight of the 6 major traditions was the following: 47.6 % were Roman Catholic (291,440,000, respectively 16.6 % of the global population), 20.4 % were Orthodox (124,923,000, respectively 7.1 % of the global population), 18.8 % were Protestants (115,013,000, representing 6.5 % of the global population), 5.4 % were Anglicans (32,920,000, representing 1.9 % of the global population), 1.5 % were Independent Christians (9,269,000, respectively 0.5 % of the global population) and 0.2 % were the so called Marginal Christians (1,070,000, representing 0.1 % of the global population).

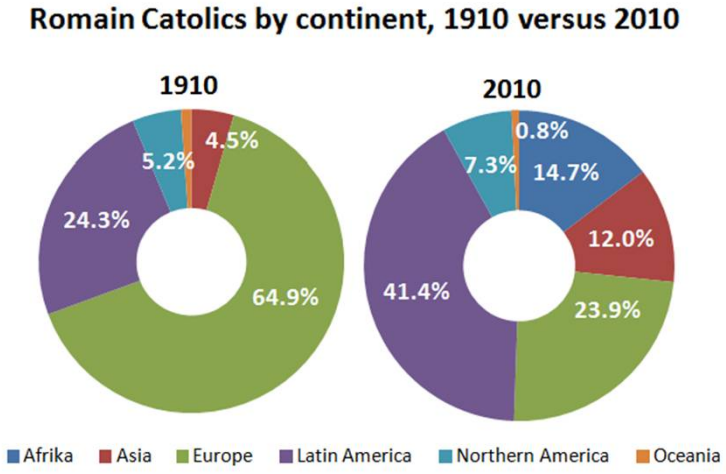
By 2010 Roman Catholicism was still the largest tradition (50.4 % of all Christians, 1,155,627,000 adherents, 16.7 % of the global population). Protestants (18.3 %, 419,316,000 adherents, 6.1 % of the global population) ended up filling the second position (12.0 %, 274,447,000, 4.0 % of the global population), consequently the Orthodox tradition became third. Independents became the fastest-growing tradition over the last century, comprising in 2010 16.1 % of all Christians (369,156,000 adherents, 5.3 % of the global population). Marginal Christians came in second, growing from 0.1 % to 1,5 % (34,912,000

adherents, 0.5 % of the global population), and the Anglican tradition represented 3.8 % of all Christians (86,782,000 adherents, 1.3 % of the global population). The diffusion of traditions over the twentieth century is due to two primary reasons: missionary activity and migration. The significant decrease of Orthodox Christians can be attributed also to Communism in Eastern Europe, which represented a repression of all kinds of religious beliefs and practices.

1.4.1. Roman Catholics

Over the past 100 years Roman Catholicism has seen a great increase in numbers of adherents. In 1910 about 291 million individuals claimed loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church worldwide and this grew to well over 1.1 billion by 2010. Although these numbers indicate an enormous increase, the annual growth rate over the century was only 1.39 %, much lower than all other Christian traditions (except the Orthodox at 0.79 %). In 1910 Roman Catholics comprised 16.6 % of the total global population; this increased only to 16.7 % by 2010.[30]

Graphic 10: Romain Catolics by Continent



[30] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 94.

During the 20th century there were some major changes in the demographic distribution of Catholicism. Hence, in Africa the number of Catholics grew from 2,153,000 adherents in 1910 (1.7 % of the population) to 169,495,000 adherents in 2010, representing 16.4 % of the population on the continent. In Asia, in a hundred years time the Roman Catholics went from 1.3 % (13,185,000 adherents) to 3.3 %, respectively 138,702,000 adherents in 2010. Roman Catholicism also registered a significant growth in North America, from 16.0 % (15,146,000 adherents) to 24.2 % (84,485,000 adherents) in 2010. In Oceania, Roman Catholics reached 25.1 % (8,914,000 adherents) from 17.0 % (1,225,000 adherents) in 1910. In Europe and in Latin America Roman Catholics experienced a drop in numbers, if rated against the entire population. If in 1910 44.3 % of the Europeans were Catholic (189,056,000), in 2010 only 37.8 % of them (275,820,000) were assuming their adherence to the Roman Catholic Church. In Latin America the numbers dropped even more, from 90.3 % (70,675,000) to 80.5 % (478,211,000).[31]

While the Roman Catholic population of the Global North continues to decline, the Roman Catholics of Global South continue to fill in leadership positions in religious and secular orders and dioceses.[32] Catholicism has grown significantly during the 20th century, but the church has also experienced major trials. As Roman Catholicism continues to spread worldwide, the church faces tremendous challenges in maintaining membership, affiliation and confidence.[33]

The Catholic Church will probably grow in numbers from 1,155,627,000 in 2010 to 1,129,000,000 in 2050, but as a percentage of

[31] See also *Global Christianity*, 23–25.
[32] The election of the Argentinean bishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio, on the 13th of March 2013, as the 266th pope of the Catholic Church, known as pope Francis, is the most conclusive proof of this matter.
[33] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 94. The main strategies and missionary challenges are analyzed by Bevans, Stephen B./ Schroeder, Roger, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, Maryknoll: Orbis Book, 2004.

the global population it is likely to fall from 16.7 % in 2010 to 14.4 % in 2050, and as a percentage of all affiliated Christians, from 50.4 % in 2010 to 37–45 % in 2050.[34]

1.4.2. Protestants

Protestants are distinct both from Anglicans – whose origins are in 16th century English history – and from Independents, many of whom have arisen through renewals or the schism from Protestant bodies, and who typically seek to distance themselves from Protestant denominationalism. The 16th century reformation and the various reformation movements of the 15th century were European.[35] Today the Protestant reformation exists in all parts of the world. The main factors behind this geographical spread have been the colonial expansion, the missionary activities and migration. Protestantism has become a global reality.

There are different groups or families of churches within Protestantism. They include Lutherans, Reformed/Presbyterian churches, Baptists, Brethren, Churches of Christ, Congregational churches, Disciples, Friends (Quakers), Mennonites, Methodists and Moravian churches.[36]

In 1910 the great majority of Protestants lived in Europe and in North America. During the 20th century the situation changed. If in 1910 in Europe lived 64,557,000 Protestants, representing 15.1 % of the population, by 2010 the percentage dropped to 9.3 % and 67,703,000 Protestant inhabitants. A dramatic drop was registered in North America. Here in 1910 45.7 % of the population was Protestant (43,259,000 adherents), and in 2010 only 17.6 % of the northern Americans declared their adherence to Protestantism (348,575,000).

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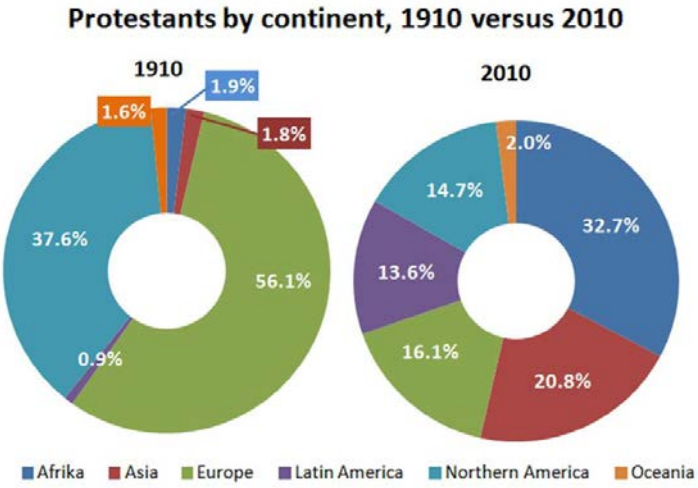
[34] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 105; Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 106.

[35] Leonardo, Emil G., *Histoire generale du protestantisme*, vol. 1–3, Paris: Quadrige/Press Universitaires de France, 1988; Hsia, Po-Chia R., (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. 6: Reform and Expansion 1500–1660, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

[36] Beek, Huibert van/ Karamaga, Andre, "Protestants, 1910–2010", in: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 88.

Graphic 11: Protestants by Continent



In Oceania a slight drop in the numbers of Protestant population is noticed as well, from 25.2 % (1,811,000) to 23.7 % (8,403,000). In Africa, Latin America and Asia the percentage of protestantism grew over a period of 100 years from 1.8 % (2,177,000) to 13,3 % (137,207,000), the annual growth rate being of 4,23 % until 2000, and of 2,87 % from 2000 to 2010. A comparable growth rate (4.04 %) was registered in Latin America, where Protestants reached up to 1.4 % (1,091,000) in 1910 and 9.6 % (57,114,000) in 2010. In Asia, the Protestants percentage grew from 0.2 % in 1910 (2,119,000) to 2.1 % (87,379,000).[37]

If we take into account these perspectives, it is estimated that by the year 2050 the number of Protestants at the global level will reach 20.0 % (644,000,000 adherents). Approximately 44 % of them will be Africans, and none of the European countries – the cradle of Protestantism – will be among the first ten countries with the most numerous Protestant population.[38]

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[37] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 90–91; *Global Christianity*, 27–29.
[38] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 108–109.

1.4.3 Independents

Among Christian communities the third position is occupied by the so called Independents. In 2010 they reached 16.1 % at the global level (369,156,000 adherents, 5.3 % of global population). Independent Christians are defined as believers who do not identify themselves with any major Christian tradition (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant or Anglican). They are independent of historic, organised, institutionalised and denominationalist Christianity. The 20th century has witnessed the emergence of a new form of Christianity quite distinctive from any of the earlier traditions. A large segment of the rapidly-growing Christian movements in the Global South is *Independent*, and sometimes described as *Churches of the Spirit*. Most Western churches and theologies continue to regard this development as schismatic, meaning an aberration from the norms of traditional Christianity. Because these movements originated among Chinese, Indians, Africans, or Black people in the Caribbean, they have often been dismissed as sectarian, separatist, cultic, millenarian, messianic, magical-religious, tribal, spiritistic, syncretistic, quasi-Christian, post-Christian or other similar categories. In contrast, most of them perceive themselves as part of a global renewal of the faith and the driving force of the Christian mission today.[39]

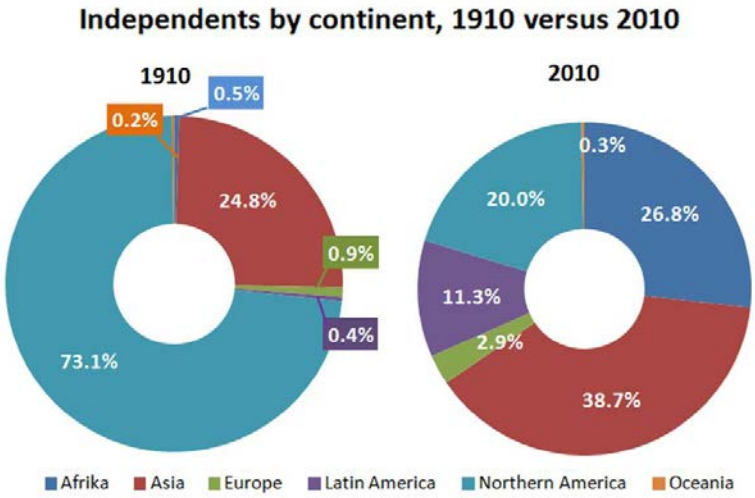
In 1910, the number of Independents was estimated at 9,269,000 adherents representing 0.5 % of the world population. The greatest majority of them lived in North America (73.1 %). Their presence was significant in Asia as well (24.8 % of the total number of adherents), while their presence was insignificant on the rest of the continents (less than 1 %).

By 2010, the number of Independents reached 369,156,000, representing 5.3 % of the world population. The percentages were the following: 38.7 % in Asia, 26.8 % in Africa, 20 % in North America, 11.3 % in

[39] Gerloff, Roswitha/ Ako Akrong, Abraham, "Independets, 1910–2010", in: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 76.

Latin America, 2.9 % in Europe and 0.3 % in Oceania. All in all, on the six continents there were 27,010 Christian denominations that summed up to 2,496,100 congregations.

Graphic 12: Independents by Continent



If we take into consideration the number of Independents in relation to the global population in 2010 in Africa, 9.6 % of the population was part of this category (98,819,000) as opposed to the year 1910, when they were under 1 %, respectively 46,900 adherents. In Asia 3.4 % of the population belongs to the Independents (142,737,000), while in 1919 only 2,301,000 belonged to Independent Christians (0.2 %). In Europe the group grew from less than 1 % (87,200 adherents) to 10,703,000 adherents, representing 1.5 %. Without a doubt, North America and Latin America had the most spectacular growths. In North America, Independent Christians went from 7.2 % (6,779,000) to 21.1 % (73,759,000), and in Latin America from less than 1 % (34,200) in 1910, to 7.1 % in 2010 (41,876,000). In Oceania Independent Christians increased from 0.3 % (20,900) to 3.6 % (1,262,000). The average growth rate of Inde-

pendent Christians was of 3.75 % per year between 1910 and 2000, and of 2.42 % between 2000 and 2010.[40]

A steady growth among Independent Christians is anticipated; accordingly by the year 2050 they will reach 840,000,000 adherents, representing 20–25 % of the Christian population in the world.[41]

1.4.4 Orthodox

The expression *Orthodox Church*, as used in modern research on global Christianity, describes two distinct church families, the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, which are not in eucharistic communion with one another. Both these church families consider themselves to be in unbroken continuity with the church founded by the Apostles. The official theological dialogue between these two church traditions (1985–93) underlines the fact that in spite of some differences in their theological terminologies and different emphasis in their theological understanding, they both confess the same faith.[42] The Oriental Orthodox Churches are the Eastern Orthodox Churches that recognize only the first three ecumenical councils, and therefore have also been called Non-Chalcedonian Churches. The Oriental Orthodox Churches include the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Eritrean Orthodox Church, the Syriac Orthodox Church, the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (India) and the Armenian Apostolic Church.[43]

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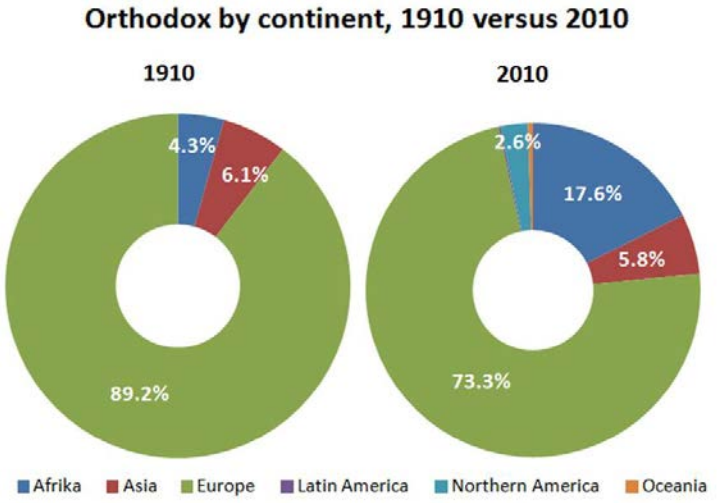
[40] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 78–79.
[41] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 113; Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 106.
[42] Ionitsa, Viorel/ Gazer, Hacik Rafi, "Orthodox, 1910–2010", in: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 84.
[43] *Global Christianity*, 49.

During the 20th century the Christian Orthodox experienced a significant drop in the global religious structure. At the beginning of the century 20.4 % of the Christian population of the world was Christian (124,923,000 adherents, 7.1 % of population). Furthermore, 89.2 % lived in Europe, 6.1 % in Asia and 4.3 % in Africa. In 2010 only 12.0 % of the Christian population of the world was still Orthodox (274,447,000 adherents, 4.0 % of population). 73.3 % of them lived in Europe, 17.6 % in Africa, 5.8 % in Asia and 2.6 % in North America.

Graphic 13: Orthodox by Continent



If we take into account the numbers of Christian Orthodox among the global population of each continent, in the year 2010 4.7 % of the African population belonged to this category (48,286,000), registering a slight increase as opposed to the year 1910, when it was 4.4 %, respectively 5,431,000 adherents. In Asia only 0.4 % of the population was Orthodox (15,787,000), while in 1910, 7,607,000 were Orthodox (0.7 %). In Europe the number of Orthodox grew from 26.1 % (111,391,000 adherents) to 27.5 %, respectively 201,197,000 adherents. In North

America the number of Orthodox Christians went from 0.5 % (481,000) to 2.1 % (7,180,000), and in Latin America from under 8200 adherents in 1910, to 0.2 % in 2010 (1,068,000). In Oceania the number of Orthodox Christians grew from 0.1 % (4900) to 2.6 % (928,000). The average growth rate of the Christian Orthodox population was of 0.79 % per year between 1910–2000, and of 0.68 % between 2000–2010, which is below the average global growth rate of the population of 1.38 %, respectively 1.21 %.[44]

The main causes that lead to a decline in numbers among Orthodox Christians were the persecutions and the massacres conducted by Muslims, the Armenian genocide, persecutions of the communist regimes, the lack of sustained missionary actions, as well as a common ethnocentrism.[45] It is also estimated that none of the other major Christian traditions have had as many martyrs.[46] The estimates until the year 2050 are not very optimistic. The number of Orthodox Christians will continuously drop, reaching as it seems 172,000,000 adherents,[47] (8.4 %).[48]

1.4.5. Anglicans

The Anglicans have experienced a more profound demographic transformation than other Christian traditions over the past 100 years. In 1910, 80.1 % of the Anglicans lived in Europe. However, by 1910 the southern part of Australia and a few other British colonies in the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, had begun to pull the Anglican centre of gravity south. Hence, by 2010, the centre of gravity of the Anglican Commun-

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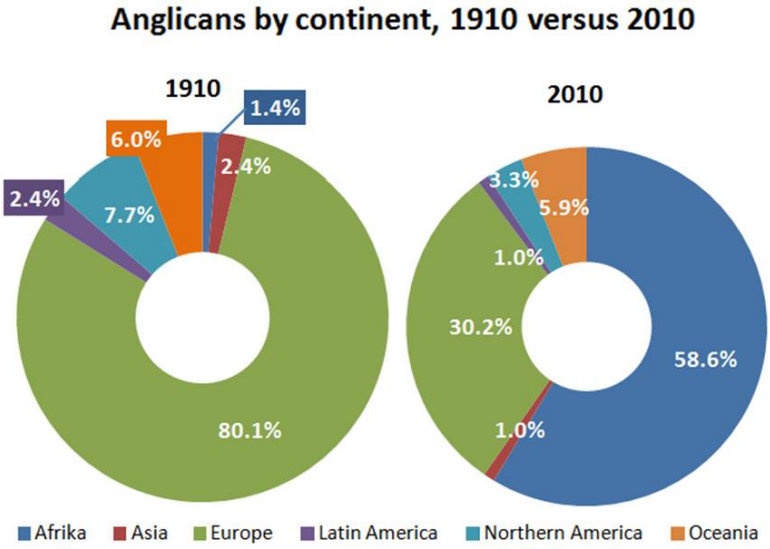
[44] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 78–79.
[45] McGuckin, John Anthony, *The Orthodox Church: An Introduction to the History, Doctrine, and Spiritual Culture*, Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell, 2008; Clendenin, Daniel B., *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.
[46] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 106.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 106.

ion is located in Chad. This is largely due to the meteoric rise of Anglicans in African countries, especially Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. In addition, during this century, Anglicans continued their missionary outreach in Latin America and Asia, where thriving Anglican Churches have resulted.[49]

Graphic 14: Anglicans by Continent



As a consequence of these demographic transformations, in 2010 58.6 % of the Anglicans lived in Africa (50,866,000 adherents, 4.9 % of the population), 30.2 % in Europe (26,219,000 adherents, 3.6 % of the population), 5.9 % in Oceania (5,078,000 adherents, 14.3 % of the population), 3.3 % in Nord America (2,864,000 adherents, 0,8 % of the population), 1 % in Asia (864,000 adherents), and 1 % in Latin America (891,000 adherents, 0.2 % of the population). Globally, the percentage has dropped from 1.9 % in 1910 to 1.3 % in 2010, and the total number

[49] Ibid., 74. Ward, Kevin, *A History of Global Anglicanism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; Kaye, Bruce, *An Introduction to World Anglicanism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

shifted from 32,920,000 adherents in 1910 to 86,782,000 adherents in 2010, the annual growth rate being of 0.97 %.

The evolution on the continents is presented as such. Africa registered a growth from 0.4 % (443,000 adherents) to 4.9 %; in Asia a drop from 0.1 % to under 0.0 % was registered, in Europe a drop from 6,2 % to 3.6 %, in Latin America a growth from 0.1 % to 0.2 %, in North America a drop from 2.7 % to 0.8 %, in Oceania a significant drop from 27.5 % to only 14.3 %.

The estimates for the year 2050, as a result of the shift of the Anglican centre of gravity, anticipate a significant growth of the Anglicans. The engine of this growth is going to be Africa. The Anglicans are estimated to get from 3.8 % among Christian communities in 2010, to 4.4 % in 2050, the probable number of adherents being by then of 130,000,000.[50]

1.4.6 Evangelicals and Pentecostals

The last part of the demographic analysis presents two religious trans-confessional movements: the Evangelicals[51] and the Pentecostals.[52] Here, Evangelicals are defined as a subdivision of mainly Protestants and Anglicans, consisting of all affiliated church members calling themselves Evangelicals, or all persons belonging to Evangelical congregations and denominations. Others used this term to refer to a broader phenomenon, sometimes with a few or many Evangelicals outside of the Protestant tradition.

The Evangelical movement reached its global dimensions during the 19th century, and flourished during the 20th. It is rooted in the Puritan movement and in the Wesleyan revival in the English-speaking world, as well as in the Pietistic movement of continental Europe. As such, it

[50] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 111.
[51] See Bebbington, David W./ Noll, Mark A. (eds.), *A History of Evangelicalism*, 5 vols., Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
[52] See Anderson, Allan, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

took from these sources the emphasis on a recovery of the message of the Protestant reformation, especially the authority of the bible and the justification by faith in the work of Christ alone. From these sources came also the emphasis on personal conversion, a life of disciplined piety, a special creativity of pastoral structures to respond to new social situations, a sensitivity to the needs of the poor, and an evangelistic zeal that is matched by suspicion of formal ecclesiastical structures. However, Evangelicals did not start a series of new denominations but remained as a ferment within the historical denominational families.[53]

At the global level, the percentage of the Evangelicals dropped during the past century from 4.6 % (80,192,000 adherents) in 1910, to 3.8 % (263,464,000 adherents) in 2010.Yet, the actual tendency is growing.[54] Evangelical churches seem more dogmatic in character than the Charismatic churches. They are attractive because they have a clear identity, strong community life, absolutist ethical principles and a strong passion for evangelism (coupled, all too often, with a week ecumenical interest).[55]

Table 1: Evangelicals by Major Tradition

Evangelicals by major tradition

	1910		2010		1910-2010
	Adherents	%	Adherents	%	Rate
Anglican	10'695'000	13.3%	34'087'000	12.9%	0.99
Catolic	1'001'000	1.2%	2'741'000	1.0%	0.84
Independent	13'049'000	16.3%	37'895'000	14.4%	0.89
Marginal	8'000	0.0%	109'000	0.0%	2.45
Orthodox	109'000	0.1%	820'000	0.3%	1.87
Protestant	55'329'000	69.0%	187'812'000	71.3%	1.01

[53] Dowsett, Rosemary/ Escobar, Samuel, "Evangelicals, 1910–2010", in: Johnson, Todd M./ Ross, Kenneth R. (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910–2010*, 98.
[54] See Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 139–160.
[55] *A Changing World: Reflection on the Changing Landscapes of World Christianity* – Report from WCC's 9th Assembly, Porto Alegre, 2006, 363.

Graphic 15: Evangelicals by Continent

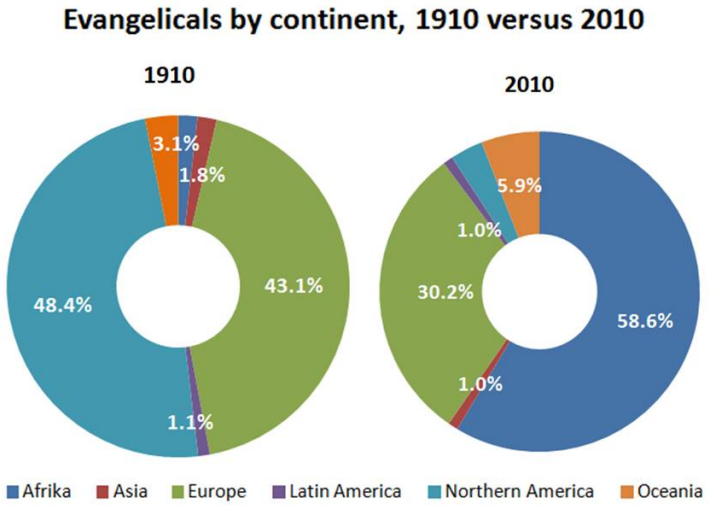
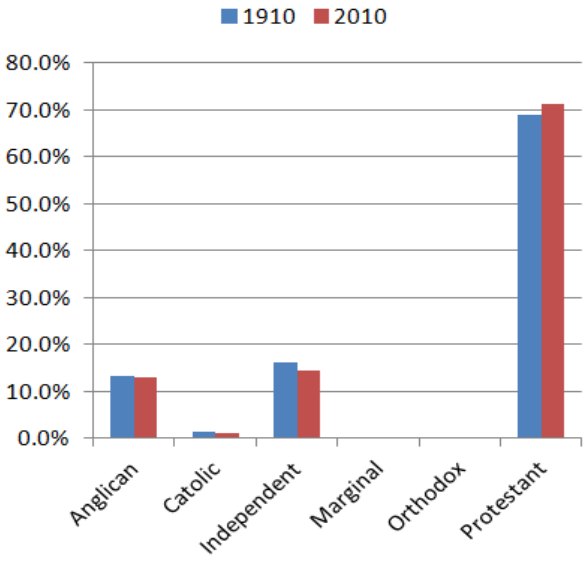


Table 2: Evangelicals by Major Tradition



Over the last 100 years, the Renewalist movement (a short term for the worldwide Pentecostal/Charismatic/Neo-Charismatic Renewal in the Holy Spirit) has grown at almost five times the rate of global Christianity. If in1910 the number of adherents to the Renewal movements was 1,203,000, representing 0.1 % of the global population, whereas in 2010 8.1 %, respectively 614,010,000 were part of this movement.

Pentecostalism has poly-nucleated origins, a global orientation and network, and inherent migrating tendencies that, coupled with its strong individualism, made it fundamentally a multidimensional phenomenon. Pentecostalism has always been a missionary movement in foundation and essence. It emerged with a firm conviction that the Spirit has been poured out in signs and wonders in order for the nations of the world to be reached for Christ before the end of this age. Its missionaries proclaimed a *full gospel* that included individual salvation, physical healing, personal holiness, baptism with the Spirit, and a lived expectation of the imminent return of Christ.

Graphic 16: Fastest Renewalist Growth

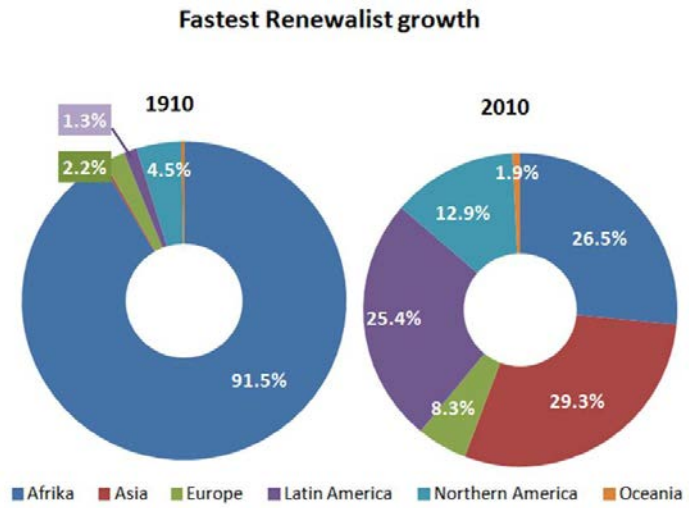


Table 3: Renewalists by Major Tradition

Renewalists by major tradition

	1910		2010		1910-2010
	Adherents	%	Adherents	%	Rate
Anglican	1'000	0.1%	19'276'000	3.1%	10.18
Catolic	12'000	1.0%	139'210'000	22.7%	9.67
Independent	1'164'000	96.8%	313'048'000	51.0%	5.46
Marginal	0	0.0%	3'000	0.0%	5.80
Orthodox	0	0.0%	4'817'000	0.8%	11.21
Protestant	26'000	2.2%	137'665'000	22.4%	8.65

If present projections prove accurate, by 2050 Charismatic Christians will comprise one-third of all Christians and one-tenth of the world's population.[56] Most churches belonging to the *charismatic renewal* in a broad sense have not been involved in the contemporary ecumenical movement, and are not represented in its structure. For most of these churches, spreading the gospel and inviting people to the Christian faith, have priority over cooperation with other churches, especially mainline churches or major Christian traditions. Many of them grow among the most marginalized persons: they have become *churches of the poor*, offering both spiritual home and social relief. They are attractive due to their oral theology, lively liturgy and strong community life, and they seem adapted to the non-European cultural context.[57]

1.5 New Outlines of Ecumenism in the 21st Century

The analysis of the demographic and geographic evolution of Christianity leads us to a few observations regarding the changes within the

[56] Johnstone, Patrick, *The Future of the Global Church*, 125; see also 121–138.
[57] *A Changing World: Reflection on the Changing Landscapes of World Christianity* – Report from WCC's 9th Assembly, Porto Alegre, 2006, 363. See WCC 10th Assembly – Report of the Moderator or the Central Committee, 4, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/plenary-presentations/report-of-the-moderator-of-the-central-committee (accessed 10 July 2015).

ecumenical and ecclesial context. These observations can be found in ecumenical documents as well:[58]

1. Christianity has shifted dramatically to the South.
2. Christianity is fragmented.
3. Christians are experiencing unprecedented renewal.
4. The globalization of the world also brings injustice, fragmentation and fundamentalism.
5. Religions can foster war or peace; therefore, for peace to exist among nations, peace among religions is necessary.[59]
6. Ecumenism is in crisis or in transition, and these two elements are usually intertwined.
7. In many parts of the world (but especially in the South) charismatic forms of faith and worship are increasing to the point of being the majority expression of Christianity.
8. Most churches belonging to the charismatic movement have a weak ecumenical interest.
9. Mainline churches, which have been central to the contemporary ecumenical movement and have supported it at global, regional and national level, have declined in both active membership and financial strength, particularly in Western Europe and North America.
10. Religious behaviour has changed, particularly among youth and young adults.
11. One can observe *believing without belonging* and of *belonging without believing*. The first expression refers to those who experience a relationship with God and have a personal life in prayer,

[58] *A Changing World: Reflection on the Changing Landscapes of World Christianity* – Report from WCC's 9th Assembly, Porto Alegre, 2006; *Ecumenism in the 21st Century* – Final report of the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century, Geneva, 2012.
[59] *Ecumenism in the 21st Century* – Final report of the Continuation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century, Geneva, 2012, 372.

but do not feel bound by the doctrinal or ethical tradition of a church, and do not actively participate in its community life. The second expression describes those who accept the existence of the institutional churches, and even appreciate some of their social or educational services, but without personal involvement or belief.

12. Intra-national or international migration flows increase the number of new diaspora churches in all countries and regions of the world. The diaspora experience modifies both the host and the guest churches, and their customary theological or ecclesiological approaches.[60]

A statement of the year 2004 articulates clearly the values that have emerged in ecumenical relationship in new context: 'The ecumenical movement in the 21st century will be a special place:

- where increasing numbers of Christians are involved in the work of Christian unity, and the fellowship among the churches is strengthened;
- where an open and ecumenically minded culture is fostered in the everyday lives of people in their own contexts, and where ecumenical formation is a central focus at all levels of church life, from the local to the global;
- where spirituality is the basis of life of Christians together, and where, as individuals, churches and organizations, Christians can pray together and encourage each other to discern God's will for their lives;
- where all, including the marginalized and excluded, are welcomed into inclusive and loving communities;
- where relationships, built on mutual trust, are strengthened between all parts of the ecumenical family;

[60] *A Changing World: Reflection on the Chanching Landscapes of World Christianity* – Report from WCC's 9th Assembly, Porto Alegre, 2006, 364.

- where each Christian can be supported in practising responsible stewardship, and where churches and Christian organizations can be mutually accountable to each other;
- where the diversity of cultures and traditions is recognized as a source of creativity; where hospitality is shown towards those of different faiths, and where dialogue is encouraged;
- where women's visions of being church are shared;
- where young people are encouraged to join in and lead;
- where the ministry of healing is carried out in shared actions;
- where the healing of memories leads to reconciliation;
- where, together, we are able to be prophetic in confronting the injustices and violence of the world, and to take risks in our commitment to justice and peace when Christ calls us to do so.'[61]

This declaration becomes a true agenda of ecumenism in the 21st century.

During an excellent lecture at the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute on 30 October 2013, professor Michael Kinnamon described a few fundamental problems regarding the evolution of ecumenism during the 21st century and regarding the achievement of the objectives of the ecumenical agenda. I will only mention them briefly:

1. The circle of ecumenically-engaged churches needs to be expanded, since in 2010, the member churches of the World Council of Churches constituted little more than 20 % of world Christianity.
2. The ecumenical movement needs a new generation of leaders.
3. The connection between ecumenism at the global or national level, and ecumenism at the local level needs to be strengthened.

[61] Statement of the 2004 Chavannes-de-Bogis Conference, in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 370.

4. The various ecumenical structures, which came into existence in a very different era, need to be reconceived.[62]

Having such realities as starting points, a series of questions arise, regarding not only the form of the ecumenical movement, but also its essential character:

1. Is the unity of the church still central to the vision of this movement?
2. Is the ecumenical movement in danger of becoming too ideological?
3. Is this a movement that truly trusts in the leading of God?[63]
4. With so many changes, how can the ecumenical movement preserve its identity?
5. Compared with the past times, has not the WCC lost its prophetic voice?[64]

Without a doubt, there are several other questions that could be addressed. Furthermore, the answer to each question can generate new inquiries regarding the past, the present and the future of ecumenism. In fact, the future of ecumenism in the 21st century is dependent upon the answers we will give to these major questions. Either way, there is a general consensus: at the beginning of the 21st century, the ecumenical movement needs a revitalised ecumenical vision, a renewed spirit and a new commitment by all partners.[65]

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[62] Kinnamon, Michael, *New Contours of Ecumenism in the Twenty-First Century*, 1–3.
[63] Ibid., 3–7.
[64] See WCC 10th Assembly – Report of the Moderator or the Central Committee, 5–6. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/ assembly/2013-busan/plenary-presentations/report-of-the-moderator-of-the-central-committee (accessed 11 February 2014).
[65] Kasper, Walter, *The Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century*. Presentation at the Event Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Joint Working Group Between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/joint-working-group-between-the-

1.6 Ecumenism as a Pilgrimage towards Justice and Peace

One of the most interesting reflections regarding the new vision of ecumenism comes from the former general secretary of the WCC, Konrad Raiser. In his lecture at the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute he focuses on the term *pilgrimage*. The same concept is found in the report of the general secretary of the WCC, Olav Fykse Tveit[66], as well as in the message of the 10th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches.[67]

The pilgrimage is a dynamic image suggesting a means of travelling together. It recalls the biblical image of the church and the wandering people of God excepting to be guided by God's Spirit into the revelation of God's final *shalom*. This image has already been in the vision statement at the Harare Assembly. Konrad Raiser quoted a few sentences: 'We are challenged by the vision of a church, the people of God on the way together, confronting all divisions of race, gender, age or culture, striving to realize justice and peace, upholding the integrity of creation. [...] We journey together as a people freed by God's forgiveness. In the midst of the brokenness of the world, we proclaim the good news of reconciliation, healing and justice in Christ. We journey together as a people with resurrection faith. In the midst of exclusion and despair, we embrace, in joy and hope, the promise of life in all its fullness. We journey together as a people of prayer. In the midst of confusion and loss of

roman-catholic-church-and-the-wcc/the-ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century (accessed 11 February 2014).

[66] See WCC 10th Assembly – Report of the General Secretary, 10-16. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/ plenary-presentations/report-of-the-general-secretary (accessed 11 February 2014).

[67] http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/ adopted-documents-statements/message-of-the-wcc-10th-assembly (accessed 14 July 2015)

identity, we discern signs of God's purpose being fulfilled and expect the coming of God's reign.'[68]

The image of a pilgrimage appeared for the first time in the reports of the 5th World Conference on Faith and Order, at Santiago de Compostela in 1993. The conference started of from the statement at the Canberra Assembly in 1991, regarding *The Unity of the Church as Koinonia – Gift and Calling*.[69] Reflecting on the understanding of *koinonia,* the conference underlined its dynamic character as a pilgrimage. 'As we strip ourselves of false securities, finding in God our only and true identity, daring to be open and vulnerable to each other we will begin to live as pilgrims on a journey, discovering the God of surprises who leads us into roads we have not travelled, and we will find in each other true companions on the way.'[70]

What are the implications of considering the ecumenical vision through the image of a pilgrimage, 'a journey into World Christianity'? Konrad Raiser has mentioned a few indications: First, the pilgrimage is a dynamic and open-ended concept. The way travelled together is more important than the goal, or – to use a formulation of Gandhi – the way is the goal. The pilgrimage is essentially about relationships among those who journey together. They discover each other as people on the move, inspired by the same call. They come from different directions and meet each other at unexpected points, but all have left their secure places behind and are prepared to be transformed and renewed through the encounter. This can become a powerful impulse for interpreting afresh what the ecumenical movement is all about. It can liberate the ecumenical movement from its institutional captivity and evoke the original

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[68] Raiser, Konrad, *The Busan Assembly in the History of WCC Assemblies and as an Occasion to Unfold a New Ecumenical Vision*, 4.

[69] The full text can be found in Kinnamon, Michael/ Cope, Brian E. (eds.), *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Text and Voices*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997, 124–125.

[70] Raiser, Konrad, *The Busan Assembly in the History of WCC Assemblies and as an Occasion to Unfold a New Ecumenical Vision*, 4–5.

thrust of a renewal movement. It can help to discover that the central notions of unity, justice and peace are in themselves dynamic concepts, rather than a state of affairs or an ideal to be realized.

Second, the image of the pilgrimage opens the horizon of the Assembly beyond the institutional concerns of the WCC. The WCC is still the most representative of all bodies who share in the ecumenical movement. However, today it finds itself surrounded by a polycentric network of diverse partners, churches, church-related organizations and movements of Christian people on national, regional and global levels. As a *fellowship of churches*, who have accepted a commitment of mutual accountability and solidarity, the WCC seeks to deepen the experience of communion among its member churches, and through its ethos of mutual trust to live as a sign of what it means to be church to today. However, the WCC has also been entrusted with the responsibility to work towards the *coherence* of the one ecumenical movement in its diverse manifestations. The WCC has been accepted by the different ecumenical partners as the convener of all those engaged in the ecumenical pilgrimage, opening the space for dialogue and cooperation and offering opportunities to consider together the next stretch on the way.

Third, the image of the pilgrimage takes us beyond the structures of the organized ecumenical movement. It is becoming more and more obvious that the organized ecumenical movement represents only a certain part of world Christianity. The member churches of the World Council of Churches are a clear minority: the Roman Catholic Church (a non-member of the WCC) accounts for one half of world Christianity, and the diverse groups of Evangelical, Pentecostal, Charismatic and Independent communities have been growing steadily and represent today approximately one quarter of Christianity worldwide. While the WCC has been maintaining close relationships with the Roman Catholic Church since 1965, for the last four decades the ecumenical movement and the Evangelical-Pentecostal communities have considered each oth-

er as competitors and have quarrelled over the correct direction of the way. Since the Harare Assembly, the WCC has taken several initiatives to open itself and the institutional ecumenical movement up for these potential companions on the journey. One result of these initiatives has been the formation of the Global Christian Forum as an open space where representatives of a broad spectrum of churches and inter-church organizations can meet to respond together to common challenges. The other result has been the beginning of an intensive dialogue with Pentecostal communities as well as with the Evangelical Alliance.[71]

1.7 Conclusion

The general secretary of the WCC, Olav Fykse Tveit, stresses the following: 'This is a real pilgrimage, not merely one of ideas, but a movement that aims at something that is to be achieved or to be found. It will be marked by many initiatives and by many stages along the way. Our success will be measured not only by our progress, but by the experience of moving together.'[72] *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.*

[71] Ibid., 5–6.

[72] WCC 10th Assembly – Report of the General Secretary, 16. http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/ plenary-presentations/report-of-the-general-secretary (accessed 11 February 2014).

PART II

A. THE PLENARIES OF THE ASSEMBLY

REFLECTIONS ON THE AGENDA OF THE 10TH ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

2

AN ECUMENICAL PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE THE GLOBAL CALL OF THE 10TH ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Jutta Koslowski (Germany, Protestant)

2.1 Introduction

At the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which took place between the 25 October and 9 November 2013 at Busan, South Korea, there were many discussions about the *ecumenical pilgrimage of justice and peace*, which the member churches were called upon to join. This pilgrimage forms a kind of framework for the numerous topics discussed within the WCC. The key topics of the Assembly programme that were highlighted by morning plenary sessions and special documents comprised:

- mission (comprising the documents Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism an Changing Landscapes; Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct);
- unity (The Church: Towards a Common Vision; God's Gift and Call to Unity – And Our Commitment);
- justice and peace (An ecumenical call to Just Peace; Economy of Life, Justice and Peace for All: A Call to Action).

The pilgrimage is to form a common basis and link for all of these concerns. Thus, the pilgrimage is not just one topic among many others, but located at the meta-level.

2.2 The Idea of Pilgrimage within the WCC

How did the WCC conceive the idea of such a pilgrimage? In the past, attempts to focus the WCC's work had been successful twice before (through the *Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women* of 1988–1998 and the *Decade to Overcome Violence* of 2001–2010). However, at the 9th WCC Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2006, no direct successor programme was decided on, which resulted in a kind of vacuum. In 2010, the German delegation to the WCC central committee proposed to call for an *ecumenical pilgrimage* at the next Assembly. This proposal found support among various groups and was taken up during the preparations for Busan. The suggestion was to plan the pilgrimage to last seven years (taking account of the symbolic significance of this figure in the bible) so that it would reach its destination (or at least its temporal conclusion) at the 11th Assembly in 2020. Although it was decided at Busan to convene future Assemblies at 8-year intervals (because an even number of years has the practical advantage that central committee meetings can take place at regular 2-year intervals) this did not change the basic idea underlying the pilgrimage. The year 2020 is of significance also because a broad alliance of climatologists and futurologists have declared this to be a deadline for international action to be taken against global warming so as to prevent a global climatic catastrophe.[73] According to these scientists, even an estimate of the effects of global warming on climate and world economy would be impossible, unless global warming can be limited to less than 2° Celsius (these

[73] See Heidel, Klaus: *Die Große Transformation und Gerechtigkeit: Eine Herausforderung für kirchliches Handeln. Zwölf vorläufige Thesen.* http://www.plaedoyer.ecu.de/ppt/heidel/ppt (accessed 12 February 2014).

effects being severe in any case). Should decisive climate protection measures not be taken by 2020, global warming beyond the *red line* of 2° Celsius will be inevitable. Against this background, the idea of a pilgrimage was strongly linked to the topic of *climate justice* – the German public generally having a relatively strong awareness of the importance of environmental protection. Fernando Enns, a long-term committed member of the WCC central committee, therefore proposes not simply to speak of a pilgrimage, but of an 'ecumenical pilgrimage of justice and peace *for life*'. According to him, this would highlight the fact that the pilgrimage picks up and dynamically develops all *three* aspects of the JPIC process, so that the protection of God's creation (to which the words *for life* are to refer) remains a integral part of the WCC's programme.[74] It remains to be seen whether this proposal will find a majority after the Assembly or whether the German member churches will go alone in this direction.

At the discussions at Busan, the focus on eco-justice as a concrete aspect of the pilgrimage was less pronounced because the topics of justice and peace were of greater importance to most delegates. After all, most WCC member churches come from the Global South and in many of their countries people suffer from the consequences of poverty, civil war and violent conflicts between members of different religious and ethnic groups. Thus, it is only natural that ideas about the pilgrimage related mainly to these problems. However, at Busan there were also a few voices from the Pacific Region which profoundly impressed many listeners. For people living on the Pacific Islands, climate change is indeed an existential threat because many of these islands rise only a few meters above sea level and are under acute threat of destruction. One pastor from the Island of Tuvalu, where several coastal villages had already been evacuated, warned his listeners: 'We, the inhabitants of the

[74] Statement of Fernando Enns at the public evaluation meeting of the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* together with his lecture *„Wie geht es weiter? Nächste Schritte – neue Horizonte aus friedenskirchlicher Sicht"*.

Pacific Islands, make the smallest contribution to CO_2 emissions causing the greenhouse effect – and yet we are most strongly affected thereby!' His complaint echoed through the hall and did not fall silent again. The audience understood: climate change is not a matter of the future, but an issue of the present; it is not a scientific hypothesis, but a political reality. And if some still discuss the question whether climate change is likely to happen or not, this has to do with self-serving assertions and delaying tactics.

The message of the WCC Assembly – the text that traditionally finds the widest circulation and attention – contains no explicit invitation to an ecumenical pilgrimage of justice and peace.[75] One could say that this idea did not make it to the top of the agenda. On the other hand, the message is entitled 'Join the Pilgrimage'.[76] Hence the pilgrimage may well be understood as the concept overarching all WCC activities. The message's last paragraph, which begins with the words 'We intend to move together', contains a further indirect reference to the pilgrimage. This is of great importance since it takes up the programmatic statement contained in the message of the First Assembly of the WCC at Amsterdam of 1948, which has since gained considerable significance within the ecumenical movement. It is not without reason that this very statement is taken up in the message of Busan – the 10th Assembly, which not only marks a jubilee, but, according to many observers, will be of decisive importance for the future of the ecumenical movement, or at least for the future role of the WCC in that movement. The *Amsterdam Creed* is taken up in Busan, but it is not simply repeated, but modified in a characteristic way: *We do not only intend to stay together, but we in-*

[75] The message of the assembly can be found at http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/message-of-the-wcc-10th-assembly (accessed 12 February 2014).

[76] In a later version of the message of the Assembly, which has been publishes on the internet, the title has been extended to specify the aim of the pilgrimage: "Join the pilgrimage of justice and peace".

tend to move together – this is a clear allusion to the idea of a pilgrimage.

Another aspect of the Busan Assembly that is related to the idea of a pilgrimage was the *Peace Train* initiative. This was devised an organised within the WCC – not from the top, but from the grassroots. The initiative was started mainly by South Korean Christians who wanted to create a visible sign of their desire for reunification between North and South Korea. They had the idea that some of the Assembly delegates might travel to Busan overland, crossing North Korea by train on their way to the South. This was meant to highlight the fact that these two parts of the country, which have been separated for more than fifty years, belong together. From the start, the Peace Train initiative met with much scepticism and even resistance because it was considered unrealistic. It received little support from within the WCC, be it moral, logistic or financial. And yet, with much perseverance, the project became a success: more than one hundred people from all continents set out to travel together all or a part of the way from Berlin via Moscow and China to the North Korean border. On their journey, they experienced the spatial limitation of train compartments and shared everyday life; they talked with each other and prayed together – for Korean reunification and other worldwide concerns. And along the way, when stopping to change trains, they visited local Christians. Although the original plan to pass through North Korea could not be realized and South Korea had to be reached by ship from China, those who travelled on the Peace Train described it as an unforgettable experience of pilgrimage.

The Peace Train received little official attention at the Busan Assembly (it was neither mentioned in the gathering prayer, nor in the opening or closing plenary sessions, and only a short trailer about the Peace Train was shown *before* one of the plenary sessions). Nevertheless, this initiative met with lively interest from Assembly participants

and it can be understood as a symbol of the pilgrimage. Thus, the key aspects of the ecumenical pilgrimage are

- being on the move;
- coming together with others;
- in doing so, linking different denominations and cultures together;
- sharing everyday life with each other;
- praying together;
- seeking places to pause;
- visiting purposely locations of conflict and pain;
- having a specific common destination;
- and thereby putting into practice the Assembly's motto: *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'*

2.3 The Christian Tradition of Pilgrimage

It is well understandable that the idea of an ecumenical pilgrimage came up within the WCC. The old tradition of pilgrimage is becoming more and more popular again – not only among Christians, but also among people not affiliated to any church. In the European context, one of the reasons for this is the rediscovery of the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. During the middle ages, this destination in the extreme Northwest of Spain was (together with Rome and Jerusalem) one of the most important centres of pilgrimage in Christianity. At Santiago de Compostela, Christians venerate the tomb of the Apostle James, and pilgrims who completed the long way to this shrine were rewarded with a full indulgence of all temporal punishments for their sins. Although the indulgence plays hardly any role today, an increasing number of people set out for Santiago de Compostela – Catholics, Protestants and spiritual seekers alike. In 1987, the Way of Saint James was declared a *European Cultural Route* and since then it has been continuously

extended and developed. Its main route within Spain leads from the village of Roncesvalles in the Pyrenees over a distance of 800 kilometres to the tomb of Saint James. The infrastructure is now well developed: the way is marked along its entire length and pilgrims may use the numerous free-of-charge self-service *refugios* for staying overnight. Apart from the Spanish part of the Way of Saint James, the old medieval routes towards Santiago through neighbouring countries have also been revived, so that today an extended network of Ways of Saint James exists in France, Germany, Switzerland, Portugal and other countries. The well-known German presenter and comedian Hape Kerkeling described his personal experience as a pilgrim on the Way of Saint James in his book *Ich bin dann mal weg* (I'm off, then), which topped the *Spiegel* (a German news magazine) list of bestsellers for many weeks.[77]

Not only the Way of Saint James attracts thousands of people every year, numerous other pilgrimage routes have also been newly set up. For example, in Germany the *Path of Elizabeth* converges from the three cities of Eisenach, Frankfurt and Cologne to the destination of the church of St. Elizabeth in Marburg. The *Pilgrimage Route Loccum – Volkenroda* links these two former Cistercian monasteries, both of which are now Protestant. Many more examples of shorter and longer pilgrimage routes could be listed – not to mention the predominantly Roman Catholic practice to undertake collective outings as pilgrimages.

There can be no doubt: the pilgrimage is a spiritual exercise which appeals to people of our age. There are many reasons for this: First, being out and about, on foot, in nature is a wholesome pastime. Fresh air and exercise are good for the body. Silence (when walking alone) or group spirit (when going with others) may strengthen the soul. Since pilgrims consider it a point of honour to carry their own baggage, they experience quite physically how much everyday burdens weigh on them.

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[77] Kerkeling, Hape, *Ich bin dann mal weg. Meine Reise auf dem Jakobsweg*, 23rd ed., Munich: Piper, 2013.

They learn to do without all unnecessary things and how few belongings they really need. In our consumer society, where material possessions play such an important role, *travelling light* can become a symbolic experience and may help to reflect on one's own lifestyle. Another important aspect of pilgrimage is the *closeness to nature* – which is again in contrast to our society, where many city-dwelling people are estranged from nature. In experiencing nature, we learn how much we *depend* on it, especially on the weather: we cannot influence it, but it has a strong influence on us, when we spend a whole day in pouring rain or scorching heat. Thus we can learn to *pay attention to nature* – and in a wider sense regain *respect for nature*. We can observe the weather and adjust to it, just as we can adjust to the way ahead of us, whether it leads up steep hills or through boggy meadows. And finally, according to Christian belief, an encounter with nature is always an *encounter with God's creation* – and thereby also an *experience of God the creator*. We acknowledge God as the 'creator of heaven and earth' in the first sentence of the Apostles' Creed, but in the theology and spirituality of all denominations, the sense of creation has been widely lost. Our urban, technology-dependent lifestyle largely deprives us of the chance to recognize God in his creation. This may be a reason for the increasing secularization of our society which is even more important than the often cited enlightenment. Being in nature, as pilgrims are, has certainly an important religious dimension because many people experience God in nature – more vividly than they do in church, when reading the bible or through the sacraments.

Pilgrimage is an ancient Christian exercise and has a rich tradition. The bible itself contains important points of reference to it. The archetype of the pilgrim – a person who sets out on a voyage in the name of God and under his protection – is Abraham. 'Go from your country, your people and your father's house to the land I will show you.' (Gen

12:1)[78] It is with this call from God to Abraham that the history of the people of Israel begins. Another biblical paradigm of pilgrimage is the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and their forty years of wanderings through desert and wilderness. The path leads them *from the land of slavery to the promised land of freedom*, a fundamental and deeply symbolic journey. God's presence accompanies them – 'by day [...] in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light' (Exod 13:21). For centuries, the tribes of Israel led nomadic lives in the Holy Land and the Hebrew bible reflects this experience. One of the best-known examples is Psalm 23, where we read: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, *they* comfort me.' (Ps 23:1–4) There are also the *pilgrimage psalms*, which were prayed on the pilgrimage holidays of passover, shavuot, and sukkot. For these holidays, three times a year large numbers of Jewish pilgrims came to the temple of Jerusalem, to sacrifice and celebrate together. Psalms 120 to 134 are each entitled 'A pilgrim song' – they thus constitute one of the oldest collections of spiritual travel companions in world literature. In Psalm 121, the pilgrim prays: 'I lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip. He who watches over you will not slumber. The Lord watches over you; the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm; he will watch over your life.' (Ps 121:1–3.5–7)

The New Testament, too, contains the pilgrimage motif. Jesus himself was a wandering preacher and those who wanted to become his dis-

[78] This and further bible quotations are according to the New International Version.

ciples had to *follow* him, which means to set out on the journey together with him. The apostles were envoys, travelling from one place to the next. Christians are called upon not to become settled in this world. 'For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.' (Heb 13:14) And as the *didache* tells us, the oldest Christian catechism dating to the time around 100 AD, many members of the first Christian community followed Jesus' practice. It stipulates in detail under what conditions and for how long the Christian wandering preachers were to be allowed to stay in a town – after three days at the latest, they had to be sent on their way again.[79]

The practice of pilgrimage became increasingly popular in the Constantinian era. Empress Helena herself, the mother of Constantine the Great, had travelled to the Holy Land to visit various biblical places and the site of Jesus' death and resurrection. Yearning for the country of Israel was widespread at the time – another famous example for this is Saint Jerome, who settled in Bethlehem to translate the Hebrew bible into Latin (the so called vulgate). We owe a most lively and instructive report on the practices of pilgrimage around that time to Egeria, a French pilgrimess who visited the Holy Land from 381 to 384 AD and gave a detailed account of her travels for her sisters back home in Gaul.[80] Her description of the actual proceedings already prefigures the most important key elements of pilgrimage:

- visiting the places of the Salvation History;
- travelling together with others;
- going on foot and considering the journey as a spiritual exercise;
- reading the biblical stories corresponding to the individual places;
- praying for certain important concerns.

[79] Schöllgen, Georg (ed.): *Didache/Zwölf-Apostel-Lehre*, Freiburg: Herder, 1991.
[80] Brox, Norbert *et al.* (eds.), Egeria, *Itinerarium/Reisebericht*, Freiburg: Herder, 2000.

Only the aspect of indulgence, which played such an important role in the popularization of pilgrimage during the middle ages, was unknown to Egeria. Her prayers, too, ask for purification and forgiveness, but this was only one of many aspects and not related to the idea of remission from punishment in the afterworld.

From the 11th century, visiting the Holy Places played an important role in the context of the crusader's movement and abusive practices began to develop which remained influential in the Catholic Church until modern times. Since not all supporters of the crusades could visit the Holy Land themselves, as a kind of substitute, numerous places of pilgrimage emerged in Europe. They were provided with relics (in most cases false), related to miraculous accounts and given the privilege to grant indulgences – pastoral concerns being of much less importance than historical authenticity. The aforementioned pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela also owes its popularity to this development. The reformation and Luther's protest against the abusive sale of indulgences brought an end to the practice of pilgrimage among Protestant Christians for a long time. However, the idea, based on biblical motifs, that *life is a pilgrimage* remained alive as a literary figure, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world. John Bunyan's famous book *The Pilgrim's Progress* has been a classic of spiritual literature for centuries.[81] And when a group of radical Congregationalists split from the Anglican Church and was therefore forced to emigrate, they were called the *Pilgrim Fathers*.

Against this historical background, it is of great importance to the ecumenical movement that the concept of pilgrimage is taken up across denominations. This was possible not least because malpractices that were *anathema* to other Christians have become less pronounced in the Catholic Church. At least at the grassroots level, catholic and protestant Christians can nowadays set out together on their way – although the

[81] Bunyan, John: *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

granting of indulgences at the pilgrims' destination is still part of the official catholic practice. Some pilgrims arriving at Santiago will realize this, with a mixture of amusement and surprise, when, after weeks of hardship, they are cordially received at the International Pilgrim's Office and handed a certificate, written in Latin (with the pilgrim's name also latinized), which confirms that he or she – after receipt of the eucharist, confession, a Lord's prayer and reciting the creed – will be free of punishment in the afterworld. Irritations among protestant Christians also arose in relation to the Great Jubilee Indulgence for pilgrims to Rome in the year 2000 and the Holy Robe Pilgrimage to Trier in 2012 which had been conceived as an ecumenical event.

Thus, it is a remarkable development that the WCC, whose member churches predominantly belong to the protestant community, has called for an ecumenical pilgrimage for justice and peace. This shows that denominational controversies have been resolved sufficiently to embark on the pilgrimage together.

2.4 Following the Pilgrim Way

But what does the WCC's call for on an ecumenical pilgrimage actually mean? First, we should note that this call is not only addressed to the member churches, but to all believers and even to all people of good will. There has long been an awareness within the WCC that the ecumenical movement is wider and more comprehensive than the part of Christianity which is represented by its member churches. The WCC does not consider itself to be identical with the ecumenical movement. Rather, it has the self-understanding to be 'a privileged instrument' to determine the agenda of ecumenical processes.[82] Since the WCC has no

[82] Ecumenism in the 21st Century. Final Report of the Consultation Committee on Ecumenism in the 21st Century, Geneva 2012, IV: Institutional Challenges, in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st*

jurisdictional powers, and in accordance with its constitution does not seek such powers,[83] the Assembly will not be followed by any roadmap from Geneva that would prescribe the churches' individual stations of the pilgrimage. Those who should expect such guidance from the WCC will be disappointed. The Busan Assembly's call for pilgrimage only gave an impulse and it remains the responsibility of local churches to react to this impulse and put it into practice in their own contexts. Whether the ecumenical pilgrimage only remains a formula of ecumenical jargon or whether it is put into practice to contribute to the development of justice and peace in this world – that is a matter of reception, it depends on all of *us*.

One possible example of such reception is the synod of the Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau (EKHN), which was held in Frankfurt in November 2013, only a few days after the conclusion of the WCC Assembly. At this time it was too early to take concrete decisions as to how the pilgrimage might be realized within the EKHN, but it was resolved that this would be a key issue to be discussed at the next autumn synod. Consultations as to how the pilgrimage might be undertaken in this church are underway and corresponding requests can be submitted. One pronouncement already made is to set up an environmental programme and a special fund to help local communities to bring their buildings up to ecological standards.

An *ecumenical* pilgrimage cannot be unilinear. According to the basic principle of *unity in diversity*, there must be multiple access points – like with the Way of Saint James, that extends its network of small and large roads across the landscapes, to converge on a single destination. After all, we set out on our pilgrimages for justice and peace from different starting points: some Christians will consider the question of

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Century. A Reader for Theological Education, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 379.

[83] See Meeting of the Central Committee in Toronto/1950: *The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches* (Toronto Declaration).

women's rights or gender equality to be of particular importance, others will focus on issues like climate protection, nuclear power or the prohibition of arms trade. Therefore, the pilgrimage will likely resemble a *converging march* in which we move from different directions towards a common goal. 'We intend to move together' does not mean that we all march in closed ranks along the same route – this would be a fatal misunderstanding of this aspiration.

Rather, it is important to keep in view the *dimension of repentance* which has been linked to the tradition of pilgrimage since ancient times. The practices relating to indulgences have distorted this dimension and it is in need of ecumenical rediscovery. Another key idea of pilgrimage is that it does not only involve being on the move, but also pause and reflection. We need *stations* along the way, stopovers where we can rest. What are the *sources of strength* that we can find in order not to give up on the way towards justice and peace? From the Peace Train initiative we can learn that not only the resting places but also the *points of pain* constitute important stations along the way; many participants reported that the visit to the border with North Korea was one of the most impressive experiences on their way – even though their journey reached its lowest point there.

2.5 Conclusion

Finally, a proposal deserves to be mentioned that was made by the former Anglican Bishop of Colombo, Sri Lanka, Duleep Kamil de Chickera, during the first theme plenary at the Busan Assembly. He called upon Christians worldwide to practice an ecumenical liturgy of the washing of the feet. While the joint eucharist is not allowed by the Catholic and Orthodox churches, according to de Chickera, it is more useful to seek for alternatives than to get embroiled in controversy over this issue. The washing of the feet could be such an alternative. It is *un-*

controversial in the ecumenical dialogue and not subject to any canonical prohibition. Moreover, it is a powerful expression of *humility*, without which reconciliation between the churches cannot progress. The washing of the feet creates a *closeness*, which is quite different from but no less intimate than that experienced during the eucharist. And finally: The washing of the feet may be understood as a *sacrament of the way* because it is the feet that carry us forward. Thus the ecumenical washing of the feet could become the liturgical expression of our commitment to the pilgrimage of justice and peace, if we celebrate it on a regular basis – for example during ecumenical gatherings. In fact, one of the services held at Busan involved a liturgy of the washing of the feet: Olaf Fykse Tveit, the WCC general secretary washed the feet of four participants, who were sitting, back-to-back, on chairs arranged at the four ends of a cross. This was an impressive symbol of the care and attention that will make the ecumenical pilgrimage for justice and peace a success. May the symbols become reality!

3

ASIAN APPROACHES TO CHRISTOLOGY

Cornelia Hole (Germany, Protestant)

3.1 Introduction

During the 20th century profound changes took place in the understanding of mission and ecumenism. The World Council of Churches (WCC) became a forum for exchange between different churches and denominations from various cultural backgrounds. Alongside this process it has been intensely discussed how gospel and culture relate to each other.[84] The title of this essay *Asian approaches* assumes that contextual theologies and a mutual influence of Christianity and culture do exist.

Consequently, two questions need to be raised: First, in which sense are the approaches presented below distinctively *Asian*? And second, what do they contribute to christology? I will first discuss briefly these two criteria and focus on some Asian, particularly East Asian concepts. I will then evaluate the insights of these Asian christologies according to

[84] For different concepts regarding the relationship between gospel and culture (e.g. exclusivism, inclusivism, accommodation, inculturation, contextual theology) see Küster, Volker, *Die vielen Gesichter Jesu Christi. Christologie interkulturell*, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner, 16–33.

those criteria. Finally, I will summarise their meaning for contemporary christology.

3.2 The Criterion of Contextuality

What is truly *Asian*? Asia comprises not only entirely different countries and climate zones, but also differs largely with regard to its cultural and religious backgrounds. To make it even more complicated, the colonial history of many Asian countries and the significant Western influence have shaped them profoundly. Further, even if the authors of the discussed approaches are themselves Asian, they often studied in Western countries.[85]

Keeping this in mind, I am going to focus on the (East) Asian approaches of the Japanese Kazoh Kitamori, of Choan-Seng Song, born in Taiwan, and of Young-Bok Kim and other representatives of the minjung theology in Korea. I shall look at whether and how these concepts interact with their complex cultural-religious and socio-political context: Buddhism in the case of Kitamori and chances and problems of newly technically developed countries in the case of Minjung theology. Because of the limited scope of this essay, concepts which are especially concerned with an inter-textual and inter-religious understanding of Jesus Christ as it is important for the Hindu context, cannot be dealt with.

3.3 The Criterion of a Christological Contribution

The central criterion to evaluate these approaches shall be, how they deal with Christ's suffering, death and resurrection. I shall merely ex-

[85] Furthermore, my sources are limited, as only few Asian theologians have written in or have been translated into English. See Tang, Edmond, "East Asia", in: Parratt, John (ed.), *An Introduction to Third World Theologies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 74-104.

plore, whether, how and why Asian approaches relate to the Western understanding of sin, redemption and incarnation. This again is not to measure them by Western concepts which they often want to become emancipated from, but, contrariwise, to see Western concepts from a new angle.

3.3.1. Kazoh Kitamori

The central idea of Kazoh Kitamori's *The Theology of the Pain of God* (1946) is 'the gospel of love rooted in the pain of God'.[86] 'Love rooted in the pain of God' means 'that God loves those who reject his love [...].The entire bible has nothing more than this to say.'[87]

In order to understand Kitamori's concept it is crucial to realize that he distinguishes between two kinds of love: God's immediate love, which is rejected, and God's love of the cross, his pain: 'The "pain of God" is different from "love of God". [...] Both the "pain of God" and "love of the cross" reflect love which is poured on us by cancelling our sin of rejecting God's love. [...] Man can turn against the immediate "love of God" but not against the "pain of God", the love of the cross.'[88]

To illustrate God's pain, Kitamori uses the *tsurasa* concept of classical Japanese drama.[89] Tsurasa means a feeling of 'suffering, sadness and bitterness',[90] which becomes pain when it has to be restrained. It is caused for instance by the dilemma of loving someone who rejects one's love. Likewise, God is torn between his immediate love and his wrath about human sinfulness, which rejects this love. But God overcomes his

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[86] Ibid., 150.
[87] Ibid., 162. 'This term [...] derives its expression from biblical passages. [...] The passages in question are Jer 31:20 and Isa 63:15.' (Ibid., 162) 'The word *hamah* [my bowels are troubled, mercies], applied to God, means *pain* and *love* simultaneously.' (Ibid., 161).
[88] Ibid., 156, 160.
[89] 'Tsurasa, the heart of Japanese tragedy, corresponds most closely to the pain of God.' (Ibid., 148).
[90] Tang, Edmond, "East Asia", in: Parratt, John (ed.), *An Introduction to Third World Theologies*, 91.

wrath by the love of the cross, his pain.[91] It is God's pain-love, which brings about justification and redemption for people: 'His will for salvation is manifested in the person of Jesus Christ as his pain. The pain of God reveals himself while saving us.'[92] Human suffering can reveal God's saving pain-love to people although it has its origin in man's alienation from God. Kitamori calls this *analogia doloris*.

Contrary to Song,[93] who will be introduced later, I see Kitamori's strength in his understanding of salvation. His theology makes it very clear that it is impossible for man to be separated from God's love even if he turns against it. Song says that Kitamori's redemption is a mere process within God himself, necessary because of God's anger and hardly related with forgiveness of our sins. Yet, it has a lot to do with forgiveness because our sin causes the wrath of God. The problem is not, that God has to overcome his wrath, but that he has to overcome human sin which rejects his first, immediate love. He overcomes sin through the new love of the cross, the love which loves despite of rejection.[94]

On one side, Kitamori takes the pain of God seriously: 'The pain of God is his deepest and most essential nature.'[95] Thus he succeeds in putting the cross in the very heart of the understanding of the trinity, contrary to several Western approaches. On the other side, God's pain is just an ontological category for him and not real pain: 'Man's pain and God's pain are qualitatively different',[96] even though human suffering might reveal God's pain-love for us (*analogia doloris*). 'The word "pain" [...] is symbolic.'[97]

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[91] See Kitamori, Kazoh, *The Theology of the Pain of God*, Richmond: John Knox Press, 1946, 160.
[92] Ibid., 146.
[93] Song, Choan-Seng, *Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*, New York: Maryknoll/ Orbis Books, 1991, 78.
[94] See Kitamori, Kazoh, *The Theology of the Pain of God*, 156, 160, 164.
[95] Ibid., 146.
[96] Ibid., 167.
[97] Ibid., 162. Song criticizes: 'There must be a difference between the cross that God in Christ is bearing for the pain and suffering of this world and the cross as

What of Luther's 'O große Not, Gott selbst liegt tot'?[98] Kitamori tends to internalise pain. Consequently real com-passion becomes impossible. Further on, Kitamori's ontological understanding of God's pain grants little but a symbolic role for Jesus: 'The personification of God's pain is Jesus.'[99] As a result, the concept of incarnation has no meaning for his theology. Moreover, his theology of God's pain somehow cannot conceive the god-forsakenness of Jesus on the cross, as for him it is God's pain which brings about redemption. Therefore, the resurrection plays a minor role, the death being already the justification of man: 'The relationship between the death and resurrection of Christ and between justification and sanctification constitutes the inner structure of grace.'[100] Finally, although he defines God's pain as ontological, the question remains how an almighty God can suffer. This is the reason of the decrees of Chalcedon – to make the cross consistent with the Greek philosophical imagination of an invulnerable God.

However, Kitamori starts a dialogue not only with Japanese literature but also with Buddhism by mediating 'between Buddhist understanding of suffering and Christian theology of the cross'.[101] Moreover, his concept of the *analogia doloris*, meaning that human suffering reveals God's redeeming pain-love, calls Christians to live in solidarity with the suffering and oppressed; very much in agreement with liberation theologies.

3.3.2. Choan-Seng Song

Unlike Kitamori, incarnation is the central concept of Choan-Seng Song. But he tends to dissolve incarnation and christology completely

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symbol of the struggle within God's own self.' Song, Choan-Seng, *Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*, 78.

[98] 'God himself is dead.'

[99] Kitamori, Kazoh, *The Theology of the Pain of God*, 167.

[100] Ibid., 161.

[101] Tang, Edmond, "East Asia", in: Parratt, John (ed.), *An Introduction to Third World Theologies*, 90.

into his theology.[102] Originally an interpretation to understand Jesus within the complex Greek cosmology, the dynamic of incarnation becomes a confession for Song: 'The symbolic meaning of God taking human flesh is that God has always been with and in the world, that he has always been involved in history [...] [as] the redemptive force.'[103] Thereby he is able to say that God has always been present in Asian cultures and religions. This again establishes a basis for contextual theology.

Consequently, he makes no difference between creation and redemption: 'Where there is creation, there is redemption. [...] Creation is God's redeeming act.'[104] As a result, Jesus Christ becomes a mere *intensification* of God: 'What we have in Jesus Christ is the concentration of God's creating and redeeming power.'[105] 'Jesus did not bring the reign of God into the world because it was already there.'[106] However, by this means he argues that God is incarnate everywhere in the world even if he is most intensely present in Jesus, thus founding a 'multi-centre-theology'.[107]

Songs principle is his *story-theology*. Beyond the inculturation of Christianity in Asia he aims at a genuine Asian way of doing theology. His method is telling stories, confronting and combining the tales of people, traditional and biblical narratives. Asian theologians need 'to

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[102] See Federschmidt, Karl, *Theologie aus asiatischen Quellen: Der theologische Weg Choan-Seng Songs vor dem Hintergrund der asiatischen ökumenischen Diskussion*, Münster: Lit Verlag, 1994, 246.
[103] Song, Choan-Seng, "God's Mission with the Nations", in: Amirtham, S (ed.), *A Vision for Man*, Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1978, 232.
[104] Song, Choan-Seng, *Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*, 56.
[105] Ibid., 74.
[106] Song, Choan-Seng, *Jesus and the reign of God*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 162.
[107] Federschmidt, Karl, *Theologie aus asiatischen Quellen: Der theologische Weg Choan-Seng Songs vor dem Hintergrund der asiatischen ökumenischen Diskussion*, 251.

image their theology and not conceptualise it'.[108] They should not be like scholars in an ivory tower but like story-tellers in an oriental bazaar. Song's method corresponds to the way Jesus communicates with people in biblical stories using examples of their daily life. Unlike Kozuke Koyama's story theology, he barely reflects on hermeneutic principles of selecting, combining and telling stories. Furthermore, after having experienced various Asian contexts 'one danger he is liable to is that [...] he looses his earth-bound footing.'[109]

Yet his comparison of the cross and the lotos is inspiring.[110] Not denying their differences he argues that they symbolize the same questions about life and death, originally rooting both in the suffering of the people. Therefore he postulates common action of Buddhists and Christians for the suffering people.

Another contrast to Kitamori is Song's understanding of divine pain and its relation to human suffering. This originates not least in his concept of incarnation. According to Song, there is no difference between divine and human suffering. 'God suffers with us and dies with us. [...] The God who is crucified on the cross is not so much the God who vicariously suffers and dies *for* the world as the God who suffers and dies *with* the world. Here vicariousness is replaced by identification.'[111] His opinion is opposed to traditional Western theology with its emphasis on the vicarious suffering of Jesus Christ.[112]

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[108] Song, Choan-Seng, *Theology from the Womb of Asia*, New York: Maryknoll/ Orbis Books, 1986, 61.
[109] Federschmidt, Karl, *Theologie aus asiatischen Quellen: Der theologische Weg Choan-Seng Songs vor dem Hintergrund der asiatischen ökumenischen Diskussion*, 243.
[110] Song, Choan-Seng, *Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*, 119–141.
[111] Ibid., 184.
[112] But Song himself refers to Bonhoeffer to support his statement, and he could well be compared to Dorothee Sölle's book *Stellvertretung* (Vicariousness), 1965.

In contrast to Kitamori, Song is able to emphasize the real compassion of God: only a com-passionate God can struggle with the oppressed. 'The theological uniqueness imputed to him [...] has to yield to his solidarity with people in their struggles in particular historical situations.'[113]

Combining his story-theology and Jesus' compassion he says: 'Jesus is the story of people'.[114] 'To know Jesus and God, then, we [...] have to listen to the stories of people.'[115] 'In the meeting of these histories [of Jesus and the people] [...] the perimeter of God's saving power [...] is broadened.'[116] It is through this conception that he takes the concrete history of Jesus serious and encourages a creative encounter of divine and human stories. The concept of a compassionate God is also crucial for the Korean minjung theology, to which we shall turn now.

3.3.3. Young-Bok Kim and the Minjung Theology

Young-Bok Kim, 9.01.2003
© Cornelia Hole

Minjung denotes the marginalized, the people living at the bottom of society. The aim is to raise *minjung* as the subjects of history. As part of this cultural and political movement which arose in the 1970s addressing itself against the dictatorship of Park Chung-Hee in South Korea, minjung theology came into existence.

Ahn Byung-Mu finds in the *ochlos* of the gospel of Mark, the main addressees of Jesus' message, the equivalent for the minjung, the suffering grassroot people. Yet minjung are not only addressees. Similar to Songs *Jesus, the*

[113] Song, Choan-Seng, *Jesus, the Crucified People*, New York: Crossroad, 1990, 125.
[114] Ibid., 14.
[115] Ibid., 215.
[116] Ibid., 217.

Crucified people where Song interprets Jesus on the cross as the personification of the collective people who were crucified, minjung theologians argue that Jesus himself was a suffering minjung. They perceive him rather as a collective symbol of the poor than as redeemer. 'Jesus was a friend of minjung rather than their leader, educator or liberator. Jesus as liberator is incongruous with the notion of minjung subjecthood in history.'[117]

As a consequence, this subjecthood was the strength as well as the weakness of minjung theology: On one hand they could take side with the politically oppressed and economically exploited, thereby taking the message of Jesus seriously. They really did not need another dictator. On the other hand they tended to overlook that God was suffering with us in Jesus. 'If Jesus was a mere minjung [...], then why were the Jewish religious leaders scandalised by his association with sinners? [...] For no radical message can be found in a minjung's association with other minjung.'[118] The understanding of Jesus as a mere projection of the collective minjung tends to de-historize him and to neglect him being saviour. It tends to leave out the tension between the total liberation in future and the partial liberation in history.

Another point minjung theologians share with Song is the emphasis on the stories of the people and the appreciation of popular culture. This is for example expressed in using the shamanist mask dances to express their feelings of *han*, 'the proud bitterness of the oppressed'.[119] According to Hyun Young-Hak[120] these dances allow the han-solving experi-

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[117] Lee, Moonjang, *Images of Jesus Christ in the non-Western World: An Asian Reflection*, 2002, 1–8, http://iworldmission.com/mjlee01.htm (accessed 2 December 2013).
[118] Ibid., 1.
[119] Tang, Edmond, "East Asia", in: Parratt, John (ed.), *An Introduction to Third World Theologies*, 98.
[120] Hyun, Young-Hak, "A Theological Look at the Mask Dance in Korea", in: The Comission on Theological Concerns of the Christians Conferences of Asia (CTC-CCA) (ed.), *Minjung Theology. People as the Subjects of History*, London: Zed Press, 1983, 47-54.

ence of critical self-transcendence. Maltuggi, a clown, thus becomes transparent for Jesus.

In Kim Young-Bok's conception the link between subjecthood and story-theology becomes obvious. Minjung can become subjects of history by participating in cultural communication and 'Jesus is the messiah who raises up the people as the subject of religious-cultural creation and cultural action [communication].'[121] Quoting Phil 2:5f he identifies two crucial points of an Asian christology: 'The minjung theology takes the *kenosis of power* as the fundamental christological statement. [...] The other christological notion is the social and collective modality of *en christos*.'[122] The first adding a new dimension to a theologia crucis and the second criticizing Western christologies which introduce 'Christ as an individual person for each individual',[123] they both create upheavals for the understanding of Jesus Christ. Subjecthood emerges from minjung (kenosis of power) acting jointly (*en christos*) and raising their cultural voice. Jesus rendered this possible by making them addressees, subjects and communicators of his stories, the bible being 'the book of communication'.[124]

The problem of Kim's concept is his understanding of *en christos* as a community of minjung only. Blessing the ethnic and cultural differences between people on one side,[125] on the other side he says 'people live in the midst of a cultural war'[126] and blames dominant cultures like the American. 'The movement of Jesus for the reign of God is a combined struggle against the Roman and Greek imperial powers [...], against the encroaching cultural pollution in the life of God's people.'[127]

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[121] Kim, Young-Bok, *Jesus Christ Among Asian Minjung: A Christological Reflection*, 1989, 1–31, http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=46 (accessed 2 December 2013).
[122] Ibid., 3f.
[123] Ibid., 2.
[124] Ibid., 22.
[125] Ibid., 20 f.
[126] Ibid., 13 f.
[127] Ibid., 20.

He does not consider biblical stories like Philemon and Onesimus (Philem 1:10f), nor the one of the centurion of Capernaum (Matt 8:5f). As a result he fails to conceive a real reconciliation and transformation of the relationship between powerful and powerless, which was so central to Jesus' message.[128]

Finally, there are lots of urgent new issues an up-to-date minjung theology could tackle having lost its visible enemy and having reached democracy. To name just some of them: insufficient rights for migrant workers with their *3-D jobs* (dirty, dangerous and difficult), homeless people or school system.

3.4 Conclusion

In which sense are the considered approaches contextual? Kitamori is deeply influenced by Western theologians. Yet, in dealing with the pain of God related to human suffering, his theology is relevant both to the post-World War II situation in Japan and to suffering in general. Furthermore, his concept of God's pain enables a dialogue with Buddhism and his use of the tsurasa concept roots his theology in Japanese culture.

Song lays the theological foundation for contextual theology with his understanding of incarnation, stating that God has always been present in Asian cultures and religions. Besides, he contributes largely to contextuality by his story-theology. Real contextuality is enabled not only by translating theological concepts into the religious-cultural categories

[128] Fighting against 'imperial cultures' and 'cultural pollution' he apparently does not realize the complex structure of a culture. *The* American as well as *the* Korean culture is a product of different cultural identities. Consequently, he turns a blind eye to suppressed cultural identities within cultures as, for example, those of migrant workers in Korea. Nevertheless, Kim makes the important point that there should be an equal dialogue between different cultures. See Kim, Young-Bok, *Jesus Christ Among Asian Minjung: A Christological Reflection*, 22.

of other people but by a new way of doing theology: telling stories. Combining this with Jesus as representative for the crucified people, he succeeds to relate incultural and liberation theology.

Minjung theologies' merit finally is to face the concrete historical, socio-political problems during the time of dictatorship in Korea; it is not merely an indigenous hermeneutics of biblical texts but a cultural struggle with and of the people against oppression.

What are the insights of these approaches for Christology?

1. *Kitamori:* The suffering of Christ (theologia crucis) is at the centre of the trinity. However, Christ becomes here a mere personification of God's essence, which is related to ontological pain rather than real suffering. Redemption is fulfilled by love rooted in this pain; resurrection is likely to be secondary. Yet, he makes strikingly transparent that God's love revealed in Jesus overcame any sinfulness.
2. *Song:* By means of his story-theology he reveals that there can be no christological thinking without looking at and telling the stories of people. Western theology should realize that Bultmann's history of tradition is not just a description of how stories were handed down in former times. Song's universal understanding of incarnation makes it difficult for him to take the historical Jesus seriously. But turning from a christocentric universalism to a theology of the suffering people in his later writings, he casts Jesus as the story of people and Jesus' stories gain importance. This leads him to a revision of the concept of vicarious suffering.
3. *Kim* (minjung theology): A revised view of sin is achieved. Sin is not just a moral issue like in traditional Western concepts but it is understood as structural sin. Kenosis is crucial for the messiahship of Jesus. The limited understanding of Jesus as a mere saviour for individuals is broadened by the emphasis on the community in Christ. The cross is a collective symbol for the suffering

people. Redemption is thought to be political liberation and cultural self-determination.

To conclude, Asian approaches unveil the contextual presuppositions of Western concepts and urge us to *rethink the concepts of moral sin, individual redemption and vicariousness*. They point to the importance of story-telling for theology. Furthermore, they challenge Western theologians to consider dogma and ethics, thought and action as belonging together since they emphasize the importance of common struggle and solidarity.

4

MISSION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Joanna Hipp (USA, Presbyterian)

Mission

4.1 Introduction

The ecumenical movement in the 21st century is a movement of change. It provides an open space for dialogue about what needs to be changed, how to do it, and where to start. If we speak about the ecumenical *movement*, this implies the notion of transition and action. At the 10th Assembly of the WCC in Busan, the term *pilgrimage* has been employed to express the same conviction. This constant change also affects our understanding of mission.

I grew up in rural North Carolina and went to college in that same state. I moved to Louisville, Kentucky, to gain a Masters of Divinity, and in my time here, I have travelled on two opportunities with the World Council of Churches. The ecumenical movement is now at the heart of my own being, and a renewed understanding of mission is just as much a part of that. It was a great opportunity for me to participate in the WCC Assembly in Busan thanks to the GETI programme. The Assembly's issues do not only affect those who are delegates, but the uni-

versal church. To keep this in mind will be beneficial especially for young people, since all voices are to be heard.

When missionaries embark to new places, they do not only need to study the context of their host country but to be involved with as much of the culture as one can. Again, this requires not a top-down approach, but a collaborative one. The missionary seeks to name the hardships of everyday life – in the peoples' own language. Therefore, it is important to become multilingual, and strive to learn about the history of other countries. Even when it seems that this is not directly related to my life – we are all connected in the body of Christ, and this means we hold one another accountable.

4.2 Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes

The World Council of Churches (WCC) drafted a document called *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* that went before the central committee in 2012 on the island of Crete, Greece. The document passed, and it raises important issues concerning the ecumenical vision of mission and evangelism. This document starts with the affirmation: 'We believe in the triune God who is the creator, redeemer, and sustainer of all life.'[129] It is through the trinity that mission begins. The trinity binds together humanity and creation. This means that we care both for humanity and for the world entrusted to our care. 'We are commissioned to continue seeking God's justice through a liberating and healing ministry.'[130] Because of this, we have to be bold and take a stance. We cannot sit idly by. But the question remains: what actions have to be taken?

[129] Keum, Jooseop (ed.), *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 4.
[130] Ibid., 4.

An important statement in this document is: 'The church is to be in the world but not of the world.'[131] To be of the world would mean to accept the world's values and standards; however, this is not what we are called to because people are being exploited and lives are diminished. We are called to be the agents of restitution and justice and members of a reconciling body.

As the ecumenical movement is a pilgrimage, mission is a pilgrimage as well. It is not stagnant. For both the ecumenical movement and world mission have a specific goal, which is named explicitly in the mission-document: together *towards life*. Thus, this is a life-affirming document. Mission is not *to* or *at* the margins, but it has to be *with* and even *from* the margins. The people at the margins have a voice that has been long silenced. We do not speak for the voiceless, because those who have been ignored have a voice of their own; the problem is simply that we are not listening. According to Stephen Beavens, 'Spirit is at work among all cultures. The Spirit is at work calling us to join in. Spirit is at work in the hearts of all women and men. It is Jesus who shows us the face of God and in the resurrection shows the Spirit to us.'[132] We have to find out where mission is happening and join in. This mission policy is not only about mission and evangelism, but a re-working of how we view the other.

4.3 Mission and the Perspective of the Global South

Today, two thirds of Christians live in the Global South. This means that the West, specifically the United States, while vastly wealthy, no more constitutes the majority. If the church is going to reach and serve the poor, the church needs to be poor itself. As the church in the Western hemisphere is in decline, what will provide the momentum to help us

[131] Ibid., 14.
[132] Beavens, Stephen, *The Spirit of Mission*. Mission Plenary, World Council of Churches 10th Assembly, Busan, Korea, 1 November 2013.

move forward? We need to be concerned for all of God's kin-dom. Our priority should not be to posse a location in the most popular part of the city. In the West, we have become so focused on buildings that we have forgotten that the presence of Jesus may be experienced where two or three are gathered. The buildings are not sacred; *we* are the sacred – wherever our feet touch is sacred ground, for we have gathered in God's name.

In a lecture for the students of the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute, Cecilia Castillo Nanjan spoke about mission in Latin America. Often, when we hear of *America* people think of the *United States*. We forget about our brothers and sisters in Central and South America. When we then talk about mission, we must remember that this is not a top-down approach. It is not about the super-hero swooping in to save the day. Paraphrasing Nancy Cardoso from Portuguese: 'Losing time, losing friends, losing one's voice and memory we have already become close to losing that we forget about leaving, we simply survive.'[133] Life is more than just surviving; it is a call to aid everyone to thrive. Mission has to also be about women raising their voices about the denial of gender justice and political freedom. We are to denounce crimes against human rights.

Essentially, mission is about justice and peace – this is the call for mission in the 21st century. 'The quest for justice and peace is central to the church's mission; it is the call of Christ to the church. In the quest for justice and peace we recognize the significance of all creation and each human being in relationship to God and each other.'[134] This is where the theme of both the central committee meeting in Crete and the Assembly in Busan come in: *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'*

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[133] Cardoso, Nancy, *Oikos Tree Movement*, Madang Workshop, World Council of Churches 10th Assembly, Busan, Korea, 6 November 2013.
[134] Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 376.

This is the first time an Assembly theme has been a prayer. The motto of the Assembly shows the changing face of the ecumenical movement in the 21st century. Because God is the source of life we can affirm to be mutually accountable to one another. Our power is a common power, not a hierarchical one. When we share power, we also share our vulnerability. God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, who identified with the marginalized, the outcast, the broken. We are called to be in the world, following his example.

This is why the changing landscape of mission is so important. 'In considering mission in the context of ecumenism in the 21st century, we reaffirmed that missionary activities and ecumenical dialogue require respectful relationships, accountability and trust.'[135] We shall not pursue a top down approach, but a mutual affirmation of the gifts God has granted all of us.

4.4 Conclusion

Globalization is an important factor for mission in the 21st century. When we begin to cooperate, then we are able to overcome problems of poverty, oppression, war. If we are in dialogue with one another, we have to hear everyone's voice. The new mission statement calls for all to be heard and for all to serve. We are to transform power into a shared power, and that this is done by giving the power to the poor. Matthew 28 is not just a phrase to skip over, for we are called to teach, to serve and be served.

Our Christian life is not just a spiritual one, but a bodily one. Mission has to be bodily, an affirmation of our whole selves, not only in prayer but in action. Mission is not a solitary activity, it is not an activity of the Global North, nor is it an activity of the privileged few – but one that calls us together.

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[135] Ibid., 375.

May the spirit of mission – the breath of life – breathe into us all new ways for mission, new ways for viewing the world, and new ways of viewing one another as *imago dei*. *Missio dei*, God's mission, is not a solo act done by God, but a call to us as well. God is one who acts in history and in creation and works to provide the fullness of life to all through peace and reconciliation. This is not a metaphorical act, or a prayer we pray on Sunday morning. For when we do mission, we are called to help others so that all persons can experience the richness of the economy of life. We all have the power to change the conditions we are in – not individually, but collectively. As one, we can.

5

POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND FOOD INSECURITY

Derick Dailey (USA, Methodist)

"Is not this the fast I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house?"
(Isaiah 58:6–7)

5.1 Introduction

In America, scores of religious communities and churches are tackling food insecurity by sponsoring soup kitchens, serving as host site for local food banks, participating in holiday food distributions, and more. However, the American church's traditional mode of confronting hunger is proving to be insufficient and inadequate. As the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, new methods of addressing food insecurity must be employed in order to systemically curb the tide of entrenched and abject poverty.

The United States is not acquainted with the kind of poverty that plagues over one billion people on earth; a poverty that forces people to

live on less than USD 1.25 per day.[136] This extreme poverty is an ongoing reality for hundreds of millions of people who struggle daily for survival. Extreme poverty consumes the lives of people around the globe, irrespective of race, gender, nationality, and religious affiliation. But luckily, extreme poverty may be seeing its last days. World leaders, large non-government organizations, major corporations, communities of faith and citizens work to put an end to extreme poverty. The steps laid out in the 2002 United Nations *Millennium Declaration – Millennium Development Goals* provide a blueprint for global action against extreme poverty. This document, global in scope, calls for the elimination of extreme poverty. It was a necessary precursor for the strategies being employed by governments and corporations around the world today. It communicated to the world the stark realities of the poor and hungry around the world, while at the same time it made clear the possibilities of ending global poverty and the tools it would take to get there. Because of the legislative commitments articulated in this strategic plan, we are closer than ever to putting an end to extreme poverty.

Despite the fact that the United States has been able to escape the extreme and abject poverty reflected in the USD 1.25 per day figure, America has been caught in an ever-tightening web of chronic and generational poverty. American poverty currently wreaks havoc on nearly 40 million Americans, almost 15 million of them children.[137] The greatest contributor and sustainer of poverty in America is hunger and food insecurity.

In 2010, 42 out of 50 states saw an increase in child poverty, in large part due to the increased rates of food insecurity. Responding to food insecurity has taken many forms over the years and the church has remained consistent in its fight against hunger and poverty in ways they

[136] Sachs, Jeffrey *The End of Poverty. Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, New York: Penguin, 2005, 20.
[137] Edwards, John *et al.*, *Ending Poverty in America. How to Restore the American Dream*, New York: New, 2007, 4.

deem best. This article seeks to highlight the theological principles that undergird the work of Judeo-Christian community commitments on the issue of hunger and poverty, in an effort to uncover the strand of political theology that these groups employ. It also seeks to illumine the gap between hunger advocacy and the need for more comprehensive and far-reaching approaches from Judeo-Christian groups which include political engagement.

5.2 Food Insecurity, Hunger and Poverty

In 1986 the World Bank published an in-depth study on international hunger and poverty from a strict public policy perspective, under the direction of two economists and social scientists, Shlomo Reutlinger and Jack van Holst Pellekaan. The study culminated in a book entitled *Ensuring Food Security in the Developing World: Issues and Options.* In this study Reutlinger and Pellekaan use the term *food security*. Food security as they wrote 'has to do with access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life.'[138] In the mid-1980s, the report found that more than 700 million people were food insecure; all of which were in the developing world. The most significant dimensions of food security are rooted in accessibility. Accessibility takes two forms: the availability of food and the ability to acquire or procure food.

The study goes on to describe two distinctive forms of food insecurity: chronic and transitory. *Chronic food insecurity* 'is a continuously inadequate diet caused by the inability to acquire food.'[139] Chronic food insecurity is most visible in the developing world; in places like Sub-Saharan African and Southeast Asia. This kind of food insecurity is gen-

[138] Reutlinger, Shlomo/ Holst Pellekaan, Jack van, "Poverty and Hunger. Issues and Options for Food Security in Developing Countries", in: *The World Bank Policy Study*, 1986, 1–82, foreword, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/ external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/1999/09/17/000178830_9810190145 5676/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf (accessed 25 April 2013).
[139] Ibid.

erational and escaping it is extremely difficult; in the last few decades it has been nearly impossible. Chronic food insecurity is prevalent in the lives of nearly 24 % of the global population. Currently, an estimated 1.7 billion people experience chronic food insecurity in the world. This number rose significantly in the last few years as a result of the global economic recession that drastically impacted the costs of fuel and food. As international markets rebound from the financial crisis, food prices around the world remain uncertain and volatile. International food prices are slowly returning to normal rates, but local food prices in the most impoverished countries are yet to descend. The United States Department of Agriculture reports that 'despite the severe drought in the Midwest, retail food prices were mostly flat in 2012. The food-at-home consumer price index (CPI) increased a total of 0.5 % in 2012. Prices rose for beef and veal, poultry, fruit, and other foods in 2012; however, prices fell for pork, eggs, vegetables, and non-alcoholic beverages. For the remaining food categories, prices were unchanged for the most part.'[140] While America experienced a holistic non-change in food prices over the last year, developing countries like Ethiopia are being hit with enormous spikes in food costs resulting in significant challenges for families who are members of the chronically food insecure. A 2012 article from an international news agency reported that food prices for Ethiopians had rose nearly 50 % in one year. The article says: 'Ethiopia's annual inflation rate jumped to nearly 40 % in July. The Central Statistics Agency says food prices, which comprise more than half the consumer price index, were up 47.4 % from a year ago.'[141]

It is critical to frame food insecurity within the aforementioned data because if one only considers American poverty data it is easy to embrace an incorrect account of global hunger and poverty. Contextualizing the food crisis in America in global terms provides vital groundwork

[140] Volpe, Richard, "USDA ERS – Food Price Outlook. Summary Findings", in: *USDA ERS – Food Price Outlook. Summary Findings*, 1.
[141] "Ethiopian Food Prices Up Nearly 50 Percent", in: VOA, 8 August 2011.

for the social scientific task of developing solutions to put an end to food insecurity. A global contextualization does three things for Americans interested in ending American food insecurity. *First*, a global framing provides for a comparative approach that illumines the real possibility of ending poverty here at home. When one engages with the international realities of hunger and poverty and the strategies available, the possibility of ending food insecurity becomes real and the narrative becomes more hopeful rather than overwhelming depressing. *Second*, a global framework helps one to see the enormous gap between American food insecurity and food insecurity in the developing world in places such as South Sudan, Bangladesh, Palau, Cambodia and East Timor. *Finally*, a global context plays an instrumental role in international policy-making by independent states with respect to foreign aid assistance. A global framework aids international institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations, as well as autonomous independent state actors such as Great Britain and Canada in allocating international and independent resources appropriately, by giving priority to those places with the greatest need.

The primary concern of this article is the issue of *transitory food insecurity*. Transitory food insecurity is the current dilemma that many American families are confronted with. It is important to note that sustained transitory food insecurity becomes chronic food insecurity. Today, there is a significant rate of chronic food insecurity in America but in recent years the rise of transitory food insecurity has thrust a number of families, communities and states into deeply impoverished lifestyles and places them on the verge of becoming chronically food insecure. Transitory food insecurity as defined by Reutlinger and Pellekaan is 'a temporary decline in a household's access to enough food. It results from unstable food production and most importantly, the decline of

household incomes.'[142] As a result of the financial recession of 2007, household incomes in America declined while unemployment continued to rise. A March 2013 Washington Post article reports 'that median household income has plummeted 7.3 % since the recession began.'[143] It goes on to say that, 'back in 2007, median household income was USD 55,438. That declined to USD 51,404 in February 2013. Those numbers are pre-tax and adjusted for inflation and seasonal factors.'[144]

This article intentionally focuses on the issue of *food insecurity*, rather than the issue of *hunger* for one very important reason: food insecurity provides a more comprehensive and holistic illustration of the global food crisis and the food crisis in America. Speaking in terms of hunger narrows the scope of the crisis and provides an inadequate demonstration of the challenges that face poor and hungry people. Hunger, for instance, confronts the absence of food but does not take into consideration the nutritional value of food available for families. Food insecurity however, deals with a person's ability to have access to food that will enable them to lead productive and healthy lives. For example, a family in inner city Detroit who has access to cheap food at the local convenient stores or corner stores would not be considered hungry. They would be considered food insecure because their food access is limited to foods that prevent them from living quality lives. Their food is high in sugars, corn and saturated fats. This family is food insecure because they do not have access to wholesale grocery stores or local markets where they can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Families that are in communities where there is no access to fresh fruits and vegetables are living in *food*

[142] Reutlinger, Shlomo/ Holst Pellekaan, Jack van, "Poverty and Hunger. Issues and Options for Food Security in Developing Countries", 5.
[143] Plummer, Brad, "Chart: Median Household Incomes Have Collapsed since the Recession", in: *The Wasington Post*, 29 March 2013, 1, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/03/29/chart-median-household-incomes-have-collapsed-during-the-recession/ (accessed 21 April 2013).
[144] Ibid.

deserts. These families purchase milk at the gas station, eat packaged food regularly and are forced to travel miles for fresh foods that are nutritional and healthy. This Detroit family would not be considered hungry because food is available but they would be considered food insecure because the quality of food does not yield to productive living. The hunger framework explains why so many Americans have diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and other ailments associated with their unhealthy diet. America must see individuals living in food deserts as a dimension of the American food crisis. As a result, this article will speak in terms of food insecurity rather than hunger.

5.3 A Political and Theological Framework

Traditionally, political theology is concerned with the relationship between the institution of the church and the institution of the state. Political theology deals with a multitude of concepts rooted in social ethics, politics, economy, culture, and religion. Political theology is vast and in order to put it in conversation with the topic of food insecurity, it is critical that we focus our understanding of the concept.

Graham Ward says in *The Politics of Discipleship*: 'By [political] I mean an act that entails power – that is an act the effect of which is (a) subjection (an act that puts things into a hierarchy that favours the individual or institution that is acting), (b) liberation (an act that deconstructs the hierarchy that is involved in subjection), (c) maintenance of the status quo.'[145] This article is interested in placing this definition in conversation with God and the church, particularly the role of God and the church in a secular polity. What should Christians do in relation to politics and government? Should they be active participants or passive bystanders? In order to answer these questions it is necessary that we lift

[145] Ward, Graham, *Politics of Discipleship. Becoming Postmaterial Citizens*, Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2009, 27.

up two scholars whose work infiltrates the overlapped space of church and state. A concurrent political and theological framework, for the purposes of this article, relies on the theological and political interpretation of Gustavo Gutierrez and Nicholas Wolterstoff.

Gustavo Gutierrez, the father of liberation theology, begins with the practical realities of people. Confronting the people's struggles is central to liberation theology. Liberation theology is not an attempt to modify ancient patristic thought on issues of justification and trinitarian doctrine; it is rather an attempt to be radical, in that it aims to get to the root of things. The source of oppression, as he sees it, is a systemic, fundamental structural misalignment. Injustice for Gutierrez is not a result of mistakes on behalf of the oppressed. Injustice is tied to cultural and social systems that create the atmosphere for injustice to be born and sustained. These social and cultural systems are not isolated or haphazard; they are grounded in history, which make them difficult to confront in a comprehensive way, but require tireless effort. The goal of liberation theology is to give life to the oppressed and the oppressor. Gutierrez places a premium on the liberation of the oppressed from the oppressive systems, while at the same time, giving significant importance to the internal freeing of oneself. In his text *A Theology of Liberation* he contends that: 'First, there is liberation from social situations of oppressions and marginalization. [...] But it is not enough that we be liberated from oppressive socio-economic structures; also needed is a personal transformation by which we live with profound inner freedom.'[146] Due to the rootedness of the problems that create injustice and oppression, Gutierrez advocates for transformational change. There must be a wholesale altering of the state of things in order to combat systems of oppression. The revolutionary approaches to injustice that Gutierrez calls for, acknowledge that there is no hope in the current system.

[146] Gutiérrez, Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation. History, Politics, and Salvation*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1973, xxxviii.

There is nothing about the current order of society or humanity that makes it plausible to radically undue the systems of oppression and injustice in the world. This is because these systems were built in favour of the strong. They benefit the powerful, not the poor, not the oppressed.

In order to usher in a radical new order, Gutierrez believes that there are two vital steps one must embrace. First, Christians must live their faith. In other words, in order to bring about holistic change in an oppressive system, Christians must become an active participant in the context in which they find themselves. Second, Christians must reflect on their participation through prayer and with a discerning spirit. The Christian practice of living out ones faith is a deeply spiritual one. The Christian life becomes consumed with prayer, fellowship with humanity and communion with God. In living out the Christian faith, the Christian accepts that the gospel message is incompatible with an unjust society. Gutierrez exclaims: 'The motive that moves Christians to participate in the liberation of oppressed people and exploited social classes is the conviction of the radical incompatibility of evangelical demands with an unjust and alienating society.'[147] To be a Christian is to reject injustice and work against it. Christianity is antithetical to injustice and oppression. In addition to rethinking the gospel message the Christian must *act*, and act *locally*. Liberation must be local because the oppressed must be active in the liberation process. It is important to note that liberation is not limited to local efforts. These local efforts are connected to a broader vision for all of humanity. The only way liberation from a particular system can happen is through the collective efforts of people in the struggle, those people experiencing the oppression and injustice made manifest in their daily lives. After the Christian has reassessed the gospel message and attempted to live out ones faith, s/he must critically reflect on that action and invoke God to complete the work of liberation. Critical reflection allows the Christian to determine whether or not ones

[147] Ibid., 81.

actions are aligned with the word of God because, as Gutierrez sees it, fidelity to God's word is at the centre of Christian activism.

As the Christian attempts to act, s/he understands that God is the reformer. God alone is the change-maker. To drastically shift times and uproot systems of oppression, God must be active. Liberation theology recognizes the limitation of human action and links that action to the work that God will do in history. The Christian is called to participate in this work not for mere abstract reasons but also because liberation theology has salvific rudiments. At the core of oppression and injustice there is sin. Liberation theology is about liberation from sin. Sin is being in wrong relationship with God. Sin is a social matter – a lack of communion with humanity and God. Sin is at the core of all injustice. To be saved is to be free from sin, to reject sin and in turn reject injustice and oppression. Spirituality is central to liberation theology. To participate in liberation theology is to be spiritual because it means working towards truth and freedom. Gutierrez puts it this way: 'Spirituality, in the strict and profound sense of the word is the dominion of the Spirit. If "the truth will set you free"[148] the Spirit "will guide you into all the truth"[149] and lead us to complete freedom'.[150]

Nicholas Wolterstorff provides a profound explanation of the tasks of American Christians. Wolterstorff confronts the dualisms present in their lives. Wolterstorff's book *The Mighty and the Almighty* highlights the dualisms present in religious leaders who are a part of the state system. Religious leaders have a dual membership. They are representatives of the church and yet they are also members of society. Additionally, religious leaders have dual authority. One is a spiritual authority bestowed to them by God and the church and another is a social authority conferred to them by their position in society.

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[148] John 8:32.
[149] John 16:13.
[150] Gutiérrez, Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation. History, Politics, and Salvation*, 117.

Wolterstorff is responding to the inadequate defences of liberal democracies by theologians and is attempting to posit the office of citizen and the office of Christian in terms of authority, power and engagement. Wolterstorff believes that Christians, as citizens of the state, are under state authority but they should not compromise their commitments to God and the church. In other words, accepting the authority of the state does not mean a resignation of your critical perception of that state *vis-a-vis* the church. This Christian reflection is necessary because state authority is severely limited. Wolterstorff highlights this in his book saying, 'the state is authorized to curb wrongdoing, to curb injustice, to protect rights, not a positional authority but a performance authority; authority of the state is linked to a specific task.'[151] With regard to the limitation of its task, it is easy for the state to go astray and become a wrong actor.

Wolterstorff's theological perspective sees the obligation that humanity has to itself and contends that for effective governance there must be cooperation. Wolterstorff's account from below makes the case for the additional layer of obligation to God that the Christian has. Christians must not become so consumed with state authority, that they forget their responsibility to God as secondary to that of the state. Cooperation for Wolterstorff is necessary because the state is not only limited in its specific tasks but also because the state is primarily neutral. The state cannot be trusted to cultivate a virtuous society. However, Wolterstorff invites the reader to embrace the positive features of the state. Wolterstorff says: 'God authorizes and enjoins government [...] not to coerce us into loving God and neighbour, if that were even possible, but to deter and punish our wronging of the other and thereby, at the same time, to encourage our doing of what is good and right.'[152] Christian

[151] Wolterstorff, Nicholas, *The Mighty and the Almighty. An Essay in Political Theology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 20.
[152] bid., 110.

engagement must see the state as more than just performing a purely negative function but also with possessing positive elements.

Wolterstorff goes further in laying out Christian engagement in the affairs of the state. He does so by invoking thoughts of Augustine. Augustine, while speaking of the religious leader, illumines a point that is critical to the understanding of Christian Americans and their interaction with the state. Augustine says: 'We see now a citizen [...] holding some office upon earth; as for example, wearing the purple, serving as magistrate, as aedile, as proconsul, as emperor, directing the earthly republic; but he hath his heart above if he is a Christian, if he is of the faithful, if he despiseth those things wherein he is and trusteth in that wherein he is not yet. [...] Let us therefore not despair of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven when we see them engaged in the affairs of Babylon, doing something terrestrial in a terrestrial republic; nor again let us forthwith congratulate all men whom we see engaged in celestial matters for even the sons of the pestilence sit sometimes in the seat of Moses.'[153] Christian state engagement is not only legitimate but ultimately necessary for the building of a just and equal society.

5.4 An Ecumenical Approach to Food Insecurity

The World Council of Churches has articulated its position on issues of greed and consumerism in a well drafted document entitled the *Sao Paola Statement*. This document was born out of previous ecumenical statements such as the *Accra Confession* from the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the 2009 *Statement on Just Finance and the Economy of Life*. In the Sao Paola statement the WCC calls for a new economic and financial architecture to undergird the work of God in creating an economy of life for all of creation. This 2012 statement seeks to confront the grave realities of ecological, social and economic

[153] Ibid., 270.

trials that plague all of creation. The gap between the rich and the poor is evident in nearly every country in the world, particularly in the wealthiest countries such as the United States, and the systemic poverty in the world's poorest countries has become generational and inescapable. Realities like these call the church to prophetic witness and courageous action wherever its context.

The Sao Paola statement seeks to confront four major points. First, it proposes a new economic structure that is based on economic, social and climate justice. Second, the new structure seeks to address and serve the real economy. Third, it hopes to account for social and environmental tasks. Lastly, the new financial architecture seeks to set clear limits to greed. This alternative economic and financial system is grounded in the witness of Christ and God's love. An ethical, just and democratic global economic model is rooted in ecological sustainability, mutual accountability, honesty, and dignity for all of creation. The Sao Paola statement is inherently opposed against imperialism, capitalism and consumer culture. The current economic and financial structures are contrary to God's conception of justice in the world, namely for the most marginal in the world. The churches declare in this statement: 'We therefore seek a transformative theological praxis that not only delegitimizes, displaces and dismantles the present social and economic order but also envisions alternatives that emerge from the margins.'[154] A new theological praxis requires a fresh reconstruction and re-articulation of God's priorities as laid out in the ministry of Jesus Christ and the biblical witness. While the statement rejects the current economic, social, political and military structures, it also recommends alternatives that more completely fulfil the call from God.

The WCC envisions the way forward in a multi-dimensioned framework. The statement calls for institutional and structural changes from

[154] Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 2013, 234.

governments and international organizations, as well as theological shifts. Those changes include the following: alternative indicators of economic well-being, regulating the financial sector, financial transaction tax, investment and sustainable development policies, gender-just fiscal stimulus, addressing tax evasion, ecological taxation, and sovereign debt restructuring mechanisms. Each of these actions could do significant good for encouraging policies that help the poor access more upward mobility.

Governments and international financial organizations are not the only institutions that are called to create a more just society. Churches and religious groups are also compelled to live differently, and operate differently in order to bring God's will to the whole world. A few of the actions that churches can participate include new advocacy measures from people of faith that urge the development of new economic and financial architecture. In order to do this effectively, new communication strategies are necessary. The statement asserts that churches should 'substantially increase the number of staff working on building dialogue on economic and financial developments with decision makers in the fields of politics, the private sector and research organizations.'[155] Additionally, churches should affirm a commitment to communication rights and agree to report on how they have followed up on recommendations on ethical investments. Lastly, the WCC called for the creation of a new Ecumenical School of Governance, Economics, and Management. This school's purpose is to development 'economic competences and empowerment within the ecumenical movement, as well as produce educational materials for member churches.'[156]

[155] Ibid., 239.
[156] Ibid.

5.5. Conclusion

It is critically important that the churches take ownership of making these new structures and alternatives a reality in the world. The church must not sit idle and wait governments and various power brokers to privilege this new kind of economic, political and financial culture. Church leadership is immensely vital in moving the rest of the world forward on these much needed changes.

6

THE CONCEPT OF JUST PEACE IN THE WCC

Moisés Medrano (Nicaragua, Baptist)

6.1 Introduction

At present the issues of justice and peace are becoming more and more important in the public discourse.[157] This involves the general question about the world in which we want to live; but in its most profound sense it is related to the understanding of reality[158] that different

[157] Just to give some examples, the Security Council of the United Nations in its 7105 session on 29th January 2014, addressed the issue on peace and international security under the title *Maintenance of International Peace and Security*. The statements of the session can be accessed online in http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7105.pdf (acessed 15 September 2015). Also, the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI, by its initials in Spanish), in its 64th General Assembly, held in Havana, Cuba, from 22 to 25 May 2013, talked about the Latin America and Caribbean region as zone where a "peace with justice" has been developed. To see the related statement you can visit http://www.claiweb.org/vi%20asamblea/carta%20pastoral%20de%20La%20Habana.html (acessed 18 August 2015).

[158] Many researchers in religious studies understand reality as a social construction. See Aquino, María Pilar, *Nuestro clamor por la vida: teología latinoamericana desde la perspectiva de la mujer*, San José: DEI, 1992, 149; Berger; Peter/ Luckmann, Thomas, *La construcción social de la realidad*, Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 2001, 36f.. The present work, however, affirms that reality has to do with a dialectical totality which links the subjective and objective dimenson

groups and individuals have. From a Christian perspective, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has addressed these issues from its inception,[159] but with even greater intensity since the late 20th century and early 21st. The latter could be observed, for example, in the theme of the 10th General Assembly of the WCC, held in Busan, South Korea in October–November 2013, which was *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'*

According to the WCC, justice and peace must be the concern of the churches everywhere and not just a preoccupation of social and political organizations; these issues are natural elements of the church's mission.[160] Moreover, justice and peace are part of the mission that God has entrusted to the people especially in the *periphery* of the world, so that 'life may flourish'.[161]

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of life and is manifested implicitly in the human communication. This is the way how *objective idealism* understands reality. To know about objective idealism see Kofler, Leo, *Historia y dialéctica*, Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 1973, 13–32.

[159] This is expressed in different documents of the WCC, especially with reference to the concepts of *humanitarian intervention* and *responsibility to protect*. See Raiser, Konrad, "The Ethic of Protection", in: Asfaw, Semegnish *et al.* (eds.), *The Responsibility to Protect. Ethical and Theological Reflections.* Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005, 10–16; see also http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/2003/the-responsibility-to-protect-ethical-and-theological-reflections (accessed 17 July 2015).

[160] 'The world that "God so loved" is scarred with problems and tragedies which cry out for the compassionate engagement of Christians. The source of their passion for the transformation of the world lies in their communion with God in Jesus Christ. [...] The explicit call of Jesus that his disciples be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Matt 5:13–16) has led Christians to engage with political and economic authorities in order to promote the values of the kingdom of God, and to oppose policies and initiatives which contradict them. This entails critically analyzing and exposing unjust structures, and working for their transformation, but also supporting initiatives of the civil authorities that promote justice, peace, the protection of the environment and the care for the poor and the oppressed.' WCC, *The Church. Towards a Common Vision*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 36–37.

[161] *Together towards life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*, art. 2http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-

In the understanding of the WCC, it is not possible to think of peace without making reference to justice, nor should anyone think about justice as something which is independent from peace. Both are concepts that should never be separated from each other and are not mutually exclusive.[162] Hence, and more recently, these two concepts have been combined to the concept of *just peace*.[163] This calls attention for a way of understanding reality that needs to be explored.

What is that reality to which the WCC's perspective on just peace points out? I am going to show that in the view of WCC, *theology*[164] and *politics*[165] are two dimensions of reality which embrace one another in a characteristic manner. In the way they are linked there is the risk of mis-

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and-evangelism/together-towards-life-mission-and-evangelism-in-changing-landscapes (accessed 17 July 2015).

[162] See Tveit, Olaf Fykse, Just Peace – The Dream that Comes True, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/speeches/just-peace-the-dream-that-comes-true (accessed 17 July 2015); Enns, Fernando, Just Peace. A New Framework for Ecumenical Social Ethics, http://www.seattlemennonite.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Seattle-JUST-PEACE-2012-10.pdf; Chunakara, Matthew George (ed.). Building Peace on Earth. Report of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 177–189.

[163] This concept has been adopted by the WCC during its 10th Assembly: WCC, Statement on the Way of Just Peace, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/the-way-of-just-peace (accessed 17 July 2015).

[164] I understand theology as a critical reflection on the statements of faith in light of the threatened existence. It intents to understand the liberating possibilities as well as the limitations of faith in the context of 'premature death' (Gutiérrez) of concrete people. Liberation means an act which deepens the autonomy of individual or collective existence without destroying the harmonious relationship with others. A similar definition can be found in Gutiérrez, Gustavo, Teología de la Liberación. Perspectivas, Salamanca: Sígueme, 1975, 34 and 38. About the idea of the ultimate as the object of theology see Tillich, Paul, Teología sistemática. La razón y la revelación. El ser y Dios, vol. 1, Salamanca: Sígueme, 1982, 27 and 29.

[165] Here, I define politics as the way of understanding, sustaining and using power in all kinds of relationship (social, political, economical, cultural).

understanding reality in a theological-legal positivist[166] form that needs critical reflection.

In what follows, I will analyze some statements from the WCC concerning justice and peace (declarations and agreements issued by the organization between 1999 and 2014), in order to unfold their sense of reality. First, I will provide some very brief information about the World Council of Churches and its history. Second, I am going to describe the discourse of just peace within the WCC. Third, I am trying to show which concept of reality is underlying this discourse on just peace. And finally, I am going to point out to reality from the *non-persons* perspective (Gutierrez): those located at the margin of our societies.

6.2 Origin and Development of the WCC

I think is important to be aware of the self-understanding of the WCC before describing its perspective on just peace – and from here its understanding of reality. The WCC affirms that it is 'first and foremost a church community (*koinonia*) committed to the goal of visible unity [of the church] and not an organization.'[167] The WCC 'has a structure and organization in order to serve as a tool to the churches as they work towards koinonia in faith, life and witness.'[168] Though there are some objections to such an understanding[169] it has been widely accepted. In any

[166] Positivism is a philosophy which holds, in its logical form, that all given assertions of reality relate to facts as they occur. It is a way of thinking which is convinced that our affirmations on reality correspond to exclusive objective facts. Because of this, the interpretative dimension of our thinking is lost. See Pannenberg, Wolfhart, *Teoría de la ciencia y teología*, Madrid: Cristiandad, 1981, 37–51.

[167] Robra, Martin, "The Ecumenical Movement in the Context of World Christianity in the 21st Century", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 11.

[168] WCC, *The Church. Towards a Common Vision*, 33.

[169] Robra, Martin, "The Ecumenical Movement in the Context of World Christianity in the 21st Century", 7–15. Besides see Gill, Theodore, "The World Coun-

case, nowadays the WCC sees itself as a network of organizations and churches;[170] as a place for inter-ecclesial dialogue where conditions are provided to this end.[171]

The WCC was formed after the Second World War; its first general Assembly took place in Amsterdam in 1948.[172] Its founding was achieved after a long process, which owes much to the different meetings of the missionary and ecumenical movement since the late 19th century.[173] Fundamental for the origin of the WCC was the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, where a permanent monitoring committee for the coordination of the missionary and ecumenical activity was established.[174] Since Edinburgh,[175] two different perspectives regarding the ecumenical task were consolidated: *Life and Work* and *Faith and Order* Commissions. The first would promote the unity of the church through practical action, while the second tried to overcome

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cil of Churches and the Ecumencial Movement in the Context of World Christianity", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 3–6.

[170] Ibid., 5.

[171] See Gibellini, Rosino, *Teología del siglo XX*, Cantabria: Sal Terrae, 1998, 521.

[172] On the origins and development of WCC see ibid., 519–522.

[173] According to Gibellini, the origin of the ecumenical movement goes back to the beginning of the 19th century and can be found in the efforts of the missionary and Baptist pastor William Carey for the unity of the different Christians denomitations at that time. See ibid., 519. For a critical view of the Edinburg, Panama and Havana congress regarding the conflicts between the different perspectives on missionary work see Piedra, Arturo, *Evangelización protestante. Análisis de las razones que justificaron y promovieron la expansión protestante. 1830–1960*, vol. 1, San José: DEI, 2005, 1. For a different perspective of the evolution of the ecumenical movement in Latin America see Sabanes Plou, Dafne, *Caminos de unidad. Itinerario del diálogo ecuménico en América Latina, 1916 – 1991*, Quito: CLAI, 1994.

[174] See Gibellini, Rosino, *Teología del siglo XX*, 520.

[175] An interesting and critical work about those missionary meetings effectuated between the first half of the 19th and the second half of the 20th century, are the two volumes by Piedra, Arturo, *Evangelización Protestante en América Latina. Análisis de las razones que justificaron y promovieron la expansion protestante. 1830–1960*.

the dogmatic obstacles for church unity. One was influenced by liberal theology and the social gospel of the United States, while the other was inspired by the European dialectical theology.[176] These two perspectives would form, after a long process of discussion, two departments of what later became the WCC; both perspectives were reconciled with one another under the conviction that 'the unity of the churches enables a more effective *diakonia* of the church in the world.'[177]

Nowadays, the WCC has grown greatly and represents a vast proportion of global Christianity. It actually consists of 345 member churches representing 560 million communicants. It works in close relationship with a network of other churches and ecumenical partners in the whole world[178] – which includes collaborators from the global civil society, as well as political institutions like the United Nations.

Furthermore, WCC's engagement covers a wide spectrum of issues ranging from the global and regional to the local, from the social and political to the ecological, from the collective to the individual level. The commitment to these problems is, according to the WCC, motivated by the search for justice and peace.[179] It proposed, therefore, the way of just peace.

6.3 On the Way to Just Peace

Just peace, according the WCC, is a *way* and, at the same time, a *proposal* adopted by the organization to tackle violence and promote peace in all areas of life (social, political, economical and ecological).[180]

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[176] See Gibellini, Rosino, *Teología del siglo XX*, 520.
[177] Ibid.
[178] See Gill, Theodore, "The World Council of Churches and the Ecumencial Movement in the Context of World Christianity", 3.
[179] WCC, *Statement on the Way of Just Peace*, 2–3; see also Chunakara, Matthew George (ed.), *Building Peace on Earth*, 184 – 189; Enns, Fernando, *Just Peace. A New Framework for Ecumenical Social Ethics*, 2–5.
[180] See WCC, *Statement on the Way of Just Peace*, 2–5.

It urges for action on the most pressing issues of our time.[181] It is also a *language*[182] and, most importantly, a *framework* for a 'coherent ecumenical reflection, spirituality, commitment and active work for peace.'[183] But above all, it is a *perspective* that needs to be built, and it must be understood as a *call*[184] to achieve peace by peaceful and nonviolent means.[185] 'There are many ways to respond to violence, many ways to practice peace. As members of the community proclaiming Christ as the embodiment of peace, we respond to the call to give the divine gift of peace within contemporary contexts of violence and conflict. So we joined the way of just peace, which requires both a movement towards the target as a commitment in the day [...]. The just peace invites us all to testify with our lives.'[186]

The concept of just peace involves social justice, rule of law, and respect for human rights and human security.[187] It is, ultimately, a way of understanding integrity of life based on the Christian idea that *life is sacred* (created by God).[188] Hence, there will only be peace on earth when we act according to this conviction.[189] In order to have success in making just peace a collective effort is needed – this includes transnational action, too. It is also necessary to have a multifaceted approach to

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[181] Tveit, Olaf Fykse, *Just Peace – The Dream that Comes True*, 3. Those issues are: violence, climate change, massive poverty, and the capacity to produce arms and destroy life with nuclear arsenal.
[182] Ibid., 1.
[183] WCC, *Statement on the Way of Just Peace*, 2.
[184] Tveit, Olaf Fykse, *Just Peace – The Dream that Comes True*, 2–3 and 6.
[185] Chunakara, Matthew George (ed.), *Building Peace on Earth*, 180.
[186] Ibid., 179.
[187] Ibid., 180.
[188] Tveit, Olaf Fykse, *Just Peace – The Dream that Comes True*, 2–3. 'Just peace is a journey into God's purpose for humanity and all creation. It is rooted in the self-understanding of the churches, the hope of spiritual transformation and the call to seek justice and peace for all. It is a journey that invites us all to testify with our lives.' WCC, *Statement on the Way of Just Peace*, 1.
[189] Enns, Fernando, *Just Peace. A New Framework for Ecumenical Social Ethics*, 5–9.

the current problems of our world and to overcome the lack of empathy with others.[190]

Historically speaking the concept of just peace was developed within the discourse on *humanitarian intervention* (which later was called *responsibility to protect*[191]) of the United Nations (UN).[192] In 1999, at the beginning of the debate, the general secretary of the UN, Kofi Annan, had invited Konrad Raiser, general secretary of WCC, to contribute to the issue of humanitarian intervention from a theological and ethical perspective.[193] UN's concern on humanitarian intervention then led the WCC into a debate about the *Christian responsibility* when confronted with violence (armed violence especially). Here, different perspectives arose with regard to the humanitarian responsibility to protect the vul-

[190] See Tveit, Olaf Fykse, *Just Peace – The Dream that Comes True*, 3–5 and 7.

[191] This concept still is being debated in the WCC and the UN. The concept itself was developed during debates of the UN about proper responses of the international community when faced 'with situations of catastrophic human right violations within states, where the state in question claims immunity from intervention based on longstanding principles of national sovereignty'. See Evans, Gareth, "The Responsability to Protect: Moving Towards a Shared Consensus", in: Asfaw, Semegnish *et al.* (eds.), *The Responsibility to Protect. Ethical and Theological Reflections.* Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005, 3–5. The concept was formulated by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty – an initiative of the Canadian Government in 2001. See ibid., 10. Regarding all the corresponding debates in the churches and the WCC, see Kerber, Guillermo, "The responsibility to Protect", in: Asfaw, Semegnish *et al.* (eds.), *The Responsibility to Protect. Ethical and Theological Reflections.* Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005, 114–120.

[192] The Canadian government sponsored the International Commision on Intervention and State Sovereignty to review the concepts of *sovereignty* and *humanitarian intervention* for that of *responsibility to protect*. See ibid., 4–5. Nowadays, the USA and its allies stand in the UN Security Council for the *responsibility to protect*.

[193] See WCC, *Vulnerable Population at Risk. Statement on the Responsibility to Protect*, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2006-porto-alegre/1-statements-documents-adopted/international-affairs/report-from-the-public-issues-committee/responsibility-to-protect (accessed 17 July 2015). In 2005 the General Secretary of WCC was asked to make lobbying on favor of the *responsibility to protect* concept from Gareth Evans, who was one of the defenders of this concept in the UN debates. See Evans, Gareth, "The Responsability to Protect: Moving Towards a Shared Consensus", 7.

nerable: some defended a theory of *just war* (the need for military intervention or force as resource to protect the lives of individuals and populations at risk), while others defended the idea of non-violence and a radical peace.[194] Nowadays, the discussion has changed. It is argued more emphatically in terms of *security, conflict prevention, reconciliation* and *rule of law*. The use of force as a last resource to protect people at risk is accepted by most (not all), even though it reveals a failure in the task of conflict prevention.

In short: just peace pursues peace with non-violent means and proposes a coordinated work of churches and organizations working for peace and human rights, on the grounds of the sacredness of life.

6.4 An Understanding of Reality

Now, I am going to examine which understanding of reality lies behind the concept of just peace as conceived by the WCC. First of all, just peace is sustained by the ethical-theological argument that human and planetary life is God's creation and, therefore, sacred. Hence, we must find a way to preserve what is sacred by nature. In the perspective of Christian faith, life is a creation of God. It thus transcends the finite human life. To acknowledge the transcendence of life may promote respect for the whole creation and lead us to greater tolerance and non-violent conflict resolution. However, some objections must be risen in order to not compromising the deepness of a just peace for all. These objections refer both to the practical and theoretical dimensions of reality.

On a *practical* level, the sacred reality of life is more complex than it appears to be. History shows that those in power (economically, politi-

[194] About this debate in the WCC see Mennonite Central Committee, "Vulnerable Population at Risk. WCC Statement on the Responsibility to Protect", *MCC Peace Office Publication 4*, 2006, 2–6.

cally and culturally speaking) have the ability to impose laws according to their own interests (as in Iraq war and Kosovo, for example).[195]

One might ask: to what degree would individuals participate in the development of such laws? To what extent would they be subject of their own destiny once the law has been established? Would the rule of law comprehend the rights of workers, unemployed and vulnerable people (men and women) to live with dignity according to their own terms? Is it possible to overcome immoral structures (think of all the diamond, gold, oil and natural resources that some countries have taken from others in the name of civilization, prosperity and democracy)? We would need to change our mind about private property and capital, and to be aware that today's societies are dominated by the spirit of capitalism – which has been built in a long history of wars, imperialism, deceit and violence at all levels.

Objections also arise with regard to the *theoretical* aspect of the sacred reality of life. The concept of *sacredness* necessarily differs between individuals, cultures and societies. We do not have a common language to express such a concept, since all languages are bound to their respective cultural background. So, it is difficult to convey this idea on a global level. Besides, the rule of law, as it is proposed for the way of just peace of the WCC, is somewhat difficult. If it is seen as something given and obvious, the problem of positivism might arise. There is little consideration for in-depth discussions about the interpretative character of peace and the possibility for it to be just a dominant and a flattering perspective related to selfish interests.[196] To propose an absolute criteria (the sacred life) from which derives the rule of law is problematic. However, the vision of a world where justice and peace reign

[195] This can also be observed in recent struggles between the Western countries (lead by the USA) and Russia. Their actions are being justified with lies and coercive actions. Unfortunately, Christians on both sides of the conflict take positions based on the respective ideology.

[196] Pannenberg criticises consensus from an epistemological point of view. See Pannenberg, Wolfhart, *Teoría de la Ciencia y Teología,* 101.

under the rule of law is plausible and important. To aspire for such a peace would be in tune with reality as it is perceived by the deprived individuals, the vulnerable of the world at the *underside of history*.

6.5 Insights from the Underside of History

Finding justice and peace, then, is not easy but it is desirable. Two more questions arise at this point: For what kind of peace must we search? And how can we achieve it? From the perspective of the other side of history (the *underside of history*),[197] the reality which is proposed is based on the experience of *pain* from individuals and specific groups. From this starting point, one might think of alternative ways to make peace and to talk about it. To achieve this, it would be important not to exclude differing interpretations of peace – even the most dissonant of them. A dialogue on an equal footing is necessary. It is not mainly about seeking an absolute consensus. The goal is not even to find a common language, but rather to create conditions to transform the current reality. This requires to cast off everything that gives us an advantage over others (both materially and discursively) when it comes to the dialogue about a different reality.

The dialogue on an equal base, from the underside of history perspective, has a specific meaning: first of all, it is required to give up power over others prior to any discourse; all subordinated or alienated persons or groups shall be liberated – even the environment. It extends to the global dimension of life. It requires on the part of the dominant nations (and individuals) to renounce of all forms of domination over others. It also implies a historical restoration of evils which have endured through generations. Even if these evils are not caused by our own generation, we enjoy the benefits and advantages of them (consciously

[197] Here, I understand the *underside of the history* as a critical concept in which the discourse of reality is developed from the perspective of historically, socially and culturally subordinated people on the margin of our societies.

or not). In order to change the global reality, we need to start in the privileged countries; we need to challenge ourselves and our governments to become just. We also need to be aware of any imperialistic understanding of our mission as religious persons.

All this is a prerequisite for dialogue. Commencing the dialogue itself would be the next step. Its agenda should be elaborated both in form and content by all participants (individuals, groups and nations) under equal conditions. A just peace should strive for fair relationships between humans and their environment in a participatory way.

6.6 Conclusion

Most of us dream of a life where justice and peace prevail. What is proposed in the WCC's concept of just peace leads us into a reality where law reigns and life is conceived as sacred. But the understanding of the rule of law and the sacredness of life underlying WCC's concept of just peace has its limitations. It is necessary to overcome the positivistic trend attached to it.

Peace, from the perspective of the underside of history points out to a reality based on a dialogue of equals. The renunciation of my own power needs to take place prior the dialogue itself (in thought as well as in action). Let the other be free in order to have a non-coercive dialogue. This is not easy to be done but nevertheless a path worth to follow.

PART II

B. THE ECUMENICAL CONVERSATIONS

7

BONDED WITH THE MARGINALIZED TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

Ecumenical Conversation XI

Maaike de Jong (Netherlands, Mennonite)

7.1 Introduction

Before and during my studies to become a Dutch Mennonite minister, I worked with people with mental, psychiatric, psychological and physical disabilities. So, I became interested in inclusive churches and the way people with various disabilities were included in the church. In my own congregation, disability did not appear very much some time ago. Nowadays, our congregation reflects more the plurality of society, where people of all ages, backgrounds, colour and with/without disabilities worship and learn together.

I myself also relate to the subject on a more personal level. Since I was very young, the doctors diagnosed me with Tourette Syndrome, a neurological disability, that caused severe tics during my childhood. Not surprisingly, I was bullied enormously then, and I felt marginalized almost every day. Today, my tics are less visible, but now I cope with energy problems and I am overwhelmed fairly quick. In this respect, I still feel marginalized, but my life is so much easier now than it was

when I was younger. So, the experience of being marginalized is well-known to me, and if possible, I try to make people aware of this problem. The ecumenical conversation *Bonded with the marginalized for a just and inclusive church and world* therefore met my personal and professional interest.

7.2 The WCC Statement on Justice and Peace

'God of life, lead us to justice and peace' was the theme for the 10th Assembly of the WCC in Busan in the Republic of South Korea. In its statement *On the Way to Just Peace*, the WCC declares: 'Just Peace is a journey into God's purpose for humanity and all creation. It is rooted in the self-understanding of the churches, the hope of spiritual transformation and the call to seek justice and peace for all. It is a journey that invites us all to testify with our lives.'[198]

A journey is something that is ongoing and active: it calls for us to take action and to be participants to pursue just peace together. This process is rooted in the self-understanding of Christian churches, who consider Christ as their centre. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the story to which we relate when acting as Christian churches within the world. Jesus is our teacher and shows us how to be disciples of just peace; like him, we are being called to counteract the systems in which people are excluded, ignored, and victimized. We are called to transform those systems so that every person can feel whole and a part of our church.

Even though we are on the journey to just peace, we are not there yet. Still people are struggling to be fully accepted as members of the church and to transform the church into a body without divisions among

[198] WCC, *Statement on the Way of Just Peace*, 1, https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/the-way-of-just-peace (accessed 17 July 2015).

people. One of those marginalized groups are people with visible and invisible mental, psychiatric, psychological and physical disabilities.

Another part of the statement of the WCC states: 'Together we believe in God, the creator of all life. Therefore we acknowledge that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God, and we seek to be good stewards of creation. In wondrously creating the world [...], God makes manifest a vision for all people to live in the fullness of life and with dignity, regardless of class, gender, religion, race or ethnicity.'[199] I think we can add *disability* to that list. Here, the diversity of people is emphasized as being part of the full and diverse nature of God. Therefore, every human being should be respected as a creation which is loved by God and should be treated as such.

7.3 Ecumenical Conversation on Inclusiveness

During the Assembly, I was part of the ecumenical conversation No 11, called *Bonded with the marginalized for a just and inclusive church and world*. In the first meeting, I met a group of people with physical disability and we had a very interesting conversation about the title of this ecumenical conversation. Our gathering began with a video clip showing examples of who the marginalized could be; most of the people were weak and in need of help. There were few examples of strong people who could stand up for themselves, with or without a visible disability. It seemed as though the marginalized were being portrayed as a group depending on sympathy and a lot of assistance. We wondered if this is an image we could relate to – and who decides who the marginalized are?

Of course, in a lot of countries people with disability are put out of sight. Their disability is seen as a punishment or even a demonic possession, and they cannot speak for themselves. For these people we shall

[199] Ibid.

raise our voices and make those societies aware of this injustice. But there are others who can speak for themselves, as they are full members of society. In our group, the label *marginalized* was not something we would attribute to ourselves; being successful people, with family and friends, feeling happy and loved, living a pretty full life.

It seems as though a verb (to disable) has been turned into a label (disability), given to people by others who do not own this label themselves. The verb *to disable* almost shows its pitfall: one person does something to another; there is an inequality in power. It indicates a state of being which one can force upon someone else, even though the other person does not relate to it. People with visible physical or mental disabilities have almost no chance of ever getting rid of this, for their disability immediately marginalizes them. Maybe the label *disabled* even disables people more than the disability itself.

Within their families for example, people with disabilities are *just* family members; an aunt, an uncle, a grandfather or a niece. Their disability does not stand out anymore, because everyone in the family is used to it. They are not given a special title, a different approach or a weird look, they can be themselves, like the rest of the family.

Also, persons without a visible disability, whether physical, psychological, mental or psychiatric may experience marginalization, even though nobody is labelling them in this way. In situations when help is needed, but not provided, because nobody knows the need is there, a person can still feel marginalized, even though others would not give that person this label. So, the question we asked was: who decides where the label *marginalized* should go? Who decides who is marginalized? And our answer was: the people with (and without) disabilities themselves. And just as the people *without* disability, people *with* disability who feel marginalized are called to speak up, to make the society aware of their situation and to help transform the church into a place where there is no need for divisions among people.

7.3.1. Church of the Marginalized

During the ecumenical conversation, we heard a lecture from Beverly Mitchell with the title *Being Church of the Marginalized and the Crushed*. It was a very passionate plea for the Christian church to be a church *of* the marginalized. As disciples in Christ, having Jesus as our teacher means, according to Mitchell, dwelling with the *outcasts and sinners* and the people who were treated with little or no dignity, people at the fringe of society. She called us to show our love of God and of our fellow men concretely and she argued: 'Our "love" for God is in vain, if we see our sisters and brothers in need, and lift not a finger to help them (1 John 3:17).' [200]

Even though I agree with Mitchell to help a sister or brother in need, especially in a situation of suppression and injustice, I wonder who is the one who decides if someone is in need of help? Being charitable to a brother or sister who does not feel he or she is in need deepens the division. People with disabilities often speak about well-meant charitable help which only made them feel more disabled than they were, patronized and pathetic: not being in a dialogue, but being talked about; not being asked 'Can we help you?', but simply having work taken out of their hands, assuming the disabled person cannot possibly cope for him- or herself.

Later, Mitchell says: 'If we become church of the marginalized and the oppressed, we will get in conflict with the powerful. Declining to align ourselves with the powerful will take away the privileges that the churches of the centre enjoy.'[201] Jesus was all about turning around the existing order. As his followers, we shall confront social justice with privilege, economic justice with greed, ecological justice with consumption and political justice with power – intending to heal our society. So,

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[200] Mitchell, Beverly E., *Being Church of the Marginalized and the Crushed*, Busan 2013.
[201] Ibid., 4.

'mercy, forgiveness and reconciliation become shared public experiences.'[202]

7.3.2 Inclusive Church

In my opinion, a church *of* the marginalized is not the goal we should pursue. But neither can a church *for* the marginalized be the answer, because this, too, implies a distinction and creates division. Then how should we perceive an inclusive church?

An inclusive church is a *community*. Like society in general, this community consists of all kinds of people – with various backgrounds, ethnicity, ages, sexes, shapes and forms, with various wishes, worries, longings and interests. Here, everybody is taken seriously and has a chance to let his or her voice be heard; all strive together for justice and peace, being on that journey which indeed invites us to testify with our own lives. Within this church all divisions should stop. It should empower people to be the best they can be and emphasize their strength and talents.

7.3.3 Inclusiveness in Scripture

The WCC statement acknowledges the biblical tradition calling for a united and inclusive church. This begins with God as creator and giver of life to all people in the book of Genesis. God has created us in his image, with all the variety in which this life is given, reflecting the nature of God. The love which God has for us is shown in the life, death and resurrection of his son, Jesus Christ; this tells us that all of us are lovable as we are.[203] The justice which flows from that love is the basis for the equal treatment for all God's people.

Even though Jesus did go to the people at the margins of society, he is moreover a teacher of reconciliation and restoration; in the stories

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[202] WCC, *Statement on the Way of Just Peace*, 1.
[203] Kundtz, David J./ Schlager, Bernard S., *Ministry Among God's Queer Folk. LGBT Pastoral Care*, Cleveland, Ohio, 2007, 2–3.

about healing or the parables about the lost sheep or the lost son, the focus is to get people back to society. Being community is most important and we are called by Christ to pursue this aim. Just relations are a decisive aspect of this, and being a Christian community we are compelled to live out of mutual love and respect. This requires a transformation of our thoughts and actions, as well as a transformation of the way in which we interact with the world around us. We shall not merely relate to peoples' disabilities, but to the person with the disability – this makes the difference in creating a just relationship.

7.3.4 Healing versus Recovery

Another discussion during the ecumenical conversation was about the difference between *healing* and *recovery*. The stories in the gospel, in which Jesus heals people who are blind or paralyzed, talk about recovery, rather than about healing. These stories have not made it easy for people with disability to get rid of the idea that there is something wrong with them; as though they can only be whole without their disability.

A lot of stories during the ecumenical conversation from people with a disability were about growing up and learning that their disability was a punishment of God, or that it would go away if they would pray hard enough or believe in the right way. Often, having a disability is perceived as negative or even a punishment. This calls for a new way to look at disability: not regarding it as a negative, a punishment or a curse, but as one form of the nature of God, our creator.

Regarding disability merely as a negative fact, as something which makes people suffer, reduces the sources of strength and creativity people with disability may have found within themselves, their faith and their community to prosper and live a full life. Having a disability can be a setback for people, but it can also be a source of empowerment, or a challenge to reach further, every day. In this regard, people with disability are not so different from people without disabilities; all of us face

situations in our lives, which can restrain us, bottle us up and paralyze our motivation to move forward. But those situations can also be challenges to rise above oneself, to take it on, to move forward with a new spirit.

With Jesus as our teacher, the focus is to restore people to their community. The healing of disability is not an end in itself. People with disabilities are at the margin of society in the stories of the gospel. They are cast out and ignored, but after their encounter with Jesus they are a part of the community again. So healing in the gospel is about restoring unjust relations where people are marginalized because of their disability. The problem is not with *them*, but with the *community*; through Jesus' teachings of reconciliation, they are brought back into the community. The focus is not on disability, but on the broken relationship.

Still, the healing stories, in which Jesus makes blind people see and paralyzed people, can be read in a merely literal way, and we are back at our starting point of seeing disability as a lack of faith, a punishment or a curse. So, where in the bible can answers about inclusiveness be found? We will see later that Leviticus and Matthew can help us learn more about inclusiveness.

Within the WCC statement, one of the main points is about the unity of the church, globally as well as locally. Where unity is pursued, justice and peace are basic conditions. We can only be a community when everyone is acknowledged as equally important. We cannot be equal, for we are created as different individuals, with our own talents and flaws. The church as the body of Christ underlines this fact; together we make up the full colour fabric of Christianity. So, if we strive towards being a community in the process of justice and peace, exclusion or division is not an option.

7.4 A Call for Transformation

Christianity calls for transformation; a transformation of society, of the systems which cause an injustice, but also of ourselves. We are called to transform our concepts of what is just and unjust, of what is normal and not normal; we are also called to transform our way of thinking about disability. We have to leave concepts behind which understand disability as a punishment. We shall be a community of people, all beloved creatures of God, all striving for the same basic values: love, acceptance, belonging. We have to be courageous to face our own inhibitions concerning disability. What makes us so reluctant to speak about disability – or even worse, to speak to people with disabilities? As Christians, we follow the teachings of a man who disrupted society, uncovering the unjust systems which ruled them. Being disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to do the same, for following Christ is not without risk.

For most people, the encounter with someone who differs from oneself causes fear; the situation is not standard, and standard rules of communication do not apply. This may leave us feeling uncomfortable. But there is a deeper level in this estrangement which teaches us something about our humanity. The confrontation with someone who has a disability may provoke a disturbance of our self image.[204] It reminds us of our own fragility as human beings and makes us think about how easily our own situation without disability might change. It destabilizes our own sense of control, of security and of the dichotomy *they* versus *us*. How can we react to this in such a way that we can build a stronger community and transform our xenophobia?

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[204] Meininger, Herman P. (ed.), *Van en voor allen. Wegwijzers naar een inclusieve geloofsgemeenschap met mensen die een verstandelijke handicap hebben*, Zoetermeer, 2004, 21.

Leviticus gives us an answer in chapter 19:34.[205] Loving someone *as* yourself implies that the other person is the same, but different. Both the similarity and the difference are referred to, without making a division between *in-group* and *out-group*. It reminds us of times when we ourselves were foreigners, or at least felt like that. Matthew takes it a step further in chapter 25:31–46.[206] He talks about hospitality as the next step beyond tolerance. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus says: 'The King will answer them: "Most assuredly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers , you did it to me."' If we read this, we understand that the *least* can be us as well; therefore it is a call, both to be the least and to be the one who acts.[207]

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[205] 'The stranger who lives as a foreigner with you shall be to you as the native-born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am Yahweh your God.'

[206] 'But when the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the king will tell those on his right hand: "Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me." Then the righteous will answer him, saying: "Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you? When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?" The king will answer them: "Most assuredly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." Then he will say also to those on the left hand: "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you didn't give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and you didn't take me in; naked, and you didn't clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn't visit me." Then they will also answer, saying: "Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn't help you?" Then he will answer them, saying: "Most assuredly I tell you, inasmuch as you didn't do it to one of the least of these, you didn't do it to me." These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

[207] Meininger, Herman P. (ed.), *Van en voor allen. Wegwijzers naar een inclusieve geloofsgemeenschap met mensen die een verstandelijke handicap hebben*, 31.

7.5 Conclusion

After meeting so many different people during the Assembly in Busan, my understanding of church unity has changed. It is no longer about having the same belief system, the same norms, or even having the same ideals for the church. It is about acknowledging and celebrating the differences which exist among Christians, among people. We need to realize that we can experience God's creation in its diversity whenever we meet another person. In the encounter with the other, we recognize God's creation and therefore recognize ourselves. Differences do matter, because they enrich our knowledge of God and make us aware of our calling to unite with others. Only then are justice and peace possible for the church and society. The prayer of the 10th Assembly was altered by a Quaker brother during a *madang* lecture, and as a Dutch Mennonite sister, I was enthusiastic about his change, because it justly refers to the strength of *all* people. His variation on the Assembly prayer was: *'God of life, make us instruments of your justice and peace.'*

8

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND REUNIFICATION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Ecumenical Conversation XVII

Jieun Kim Han (South Korea, Presbyterian)

8.1 Introduction

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) took place in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 30 October to 8 November 2013. I had the privilege to participate in the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI), which brought together about 160 participants from all regions of the world and various Christian denominations. This programme was carried out parallel with the Assembly in Seoul and Busan. GETI was designed to bring young theologians to the Assembly for an intensive ecumenical discourse. Its curriculum focused on the future of ecumenism and the transformation of world Christianity in the 21st century and was geared to the theme of the WCC Assembly *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'*[208]

[208]http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/theological-education-initiative-begins-in-seoul (accessed 18 July 2015).

GETI has become a place for ecumenical leadership formation, intense theological learning and mutual dialogue, as well as intergenerational dialogue with important heads of the ecumenical movement. GETI was a special initiative which was prepared and supported by the Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) programme of the World Council of Churches in cooperation with Bossey Ecumenical Institute and a network of theological institutions both in Korea and abroad. Along with the lectures given during GETI, the participants were assigned into seminar groups to discuss various issues in light of the ecumenical visions for the 21st century. The participants had faculty mentors who led the seminar groups and facilitated the paper presentations. Seminar sessions provided excellent opportunities to reflect with other participants challenges of the ecumenical movement. This provided a rich vantage point as we listened to each other's voice from varied contexts and perspectives. Personally, Busan was my hometown where I was given birth, and Seoul was my home since I was one year old until graduation from college. So, this journey literally meant coming home to me.

The Assembly, as a whole, provided space for celebration, dialogue and reflection through common prayer, bible studies, thematic plenaries, ecumenical conversations, business sessions, workshops, a weekend pilgrimage with the Korean churches, and the *madang* exhibition hall (a Korean term for a courtyard in a traditional home which is used for encounter, sharing, greeting a visitor and welcoming a stranger). Ecumenical conversations, in particular, engaged Assembly participants in sustained and in-depth dialogue on critical issues that affect the mission and witness of the church today – issues that require a common response. The results of the conversations would help to guide future ecumenical cooperation. There were 21 ecumenical conversations. Each conversation focused on an unique topic and provided four ninety-minute sessions. Among these ecumenical conversations, one was *The Korean*

Peninsula: ecumenical solidarity for justice and peace, in which I had the opportunity to take part. The delegates discussed the impact of the tense situation on the Korean peninsula on other regions of the world and how to strengthen ecumenical networks that could promote a vision of unity. As a result, the Korean peninsula was one of the topics of the public statements at the WCC's 10th Assembly in Busan. Through the statement on *Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula*, churches 'call upon all stakeholders in the region to participate in a creative process for building peace on the Korean peninsula by halting all military exercises on the Korean peninsula, by ceasing foreign intervention, withdrawing foreign troops and reducing military expenditures.'[209]

8.2 The WCC Assembly in Busan and the Reunification of Korea

The Assembly also highlighted the significance of peace. During the *peace* plenary session, the Korean theologian Chang Yoon Jae spoke about peace on the Korean peninsula. He urged to advance beyond the Korean armistice agreement of 1953. After the armistice Koreans are still living in fear of war. He stated there needed to be a transition from *unfinished war* to *permanent peace*.[210] Chang added that, in order to achieve peace, we need a world free of nuclear power plants and weapons. Since the WCC Assembly in India in 1961, the number of nuclear powers in the region has more than doubled. Chang asserted: 'Nuclear weapons cannot co-exist with peace and Christian faith.'[211]

The *Peace Train* was another initiative for peace and reconciliation of the Korean peninsula. It was sponsored by the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) and the Korean Host Committee for the

[209]http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/wcc-assembly-addresses-contemporary-public (accessed 18 July 2015).
[210]http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/busan-assembly-highlights-significance-of-peace (accessed 18 July 2015).
[211] Ibid.

WCC Assembly. The project aimed to raise awareness of the 60-year division of the Korean peninsula. Around 130 people from 15 countries participated in the event. The train started its journey in Berlin, Germany on 9 October and travelled through Moscow, Irkutsk, Beijing, Dandong and Seoul, before it finally arrived in Busan on 28 October prior to the beginning of the Assembly. A friend of mine joined this pilgrimage, so I was able to listen to first-hand stories from the journey. After the train arrived in Beijing, the initiators had originally planned to go on to North Korea's capital Pyongyang by plane. They had hoped for the permission from North Korea up to the final minute – but it did not come. Instead, the participants travelled by train to the Chinese city of Dandong, located on the border with North Korea, where they held a church service with a Chinese community that also included North Koreans. They then took a ferry to the South Korean port of Incheon, and continued by bus to Seoul. The group completed the last stage to Busan by train again. The participants were somewhat disappointed about not having been able to make the journey to Pyongyang; however, this project was a success. 'The trip is an initial impetus,' said one of the participants, and he added: 'our commitment will continue.'[212]

The weekend pilgrimage programme of the Assembly was a unique experience with the Korean host churches. On Saturday 2 November 2013, more than 800 participants joined in a pilgrimage of peace to Seoul, expressing solidarity with the people of Korea and endorsing the worldwide call for the unification of the Korean peninsula. The group moved to the pond at Imjingak, where participants gathered under the bridge which is the front line of division. This spot 'integrated the past, present and future.'[213] At the bridge, the pilgrims shared messages of peace. Singing together, they offered a hymn called *Now go in peace* as

[212]http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/by-train-to-busan-journeying-for-peace-in-korea (accessed 18 July 2015). (accessed 18 July 2015).
[213]http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/wcc-assembly-participants-make-pilgrimage-for-peace-on-korean-peninsula (accessed 18 July 2015).

they placed ribbons with a prayer for peace on the iron fence along the military demarcation line, adding to the thousands of ribbons already present on the fence. It was a powerful symbol of solidarity amidst of hostility.

Korea, my home country, is the last country still divided as a consequence of the Cold War ideology. Since 1945, Korea has become an 'indicator of the state of peace and security in the world.'[214] God's intention for the world is *shalom* – justice and peace for all creation; yet the world is wounded by violence and broken by war. Forces of brutality and aggression are at work in all areas of human life, even within the church. Christ came to break down dividing walls of hostility and to establish God's reconciliation in the world. All who follow Christ are called to live as peacemakers in a world that lacks the deep reality of God's concord and unity. As we live in unity with brothers and sisters around the world, working ecumenically to overcome violence, we both embody and proclaim the fullness of the Lord's peace. Rodney Peterson, executive director of the Boston Theological Institute, urged in his powerful lecture *Reconciliation as an Ecumenical Key Mandate: Is Forgiveness Possible?* during a GETI session that 'reconciliation is the resolution of violence.'[215]

8.3 Ecumenical Conversation on the Korean Peninsula

Among various subjects, the ecumenical conversation on *The Korean Peninsula: Towards an Ecumenical Accompaniment for Building Justice and Peace* drew many people's attention. According to the reference document of this conversation, the aim was to promote ecumenical

[214] In: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 41.
[215] Peterson, Rodney, *Reconciliation as an Ecumenical Key Mandate. Is Forgiveness Possible?*, GETI Keynote Lecture, World Council of Churches 10th Assembly, Busan, Korea, 31 October 2013.

accompaniment for building justice and peace on the Korean peninsula and to foster reconciliation with a vision towards future reunification. The participants were introduced to the range of initiatives undertaken by the Korean churches and ecumenical bodies. Each gathering of this conversation consisted of an opening and closing prayer, a plenary session, buzz group discussion, presentation of report and feedback.

The conversation allowed me to meet various ecumenical leaders from the Korean churches and all over the world. It was a wonderful experience, for example, to listen to Erich Weingartner who began to plan what has come to be known as the *Tozanso Consultation*. This consultation was held in the city of Tozanso, Japan in 1984 on *Peace and Justice in Northeast Asia*. Despite the walls of separation that were both physical and spiritual, Tozanso initiated lines of communication between Christians of North and South Korea. Weingartner recalled that the Tozanso consultation was the most tension-filled event of his entire WCC career. He continued: 'To the very end, there was nervousness, fear and resistance to what everyone knew would have to be the next step. In prayers both public and private, we wrestled like Jacob for God's wisdom and blessing to assure us that the moment of *kairos* had really come.'[216] Weingartner, in conclusion, emphasized the importance of ecumenical accompaniment. According to him, 'above all, accompaniment means being there for them as sisters and brothers, in sickness and in health, through trials and triumphs, without judgment or prejudice. Ecumenical accompaniment is about being witnesses of hope in the midst of despair.'[217] The outcome of this consultation was accepted by the ecumenical community and became known under the name *Tozanso Discipline*.

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[216] Weingartner, Erich, *Ecumenical Accompaniment for Building Justice and Peace in Korea*, Ecumenical Conversation plenary lecture, World Council of Churches 10th Assembly, Busan, Korea, 4 November 2013.
[217] Ibid.

The confidence built in the subsequent *Tozanso Process*, enabled representatives of the Korean Christian Federation (KCF) from North Korea to travel four times to the USA between 1989 and 1997 for official meetings with US church counterparts. These ecumenical efforts opened the way for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) officials to request the WCC international humanitarian assistance for flood victims. WCC's involvement in Korea was certainly a unique ecumenical story that deserves to be documented. Important aspects of this effort which could serve as lessons for ecumenical methodology include: unity among partners within and out of Korea; clear objectives around which the actors coalesced; well-defined strategy and discipline in implementation; identified roles and responsibilities for the network of supporters; excellent coordination in the implementation of the strategy. The Tozanso process placed the WCC at the centre of the unfolding drama still being played out on the peninsula. Not only has it been for three decades a pioneer in promoting peace and unification in North East Asia, it has also developed a unique access to the political authorities on both sides. The situation calls for a renewed commitment for justice, peace and reconciliation of the Korean peninsula.

8.4 The WCC Statement on Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula

It is noteworthy that the delegates of the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches adopted the *Statement on Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula*, bearing witness to the suffering of the Korean people through decades of violence caused by war and hostility that have left them divided into two nations. The statement pointed out that 'the present situation in the Korean peninsula prompted us to a renewed

engagement in efforts to work for justice and peace throughout the region and for the reunification of a divided Korea.'[218]

'Changing geopolitical dynamics among the four major powers – the United States and the three other "power poles" China, Japan and Russia – can stifle the aspirations and hopes of the Korean people for peace and reunification. Increasing arms build-ups in several Asian countries make this one of the fastest growing regions for military spending in the world, including nuclear arms and high-tech weapons of mass destruction. The peace we envision is a condition of justice embracing the whole of life and restoring harmony among neighbours. We are convinced that it is the right time to begin a new process towards a comprehensive peace treaty that will replace the 1953 armistice agreement and secure just and peaceful relations among nations in the region while normalizing relations between North and South, and facilitating Korean reunification.'[219] The *Statement on Peace and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula* affirmed 'that as we pray with and for the people of Korea, the churches and ecumenical partners have a specific responsibility towards working together for peace and reconciliation in the Korean peninsula with renewed energy, in close partnership and transparent relationships with each other and with the churches and Christians in both North and South Korea, the National Council of Churches in Korea and the Korean Christian Federation.'[220]

The message of the WCC Assembly also refers to Korea.[221] Describing their time in Busan and other parts of the country, the delegates of the 10th Assembly declared: 'We share our experience of the search for

[218]http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/peace-and-reunification-of-the-korean-peninsula (accessed 18 July 2015).
[219] Ibid.
[220]http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/peace-and-reunification-of-the-korean-peninsula (accessed 18 July 2015).
[221]http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/message-of-the-wcc-assembly-201cwe-intend-to-move-together201d (accessed 18 July 2015).

unity in Korea as a sign of hope in the world. This is not the only land where people live divided, in poverty and richness, happiness and violence, welfare and war. We are not allowed to close our eyes to harsh realities or to rest our hands from God's transforming work. As a fellowship, the World Council of Churches stands in solidarity with the people and the churches in the Korean peninsula, and with all who strive for justice and peace.'[222]

8.5 Conclusion

Participating in the GETI programme alongside the 10th Assembly of the WCC was not only a homecoming time for me, but a pilgrimage on a faith journey. As WCC staff Guillermo Kerber said: 'A pilgrimage is always a transformative experience.'[223] After this once-in-a-lifetime event, I came back to my American home filled with enormous energy. My new obligation has begun. It is not a lonely endeavour. It is a journey for reconciliation which gives us courage to heal the divisions between the churches. This ecumenical solidarity will lead us to peaceful co-existence and finally full visible unity. *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'*

[222] Ibid.
[223] http://wcc2013.info/en/news-media/all-news/peace-train-takes-a-journey-towards-reunification-of-koreas (accessed 18 July 2015).

9

EFFORTS TOWARDS RECONCILIATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Ecumenical Conversation XVIII

Victor Cancino (USA, Roman Catholic)

9.1 Introduction

'God of life, lead us to justice and peace' was the motto of the World Council of Churches' 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea. This theme gradually took on greater significance as participants, delegates and Assembly staff slowly began to pray with this phrase and believe in its content. Perhaps the ecumenical conversation concerning the Middle East best revealed the implications of this prayer for this region as well as for the church at large. Nowhere else in the world is the possible extinction of an entire Christian community as readily felt. Why should we, however, care about this cultural genocide? And if we do care, what is the source of our motivation and sympathy? Does Christian zionism have a tendency to view Islam with suspicion and Israel with acceptance? Do emotional sentiments blind many to the reality that the turmoil in the Holy Land is directly tied to US and international foreign policy towards Israel? Is it possible to ask these difficult questions without shying away from their far-reaching implications?

9.2 Ecumenical Conversation on the Middle East

Ecumenical conversation (EC) No 18 of the Assembly had the title *'Middle East': whose justice, what peace?* As the Christian population diminishes in this region, religious leaders are for the first time imagining a land with ancient churches but no Christian believers. The numbers are unambiguous. In Palestine, for example, Christians have decreased from 20 to 1 % of the total population; in Syria the Christian population of 5 % is rapidly diminishing in the midst of the present crisis.[224] In Busan, EC–18 brought together Arab Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants and Coptic representatives to sift through the essential issues of the region. From the start the consensus formed that this is a moment of crisis. The diminishing numbers of Christians, the Arab Spring in Syria and Egypt, and the post war aftermath of Iraq and Afghanistan combine to form the critical moment presently faced by the Middle East. While the crisis brings unimaginable turbulence to millions it is also forcing a conversation and raising a deceptively simple question: What has gone wrong in the Middle East? Before assuming anything, the answer to this question is complex and crucial. Part of the answer involves how Islam is often conceived of in the West as violent and malicious. It also challenges the global church to reflect over its sympathy with Israel and negligence towards Palestine.

What, therefore, can the churches of the Middle East teach about the nature of ecumenism in the midst of the current crisis and ongoing re-

[224] Sennot, Charles, *The Road to Emmaus: Dwindling Christian in the Middle East*, http://www.globalpost.com/dispatches/globalpost-blogs/belief/emmaus-christian-communities-middle-east-easter-good-friday (accessed 9 December 2013). Sennot writes: 'According to the census data kept by the Ottoman Empire, the Christian population in 1914 was 24 percent of what we could call today Israel/Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey. Today it is less than 5 percent. In British-ruled Palestine, Christians comprised as much as 20 percent of the population (though some put the figure at 13 percent), while today in Israel/Palestine, that figure is estimated at no more than 1 percent.'

gional diminishment?[225] Within EC–18 it became clear that the central issue lying behind many of the calamities is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Israeli illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories opens up a host of considerations that are related to our theological, moral and political sentiments. We need to re-evaluate radical Islamic practices in light of their actual cause and not their perceived ideological origin. It is crucial to the political sphere to enter into some type of truth commission. Truth telling, after all, is a central tenant of just peacemaking, without which no further step is promising.[226]

This article will show the ability for an ecumenical conversation to have an impact beyond its setting. EC–18 created an ethical space within the WCC for various traditions and churches to begin to look at the real problems in the Middle East. Necessity does not drive this ecumenical spirit; rather, it is the conviction that *if Israel can reconcile with Palestine such a feat would have the power to begin the process of reconciliation between Islam and the West*. Without such efforts the reality of peace for this part of the world remains an illusion. The task, then, is to restore the humanity of victims from all sides and to restore dignity to the demonized.

9.3 Love thy Enemy

During the WCC Assembly, a group known as *Kairos Palestine* hosted a workshop which most of the participants from EC–18 attended. Stories were shared about the suffering and struggle to live in the midst of occupation. Lessons from other parts of the world, for example South

[225] For more statements see *Global Christianity. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population*, http://www.pewforum.org/files/2011/12/Christianity-fullreport-web.pdf (accessed 9 December 2013).
[226] See Stassen, Glen, "Just Peacemaking as the New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War" in: Stassen, Glen *et al.* (eds.), *Formation for Life. Just Peacemaking and Twenty-First-Century Discipleship*, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2013, 137.

Africa during the apartheid resistance movement, were offered as a paradigm of hope. Countering the temptation to oversimplify the reality, calls for reconciliation and forgiveness were also received with a healthy dose of scepticism. WCC Assembly participants from war-torn African countries expressed their concern about the misuse of the biblical imperative to love thy enemy. A palpable hermeneutic of suspicion arose around the notion that to love one's enemy implies forgetting injustices. Others joined the African Assembly participants in cautioning about invoking love to soften the demands of justice. Retribution is a form of justice that is often passed over in the pursuit of Christian themes centred on love. One Palestinian present at the workshop described the impossibility of forgetting being tortured when Israeli officials falsely accused him of criminal acts against Israel. How can one love and forget within these circumstances?

What arose from the *Kairos Palestine* workshop, however, was a theologically significant argument for the Christian imperative to love one's enemy. Another Palestinian spoke up and offered his interpretation around this contentious theological discussion: 'Because I choose to love', he explains, 'I am able to hold onto my humanity.' Love is the last conscious effort this Palestinian is able to make in the midst of a total loss of dignity. Hatred, by this interpretation, chips away at a person's spiritual centre and allows a person to live in bitterness. Often, the demand for retribution has the potential to dehumanize the victim in the process. In light of this interpretation (that love potentially restores humanity), the ecumenical conversation offered a pathway to love biblically while exposing the injustice.

Kairos Palestine called this 'loving through non-violent resistance' as made clear in their landmark document. The rhetoric contained in *Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth* offers an alternative to irresponsible Christian loving. 'Resistance', the document reads, 'is a right and a

duty for the Christian. But it is a resistance with love as its logic.'[227] Loving through non-violent resistance humanizes both the perpetrator and the one who experiences aggression. Later in this essay, I will contrast this specific type of resistance from past notions of resistance movements in the Middle East that are linked to radical militant Islamic trends. *Kairos Palestine* proposed that the struggle being argued for offers a corrective towards the evil and aggression experienced. Without ambiguity the document states boldly: 'It is thus a creative resistance, for it must find human ways that engage the humanity of the enemy. Seeing the image of God in the face of the enemy means taking up positions in the light of this vision of active resistance to stop the injustice and oblige the perpetrator to end his aggression and thus achieve the desired goal, which is getting back the land, freedom, dignity and independence.'[228]

The claim to expose the injustice and oblige the perpetrator to reconsider his actions is biblically grounded. A passage often cited in this situation comes from the gospel of Mathew: 'You have heard that it was said: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also.' (Matt 5:38–39) An apparent contradiction to resistance seems to surface whenever this passage is used. Is not the moral superiority Jesus points to a direct command *not to resist* evil, to somehow accept it? Jesus uses the term *αντιστηναι*; this Greek infinitive verb can be translated as 'to resist, to set one's self against, to oppose, to withstand'.[229] When the phrase reads 'do not resist' (*μη αντιστηναι*), it can literally be translated as Jesus implying that a person should not stand up against whatever force is about to meet her – in this case the force of evil. Without the following sentence we could assume Jesus intends for

[227] *Kairos Palestine. A Moment of Truth*, Jerusalem, 2009, no. 4.2.3.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Westcott, Brooke Foss/ Hort, Fenton, *The Greek New Testament with Greek Dictionary*, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007, 15.

the injustice we face to be reconciled in a later eschatological reality. For the time being, the logic goes, one ought to embrace the injustice and take the moral high ground.

This seems unlikely, given the understanding of Jesus' next phrase. He advises that when struck on the right cheek one ought to turn the other one and offer the left one as well. How is one to face injustice? Evidently, one should not return evil for evil or injustice in response to another injustice. Walter Wink, in *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way*, interprets this passage as exposing the injustice of the perpetrator while reclaiming one's dignity. This is a case of direct humiliation, Wink explains, a strike by a superior with the right hand across the face of an inferior's right cheek.[230] By turning one's face to expose the left side the aggressor is forced to make a choice to either both stop his aggression and acknowledge the wrongdoing or to strike his opponent as an equal rather than as an inferior. Either way the injustice is exposed for what it is: an empty threat against the dignity of the other. According to Wink, Jesus offers a perspective to potentially love one's enemy. One does not have to be passive (accepting the harm done) and one does not have to seek violent retribution. Between these two false extremes, there is a third way. Jesus offers a path of non-violent resistance that shames the perpetrator's actions and restores the humanity of the one being humiliated.[231] 'This action', explains Wink, 'robs the oppressor of the power to humiliate.'[232] When the Palestinian shared his testimony he corroborated the fact that Jesus does offer an alternative through non-violent resistance. Such resistance has far-reaching implications. The best summary comes from Lisa Cahill in *The Atonement Paradigm: Does it Still Have Explanatory Value?* She describes that God's presence with an

[230] Wink, Walter, *Jesus and Nonviolence. A Third Way*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003, 14.
[231] Ibid., 16.
[232] Ibid.

oppressed people is best made explicit in the active resistance to evil.[233] Christ does not crush and overburden the poor; Jesus restores their divinity in their humanity.

9.4 Islamophobia

Ecumenism carries a potential to move beyond itself. In fact, the nature of ecumenism is one that brings together different voices from different traditions in order to imagine a horizon beyond ecclesial and denominational lines. In order to realize its mission, the church must always hold in tension the relationship between the centre and the periphery.[234] Situated at the periphery, the churches of the Middle East bring a moral dimension that speaks to the Arab world beyond the ecclesial walls. EC–18 began with concerns for self-preservation in the midst of a mass emigration of Arab Christians in hope of safer pastures. As noted already, EC–18 immediately moved beyond internal concerns and spoke of a reality that implicates all people from this global region.

Peace is merely an abstraction for millions living in this region. Peace will continue to be, moreover, an abstraction for the near future until enough people are willing to acknowledge the source of the conflict. EC–18 raised a relentless question: Why? Why has the West and the East been misled with respect to the nature of the conflict between a

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[233] Cahill, Lisa, "Quaestio Disputata: The Atonement Paradigm. Does it Still Have Explanatory Value?", in: *Theological Studies 68 (2)*, 2007, 426. Cahill goes on to explain: 'As an ethical model, the cross properly inspires resistance, not acquiescence. Jesus' death, precisely as the death of the Son of God, is an example of power assuming vulnerability (Phil 2:6–11); it does not model behavior to be emulated by those who "suffer innocently". [...] The ethical criterion of human behavior is established by the fact that the one who in Jesus' teaching paradigmatically undertakes suffering is not only motivated by love and solidarity, but is one whose action is voluntary and whose personhood is not radically endangered by suffering.' Ibid.

[234] In: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 192.

Jewish-Christian alliance and Islam? Why does there exist a gulf of misunderstanding between Islamic extremism and Western appeals for democratic ideology? EC–18 did not hesitate to reiterate through the span of the conference that the source of conflict in this region is embedded within the century long Israeli-Palestinian struggle. Not until this conflict is analyzed and all parties held accountable can anyone begin to conceive of a future of peace and stability within the Middle East. Cahill is correct when she describes the role of churches within this moral crisis. 'This role will require', she pleads, 'a theology of salvation in which the guilty are included along with the innocent, and in which expiation, forgiveness, and restoration are counterparts.'[235]

At the heart of peace is a relentless desire for justice. Since 11 September 2001, however, the West has turned a blind eye to acts of injustice against Palestine in the name of a so-called war on terror. Unfortunately, western foreign policy has positioned the entire Muslim world as the scapegoat by frequently confusing Islam with terrorism. Martin Accad, in his essay *Just Peacemaking in Light of Global Challenges: Involving Islam and Muslims*, argues that Western society and our churches have fallen into a reductionist perception of Islam.[236] If this claim holds, a look at the events of 9/11 as a turning point for Western-Muslim relations exposes the pitfall of a reductionist perception.

Robert Fisk, a journalist for *The Independent*, reflects on the ten-year anniversary since the tragic events of September 11.[237] He dares to ask a recurring question that has been largely ignored for more than a decade:

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[235] Cahill, Lisa, "Quaestio Disputata: The Atonement Paradigm. Does it Still Have Explanatory Value?", 432.

[236] Accad, Martin, "Just Peacemaking in Light of Global Challenges. Involving Islam and Muslims", in: Stassen, Glen *et al.* (eds), *Formation for Life. Just Peacemaking and Twenty-First-Century Discipleship*, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2013, 233.

[237] Fisk, Robert, *For 10 Years We've Lied to Ourselves to Avoid Asking the One Real Question*, http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/fisk/robert-fisk-for-10-years-weve-lied-to-ourselves-to-avoid-asking-the-one-real-question-2348438.html (accessed 10 December 2013).

Is there a problem in the Middle East? All the terrorists surrounding the events of 9/11 were Muslim and from the Middle East. Rather than pursue the motivation behind the attacks on the Twin Towers, the US moved into an ideological warfare. If, moreover, a government decides that terrorism is synonymous with Islam, then consequently the said power is at war with Islam itself, the third branch of the great Abrahamic religions. Without reflection a majority of Western powers appropriated this empty rhetoric – that Islam is inherently a religion of violence.

Some examples of the reductionism argued for here suffice to make the point. Accad traces several strains of this anti-Islamic perception beginning with the less sophisticated clergy members to academic circles.[238] Reminiscent of a Nazi era, calls for a Koran book-burning event (albeit from fringe Christian voices) gained attention not too long ago. Publications about Islam and Muslims after 2001 centred on questions that link militant extremism as representative of the nature of Islam. The controversy over *Park 51*, an Islamic cultural centre built near New York's *Ground Zero* sparked enough controversy that religious freedom and expression seemed dangerously tied to Christian liberties alone. 'Nazis don't have a right', it is argued, 'to put up a sign next to the Holocaust Museum in Washington. There's no reason for us to accept a mosque next to the World Trade Centre.'[239] Apparently, for like-minded people, Islam is responsible for 9/11. Regardless of what society believes, the greater moral failure is whenever such reductionism sweeps into our churches as well. To hold on to such sentiments, according to Accad, will damage Christian-Muslim relations for decades to come.[240] This is no future that benefits anyone accept extremists from all sides,

[238] Ibid., 233–237.
[239] Ibid., 237.
[240] Ibid. Accad writes: 'I believe that the debate [within the church] on one side is driven primarily by hatred for Islam (although proponents usually claim they love Muslims), driven by the reductionist understanding of the religious as a monistic reality, [...] rather than by a comprehensive and fair historical, theological and practical exploration.' Ibid.

West and East. Is it possible, however, to change this social drive to demonize the other?

Such reductionism needs serious retrospection. This is a moment for radical reflexivity. Charles Taylor, the political philosopher, reminds us that what sets humans apart is precisely our ability to step back and think about our own thinking.[241] In other words, how does one's upbringing affect the manner in which a person reflects within an ethical space? If society reflects on its own thinking about the Muslim world, it will discover the manner in which both the innocent and the guilty of the 9/11 atrocity are somehow implicated. Is something wrong in the Middle East? Yes, but the answer potentially has more to do with US foreign policy on Israel than with Islam as a whole.

Al-qa'ida is often described as an extremist group that finds its motivation from its religious ideology. Is this the case? Accad reminds us that Osama Bin Laden's clear and persistent rhetoric against the US (even before 9/11) has been about an American foreign policy that sides blindly with Israel against Palestinian Arabs. Accad highlights Bin Laden's own words, which describe resentment for the perceived forced signing of the Oslo Accords (13 September 1993) by the alliance that surrendered Palestinian territory over to Israel.[242] Accad captures Bin Laden's sentiment over these contracts, which also reveals al-qa'ida's position on this issue: 'These contracts constitute a serious and dangerous calamity containing deceit and deception from a number of different perspectives. The legal duty regarding Palestine and our brothers there – these poor men, women, and children who have nowhere to go – is to wage *jihad* for the sake of God, and to motivate our *umma* to *jihad* so

[241] Taylor, Charles, "The Dialogical Self", in: Hiley, David R. *et al.* (eds), *The Interpretive Turn. Philosophy, Science, Culture*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991, 304.
[242] Accad, Martin, "Just Peacemaking in Light of Global Challenges. Involving Islam and Muslims", 227.

that Palestine may be completely liberated and returned to Islamic sovereignty.'[243]

Bin Laden's terms are coloured by religious imagery. He utilizes loaded terms such as *jihad,* God, and Islamic sovereignty. The point of the example is not to say that religion (Islam) is not a major factor for extremist groups like al-qa'ida; the point, however is to show that Bin Laden's primary motivation for violent resistance comes from a perceived injustice towards Arab Palestinians.

The US government understood al-qa'ida's motivation and continues to downplay its significance. By Fisk's analysis, the official Commission Report by US authorities after the 9/11 attacks understood that Palestine was the main motivation for the suicide mission.[244] To admit this reality, however, suggests that the US would need to reconsider its own policy in the Middle East. In the end, US authorities decided that it was more convenient to link the motivation for 9/11 to a religious ideology than to American support for Israel.[245] Forget the focus on American policy – under the cover of this smoke screen America led its retribution against a religious ideology and fell into the reductionist perception of Islam.

Within EC–18 the question was asked: Why does so much silence revolve around the Palestinian cause, especially within our churches back home? Some participants from Western nations expressed the fatigue of raising any issue against Israel, which is almost certainly met with resistance. To vocally attack Israeli policy is perceived as an attack on Israel; any opposition to Israeli national policy is declared as anti-Semitic. For the sake of not offending an ally, America finds it easier to hide behind religion. This will continue to be a great moral failure if the

[243] Ibid., 227–228.
[244] See Fisk, Robert, *For 10 Years We've Lied to Ourselves to Avoid Asking the One Real Question.*
[245] Ibid.

church becomes too afraid to have a difficult conversation about its own biased misconceptions.

9.5 Acknowledge Responsibility

Within EC–18 it became possible to understand the political significance of what has so far been expressed in this essay. In the first section, 'Love thy enemy', the political reality was clearly understood within a certain Christian paradigm. Non-violent resistant Palestinians are far more dangerous (politically speaking) than any terrorist. When the mistreated choose to love radically their enemy it carries the potential to remove the notion of *enemy* completely. This becomes a threatening situation, for when the oppressed regain their humanity, the oppressor is challenged to turn away from the injustice presently exposed. Love through non-violence becomes a path for restoration rather than retribution. Both the guilty and innocent alike have the potential to regain their humanity if, and only if, both sides acknowledge responsibility and practice active forgiveness.[246] Within a just peacemaking paradigm, 'forgiveness moves towards reconciliation, and reconciliation moves towards patters of life that are based in trust and are just and equitable.'[247] This is an arduous path for two sides at conflict, but in order to reach an atmosphere of mutual trust it must be accompanied by a constant striving for justice through honesty. Christian communities are called to question their sentiments, to be honest about harbouring either fear or hatred against Muslims without actually engaging their neighbour or understanding the conditions on the ground.

[246] Stassen, Glen, "Just Peacemaking as the New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War", 137.
[247] Petersen, Rodney, "Just Peacemaking and Overcoming Violence", in: Stassen, Glen *et al.* (eds.), *Formation for Life. Just Peacemaking and Twenty-First-Century Discipleship*, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2013, 285.

The political space is tied with the theological one. As the West becomes honest about its foreign policy with respect to Israel at the expense of Palestine, it is also invited to personal conversion. Albert Nolan in *Jesus before Christianity* believes that the underlying theme for Jesus' preaching about the reign of God is a relentless appeal for repentance and compassion.[248] Repentance, however, is biblically understood as a change of thinking, a change of the inner person and way of being (*μετανοια*). This road to conversion, Petersen argues, is the difference between *being* and *becoming*.[249] Not until patterns of life are in tune with personal and societal conversion can one ever say 'we have arrived'. This is a demanding spiritual road, but it is a political one as well. How does Jesus walk this political path as evidenced from the gospel narratives? Compassion (*σπλαγχνον*) is his secret. Jesus allows himself to be moved from his bowels to his heart and finally led to action – active care for those who suffer.[250] This is love governed by compassion in the biblical sense.

Compassion moves a community to change its thinking and old way of being. This is not utopian. Examples abound from Christian communities that have responded through compassion. From across denominational lines British churches published their stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in support of the non-violent Palestinian cause.[251] Several voices from within the church outlined in detail British involvement and responsibility in creating much of the conflict that exists today. The United Church of Christ and United Methodist communities have taken a stance to support the Palestinian call for an economic boy-

[248] Nolan, Albert, *Jesus Before Christianity*, New York: Orbis, 2001, 34.
[249] Petersen, Rodney, "Just Peacemaking and Overcoming Violence", 276.
[250] Nolan, Albert, *Jesus before Christianity*, 35.
[251] Kairos Britian, *Time for Action. A British Christian Response to a Moment of Truth, the Kairos Palestine Document*, http://www.kairosbritain.org.uk/ resources/documents/Time-for-Action/Time-for-Action.pdf. (accessed 12 December 2013).

cott on anything produced by or in the occupation from Israel.[252] The political and theological clash is now a reality that cannot be ignored. The Christ of the gospels never promised an easy and broad path, only one of which the entrance gate remains narrow.

9.6 Conclusion

This essay is about restoring humanity to all parties, Israelis and Palestinians alike, concerning the conflict in the Middle East. In loving one's enemy the challenge is to move beyond the innocent-guilty paradigm to one of restorative justice and practice. The alternative to non-violent resistance is a violent resistance movement – one leads to a life of justice and peace while the other continues a cycle of brokenness and despair.

[252] See Kairos Palestine, *Responses*, http://www.kairospalestine.ps/ ?q=node/18 (accessed 12 December 2013).

PART III

FURTHER REFLECTIONS

10

PENTECOSTALISM AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Doreen A. Benavidez (Philippines, Pentecostal)

10.1 Introduction

The Global Ecumenical Theological Institute (GETI) was held in South Korea 2013, parallel to the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC). I was the only delegate from a Pentecostal denomination, and I am proud of this. In one of the GETI lectures, Kim Heung Soo, when asked about the influence of Pentecostals on social issues in Korea, said: 'Pentecostals are only concerned with saving souls.' He insinuated that Pentecostals are not interested in addressing social issues. I regret this perception. It challenges Pentecostals to carefully analyse their theology and practice and to reflect on the social significance of Pentecostalism.

The *Grand Rapids Report on Evangelism and Social Responsibility* divides Christian social responsibility into two kinds: *social service and social action*.[253] Here is the functional distinction of the two: social service refers to the relief of human need, seeking to minister to individuals and families; social action tries to remove the causes of human need and

[253] Stott, John (ed.), *Grand Rapids Report on Evangelism and Social Responsibility*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and World Evangelical Fellowship, 1982), 40–44.

to transform the structures of society.[254] I believe that the Pentecostal community should be involved in these two responsibilities rather than just relinquishing to government agencies the task of promoting human betterment. The reason of this stand is that the church has more to offer given the heavenly mandate and empowerment to fulfil such responsibility.

The purpose of this article is to identify the distinctive contribution of Pentecostalism, its theology and its connection to the mission of the church. Pentecostals' experience as a form of empowering may indeed offer distinctive theological and methodological insights into the Christian task of transforming social structures.

10.2 Principles of Pentecostal Theology

Pentecostals consider Spirit baptism as experience from the origin of the church with the visible evidence of speaking in tongues. Pentecostal scholars Roger Stronstand and Robert Menzies have argued that pentecostal theology is about witness and service rather than salvation. Empowerment for service is the reason why God poured out his Spirit to the disciples on the day of Pentecost and unto this present day. The pentecostal community is empowered for service affecting society.

Murray Dempter is right on target when he says: 'Social programs will need to find support from solid theological foundations. The rapidly changing social face of Pentecostalism intensifies the need for a theology of church ministry that can inspire and direct the church's moral engagement with society without diminishing the church's historic commitment to evangelism. What is needed is a theology of church ministry capable of integrating programs of evangelism and social concern into a unified effort in fulfilling the church's global mission.'[255]

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[254] Ibid.

[255] Dempster, Murray A. *et al.* (eds.), *Called and Empowered,* Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991, 22–23.

Recognizing Luke's pneumatology enables us to focus on the charismatic activity of the Spirit in the community of believers. Experience as the basis of theological reflection is established in Luke's understanding of the Spirit-gift.[256] Stronstad argues strongly for the theological independence of Luke.[257] Howard Marshall's *Luke: Historian and Theologian* has allowed Luke to be heard of what he wants to say. To recognize that Luke is a theologian, Stronstad asserts, is also to recognize the validity of using Luke-Acts for the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.[258]

Menzies along with Stronstad argues for the distinctive character of Luke's theology from Acts 8:4–25.[259] A study of the passage presented by Menzies will show Luke's understanding of the gift of the Spirit as a prophetic endowment given to the converted. Based on Luke's pneumatology, the pentecostal gift in Acts 2 is an empowering experience, charismatic rather than soteriological in purpose. Roger Stronstad describes the role of Pentecost in Luke's theology of church mission: 'The Pentecost narrative is the story of the transfer of the charismatic spirit from Jesus to the disciples [...]. By the transfer of the Spirit, the disciples become the heirs and successors to the earthly charismatic ministry of Jesus [...]. Because Jesus has poured out the charismatic spirit upon them, the disciples will continue to do and teach those things which Jesus began to do and teach (Acts 1:8).'[260]

What needs to be taken into consideration is that the kingdom of God is central to Jesus' ministry. The kingdom of God offers a biblical perspective because it expresses the essence of the mission of God. The significance of the kingdom of God lies in its message. For Pentecostals,

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[256] Mac Donald, William G., "Pentecostal Theology. A Classical Viewpoint", in: Spittler, Russel P. (ed.), *Perspective on the New Pentecostalism,* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976, 62.
[257] Stronstad, Roger, *The Charismatic Theology of St Luke,* Peabody: Hendrickson, 1984, 19–12.
[258] Ibid., 12.
[259] Menzies, Robert, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology*, Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991, 248–260.
[260] Dempster, Murray A. *et al.* (eds.), *Called and Empowered*, 23.

the concept of the kingdom is basically a *pneumatic* perspective, for the Holy Spirit plays a pivotal role in the mission and message of the kingdom. Luke presents a clear picture of Jesus empowered by the Spirit in his entire life from conception to the resurrection.[261] 'The kingdom is given performance and reality in the midst of the world.'[262] The Scripture, particularly the gospels, teaches that the kingdom of God is both a future event and a present reality. The Spirit no doubt affected the tension about the advent of the kingdom. In Luke, the special function of the Spirit is to help establish the kingdom by inspiring the mission of Jesus and the church. According to Dempster, 'the transfer of the Holy Spirit to the disciples carries with it the ministry of bringing in the kingdom of God.'[263]

The significance of the Holy Spirit is especially clear in Luke's gospel, for he designates the Spirit as the one who empowers Jesus and his followers for service. As viewed by most scholars, the use of the pneumatic approach is crucial if the kingdom of God motif is to be understood in its fullest sense. Because of the importance of the Spirit in effecting the establishment of the kingdom, it is difficult to separate these two: the kingdom cannot be fully understood without studying the doctrine of the Spirit. Bruce writes that the 'gift of the Spirit was not to be confined to the apostles and their associates: all who listened to Peter's sermon were assured that the gift maybe theirs, too.'[264]

The pentecostal championing of a Spirit led ministry in terms of signs and wonders, exorcisms and dynamic worship can only be explained through an understanding that the same Spirit who directed the

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[261] Hawthorne, Gerald F., *The Presence and the Power*, Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1991, 163.
[262] Chilton, Bruce/ Mc Donald, James I.H., *Jesus and the Ethics of the Kingdom*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1987, 131.
[263] Dempster, Murray W., "Evangelism, Social Concern and the Kingdom of God", in: Dempster, Murray W. *et al*. (eds.), *Called and Empowered*, Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991, 22–39.
[264] Bruce, Frederick F., "The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles", in: *Interpreter 27 (2)* 1973, 171.

events in both the Old and New Testaments is the very Spirit that works today. The crucial role of the Holy Spirit in the kingdom of God particularly as the source of empowerment provides a biblical basis for Pentecostals dealing with social issues.

10.3 Implications of Pentecostal Theology

Pentecostals believe that the Spirit-baptism enables the believers to be involved in the mission of the church in a more effective way. The intimate experience with the Spirit, they testify, 'brings fresh insights on how God is active through the Spirit's ministry both within the church and in the world.'[265] History informs us that Pentecostalism has spawned tremendous exploits in the field of mission, and this includes various forms of social ministries. Pinnock believes that 'charismatic experience should produce potentially the most radical and also the most effective Christians in the area of social concern.'[266] In Acts 2, the Christian community is potentially a community of prophets empowered by the Spirit.

Understanding the Pentecost event is significant in providing a biblical framework for social action.[267] The social dimension of Joel's prophecy is not suppressed in Acts 2 but rather extended. It is explicitly stated that the servants and handmaids will not only receive God's Spirit, but also themselves prophesy.[268] According to Scripture, the coming of God's Spirit is an eschatological phenomenon.[269] The coming down of the Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost was not only historical but

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[265] Pomerville, Paul A., *The Third Force in Missions*, Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1985, 9.
[266] Dayton, Donald W., "Pentecostal Charismatic Renewal and Social Change", in: *Transformation 4 (4)*, 1988, 12.
[267] Suico, Joseph, *A Strategy of Social Action: A Filipino Pentecostal Perspective*, M.Div. Thesis, 1993.
[268] Lohfink, Gerhard, *Jesus and Community*, New York: Paulist Press, 1982, 90.
[269] Ibid., 82.

also essential: it enables one to see a glimpse of what is to come in the future and at the same time conveys how the Spirit empowered community should live in the present age.[270]

Since the Holy Spirit directed the mission of the church, social action is grounded in the nature and purpose of the church as God envisioned it to be. The prophetic task of the Pentecostal community is to continue the mission of Jesus. This mission was carried out in the lives of the early believers through the power of the Spirit. As both a historian and a theologian, Luke's account provides the major components of their social ministry.[271]

Laney describes the attitude of the Old Testament prophets towards social matters: 'The prophets of Israel were greatly concerned with social issues, both moral and religious. Indeed, for the prophets, social and moral concern lay at the very heart of religion. Repeatedly they rebuked idolatry, formalistic worship, failure to support temple worship, oppression of the poor, murder, usury and dissipation.'[272] It is evident that the prophets are concerned not only with the eschatological coming of God's Spirit, but also with the conferral of the Spirit on the entire people of God and the elimination of all social injustices.[273] In this regard, the mission of the Pentecostal community requires active involvement in addressing discrimination and rebuking sin just like the prophets of Israel and Judah. Although there are major differences between prophecies in the Old and New Testament, the message of the prophets remains unchanged. Prophecy has always been God's message revealed to his people. According to Bruce, the 'prophetic ministry is the declaration of the mind of God in the power of the Spirit, with special bearing on the

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[270] Suico, Joseph, *A Strategy of Social Action: A Filipino Pentecostal Perspective*.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Laney, J. Carl, "The Prophets and Social Concern", in: *Bibliotheca Sacra 147 (1)*, 1990, 34.
[273] Lohfink, Gerhard, *Jesus and Community*, 88.

current situation.'[274] As was Israel during the time of the first covenant, so the church of the renewed covenant is the primary social structure for the expression of God's reign. It is the agent where God's reign is to be most fully at work most adequately expressed to an alien world.[275]

10.4 Conclusion

To be a Christian is to have your 'heart broken by the things that break the heart of God.'[276] In the Philippines alone, the majority of the Philippine people are below the poverty line. Because of this poverty, together with other social problems such as prostitution, drug addiction and corruption, the society is affected. We are living amidst of fear and social decay. What does our pentecostal belief offer to solve this problem? How can our faith be relevant to the people in the world? The church cannot afford to be apathetic when the world is suffering. The ministry of the Spirit is to control how the churches address the present socio-political and economic issues and Scripture must be recognized to provide the key principles and framework for this task.

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[274] Bruce, Frederick F., "Foreword", in: Hill, Clifford, *Prophecy and Present*, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications,1989, xii.
[275] Longenecker, Richard N., *New Testament Social Ethics for Today*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publislishing, 1984, 95–96.
[276] Campolo, Antonio, *Ideas for Social Action*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983, 12.

11

COMPELLED TO SERVE DIAKONIA IN CHINA

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11.1 Introduction

The 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held in Busan, South Korea from 30th October to 9th November 2013. Over 3000 Christians from all over the world gathered to discuss their ecumenical visions for the 21st century. We prayed together *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'* This helped me to realize that, when we preach, we need more than words – we also need to express our faith in deeds. As a female pastor working with a Christian organization, the *Amity Foundation*, I am eager to learn from other churches and church-related organizations, to share their knowledge and experience in serving the people. So, I joined the ecumenical conversation about *diakonia*. In this article, I will share some of the insights which have been inspired through this encounter.

11.2 Diakonia in the Bible

From the gospel, we learn that Jesus Christ was a great servant of the people. First he became a human being, and then he became our deacon. In other words, he is the main foundation of our diaconal work.

What is diakonia? This term is used to describe Christian service. Christian service springs from and is nourished by God's love as revealed through Christ. So, the concept of diakonia is determined by Jesus Christ. Diakonia is filled with the significance given to it through his teachings, life and work. In other words, diakonia is at the heart of the gospel: 'For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.' (Mark 10:42 – 45; Luke 22:25 – 27).[277]

Jesus is like ourselves. He concentrates on the fundamental need of living: our daily bread. According to John 2:1 – 12, Jesus' first miracle on earth was to turn water into wine, so that human life can be contented and fulfilled. Jesus wandered through Galilee with his disciples, teaching, proclaiming and healing. What does this mean for us today? The Son of God meets us in our sorrow and despair. He was tempted like us by distress, pride and pleasure, power and enjoyment. Thus he understands us and is with us. Jesus Christ became our *deacon*, carrying all of our sins, thus doing the service of the suffering servant.

Christians in China talk about many kinds of sins, including smoking, adultery and killing. But when we examine the bible, we find a different view: it was because of one person's offense, Adam's sin in the garden of Eden, that death began to reign. It is important for us to realize that our lives are wrapped up in those of our ancestors. We would not exist if we did not have our forefathers. We are sinners not because *we* sin, but because of Adam's sin. Because of this original sin, the whole

[277] Oftestad, Alf B., *A Short Introduction to The Biblical Understanding of Diakonia*, Diakonhjemmets Hogskolesenter 1998, 46.

world became imperfect. Human lives are full of sicknesses, crises and broken relationships.

When we look further in the gospel, we see that the most consistent service was Jesus' surrender and sacrifice for others. The service of Jesus Christ culminated in his suffering and death on the cross. So, Jesus put *martyria* and *diakonia* together. After his crucifixion, Jesus was resurrected. His resurrection gives our diaconal work hope and a future. For those who believe, death and the power of sin belong to the past. His disciples have 'already passed from death to life' (John 5:24; Eph 2:6). Jesus called on his disciples to follow him and gave them the Holy Spirit and the power to do what he had done: to bring the kingdom of God to the people. This we call the great commission, which the church has inherited.

The growth of faith cannot be separated from growth of love for our fellow men. The works of love are entirely different from works of law. Works of love are done to help fellow humans, who have to be in the focus. The source of our works of love is not ourselves, but God's love in Jesus Christ. 'In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.' (1 John 4:19). The church needs to realize more deeply that diakonia is part of the gospel and that our diaconal work must be founded on the work of Jesus Christ as our deacon: we should be ready to become deacons for others.

11.3 Diakonia in the Context of China

11.3.1 Christianity in China

Christianity entered China in the year 635 A.D., when the Nestorians brought the gospel during the Tang Dynasty. However, current studies, while still controversial, indicate that Christianity might have first entered China as early as the first century A.D. when Thomas the apostle brought the gospel to India. In the 19th century, many protestant mis-

sionaries came to China, but unfortunately this was closely associated with colonialism, and Christianity was seen as a foreign religion. In the 1950s, in order to change the image of Christianity as a foreign religion, Chinese Christians with a broad vision initiated the *Three-Self Patriotic Movement*. The principles of *self-governance, self-support* and *self-propagation* quickly received support and a positive response from most Chinese Christians.

In the last thirty years, Christianity in China has been growing fast and is enjoying somewhat of a golden age. Besides, there is an extraordinary economic growth – so it seems the poor are far away from us. But this is not true: We can see people in the city who do not have enough to sustain themselves, and farmers in the countryside have very low incomes, working hard the whole year, yet earning little. According to incomplete statistics, throughout the country, there are over 23 million protestant Christians, which is 30 times the figure of 1949.[278] But compared to a population of 1.34 billion, protestants in China not only constitute a minority but are also marginalized. How does this small Christian group exert an influence in its context? How can they carry on the mission of God and at the same time help to promote a harmonious society in China?

11.3.2 The Amity Foundation

After graduating from Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, I had the opportunity to work with the Amity Foundation; so I would like to introduce this institution. It was established in 1985 through the initiative of Chinese protestant leaders. How has this small organization become a favoured vessel to spread the love of God in this country? Why is diakonia becoming more and more important both theologically and in practice for the church in China? Drawing on insights from Amity's

[278] http://www.bibleinchina.org/news/chineseschurch (accessed 21 July 2015).

work, we can see how this ministry has been connecting people and contributing to society.

When new policies of openness and reform emerged in the early 1980s, members of the protestant Church in China approached overseas churches to forge a new partnership. Accordingly, the process of founding Amity became an occasion for re-assessing a common history. Many church representatives from overseas were not only preoccupied with reaching a proper agreement with Chinese partners but also with convincing their own mission agencies that it was a good idea to help setting up Amity Foundation. They proved that they were people with a strong personal interest in China and also with the stamina to carry through – against all odds – with Bishop Ting's vision of creating a faith-based development organization in China.[279]

The Amity Foundation was established as a civil society sponsored by Chinese Christians and supported by interested groups. Its purpose is to help developing China's social welfare structure by promoting education, medical and health services, community development, environment preservation, sustainable development, disaster management, and so on. By 30 September 2010, the Amity Foundation had raised donations of about RMB 15 billion. Its projects cover 31 provinces, cities and autonomous regions, and have benefited more than 10 million people.[280] Due to its great contributions to Chinese society, especially its projects in rural areas, Amity has received the following national awards:

- In 1997, the Amity Foundation received the medal of 'National Advanced Unit in Helping the Disabled' granted by the State Council.

[279] Carroll, Ewing W. *et al.* (eds.), *Amity's Founding. Recollections from Abroad*, 2010, 3.
[280] See *Love Never Ends: On the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Amity Foundation*, 1985–2010, 10.

- In 1999, the Amity Foundation was awarded the honorary title of 'Model Unit for National Unity and Progress' by the State Council.
- In 2006, the Amity Foundation won the second session 'Agency Award' of the China Poverty Eradication Award.
- In 2008, the Amity Foundation won the 'China Charity Award'.
- In 2009, the Amity Foundation was awarded the honorary title of 'Model Unit for National Unity and Progress' by the State Council.

The entire staff of Amity Foundation strongly believes in the power of love, as it is written in the bible: 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.' (1 Cor 13:13) In Amity, we believe that love is not just a sentiment but a strong force. It is the blood of life and a power that unites people. The founding president of the Amity Foundation, Bishop Ting, taught us that 'God is love. Love needs witness. To witness, we shall participate actively in social service.' Through its relationship with churches in China and its work with the poor, Amity has made more and more people realize that religious practices can be beneficial for society, just as religious diversity can lead to harmony.

11.3. 3 Theological Foundation of Amity's Work

We confess that 'the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.' (Ps 24:1) Faith in the creator implies admiration consistent with God's own conclusion at the end of every day: 'God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.'[281] This is the basis of our faith and work. Though there is sin in this world, it was created perfectly. The whole creation is very good and magnificent, because it comes from God, the creator. It is not only made for use by

[281] See *Diakonia in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment.* An LWF Contribution to the Understanding and Practice of Diakonia, 2009, 15.

humankind: God the creator rejoices in his work (Gen 1:31). All humankind shares in this joy and in some way perceives the eternal power of God in his work (Rom 1:20). Israel sees in the creation the characteristic features of God's glory on earth and in heaven (Ps 8:2; Isa 6:1 – 3).[282] Humankind has been created in the image and likeness of its creator (Gen 1:26 – 27). As such, humankind is given a permanent dignity which requires respect for human life (Gen 9:6). It entails praise of the creation and the creator. At the same time human beings are responsible to be God's representatives. They are co-operators in, stewards of, and even rulers over creation (Gen 1:26 b; Ps 8:4 – 8) – to care for all which is created on earth. This implies that human beings are called to develop culture, including the arts, as well as science and technology, and to use them in accordance with God.[283]

Such faith contradicts a worldview reducing creation to matter which human beings are free to consume and even to waste. The world is never just material, but an expression of God's goodwill and touched by God's endless love. God's good creation is not at the service of human beings. On the contrary, God gives a special responsibility to all humankind to care for creation. Diaconal action affirms this vocation and gives us an opportunity to be partners in God's mission. So, we confesses God's continued presence in the world as creator.[284]

11.3.4 Awareness of Diakonia

Mentioning diakonia to a Chinese Christian is not easy because the term sounds quite abstract and we cannot find an appropriate Chinese translation for it. In order to raise awareness of diakonia in China, the Amity Foundation created a capacity building project for lay people from local churches in 2009.

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[282] See *Confessing the One Faith: An Ecumenical Explication of the Apostolic Faith as it is Confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381)*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1990, 40.
[283] Ibid., 41.
[284] See *Diakonia in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment*, 15.

At an advanced stage of this project, we invited a Methodist minister, Adrian Burdon, to give our church-based trainees a series of lectures on *Diakonia and mission*. In his lectures, he mentioned the gospel of Luke, where Jesus indicates the great importance of the poor: it is to them that the kingdom of God is announced. The Nazareth manifesto built on the book of Isaiah (61:1–2), says that it is to the poor that the good news is preached. 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.' (Luke 4:17–19).

Because the poor have nothing, they are particularly ready to open themselves to the saving action of Jesus. This privilege of the poor also inspires them with hope, because the end of their suffering is in sight.[285] Julio de Santa in *Towards a Church of the Poor* defines poverty as the non-fulfilment of basic human needs required to adequately sustain life, on the one hand, and the condition of defenceless people suffering from structural injustice on the other. Too often, attempts to reduce or eliminate poverty fail because efforts were focused on working *for* rather than *with* the poor, without attacking the oppressive causes of impoverishment.[286]

Amity's work is always concerned about people who are needy. We want to be close to the people, talking with them and listening to them, trying to find the origins of their problems. We do not stress that we are Christians or that we believe in Jesus Christ, but we can observe positive changes in the peoples' lives. When poor people have enough food and clothes, they find peace in daily life, and some begin to reflect: Why did these people help us? Why did they support us without any expectation of repayment? When they find out that those who come to them are fol-

[285] See De Santa Ana, Julio, *Good News to the Poor – The Challenge of the Poor in the History of the Church*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1979, 13–14.
[286] See De Santa Ana, Julio, *Towards a Church of the Poor"*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1979, 76.

lowers of Christ, they may choose to become believers as well, so that they can live within this grace all lifelong.

11.3.5 Inspiration from the WCC Assembly

The report of the WCC conference on the future of diakonia in Sri Lanka in 2012 opted to look at diakonia from three specific vantage points as elaborated below: First, it considered diakonia as a primary expression of the churches' participation in the ongoing work of God. This option was chosen to assert that churches are not to be exclusive, inward-looking religious communities, but have a calling to be engaged for the world.

Second, it attempted to re-image diakonia from the point of view of those who are traditionally considered as recipients of the churches' diakonia – the vulnerable and marginalized communities. Besides of theological reasons, this option was taken to search for more people-based and less resource-intensive forms of diakonia.[287]

Third, God's mission is about the realization of God's vision for the world, a world in which 'God rejoices because there shall no more be people who build houses and do not live in them and enjoy the fruits of their labour; where people will not die of calamities, and where the aggressors are transformed so that all shall live in peace.' (Isa 65:17 – 25) This eschatological hope of a 'new heaven and earth' (Rev 21:1) constantly breaks into our present, inviting people to become co-workers of God.

[287] See Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 401.

11.4 Conclusion

Diakonia stands out as a basis for unity.[288] Bishop Ting, the founding president of Amity, said: 'The bible helps to unite us.' He said this in relation to the Amity Bible Printing Company which is now the largest bible printing company in China and has already produced more than 100 million bibles. This is an important mission – but for the church to share the gospel through its diaconal work will require much more reflection and practice. We must admit that the diaconal ministry in China is still in its infancy, and we have a long road to walk. We need support from inside and outside the church, both international and domestic. We also need to work for more acknowledgement from our government and society. There is a consensus in the church today that this is the golden age for the development of Christianity in China. The church and church-related associations should take the opportunity to bear witness to Christ through their practice in faith, in order to bring about the kingdom of God in this country. We also need the prayers of churches all over the world; we need the WCC and other worldwide organizations to work with us. If we want to walk far, we need to walk together.

[288] Ibid., 402.

12

MIGRATION AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Dawit Olika Terfassa (Ethiopia, Evangelical)

12.1 Introduction

In the last decades, the context of migration has changed dramatically and is one of the global forces that have shaped our landscapes.[289] Migration and the need of inclusive communities can only be addressed effectively by ecumenical oriented and multi-cultural Christian communities.[290] Being a loving community and providing effective models of integration can contribute to counteract the growing attitudes of separation, discrimination and racism in our societies. In this article, I will discuss the relationship between migration, inclusive communities and ecumenism. We need to help our churches and societies to develop a positive attitude towards the increasing diversity of people, language, culture, ethnicity and religions to make this world a better place where everyone is equally welcomed and recognized.

Though there are some organizations working for integration and inclusiveness within the church and society, there is a great need for more

[289] Halliday, Adele, "Migration and Multicultural Ministries as Mission", in: *International Review of Mission 101 (2)*, 2012, 408–414.
[290] Ibid.

to be done. The WCC has prioritized the issue of migration and initiated three consultations in Beirut, Lebanon (5–7 December 2011) Geneva, Switzerland (7–9 May 2012) and Manila, Philippines (4–11 November 2012).[291] The challenges we face in relation to migration and integration are too big to be solved by a single church or society. They call for a change of attitude by every one of us. We need to avoid prejudices which have built walls of separation, and to recognize one another as members of the same family.[292] This concern was expressed by Bishop Leslie Newbigin as follows: 'The disunity of the church is a denial of the promise and a contradiction of the purpose for which the church is sent into the world. How can the church give to the world the message that Jesus is able to draw all men to himself, while it continues to say, "Nevertheless, Jesus is not able to draw us who bear his name together"? How will the world believe a message which we do not appear to believe ourselves? The divisions of the church are a public denial of the sufficiency of the atonement.'[293]

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[291] These conferences were organized by WCC as Global Ecumenical Network on Migration and carried out in partnership with the All African Churches Conference (AACC), the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCEM) and the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC). *See Who is my neighbor? Migration and Ecclesial Landscape: An Ecumenical Response to Migration*, WCC Concept Paper, 2012, 1.

[292] The attitude among Pentecostals, who have basically been skeptical to ecumenism, has begun to change in recent years. They contribute to the work of Faith and Order and participate in bilateral dialogues (international Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue, Lutheran–Pentecostal dialogue, dialogue between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and Pentecostals, Orthodox–Pentecostal dialogue, Global Christian Forum, Formation of the Joint Consultation Group as an ongoing dialogue between WCC and Pentecostals, and so on). See Ariarajah, S. Wesley, "Interfaith Dialogue", in: Lossky, Nicholas *et al*. (eds.), Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement, Geneva: WCC Publications, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/interreligious-trust-and-respect/ecumenical-dictionary-interfaith-dialogue (accessed 8 October 2013); Robeck, Cecil M., *Christian Unity and Pentecostal Mission: A Contradiction?*, 2013, 15–18.

[293] Newbigin, Lesslie, "The Dialogue of Gospel and Culture. Reflections on the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil", in:

12.2 Some Facts about Migration

Migration is among the most influential forces that have changed the landscapes of our respective contexts. A large number of people are presently on the move to a different country or even continent due to different reasons such as war and conflict, persecution, economic problems, and natural disaster. There are forced immigrants as well as voluntary immigrants.[294] 'People leave their home countries for a variety of reasons. There are several categories of migrants, for example migrant workers, economic migrants, international students, environmentally induced migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, irregular migration (passing through a country to reach other destinations), trafficking of human beings, people smuggling, internationally displaced people, [and] Stateless people.'[295]

Among the global migrants today the largest group is Christian (49 %) and its major destination is Europe.[296] Among many other reasons

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International Bulletin of Missionary Research 21 (2), 1997, 9. http://www.newbigin.net/assets/pdf/97dgc.pdf (accessed 6 October 2013).

[294] 'Forced migration is a general term that refers to the movements of refugees and internally displaced people (people displaced by conflicts) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects. Forced migration is distinguished from voluntary (sometimes called economic) migration by the original absence of a desire or motivation to leave the place of residence.' http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/iasfm/mission.htm (accessed 2 January 2014).

[295] Chetti, Daniel, *Migration and the Changing Ecclesial Landscape: Who is my Neighbor?*, http://www.abtslebanon.org/Default.asp?PN=News&SubP='NewsStory'&DivisionID=&DepartmentID=&SubDepartmentID=&NewsID=37898&ShowNav=&StoryGroup=Current&A= (accessed 15 October 2013).

[296] Of the total number of global migrants, an estimated 106 million (49%) are Christians, 60 million (27%) Muslims, 5% Hindus, 3% Buddhists, 2% Jews, 4 % other faiths. The major destination regions for Christian emigrants are Europe (38%), North America (34%) and Asia Pacific (11%). See "The 'Other' is My Neighbour", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 276. 'The most important causes [for migration] are related to the considerable economic, social, and political imbalances that characterize the gap between relatively rich, democratic, and stable but aging societies in Europe and

why Europe is attracting migrants are its wealth and political stability. Migrants have diverse experiences of migration: for some it has been a successful journey, but for most of them it has been full of hardships, being uprooted, detained and meeting all sorts of challenges before and after arriving at the planned destination. The difficulties of learning a new language, of finding a job and of being reunited with the family, which is often left behind at home or in a refugee camp, are enormous. These have a strong influence on the health and psychological well-being of migrants according to the studies made by UN refugee agency, UNHCR.[297] Migrants are exposed to racism, exploitation, abuse, discrimination and segregation of different forms. Despite all these challenges, migration is constantly increasing. 'It might be briefly recalled that the total number of international migrants has increased over the last 10 years from an estimated 150 million in 2000 to 214 million persons today. Migrants today would constitute the fifth most populous country in the world.'[298]

Racism, devaluation and exclusion are making inclusion a difficult task. Some of the attitudes of rejection and exclusion can be summarized as follows:[299]

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the much poorer, less stable, but youthful and demographically growing societies in neighboring and other world regions.' Holzmann, Robert/ Münz, Rainer, *Challenges and Opportunities of International Migration for the EU, Its Member States, Neighboring Countries and Regions: A Policy Note*, Social Protection Unit, Human Development Network, The World Bank, 2004, 7.

[297] The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, has studied the refugee integration in Sweden, Austria, France and Ireland. In Sweden, 55 refugees as well as a national reference group and people working with migrants have been interviewed. The result of this research was that difficulties of being reunited with the family and learning the foreign language affects integration highly. http://www.svt.se/nyheter/sverige/svart-att-ateforenas-i-sverige (accessed 11 November 2013).

[298] Werner, Dietrich, *Evangelism in Theological Education in Europe – 12 Considerations from ETE/WCC.* Unpublished paper for a Consultation of WCC/ CWME, Bossey, Switzerland, 2012, 8.

[299] Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*, Louisville, Kentucky: Office of Evangelism and Racial/ Cultural Diversity, 2011, 39–40.

1. The assumption that differences associated with race, social class and gender are by nature irreconcilable. As a result, staying with one's own kind becomes the best option.
2. The conviction that social groups are innately limited in their capacity to interact across group boundaries and that some groups naturally trigger a mutual hostility so that they should remain separated from each other.
3. The belief in the importance of our own group identity so that we resist others who are not like ourselves.

These ideas are not only hindering inclusiveness and ecumenism, but also affect the confidence of the migrants. Being daily observed by suspicious eyes in public places, shops, restaurants, recreation places and sometimes even in churches destroys the migrants' self-confidence. Therefore, these attitudes are among the main challenges that need to be addressed. 'It begins with the opening [of] our hearts and minds to others who we perceive to be different. This requires us to confront intentionally the elements of resistance within us as members of this society. [...] It means building mutual partnership with others to carry out ministries of service, social justice, and evangelism. In order to practice mutual inclusion, we have to confront the reality of racism that leads to inter-group mistrust and hostility. The multicultural journey is a long-term effort that requires humility and perseverance.'[300]

12.3 Opportunities of Migration

Migration is not only a challenge but also a blessing for Christian and non-Christian communities. 'Migration leads to increasing cultural, theological, and linguistic pluralism within Christian practice.'[301] In

[300] Ibid., 2.
[301] Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications,

most migrant receiving countries, Christian worship is taking place in multicultural congregations and the number of migrant congregations is continually increasing.[302] 'The presence of diverse people, [...] different music styles, languages, different spiritual expressions of faith [...] also enable us to develop a broader understanding of God'.[303] A diaspora community with its multicultural elements introduces new ways of worship and methods of evangelization. 'The changing faces of global migration have huge implications for contextual theology and teachings on evangelism, as the majority of migrant churches have a self-understanding which is positive on evangelism.'[304]

The new context created by the presence of migrants can expose us to gifts and blessings that contribute to the mutual benefit of both local and migrant Christians. It broadens our knowledge of a world beyond our limited context. It is an opportunity to increase our concern for human rights, peace and climate issues on a global level. Besides, in some cases migrants are contributing to the economic growth and labour market of the hosting and sending countries. For example, a research project in Sweden has shown that companies increased their export rates depending on their employment of migrants.[305] For migrant receiving

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2013, 276; Halliday, Adele, "Migration and Multicultural Ministries as Mission", 408–414.

[302] For example, Geneva had over 90 worshipping communities of foreign origin by the end of 2007, Ireland had 361 migrant led-churches in 2008. Here in my context in Sweden, the number of migrant churches has grown from 17 in the year 2000 to 67 in 2010. See Terfassa, Dawit Olika, Evangelism in Theological Education and Missiological Formation in Sweden. From a Migrant Perspective, Unpublished paper for a Consultation of WCC/CWME, Bossey, Switzerland, 2012, 1 and 10–12.

[303] Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*, 27.

[304] Werner, Dietrich, *Evangelism in Theological Education in Europe – 12 Considerations from ETE/WCC*, 8. See also Terfassa, Dawit Olika, "The Impact of Migration on Evangelism in Europe", in: *International Review of Mission*, 2014, 256–274.

[305] According to a recent study carried out at the University of Uppsala, migrants have increased the export market in Sweden about 4.5% because they know the market situation abroad better and have the necessary knowledge.

countries, migration reduces the shortage of labour and skills. At the same time it helps the migrant sending countries to ease the pressure on their labour market and to avoid unemployment. So, migration may create a win-win situation for both parts.[306]

The approaches introduced by migrant churches are met with different attitudes. Sometimes, they are rejected as irrelevant to the western culture. In other cases, they are accepted with genuine openness and humility as useful tools of inspiration which help local churches to reflect on their commitment to Christian faith. Yet, it is obvious that we have not been able to fully utilize our diverse cultural backgrounds to develop mutual learning. 'All too often, churches tend to be blind to the changes that are taking place all around them. The social, economic and demographic changes that are affecting our societies will invariably impact our churches and the way we understand the nature and witness of the church. I suspect, changes may come sooner than later. The largest protestant church in London is an immigrant church; the same is true in some other European capitals, in Ukraine and Russia. Migrant churches are also changing the ecclesial landscape in North America. Incidentally, the largest protestant worshipping congregation in Lebanon, on any given Sunday, is not an Arabic speaking congregation. It is a Full Gospel congregation of around 400 Ethiopian maids, worshipping in Amharic.'[307]

In general, both the challenges and opportunities related to migration cannot be handled by a single denomination. It demands a joint effort and an ecumenical vision. Migration is a reminder to churches to redis-

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http://www.svt.se/nyheter/vetenskap/invandring-gynnar-export (accessed 11 November 2013).

[306] Holzmann, Robert/ Münz, Rainer, *Challenges and Opportunities of International Migration for the EU, Its Member States, Neighboring Countries and Regions: A Policy Note*, 5.

[307] Chetti, Daniel, *Migration and the Changing Ecclesial Landscape: Who is my Neighbor?*

cover their identity as inclusive community and a step towards an ecumenical future.

12.4 Migration as a Concern for the Church

I refer to a statement adopted by the central committee of the World Council of Churches from the year 1995 called *A Moment to Choose: Risking Being with the Uprooted People*.[308] This statement shows why the church as well as individual Christians should be concerned about migration. Some of these reasons are mentioned below.

12.4.1 The Sacredness of Human Life

Every human being regardless of age, colour, language, and cultural and religious background is created in the image of God and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. The bible clearly shows that diversity is God's intention for the whole of creation and that God created humans different but equal according to Acts 17:26.[309] 'Every person wishes to be confirmed for whom s/he is and, as a human being, s/he is created with the capacity to confirm the worthiness of others. This is the basis for developing positive and inclusive relationships.'[310] There is no greater motivation for human rights than the fact that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God.

12.4.2 The Biblical Value of Love

To love our neighbour with all our heart compels us to struggle for justice and peace. The *golden rule* constitutes the moral responsibility which is central to our faith. But it is meaningless if we do not exercise

[308] "The 'Other' is My Neighbour", 272–276.
[309] See "The 'Other' is My Neighbour", 272f.
[310] Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*, 58.

it in our daily encounter with those who are in need.[311] God commands Moses to tell the people of Israel: 'When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you and shall be to you as the citizen among you, you shall love the alien as yourself. I am the Lord your God.' (Lev 19:34) The church is challenged to voice the concerns of the strangers in our midst, to meet their needs and to seek justice for them and their families.[312]

12.4.3 The Wandering People of God

The bible is narrating the story of the people of Israel being migrants accompanied by God. Migration is also the nature of the church from the early times. 'That the Scripture refers to followers of Jesus as "aliens and exiles" implies that migration in itself is not viewed as an experience to be aspired to. Much rather, it calls us to justly and inclusively relate to others who equally experience alienation.'[313] This is reminding us of the truth that our role and mission as a church is not only to welcome, tolerate and have pity for the migrants, but to walk with them. Authentic mission looks for partners in pilgrimage, not for objects of mission. The vision of a multicultural church is as old as the church it-

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[311] 'Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" The king will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."' (Matt 25: 34–40). 'A ministry of accompaniment and advocacy with the uprooted people upholds the principles of prophetic witness and service.' Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 272.

[312] Lev 19:33–34; Eph 2:19. See Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*.

[313] "The 'Other' is My Neighbour", 274.

self. The future church in heaven is described in the book of Revelation as a multicultural, multi-racial and multi-lingual inclusive community.[314]

12.4.4 The Global Context

'The ecclesial landscape, especially in migrant receiving countries, has changed rapidly. The co-existence of migration-shaped congregations and local churches challenges the church to rethink its nature.'[315] We are affected by changes such as ethnic diversity in church membership, formation of migrant churches and challenges related to ecclesiology and theological hermeneutics. 'The correct interpretation of the bible is to read it with the eyes of those who suffer.'[316] If we take our context seriously, we cannot ignore the issue of migration. Our theology, ministries and ecclesiology need to be revised to fit into our context and to promote contextualization and integration.

12.5 Churches as Promoters of Inclusion

As mentioned above, the basic requirement is that the Christian community reflects on its identity as aliens and exiles and follows the ethical mandate of loving others as ourselves. Practically, there are several things which a church can do in order to develop a mentality of inclusion both within church and society. But this is never an assignment of a specific group or denomination – rather it requires the joining of hands to confront the challenges together. Whatever we do as individuals may be useful steps. But let us not stop there; let us utilize collective power to bring radical changes and to address the challenges even more

[314] Isa 56:6–8; Rev 7:9–12. See also Terfassa, Dawit Olika, "The Impact of Migration on Evangelism in Europe", 263–274.
[315] "The 'Other' is My Neighbour", 278.
[316] Choi, Y.-S., NCCK Newsletter, December 2014, https://uk-mg61.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?.rand=2fkmqh9g1v0p8 (accessed 11 December 2014).

effectively. Here are some general suggestions for a better ecumenical response to the issue of migration.

12.5.1 The Divine Migrant

Unity celebrates diversity since it is modelled by the unity between the three persons of the trinity. Every member is equally important, essential for the wholeness and dependent on one another. An ecumenical vision which is based on this understanding will have a lasting and stable ground. 'Our identity is determined by our communion with Christ and being part of the kingdom-community. This identity embraces diversity as much as it celebrates unity [...]. The "other" is not just tolerated in the kingdom of God, but has an active role to play and unique contribution to make.'[317]

All we need as a starting point is humility and openness which can overcome prejudices.[318] 'We should not be surprised by the increase of multi-cultural and multi-religious communities. This is a great opportunity to put into practice the love of Christ what we so often talk and write about, but find it difficult to mirror in our living.'[319] We need to keep our eyes on the *divine migrant*, the incarnate Christ, to be reminded

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[317] "The 'Other' is My Neighbour", 275. 'There are Christians who migrate; some of the challenges they face are constantly reminding us that Christ continues to suffer, because migrants are members of the body of Christ. When one part of the body hurts, the rest of the body hurts as well. It may be happening to migrants in Africa or Asia, but if we are one body we all suffer.' Mutambara, E., *Biblical Reflection*, Global Ecumenical Network on Migration, 4–11 November 2012, Manila, Philippines, final report, https://www.oikoumene.org/en/folder/documents-pdf/Final_GEM_Report_2012.pdf (accessed 12 July 2015).

[318] 'At its very core hospitality requires us to confront our own prejudices, opinions, and subjections and ultimately place them aside if we want to be truly hospitable.' Ngomedje, A. D. . "A Cross Cultural Church and Mission Experience", in: Fagerli, Beate *et al.* (eds.), *A Learning Missional Church: Reflections from Young Missiologists*, Edinburgh: Regnum Books, 2012, 123.

[319] Rimkiene, Rita, *Case Studies. Incarnational Mission in Gloucester, UK*, Consultation for Evangelism in Theological Education and Missiological Formation, WCC Commission for Mission and Evangelism, 30 October 2012, Bossey, Switzerland.

of the importance of a continual boundary crossing.[320] There are several good examples[321] of such boundary crossings within various church traditions. Our call is to be the oikonomia, the all-embracing household of God which transcends all barriers.

12.5.2 Struggle for Justice

We have to deal with the issues of oppression, discrimination and racial movements.[322] 'The model for our diaconal ministry is Jesus Christ who holistically and in challenging ways met the needs and the quests for inclusion, justice and life in its fullness of those he encountered.'[323] Therefore we should expand our mission from programs of aid and relief to revolutionary and reconciliatory struggle against social injustice and structures that oppresses the uprooted.[324]

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[320] Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*, 16.

[321] *Fresh expressions* from UK is a good example and has a lot to teach about border crossing. This initiative provides international gatherings, international student fellowships, experience exchanges and intercultural/ interreligious dialogues. 'A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. [...] Fresh expressions is a new mindset, not a new model of church to be copied. It is a mindset that starts not with church, but with people who don't belong to church.' http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/guide/about/whatis (accessed 18 December 2013). See also Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 280.

[322] 'A Christianity which has lost its vertical dimension has lost its salt is not only insipid in itself, but useless to the world. But Christianity which would use the vertical preoccupation as a means to escape from its responsibility for and in the common life of man is a denial of the incarnation.' Bosch, David J., *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Maryknoll, New York,: Orbis Books, 1991, 408. 'As churches we are called to overcome those elemental forces that are life destroying and harm migrants by identifying them as others.' Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 278.

[323] Ibid., 281.

[324] Ibid., 279.

12.5.3. Inclusive Worship

We should encourage the involvement of people with different backgrounds in our services and make sure that our sermons and prayers are related to migration issues. We have to move beyond the mono-cultural paradigms that often characterize our Sunday worships services. Being an inclusive church should not be reduced to sharing buildings and facilities. We need to be willing to let the others contribute to our worship, theology and leadership. 'The presence of persons from two or more cultural or racial groups does not in itself make a congregation "multicultural". The key is the practice of mutual inclusion between and among the various cultural groups present in the congregation. This involves building community through enthusiastic and broad evangelism, embracing worship, shared leadership, joint decision making, partnering for ministry, and inclusive patterns of interpersonal and organizational communication.'[325]

12.5.4 Raising Awareness

Creation of joint forums[326] can engage both parts to investigate factors that are hindering integration and find strategies to overcome the obstacles. This is not only strengthening the relationship between migrants and local churches, but the outcomes of the meetings will be more effective. 'In principle sending and receiving countries have a common interest to explore win-win solutions that allow not only the countries and economies involved but also the migrants themselves to gain from

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[325] Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*, 22. 'In fact, cross-cultural mission has always been and will continue to be the primary learning experience of the church, particularly because it pulls us out of a mono-cultural understanding and helps us to discover a legitimate theological pluralism which actually opens up for new perspectives in the gospel.' Jørgensen, Knud, in: Fagerli, Beate *et al.* (eds.), *A Learning Missional Church: Reflections from Young Missiologists*, 4.

[326] Kool, A-M., *Evangelism in Theological Education and Missiological Formation. A Central and Eastern Europe Perspective with Hungarian Focus*. Unpublished paper for a Consultation of WCC/CWME, Bossey, Switzerland, 2012, 6 f.

geographic mobility of the labour and skills.'[327] Both migrants and the locals can benefit from joint forums. Often, it is not known to the society what is happening to migrants and their families[328]. Many of the inhabitants of migrant receiving countries have no experience of what it means to migrate. Churches can use exhibitions, conferences, media and publications to raise the awareness of the situation of migrants.[329] 'Provide educational opportunities and events intended to raise cultural awareness and cultural competence, bible studies and multicultural small group sessions, introduce diversity workshops, courses of study on the understanding of the migrant and/or refugee experiences of dislocation and invite individuals to share their stories and experiences – these things are raising the awareness of the congregation and society to discern and confront beliefs and behaviours that work against the practice of inclusion.'[330]

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[327] Holzmann, Robert/ Münz, Rainer, *Challenges and Opportunities of International Migration for the EU, Its Member States, Neighboring Countries and Regions: A Policy Note*, 6.

[328] 'The church must be a site for storytelling, for it is in lifting up the stories of migrants that we refuse to yield to the temptation of entering the catacombs of hopeless accommodation and deadly skepticism. We need to be reminded over and over through these conversations that to be desensitized by the ordinariness of forced migration because it is a daily occurrence is to altogether lose our humanity.' Ruiz-Duremdes, S. R. J., *Theological and Biblical Reflection,* National Council of Churches of the Philippines, 4–11 November 2012, Final Report, https://www.oikoumene.org/en/folder/documents-pdf/Final_GEM_ Report_2012.pdf, 43–44 (accessed 12 July 2015).

[329] 'The goals of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) are twofold: (1) Promote and increase the scientific knowledge of forced migration. (2) Advance the understanding of appropriate and effective practice concerning forced migration. One means by which we advance these goals is by sponsoring international conferences where we meet to discuss and learn from each other's insights and experiences. We disseminate these lessons by publishing a rapporteur's summary report of each IRAP meeting in the Journal of Refugee Studies.' http://www.efms.uni-bamberg.de/iasfm/ mission.htm (accessed 2 January 2014).

[330] Parker, Sara J./ Girgis, Raafat (2011), *Living the Vision. Becoming a Multicultural Church*, 39–40.

The use of media has strong impact in our society. Therefore, networks should use TV programs, create well organized websites, and arrange concerts and music festivals to encourage a change of attitude. Contrary to the negative image which is dominating public discussion, attention should be given to the positive experiences related to migration.[331] Adéle Djomo Ngomedje presents a list of further recommendations given by the churches' *Commission for Migrants in Europe*.[332] These recommendations are helpful as congregations attempt to improve their involvement in migration issues.

12.5.5 Theological Education

Educational institutions are influential places to proper reflect on the theological and spiritual challenges faced by the church. To provide a framework for proper responses to migration is one of the tasks of theological education. We have to adjust our curriculums to equip future leaders with the capacity to address the issue of migration. It is also important to notice the contribution of the migrants themselves in the ad-

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[331] 'In most countries of Europe today, public concern has brought about a political emphasis on immigration restriction, if not prevention, on the assumption that the social and fiscal costs (and therefore also political costs) of immigration may outweigh its benefits. Recent terrorist activities in Europe and the United States have intensified security concerns. The opposite is true for most sending countries. There, emigration is seen as an opportunity for the mobile segment of society, a relief for domestic labor markets, and a major source of national as well as individual income through remittances from successful migrants.' Holzmann, Robert/ Münz, Rainer, *Challenges and Opportunities of International Migration for the EU, Its Member States, Neighboring Countries and Regions: A Policy Note*, 14.

[332] The recommendations are: (1) Integration as a two-way process based on mutual and equal efforts by migrant and host society/church. (2) A welcoming attitude. (3) The introduction of intercultural church activities. (4) The improvement of social interaction among members. (5) A reflection on church structures related to aspects and attitudes that influence active participation. (6) Going where the others are. (7) Establishing dialogue on core issues.(8) Addressing conflicts in the church. (9) Creating and improving relations with associations, migrant led churches and traditional churches for exchanging good practices. Ngomedje, Adéle Djomo, *Christian Communities in Contemporary Context*, 2012, 117.

justment of our formation.[333] Networks between institutions for intercultural studies can make a valuable contribution.[334] 'As children of the enlightenment, we distinguished between theory and practice. An encounter with theologies from the Global South will help us to understand that theology cannot and must not be separated from the concrete world. [...] Theology must therefore be based on missional/missionary experience.'[335]

12.6 Conclusion

Migration is one of the crucial issues of our time both in church and society. It is a major challenge because of the multifaceted problems connected to it. There is a big need for a welcoming attitude to create a better future for ecumenism. This requires a joint effort to radically change the spirit of division, hatred, discrimination, racism, and segregation which is continuously growing in our societies. To bring about a change we have to begin with each and every one of us, fighting the prejudices within ourselves. The biblical teaching that every human being is created in the image of God, the value of Christian love and our mark as alienated people is challenging us to create an inclusive community. We need to rediscover our prophetic role and to expand our mission beyond programs of charity to advocacy for human rights. The issue of migration demands cooperation between the ecumenical community and other agents in the civil society.

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[333] For more information on the contribution of migrants to theological education see Terfassa, Dawit Olika, "The Impact of Migration on Evangelism in Europe", in: *International Review of Mission*, 265–266.

[334] Werner, Dietrich, *Evangelism in Theological Education in Europe – 12 Considerations from ETE/WCC*, 5–10; Kool, A-M., *Evangelism in Theological Education and Missiological Formation. A Central and Eastern Europe Perspective with Hungarian Focus*, 4–6.

[335] Jørgensen, Knud, "Mission in the Postmodern Society", in: Sannes, K. O. *et al.* (eds.), *Med Kristus till Jordens ender: festskrift till Tormud Engelsviken,* Trondheim, Norway: Tapir akademisk forlag, 2008, 118–119.

There are shortcomings and failures that we need to reflect on and confess about to receive forgiveness from God and from one another. Such reconciliation is a basis to stand on when we are dealing with the future of ecumenism and inclusive communities. 'True repentance and humility are cleansing experiences which lead to renewal and renewed commitment.'[336] The theme of the 10th WCC Assembly '*God of life, lead us to justice and peace'* calls us for a renewed ecumenical response to migration.

[336] Bosch, David J., *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 473 f. See also Pham, Paulus Y., *Towards an Ecumenical Paradigm for Christian Mission. David Bosch's Missionary Vision*, 2010, 399 f.

13

HUMAN RIGHTS ON THE ECUMENICAL AGENDA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Christian Albers (Germany, Protestant)

13.1 Introduction

In his influential book *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry* (2001) Canadian historian Michael Ignatieff stated that human rights have 'become the lingua franca of global moral thought just as English has become the lingua franca of the global economy.'[337] Indeed, the tremendous increase of attention for this issue in the media after the end of the Cold War coincided with some important developments in the international human rights movement which a few years earlier had been unimaginable. These include the establishment of the office of a High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations (UN) in 1993, the founding of the International Criminal Court in 2002 and the adoption of the concept of *responsibility to protect* by the UN in 2005. In addition, there has been a gradual expansion of the scope of human rights which is different from the concepts of 19th century liberal and enlightened

[337] Ignatieff, Michael, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001, 53.

Europe, the birthplace of *first generation* civil and political rights.[338] *Second generation* economic, social and cultural rights, although not legally enforceable in the same way, are widely acknowledged in faculties of political science and political ethics as well as by 161 member states of the UN (prominent exceptions being Cuba and the United States). *Third generation* collective rights to peace, development or a clean environment, although even less actionable and not institutionalized in an international covenant, are discussed at the UN, in civil society and at the universities since the 1970s. However, it is obvious that the expansion of the global human rights discourse has not lead to a reduction of human rights violations. The end of the Cold War was not the beginning of a more just and peaceful world. Discrimination against homosexuals in Russia; racial profiling in Germany; concentration camps in North Korea; the lack of access to clean water and sanitation for many people in sub-Saharan Africa, and the murder of people by US drones are just a few examples of human rights violations which occurred in 2015. Yet, in the globalized world of the 21st century, Immanuel Kant's foresightful notion appears to be truer than ever before: 'The intercourse, more or less close, which has been everywhere steadily increasing between the nations of the earth, has now extended so enormously that a violation of a right in one part of the world is felt all over it.'[339]

The WCC and its Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) has, since its inception in 1946 with its first and influential Director Frederick Nolde, participated in the development of the interna-

[338] See Normand, Roger/Zaidi, Sarah, *Human Rights at the UN. The Political History of Universal Justice*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008. The notion of *generations* of human rights is widely disputed, as it seems to imply the replacement of an older generation by a younger one and the arbitrary separation of human rights, which in fact belong together. Neither is intended here. Being aware of the difficulties of this notion, I will still use them due to lack of space for a thorough discussion.

[339] Kant, Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace*, New York: Cosimo Classics, 2010, 20.

tional human rights movement and, maybe even more importantly, has enabled the churches to bring the issue of human rights to the grass roots level. As the concept of human rights is always in a flux, the CCIA has periodically reconsidered its human rights programme – most notably at consultations in St. Pölten (Austria) in 1974 and in Morges (Switzerland) in 1998. But still the term *human rights* is not self-explicatory. The dispute between the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) over the ROC statement on human rights[340] reveals that even within WCC member churches there is little agreement about this issue. The following article will examine the understanding of human rights and the application of human rights terminology prior to and during the 10th Assembly of the WCC in Busan. This will lead to the question, whether human rights for the WCC might represent the *lingua franca* of ecumenical moral thought.

13.2 A Crosscutting Issue

Although the CCIA is the official body within the WCC dealing with political and economic ethics in general and human rights in particular, the notion of human rights appears in many different contexts and units within the WCC, such as mission, Faith and Order and the central committee. Human rights is a crosscutting issue, permeating almost every aspect of the work of the WCC.

The most obvious appearance of human rights terminology outside the scope of the CCIA appears in the field of mission, which, as Dietrich Werner has explicated,[341] draws from a long history of involvement in

[340] Heller, Dagmar, "Menschenrechte, Menschenwürde und sittliche Verantwortung im kirchlichen Dialog zwischen Ost und West", in: *Ökumenische Rundschau 59 (3)*, 2010, 308–329.

[341] Werner, Dietrich, "Mission und Menschenrechte: Missionsgeschichtliche, ökumenegeschichtliche und gemeindepraktische Perspektiven", in: Brock, Lothar (ed.), *Menschenrechte und Entwicklung: Beiträge zum ökumenischen und*

the human rights discourse. Presently, the mission statement *Together Towards Life: Mission From the Margins*, which was adopted by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in 2012 and also by the Assembly in Busan, stated, that 'mission in Christ's way involves affirming the dignity and rights of others.'[342] In order to engage for the marginalized, the traditional flow of mission from the wealthy centres in the North to the poor people of the South must be reversed and the structural causes of injustice have to be tackled.[343] Therefore, the struggle does not only state certain individual rights in an apolitical manner, but aims at changing cultural patterns and political structures: 'For example, this involves deconstructing patriarchal ideologies, upholding the right to self-determination for indigenous people, and challenging the social embeddedness of racism and casteism.'[344]

In addition to the field of mission, human rights also appear in a document by the Commission of Faith and Order *Christian Perspectives on Theological Anthropology* from 2005. As this text aimed to explore the human nature which is considered to be under threat from both, society and science, it starts with the affirmation that 'Christians of diverse traditions have joined in supporting human rights around the world against all that treats people as no more than tools or instruments for the purpose or profit of others'.[345]

Finally, the central committee policy statement *Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches* (1997)

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internationalen Dialog, Frankfurt am Main: Gemeinschaftswerk der Evangelischen Publizistik, 1996, 91–113.

[342] WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, "Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 191–206, 202.

[343] See ibid., 196.

[344] Ibid.

[345] WCC Commission of Faith and Order, "Christian Perspectives on Theological Anthropology", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 148.

took a self-critical stance towards the WCC human rights involvement in the past: 'While Christians and churches should be advocates of the rights and dignity of those marginalized and excluded by society, there are shameful examples of complicity with structures of social and economic injustice. Nor has the World Council of Churches in its struggles for justice and human rights been able to act and speak according to the same criteria everywhere.'[346] While remaining vague about the kind of failures in the past, the document makes clear that, for the central committee, defending in 'international forums the rights of those oppressed and pushed to the edges'[347] remains one of the 'signs of obedience and faithfulness' that has been integral to the common ecumenical call during the past fifty years.

At the turn of the century, the issue of human rights can be applied to many ecumenical contexts. The current ecumenical policy reflects the dynamic understanding of human rights, which shaped advocacy since the 1970s.[348] Further, the human rights terminology which is present in almost all thematic sections and programs of the WCC, mirrors the perception of *oikoumene* which is prevalent in the WCC: It does not only address the unity of the churches, but to the same extent the unity of humanity and, one might say, the unity and integrity of the human being. However, the above mentioned documents are not primarily and explicitly intended to deal with human rights and they are not necessarily drafted by human rights experts. Human rights is no longer an ethical, juridical or diplomatic technical term, but a catchphrase and a synonym for justice. While the acquisition of human rights by non-experts is an

[346] WCC Central Committee, "Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the World Council of Churches", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 29.
[347] Ibid., 34.
[348] Weingartner, Erich, *Human Rights on the Ecumenical Agenda,* CCIA Background Information 1983/3, Geneva, 1983.

important development which began in the 1970s on a global scale,[349] the CCIA and related WCC programs remain active in tackling human rights, such as religious freedom, the rights of stateless people and economic and earth rights, in a more sound and explicit way.

13.3 Human Rights in the Spotlight

13.3.1 Religious Freedom

Freedom of religion was a core issue for the CCIA since its inception in 1946 until the early 1970s.[350] This emphasis started to shift with the inclusion of social, economic and cultural rights in the CCIA agenda, when the steering committee for the St. Pölten consultation explained, that 'the primacy of religious liberty has in more recent years given way to [a] more integral approach to human rights.'[351] The Morges consultation in 1998 took up the freedom of religion again in a twofold manner. First, it criticized the limitation of religious freedom in 'countries that have declared an official state religion.' Second, it also criticized a 'free market' of religion in former Communist states, leading to an 'invasion of exogenous religious movements and proselytism' and asked for 'protection' of traditional established religions.[352] It must be questioned

[349] For about ten years historians have been dealing with the historiography of human rights. Some of them agree that the *kairos* for human rights was neither the late 18th century with the French and American revolutions nor the mid-20th century with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but the 1970s when human rights became a matter for civil society. See most notably Moyn, Samuel, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010.

[350] See Fagley, Richard M., "The First Twenty Years: A Brief Review of CCIA 1946–1966", in: WCC CCIA (ed.), *The Churches in international affairs. Reports 1970–1973*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1974, 19–33.

[351] WCC CCIA, "Human Rights and Christian Responsibility", in: WCC CCIA (ed.), *The Churches in international affairs. Reports 1970–1973*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1974, 114.

[352] See WCC, "Human Rights and the Churches. The New Challenges: An International Ecumenical Consultation Convened by International Affairs (CCIA), World Council of Churches, Morges, Switzerland, 23–27 June 1998", in: Clem-

whether the latter actually fosters the freedom of religion. Rather it seems to protect traditional religions (like the Orthodox Church in Russia) instead of the rights of individual believers. Later the CCIA focused more on the first aspect of the Morges statement: the limitation of religious freedom by state sanctioned religious intolerance. In a statement to the UN Human Rights Council in 2000, the CCIA explicitly mentioned Pakistan's blasphemy law and the destruction of mosques and churches in Indonesia.[353]

The *Statement on the Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities*, which was prepared in a three year study process and adopted by the 10th Assembly in Busan, has to be understood against this background. According to this statement, the right to religious freedom is not an exclusive right for Christians, but for adherents of every religious faith and atheists alike. It is closely linked to the issues of equality and justice. Though this declaration is a response to calls of support by certain member churches, it takes the general viewpoint of those who are marginalized because of their religious affiliation: 'In recent years, the WCC has been concerned about the alarming trend of growing instances of hatred, intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief in different parts of the world where religious minorities have been forced to live in vulnerable circumstances.'[354] One of the main problems, according to this document, is the confusion of politics and religion. The statement does not only denounce the politicization of

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ent, John (ed.), *Human Rights and the Churches. New Challenges: A Compilation of Reports of International and Regional Consultations Organized by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, October 1994–June 1998*, CCIA Background Information, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998, 19–20, 43–58.

[353] WCC CCIA, *Civil and Political Rights, Including Questions of Religious Intolerance*, http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/international/unchr00-3.html (accessed 22 July 2015).

[354] WCC, *Statement on the Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities*, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/politicisation-of-religion-and-rights-of-religious-minorities (accessed 22 July 2015).

religion, which might intensify an already existing political divide, but also the religionizing of politics: Religious groups trying to gain political power in order to oppress minority religions and frighten their believers. Unlike most other WCC statements, the names of specific countries in the Middle East region such as Egypt and Iran are mentioned, but also several countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. The prohibition for Christians to use the word *Allah* for God in Malaysia illustrated the urgency of the statement just two weeks prior to the Assembly.[355]

The addressees of this declaration are churches as well as states. WCC member churches are called to engage actively in defending the rights of all religious minorities and their right to freedom of religion or belief. It explicitly 'urges states to repeal criminal law provisions that misuse blasphemy laws, apostasy laws or anti-conversion laws to punish deviation from majority religions or to discriminate against religious minorities and violate their right to freedom of religion or belief.'

Finally, the UN Human Rights Council is called 'to give the same priority to freedom of religion or belief as is given to other fundamental human rights and to resist any attempts to weaken the principle of freedom of religion or belief.' This strong language reflects a new emphasis on the matter of religious freedom and a departure from the rather reserved approach during the 1970s and 1980s when there was suspicion within the CCIA that advocacy for religious freedom (in predominantly socialist countries) was a form of political exploitation from the West. Unlike the Busan statement, former CCIA director Ninan Koshy argued in an oral intervention at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1986, that 'questions related to intolerance based on religion are different in nature from violations such as torture, disappearances or

[355] Fuller, Thomas, "Malaysian Court Restricts Use of 'Allah' to Muslims", in: *New York Times*, 15 October 2013, New York edition, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/15/world/asia/malaysian-court-restricts-use-of-allah-to-muslims.html?_r=0 (accessed 22 July 2015).

summary executions.'[356] He then suggested that the WCC should limit its endeavours in the field of religious freedom to dialogue and refrain from creating a stronger, denunciatory mechanism. Without getting deeper into the highly disputed issue of the WCC involvement in human rights in the Eastern Bloc, clearly, the end of the Cold War opened a new opportunity for the CCIA to address the pressing issue of religious freedom.

13.3.2 Stateless People

In her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) political theorist Hannah Arendt pictured the fate of uprooted people after the two World Wars in Europe. Refugees and stateless people, she said, were not able to enjoy even basic human rights, as 'the world found nothing sacred in the abstract nakedness of being human.'[357] Belonging to the human family, she felt, was not enough to be guaranteed human rights. One has to be a member of a community, a state, to be able to demand rights. Refugees and other stateless people are the most vulnerable people of all. Therefore she concluded: 'We become aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, only when millions of people emerge who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation.'[358] The *right to have rights*, or the right to never be excluded from his or her citizenship, for Arendt, remained the only right that can and must be assigned to every human being just by being human.[359]

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[356] WCC CCIA, *Religious Liberty,* CCIA Background Information, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1987, 44.
[357] Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York: Brace and World, 1966, 299.
[358] Ibid., 297.
[359] See Arendt, Hannah, „Es gibt nur ein einziges Menschenrecht", in: *Die Wandlung*, Jg. IV, 1949, 768.

Although the global human rights situation has improved since the end of World War II, there are still more than 10 million stateless people in many places of the world. In 2013 it was decided by the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic to retroactively withdraw citizenship from people of Haitian decent, even from those who were born in the Dominican Republic and have held Dominican citizenship since birth.[360] But statelessness does not only occur in the Caribbean. 'Stateless people are present in every region of the world'[361] says the Busan *Statement on the Human Rights of Stateless People*. It particularly mentions, among others, the Rohingya in Myanmar, Roma in Europe and Russians in Latvia. Arendt's study of post-war Europe turns out to be true in a global scale today. Not having a nationality means to be deprived of the whole set of otherwise more or less acknowledged human rights. Stateless people, very often, have no right to reside, to move, to work, to call upon health care and education.[362] They 'live in a situation of legal limbo'.[363]

The fate of stateless people is neglected by the international community. Stateless people seem to be the forgotten ones in the field of international human rights. Although the United Nations adopted two conventions on stateless people in 1954 and 1961, only 86 states ratified the first convention and 64 the second. And these conventions only apply to

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[360] Archibold, Randal C., "Dominicans of Haitian Descent Cast into Legal Limbo by Court", in: *New York Times*, 24 October 2013, New York edition, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/24/world/americas/dominicans-of-haitian-descent-cast-into-legal-limbo-by-court.html (accessed 22 July 2015).

[361] WCC, *Statement on the Human Rights of Stateless People*, Busan 2013, http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan/adopted-documents-statements/human-rights-of-stateless-people (accessed 22 July 2015).

[362] WCC CCIA, "Communiqué from the Consultation Towards an Ecumenical Advocacy on the Rights of Stateless People, 27 February to 1 March 2012, Washington D.C., United States", in: World Council of Churches – Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (ed.), *Human Rights of Stateless People*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 14.

[363] WCC, *Statement on the Human Rights of Stateless People*.

those stateless people, who are officially recognized.[364] The WCC itself did not address that issue in depth until recently, when the CCIA organized two international consultations in Dhaka (Bangladesh) in 2011 and Washington, D.C. (USA) in 2013. Even more prominently the Busan Assembly issued a *Statement on the Human Rights of Stateless People*.

As in most ecumenical statements on social and political issues, the drafters of the statement based their reasoning on biblical grounds. Jesus' service for the marginalized and God's creation of mankind encourage the CCIA and WCC to take up the fate of stateless people on their human rights agenda.[365] Further, the statement declared that caring for stateless people is a 'sacramental act'[366] that unites Christians with God. In Busan, the Assembly decided to encourage 'churches to raise awareness of the situation of stateless people' and 'to engage in dialogue with states to adopt policies which confer nationality and provide proper documentation to stateless people.'[367] The Assembly also requested the WCC 'to take up the issue of stateless people as one of its programmatic priorities until the forthcoming WCC 11th Assembly.'[368]

13.3.3 Economic and Earth Rights

Increasingly, the WCC has drawn on human rights in the context of economic issues within the overall framework of the *economy of life* (as an alternative to the current economic world system). Of particular interest in this matter are two recent documents. The first of these is the statement *Economy of Life, Justice and Peace for All: A Call to Action*.

[364] The example of the Netherlands show that this is only a small percentage: Werkman, Geesje/ Aalbersberg, Roel, "Lobby and Advocacy for Stateless Roma in the Netherlands – A Road with Blockades!", in: World Council of Churches – Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (ed.), *Human Rights of Stateless People*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 104.
[365] WCC CCIA, "Communiqué from the Consultation Towards an Ecumenical Advocacy on the Rights of Stateless People, 27 February to 1 March 2012, Washington D.C., United States", 15.
[366] Ibid., 16.
[367] WCC, *Statement on the Human Rights of Stateless People*.
[368] Ibid.

It was published in 2012 as a result of a six year process of consultations and studies linking poverty, wealth and ecology (PWE). It stated that 'life-destroying values have slowly crept in to dominate today's structures and lead to lifestyles that fundamentally defy the regenerative limits of the earth and the rights of human beings and other forms of life.'[369] The close bond between human beings and creation, which is of vital importance for indigenous people, strengthened the approach of not only talking about *human rights* but of tackling the ecological crisis with the concept of *earth rights*.[370] The second document is the Sao Paolo statement: *International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life*. It is the outcome of a global ecumenical conference on a *New International and Financial Architecture* in 2012. According to the Sao Paolo statement, we are called 'to find a new and just international financial architecture oriented towards satisfying the needs of people and the realisation of all economic, social and cultural rights and human dignity.'[371] The *economy of life* is reflected in the theme of the Busan Assembly – *'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.'* In the context of human rights it also reflects the St. Pölten consultation in 1974, whose participants agreed to demand the *right to life* as the basis of all other rights.[372]

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[369] Global Forum on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology of the WCC, "Economy of Life, Justice and Peace for All: A Call to Action", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 217.
[370] Ibid., 218.
[371] Global Ecumenical Conference on a New International Financial and Economic Architecture, "The São Paulo Statement: International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, 235.
[372] WCC CCIA, *Human Rights and Christian Responsibility. Report of the Consultation St. Pölten, Austria, 21–26 October 1974*.

13.4 Conclusion

The above mentioned examples indicate quite clearly: human rights continue to play a crucial role in ecumenical ethics. Compared to other human rights agents, ecumenical human rights policy generally took and still takes a progressive stand. Even prior to the foundation of the WCC and CCIA, the International Institute of Social Sciences of the Life and Work movement demanded in 1931 from the International Labour Organization (ILO) a convention against child labour.[373] It was finally adopted in 1973. At the St. Pölten consultation in 1974, the CCIA declared the equal importance of political and civil as well as social, economic and cultural rights. Amnesty International, the largest human rights NGO waited until the 1990s to undertake this shift.[374] Finally, considering the multiple economic and political crises the world is facing today, the WCC has been proved right in addressing the global economic order as a threat to human rights in Morges and Harare. Still today, the WCC scratches the boundary of what can be described as human rights. While religious freedom and the right of stateless people are widely acknowledged as human rights in the academic, political and NGO-sector, earth rights so far have no legal base and drift even terminologically away from what is commonly understood as the right of an individual or a group of people. While in the light of the ecological crisis an anthropocentric worldview proves to be insufficient, we need a thorough reflection about the legal and ethical nature of earth rights.

In spite of this tradition of human rights policy, the WCC is neither a human rights organization, nor are human rights to be considered as the *lingua franca* of ecumenical social thought. The rich membership of churches from all cultural and political backgrounds, while allowing the

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[373] Hudson, Darril, *The Ecumenical Movement in World Affairs*, London: Weidenfeld Nicolson, 1969, 109.
[374] Chong, Daniel P.L., *Freedom from Poverty: NGOs and Human Rights Praxis*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010, 32–33.

CCIA and WCC, as mentioned above, a very inclusive understanding of human rights, at the same time prevents them from addressing particular issues when member churches disagree. Similar to the United Nations the room for manoeuvre for the WCC is limited by the constraints of the member churches. Most recently this became evident through the non-satisfying treatment of the issue of the rights of homosexuals at the Busan assembly. Therefore, unlike decisive human rights organizations such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, the WCC and CCIA see human rights not as an end in itself, but rather as an important element in the engagement for a 'theology of life'.[375] This is expressed, for example, in the *Statement on Human Rights* of the Harare Assembly: 'It is our firm conviction based on our theological underpinnings that human rights do not constitute a goal in themselves for protecting the interests or rights of only certain groups, but we see human rights show us the direction in which society should develop towards peace with justice. They are a vehicle enabling the life of everybody to acquire fuller and richer quality.'[376] Unlike secular human rights organizations, WCC and CCIA take into consideration the wider, eschatological horizon of the kingdom of God. This may prevent them from clinging to false ideologies which claim to set up complete salvation in the present; at the same time, it envisions a more holistic understanding of *shalom* as a transcendent goal which humanity can reach out for by the grace of God. Referring to the all-encompassing *shalom* of the Hebrew bible, *just peace,* thus, is the *lingua franca* of ecumenical social thought in the early 21st century. It is the challenging task for the WCC, member churches, congregations and believers to translate this solemn term into concrete advocacy and action.

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[375] Tveit, Olav Fykse, "Foreword", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, ix.

[376] World Council of Churches, Statement on the Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities. Unpublished Manuscript, 2013, 2.

14

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
A CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE

Mery Simarmata (Indonesia, Protestant)

14.1 Introduction

'God of life, lead us to justice and peace.' This was the theme of the 10th Assembly of the WCC which was held in Busan, South Korea in 2013. There were many Christians coming from different countries and denominations, sharing their problems and struggles. One of the crucial issues at the beginning of the 21st century is the absence of religious freedom in many countries of the world. People from religious minorities – either Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists or other believers – frequently become victims of the violation of the human right of religious freedom. Many of them are longing to live in peace with their neighbours.

14.2 The Right to Religious Freedom

In article 18 of the Declaration of Human Rights of the UN, it is stated that there is the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right cannot be derogated even during a public emergency. It guarantees freedom of thought on all matters. It includes personal conviction

and the commitment to belief held individually or in a community with others. It protects both the freedom to have a religion and to manifest it. The term *belief* includes theistic and non-theistic as well as atheistic beliefs.[377] Many countries in the world are inhabited by adherents of more than one religion. For instance in Indonesia, my home country, there are six recognized religions: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, catholic and protestant Christianity. Besides these, there are several indigenous beliefs. Some religions constitute the majority in a certain region, such as Christianity in the Eastern part, Islam in the West, Hinduism in Bali, and so on.

The right to manifest a religion covers a wide range of acts. It includes worship, which involves building places of worship, the use of ritual formulae and objects, the display of symbols, and the observance of holidays. The right to practice religion contains customs such as the wearing of distinctive clothing, conducting rituals associated with certain stages of life, and the use of a particular language of the group. Finally, it comprises the freedom to choose religious leaders, priests and teachers, freedom to establish religious schools and the freedom to publish and distribute religious literature.[378] So, the human right of religious freedom covers a wide range of aspects. If all people were aware of this, human beings could live more peacefully together.

Hans Küng's *Project World Ethos* has established the motto: 'No peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. No dialogue between the religions without investigations of the foundations of the religions.'[379] Religion is a very essential aspect of human life. Through religion, people can express their faith to God and their understanding of

[377] See Ravindran, D. J., *Human Rights Praxis. A Resource Book for Study, Action and Reflection*, Bangkok: The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 1998, 108.
[378] Ibid.
[379] Küng, Hans, *Islam. Past, Present and Future*, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2007.

the world. Therefore, if human beings do not respect each other's right to freedom of belief, this will trigger serious conflicts among nations.

14.3 The Problem of Religious Freedom

Many countries in the world are facing conflicts among religions. This happens, for example, in Asian countries that are home to more than one religion, such as in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, and others. These problems are not caused by one religion in particular, but rather by religious majorities in general.

Tensions within and between religions have been the source of so much violence and suffering in the world (such as Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Israel and Palestine). In a WCC consultation on *Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities*, which took place in Geneva 2013, diverse perspectives from Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe on this subject have been shared. African participants stated that religious fanaticism has contributed immensely to the political division of Nigeria, affecting Christians in the North and Muslims in the South. A partaker from Syria said that combating secularism was necessary to let people practise freely their religion without oppression of the state. An Asian spoke about the colonial history and laws introduced during the years of dictatorship, which resulted in the persecution of religious minorities in Pakistan. An Indian participant said that despite constitutional guarantees of religious freedom in India, seven states have passed discriminatory laws owing to which Christians and Hindus face discrimination, and politicization of religion has already destroyed the long nurtured communal harmony in Bangladesh. The participant from Malaysia regretted that although the Malaysian constitution stipulates freedom of religion, small religious groups face discrimination. It can be concluded that conflicts within and between religions in the world are not only caused by adherents of different religions, but also related to the political context of the countries.

Religious conflicts are usually fostered by fundamentalism and fanaticism. These are not confined to a certain religion but can be globally observed. In Indonesia, for instance, the biggest religious group is Islam. The relationship with some exclusivist Muslim groups is very difficult. They consider social commitment of Christians, such as educational activity or empowerment for the poor, as a way of Christian mission. Given such suspicion, certain Muslims tend to express their objection by attacking Christian institutions and the people involved.[380] Another problem is that some Muslims try to introduce Islamic *sharia*[381] – especially after the implementation of decentralization. One of the provinces which fully practice *sharia* is the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam. Some groups in other provinces are also fighting for *sharia*, for example in West Sumatra the Council of the Ulama of Indonesia, the Council of Indonesian Mosque and The Communion of Indonesian *haji* brotherhood.[382] At some private schools in Muslim areas, all women teachers and staff have to wear long sleeves blazer and skirt. Female students have to wear Muslim *hijab* (cowl) at school and all students have to learn Islamic religion. Thereby, Muslim traditions and regulations are enforced on non-Muslim people. In other areas, Christians cannot practice their worship such as singing and praying. The most common problem in Indonesia is the destruction of places of worship and the prohibition on building new ones. This shows that the right of others to religious freedom is not respected.

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[380] Mulkhan, Abdul Munir, "Persepsi Muslim Terhadap Aksi-aksi Sosial Kristiani" (Muslims' Perception Towards Christianity's Social Actions), in: *Gema Teologi 32 (1)*, 2008, 63.

[381] *Sharia* is the path to be followed, the Islamic law, the totality of the Muslim way of life, the revealed Islamic code of conduct the outer path. See Husein, Fatimah, *Muslim-Christian Relations in the New Order Indonesia. The Exclusivist and Inclusivist Muslims' Perspectives*, Bandung: Mizan Media Utama, 2005, 25.

[382] See Suprianto, Onesimus Dani/ Suprianto, Daryanto (eds.), *Merentang Sejarah, Memaknai Kemandirian. Menjadi Gereja Bagi Sesama,* Bandung/ Jakarta: Majelis Sinode Gereja Kristen Pasundan/ BPK Gunung Mulia, 2009, 182–184.

The tensions between Muslim and Christian communities generally harm the Christians in Indonesia. These problems are not only influenced by religious interest, but also by political and economic factors. Muslims fear that the mainstream institutions may lose their dominance, or that the community may have to change some of their patterns of behaviour. Therefore, they strive to dominate or even to destroy the other groups so as to maintain their power. Besides, they have the means to mobilize large numbers of people. However, it is not the whole Muslim community that is doing this, rather it is some fundamentalist groups.

Exclusivist Muslims have several characteristics in common. They apply a literary approach in understanding the foundational texts of Islam, namely Koran and the *hadith*[383] of the prophet. They hold the view that salvation can only be achieved through Islam. They emphasize the notion that there should be no separation between Islam and the state, and that all aspects of life should be governed by Islamic principles. They also believe that there is a conspiracy between the Indonesian government and Christians to weaken Islamic political power.[384] Muslims have promoted Islam to become the sole foundation of the nation on the basis that the majority of the Indonesian population is Muslim.[385]

However, those tensions are not only caused by Muslims, but sometimes also fostered by fundamentalist Christian groups. As Husein defines exclusivist Muslims as having superficial knowledge of their religion and understanding it as the only true way to God, exclusivist Christians also have the same characteristics. Christians are involved in these

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[383] *Hadith* is the practice of the prophet and the early community which becomes for all Muslims an authoritative example of the correct way to live a Muslim life. See Husein, Fatimah, *Muslim-Christian Relations in the New Order Indonesia. The Exclusivist and Inclusivist Muslims' Perspectives*, 26.

[384] Ibid, 29–30.

[385] Titaley, John A., *A Socio-Historical Analysis of the Pancasila as Indonesian's State Ideology in the Light of the Royal Ideology in the Davidic State*, Berkeley Califoria: Graduate Theological Union, 1991, 2.

conflicts, whether voluntarily or involuntarily – as those who are persecuted or as those participating in violence, or both.

Another example is the church in Sri Lanka.[386] In 2014, the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka (MC-SL) celebrated its 200th anniversary. A new edifice in Buttala was to be finished for the celebration, but Buddhist monks formed protest actions and forcibly interrupted the construction. The constitution and laws of the country actually ensure freedom of worship for everybody, therefore it is not permissible for any organization to use whatever influence they wield to hinder such a building (which was commenced after all the necessary approvals were obtained). However, this project was stopped.

These examples show that religious conflicts may be caused either by Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, or Hindus. It is not only one group which is longing for religious freedom, but all religions really are. Thus it is the responsibility of all religions to respect the right of others to religious freedom.

14.4 Religious Freedom and Justice

Why did the issue of justice appear in the motto of the WCC's 10th Assembly? For Reinhold Niebuhr, a Protestant theologian, there are several principles related to justice. The two most important of these are freedom and equality. *Freedom* is the essence of human nature and therefore always stands as a core value. Yet, freedom cannot stand alone as a social principle – it must always be related to justice and equality. *Equality* is the regulative principle of justice, a principle under which every scheme of justice stands. *Equal justice* is the best approximation of brotherhood or love under the conditions of sin. Equal justice is there-

[386] See http://www.vemission.org/en/home/news-detail-view/archive/06/january/2014/article/kirchenbau-gewaltsam-gestoppt.html (accessed 11 February 2014).

fore 'the most rational possible social goal'.[387] Based on Niebuhr's thought, freedom is not merely freedom. There is freedom that harms other people. Freedom which is not well controlled will make people suffer. Therefore, in struggling for freedom, people should consider whether this is just and equal for the community as a whole. If there is freedom, but it is not just and equal for others, then it is not real freedom. When people are free to build their own worship places but they prohibit other religions to do so, this is not real freedom, for justice and equality are lacking. Real justice, freedom and equality will ensure peace among all religions.

14.5 Religious Freedom and Peace

In the midst of religious plurality, peace is difficult to achieve. However, through the WCC Assembly, churches in the whole world are reminded of God's call to be peacemakers in the world. Churches hope that peace can be realized when they are acting together. Regardless of their diversity, churches all over the world should be united as one body of Christ. However, unity is not uniformity. Having peace among religions does not imply that there must be only one religion nor that all religions have to become one.

From a Christian perspective, peace can be attained if people love each other. In the joint declaration of WCC, Pontifical Council and world Evangelical Alliance (2011), Christians are called to adhere to the

[387] Lebacqz, Karen, *Six Theories of Justice. Perspectives from Philosophical and Theological Ethics*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986, 87. Lebacqz quoted Niebuhr's thought from Reinhold Niebuhr's books entitled *Nature and Destiny and Christian Ethics*, and also from the book of Gordon Harland entitled *The Thought of Reinhold Niebuhr*.

following principles as they seek to fulfil Christ's commission in an appropriate manner, particularly within interreligious contexts:[388]

1. Acting in God's love, because God is love, God is the source of love and God has loved first.
2. Rejection of violence.
3. Freedom of religion and belief.
4. Mutual respect and solidarity to all people.
5. Struggle for religious freedom and promotion of interreligious dialogue.

Doing mission is sharing God's love to other people even from different faiths. Mission is not a matter of converting, proselytising or Christianizing but purely of service to the people. In the context of Christian-Muslim relations, there is one important element which Christians should encourage - dialogue. Interreligious dialogue is an intentional encounter to share information and experience about one's own beliefs. This will be useful if all participants are willing to listen to the others.[389]

There are four forms of interreligious dialogue which Christians can practice:[390]

1. Dialogue of life. Commitment to a dialogue of life would help people of different faiths to get to know one another as human beings, as neighbours and as fellow citizens.
2. Dialogue of action for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.
3. Dialogue of theological exchange. This is a form of dialogue usually done by experts or official delegates of particular reli-

[388] See Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 207.
[389] Sitompul, Einar M., *Gereja Menyikapi Perubahan* (Church's Response towards Change), Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2009, 5.
[390] See Bevans, Stephen B./ Schroeder, Roger P., *Constants in Context. A Theology of Mission for Today*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004.

gions; it can be either an exchange of thoughts or a mutual wrestling with a particular religious topic (for example eschatology or the meaning of Jesus).

4. Dialogue of religious experience. All religions have their own spirituality and various forms of prayer, and an exchange about the meaning and practice of these can lead to a deeply mutual enrichment.

In addition to interreligious dialogue, there should be an intrareligious dialogue. This can take place among Christians, Muslims and other adherents of a specific religion as they try to understand themselves.

14.6 Conclusion

Religious freedom is an integral part of human rights. When people do not have freedom of religion, including practicing their rituals and building their own worship places, justice and peace are in danger. Real freedom requires justice and equality. Respecting the religious freedom of others means to respect their human rights.

Religious conflicts occur when exclusive and fundamental groups are agitating. The problems may be caused by different religions such as Islam, Christianity or Buddhism. Therefore, people of all religions should work together to bring about justice and peace. All believers should respect each other and struggle for religious freedom together. Churches are called to be God's ambassadors to achieve justice and peace in the world. However, they are first called to transform themselves. All churches should be actively involved in the ecumenical movement so that all human beings and the whole of God's creation can live in justice and peace in the one *oikos* God has provided.

PART IV

PERSONAL REFLECTION

15

GOD IS LOVE
ECUMENISM OF THE HEART

Antonia Pizzey (Australia, Roman Catholic)

15.1 Introduction

> *"The heart has its reasons of which reason knows nothing. We know the truth not only by the reason, but by the heart."* (Blaise Pascal)

Of participating in GETI and attending the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches, one thing in particular stands out for me. I experienced ecumenism not only rationally, but perhaps more significantly, emotionally. Ecumenism is an act of love. This loves springs from the *desire* to be one, as Christ prayed for us (John 17:21). Ecumenism is therefore affective: it is an impulse of hope, of humility, of awe, and above all, of love. Ecumenism is not only a rational matter of the head, a discussion of doctrinal, theological, structural, or hermeneutical differences between Christians. Ecumenism is also an affective movement of the heart, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Ecumenism is a holistic exercise, which is what we experienced during GETI. It involves learning from each other and understanding each other's beliefs (as it happened during our lectures, seminars, and workgroups). But it is also about common prayer and worship, table fellowship, embracing each other as friends, and helping each other as Christians. At the deepest

level, ecumenism is, as pope John Paul II declares, 'an exchange of gifts'.[391] For me, this exchange was the heartbeat of GETI. We came together from many traditions to share one another's gifts. When I now reflect upon GETI, what I remember most is the people and the relationships, rather than just the formal learning.

Thus, what I want to explore here is the *spirituality* behind the ecumenical endeavour. First, I will discuss what is meant by *spiritual ecumenism*, before delving into *ecumenism as a gift exchange*. Finally, I will consider *receptive ecumenism* as a new approach which emphasises the more affective dimensions of our encounter.

15.2 Spiritual Ecumenism

The ecumenical movement began as an impulse of the Spirit. As such, considering the spiritual dimension within ecumenism is important to understand this endeavour as a whole. Recognising the spiritual roots of ecumenism is one of the major themes taken up by the Ninth Report of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC (JWG). The report seeks to 'remind Christians of the spiritual impulse that has driven the ecumenical movement from its inception, and to consider fresh ways that churches can nurture these spiritual roots [...] by offering some practical recommendations.'[392] Spirituality speaks to the depths underlying ecumenical dialogue, the silences without words, and the mystery that concepts alone cannot convey, where the spark of the Holy Spirit is found. Ecumenism is a spiritual activity, and it must also be practised as such, particularly with regard to the setbacks

[391] John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint. On Commitment to Ecumenism*, 1995, 28. Hereafter referred to as *UUS*.

[392] Report of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, "The Spiritual Roots of Ecumenism. A Fresh Look with Some Practical Recommendations", in: Lorke, Mélisande/ Werner, Dietrich (eds.): *Ecumenical Visions for the 21st Century. A Reader for Theological Education*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2013, 173.

the ecumenical movement is facing. As the Joint Working Group stated: 'Fresh focus on the spiritual roots of ecumenism is an appropriate response to contemporary challenges among churches and within the world.'[393]

While the spiritual aspects of ecumenism have been acknowledged since the beginning,[394] the importance of spirituality appears to be undergoing something of a re-discovery. The JWG describes the roots of ecumenism as combining 'efforts of Christians to discern God's will and to be receptive to the Holy Spirit'.[395] Spirituality encompasses the very core of ecumenism. It embraces key concepts such as the unity of the church as act of the Holy Spirit, ecumenism as Christ's will and prayer, and unity as given by God. The purpose of ecumenism is not to *create* unity, but to uncover the unity that already exists, given by the Spirit. In that sense, it is a spiritual as well as an academic or practical exercise.

In catholic theology, the term *spiritual ecumenism* can be traced back at least to the 1930s.[396] In particular, spiritual ecumenism is influenced by the work of Abbé Paul Couturier (1881–1953). Couturier founded the *Groupe des Dombes* and established the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. He is often considered to be the father of spiritual ecumenism. Walter Kasper calls him 'the grand apostle and pioneer of spiritual ecumenism.'[397] Kasper himself draws attention to the fact that the catholic ecumenical movement can be considered as beginning with spiritual ecumenism, as 'the very first impetus of the ecumenical move-

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[393] Ibid., 175.
[394] Here considered to be dated from the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh.
[395] Report of the Joint Working Group Between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, "The Spiritual Roots of Ecumenism. A Fresh Look with Some Practical Recommendations", 176.
[396] Ladous, Régis, "Spiritual Ecumenism", in: Lossky, Nicholas *et al.* (eds.), *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, Geneva: WCC Publications, 2002, 1069.
[397] Kasper, Walter, *That They May All Be One. The Call to Unity Today*, London: Burns and Oates, 2004, 156.

ment.'[398] Officially, it was the promulgation of *Unitatis redintegratio* (UR), the *Decree on Ecumenism* in 1964, which not only launched Roman Catholic involvement in ecumenism, but has fundamentally fashioned the framework for Catholic ecumenical dialogue over the decades since the Second Vatican Council. Significantly, spiritual ecumenism can be seen as underlying UR, and UR declares spiritual ecumenism as 'the soul of the whole ecumenical movement'.[399]

The *Decree on Ecumenism* attests that the core of spiritual ecumenism is a focus on *interior conversion*. As the *Decree* announces: 'There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without interior conversion.'[400] This *metanoia* is marked by hope for the future and trust in the Holy Spirit. It is repentance for the sins of the past (such as witnessed during the 10th Assembly of the WCC), as well as hope in the future.

The foundations for spiritual ecumenism laid by Vatican II were expanded by pope John Paul II, particularly in his encyclical *Ut unum sint* (UUS). John Paul II repeatedly affirmed the Catholic Church's commitment to ecumenism as 'irreversible' or 'irrevocable'.[401] *Ut unum sint*

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[398] Ibid.

[399] Vatican II Council, "Unitatis Redintegratio. Decree on Ecumenism", in: Flannery, Austin (ed.), *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents. Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*, New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1996, 8. Hereafter referred to as *UR*.

[400] *UR*, 7.

[401] See *UUS*, 3 for one instance of John Paul II making this statement. For examples of scholars quoting his statement, see O'Gara, Margaret, "Ecumenism's Future", in: *Commonweal 132 (13)*, 2005, 11; Cross, Peter, "John Paul II and Ecumenism", in Gascoigne, Robert (ed.), *John Paul II. Legacy and Witness*, Strathfield: St Pauls, 2007, 121; Cassidy, Edward Idris, "Ut Unum Sint in Ecumenical Perspective", in: Braaten, Carl E./ Jenson, Robert W. (eds.), *Church Unity and the Papal Office. An Ecumenical Dialogue on John Paul II's Encyclial Ut Unum Sint (That All May Be One)*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001, 11; Kasper, Walter, *The Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century*. Presentation at the Event Marking the 40th Anniversary of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC, 18th November 2005. The Catholic Church's irreversible commitment to ecumenism was re-affirmed by Pope Benedict XVI after his election in 2005.

is a landmark document for catholic ecumenism. As Edward Idris Cassidy points out, it is 'the first encyclical letter ever written on the subject of ecumenism', and has 'made a vital contribution to the ecumenical movement'.[402] In this encyclical, John Paul II emphasises that unity is God's will, and as such, it is intertwined with God's plan of salvation for humanity. Ecumenism is, at its heart, conversion.

Therefore, the practice of ecumenism is a spiritual one. Fundamentally, spirituality is about relationship, deepening communion between the church and Christ, between ourselves and God, and between each other. In ecumenical practice, we do not meet denominations; we meet people. Spiritual ecumenism is about recognising where one tradition may have a gift others can benefit from. As Kasper writes: 'Ecumenical spirituality means listening and opening ourselves to the demands of the Spirit who also speaks through different forms of piety; it means a readiness to rethink and convert, but also to bear the otherness of the other, which requires tolerance, patience, respect and, not least, goodwill and love.'[403]

One key characteristic of ecumenical spirituality, if it is to be genuinely relational, is that of both *offering* and *accepting* gifts from others, for our own interior conversion. This brings us to consider ecumenism as an *exchange of gifts*.

15.3 Ecumenism as an Exchange of Gifts

In UUS, John Paul II emphasises that ecumenical dialogue is 'not simply an exchange of ideas. In some way it is always an "exchange of gifts".'[404] Building upon Vatican II's recognition that 'many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of [the church's] visible structure', opens the way for the church to look at others in the sense of

[402] Cassidy, Edward Idris, "Ut Unum Sint in Ecumenical Perspective", 10.
[403] Kasper, Walter, *That They May All Be One. The Call to Unity Today*, 160.
[404] *US*, 28.

an exchange of gifts. UUS conveys: 'Communion is made fruitful by the exchange of gifts between the churches insofar as they complement each other.'[405] This exchange of gifts is for the benefit of all, as John Paul II observes: 'Everything that the Spirit brings about in "others" can serve for the building up of all communities'.[406] The dialogical nature of ecumenism is necessary as the church exists within the eschatological awareness that she is yet to fully realise herself. In continuity with the humble tone of UUS, John Paul II describes ecumenism as a 'long and arduous pilgrimage', performed with an 'attitude of conversion to the will of the Father and, at the same time, of repentance and absolute trust in the reconciling power of [...] Christ.'[407] Therefore, UUS attests that 'ecumenism implies that the Christian communities should help one another so that there may be truly present in them the full content and all the requirements of the "heritage handed down by the Apostles". Without this, full communion will never be possible. This mutual help in the search for truth is a sublime form of evangelical charity.'[408]

The exchange of gifts emphasises the fact that ecumenism cannot be carried out alone. This search for truth and pilgrimage towards conversion must be undertaken with others, 'whereby communities strive to give in mutual exchange what each one needs in order to grow towards definitive fullness in accordance with God's plan.'[409] In this spirit, John Paul II reflects upon the achievements ecumenism has already offered: 'We are aware, as the Catholic Church, that we have received much from the witness borne by other churches and ecclesial communities to certain common Christian values.'[410] He goes on to state that 'at the stage which we have now reached this process of mutual enrichment

[405] Ibid., 57.
[406] Ibid., 38.
[407] Ibid., 82.
[408] Ibid., 78.
[409] Ibid.
[410] Ibid.

must be taken seriously into account.'[411] Moreover, he attests that this 'process of mutual enrichment', grounded in the 'communion which already exists as a result of the ecclesial elements present in the Christian communities' will 'be a force impelling towards' the 'desired goal of the journey we are making'.[412] Therefore, the exchange of gifts, which is possible due to the real but partial communion which already exists amongst Christians, leads to the mutual enrichment of the churches, and ultimately towards the goal of ecumenism, which is no less than 'full and visible communion'.[413]

In perhaps the best-known passage of *Ut unum sint*, John Paul II offers an example of this exchange of gifts regarding the Petrine ministry. Not without justification, Peter Cross describes this section of UUS as 'a bombshell'.[414] Acknowledging that the papal office 'constitutes a difficulty for most other Christians',[415] the pope asks: 'Could not the real but imperfect communion existing between us persuade church leaders and their theologians to engage with me in a patient and fraternal dialogue on this subject, a dialogue in which, leaving useless controversies behind, we could listen to one another, keeping before us only the will of Christ for his church and allowing ourselves to be deeply moved by his plea "that they may all be one [...] so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:21)?'[416]

The importance of this section is attested to by Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson in their edited volume devoted to offering an ecumenically representative response to this one part of the encyclical.[417] The hu-

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[411] Ibid.
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid.
[414] Cross, Peter, "John Paul II and Ecumenism", 124.
[415] *UUS*, 88.
[416] Ibid., 96.
[417] Braaten, Carl E./ Jenson, Robert W. (eds.), *Church Unity and the Papal Office. An Ecumenical Dialogue on John Paul II's Encyclial Ut Unum Sint (That All May Be One)*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001, 1.

mility expressed in the request, and as Henn notes, the implied 'openness to modify the present forms of the exercise of this ministry'[418] reflect the shift in attitude towards ecumenism brought about by Vatican II. Such a statement represents substantial changes since encyclicals such as *Mortalium animos* (1928). Evoked in this passage is the sense of a pilgrim church open to conversion and a beneficial exchange with other Christians, and the gifts they have to offer.

Ecumenism as gift exchange is also a prominent theme taken up in the work of catholic ecumenist Margaret O'Gara. She states: 'In ecumenical dialogue, each Christian communion brings one or many gifts to the dialogue table, and each receives riches from their dialogue partners as well.'[419] In recognition of the humility required for conversion, O'Gara posits that ecumenism should be a beneficial sharing of each other's gifts, leading all towards a greater fullness than would be possible on one's own. She rejects a charge frequently levelled at ecumenism, that it seeks to be 'a kind of melting pot', leading to the 'elimination of the distinctive gifts of the many churches' and a 'loss of identity'.[420] Instead, she argues, 'the gift-giving enriches all of the partners, since we do not lose our gifts by sharing them with others.'[421] She provides some examples garnered over her years of ecumenical experience, which is worth quoting at length: 'Where my Anglican partners have a rich understanding and practice of the conciliarity of the church, they need and are seeking the leadership in teaching that can be provided in the Roman Catholic communion by the bishop of Rome. Where my own Roman Catholic communion has emphasized the communal character of faith and decision-making, we need to receive from my partners in the Disciples of Christ their effective emphasis on the personal appropriation of

[418] Henn, William, "Ut Unum Sint and Catholic Involvement in Ecumenism", in: *The Ecumenical Review 52 (2)*, 2000, 243.
[419] O'Gara, Margaret, *The Ecumenical Gift Exchange*, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998, vii.
[420] Ibid., viii.
[421] Ibid., vii.

faith within the community of baptized believers. [...] Where one communion is clear about the priority of grace, another is clear about the implications of the gospel for the social order. Where one communion is open to the opportunities provided by modern culture for proclaiming the gospel, another is clear about the centrality of our trinitarian foundations.'[422]

For O'Gara, ecumenism as a gift exchange is the fundamental basis for ecumenical activity. This conception of ecumenism shapes her overarching vision of ecumenism, as she writes: 'The gifts exchanged in ecumenical dialogue are more like a mosaic, where every piece is valuable and every piece is needed for the full picture of the one church of Christ.'[423] Here, she emphasises John Paul II's teachings on dialogue as fundamental to the nature of the human person, and essential to the church.[424] Moreover, she explains: 'The mosaic picture is damaged if any of the pieces is missing.'[425] It is only through dialogue with one another, through conversion, that the church can become fully what she is. This is why ecumenical dialogue is essential to the Catholic Church. As John Paul II asserts, ecumenism is 'not just some sort of "appendix". [...] Rather, ecumenism is an organic part of her life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she is and does.'[426]

As such, the notion of hospitality can be seen as underpinning the concept of the ecumenical gift exchange. Christine Pohl describes hospitality as welcoming strangers, and selflessly ministering to others.[427] It involves 'attentive listening and a mutual sharing of lives, [...] an openness of heart, a willingness to make one's life visible to others, and a

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[422] Ibid., 3.
[423] Ibid., viii.
[424] *UUS*, 28, 31.
[425] O'Gara, Margaret, *The Ecumenical Gift Exchange*, viii.
[426] *UUS*, 20.
[427] Pohl, Christine D., *Making Room. Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999, 4.

generosity of time and resources.'[428] Pohl states that 'acts of hospitality participate in and reflect God's greater hospitality',[429] accentuating the link between hospitality and humility, and touching on a broader context of hope. O'Gara emphasises hospitality as a powerful resource for ecumenical dialogue, stating: 'Ecumenical friends and colleagues from other church communions offer each other intellectual and emotional hospitality on the journey towards full communion.'[430] The ecumenical gift exchange can only be properly undertaken within a spirit of hospitality. As she asserts, 'real ecumenical collaboration calls for willingness to enter into relationships, to risk vulnerability for the sake of the common effort, and to reject competition.'[431] Therefore, practicing hospitality towards each other rather than competition is essential for the success of ecumenism.

To view ecumenism as a gift exchange deepens the understanding of ecumenical hospitality. Rather than just accepting the otherness of the other, and giving without a sense of reciprocity, the gift exchange pushes ecumenism to another stage: that of actively receiving gifts from the other. This next step is the vision of *receptive ecumenism*.

15.4 Receptive Ecumenism

Like many others, Paul Murray sees a need for a fresh approach to ecumenism. He outlines certain factors that have led both to the slowing down of the ecumenical movement and a shift away from optimistic expectations in general. Among them, he lists 'immense disappointment' caused by the 'failure of high-profile initiatives', such as the 1969 and 1972 Church of England-Methodist unity schemes, and the negativi-

[428] Ibid., 13.
[429] Ibid.
[430] O'Gara, Margaret, "Witnessing the Ecumenical Future Together", in: *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 46 (3*)*, 2011, 376.
[431] Ibid., 373.

ty of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith during the first stage of ARCIC.[432] He asserts that there is a perception of a divide between the commitment of grassroots ecumenists and the official levels of the Catholic Church. Frustration with slow progress has led to a move away from concentrating on doctrinal or theological matters towards emphasising more practical aspects, such as mission.[433] Murray also emphasises a trend of increasingly insular Christian communities, who place an emphasis upon re-asserting their unique identity and rejecting the ecumenical spirit.[434]

Despite negativity surrounding the ecumenical endeavour, however, Murray recalls that the ultimate goal of ecumenism is eschatological, in light of the *now* but *not yet*.[435] In view of the current ecumenical climate, Murray proposes a new strategy: receptive ecumenism. Receptive ecumenism is a fresh ecumenical methodology stemming from the call for ecumenical renewal. Receptive ecumenism is described as a process whereby 'each tradition should focus first on the self-critical question: "What can we learn, or receive, with integrity from various others in order to facilitate our own growth together into deepened communion in Christ and the Spirit?"'[436]

This is the fundamental methodology of receptive ecumenism: each tradition should critically reflect upon *what they can learn from another tradition*. This is undertaken because doing so will enrich one's own community – without 'making others' learning a precondition to one's

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[432] Paul Murray, Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Learning: Establishing the Agenda, in: *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, 7 (4), 2007, 285.
[433] Ibid., 286.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid., 287.
[436] Murray, Paul, "Preface", in: Murray, Paul (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning. Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, ix.

own.'[437] This implies the interior conversion advocated by Vatican II as the essence of ecumenical dialogue. In line with this, Murray goes on to attest that 'receptive ecumenical awakening is properly a matter of the heart before it is a matter of the head.'[438] He describes it as 'a matter of falling in love with the experienced presence and action of God in the people, practices, even structures of another tradition and being impelled thereby to search for ways in which all impediments to closer relationship might be overcome.'[439]

Murray elaborates that receptive ecumenism 'requires the churches to make an analogous move to that advocated more generally by the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas in calling for a fundamental shift from each assertively defending their own perceived rights in competition with each other, to each instead prioritizing the need to attend to and to act upon their specific responsibilities revealed in the face of the other.'[440]

This immediately recalls O'Gara's emphasis upon ecumenism as hospitality, not competition. As Murray explains: 'For this to happen [...] it requires to take responsibility, to take the initiative, and this regardless of whether others are ready to reciprocate'.[441] Receptive ecumenism focuses, therefore, more upon the benefit to be gained by one's own tradition through discovering the *other*, rather than any type of *quid pro quo* ecumenical competition.

Receptive ecumenism is steadily increasing in significance. Building on two international conferences held at Durham in 2006 and 2009, a third international conference was held in June 2014. Receptive ecumenism evokes a high level of popular appeal, particularly from a lay level.

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[437] Murray, Paul (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning. Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, 290.
[438] Ibid., 291.
[439] Ibid.
[440] Ibid., 290.
[441] Ibid.

It is not asking an ecumenical activist to detail the differences between, say, the catholic and Lutheran understanding of the doctrine of justification. Rather, it asks a more open question: what can Catholics learn from Lutherans? David Carter, in reflecting on receptive ecumenism, writes that 'Charles Wesley's line "thy truth we lovingly receive" sums up the spirituality that inspires receptive ecumenism. It is an expression of our love for God and most particularly of our thankfulness for the gifts that he gives us through his inspiration of others in their leading of the Christian life in all its fullness. It is important to be able to receive those gifts graciously and humbly.'[442] Therefore, while it's full potential is yet to be discovered, receptive ecumenism offers a methodology which focuses on the affective, as well as the theological, levels of ecumenism.

15.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the experience of GETI led me on a deeper journey towards the spirituality behind the ecumenical endeavour. This reflection was undertaken by firstly investigating the meaning of spiritual ecumenism, then considering ecumenism as a gift exchange, before finally, discussing receptive ecumenism as a possible strategy which operates on the affective as well as theological levels of ecumenism. Ecumenism is not an optional extra for the Catholic Church. Ecumenism is an imperative, a task we are called to by Christ. While we may each practice ecumenism in a variety of ways, it is pertinent to remember that we all undertake this task out of love. As Scripture reminds us: 'Let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God [...]. Since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.' (1 John 4:7–11). And here lies the very heart of ecumenism: 'God is love.' (1 John 4:8).

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[442] Carter, David, *Receptive Ecumenism – An Overview*, Presented at Receptive Ecumenism: The Call to Catholic Learning, St Mary's Catholic Church, Cadogan Street, Chelsea, 2007.

16

APPENDIX

THE GLOBAL ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE (GETI) A NEW INITIATIVE WITHIN THE WCC

Ioan Alexandru Daian (Romania, Orthodox)

My name is Ioan Alexandru Daian, and I participated at the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) which took place from 24 October to 9 November 2013 in Busan, South Korea. I was a student of the *Global Ecumenical Theological Institute* (GETI). This programme was initialized by the WCC in order to foster theological education and ecumenical formation. I have also taken part in a pre-Busan conference from 18 to 20 June 2013 in Hofgeismar, Germany. This was a very useful experience for newcomers at the Assembly.

This report is focused on my ecumenical experience as GETI student at the Assembly, where more than 3500 Christians from all over the world gathered – among them more than 900 delegates of the 345 member churches of the WCC. At GETI, about 160 ecumenically engaged graduates of theology met to share their experience and to discuss the future of Christianity in the 21st century.

To select the participants of this programme, great attention was paid to reach a balance regarding age, gender, nationality and denomination,

so that the largest spectrum possible would be represented. Moreover, a faculty of 20 members was created to accompany the participants academically.

The programme commenced in Seoul a few days before the beginning of the Assembly. We were divided into 20 *seminar groups*, each consisting of ten students and one faculty member. In every seminar group, there were participants from all continents and at least one member from Korea, our host country. These seminar groups stayed together for the next two and a half weeks and met once or even twice a day for sessions of two hours length. So, the encounter in the seminar groups was very intense. They were the most important feature to carry out the objectives of the GETI programme, since they enabled us to experience and practise intercultural and ecumenical dialogue. Besides, they provided the opportunity to reflect the impulses from the Assembly and from our additional GETI lectures.

Each student was assigned to present two papers in his seminar group. One of these introduced his fellow participants to his own ecclesial context; the other was devoted to a particular ecumenical subject related to the themes of the Assembly. Myself, I presented the following seminar papers during this time: *Peace and Human Rights in Middle East* and *Migration, Pentecostalism and the Future of Ecumenism in South Korea*.

Through lectures we were prepared for the issues and proceedings of the Assembly. We were also introduced to our host country, Korea, and its ecumenical challenges. After our preparatory programme in Seoul, we were transferred to Busan, the location of the Assembly. The first three days in Busan were followed by a weekend programme of sightseeing in the town of Gwangju. This was a welcome change to start into the second week of the Assembly programme with renewed forces.

GETI was a *life-changing experience* for me as it comprised an ecumenical learning process which combined three different levels:

- the institutional level (through the opportunity to participate at the WCC Assembly);
- inter-contextual learning (especially through our encounter in the seminar groups);
- spiritual formation (through the daily prayer times organized by GETI and held by the students from their different traditions).

The GETI-project consisted of three phases: First, the preparation was done at home before the Assembly. The participants made contact with each other using the GETI-workgroup of the Global Digital Library on Theology and Ecumenism (GlobeTheoLib), an internet-platform part of Globethics.net. GlobeTheoLib offers various services: a library, a networking facility and a research facility. All GETI-participants have introduced themselves, their church and the ecumenical challenges in their context through a brief paper which was made accessible to all other participants. The second phase took place in Korea and was the most important. The third phase was the follow-up after the Assembly. The concept of GETI ensured that the participants could keep in touch with each other and apply their ecumenical experience to their respective contexts. Each GETI-student had to write a final paper after returning to his home country, and the GETI-workgroup on GlobeTheoLib was continued. Moreover, a facebook page was created where many photos and videos are shared (www.facebook.com/ geti2013). Personal contacts were developed between students and teachers, contacts that will contribute to the future development of the ecumenical movement. Additionally, the GETI alumni and alumnae have started several initiatives to create GETI-like events in the future. A student continuation committee has been established, which is committed to promote a Global Ecumenical Theological Institute at future Assemblies of the WCC and possibly at meetings of the central committee (taking place every two years).

The GETI-project met strong interest of the delegates of the Busan Assembly: In the last business plenary, before the closing session of the Assembly, an additional paragraph was added in the report of the Program Guidelines Committee: 'The Assembly asks the central committee to invite for a round-table-meeting immediately after this Assembly, inviting representatives of GETI, of the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, and of key universities in the field of ecumenical theology in order to establish a new network of ecumenical formation.'

In conclusion, I would like to say that GETI was a unique experience for me, which will forever linger in my heart. Indeed, I count myself very fortunate for the opportunity to be part of this project.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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Ioan Alexandru Daian was born in Medias, Romania in 1985. Like the majority of Romanians, he was raised within an orthodox family. He finished two Bachelor Degrees in orthodox theology and law in Sibiu, Romania (2009). He then completed a Master's Degree in Church History (2011–2013), followed by one year at the Catholic Faculty in Graz, Austria and one year at the Orthodox Faculty in Sibiu. He also obtained a Ph.D. in Theology (2014) with the focus on the Assyrian Church in the VII–IX centuries. At present, he is undertaking research in ecumenism and interreligious dialogue within a global context.

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Joanna Hipp, born 1988 in the United States, graduated in 2014 with a Master of Divinity from Louisville Presbyterian Theological

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Prospects and Challenges for the Ecumenical Movement in the 21st Century

Insights from the Global Ecumenical Theological Institute

The Global Ecumenical Theological Institute provided a unique opportunity for a new generation of ecumenical leaders from across the globe to engage with each other and with the themes presented at the World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly in Busan (South Korea). These papers in which the participants reflect their experience show both this engagement and the diversity of their contexts. The papers deal with a variety of themes such as: pilgrimage, Asian Christology, food insecurity, just peace and the shift of the center of gravity of Christianity to the Global South. The collection of these papers provides significant insights into the challenges faced by the ecumenical movement and the prospects for its future. More particularly they articulate the perspective of a new generation of leaders in the ecumenical movement whose voice needs to be heard.

The Editors

David Field is a South African based in Basel/Switzerland where he is the co-ordinator of the Methodist e-Academy. He studied at the University of South Africa and the University of Cape Town. His Ph.D. from the University of Cape Town focused on Ecotheology. He has previously taught at a variety of theological colleges and universities in Southern Africa.

Jutta Koslowski has graduated in Protestant as well as in Catholic and Orthodox theology and is an distinguished scholar in ecumenism. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Munich and is currently doing postdoctoral research at the University of Münster on the subject "Judaism and Christianity – Attempts in Defining their Relationship after the Shoah". In addition to this, she is a pastor in the Protestant Church in Germany and member of the ecumenical community.

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