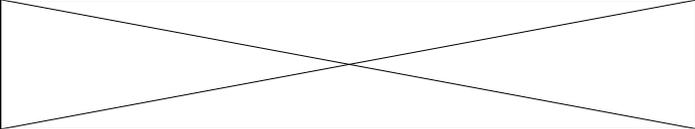


„Corridors of Ideas“ / Parallel Paper Presentation

Room	Thursday, April 27th 14.00-16.30	Friday, April 28th 14.00-16.30
Freiherr-vom-Stein-Saal (Venue)	First Part of the Panel (I) THE FUTURE OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY. Convener: Joerg Rieger	Second Part of the Panel (I) THE FUTURE OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY. Convener: Joerg Rieger
Room B14/16 (Venue)	(II) THE FUTURE OF CRITICAL RELIGION. Convener: Anne Koch	(V) GENDER JUSTICE IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION. Convener: Anne Hege Grung
Room B17/18 (Venue)	(III) TRAUMA, RESILIENCE AND RECONCILIATION. Convener: Julianne Funk	(VI) INTER-RITUALITY IN CONFLICT ZONES. Convener: Marianne Moyaert
JO 101 (Cluster)	(IV) REFUGEE CRISIS AND MIGRATION. Convener: Jorge E. Castillo Guerra	(VII) BUDDHISM AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION. Convener: Jude Lal Fernando
JO 102 (Cluster)	First Part of the Panel (VIII) ISLAMIC APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING. Convener: Nayla Tabbara	Second Part of the Panel (VIII) ISLAMIC APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING. Convener: Nayla Tabbara
KthIV (Theology Building)	(IX) INTERRELIGIOUS LITERACY AMONG INDONESIANS AND EZIDIS Convener: Norbert Hintersteiner	

“Corridors of Ideas”: Parallel Paper Presentation Groups

Please note that panels I and VIII have been split in two sessions to accommodate for the larger number of speakers applying to present on those topics.

In addition to the sessions advertised beforehand, we have another session on interreligious literacy in Indonesia and a presentation on the Ezidis. Those two are scheduled for Thursday, see below.

Thursday, 27th of April 14.00-16.30

(I) THE FUTURE OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY.

Convener: Joerg Rieger

Room: Freiherr vom Stein Saal

PART 1 – Thursday 27th of April 2017

Volker **KÜSTER**, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz: *Revisiting Liberation Theologies and Marxist Theory – A Contested Relationship*

First Generation Latin American Liberation Theologian's flirt with Neo-Marxist analysis of dependent economies on the periphery (*dependencia*) led to a witch-hunt by the Christian right and neo-conservative politicians on all kinds of progressive Christians even not sparing the World Council of Churches. The CIA and their allies in dictatorships around the globe gained interest in theological tracts and sermons and as a consequence devote Christians, clergy, nuns and theologians were harassed, imprisoned without trial, tortured and killed by death squads. South Korean Minjung Theologians still horrified by the massacres between Christians and Communists in the vortex of the division of the country tried to formulate an alternative theological option. Yet they were opposing the anti-communism of the military dictatorship and therefore being accused of being communists themselves by the majority of fundamentalist Korean Christians. American and South African Black Theology highlighted race discrimination. Indian Dalit Theology is addressing the caste system. Women of all colors raise the gender issue. Meanwhile the younger generation in these theo-political movements is reclaiming the class-struggle as not to be neglected by issues of race, gender and cultural-religious discrimination. With the triumphant advance of global consumer capitalism and empire, liberation theology and Marxist theory alike may get a second chance as critical tools, against the neo-conservative myth of their end.

Reggie **NEL**, University of South Africa (UNISA): *Student Movements Are Turning the Tide? A Postcolonial Intercultural Engagement with Steve Biko towards Liberation in South Africa*

Student Movements in South African Universities have become an integral dimension of broader social movements pushing for the decolonization of the public space. This is nothing new in the context of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. One of the key figures in South African political history has been the student activist and black theologian, Steve Biko. He was killed by the security police on 12 September 1977, 40 years ago. This contribution, revisits the legacy of Biko, in the light of the current rise of social movements, in response to various (new) forms of exclusion and injustice, socio-politically and economically. Within the SA context, one can refer to the #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall student movements. A postcolonial theological lens is proposed in dialogue with new social movement theory and transformation studies. The intention is to discern this in conversation with similar movements and broader conversations globally – landless movements across the globe but particularly in places like decolonization and postcolonial projects, BlackLivesMatter in the USA, or the resurgence of Fanonian thought and practices on the African continent and elsewhere. The notion of “spirit rising” and “tracing movements”, as well as justice becomes key lenses, in this study whilst also the terms such as solidarity, responsible solidarity, critical solidarity, hybridization, activist scholarship, and other such terms, are used to consider (dis)engagement in relation to justice issues. This presentation is part of a bigger project exploring the future of an interdisciplinary, activist engagement from the Southern African perspective.

Hayden E. **PENDERGRASS**: *A Tunisian “Renaissance”: Ennahda’s Political Ethics as Postcolonial Critique of the “Clash of Civilizations”* ABSTRACT PENDING

Sebastian **PITTL**, Institute for World Church and Mission, Frankfurt: *Carl Schmitt Revised? The Theopolitics of Contemporary Identitarian Movements as Challenge for Doing Political Theology in a Globalized and Multicultural Context*

When theologians like Metz, Moltmann or Sölle developed their variants of „political theology“ in the 60s, 70s and 80s their main opponent was what Metz called „bourgeois Christianity“. Given the rise of identitarian movements in Europe and the US the paper argues that critical forms of political theology today have to face not so much the privatization of religion, but the revival of politically highly engaged forms of „political theology“ in the footsteps of Carl Schmitt. As it seems „religion“ does not only play an important role in Islamist identity politics, but is also of crucial importance in various identitarian movements of the far-right in Russia, Europe and the US. Despite the growing influence of these movements in various countries in Europe and the US theological and political analysts often ignore the significant transformations within the far-right during the last decades falling into simplistic stereotypes of the „right“ and therefore failing to grasp the phenomenon and to develop effective strategies to counteract it.

This paper tries to avoid such simplifications by focusing on the probably most influential intellectual figure of the European „new right“, the French philosopher Alain de Benoist. The writings of Benoist seemingly transcend the political categories of „right“ and „left“, integrating a variety of topics traditionally associated with the „left“ like critique of globalization, neoliberal capitalism, racism, eurocentrism and nationalism, the defense of cultural difference and plurality and the strong impetus on sustainability, ecology and degrowth.

This paper gives special attention to three challenges that Benoist' writings offer for an intercultural and critical political theology today: 1.) Benoist' understanding of culture and a „right multiculturalism“ which drawing on postmodern discourses of difference and ideas of Carl Schmitt pretends to defend the plurality of languages and „rooted“ cultures against the cultural alienation of capitalism and US-americanization by fostering the vision of a multitude of highly different, although within themselves rather homogenous ethnic groups. 2.) Benoist's concept of „Meta-politics“ which uses Gramsci's ideas about cultural hegemony to develop a political strategy that aims more at winning „minds and hearts“ through discourse and media than at a violent revolution, thereby questioning the naive assumption that political theologies that act primarily on the level of civic society are per se more compatible with secular democracies than political theologies that attempt to gain influence on politics in a more direct way. 3) The strictly religious aspect of Benoist's „ethnopluralism“ which blames „JudeoChristianity“ for the disenchantment of the world and its consequences: cultural alienation and nihilism, and instead opts for a new paganism. This contrasts with other identitarian groups and rightwing politics especially in Eastern Europe which try to legitimize their political projects with the defense of a supposedly Christian occident against increased „Islamization“.

The paper investigates historical and theoretical backgrounds of these ideas and analyzes how they can be criticized from a theological and biblical perspective. It suggests to take serious the intellectual challenge of new right thinkers and the puzzling transformation of right ideology in identitarian movements, however it also demonstrates in which ways Benoist and the new right despite their anti-racist and anti-fascist discourse remain entangled with fascist groups and ideologies of the past and present. It is argued that a detailed analysis of the theopolitics of the new right is not only necessary to counteract the political project of these movements, but can also serve political theologies in the tradition of Metz, Moltmann or liberation theology to become more sensitive to their own ideological temptations, which are latent in some forms of excessive critique of modernity and „liberal“ democracy, the sometimes exaggerated ambition to speak for and represent the poor and oppressed and claims of immediate truth based on a supposed (or real) proximity to experiences of suffering and persecution.

Peter **ADMIRAND**: *Should Theology Trump Anyone? A Humbled Political Theology in a Time of Anti-politics*

In the midst of political contexts, where sides divide and spew accusations upon the other, sometimes in the name of love, often in the language of justice or God, what could be the best theological approach seeking to bridge gaps, promote dialogue, and help form and sustain a need and plan for social action with and towards those deemed most marginal and vulnerable?

In this paper, I will contend that the virtues of humility and empathy are two of the most promising and helpful to make sure the focus is not self-serving, unreflective, or abruptly dismissive of opposing views. To do so, I will first highlight the strengths and (most importantly) weaknesses of humility and empathy, as neither are panaceas. Humility can be, and has been, easily co-opted by the powerful to silence the marginalized, while empathy can facilely assume that another perspective can be fully known and understood. Clearly, in the so-called surprise victories of Trump, Brexit supporters, and the rise of the far-right or alt right in France, Hungary, and Germany, more listening and attempt at understanding are needed.

In the second part of the paper, I will turn to some recent texts on racial and class justice in the Unites States, particularly Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*; Alice Goffman's *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City*; Waverly Duck's *No Way Out: Precarious Living in the Shadow of Poverty and Drug Dealing*; Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy, A Story of Justice and Redemption*; Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*; Matthew Desmond's *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*; and Nancy Isenberg's *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America*. Such a rich and wide selection of texts will helpfully provide a layered and nuanced presentation of the extent and level of the problems, the signs of the times, as it were.

In the third part of the paper, I will try to articulate what it means for a political theology to wade into such contentious issues revolving around class, race, and gender in a time where distrust of politics and political policy is so high and charged. What would it mean for theology to examine and listen to such texts and lives with the virtues of humility and empathy? The dialogue and introspection that should ensue would seem to further widen the need for humility (seeing the failures maintained or sustained by our religious or ideational group and identity) and the deep sense of the great suffering and struggle by one's fellow human beings (which can only be truly known if equally experienced). What kind of theology, or more specifically, humbled political theology, would result? In the spirit of Metz's searing questions in the aftermath of Auschwitz and the failures of Christians vis-à-vis Jews, how candid and transparent can theological claims be, not knowing all the answers, truths, or certainties?

Wolfram **WEISSE**: *Dialogical Theology. Theoretical Approach of a Contextual Theology and the Need for a Connection with Grassroots Theological Thinking*

The paper has three parts:

1. In the introduction I will sketch the relevance of the theme and the main features of the European research project "Religion and Dialogue in modern Societies (ReDi). Interdisciplinary and Internationally Comparative Studies on the Possibilities and Limitations of Interreligious Dialogue". Its interdisciplinary approach including theology (and the humanities in general) along with social science and education has been chosen to study complex phenomena of interreligious dialogical activity, including their impact on social processes of integration and peacemaking and thus gain insight for their realization. This research forms the background for working out a "Dialogical Theology" which is connected to our empirical research on "Dialogical Praxis".

2. The main ideas of what we call "Dialogical Theology" will be presented. We understand "Dialogical Theology" as a contextual theology built on different religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. We analyzed how different religions integrate mutual interaction into their theological reflections and how they can grow towards interreligious openness. Therefore, "Dialogical Theology" is based on the perspectives of different religions and their respective theologies. Dialogical Theology transcends from the very beginning a mono-confessional approach of theology. It aims at contributing to societal justice and has a strong impetus in the direction of gender equality and justice. Thus it could be understood as a form of liberation theology. The main features of "Dialogical Theology" are: openness and dialogue, interreligious processes of understanding, context and ethics, perspectives for the future directed to transformation and new approaches of theology. I will underline that a dialogical approach to theology represents an asset for peaceful coexistence between people of different faiths in our society. Finally we try to combine our concept of "Dialogical Theology" to lived experiences of people, belonging to different religious and worldview backgrounds.

3. Theological conceptions and interpretations of religious pluralism arising from the experience of everyday life, especially among young people (*Alltags- und Jugendtheologie*) are of particular interest for us.

As one example, how to link the concept of “Dialogical Theology” to the thinking at grassroots level I present in a case study the views of adolescents on religion and dialogue. Our empirical basis are written and oral interviews with pupils in Hamburg from different religious and non-religious backgrounds in the age group of 14- 17. We stimulated them to reflect on the truth question, on religious diversity, and on the question of God. I will present a structural analysis of the data which forms a preliminary result of our fieldwork which still is ongoing. I do not think it is indicated to relate the positions of youngsters to approaches of academic theology too hastily. Nonetheless I see great potential in addressing profound theological questions with a focus on interreligious dialogue through the reflections of youngsters.

Conclusion: The paper ends with a resumee and a perspective for further research.

(II) THE FUTURE OF CRITICAL RELIGION.

Convener: Anne Koch

Room: B 14/16 (Venue)

Oddbjørn **LEIRVIK**, University of Oslo: *Islamic Humanism as Critical Religion*

In 2015, Mouhanad Khorchide (the director of the Centre for Islamic Theology at the University of Münster) published a book with the interesting title *Gott glaubt an den Menschen: Mit dem Islam zu einem neuen Humanismus*. The book title could be taken as an indication of how Islamic university theology in the European context is currently being reformulated in dialogue with dominant ethical and philosophical discourses in the larger society – in this case, the humanistic legacy. The most central issue in this book is religion and violence, a theme that Khorchide (on behalf of the Muslim community) approaches in a highly self-critical way. He criticizes the apologetic argument that “violence has nothing to do with Islam” and cites a number of mainstream classical scholars of Islam who have actually articulated rather belligerent interpretations of the Qur’an. Like in Khorchide’s previous book about divine mercy (*Islam ist Barmherzigkeit*, 2012), he also criticizes violent images of perdition and of hell as a place of divine torture, taking instead such imagery as a symbolic expression of purification. In his positive formulation of a non-violent humanism, he leans both on his reading of Islam as a religion of mercy and on relevant strands of European humanism, which are expounded at length. Islamic-religious and European-philosophical tradition seems thus to carry equal weight as background material for his formulation of Islam’s contribution to humanism today.

In my paper, I will analyze how Khorchide’s applies the double legacy of a postulated Islamic form of humanism and European humanistic discourses. In what sense might Khorchide’s vision of an Islamic humanism be characterized as critical religion? The other book to be analyzed along the same parameters was published by a group of Norwegian Muslims in 2016, under the title *Islamsk humanism*. What is understood as Islamic humanism in this book? How do the authors balance a self-critical perspective on Islam’s behalf with their idealistic vision of an Islamic humanism? To what extent do the books also articulate a gender critical perspective?

Vebjorn **HORSFJORD**, University of Oslo: *The Marrakesh Declaration – Critical Religion or Legitimation of Traditional Authority?*

The paper will present an investigation into the Marrakesh Declaration on the Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Majority Communities that was issued by a conference of international Islamic scholars in January 2016. The declaration was hailed by both Islamic and Christian leaders as well as many other observers as an important critical contribution towards better majority – minority relations in the Middle East.

The paper will analyse the document itself as well as the reception process and ask: Is a critical potential in the Islamic tradition released, or does the declaration reinforce traditional authority structures that hamper minority interests in the long term; or are both possible at the same time?

The Marrakesh Declaration illustrates a tension in religions’ critical engagement with political issues. On the one hand it may be useful to draw on resources that are widely recognised within the tradition. On the other hand a clearer break with tradition may be more conducive to empowering those who are most often marginalised. The arguments of the Marrakesh Declaration are based on the former strategy. This may strengthen its legitimacy within Islamic discourse, but may also explain why it falls short of embracing standards of religious freedom as it is understood in international human rights discourses. The paper will argue that the argumentative strategy of the document leads to its falling short of the ambitions articulated by its proponents.

However, the paper will also argue that despite its shortcomings, the declaration may fulfil some other, unstated, but desirable aims through its pragmatic functioning. The declaration explicitly places itself

within a broader context of Islamic and interreligious declarations on Christian-Muslim relations. Many Christian respondents have also read the declaration in light of such other dialogical efforts. Through what might be termed a “hermeneutics of good will” Christian and Muslim leaders together contribute to a counter discourse on interreligious relations that challenges the widely held clash of civilisations paradigm. A major problem with this counter narrative, however, is that its protagonists tend to be overwhelmingly male and representing majority positions.

The paper will suggest that although well intended, the strategy of gathering religious leaders and scholars around lofty declarations about mutual respect and understanding, has limited potential as an instrument for critical religious engagement with pressing political issues in the future.

Sylwia GÓRZNA, Poland: *Intercultural Dialogue in the Teaching of Pope Benedict XVI*

My paper is devoted to intercultural dialogue from the point of view of Pope Benedict XVI (pontificate between 2005 and 2013). It presents pontifical documents, statements and speeches dedicated to this issue as well as the conclusions resulting from them. The aim of the paper is to prove that intercultural dialogue and interreligious dialogue are within the context of a new scientific discipline – political science of religion – which deals with the issues of relations between the sphere of religion and the sphere of politics.

Benedict XVI repeatedly referred to the teaching of his predecessors e.g. John Paul II and to the work of the Second Vatican Council. He presented and appreciated people (Saint Thomas Aquinas), institutions (the European Union), organizations (the Council of Europe’s North-South Centre in Lisbon), which have been engaged in intercultural dialogue. From Benedict XVI’s documents, speeches and statements the following conclusions can be drawn: intercultural and interreligious dialogue constitutes a life necessity, a foundation of the future; enriching thanks to intercultural and interreligious contacts; interreligious dialogue is a more cultural (rational) domain rather than a purely religious (theological) one; reason, which pushes religion towards the sphere of subculture is not capable of engaging into intercultural dialogue; interreligious dialogue fits within the context of political science of religion because it contributes to the construction of the world based on peace and brotherhood; warning against increasing mercantilism of cultural exchange, cultural eclecticism, cultural relativism, cultural levelling, cultural prejudices, conflicts due to different cultural visions, violence; globalisation in a positive dimension allows to reach an agreement, however, in a negative one, it become a tool of greater inequalities, poverty; media play an essential role in the shaping of culture; media and journalists may contribute to the creation of peace but also to spread fear and hatred. Benedict XVI called for intercultural dialogue, adapting to those who belong to other cultures, respecting other religious and cultural traditions, undertaking evangelization of cultures, peaceful coexistence among people of various cultures and religions, propagating “the spirit of Assisi”, meeting of religion and culture in a common search for truth. He stressed that just and permanent peace can only be built on the basis of intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

Sule DURSUN: *Islamic Religious Education, University of Vienna, Transformation of Identity: The Importance of University Graduation on the Lives of Turkish Women in Vienna*

My paper aims at presenting the importance of university graduation in the lives of young Turkish women in Vienna. This study is based on an analysis of interviews with seven young, University graduated women with two different migration backgrounds: Young women who were born or grew up in Austria and young women who have come to Austria for their studies. Young women, who were born or grew up in Vienna have mostly a migration background and are from families who came as “guest workers”. Some of the graduated visible Turkish women are wearing a headscarf which has been discussed as a backward traditional lifestyle in contradiction to the Western values. And some of the visible graduated Turkish women are corresponding secular values without headscarves. All of them have one common; they have educational and professional success in Austrian society and do not correlate with well-known stereotypical or traditional image of Muslim woman.

The focus of my research was on the correlation between University graduation and religion. I focussed on higher education because of the idea, that Universities teach young people to think critically and to express their views openly. Analysis of the interviews shows that university education leads to individual modification of religious and cultural practices as well as an adaptation of religious values and cultural attitudes in the lives of these women. Young women – who were brought up in a conservative or popular Islamic way– developed a modified, individual understanding of their religion. The approach of religious reflexivity as a result of continuous confrontation with new experiences is the decisive result of the study. These young women reflected upon their upbringing/setting and relied on themselves and their own intuition to solve religious challenges. Religious attitudes irregular of intensity are not regarded as a barrier

to their individual fulfillment with their professions and their emancipation ideals in the Austrian society. Religious attitudes do not cause an obstruction because of the internalization of modified religious and cultural practices.

The research results show on the one hand the heterogeneity of Muslim identities and on the other hand, how these individuals develop new theological reasoning to encounter with novel situations. With the help of my research results I want to underline the importance of Islamic religious education in the European context. Islamic religious education should encourage critical thought in order to develop new theological reasoning to encounter with novel situations in the European context.

(III) TRAUMA, RESILIENCE AND RECONCILIATION.

Convener: Julianne Funk

Room: B 17/18 (Venue)

Lobna **BENSALEM**: *Broaching the "State of Exception": Mourid Barghouti's Memoirs on Palestine and the Trauma of Occupation*

For Palestinians, The trauma of occupation is an unassimilated historical reality that challenges the individual sense of identity and emotional wellbeing. It does not merely imply the objectification of space, its significance delves deeper into moral existence. Massive losses of lives, land, and culture due to the Israeli occupation have resulted in a long legacy of chronic trauma and unresolved grief across generations. The enduring, cumulative process of traumatization confronts its victims with utter helplessness and interferes with their personal development. Profoundly concerned with the psychological ramifications of such an experience, Barghouti's memoirs expose Palestinians' commitment to historical trauma.

The paper investigates how this erasure of Palestinian spaces and stories produces an entire culture that is compromised by collective trauma, leaving its members vulnerable to the psychological sequelae it engenders. Barghouti's ethical commitment foregrounds the importance of narrativization as a way to bear witness to the oppression and denial of his people's history and lives; it also provides a welcome reminder of the crucial role played by the writer and intellectual at attending to and contesting the political and cultural amnesia of Palestine. Key words: Palestine – trauma – narrative - "working through".

Stipe **ODAK**, ISPOLE, Université Catholique de Louvain: *Broken Harmonies: Religious Leaders as Peacebuilders in Post-Conflict Societies*

When discussed in the context of conflicts, religion is often met with suspicion. It is argued that religious narratives, symbols, and teachings tend to deepen existing divisions, make negotiations and settlements more difficult, and catalyze violence. The underlying caution gets substantiated in light of empirical data which suggest that a significant percentage of conflicts involves religious elements. At the same time, a number of cross-national empirical studies suggest that religion can be engaged positively "as a part of a solution" precisely because it was often perceived as "a part of a problem." The data suggest that religion-based actors are particularly effective in the resolutions of conflicts which already had religious components. Thus the positive potential of religion in peacebuilding and conflict-resolution is more resonant when religious traditions, which are substantial components of personal and group identities and an integral element of past and present conflicts, are being seriously engaged as dialogue partners. This paper will analyze the comparative advantages that religions (as systems) and religious leaders (as actors) could have in the transformation of inter-group divisions, and peacebuilding. The focus will be placed on three interconnected aspects: the psychological aspect (development of positive emotions, primarily hope), the sociological aspect (promotion of inclusive identities and tolerance), and the political aspect (moral mediation). The paper will be based on empirical data collected in 2015 and 2016, during two waves of interviews with Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Charlotte Karungi **MAFUMBO**, School for International Training and Makerere University's Peace Center, Uganda: *Confessions of a Former Child Soldier: Seeking Forgiveness and Forgiving as a Prerequisite for Reconciliation*

"When I read the bible verses: Isaiah 1: 15-16

"...¹⁴"I hate your new moon festivals and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them. ¹⁵"So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. ¹⁶"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil,...."

I knew it was time to end my participation in the Lord's Resistance Army Rebellion" -- Elijah

These words still ring in my ears as I recall the former child soldier (I will call Elijah) confess his participation in the two decade war that consumed Northern Uganda with intolerable, unbelievable and incredible social destruction. Starting from his narrative of being taken into captivity, eventual indoctrination and final leadership of a terror attack that never happened because of the biblical verse he read during a trance, Elijah becomes for many the greatest symbol of reconciliation and how this has worked in Northern Uganda. In this paper, this narrative of a personal journey and how it provides great lessons for deeper reflection of how reconciliation should be approached in conflict zones will be discussed. Considering that conflict in this region ended but that the region is proximate to a more dangerous conflict zone (Southern Sudan) lessons should be learnt early enough to address the current crisis in South Sudan that has contributed over 250,000 refugees in the Bidi-bidi refugee settlement in Northern Uganda since July alone. The paper further argues that all conditions for intense violence and early warning have been met in the current conflict in South Sudan and reconciliation should start alongside the attempts by regional and international community in ending this violence.

Boluwatito COKER, Citizens for Public Justice, Canada: *The Victim-Perpetrator Complex & Trauma in Nigerian Child Perpetrators: Any Social (re)Integration Potentialities?*

The Nigerian government is succeeding against Boko Haram, but there are many concerns about what form justice and accountability will take. The government may become too vindictive in prosecuting alleged terrorists. However, retributive justice cannot account for the many complexities in the Nigerian situation, such as the fact that child perpetrators may have been coerced and victimized into terrorism.

My objective is two-fold. I intend to further inquiries into this relatively unexplored area of victim-perpetrators in conflict (as it relates to child perpetrators), using Baga, a Northern Nigerian community, as a case study. I also seek to discover how a balanced understanding of the needs of child perpetrators and traumatized communities in conflict, can enhance social reintegration initiatives within such communities.

Consequently, my paper is divided into three core sections. The first comprises a literature review that examines the idea of the "victim-perpetrator", and its relationship to trauma and reconciliation. I then analyze the needs of child victim-perpetrators and communities, using Redekop's Human Identity Needs framework. This helps to strengthen the social reintegration analysis in the third section, where I use Ken Wilber's Integral Approach to construe a social reintegration framework for the traumatized community (Baga), and child victim-perpetrators. My analysis shows that there are many benefits to a comprehensive approach to reconciliation in traumatized societies, including an appreciation for religious identity.

My paper provides valuable thoughts on the prospects for social reintegration in communities traumatized by violence, incorporating the complex identity situations, and needs of both victims and perpetrators in conflict. It argues that peace and conflict resolution practitioners must focus more on the benefits of reconciliation and reintegration for a society's lasting peace.

(IV) REFUGEE CRISIS AND MIGRATION.

Convener: Jorge E. Castillo Guerra

Room: JO 101 (Cluster)

Ge SPEELMAN: *Fatherland-Motherland: Religion, Citizenship and Conflicting Loyalties*

One of the challenges faced by Muslim migrants in the Netherlands is the accusation that they cannot be completely loyal to the Dutch secular society. This challenge is not new: in the context of the Netherlands, Catholics and Jews had to face accusations of disloyalty by the majority society from the time they received full citizens' rights in the early 19th Century. Quite often, this accusation ties up with the supposed *religious* loyalties of minorities. In this lecture, I will analyze why certain religious identities and citizenship are seen as incompatible in public debate. I will also present a qualitative research about the way people from religious minorities deal with issues of loyalty, not denying the complexity of the concept of loyalty but deepening their understanding of what it implies. As Jewish Senator Hanneke Gelderblom said, when questioned about her relationships with Israel: 'I have a fatherland *and* a motherland.'

Douglas **PRATT**: *Refugees, Migrants, and the Fear of Islam: the Problem of Reactionary Extremism*

In this paper I discuss some problems and concerns occasioned by the flood of refugees that have come into Europe, mainly from the contemporary troublesome hotspots of Syria and Iraq. Arguably the context of the still-current migration and refugee crisis has stimulated a reinforcing, and prompted new forms, of exclusionary reaction against, in particular, the rising presence of Islam within otherwise western secular, albeit still nominally Christian, European societies. Refugee and migrant host countries are now facing the internal challenge of a reactionary home-grown extremism that is as much a threat and security issue as any concern with the potential of incoming Islamists to wreak havoc – for which there is certainly evidence.

The visceral fear of Muslims and of the religion Islam – Islamophobia – is not just an attitudinal stance. It reflects and is expressed by a range of exclusionary or negatively reactive actions. Very often these draw on religious tropes and imagery with respect to demonising Islam and Muslims on the one hand, and justifying exclusionary, even extreme and violent, behaviours and rhetoric, on the other. As an expression of a generalised ‘fear of Islam’, such reactionary extremism is every bit as abhorrent and problematic as the Islamist extremism that ostensibly provoked it and against which it rails.

In this paper I argue that, in fact, a new form of religious extremism has emerged, one which paradoxically portrays itself as being a counter to another – the ostensibly ‘initiating’ – extremism perceived as a real and imminent threat. In response to contemporary Islamist violence, whether threatened or enacted, aimed at Western societies – including Europe – as well as other societies such as in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere, there has emerged, particularly in Europe, but also elsewhere, an upsurge in various forms of reactionary rhetoric and violence, with Islam and Muslims as the target.

This mutual extremism I have called ‘reactive co-radicalization’ and I argue it is now a key element in the situation that confronts modern secular societies today. Furthermore, I argue that beneath any reasonable and rational concern with Muslim terrorism, the wider rejection of Muslims and Islam is a variant on the more generalized phenomenon of ‘fear of the other’ as such (xenophobia), and a marker of the mood of rejection of diversity which undergirds right-wing, jingoistic, and extreme nationalism as well as exclusivist religious ideology – both of which are on the increase and all too often intertwine.

Susanne **SCHOLZ**, Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University (SMU), Dallas (USA): *Reading with Women Migrants? The Global Migration and Refugee Crises in the Neoliberal Era and the Task of Feminist Biblical Interpretation*

When more people than ever are on the move worldwide due to ongoing military conflict and war, political and social persecution, or economic deprivation, and most of them are women, the question is whether and how feminist bible interpreters address as an exegetical problem the global migration and refugee crises in the neoliberal era. Should feminist (and non-feminist) Bible scholars, whether they are secular, Christian, or Jewish identified, not reflect on the purpose of biblical hermeneutics and the rationale for reading biblical literature in light of this pervasive social dislocation of so many people, many of whom hailing from bible-reading religious traditions? This paper takes this question seriously and outlines a feminist-hermeneutical response to the global humanitarian crises. My paper will proceed in three steps. First, it examines whether and how feminist Bible interpreters have dealt with the topic of migration. Second, it discusses what hermeneutical reading strategies and epistemological considerations might be most useful in speaking from within this particular social location. Third, it asks how feminist biblical exegesis ought to proceed methodologically in nurturing and enriching systematic and comprehensive reflections on hermeneutical stances that take seriously the global migration and refugee crises in the neoliberal era.

Berge **TRABOULSI**, Haigazian University, Beirut (Lebanon): *Breaking down the Current Complex Refugee & Migrant Crisis in Europe: Analysis of Paradoxical Integration Values, Challenges, Strategies, and Solutions*

Breaking down the current refugee & migrant crisis in Europe is not an easy task due to its complexity, multiplicity and sensibility. This task entails a deep analysis of various interrelated and intra-related factors which have given rise to a higher degree of fear, insecurity, anxiety and perplexity in many European societies regarding Europe’s identity, demography, stability and future. In fact, this crisis has challenged Europe economically, financially, politically, legally, culturally, psychologically and religiously. The contacts between hosts and foreigners may shock both parties and lead either to mutual adaptation or refusal at different levels and degrees. In fact, acculturation is a long, diversified and relative process and

integration of individuals or groups into any foreign society is a difficult process; some formulas and procedures seem simple, but their application may prove to be difficult, complicated, challenging, and time-consuming. Several critical questions are raised pertaining to this crisis; e.g. what do hosts and foreigners expect from each other? Aren't multiculturalism, human rights, social values, and integration rather ambiguous terms and thus difficult to measure? Will EU principles, e.g., pluralism, secularism, human rights, the rule of law, equality, and liberal democracy, remain intact despite their practical vagueness? Are there common European ethics and values which should serve as standards according to which every citizen and resident should live their life. How would the foreigners' lives, families, education, work, communities and societies, politics and religious beliefs look like in Europe? How will this crisis reshape Europe itself? The first impression one gets when following the news is how chaotic and weak the administration of the crisis has been so far. The waves of people arriving to the EU borders and subsequently reaching European cities and towns proved to be beyond the expectations, capabilities, knowledge and experience of national and local authorities in terms of dealing with movements of people in such a massive scale. Moreover, the host authorities and activists were hardly familiar with the numerous geographical, demographical and political contexts which the refugees carried with themselves, and thus failed to distinguish between a refugee, an asylum seeker, a migrant, a criminal, an infiltrator or an ideological propagandist. Needless to say, however, that governments are non-charitable organizations and their countries are not safe havens capable of hosting all the needy of the world. As a matter of fact, countries like Greece, Sweden, Germany and Austria which had welcomed various migrants and refugees in the past, were seriously challenged and caught off guard by the sheer number of Middle Eastern, African, Eastern European, and Asian foreigners seeking asylum in their countries. Last but not least, this crisis has revealed paradoxical realities which hinder the effective promotion of EU stability and cohesion. In this paper, some of the aforementioned critical questions will be answered, major challenges regarding integration of foreigners (migrants, refugees and others) in the EU societies will be analyzed, and the future of the crisis and the prospective solutions within their intercultural, interreligious and *realpolitik* contexts will be reflected upon.

(IX) Interreligious Literacy among Indonesians and Ezidis

Convener: Norbert Hintersteiner

Room: KthIV (Theology Building)

Nicholas **ADAMS**, Birmingham, and Eckhard **ZEMMRICH**, Berlin: *Inter-religious Literacy Among Young People in Indonesia*

How do young people, of around university age, think and speak about inter-religious encounter in Indonesia? And what, if anything, leads them to change their minds about religious traditions other than their own? These are the questions that we are asking in Java in two contrasting sites: Salatiga and Yogyakarta. Partnering with two local research centres, Kampoeng Percik and Interfidei, our research engages two contrasting groups: university students in Yogyakarta, and young people from villages near Salatiga. We aim to discover how they engage and respond to local inter-religious initiatives and to ask whether these initiatives are relevant only to these local situations or if their approach might be extended to other situations in other countries. Our research focuses on three initiatives, two in Yogyakarta and one in Salatiga. In Yogyakarta we are looking at an undergraduate religion course hosted by Interfidei, in which students from four universities elect to study questions of contemporary religious significance (these change from year to year), and during which trips are arranged to visit sites representative of a variety of local religious traditions. We will also report on a now-annual Peace Camp organised by and for students at Gadjah Mada University, which takes place over two days in the summer, and which includes a variety of inter-religious activities including Scriptural Reasoning. In Salatiga we are considering 'sobat' programmes (sobat is Indonesian for 'friend') arranged by Percik for young people in neighbouring villages, at which participants from different religious traditions mingle, eat, discuss and consider local challenges. These often take place in the evening, with some including late-night discussions and overnight camping.

We propose to report on our fieldwork: the main body of research is interviews with participants in the initiatives, especially 'before and after' conversations, with follow-up interviews one year and two years after participation to discover whether students' interests, concerns and relationships are sustained beyond the immediate period of the initiatives themselves.

Aslan **KIZILHAN**, Bielefeld: *Interreligious Literacy: The Philosophy of the Ezidis*

Aslan Kizilhan will focus in his speech on the Ezidian philosophy, especially on its pacifistic elements and the importance of nature in the Ezidian belief system. Without this prior knowledge, we cannot understand Ezidism and its relationship to its environment. Kizilhan will then dedicate himself to the Ezidian caste system created by the reformer Sheikh Adi (12th century AD), which was established as a protection system against persecution and forced conversion, but was also used for political purposes by the ruling caste. In this context, he will focus in particular on the territorial conflicts between the Ottoman and Persian empires throughout the history and the role played by the Ezidis in these power struggles. He will particularly emphasize the relationship with the Kurdish-Muslim tribes and the political parties that have emerged from them. These ties still determine not only the relationship between the Ezidis and politics but also the "Ezidian identity".

Friday, 28th of April 14.00-16.30

(V) GENDER JUSTICE IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION.

Convener: Anne Hege Grung

Room: B 14/16 (Venue)

Katja **DRECHSLER** and Marius **VAN HOOGSTRATEN**, Academy of World Religions, University of Hamburg: *Dealing with Difference: Between Universality, Context, and Intersection*. Thinking about Gender and a 'Dialogical' Theology

The negotiation and construction of gendered difference through an appeal to 'religion,' and, vice versa, the negotiation of religious difference through an appeal to 'gender,' are as common as they are malignant. Yet the interaction between these two lines of difference remains, with notable exceptions (Egnell, 2006, 2009, 2010; Grung, 2016; Hill Fletcher, 2003, 2005; O'Neill, 2007), largely uninterrogated, both in interreligious studies and in those parts of theology that have taken feminist thought and gender studies seriously.

Exceptions to this dearth have been most effective when speaking from a position of postcolonial critique in order to reveal the intimate connection of patriarchy, heteronormativity, and Christian domination (Donaldson, 2006; Grung, 2016; Kwok, 2005). However, to the extent interreligious studies has taken note of them, such inroads have overwhelmingly come from Christian and post-Christian scholars. In this short paper, we therefore want to look more closely at the intersection of gendered and religious difference(s) in Muslim theology and explore how it might challenge the discussion in interreligious studies.

After a brief exploration of the relation between the terms 'Islam' and 'Feminism,' (Abou Bakr, 2001; Amirpur, 2013; Davids, 2013; Seedat, 2013) we thus single out Jerusha Lamptey's appropriation of feminist hermeneutic strategies for the reinterpretation of Muslim sacred texts toward an unsettling of religious difference and identity (Lamptey, 2014a). The religious other in the Quran is "a direct and perpetual challenge to the worldview and identity of the 'self,' forcing ongoing modification, reconsideration, and re-drawing of boundaries." (Lamptey, 2014b, pp. 36–37)

We ask the question not so much how insights from feminist hermeneutic strategies can be *applied* to interreligious studies, but rather how feminist hermeneutics and questions of religious difference mutually impact each other (cf. Butler, 1999, p. xvi). Drawing on Christian process theologian Catherine Keller's feminist appropriation of apophasis (Keller, 2008, 2014, 2015), we argue this interaction unfolds as a dynamic tension between context and universality. In the end, this tension is intimately entangled with the way bodies of the faithful tremble before the word of God (Isaiah 66:5 / Al-Anfal (8):2).

This paper draws on ongoing research at the Academy of World Religions seeking a 'dialogical' theology. Drawing on our respective schooling in Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Muslim thought, four researchers reflect on the interaction of themes, methods and insights from—amongst other fields—gender studies and feminist and queer theologies with issues and questions from interreligious encounter. The research aims to dialogically explore strategies and hermeneutical approaches of gender-just readings of the respective sacred scriptures and systematic theologies. The aim is thus a process of mutual challenge and transformation, seeking not the dissolution of the relative integrity of the respective theologies, but a theological unfolding of the recognition that, in the world we live in, to be religious is always already to be interreligious.

Amina **SELIMOVIC**, University of Oslo: *The Islamic Community in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Women Activism: A New Woman-Inclusive Agenda or Solidification of Patriarchy?*

In this paper I wish to analyze woman-activism within IC-associations that have emerged within the Islamic Community in Bosnia-Herzegovina (IC) in the last years. Woman activism is not new in Bosnia-Herzegovina as in the Yugoslav-era all types of engagement in the society was expected, and the post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina has become an intricate web of different NGOs and associations. Many western donors have set up different nongovernmental organizations (NGO) and associations dealing with issues such as dialogue for peace, humanitarian help, human rights, and so on. In many of these NGOs women are the main driving force, sometimes by intent and other by coincidence. Through the NGO women engage in many different activities such as humanitarian aid and social service, but also in campaigns for women's rights and gender equality. The Islamic Community in Bosnia-Herzegovina acknowledges the humanitarian work of many of the NGOs as important and valuable for the society, especially during humanitarian crisis. However, the IC itself has previously been criticized for not taking more responsibility in areas the NGOs are working with, such as projects against battering of women.

The backdrop of my asking the question “A woman-inclusive agenda or solidification of patriarchy?” is that the IC and the Bosnian community in general have in the post-war years become re-traditionalized and patriarchal norms have been reintroduced into the society (Zilka Spahic-Siljak 2012). Activism within the NGO sector and similar organization forms may be understood as positive as they engage women and make them visible in the society. However, there are some critical points that need to be acknowledged. In her research Elisa Hems has noticed that many donors and supporters of NGOs in Bosnia-Herzegovina caste women in roles as nurturers and peacemakers (Helms 2003: 15) and as such they are paying homage to traditional and patriarchal gender roles. In many ways they are reinforcing the gender lines between “activities for women” and “activities for men” and therefore enlarging the gap which women must bridge in order to take part in the male sphere where real social influence is conducted. A part of my analysis will be to see what types of projects the IC-women associations are conducting and who the initiators of these are.

Nelly van Doorn-Harder, Wake Forest University: *Indonesian Activists for Women’s Rights: Practicing Interfaith, Negotiating Modernity*

Following the work of the Indonesian National Committee for Women (KOMNAS Perempuan), the governmental Human Rights organization that focuses on women’s issues, this paper analyzes how national KOMNAS priorities concerning women’s rights are being translated at the grassroots level into everyday activities, especially where it concerns the ideals for inclusive and interreligious living. Looking at one of Komnas’ local initiatives called Spekham in the city of Solo in Central Java, the paper seeks to answer questions about how its women activists negotiate their strategies to strengthen women’s rights within the context of conflicting trends that secularize society while at the same time forces emerge that push for stronger religious institutions.

Joo Mee HUR, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz: *Migration and Gender: An Aesthetic Approach to Films in Doing Theology Today*

In Asia, cross-border marriages have increased rapidly in the past two decades. In this process, the feminization and commercialization of migration are largely found. Many women from developing countries are migrating to developed countries through marriage brokerage or matchmaking industries. This perilous phenomenon calls attention not only of social scientists but also of pastors, missionaries and theologians in faith communities with its patriarchal, sexist and racial discrimination and violence towards women. This paper is an attempt to present one way of aesthetic approaches, which can offer a committed moral perspective unlike an abstract and neutral perspective of the social scientific approaches. Collecting theological resources from the life experiences of people living today can provide faith communities with the power of renewal. First, a short film, *A Perm* describing the hardship of a new Vietnamese bride in South Korea will be analyzed by exploring its generative themes in its relation to the book of Ruth. Second, it examines the validity of some controversial interpretations of the book of Ruth as a representative biblical story dealing with gender, race, sexuality and cultural contacts. In conclusion, it seeks for contemporary theological answers to the commercially arranged gender migration.

(VI) INTER-RITUALITY IN CONFLICT ZONES.

Convener: Marianne Moyaert

Room: B 17/18 (Venue)

Nina FISCHER, Edinburgh/Frankfurt: *Ritual and Contested Space: Politicized Prayer in Israel/Palestine*

In interfaith meetings dedicated to working together in Israel/Palestine, joint symbols and rituals are often included as one of the elements in the common struggle towards coexistence and peace. Such practices are in line with what scholars have identified as an area of transformative potential in interreligious encounters (Bercovitch, Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009, Frøystad 2012, Moyaert, forthcoming). However, throughout this contested area, both Palestinians and Israelis also choose prayer also as a weapon within the political conflict. Given the religious and political intersections of the conflict especially in Jerusalem, religious acts can thus become political performances.

Looking at Muslim prayer on the streets of Jerusalem when denied entry to the Haram al- argue that these prayers, while religious rituals, are also political statements against what both groups consider injustices. Palestinians, while praying, are performing an act of resistance against the Israeli occupation and the power it has over their lives, including the refusal of religious freedom. Rightwing religious Israelis, who refuse to comply with the ban of non-Muslim rituals on what they consider the holiest site of Judaism, are aiming their prayers against both Muslims and their own government who uphold the status quo that gives the Islamic Waqf authority on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount. Both scenarios, through the inclusion of prayer, are also interreligious encounters, rather than being solely political statements. But unlike rituals performed within encounters dedicated to dialogue and conflict resolution, these prayers – though given specifically interreligious form – are not transformative (unless they end in violence).

Lailatul FITRIYAH, Department of Theology-University of Notre Dame (USA): *Listening to the Sound of Nusaina: Interstitial Theology in Post-Conflict Maluku*

As one of the most culturally and religiously diverse countries in the world, Indonesia – with more than 300 ethnic groups, each with their own cultural, linguistic, and even religious systems – is a wealthy source of learning on religio-cultural conflicts and their reconciliation processes. Inspired by my 2014 fieldwork in Ambon island, Maluku-Indonesia, this paper focuses on the narratives of peace constructed and employed by the Protestant Church of Maluku (*Gereja Protestan Maluku/* henceforth GPM) in their ongoing efforts to heal social wounds between the Ambonese Christian and Muslim communities after inter-communal conflict in 1999. The observation of the narratives will then be placed within the context of interreligious relations to understand the intertwined dynamics between the formation of peaceful narratives among GPM priests and their practices of interreligious dialogue.

The paper will specifically deal with the question of ecclesial perspectives that some GPM religious peace activists employed and drew their inspiration from in their interreligious peacebuilding work. The main questions of, “how do the GPM priests perceive the meaning of ‘Church’ in their interreligious peacebuilding work?” and “what kind of ecclesial narratives are in play within the peacebuilding work of these Ambonese priest-peacebuilders?” comprise the core of this paper. Thus, the paper aims to uncover the working narratives of ‘the Church’ within the context of interreligious peacebuilding processes in Ambon, Maluku-Indonesia.

Methodologically speaking, the paper is based upon an ethnographic study of six priests from GPM who are also well-known peace activists from the island of Ambon. The framework of the theology of reconciliation will be used to highlight transformational elements within the said ecclesial narratives, while the concept of interstitial theology will be employed to capture these ecclesial narratives in the context of interreligious dialogue as the core element of the peacebuilding processes in Ambon, Maluku-Indonesia. Thus, the paper aimed at elucidating the operational dimension of interstitial theology in its interactions with the theology of reconciliation against the backdrop of post-intercommunal conflict transformation processes.

Marianne **MOYAERT**, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands): *Christianizing Judaism? On the Problem of Christian Seder Meals*

In the aftermath of the Council, Catholics grew accustomed to speaking about the Judeo-Christian tradition, thereby at once recognizing the continuity between both traditions. Scholarly research began to reveal the complex history of the parting of the ways between the two traditions. At a grassroots level, several initiatives were taken to stimulate the dialogue between Jews and Catholics, and to establish friendly relations between both communities. The changed attitude of the Church vis-à-vis the Synagogue also found its expression in the liturgical realm. In the years after Vatican II, some Catholics have started to adopt certain ritual practices, which Jesus (and his followers) presumably observed. The celebration of some form of the Jewish Passover Seder in particular is becoming more popular. The primary goal of such celebration is to imitate as closely as possible Jesus and his disciples during the Last Supper, as well as learn to appreciate the Jewish origins of the Eucharist. This ritual cross-over can be seen as a concrete expression of Judeo-Christianity. I will argue that this specific form of *cross-riting* brings to the surface some problems related to the notion of the *Judeo-Christian tradition*, which are not sufficiently thought through by theologians who locate themselves after the Shoah and after Vatican II. That is to say, emphasis on the Judeo-Christian tradition is meant to express *Christian* appreciation for the bond between the two traditions. Yet its usage may also indicate the difficulty in recognizing Judaism as a self-sufficient and independent religion. To put it more strongly: its usage may even indicate a form of latent anti-Judaism.

I shall structure my argument as follows in three parts. In the first part of this contribution, I dwell upon a theological (anti-Jewish) tradition that emphasized the discontinuity between Judaism and Christianity. Second, I articulate the shift that the Second Vatican Council (and *Nostra Aetate*) brought to Catholic theologies of Judaism and how the notion of *the Jewish-Christian tradition* in this theological context was, and continues to, be an expression of appreciation for the Jewish roots of Christian tradition. Third, I will then turn to the contemporary practice of Catholics who re-enact Jesus' Last supper by celebrating Jewish Seder meals. However sincerely intended, I will argue that this liturgical expression of 'Judeo-Christianity' is problematic from a historical point of view (did Jesus actually celebrate Seder?), from a religious-ethical point of view (is it appropriate for Catholics to appropriate the rituals of Jewish tradition?), and from a reconciliatory perspective (will Christian Seders contribute to reconciliation between Christian and Jewish communities?).

Daan F. **OOSTVEEN**, VU University Amsterdam: *Multiple Religious Belonging from the Perspective of Critical Religion*

In recent decades, scholars of religion have observed the rise religious creatives: people who do not limit themselves to the boundaries of religious traditions but combine elements from various religious sources. These hybrid forms of religiosity have sometimes been referred to as multiple religious belonging or multiple religious identity (Cornille 2010, Schmidt-Leukel 2008). Multiple religious belonging has been studied from various scholarly perspectives, such as theology of religions, anthropology and sociology. Key concepts in the study of multiple religious belonging have not been, however, uncontested. Some scholars have suggested that "multiple religious belonging" should be considered as too embedded in the framework of World Religions (Hedges 2016). The project of critical religion, advocated by scholars such as Timothy Fitzgerald, goes even further. Fitzgerald questions the validity of "religion" and related terms such as "religious" and "religiosity" as analytical concepts in religious studies (Fitzgerald 2000). Fitzgerald calls for the deconstruction of oppositional pairs of concepts such as religion-secular and religion-politics. He argues that these pairs are the result of an ideologically motivated development in which "religion" has become imagined as the "other" of secular civility (Fitzgerald 2016). In my presentation I will investigate the implications of such a project of critical religion on the hermeneutical research of multiple religious belonging. Multiple religious belonging, it appears, transcends the paradigm of World Religions, by acknowledging the possibility to belong to multiple religions. In doing so, however, it still confirms the basic premise that these religions exist in the world. Also, multiple religious belonging does not transcend the religion-secular binary. Although it reimagines religious belonging, it still tacitly acknowledges the difference between religious and non-religious or secular belonging. A critical theory of multiple religious belonging should subvert the implicit power relations at work in the constructions of our concepts and it should be studied with understanding of the ideological framework that underpin our worldviews.

(VII) BUDDHISM AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION.

Convener: Jude Lal Fernando

Room: JO 101 (Cluster)

André **VAN DER BRAAK**, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam: *David Loy: Sunyata as unlimited potentiality for conflict transformation*

In today's age of increasing globalization, religious diversity and social conflict, what Buddhist resources are available that contribute not merely to conflict resolution, but to conflict transformation?

The American Buddhist scholar and teacher David Loy argues that the naturalistic and materialistic values of our secular age are quite different from traditional Buddhism. He therefore stresses the need for the development of new and engaged forms of contemporary Buddhism that are faithful to the most important traditional teachings, as well as compatible with secular modernity. He rejects both the arguments for retraditionalization ("we need to revitalize ancient Buddhism wisdom in order to heal the ailments of modernity") and for secularization ("we need to replace Buddhism's Iron Age mythological roots with a worldview more compatible with science"), but recommends using each viewpoint to interrogate the other.

Loy points at the complexities around the problems around transcendence and immanence in Buddhism. Traditional Theravada often characterizes nirvana as a transcendent, unconditioned realm. By transcending this suffering world of samsara in order to attain the unconditioned (asamskṛta) realm of nirvana (an approach that is consistent with other axial Age religions), we can bypass the problems and conflicts of this world. On the other hand, some contemporary secular immanent interpretations of Buddhism view enlightenment as the end of greed, ill will and delusion that enables us to accept and adapt to the world, thereby making our peace with the problems and conflicts of this world. Buddhist mindfulness is often presented as such a purely immanent, psychological form of therapy that is aimed at the individual. Rather than focusing on global and social conflicts, we can solve our own psychological problems. Loy rejects both approaches: a new Buddhist path needs to be found beyond transcendence and immanence, a path that aims at directly addressing and transforming global and social conflict just as much as individual suffering.

As a way into such a new Buddhist path, Loy offers an interpretation of enlightenment as epistemological transcendence: a nongrasping and therefore nondual awakened way of experiencing and living in the world that transcends our usual dualistic understanding of it. Although such a nondual understanding sounds similar to what is advocated by many contemporary writers on mindfulness, Loy stresses that mindfulness is not merely an ethical neutral practice for reducing stress and improving concentration (this invites a consumerist approach to mindfulness that he has called McMindfulness). Rather, it is a distinct quality of attention that includes developing wholesome behaviors that are conducive to wise action, social harmony, and compassion.

Loy further elucidates this nondual understanding of the world through the term sunyata, which he doesn't translate as "emptiness" but as "unlimited potentiality". For Loy, sunyata is a metaphor for the irreducible dynamic creativity of the cosmos, the incessant self-organizing creativity that produces all things.

This paper will critically address Loy's notion of sunyata as unlimited potentiality, and investigate in which ways his proposal for a new Buddhist path may contribute to the actual transformation of global and social conflict.

Carola **ROLOFF**, University of Hamburg: *Buddhism and Dialogue in the Contemporary World. Challenges Buddhism encounters in the West today*

In the West not only Buddhists are engaged in the teachings, philosophies and practices of Buddhism to enrich their way of life. Buddhist influence on Western culture is strong in arts and social action, in environmentalism, psychotherapy and pedagogics, and has even found its way into colloquial language and many people's every day lives.

Many people understand Buddhism as a kind of philosophy and lifestyle. On the one hand this great interest is most welcome, on the other hand, however, Buddhism is challenged by already existing values and achievements of predominant secular societies that may call for conflicts and vast internal changes and transformations. Buddhism has to cope, for instance, with the values of European Enlightenment and Human Rights. Taking—among others—the right of gender equality as an example, I will discuss the challenge the secular poses for Buddhism, how it can be met, and which transformations have already taken place during the last 30 years.

Further points of discussion will be: democracy vs. hierarchy—tension between tradition and modernity—interactions between gender and religion in Buddhism, and its significance in social dialogue processes.

Ari **FOGELSON**, Trinity College Dublin: *Agency and Authorship or Social History? The Methodology and Politics of Key Perspectives on the Emergence of Modernist Buddhism in Sri Lanka*

The term “Protestant Buddhism” is much debated in the analysis of Sri Lankan Buddhism, generally reflecting disagreement about the origins of the changes it is meant to describe. First introduced by Gananath Obeyesekere, the term denotes the influence of both Protestant missionaries and of the British imperial presence on the forms of Buddhism that emerged in late 19th and early 20th century Sri Lanka. In this essay I will be rehearsing the basic arguments that make up the Protestant Buddhism thesis. Although these are presented in much the same form by various authors, I will be focusing on the influential version offered by Gombrich and Obeyesekere in their book *Buddhism Transformed*. I will then be treating the critique of the Protestant Buddhism designation offered by Elizabeth Harris in her book *Therevada Buddhism and the British Encounter*. This comparison raises important questions for intercultural theology and interreligious studies: I argue that contrasting how each interprets key individuals, events, or doctrines would miss the methodological disjunction that predominates, a difference that has much to do with the political and ethical stance of the scholar. I will therefore be highlighting Gombrich and Obeyesekere’s proposal that the “general cause” of Sri Lankan Protestant Buddhism is embourgeoisement and the “specific causes” have to do with the circumstances of interreligious encounter. I argue that Harris’s portrayal of the Protestant Buddhism thesis is one of the shortcomings of her work, portraying the thesis as one instance of a highly caricatured critique of orientalism which Harris aims to counter. These points are illustrative of some of the questions that are unasked in Harris’s historical-ethical project, and raise broad questions for intercultural and interreligious study and activism both in the Sri Lankan context and more generally.

Max **DE GRAAF**, Trinity College Dublin: *A Buddhist Reading of the Radical Right of Western Europe*

For the last few decades now the West has become engulfed by the powers of a renewed generation of nationalist thinkers and politicians. This far right’s ideas are alive beyond their political power, and live within the population, not contained within their parties. These ideas are therefore the danger that the world needs protecting from: their ideas are the illness that need to be treated, not their leaders. Many people have critiqued the radical right from many different perspectives. This paper will attempt to add to this myriad of existing critiques a Buddhist one. I will argue that the radical right is a recent manifestation of the idea of a national identity, which in turn causes the expressions of xenophobia and racism. I then connect this to Buddhism by arguing that ideas such as national identity do not fit with Buddhism if laid next to Buddhist ideals of interbeing, co-dependent arising, and the ideas between the self and the no self. Therefore I argue that the radical right and its manifestations are antithetical to these Buddhist beliefs. Secondly I will argue that Buddhism can be seen as an active religion that should actively work for the betterment of the human person, therefore stating that it should be the task of every Buddhist to resist the radical right and their ilk.

(VIII) ISLAMIC APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING.

Convener: Nayla Tabbara

Room: JO 102 (Cluster)

PART 1, Thursday 27th of April 2017

Yaser **ELLETHY**, Center for Islamic Theology, Faculty of Theology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam:
Peacemaking in Islam: historical-hermeneutic perspectives

The contemporary political context witnesses a series of violent conflicts in which Muslims are involved. The victims are non-Muslims and Muslims alike. A solid impact, even with many biases, is created on the image of Islam as a non-pluralistic and inherently pro-violent faith. Especially in the case of Islam, due to its ongoing role in the formation of Muslim identity, scriptural sources still feed Muslim attitudes with ambivalent incentives. No objective analysis could overlook the pivotal role of the different interpretive modes of the Islamic *sacra scriptura* in the framing of these attitudes.

Examining the Islamic pluralistic view involves not only the Islamic *Weltanschauung* of human (co-)existence and its perspective of the spectra of mundane differences, but also how Islam teaches Muslims to deal with 'otherness', regulates socio-political diversity and enhances or impedes peacebuilding processes.

This paper explores the Islamic view of the notions of pluralism and otherness and how these are perceived within the Islamic scriptural sources and historical-exegetic discourses. How far can this view shape the ethical-behavioral code of Muslims in times of political crises? Which factors could determine a "Muslim pluralistic thesis"? How can an interpretation of the formula Islam-and-otherness be constantly reconstructed in theological, hermeneutic and socio-political contexts in relation to mediation and peacebuilding strategies? These are all relevant questions, which this paper aspires to answer. To do this, we need to re-examine the Islamic interpretive heritage and its correlation to the practical pluralistic experience as it emerges in the Islamic tradition. Therefore, I will discuss the Islamic attitudes towards the "Other" in general as fueled by this heritage. Of course, the focus will be on the religious "Other", as this comprises primarily the "non-Muslim Other" in an Islamic perception of what exists outside its particular realm of faith. I will do this in the framework of some historical, hermeneutic and jurisprudential contexts, which build up the discourse on the Islamic pluralistic view and its impact on peacebuilding and conflict resolutions. In this respect, the relation between Islam, Christians, Jews and, of course, the Pagans - as those who comprised the "Other" main groups in the first Islamic experience - can still be easily evoked in contemporary conflicts. This is the reason why this early encounter of Islam and otherness constitutes a starting point of this discussion. Secondly, I will give some examples of how hermeneutic reconstructions of some classical interpretive modes of the Quran, mainly used by terrorist groups such as ISIS to mobilize Muslim youths and justify violence against 'others', could function in counter-radicalization and pro-tolerance strategies. Finally, I will tackle two much discussed key terms in this respect, *dhimmi* (a non-Muslim, especially Christian or Jew, under Muslim authority) and *kāfir* (unbeliever), and their eventual exclusivistic connotations.

Shanthikumar **HETTIARACHCHI**, *Hizmet Movement inspired by Fethullah Gülen: A Case for a Transnational Approach to Peace Building*

This paper outlines and argues that an innovative grassroots movement from within the Turkish Islamic ethos, and based on the thought of Fethullah Gülen, makes a significant contribution to peacebuilding in society and among nations. I demonstrate that an ethic of social responsibility within Islamic tradition goes beyond the parameters of mere preaching and admonition to duty and embodies a loyally dissenting and critically responsible reading of Islam. Gülen's belief in radical service (*hizmet*) is an integral component of peacebuilding and, though problematic for some commentators, is fundamental to his thought and teaching. It can be argued that the Hizmet movement addresses contemporary social issues, ranging from education to employment, poverty alleviation to social adjustment, and inner spiritual self-development to economic prosperity.

The movement has its critics, but this paper demonstrates how the 'Gülen social experiment' addresses contemporary issues by elevating 'people-engagement' as being key to the movement's objectives, thus drawing from its roots in Islam. By championing the virtues of mercy and compassion lessons can be learned from both the internal and external calamities it has withstood. The paper proposes that dependable peace-templates - transferable with value-laden instructions and virtue-based propositions for the purpose of 'up-skilling' a new generation of young Turks, and those they encounter locally and globally - are able decisively to mentor generations of dialoguers, peace activists and scholars, so as to impact on policy development and community building.

While there is evidence of increased turmoil, elements of social mobility, knowledge explosion, dialogue networks, quests for freedom, inter-community relations, spiritual renewal and social wellbeing,

reconciliation between various religious groups, activism of non-state actors and other agencies that matter in governance are at the centre stage of this discussion; there are also many lessons of hope and perseverance which have emerged through Gülen's people-based movement. Moreover, I analyze how this is the case even amidst signs of socio-economic despair and political despondency in different corners of the world.

In recent times, and in spite of the fact that Hizmet's national, social and philanthropic activists have been harassed and even arrested, their international volunteer network restricted and their funding routes curbed, this paper argues that internal pressures and the attempts internationally to ostracize them have only served further to strengthen the resolve of the movement in pursuit of that peacemaking and peacebuilding which they maintain lies at the heart of the genuine spirit of Islam.

Max REGUS, The Graduate School of Humanities, Tilburg University (The Netherlands): *Islam and the Making of Peaceful Public Sphere in Indonesia: Defining Opportunities, Challenges and Prospect*

In a relation to the position of Indonesia, in the Southeast Asia region, as a new emerging democracy, Islam becomes one of the dominant factors in the whole discourse. It is referred to the fact that the country has 240 million people and more less 85% of the population is Muslim people (Indonesian statistic 2010). However, the country presents itself as 'plural society' and 'semi-secular' nation-state. It can be the important reason to consider Indonesia as one of the central subjects in discussing the position of Islam in the context of constructing peaceful democracy and politics (Hosen, 2005; Buehler, 2009).

By this fact, Islam is not only a social label to provide justification that Indonesia is the largest Muslim population in the world. It also connects with the social resource in building peaceful public sphere. Moreover, it is mainly true that what is happening among Muslim people will determine the process of socio-politic constellation; Indonesia as a social community and political construction.

A discussion about Indonesia today, in the context political reform since the fall of Authoritarian Suharto in 1998, cannot be separated from what Brenner (1998) has affirmed. He has concluded that Indonesia under reformation trajectory becomes 'the land of opportunity' for many negotiations between social and political groups within society. The democratic changes has provided both participation and competition between political factions and social groups. In specific issue, Islam as dominant group in Indonesia has obtained the same chance to involve into the complexities and dynamics of such social and political in the country (Hefner 2011).

Furthermore, importantly, this study (paper) intends to answer several main question; 1) how does Islam take a decisive position to participate in the making of peaceful public sphere in Indonesia? 2), What are the opportunities and challenges involved in the whole process of taking the role of constructing peaceful democracy and politics in Indonesia? 3) What are the points that can be learnt from the position of Indonesia with the largest Muslim population in strengthening peaceful public space?

Academically, the study is very important to improve literature on the discourse of the relationship between Islam and public sphere. This study will discuss the current problem faced by the practice of democracy and politics from concrete level and contestation. The study also intends to explore the shifting of power from national level to local level in post-authoritarian regime that brings a main implication to the position of Islam in the whole process of building peaceful public space in Indonesia. Practically, the study wants to offer some information from the ground in the case of Islam that has main role and position to construct peaceful atmosphere.

Sybille C. **FRITSCH-OPPERMAN**: *Catharsis and Greater Jihad as Liberation for the Wise Measure and Dimension in Human Co-existence*

What are human beings afraid of? And what are the roots of it? Is it perhaps an „Ur-Angst“ which lies at the bottom of the often invoked (on the other hand more and more criticized) „clash of civilizations“ Samuel Huntington brought into the debate. And is this primordial fear more important for xenophobia and hatred in the end than all aggressive and fundamentalist structures of (monotheist) religions and their economic and political abuse?

And what if the common root of all those different and situative phobias and hatred would be an „Ur-Emotion“, would be shame – a pre-moral category and emotion.

To follow this thesis one of the greater advantages of it would be to differentiate between the studies of personal and collective primordial fear on the one hand from political, sociological and economic analysis on the other.

In a first chapter I will start with a short critical analysis of my own Protestant-western heritage (which of course will always influence my thinking and judging, my research) and its own fundamentalist structures. Then I will try to explain their effects upon and their perception by non western and non Christian discussion partners or counterparts in face of historical and political distortions and condemnations.

In a second chapter I explain what I call „Selbst-Verkehrungen“ (from the Latin „incurvatio in se“) in Christianity and Islam giving examples and how they lead to political misuse of religion.

I will discuss here the typical breaks between more tribal understandings and modern nation state discourses about the separation of religion and state and the fact that the authoritarian regimes of countries which culture is deeply shaped by Islam are / have been at least in most cases not so much „Muslim“ but secular and not seldom shaped after the model of Western regimes.

A third chapter discusses shame in more detail as root of religious and cultural ideologies.

Here catharsis and newbegin are helpful categories in the sense that return often becomes only possible through initiation, through repentance.

I will take up the term „catharsis“ and try an adequate description and paraphrase – very well aware of the fact, that liberation (from shame) through repentance has to be communicated quasi „interreligiously“ and „interculturally“, especially when this hopefully will lead us to common action.

From a more Christian point of view catharsis is taken as „Crossing through the crosses“.

From a more Muslim point of view „Lesser Jihad“ is differentiated in its meaning from „Greater Jihad“ - the latter being taken as „Contemplation of the real Self as (Painful) Devotion towards the Other“ and as a Muslim analogy to catharsis.

Kumail **SHARIF**, *Towards a greater harmony in the Islamic World – Learning from Abdallah Saeed and Ludwig Wittgenstein*

Islam is a religion of peace. The Quranic ethos is one of the promotion of greater harmony amongst mankind. As the Qur’an states – saving a life is like saving the whole of mankind (5:32). Why then, does the practice of Muslims show otherwise. The last few decades have seen violence within the Islamic world with actions committed on Quranic foundations. The root problem, I argue, goes back to a flawed interpretation of the Qur’an.

In this paper, I argue that to truly understand the Quranic worldview, one needs to understand Ludwig Wittgenstein’s language game theory and apply it to the Qur’an. When one appreciates one’s own language game and the Quranic language game then only can they infer an interpretation of the Qur’an and the understand the Ratio Legis. It is only through this that one can really understand what is in the mind of God. Abdallah Saeed in his book, *Interpreting the Qur’an*, refers to this concept without explicitly mentioning Wittgenstein. I will thus outline the method of carrying out this type of interpretation and show how it can create a peaceful environment both in the Islamic World as well as outside it.

Ahmed **BOUAOUD**, University of Abdelmalik Essadi (Morocco): *Muslim Participation*

Nowadays, globalization obliges the Muslims to wake up and participate with others in laying down the features of the world of tomorrow. Their isolation from participation and their preference to being part of the audience clashes with the trust given to them to carry to the world, and an obvious contradiction to Islamic law.

The object of Muslims in relation to participation with other civilizations in the building of the human participant is to obey to the great ends of Islam (knowing, cooperating, complimenting each other, realizing peace and justice, protecting human rights...). Such ends cannot be refuted by any religion or creed. This is due to its agreement with human nature.

The great final end becomes all humanity, no matter which religion they belong, to live in one universal nation based on a sense of responsibility in the enforcement of justice and the guarantee of human freedom and dignity.

How Muslims can build the human participant? Are the Islamic values convenient?

To answer these questions, the paper will revolve around three topics:

1-Knowing, cooperating with and complimenting each other.

2-The Achievement of International Peace Based on Justice

3- Protection of Human Rights:

-The Right to Live:

-The Right to Dignity:

-The Right of Freedom:

Conclusion

This paper will follow two approaches:

- The first approach is an analytic one which will analyze the Islamic values about the relationship between Muslims and others.

- The second approach is a deductive one which will deduce the relationship between Muslims and others in the era of globalization.