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133



Zsolt Görözdi | Henk de Roest | Katya Tolstaja (Eds.)

Roads to Reconciliation Between Groups in Conflict

Hans-Martin Kirn | Wolter Rose (Eds.)

Theology in a World of Ideologies: Authorization or Critique?

The Tenth and Eleventh Conference of Theological Faculties
from Central and Eastern Europe and the Netherlands



Roads to Reconciliation Between Groups in Conflict

Theology in a World of Ideologies

Edited by ...

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Theology in a World of Ideologies:
Authoritarianism or Critique?

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FRANZISCHEN UNIVERSITÄT
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Beihefte zur Ökumenischen Rundschau Nr. 133

Zsolt Görözdí | Henk de Roest | Katya Tolstaja (Eds.)

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Contributions to the 10th International COMENIUS Conference,
20–24 April 2016, Komárno, Slovakia

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Theology in a World of Ideologies: Authorization or Critique?

Contributions to the 11th International COMENIUS Conference,
18–21 April 2018, Kampen, The Netherlands



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PART I Roads to Reconciliation Between Groups in Conflict

Contributions to the 10th International COMENIUS Conference,
20–24 April 2016, Komárno, Slovakia

Introduction
The 10th International COMENIUS Conference was held in Komárno, Slovakia, from 20 to 24 April 2016. The conference was organized by the Institute of Education, Bratislava, in cooperation with the Faculty of Education, Comenius University in Bratislava. The conference was the first of its kind in Slovakia and was attended by 150 participants from 15 different countries. The conference was held in the beautiful setting of the Komárno Castle, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The conference was a great success and provided a valuable opportunity for researchers and practitioners in the field of education to share their experiences and ideas. The conference was organized in a very professional and friendly manner and was a pleasure to attend. The conference was held in a beautiful setting and was a great success. The conference was a valuable opportunity for researchers and practitioners in the field of education to share their experiences and ideas. The conference was organized in a very professional and friendly manner and was a pleasure to attend.

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Introduction

The articles of the first part of this volume originate from the 10th International COMENIUS Conference “Roads to Reconciliation Between Groups in Conflict”, held from 20 April to 24 April, 2016, in Komorn (Komárno), Slovakia, at the Faculty for Reformed Theology of the J.-Selye-University. Founded in 2004 by the Slovakian government, the J.-Selye-University is the first Hungarian-language university in Slovakia. The geographical context of this university played an important symbolical role for the topic of this conference. After World War I, the city of Komárno was divided into two parts: the south part belongs to Hungary, while the northern part, across the bridge over the Danube river, belongs to Slovakia. For decades, the two parts developed in relative isolation from each other but, today, citizens in both parts have learned to live peacefully, in partial separation and parallel existence. Although there are difficulties in communication, there are also advantages to living a multi-layered life.¹

During the conference, the theological key concept of reconciliation – its essence, its tradition, and its conceptualisation in different contexts – was reflected on in a number of contributions, in particular with reference to the Scriptures. For this volume, however, we have selected a limited number of contributions that focus on intergroup conflict. The theme of reconciliation is especially important for our understanding of European political and social history: wars and conflicts have left their traces, including in the private lives of individual citizens and many Europeans carry the burden of historical traumata, which can give rise to new con-

¹ See in detail: Barnabas Vajda, “The Komárom / Komárno Case, or from the ‘Iron Curtain Feeling’ to the ‘No-Border Feeling’”, in: Osamu Ieda (ed.), *Transboundary Symbiosis Over the Danube. EU Integration Between Slovakia and Hungary from a Local Border Perspective*. Sapporo, 2014.

flicts. The traces of wars and conflicts can also pose challenges to reconciliation, which calls for a theological reassessment of both the concept of reconciliation and its accompanying practices. In addition, the current societal situation in European countries is characterized by tensions, perhaps less between states and more within states: people with different ethnic or cultural backgrounds and groups with different interests or values, including different religious groups, can easily clash. Central to the selected contributions, therefore, is not the reconciliation between individuals or even between God and human beings, but intergroup conflicts in state and church. Biblical perspectives on and understandings of reconciliation, however, are never completely out of sight: the reconciliation of God and the world forms a foundation on which human beings may deal with each other. Being reconciled by God, for example, raises the expectation – and the challenge – of reconciling with the other and accepting one another. This soteriological perspective can be inspirational for finding a road to reconciliation after intergroup conflict.

The selection of contributions in this volume focuses on specific cases, situations and events. In the first article of this volume, *Henk de Roest* analyses the dynamics of intergroup conflict, describing the different phases that lead to mutual aggression and violence. De Roest creatively ‘turns these phases around’ in order to analyse the relational dynamics of reconciliation, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. In the second article, *Dolf te Velde* investigates how two doctrinal Polish documents from 1562 and 1570 contributed to the establishment of religious reconciliations. Te Velde has analysed the correspondence of the Italian reformer and theologian Girolamo Zanchi (1516–1590). In the third article, *Gert van Klínken* describes the impressive case of the destroyed, ruined, and depopulated village of Al-Summayriyya, a neighbouring village to Nes Ammim, in the North of the State of Israel, focusing on the notion of ‘no time for guilty feelings’, the denial of the loss suffered by the former villagers, and the first steps on the road to reconciliation by two individuals, a Jew and an Arab. Next, *Leon van den Broeke* explores in his turn how the nature and the application of Reformed church polity can be considered as an instrument of (re)conciliation, stating that, while church polity may seem purely concerned with procedural law, reflection on the nature of reformed church law with a focus on reconciliation and the Lord’s Supper provides a new perspective on how it can be applied in conflicts. In the fifth article of this part of the joint issue, *Eva Gáldanová* analyses a document prepared for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation by the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, called ‘From Conflict to Communion’. Gul-

danová demonstrates how, in four different ways, this document aims at helping the rapprochement and reconciliation between Catholics and Lutherans in particular but also Christians in a wider, more general sense. In the next article, *Viktória Koczián* and *Eddy Van der Borgh* analyse the theology of the documents of the World Council of Churches (WCC) with regard to the refugee crisis from 2015 until today. Including conference messages and communiqués as well as speeches in their research, the authors demonstrate how the WCC relates the migrant crisis to the self-understanding of its member churches and to national identity issues such as the fear of the loss of national identity, while the WCC seeks to promote reconciliation and suggest solutions dealing with the problems. Another view on reconciliation between groups for is presented by *Olga Lukacs*, who analyses and describes the ‘Healing of Memories’ project, which started in 2003 in Transylvania. In this article, Lukacs demonstrates that, in the courses in this project, the trauma of personal life experiences could be surmounted when church members play an active role in a process intentionally aimed at healing both historic and individual wounds. Next, *Cserpeke Toth* reads ‘The End of Memory. Remembering Rightly in a Violent World’ by Miroslav Volf, through the prism of the question if and how wounds can be healed. For Miroslav Volf, the last judgement turns out to be important. Toth offers some insightful theological reflections. Finally, *Daniël Sloots* connects Hannah Arendt’s understanding of recognition to the PLO-Israel negotiations, that is, the Oslo Accords, investigating how Arendt’s thought might help to understand and actualize recognition in concrete situations, such as in the ‘Mutual Agreement of Recognition’.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Dénes Damásdi, Ph.D. student, Debrecen Reformed Theological University, for correcting the text of all the articles of this volume.

Zsolt Görözdí
Henk de Roest
Katya Tolstaja

Start Drinking Tea Together?

The Relational Dynamics of Intergroup Peacemaking versus the Relational Dynamics of Intergroup Conflict

Henk de Roest

In 2014, the former mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen, was considered soft and naive when he insisted that ‘drinking tea together’ is an essential part of intergroup peace-building.¹ This was ten years after he first suggested this measurement following the murder of Theo van Gogh by a Muslim extremist in 2004. In the decade after the murder, major newspapers wrote stories about his initiative. In 2010, in the *New York Times*, we read:

The most contentious feature of Cohen’s tenure as mayor of Amsterdam: his decision to give a sympathetic ear even to insular and orthodox Muslim communities. Drinking tea in mosques became a term of derision used by those convinced this was exactly the wrong tack.²

In this article, based upon an analysis of the dynamics of intragroup conflict, I seek to demonstrate that Cohen’s proposal was not naive, but rather, on the contrary, a wise proposal. Furthermore, I intend to show that inviting members of religious groups to meet each other, whether they are competing or not, is an important step in reconciliation and peace-building, and, also, that both religious leaders and political authorities should encourage meetings like these or even take the initiative to organize them. I will further argue that these authorities should encourage interreligious dialogue at the grassroots level, or even enable and facilitate the emergence

1 “Job Cohen: ‘Mensen vonden mij veel te soft’”, *Het Parool*, 26 Oktober 2014, url: <https://s.parool.nl/s-a3776168> (accessed 19 March 2020).

2 Russell Shorto, “The Integrationist”, *New York Times*, 28 May 2010, url: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/30/magazine/30Mayor-t.html?smid=pl-share> (accessed 19 March 2020).

of interreligious groups.³ Local churches may also play an important role in establishing such groups. Reviewing the past decades, R. Scott Appleby has listed numerous cases of mediation, reconciliation, and peacebuilding initiated by Christians and religious actors from other religions.⁴ Following the outbreak of largescale Muslim-Christian violence on the Moluccan islands of Indonesia, in the years 1999–2002, (involving Calvinist-Protestants, Catholics, Muslims, and Java-based jihadists) interfaith reconciliation teams were established at the local level.⁵ These teams were instigated or facilitated by local government, and, even during the violence, there were still groups and individuals in both cities and villages that took the initiative for intergroup meetings.⁶

In this article I hope to provide some insights from the last decades on the emotions and relational dynamics of group conflicts. Furthermore, by reviewing and assessing these mechanisms, I also offer an outline of a trajectory in the opposite direction by providing some insights into the relational dynamics of reconciliation, peace-making and peace-building. I use the term *peace-building* in this article to mean an

[...] array of activities aiming at transforming violence and massive injustices into a just peace. In part, peace-building includes short-term efforts to end active violence such as mediation and negotiation.⁷

It involves “[...] holistic efforts to build sustainable, positive peace in a society or relationship between societies [...]”⁸ Drinking tea together is an integral part of these efforts.

3 Sumanto Al Qurtuby, “Peacebuilding in Indonesia: Christian-Muslim Alliances in Ambon Island”, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 24 (2013) 3, 349–367, url: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2013.785091> (accessed 19 March 2020).

4 R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred. Religion, Violence, and Recon-citation*. Lanham MD 2000.

5 Al Qurtuby, *Peacebuilding*, 350.

6 Al Qurtuby, *Peacebuilding*, 354.

7 Daniel Philpott, “Religious Freedom and Peacebuilding: May I Introduce You Two?”, *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 11 (2013) 1, 31.

8 Philpott, “Religious Freedom”, 31.

Conflicts Between Religious Groups

Demographic predictions suggest that in the future, around the globe, group conflicts will not only emerge more frequently, but that they will also intensify. In particular if populations grow, and social groups in societies are segregated on the lines of religion, and when mechanisms of exclusion occur, and disappointment and frustration abound, extremism is set to increase. Political borderlines between groups may be emphasised by religious rivalry. Religious loyalties are often at the root of, or they play a distinct role in, political violence. Indeed, religion can incite or legitimate violence. For example, recent studies demonstrate that “[...] contemporary terrorism has root causes that may not be dissolved without confronting the ideology that legitimates violence.”⁹ Acts of terrorism can even “[...] require an ideology or political religion to sustain them.”¹⁰ Here, however, I do not focus on acts of terrorism, but I will ask how do religious group conflicts start? And how do these conflicts become violent conflicts? According to Atalia Omer, in the *Oxford Handbook on Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*, “[...] the last three decades have witnessed a thematically and methodologically incoherent outpouring of books, articles, and multimedia documentaries on religious violence [...]”¹¹ and in the same section she adds, “[...] everyone, it seems, has a pet theory as to the who and why of religious violence.”¹² However, although dispersed throughout monographs, handbooks, readers and journal articles, we actually know quite a lot about the dynamics of group conflict. Over the past decade, the quest to identify general mechanisms and processes at work in group conflict has intensified in research in sociology, political science and group psychology. Striking in this research is the discovery that violence is driven less by strategic concerns than by emotions and by “[...] relational dynamics developing during moments of intense mobilization [...]”¹³. Group con-

⁹ David Martin Jones, M. L. R. Smith, *Sacred Violence. Political Religion in a Secular Age*. London 2014, 1.

¹⁰ Jones, Smith, *Sacred Violence*, 1.

¹¹ Atalia Omer, “Religious Violence: The Strong, the Weak, and the Pathological,” in R. Scott Appleby, Atalia Omer, David Little (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding*, Oxford 2015, 33.

¹² Omer, “Religious Violence”, 33.

¹³ Donatella della Porta, “Competitive Escalation During Protest Cycles: Comparing Left-wing and Religious Conflicts”, in Stefan Malthaner, Chares Demetriou, Lorenzo Bosi (eds.), *Dynamics of Political Violence. A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*, New York / London 2014, 76.

licts may be latent, become manifest and then linger until a threshold is passed and people begin to fight with each other. Some scholars argue that at this threshold, there are only two fundamental emotional management mechanisms at work in collective violence: fear abatement and anger spirals.¹⁴ As we will see, the collective actions have strong emotional links.

The Relevance of Knowledge About Group Conflicts

In an open society, there are well-known differences between religious groups and the communities to which they belong. People have different beliefs, habits and practices. Normally these differences do not lead to intergroup conflicts or violence. However, research demonstrates that even in democratic, open societies, group differences can lead to rivalry, hostility and framing the ‘other group’ as the enemy. There are relational mechanisms at work in the dynamics of group conflicts. On the other hand, the same research demonstrates that there is also an antidote against these mechanisms. It is *knowledge* about conflicts and about escalation that can aid groups (including religious groups) and their leaders to counteract what may otherwise get out of control. Mechanisms may suggest automatisms, but wise and thoughtful leaders may prevent these mechanisms from taking place. According to Princeton practical theologian Richard Osmer, as interpretive guides, leaders of religious groups have a responsibility to draw on theories to understand and respond to particular situations and developments.¹⁵ Wise judgments are crucial to good leadership that involves discerning the right course of action, assessing when an action is courageous, not reckless, and when a situation requires taking the initiative. It evokes thinking about steering strategies and proper timing. Revealing the mechanisms or patterns of group conflicts improves the capacity of leaders to guide processes that might normally lead to conflicts to peaceful resolutions. Much can be learned by carefully attending to what is going on and why this is going on. Research shows that violence against groups is often preceded by an intensification of group oppositions. This intensification has typical characteristics. In what follows, I will summarize

¹⁴ Hank Johnston, “The Mechanisms of Emotion in Violent Protest”, in Stefan Malthaner, Chares Demetriou, Lorenzo Bosi (eds.), *Dynamics of Political Violence. A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict*, New York / London 2014, 29.

¹⁵ Richard Osmer, *Introduction to Practical Theology*, Grand Rapids 2008, 83 ff.

research about group conflicts using the inaugural lecture at Leiden University of a well-known Dutch sociologist, Kees Schuyt. Schuyt has created an analytical scheme out of the literature, based upon theories about conflict and conflict containment, in order to combine as many insights as possible from different empirical research projects.¹⁶ I will add some of my own reflections, elaborating on some of the thoughts that he brings forward. Schuyt's analysis is valuable for paving the road to reconciliation, peace-making and peace-building. I suggest swapping the conditions that generally precede group conflicts, and focusing on the steps that are necessary for peace-making. This will allow us to present 'drinking tea together' as an essential part of intergroup peace-making.

Group Conflict: Theories

According to Schuyt, sociological and social-psychological literature on the mechanisms of group conflict amount to converging conclusions. What are his sources? Schuyt mentions Erwin Staub's research on the origins of group violence (*The Roots of Evil. The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*, 1989) and Russell Hardin's research concerning groups with strict boundaries in which the leadership puts high pressure and demands upon the members (*One for All. The Logic of Group Conflict*, 1995; *Trust*, 2006). In addition, Schuyt mentions the well-known work of Hannah Arendt (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 1951); *Men in Dark Times*, 1955), Otto Klemperer (regarding the language of the Third Empire), Adam Phillips (*Equals*, 2002); *Going Sane*, 2006) and the books written by Italian author Primo Levi. Schuyt also refers to James Alfred Aho's research, such as that on anti-Semitism among members of extremist, right-wing groups in the northern part of the US. Aho proved that untrue and offensive information on internet sites influences inclinations of group members to violence and even murder (*This Thing of Darkness. A Sociology of the Enemy*, 1994). Aho argued that "the enemy is socially constructed"¹⁷. Finally, Schuyt uses Thomas Scheff's meticulous analysis of the influence of the so-called master emotions, such as pride and shame, on the origins of domestic violence, but also on the origins of violence between groups of

¹⁶ Cornelis J. M. Schuyt, *Democratische Deugden* (Democratic Virtues), Cleveringa-orate (inaugural speech Cleveringa Chair), Leiden University 2006.

¹⁷ James Alfred Aho, *This Thing of Darkness. A Sociology of the Enemy*, Seattle 1994, 151.

youngsters and even on the origins of both the world wars (*Microsociology. Discourse, Emotion and Social Structure*, 1990; *Bloody Revenge. Emotions, Nationalism, and War*, 1994). Combining elements from these theories, Schuyt arrives at four complex conditions that separately, and particularly in their mutual interdependency, form a strong stimulus in the direction of the destructive development of group conflicts. When these four conditions are realized simultaneously, group oppositions are more likely to lead to a destructive outcome than a constructive solution.

The First Condition

According to Schuyt, when part of a group, the individual is suppressed by the collective, thereby denying or neglecting the formation or development of a personal, individual self. This constitutes the first step towards a possible intergroup conflict. It refers to an internal or intra-group dynamic, a 'dynamic within a group'.¹⁸

In Muzafer Sherif's research on groups (in particular the 'Robbers Cave Experiment' of 1954) one can find the first formulation of the insight that when studying relations between groups it is important to focus on what happens inside the groups. Joaquim Valentim writes:

By studying, simultaneously, the intragroup and the intergroup, Sherif's experiments show that the explicitness of the ingroups' hierarchical structures could be enhanced by competition between groups.¹⁹

According to Kenwyn Smith and David Berg, when individuals approach a group, they struggle to know what they are going to have to give up.²⁰ An individual must give something up in order to belong, and groups may come to determine what individual members can and cannot bring, and what they are required or obliged to bring, to the group. Groups are likely to consider members that are willing to put the group ahead of themselves as good members. In some cases, group norms can be loose, having a laissez-faire identity. However, group norms can also be very strict and in

¹⁸ Schuyt, *Democratische Deugden*, 28.

¹⁹ Joaquim Pires Valentim, "Sherif's Theoretical Concepts and Intergroup Relations Studies: Notes for a Positive Interdependence", *Psychologica* 52 (2010) 2, 588.

²⁰ Kenwyn Smith, David N. Berg, *Paradoxes in Group Life. Understanding Conflict, Paralysis, and Movement in Group Dynamics*, San Francisco 1987.

those cases the group may be considered upright.²¹ When a group becomes highly demanding in regard to its members and there is no space for deviant opinions or one's own personal convictions a 'closed' group is formed. Ethnic, religious or political groups can easily transform into such closed groups. In these cases, being a member of the group is the primary defining characteristic of the individual. This then leads to a situation in which the behaviour, choices and decisions of individual group members will be increasingly determined by the leaders of the group, and the allowed space for individual differences between members will diminish. In addition, if a group views any deviancy as characteristic of the individual who is expressing it, instead of as an expression of itself, then the group may elect to eliminate that individual, or at least his or her troublesome behaviour.²² In terms of causation, while closed groups can be formed *from within*, when strong, charismatic leaders exert their influence, they can also be stimulated *from outside* the group, by external causes, be they physical or social. An example is scarcity of resources and rivalry to attain those resources.

In summary the first condition can be described as the dominance of collective identity over individual identities. The potential for conflict between groups can be established by the extent to which collective identities suppress or even engulf personal, individual identities. When in a group or community the collective prevails over the individual, and, when in conflict with another group or community, it will stimulate group-responses that will go further than individual members would go.

The Second Condition

The second condition can be described as an intensification of group-positions. They develop into We-They/Us-Them oppositions, that often take the shape of a majority vs. a minority in terms of the inter-group dynamics. This intensification is often a long-term process, with recurring patterns, referred to as the 'law of group-polarization'. Polarization is the opposite of pluralism and enduring complexity. Polarization and escalating rivalry can be recognized by:²³

a. The use of language and symbolic expressions, negative stereotypes, metaphorical exaggerations, defamatory labelling, and dehumanizing or demonizing images. I add that Daniel Bar-Tal and Phillip Hammack introduced the concept of 'delegitimization': the socially construed and extremely negative categorization of people or groups, who are then perceived to be outside the realm of those to whom basic human norms or values apply:

Delegitimization provides the sociopsychological rationale, the moral and the discursive basis to harm the delegitimized group, even in the most inhumane ways. Thus, categorization into the extreme negative categories does not constitute merely an exclusion. Rather, it has the purposive function of licensing harm of an outgroup.²⁴

b. The creation of historical myths and the twisting of historical facts. I add that the in-group's version of history is evaluated as adequate and true, while the out-group's version is considered a distortion or lie.²⁵ According to Rezarta Bilali and Michael Ross,

[...] historical memories are to group identity what personal memories are to individual identity. Historical memory is the glue that connects group members, events, and ideas through time and space.²⁶

Historical memories or narratives can become crucial to collective action as they can be used to legitimize group conflict and then are likely to be modified or even filtered to conceal shameful episodes.²⁷ We can therefore understand how glorification, rather than group attachment per se, "[...] predicts denial of ingroup responsibility for wrongdoing and legitimization of past ingroup harms."²⁸ In line with this concept, increasing polarization and escalating rivalry can be observed in the stories which communities tell themselves about *our* innocence and *their* guilt. Today, where groups

²¹ Smith, Berg, *Paradoxes*, 91.

²² Smith, Berg, *Paradoxes*, 92.

²³ Schuyt, *Democratische Deugden*, 35 ff.

²⁴ Daniel Bar-Tal, Phillip Hammack, "Conflict, Delegitimization, and Violence", in Linda R. Tropp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Intergroup Conflict*, New York 2012, 29-52.

²⁵ Rezarta Bilali, Michael Ross, "Remembering Intergroup Conflict," in Linda R. Tropp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Intergroup Conflict*, New York 2012, 123-235.

²⁶ Bilali, Ross, *Remembering*, 123.

²⁷ Bilali, Ross, *Remembering*, 126.

²⁸ Bilali, Ross, *Remembering*, 128.

are in conflict, false information or fake news about the other is easily spread through social media. For example, during the violence on the Moluccan islands, people used text messages to multiply false information for their own purposes such as calling for reprisals. Meanwhile, interreligious peace-groups, such as a group called Peace Provocateurs, sent counter-text messages, "[...] highlighting the inaccuracy or inappropriateness of the reports that were disseminated in order to quell the growing fury within the community."²⁹

c. The use of selective and biased information about the out-group, in conjunction with restrictions on providing counter-information. I note here that stereotyping as such need not be considered morally wrong.³⁰ One of the main Social Identity Theorists, Rupert Brown writes: "It may not be very helpful to regard stereotypes as faulty distortions which need to be corrected or overcome"³¹ Groups may become associated with a particular characteristic and this is a basic collective cognitive process. In general, in-group members perceive more variability in the characteristics of the in-group than in the characteristics of the out-group. They are also increasingly likely to show in-group bias and describe the in-group in more favourable terms.³² There are even intergroup situations where stereotyping may be desirable, as long as the stereotype is accurate and respected by members of the other group. Groups may stereotype the other in a manner consistent with each group's stereotype of itself.³³ On the other hand, Social Identity Theory, described by Rupert Brown as one of social psychology's pre-eminent theories,³⁴ states that negative stereotyping will occur if there is a strong need to increase self and group esteem. This will provide another motivation for individuals to evaluate their own group more favorably than other groups.³⁵ In-group esteem increases as individuals within that group feel more positive about the virtues, capabilities, history and motivations of their own group, and, by extension, more neg-

²⁹ Al Qurubuy, *Peacebuilding*, 359.

³⁰ Donald M. Taylor, Fathali M. Moghaddam, *Theories of Intergroup Relations. International Social Psychological Perspectives*, Westport CT 1994, 162ff.

³¹ Rupert Brown, "Social Identity Theory: Past Achievements, Current Problems and Future Challenges", *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30 (2000), 750.

³² Brown, "Social Identity Theory", 747.

³³ Taylor, Moghaddam, *Theories*, 164.

³⁴ Brown, "Social Identity Theory", 745-778.

³⁵ Miles Hewstone, Mark Rubin, Hazel Willis, "Intergroup Bias", *Annual Review of Psychology* 53 (2002), 575-604.

ative about the virtues, capabilities, history and motivations of the out-group. While in-group-positivity does not necessarily lead to derogation and antagonism towards out-groups,

[...] the constraints normally in place, which limit intergroup bias to in-group favoritism, are lifted when out-groups are associated with stronger emotions, like the feeling of being threatened, disgust or hatred.³⁶

An important step in the intensification of group-oppositions is when the out-group is regarded as a *threat* that should be combated, instead of a group that one can negotiate with. Based upon extensive empirical data, Hewstone, Rubin and Willis write:

An out-group that violates in-group norms may elicit *disgust* [italics, HdR] and avoidance; an out-group seen as benefiting unjustly (e.g., from government programs) may elicit resentment and actions aimed at reducing benefits; and an out-group seen as threatening may elicit fear and hostile actions.³⁷

In the end, there will be an increasing fascination with the other, an obsession which dominates all other aspects of reality, structures relationships and reduces the nature of identity to that of identity within the confines of the conflict.

I add to Schuyt's second condition, that James Aho articulated three paradoxes of violence regarding groups against groups. *First*, evil is hard to distinguish from good, because evil always starts with combating or fighting a presumed larger or greater evil. The subject of violence becomes challenging when a group feels justified in acting violently. For example, violence can emerge from victimization or from a heroic quest – one form of which is the attempt to "[...] save the world by annihilating the enemy."³⁸ *Second*, precisely this fight against evil turns the groups in competition with one another into firm, sturdy units who, by a strengthened solidarity, are increasingly less capable of accepting other (more positive) information about the enemy. Dissenting opinions within the in-group will also be systematically suppressed.³⁹ *Third*, the enemy apart from being a projection and an object of fascination can also be an objective reality, a

³⁶ Hewstone, Rubin, Willis, "Intergroup Bias", 579.

³⁷ Hewstone, Rubin, Willis, "Intergroup Bias", 580.

³⁸ Aho, *This Thing*, 11, 151.

³⁹ Aho, *This Thing*, 14.

facticity, and this facticity of evil should not be overlooked, as Aho adds, romantics tend to do: the other can be a repository of horrors.⁴⁰

The Third Condition

The third condition is the answer to the question of whether values and normative meanings of objects or actions are involved in the intergroup dynamic. In particular, what is considered absolutely true and sacred and what is not is especially important. The development of value and faith conflicts is often more destructive than a conflict of interests. These group conflicts have a different structure than conflicts about interests only. Conflicts of interest can lead to bargaining or exchange; they can be understood using one's rationality. We could go further and say that religious convictions will probably lead to hostility when they are connected to social and economic interests. Group conflicts also become unsolvable when groups view their demands as sanctioned or legitimized by their own religion. The rights they claim will become increasingly non-negotiable. I further add that religious loyalties are involved in a lot of current political violence. Political boundaries are indeed often marked by rivalry around religious convictions, habits or practices. Miroslav Volf writes, "[...] as long as religious symbols capture the imagination of people, people will seek to draw religious symbols into their conflicts, to use them as weapons in their wars."⁴¹ In addition, demographic trends, and the predictions based upon them, suggest that religious conflicts will not cease to exist, but will rather intensify.⁴² In the long run, prognoses for interreligious relationships are not a reason for optimism. In combination with a scarcity of resources, growing populations, increasing poverty and disappointment, we-they mechanisms are likely to increase. Groups can easily become locked into struggles over resources. When groups are in an environment of scarcity, they will frame their experience in terms of survival.⁴³ I add that a *mimesis* of desire (René Girard), a mechanism of imitating, may lead people into conflict over the same object. Simply because I want what you want, we

⁴⁰ Aho, *This Thing*, 17.

⁴¹ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace. A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation*, Nashville 1996.

⁴² Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom. The Coming of Global Christianity*, Oxford 2002, 163ff.

⁴³ Smith, Berg, *Paradoxes*, 188.

can quickly become rivals for the same object – whether that object is a person, a position or a quality. If human rivalry is not somehow diverted or controlled, it has the potential to escalate into reciprocal violence, in which the initial object of conflict gradually fades from view as conflict with the rival becomes the mutual driving factor.

The Fourth Condition

The fourth and last condition can be described as the emotional threshold from conflict to violence. Unrecognized and unacknowledged emotions, usually shame, but also grief, anxiety, resentment, anger, and revenge or vindictiveness, are a crucial factor in escalating group conflicts. Many historical examples of collective violence demonstrate suppressed 'shame-anger' sequences. This can be described as the "[...] honor-insult-revenge cycle".⁴⁴ Damaged esteem or feelings of wounded pride, resentment and anger feed the cycle. From an outsider's perspective this then leads to sudden and unexpected outbursts of violence.

It should be further noted that in the nineties, Scheff discovered that anxiety and fear are often mentioned in discussions of the source of conflict, but shame and its opposite emotion, pride, are hardly discussed. Scheff argued that shame and pride are polar-opposite emotions that signal to individuals how alienated from, or united to, a social group they are. Pride accompanies an adequate number of secure social bonds, while shame accompanies either threatened bonds or bonds that engulf the self. According to Scheff, shame often appears in disguise, and is denied or goes unacknowledged. Now, "[...] each of us is conscious of the amount of attention we get from others [...]"⁴⁵ and a shame response signals that one is being excluded or submerged in a group. Embarrassment and other shame signals warn us when we feel too close to (exposed), or too far from (rejected), a group. However, when it remains unacknowledged, shame can interfere with an angry desire to be proud of oneself, thereby paralyzing the ability and desire to reach a compromise. One sees one's self negatively through the eyes of other persons and then protests the injustice of the situation produced by this imagination. Scheff argues that

⁴⁴ Thomas J. Scheff, Suzanne M. Retzinger, *Emotions and Violence. Shame and Rage in Destructive Conflicts*, Lexington MA 1991.

⁴⁵ Thomas J. Scheff, *Bloody Revenge. Emotions, Nationalism, and War*, Boulder CO 1994, 51.

unacknowledged shame causes conflict. Here I would add that revenge, or rather vindictiveness, is an escalating emotion. Revenge is an act, but vindictiveness is also a universal emotion. In the words of Jon Elster, vindictiveness is “[...] an attempt, at some cost or risk to oneself, to impose suffering upon those who have made one suffer.”⁴⁶ Empirical research indicates that false accusations and being ashamed are often the major incidents that trigger an emotion of vindictiveness.⁴⁷ Restoring the balance and re-establishing self-esteem are often mentioned as motives. This is based upon the *lex talionis*, or ‘an eye for an eye’ approach which suggests that what he has done to me should be done back to him. Now, if a group does not appeal to a judicial instance such as a court, but rather seeks to realize revenge by themselves, this ‘eye for an eye’ approach will generally be destructive. Any revenge taken will often stimulate retaliation. In such cases, the social narrative of being a victim – instead of being an offender, or at least a partaker, in a vicious circle of revenge – will often be used to justify further violence.

Peace-making, Peacekeeping, Reconciliation and Peace-building

Once intergroup conflict has escalated, it is resistant to de-escalation because of certain solidifying mechanisms. In these cases reasoning through facts is ineffective. Therefore, innovative and creative means of resolution have to be developed.⁴⁸ A typology may be helpful here.⁴⁹ *Peace-making* is operationalized through activities directed toward reaching a settlement between conflicting groups. *Peacekeeping* involves the intervention of a third party, and a willingness to engage in reconciliation. It requires effective and constructive face-to-face interaction between representatives of the groups. This may involve small-group discussions that are facilitated by an impartial third party. *Peace-building* refers to attempts to create structures of peace in equity and justice.

First, acknowledging emotions such as shame, anger, pride, honor, humiliation and vindictiveness is important. Since, as Scheff demonstrates, shame may be considered a master emotion, it is important to acknowledge

⁴⁶ Jon Elster, “Norms of Revenge”, *Ethics* 100 (1990), 862.

⁴⁷ Hans Crombag, Eric Rassin, Robert Horselenberg, “On Vengeance”, *Psychology, Crime, & Law* 9 (2003), 333–344.

⁴⁸ Ronald J. Fisher, *Interactive Conflict Resolution*, New York 1997, 7.

⁴⁹ Fisher, *Interactive*, 11f.

it in intra- and intergroup group dialogues. Scheff says that, under the right conditions, putting emotional states into words helps dispel them or decrease their destructive consequences. He advocates reconciliation as “[...] an acknowledgement of interdependence [...]”⁵⁰ and emphasizes the importance of apologies. Scheff also encourages informal one-to-one encounters and highlights how significant interchanges often occur over meals or through social occasions.⁵¹ German psychologist Ekkehard Kleiter identifies three levels that occur in reconciliation: “[...] giving up the longing for vengeance by oneself [...]”, “[...] giving up hatred by understanding the other [...]” and finally “[...] forgiveness.”⁵² In this perspective, renouncing feelings of vengeance and renouncing feelings of hatred are pre-conditions for forgiveness. Renouncing them interrupts the spiral of escalation. Still, we may also question this approach or, better still, modify it. Over the last decades the world has entered an ‘age of apology’, with various groups apologizing to each other for past and present injustices.⁵³ There has been a sharp increase in the frequency of apologies offered between social groups. However, research demonstrates that people often respond to public group apologies with skepticism and even cynicism and point to their relative ineffectiveness in promoting forgiveness. These apologies may represent cheap talk, that is, lip service. An apology offered under conditions of instability is likely to be viewed as manipulative and insincere. That is, it will be perceived as a strategic attempt by the apologizer to reinforce existing status relations, and perceived insincerity will lead to a negative emotional response of reduced forgiveness and willingness to reconcile among members of the disadvantaged group.⁵⁴ Yet, this need not discourage us from swapping the conditions and finding effective peace-making strategies.

First, acknowledging emotions and leaders of advantaged groups offering apologies to disadvantaged minorities needs to represent a genuine

⁵⁰ Scheff, *Bloody Revenge*, 131.

⁵¹ Scheff, *Bloody Revenge*, 145.

⁵² Ekkehard F. Kleiter, *Konflikt und Versöhnung. Über den empirischen Zusammenhang von Konflikt und Versöhnungsbereitschaft bei Kindern, Jugendlichen und Erwachsenen*, Langerich 2003. See: Stephanie van de Loo, *Versöhnungsarbeit. Kriterien, theologische Rahmen, Praxisperspektiven*. Stuttgart 2009.

⁵³ Roy L. Brooks, *When Sorry isn't Enough. The Controversy Over Apologies and Reparations for Human Justice*, New York 1999.

⁵⁴ Nurit Shnabel, Samer Halabi, Ilanit Siman Tov-Nachleli, “Group Apology Under Unstable Status Relations: Perceptions of Insincerity Hinder Reconciliation and Forgiveness,” *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 18 (2015) 5, 717.

willingness to compensate and empower the latter, and rebuild constructive relations with them. Trust in the apology's sincerity is found to critically determine its effectiveness.⁵⁵ In addition, empirical research demonstrates that the apology should be victim-focused, because that will heighten perceptions of offender group remorse, (perceived empathy of the offender group) and trust in the offender group. Collective apologies are more effective at facilitating trust, remorse, and forgiveness when they focus on the victimized group members' feelings.⁵⁶ It is important to word the apology in such a way that the victimized group's suffering is made focal. *Second*, for peace-making it is necessary to investigate what the intergroup conflict was about, and whether it involved interests and/or deeply held personal convictions and values. The challenge here is to listen to what was at stake for people, what they considered to be sacred to them. The critical challenge for peace-making between groups in neighbourhoods is to identify those circumstances in which passionately held, and absolutely believed, 'myths' are set aside and the human in the out-group appears. It involves unveiling and unmasking any ideological language and false information about the competing group in which we-they/us-them schemes often occur. This entails a responsibility for each individual and each group.

Third, alienation between disputing groups causes interminable conflict. Therefore, processes of peace-making start with the discovery and acknowledgement that it is necessary to get to know and acknowledge the outgroup. Researchers on processes of reconciliation in Northern Ireland state that, based upon empirical research, they

[...] firmly believe that in a society as starkly segregated as Northern Ireland, cross-community contact is an essential part of any solution [...] it reduces intergroup anxiety, promotes outgroup perspective-taking, and is a strong predictor of outgroup attitudes, forgiveness, and trust.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Michael Wohl, Matthew J. Hornsey, Shannon H. Bennett, "Why Group Apologies Succeed and Fail: Intergroup Forgiveness and the Role of Primary and Secondary Emotions", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 102 (2012) 2, 306–322.

⁵⁶ Mariëtte Bermdsen, Matthew J. Hornsey, Michael J. A. Wohl, "The Impact of a Victim-Focused Apology on Forgiveness in an Intergroup Context", *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations* 18 (2015) 5, 727.

⁵⁷ Miles Hewstone et. al., Ed Cairns, Alberto Voci, Frances McLernon, Ulrike Niens, and Masi Noor, "Intergroup Forgiveness and Guilt in Northern Ireland. Social Psychological Dimensions of 'The Troubles'", in Nyla R. Branscombe, Bertjan Doosje (eds.), *Collective Guilt. International Perspectives*, Cambridge 2004, 211f.

On the Moluccan islands, the creation of interreligious groups at a local level, not only consisting of leaders but of ordinary men and women too, was essential for peace-making. An example can be found in the work of an interfaith alliance, the so-called Peace Provocateurs, co-founded by Reverend Manuputy. In an extensive research project describing the events, and the role of religion as a resource for peace-making, Al Qurtuby writes:

Manuputy used his friendship networks of Christian and Muslim peace activists to create a public culture of tolerance and fraternity by developing multiple creative programs, such as a peace curriculum for schools, trauma healing workshops, art for peace with the involvement of international peacemakers, peace sermons in churches and mosques, "live-ins" in houses of opposing religious communities, and interfaith camps. Manuputy named his method of using friendship networks a strategy of weaving a mat (strategi menganyam tikar pandan). A conflict resolution practitioner, he believes that such friendship networks can be utilized to generate a web of peacemakers, and hence can be a powerful means of peacebuilding and reconciliation.⁵⁸

The peace-making task is not to abolish conflict, which will remain a reality of human life, but to find ways to form new social relationships in which each participant/group can recognize the other and give them a real place in life, in which rivalry is no longer decisive. Bar-Tal (2000) emphasizes a shift to a more objective perspective of one's own group and the adversary group, both in respect to the cause of the conflict and in regard to suffering on both sides. In addition, recognizing differentiation within the outgroup is important in order to see that they are not a homogeneous mass. Intergroup contact is essential to reduce stereotypes. This last sentence reads as a hypothesis and indeed it is one. It was put forth in the early fifties by Robin Williams Jr. and Gordon Allport, and then reviewed in the eighties by Thomas Pettigrew. The hypothesis that intergroup contact reduces stereotypes is still considered valid by many parties including both researchers and politicians. Intergroup contact is associated with peace when it involves interaction that is intimate and where the purpose of the interaction is cooperative rather than competitive.

Fourth, the turnaround impact of the aforementioned conditions acts as a societal mirror. In the long run, successful effects reveal the foundation of a well-integrated society, a society that acknowledges individual

⁵⁸ Al Qurtuby, *Peacebuilding*, 358.

differences while simultaneously offering facilities and opportunities for establishing social cohesion. Processes of intragroup and intergroup 'peace-building' start with the development of individual identity, the encouragement of asking questions and learning and enabling access to all possible information. Feeling 'critical attachment' to one's group (vs. its glorification) may help to reduce conflict.⁵⁹ Ultimately, the formation of individual identities by each person have to be more important than the promotion of group identities. The tensions between individual and group identities require choices and compromises to be made by both the individual and the group. The paradox is that a group may exist, grow, and become strong and resourceful particularly if the individuality of its members can be expressed. A socially desirable intergroup situation is reached where each group retains its distinctiveness but is respectful of the attributes that are distinctive of the other group.⁶⁰ According to Taylor and Moghaddam, despite media attention, it is not the case that intergroup violence is the norm. Individuals may represent conflicting groups, but the demands of normal roles or proximity require them to interact frequently causing countless everyday interactions. Despite often being judged as superficial, many work, leisure and neighborhood situations can also lead to cross-group friendship. These processes, and a variety of mechanisms for interacting effectively with members of a different group must be explored, because, when contact is frequent and intimate, individuals define themselves, the other person, and the context in more than just intergroup terms. Indeed, it is the breakdown of these everyday interactions that may actualize intergroup conflicts.

Returning once again No getting back to the former mayor of Amsterdam, was he theoretically justified in promoting 'drinking tea together'? Our inclination is yes. Eating together, sharing meals, drinking tea and sharing emotions and deeply rooted values and beliefs in order to acknowledge the other, are all highly relevant when it comes to peace-making and peace-building. It is about 'weaving a mat' together. These actions contribute both to better understanding of, and increasing tolerance towards other groups. This then results in diminishing the risks of group conflicts and, in particular, group violence. In conclusion, we can say that Job Cohen made a wise decision when he decided to promote drinking tea among the different groups in the city.

⁵⁹ Sonia Roccas, Andrey Elster, "Group Identities", in Linda R. Tropp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Intergroup Conflict*, New York 2012, 106–122.

⁶⁰ Taylor, Moghaddam, *Theories*, 164.

From Confession to Consensus

Girolamo Zanchi and the Reformed Churches of Poland between 1560 and 1570

Dolf te Velde

The second half of the 16th century showed a tremendous activity in the formulation of confessional statements. Started as a movement of protest against ecclesiastical hierarchy and manifold excesses in doctrine and ethics, the Reformation consolidated into well-ordered national or regional churches. Within this process of fine-tuning a new identity, the emerging churches saw the formulation of their doctrinal positions as a most significant task. Soon after the initial breach with the Roman Catholic Church, it turned out that the 'dissidents' differed among themselves as well. During the 1520s, a split occurred between radical Anabaptists on the one hand and more 'churchly' oriented Swiss and German theologians on the other hand, a split which was almost irreparable from the outset.¹ In the next decades, intractable doctrinal differences also created distance between the Lutheran churches of Central Europe and the communities in Swiss and Southern Germany following the lead of Huldreich Zwingli, Martin Bucer, Heinrich Bullinger, and eventually John Calvin. During these years, a consensus was sought between 'Lutheran' and 'Reformed', but despite these efforts a confessional separation between these two denominations came to the fore.²

This paper aims to present a case-study of how processes of conflict and reconciliation have been dealt with in the past, by focusing on the situation of the Reformed Churches in Poland.³ Space does not permit a

¹ George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, Kirksville 1992, has sought to document this antagonism in terms of 'Radical Reformation' versus 'Magisterial Reformation'.

² The concept of 'multiconfessionalism' is investigated by means of case studies from several parts of Europe in Thomas Max Safley (ed.), *A Companion to Multiconfessionalism in the Early Modern World*, Leiden 2011.

³ Several other cases from the 15th – 17th centuries are presented in the collection

broad sketch of the era of intense but brief flourishing of Calvinism in Poland (after 1569: the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth).⁴ We will look at the development of a confessional identity of these Polish Reformed Churches through the window of the correspondence of the Italian reformer and theologian Girolamo Zanchi (1516–1590).⁵ Between 1556 and 1570, several letters were exchanged between Zanchi and leaders from the Polish churches. Eight letters have been published in the edited correspondence of Zanchi that can be found in his *Opera omnia*.⁶

The connection between the Italian Zanchi (who converted to Protestantism around 1542 and served as a professor at Strasbourg, Heidelberg, and Neustadt) and the churches in Poland and Lithuania evidences the international dimension that was typical of Calvinism in the 16th century and afterwards. During the 'Golden Age' of Poland under the reign of the kings Sigismund I (1506–1548) and Sigismund II Augustus (1548–1572), a vivid exchange of artists, scholars, and students took place throughout Europe. In his letters, Zanchi regularly mentions the visits of students from noble Polish families, who traveled with their companions to Strasbourg or Heidelberg. The practice of *peregrinatio academica* stimulated the proliferation of reformational ideas in parts of Poland. The Calvinist branch of Protestantism found its most fertile soil in the territory of Lesser Poland (Polonia Minor): the region in the South-East of present-day Poland with

of essays by Howard P. Louthan and Randall C. Zachman (eds.), *Conciliation and Confession: The Struggle for Unity in the Age of Reform, 1415–1648*, Notre Dame 2004.

⁴ For a first orientation in the history of the Reformation in Poland, see James R. Palmitessa, "The Reformation in Bohemia and Poland", in R. Po-chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World*, Oxford 2006, 185–204. Recent discussion of Polish Reformation historiography is provided by Piotr Wilczek, "The 'Myth' of the Polish Reformation in Modern Historiography", in Peter Opitz (ed.), *The Myth of the Reformation*, Göttingen 2013, 59–70. A sample of studies in the history of the Polish Reformation can be found in Piotr Wilczek, *Polonia reformata: Essays on the Polish Reformation(s)*, Göttingen 2016.

⁵ The most complete survey of Zanchi's life and work is still provided by Charles Schmidt, "Girolamo Zanchi", *Studien und Kritiken* 32 (1859), 625–708. Additional material focusing on Zanchi's professorate at Strasbourg can be found in Christopher Burchill, "Girolamo Zanchi: Portrait of a Reformed Theologian and His Work", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 15 (1984), 185–207.

⁶ While most of Zanchi's works were published in Heidelberg and Neustadt during his lifetime, or shortly after his death, the first collection of his *Opera omnia* appeared in 1605 in Geneva with Gamonet & Aubert. The reprint of this edition in 1617–1619 by the Genevan publisher Samuel Crispin is used in this paper.

the prominent cities Cracow, Sandomierz, and Lublin. The well-known reformer John a Lasco (Jan Łaski)⁷ co-operated with others, such as the Greek-Italian Francesco Lismanini,⁸ in consolidating the Reformed Churches of Poland by building a specific ecclesiastical structure (including the function of 'superintendent') and by writing a catechism. Łaski also strove for union between the various Protestant 'confessions' (besides Lutheran and Reformed, also the Bohemian Brethren who originated in the Hussite movement of the 15th century), but these attempts remained unsuccessful.

In the course of the 1550s, the Reformed Churches of Lesser Poland had to deal with intense and fierce debates concerning the doctrine of the Trinity.⁹ Although these disputes arose also in other parts of Europe (we need look no further than the notorious trial and execution of the anti-Trinitarian leader Michael Servetus in Geneva in 1553), an exceptionally high concentration of radical critics of the orthodox notion of the Trinity happened to come to Poland. Long before the rise of the Lutheran and

⁷ Jan Łaski (1499–1560), born from a noble Polish family, started as a priest in the Catholic Church. During a trip to Switzerland in 1523, he became a friend of Huldreich Zwingli and Desiderius Erasmus; he even purchased Erasmus's personal library and had it transported to Cracow in 1536. In 1542, Łaski went over to the Reformation, and had to leave Poland. He became a pastor of the Reformed Church in Emden (East Frisia) and in 1548 he was invited to become superintendent of the Reformed Strangers' Church in London. After being expelled from Britain, he moved along several places in Europe, until in 1556 he was called back to his homeland. On Łaski's efforts to help organize the Reformed Churches in Poland during the late 1550s, see G. H. Williams, "The Polish-Lithuanian Calvin during the 'Superintendency' of John Łaski, 1556–60", in B. A. Gerrish (ed.), *Reformatio Perennis: Essays on Calvin and the Reformation in Honor of Ford Lewis Battles*, Eugene 1981, 129–158.

⁸ Francesco Lismanini (or Lismanino) was born at the isle of Corfu, ca. 1504. His Greek parents soon moved to Italy and in 1515 the family arrived in Cracow, Poland. In 1525, Francesco entered the Franciscan order, where he became a 'Father' in 1540. Lismanini had been working as a preacher at the Royal Court in Poland since 1546. He stood in contact with several humanist scholars from the Erasmian circle. During a journey to Switzerland in 1553, Lismanini accepted the Calvinist version of the Christian faith. After his return to Poland, he attempted together with John a Lasco to bring together the different strands of Protestantism in Poland. Lismanini died at Königsberg in 1566. On Lismanini's contribution to the establishment of the Polish Reformed Church, see L. Hein, *Italienische Protestanten und ihr Einfluss auf die Reformation in Polen während der beiden Jahrzehnte vor dem Sandomirer Konsens (1570)*, Leiden 1974, 27–65.

⁹ On the involvement of Reformed theologians in the Trinitarian controversies, and on the role of Girolamo Zanchi in particular, see Benjamin R. Merkle, *Defending the Trinity in the Reformed Palatinate: The Elohistae*, Oxford 2015.

Calvinist Reformations of the 16th century, Poland had been familiar with religious diversity, and had maintained a sort of religious tolerance. This religious plurality, together with a political constitution in which the Polish king had to reckon with the wishes and interests of high and lower nobility and with the secular power of the Catholic Church, led to the situation in which Poland was the first European nation in the 16th century that entertained a high degree of religious tolerance. In this context, thinkers from all different countries sought refuge in Poland when they were elsewhere prosecuted – either by Catholic inquisition or by Protestant magistrates – for their deviations from the Christian doctrine.¹⁰

The Polish correspondence of Girolamo Zanchi circles around two important steps in the process of confessional consolidation during the third quarter of the 16th century. The first important document that occurs in the exchange of letters is the *Confessio* issued by the Reformed synod of Pinczow on August 22, 1562. This confessional statement deals with questions on the doctrine of the Trinity and Christology. The second document that occurs in the correspondence between Girolamo Zanchi and the Polish churches is the *Consensus* of Sandomierz (*Consensus Sandomiriensis*) of 1570. Although only eight years later, the *Consensus* represents a quite different stage of the history of the Reformed Church of Poland: a new situation in which reconciliation between Calvinists, Lutherans and Bohemian Brethren was pursued under increasing pressure from the Catholic Counter-Reformation. We will investigate the extent to which the two doctrinal documents contributed to the establishment of religious reconciliation.

The Confession of 1562

The Confession of the Pinczow Synod was sent to Zanchi in a letter dated August 22, 1562,¹¹ on behalf of the synod and signed by the 'superintendents' and a few other leaders of the Polish churches including Felix Cruciger,¹² Gregorius Paulus,¹³ and Francesco Lismanini. Pinczow is a town

¹⁰ See Paul W. Knoll, "Religious Toleration in Sixteenth-Century Poland: Political Realities and Social Constraints", in Howard Louthan, Gary B. Cohen, Franz A. J. Szabo (eds.), *Diversity and Dissent: Negotiating Religious Difference in Central Europe, 1500 – 1800*, New York 2011, 30–52.

¹¹ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8, 35–36.

¹² Felix Cruciger (Felix Krzyzak), was elected by the Polish Reformed Churches as their first superintendent in 1554. He also served the local church of Secymin.

some 70 kilometers North-East of the former Polish residence Cracow. Since 1550, it became an important center of the Calvinist Reformation, ornated with an Academy, and serving as the location for subsequent Synods of the Reformed Churches of Lesser Poland.

The confessional statement drafted at the Synod of 1562 was part of the raging debates over the doctrine of the Trinity of God. At least since 1556, synods and other meetings had constantly engaged in doctrinal battles. Several confessional statements had been issued in several stages of the debate in an attempt to end the quarrels and to establish the doctrinal position of the Reformed Church. One famous predecessor to the 1562 Confession was the *Confessio de Mediatore generis humani Jesu Christo Deo et homine*, also promulgated by a synod at Pinczow, August 10, 1559. It proceeded by endorsing the Trinitarian and Christological language of Nicea and Chalcedon, and by substantiating the doctrine of Christ the Mediator by an exposition of his threefold office as Prophet, Priest, and King.¹⁴

Since the controversies had not yet been silenced and polarization abounded in the Polish churches, the synod of 1562 felt urged to make a new attempt at pacification, and for that purpose a brief statement was issued. In what follows, the integral text of the *Confessio* is given in Latin and English.¹⁵ Next, the Confession is analyzed on a number of aspects

Due to his incapability to act upon the Antitrinitarian controversies, he was removed from the ministry and died during his farewell sermon on Easter, April 11, 1563.

¹³ Gregory Paul (Grzegorz Paweł; c. 1525–1591), earned his master's degree at Cracow University in 1549, and served as a rector of the Latin school in Poznań for one year. Due to his conversion to Protestantism, he was forced to leave the city and left to Wittenberg, where he attended the lectures of Philipp Melancthon. Having returned as a Reformed pastor to Poland, he soon played a leading role in church affairs. During the Trinitarian controversies, his denial of the alleged Modalism of Francesco Stancaro led Paul and others into an anti-Trinitarian direction, by which they intended to uphold the true deity of the Father. During the Pinczow Synod of 1562, Paul remained within Reformed ranks, but soon afterwards he became one of the leading pastors of the Minor Church that split off from the Reformed Church in the years 1563 to 1565.

¹⁴ The text of the 1559 Confession is available in Th. Woitschke (ed.), *Der Briefwechsel der Schweizer mit den Polen*, Leipzig 1908, no. 172. Brief discussion and a complete English translation is provided by Williams, *Radical Reformation*, 1030–1032.

¹⁵ Apart from its being included in Zanchi's *Opera omnia*, the confession of 1562 was printed by Francesco Lismanini in his *Brevis explicatio doctrinae de sanctissima trinitate*, 1565, no pagination; recently, it was reprinted in Irene Dingel,

that are of interest in terms of the formation of creedal or confessional statements. The response of Zanchi and his colleagues will be expounded. Finally, the function and impact of this confessional document on the developments in the Polish Reformed Churches after 1562 will be discussed.

<p>Confessio de sancta Trinitate, contra eos, qui Ecclesias minoris Poloniae, Arianismi et pluralitatis Deorum accusant in eadem synodo [Pincoviensis] edita, 22. August. M.D.LXXII [sic, corrected into: M.D.LXIII].</p> <p>Quemadmodum semper ab initio, in Ecclesiis nostris Symbolum Apostolorum amplexi sumus, illudque pro fundamento doctrinae fidei retinuimus: ita in eiusdem puritate et integritate nos semper per mansuros profitemur. Interea vero cum falso traducitur a quibusdam, ne suspicio bonis piisque viris ulla de nobis haereat; fatemur, nos semper amplexos esse, et nunc amplecti symbolum quoque Nicenum, contra Arianos editum; cuius verba sunt:</p>	<p>Confession concerning the holy Trinity, against those who accuse the churches of Lesser Poland of Arianism and polytheism; issued by the same synod [of Pinczow], August 22, 1562.</p> <p>Since we have, from the beginning, always accepted the Apostle's Creed in our churches, and maintained it as the foundation of the doctrine of the faith, we now profess to keep to its purity and integrity forever. In the meantime, however, as we are falsely portrayed by some, in order to remove the stain of suspicion by good and pious persons, we state that we have always embraced and do now embrace also the Nicene Creed that was issued against the Arians. Its words are as follows:¹⁶</p>
<p>Credimus in unum DEUM Patrem omnipotentem, visibilibus omnium, et invisibilibus factorem.</p> <p>Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum, Filium Dei genitum ex patre, unigenitum, hoc est ex Patris essentia, lumen ex lumine, Deum verum ex Deo vero, genitum non factum, coessentialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt, et quae in coelo, et quae in terra: qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis, incarnatus est, homo factus est: resurrexit tertia die, ascendit ad caelos, venturus ad iudicandum vivos et mortuos.</p> <p>Et in Spiritum S. [...]</p>	<p>We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of all that is, seen and unseen.</p> <p>And we believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father, that is, of the Being of the Father: God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made, both in heaven and on earth.</p> <p>For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate and became truly human.</p>

Kejtutis Daugirdas (eds.), *Antitrinitarische Streitigkeiten. Die tritheistische Phase (1560–1568)*, Mainz 2013, 210–211.

¹⁶ Translation of the Nicene Creed adopted from the English Language Liturgical Consultation, uri: <http://englishtexts.org/ELLC-Documents/Survey-of-Use> (accessed 25 February 2019), and adapted according to variations in the Latin text.

	<p>On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and He will come again to judge the living and the dead.</p> <p>We believe in the Holy Spirit [...]</p>
<p>Eos vero qui dicunt, Erat aliquando tempus, quando non erat, et antequam gigneretur, non erat, et quod ex non existentibus factus sit, aut ex alia subsistentia esse, vel veribilem, aut alterabilem Filium Dei dicunt, anathemate cum Catholica et Apostolica Ecclesia condemnamus.</p>	<p>Those, however, who state: "There was some time when He was not; and before He was begotten, He was not; and that He was made from non-existent things, or that He is from an other subsistence and thus can change and be altered as Son of God," we condemn with 'anathema' together with the Catholic and Apostolic Church.</p>
<p>Ne quid vero etiam ultra aliquis desideret, quamquam in his duobus Symbolis satis est ad Arianismum cum suis appendicibus retulandum et convincendum: tamen nec symbolum quod dicitur Athanasii relictum, quo unitas naturae divinae in Patre, Filio, et Spiritu S. contra Arium demonstratur, modo ne quis illo, Apostolici symboli puritatem et veritatem inconcusam, inficere tentet, quales Sabellianos nunc novimus: tum iuxta mentem ipsius Athanasii, praecipue in expositione fidei, quae continetur in epistola ad Epictetum, interpretatio eius constet.</p>	<p>In case someone would require something more from us, although in these two Creeds sufficient material is present to refute and convict Arianism and its adjuncts, still we do not reject the Creed that is called 'of Athanasius', in which the unity of the divine nature in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is demonstrated against Arius. Lest someone should attempt to compromise the purity and the indisputable truth of the Apostle's Creed by this as we now see the Sabellians doing. And provided the Symbol of Athanasius is interpreted in accordance with the spirit of Athanasius himself, especially in his exposition of the faith in his letter to Epictetus.</p>

Although the text is very brief, it still provides interesting indications for considering the process of composition of confessions in the context of 16th century Reformed Protestantism. First, there is the actual situation that occasioned the Reformed Churches to express their doctrinal position. The accompanying letter by which the Pinczow Synod's *Confessio* is sent to Zanchi and his colleagues contains a brief narrative of this situation.

The Church leaders write that in recent years the Churches in Poland had been shaken by the teachings of Francesco Stancaro,¹⁷ who in their

¹⁷ Francesco Stancaro (1501–1574), born in Mantua in Italy, ordained as a Catholic priest, but converted to the Reformation in 1540. He taught Greek and Hebrew in Padua, Regensburg, and Cracow. Stancaro was instrumental in promoting the Re-

opinion resuscitated the heresies of Sabellius concerning the Trinity, and of Nestorius regarding the notion of Christ as Mediator. In both directions, the accusations are heavy: Stancaro charged the Polish Reformed of Arianism and of tritheism. The Synod retorted by pointing out that Stancaro himself does not acknowledge the distinction of three 'Persons' in God. In all places of Scripture where the name 'God' occurs, Stancaro interpreted this as the complete, undivided Trinity; while in the classic Christian exegesis the reference to 'God' could also be specified as 'God the Father'. In Stancaro's view the terms 'Father, Son, holy Spirit' were merely three 'names' for the one and only God. From this position, the Pinczow Synod drew the conclusion that Stancaro honors Christ as the Son of God merely by words, while in effect he placed Christ wholly outside the Trinity.

An element that comes to the fore especially in the Polish context, is the relation of the Christian faith in the Triune God to the other religions. In the sixteenth century, Poland had a significant number of Jewish and Muslim inhabitants. The Reformed leaders emphasized that the one God is the Father, and that the Son is true God from true God. By the Son, we have access to the Father. God does not exist without the Son. The Church leaders point out that precisely on this question, the Christian faith differs from Turks and Jews.¹⁸ In a following passage, they call Sabellius, the god-father of the Modalist understanding of the Trinity, the "murderer of the Son of God" (*homicidam Filii Dei*) because he denies the true divinity of the Son. These formulations express a high level of sensitivity towards other religions, in particular when it comes to the question whether God subsists in the unity of Father, Son, and Spirit. For the Reformed Churches

formation in Poland. In 1551, he inaugurated as a professor at Königsberg, where he became involved in the controversies around Andreas Osiander. Stancaro combated Osiander's view of justification as based on the 'infusion' of the essential righteousness of Christ in the believers. At the same time, Stancaro developed a critical stance toward the doctrine of the Trinity as defended by – among others – Andreas Musculus, Heinrich Bullinger, and Petrus Martyr Vermigli (see his *De trinitate et Mediatore Domino Iesu Christo* from 1562). On the controversy elicited among the Polish Reformed by Stancaro's statements on the mediatorship of Christ, see, e.g. Mark Taplin, *The Italian Reformers and the Zurich Church, c. 1540–1620*, Burlington 2003, 171–181.

¹⁸ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8, 35: "Nobis vero, ut semper confiteundus est unus Deus, qui est Pater [...] ita quoque Filius Dei verus Deus de Deo genitus [...], sine quo accessus ad Deum nullus est, atque ita nec verus Deus sine illo est, qualem Turcae & Iudaei sibi imaginantur. Hoc vero solo nos Christiani a caeteris, tum Iudaeis, tum Gentibus differimus."

in Poland, the doctrine of the Trinity is not an abstract theory, but it functions in the everyday situation of a multi-religious society.

In addition to the actual focus of the *Confessio* in the situation of the Polish churches, the abiding significance of the classic tradition of the Church is manifested. This holds in particular for the Apostles' Creed. The Reformed Churches of Poland are committed to the age-old faith of the "apostolic and catholic church." They are eager to prevent the contamination of the pure and pristine truth by the admixture of contemporary statements.

On this point a fundamental question of creedal formulation arises: do the concise and summary formulations of the Apostles' Creed suffice to refute the controversial opinions of Stancaro and others? The Polish churches are reluctant to move a step beyond the foundational Creed of the Apostles and to accept the confessions of Nicea and of Athanasius as further explanations. This raises the question of how these creedal documents relate to each other. In comparison to the Apostles' Creed, the *Nicaenum* and the *Athanasianum* contain a clear expansion in their description of the relation between the Father and the Son and, taken more broadly, the relation between the One and the Three in God. Should this expansion be understood as a substantial addition, necessitated by the theological debates of the fourth and fifth centuries? Or is it a mere explication of what is already implicitly confessed in the Symbol of the Apostles? From a hermeneutical perspective, the former interpretation seems most plausible. It is quite understandable that in different times and contexts different questions arise, and we can expect that in answering these questions the Church makes progress in understanding and expressing the contents of faith. The Pinczow *Confessio* seems to opt for the more restricted approach: the Apostles' Creed is the unshakable foundation of the faith, and the elaboration in *Nicaenum* and *Athanasianum* is no more than interpretation and explication, it gives no new doctrinal substance. Apparently, the Synod was concerned about the risk of undermining the authority of the oldest Christian confession by cumulating later statements. This would weaken the confessional status of the Church itself. In this line, the *Confessio* is little more than a resumption of the Early Christian Creed in response to an actual debate in which the Polish Reformed Church was engaged.

When we take a closer look at the text quoted from the Nicene Creed, a number of deviations from the present-day standard text can be noticed. The quotation has a clear focus on the relationship of the Father and the Son. As a consequence, the 'historical' narrative of the birth and passion

and death of Christ is omitted. Also the third part on the Holy Spirit is not quoted in full. Concerning the article on the Father, the quotation calls Him the Maker "of all things visible and invisible", but not the Creator "of heaven and earth". The introductory words for the part on Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, differ slightly from the most current versions. Instead of the Latin preposition *de* ("God of God, Light of Light, [...]"), the other preposition *ex* is used ("God from God, [...]"). The text quoted by the Pinczow Synod employs the terms *essentia* and *coessentialis* instead of *substantia* and *consubstantialis*, when the unity of essence between Father and Son is indicated. Most of these variations can be explained by the fact that the Polish churches read the original text of the Nicene Council of 325 in the Latin translation by Hilary of Poitiers. In a few places a mixed form of the 325 version with the expanded formulations of the Council of Constantinople 381 is used. The occurrence of *essentia* instead of *substantia* has no clear explanation in the textual history of the *Nicaenum*.

For the Polish Reformed Churches the doctrinal controversy in which they are involved has an international and ecumenical interest beyond their own boundaries. For that reason, they seek advice and support with their partner churches in Western Europe. Through the exchange of students between Poland and – among other places – Strasbourg, good contacts had been established with the ecclesiastical and academic leadership in this Reformation city.

The letter sent by Zanchi – in name of all ministers and professors of the Strasbourg church and school – is remarkably brief. He reports that no objection can be found in the Pinczow Synod's *Confessio*. Due to a lack of time, Zanchi says he cannot review the relevant passages from church fathers and scholastic theologians. The letter expresses sorrow and sadness about the fact that the churches of Poland are struck by this doctrinal fight. The brothers in Poland are admonished to view this situation as a divine trial which urges them to prayer for peace and unity.¹⁹

In a next letter to Christophorus Thretius,²⁰ one of the leaders of the Polish Reformed, Zanchi addresses the discussion more substantially. He

¹⁹ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8, 36.

²⁰ Christophorus Thretius, or Krzysztof Trety, was an important theologian and pedagogue. He was the rector of the Calvinist Academy at Pinczow, and later of the Jagiellonian University of Cracow. Since his student time, Thretius made frequent journeys to Western European cities, including Geneva, Zurich, Heidelberg, Wittenberg, Paris, and Strasbourg. Interestingly, Thretius published Jean Sturm's *De universa ratione elocutionis rhetoricae* in 1575. This is probably the fruit of his attending the master's lectures in Strasbourg earlier in his scholarly career. See for

expresses his regret about the Polish church being so plagued in a matter that has been, in Zanchi's words, so completely certain and accepted from the beginning, namely "that there is only one God, distinct in three 'hypostases' or persons, but not divided."²¹ When the Gospel narrates the baptism of Christ, for example, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are clearly presented as distinct 'persons'. The unity of God in three Persons should not be interpreted in analogy to the common human 'nature' shared by different human individuals; for these individuals are not 'one man', but God is 'one God', distinct in three Persons. Zanchi refutes the opinion of Stancaro, that in Scripture only the Father is called 'God'. He also denies that the classic Reformed position implies that there are in fact four gods: one essence *plus* three persons. That would only apply if the divine essence were, in a Platonizing manner, viewed apart from the Persons. But this is exactly what the Christian doctrine of the Trinity prohibits. The one essence of God is in the three Persons in such a way that these Persons subsist together at the same time in the one and complete divine essence.²²

In a very concise way, Zanchi gives in this letter a clarification and a demarcation of the crucial concepts of the doctrine of the Trinity of God. The explanation in terms of 'essence' and 'persons' can – perhaps – be understood as a tacit correction of the position taken in the *Confessio* of the Pinczow Synod of 1562. In reaction to the doctrinal assaults by Stancaro and his followers, the Synod retreated to the traditional formulas of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, while refusing to attach any substantial clarification to these classic documents. Indeed, it is worthwhile

an account of the frequent visits of Thretius to Switzerland, France, and Germany: A. Gleysztor, H. C. Peyer, S. Stelling-Michaud et. al., *Échanges entre la Pologne et la Suisse du XVIe et XIXe siècles: choses-hommes-idees*, Geneva 1964, 86–96, with the older literature mentioned there. According to Williams, *Radical Reformation*, 1042–1046, the Synod was dominated by the antagonism between Stanislas Samicki and Gregorius Paulus.

²¹ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8,37: "Nihil in ipsa Ecclesia, iam inde ab initio in hoc usque tempus, certius, antiquius, receptius [...], quam unum tantum esse Deum, in tres hypostases seu personas distinctum, sed non divisum."

²² Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8,37: "Quod dicunt, nos facere quatuor DEOS, unum ipsum divinam essentiam, alios tres, ipsas tres personas, calumnia est, vel ex militia, vel ex ignorantia saltem profecta. Quasi vero essentiam divinam statuamus more Platónico separatam a personis. Ecclesia sensit, et sentit, sicut natura et essentia humana non subsistit per se extra homines, sed tota in ipsis est hominibus: ita essentiam divinam non esse rem per se extra personas subsistentem [...] sed ita esse totam in personis, ut ipsae tres personae subsistentes simul in tota ipsa divina essentia."

in theological controversies to return from the intricacies of the debate to the succinct phrases of the official creedal statements. Still, these basic formulas of doctrine ask for further reflection, and often prove to be a fertile starting point for theological discussion.

Did the *Confessio* of Pinczow 1562, together with the theological support given by Zanchi (and a number of other theologians) make any difference in the struggle within the Polish Reformed Churches concerning the doctrine of the Trinity? At the very least, we must conclude that no agreement was reached in this controversy. To the contrary, in the following years 1563 – 1565, the breach between the two groups led to a definitive separation and the establishment of two churches: on the one hand, the *Ecclesia reformata maior* as a continuation of the 'Calvinist' community, which adopted in 1566 a translation of the Second Helvetic Confession, and maintained the classic dogma of the Trinity; on the other hand, the *Ecclesia reformata minor*, as the assembly of those who rejected the Trinitarian dogma.²³ The latter church eventually was known as the 'Socinian' church, with the Racovian Catechism of 1605 as its confessional standard. In retrospect, the differences between Trinitarians and anti-Trinitarians were so profound, and reflected such fundamental shifts in world view, that they could not be pacified by doctrinal formulas designed for reaching consensus.²⁴ In the final analysis, despite the efforts of church leaders and theologians to clarify the discussion and find common ground, there was in these fundamental issues no longer a common faith that could serve as the basis for ecclesiastical unity.

²³ Cf. Williams, *Radical Reformation*, 1082–1087.

²⁴ A survey of the lives of the founding fathers, Lelio and Fausto Socinus, and of the main doctrines of Socinianism is given by Magda Martini, *Fausto Socino et la Pensée Socinienne: Un maître de la pensée religieuse (1539–1604)*, Paris 1967. An assessment of the relation between Socinianism and Enlightenment is provided by Zbigniew Ogonowski, "Der Sozialismus und die Aufklärung", in Paul Wrzeciecko (ed.), *Reformation und Frühaufklärung in Polen: Studien über den Sozialismus und seinen Einfluss auf das westeuropäische Denken im 17. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1977, 78–156. See also Martin Mulsow, Jan Rohls (eds.), *Socinianism and Arminianism: Antitrinitarians, Calvinists and Cultural Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Leiden 2005.

The Consensus of 1570

The second document that occurs in the correspondence between Girolamo Zanchi and the Polish churches is the Consensus of Sandomierz (*Consensus Sandomiriensis*) of 1570. Without mentioning this specific title, Zanchi interacts with this consensus in a letter from June 11, 1570. It was brought to Zanchi's attention by Christophorus Thretius, one of the leading persons within the Polish Reformed churches. A joint synod of Lutherans, Reformed, and Bohemian Brethren had issued this statement in April 1570. These three groups had been forced to stating a common declaration of their faith, since the Roman Catholics had launched a campaign of Counter-Reformation under the powerful and able lead of Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius (1504–1579).²⁵ In these circumstances, the fragile religious freedom and tolerance that Poland had seen thus far came under pressure; only by closing their ranks, the three groups of Protestant Christians could appeal to a certain amount of protection by the government. The synod in which the Lutherans, Reformed, and Bohemians convened did not include the Anabaptists, nor the anti-Trinitarians who had split off from the Polish Reformed church during the 1560s.²⁶

The *Consensus Sandomiriensis* consists of three parts.²⁷ The first element is a formal and mutual recognition by the three participant churches of their respective confessions. On the Reformed side, this is the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, for the Lutherans it is the Augsburg Confession of 1530, and the Bohemian or Waldensian brethren had their own confessional statement. This aspect of mutual recognition by the parties of the Consensus of Sandomierz is often understood as the expression of an

²⁵ Stanislaus Hosius (1504–1579), Polish theologian, diplomat, preacher, and strong defender of the Catholic Church against Protestant rulers. He was prince-bishop of Warmia, promoted to cardinal in 1561, and participated in the final sessions of the Council of Trent. His most popular work is the *Confessio catholicae fidei christiana* (1552/53).

²⁶ The history of the tripartite synod of Sandomierz is sketched by Oskar Bartel, "Der Consensus Sandomiriensis vom Jahre 1570 im Lichte der ökumenischen Bestrebungen in Polen und Litauen im 16., 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", *Lutherjahrbuch* 40 (1973), 107–128, and by Janusz Mattek, Sandomierz, Consensus von, in: TRE 30, 1999, 29–32.

²⁷ Apart from a number of Polish editions, the text of the *Consensus* is available in Heiner Faulenbach et. al. (eds.) (commissioned by the Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands), *Reformierte Bekenntnisschriften*, vol. 3/1, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2012, 1–20. The introduction by H. P. Jürgens and K. Daugirdas contains and extensive bibliography. The (brief) Latin text of the *Consensus* is found on pages 17–20.

ecumenical spirit, but at the same time it implies that the distinct character of each church with its own confession is being preserved.²⁸ Some of those involved in the negotiations at the synod strove for a fully united church after the model of the Church of England, but they could not push through. Also an attempt to write one common confession failed: a draft version that was at the synod's table was acceptable only for the Reformed. This background information makes it clear that the consensus that could be reached is limited in scope.

The second step taken by the Consensus is to subscribe to the Trinitarian dogma of the Early Church. This is quite understandable in view of the heavy debates of the previous decades. The attacks on the doctrine of the Trinity by Stancaró, Biandrata and others had led to the painful break in the Reformed churches of Poland in the years 1563 to 1565. The introduction to the Consensus of Sandomierz refers to these conflicts, and when the three groups of churches now express their common faith, their agreement with the Trinitarian dogma is stated emphatically.²⁹ In the years following the Consensus of 1570, this issue remained urgent: the arrival of the Italian freethinker Fausto Sozzini in 1579 gave a strong new impetus to the Unitarian church in Poland. Even into the late 17th century the Socinian movement, also known as the 'Polish brethren' exerted strong influence throughout the Protestant lands of Europe. The anti-Trinitarian and rationalist theology of the Socinians was viewed by leading authors of scholastic Reformed theology as the greatest threat to the true Christian faith. For this reason, and in relation to the Roman Catholic majority which was supported by the Catholic Polish king Sigismund II Augustus (1548–1572), it was of utmost importance for these Protestants to keep distance from the freethinkers who rejected the Trinitarian Creed.

The third and most substantial part of the Consensus is its exposition of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper (or Eucharist), which attempts to

²⁸ Faulenbach, *Bekennnisschriften* 3/1, 17: "[...] visum est iisdem ecclesiis Polonicis reformatis et orthodoxis, quae in quibusdam capitibus et formulis doctrinae hostibus veritatis et evangelii minime consentire videbantur, pacis et concordiae studio synodum convocare ac consensionem mutuum testari."

²⁹ Faulenbach, *Bekennnisschriften* 3/1, 17–18. Stated from a Reformed perspective, the Consensus acknowledges of the Lutherans with the Augsburg Confession: "numquam credidimus eos [...] aliter quam pie et orthodoxe sensisse de Deo et Sacra Trinitate atque incarnatione Filii Dei et iustificatione aliisque praecipuis capitibus fidei nostrae." On the Waldensians, it says: "[eorum] confessione de Deo et Sacra Triade, incarnatione Filii Dei, iustificatione at aliis primariis capitibus fidei Christianae nihil agnoscere, quod sit absolum ab orthodoxa veritate et verbo Dei puro."

bridge the differences between the Lutheran and the Calvinist positions.³⁰ In order to achieve this reconciliation, the Consensus appeals to formulations of the Church Father Irenaeus, who had distinguished between the 'earthly' (*terrena*) and the 'heavenly' (*coelestis*) dimension of the sacrament. The further formulations make it clear the the Consensus was conceived from a Reformed, 'Calvinist' perspective, and that from this framework of thought it searched maximally for the points of connection with the Lutheran views. The Consensus emphasizes that the elements of bread and wine should not be seen as 'bare and empty signs' (*elementa signave illa nuda et vacua*), but that they present to the faith of the recipients at once the matter itself (the body and blood of Christ) to which they refer. Also the far-reaching term 'substantial' (*substantialtem*) is employed to indicate the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper: the sacrament does not only signify or refer to Christ's body and blood, but it is a true and real representation, distribution, and exhibition of Christ (*repraesentari, distribui, et exhiberi*). In order to do justice to the various ways of expression of the Lutheran and the Reformed sides, the Consensus refers to, on the one hand, the Second Helvetic Confession, and, on the other hand, to the *Confessio Saxonica* that had been drafted by Philip Melancthon in 1551. On the basis of the substantial formulations from these two confessions, it seeks common understanding in the core doctrine of the Lord's Supper, while leaving aside as secondary the different 'rituals' and practical performance of the sacrament.

In his letter of June 1570, Girolamo Zanchi focused on the third part of the Consensus in particular.³¹ In response, he gave a brief systematic-theological exposition of his views on the Lord's Supper. First, the three levels in the sacrament are addressed: the first level is that of the symbols of bread and wine with the formulas uttered together with these symbols; together the symbols and the words constitute the external side of the sacrament; next, Zanchi points to the body and the blood of Christ, as the spiritual and heavenly realities to which the symbols refer, and which are perceived in faith through the Holy Spirit; as the third level, Zanchi indicates the new covenant (*foedus novum*) that is established by the body and blood of Christ.³²

³⁰ Faulenbach, *Bekennnisschriften* 3/1, 18–19.

³¹ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8, 41–42.

³² Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8,41: "Scimus (ut de Coena aliquid dicam) in Coena tria esse, et unum propter aliud nobis exhiberi: symbola cum verbo, res externas, et sensu perceptibiles: corpus et sanguinem Christi, res spirituales atque coelestes;

According to Zanchi, there is no point in combating each other on the level of the outward symbols, for example over the question whether the bread of the Eucharist should be leavened or unleavened. When, secondly, speaking about the body and blood of Christ, Zanchi puts emphasis on the fact that it is the body of Christ as broken and entering into death for us, and the blood of Christ as poured out for the satisfaction of our sins. Only in this connection, and not viewed apart, are the body and blood of Christ offered to us in the Lord's Supper. Because of this broken body and the poured blood we are reconciled to the Father and accepted into an eternal covenant, in unity with the true body of Christ.³³

In these statements by Zanchi, we see in a nutshell the Reformed position on the spiritual presence of Christ in bread and wine, as distinct from the Lutheran interpretation which focuses on the possibility of a bodily presence of Christ in his state of exaltation. At the same time, Zanchi made a movement toward the Lutherans by acknowledging that bread and wine are no mere symbols, but that they truly make the believer partake in the reconciliation offered by the body and blood of Christ.

The urgent question, of course, is to what extent the profound difference between Lutherans and Reformed concerning the Lord's Supper can be overcome by these formulations of the Consensus of Sandomierz. In what Girolamo Zanchi writes in his letter, his own experiences resonate from the conflict with the Lutheran preacher Johannes Marbach in Strasbourg. In the final instance, after backbreaking battles over the doctrine of predestination, Zanchi was then forced to sign a formula that was conceived from the Lutheran point of view. Still, he saw room for interpreting this formula in maximal agreement with Holy Scripture, and thus he could sign the formula with good conscience.³⁴ A similar approach is manifest in his advice

ac proinde spiritu etiam, et coelesti fide percipiendas: denique foedus novum, carne et sanguine Christi confirmatum."³³

³³ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8, 42: "invisibilem carnem et sanguinem Christi, non simpliciter, sed quatenus et illa pro bonis fracta et mortua est: et iste in remissionem peccatorum nostrorum effusus, precipiamus, edamus, bibamus ... ut Novi foederis vinculo magis ac magis cum Deo et inter nos constringamur: atque ita in dilectione Dei et proximi coalescamus [...] eoque nos esse Patri per Christum reconciliatos, et aeterno foedere ei copulatos [...] et ut ita loquar realiter, eidem corpori Christi in coelo iam viventis, et inde nos hic in terra vivificantis, vi sui spiritus, unimur."

³⁴ On the turbulent time Zanchi experienced in Strasbourg, see Burchill, Girolamo Zanchi, and James Kittelson, "Marbach vs. Zanchi: the Resolution of Controversy in Later Reformation Strasbourg", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 7 (1977), 31–44. After a lengthy conflict concerning the doctrines of the Lord Supper and election, Zanchi conceded to sign a formula drafted by a dominantly Lutheran committee

to Christopher Thretius concerning the Consensus of Sandomierz. According to Zanchi, this form of teaching (*doctrinae forma*) can serve to unite people in concord with the Scriptures, and to build the unity of the churches. The Polish Reformed churches have done well to accept this Consensus. At the same time, Zanchi is aware of the limited significance of the teaching of the Consensus: it gives no satisfying answers to all questions concerning the Lord's Supper. For this moment, it is wise to acquiesce in this limited agreement, for the well-being and the proliferation of the churches in Poland. When, however, on a later moment the necessity of a more profiled statement occurs, the Lord will give directions.³⁵

This final remark by Zanchi witnesses a sort of realism that could even be labeled pragmatic. Obviously, in certain circumstances the function of a confessional document is little more than securing a political basis for the survival of the church. It was this situation, with all the external pressure and threat, that necessitated the Lutheran, Reformed, and Bohemian churches of Poland to join forces. This actual context qualifies the potential scope of a confessional document. The *Consensus Sandomirensis* strongly bears the traces of the political situation in Poland. Still, it is remarkable that Zanchi can with good and generous conscience endorse the contents of this consensus formula. At the same time, the importance of the formula as such is relativized. What matters is, first, the space created by the Consensus for a biblical explanation and understanding of its statements on the Lord's Supper, and, second, the positive interpretation that can be given from a Reformed perspective of statements that are the result of negotiations and compromise.

During a few decades, the *Consensus Sandomirensis* did fulfill the function for which it was devised. The so-called Confederation of Warsaw of 1573 legislated the status quo that had existed for a long time in Poland: next to the Roman Catholic Church with its dominant position, the 'dissenters' (apart from the Protestant groups also the Greek Orthodox church and the Armenian church were covered by this label) enjoyed common

with this restriction: "Hanc doctrinae formulam ut plam agnosco, ita eam recipio." (I accept this statement of doctrine in so far as I acknowledge it to be pious). Soon after giving in to the Lutheran pressure, Zanchi left the city of Strasbourg. In the light of this, it is remarkable that the *Consensus Sandomirensis* employs a similar formula with regard to Melancthon's *Confessio Saxonica*: "quem etiam ut plium agnoscimus et recipimus" (Faulenbach, *Bekenntrisschriften* 3/1, 19).

³⁵ Zanchi, *Opera omnia* 8, 42: "Acquiescendum esse in ista facta compositione, nihilque praeterea pro hoc tempore tentandum; si qua vero urserit necessitas, Dominus vos in Spiritu Sancto congregatos, quid factu opus fuerit, condocefaciet."

civil rights and religious freedom. The Consensus of 1570 formed the substantial condition and prerequisite for the Protestant churches to lay claim to the Confederation of 1573. Later Polish kings such as Sigismund III Wasa and John II Casimir took steps to decrease the room for their Protestant citizens, in favor of the Roman Catholic majority of the population. The anti-Trinitarian, Socinian church in particular fell victim to this policy of repression: considered as 'Arians', they were in fact excluded from the definition of 'Christians'. The other Protestant churches managed to maintain themselves as a tolerated minority.³⁶

Epilogue

In this paper, two documents gave us an impression of a turbulent episode from the history of the Reformed churches in Poland. The struggle over the confession of God as the Triune made a heavy impact on the life of the churches in the 16th century. During the centuries after these debates, the resistance against the Trinitarian dogma has even gained momentum and propagation. Over the large distance in time, we can discover how vital it is for the Church to maintain its confession of God's Trinity. This applied to the Polish churches when they held on to the Creeds of the Early Church, and when they gave testimony of the one and unique God of Israel who is the Father of Jesus Christ, in a context where other religions such as Judaism and Islam were just around the corner. We can sound the same witness in a 21st century context that differs in many respects from 16th century Europe, now that we again face religions and worldviews that display a fundamentally different conception of God and of his involvement in our world. Confessing God as Triune is not a theoretical abstraction, but it speaks of God who is in all respects the source and fountain of goodness and salvation for lost humans. Despite all its limitations and defects, we can be thankful that the Confession of the Pinczow Synod of 1562 kept to this core article of the Christian faith, against the challenges of alternative modes of thought that became *en vogue* in the pre-Enlightenment era.

On a slightly different level, the interconfessional conflict concerning the Lord's Supper also touches the heart of the Christian faith: in what way do the reconciliation and the renewed life through the death of Christ

affect our lives? To be sure, the Consensus of Sandomierz contributes a limited answer to considering this question. The objective of forming a Protestant alliance against the supremacy of the Roman Catholic church accounts for the somewhat pragmatic and formalistic character of this document. It is impossible to bridge the gap between the Lutheran and Calvinist interpretations of the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharistic bread and wine by a few negotiated sentences. Still, the Consensus of 1570 gives an unambiguous statement of the fully Spiritual reality of this presence of Christ, which makes the earthly signs into the vehicles of the heavenly salvation. Threatened communities in Poland and Lithuania in the 16th century succeeded to find each other in an brief expression of their common faith. Perhaps this fact itself is an unexpected fruit of the fellowship experienced in the Lord's Supper. The reconciliation that is received in the Eucharist is the deepest root of Christian consensus and communion.

³⁶ Cf. Knoll, *Religious Toleration*.

“That old village over there”

Confrontation in Israel. The story of al-Sumayriyya in Western Galilee

Gert van Klínken

The central theme of this volume is referred to as groups in conflict. In this contribution I propose to look at this subject from the angle of loss and dislocation. The case study is Al-Sumayriyya, a depopulated village in the North of the State of Israel. In 1948, more than half of the residents of Western Galilee landed as refugees in camps in Lebanon. Most of these camps were less than fifty kilometers away from their former places of residence. Runa Mackay, a doctor in the Edinburgh Medical Mission Hospital in Nazareth, also served in these Lebanese refugee camps:

The Palestinians arrived in a massive influx in 1948. Some were bourgeoisie and intellectual elite of Haifa who settled in Beirut. They were able to buy citizenship and were easily assimilated into the upper strata of Lebanese society. The majority, however, arrived empty-handed believing they would soon be returning home. This did not happen. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was formed in 1949. Seventeen camps were set up near Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon and Tyre for the refugees, who became a pool of unskilled labour as well as a source of resentment to their hosts. Starting in 1950 the Lebanese government controlled the camps very strictly with their Deuxième Bureau.¹

Israelis were of the opinion that these refugee communities were artificially maintained by Arab authorities, with the intention of putting political pressure on Israel. If, so the theory ran, Lebanon had absorbed the Arab refugees in the same manner in which Israel had taken in the victims of the Holocaust, the problem would have ceased to exist. Al-Sumayriyya

¹ Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel. A personal journey with the Palestinians*, Glasgow 1995, 46–50.

was one of the Israeli villages from which Palestinian citizens had been removed and relocated to Lebanon.

Remembering a vanished group

As long as any responsibility for their plight was denied, the refugees could expect little attention from Israel or even from the West:

For a brief while in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the plight of Palestinian-Arab refugees temporarily lost its newsworthiness as the press abroad turned its attention to stories of the Jewish state's herculean job of absorbing its own refugees.²

As for the refugees themselves, they found it hard – or even shaming – to share their experience of loss and humiliation with others; even with their own children. Edward Said, born in a Protestant Arab family in Jerusalem, testifies:

What overcomes me now is the scale of dislocation our family and friends experienced and of which I was a scarcely conscious, essentially unknowing witness in 1948. As a boy of twelve and a half in Cairo, I often saw the sadness and destitution in the faces and lives of people I had formerly known as ordinary middle-class people in Palestine, but I couldn't really comprehend the tragedy that had befallen them nor could I pierce together all the different narrative fragments to understand what had really happened.³

Their exodus was perceived as final, never to be made undone. The Dutch Friends of Israel-foundation, in which the Mennonite pastor Frits Kuiper was a leading figure, phrased the conclusion in the following words:

A third of Jewish population in Israel dwells on former Arab land. Large-scale repatriating of Arab refugees into Israel would harm the very foundations of the Jewish State.⁴

² Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian attitudes towards the State of Israel*, Montreal 2001, 11.

³ Edward W. Said, *Out of place. A memoir*, London 1999, 114.

⁴ M. Wijnhoven, *Het feit Israël* (The Fact Israel), Amsterdam 1958, 112.

After the Holocaust, Christianity had no other option but to take the side of the Jews. Rev. Maas Boertien, posted in Israel in 1960 as a representative of the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, found it impossible to cooperate with the Near East Council of Churches (NECC), based in Beirut. Apart from the difficulties of crossing the border between Israel and Lebanon, the rhetoric against Judaism that was so common in the NECC could simply not be tolerated by anyone who had witnessed the destruction of the Jewish communities in Europe.⁵ Reconciliation between Church and Israel was a top priority for Kuiper and Boertien. All other issues would have to wait. Boertien:

In my opinion, the best friendship one can offer the Arab, is an insistence on the international legitimacy and the lawful claims of the State of Israel on its territory. This is the only way to bring some sense of reality to the Arabs. This attitude is founded in solidarity that connects me to Israel. One might argue that I'm predisposed. I am aware of that.

To be sure, it has come to my notice that wrongs have been committed. However, Israel is truly committed to put things right, as far as is possible. And we should never forget that Arabs have opposed Zionism from its very start, monitored by Western countries. Arabs have attacked Jewish settlements. Arabs have tried to push the young State of Israel into the sea. Those Arabs who kept clear from those atrocities and remained in the State of Israel, are a thousand times better off than their brethren in Arab lands.⁶

In 1960, Boertien was of the opinion that Arab refugees had paid the price for opposing the Jewish State. His opinion was hardly exceptional in this era. The Council for Church and Israel of the Dutch Reformed Church participated in the Scottish Hospital in Tiberias. In 1959 the Council had suggested to sack any remaining Arab workers in the hospital grounds, and to replace them with either European Christians or Jews.⁷ According to a Dutch tourist guide, Arabs did not belong to the Holy Land. "While the Jews began to reclaim their ancestral lands, they found Arab tribes, that had forced their way in."⁸

⁵ "M. Boertien to consistory Christian Reformed Church (CRC) Groningen and to Israel Evangelisation Board CRC", in: Utrecht Archive (HUA) CRC Archive, inv.nr. 104.

⁶ M. Boertien, "Report December 1960 – June 1961", in: HUA CRC Archive, inv.nr. 104.

⁷ Tiberias Joint Committee, Baarn 9 June 1959, in: HUA Archive of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN), (Church and Israel), inv.nr. 353.

Jan Leunis Koole, professor of the Old Testament in Kampen, held a minority view on this issue.⁹ He managed to visit Israel per car, via Lebanon and Jordan (1963). In Israel, Koole had a conversation with Johan Pilon, one of the initiators of the Protestant kibbutz Nes Ammim in Galilee. Koole asked Pilon why Arabs, even Christian Arabs, were absent from Nes Ammim. Pilon agreed that their absence was regrettable. However, he had the following views:

Yes, it would be great to develop Nes Ammim together with both of the parties. We have discussed this over and again with the Rev. Rafiq Farah in Haifa. However, even realising this project as it stands now is so difficult (and sometimes seemingly impossible), that the time is not ripe. We have to acknowledge the fact that, in present conditions, strong ties with the Christian Arab community and unrestricted affinity to Israel do not sit together well.¹⁰

Pilon made it clear to Koole that he could not avoid taking sides. Remembering the Holocaust, his choice was obvious: the choice to support the people and State of Israel. After the fate that had befallen the Jews of Europe, reconciliation was imperative for the Church, as well as the Christian continent. There was no unpleasantness in meeting Arab Israelis, such as the Farah family. But these relationships were not equivalent to those developed with the Jews. Pilon's friend Heinz Kremers, of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland, held a similar view. His son, Thomas Kremers, remembers:

For my father and Pilon, with their backgrounds in World War Two, the Arabs were simply not the main reason for their presence in Israel. They tried to do something for them, in Mazra'a, but it remained a matter of charity. Initially, it seems that my father really believed that the Arabs had left Palestine as a free decision, urged on by their muftis. He was distressed by the alternative story: that they had been driven from the land. But this came later.¹¹

⁸ Petrus Huigens, *Israël, land van de Bijbel land van de toekomst* (Israel, land of the Bible, land of the future), Baarn 1960, 151.

⁹ J.L. Koole, "This will confront you in Israel", *Gereformeerd Weekblad* (Reformed Weekly) 20 December 1963.

¹⁰ J.J. Pilon to J.J. Koole, Heemstede 24 January 1964, in: ANAN.

¹¹ Interview Thomas Kremers by author, Moers (Duisburg) 27 April 2014.

The French map of "la Palestine contemporaine", drawn by L. Cl. Fillion and H. Nicole, prefers to call Akko by its Crusader name St. Jean d'Acre. To the North lies "Semireh".²¹

The excellent care that was given to local agriculture was even noted in the 1912 edition of the Baedeker-travelguide: "La contrée est très bien cultivée."²² Twenty years later, Al-Summayriyya could boast 92 houses, a mosque and a school. At that moment, there were 392 inhabitants: 391 Muslims and a single Christian.²³ Kuwaykat had 163 dwellings, all of its 789 inhabitants being Muslims.²⁴ In 1935 the Jewish coastal resort Nahariya was founded by refugees from Germany. But apart from that, few things seemed to change in this part of the world. Local distances were reckoned from Beirut:

Km 126,1 (von Jerusalem km 196,2). Man passiert Wadi el-Medschune. Links liegt das Dorf El-Masra'a, bald darauf Es-Ssumejrie. Km 128,3 (von Jerusalem km 194), der Aquädukt von Akko.²⁵

Remains

Since the spring of 1948 only ruins remained of what formerly had been the villages of Al-Sumayriyya and Kuwaykat. The olive gardens of Kuwaykat had been taken over by Beit HaEmek. The Hungarian kibbutzniks carried the burden of terrible memories, most of their relatives having been murdered. In their view, Arabs belonged to the set of deadly enemies of the Jewish people. Should the original inhabitants try to return to their former homes, they would be resisted by all means. For Beit HaEmek, the presence of the Druze villages of Kafir Yasif and Abu Sinan was already terrifying enough. "There were several Arab and Druze villages whose inhabitants had remained in their homes throughout the war. For the new settlers, young and inexperienced, this was a threatening situation."²⁶ In

²¹ L. Cl. Fillion, H. Nicole, *Atlas Géographique de la Bible d'après des documents antiques et les meilleures sources Françaises, Anglaises et Allemandes contemporaines*, Lyon 1890, plate xii.

²² Karl Baedeker, *Palestine et Syrie. Manuel du voyageur*, Leipzig 1912, 266.

²³ E. Mills (ed.), *Census of Palestine 1931. Population of villages, towns and administrative areas*, Jerusalem 1932, 103.

²⁴ E. Mills, *Census of Palestine 1931*, 101.

²⁵ Jessias Press, *Neues Palästina-Handbuch. Führer durch Palästina*, Wien 1934, 493.

²⁶ Henry Near, *The Kibbutz Movement. A History*, vol. 2, Oxford 2007, 153.

the plain of Asher the Muslim village of Maz'ra had survived, at the cost of losing its fields to the kibbutzim. In Israeli history, the stories of these villages was lost, superseded by the heroic tale of land taking:

The commander of the Western Galilee was Moshe Carmeli, one of the secret leaders of Haganah. He had been arrested by the British in 1939 during a raid on a Haganah officers' school and had spent a year and a half in the prison at Acre. Carmeli decided to take the offensive in Western Galilee. There was a famous height just outside Acre which controlled the roads running north and south. It is called Napoleon's Hill because it is the point where Napoleon was defeated during his famous Egyptian campaign. Iraqi soldiers were stationed here. Palmach²⁷ units made a surprise attack on this position, with mortars and machine guns, taking the hill from the east. The Iraqi fled from both the hill and the camp. Now, armoured columns of Haganah with large supplies of food moved northward to Nahariya, clearing the roads before them. By noon of the next day, the whole road from Acre to the border of the Lebanon was cleared.²⁸

Contemporary sources regarding the expulsion of the Arab population are scarce.²⁹ The Guide Bleu of 1958 has nothing to say about Al-Summayriyya or Kuwaykat. All that is mentioned is a critical remark on the supposed mismanagement by "successives occupations étrangères" predating 1948. For the author of the Guide Bleu the Jewish people were the sole legitimate owners of the land.³⁰

The grounds of Al-Sumayriyya were taken over by a kibbutz in 1948. The founders, from Poland, had contemplated the name: Lohamei HaGettaot Samariah. The Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemet) preferred kibbutz Asher. In the end, the new name became Lohamei HaGettaot, "Fighters of the (Warzaw) Ghetto".³¹

²⁷ Elite forces of the Haganah, the army of the Jewish community in Palestine in 1948.

²⁸ Dorothy F. Zeligs, *The story of modern Israel for young people*, New York 1951, 317-318.

²⁹ Cf. Shavit, *Mijn beloofde land*, 128-138.

³⁰ Elian Finbert, *Israel (Les Guides Bleus)*, Paris 1955, 179.

³¹ Tom Segev, *The seventh million. The Israelis and the holocaust*, New York 1994, 451.

"That old village over there"

Nes Ammim was aware of the nearby presence of "unoccupied wasteland where once an Arab village was sited".³² The Settlement Department was given notice that the Christian kibbutz would like to use the site for the build-up of industry. The location was excellent: close to the highway between Haifa and the North.³³ The international board of the project contacted Israeli officials to discuss the matter:

You will remember that there was a portion of land of the demolished village on the main Haifa-Acco road, which we would like to acquire for some industrial buildings. Only a few days ago, I was able to discuss the matter with Mr. Weitz who is now heading a joint land administering office which was lately set up and under whose jurisdiction all the government-, state domain- and Karen Kayemet-land are administered. There is every reason to believe that the above area will be available in June.³⁴

The official designation was that of "an area of non-fertile land".³⁵ The locals would refer to "that old village over there".³⁶ In the end, Nes Ammim would drop the idea of purchasing the plot, for financial reasons.

Pragmatism

Tanja Ronen-Laron, born in 1950 and raised in Regba, does not remember any discussions regarding Al-Summayriyya when she was a girl. No one remembered the former toponyms of the area, and fields and meadows were given new names. People in Al-Mazra'a and Abu Sinan might have known the former toponyms. But contacts were few, especially when a sensitive subject like land ownership was concerned.³⁷ The villagers of Al-

³² "Technical report J. Bernath", Thyngen 1 May 1960, in: Archive Johan Pilon, Haarlem (AJP).

³³ "J.J. Pilon to J. Bernath", Heemstede 23 December 1960, in: AJP.

³⁴ "D. Ben-Dor to J.J. Pilon", Jerusalem 15 April 1961, in: AJP.

³⁵ "Nes Ammim. International Christian Settlement in Israel", in: Historical Documentation Centre Free University, Amsterdam (HDC VU), archive Nes Ammim Foundation (Holland), box 4.

³⁶ "S. Bezek to J.J. Pilon", Ayeleth Hashachar 21 January 1963, in: AJP.

³⁷ Interview Tanja Ronen-Laron by author, Regba 10 May 2013.

Sumariyya were completely inaccessible, hidden behind an unpassable border, beyond the view of the Israeli population. For those who had an opportunity to cross the border to Lebanon or Jordan, and to witness the reality of these camps, the sight came as a shock.³⁸ However, within the focus of daily life in Israel, Al-Sumayriyya did not connect to the life of former refugees. Neither did they raise concern. The ruins were simply there:

We used to view those ruins with an eye on archaeology, not as part of contemporary history. We were convinced that true Palestinian Arabs had never left. The locals, rooted in the ground. The refugees of 1948 were considered as recent migrants, attracted to Galilee by the success of the kibbutzim, and now returned to their native land.³⁹

Yusef Mubarki grew up in Al-Mazra'a. He is of the same opinion as Tanja Ronen-Laron: Al-Sumayriyya was hardly ever mentioned.⁴⁰ Gerrit Polet, of Nes Ammim, concurs:

We got on quite well with the Arabs. I assisted in the build-up of a technical school in Mazra'a. But, compared to the Jews, Arabs figured in the background, in our perception. I was hardly aware of the existence of Al-Sumayriyya. We were told that the Arabs had left by orders of their leaders, that the refugee problem had been caused by themselves.⁴¹

Perceptions of Arab history in Galilee

According to Johan Snoek, Reformed pastor in Tiberias, the subject was something like a blank spot:

I didn't know how to respond to a remark by our kitchen maid, that terrible things had happened to her village in 1948. A defensive mechanism, I suspect: my task was to contact the Jews.⁴²

³⁸ Interview Gerhard Wiggers by author, Barlo (Aalten) 4 December 2015.

³⁹ Interview Dirk Vermeulen by author, Etten-Leur 10 January 2018.

⁴⁰ Interview Yusef Mubarki by author, Nes Ammim 8 January 2011.

⁴¹ Interview G. Polet by author, Paterswolde 15 March 2013.

⁴² Interview J. M. Snoek by author, Rotterdam 22 July 2008.

A staff member in the Scots Hospital heard stories from a cleaner. Only then did she notice the ruins in the surrounding landscape, often overgrown by conifer plantations.⁴³ Among the Dutch, Boertien belonged to the first theologians who were developing a different view. He began to question the idea of the State of Israel as fulfillment of prophecy:

Dass sich die Verheißung des Propheten Jesaja in unseren Tagen erfüllt hat [...] Nein, so geht das doch wirklich nicht. Ist denn "Erfüllung der Verheißung" eine so einfache Sache, dass wir in der Errichtung des Staates Israel sich diese Verheißungen erfüllen sehen? Mietet euch in Israel mal ein Auto, und macht eine Fahrt an der libanesischen Grenze entlang. Dann werdet ihr etwas Merkwürdiges sehen: verschiedene neue jüdischen Siedlungen, und dazwischen die Ruinen von arabischen Dörfern. Mit etwas Mühe könnten diese ruinierten Dörfer wiederaufgebaut werden. Man tut das nicht. Man baut dazwischen neue Siedlungen für Einwanderer. Die ursprünglichen Bewohner wohnen in Flüchtlingslagern, etwa 15 km. weiter nördlich. Und dies soll Erfüllung der Prophetie sein? Ich finde das eine schreckliche Behauptung.⁴⁴

He received the following response:

Die verlassenen arabischen Dörfer und die hoffnungslosen Flüchtlingslager jenseits der Grenze, die Boertien erwähnt, gehören nicht zu den Fehlern der Israelis. Das ist arabische Politik, wo sie am dreckigsten ist.⁴⁵

Jan Leunis Koole

Boertien's arguments were shared by Koole.⁴⁶ Travels to Israel had already become popular in the Netherlands, but Koole planned his voyage in an exceptional way: by car, and via Mandelbaum Gate in Jerusalem "People used to ask me: when will you visit Israel? Meaning: just the Israeli part of Palestine." By following the land route, Koole saw what most visitors to Israel (by airplane to Lod or by ship to Haifa) missed: the miserable living

⁴³ Interview J. Schoneveld and E. Schoneveld-Tuyt by author, Rijswijk 13 March 2009.

⁴⁴ M. Boertien, recension of "Sinn und Aufgabe von Nes Ammim" by H. Kremers, Wassenaar 17 August 1963, in: AJP.

⁴⁵ H. Krause, response to M. Boertien, Jerusalem 15 August 1963, in: AJP.

⁴⁶ "Travel impressions", Gereformeerd Weekblad, 28 June – 20 December 1963. In: Protestant Theological University (PThU) Amsterdam, archive J. L. Koole, inv.nr. 13.

conditions of the refugees. In Jordan, he climbed mount Nebo. It was from here, according to the Bible, that the dying Moses had spotted the Holy Land from afar. In 1963 Koole saw something very different: 75.000 Arabs in the squalor of the camps near Jericho. Next day, in the UNRWA⁴⁷ headquarters in Ramalla, he heard that the total number of camp dwellers was estimated to be about one million. Koole drew the following conclusions from his impressions:

There will be no solution, not as long as we restrict our empathy to the Jewish victims of the terrible cataclysm of the Holocaust [...] It would be a mistake to presume that time will heal the Arab-Israeli conflict. The passing to time makes things worse. A dying Arab hands the door key and the ownership papers of a home that was lost in 1948, now beyond the demarcation line, to his children. The school paper in the refugee camp carries the name The Hope [...] of return. No, the next Arab generation will not be less antagonized than the first. But perhaps, better armed.⁴⁸

Zakaria Elnatour en Gil Shner

Nevertheless, to most inhabitants of Galilee, it seemed as if the villagers of Al-Summayriyya had simply vanished from the earth. Some went so far as to think they deserved their fate. Tzvika Dror, historian of Lohamei HaGettaot, mentioned a village of terrorists to Tom Segev in 1989. Segev noted the context of Palestinian tragedy, but Dror wouldn't change her mind.⁴⁹

Runa Mackay was a medical care assistant in the Lebanon camps. In 1992, she met people from Galilee:

The Palestinian camps around Tyre and Qasmiyeh are really little villages, with cement block houses, most of which have a small garden and a vine. The people all originated from the north of Galilee, some are Bedouin and some are fellahin (farmers). These Palestinian villages are always very cleanly designed camps which symbolize the status of the Palestinians here in Lebanon – marginalized, in no way a part of Lebanese society, most definitely not Lebanese citizens. Some of the Lebanese are only too ready to blame the Pal-

⁴⁷ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

⁴⁸ "Travel impressions", Gereformeerd Weekblad, 28 June – 20 December 1963.

⁴⁹ Tom Segev, *The seventh milliton*, 451.

tinians for all Lebanon's problems. Many people have emigrated, most went to West Germany, either legally, if they have close relatives already there, or illegally, smuggling themselves across the border, but now, Germany like the rest of Europe, has closed the door.

Inevitably those with the most initiative have gone, leaving the old, the women, children, the disabled as well as a few who have relatively well-paid jobs with UNRWA [...]. Almost the only other work available is seasonal, badly paid, day labour in the nearby orchards owned by wealthy Lebanese. The government prohibits Palestinians from starting their own businesses and they cannot even own a shop, except inside the camps. Life, therefore, lacks purpose and the future looks equally hopeless. [...] Most of the people in Oas-miyeh support Fatah, mainstream PLO.⁵⁰

In Israel, it had become customary to deny the Arab story of loss and deprivation. But this began to change. A schoolboy in Lohamei HaGettaot, Gil Shner, received an assignment for a paper on local history in 2007. His interest was roused by the curious ruinous terrain next to the shopping mall parking lot. Via the internet Gil succeeded to contact one of the villagers that had actually lived there: Zakaria Elnatour (Zakariyya Alantur), born in Al-Summayriyya in 1941 and now a resident of Milwaukee in the United States. Elnatour used the computer to tell Gil Shner about his childhood in Galilee:

The relation between the village people and the Palestinian Jews was very good. We visited them and they visited us at all occasions. We were medicated at Nahariya clinics and hospitals. An alderman from Nahariya was a good friend to the village, and many times I heard him saying to us: "Be careful, bad days will come."

That happened, when one early morning about thirty trucks entered the village. The soldiers were dressed Arabian style, so we thought: "They are Arabs, coming to defend us". But they began shooting at everyone they saw. Most of the residents escaped to the North, because the Zionists made a safe side in the North to kick out everyone. We escaped to Lebanon, through Albassa and Tarshitha. After we left the Zionists destroyed all of the village, except the mosque and the old Romanian building. In Lebanon, we lived about one month in a village called Tyrharfa, with no clothes, no food and with little money, that my father was carrying in his pocket. After that they asked us to move to Tyre City (Sour). They took us by train to Aleppo, Sypra. A 95 percent

⁵⁰ Runa Mackay, *Exile in Israel*, 78.

of the village people stayed in Ein el Hillweh (Ein Elhelwa) refugee camp, to the south of Sayda city in Lebanon. After one month, they moved us to a Syrian village called Altamanaa, from there to Maarat Alno'aman, from there to Hamah. That is what happened to my family.

With some help from our people we returned to Ein el Hillweh in Lebanon. We stayed in tents, and imagine what was happening to us in winter or summer. The Red Cross gave us food and opened for us a school. I studied there.⁵¹

Gil Shner had opened up an unexpected window into local history:

Zakariyya was cordial and understanding towards my being a Jew, an Israeli living today on the same land as he grew up on. I was excited to find a man who believes one must see a person's humanity and not his/her religion and faith, and to my surprise he treated me with no grudge or resentment. I have learned a lot from him.

I do not feel guilty for living on a land taken from its former residents, in part due to the fact that I am a descendant of people exiled from their land in Europe, who came to Israel as refugees and founded the kibbutz in which I live. However, I think it is important that people know and recognize the stories of this place and of the people who lived there in the past. It's part of the history of our home.⁵²

The Mennonite Central Committee published the mail-exchange between Elnatour en Shner in Ivrit, Arab and English: *Remembering Al-Summayriyya*.⁵³ Zochrot, an Israeli non-profit founded to expand awareness of the catastrophe caused by the 1948 displacement of Palestinians organized a trip to the site in 2009. A former villager (Rushdiyya al Yusuf) and Hava Keller from Regba, who had witnessed the blowing up of the empty houses of al-Summayriyya, were both present. Today, the terrain belongs to the Regional Council (Mo'atza Azorit Mateh Asher).

Simon Schoon, pastor of Nes Ammim in the seventies, was interviewed in 2008 at the spot of Al-Summayriyya. Like Gil Shner, he now had a different view of the past, "ashamed that I hadn't noticed in 1974-1981".⁵⁴

⁵¹ "Remembering Al-Summayriyya. Excerpts from the letter of a Palestinian refugee to a Jewish Student", 2009, url: <https://www.zochrot.org/en/booklet/49823> (accessed 16 March 2020).

⁵² "Remembering Al-Summayriyya"

⁵³ Mennonite Central Committee, *Remembering Al-Summayriyya*, Tel Aviv 2009.

⁵⁴ E-mail Simon Schoon to author, Amersfoort 13 June 2017.

UNWRA interviewed fifteen-year old Inas Mahmoud, in Ein el-Hillweh in Lebanon – a camp visited by Jan Leunis Koole in 1963. Inas Mahmoud hoped she would be able to open her own shop one day. She doubted whether her family would ever return to Al-Summayriyya, but trusted the future:

That every individual enjoys his rights, and work to obtain these rights, because this is the way to a decent life. Foremost is the right to education, remoteness from violence, and tolerance.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ <https://www.unwra.org/newsroom/features/human-rights-day-2011-paying-tribute-human-rights-defenders> (site accessed September 2020).

Rules or (Re)conciliation?

Reformed Church Order as "Abendmahlsordnung"

Leon van den Broeke

Introduction

A few years ago my colleague, the Dutch emeritus-professor Church Polity and Ecumenism Leo Koffeman, told me that the aim and concept of reconciliation with view to situations of sexual abuse in pastoral relationships has been removed from the church order of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands. It appeared to be too difficult, if not impossible, to achieve reconciliation between the victim and the abuser. Moreover, multiple parties are involved. Abuse lays a heavy burden on the relationships within the religious community, especially when families of both the victim and the abuser stand up for their beloved ones or the consistory, friends, members of the community decide to take sides for emotional or strategic reasons. That makes it even harder to reach reconciliation between offender and victim. From empirical research it appears that many, if not all, victims of sexual abuse leave the church, especially when the abuser has dehumanized and depersonalized the victim(s) and/or when he denies or minimizes what – usually – he has done and when he does not take responsibility.¹ The effect is that the victims is hurt twice. The impossibility of reaching reconciliation puts much pressure on the congregation, and it underscores the fact that the church is a broken community. As a result, the faith community becomes absent in the daily life of the victim and/or the abuser, but sometimes in the life of their peers as well, because they

¹ Christiane van den Berg-Seifert, *Ik sta erbuiten – maar ik sta wel te kijken. De relationele dynamiek in geloofsgemeenschappen na seksuele grensoverschreiding in een pastorale relatie vanuit het perspectief van primaire slachtoffers*, Zoetermeer 2015; J. Kregting, "Welke invloed hebben de affaires? Uitschrijvingen in de rijkkerk", *Blad voor Katholiek Nederland* 52 (2011), 20–21.

feel left behind by the religious leaders and/or (part of) the faith community. Also, the victim and their peers are absent when the Lord's Supper as an expression of reconciliation is celebrated. In that case the table exhibits empty seats.

This article does not only consider such cases and the (im)possibility of reaching reconciliation, but also the nature of Reformed church polity and/or law in general. A (book of) church order is more than a set of rules, it is not a penal code and it is more than a hindrance for the flourishing of the gospel. The same goes or should go for law books in general. I would like to refer to the late Dutch senator and philosopher of law, Willem Witteveen (1952–2014) who died as a result of the disaster with airplane MH17 above Ukraine in July 2014. Just before he left for the airport he had finished a manuscript. It was published after his death.² In this book he reflects on the nature of law and considers a law book as a piece of art. This caught my attention, because too often it is my observation that (books of) church orders are considered to be something that is purely concerned with procedural law. This gives rise to the reflection on the nature of Reformed church order and specifically with the focus on reconciliation and the Lord's Supper. The research question is how the nature and the application of Reformed church polity can be considered as an instrument of (re)conciliation. This article includes paragraphs on church order as "Abendmahlsordnung", reconciliation and Reformed church polity, Reformed church polity and Karl Barth (1886–1968), an assignment for the Reformed church, juridical instruments, an illustration of reconciliation, and some final remarks.

Church order as "Abendmahlsordnung"

The topic of this article touches the relationship between the Lord's Supper and Reformed church polity, between (re)conciliation and rules. Nowadays, this might be a quite unexpected approach. Nonetheless, I would like to revisit John Calvin's (1509–1564) and Guillaume Farel's Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte a Genève. On 16 January 1537 they presented it to the city council of Geneva. The Articles formed the predecessor of the Ordonnances Ecclesiastiques of 1541.³ The main theme

² Willem Witteveen, *De wet als kunstwerk. Een andere filosofie van het recht*, Amsterdam 2014.

³ *Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte a Genève, proposés au*

of these Articles concerns the Lord's Supper. The Articles begin with this statement: "Il est certain que une esglise ne peut estre dicte bien ordonnee et reiglee synon en la quelle la sainte Cene de nostre Seigneur est souuentefoys celebree et frequentee."⁴ It emphasizes the fact that the Reformed congregation is a table community. The Articles express that a church cannot be organized well when the Lord's Supper is not celebrated on a regular basis. Also, the Articles include other themes: the singing of psalms, the instruction of the youth, and marriage law. However, the Lord's Supper seems to be the main theme. On this ecclesiological, soteriological and church polity basis Karl Barth stated in 1922 that the Calvinistic church order is "Abendmahlsordnung".⁵ He considered that these Articles and its successors – the Ordonnances Ecclesiastiques of 1541 and 1561 – had a major influence on the development of Reformed church polity in other European territories. The Articles of 1537 also contain articles on admonition, discipline, and excommunication. However, this has to be regarded as closely connected to the church as a table community in order to safeguard it, to keep it pure, for the benefit of the *ecclesia purior*. The congregation is, or continues to be, a table community. The aspects of admonition, discipline, and excommunication have to be seen in the context of the Lord's Supper and the church as a table community.⁶

Considering current Calvinistic church orders as "Abendmahlsordnung" is quite unusual even in Reformed churches, and it is hardly possible, at least from the perspective of the empirical church. Today, this particular view of the church as a table community and of a church order as "Abendmahlsordnung" has gotten lost, not only in the present, but also in the Reformed past. Not only then, but also today many church members, office bearers, policy makers in the church, and theologians tend to have a negative view towards church polity, church order, and/or to rules in general. Despite the fact that other people – a minority – do have a high esteem of church order, as soon as problems occur in the ecclesial practice, they apply the church order as a code of penal law, a law book, and they

conseil par les ministres, le 16. Janvier 1537; in Wilhelm Baum, Eduard Cunitz, Eduard Reuss (eds.), CALVINI OPERA (zit.: CO) 10/1, Brunsvigae 1871, 5–14. CO 10/1, 5.

⁵ Karl Barth, *Die Theologie Calvins 1922. Vorlesung Göttingen, Sommersemester 1922*, Hans Scholl (ed.), (Karl Barth. Gesamtausgabe, 2. Abt.), Zürich 1993, 357–358.

⁶ Interview Gerard ter Horst with Leon van den Broeke, "Sleutelwoord bij tucht is herstel: kom erbij" Nederlands Dagblad, 21 March 2012.

do not regard it as "Abendmahlsordnung" let alone as an instrument of stewardship or with the goal of reconciliation. For such persons, the church order is an emergency-kit, no more and no less; or an instrument to show oneself to be in the right.

Whether believers have a positive or a negative attitude towards rules and governance, many times they regard church order, rules, structures, and power as something negative, not belonging to the nature, the essence or the identity of the church. When they do have a positive attitude they are still more involved with rules, structures, church policy or church politics than with the ecclesiological and soteriological essence of the church. This reflects the juridification in society. Nowadays, staff offices of churches have more jurists as employees than before. It is hard for believers, office-bearers, and jurists who consider the church order as a law book to see the close connection between church polity and liturgy, and between church polity and soteriology in the process of application of church polity. Moreover, liturgy and soteriology in general, and (re)conciliation in particular, are overlooked and/or overshadowed in Reformed church polity. This happens in church conflicts. People usually do not take an interest in church order, unless they are involved in ecclesiastical conflicts. As soon as conflicts arise people tend to apply and/or interpret the church order more literally than the Bible. In daily ecclesiastical life it is sometimes (too) hard to reach reconciliation between people and/or groups.

Reconciliation and Reformed church polity

A twist in the approach of Reformed church polity might be helpful and contribute to another understanding of rules and governance with view to conflicts and reconciliation. Despite the removal of the concept and the word 'reconciliation' in the church order of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (Protestantse Kerk in Nederland) in matters of sexual abuse, it still does contain a few references to reconciliation. The most important section, in the theological foundation of the church order, declares that the church testifies in the proclamation and service to all people and to all the nations the salvation in Jesus Christ, as it is sent into the world and called to the service of the reconciliation, article I.8. Within view of the celebration of the Lord's Supper the church order states that a consistory can convene church members for reasons of reflection, and reconciliation. Its purpose is the worthy celebration of the Lord's Supper, Ordinance 7-4-2. The third and last article in the church order regarding reconciliation

concerns the supervision over the confession and the way of life of congregants and office-bearers in the church. This supervision is fourfold. It is for the edification of the spiritual life of the congregation; the protection of those who err; the reconciliation of those with the congregation, and with their neighbors; and the safeguard of the order in the life and the work of the congregation and the church, Ordinance 10-6-1.

The most important section declares that the church testifies in the proclamation and service to all people and to all the nations the salvation in Jesus Christ, as it is sent into the world and called to the service of the reconciliation, article I.8. Not only is this service of reconciliation a gift to and for the community itself, but something to testify to all people and all the nations. It is a *service*, and church polity is an instrument of this service.

Karl Barth

Regarding this aspect of service, I shall return to Barth, not only because he made a comment to Calvin's Articles of 1537. Also, in 1955 he published a book on the dogmatic foundation of church polity: *Die Ordnung der Christliche Gemeinde: Zur dogmatischen Grundlegung des Kirchenrechts*.⁷ It was included in his *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, vol. IV/2, "Die Lehre der Veröhnung" (The doctrine of Reconciliation). The reconciliation with God in Jesus Christ is the big battle against the Chaos ('Unordnung'). He contradicts the German jurist Rudolph Sohm (1841-1917) who could not connect with what he called the distinction between *Rechtskirche* and *Geistkirche*, and he contradicts the Swiss theologian Emil Brunner (1899-1966). Sohm had stated that church polity contradicts the nature of the church. In 1892 he had published his famous book *Kirchenrecht*.⁸ In 1923 his second volume was - posthumously - published. Barth considered that the concepts of church of both Sohm and Brunner did not have a Christological foundation as they considered it as a purely fellowship of persons of brothers (and sisters). In Barth's opinion church polity is: *liturgisches Recht* (liturgical law), *Dienstrecht* (service law), *lebendiges Recht*

⁷ Karl Barth, *Die Ordnung der Christliche Gemeinde. Zur dogmatischen Grundlegung des Kirchenrechts*, München 1955.

⁸ R. Sohm, *Kirchenrecht. Die geschichtlichen Grundlagen*, 2. vol., Leipzig 1892/1923, (Systematisch Handbuch der Deutschen Rechtswissenschaft, Karl Binding (ed.), 8th. division, vol. 1.).

(living law), and *exemplarisches Recht* (exemplary law). Church polity is service law because although Jesus Christ is Lord and head of his body, the church, he did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45). Barth stated that serving law is unambiguous, total and universal. It is unambiguous, because there is no ruling law besides serving law. Serving law is required from every member. It is also total, because it is not a part of the church, but it belongs to its foundation and nature. Also, it is universal, because everyone and everything is submitted to the service of the Lord. As in the letters to the Romans and Philippians: every knee shall bow before him, Rom 14:11 and Phil 2:10. Power is not necessarily negative, even not in the church. Moreover, it can be positive. Within view of the Reformed decline and fear of hierarchy of the sixteenth-century Roman Catholic Church a negative approach towards and resistance against ecclesiastical power is understandable. Indeed, in some cases, including Reformed denominations, there is abuse of power. Those who receive ecclesiastical power need to be aware of the fact that they are servants, not lords. Reformed church polity rejects lordship. However, power in itself is not necessarily negative and wrong, not even in the church. It can be a helpful instrument of stewardship, of serving the church and the Kingdom of God.

Church polity is also liturgical law. In the liturgy it is celebrated that the subject of the church is Jesus Christ. The church is a Christocratic fellowshipship. Barth did not include the Didachè when he stated that Reformed church polity should be or is liturgical law. This oldest document of the Early Church contains liturgical rules on baptismal and the Lord's Supper rules. The heart of the Didachè is formed by rules on baptism (paragraphs 7-8) and the Eucharist (paragraphs 9 and 10).⁹ Although the Didachè is usually cited in one breath with the Didascalia Apostolorum (The Teachings of the Apostles) this 'church order' is less liturgical than the Didachè and the Egyptian Church Order.¹⁰ It contains many more rules and is a lengthy document. Also, it is more concerned with relationships between husbands and wife, orphan children, bishops, deacons, widows etc. Furthermore, in

⁹ A.F.J. Klijn (ed.), *Apostolische Vaders 1. De Brieven van Ignatius, De Brief van Polycarpus, de Marteldood van Polycarpus, I Clemens, II Clemens, Het Onderwijs van de Twaalf Apostelen*, Kampen ²1992, 225-256; Maxwell Staniforth, Andrew Louth (eds.), *Early Christian Writings. The Apostolic Fathers*, (reprint) Harmondsworth 1987, 185-199.

¹⁰ R.H. Connolly, *The So-Called Egyptian Church Order and Derived Documents*, Eugene Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004 (Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature. Texts and Studies viii, ed. by J. Armitage Robinson) Rudolf Lorentz, *De Egyptische Kerkorden en Hippolytus van Rome*, Haarlem 1929.

addition to Barth church order is not only *Abendmahlsordnung*, but also *'laufordnung'*. It is not only for those who made profession of their faith, but also for infants and adults who are baptized, but did not (yet) make this profession.

According to Barth, Reformed church polity is, or at least should be, also exemplary law, because it is law *sui generis*. The church should be an example to the world, more specifically to the political, academic, cultural and other communities, including in its order, governance, and leadership. Barth had high expectations of the church as an example for the world. We also have to understand this against the background of Barth's experience with Nazi-Germany, the *Deutsche Christen*, and the *Bekennende Kirche*. Nowadays, whether the church likes it or not, the context has rapidly changed. Its role, position, and influence in the world has been marginalized, at least in Western-Europe, despite the rise of new faith communities and fresh expressions of church. Despite the fact that church polity needs to be an example, it needs to be humble. Setting an example is not a goal in itself. It is an instrument, an expression of reconciliation.

Church polity is also living law, because it is the order of the living body of Christ, and its head, Jesus Christ, is alive. Therefore, Christ's body, the church, cannot be dead, but is alive. In a broken world it is provisional law, or in other words: it is eschatological law. It is never perfect, and should not be or become petrified.

An assignment for Reformed denominations?

From a normative ecclesiological point of view the Reformed church and its church order cannot be or become petrified. An old saying in law is: *ius sequitur vitam*, i.e. law follows life. Or, to put it into theological phrase: *ecclesia reformata semper reformanda*: the Reformed church always to be reformed. It can be helpful for the Reformed church and its system of governance to understand that power, structures, and leadership are not necessarily negative. To put it into other words: they can be positive, helpful, and are necessary for the church in a broken world, even or especially in case of a conflict and in connection with reconciliation. Power or structures are not necessarily the issue. It is the abuser who hurts, harms, limits, and humiliates others. The implication is that the 'victims' – not only of abuse in the sexual context – leave the church, internal or external. They stay or stay out (internal), or they are no longer member of a denomination

(external). This has implications for the table community as there is no (re)conciliation possible in relationships.

Furthermore, the church needs to be aware of the decoy of codification. There is no need to keep it too simple: too little codification is not good. The same goes for too much codification and juridification. The church should not support church polity Docetism. There is nothing wrong with a good rule. Of course, there is this simplification, and false contradiction in the subtitle: 'Rules or (Re)conciliation', as if rules are bad, and (re)conciliation is good; as if one has to choose. A rule can be merciful, and reconciliation can be aggressive and oppressive in the ecclesiastical life when people are forced to reach reconciliation, when injustice is neglected and no justice is done. The victim is or the victims are hurt again. Of course, it is also the other way around. Rules can be aggressive and oppressive, and reconciliation is merciful. There is this old saying in law: *summum ius sumum iuria*.¹¹ It means that the supreme justice can be supreme injustice. Rules are not a goal in itself.

Ecclesiastical rules should reflect that the church celebrates the life, the work, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He did not come to be served but to serve. This is or should be the nature of church polity, structures and power. Just like rules, church polity is not an end in itself. It is an instrument, an instrument of stewardship, in order to serve, and to express, to testify that reconciliation is not only something to strive for, to work on, but is also a present of God in Christ. Indeed: church polity is about rules, but also about (re)conciliation, whether broken relationships between church members and/or non-church members can be reconciled or not and, if we are not able to express and testify reconciliation with words in the church we better celebrate, as Calvin stated in his Articles of 1537 – frequently – not only for the sake of the church and church members, but also for the benefit of those who left the church with a broken heart, and for the benefit of the world.

Juridical instruments

"Sent into the world and called to the service of the reconciliation". This quote from article I.8 of the church order of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands challenges the church and church polity to act proactively in

the domain of conflict management, or ecclesiastically speaking of the service of the reconciliation. The church needs instruments to intervene, to mediate, and to facilitate recovery of broken relationships, or at least on damage control. An old instrument is church visitation as a means to be able to intervene in conflicts between individuals, and/or between individuals and groups, and/or between groups in the local congregation. However, the (church polity) instrument of church visitation is limited.

An instrument in penal law is restorative justice.¹² Both the victim and the abuser agree to participate in this difficult, complex and hurtful process of encounter, and listening to each other's stories in order to reach understanding, and in ultimate instance maybe even reconciliation or recuperation. It is even useful in case of provisional detention. The judge can use the benefits of restorative justice when he or she needs to take the final decision. Restorative justice gives the victim a voice, and the possibility to ask the offender questions like: 'why did you pick me?', 'why all this damage?', 'do you know that you ruined my life?'. Also, it gives the offender the space to (try to) answer questions and to reflect, and even to express his or her apologies. Restorative justice is a replacement of retributive justice which is more focused on punishment. Despite restorative justice people in our society ask for higher and heavier punishment. They think that punishment meted out by judges is too soft. Sometimes this de-

¹² In Dutch: herstelbemiddeling; url: <http://perspectiefherstelbemiddeling.nl> (accessed 3 January 2018); I. Cleven, K. M. E. Lens, A. Pemberton, *De rol van herstelbemiddeling in het strafrecht. Eindrapportage onderzoek pilots Herstelbemiddeling*, Tilburg, International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT)/ Wetschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum, 2015, url: https://www.wodc.nl/binaries/2377a-voledige-tekst_tcm28-73209.pdf (accessed 13 June 2018); Maud Kips, "Herstelbemiddeling na kindermisbruik binnen de rooms-katholieke kerk," in Ruard Ganzevoort a. o. (ed.), *Geschonden vertrouwen. Seksueel misbruik in een religieuze context*, Tilburg 2013, 78–92; Jolande uit Beijerse, "Herstelrecht als alternatief voor voorlopige hechtenis," *Tijdschrift voor Herstelrecht* 12 (2012) 1, 3–6; Janny Dierx, Anneke van Hoek, "Mediation in strafzaken," in A. F. M. Breninkmeijer a. o. (ed.), *Handboek Mediation*, Den Haag 2013, 475–487; Ruard Ganzevoort, "Uitieme breuken - ultieme bronnen: De fundamentele relaties tussen seksualiteit, trauma en religie," in Ruard Ganzevoort a. o. (ed.), *Geschonden vrouwen. Seksueel misbruik in een religieuze context*, Tilburg 2013, 17–37, footnote 45; Lieven Dupont, "Herstelrecht: afscheid van vergeldend strafrecht," in L. Dupont, F. Hutsebaut (eds.), *Herstelrecht tussen toekomst en verleden. Liber Amicorum Tony Peters*, Leuven 2001, 209–224 (Samenleving Criminaliteit & Strafrechtspleging 22); Christian Eliaeris, Roxane Bitoune, "Herstelrecht voor minderjarigen: Theorie en praktijk," in L. Dupont, F. Hutsebaut (eds.), *Herstelrecht tussen toekomst en verleden. Liber Amicorum Tony Peters*, Leuven 2001, 225–246.

¹¹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Officiis* 1, 10, 33.

velopment reflects upon the ecclesiastical society as church members also ask for more stringent punishment as they do not understand the verdicts of ecclesiastical courts. They are more focused on a punitive approach of the offender than of restoration and reconciliation.

At the same time, it is tempting to implement restorative justice in ecclesiastical admonition and discipline law. However, the nature of ecclesiastical admonition and disciplinary law has less as its goal punishment, but its aim is the glorification of God, edifying his church and (re)conciliation between the victim, the offender and the faith community.

Excurs: Pontanima

Apart from these juridical and/or church polity instruments, there are more possibilities of reaching reconciliation. I like to highlight an example, albeit a non-juridical and a non-church polity instrument. In April 2015 I was with my Dutch colleague Heleen Zorgdrager and a group of students in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. Together with our Hungarian colleague Eitöd Hodossy-Takács and his students from Debrecen, Hungary, we traveled through the Balkans. We visited Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Along the way, we discussed the topic of Religion, Politics and Conflict. The very last meeting was with Father Ivan, a Franciscan pastor. During dinner he shared his experiences with the Yugoslavia war. It became clear that he too suffered from this war. After dinner he invited us to experience the rehearsal of the interreligious choir Pontanima in Sarajevo. We joined him and were astonished about the identity and the high quality of the choir. Jews, Christians and Muslims sang each other's songs. In this way the choir members try to build bridges for the souls (*pont anima*). It is just one small example of reconciliation. However, it has tremendous effects. Moreover, our students, both Dutch and Hungarian, were moved and cried by this expression and instrument of reconciliation. It made a tremendous impression on the students.

Final remarks

Reformed church polity is not (only) about rules, structures, and power; at least, they are not goals in themselves, but instruments to reach (re)conciliation. It needs to avoid overregulation (juridification) and litigation (too many procedures). On the other hand, it needs to avoid the neglect of or

contempt for regulation in the church (church polity Docetism). If the focus of church polity is on *concilium* (gathering) and *conciliatio* (connection), it also should focus on reconciliation. Reformed church polity can assist in and provide tools for the process of reconciliation by being aware of the theological reflection of its governance, rules, leadership, and relationships, and by tirelessly telling that rules can be merciful, and can be unjust, and that the decoy of considering church order as a law book need to be avoided. Or to put it into other words: a Reformed church order should be a hymn book. From 1537 on, a Reformed church order is considered to be *Abendmahlsordnung*. The Reformed church is a table community, although a broken community whether victims and/or abusers are still present or absent. Indeed, Reformed church polity is liturgical law, in order to serve, and to be or set an example, because of the living Lord.

The English poet Coventry Patmore (1823–1896) expressed something alike in his poem *Wisdom*, albeit in other words:

They live by law, not like the fool,
but like the bard, who freely sings
in strictest bonds of rhyme and rule
and finds in them not bonds but wings.¹³

So, the normal observation of a (book of) church order as a law book or a penal code needs to be replaced by the observation as it is a piece of art, or ecclesiastically speaking a piece of Reformed art, a song book which includes hymns on the reconciliation in Christ and the celebration of the Lord's supper, even in a broken world.

¹³ Coventry Patmore, "Wisdom," in Ralph Waldo Emerson (ed.), *Parnassus. An Anthology of Poetry*, Boston 1875, 146–147.

On the Way to Reconciliation between Catholics and Lutherans

The Document 'From Conflict to Communion'

Eva Guldanová

Introduction

Protestants and Catholics have for hundreds of years been in conflict and opposition. They waged wars that destroyed hundreds of thousands of lives and even after the decades of wars were over there remained antagonism, hatred, mistrust and contempt as well as feelings of humiliation and injustice between them. The conflict between these two Christian religious groups changed the face of Europe and left it with a deep wound, internalized in many local groups and individuals. Even up to this day groups of one or the other confession sometimes create their identity in opposition to the other. One can sometimes hear arguments like: "We do or don't do or teach this or that because we are not like them." "If this or that liturgical element or theological teaching is similar to or reminds us of the other we won't accept it" – not on the basis of its being correct or wrong, but "because we want to differ from them, we don't want to be confused with them or be placed on a par with them." This conflict and these attitudes have caused tremendous amounts of pain and suffering on both sides.¹

¹ Cf. Liturgical Task Force of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, "Common Prayer: From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017", 2016, url: <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/joint-common-prayer-lutheran-catholic-common-commemoration-reformation-2017>, (accessed 21 April 2016), 14. "Lutherans and Catholics often focused on what separated them from each other rather than looking for what united them. They accepted that the Gospel was mixed with the political and economic interests of those in power. Their failures resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Families were torn apart, people imprisoned and tortured, wars fought and religion and faith misused. Human beings suffered and the credibility of the Gospel was undermined with consequences that still impact us today.

Realizing this we can only say that the change during 20th century that came about through the ecumenical movement is something that has a source beyond us, has its foundation in a source of goodness that transcends us, is a work of the Holy Spirit. God moved the broken but stony hearts of groups in conflict to desire to change the dire situation, to desire reconciliation, and, with the divine creative power which always makes things new, formed us and still continues to reshape us into instruments of reconciliation. God does this in a variety of ways, among them through ecumenical gestures, declarations and documents.

When in 1964 Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I met and embraced in Jerusalem, it was the first time such a meeting took place in more than 900 years. The historic encounter was followed in 1965 by a common declaration in which, believing that they were "responding to the call of divine grace" to "overcome their differences, so as to be once again 'one'," they acknowledged that

[a]mong the obstacles to be found in the way of the development of [...] brotherly relationships of trust and esteem, there is the memory of those painful decisions, acts and incidents which led in 1054 to the sentence of excommunication [...].²

Upon this acknowledgement these highest representatives of the Latin and Byzantine church declared:

[...] with one accord that:

- a. They regret the offensive words, the reproaches without foundation and the reprehensible gestures which on both sides marked or accompanied the sad events of this period;
- b. They also regret and wish to erase from the memory and midst of the Church the sentences of excommunication which followed them, and whose memory has acted as an obstacle to a rapprochement in charity down to our own days; and consign them to oblivion;
- c. Finally, they deplore the troublesome precedents and the later events which, under the influence of various factors, among them lack of understanding

We deeply regret the evil things that Catholics and Lutherans have mutually done to each other."

² "The Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras, 1965", in Michael Kinnamon, Brian E. Cope (eds.), *The Ecumenical Movement: An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices*, Geneva 2002, 145.

and mutual hostility, eventually led to the effective rupture of ecclesiastical communion.³

They considered this a “reciprocal act of justice and forgiveness,” and hoped the declaration would be recognized “as the expression of a sincere mutual desire for reconciliation.”⁴

It was a profound sign to the whole world that the almost thousand year division between Eastern and Western Christianity had begun to mend, that a deep wound on the body of Christ had begun to heal; it was a beginning of reconciliation. The act was followed by strengthening and deepening of mutual contacts and growth of mutual appreciation on various levels. The heads of the two churches gave “their blessing and pastoral support to all efforts for cooperation between Catholic and Orthodox scholars”⁵ and a substantial ecumenical dialogue as well as cooperation ensued that continues till today.

A recent example is the common encounter on 16 April 2016 of Pope Francis, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens at the Greek island of Lesbos in support of the refugees coming “to Europe fleeing from situations of conflict and, in many cases, daily threats to their survival.” In the common declaration after the visit the church leaders restated their desire to work toward the unity of all Christians.

“For our part, in obedience to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, we firmly and wholeheartedly resolve to intensify our efforts to promote the full unity of all Christians. We reaffirm our conviction that ‘reconciliation [among Christians] involves promoting social justice within and among all peoples [...]’ (*Charta Oecumenica*, 2001). By defending the fundamental human rights of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, and the many marginalized people in our societies, we aim to fulfill the Churches’ mission of service to the world. [...] As leaders of our respective Churches, we are one in our desire for peace and in our readiness to promote the resolution of conflicts through dialogue and reconciliation.”⁶

³ *The Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras, 1965*, 145–146.

⁴ *The Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras, 1965*, 146.

⁵ “Common Declaration of His Holiness Pope Paul VI and the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I,” 1967, url: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ch_orthodox_docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19671028_athenagoras-i-paul-vi_en.html, (accessed 18 April 2016).

In 2017, we will commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation of the 16th century. The two main groups within Western Christianity – Protestants and Catholics – also desire reconciliation. They wish to move *from conflict back to communion*. 2017 offers a unique opportunity for this. In the words of Catholic Bishop Karlheinz Diez and Lutheran Bishop Eero Huovinen on behalf of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity,

In 2017, we must confess openly that we have been guilty before Christ of damaging the unity of the church. This commemorative year presents us with two challenges: the purification and healing of memories, and the restoration of Christian unity in accordance with the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁸

For this occasion the commission prepared a document with the exact title *From Conflict to Communion* – to accompany the process leading to this commemoration and the commemoration itself, to help the rapprochement and reconciliation between Catholics and Lutherans in particular, and among Christians in a wider sense, in general.

How does this document (and its accompanying actions) help reconciliation? I would argue that it does so in at least four different ways:

- I. It invites us to commemorate the 500th anniversary, as well as any future Reformation anniversary, differently than had ever been done in the past.⁹
- II. It offers for the first time at an international level a common re-telling of the history of the Reformation events resulting in the division between Lutherans and Catholics.

⁶ “Joint Declaration of His Holiness Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, of His Beatitude Ieronymos, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece and of His Holiness Pope Francis,” Lesbos 2016, url: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2016/april/documents/papa-francesco_20160416_lesvos-dichiarazione-congiunta.html, (accessed 11 June 2018).

⁷ Readers are reminded that the contribution was written in April 2016.

⁸ *From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017. Report of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity*, Leipzig 2013, 7, [hereafter cited as FCTC].

⁹ In 2018, when this paper is prepared for publication, the author can attest that indeed this has taken place. The commemorations of the 500th anniversary were to a large extent carried out in an ecumenical spirit, a spirit of reconciliation, and mutual appreciation among Christians.

III. It looks at central disputed theological points of the Reformation era; presents them in a balanced way, and shows the significant progress ecumenical dialogues have brought in looking together at these points.

IV. In an honest and sensitive way the document expresses feelings of regret for what has happened in the past, it thus helps both sides to understand the other's pain, and invites to repentance and lament, while at the same time realizing the numerous gifts and progress that the Reformation brought or gave impulse to for which both communities feel and want to express thankfulness. This expression of repentance and gratitude would be also concretely realized in a set of events prepared for the Reformation commemoration and stemming from the document.¹⁰

In what follows, each of these four points will be elaborated and illustrated with quotes from the document to support my arguments. Sometimes I will just flow from one quote to another without commenting, in order to let the texts speak for themselves.

Invitation to Commemorate differently

The document starts by presenting the character of previous centennial commemorations of the beginning of the Reformation and the new ecumenical, global and secular context in which the half-millennium anniversary would be commemorated in 2017. It invites us to make this commemoration, as well as any other in the future, different than previous ones – not a source of more separation, division and pain, but an occasion for common joy and celebration as well as healing through repentance and forgiveness.

¹⁰ Among the many events prepared for the commemoration of the 5th centenary, one of the most significant was the common ecumenical liturgy on 31 October 2016 in Lund, Sweden, that opened the 500th anniversary year. This ecumenical worship was presided over by the highest representatives of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Pope Francis. This was the first time in history that a pope commemorated an anniversary of the Reformation together with Protestants. The liturgy indeed contained elements of common gratitude for the gifts of the Reformation, of repentance and lament for the division, and a commitment to common witness to the world as well as to working incessantly for the goal of visible unity. Pope Francis' participation at this event was a profound ecumenical gesture with an immense impact for the process of reconciliation among Western Christians.

The document admits: In the past,

[t]he centennial celebrations of the Reformation have been lavish and festive. The opposing viewpoints of the different confessional groups have been especially visible at these events. For Lutherans, these commemorative days and centennials were occasions for telling once again the story of the beginning of the characteristic – 'evangelical' – form of their church in order to justify their distinctive existence. This was naturally tied to a critique of the Roman Catholic Church. On the other side, Catholics took such commemorative events as opportunities to accuse Lutherans of an unjustifiable division from the true church and a rejection of the gospel of Christ.¹¹

Because [the] accounts of the past were mostly oppositional, they not infrequently intensified the conflict between the confessions and sometimes led to open hostility.¹²

Today we live in a changed reality.

Lutherans and Catholics today enjoy a growth in mutual understanding, cooperation, and respect. They have come to acknowledge that more unites than divides them [...].¹³

It is no longer adequate simply to repeat earlier accounts of the Reformation period, which presented Lutheran and Catholic perspectives separately and often in opposition to one another.¹⁴

Thus, in sharp difference to the previous four centennials, Lutherans and Catholics "long to commemorate 2017 together"¹⁵ and view it as "an occasion to deepen communion between"¹⁶ them. Moreover, since Lutherans "realize that what they are thanking God for," with regards to the fruits of the Reformation,¹⁷ "is not a gift that they can claim only for themselves

¹¹ FCTC, par. 5. As is often the case by ecumenical documents, FCTC is divided into paragraphs. Referring to the paragraphs rather than to the page facilitates orientation in the document in a different language or edition. Unless indicated otherwise, from here on the numbers, preceded by the abbreviation "par.", in the footnotes referring to the document will indicate the paragraph.

¹² FCTC, par. 8.

¹³ FCTC, par. 1.

¹⁴ FCTC, par. 8.

¹⁵ FCTC, par. 7.

¹⁶ FCTC, par. 4.

¹⁷ The document names some of the fruits of the Reformation for which Lutherans

[...] [t]hey want to share this gift with all other Christians. For this reason they invite all Christians to celebrate with them."¹⁸

The year 2017 is not only the year of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It also marks the 50th anniversary of international ecumenical dialogues between the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church. "Therefore," says the general secretary of the LWF, "an affirmative action is required so that these fifty years are not overlooked, pushed aside, or sidelined during the commemoration of five centuries of Reformation."¹⁹ The commemoration needs to be also a celebration of and an expression of gratefulness for the fifty years of rapprochement through the dialogue and for its fruits.

The commemoration should also lead us to reflect upon how to properly pass on our traditions and riches of faith in today's secularized and globalized society "in such a way that they do not dig new trenches between Christians of different confessions,"²⁰ so that antagonisms are not perpetuated.²¹

Finally, "[i]n 2017, Catholic and Lutheran Christians will most fittingly look back on events that occurred five hundred years earlier by putting the gospel of Jesus Christ at the center."²² The commemoration should not be primarily a glorification of persons or celebration of events that are now part of history. In the section entitled "Sermon Notes" the authors of the *Common Prayer* for the commemoration of the anniversary advise:

feel profound gratefulness, such as "the understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and faith in him; the insight into the mystery of the Triune God who gives Himself to us human beings out of grace and who can be received only in full trust in the divine promise; the freedom and certainty that the gospel creates; [...] the living contact with the Holy Scripture, the catechisms, and hymns that draw faith into life;" from FCTC, par. 225.

¹⁸ FCTC, par. 226. Cf. Martin Junge, "From Conflict to Communion – A prophetic witness in a fragmented world. The Scherer Lecture 2015," Chicago 2015, (video), url: <https://vimeo.com/143148130>, (accessed 17 April 2016).

¹⁹ Junge, "The Scherer Lecture"; cf. FCTC, par. 7.

²⁰ FCTC, par. 12; cf. also FCTC par. 242.

²¹ Cf. Karl P. Donfried, "From Conflict to Communion and the Renewal of the Church," *Lutheran Forum* 48 (2014) 3, 43, where one reads: "Among the other challenges that the 2017 commemoration of the Reformation must confront are [...] the loss of essential ecclesial traditions and, as a result, much of the treasure of the gospel itself. These foundational elements need to be relearned by many, and this activity may simultaneously provide an enormous ecumenical opportunity that will also assist in overcoming the confessional conflicts that have so thoroughly damaged Christian credibility."

²² FCTC, "Foreword," 7; cf. also FCTC par. 245.

The commemoration of the Reformation should be a celebration of Jesus Christ since the reformers saw their main task in pointing to Christ as 'the way, the truth, and the life' and calling people to trust in Christ. Christ should be celebrated. Martin Luther and the other reformers only sought to be 'witnesses to Christ'.²³

A Common Re-telling of the History of the Reformation

The second chapter of the document *From Conflict to Communion* presents historical research of the last century about Martin Luther and the Reformation and how this research contributed to changed views, both on the Catholic and the Lutheran sides, of the topic and its related issues. Thanks to the developments of the research these views are now significantly more complex, nuanced and objective and thus closer to the truth. The document directs our attention to the conviction that

[w]hat happened in the past cannot be changed, but what is remembered of the past and how it is remembered can, with the passage of time, indeed change. [...] In view of 2017, the point is not to tell a different history, but to tell that history differently.²⁴

The brief description of the developments of recent historic research (in chapter II) leads to chapter III, entitled "A Historical Sketch of the Lutheran Reformation and the Catholic Response" which is a *common* retelling of the events and issues of the Reformation of the 16th century. Rev. Martin Junge claims: "Healing of memories can only begin when history is told, assessed, and jointly understood."²⁵

Churches all over the world have many times supported this methodology of the joint retelling of a shared history "when communities and societies were attempting to overcome trauma, division and clouded memories." But "churches have not been too keen to apply this methodology to their own traumatic experiences of rupture, violence and division."²⁶ This has happened for the first time for Lutherans at the international level in the Lutheran-Mennonite dialogue, "which resorted to this methodology of shared story, history telling when clouded memories were obstructing

²³ *Common Prayer*, 8.

²⁴ FCTC, par. 16.

²⁵ Junge, "Scherer lecture."

²⁶ Junge, "Scherer lecture."

fruitful theological discussion.”²⁷ The Lutheran-Mennonite dialogue and the LWF worship service of reconciliation with Mennonites which was its culmination were, together with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine on Justification*, key inspirations for the report *From Conflict to Communion*. As Dr. Junge says, “the Mennonite Action is one of the midwives of *From Conflict to Communion*.”²⁸

Just as the experience of the Mennonite-Lutheran dialogue and its report *Healing of Memories: Reconciling in Christ* naturally led to public confession of sins and forgiveness between Lutherans and Mennonites in the Mennonite Action of 2010, so will the process of retelling of the history of the Reformation started in the document *From Conflict to Communion* lead to ecumenical worship services which will include repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation.²⁹ The most important of these would take place at the beginning of the Reformation anniversary year on 31 October 2016 in the Cathedral in Lund, Sweden, and be presided over by the highest Lutheran and Catholic representatives – the President of the LWF Bishop Munib Younan, the LWF General Secretary Martin Junge, and Pope Francis. Bishop Younan in connection with this prepared event said:

The action of reconciliation with the Mennonites in 2010 has inspired what we are going to do in Lund. We have experienced the power of forgiveness and reconciliation as the most encouraging and freeing power which has made us free to work, engage, connect, work together, to trust each other. We hope that the Holy Spirit will continue to lead us with the Catholics to Lund and beyond.³⁰

I believe his words have proved and continue to prove true.

The document *From Conflict to Communion* directs our attention to the conviction that “[w]hat happened in the past cannot be changed, but what is remembered of the past and how it is remembered can, with the passage of time, indeed change. [...] In view of 2017, the point is not to tell a different history, but to tell that history differently.” The manner in

²⁷ Junge, “Scherer lecture.”

²⁸ Junge, “Scherer lecture.” Cf. also in the same lecture: “The Mennonite Action characterized by its focus on reconciliation constituted a decisive paradigm for Lutherans and Catholics to approach the anniversary and invited the two of us to move away from a situation of confrontation and conflict and move towards reconciliation and growing communion.”

²⁹ Cf. *Common Prayer*, 14–15.

³⁰ The Lutheran World Federation, “What unites us is stronger than what divides

which we tell the story is really important as it can contribute either to the exacerbation of the relationship between the two sides of the story or to their reconciliation. The document *From Conflict to Communion* sees to do the latter.

In chapter III of *From Conflict to Communion* Catholics and Lutherans tell the story of the Reformation together. The story is recounted in a way that is trying to be objective, acceptable, just, and kind to both sides, not in a way that would be biased and perpetuate the “enemy” image of those on the other side, and the *dhero*” image of those on “our” side. That would only strengthen division and distort reality.

Unlike in the past, in expressing how they evaluate the Reformation ecumenical theologians have decided not to pursue their confessional self-assertions at the expense of their dialogue partners but rather to search for that which is common within the differences, even within the oppositions, and thus work toward overcoming church-dividing differences.³¹

Disputed Theological Points of the Reformation Era

Building upon chapter III, chapter IV of the report *From Conflict to Communion* (which is its most substantial chapter) brings up four central topics of the Reformation which, since the sixteenth century, have been a matter of controversy between Catholics and Lutherans: justification, eucharist, ministry, and Scripture and tradition.

The chapter is structured in such a way so as to put into conversation the respective perspectives of both sides. It first presents Luther’s perspective of the topic, followed by the Catholic view, bringing into the discussion concerns of the Catholic side. In the last step in each of the four topics the results of Lutheran-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogues are presented.³²

The chapter shows how ecumenical dialogues were able to make significant progress in clarifying the differences and in rapprochement; enabling differences of emphasis within the unity in the central points. It notes how far we have advanced in the fifty years of dialogue, showing

us’,” Geneva 2016, url: <https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/what-unites-us-stronger-what-divides-us>, (accessed 17 April 2016).

³¹ FCTC, par. 17.

³² Cf. FCTC, par. 95.

that most of the disputed topics have been resolved with careful mutual listening. The chapter at the same time is also honest about where we still differ and what remains for discussion, thus candidly allowing both voices to be heard.

I wish to highlight here the main results, the most important and sweetest fruit of these ecumenical dialogues.

On the topic of justification, which was chiefly dealt with in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (JDDJ), the document *From Conflict to Communion* concludes by stating that:

Lutherans and Catholics have each condemned the other confession's teachings. Therefore, the differentiating consensus as represented in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification contains a double aspect. On the one hand, the Declaration claims that the mutual rejections of Catholic and Lutheran teaching as depicted there do not apply to the other confession. On the other, the Declaration positively affirms a consensus in the basic truths of the doctrine of justification [...] 'In light of this consensus the remaining differences of language, theological elaboration, and emphasis in the understanding of justification are acceptable. Therefore the Lutheran and the Catholic explanations of justification are in their differences open to one another and do not destroy the consensus regarding the basic truths' (JDDJ 40). [...] 'The teaching of the Lutheran churches presented in this Declaration does not fall under the condemnations from the Council of Trent. The condemnations in the Lutheran Confessions do not apply to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church presented in this Declaration' (JDDJ 41).³³

With regard to eucharist, the dialogue discussed several issues, the main among them being the real presence of Jesus in the sacrament and the eucharist as a sacrifice. Today the following can be said together:

The question of the reality of the presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper is not a matter of controversy between Catholics and Lutherans.³⁴ Lutherans and Catholics can together affirm the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper.³⁵

The concept of anamnesis has helped to resolve the controversial question of how one sets the once-for-all sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ in right rela-

³³ FCTC, par. 138-139.

³⁴ FCTC, par. 153.

³⁵ FCTC, par. 154.

tionship to the Lord's Supper³⁶ [...] If the understanding of the Lord's Supper as a real remembrance [anamnesis] is consistently taken seriously, the differences in understanding the eucharistic sacrifice are tolerable for Catholics and Lutherans.³⁷

Lutherans and Catholics also agree and affirm together that a eucharistic celebration has to be presided over by a minister appointed by the church.³⁸ However, concerning the understanding of the office of ministry, which is the topic treated in the subsequent section of the report, some differences still remain that, in contrast to what is claimed in the other three discussed topics, do not yet allow the commission to declare unity in reconciled diversity. Nevertheless, it is important to note that, with the exception of the question of ministry, the ecumenical dialogue on the topics presented in the document *From Conflict to Communion* was able to reach the point where the differences on these topics are no more church dividing. Still a considerable progress can be noted also in the question of ministry.

In the matter of ministry significant rapprochement was achieved in questions of the priesthood of the baptized, the divine source of the ministry, the fundamental task of minister, the ordination rite, local and regional ministry, apostolicity, and service to the church universal.

To quote just some most interesting examples:

In understanding the ordained office, there is a common conviction about its divine source: 'Catholics and Lutherans affirm together that God instituted the ministry and that it is necessary for the being of the church, since the word of God and its public proclamation in word and sacrament are necessary for faith in Jesus Christ to arise and be preserved [...] (ApC 276).³⁹

³⁶ The common understanding of anamnesis, as well as of the relationship of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross to eucharist is explained in these terms: "Through the remembrance in worship of God's saving acts, these acts themselves become present in the power of the Spirit, and the celebrating congregation is linked with the men and women who earlier experienced the saving acts themselves. [...] If Jesus Christ is really present in the Lord's Supper, then his life, suffering, death, and resurrection are also truly present together with his body, so that the Lord's Supper is 'the true making present of the event on the cross.' [...] The liturgical form of the holy meal must, however, exclude everything that could give the impression of repetition or completion of the sacrifice on the cross." FCTC, par. 158-159.

³⁷ FCTC, par. 158-159.

³⁸ Cf. FCTC, par. 161.

³⁹ FCTC, par. 178.

The Apostolicity of the Church [document], abbreviation ApC identifies the fundamental task of ordained ministers for both Lutherans and Catholics as the proclamation of the gospel.⁴⁰

Lutherans and Catholics also agree on the responsibility of ordained leadership for the administration of the sacraments.⁴¹

With respect to induction into this special office, there exists the following commonality: 'Induction into this ministry takes place by ordination, in which a Christian is called and commissioned, by prayer and the laying on of hands, for the ministry of public preaching of the gospel in word and sacrament. [...]' (ApC 277).⁴²

Even though Catholics and Lutherans perceive their ministerial structures to transmit the apostolicity of the church differently, they [...] both agree [that], 'the church is apostolic on the basis of fidelity to the apostolic gospel' (ApC 292). This agreement has consequences for Roman Catholic recognition that individuals 'who exercise the office of supervision which in the Roman Catholic Church is performed by bishops' also 'bear a special responsibility for the apostolicity of doctrine in their churches' and therefore cannot be excluded from 'the circle of those whose consensus is according to the Catholic view the sign of apostolicity of doctrine' (ApC 291).⁴³

If, according to the judgment of the Second Vatican Council, the Holy Spirit uses 'ecclesial communities' as means of salvation, it could seem that this work of the Spirit would have implications for some mutual recognition of ministry. Thus, the office of ministry presents both considerable obstacles to common understanding and also hopeful perspectives for rapprochement.⁴⁴

Finally, in the question of Scripture and tradition Lutherans and Catholics were able to say together:

As a consequence of the biblical renewal that inspired the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* of the Second Vatican Council, a new ecumenical understanding of the role and significance of the Holy Scripture has become possible. As the ecumenical document *Apostolicity of the Church* states, 'Catholic doctrine, thus, does not hold what Reformation theology fears and wants at all costs to avoid, namely, a derivation of scriptural authority as canonical and binding from the authority of the church's hierarchy [...]' (ApC 400).⁴⁵

⁴⁰ FCTC, par. 179.

⁴¹ FCTC, par. 181.

⁴² FCTC, par. 183.

⁴³ FCTC, par. 185, emphasis added.

⁴⁴ FCTC, par. 194, emphasis added.

Vatican II does not say that the tradition gives rise to new truths beyond Scripture, but that it conveys certainty about revelation attested by Scripture' (ApC 410).⁴⁶ Thus, Lutherans and Catholics are able jointly to conclude, 'Therefore regarding Scripture and tradition, Lutherans and Catholics are in such an extensive agreement that their different emphases do not of themselves require maintaining the present division of the churches. In this area, there is unity in reconciled diversity' (ApC 448).⁴⁷

Ecumenical dialogues enriched significantly both involved Christian communities. Catholics acknowledge that the dialogues have given them a better understanding of Martin Luther's theology. Joint historical and theological research helps each side to better understand the other. Through dialogue, the points of agreement are discerned and the issues still needing ongoing conversation are identified.⁴⁸ But above that, its most profound value lies in the conviction that 'ecumenical dialogue is the common search for the truth of the Christian faith.'⁴⁹

Ecumenical dialogues thus clearly contribute to rapprochement of churches and to their growing in faith together. They clarify the differences and often resolve them to the point when these are no longer church dividing. That directly facilitates reconciliation of churches as theological disagreements have been among the most important causes of conflicts. Highlighting the achieved results of the process of ecumenical dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans and bringing them to the wide public the document *From the Communion* aims at strengthening the reconciliation also at the grassroots.

Invitation to Celebration, Repentance and Forgiveness

Based on realization that through baptism we belong to the one body of Christ, and thus belong together, the report in its last part invites us to rejoice and celebrate together as well as it invites us – both sides – to self-reflection, repentance and forgiveness, regret over mistakes and short-

⁴⁵ FCTC, par. 206.

⁴⁶ FCTC, par. 207.

⁴⁷ FCTC, par. 210.

⁴⁸ Cf. FCTC, par. 211.

⁴⁹ FCTC, par. 34.

comings. It also calls us to go forward in commitment to bring this world the message of gospel as well as continue on the journey to unity.

Particularly significant is the call to confession of sins against unity. We read:

Because Jesus Christ before his death prayed to the Father 'that they may be one,' it is clear that a division of the body of Christ is opposed to the will of the Lord. It contradicts also the express apostolic admonition that we hear in Ephesians 4:3-6 [...].⁵⁰

As the commemoration in 2017 brings joy and gratitude to expression, so must it also allow room for both Lutherans and Catholics to experience the pain over failures and trespasses, guilt and sin in the persons and events that are being remembered.⁵¹

This guilt and sin is expressed especially in recognizing that:

In the sixteenth century, Catholics and Lutherans frequently not only misunderstood but also exaggerated and caricatured their opponents in order to make them look ridiculous. They repeatedly violated the eighth commandment, which prohibits bearing false witness against one's neighbor. Even if the opponents were sometimes intellectually fair to one another, their willingness to hear the other and to take his concerns seriously was insufficient. The controversialists wanted to refute and overcome their opponents, often deliberately exacerbating conflicts rather than seeking solutions by looking for what they held in common. Prejudices and misunderstandings played a great role in the characterization of the other side. Oppositions were constructed and handed down to the next generation. Here both sides have every reason to regret and lament the way in which they conducted their debates. Both Lutherans and Catholics bear the guilt that needs to be openly confessed in the remembrance of the events of 500 years ago.⁵²

Finally, the last chapter (VI), with its five ecumenical imperatives, invites us to move ahead, to continue on the ecumenical journey with a strong commitment for unity and a strong emphasis on what we have in common rather than what divides us.

⁵⁰ FCTC, par. 230.

⁵¹ FCTC, par. 228.

⁵² FCTC, par. 233.

Conclusion

The Reformation and what followed in the subsequent centuries left Europe, and indeed the world, with another deep wound on it and on the body of Christ. A wound can only be healed under two conditions: 1. if it is cleansed, and 2. if it is not exacerbated anymore. The cleansing process can sometimes hurt as it means exposing and removing pus and dirt. To look at our dirt and pus is not pleasant. It is not enjoyable. But it must be done because it is precisely these that obstruct the healing of the wound.

The first of the above mentioned conditions for healing is initiated in this document and by this process of common retelling of the story of the Reformation, the story of the events which led to division, the story of the origin of the wound; and by the suggested public worship in the recently published *Common Prayer* which includes regretting, grieving, lament, repentance and forgiveness.⁵³ This common prayer will be used on 31 October 2016 in Lund, Sweden, when the highest Lutheran representatives together with Pope Francis will ecumenically open the year of 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It will be consequently used at numerous ecumenical events to mark the half-millennial commemoration. These ecumenical services have a potential of strong healing power, of considerable contribution to the reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics.

Such reconciliation is furthermore promoted – and this is how the second condition for healing is initiated – generally by celebrating the anniversary in ways different from how it was celebrated in the past. It is also brought about by receiving the fruits of the ecumenical dialogues into the (daily) life of the churches.⁵⁴ This also implies that, in the process of our ecumenical rapprochement, we have to give up something. We have to give up “patterns of thought that arise from and emphasize the differences between the confessions.”⁵⁵ By and in our mutual encounters and by our mutual witness we have to be constantly converted and continuously transformed⁵⁶ – to Christ – so that with the help of each other we can become better Christians, more what God calls us and wants us to be

⁵³ *Common Prayer*, 11–19, especially 14–15.

⁵⁴ Cf. Junge, “Scherer lecture”: “the pledge to ecumenical accountability includes the intentional affirmation of the many fruits that the bilateral ecumenical dialogues have born over the last few decades.”

⁵⁵ FCTC, par. 34.

⁵⁶ Cf. FCTC, par. 239, 240, 243.

—so that through us and our witness and service the world may be healed, may experience reconciliation, and may believe.

The process of reconciliation that this document and related events aim at is thus ultimately not an internal question between Lutherans and Catholics. The LWF President Bishop Younan stressed:

The Lund event is an important opportunity for Catholics and Lutherans to reflect together that the reconciliation to which God calls us in Christ is not for ourselves but for the unity of the Church of Christ and of the world.⁵⁷

This whole process is meant to be a sign of hope for the world. Dr. Martin Junge expressed it in these words:

It is my deep hope that this report and above all what we will do with it will speak powerfully to our world that seems to be overshadowed by fragmentation, withdrawal, regression, and communication breakdowns.⁵⁸

The whole process thus aims at becoming an example for the world, a sign of hope that another way of dealing with and resolving of conflicts is possible. And so ultimately in this way the whole process intends to be a witness to the world, a testimony also for other religions,⁵⁹ a proclamation of the gospel, of its healing power for this broken world in our time.⁶⁰ I would like to conclude with a quote of one of the most influential promoters of this document and its message, the General Secretary of the LWF Rev. Dr. Martin Junge:

I'm carried by the profound conviction that by working towards reconciliation between Lutherans and Catholics, we are working towards justice, peace and reconciliation in a world torn apart by conflict and violence.⁶¹

⁵⁷ LWF, "What unites us is stronger."

⁵⁸ Junge, "Scherer lecture."

⁵⁹ Cf. FCTC, par. 15: "How Christians deal with differences among themselves can reveal something about their faith to people of other religions."

⁶⁰ Cf. Donfried, "Renewal," 43.

⁶¹ The Lutheran World Federation, Holy See Press Office, "Press Release: Joint Ecumenical Commemoration of the Reformation in Lund," Geneva/Vatican City 2016, url: <https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/press-release-joint-ecumenical-commemoration-reformation-lund>, (accessed 17 April 2016).

Reconciling with the Newcomers

Ethnic and National Identity Questions in the Work of the World Council of Churches Related to the Contemporary Influx of Refugees and Migrants

Viktória Kóczán and Eddy Van der Borgh

Introduction

Since its beginnings, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has been involved in the protection of people who became migrants and refugees as a consequence of the Second World War.¹ The fourth assembly of Uppsala (1968) adopted the *Statement on the Middle East* in which the WCC expresses its will to "join with all who search for a solution for the refugee and displaced person problems".² Today the work of the WCC on migration is connected to its other work areas on human trafficking, development, conflicts and racism, and a closer cooperation is realized with the United Nations and related agencies. The commitment of the WCC to the support of refugees and migrants is evident from its public communication, and it is clear that as a church organisation, it builds its view on a biblical basis. Although theological elaborations do not make most part of the organisation's texts about migrants and refugees, it is possible to discover underly-

¹ "When the World Council of Churches came into existence in 1948, the disastrous humanitarian impacts of the Second World War were still a very present reality. The international community was still struggling to cope with the massive population displacements caused by conflict and crimes against humanity. Churches and their specialized ministries were key actors in the humanitarian response to this unprecedented suffering, and have continued to be in the forefront of assisting refugees and immigrants, from emergency relief to long-term support." WCC, "Statement on refugees in Europe", Geneva 2015, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/statements/statement-on-refugees-in-europe> (accessed 23 March 2019).

² WCC Central Committee, "Statement on the Middle East", Uppsala 1968, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/1968- uppsala-statement-on-the-middle-east> (accessed 31 January 2019).

top theological texts in the discourse about the issue. A key Christian justification of the protection and support of migrants used by the WCC is the welcoming of the stranger (Matthew 25:35).

The concept of the stranger touches a most relevant point in the European setting of recent years as high numbers of refugees and migrants from the Middle East, Asia and Africa, with many among them of an Islamic religious background, came to Europe in the past few years. The 2015 influx of Syrian refugees caused a humanitarian crisis because European leaders were not able to agree on the solidarity measure with the European border countries that received the bulk of the incoming refugees. Angela Merkel decided to open the German border and assured the German people that the country would be able to deal with this humanitarian crisis ("Wir schaffen das"). Soon this culture of welcoming refugees was countered by populist nationalist discourses claiming that this sudden influx was a threat to national security and to the cultural identity of Europe. They focused especially on migrants coming from countries with Islamic cultures and referred to the 2001 9/11 attacks in the USA and the ISIS terror incidents in Europe since 2014. They blamed the secular European Union for destroying their national 'Jewish-Christian culture'.

From a lived religions perspective, among part of the Christian faithful the anti-migrant and anti-European discourse resonated positively, since they identify Europe with Christian culture. Many other Christians wholeheartedly joined the governmental and civil society efforts to welcome the refugees. Others again felt uncertain and kept silent on this divisive issue. In the Hungarian context, the political agenda makes a clear distinction between groups based on national and ethnic belongings in the field of migration. When a comparison is made between the hospitality of European nations towards Hungarian refugees in 1956 and Hungary's current closed borders, Hungary's official response is that the 1956 migration was smooth and successful because of the similar socio-cultural identity in the other European countries over against the different socio-cultural identity of the current (Islamic) migrants. Many Hungarian Christians – Catholic and Protestant – support this official Fidesz party government decision.

When the end of the Cold War resulted in violence, leading to regional conflicts, wars and ethnic cleansing justified with reference to national and/or ethnic identity, Faith and Order, the theological commission of the WCC that includes Roman Catholic theologians, launched the ETHNAT project (Ethnic Identity, National Identity and the Search for the Unity of the Church). It resulted in the 2005 study *Participating in God's Reconciliation: a Resource for Churches in Situations of Conflict*.³ Since the clo-

sure of this project, the WCC has not dealt with the topic of ethnicity and nationalism in such an extensive way in spite of the present-day rising national and ethnic consciousness permeating not only countries of member churches, but the churches themselves as well, especially against the background of the migration challenge.

This paper analyzes the theology underlying the responses of the WCC to the refugee and migrant crisis from 2015 until today and maps connections between this area of work and the one on ethnicity and nationalism. Our main interest is to see how this organization relates the migrant crisis to the self-understanding of the member churches and national identity issues like the fear of the loss of national identity, while they promote reconciliation and suggest solutions dealing with the problems. We are looking at the WCC's theological assessment of the contemporary refugee and migrant crisis and see whether the WCC links the problems of social-cultural identities to the issue of migration when it theologically assesses the crisis and offers solutions to it.

Materials and methodology

The primary material used for this research consists of different texts published by the WCC. The organisation has published documents related to the topic of migration since the 1948 Amsterdam Assembly. Since this research is concerned with the migrant crisis of 2015 and its developments until today, we concentrate here on documents of the WCC in this time period only. The amount of texts in this time period is more than forty, therefore, a selection had to be made in order to analyse these documents that grasp the ideas of the WCC most efficiently. We include all documents called 'statements' since these texts provide the most detailed and thorough responses to the issue. Conference messages and communiqués are also a primary source of information coming out of meetings organised on our topic. A few speeches are part of this examination as well, as they come from the major representative of the organisation (the general secretary). We will analyse communiqués in order to discuss the recent work of the Joint Working Group (JWG) of the WCC and the Roman Catholic

³ WCC Faith and Order Commission, "Participating in God's Mission of Reconciliation. A Resource for Churches in Situations of Conflict", Geneva 2005, Faith and Order Paper 201, uri: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/faith-and-order/vi-church-and-world/faith-and-order-201> (accessed 24 March 2019).

Church, since their work on migration is still in progress and publication is expected at the end of 2019. As most of these documents have long titles, for the sake of convenience, we refer to them based on the name of the place where they were prepared, read or published. In case of speeches, we refer to them by the author. Most material of the research is published online, therefore online research is one of the methodologies used here. Text analysis and synthesis are the main working methods of the paper.

The documents

*Statement on responses to migrant crises, Etchmiadzin, 12 June 2015*⁴

Context and authors

Two months after a shipwreck south of Lampedusa, ending in a loss of life of around six hundred fifty migrants and a month after the quota proposal of the European Commission,⁵ which was supported by countries like Germany and Italy but opposed by others like Hungary, the executive committee of the WCC at one of their regular meetings published a statement on the migrant crises. It was the organisation's first published writing in 2015 to approach the topic of migration.

Content

The statement indicates the committee's grave concern about people undertaking dangerous journeys as they flee from situations of violence and conflict. In order to call the attention to the global nature of the problem, specific reference is made to migrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea, to the Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants, to Ethiopian Christian migrant workers killed in Libya and to xenophobic violence against migrants in South Africa. The aim is twofold. The WCC expects states to

⁴ WCC Executive Committee, "Statement on responses to migrant crises", Etchmiadzin 2015, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/etchmiadzin-june-2015/statement-on-responses-to-migrant-crises-doc-no-29-rev> (accessed 12 March 2019).

⁵ In May 2015, the European Commission proposed binding quotas for migrant relocation in order to share the responsibility for large amounts of migrants and asylum seekers in the European Union.

save the lives that are put to danger during the journey to reach the new land, and it calls on states to provide protection to migrants and refugees in the receiving countries regardless of their status. The WCC is of the opinion that closing borders is harmful for all parties: for the migrants, the refugees and for the receiving societies as well. The document highlights the unfair distribution of people in the European Union, as it reacts to the situation of Italy and Greece taking the biggest burden in the migrant distribution and suggests fair allocation of responsibilities for migrants in the EU. As the organisation is involved in work against human trafficking and smuggling, the statement reacts to this problem as well. The WCC shares the view that migration is a phenomenon rooted in conflicts, oppression, occupation and poverty. Therefore, it argues that these root causes of migration should be eliminated.

Theological argument

This early document is provided with a motto (Matthew 25:35) from the Judgment of the Nations, but it does not offer an explicit theological assessment of the theme of migration in the light of the highlighted events. At this point, the committee seems to identify the stranger who needs food, drink and welcoming with Jesus himself and seems to suggest that to belong to Jesus, to be a Christian, requires the attitude of offering hospitality to refugees and migrants.

*2. Statement on refugees in Europe, Geneva, 4 September 2015*⁶

Context and authors

This statement, published by the general secretary of the WCC, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, was the second major writing of the WCC related to the migration crisis in the year 2015 that witnessed hundreds of people drowning in the sea and several countries strengthening their borders. In the first days of September, global media concentrated on Hungary as thousands of migrants were held back at Keleti railway station in Budapest since the Hungarian government wanted to register them according to the Dublin Regulation. A day later, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel would announce that no number limits would be set to the right to asylum.

⁶ WCC, "Statement on refugees in Europe".

The text of the WCC general secretary acknowledges that the year 2015 brought the most serious refugee crisis since World War II. The needs are considered so high that consultation and action do not meet them. He writes that the WCC and its member churches have been committed to support refugees and displaced people since the beginning of the organisation (1948).

Also, this statement highlights the reasons behind the crisis: conflicts, oppression and extreme poverty. The WCC argues that all EU states should take part in the reception and support of these people without any discrimination, and it is *shocked* by the rejection of some based on religion. While the organisation acknowledges that some churches offer help for the migrants and refugees, it feels the urge to encourage all churches to welcome the stranger. In order to achieve the goals, it argues that ecumenical cooperation is needed.

Theological argument

The theological argument in this document is partly based on the previously mentioned text of Matthew 25:35, but it is developed further, as Matthew 2:13 is added to provide the ground for the claim that the Church is the church of a child refugee. As a consequence, the WCC calls on the global church to base their identity, integrity and vocation on the element of the “stranger”.

There is no agreement among the member churches regarding the reaction to the refugees and migrants, there is no unity in decision making and policies: “Some churches are taking a lot of responsibility in this situation”, while others need to be encouraged to do so. Although the common Christian belief and practice unites the churches of different nations and denominations, their views on and responses to migration differ. The goal of the WCC seems to be to achieve a common vision and practice regarding refugees and migrants among all member churches, which is based on the identity of Jesus himself who crossed borders and was a stranger among strangers in the Egyptian land.

7 WCC, “Statement on refugees in Europe”.

3. Church Leaders’ Consultation on the European Refugee Crisis: Communiqué, Munich, 29 October 2015⁸

Context and authors

A few weeks after the “Wir schaffen das” assertion of Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel, the WCC, the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) and the Lutheran Church in Bavaria organised a consultation in Munich with the participation of 25 representatives from churches and ecumenical organisations. The meeting aimed at providing an opportunity for the participants of sending, transit and receiving countries to exchange their experiences.

Content

The main areas of discussion were the tragic situation in the Middle East, and the refugees from there and from Africa. The document is divided into two main parts: affirmations about migration (the faith of the church and her responsibility) and recommendations (actual work plans for the future).

The document emphasizes that the writers welcome every refugee in Europe and cherish the gifts that they bring to their new countries. Like other texts examined previously, this one also points to the origins of migration: war, persecution and injustice people experience in their homeland. The participants of the consultation appeal for the end to all these challenges.

Another similar point of the consultation with earlier WCC texts is the commitment to universal and ecumenical cooperation: in the light of the renationalization of politics, the participants oppose working in isolation. Since Europe is seeing fear and anxiety in connection with the refugees, they emphasize collaboration and cooperation. They commit to help refugees to work for their new future. According to the text, a new paradigm of fragility appears. The group also welcomes a deeper cooperative work with the UN.

⁸ WCC, “Church Leaders’ Consultation on the European Refugee Crisis: Communiqué”, Munich 2015, url: <https://www.olkoumene.org/en/resources/documents/other-meetings/communiquemunich> (accessed 12 March 2019).

Following these affirmations, the second part of the document provides recommendations. The participants wish to accompany their governments to find solutions not only on the short term, but on the long one as well. Regarding the realm of politics, they warn about using the crisis for political ambitions or benefits. They acknowledge that people in receiving countries are facing fear: fear of competing with others, losing identity, losing the security of material things and jobs. Instead they encourage people to look at the refugees as blessings that bring new life and energy. The fear of losing identity in host nations is recognized, but the issue is not elaborated in detail.

Besides cooperation on long term solutions, the participants of the consultation offer their experience and expertise to the governments in the area of spiritual and pastoral support, ecumenical and interreligious cooperation and bridge building between different communities. They urge every good willing individual to communicate the truth and not its distortion or exaggeration. As far as international matters are concerned, they suggest helping neighbouring countries, to accept refugees, to invest into safe passage and to support transit countries.

Theological argument

The section of affirmations sets off with offering a twofold theological basis for the argumentation of welcoming refugees and migrants. The Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 25:30–46) is used to justify that the stranger should be identified with Christ himself. Verses from the story of creation (Gen 1:26–27) appear as new elements and are used to prove that every human being is created by God in his image and likeness. The story of the refugee Jesus is applied to show that migration is connected to the life of the Church: there is a relation between Jesus and his family and the refugees of today because Jesus' family were also refugees. As a fourth theological element, the text draws a parallel between the refugees' border crossing and Jesus' incarnation that is a border crossing between God and humanity.

4. 'Have no Fear': A Statement, Lunteren, 16 June 2016⁹

Context and authors

The WCC together with the Conference of European Churches (CEC), the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) and the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN) organised a conference in Lunteren, the Netherlands, between 14th and 16th June 2016 in order to reflect on ecumenical responses to the global refugee crisis. The participants represented European churches and ecumenical organisations who work with and for refugees.

Content

The conference produced a three page long document that calls the attention to fear, a force that forms an obstacle in the way of humanitarian help. As it talks about fear, it adds a new element to the concept. The previous document (Munich) dealt with the theme of fear as it permeates host societies, but Lunteren is the first text that elaborates on the fear of the refugees: they fear violence, hence they flee from their home countries, they fear the journey they have to make in order to reach a safe country since many lose their lives, and they fear the reactions of the host countries as well. Munich only dealt with the problems of host countries fearing the effect of immigration on social norms and values, and fearing that immigration consumes the local resources. It pointed to the fact that this fear is used and manipulated by politics. Lunteren deals with the issue of the silence of some churches and civil society organisations as they do not address the issues of migration in public even though they help refugees and migrants in practical ways complementing the services of the state. The reason, as Lunteren explains, is that these organisations are mindful of social tensions and have inner tensions as well concerning the issue. However, this document calls on churches and related organisations to voice their views in the public debate.

⁹ WCC-CEC-CCME-PKN, "Have no Fear". A Statement", Lunteren 2016, uri: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/umer/migration-from-the-margins/migration/have-no-fear> (accessed 12 March 2019).

Theological argument

The theological approach to the solution *Lustereen* seems to provide is for the first time based on an Old Testament text: "So do not fear, for I am with you." (Isaiah 41:10) and connects it to the New Testament text emphasizing the importance of hospitality to strangers (Hebrews 13:2).

5. Statement on the Forced Displacement Crisis, Trondheim, 28 June 2016¹⁰

Context and authors

As the central committee of the WCC met in Trondheim, Norway from 22nd to 28th June 2016, a statement was published on the crisis of forced displacement.

Content

Similarly to previous documents, this statement uses Matthew 25:35 as a major biblical guide in the assessment of migration. To emphasize how serious the problem of migration is, it sets off by describing the world as a place of a "historic crisis of forced displacement" and like in previous texts, it traces back migration to conflict, persecution, and disasters among others. Due to conflicts in the Middle East and the insecurity, more than 65 million people were forced to leave their countries in 2015, more than one million crossed the Mediterranean, many were smuggled and more than 3770 lost their lives. In the first half of 2016, more than 2850 died. As other documents like Etchmiadzin, this text refers to the crisis as global: people crossing the Mediterranean, Rohingyas and Bangladeshis crossing the Andaman Sea, and Central and South Americans moving to the US. The text addresses the Latin American reality as there forced migration is connected to corruption and organized crime. It refers to the UNHCR data: the number of asylum seekers from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador increased by five times between 2012 and 2015. The reactions of the receiving countries varied. The central committee of the WCC "affirms

¹⁰ WCC Central Committee, "Statement on the Forced Displacement Crisis", Trondheim 2016, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/2016/statement-on-the-forced-displacement-crisis> (accessed 12 March 2019).

and celebrates the efforts of communities and of churches to provide help and support to those passing through or arriving in their countries".¹¹ The text describes how churches and organisations reacted (ACT, CCME, WCC). The WCC also cooperated with UN partners UNICEF, UNHCR and UNFPA and organised a conference on the refugee crisis (January 2016).

The WCC is sorry that often refugees are feared and rejected by countries. Political actors have frequently aroused public concern and increased fear for political advantage. Churches often have not welcomed the stranger. The WCC believes that all people have the right to asylum –

the fundamental principle that all people fleeing from conflict and persecution are entitled to seek international protection regardless of nationality, ethnicity, religion, health status or any criterion other than need.¹²

The WCC Central Committee "acknowledges and respects the prerogative of sovereign states to define arrangements for the control of their own borders and the conditions of entry and stay and recognizes the practical and political challenges posed by the numbers of people arriving."¹³ It also requires that all states

honour the letter and spirit of their obligations under international law, including human rights and refugee law and especially the right of asylum. [...] And states receiving refugees should refrain from imposing oppressive and inhumane constraints upon family reunification that cause suffering and impede social integration, such as lengthening waiting periods.¹⁴

The Committee "reiterates and underlines the WCC's deep concern for the lives of the tens of millions of people forcibly displaced globally"¹⁵ and it stresses that the root causes need to be addressed.

The Central Committee addresses the question of fear present in those communities that receive large numbers of refugees and migrants and they also acknowledge the fear of losing security, culture, tradition and identity. However, they require a positive attitude towards the refugees and migrants referring to the common themes in the WCC documents,

¹¹ WCC, "Forced Displacement Crisis".

¹² WCC, "Forced Displacement Crisis".

¹³ WCC, "Forced Displacement Crisis".

¹⁴ WCC, "Forced Displacement Crisis".

¹⁵ WCC, "Forced Displacement Crisis".

the "common humanity" of the "shared God-given human dignity", the Cadden Rule, and other biblical passages that emphasize hospitality and the love of God (James 1:27; Matthew 23:33; John 14:27). Although the Bible has the church as clearly defined by the document, it does not tackle the source of the problem but is generated by difference, clashes of views, customs, traditions that are rooted in socio-cultural identities.

6. *Statement on US Presidential Executive Order "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" and its Impact on Refugees, US, 31 January 2017*¹⁶

Context and authors

The background of the statement was that the US under its new president Donald Trump suspended refugee admissions for 120 days and banned Syrian refugees indefinitely. It suspended entry for nationals of seven Muslim-majority countries in order to protect the nation from terrorists. This common statement was published together by the WCC, the ACT Alliance and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Content

The organisations are of the opinion that this presidential order will further harm the victims. They

affirm and insist that, as prescribed under international humanitarian and human rights law, all those in confirmed need of refuge and international protection have a right to receive it, regardless of their religious or ethnic identity.¹⁷

Pressing on the importance of the US in resettlement, they state:

¹⁶ WCC-ACT-LWF, "Statement on US Presidential Executive Order 'Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States' and its Impact on Refugees", 2017, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/joint-declarations/statement-on-us-presidential-executive-order-on-refugees> (accessed 22 March 2019).

¹⁷ WCC-ACT-LWF, "US Presidential Executive Order".

As one of the most significant destination countries for refugee resettlement worldwide, we urge the United States to uphold its long tradition of welcoming refugees and offering them international protection, in accordance with its commitments and obligations under international law.¹⁸

The authors express a special concern about the suspension of Syrian refugees and see it as "an abysmal failure of compassion and responsibility". They share this view with many Christian leaders of different denominations both from the US and outside, and they "welcome the ecumenical unanimity of perspective on this issue". The organisations see the road to the solution of the problem in the common global witness of Christians:

The gravity of the matter, and the suffering of so many forcibly displaced people around the world, demands nothing less than a united Christian witness for human dignity and for justice, and partnership with the many others from other faith communities who have spoken out against these measures.¹⁹

Theological argument

The organisations reaffirm the conviction that Christian faith calls "to love and welcome the stranger, the refugee, the internally displaced person, the other".²⁰ As a basis of this statement, the following Scripture passages are referred to: Leviticus 19:33–34, Deuteronomy 23:15–16 and Matthew 25:34–36.

7. *WCC expresses grave concern for Rohingya people in Myanmar, Myanmar, 14 September 2017*²¹

Context and author

In this text by the general secretary of the WCC, the WCC shows concern about the stateless people of Myanmar, as 379,000 Rohingya people fled to Bangladesh.

¹⁸ WCC-ACT-LWF, "US Presidential Executive Order".

¹⁹ WCC-ACT-LWF, "US Presidential Executive Order".

²⁰ WCC-ACT-LWF, "US Presidential Executive Order".

²¹ WCC, "WCC expresses grave concern for Rohingya people in Myanmar", Geneva

The WCC affirms the human dignity of every human being and is “committed to lifting up the voices of the vulnerable and most vulnerable”.²² The WCC wants to see the end of violence that caused this displacement and the safety of the people without persecution due to ethnic or religious identity. They also “appeal for all the refugees to be received and cared for appropriately” and “call for the international community to provide all needed support, until the refugees are able to return to their homes and communities in conditions of safety and dignity”.²³ This short statement lacks a theological argument.

8. *Communiqués by the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the RCC, Lisbon, 12–15 September 2017 and Ottmaring, 3–7 September 2018*²⁴

Content

Although this research does not pay a great emphasis on *communiqués*, these texts are important, because the JWG of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) had recently chosen the issue of migration as one of their two special foci. At their meeting from September 12–15, 2017 in Lisbon, they discussed

the role of culture, religion, and dialogue in peace-building and the challenges and opportunities for ecumenical cooperation concerning migrants and refugees [...] In light of the teachings of Jesus Christ according to the Gospel.²⁵

2017, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-expresses-grave-concern-for-rohingya-people-in-myanmar> (accessed 22 March 2019).

²² WCC, “WCC expresses grave concern”.

²³ WCC, “WCC expresses grave concern”.

²⁴ JWG, “Communiqué by the Joint Working Group, September 2017”, Lisbon 2017, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/jwg-rcc-wcc/communique-by-the-joint-working-group-september-2017> (accessed 22 March 2019); JWG, “Communiqué by the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the RCC, September 2018”, 2018, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/communique-by-the-joint-working-group-between-the-wcc-and-the-rcc-september-2018> (accessed 22 March 2019).

²⁵ JWG, “Communiqué 2017”.

Two theme groups were formed, one on peace-building and the other on concerns of migrants and refugees.

The JWG considers the current situation of migrants and refugees to be a significant “sign of the times” (Lisbon) and they find it necessary that all churches respond to this situation and cooperate with others who work in the field. The tasks ahead of churches working together are “welcoming, protecting, integrating and empowering refugees and migrants” (Lisbon). As distinguishing migration from earlier migration times – migration has been part of human history –, they state that today churches are increasingly concerned about racism and the rejection of the migrants and are “committed to strengthening a culture of openness and inclusiveness” (Lisbon). A present goal of the JWG is to prepare pastoral recommendations for both the RCC and the WCC on the theme with the aim to “bring the churches to greater unity in addressing areas of vital concern” (Lisbon).²⁶ The JWG emphasizes ecumenical cooperation for the caring for the migrants and refugees as a shared Christian responsibility which can strengthen common witness. According to the JWG, migrants and refugees are both a challenge and an opportunity for our societies and churches.

9. *Message from the conference “Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration”, Rome, 20 September 2018*²⁷

Context and authors

Governmental, intergovernmental, civil society, academic, religious, and ecumenical leaders gathered in Rome, Italy from 18–20 September 2018 at a conference organized jointly by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD, Vatican City) and the WCC in collaboration with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU, Vatican City).

²⁶ JWG, “Communiqué 2017”.

²⁷ DPIHD-WCC-PCPCU, “Message from the conference ‘Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration’”, Rome 2018, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/message-from-the-conference-xenophobia-racism-and-populist-nationalism-in-the-context-of-global-migration-19-september-2018> (accessed 10 January 2019).

The leaders acknowledged the existence of marginalization and stigmatization in the church as they gathered

to describe, analyze, understand and address the exclusion, marginalization, stigmatization and criminalization of migrants and refugees, and the justifications for these attitudes and discourses which now exist in several different parts of the world, even within the churches.²⁸

They are convinced of equal rights and dignity of human beings:

The common basis for our reflections is the conviction that all human beings are equal in dignity and rights and equally to be respected and protected, and as a consequence we are called by God to resist evil, to act justly, and pursue peace to transform the world.²⁹

Similarly to the words of Pope Francis at the same conference, the participants viewed migration as inherent to the human condition and to the history of mankind including the biblical narrative. According to the document, all people are migrants and belong to the same family of human beings. They recognize the right to return to their home country and the right to asylum outside of the home country and share the view that all people, independent of their status, should have rights. They believe first of all that migration contributes positively to both countries (destination and origin) and they recognize that the rights of undocumented migrants should be protected.

Analysing the causes and effects of hate speech and tensions (between countries and different communities) they point to the following issues at stake while people encounter the vulnerable other seeking asylum: xenophobia (the fear of the foreigner) is expressed by exclusion, indifference, rejection, denial of help. The sources of this fear can go back to personal or collective past events as well and maybe fed by the fear of losing identity, security, and power. Another issue that is at stake is racism. They define racism as “the systemic and systematic impact of actions taken against groups of people based on the colour of their skin”. The separation of peo-

²⁸ DPIHD-WCC-PCPCU, “Message from the conference”.

²⁹ DPIHD-WCC-PCPCU, “Message from the conference”.

ple is based on false notions of purity and superiority. The expressions of racism are similar to that of xenophobia: “marginalization, discrimination and exclusion”. They state that racism is a sin, “it denies human dignity and the mutual belonging to the one human family, and defaces the image of God in every human being.”³⁰ A third issue is populist nationalism. It

seeks to rely on and promote the fears of individuals and groups in order to assert the need for an authoritarian political power to protect the interests of the dominant social or ethnic group established on a particular territory. It is in the name of this “protection” that populist leaders justify the refusal to offer refuge, to receive and to integrate individuals or groups from other countries or different cultural or religious contexts.³¹

Theological argument

In terms of theological explanations, the migration experience in the Abrahamic traditions is used to show people on the move, people accompanied by God. The idea of hospitality is referred to as an important biblical element. The story of Sarah and Abraham (Genesis 18:1–16), the prophets and Jesus as the stranger (Matthew 25:35–40) all serve to show migrants should be welcome based on “an act of love inspired by faith”.³²

10. Greetings of Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit: World Conference on Xenophobia, Racism, and Populist Nationalism In the Context of Global Migration and Refugees, Rome, 18 September 2018³³

Context and author

The general secretary of the WCC conveys his greetings at the previously mentioned conference.

³⁰ DPIHD-WCC-PCPCU, “Message from the conference”.

³¹ DPIHD-WCC-PCPCU, “Message from the conference”.

³² DPIHD-WCC-PCPCU, “Message from the conference”.

³³ Olav Fykse Tveit, “Greetings of Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit : World Conference on Xenophobia, Racism, and Populist Nationalism In the Context of Global Migration and Refugees”, Rome 2018, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/doc>

The general secretary of the WCC defines the reason of the conference as a call from God that is conveyed by the migrants, many of whom lack security and hope. The task of the conference participants is to address fear: "fear of the other, the expressions of that fear, the political use or abuse of fear, and the cynical profit from the fear of refugees and migrants."³⁴

Tveit seems to differentiate between two types of fear. He explains that to feel fear and anxiety is human and to protect the ones we love is a natural phenomenon. However, there seems to be another kind of "fear", the one that divides and polarizes and creates more fear. According to Tveit, this type of fear should be confronted by the churches: "Churches are called to confront together the destructive forces of fear, of xenophobia, racism, and populist, exclusive nationalism".³⁵ As Tveit argues, these types of fear result in closed identities that neglect the right and dignity of the other. Binary oppositions are created by those who fear: us - them; our security - their vulnerability; our wealth - their right for life and livelihood. He mentions the Hungarian refugees of the 1950s that was his first encounter with refugees.

According to Tveit, refugees are one of the most vulnerable groups of people today. Many of them lost their lives during the journey for a better life, and all who are able to help must address this issue. Offering help means not becoming inhuman. In Tveit's opinion, it seems that the boundary between human and non-human is stepped across by offering support and help the other human being. Those who do not help the vulnerable do not behave in a human way. He mentions positive examples from the European scene: Italy, France and Belgium.

Theological argument

Tveit provides a theological grounding for the described behaviour towards migrants: he talks about the love of God that casts out fear (1 John 4:18). He urges the church to "stand for neighbour love and justice, for strong relationships of mutual support, for unity in the diversity of humankind".³⁶

uments/greeting-by-rev-dr-olav-tykse-tveit-world-conference-on-xenophobia-racism-and-populist-nationalism-in-the-context-of-global-migration-and-refugees (accessed 12 March 2019).

³⁴ Tveit, "Greetings".

³⁵ Tveit, "Greetings".

He envisions a future without the fear of the other and urges the church to hope for it.

He reflects on the love of Christ that is more than emotions as it renews the broken relationship of God and the world. From this love, he argues, Christians have the responsibility for all creatures of God as Christ even talked about loving our enemies. Christ's love requires people "to resist exclusion based on fear, the fear that fuels xenophobia and exclusive nationalism".³⁷ He lists different achievements and events (the visit of the Pope to the WCC in Geneva, ecumenical dialogue, inter-religious dialogue, youth formation, climate justice) as a line where the conference on migrants and refugees is a further common step. As he phrases: "We see that together we can contribute to heal and reconcile societies deeply divided in their reaction to foreigners and strangers, to the poor and marginalized in their midst."³⁸

He stresses the importance of "love, of unity in diversity, of healing and salvation, of hospitality and solidarity with all who are in need".³⁹ Millions of migrants and refugees should be helped to have safety and new homes. The following tasks are there to be accomplished: societies must be helped as they are divided by xenophobia, racism and hatred; women and children should be protected so they are not abused and are treated with dignity; churches should become authentic communities, "defending human rights and accountable in our faith, especially to the most vulnerable and marginalized"⁴⁰; the consequences of sinful economic structures should be addressed and overcome.

He sees this will happen through love:

Love will bind us as churches and as Christians to each other and to our neighbours across the street and around the world. Love will free us from distorted values and deep prejudice. Love will see through the falsehoods of racism and tribalism. Love will open us up to learn from criticism and self-criticism of our own complicity. Love will fire our dreams of freedom and peace. Love will unleash new visions, creative thinking, and fresh approaches to our steepest challenges. And love will give us the courage and stamina, the heart and soul, to rescue progress from deep danger, and peace from peril.⁴¹

³⁶ Tveit, "Greetings".

³⁷ Tveit, "Greetings".

³⁸ Tveit, "Greetings".

³⁹ Tveit, "Greetings".

⁴⁰ Tveit, "Greetings".

⁴¹ Tveit, "Greetings".

11. *Statement on People on the Move: Migrants and Refugees, Uppsala, 7 November 2018*⁴²

Context and authors

The WCC Executive Committee issued the statement in Uppsala, Sweden.

Content

The first part of the statement describes and analyses the phenomenon of migration. It states that the movement of people is an inherent feature of the human condition, and it belongs to human history as well as it is an integral part of the biblical narrative. It lists several different reasons that make people move, both voluntarily and involuntarily. It refers to the situation of wealthier countries in the Global North where political parties and figures play upon “people’s fears about the impact of migrants and refugees on their societies, economies and cultural identities”.⁴³ It mentions some responses of the international community (2016 *New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants*; *Global Compact on Refugees*; *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*). It acknowledges the efforts of many churches that offered welcome and support to refugees and migrants and aimed at countering the atmosphere of fear, exclusion, racism and xenophobia prevalent in wealthier destination countries. It states that the WCC has taken great effort to address this question at the international level, including organising with the Roman Catholic Church a conference on Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the Context of Global Migration and taking part in the Global Forum for Faith Action for Children on the Move. After this descriptive part, the statement continues with listing the executive committee’s responsive actions to the described situation.

The committee strongly reaffirms support for the institution of asylum, the principle of non-refoulement, the 1951 UN Refugee Convention as essential instruments for the protection of people obliged to flee [...] as well as reaffirming the right to return [...].⁴⁴

⁴² WCC Executive Committee, “Statement on People on the Move: Migrants and Refugees”, Uppsala 2018, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/upsala-november-2018/statement-on-people-on-the-move-migrants-and-refugees> (accessed 23 March 2019).

⁴³ WCC, “Statement on People on the Move”.

The committee calls for respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights. The committee expresses particular concern about children on the move and abhors the practice of separating families. The committee calls upon members of the international community to adopt the Global Compacts on refugees and safe migration. They call for action for safe pathways, combatting xenophobia, inclusion and integration, responsibility sharing, ending drivers of forced displacement. They urge churches to learn about the situation of migrants in their home countries, and link support and advocacy with engagement and accompaniment of migrants and refugees. They urge inclusion, greater social cohesion to create openness and solidarity. They appeal for increased ecumenical and international solidarity with children, women and men on the move.

Theological argument

The committee lifts up and affirms the example of many churches that welcome the refugees and migrants. A theological explanation is that welcoming the stranger, the refugees and the migrants is to be true servants of Christ. The executive committee acknowledges that many people in countries receiving significant numbers of migrants and refugees are concerned and fearful (society, economy, religion, and cultural identity) and that national governments have the legitimate responsibility to control borders, ensure security, promote stability and prosperity. A further theological contribution to issues of migration from the WCC is that “all refugees and migrants [...] are [...] created in the image of God, children of God, sisters and brothers, with equal human dignity and rights”. The committee states that “to raise national boundaries and the nation state to an order of value above the recognition of the image of God in every refugee and migrant is a kind of idolatry”. The committee affirms the declaration of the Rome conference as it declares that “to refuse to receive and help those in need is contrary to the example and calling of Jesus Christ.” A further theological contribution is, “God identifies with migrants through the life of Christ and calls us to care for people on the move in vulnerable situations, fleeing conflict, violence, persecution, famine and economic hardship.”⁴⁵

⁴⁴ WCC, “Statement on People on the Move”.

⁴⁵ WCC, “Statement on People on the Move”.

*1.1. Taizé Greetings WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, Madrid, 28 December 2018*⁴⁶

Context and author

At the Taizé's 41st European Youth Encounter, the general secretary of the WCC greeted the participants with a message that focused on the idea of hospitality as a special charisma of Taizé.

Theological argument

The motto was chosen from Ephesians (2:20) that speaks about the experience of strangers and aliens becoming members of God's household. Tveit describes hospitality as a relationship of welcome, mutuality and friendship with its risks when people invite others into their homes and hearts. Tveit states that hospitality belongs to the nature of God who is hosting humankind in this world and emphasizes that today hospitable love is needed to be given to the immigrants, refugees and the homeless, to those who are different from us.

Conclusion

The WCC has been following the political and social developments of the migrant crisis since 2015, have reacted to major events and voiced its opinion in different statements, news releases and speeches. We analyzed thirteen documents: five were the outcome of regular meetings of different working groups (Etchiadzin, Trondheim, Lisbon, Ottmaring, Uppsala), five were produced or presented at conferences with national churches and global ecumenical bodies (Munich, Lunteren, Rome, Tveit Rome, Madrid) and three were statements of the WCC reacting to political and social events (Geneva, US, Myanmar). The majority of documents are the results of cooperation with other organisations (Munich, Lunteren, Lisbon, Ottmaring, Rome, Tveit Rome, Madrid) and only one fourth was an immediate response to actual global events.

⁴⁶ Olav Fykse Tveit, "Taizé Greetings WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit 28 December 2018", Madrid 2018, url: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/taize-greetings-wcc-general-secretary-rev-dr-olav-fykse-tveit-28-december-2018> (accessed 2 January 2019).

The content of the documents demonstrates that similarly to the UN and related agencies, the WCC focuses on supporting refugees, welcoming them in the destination countries, integrating them in societies, and it argues also for putting an end to the political and social reasons that cause mass migrations. A stressed point in the documents – mostly those of 2016 – is the fear societies and churches struggle with, and their rejection of and hostility towards refugees and migrants. Part of this fear is about the loss of identity that plays a very important role in the Hungarian society. Munich recognizes this fear of losing identity in hosting countries. This statement also perceives the renationalization of politics, which indicates an awareness of the role of nationalism within the context of the migration crisis. The US statement alludes to the significance of ethnic and religious identity differences in the processes of international refuge and protection. Lisbon points out the increasing racism churches are concerned about. Uppsala acknowledges the fear of the possible change of Western cultural identities due to the impact of migration.

In its theological reasoning, the WCC uses both Old Testament and New Testament passages to support its vision on hospitality and welcoming. While migration is viewed as an integral part of human history, migrants and refugees are considered part of the one human family created in the image and likeness of God, therefore strangers are brothers and sisters and it is a human obligation to welcome and help them. From a New Testament point of view, they embody Christ who commanded his audience to welcome and support the stranger, the hungry, the thirsty and the needy.

The theological discussions of migration in 2015 started with the identification of the stranger with the refugees and migrants (Matthew 25) and became extended later with the interpretation of man created after the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1). Munich depicts Jesus crossing the border between God and humanity: a parallel between the refugees' border crossing and Jesus' incarnation. This argument begs a few questions. Does it mean that Jesus entered a completely new reality just like refugees enter a new, for them unknown country? Can we talk about a vulnerable baby Jesus, does it mean that Jesus was vulnerable as a baby in the same way as refugees are in the new land? Does it mean that Jesus was a refugee in this world escaping from Heaven? Does it mean that Jesus was not accepted by many in this world just like refugees are not accepted by many in the receiving country? And if all the answers are positive, what are the consequences?

In 2016, the theological argument of Lunteren and Trondheim emphasize no fear and hospitality. In 2017, the JWG brings a new element

into the discussion. Migration, one of the major contemporary social issues that divides churches today, is being turned from a dividing one to a uniting one, a common service that brings churches closer to each other. The group plans to provide pastoral and practical recommendations in this issue that can foster ecumenical cooperation. In 2018, the Rome conference document adds to the discussion that migration is an inherent experience in the Abrahamic traditions. It recognizes that people's fear of migrants suggests that this phenomenon has to be examined as well.

The WCC's awareness of the challenges of socio-cultural identities in the contemporary migration crisis is indicated in several documents. The organisation offers theological views on the problem mostly providing ethical responses that are based on the narrative of love and hope. However, this answer does not seem to be sufficient, since it does not provide solutions to issues that cause fear rooted in the differences of socio-cultural identities. To further contribute to the much expressed goal of hospitality and ecumenical cooperation as well as supporting member churches encountering fear, silence and division, theological reflection on socio-cultural identities in the contemporary crisis of global migration would be an utmost necessity.

Healing of Memories in Romania – A Bridge between Churches, Cultures and Religions

A Project of Loving one's Neighbour

Olga Lukács

In the years after the events of 1989 the churches in Transylvania tried to strengthen their positions shattered during the decades of Communism. The Greek-Catholic church that was dissolved at the beginning of the communist regime also managed to reorganise itself. After the transition, the representatives of the historic churches in Transylvania fought both by political and legal means to recover the nationalised land, real estate and the seized church assets. The churches, prayer houses and parish houses were rehabilitated, and new ones were built. The inner spiritual life of the churches got revived and the ecumenical movement emerged from within and found a new path based on free conviction.

Unfortunately, churches were often the very source of conflicts as they strengthened and approved of the prejudices arising among the individuals of different cultural, linguistic and ethnic communities, thus hindering peaceful coexistence. In this article, I explore a remarkable project, a healing process for the churches in Romania. It developed into a comprehensive project¹, which required the cooperation among history, cultural studies, psychology and sociology.

¹ Healing of Memories as a religious project converged with the objectives set forth in the Charta Oecumenica. It first started in South Africa, being initiated by the local Christian churches. Its aim was to deal with the injuries and the painful events that took place among individuals, cultures and religions. The first event of the kind in Europe took place in Northern Ireland in the 90s. Cf. H. Russel Botman, Robin M. Petersen (eds.), *To Remember and to Heal. Theological and Psychological Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation*, Cape Town / Pretoria / Johannesburg 1996; Wahrheits- und Versöhnungskommission Südafrika, *Das Schweigen ist gebrochen "Out of the Shadows". Geschichte – Anhörungen – Perspektiven*, Frankfurt a.M. 2000.

In Romania, the Healing of Memories project (hereinafter referred to as HoMR) has aimed at implementing the Charta Oecumenica signed in Strasbourg on 22 April 2001.² The 12 chapters of the Charter set forth various principles for the prerequisites of interconfessional, intercultural and interreligious relations whose points were tried out in practice in an ecumenical project.

On 4 June 2004, the Conference of European Churches and the board of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe decided to undertake the healing process for the Christian churches in Romania that was a joint endeavour with the churches in Romania, the first part being supervised by the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe while the second is still being supervised constantly by the Conference of European Churches. The Healing of Memories project was preceded by an interconfessional and interdisciplinary study and consultation. The study compared the historic perspectives of the churches, denominations and cultures in Romania.³

Initially the project management was undertaken by the World Council of Churches and its coordination was entrusted to Dieter Brandes, Lutheran priest and economist, highly experienced in international relations, former Director of the Gustav Adolf Werk in Leipzig.⁴ The Healing

of Memories project was preceded in Cluj in May 2005 by an interconfessional and interdisciplinary study and consultation. The study compared the historic perspectives of the churches, denominations and cultures in Transylvania.⁵

The outstanding historical perspective of the healing of memories process aimed at gaining access to the various religious and historic perspectives, the participants learning as much as possible about each other, accept the others' approach and share the pain caused by different historic events with each other. The project dealt with the positive relationships among the churches as well as the conflicts and the offences, judgments and misunderstandings that the different nationalities, cultures and religious denominations encountered during the centuries. Overcoming the inner, deep injuries could open new possibilities for coexistence, and Transylvania could become a role model in the future for the entire Europe.

The Theoretical Necessity of the Healing of Memories Project

The starting point of the HoMR project was a paper summarising the decades of experience in reconciliation, published by the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches. The paragraph on the »Reconciliation of Memories« in the collection starts with the following sentence:

Human development, and all acquired knowledge, are to a great extent based on the ability to organize and take advantage of memory. Without memory human beings cannot take advantage of what they have learned or experienced. [...] Memory enables every human being to function effectively.⁶

During their history all human communities preserve their identity by memories. Memory connects us with the living as well as with the previous generations since "what has passed it is not dead yet; it hasn't passed yet".⁷

schen Kirche in Rumänien", *epd-Dokumentation* 40 (2005), 58–63; "Der Weg von Rom über Wittenberg nach Hermannstadt", *Materialdienst (MD) des Konfessionskundlichen Institutes Bensheim* 3 (2006), 52–53;

⁵ Brandes, "Eine Aufgabe christlicher Kirchen in Europa".

⁶ World Council of Churches (WCC) Faith and Order Commission, "Participating in God's Mission of Reconciliation. A Resource for Churches in Situations of Conflict", Geneva 2005, Faith and Order Paper 201, 29.

⁷ Christa Wolf, *Kindheitsmuster*, Darmstadt, 1977, 9.

² Conference of European Churches (CEC), Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE), "Charta Oecumenica, Guidelines for the Growing Cooperation among the Churches in Europe", uri: <https://www.ceceurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ChartaOecumenica.pdf> (accessed 17 March 2020).

³ Dieter Brandes, "Healing of Memories. Eine Aufgabe christlicher Kirchen in Europa", *epd-Dokumentation* 40 (2005), 16–25; Olga Lukács, Das Versöhnungsprojekt „Healing of Memories“ in Rumänien und die Beziehungen zwischen der Konfessionen aus Siebenbürgen in den 16.–17. Jahrhunderten, in *Ökumene der Zukunft. Hermeneutische Perspektiven und die Suche nach Identität*, Stephen Lakkis, Stefan Höschele, Stefanie Schardien, (eds.) Verlag Otto Lembeck, Frankfurt am Main 2008, 200–218; Olga Lukács, Healing of Memories in Romania A Protestant approach to Church, *Healing of Memories in Europe. A Study of Reconciliation between Churches, Cultures and Religion*. Dieter Brandes (ed) Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, Leipzig 2007, 86–101.

⁴ I would emphasise some of the author's most important studies: Dieter Brandes, "Healing of Memories. Eine Aufgabe ökumenischer Ekklesiologie im 21. Jahrhundert", *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Theologia Reformata Transylvanica* 48/5–6 (2003), 57–63; "Auf dem Weg zu einer Kolonia der Kirchen", *Materialdienst (MD) des Konfessionskundlichen Institutes Bensheim* 2 (2005), 32–34; "Kurze Geschichte der historischen Regionen Rumäniens" *epd-Dokumentation* 40 (2005), 4–14; "Healing of Memories. Eine Aufgabe christlicher Kirchen in Europa"; Laszlo Orban, Dieter Brandes, "Die Burzenländer Vorgeschichte zur Evangelisch-Lutheri-

In the church, the sons have taken up their parents' faith, and the communion with the saints of previous generations is the basis for the present-day religious communities.⁸ The knowledge from the past and the awareness that we Christians have a future that is beyond the visible world, the acknowledgement that memory awakens consciousness, that faithful speaking and deeds are not only and individual duty but also the duty of the (Christian) community, these features and particularities of human coexistence lead to European (identity shaping and) integration.⁹

Remembrance, stories and written history define identity and human communities.¹⁰

The child needs »an environment in which he manages to understand the world with the help of his body and mind.«¹¹ A real educational experience means that the child is supported and guided by the adults in the long run, he is given safety and love, esteem and he is cared for, he is stimulated, encouraged and challenged, and he develops skills by which he can learn how to handle the tough life situations and conflicts later and how to fight for better life quality.¹²

Sometimes the parents would pass on negative experiences regarding other individuals or groups in order to safeguard their children from their own negative experiences. The efforts to protect oneself from other people different from one's culture and faith however could shape into a strong mental outfit and attitude spanning generations. In this case the memories

could hinder the peaceful cohabitation of the following generations with the respective ethnic groups.

Children easily adapt to their environment, which is extremely important for survival and it can mean learning as well as gathering experience. Individuals react to similar situations in a similar manner. Biologically this is important so that the individual would not have to deal with the same painful experience several times. Such "conditioning" accustoms the individual to perceive danger and activate his own natural defence mechanism. These mechanisms however are preserved even when the danger is no longer there, and thus the grievances suffered by the previous generations could permanently hinder the apprehension of the others and reconciliation.

The grievances suffered as well as the painful events have activated beliefs, attitudes, images and negative appreciations in time, which greatly renders the novel relations with other ethnic groups more difficult.¹³ The main purpose of the healing of memories project has been to revise, understand and deal with the fears and separation among Christians that have occurred during history.

The children and the youth build their judgment and conviction models not only within the family but also "as a result of the direct or indirect feedback they get from the society they live in".¹⁴ A prerequisite of the peaceful cohabitation and reconciliation among churches and religious communities is to cease transferring the negative experiences and confinement existing within a people/nation (by the pastoral treatment of the historic grievances), and bringing positive experiences to the foreground.

This is why theologians speak about *koinonia*: we have not been created to live isolated, telling negative stories about each other but rather to live together as depicted in the simple example of the last supper but also reflected in the image of God's world whose gates are open for every people.¹⁵

Starting off from the above ideas, the project implementation became necessary in Romania. From 2005, the first partners in the project were the Reformed District of Transylvania, the Roman-Catholic Bishopric of Bu-

¹³ Cf. Joachim Bauer, *Das Gedächtnis des Körpers*, Eichborn, 2002.

¹⁴ Behrman, *Zurück ins Leben*, 23.

¹⁵ Mark Santer, "The Reconciliation of Memories", in Alan D. Falconer, Joseph Liechty (eds.), *Reconciling Memories*, Dublin 1998, 30–36.

⁸ Cf. Károly D. Tóth (ed.), *Lépések a megbékélés felé. A keresztyén hit és az emberi ellenségeskedés című ökumenikus konferencia (Kecskemét, 1995. augusztus 21–27.) eladási és dokumentumai*, Budapest 1996; Bálint Balla, Gellért Békés (eds.), *Az evangélium: közös szolgálatunk ma. Kiengesztel és megbékélés, 5. magyar ökumenikus találkozó, Gyula 1995. Augusztus 17–25.*, Pannonhalma 1995.

⁹ Walter Herrenbrück, "Der Beitrag des Protestantismus zur europäischen Integration", in Christoph Quarch, Hans Michael Heimg (eds.), *Protestantismus in Europa. Das Zentrum Europa des 29. Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchentages 2001*, Münster 2002, 12–18.

¹⁰ The past – as a source of self-understanding and value – is not a »neutral zone«, but an arena, in which the status and identity of groups are contested. "We can allow ourselves a little detour regarding the evolution of orientations, values and prejudices as before aiming at reconciling traditions, we should understand first how and why traditions play such an important role in our today's lives.", WCC, "Participation in God's Mission of Reconciliation", 53.

¹¹ Irene Behrman, *Zurück ins Leben. Erfahrungen mit der ambulanten Regressionstherapie*, Berlin 2002, 14.

¹² Behrman, *Zurück ins Leben*, 14.

charest and Alba Iulia as well as the Greek-Catholic Bishopric of Blaj. Between 2005–2007, the leaders of fourteen denominations agreed to the participation in the project: the Orthodox church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox church, the Russian old rite Orthodox church (the Lipovans), the Roman-Catholic church, the Greek-Catholic church and the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic church, the Reformed church, the Lutheran church of Augustan confession (Transylvanian Saxons), the Hungarian Evangelical-Lutheran church and the Slovak Lutheran church, the Baptist community and the Unitarian church.

The Federation of Jewish Communities also took part in the process by the communities existing in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi, Baia Mare, Constanta, Oradea, Radauti, Suceava and Timisoara. In the region of Dobrugea characterised by interconfessional and intercultural relations, the Muftiate of Romanian Muslims took part in the process. After 2005, the representatives of national minorities living in different regions also joined the project: the Roma, Hutsuls, Poles, Slovaks, Rusyns, Germans, Tartars, Albanians, Turks, Bulgarians and Greeks.

The Theoretical and Practical Foundation of the Project

According to Johnston McMaster the concrete steps in the healing of memories are the following: "1. a walk together in history. 2. sharing each other's pain, 3. preparation for the future"¹⁶ Based on these stages, it is visible that the healing of memories is a process of generations that is made up of the following steps. The working method is based on this threefold structure that build one upon the other in concentric circles. The method in HoM also used in the project carried out in Transylvania is structured on this threefold division.

Stage 1: a walk together in history

Stage 2: sharing each other's pain

Stage 3: preparation for the common future

The healing of memories project based on the working method drafted by Mc Master considered mapping the interconfessional relations in Transylvania, the analysis of cause and effect both in peaceful and in conflict situations.

¹⁶ Santer, "The Reconciliation of Memories", 35.

Johnston McMaster presented his method in the CEC Healing of Memories meeting held in Trondheim in May 2002, emphasising mostly the "a walk together in history" process. His aim was to present the example of the reconciliation process among the Norwegian Lutheran church, the Sami and the Roma oppressed and harassed during the country's history. The following three stages were suggested for this part in Trondheim.¹⁷

The Implementation Stages of the HoMR

Stage 1: Explaining each other's history

It was a tense and painful stage for the participants as everyone had to accept the other's different approach on history but they had to listen to the other party's approach and historic experience without interrupting.

The images of their own history are so well anchored even in the historians' conscience that the first question is actually if they can stand the existence and the formulation of antagonistic perspectives.¹⁸

The purpose of the HoM is to get acquainted with each other's historic perspectives. The purpose is not to rewrite history but to accept otherness, not to debate but rather to carry out a dialogue, and thus granting mutual respect to the other's history.¹⁹

It is important because the antonymic history explains that the historiography of different nations and churches had and still has different positions in the way the past events are judged and that historiography had

¹⁷ *Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen aufarbeiten. Healing of Memories zwischen Kirchen, Kulturen und Religionen. Ein Versöhnungsprojekt der Kirchen in Rumänien*, Dieter Brandes – Olga Lukács (ed.) Evangelische Verlagsanstalt GmbH, Leipzig 2011. 33.

¹⁸ Cf. Dieter Brandes, "Healing of Memories in Romania. An interconfessional and interdisciplinary process of Reconciliation", in Dieter Brandes (ed.), *Healing of Memories in Europe*, Cluj-Napoca 2007, 58–77.

¹⁹ Sándor Fazakas, *Emlékezés és megbékélés. A múlttal való szembesítés egyházi és teológiai kritériumai*, Budapest 2006, 16.; Cf. Christoph Klein, *Bosszi helyett megbékélés. A megbékélés kultúrájának teológiai alapvetése*, Budapest 2003; *Kereszténység és nemzeti egység a Kárpát-medencében. A balatonszárszói népfőiskolai konferencián elhangzott előadások 2002. július 22–28*, Budapest 2002; *A bűn megváltása és a felelősség felismerése*, Kecskemét, 1995; Tamás Gesztelyi, *Egyházak és vallások a mai Magyarországon*, Budapest, 1991.

its own significant share in shaping and fostering nationalistic trends and in the antagonistic, competition-like attitude that the churches had vis-à-vis each other.

The participants to the project mostly acknowledged that the history of Transylvania is characterised by ethnic and cultural diversity, being both a buffer country and a bridge among the historic cultural regions of Europe. During the centuries many religious, denominational and ethnic groups settled in this area during immigration waves, ethnic and religious settlements or wars. The ethnic and denominational groups in the project were a community that was unique in Europe featuring a specific history and relationship network. The starting point sprang from the premise that the cultures, nationalities and denominations living in Transylvania could become the symbol of tolerance and mutual acceptance.²⁰

Starting 2004, there were nine conferences organised in eight historic regions around Romania: the "Healing of Memories in Romania International Conference" was organised in Cluj-Napoca in May 2005, in Iasi and Suceava in May 2006, in Timisoara and Oradea in June 2006, in Bucharest and Constanta in November 2006, in Baia Mare in March 2007 and in Bucharest in June 2007.

In the Healing of memories project, 16 theological research and educational institutions, 7 history departments and 2 sociology departments took part. Furthermore other six institutions were contacted and over 300 colleagues participated in the workshops and conferences.

Stage 2: Sharing each other's pain on the path to reconciliation

The first most important aspect is that the second part of the HoM project was dedicated to the survivors. Ruth Elias, who survived the concentration camp in Theresienstadt (Czech Republic) gave evidence about the horrors she had experienced in the following manner: "It haunted me and left deep marks inside me. I cannot get rid of it, it keeps coming back."²¹ The memory of humiliations haunts the "survivors" of the persecutions of the fascist and communist regimes in the same way. But it also refers to the groups of people and cultures that caused painful memories to each other

or fought against each other for centuries. We should not forget that the wrongs suffered by the ancestors is present bridging generations and gets "stronger" due to the current real or imagined experiences and events in relation to the individuals belonging to another linguistic group or culture.

Due to the centuries of ethnic and cultural cohabitation, South-Eastern Europe could become the foundation of a conciliated Europe; however the grievances of the past still influence today our behaviour towards others. The positive and negative experiences from "our ancestors' times", from the time of the Hungarian Kingdom, the time of the counterreformation, the time of the Treaty of Trianon and the Fascist regime, or even the Communist times all lie at the basis of the present-day generation's judgment and approach (mostly unconsciously) vis-à-vis the individuals of other ethnic, linguistic groups or other denominations.²²

Thus, "a thick layer of memories and opinions' take shape throughout generations, and pastoral care as well as an affectionate dialogue is required for dealing with them. Only this way can we create the conditions for 'sharing others' pain' in a Christian community".²³

Thanks to the healing of memories project we witness "a deep historic pastoral overture"²⁴ among Christians and different denominations that the nation, culture, language and religion impressed upon in a different manner. The emerging "social ecumenical empathy"²⁵ open the possibilities for a conciliated Christian fellowship ("twofold conciliated koinonia") both vertically (throughout generations) and horizontally (among the existing denominations and cultures). However, the prerequisite is to revise our own culturally influenced perspectives over history, "so that we can acknowledge our wounds and put right the self-deceit in these memories."²⁶

The interdisciplinary working groups formed in each historic region summarised the differences as well as the congruencies among the historic perspectives of the various denominations, and ascertained the weight and importance of the historic data. They also drafted the structural table of the time periods relevant for the given region. The evaluation board made up of the representatives of the regional working groups discussed

²² Vorbereitungstext Trondheim, No.38, 29.

²³ Vorbereitungstext Trondheim, 31.

²⁴ Kirchen im Dialog, Offene Projekte – Heilen des Erinnerns – Healing of Memories

²⁵ Cf. Brandes, *Healing of Memories in Romania*, 58–77.

²⁶ Rolul Cartei, "Ecumenice in promovarea ecumenismului european si local: o perspectiva catolica", *Caierete Institutului Catolic 6/2* (2005–2006), 203–218.

and assessed the results obtained so far. The outputs of the regional seminars were also published in Romanian, Hungarian and German.

We successfully managed to apply the above-mentioned Mc Master working method within the regional working groups. It got concretised in the following manner:

The following publications appeared on the churches in Transylvania:

- *Healing of Memories in Europe. A Study of Reconciliation between Churches, Cultures and Religion*, edited by Dieter Brandes, Cluj Napoca - Leipzig 2007. 225. p.
- *Healing of Memories – Punte între biserici, culturi și religii. Un proiect de reîmpăcare a bisericilor*, Accent, Cluj-Napoca, 2007. 409. p.
- *Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen aufarbeiten. Healing of Memories zwischen Kirchen, Kulturen und Religionen. Ein Versöhnungsprojekt der Kirchen in Rumänien*, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt GmbH, Leipzig, 2011. 478. p.
- *Kurze Geschichte der Kirchen und Religionsgemeinschaften in Siebenbürgen*, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt GmbH, Leipzig, 2010. 315. p.
- *Scurtă istorie a bisericilor și comunităților religioase din Transilvania*, Presa Universitară, Cluj-Napoca, 2008. 272. p.
- *Az erdélyi egyházak és vallási közösségek rövid története*, Presa Universitară, Kolozsvár, 2008. 275. p.
- *Evoluția instituțiilor episcopale în bisericile din Transilvania. Partea I. De la începuturi până la 1740*, Presa Universitară, 2010. 219. p.
- *A püspöki intézmények kialakulása és fejlése Erdélyben 1740-ig, I*, Presa Universitară, Kolozsvár, 2010. 219. p.

The volumes were discussed in public. An internal working group carried out a so-called conflict analysis about the issued discussed earlier. The specialist participating in the project bound themselves during the evaluation process to use the conference volumes in interconfessional seminars for a better understanding of each other's approach.

Stage 3: The common future

The third point of the Ecumenical Charter warns us that "It is important to acknowledge the spiritual gifts hidden in the different Christian traditions, to learn and also to enrich each other through them".²⁷ Johnston

²⁷ Gerhard Albert, *Der Beitrag der Kirchen – Hindernis oder Hilfe für die europäische*

McMaster pointed out that this process gives us the opportunity to implement the third stage of the HoM project but which has to be elaborated in another context. The implementation of this stage was undertaken by the churches and supporters taking part in the HoM project (in cooperation with the CEC, CPCE and CCEE), which did not get a finite form until 2014. The implementation was only partially successful in Transylvania as it did not manage to solve the actual local conflicts.

The title of the course: Course on pastoral care, communication, mediation and team work (within "Healing of Memories between Christian Churches in Transylvania"). The course tried to find a way to the different churches, nationalities and cultures to get acquainted with each other to facilitate peaceful cohabitation. Beside the preservation of the various traditions, stress was laid upon acknowledging the common traits in language, traditions, religion and social duties.

The purpose of the course was also to find and try out models regarding the way in which one can present the common traits in the different churches and cultures. The concerned parties in the process were able to experience the clear advantages of teamwork, and the persons coming from different cultural and religious backgrounds learnt how to apply the knowledge from the moderation and team leader course for the purpose of interconfessional and intercultural communication.

The course was designed on two levels: the first level focused on communicational techniques, with the following areas: life stories and identity, the basics of communication in the church and society, intercultural and interconfessional identity and its acknowledgement, leadership in interconfessional and intercultural contexts. On the second level, the purpose was to acquire intercultural moderation (mediation) techniques, featuring the following areas: identity and alienation in relationships, developing mediation competences and techniques, problem-solving moderation, moderation and communication techniques, life stories and relationships in local and foreign cultures.

The syllabus of the courses was designed by well-known pastoral psychologists such as: Helmut Weiss, Society for Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling SIPCC, Dr. Kocsev Miklós, Director of the Gyökössi Insti-

Verständigung? Die konfessionelle Situation, in Versöhnung in Europa – Aufgabe der Kirchen in Ukraine, Belarus, Polen und Deutschland, Ed. Kontaktausschuss des Polnischen Ökumenischen Rates und der Evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland, Hannover 1998, 41.

tute in Kecskemét and Dr. Hézser Gábor, Professor at the Evangelical Theology of Mezőfeld-Béthel.

- The purpose of the courses could be put in the following manner:
- Evaluation of the outcomes of historic conflict analysis – based on HoM publications
- Academic pastoral care courses
- Organising interconfessional seminar locally in regionally.

Upon organising the courses, the selection of pastoral counsellors, mentors and experienced pastoral psychologists required great care.²⁸ It was implemented with the help of specialists dedicated to the objectives of the project and paid attention to dialogue efficiency.

The organisation of the courses was supported by the following organisations: the Conference of European Churches (CEC), the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE), the Gustav-Adolf-Werk (GAWERK), the Kirchen helfen Kirchen, Renovabis, the Gustav-Adolf-Werk in Romania (GAWRO), the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, the Evangelical Church of Württemberg, the Churches of Rhineland, Baden and Hessen-Nassau.

On the Organisation of the Courses

a. As a first step, a pilot course was organised at the Faculty of Reformed Theology of Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca and the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Alba Iulia. The courses were held according to the 1st curriculum in both venues.

In Cluj-Napoca, there were 10 Hungarian native participants out of whom 4 Reformed, 4 Unitarian, 1 Baptist and 1 Roman-Catholic. The course in Alba Iulia was translated into Romanian for the 16 participants out of whom 15 were Orthodox and 1 Greek-Catholic. The courses were held in parallel between 2 November 2009 and 30 April 2010.

The participants to the course in Cluj-Napoca were all ministers except for the Roman-Catholic participant while in Alba Iulia, only the Greek-Catholic participant was a priest while 75 % of the Orthodox participants

²⁸ Solid relationships came into being with the following institutions: Konfessionskundliches Institut Bensheim, Irish School of Ecumenics Dublin/Belfast, Institute for Ecumenical Studies Fribourg CH, Kontaktausschuss des Polnischen ÖRK, Der Evang. Kirche in Deutschland EKD, Kontaktausschuss zum Interkonfessionellen, Versöhnungs-Dialog Deutschland-Serbien.

were religion teachers and 25 % were teachers in public education but they all held some positions within the church.

The more exciting part of the pilot project was the second stage of the course, organised according to the 2nd curriculum. The members of the former two teams regrouped into one group with 16 participants: 7 Orthodox, 1 Greek-Catholic, 4 Reformed, 3 Unitarian, and 1 Roman-Catholic. The very first conflict was to choose the language into which the foreign speakers were going to be interpreted into. Finally, the Hungarian participants suggested to have interpretation in Hungarian too only if they could not understand and their ideas conveyed in Hungarian to be translated into Romanian.

b. Further two courses were organised. One between 15 March 2010 and 11 September 2010 at the Orthodox Theology in Sibiu, with 16 participants: 10 Orthodox, 3 Reformed, and 3 Greek-Catholic. It was supported by the Church of Norway and the Evangelisch-Lutherische Landeskirche Hannover. The next course was organised at the Greek-Catholic Theology in Blaj between 26 April 2010 and 30 September 2010 where from the 16 participants 15 were Greek-Catholic and one Reformed. It was sponsored by Renovabis, partner being the Roman-Catholic Bishopric of Rottenburg-Stuttgart.

The participants in the previous two preparatory courses regrouped into a mixed group made up of 14 participants out of which 9 Greek-Catholic, 3 Orthodox and 2 Reformed who were awarded the interconfessional mediator degree based on the 2nd curriculum.

The course was held at the Greek-Catholic Theology in Blaj between 1 March and 29 September 2011. Thus, in the HoM project, 30 people were awarded the interconfessional mediator degree.

c. Based to the declaration of Oradea dated 9 April 2009, as a joint programme of the 4 churches, they conceived the course on the integration of Roma women, organised between 6 September 2010 and 17 June 2010 at the Partium Christian University. The sponsors were: the Presbyterian Church of USA, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME), Evangelical-Lutheran Church of America, Lutherische Kirche Finnland. The heads of the 3 churches resolved upon it at the meeting organised by the HoM on 25 February 2010, being aware that the Christian communities around Europe know about the Roma holocaust and are aware of the persecutions, too. That is why they commit to »turn against any form of nationalism that causes the repression of other people and ethnic minorities, and they are constantly in search for peaceful solutions.«²⁹ In Tran-

²⁹ CEC, CCEE, „Charta Oecumenica”, 8. p. (Reconciling Peoples and Cultures).

sylvánia, the history of all the churches intertwine with the past as well as current grievances and prejudices against the Roma, and that is the reason why this joint decision was taken to attract the Roma representatives into the healing of memories process.

The course was based on the 1st curriculum. The course on the integration of Roma women had 14 participants: 7 Roma and 7 non-Roma women who were active in the different churches but mostly in the Reformed and the Roman-Catholic church and were all already acquainted with the Roma projects.

In conclusion, we can state about the HoM projects that one can surmount the trauma of personal life experiences if the members of the denominations take active part in the historic and pastoral processed aimed at healing the historic and individual wounds. In the case of individuals as well as groups, the wounds pile up throughout generations by the evocation of negative experiences and fears. One can get rid of these wounds arising from these wrongs only if one takes account, deals with and repels them effectively.

On the way to the reconciliation among European churches in the 21st century, the main duty of the Christian churches, ministers, leaders, workers and congregation members is to facilitate the reshaped brotherly behavioural norms among nations, cultures and denominations, and feature the brotherhood inspired by the Holy Spirit in a long-lasting manner.

The HoM process proves that there is openness towards getting to know and accepting each other as well as for the common future, and its further development rests with those over 300 participants who got involved in this work one way or another.

What was the general objective of the HoM project? It was recollection and beyond recollection mutually getting acquainted with, understanding, accepting and sympathising with each other. The Healing of Memories project was a true success. What better proof for that than the fact that it spread all over Romania by 2007.

The participants' experience was formulated pertinently by Sándor Fazakas:

Remembering and facing the past be restricted to rituals and political formalities that do not bound us for anything [...] The individuals and society need to have the freedom to face the past and get relieved by it.³⁰

³⁰ Fazakas, *Emlékezés és megbékélés*, 16.

Die Vergebung und das Vergessen

Cseperke Tóth

Die Vergebung und das Vergessen, ihre Verbindung und ihr Zusammenhang sind keine neuen Themen im Denken des Christentums. Mein Thema ist die Vergebung und das Vergessen aus der Perspektive eines Opfers, besonders die Zukunft betreffend. Wie kann man die erlittenen Gewalttaten überwinden, wie kann man über seine Wunden hinweg sehen? Um dieses Thema noch tiefergehend zu behandeln, habe ich das Buch *The End of Memory – Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* von Miroslav Volf gelesen.

Miroslav Volf, heute Professor an der Yale Universität, war im Jahre 1984 als Soldat in der jugoslawischen Armee und wurde während mehrerer Monaten in Mostar von Kommandant G. befragt. Er fängt dieses Buch mit seinen Erinnerungen über dieser Periode seines Lebens an, und versucht eine Lösung oder Antwort finden, damit diese Erinnerungen eine Quelle der Heilung werden können.

„Jedes Mal, wenn ich über Kommandant G. ‘lieben’ geschrieben habe, hatte ich eine kleine hervorgebrochene Rebellion in meiner Seele. [...] Ich liebe nicht die Übeltäter“¹ – sagt Miroslav Volf.

Als Miroslav Volf über seine Erinnerungen und ihre Funktion nachsinnt, beginnt er diesen Ablauf mit der psychologischen Seite unseres Gedächtnisses, mit der psychologischen Definition der Vergebung. Nach dieser psychologischen Zusammenfassung erreicht er theologischen Ausführungen. Für ihn ist die Frage nicht, ob man sich erinnern muss, die Frage ist, wie man sich richtig erinnern kann?

¹ Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory. Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*, Grand Rapids 2006, 17.

Die Erlösung liegt im Gedächtnis, sagt Volf, in dem er eine Idee von Eile Wiesel² interpretiert. Aber er stellt auch die Frage: Wenn sich erinnern an das ausgehaltene Leid die Wunden von jemandem offen hält, wenn das Gedächtnis das ursprüngliche Leid reproduziert und wiederholt, wie kann die Erlösung im Gedächtnis liegen?³

Wenn Miroslav Volf meint, die Funktion des wahrheitsgetreuen Gedächtnisses ist im Prozess der Vergebung folgende, dann müssen wir uns erinnern, um die Gewalttaten der anderen nennen zu können. Denn "nachdem ihre Sünden bekannt, verdammt und vergeben sind – wenn sie bekannt, verdammt und vergeben sind – können sie verdeckt, verborgen, feinverteilt – also vergessen werden"⁴.

Für den Deuteronomist hat das Gedächtnis außerordentlich und zentrale Wichtigkeit. Wie der Kommentar *Word Biblical Commentary* definiert, bedeutet das Gesicht Gottes "seine aufmerksame Anwesenheit und sein Gunst, seinen Segen"⁵. Wenn Gott sein Gesicht vor seinem Volk verbirgt, hat das zur Folge, dass "sein Volk zahlreiche Bösartigkeiten und Unglücke erfährt"⁶. Es findet sich die Bedeutung dieses Ausdrucks in der Welt des Deuteronomiums und auch in mehreren Versen des Alten Testaments (Deut 32,20, Ez 39,29, Ps 10,11; 13,2; 27,9; 30,8; 44,25; 69,18; 88,15; 102,3; 143:7, Job 13,24, Jes 8,17; 64,6; 54,8, Jer 33,5, Mich 3,4). Lesen wir z.B. in Deut 31,17–18:

Da wird mein Zorn entbrennen über sie zur selben Zeit, und ich werde sie verlassen und mein Antlitz vor ihnen verbergen, sodass sie völlig verzehrt werden. Und wenn sie dann viel Unglück und Angst treffen wird, werden sie sagen: Hat mich nicht dies Übel alles getroffen, weil mein Gott nicht mit mir ist?⁷

Im Ps 51 finden wir eine interessante sprachliche, aber auch theologische Wendung. Wenn wir Ps 51,11 sehen, lesen wir folgendes: "Verbirg dein Antlitz vor meinen Sünden / und tilge alle meine Missetat." "Das Verbergen des göttlichen Gesichts ist eine graphische Metapher einer Handlung

² Volf, *The End of Memory*, 21.

³ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 22.

⁴ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 64.

⁵ Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, New York 2002, 772.

⁶ Christensen, *Deuteronomy*, 772.

⁷ Alle biblischen Referenzen stammen aus der Luther-Bibel von 1984, sofern nicht anders angegeben.

der Vergebung."⁸ Der Psalmist betet für etwas, was in der Gedankenwelt seines Volkes das Ende, das Urteil, das zu Vermeidende war: dass Gott sein Gesicht verbirgt. Er betet zu Gott, damit Gott sich abgrenzen will. Aber wovon? Und hier finden wir die theologische Wendung: der Psalmist hält es für möglich, dass "Gott sich abgrenzt in einer gnadenvollen Selbstentfremdung von den Sünden des Beters"⁹, aber sich nicht von der Person des Beters abgrenzt!

Als Miroslav Volf über das Vergessen schreibt, sieht er das Zustandekommen des vollen Vergessens immer und nur nach dem jüngsten Gericht. Er meint, dass dann,

jede erlittene Gewalttat in seinem ganzen Schrecken ausgesetzt wird, die Übeltäter verurteilt und der Reuige umgewandelt, seine Opfer geehrt und geheilt werden. Dann, nachdem das Böse verdammt und überwunden wurde, werden wir fähig die Erinnerungen der erlittenen Gewalttaten freizugeben, wir werden fähig sie aus unserem Sinn hinausschütten zu lassen [...] Dann werden die Erinnerungen der Gewalttaten verdorren, wie die Pflanzen ohne Wasser.¹⁰

Und die Frage, die mir gekommen ist, war die folgende: ist es unbedingt nötig, dieses Ereignis nach dem jüngsten Gericht zu verorten? Wie lebt man bis zu diesem Gericht? Da es klar ist, dass wir, die Opfer, hier noch einige Jahrzehnte leben möchten. Aber wenn man sich vorstellt, dass die volle Vergebung und volles Vergessen bis zum Ende nicht möglich und unvollkommen bleibt, was für ein Leben bleibt für uns? Haben wir keine anderen Wege?

Wir haben nicht nur andere Wege, sondern auch andere Pflichten. Wenn wir beten: "und vergib uns unsere Schuld, wie auch wir vergeben unseren Schuldigern" (Mt 6,12) was meint vergeben, was meint "die Schulden zu erlassen"¹¹? János Pilinszky, der ungarische, römisch-katholische Schriftsteller und Dichter schreibt:

Wenn wir jemandem tatsächlich vergeben, vergessen wir alles, was er gegen uns getan hat. Daher, wenn wir unsere Schuld wirklich bereut haben, sollen wir auch akzeptieren, dass Gott sie nicht nur vergeben, sondern auch vergessen hat.¹²

⁸ Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, Dallas 1990, 21.

⁹ Tate, *Psalms*, 21.

¹⁰ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 214.

¹¹ Einheitsübersetzung.

¹² János Pilinszky, "Megbocsátás és felejtés", url: <http://dia.pool.pim.hu/html/mu->

Das Anchor Bible Dictionary definiert die Vergebung so:

Die Vergebung ist eine Gewalttat aus dem Gedächtnis zu tilgen; es kann nur von der geschädigten Person getan werden. Einmal ausgerottet, bestimmt die Gewalttat nicht mehr die Beziehung zwischen dem Opfer und dem Übeltäter, und eine Harmonie wird wiederhergestellt zwischen ihnen beiden.¹³

Man kann und soll diese Wendung vollziehen, wie es im Alten Testament gelesen wurde. Es ist nicht die Frage, ob wir die erlittenen Gewalttaten aus dem Gedächtnis tilgen sollen, und meiner Meinung nach, es ist auch nicht die Frage, ob wir das während der Zeit unserem Leben erreichen können. Die Frage ist: was für eine Ressource ermöglicht uns dieses Vergeben, diese Wendung? Was zeigt uns den Weg, die schmerzhaft Narbe, die negative Seite der Verletzung durch Vergebung in einen positiven Wert zu transformieren?

Wir sollen hier über die Prädestinationstheorie sprechen. Ich möchte voranstellen, dass es hier nicht um die so genannte "doppelte Prädestination" geht. Als Prädestination bezeichne ich ein Thema, was Johannes Calvin im Rahmen der Vorsehung Gottes erklärt. Gott "heißt deshalb allmächtig, weil er Himmel und Erde mit seiner Vorsehung lenkt und alles so einrichtet, daß nichts ohne seinen Willen geschieht."¹⁴ "Die Vorsehung Gottes besteht in seinem Wirken."¹⁵ Wir sprechen hier über "die Vorsehung, die alle Dinge regiert, von welcher lauter Gutes kommt, so verborgen uns ihre Gründe auch sein mögen!"¹⁶ Auf diesem Grund haben wir ein Bewusstsein, was sagt dass alle Geschehnisse meines Lebens ganz anders hätten geschehen können, gab es doch unendlich zahlreiche Möglichkeiten, und doch, alles war so wie es war, weil es von der Vorsehung Gottes regiert worden ist. Es ist die persönliche Seite der Prädestination, würde ich sagen, damit ich akzeptieren kann, was mit mir, durch mich, gegen mich getan wurde.

vek/PILINSZKY/pilinszky00373/pilinszky00891/pilinszky00891.html [11.04.2016].

¹³ David N. Freeman, et. al. (eds.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 2, New York 1992, 831.

¹⁴ Johannes Calvin, *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion. Institutio Christianae religionis*, (Digitalisat nach der letzten Ausgabe von 1559 übers. und bearb. von Otto Weber), Neukirchen 1997, uri: http://www.calvin-institutio.de/display_dokument.php?elementID=2 [11.04.2016], 1.16.3, 106.

¹⁵ Calvin, *Institutio*, 1.16.4, 107.

¹⁶ Calvin, *Institutio*, 1.17.2, 115.

Also wenn wir über dieses Bewusstsein sprechen, sollen wir sehen, das es nichts gibt, was außerhalb des Willens Gottes geschehen kann. Dass es immer einen Grund gibt, den wir nicht unbedingt kennen. Hier sollen wir auch berücksichtigen, womit Johannes Calvin seine Betrachtung anfängt:

Es wird niemand Gottes Vorsehung recht und mit Nutzen erwägen, der nicht bedenkt, daß er mit seinem Schöpfer und dem Wirker der Welt zu tun hat, und sich ihm dementsprechend zu Furcht und Ehrerbietung in gebührender Demut unterwirft.¹⁷

Wenn wir für einem Moment ins Alte Testament zurückgehen, sehen wir dieses Geschichtsverständnis zum Beispiel in der Geschichte Josefs. Gottes Absicht, sein Wille war der Hintergrund, vor dem die kleinen Handlungen der Menschen durchgeführt wurden. Neben diesen Handlungen – wen soll ich lieben, wer gehört zu uns, wer nicht; Auswerfen, Sklaverei – was wichtig ist, dass "der HERR mit ihm war" (mit Josef – Gen 39,21). Josef, das Opfer vieler Gewalttaten hätte das sagen können: "ihr habt gegen mich so viel getan, dass ich nicht vergeben kann!" - Aber er sagt das nicht. Er sieht diese höhere Ebene, die seine Brüder nicht sehen. Seine Brüder denken immer noch in menschlicher Gesinnung:

Die Brüder Josefs aber fürchteten sich, als ihr Vater gestorben war, und sprachen: Josef könnte uns gram sein und uns alle Bosheit vergelten, die wir an ihm getan haben. Darum ließen sie ihm sagen: Dein Vater befahl vor seinem Tode und sprach: So sollt ihr zu Josef sagen: Vergib doch deinen Brüdern die Missetat und ihre Sünde, dass sie so übel an dir getan haben. Nun vergib doch diese Missetat uns, den Dienern des Gottes deines Vaters! Aber Josef weinte, als sie solches zu ihm sagten. Und seine Brüder gingen hin und fielen vor ihm nieder und sprachen: Siehe, wir sind deine Knechte. (Gen 50,15–18)

Aber Josef interpretiert, resümiert und erklärt die Ereignisse seines Lebens, und sagt: "Ihr gedachtet es böse mit mir zu machen, aber Gott gedachte es gut zu machen, um zu tun, was jetzt am Tage ist, nämlich am Leben zu erhalten ein großes Volk."¹⁸ (Gen 50,20) – Es ist Gottes Gnade allein, durch die Josef das erkennen konnte.

¹⁷ Calvin, *Institutio*, 1.17.2, 114.

¹⁸ Einheitsübersetzung.

„Das Neue Testament lehrt ständig, dass die Forderung, für den Nächsten zu vergeben, direkt auf der gnädigen Vergebung Gottes beruht.“¹⁹ Jesus selbst hat uns mit der Parabel des Schalksknechts (Mt 18,21–35) und mit seine Taten Beispiele gegeben: als er die Sünde vergibt, bricht das Reich Gottes in diese Welt herein.²⁰ Er erklärt den jüngern auf den Weg nach Emmaus, dass alle traurige Ereignisse, die geschehen sind, Offenbarung des Willens Gottes sind: „Musste nicht der Messias all das erleiden, um so in seine Herrlichkeit zu gelangen?“ (Lk 24,26) Er hat uns das Beispiel gegeben, als am Kreuz seinen Henkern vergeben hat: „Vater, vergib ihnen, denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun.“ (Lk 23,34). Oder sehen wir seinen inneren Kampf, und den Sieg des Verständnisses des Willens Gottes, als er nach seinem Einzug in Jerusalem sagte: „Jetzt ist meine Seele betrübt. Und was soll ich sagen? Vater, hilf mir aus dieser Stunde? Doch darum bin ich in diese Stunde gekommen.“ (Joh 12,27)

Unsere Ressource ist das Verständnis der gnädigen Vergebung Gottes, und ebendieses Verständnis der Bedeutung der erlittenen Übeltaten. Die Vergebung ist nicht ein passives Warten, sondern beginnt mit einer bewussten Entscheidung. Diese Entscheidung beginnt mit der Dezentrierung des Ichs. Ich erkenne im Glauben, dass „Christus in mir lebt“ (Gal 2,20). Ich kann „die Vergangenheit frei von aller Abwehr und sich beweisendem Stolz durchdenken – in der Vergangenheit so wie in der Zukunft den Generalnenner des Evangeliums suchend.“²¹ Es ist so ähnlich, wie die Domino-Kettenreaktion, der Dominoeffekt: in der Bekehrung entscheidet man (aber schon mit Hilfe Gottes), dass man Gottes Geist in seinem Leben wirken lässt: das ist der erste Stein der Kettenreaktion. Der folgende Stein: das ist das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes. Es ist Gott allein, seine Wirkung, wodurch ich alles, was geschehen ist, auf einer höheren Ebene verstehen kann.

Aber wie? Wir haben schon erwähnt, dass man die schmerzhaften Narbe, die negative Seite der Beleidigung durch Vergebung in einen positiven Wert transformieren kann.

Miroslav Volf schreibt über zwei Rahmenstrukturen, mit denen man seine Erinnerungen neu interpretieren kann: die sind die Erinnerungen des Exodus und der Leiden Christi.

¹⁹ *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 2, 837.

²⁰ *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 2, 836.

²¹ András Csepregi, „Religionische Identität und demokratische Politik. Geschichte, Thematik, Dialog“, url: <http://www.uni-miskolc.hu/~egyhort/cikkek/csepregi-andras.html> [13.03.2016].

Durch die Erinnerung an die Leiden Christi sehend, sind alle Gewalttaten, die gegen mich getan wurden, in einem maßgeblichen Sinn, schon gebüßt. Vergeben. Ja, Gott hat selbst sein Gesicht vor denen verborgen. Es ist eine Gewalttat, für die Jesus am Kreuz gestorben ist.²²

Es gibt in diesem Buch einen Teil, in dem Miroslav Volf die christliche Tradition zusammenfasst und überblickt, besonders in Anbetracht der „Göttlichen Komödie“ von Dante Alighieri. Da sagt er: „bevor die Sünder ihre Sünden vergessen, müssen sie sich an diese in ihrer ganzen Grausamkeit erinnern.“²³ Und ein bisschen später: „Das Vergessen der Übeltaten muss als Folge des Geschenkes der neue Welt stattfinden.“²⁴

Miroslav Volf hält diesen Zustand nur nach dem jüngsten Gericht für möglich. Ich denke zunächst, dass die Sünden in ihrer ganzen Grausamkeit im Kreuz Christi, im leidenden Christus zu sehen sind. Zweitens, indem wir Christen akzeptieren, dass Jesus, der in uns lebt, die Sünden als ein Hereinbrechen des Reiches Gottes vergeben hat – und so auch vergessen hat – bedeutet das, dass wir dies durch ihn ebenso tun können. Dass wir durch solche Handlungen auch das hereinbrechende Reich Gottes zeigen können, und nicht aus unserer Kraft, aber mit der Kraft Gottes.

Nicht als ob es unsere Sache wäre, die Schuld solcher Übelat oder Kränkung zu vergeben, – denn das kommt allein Gott zu! (Jes 43,25) –; nein, unsere Vergebung soll darin bestehen, daß wir aus freien Stücken allen Zorn, allen Haß, alle Rachsucht aus unsrem Herzen entfernen und die Erinnerung an Beleidigungen durch freiwilliges Vergessen tilgen. – schreibt Calvin.²⁵

Sollen wir unbedingt einen Sinn finden, um die erlittenen Gewalttaten in unser Leben integrieren zu können? Miroslav Volf sagt, nein. Er sagt, dass es manchmal so schreckliche Gewalttaten gibt, dass wir für sie einfach kein Sinn finden können.

Wir müssen nicht alle Ereignisse in unserem Leben als sinnvoll betrachten, um völlig und endlich erlöst zu sein, wir müssen alle unsere Erfahrungen nicht sammeln [...] und in einem Band binden können [...] Es ist genug,

²² Volf, *The End of Memory*, 123.

²³ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 139.

²⁴ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 146.

²⁵ Calvin, *Institutio*, 3.20.45, 608.

einige Erfahrungen unberührt zu lassen, andere mit heilender Hand und mit Vorsicht zu behandeln [...].²⁶

Was bedeutet sinnvoll zu sein? Es heißt nicht, dass jede Tragödie, die passiert, gut sei. Wir sollen nicht unsere Augen schließen und sagen: alles was passiert ist, war gut. In einigen Situationen können wir einen anderen Sinn finden: Aber wir sollen hier auch alles auf eine höhere Ebene heben. Ich als Opfer verstehe vielleicht nicht, was gegen mich auf menschlicher Ebene passierte. Aber ich verstehe, dass Gott mich liebt und so akzeptiert, wie ich hier bin. Gott akzeptiert mich zusammen mit allen meinen Erfahrungen, zusammen mit allen Gewalttaten, die man gegen mich getan hat. Hat mich das geändert? Vielleicht ja, sehr! Aber Gott, der wollte oder erlaubte, was passiert ist, umarmt mich mit seiner unveränderten Liebe. Und was in Gottes Plänen existieren kann, das hat schon ein Sinn. Ein Sinn, nicht auf unserem Niveau, sondern auf höchstem, göttlichem, transzendentalen Niveau.

Unsere Identität ist grundlegend in Gottes Händen, nicht in unseren, und sicher nicht in denen unserer Übeltäter. Und so können wir die Erinnerungen der erlittenen Übeltaten gehen lassen.²⁷

Stellen wir uns einen olympischen Läufer vor! In dem Moment, in dem er seine Goldmedaille bekommt, sagt er nicht, wie schwer der Weg bis zu diesem Tag war, welche Verletzungen er erleiden musste, was für ein Leiden das Training Tag für Tag war. Nein, weil er immer das Ziel vor Augen hatte, weil er schon seine Medaille an seinem Hals hängen fühlte.

Wie sehe ich über die erlittenen Gewalttaten hinweg? An der Genter Universität organisierte man eine Studientagung, unter dem folgenden Titel: "Bis wohin kann man Vergebung erbitten für die Fehler in der Vergangenheit?" – Bis wohin haben wir die Möglichkeit, das zu machen? Aber für mich, wenn ich den Akzent auf die Möglichkeiten der Opfer lege, gibt es eine andere Frage. "Bis wohin muss man Vergebung erbitten für die Fehler in der Vergangenheit?" Ich meine diese Frage ernst sowohl für das Individuum, als auch für mein Volk, für andere Völker. Wir können noch hinzufügen, dass unsere

²⁶ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 192.

²⁷ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 203.

Konflikte zumeist verquickt sind. Es ist einfach unrecht, dass man eine Geschichte aufbauen könnte, in der es eine offenbare böse Seite gegen eine unbestrittene gute Seite gäbe. Meistenteils ist es nicht so, dass 'Ephraim neidisch ist auf Juda und Juda Ephraim Feind ist' (Jes 11,13)?²⁸

Ich weiß, dass es längere Zeit braucht, bis man seine Wunden nicht als offene Wunden, sondern auch als fast geheilte Narben betrachten kann. Aber die Zeit heilt nicht alle Wunden.

Miroslav Volf stellt die Frage, ob "wir 'wir selbst' bleiben könnten, wenn wir uns nicht mehr an das gegen uns begangene Unrecht erinnern würden? Sicher könnten wir"²⁹, sagt er. Die Christen vergeben nicht weil sie feige oder kriecherisch wären. Die Christen vergeben ihren Feinden, weil sie verstanden haben, dass sie keine Feinde mehr haben. Es gibt keine Feinde mehr, weil der Plan Gottes alles was geschehen ist über schreibt, weil der Christ versteht, dass in allem, was passiert ist, "der HERR mit ihm war".

Nach dieser Wende kann man sein Gesicht vor den Sünden der anderen verbergen; nach dieser Wende kann man sagen: "Du hast Böses gegen mich im Sinne gehabt, Gott aber hatte dabei Gutes im Sinn"; und nach dieser Wende kann das eigene Ich dezentralisiert auf Christus schauen und zu Christus hin gehen, und sagen: "Ich vergesse, was dahinten ist, und strecke mich aus nach dem, was da vorne ist." (Phil 3,14)

²⁸ András Csepregi, "Kreuz Jesu Christi – ein Empfang?", uri: <http://bocs.hu/beke/Volf.html> [10.04.2016].

²⁹ Volf, *The End of Memory*, 196.

Reshaping Understanding of Recognition in the Oslo Agreement in the Light of Hannah Arendt

Daniël Sloots

On September 13, 1993 a historic event occurred: the Israeli and Palestinian political leaders were united at the White House to present the “Mutual Agreement of Recognition.” It was a promising sign in the hope for peace in what is known as one of the most complex conflicts globally.¹ Yet, this journey towards peace in the ‘90s between Israel and the Palestinian territories, known as the Oslo Process, ended in another season of fighting, which culminated in the Second Intifada. Here the question presents itself: how did the “Mutual Agreement on Recognition” function in this attempt towards peace, as it has been violated by both parties?

In this article I will connect Hannah Arendt’s understanding on recognition to the Oslo Process, investigating in what way Arendt’s thought might help understanding and actualizing recognition in concrete situations, such as during the “Mutual Agreement of Recognition.” The Oslo Process functions as the point of departure in approaching Arendt’s theory on recognition. For several reasons Arendt’s thoughts are helpful in analyzing and structuring this process. Working within the field of philosophy amongst others, she explicitly argues that philosophical reflection is essential for understanding dynamics in historical events. In fact, she demonstrated the added value of philosophy for political studies in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* by analyzing the rise and fall of the Nazi and Soviet regimes.²

In this article I will show that Arendt’s approach of analyzing and embedding cultural and political dynamics philosophically bears relevance

for other complex political events, such as the agreement of recognition. Significant in this respect, is Arendt’s view on the role of recognition. According to her, the incorporation of philosophical reflection is crucial for implementing politics successfully. Since the Oslo Process started with this agreement in which both represented leaders recognized each other’s embodied existence in the Holy Land, it is relevant to connect these two discourses in order to create new understandings. I will differentiate a politico-philosophical meaning of recognition, that emerges out of Arendt’s work, from a politico-diplomatic meaning of recognition, which is used in the context of the Oslo Process.

Arendt’s work has frequently been quoted in the context of interdisciplinary research on Israeli-Palestinian studies, due to her own contributions in this field, such as the *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.³ In these works, she expressed her opposition towards political Zionism and the minority status as a consequence of the rise of an Israeli nation-state. While Arendt wrote about the topic of recognition, the scholarship has not yet explicitly been connected it with the “Mutual Agreement of Recognition,” signed during the Oslo Process.

In approaching the central research question, content analysis is particularly helpful for the aims of this article. It will help, first of all in understanding cultural expressions and in examining the dynamics in the period of the mutual agreement. Secondly, this method reveals intertextual pattern, which will help to uncover interwoven cultural aspects. In order to prevent *Hineininterpretierung*, by integrating Arendt, I will perceive the historical events during Oslo Process as primary to philosophical concepts, which then will function in my analysis as heuristic instruments. Therefore, Arendt will be introduced methodologically as an auxiliary to provide an analysis of the “Mutual Agreement on Recognition.” In order to create a framework of interpretation, I will first place Arendt’s theory within the phenomenological tradition, which is followed by a discussion on interpreting recognition.

¹ State of Israel, Palestine Liberation Organization, “Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements” (Oslo I), Washington DC 1993, url: https://ecf.org.il/media_items/612, (accessed 12 March 2020).

² Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York 1973, 222.

³ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, and Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, New York 2006.

Scholars have difficulties with categorizing the content of Arendt's political ideas within one certain political stream of thought, since her oeuvre does not fit within one specific thought as a result of her pragmatic approach.⁴ Therefore, it would not represent the fullness of Arendt's thought if her oeuvre were to be classified under a single movement, like liberalism, socialism, or conservatism. Though liberals have quoted Arendt, she has also been mentioned in the context of communitarianism.⁵ In any case, what can be said about the nature of her work is that it "defends constitutionalism and the rule of law" in which she advocates for the significance of human rights, referring to "liberty, and freedom of expression, but also the right of action and differences of opinion."⁶ On the other hand, Arendt expresses objections to political communities, which emerges out of religious, ethical or radical identities. I will not primarily focus on the categorization of Arendt's thought on "recognition" within the political discourse. Rather, I will investigate which tradition influenced her interpretation and perception of reality.

In this article, I will follow Anya Topolski's view, which places Arendt's philosophy in the school of the phenomenological tradition, and aims to evolve from fundamental questions concerning metaphysics.⁷ Before making the relation between Arendt and the phenomenological tradition, I will first mention some fathers of phenomenology in order to provide the reader with a context. One of these fathers is Edmund Husserl, who published his *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung* in 1912. This publication was intended to present articles, addressing phenomenological questions and data. In this respect, *Ideen* constituted the first and one of the most important works of this *Jahrbuch* in which he presented the concept of a transcendental phenomenology.⁸ By referring

⁴ Parts from this text are adopted from another paper that I have written. Maurizicio Passerin d'Entreves, Hannah Arendt, in: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (2016 edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), url: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/>, (accessed 18 January 2018).

⁵ Passerin, Hannah Arendt.

⁶ Passerin, Hannah Arendt.

⁷ Though this thesis only focuses on Arendt's interpretation of action and recognition, this monograph can be regarded as a valuable contribution in analysing Arendt's introduced concepts, see Anya Topolski, *Arendt, Levinas and a Politics of Relationality*, Lanham 2015, 15.

⁸ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, London 2013.

to this term, Husserl provided a solution for the reduction of the transcendent to the immanent constitutions, since people are only able to know immanent phenomena.⁹ Transcendental refers here to the search of necessities within the immanent reality. By doing so, Husserl focuses on knowledge that emerges out of experience, which therefore reflects the ontological perspective.

Inspired by Husserl's thought, Martin Heidegger, another father of phenomenology, started to conduct research within the field of ontology in relation to the immanent reality.¹⁰ He argued that one should return to the Greeks and the ontology proposed by Aristotle, though he stated that this ontological understanding should be critically discussed in the light of present day phenomena.¹¹ This search led to the questioning of a transcendental ontology. In this line, Heidegger published *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* in 1929.¹² In one of his most important works, published two years earlier under the title *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger focuses on the state of being a human, approaching it phenomenologically. He introduces the concepts of *Sein* [being in general] in relation to *Dasein*, which alludes to human existence. This category of *Dasein* is carefully demarcated in terms of being engaged while being-in-the-world.¹³

By preventing a reduction of the other to the self, the phenomenological tradition in general proposes a revision of ontology in the line of Heidegger's plea. Arendt belongs to the third generation of phenomenologists who proclaim that "the concrete transcendental subject grasps itself as Other in that it is 'an other' for the Other, and introduces an absolutely original element into the problematic of this subject: the social. Here again phenomenology was led inevitably, by the very fact that it is not a metaphysics but a philosophy of the concrete."¹⁴ From a post-modern perspective, which takes the loss of the metaphysical methodologically in the perception of reality as its point of departure, this phenomenological approach functions as a bridge to cope with the reduction of the other to the self. Based on this idea, Arendt, therefore, concludes that the political becomes

⁹ Husserl, *Ideen*, 213.

¹⁰ When the term 'father' is used in this paper, it must be understood in a gender neutral way.

¹¹ Elisabeth Young-Bruenel, *Hannah Arendt. Een Biografie*, trans. Hein Groen, Gijss Went, Amsterdam 2004, 107.

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Kant Und Das Problem Der Metaphysik*, Vittorio 2010.

¹³ Martin Heidegger, *Sein Und Zeit. Ein Einführender Kommentar*, Stuttgart 2001, 76.

¹⁴ Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Phenomenology*, Albany 1991, 75.

the space where human existence is the center. This conviction leads to a journey of seeking to understand concrete situations by analyzing events, societal dynamics and incorporating lived experience. Arendt's work testifies of this concrete approach *par excellence*.¹⁵ This is for instance disclosed when she refers to worldliness, which does not correspond to a natural fact. Rather, it is an observation on an experiential level, alluding to a "reality created between people in the public realm."¹⁶ Like Heidegger, Arendt focuses on the *who* instead of the *what*, for the *who* discloses the ontology of a person. For Arendt, this emphasis on the *who* finds expression in the interrelation between the self and the other through, for instance, the act of speech. Again, this fits within the phenomenological approach Arendt integrates into her understanding of the realm of appearances.

In sum, Arendt adopted, yet changed many concepts from Husserl, Heidegger and another important phenomenologist, such as Karl Jaspers, but she remained to perceive and interpret reality according to phenomenological standards. Therefore, I understand Arendt's views to fit within the phenomenological line of thinking. This notion functions as a guiding principle for interpreting Arendt's "recognition" throughout this article. From locating Arendt's thought within the phenomenological tradition, I will now turn to her understanding of recognition.

Arendt's understanding on recognition: The gate to the place of interaction

In this paragraph I will focus on Arendt's understanding of "recognition," which will help to further interpret the "Mutual Agreement of Recognition." The concept of recognition functions as a gate to enter the realm of interaction where rights are protected, where one belongs to community, and where identity is being disclosed. In presenting the significance of recognition, I will show that according to Arendt it is rooted in the faculty of natality, and is constituted in desire for the other to be. In this respect, equality becomes a prerequisite for recognition. It is to be argued that recognition has an essential regulative role in Arendt's thought, though it remains implicit. Furthermore, it deserves attention, that it places the other in perspective to the self. Seyla Benhabib interprets Arendt's understanding of recognition, arguing: "One's status as a right-bearing person is

¹⁵ Topolski, *Arendt*, 16.

¹⁶ Topolski, *Arendt*, 17.

contingent upon the recognition of one's membership."¹⁷ In essence, it is a necessity for interacting.

Following Arendt's argumentation, the concept of natality distinguishes between two different kinds of birth. First, there is the natural birth corresponding to *givenness* and the second birth is a so-called politico-linguistic birth, characterized by *publicness*.¹⁸ This last birth embodies a political birth by recognizing "one can take on a persona and be admitted to a political community."¹⁹ Therefore, one can state that natality gives rise to the potential of action. Here, Arendt distinguishes the beginning of humankind (*initium*) from the beginning of the world (*principium*). According to Arendt, humans are the forces that have the capacity to set things in motion, corresponding with natality in this sense. Arendt refers to St Augustine, when she presents her argumentation for incorporating recognition into her philosophy:

This mere existence, that is, all that which is mysteriously given to us by birth and which includes the shape of our bodies and the talents of our minds, can be adequately dealt with only by the unpredictable hazards of friendship and sympathy, or by the great and incalculable grace without love, which says with Augustine, *Volu ut sis* without being able to give any particular reason for such supreme and unsurpassable affirmation.²⁰

By quoting Augustine, Arendt acknowledges two births, embodied in a natural birth, mysteriously given, and a political birth by the desire of the one for the other to be. In both cases, it enables the person to engage, to act and interact. Exactly here, both forms of natality meet each other in sharing the common ground of action. Arendt interprets Augustinian "miraculous" in a way that it is indeed miraculous who people become.²¹

However, the prerequisite to be fully human, in terms of acting and interacting, is (the need to) have listeners or an audience. An underlying assumption in the actualisation of acting entails the recognition of others. According to Arendt, when recognising the other, one steps into a new realm where equality and freedom are essential.

¹⁷ Seyla Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Maryland 2003, 58.

¹⁸ Matt Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition. A Political Theory of Human Rights*, London 2016, 72–73.

¹⁹ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 73.

²⁰ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 301.

²¹ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 73.

Without those who are my equals, there is no freedom, which is why the man who rules over others [...] is indeed a happier and more enviable man than those over whom he rules, but he is one who freer. He too moves in a sphere in which there is no freedom whatever.²²

Within the context of an asymmetry of power, Arendt challenges the ruler to give up his power for the sake of freedom of both the ruler and the ruled. Refusing to give power consequently implies that it functions as a barrier to be fully human.

Further, the notions of action and speech are faculties expressed in a community, and these notions are connected to natality in a way that every human has the capacity to set things into motion. This leads to the conclusion that every human has the right to have rights. A requirement in this respect is the recognition of the other before attaining this right. In other words: "the potential of continual new beginnings is the basis for freedom and human rights, rights founded on the judgment of members of a free political society."²³

Recognition in relation to the right to have rights

Arendt was one of the pioneers in providing severe critique of the human rights movement after the Second World War. Eleanor Roosevelt and H.G. Wells, for example, advocated for universal rights of every human being, embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 by the United Nations.²⁴ Arendt opposed this, holding the 'doctrine of human rights' accountable for causing trouble in the past. In fact, she argued that people have rights when they belong to a certain community, something that nineteenth century philosopher Thomas Hill Green also has argued.²⁵ A synonym for the right of membership entails the right to have rights, to put it into Arendtian terms.

Arendt argues: "The concept of human rights can become meaningful again if it is redefined in the light of present experiences and circumstances."²⁶ By incorporating empirical data into her argumentation, she

describes what the consequences are when recognition is absent, for example in being stateless, excluded from political membership and being without rights.²⁷ In this respect, the role of recognition is crucial for understanding Arendt.

Like Green, Arendt argues that rights assume recognition and are bound to a societal sphere. In this respect, there are two categories of recognition, one of persons and one of rights. Arendt also adds that equality is necessary to obtain the right to have rights. The principle of recognition is based upon the idea of common good, the *sensus communis*. Furthermore, "recognition of rights requires the greatest possible facilitation of communication within society."²⁸ From here, it is clear that a society functions as an open community in terms of being open for other ideas and people outside the community.

Arendt connects the topic of recognition with human rights and the powers of nation-states. She starts describing the situation before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was introduced. Nation-states were organized around the principle of self-determination and national sovereignty. It was in this structure that the topic of human rights emerged, advocating for a better civilisation. Arendt concludes that the rights of the individual "were dependent on and secondary to the rights of the community in which the individual lived."²⁹ Continuing, Arendt argues that this relation and dependency is problematic, since human rights are not protected when the structure of the nation-state changes:

Without much notice, all this collapsed almost overnight, and then it was as though morality suddenly stood revealed in the original meaning of the word, as a set of mores, customs and manners, which could be exchanged for another set with hardly more trouble than it would take to change the table manners of an individual or a people.³⁰

The '30s and '40s of the last century testify of societies in which many, while being refugees or stateless, lost their right of political status and engagement. Consequently, no nation-state will accept the person as such in perceiving this person as a political actor.³¹ This leads to the argumentation

²⁷ Peg Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights. The Predicament of Common Responsibility*, (Studies in Continental Thought), Bloomington 2006, 49.

²⁸ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 43.

²⁹ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 44.

³⁰ Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment*, New York 2003, 50.

³¹ Arendt's definition of a nation is a people that is self-aware of its common history.

²² Hannah Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, New York 2007, 118.

²³ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 75.

²⁴ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 41.

²⁵ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 41.

²⁶ Hannah Arendt, "The Rights of Man: What Are They?" *Modern Review* 3 (1949) 1, 34.

that one needs to have social recognition in terms of recognizing the other not only as a human, but rather as a person. So Arendt presents the right to belong to a political community as primary to the other, since only this can guarantee protection from dehumanization.³²

The problem that Arendt has with statelessness is that it closes the relation between being a citizen and having rights. Arendt describes the process of becoming stateless as a transformation from being a person to becoming a human.

A human being in general, without a profession, without a citizenship [...] representing nothing but his own absolutely unique individuality which, deprived of expression within and action upon a common world, loses all significance.³³

Stateless people can no longer lean upon the protection, contrary to citizens of a certain nation-state. In this sense, belonging to a political community functions as a precondition in order to uphold human rights, according to Arendt.³⁴

The second important element in Arendt's exposé is equality, which functions as another precondition for upholding human rights. First of all, equality should be expressed within the law in which the equality of humans is anchored. Besides, Arendt argues that equality must be embodied by a proper organization and structure. Since man is not born equally, one must become equal "as members of a group on the strength of our decision to guarantee ourselves mutually equal rights."³⁵

In this paragraph we have investigated the role of recognition in relation to belonging to a community and its impact. On the one hand, recognition functions as a way for the other to become part of the political community, or in Arendt's terms, the polis. On the other hand, recognition is the key to the releasing of rights to every member for communicating

However, the definition of state considers "an open society, ruling over a territory where its power protects and makes the law. As a legal institution, the state knows only citizens no matter of what nationality; its legal order is open to all who happen to live on its territory." Arendt distinguishes that a nation has sameness and a state upholds equality, see: Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 54.

³² Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 49.

³³ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 302.

³⁴ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 51.

³⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 301.

and interacting. This form of social recognition constitutes the foundation for ethics and morality. In both cases, it forms a gate to a new space of interaction.

Having discussed Arendt and her understanding in regards to "recognition," I will now turn to the Oslo Process. In order to prevent an artificial presentation of data in this interdisciplinary research, I will allude to Arendt's thoughts of "recognition" after discussing the events and cultural dynamics within the Oslo Process.

Mutual Agreement of Recognition

In December 1992, the Oslo Process started as a pioneering project in which Israeli and Palestinian representatives would make history. Uri Savir, chief-negotiator of the Israeli negotiators, testifies of this period in his book *The Process: 1,100 days that changed the Middle East*. He starts his book by mentioning the challenge of compromise in order to "resist religious fundamentalism and nationalist fanaticism."³⁶ The initial target of the meetings in Oslo was to provide an informal agreement, which could be used for further negotiations. Shimon Peres, being minister of foreign affairs, authorized Savir as chief representative in Oslo to speak about three main topics. First, Savir had to consider the status of Jerusalem, which should not have been mentioned in any potential autonomy principle. Second, the Palestinians should drop their wish for an international trial as a result of Israeli deeds in the past. The last point concerned the moving of the PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organization] leadership to Gaza strip and included the topic of its autonomy.³⁷

The willingness to speak with the PLO on behalf of the Palestinian people was a direct result of a political aim to achieve peace under the supervision of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. The Labour Party under supervision of Yitzhak Rabin advocated for peace during elections times, pursuing to achieve it after winning the elections in 1992.³⁸ Savir writes: "The aim of Israel's elected government is to bring about a historic reconciliation with the Palestinian people. We have no interest in only a cosmetic change of the status quo. It is not our wish to control your

³⁶ Uri Savir, *The Process. 1,100 That Changed the Middle East*, New York 1998, 72.

³⁷ Savir, *The Process*, 146.

³⁸ Asher Arian, Michal Shamir (eds.), *Elections in Israel. 1992*, Jerusalem 1994, 22.

lives. Our interest is in peace, in security, and, together with you, in leading the way to regional peace."³⁹

The Palestinians were also willing to start the conversation about a potential agreement of recognition. Based on the economic and geopolitical situation, the Palestinians aimed to achieve peace. Savir reports that Abu Ala said:

We want to live with you in peace. We want to cooperate with you toward developing the region; encouraging the creation of a Marshall Plan for the Middle East; developing our economics, so that we can open the doors to the Arabs world for you and to freedom for ourselves. The situation in the occupied territories is desperate, politically and economically. Time is running out.⁴⁰

Smith also argues that PLO was willing to participate in peace negotiations, since it would strengthen its internal position within the Palestinian territories.⁴¹ Due to the rise of Hamas in Gaza and critique towards Arafat, it was foreseen that the PLO could become the public and national image in representing the Palestinian territories.

The Norwegian Terje Larsen, who studied in Israel and was director of a major European Peace organization (FAFO), hosted the secret conversations between Israeli and Palestinian representatives. Savir writes about Larsen and his creative style of approaching the conversations:

For the Terje, the essence of the Oslo channel was to come up with creative solutions by a process of free thinking, not traditional hardnosed bargaining. He believed that the relaxed Norwegian atmosphere would have an osmotic impact on the talks and hoped we could achieve a blend between Oslo and Jerusalem.⁴²

By the end of August 1993, Israeli and Palestinian representatives provided an accord in which both parties mutually recognized one another. The Israeli-Palestinian Accord includes two aspects: one of them is the Declaration of Principles (DOP), which was 'initialed' on August 20, 1993 and was officially signed at the White House on September 13, 1993.⁴³ The

³⁹ Savir, *The Process*, 256.

⁴⁰ Savir, *The Process*, 273.

⁴¹ Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab- Israeli Conflict. A History with Documents*, Boston 2017, 436.

⁴² Savir, *The Process*, 275.

⁴³ State of Israel, Palestine Liberation Organization, *Declaration of Principles*.

DOP concerns letters of the leading representatives of both peoples, Yitzhak Rabin who was Prime Minister of Israel and Yasir Arafat, father of the PLO. Smith writes, it "was conditional on the exchange of letters of recognition."⁴⁴ The second aspect of the accord entails the actual letter of mutual recognition. In fact, the letter was about recognizing Israel as a state and the PLO as organization. This implied that the PLO recognized the UN resolutions 242 and 238, which describe the right of the state Israel to exist in security and peace.⁴⁵ In relation to that, Arafat wrote in a letter that the PLO would abandon acts of terrorism towards the state of Israel, including the promise of active commitment to cease elements that would realize this.⁴⁶ Arafat also renounced the aspects within the 1968 charter that speaks about the denial of Israel's embodied existence in the expression of a nation-state. Further, Arafat also declared a cease fire on the ground. To the contrary, Rabin's administration responded the same day by stating: "the Government of Israel has decided to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process."⁴⁷ Based on this quote one can conclude that the Israeli government deliberately chose to only view the PLO as a representative for the Palestinian people, instead of alluding to a Palestinian state. This results in an indistinctness of the PLO's status as an organization, while speaking about a potential peace accord.

From a Palestinian rejectionist viewpoint, Arafat had recognized Israel's existence without gaining Israel's acknowledgment of a Palestinian right to self-determination. Conversely, from an Israeli rejectionist standpoint, the very fact that Rabin had officially accepted the existence of a Palestinian people, let alone the PLO, was anathema and the prelude to a Palestinian state in areas they were determined to retain for Israel.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Smith, *Arab- Israeli Conflict*, 336.

⁴⁵ United Nations, "UN Resolution 238", 1967, url: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/238\(1967\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/238(1967)) (accessed 13 March 2020); United Nations, "UN Resolution 242", 1967, url: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/242\(1967\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/242(1967)) (accessed 13 March 2020).

⁴⁶ Letter written on September 9th, url: <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Yearbook9/Pages/107%20Israel-PLO%20Mutual%20Recognition-%20Letters%20and%20Spe.aspx>.

⁴⁷ Smith, *Arab- Israeli Conflict*, 436.

⁴⁸ Smith, *Arab- Israeli Conflict*, 436.

Opponents of the signing of the accord responded with resistance. Within the Gaza area, Hamas had lots of followers and controlled the Gaza area with its militant forces, using violence against Israeli people. In this period of harassment Hamas expanded its influence in the West Bank, where settlers were killed by Palestinian opponents. Further, Hebron was a place of direct confrontation between Israeli settlers, united in a group called Gush Emunim, and the Palestinian inhabitants within Hebron.

The economic situation of Gaza declined during the years of negotiations. Many Palestinians who lived in Gaza worked on Israeli territory, and the unemployment percentage rose considerably as a result of the Israeli shutdown of territories.⁴⁹ This shutdown was an answer to the suicide bombing in Israel, killing multiple Israeli citizens in 1994. Due to security reasons, this decision has grounds to be defended.

In 1994, Israel booked progress in terms of improving its international diplomatic relations. This was expressed by the signing of an official peace accord between Israel and Jordan. In this agreement, Israel promised Jordan a prominent role within the process of finding a permanent solution for East Jerusalem. Officially, it is contradicting the Oslo Accord of September 13, 1993, which prescribed there would not be intervene concerning the East Jerusalem topic. Another development that strengthened the Israelis' position, was the formation of additional political positions with the opening of an Israeli office in Tunisia. Further, Israel joined a conference on the acceptance of the state of Israel as a result of the signing of the Oslo Accord in 1993.

The Palestinian internal situation was not as stable as foreseen. The leader of the PLO Arafat was subject to discussion whether or not his leadership skills were sufficient for the task of negotiating on behalf of the Palestinian people.

If Arafat's personal style of rule seemed to ignore the need to create a political and economic infrastructure in the territories taken over, he was hardly helped by the nature of the structure given him.⁵⁰

While these developments took place, Arab attacks on Israel continued. As a result, Israel urgently requested Arafat to control the Palestinian ter-

⁴⁹ "Whereas 70 percent of Gaza's labour force had worked in Israel before the intifada, 23 percent did so in June 1993 and only 11 percent by January 1994." Smith, *Arab- Israeli Conflict*, 442.

⁵⁰ Smith, *Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 444.

ritories, which he represented. However, this proved to be an impossible target for Arafat.⁵¹ In the following years, it turned out to be difficult to actualize recognition in the form of peaceful co-existence. The continuation of violence and the expansion of settlements were major aspects that complicated achieving the political targets of peace building.

Integrating both discourses

In this section, I will analyze the demand of embodiment and continual commitment to implement it in Arendt's understanding of the concept of recognition. O'Malley states that recognition functions as a key to entering the space where one interacts with the process towards peace. By recognizing each other's embodied existence, the first target was achieved, so that both parties could further journey towards peaceful terms.⁵² Though the mutual agreement describes that Israel has been recognized as a nation-state and the PLO as a representative for the Palestinian people, it cannot be stated that the agreement reflected symmetry or equality. Both parties departed from an unequal situation.⁵³ In fact, a democratic state starts speaking with a people that aims to organize itself as a nation-state. A Palestinian intellectual and trustee of Arafat, Ashrawi, was amongst those taking critical stance towards the outcome of Oslo I [Mutual Agreement of Recognition], arguing that this accord was the entrance towards full occupation of the Israeli powers, in which the asymmetry could further be established.

Israeli negotiator Ron Pundak, however, states that Oslo I is based on dialogue, and

as much as possible on fairness, equality and common objectives. These values were to be reflected both in the character of the negotiations, including the personal relationships between negotiations, and in the covered solutions and implementation. Unfortunately it didn't achieve that.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ofira Seliktar, *Doomed to Failure? The Politics and Intelligence of the Oslo Peace Process*, Oxford 2009, 1240.

⁵² Embodied is used here, since it acknowledges the ontological in recognizing each other; Padraig O'Malley, *The Two-State Delusion: Israel and Palestine – A Tale of Two Narratives*, New York 2016, 48.

⁵³ During these first unofficial negotiations Savir reported that the Israelis presented the work documents and potential versions of the DOP.

⁵⁴ O'Malley, *The Two-State Delusion*, 86.

Though the signing of the agreement of recognition was a historical step towards peace, the concept of recognition needed embodiment in order to receive meaning—otherwise an agreement is merely a piece of paper.⁵⁵ In other words, recognition demands an ethical implementation.⁵⁶ In Arendt's understanding, recognition was crucial, yet implicitly present within her thinking, since it functioned as a prerequisite for acting and interacting in the realm of appearances.⁵⁷ In this context Arendt refers to two births, embodied in a natural one, mysteriously given, and a political one, given shape by the desire of the one for the other to be.⁵⁸ In both cases, a birth enables the person to engage, to act and interact. Exactly here, both forms of natality meet each other in sharing the common ground of action.⁵⁹ However, the presupposition is that one needs listeners or audience to be recognized. According to Arendt, in gaining recognition, the other steps into a new realm where equality and freedom are the way. With regard to the notion of equality, Arendt even challenges the ruler to lay down its power to become equal to the other. The question remains whether this is a concept that is realistic to actualize. Laying down one's power has both consequences for Arafat himself as the state of Israel in relation to the PLO.

As noticed by Buckler, it is a methodological pitfall to interpret Arendt's thought on the realm of appearances as a model that should be implemented identically in every situation. Rather, Arendt's thought evokes discussion in order to sharpen structures in the public realm. With regard to the notion of equality, we must critically evaluate whether it is possible to embody the action and interaction within the polis of the Oslo Process. Consequently, the question is what structures should be changed in order to experience more freedom in the public realm.

The phenomenological tradition, as discussed in the first section, places ontology before epistemology. Husserl and others aimed to investigate the phenomena in this immanent reality by focusing primarily on the experiential, instead of the search for truth claims. So knowledge emerges out of experience. In the first paragraph, I followed Topolski's argument that Arendt belongs to the phenomenological tradition in terms of being a

third-generation successor.⁶⁰ In this respect, I argue that Arendt understands recognition ontologically. By connecting the faculty of natality with recognition, Arendt refers to Augustine and the wish for the other to be. Here, it is about birth and the experience of belonging, which covers the essence of the concept of recognition. This does not imply that one should agree on the basis of shared opinions or facts, but rather on the basis of acknowledgment of one's existence. Then recognition is not founded in epistemology, but rather in recognizing the immanent reality of each other's embodied existence in the disputed territory.

Another implication of this shift points at the focus on the *who* instead of the *what* in correspondence to the phenomenological tradition. With regard to the Israeli-Palestinian situation, this would shift the nature of the negotiations from trying to persuade the other on the basis of rational arguments to acknowledging the status quo in which experiences confirm each other's narratives. This does not imply that negotiations cannot be rational at all. Rather, the basis upon which an agreement of recognition is made changes considerably. By presenting this argument, I am not denying the necessity to negotiate certain terms as has been done during the unofficial meetings and is implemented within the DOP. I only restrict myself to the concept of recognition while analyzing this first phase in the Oslo Process. Practically, it could be comparable to O'Malley's view that it is important to recognize each other's existence, expressed in a sentence like: "I know your narrative and I reject it in its entirety, yet I accept your right to define your own narrative as your wish, and I will respect that right and its aspirations."⁶¹ He acknowledges that recognition is a hard thing, yet it is necessary for peace.

I argue that Arendt's interpretation of a politico-philosophical meaning of recognition, being ontologically based, functions as a valid contribution for placing the politico-diplomatic meaning of recognition in perspective, appreciation, embodiment and concretisation. This is not about the denial of an epistemological basis, but rather about the point of departure from which Israelis and Palestinians recognize each other.

⁵⁵ O'Malley, *The Two-State Delusion*, 85.

⁵⁶ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Washington DC 1997, 95.

⁵⁷ Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism*, 58.

⁵⁸ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 301.

⁵⁹ Hann, *Egalitarian Rights Recognition*, 73.

⁶⁰ Topolski, *Arendt*, 15.

⁶¹ O'Malley, *The Two-State Delusion*, 49.

This volume collects papers from the 10th and 11th conferences of the Comenius Committee of Protestant Theological Faculties in Central and Eastern Europe and the Netherlands: »Roads to Reconciliation Between Groups in Conflict« took place in Komárno, Slovakia, in 2015, »Theology in a World of Ideologies: Authorization or Critique?« was held in Kampen, Netherlands, in 2018. The authors address a range of (inter)disciplinary issues, concrete questions and implications of the Christian faith for the contemporary world. These include exploring roads to Christian inspired individual and societal reconciliation, conflation(s) of theology and ideology, the ways in which core elements of Christian existence – (biblical) narratives, traditions, memory practices – contribute to erasing or maintaining the boundaries between theology and ideology, and how these elements contribute to religious mobilization.



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