



Unity can only be hoped for and worked for as lives are touched and changed, moving into the likeness of Jesus' freedom before God...Human history is the story of the discovery or realisation of Jesus Christ in the faces of all men and women.

Rowan WILLIAMS

With a minimum of resources, God makes us creators with him, even where circumstances are not favorable. Going towards others, sometimes with empty hands, listening, trying to understand... and already a deadlocked situation can be transformed.

Brother Alois of Taizé

There is something in us, as storytellers and as listeners to stories, that demands the redemptive act, that demands that what falls at least be offered the chance to be restored.

Flannery O'CONNOR

Editorial

“And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of the father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” John 1.14

“Those whom he saved from their sins are saved simply for beautiful moments in their lives. Mary Magdalene, when she sees Christ, breaks the rich vase of alabaster...and spills the odorous spices over his dusty feet, and for that one moment’s sake sits for ever with Ruth and Beatrice in the tresses of the snow-white rose of Paradise. All that Christ says to us by way of a little warning is that every moment should be beautiful, that the soul should always be ready for the coming of the bridegroom, always waiting for the voice of the lover, Philistinism being simply that side of human nature that is not illuminated by the imagination. He sees all the lovely influences in life as modes of light: the imagination itself is the world of light. The world is made by it, and yet the world cannot understand it: that is because the imagination is simply a manifestation of love, and it is love and the capacity for it that distinguishes one human being from another.” Oscar WILDE

Working on the contributions following the ‘Dialogue as Lifestyle’ and ‘Europe, Art and Spirituality’ conferences at the same time and wanting to publish them in time for your delectation at the Regional Assembly, we hit upon an expedience which we think is not entirely inappropriate; and decided to bring the two issues together and name this edition of Mozaik, the ‘Grace’ issue.

‘Grace’, not only because the decision was favourable but because we believe that it is grace that underlies and holds together the different themes brought together in this issue. In all our talking and in our action as Christians there is always a gap that cannot be put into words and there is always a power which cannot be controlled. It is

the loving presence of God; it is the secret working of the Holy Spirit. This we call grace.

In Theology grace is too often reduced to a technical term but it should be regarded as a certain *ge ne sais quoi*. Indeed it is what was once called simply ‘imagination’. If it is to be defined at all we need to describe it’s dual meaning. It is both an attractive personal quality (so that Col 4.6 should really be translated, ‘Let your conversation always be beautiful.’) and it is also a gratuitous quality in relationships. Here grace is often translated as favour but it is better translated as good-will. The philosopher KANT’s best moment is when he identifies moral excellence as good-will. For KANT morality is ultimately a question of moral beauty and radical humanity, of the kingdom of God.

This is original Christian stuff. In the New Testament the ministry of proclaiming salvation is described as, ‘witnessing to the good news of God’s grace.’ That is to the loving-kindness of God.

So when we talk about intercultural dialogue we must, really, be preparing the way for grace, the spontaneous tearing down of the walls that divide us and be ready for an open unprejudiced meeting. This is why our first section begins with Anastasia’s reflection on her time in Manchester and her very special meeting in a Muslim store.

It is grace then which draws us into communion and which also makes us painfully aware of the divisions that remain among us and of our own brokenness. It is at this moment that God draws us into his own brokenness and allows us again to commit to life and to each other in as yet imperfect love. Here Tibor’s article on contemporary dilemmas in church music makes the essential point – what matters is that our music and our liturgy should introduce us to the reality of God’s gracious and free presence in the midst of the community.

GIOSUE ARGENTI, PHOTOGRAPHER: NORMA DESMOND



It is this characteristic unwillingness of grace to discriminate, its freedom and power to liberate, that brings us to the question of art. Here grace finds its flourishing. Freed from the pressure to compete and conform, and to serve a material purpose grace makes us partners with God in creation. Grace frees us to seek our human maturity and beauty of soul. Each of us have the capacity to be beautiful and to do beautiful things and though in this issue we focus on what we call the arts, we all discover this capacity in different ways as we grow into maturity.

So finally we are grateful to the senior friends who have contributed their reflections on and experiences of SCM and WSCF and reminded us that SCM is primarily a place of growth and exploration. SCM, we could say, is a school of grace!

Now, for bringing this edition to you, thanks must go to Rachael for her tireless work and dedication in ensuring that we progressed through the extra work, and so also to Mirka for continuing as thematic editor.

That we all may be one!

Andrew

Coping with Diversity

- 6 Anastasia GKITSI: *There Are Some Memories*
- 8 Simon BARROW: *In the Blink of an Eye - Faith, Pluralism, Communication and the Changing World*
- 15 Arlington TROTMAN: *Challenges and Opportunities of Migration – in Multi-faith, Multi-ethnic Europe*
- 22 Sören ASMUS: *Migrant and Mainline Churches – Together on a new Journey*
- 27 NAGYPÁL Szabolcs: *Relations and Dialogue Between Religions and Denominations – Reconciliation and Common Witness in Yugoslavia*
- 33 Christina KLEIS: *Theologies of Religion in Relation to Interfaith Dialogue*
- 36 Daniel KUNZ: *Living Faiths Together – Tool Kit on Interreligious Dialogue in Youth Work*

Grace in Communion

- 39 Anastasia GKITSI: *Sharing Communion at Eucharist Liturgies – An Orthodox Perspective*
- 44 Kate WILSON: *One Bread and One Body*
- 50 Tibor MAHRIK: *A Dilemma Hidden in Music*

Challenge of Beauty

- 53 Dorte KAPPELGAARD: *Created to Create*
- 57 Michael HANNA: *Right Brain in a Left Brain World – A Scientist’s Take on Art and Image in Health Science Education*
- 62 Alastair HULBERT: *There Is Another World, But It’s This One*

Pilgrimage Together

- 67 Ruth CONWAY: *Giving the Gospel Hands and Feet*
- 69 Katharina IGENBERGS: *Dear senior friends from all over Europe!*
- 71 Liam PURCELL: *Unity, Community and Continuity*
- 74 Salters STERLING and Kate WILSON: *The Meaning of SCM: From Yesterday till Tomorrow*
- 78 Rachael WEBER: *A Living Pilgrimage – The Taizé Way.*
- 84 Resource: *Praying in the Streets*
- 86 Liturgy: *United in Grace*
- 88 Submissions: *Gender, Society and Religion*



There Are Some Memories



Anastasia GKITSI graduated from the faculty of Theology in 1999 (Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki) and she completed a master's degree in Dogmatical studies (Chambesey – Switzerland). Her thesis dealt with confessions of faith's literal typology. She is writing a PhD in Theology about the relation between theology and poetry in Writings of the Church Fathers. She is working in secondary education (since 2005) as a teacher of theology, history and psychology and at same time is a member of Volos Academy for Theological Studies (www.acasimia.gr) of The Holy Metropolis of Demetrias. She is a poet and a member of the literature group "Ale Amoraza", and she publishes poems, theological and literary articles in journals, reviews and anthologies (such as *Synaxis*, *Rogmes*, *Gnomi*, *Epi-Koinonia*, *Kath'Odou*, *Nea Poreia*, *Metekasma*). She has published a number of articles dealing with the Greek poet T. Livaditis. Her own poetry collection is entitled: "I Know! it's late..." was published in 2000 (ed. Paratiritis). Her second one will be published by December 2010.

Anastasia GKITSI

Some memories are never forgotten. They may fade away a bit with the passing of time that is determined to write on what has already been written, but they are never canceled. I still remember my grandfather – a church warden for years – telling me that we show our love to God by means of our respect. I remember him telling me that each person has a truth to pass on...

How right he was, I felt it again many years later, when I found myself in England for a seminar organized by **WSCF-Europe** on the topic '**Living Our Faith in a Multicultural Society**', which lasted from the 13th until the 19th of November 2008. In an environment of mutual understanding and exchange of information about 50 people from different countries learned to work together.

Each one of us brought with us the values of Christianity, divided in confessional sects, and we learned to respect one another – as much as for who we are as individuals as for the beliefs we have been brought up with and for what we may become as we follow our individual callings. All of us, images of the One and Only God, live, act and grew up in a specific cultural and religious environment, which we cater with our contribution and interference.

The topic of the conference was timely and interesting; the daily as much as the weekly organization was strictly structured, with moments of relaxation. The hospitality in the **Hollowford Centre in Castleton, Derbyshire** was warm and cordial; the atmosphere among the participants was friendly and pleasant. The speeches of the participants and the workshops

were worthwhile and rich in information and challenges.

The scheduled excursion took place in different multicultural neighborhoods of Manchester. The directions were crystal clear. We would be divided in four groups and each group would visit a different multicultural area and record any similarities and/or differences with our own countries. In the evening, we would all gather at the University chaplaincy to share our impressions and enjoy the hospitality of the indigenous Christian student community of Manchester. Along with our impressions we would also share a typical product of the area we had visited, which we would buy with only 2 Euros.

The group I chose would go to the Afro-American and Pakistani neighborhood where the Muslim element was naturally evident. The neighborhood was a poor one, with few colourful buildings breaking the monotony of a rainy, gloomy day. Two-story blocks of flats were piled symmetrically, one next to the other, and they contained small, but cute, apartments where we could discern dimly outlined furniture and other inner trappings.

During our tour on the central street of the area, we discussed both the similarities and the differences we happened to find in comparison with our own respective multicultural neighborhoods. Suddenly, a colourful store with textiles and traditional Muslim clothes caught my eye. We immediately went in, I and another member of the group from Ukraine, and started to look for something to buy that we could share with the rest of the participants in the evening.

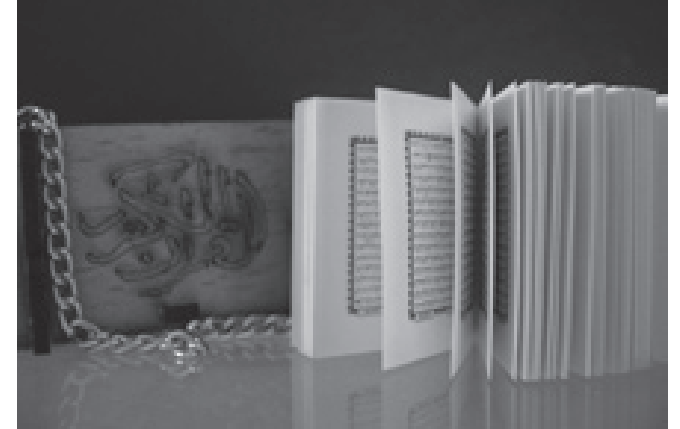
Cds with Sufi and Indian music, yashmaks and scarfs of silk and pasmina, amulets with blue-

stone eyes, sticks with the scent of jasmine and cinnamon, bookmarks with phrases from the Koran translated in Hindu, prayer booklets with Muslim prayers, prayer beads and prayer ropes (komposchinia) with various small and big stones, red, yellow, blue, green carpets on the walls with flashy pearls – the oasis of colours and a feast of scents confused us rather than help us decide what to finally buy!

Meanwhile, the saleswoman – a very sweet woman – asked us what we wanted and if she could help us. I explained to her that we were looking for something that represented the area, something characteristic of the neighborhood. She started to show us the sticks and cds with religious and/or traditional Pakistani music, the scarfs and gloves, the colourful carpets. But my eye fell on a small, carved, wooden decoration, hanging on a stand from a small golden chain.

I took it in my hands and the saleswoman rushed to assure me that this was not what I was looking for. I was taken aback by her confidence and her obvious effort to dissuade me from curiously looking at it any longer. I asked her to explain to me what it was. She took it from my hands, however, and rhetorically asked me "But, are you not a Christian?". Giving her an affirmative answer, I was startled by her response "Therefore, this is not something you will use".

"What is it?", I asked and with a simple movement she took a very small booklet out of a crack in the tiny woodcut. "It is the word of God", she said and put it back in its place while, at the same time, she showed me some other bilingual prayer booklets, urging me to buy those. I insisted with a



smile on the woodcut and she insisted, also with a smile, on preventing me. Finally, she became clearer "You know, the Koran is Sacred, it is the word of God Himself, it is not a souvenir, nor a decoration or something that you buy as a gift to show or give to someone who does not believe in it. We owe respect to it". In her sweetest of manners, she emphasised her last sentence.

I seriously looked at her and meaningfully agreed "You are right, it must have the respect the word of God deserves. Besides, I wouldn't do anything to offend you". "Have it then", she said to me, "if you promise to always treat it with respect" and she put it in my hands. It felt heavy though it was as light as a feather; it must have been the weight the word of God has for every believer. It felt heavy on account of my promise to respect it the way all religious symbols and every person trusting you with one ought to be respected.

Returning in the evening to our meeting, our group decided to share with the other members not the presentation of the typical product of the area we had visited, but the feeling of respect towards the Divine and its symbols that we sometimes – or most of the time – forget or degrade. With due respect to the faith of the Muslim woman, I narrated the incident, which dozens of Christian believers listened to and warm-heartedly accepted.

Memories keep coming back to me every time I open up my drawer and look at the woodcut; the memory of the respect one shows to her or his faith brings tears to my eyes. It is the respect a gentile shows to the faith of the other, the respect created between two and/or even more different persons, images of the One and Only God.

In The Blink of an Eye...

Faith, Pluralism, Communication and the changing World



Simon BARROW

“Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will all be changed – in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye.”
(1 Corinthians 15. 51, 52)

“Money can now transfer from one place to another faster than my eyelid.”
(A trader on Wall Street)

“All that is solid melts into air.”
(Karl MARX)

Globalisation: Being the Quick or the Dead

In 1 Peter 4,5 we are invited to consider: “... who shall give account to the One that is ready to judge the quick and the dead?” In the language of the King James Bible, ‘quick’ meant ‘living’ or ‘alive’, as derived from early German and Europeanised Indian words. Its English meaning in later centuries shifted to ‘fast’, ‘rapid’, ‘moving, or able to move, with speed’.

So my title is a deliberate play on words. In our brave new globalised world, it often feels like this: if you aren’t fast enough you’re finished. You’re either quick, or your dead. You’ve made the deal or you’ve missed it. You have a laptop or a pencil. You fly by plane or crawl in the dirt. There’s plenty in between, of course, but it is easy to forget that the kind of world we are exploring here, today, is still barely imaginable for a large portion of the world’s population.

The biblical words ‘quick’ and ‘dead’ pose a

basic question about judgement, discernment and accountability. What in our world and in our lives is truly life-giving and what is death-dealing? As we peer into the global order we are building at breakneck speed (and as we see how fast it can also crumble before us, often taking vulnerable people and a fragile planet with it), we need to be asking just that question: where is the source of life, and how do we distinguish it from all those things that look shiny and new, perhaps, but offer us no viable future?

Let me give you an example. When we reflect on living in a mixed, pluralistic society, we tend to think immediately of culture, religion, ethnicity and social diversity. What we often fail to notice is the economic engine and the political force that creates this diversity – by forcing people together in certain ways and apart in other ways

Take those Haribo sweets someone brought back last night as a representation of the postmodern multicultural mix. They come from Germany, they are distributed in Britain, they use the American symbol and flavour of Coke, and they are specified as Halal for the benefit of Muslims. How nice, how sweet, what a creative blend. But hold on a minute. The sweets may be different, but how different is the system that manufactured them? Who made and packed those sweets, I wonder? How much did they get paid and how do they live? Who gets the most money out of this product? What are the forces that have made such a happy blend of influences so advantageous – and to whom? I’m not wanting to make you feel bad about enjoying

I’m not wanting to make you feel bad about enjoying these sweets. But I am asking you to probe behind easy appearances to figure out what’s really going on.

these sweets. But I am asking you to probe behind easy appearances to figure out what’s really going on.

With all its many complexities, the question at the heart of globalization remains alarmingly simple. Not ‘shall we have it or not?’ – there is now no serious choice about that, any more than we have a choice to repeal the law of gravity. But the issue remains (and indeed becomes more urgent as we look at the human and environmental chaos blended in with our consumer comforts), what kind of globalization are we talking about, determined by whom, and to what ends? Here we face vital choices. Will it continue to be a global order of consumption and domineering homogeneity (“Thou shalt have no other jeans but mine”)? Or how about an overwhelming global ‘victory’ for Islam, or atheism, or ‘Christian civilization’, or liberalism, or some other ideology (“My rule is the only rule” is the cry of zealots in every camp)?

In our hearts, we know that these are narratives of destruction not hope. Many of us would prefer instead the global growth of genuine mutuality and of liberating difference, based on respect and growing equality. But how on earth is this achievable? The possibility of offering sustenance to each other across the barriers that divide us – religious, economic and more – seems increasingly remote in a world where digital media offers us the chance for instant judgement (of others), instant assertion (of ourselves) – and, by commission or omission, too often ends up saying “to hell with those who aren’t like us.”

To find another way forward we perhaps need to listen afresh to the ancient-new wisdom of Scripture. I am thinking of two famous passages which suggest two radically different models of what a ‘global order’ might look like. The first is the old politics of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, while an alternative possibility – the strange new economy of the Holy Spirit – is made visible in the Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. If this seems an odd way of conceiving the situation, bear with me for a bit.

First the Babel story: “And the Lord said, ‘Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose will now be impossible for them’...” (NRSV). And, so the story goes, God confounded the designs of those who wished to rule everything through the architecture of power and its corollary, a universal technological language. “Come, let us go down and confuse their speech there, so that they will not understand one another.”

Of course this reversal has its price. Confusion and dispersal leads to continued enmity among the peoples and nations, as we see from the ‘hope versus judgement’ dynamic present throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. But what does the typology of Pentecost generate by way of an alternative? Well, contrary to what modern technocratic logic might assume, the solution to human divisions is not some kind of super-language, or the creation of what philosophers now call a meta-narrative (one big story, to which all are required to submit). No, it is a massive



EVA VASILEVA



proliferation of difference once more – but this time with the extraordinary added gift of mutuality, communicability, translatability. That is, the capacity to live with and even inside each other's speech worlds: "They began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability."

At Pentecost the outcome of diversity is not hopeless confusion. Rather, with no diminution of difference, the various peoples each have the wholly unexpected, fulfilling experience of hearing their own speech picked up, recognised and honoured by the stranger. "Each one heard them speaking in the native language of each". In this context 'hear' means actively comprehend, not simply 'acknowledge'.

This translation of difference into mutuality is immensely significant. According to the politics of worldly power, difference needs to be contained and restrained. Allowing 'other languages' means risking 'other meanings'. Translation is never exact because the patterns of thinking that accompany distinct speech forms are also different. For those with plans to centralise, to lord it over others, this is disastrous. If you would rule the world you must also rule its meanings. That is true whether you are an ardent secularist or a religious ideologue.

A domination system – to use theologian Walter WINK's term – demands that only one speech is really legitimate. Ours. Conflict becomes necessary to subdue the potential for linguistic and political chaos. With a bit of civility mixed in you might just achieve similar control via a contract (a legal arrangement) or a democratic compromise, of course. The assumption in this case is that the meaning of the 'acceptable' rules is determined in the same ways as the meaning of language. Indeed rules are language, to a large extent. But instead of trust and relationship it is power and enforcement that 'calls the shots'.

Chaos, conflict, contract, control: these are all that difference can lead to when it is bereft of genuinely loving connectivity. In the taxonomy

In each fresh wound we create in the world (and the church) the counter-claim of Pentecostal compassion demands to be heard.

of the Holy Spirit, however, there is a new possibility abroad. Our differences need not cancel each other out. Instead they hold the potential to become part of that endless interplay of voluntary, proximate relationship we call communion. Freedom thus proves the condition for love (compassionate attention to the other as to ourselves) and vice versa.

This is precisely what Jesus, the distinctly un-lordly Lord, generated through his subversive practices of open table fellowship and foot washing. It is also what St Paul implies in 1 Corinthians 12, when he talks of a Body (a community of people) that relies for its unity on the free, harmonious interplay of different parts. "If one member suffers all suffer", he says. "If one member is honoured, all rejoice together."

A 'communion of difference' sounds exceptionally radical in contrast to those usual alternatives – chaos, conflict, contract, and control. And it is. But the realities of power will not go away. At Pentecost the price of the new (but demanding) freedom is a disrupted Sabbath and more than a few ruffled sensibilities in the face of God's unbounded generosity – which refuses to discriminate in ways that 'the religious' think essential, pouring out creativity on the many rather than the few. At first people are gripped by this new dynamic. Then there is also a slow return to 'normality', the routinisation of the charisma (WEBER), as the unfolding story of Acts illustrates.

For Jesus the price is much higher, however. The infliction of the Cross on those who cause the people to speak and act differently is a deadly symbol of just how unacceptable a real Pentecost-like alternative ('divine anarchy' you might say) is to the crucifying powers-that-be, since they thrive on divide-and-rule or unite-and-rule, but never on diversify-and-share.

In each fresh wound we create in the world (and the church) the counter claim of Pentecostal compassion demands to be heard. No matter how loudly the voice of

conventional politics and controlling religion tries to silence the cry for justice, it continues to spring up in people, like an unquenchable thirst. And it remains the central vocation of the church to announce, live out and apply this hope, this alternative logic of communion, amid the messiness of human affairs – starting, of course, with its own deep repentance for having too often become part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

Communications: an Alternative to the Laptop of Babel

Behind all our technologies of communication lies the psychological will and power to inform, persuade, and possibly dominate. New technology and the internet spreads communication around and diversifies it. But we could still end up with the Laptop of Babel instead of the Tower of Babel if we are not careful! The images we create of one another can be deeply illuminating or tremendously distorted, but without care and consideration they are more likely to be the latter. More and more information doesn't necessarily help us to understand things better. It can sometimes immobilize us and build a barrier to action. But, again, we can't opt out of the communications era. Everything we know about the world beyond ourselves is formed, reflected, enhanced or supplemented by what we pick up and push around from the media. So we would be wise to step back and consider how we can discover a still, small voice of reason and hope in the growing babble.

By whatever means it is conveyed, truth is something contested and shaped in public discourse. As different communities, lobbies and institutions enter the marketplace of ideas, digits and images, the issue for Christians is this: which ways of seeing and telling, which narratives, lead us to the place where a Gospel of healing and communion begins to make sense? Because in many situations today it



EVA VASILIEVA

simply does not. It often feels as if we are communicating into an abyss; that what we might want to say, about peace and reconciliation for example, makes no sense at all in a world where the ‘myth of redemptive violence’ (the idea that violence ‘saves’) holds sway over our imagination and our politics.

Therefore we are constantly challenged to consider what is distinctive about forms of communication shaped by the Gospel. Notice that I put it that way, rather than talking about ‘Christian communication’, which has the danger of sounding like an inwardly-focused factional activity concerned with the interests of only one group of people. By contrast, I understand the Gospel to be about hope and healing for all, and about extending the gifts that reside in one community to others for the sake of mutual transformation.

I have no monopoly of wisdom in this area, but I would suggest that truth in communication for followers of Jesus Christ has at least four characteristics.

1. It is personal. At its heart lies a concern for persons – their joys and sorrows, needs and contents. This means that it is in line with the Word made flesh, the Word in history, the living Word behind the text. It is personally vulnerable. God’s means are not those of ‘knock-down truth’. Our over-preoccupations with being right and being in control are not reflected in God’s communication in Christ.

But the personal is not purely individual. It is ready to face down the corporate challenge of ‘institutional truth’ (John Kenneth GALBRAITH), the kind of truth that bypasses people to serve the dominant interests of a system or ideology. Institutional truth is a partiality that determines which bits of reality are more convenient than others. It is precisely the logic that says ‘don’t let nuances spoil a good story.’

This illustrates the uncomfortable way in which truth telling can become extremely difficult when we get close to centres of power. So we rely upon other communicators and upon mutual responsibilities to call us to account. Of course it does not follow at all that being at the edges provides those who are safely distant from power with a monopoly of truth. But the moral question about how communication effects those with the fewest chances and resources is a massively important corrective from the perspective of the Gospel.

2. It is unarmed. For those who live under the shadow of the Cross and in the hope of Christ’s risen life, the way we treat enemies and those who are ‘other’ is crucial. Communication designed to obliterate and denigrate cannot bring wholeness. But the fact that we do not take recourse to arms, actual or metaphorical, does not mean that we are without power. On the contrary, we need to be reminded that “there is tremendous power in the words



ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

and images we create” (Dan CHARLES, US National Public Radio).

By ‘unarmed’ I also mean to say that communication shaped by the Gospel starts with the concerns of the defenceless, those whom the great Indian theologian M. M. THOMAS described as “the last, the least and the lost”. The people especially loved by Jesus come into focus when our communication evokes a challenge to traditional power relations and to the violence that is often involved in maintaining them.

3. It is unfinished. Maybe that sounds strange. Isn’t one of the first rules of good communication that we should finish sentences and round off images? Yes, but even then they are only ever part of the story, part of an incomplete narrative. Communication that recognizes its own incompleteness is able to evoke more truth, make space for a response, open up more possibilities.

By making space for the other it becomes possible to recognize that (as in the current Israel-Palestine tragedy) there are two wounded parties, not just one. By contrast, “half truth cuts dialogue” (Darryl BYLER, Mennonite Central Committee, Washington Office).

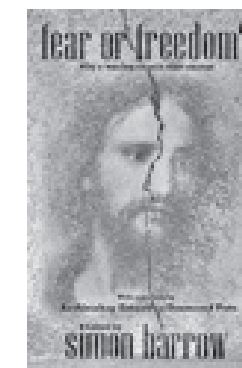
Unfinished communication acknowledges that God’s ways with us are not finished and finalised. There is a sense of deferral involved in faith that expects more.

4. Last but not least, it is relational. Good communication is constitutive of memory, which is what holds together a community, a Body – as in the Body of Christ. This is particularly important because we live in a forgetful age, one that sometimes values the fleeting attraction of the image over the more difficult relationship or truth that might sustain us when it has waned. So we need to be reminded. In my Anglican tradition communication is (or should be) Eucharistic. We speak and act out of a memory of Jesus; we are a broken body seeking healing, longing to be remembered. Similarly, ‘evangelism’ worthy of the name is a word in search of relationships with people, speech that seeks to redeem and reconnect rather than to provoke or self-justify.

Post-Christendom: Recovering our Faith in a subversive Gospel

What kind of church do we need to face the challenges of globalisation, diversity and a media saturated world? I believe it needs to be one that is able to discern the subversive quality of the Gospel story and to live and speak it authentically, one that can develop the alternative agenda of the Holy Spirit (unity-in-diversity), and one that can be global in its concerns and local in its rootedness.

An important development of the 20th Century has been the growth of conflict resolution courses that train people in peacemaking in schools, churches, communities and between nations.



Challenges and Opportunities of Migration

– in Multi-faith Multi-ethnic Europe

Reverend Arlington TROTMAN

Foundational Themes

With the increasing movement of people globally through multiple forms of migration, European Christians and society generally are naturally seeking understanding and appropriate responses to the challenges this reality brings. Migration is not new. Throughout history, Europeans have moved within Europe for refuge or opportunity. Contemporary migration into Europe also brings opportunities. Therefore, the question concerning how we should live in multi-cultural, multi-faith Europe presupposes a particular understanding of multi-culturalism and of the church.

At its broadest level, the church is not so much defined by architecture or denominational boundaries, despite their historical significance, but by relatedness to God and thus the notion of family, the ekklesia, the 'vine and the branches' (John 15,4-5; Ephesians 2,19-21). From this perspective the unity of the Christian family appears an already given reality. What is of essence in relation to this understanding of church is also true about the quest for Christian unity when understood much more broadly as result of migration to contemporary Europe. It is from this standpoint that an assessment of life amid the challenges and opportunities which migration brings is undertaken.

Biblical References to Migration

Throughout the Old and New Testaments the command time and again is to welcome and serve the needs of the 'stranger', defined differently as 'man', 'sojourner', 'alien'. Regarding the stranger, 'the other', there is no question about God's expectations:

- In the earliest Hebrew books, the prophets taught the Israelites that the test of their society would be how well the widows, the orphans and the aliens fared among them.
- This theme carries on throughout Scripture to Luke's story of the Good Samaritan and Matthew's dramatic eschatological vision in which he remarks that in the final judgment destiny would be determined on the basis of whether we welcomed, fed, visited, clothed, and supported Christ by doing these things for the stranger (Matthew 25,34-35);
- In the Torah, Abraham and Sarah provided hospitality to three strangers from another land;¹ their response became a model for the treatment of strangers by Abraham's descendants.
- The children of Jacob became forced migrants; Joseph was sold into slavery (Genesis 37,1-36).
- The enslavement of the Chosen People by the Egyptians and God's liberation of them led



Rev Arlington TROTMAN serves as Moderator (Chairman) of Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME). CCME is the ecumenical agency on migration and integration, asylum and refugee issues which works to combat racism and discrimination whilst promoting equality in a diverse Europe. Previously Arlington served as Commission Secretary for the Racial Justice Commission for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. He is a Wesleyan minister and is originally from Barbados.



EVA VASILEVA

- from the centre to the margins
- from majority to minority
- from settlers to sojourners
- from privilege to plurality
- from control to witness
- from maintenance to mission
- from institution to movement

We are also witnessing the loss of direct ecclesiastical power and influence within the social and political order. And as the Christendom order erodes further, so different responses emerge, some positive and some negative. A number of Christians will inevitably try to hold on to their power or to fight back against what they will feel is a tremendous loss (since they have identified the reign of Christ with their own reign)...but the 'Church of Power' is not the community of Jesus empowered by the Spirit and reflective of the God who gives us life by bidding us to let go of it extravagantly, lovingly, hopefully. That church is fading and dying, and in its place a new Gospel dynamic – not fearful fundamentalism – is needed.

Here is the promise and opportunity: "Death is turned into life", says theologian John D CAPUTO, "not by a power that overpowers things (like the god of omnipotence-theology), but by the kingdom of 'weak forces' (like the God of Jesus and the via crucis)."

"When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable... then the saying will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.'"

(I Corinthians 15,54-55)

Here in Britain, the churches have struggled to do these things because they have been domesticated by their respectable status, trapped by civic religion and disabled by the privatisation of faith. But much of what has propped up 'establishment religion' in the UK (I am not just talking about the Church of England here, but all the mainline denominations to a degree) is now gradually being eroded with the demise of Christendom – essentially the set of arrangements that have prevailed in European societies where the church has sought the security and privilege of a place at the table of the powerful by blessing the status quo.

"Post-Christendom is the culture that emerges as the Christian faith loses coherence within a society that has been definitively shaped by the Christian story and as the institutions that have been developed to express Christian convictions decline in influence", says Stuart MURRAY.

As a result, we are seeing transitions in the life of the church



directly to the commandments regarding strangers: “You shall treat the stranger no differently than the natives born among you, have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once strangers in the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 19,33-34).

The Israelites were not only commanded to care for the stranger, but they structured the welcome and care of aliens into their gleaning and tithing laws as well (Leviticus 19,9-10; Deuteronomy 14,28-29). Observing how Abraham bowed in homage to the three, how we formalise and structure our response towards the ‘other’ today reveals our concerns regarding human relations.

A fundamental fact about human relations is that the encounter of one person with another often falls into two categories: One, the way we relate to family, friends, and community, and two, the way we relate to the stranger or the ‘other’. Those we consider members of our community are those with whom we have bonds, with

whom we live, play and work, who have interests, values and commitments in common with us. Our instinctive reactions to these persons are positive and open. Our reactions to the ‘other’, whether the actual stranger or the thought of a stranger, are another matter: we instinctively respond often with suspicion, uncertainty, questions, hesitation and sometimes with alarm, fear, hatred, or violence and even fatal wounding. The term ‘stranger’ is ominous, and the word ‘alien’ tends to create resistance and hostility. The other is the outsider, someone who does not have the same claim upon us as do family, friends and community. It is especially important to note, however, that biblical tradition puts the person who is the ‘other’ at the heart of the matter. It is helpful therefore to tackle the subject from the standpoint of the immanence and transcendence of God as revealed in Jesus and not merely from the contemporary challenges of the formations of Christian identities.

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Immanence and Transcendence

The theologians of mediation of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as TILICH, SCHELLING, SCHLEIERMACHER and BARTH, have all addressed the quest for our essential unity as human beings. Although transcendence (distance) is defined as the opposite of immanence (nearness), the two are not mutually exclusive. God is said to be at once far from us and also near to us. The biblical picture which assumes our unity leads to a contrast, albeit briefly, of two major contributions which the title of this paper invokes: as European Christians (Churches), can we live together in a cohesive integrated way or must we exclude the ‘other’? This can be approached on two levels:

Firstly, a simple affirmative response is insufficient. If we reply positively to the challenge of cohesion in a multi-cultural context, we must then explore why living and worshipping together is perceived to be a problem? In response we might cite economics, politics, identity, cultural assimilation or even religion. If it is decided that we cannot or do not wish to live together in a multi-cultural society, we are then compelled, in the light of the biblical picture, to examine the nature of Christian (human) identity and human interdependence.

Secondly, if we take the basic idea that the Being of God establishes, secures and maintains our faith, then we presuppose something about God’s presence and distance from us. Nearness and distance is proper to the nature of God not merely as an ontological reality, but as a Person, manifested in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

Migratory Transformations

In contemporary Europe there is a compulsion to understand the nature of God and the basis of Christian unity in

the light of the increased diversity which modern migration has brought. Firstly, in traditional Christian thought, theologians and scholars have conceptualised God as immanent and ‘living’, the concrete central reality evident in Jesus Christ. Karl BARTH, like Paul TILICH, had his early grounding in the liberal tradition, but BARTH vigorously sought in later life to liberate biblical tradition from the distortions of the culturally determined religion, which characterised TILICH’s approach particularly in his lecture ‘On the Idea of a Theology of Culture’.²

If contrasted with Dietrich BONHOEFFER’s thought, a more compelling viewpoint is achievable. BONHOEFFER holds that because Christ’s Being is being for others, both God and human beings cannot be conceived in isolation but only in relationship with others, that is in I-You or I-Thou relations. Jesus’ freedom for others is the ‘experience of transcendence’; as faith means participation in Christ, so relation to the transcendent God is not to “an imagined most powerful Supreme Being – ‘that is not authentic transcendence’ ...The Transcendent is... the neighbour who is within reach in any given situation.”³ The key to a system of belief which maintains that God acts in human affairs is the reception of Jesus Christ as ‘Person’ and the belief that God also transcends ‘Person’ in God’s otherness.

Secondly, God’s Being is not in transcendent isolation and absence, but God is revealed in God’s Being-in-relation-to-us, the meaning of the Incarnation. The Incarnation shows that to be human is to be a person before God and in relation to God. We incarnate Christ, as Matthew’s eschatology shows, where God is at once in the core of human existence, and the inner Trinitarian life of God is made known through Christ. God’s Being is Being-for-humanity, so that human relationships in God’s image are reflected in one person being-free-for-the-other in love.⁴ There is no application based on ethnic or cultural distinction.

One of the challenges of a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic Europe relates directly to how religion is conceived and un-



ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

The Challenge of ‘Otherness’ in Christian Missiology: cultural and existential Distortion

Swedish theologian Daniel Calero DAVYT acknowledged the historical reality of people movement as an important part of the human condition. He notes that “in spite of the fact that we consider permanent living sites to be a major step in our progress through history, humans have continued to move in order to find new worlds...For ten thousand years people have wandered around the earth in their hunt for food, safety and freedom. No people now living in Sweden, not even the Sami, can state with truth that they have never migrated anywhere”.⁶ Clearly, finding new paths and longing for better lives are essential elements of the human condition; “Being a migrant is being a human being”. But some people, mainly from the south, have been heard to say in Europe: “But when we came here they treat[ed] us as though we were not human...”

Our understanding of the human situation, however, does not begin with geography or economics or political philosophy but with acceptance of the dignity and humanity of each person. Every person belongs to a single human community, and civil society, regardless of colour or culture, in its politics, economics, its laws and its international organization, is judged by how well it responds to the needs of the human community. Distortions such as the following require unlearning:

- the priority of the nation-state, its belief in exclusive ‘ownership’ of resources, and tendencies to nationalism for its ‘own people’ and cultures;
- a historical belief that Europeans are intellectually and morally superior to Africans, economically exploited in the transatlantic slave trade;

derstood. In some instances religion, abstractly conceived, is liberal, distant and prone to empty formalism. In others, understanding rests not on the abstract premise that God is the ground and power of being in this liberal sense, but on *relationship* through God’s self-revelation in Christ.⁵ Relationship from this standpoint implies that God is at once ‘personal’ and fundamentally ‘other’ in God’s relatedness to us.

Thirdly, meeting the challenge entails love. Love traditionally informs and represents the holy life, a life of meaningfulness. Love understood merely ontologically as intrinsic to the concept of being has been a matter of enduring contention, whether love in this sense is ever achievable. *Agapé* is understood as God’s love for humanity in all its diversity, actualised and manifested in Jesus Christ who enables human beings to be free for each other in love. If Christ’s suffering and death is appropriated, the identity common to all human beings dictates re-union and liberation regardless of existential differences. Existential differences, however, have distorted, divided and segregated what has been unified. Human beings must die. They cannot live in isolation, but must be

“open and available to others, affirming of others, ... [not] threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed...”

Archbishop Desmond TUTU

The question of unity in these circumstances disappears, and the challenge becomes an opportunity!

Love traditionally informs and represents the holy life, a life of meaningfulness.

Healing historical and intellectual Roots of Racism and Division

While every individual and people group have the power to discriminate against and exclude ‘the other’ and often exercise it, Mazrui ALI, in his book *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*, states that the record of white people’s use of conversational, material and military power to discriminate against, exclude and exploit non-white people is arguably unsurpassed in modern history.¹⁰ Croatian theologian Miroslav VOLF has identified 3 forms of exclusion: i) *elimination* through killing or assimilation, ii) *domination* by assigning others an inferior status and iii) *abandonment* by keeping others at a safe distance so that their dehumanised bodies cannot make immoderate claims.¹¹ All three forms took place during the history of white people’s relationship with African and Asian peoples, and the challenge to deal graciously with ‘otherness’ continues to influence life in the Church today.

Yet, credible authorities,¹² contrary to HUME, HEGEL and KANT, tell us that India, China and Japan were all highly developed civilisations before the age of colonialism, as were the Inca and Mayan civilisations in Latin America and the kingdoms of Ghana, Songay, Mali, Benin, Nyakusa and Mwanamutapa in Africa. The immediate need is to unlearn misconceptions and exploitation. Jewish Chief Rabbi and scholar Jonathan SACKS has pointed to the Platonic philosophy of *universals* which he thinks helped great thinkers and explorers to cement these divisions. In the theory of universals, plurality and heterogeneity must give way to homogeneity and unity: one people, one culture, one language, one book, one goal; what does not fall under this all-encompassing ‘one’ is ambivalent, polluting and dangerous. It must be removed.¹³ But divisions and segregation can be healed and overcome.

- systemic structural discrimination based on ethnicity, religion and culture, perpetuated through discriminatory legislation and pronouncement about lost opportunity in European societies, e.g. the expression, ‘they come here to take our jobs’;
- unease in dealing with ‘difference’ or ‘otherness’, such as culture, colour, religion or ethnicity. Differences *between* different people groups, or “ethnicities, account approximately for only 5%, whilst the differences which occur *within* people groups is reckoned scientifically to be approximately 85%” (Stephen COHEN, *Ethnicity, Class and Immigration*).⁷
- David HUME: “I am apt to suspect the Negroes, and in general all other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There was scarcely a civilised nation of any other complexion than white... nor even any individual eminent in action or speculation. No ingenious manufacturers amongst them, no arts, no sciences.”⁸
- Immanuel KANT, a contemporary of HUME, went as far as creating a hierarchical chart classifying human beings into different races with white people on the top of his scale and non-white people at the bottom. In his thought, non-white people were inferior to white people. KANT even ascribed to skin colour (white or black) the evidence of rational (and therefore human) capacity or lack of it.⁹
- Imperialist expansion in the late nineteenth century, in particular the ‘scramble for Africa’, exacerbated the sense of difference between Europeans and non-Europeans.

These distortions have been allowed to divide, and have taken roots in our educational and cultural formations.



EVA VASILIOU

Migration and Multi-culturalism

Some of the drivers of migration are closely allied to the experience of persecution or the fear of it, which is the focus of multi-culturalism in Europe. War, civil conflict, famine, natural disaster, tyrannical political regimes, exploitation and desperate poverty – any of which might cause people to migrate – affect human beings seeking survival. The pressures and opportunities of the global economy may well play a significant role in such decisions. As an applied ideology of ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, multiculturalism seeks to uphold, recognise and celebrate different cultures or identities to promote community cohesion. It is used to advocate and extend equality to distinct groups, but multi-culturalism is limited, however, in its ability to alone drive forward cohesiveness.

Christian identity, however, is founded and rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and this becomes the secure basis for relating to the other in a multi-cultural Europe. In every regard, Christians must affirm and be affirmed in their identity, regardless of ‘difference’, but to facilitate this requires recourse to the nearness God offers. It is the basis for embracing core principles in our response.

Core Principles

- All people are created equal in dignity, made in the image of God. Christians can, without undermining their faith, respect every human being regardless of otherness.
- Governments have a primary responsibility for their own citizens but basic human rights should not be

denied to any persons on the grounds that they are not, or are not yet, fully accepted as citizens.

- We must fully accept our obligations as citizens of the countries in which we live, but we also must recognise that our lives are pilgrimages with no abiding city; rights and privileges of nationality and citizenship are given not solely for our personal enjoyment.
- We are stewards of the world’s resources, not exclusive owners.
- People moving to Europe contribute their gifts, qualities such as courage and perseverance, skills, increased knowledge and experience to the community.

The fact that our unity transcends our differences is echoed in a telling statement from Dr Martin Luther KING Junior, who affirmed:

“The self cannot be self without other selves...The worth of an individual does not lie in the measure of his intellect, his ethnic origin, or his social position. Human worth lies in relatedness to God.”¹⁴

Conclusion

Europe is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society in actual reality, but the essential Christian identity is founded and rooted in Christ, with whom a personal relationship provides the measure and basis by which we value and respect the other. Living in multi-cultural Europe is not without its challenges, but these are not essen-



ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

tially different from the challenges Europe or any other nation already experiences whatever the culture or ethnicity of new communities. It is crucial that Christians stand in their identity as human and Christian; this is the fundamental basis for unity, dialogue, fraternity and liberty, regardless of differences in religion, culture or ethnicity. We need divine guidance and help to embrace the other as one of us in God.

(Endnotes)

1 Genesis 18,1-8. Hospitality in the scriptural sense incorporates all the acts of kindness that are prescribed or recommended in the Scriptures. It takes precedence even over prayer and spiritual exercises. Hospitality is closely associated with the covenant that God made with Abraham. In fact, it is a covenant responsibility. Consequently hospitality must be understood in the context of social justice and right relationships.

2 NUOVO Victor, *Visionary Science, A Translation of On the Idea of a Theology of Culture, with an Interpretive Essay*. Wayne State University Press. Detroit, 1987.

3 BONHOEFFER, quoted in *The Cambridge Companion to Dietrich BONHOEFFER*. John W. de GRUCHY (ed.) Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999. 130.

4 Ibid., p. 116.

5 See MOLTSMANN, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 94-116.

6 DAVYT Daniel Calero, Motion – an important part of the human condition.

7 Scientific evidence suggests that the differences in the physical features of human beings exist only in the level of tissues, cells, and molecules – distinctions that are quite insignificant.

8 HUME David, *On National Characters: An essay on the nature and immutability of Truth in Opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism*, 1753.

9 KANT Immanuel, essay, *On the Varieties of Different Races of Men*. Naomi ZACK, *Philosophy of Science of Race*. Routledge, 2002. 13-18.

10 MAZRUI Ali. A. *The Africans: A Triple Heritage*. London, BBC Publications, 1986. 301ff.

11 VOLF Miroslav, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1996. 63-4.

12 MAZRUI Ali. A Op. Cit; DAVIDSON, Basil, *Africa: History of a Continent*. Macmillan, New York, 1969; *The African Genius: An Introduction to African Cultural and Social History*. Little, Brown & Co, Boston, 1978; TIMMEL Hope, Anne & Sally, *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers III*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984. 8f.

13 SACK Jonathan, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilisations*. Continuum Books, London, 2002. 49.

14 Washington James Melvin, *A Testament of Hope, Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr*, HarperCollins, New York, 1991. 119.

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Mainline and Migrant Churches

- Together on a new Journey

Søren ASMUS

The presence of the so-called migrant churches in Europe is long felt. Beginning with the UK and the important work of Walter HOLLENWEGER and Roswith GERLOFF in the Centre for Black and White Studies, the awareness has spread around Europe via the Netherlands and Italy, Germany and France. There is now a lot of organised co-operation between the mainline and migrant churches. There has been a change in approach however, which is worth noticing and gives hope for new developments. In the beginning the roles seemed clear: there was a big mainline church, having buildings, resources and staff and there were several smaller migrant churches, needing places to meet, resources to work with and support to get to know the new religious environment. In this situation a certain attitude of diaconal (servant) lifestyle has been developed from the side of the mainline churches. On the other hand the migrant churches tried to show their importance and their valuable contribution to mission and service.

Today, while there are still many cases in which the mainline churches have financial power and resources the small migrant churches need help organising their life, others have developed into self-sufficient and large communities. These others have become an integral part of the ecumenical landscape. The main question now has become: How do we reframe the need for dialogue between migrant and mainline churches? This task is a challenge for all sides.

In the past, in Germany for instance, the mainline churches were the favoured partners of the migrant churches with charismatic or Pentecostal backgrounds; today the differences in teaching have become an obstacle for neat co-operation. In the past the migrant churches were interested in establishing an equal status; they did not want to be limited by their migrant background but to be fully respected as churches. Today they have realised that the mainline churches have a completely different understanding of what it means to be Church, as they are former state churches which try to serve

all of the community, while the charismatic churches focus more on the expression of faith and services for those who are actively involved in the life of the parish. Some parishes of the mainline churches may envy the level of activity in the services of the migrant churches and look for ways to rediscover the approach of Pentecostals as a source for their own spirituality. But the ministers and elders of the mainline churches have to serve a much larger constituency, who in some cases will not share the new approach at all. On the other hand, pastors of migrant churches have realised that the mainline churches offer aspects of the life of faith which they have not yet discovered, such as how to deal with multi-generation parishes or how to teach the tradition to the young people. At the same time they feel the pressure of congregations used to developing their own gifts and this might lead splits instead of only difficulties within the church.

So the co-operation, which used to be of benefit for one or both sides, has now to move on to accommodate the new realities of independence. It also needs to take into account the existing differences, which have sometimes shaped the theologies of the existing churches in Europe. In the past the state churches have experienced migration – dissenters left the country, while free churches were only small counterparts that were theologically considered irrelevant. Later, after the establishment of the ecumenical movement, these attitudes may have changed in some places, but in the life of the most mainline churches not much has changed. Today, the co-operation with some of the Pentecostal migrant churches has also brought mainline church theologians and Pentecostal theologians together. They have tried to develop courses for migrant church leaders and congregations. So the reality of migration also led to a new reality of ecumenism.



EVA VASILIEVA

Which way to go now?

Established migrant churches have a new self-understanding; some of them are already members of international church networks which stretch from Asia or Africa to the United States and include different European countries. At the same time there is again a growing awareness in parts of Western Europe of the presence of Orthodox parishes, which are part of the national churches in Eastern Europe and serve the migrants from those countries – a knowledge, that was more present in the beginning of the 20th century than at its ending. So the mainline churches face different kinds of migrant churches, no longer appearing as the brothers and sisters in need, but as siblings who themselves have started to shape the religious landscape.

This development is happening at the same time as Europe is struggling for its religious identity. Migrants are often publicly perceived as part of the Muslim community.



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EVA VASILEVA

In many cases the mainline churches try to influence the public debate in the direction of a ‘Christian Europe’, in which they play the role of the leading religious actor. This is necessary given their shrinking importance in the public life. Focussing on ‘Christian values’ and tradition appear to be tools that guard their position or help them to regain a dominant role. In such situations however, migrant churches seem to be competitors rather than partners, especially as they no longer play the role of churches in need.

At the same time the earlier perception of Europe as a continent in need of a missionary crusade, which was part of the self-understanding of many charismatic migrant churches, has found its limits. While the idea of a ‘Mission in Reverse’ was and sometimes still is part of the reasoning for their presence, it has now become clear that the secularism in Europe has deep roots and means that there is a completely different religious life than in the rest of the world. Claiming to bring the Gospel back to Europe, after having received it from here, might still be a powerful idea, but street preaching and evangelistic crusades are tools that have proved ineffective for European churches in the past. Migrant churches have also discovered that there are a limited number of Europeans that are interested in religion and they further find that they are competing for the few Europeans who are interested in charismatic and Pentecostal churches.

So it seems that while today there is still a large need to learn about each other and find ways to accommodate to a new religious landscape, there is only a limited space for doing so. While both sides still lack much knowledge of each other, it will no longer do to approach each other tentatively on the basis of help or to discover each other’s lively spirituality or rooted tradition. No, the encounter between mainline and migrant churches today requires

their ability to question each other theologically and to name areas of learning. The different churches are able to give each other much but a proper exchange requires an attitude or lifestyle of dialogue.

There are two main areas in which learning could be beneficial, and which would only make sense through dialogue. The intention of dialogue is not for the churches to adopt each other’s practices but to focus on areas of religious life which are a common challenge. However, this still requires the humility and the courage to learn new ways and before that the ability to recognise the weaknesses of one’s own church.

On the one hand Pentecostal churches have a strong tradition of recognising the gifts of their members, supporting them and creating many specific roles in their congregational life. This also relieves the leadership and opens new opportunities for action. Pentecostal churches have a “soft” hierarchy which makes it easier to develop the structure and ways of service which are appropriate in individual parishes. This is a quality which the mainline churches lack since they are often constrained by their legal or theological structures and requirements for ministry and service. For the mainline churches to be challenged by this and use it as an opportunity to find their own ways of integrating more people in the life of the parish and to value their contribution accordingly is an ecumenical learning experience par excellence.

On the other hand many of the charismatic and Pentecostal migrant churches face a need for tradition: ways of building their parishes have been established by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. How are these structures and understandings passed on, without either reinventing a parish every generation again or splitting along age lines? How does one teach the youth the experiences of the congregation? How can maintaining the spirituality of

So it seems that while today there is still a large need to learn about each other and find ways to accommodate to a new religious landscape, there is only a limited space for doing so.

the culture in a foreign environment be balanced with the experience of the youth whose roots are in Europe rather than the countries of their parents?

Here the mainline churches with their practices of Sunday schools, religious education and transmitting tradition through organised teaching could serve as a productive challenge, in order to add some structural duration to the charismatic experience.

A case from which much needs to be learnt is that of the Waldensian church in Italy. The Waldensians were able to integrate many of the migrant communities in their own church but now both parties face a completely new situation: The traditional congregations in some areas are becoming a minority, needing the migrants to preserve their identity by taking up their traditions and heritage. The migrants have to adapt to no longer being in receipt of aid, but rather to supporting a tradition that is not yet their own. This is an ongoing process of ecumenical learning.

Also, in the UK there is a longer tradition of co-operation between migrant and mainline churches. Here the multicultural background of the UK also serves as an example for another strong obstacle to co-operation, racism. When the mainline churches realised the great number of migrants in the UK they began on to look for migrants in their own congregations. Now the Church of England has its own bishops of colour and recognises its role in accommodating the multicultural reality of Christianity in the world today. This is not only a challenge for the Anglican community, as one can see in the struggle over homosexual bishops or same sex marriages, but for all European Churches, which have to learn that their role is no longer the centre of worldwide Christianity.

Building a Lifestyle of Dialogue

Having focused, so far, on the challenges, I want to emphasise that the awareness of these challenges is itself an outcome of a lifestyle of dialogue in parts of the churches. Sharing a building, sharing some educational resources, attending the other’s worship and taking into account the presence and relevance of the other church is an achievement in itself. Up till now, congregations and churches as a whole have been happily ignoring other communities in their parish life.



EVA VASILEVA



Everyone had been so absorbed with their own business and coming to terms with the changing realities in Europe that the need to open one's eyes to other Christians was unfelt. This diminished the appreciation of the many gifts of God's people, leaving a strong theological need for change. At the same time, we should be cautious about always approaching the other in order to 'get something out of' the encounter, rather there should be a mutual interest and respect for different Christian ways of life.

It is important to come to a position where one can witness and appreciate not only the differences between the churches but also one's own prejudices. Some of the practices in migrant churches may appear to be 'fundamentalist' but some of the ways of the mainline churches may seem to be too secular. Since the history of migration is long and dynamic, we need to recognise the new areas of Christianity that have already taken root in Europe, and allow our perception of migrant churches to change. They are an increasingly integral part of the religious landscape in contact with other centres of Christianity. This broadens the scope for dialogue as migrant congregations not only bring their traditions to Europe, but they also feed their experiences here back into the life of their original churches, into African Pentecostal churches and Orthodox churches alike.

So, in sum, the basis of a lifestyle of dialogue within Christian communities must be realistic: to be aware of the multitude of different Christian churches in Europe and the world that are sharing different ways of being Christian with each other. This means the established and traditional churches in Europe need to realise that their way of being Church is no longer the dominant way. African and Asian churches are growing much faster and outnumber European

traditions, influencing also the traditional churches in their home countries. Christianity as a whole has become more charismatic and less traditional. On the other hand, in Western Europe, many of the former migrant churches, which have taken root here, need to change their attitude towards secularism and learn that there is value in some of the traditions of the established churches. Whilst the churches in Eastern Europe and the notion of hegemonic national churches have been challenged, migrant churches from Western Europe could help to develop a more pluralistic approach. Migrant churches coming to Western Europe give opportunities to find new ways of being Church for the people. The status of being an established church is not without value, as these churches have already shaped the culture and life of a region, but migration also brings the challenge of adapting to new realities and openness to diversity.

So the churches need to adopt a dynamic style of dialogue, so as to learn from each other and be Church together. Europe needs churches that are aware of the rapidly changing realities in different countries and that are open to a multitude of ways to serve people's needs. Such an approach will encompass more than curiosity or the desire to receive from the other, it will be the realisation of the demands and opportunities involved in being church today. Valuing one's own tradition alongside others enables all churches to develop according to their gifts. It is not a bad thing that the first meeting-point of mainline and migrant churches has been the sharing of buildings or resources; hospitality has always been one of the bases of Christian encounter and has been a good witness to dialogue. Giving the other space in the context of my faith environment and allowing others to give me space to explore their faith experience will in itself lead to dialogue and hopefully respect. It is the beginnings of building community together. This practice of building community based on hospitality, respect for tradition and welcoming and learning from the other is greatly needed in Europe today.

Relations and Dialogue between Religions and Denominations – Reconciliation and Common Witness in Yugoslavia

NAGYPÁL Szabolcs

In this paper we examine an important interreligious and ecumenical case study: our theoretical reflections will tackle the manifold religious and ethnic conflicts in the region of South Eastern Europe (SEE), concentrating especially on the countries of the former Southern Slav state, Yugoslavia. The key theoretical concepts to be used and applied here are the notions of common witness and reconciliation, as they were elaborated in the documents and dialogue meetings of the ecumenical movement.¹

Historical Coexistence in the Region

As a remaining aim after the Balkan wars (1991–2001), the goal of multiethnic and multireligious societies still should not be abandoned. For this, we should certainly recollect the rich multinational, multireligious and multicultural tradition of the Balkans.² Indeed, the long Balkan tradition of pluralism dates back to the Middle Ages.³ The rich and multi-faceted stimulation, in the best of times and under benign rule, seems to have brought out the best in each tradition of the region.⁴

Historically speaking, the region has always been a crossroad of various cultures and religions.⁵ Certainly, in the old censuses, religious affiliation many times dominated ethnic affiliation.⁶ The

reason for this is that racial, linguistic or class differences were not stable foundations for constructing ethnicity, so religious affiliation had to become by default in many cases the only discernable characteristic.⁷

The nationality of the Bosniak people, for example, is attributed by some to identification with the (Ottoman) conqueror and by others to a direct or indirect Slavisation. In fact, some even consider that there are no ethnic markers associated with Bosnian Muslims other than religion.⁸ If so, they might be the only Muslims in the world officially designated as a national as well as religious group. But, at the same time, we must never forget the important and undeniable fact that there are grave tensions within the religious communities themselves to be taken into account.⁹

According to the well-known fable from the olden days, Yugoslavia had seven neighbours, six republics, five nations, four languages, three religions, two scripts, and one common goal: to live in sisterhood, brotherhood and unity. Unfortunately, in our days we are far away from these optimistic and hopeful accounts from pre-war Yugoslavia.¹⁰ Since then, yesterday's dreams have turned into today's nightmares.

Nations in War: Religion and Politics

Time and again we encounter the notion that the civil war in the former Yugoslavia was not a



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in South Eastern Europe, the powerful ideology of nationalism provided new scapegoats to fill the void left by the demise of communism. A reason for this is that where there is no political freedom, issues of nationality are many times solved by religion.¹⁴ It is interesting to note in this respect that there was a complete absence of conversion, proselytism (and mission) during the war.

We can meticulously describe the *religionisation of politics*, which means and involves a systematic and permanent inclination to lend essentially religious attributes and connotations to some key political concepts in everyday usage.¹⁵ It also entails an ontologism of existing social, political and cultural differences. That means projecting them onto a metaphysical backdrop by presenting the conflict as between different and opposed human types, irreconcilable cultures, as well as antagonistic types of civilisations.

Furthermore, in a way there is a pervading and systematic Manichæism present in this escalating process, applied to the various current conflicts, when one of the opposed parties is being portrayed as an angelic personification of Good and the other as a diabolic incarnation of Evil itself.

We can also find an interpretation of national history in terms of a sacred martyrology or Calvary, while the nations involved are eternalised, idealised and heavily ideologised. The nations are referred to in terms of their fundamental and allegedly suprahistorical immutable qualities, and we can find official interpretations of recent political events as a theory of diabolic conspiracy against the nation.

The growing politicisation and religionisation of ethnicity resulted in the artificial rhetorical overlap of identities such as Roman Catholic and Croat, Orthodox and Serb, Muslim and Bosnian. In sum, religion has thoroughly permeated the cultures of Yugoslavia to become a significant marker of ethnic and national identity and as such was a central non-material aspect of the conflicts and the war.

religious war.¹¹ There are three other possible opinions, and we can argue strongly for the third.¹² According to some, it was an ethno-religious war; others consider that it was the result of manipulation and abuse of religion; and some others think that it was a cultural-religious war.

Already many of the communists in the old times feared the gradual and threatening emergence of “cleronationalism” in this area of the world.¹³ One thing seems to be sure: for most nationalist political leaders

Already many of the communists in the old times feared the gradual and threatening emergence of “cleronationalism” in this area of the world.

Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations during and after the Disaster

During the war all the activities concerning the promotion of ecumenical interaction were naturally almost completely suspended and ecumenical themes were not given as much attention as might have been expected by many. The war also caused a thematic redistribution: themes that were related to the promotion of ecumenical interaction and dialogue, sadly, had to be temporarily disregarded.

It is a great pity, since the notion of tolerance in a religious community depends a lot on the respective theologies applied and popularised. Politically speaking, the two Christian denominations, Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism became as far from each other during the conflict as any of them from the religion of Islam. Swiss and German Protestants even sought the suspension of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) from the Genève-based World Council of Churches (WCC, established in 1948), because they remained silent in the face of Serb aggression and ethnic cleansing.

There was an interesting and overarching sociological survey conducted in Croatia, which suggests that in the post-war situation there, men proved to be more tolerant than women.¹⁶ Of course, one reason for this can be that women in general have more to lose in an interreligious marriage. The survey also shows that the youngest people have the least negative attitude towards other groups.

Another interesting sociological survey conducted in Croatia as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that ninety percent of people interviewed were not members of any ecumenical groups.¹⁷ Furthermore, sixty percent of them were not acquainted with other Christian churches at all, nor with the teachings of their own church concerning

ecumenical involvement. The sociological survey also concludes that almost fifty percent of the people expect interreligious dialogue to be conducted mostly by the highest level of authority and not at all by themselves.

When acknowledging religions and churches, the state has an important role to play in shaping mindsets and opinions. For example, the Serbian Parliament gave a kind of historical recognition in 2006 to seven communities in the country.¹⁸ These are the following: the Orthodox, the Roman Catholics (both Latin and Greek), one Calvinist-Reformed and two Evangelical-Lutheran denominations, plus the Jewish and Islamic communities.

But, in another case, religion was deliberately and totally disregarded by the international authorities in Kosovo – because of the Western notion of separation of Church and state, and because of the bad experiences with religions in the conflict.¹⁹

The Western European mode of democratisation of the religious sphere is also being revised and innovated under the impact of *globalisation*.²⁰ This seems to be an important role and responsibility, which the different new South Eastern countries of the continent of Europe can rightly play and undertake.

Prospects of Future Reconciliation

While religion has many times been misused in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in South Eastern Europe, in general to exacerbate violence, religious communities will of course be a vital part of any long-term solution.²¹ Indeed, it is high time now, after the many years of the Yugoslav wars, for us to assess and bring together the first fruits for a peace theology in South Eastern Europe.²²



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The Tirana Summit in 2004 was an important step in highlighting the intrinsic value of the religious and ethnic dimensions of intercommunity dialogue in South Eastern Europe. According to the participants, both dimensions are interlinked and help create a spirit favouring social cohesion beyond the sphere of verbal declarations into everyday living. They declared that without an *open dialogue* there can be no true reconciliation. Celebrating, protecting and safeguarding cultural heritage and exercising the freedom of religion, of speaking one's own language and of respecting traditions are among the basic rights of every human being.²³

All three (religious and national) communities involved in the mainstream of the war still have many theological doctrines that obligate them to use early periods of their history as more than just sources of inspiration. These centuries are also deemed to be doctrinally and canonically obligatory for their followers. Thus the role of theology, spirituality and teaching authority in the conflict is not to be neglected at all.

Interreligious tolerance has remained rather uneasy, proving how very difficult the creation of a firm culture of tolerance is. Some would call this the tolerant "habits of the heart".²⁴ It is not easy at all, even after considerable structural changes have been thoroughly carried out.

There are some important ways and modes in which interreligious relations could be more effectively promoted.²⁵ One is through the more active and concrete support that these communities can provide. It should exist not only for *their own* believers, but also for the members of *other* religious communities. A possible topic for interreligious dialogue, especially among adherents of Islam and Christianity, may be righteousness and

justice, in their interpersonal as well as communitarian dimensions.²⁶

But an important barrier to interreligious dialogue and reconciliation remains the *inequality of social power and influence*, in other words, majority versus minority. Another obstacle is the construction of *national identity* around the majority religious identity. This is a powerful example of interplay between religion and politics, and of the appropriation of religious discourse by nationalism. Another obstacle is the poor level of *religious education*: in many cases, people are ignorant not only of the religious teaching and practice of others, but even of their own religious tradition. The crucial role of the *media*, journals and newspapers in fuelling *negative attitudes and intolerance* by selective and tendentious reporting must not be neglected.

Religious leaders should be in the forefront showing good examples of openness and self-criticism to be followed by all; only in this way does it become possible that the "neutral" states and the international community would deem the churches and religions worthy of support. Prevailing religious ignorance, coupled with manipulative, sensationalist and sometimes religiously undereducated media, can prove to be a lethal formula for interreligious tensions and conflicts.

In politics, forgiveness requires a moral judgment about past injustices, forswearing from revenge, empathy for the enemy and commitment to repair broken social relationships.²⁷ There are indeed authentic traditions in existence in the region, according to which the various differences will be understood less as sources of conflict and more as reasons for coexistence and even convivence.

The Western European mode of democratisation of the religious sphere is also being revised and innovated under the impact of globalisation.

Common Witness, Mutual Service and Dialogue in Society

When we speak about common witness in the sense of a fundamental paradigm of reconciliation, we should consider that witnessing, or *martyria* (martyrdom), is an integral part of the nature of any religion. For Christians, as an example, the unique and decisive witness of God – the true and faithful witness in a proper sense – is Jesus Christ himself (Rev. 3,14), the source of all witness.²⁸

Common witness is the all-embracing sum of the joint efforts aiming to manifest the divine gifts of truth and life that many religious persons already share in common. Mystery, Word and Spirit are witnessing to one another in a Trinitarian way – in a *perichoretic* (mutually interpenetrative or dancing together) way in which people are called to participate.²⁹

Common witness thus needs the acknowledgement, respect and appreciation of the shared gifts of truth and love in the religious communities and also the frank rejoicing and joy in their implementation.³⁰ Many responsible theologians therefore advocate an attitude of such openness that it is capable of "crossing over" into the frame of reference of the dialogue partner.³¹

This is indeed one important thing that religions could easily do in common, and they also should do it in order to multiply their common capacities by this reciprocal support. Of course, there are many important areas and crucial fields where religions can work together in and for human society. In the field of human rights and social justice, for example, the religions and denominations are certainly able to witness and work together. In this area their main aim is to maintain and to show to the world the wide variety of spiritual, ethical and moral values which they already share together.³²

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Theologies of Religion in Relation to Interfaith Dialogue

Christina KLEIS

“There will be no peace among nations without peace among religions; and there will be no peace among religions without greater dialogue among them.”

So HANS KÜNG said, and no one who has worked with interfaith dialogue would disagree with this statement. But how do we achieve that peace bringing dialogue? How do we turn discussions with people of other faiths into interfaith dialogue? And how do Christian theologies of religion relate to interfaith dialogue?

Globalisation and religious Pluralism

One can't give an exact definition of globalisation as it is a constantly moving process of several factors: secularisation, deinstitutionalisation, privatisation and individualisation, but it also includes religious pluralism. This developing reality most importantly effects theologies of religion and interfaith dialogue. There have been many attempts to deal with the fact that the religions are moving closer to each other. Some deal with religious pluralism very well and make the religious encounter smooth, but others do not manage to deal with religious pluralism and the religious encounter ends in conflict and even violence.

Throughout the centuries, Christian theology

has worked on the question of religious pluralism – how to deal with the situation of religious pluralism and how to view other religions. Traditionally Christian theology has spoken in terms of three theologies of religion: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism.

Theologies of Religions

Exclusivism, which KNITTER calls the Replacement Model, is the position where one believes that one's own religion has the one and only truth.¹ According to this position, one cannot acknowledge other religions because no other religions have any truth. As a Christian theology of religion, this position affirms that redemption can only happen through Christ. If Christ is the only way to redemption then only Christians may be redeemed. Christ is thus central to exclusivism. There are different variations of exclusivism, but they all have a high Christology. The exclusivist is fundamentalistic and disadvantages include intolerance and even isolation, but the advantages include feelings of enormous comfort and security in the religion.

Inclusivism, which KNITTER calls the Fulfilment Model, is where one believes that redemption is possible for members of other religions but that it is none-the-less Christ who redeems. In contrast to exclusivism, inclusivism believes that other religions can contain a part of the truth. How much truth is to be found in other religions depends on how many similarities they have with Christianity. This reflects the affirmation that Christianity contains the fullness of truth, so what the other religions have in common

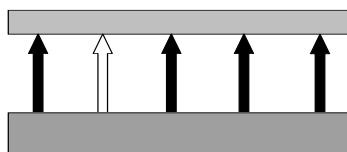


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with Christianity is true. For example Judaism and Islam have a significant portion of truth because they are, like Christianity, monotheistic religions. The disadvantage of this position is that its analysis of other religions tends to be objectifying; it does not understand other religions on their own terms. This leads to alienation and distance between the religions. The advantages are that one feels secure in one's own faith and one has a more tolerant attitude towards other religions.

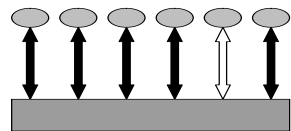
Pluralism represents people who have accepted that society is pluralistic and who have a theology of religions that accounts for the reality of religious plurality. I will describe the two positions within pluralism that KNITTER calls the Mutuality Model and the Acceptance Model.

Raimon PANIKKAR is, among others, a follower of the Mutuality Model, and believes that each religion holds some of the truth. The whole truth will be found when all the religions have demolished their differences and have come together.² Below you can see a diagram of the Mutuality Model where human beings are at the bottom and each person has the opportunity to follow one of the arrows which symbolises religious figures, practices, scriptures and other means to redemption. The different arrows are equally long and equally broad. Among the religious figures and means to redemption, Christ fulfils the same function and leads human beings to the same place.



The Acceptance Model and George A. LINDBECK represent a radically different position within religious pluralism, which believes that all religions are totally different, each religion is an entirely distinct instance of truth and each has an individual path to redemption and an individual

heaven. As you can see in the model below, human beings are at the bottom and each person may choose any religion. God (the real, the highest principle or whatever you might call it) may make itself known to humans through distinct religious figures, etc. (symbolised by the double arrows). What is really significant about the Acceptance Model is that each religion really is different and each religious figure points to unique and separate destinations.



Theologies of Religions and interfaith Dialogue

On the basis of both non-theological and partly theological definitions of dialogue, I have found one possible definition of religious dialogue, interfaith dialogue. *Interfaith dialogue is a personal and equal encounter where each bears witness to one's own and listens to the other's witness to their beliefs and experiences of faith with appreciation and interest in the other's faith, worldview and understanding of truth.* Using this definition, I will now discuss how the different theologies of religion, exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism, approach the need for interfaith dialogue.

Exclusivism has trouble with this definition in every way, except that it will make use of the personal encounter; the exclusivist is always a missionary. The exclusivist will bear witness to her or his own faith and wants to save those outside the true religion, her or his religion.

The inclusivist is more eager to save those who do not belong to the ultimately true religion and so she or he seeks to engage in interfaith dialogue even more. But the inclusivist, together with the exclusivist, fails to meet equally with members of other religions and fails to appreciate their faith, world view and understanding



ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

of truth. The inclusivist will always judge the other religions according to her or his own understanding of truth.

PANIKKAR and those who apply the Mutuality Model are the most eager to engage in interfaith dialogue and they do engage in a reciprocal personal witness with appreciation and interest, but the encounter is only partially equal. There is no doubt that they strive for an equal encounter. However, if the dialogue partners have a different theology of religions and understand the religions differently from the Mutuality Model, then it fails to be an equal encounter. If it fails to be an equal encounter, then the Mutuality Model will fail to appreciate other religions as they are and this will hinder interfaith dialogue.

In the position of Acceptance Model and LINDBECK, there is nothing to hinder an equal and personal encounter, as there is nothing to hinder the giving and listening to witness of faith, world view and understanding of truth. The only problem here is with the lack of interest in other religions, because the Acceptance Model probably doesn't find interfaith dialogue necessary except to promote separate peaceful living along side each other.

Though the Acceptance Model seems in many ways to be the most compatible with interfaith dialogue, the idea that the religions are entirely different and separate makes it also completely incompatible with interfaith dialogue. LINDBECK and followers of the Acceptance Model believe that the religions are completely different and that the differences are worth maintaining. At the same time the model acknowledges that the differences do cause complications and conflict. So is the separation of religions the best and most peaceful solution?

As I see it, the Acceptance Model has forgotten one very important thing that all religions and all

believers and non-believers have in common: the globe. It is possible that the Acceptance Model is right, the religions are entirely different and there is no point in seeking common ground between them, but it is my understanding that the globe gives each and every religion common challenges such as the environment, war, starvation, violence, oppression and so on. Even though the Acceptance Model doesn't find it necessary to engage in interfaith dialogue in order to get to know people of other faiths, there are problems in the world that are larger than those of the interfaith encounter. To people like PANIKKAR, these global challenges are another argument to engage in interfaith dialogue.

Last Thoughts

I don't think that there is only one right way to enter into interfaith dialogue because everyone will approach dialogue with different methods and convictions. On the other hand, I do subjectively believe that there are many wrong ways to understand other religions. The discussion about how to understand other religions and how to meet them in an interfaith encounter is significant and should not end here. So, I hope that you will continue to examine this individually and with your fellow believers. Examine the various understandings of Christ, salvation and truth that are involved in the different theologies of religion and see if you can address the central question: Can you acknowledge other religions at the same time as you confess your own faith?

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On the basis of both non-theological and partly theological definitions of dialogue, I have found one possible definition of religious dialogue, interfaith dialogue.

Living Faiths Together –

Tool Kit on Interreligious Dialogue in Youth Work



Daniel KUNZ

Daniel Kunz volunteered through EVS in the EYCE office in 2008. In the framework of his EVS project, Daniel served as the final editor of the tool kit in the Faith-Based Expert Group of the European Youth Forum. His EVS project was funded by the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union.

The end of 2008 turned out to be a more than prosperous time for interreligious dialogue (IRD). Not only did the Western Christmas and Jewish Hanukkah feasts share the same dates, but also an even broader IRD cooperation saw the light of the world: *Living Faiths Together* is the name of the brand new tool kit on interreligious dialogue in youth work. WSCF-E and its interreligious partners combined their expertise in the pioneer field of interreligious youth work and wrote this special hand book in a unique, consensus-based process. *Living Faiths Together* is now available for download at <http://www.wscf-europe.org/>.

Living Faiths Together was published thanks to the support of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) and is the work of the members of the European Youth Forum's Faith-Based Expert Group. WSCF's partners in this group are the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE), the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMYSO), the International Young Catholic Students – International Movement of Catholic Students European Coordination (JECI-MIEC) and Pax Christi International.

The tool kit aims to contribute to improving interaction between young people of different faiths, to promote free religious expression, to strengthen solidarity, to promote learning about the religious diversity of Europe and to encourage

cohesion in Europe. In the current European political context that faces the escalation of Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, intolerance (also directed towards Christianity) and religious tensions, this tool kit comes as an important reflection on the role youth organisations can play in efforts to tackle these questions.

Living Faiths Together targets faith-based youth organisations working on local, national, regional or European levels, encouraging them to engage in the promotion of interreligious dialogue (IRD). It encourages youth platforms to explore possibilities for IRD within their work. The tool kit provides trainers with practical information on specific considerations they need to take into account when organising events involving religiously diverse groups. Thus, the handbook can be used as a tool for learning about the concept of IRD, as a way of exploring the similarities between different religions and as a reference for activities, providing background information on the specifics of the monotheistic religions.

The Faith-Based Expert Group

The Faith-Based Expert Group (FBEG) began in 2003. Following an expert seminar on 'prejudice' organised by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg that year and an event at the European Parliament in Brussels organised by FEMYSO



and YFJ in September of the same year, a group of faith-based international non-governmental youth organisations started meeting regularly at the YFJ secretariat in Brussels to discuss how they could improve their communication and promote co-operation in the field of interreligious dialogue (IRD). This informal group was acknowledged as an official Expert Group of the YFJ during its General Assembly in Madrid in November 2004.

The aim of the group is "to develop an understanding of the role of religion and IRD, to contribute to current and future activities of international institutions and to develop actions related to this topic". The Expert Group set the following priorities for its work:

- Exchanging knowledge and experience,
- Promoting diversity,
- Learning about each other's differences and commonalities,
- Respecting cultural, individual, religious, gender and political differences,
- Working together towards a cohesive, united and diverse Europe,
- Contributing to narrowing down the

- existing social and cultural gaps,
- Fighting all kinds of discrimination and hatred,
- Building a Europe of minorities,
- Promoting common values and defending the rights of individuals and communities.

Now, as *Living Faiths Together* is finalised, the Faith-Based Expert Group will continue to consult YFJ on interreligious matters and work together towards the promotion of the tool kit and the training of trainers for interreligious dialogue in youth work.

Visit Our Faith-Based Expert Group Partners

Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE) <http://www.eyce.org>

European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) <http://www.eujs.org>

Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations

<http://www.femyso.org>

International Young Catholic Students – International Movement of

Catholic Students European Coordination (JECI – MIEC)

<http://www.jeci-miec.eu>

Pax Christi International <http://www.paxchristi.net>

European Youth Forum (YFJ) <http://www.youthforum.org>





All people are your children, whatever their belief, whatever their belief, whatever their shade of skin
– High Holiday Prayer Book



From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth.
–Acts 17,16



All creatures are members of the one family of God
– Saying of the Prophet Mohammad



Human beings, all, are as head, arms, trunk, and legs unto one another
– The Vedas (Hinduism)

Interreligious Dialogue

ALL one needs to know

Introduction

Whether you are about to engage in IRD (Interreligious Dialogue) or are already involved in it, there are some things to consider on the way. This chapter will provide you with suggestions about what to consider, during preparations as well as in the process of ongoing IRD, in order to have a smooth process, suiting all partners and avoiding confusing moments.

1. Before starting the Dialogue...

Before starting IRD a good attitude is really important. Nevertheless there are some more things that should be considered. It is essential to be prepared that the dialogue partners do not have to agree on everything. 'Agree to disagree' and learn to appreciate the differences. Moreover, partners don't have to defend their own faith, but a predisposition towards answering several questions will be appreciated. It is also important to remember that youth related IRD is a meeting with people, and not with institutions or official religious bodies. Remember that the individuals who meet might hold attitudes different to the mainstream thought in their religion. Therefore, separating the position of the individual, the religion and the institution from each other is crucial.

Be careful with your language. Speak frankly but with a language that does not hurt the other. Say what you need to say but respect the other group. Try and put yourself in their shoes and be empathetic. In addition to that don't be afraid of feelings being evoked in the dialogue since religion is an emotional topic. And do not be afraid to change your previous impressions, perceptions, images, thoughts etc. of the other – and even of yourself.

1.1 Knowing your own Religion

Dialogue is an interaction between different sides. It is not only about your interest in your chosen partner, but also about their interest in you. You might be asked questions on your religion, beliefs, and reasons for practices/customs. It might be helpful to prepare also for this occasion in order to answer questions – or at least to deal with them. To be involved in IRD does not require being an expert and it's not a big shame to admit that you don't know. But you should feel confident to talk about your own faith and address the upcoming questions. This will help to reduce the fear of losing own faith in the dialogue. Also keep in mind that things that are obvious to you may not be clear to others. Gain knowledge of the other...

For more, view the tool kit online on our website, wscf-europe.org, or on the website of the Youth Forum Jeunesse at http://www.youthforum.org/Downloads/Press_publications/reports/TKit.pdf

Sharing Communion at Eucharist Liturgies – An Orthodox Perspective

Anastasia GKITSI

Breaking common Communion.

Let me begin with Christ's prayer for Christian unity, for the unity of a whole new world, made up of those who believe in Christ and who embrace the dawning of a totally new reality. "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be one in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17,21). This unity is undoubtedly one of the most important and urgent demands and needs of all beings and of creation, especially in our time when divisions and separations (based on religion, nation, gender, colour, etc) continue to hurt human life and multiply the fragments of humanity.

Looking back at the history of Christianity we could define the period of the early Church as a period of separations and schisms in the course of history. I briefly report the most known: in the year 451 AD the Council of Chalcedon led to schism between the Eastern Orthodox Church and Oriental Orthodoxy; the year 1054 AD saw the great schism between the Churches of the Eastern and Western parts of the Roman Empire; then in the 16th Century came the split within the Western church called the Reformation. If we have to isolate the reasons that drove the ancient undivided Church to these separations, we could definitely focus on the different political and cultural developments in the East and West

that led to the Great Schism. Those political and cultural questions brought to the surface the theological gaps and different expressions of the common faith. Theological differences were also important such as the topic of Christology (at Chalcedon), the differences in the understanding of the primacy and the place of the Holy Spirit (between East and West), and the accentuation of certain aspects of the faith and the downgrading of other aspects (with the reformation churches mostly emphasising the priesthood of all believers and the Roman Catholic Church emphasising the primacy of the Pope).

The ultimate result of all these events was a broken communion; a common Eucharist was no longer possible. How did this come about? A broken communion followed from a broken faith. An over emphasis or downgrading of certain aspects of the faith, or a different understanding of faith, created different ways of acting, different ways of life, and different expressions of faith in Christ. The Eucharist was, and still is for some Christian denominations and Churches, the expression and warranty of a common faith, a common theological understanding and a common way of life, which were all broken by schism.

For many Christian communities eucharistic sharing is the high point of the ecumenical movement, but there are still barriers to be overcome and wounds to be healed before we are able to celebrate our communion together. If the greatest target and goal of ecumenical efforts is that all Christian denominations work and strive together to actualise the Church's unity, then we



To read about Anastasia, please see her brief bio on page 6.

*I am an
Orthodox
Christian
living in
Greece with
another
approximately
12,000,000
people
(98% of the
population)
who share the
same faith.*

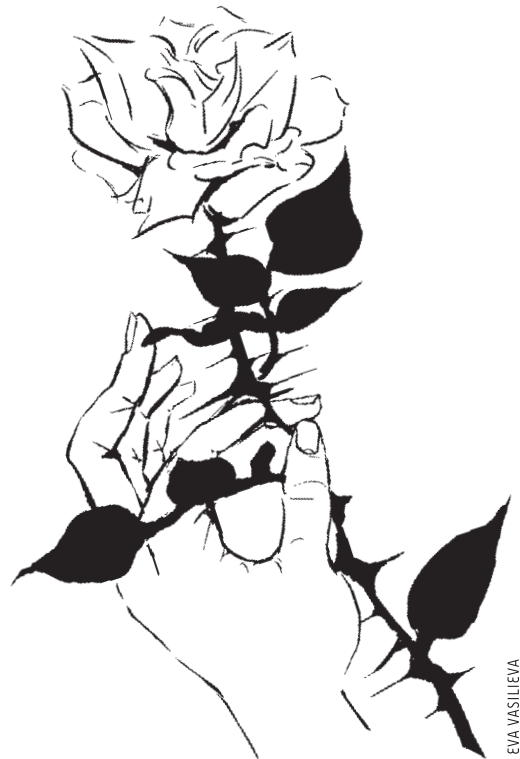
all need to deepen our knowledge of our own theological traditions. In this way we will be able to realise and experience not only our spiritual heritage, but we then can share and explore our various spiritual inheritances on this tough and painful march towards mutual understanding and much desired unity.

Ecclesiological Principles of Orthodox Faith

I am a member of the Orthodox Church living in Greece with another approximately 12,000,000 people (98% of the population) who share the same faith. The Eucharist stands at the centre of the life of Orthodox people, as the ultimate basis of Church life. According to Metropolitan John of Pergamum, the Eucharist is identified with the Church as a gathering of people (a synaxis from Greek word, σύναξις). In this synaxis, the people gathered in a particular historical place became a community, who in that moment were able to taste the eschata (end times), the Kingdom of God. “The assembly is the first liturgical act of the Eucharist, its foundation and beginning”, Father Alexander SCHMEMMANN wrote in his book *The Eucharist*.

I will briefly enumerate some fundamental ecclesiological principles of the Orthodox faith. The Orthodox Church is: 1) Historical, 2) Eschatological, 3) Relational and 4) Sacramental.

1) Historical because she claims faithfulness to apostolic and patristic tradition, positing herself in unbroken continuity with the early church. There is not only an invisible Church or an invisible or spiritual unity, rather the Church has a historical character with her structure and ministry. In every local church the bishop is the warranty of the catholicity (universality) of the whole Church. Each local Church is not a separate part of the whole Church but is completely one with her in the celebration of the



Eucharist presided over by the bishop. So the bishop alone offers the Eucharist by right of ordination whilst the priest offers the Eucharist in his place.

2) Eschatological means that this historical entity called ‘Church’ is constantly called to reflect – to reveal the eschatological community, to be a real sign and image of the Kingdom. In the Church we are going to be what the Kingdom calls us to be, what we shall be. We go to the church (I mean the temple) with our failures and unfitness in order to become a living Church which reveals what we have been created to be, a community which reflects the Triune Unity.

3) Relational because the Church is not a petrified entity transmitted from one generation to another as an

archaeological treasure, but a living organism constituted by living persons and their problems. So, the indisputable debt and duty of the Church is to relate her living voice constantly to new challenges and upcoming concerns. She does this by carrying on the essential spirit of the Fathers’ voice, be it dogmas, ethos or liturgy. This tradition, already given to the Church in history, must be always present. Its starting point is the past, but it permeates the present and is oriented to the future. We are talking about a creative reception of tradition.

4) Sacramental means that the Sacraments reveal God to us, but also serve to make us receptive to God. The Holy Spirit works through the Sacraments, leading us to Christ who unites us with the Father. By participating in the Sacraments, we grow closer to God and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Orthodox Church has never formally determined a particular number of Sacraments. In addition to the Eucharist, she accepts the sacraments of baptism, chrismation, confession, marriage, holy orders and holy unction as the major Sacraments. But she has many other Blessings and Special Services which complement the major Sacraments and which reflect the Church’s presence throughout the lives of her people.

To summarise all this, we can say that for the Orthodox, “It is not in fact possible to speak of the Church and her unity without referring first of all to the Divine Eucharist” (J.D ZIZIOULAS, 1985). The Divine Eucharist is the central and the most important worship experience of the Orthodox Church. It is often referred to as the “Sacrament of Sacraments” because all the other Sacraments

of the Church lead to and flow from the Eucharist, which is at the centre of the life of the Orthodox Church. In the body of the Church it is the Eucharist which is the centre of the Christian’s unity with Christ. Only through Divine Eucharist does the Church reveal herself as the body of Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Personal Experience of sharing Eucharist

As an Orthodox believer I always have the opportunity to taste the eucharistic gifts of Christ in all local Orthodox Churches. The first time I felt I missed the joy of participating in this central sacrament of my Church was when I was a student in France studying the language for 3 months. Even if my previous preparation – fasting, confessing, preparing myself for communion – was done, I missed the Orthodox Liturgy and Communion. In the seminar that I was enrolled in there were four Orthodox students on a scholarship from the Vatican (two from Greece and one each from Serbia and Georgia). We kindly asked the director of the seminar to suggest an Orthodox Church so that we could participate and assist in the Liturgy. Every Sunday we had to drive 100 km to receive communion with other French Orthodox believers.

One Sunday we decided to go to the local Roman Catholic Church of the city where we were living. This was my first time attending a Roman Catholic Liturgy. I started to compare it with the Orthodox Liturgy, noting the similarities and differences, the common remnants of the very first common liturgical tradition. Listening to the melody of the worship felt nice until the



moment of communion when I suddenly felt the hand of someone dragging us towards the queue of the faithful who were walking forward to receive communion. I still remember the voice saying “come on, it’s ok, it’s ok, come to commune”. I felt awfully pushed and at the same time surprised and abused; I hadn’t even realized what was going on.

Some years later, I participated as a steward in the WCC conference on Mission and Evangelism held in Athens in 2005. Spending two and a half weeks in a very close and intimate way with believers of other Christian communities, befriending most of them, sharing past experiences and future dreams, it was difficult to see them excluded from the Eucharist during the Orthodox Liturgy. One of them told me “it’s not fair for us Protestants to be excluded from your

What basic features of the Church allow me to be a faithful bearer of my Orthodox faith?

Communion. We are all Christians”. He didn’t give me the time and chance to explain the perception of the Eucharist in our tradition. I certainly believe that Communion is not ours or yours or theirs. Communion is Jesus Christ Himself given to us the moment we are able/prepared to accept Him as persons and communities as well. The distinguished father John Chrysostom warns not to give Communion to the believers who are not ready and able to accept it, otherwise it could be dangerous for them. He does not refer only to the non-Orthodox, but he is talking also to the Orthodox believers who are unfit to receive communion.

Being a Bearer of my Faith

What are the basic features that allow me to be a faithful bearer of my faith, the Orthodox faith? This is a question I frequently ask myself, especially nowadays as society is gradually changing to ensure the harmonic life of its members and the new members added to it. This change may be the richest in terms of the diversity of various human groups, but at the same time are we really ready to welcome others into our society, as they deserve?

So, what is my faith? What is its basis? Why did I not feel prepared or “ok” to take communion in the Roman Catholic Church in France? Why did I agree on the exclusion of the non-Orthodox from communion in Athens? Simply, and I do assure you that this is not a conclusion I come to easily, because

- 1) I deeply believe that Eucharistic unity first of all presupposes Unity in Faith. Of course it is never easy to draw the line between dogma and private opinion, between the essential and the non-essential.
- 2) I deeply believe that the Eucharist is not and must never be the remedy of human division; the Eucharist is the gift of unity for which we are looking. The Eucharist is not the way to achieve

unity in faith; the Eucharist is the goal, the target and the award of our unity.

- 3) I deeply believe that I belong in a particular community and am to be committed to her. I am bound to my community’s coming together and approaching the chalice. This means that I cannot act against her decisions; I respect them. I have no right to participate in the Eucharist on a personal basis with certain individuals of another ecclesial community, when my Church and theirs are still in separation.
- 4) I deeply believe that it is unfair to act as if we were reunited when we are not fully so and receive communion together. Rather we must commit to deep constant prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to show us the way and drive us into the desired unity. Approaching this unity is not up to us only; the unity is a gift of the Holy Spirit and we have to pray and simultaneously work for it. We have to work on a personal and a community level as well.

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One Bread, One Body



Kate Wilson

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.
1 Corinthians 10,16-17

Kate Wilson is a Roman Catholic from Wales. She studied in Glasgow, Warszawa, Poznań, Berlin and London, ending with a PhD on the politics of toleration after the reformations in Poland from UCL. She was a member of the WSCF ExCo and ERC, 1999-2004. She now lives and engages in grassroots community projects in Brixton, London and is wondering what language to learn next.

Sharing the Body and Blood of Christ is the heart of Christian unity, but it is also the heart of Christian division. I would like to share some ecumenical Eucharistic memories with you. I can only tell these stories from my own point of view, as a Catholic woman, so I know that my understanding of Communion will differ from that of many readers. Please bear with me because I hope to get you thinking again about why we are so divided over the Eucharist and about what we can do about it, if we really mean to strive that all may be one.

“Re-member.”: Isle of Iona, Scotland, 2001

The Eucharist is something Christians share, more or less often, as Jesus taught us on the night before He was betrayed:

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22,19)

We do this, but we do it in so many varied ways. Some churches, including my own, are very wary of sharing the Eucharist with other Christians.

A Eucharist liturgy at the Abbey on Iona gave new meaning to the word “re-member” for me when the celebrant held up the host after breaking it and joined the pieces together again. The Body of Christ needs re-membering, the members need to be joined together again in love and made whole. Communion does this but often within rather than between churches, who often seem to have opposite understandings of what the Eucharist means.

Yet Christ’s self is the bread, the union of opposite natures, divine and human: “The person of the incarnate word was penetrated and kneaded into one dough with the light of my Godhead, the divine nature, and with the heat of fire of the Holy Spirit, and by this means you have come to receive the light” (Catherine of Siena, 1380).¹ God is there to help us work out how to join our opposition, to re-member us.

In this way, the Eucharist is the opposite of sacrifice, an anti-sacrifice: “In the midst of a constant world of seething build-ups to near or actual lynchings, it is the quiet presence of Yahweh himself as not-a-sacrifice-at-all, or as the one-and-definitive-sacrifice. This presence is designed to feed us with the capacity to work our way out of being moved by the winds of our victim-aimed desire, and instead to teach us how to stand up against that and begin, however tentatively, another way of living together. In other words, it only makes sense as the beginnings of the gathering of semi-penitent former participants in the violence of the world, who, on a day-to-day basis, are learning to live in a way which does not require sacrifice.”² The Eucharist helps to make us whole again in our brokenness.

What are we re-membering exactly? More memories will help us to find out.



EVA VASILEVA

How far are People on in their Friendship?: Cardiff, Wales 1984

At the senior friends meeting in Austria, May 2009, Martin CONWAY shared his memories of trying to create an ecumenical Eucharistic liturgy at SCM conferences in the 1960s. He stressed what he had learnt then, that sharing communion is a pastoral not a doctrinal decision: How far on people are in their friendship determines how ready they are to share Communion.

I was faced with this question at the age of eight. I received my First Communion that year (in a green dress, no veil nonsense, my mother was already training me to be a good feminist). I went to a Church in Wales (Anglican) school, where the children did not receive communion until they were confirmed at about age eleven. At Llandaff Cathedral, I asked my teacher if I could go to Communion,

even though my classmates couldn’t, because I was old enough. I felt special, grown-up and proud when she said “yes”. How would I have felt if she had said “no”?

The Catholic Church uses beautiful language about the inclusivity of the Eucharist: “This Holy Communion is not just between Jesus and any individual. It is between Jesus in his union with the Father and the Spirit, and us in our union with each other. We are invited to share in the communion between God and the Church. And there is more yet – for the Church is called to invite others, indeed the whole world, to enter into this same communion. Not sacrificing our diversity, but entering into a quality of relationship which enables us to recognise in each other a brother, a sister, a child of God. This is a focus of the Communion rite as a whole: *Our* Father; the exchange of the Sign of Peace and the act of receiving Holy Communion itself. The Church’s teaching stresses this is not a private act but a communitarian act.”³

Yet my church sets clear limits to that community; you can only receive Communion if you are in full communion with the Catholic Church. Many priests would make pastoral exceptions, but that is still the rule; if you don’t believe in the real presence, you can’t share. The Anglicans I went to school with felt this tension, and got round the issue of real presence in their Eucharistic prayer:

“Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink
in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.”⁴

So it’s not quite clear what kind of feeding is going on; beliefs differ and Anglicans are able to open their Eucharist more to other Christians than Catholics can.

This is a sharing among friends, but who are our friends?

Manna in the Desert: Agape, Italy 1998

“Incorporation into Christ, which is brought about by Baptism, is constantly renewed and consolidated by sharing in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, especially by that full sharing which takes place in sacramental communion. We can say not only that *each of us receives Christ*, but also that *Christ receives each of us*. He enters into friendship with us: ‘You are my friends’ (*Jn 15,14*). Indeed, it is because of him that we have life: ‘He who eats me will live because of me’ (*Jn 6,57*). Eucharistic communion brings about in a sublime way the mutual ‘abiding’ of Christ and each of his followers: ‘Abide in me, and I in you’ (*Jn 15,4*). By its union with Christ, the People of the New Covenant, far from closing in upon itself, becomes a ‘sacrament’ for humanity, a sign and instrument of the salvation achieved by Christ, the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. *Mt 5,13-16*), for the redemption of all.”⁵

As Pope John Paul II declared, Christ calls not just Catholics, but all people into the friendship of the New Covenant. Jesus was a Jew himself, celebrating the feast of the Passover at the Last Supper. Christian friends are saved and fed by God, just as their ancestors of the Old Covenant were saved and fed by God, and Jesus tries to demonstrate this by feeding the five thousand (John 6,31-33). In Westminster Cathedral, the Russian Boris ANREP made a beautiful icon-inspired mosaic chapel of the Eucharist. The images include the Israelites gathering baskets of manna in the desert and Christ on a cloud above shaking it out of a chalice.⁶

God’s salvation is not exclusive, but we can easily try to make it so. The Israelites were not exactly receptive and joyful when God fed them manna in their hour of hunger (Exodus 16), and we are no better today. My life experience of this was at an Agape theological camp in 1998 where an international group ranging from anarchist vegan to traditionalist carnivore joined in a role play re-

enacting that journey. Like the Israelites in the desert, we roamed around in the hot sun – if only for a day. We knew we couldn’t eat pork; so when sweaty salami appeared on a rock as the only food for lunch and the water started to run out, the community became divided and almost violent. Many people declared they would rather return to slavery in Egypt than continue. Were we prepared to break the food laws to survive? Could we find a way out that meant we could stay friends?

This is manna in the desert, but who makes the food rules?

(w)hol(e)y Eucharist: Spišská Kapitula, Slovakia 2003

WSCF feels it is less radical in trying to define the food rules than it was in the 1960s, but WSCF is still very good at using what we can share creatively. At a CESR conference in Slovakia in 2003, one of the local Dominican friars brought the sheets with circle holes, from which the hosts had been punched out. We could not share the bread but we shared the edges round the bread in our free time. It was not enough, but it was a powerful symbol of how far we have still to go and a genuine sharing among friends.

This was the same year that Pope John Paul II wrote in his Holy Thursday sermon that the Eucharist is a sharing among Christ’s friends. Yet soon afterwards, a Catholic priest, Professor Gotthold HASENHÜTTL, was suspended from his duties as a priest and theologian for trying to do just that, inviting Protestants to Communion at a service during the first ecumenical Kirchentag in Berlin, May 2003.⁷ I was living in Berlin at the time and joined hundreds of people wearing orange ribbons, calling for shared Communion. Who knows what will happen at the next ecumenical Kirchentag in München, 2010?

The current Vatican line is clear: “An emphasis on this Eucharistic basis of ecclesial communion can also contribute greatly to the ecumenical dialogue with the

Churches and Ecclesial Communities which are not in full communion with the See of Peter. The Eucharist objectively creates a powerful bond of unity between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches, which have preserved the authentic and integral nature of the Eucharistic mystery. At the same time, emphasis on the ecclesial character of the Eucharist can become an important element of the dialogue with the Communities of the Reformed tradition.”⁸ This is strong language; Communion can only be shared within churches who believe the same thing about the Eucharist. Not all Catholics would agree with this, so dialogue within as well as between churches still needs to happen.

So maybe WSCF is doing all it can. We cannot all share the host; we can only share the space around it. It is like a photographic negative – black where white should be, absence where presence should be, division where sharing should be. This is a hole in our hearts and a cause of much pain. Wholeness is a long way away.

Is this communion, or is it a negative/hole-punched sheet?

“I can feed you too”: Quito, Ecuador 2000

It is not only about who receives the Eucharist; Communion also has to do with who is presiding. I had to travel thousands of miles south to feel the impact of this. In a large baroque colonial church, overflowing with people, I was with some ExCo members of WSCF, joining the local congregation for Sunday Mass in Quito, 2000. There was standing room only, and the anticipation was palpable – except there was no

priest. A young Ecuadorian woman in jeans and sneakers took hold of the microphone and began to explain this. Via a friendly translator I came to understand that it was allowed by canon law for lay ministers to distribute Communion, which had been consecrated previously (as happens on Good Friday). So she was going to lead a simple Eucharistic service without the consecration and people could still receive the sacrament. This was the first time I saw a Catholic woman like me behind the altar. Years later, as priests have become scarcer in the UK too, I have led such “almost-Mass” services myself, but I won’t forget that first time.

“We know that this is the true and full order of love that the Lord has taught us: ‘By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.’[25] The Eucharist educates us to this love in a deeper way; it shows us, in fact, what value each person, our brother or sister, has in God’s eyes, if Christ offers Himself equally to each one, under the species of bread and wine. If our Eucharistic worship is authentic, it must make us grow in awareness of the dignity of each person. The awareness of that dignity becomes the deepest motive of our relationship with our neighbour.”⁹ If a Pope can say this, if we now have women serving on the altar (since 1994) and distributing Communion as lay ministers since 1973 (and until the 13th century before that, but that’s another story), maybe the priesthood of women is finally becoming more recognised.

My local parish in London is called Corpus

It is not only about who receives the Eucharist; Communion also has to do with who is presiding.

ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

ANDRÉS LÓPEZ



Christi. Most people in the area are black, African and Caribbean, but there are people from every continent in the congregation. On any Sunday, all of them are represented in the sanctuary, reading, singing, serving, leading prayers. When it comes to Communion, it is mostly the African women who take up the chalices and patens that the priest has blessed. “We do food,” they seem to be saying. “We know how important feeding is, and we’re here to do it.” Yet still they, we, cannot consecrate Christ’s body ourselves, because our bodies are not male.

“To embrace the gospel means to enter into a community, the one cannot be obtained without the other. The gospel calls into being the church as the discipleship of equals that is continually recreated in the power of the Spirit... *Christian* spirituality means eating together, sharing together, drinking together, talking with each other, receiving each other, experiencing God’s presence through each other, and, in doing so, proclaiming God’s alternative vision for everyone, especially for those who are poor, outcast, and battered. As long as women Christians are excluded from breaking the bread and deciding their own spiritual welfare and commitment, *ekklesia* as the discipleship of equals is not realised and the power of the gospel is greatly diminished.”¹⁰ So we are partly there, but not fully. Still, but not yet. Isn’t that where the Reign of God is anyway, both realised and still to come?

Anna PRIMAVESI offers some comfort, seeing the positive femininity in Christ’s priesthood. She argues that God didn’t say don’t eat the fruit, just that we’d die if we did, and by eating it we gained knowledge and free will, becoming more like God, as God says in the

*We have a long way to go before we reach this in perfection in the heavenly banquet of Revelation 21,1-4. “The Eucharist, then, is first and foremost a taste of heaven on earth.”*¹³

text. Eve took that risk and broke the food laws so that we could live and grow in love, and after this act she becomes mother of the living. So Jesus is the New Eve, not the new Adam, as he broke food laws and shared food as a way of including people all the time, and by dying he shared his food with us and broke the old law that we might have life.¹¹

Is this real bodily food for justice, when some bodies seem ‘holier’ than others?

“And they recognised him in the breaking of bread”: The Road to Emmaus, Palestine, cAD33

We find hope in the Risen Christ, whose body was broken and transformed that we might live. The journey to Emmaus (Luke 24,13-35) is one of the earliest encounters that His disciples and friends had with Jesus. They recognised Jesus in the breaking of the bread, when He did what He had done for them on the night before He died. The Eucharist unites us, makes us part of Christ and feeds us for the journey, however far we have travelled.

Herbert MCCABE OP could have been speaking to globally scattered WSCFers when he wrote: “*This is my body...* ‘If you are looking for me’, he is saying, ‘this is where you will find me; this is where you will find my body.’ When you have a friend it is his or her bodily presence that matters. It is no (or not much) comfort to know simply that your friend exists if he or she is several hundred miles away. What we desire is bodily presence. But if we seek the bodily presence, the real self of Jesus for us, where do we find him? Jesus says: don’t go looking in the tomb for my body, don’t go looking up to heaven for my risen body, don’t go looking anywhere, look amongst yourselves, look at the food you eat together, look at the life you share together. This is the kind of thing that my bodily presence is: when you break bread together.”¹²

We have a long way to go before we reach this in

perfection in the heavenly banquet of Revelation 21,1-4. “The Eucharist, then, is first and foremost a taste of heaven on earth.”¹³

No wonder we’re not there yet.

But don’t we have a duty to keep trying?

I hope these reflections have at least given you food for thought.

What are we re-memembering exactly?

This is a sharing among friends, but who are our friends?

This is manna in the desert, but who makes the food rules?

Is this communion, or is it a negative/hole-punched sheet?

Is this real bodily food for justice, when some bodies seem ‘holier’ than others?

Where do we find Christ in the breaking of bread in our lives?

How can we share this food for the journey with others, that all may be one?

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5 Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, Holy Thursday 2003.

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6 Some images of the chapel are online at <http://westminstercathedral.blogspot.com/2007/07/vault-of-blessed-sacrament-chapel.html>

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A Dilemma Hidden in Music



Tibor MAHRİK is a worship leader and the founder (1986) and conductor (1986-2001) of the Slovak Christian national youth choir Eben Ezer. He has put effort into creating a relevant and balanced form of liturgy using different styles of music, even instrumental improvisation during Eucharist. The church, due to the lack of their own worship building, hires the hall of the music school of Ladislav Arvay in Zilina for their Sunday service. He is also a member of the Kierkegaard Society in Slovakia.

Tibor MAHRİK

Contemporary Christian music has become a common medium for families, churches, evangelists, and, to an increasing extent, foreign missionaries. Yet the hesitancy of the church to release the full potential of this tool has demonstrated that many unanswered questions still plague the minds of believers. In addition, a heated debate continues to bluster among Christian leaders. Hailed by some as a fresh movement of the Holy Spirit, maligned by others as blatant compromise with the world, according to Steve MILLER, “contemporary Christian music has become one of the most controversial issues facing the church” at the beginning of twenty-first century.¹

The titles ‘Worship’ and ‘Leading worship’ belong to the kind of seminars and workshops that are overcrowded any time at any youth conference. Despite the idea that one cannot understand ‘the worship concept’ exclusively in terms of singing but as living one’s whole life in joyful accountability before the Lord, the non-biblical approach concerning leading worship during church services still persists among some, who want to sing loudly and applaud enthusiastically for Jesus until their voice goes totally dry. On the other side there are many examples of parishes where people sing songs of high quality and theological brilliance but somehow with a lack of life that is so evidenced by the absence of youth. We have to deal with this challenge in a proper, biblically based way.

Accents of Worship

The boom of new musical forms and the whole scale of ‘worship accents’ faced by the Roman Catholic as well as reformed church in a global sense has been welcomed in Slovakia mostly by young people. Some say that the pipe organ and mixed choir will never relate to the culture of their unbeliever friends, while others from more traditionalist camps regard ‘worship songs’ wrapped into McDonalds pop style as stumbling blocks in their efforts to reach ‘higher art’ standards in local church community services. Thus a dilemma has been born and it lies in the church. I don’t think we should search for ‘truth’ here in an arbitrary sense, because it is in none of the parties, but rather to find another angle of view as this challenge touches the lives of all who call themselves Christians. What direction ought we to start in when the theological, aesthetic and practical sides of the issue seem to be equal?

Historians observed an evident shift from theocentrism in the Baptist song texts written during 1784-1807 to anthropocentrism in hymnical texts from the late 19th century, where the drama of salvation is apprehended much more from the people’s reaction point and their feelings rather than from God’s sovereign initiative. The 70s and 80s of the last century were marked by aspiration for authenticity and relevancy with a subsequent turn from systematic Bible study towards ‘a biblical debate.’ Consequently, Evangelical services have struggled with a lack of awe and a sense of transcendence as singing a couple of obligatory songs became merely an excuse to stretch their legs before the sermons. Instead of expository preachers, good ‘communicators’ were demanded as well

Should we work for high quality liturgical singing? How significant is the role of musical accompaniment in good congregational singing?

Do we need professionally trained musicians?

as ‘facilitators’ instead of ‘leaders’ to head congregations. The spirit of ‘show business’, an intellectual superficiality and artistic mediocrity have penetrated not only through evangelical circles. There is, perhaps, no greater evidence of the theological illiteracy of this Christian generation than the songs we sing and write. The emerging church movement with its prevalent ‘seeker sensitive’ philosophy brought a newcomer into the very core of liturgy, so it is no wonder that instead of worshipping with the church community the band performed worship for the community. In the worse cases we can still find churches where worship is understood as a short period of time before the sermon starts. This is more than enough for an immersion into the situation in the world. Slovakia, however, is not the exception.

The Role of Music

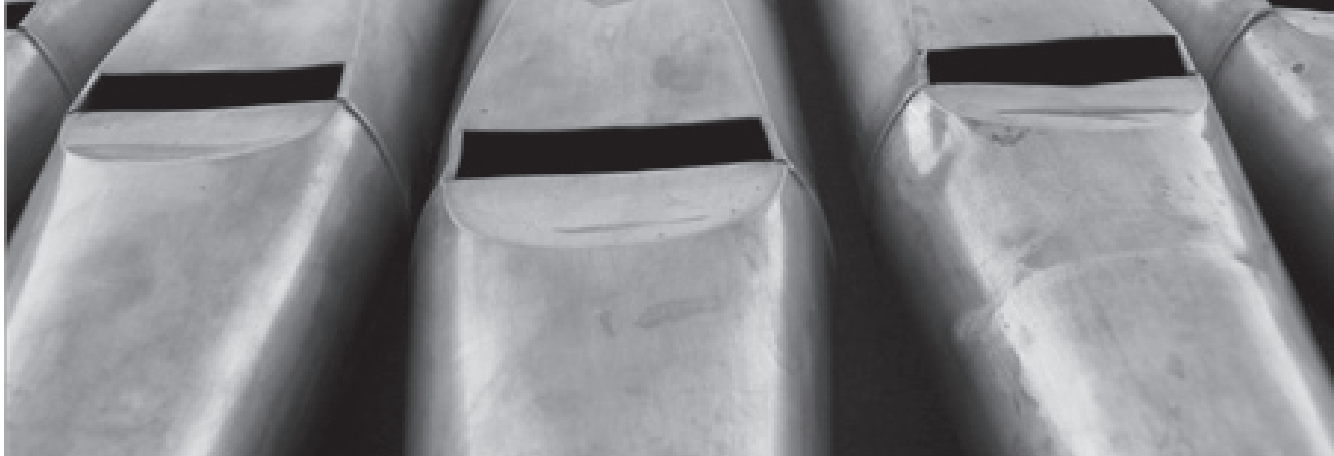
Let me share some highlights taken from my experiences. I was at a Roman Catholic funeral service recently. Though around 5 people out of 50 attendees sang, I could only, with difficulty, hear the cantor. At many wedding services the situation does not differ from this. The situation in Protestant churches despite their localisation in bigger towns is alarming too. Happy is the pastor who finds 2-3 gifted ladies or fellows who at their retirement age are able to sing on behalf of the whole congregation. Where have those years gone when a balcony vibrated with the massive singing of an overcrowded congregation? Even with the hymn ‘The Almighty Fortress’ only a few attendees sing with no further impact from any vibrant voice. Nearly a century ago KIERKEGAARD rightly exclaimed, that “where there is no passion, there no authentic religion could be found” and thus he became an unvocalised prophet whose coda plays loudly these days.²

I experienced a Lutheran liturgy where the leader was able to sing the whole chant in a half-tone minor tune,

different from the rest of the congregation. How could one listen to the message behind the melody then? Well, in order to avoid any bias, it must be articulated here that there are some exceptions, where congregational singing is very good, where music bands play well and where a balance between old and new material is embraced. Such congregations can be found among the evangelical free churches as well as among Baptists, Pentecostals and Methodists. Young Roman Catholics and Lutherans enjoy a free style of worship at different Christian ‘open air fests’, among which the ecumenical ‘Campfest’ with an attendance of 5,000 young people plays a key role.

What should the Church do on this issue? Should we work for high quality liturgical singing? How do we achieve it? What kind of discipline are we to undertake in order to do so? How significant is the role of musical accompaniment in good congregational singing? Do we need professionally trained musicians? Does it really matter if we sing well, poorly or not at all? What about placing instrumental music alone in a service order? Are all these things matters of Christian freedom? Focusing on the Old Testament, one has to admit that music played an important part in Hebrew culture. Three of its books are songs, or collections of songs (Psalms, the Song of Solomon and Lamentations). In fact, scholars claim that as much as one half to two-thirds of the Old Testament is poetry! For some, since music was an important part of the life of God’s people before the coming of Jesus, so it should also be important for us, who live after our Lord’s first coming. Others, however, preferring to focus on the New Testament, concede that there is a place for music in the life of the church, but that it is in no way a major place. They argue that singing was peripheral to the life of God’s people back in the early church, and therefore there is no basis for making it any more important in the life of the church today.

We all know what a powerful force music is. The truth from the pulpit might not be new for us, but the registering of it in our heart and mind might be fresh because of the



power of music. If the Sunday service aims primarily at evangelism, it will bore Christians. If it aims primarily at education, it will confuse unbelievers. But if it aims at praising the God who saves by grace, it will both instruct insiders and challenge outsiders. We have to sing, because as John PIPER says in his sermon: “The realities of God and Christ are so great that when they are known truly and felt duly, they demand more than discussion and analysis and description; they demand poetry and song and music. Singing is the Christian’s way of saying: God is so great that thinking will not suffice, there must be deep feeling; and talking will not suffice, there must be singing.”³

Addressing a variety of different musical styles John STOTT noted, that “there is a place in public worship both for shouting aloud because He is the *great* God, and for bowing down before Him because He is *our* God”.⁴ Professor CARSON was even right when pointing to “community building” as an important test of real worship, when he notes “If the great preaching and music simply draw a crowd of people who have nothing to do with each other the rest of the week, we have created spectacle, not a worshipping community.”⁵ This point echoes with the stress on “mutuality within all kinds of creative relationships”, that according to Professor Cyril DIATKA makes the basis for a true self-actualisation.⁶ One of the most distinctive apologist nowadays, Ravi ZACHARIAS, sustains his conviction, that “our times are making of music possibly more than it is intended to be, but we must understand why this is so and how best to use music constructively for the sake of our emotions.”⁷

In Conclusion

The more I have thought of this coming debate the more I am convinced that if worship is practised with integrity in the community of God’s people, worship may be the most powerful evangelist for this postmodern culture of ours. It is imperative that in planning worship services, the pastor and church leaders give careful attention to every element and make sure that the worship retains both integrity and purpose.

The famed archbishop William TEMPLE gave this definition of worship that to this day rings with clear and magnificent tones: “Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of the imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose – and all this gathered up in adoration, the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable.”⁸

(Endnotes)

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Created to Create

Dorte KAPPELGAARD

The great Creator

Imagine God wondering what to do. He gets the idea to create life. “Let there be light!” He... and there was light. And God claps his hand in enthusiasm (or whatever He does) and sees that it is good (Genesis 1,1). God enjoys the beauty that He has created; the Creator enjoys his artwork. And humans are created in His image to produce good things, to cultivate the ‘soil’. Or you could put it this way: Humans are created to see possibilities for life and beauty where only black soil is visible and to promote and release them.

It is about all of us!

We have been created to create, we all have a creative power within. The loving gaze releases and encourages the beauty and dignity in the other person. Solving a conflict is a creative process involving looking at a situation with new eyes. Creating a fence or giving a sermon is also (or can be) ‘cultivating the soil’, promoting life, and each have a creative dimension. Creation is a process constantly happening. It is part of our God given identity. It is a part of ourselves that we should enjoy, explore, protect and not see as any less godly or holy than our ways of being church. The work process, not just the result, is blessed and valuable. In the artistic process itself, the perspective of creation and creativity constantly unfolds in a very special way.

Art points towards...

Art often contains a prophetic dimension, speaking truths into particular situations. It might be a voice for the things that we are blind and deaf to; it can express the things that a rational description falls short of pointing out, and it can point towards what has not yet happened. In more words, art can point towards...

...Beauty

In some schools of philosophy, *the beautiful* is defined as what has value in itself. The Catholic theologian Hans Urs von BALTHASAR says that it is the beauty of another person or of nature that makes us love them. Art can point towards the beauty of this world and make us love it, see it with new eyes, see behind and beyond the broken, the parted, the hurt, the twisted part of something or someone. And it can remind us of God, as He is the essence of beauty, having set His finger print on everything beautiful in this world. In the Orthodox tradition it is said explicitly that God is beauty.

Art also has a healing effect. When King Saul is possessed by an evil spirit, the only thing that can bring him peace is David playing on the harp (1 Samuel 16,23). The music seems to reflect some of God’s being as the evil spirit must leave Saul while David is playing.

Some Taizé brothers living in a slum area in India create beauty for their visitors by keeping their hut clean and putting coloured pieces of cloth on its walls. Once they were asked how they could make themselves talk of beauty in such a poor area. Weren’t there more important things to care about, and wasn’t it making fools of the



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ANDRÉS LÓPEZ

poor? “No,” they are said to have replied. “Beauty is not a luxury. Everybody needs beauty to survive and have dignity; it is a condition for existence.”

Being the one to point towards beauty is a way to reach out, to focus away from one’s own navel, to receive and to be fascinated by life, God, the other person, nature, whatever – and to share the beauty with others without forcing it on them. Or as a friend of mine explains, “I want to give others eyes in their hearts; filling them with beauty and gratitude so that everything they see will be beautiful...God has given me the gift of recognizing beauty and the ability to see something that is invisible to many people. So I must make it visible...In this way the hope and longing for Him will grow within them.”

...Unrighteousness

Art can also point towards unrighteousness; it can be a wake-up call for us. It can display the exploitation of other people, nature, etc. and be a mirror of hypocrisy, lies, self deception and other things that we usually do not feel like being reminded of. The funny thing about art is that it is capable of saying things that you would very often not be able to say in ways that would make people listen. Perhaps this because art provides an indirect medium, a dialogue of two, requiring introspection and interpretation on the part of the viewer or reader. This is not the same as one person directly criticising another, perhaps as in debate, causing the other to become defensive. Maybe because art, at its best, is able to show us that we have been created for something much better; it has the ability to lift us up and bring forth the human dignity in us all. After having

watched *The Passion of the Christ*, a criminal in the States turned himself in to the police. The movie had called forth a deeper identity and a greater sense of reality in him.

For the maker of art, the latter can be a constructive, playful, creative way of showing one’s frustration or promoting a kind of collective repentance by communicating that ‘we as a culture’, ‘we as a church’, or ‘we as a country’ have failed. I once read the following quotation from writer James BALDWIN: “The role of the artist is the same as that of the lover. If I love you, I must make you aware of the things that you don’t see.”

...Pain

Identification with the painful is also something that art can give us. There may be a sense of recognition, that “yes, this is how I feel” or “does somebody really know how that feels?!”. The receiver experiences that the darkness that she or he carries has a universal language. In the movie ‘Shadowlands’ C. S. LEWIS says: “We read to know that we are not alone.”

The people of Israel were able to explore their emotions through the poetry of the psalmist who when depressed could write: “My days pass away like smoke... My heart is stricken and withered like grass.” (Psalms 102). The psalm is dedicated to the one who will, “rise up and have compassion on Zion”. The psalmist knows that we need imagery that expresses the unutterable, the emotions that we don’t have language for.

Actually, when I need something to express an existential pain that I have, I find it more helpful to go to the theatre than to church (though that is where I would go to find peace in the middle of distress). Why is that? Shouldn’t it be in Christian places that we dare to face pain, putting words and colours to it in a radical way, *because* we know that there is a goodness and beauty that is still greater? And where we find Jesus walking alongside in the dark? Shouldn’t the churches be fearless and playful, creating spaces for despair, angst and sorrow. Church should be a

space to name these emotions, find expressions for them and to mourn with the mourning. Could artists help grow such a culture? I believe so. Artists very often long for truth and honesty, and they have the gift of expression.

...Hope

Art can point beyond the reality that we face. It can point east while everything is still dark. It can help us stay strong when experiencing tough times, and it can free the imagination and create a vision of what Christian fellowship could be like, what our cultures could be like, what our relationships could be like and what a relationship to God might resemble. Art can remind us of the divine promises that we have forgotten and it can remind us that the Kingdom of God is at hand, already present, and that one day it will penetrate everything.

Think of this possibility to bring hope into people’s lives in places and situations where (often too) nice Christian words do not seem very helpful. As created co-creators we are in the same boat as the receivers. This is why we have a chance to be heard. On some days we may have the opportunity to point towards hope for others with blood, movement, dreams, colours, music, stories – not with a lecturing “I am going to fix you”. On other days, we are the ones who need to have our eyes opened to the possibility of hope by others.

Just as there is a need for honesty, there is a need for hope. Many stories cry for a good ending, “but the writer or filmmaker does not have in himself any experience or belief in such an ending so it can’t find its way into his work”, the fiction writer Stephen LAWHEAD has said.⁹ We need skilled artists

to reach towards hope with everything they have in them, and they cannot help but reflect this in their art.

...Adventure / Fairytale

The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. TOLKIEN reminds me of the adventurous nature of reality in a stronger way than any sermon that I have heard on the subject. A travel through strange landscapes, a fight between good and evil. Not that we should overemphasize it, but it is good to remember when darkness seems overwhelming or life meaningless. God is not absent. His Kingdom just hasn’t broken out in fullness yet.

As makers of art we can remind others that there is something good to fight for. When human beings get stuck in their own webs, they need novels, songs, movies, etc., to remind them of the greater story, the greater truth. We may ourselves be dancing on the edge between brokenness and redemption, darkness and light, despair and joy. But that is exactly the reason why with our lives and artwork, we can point towards the fact that life is a fairytale, an adventure, that everybody has their own place in the big puzzle, and that there is a better world to fight for, even when we feel incapable.

Ignoring the Senses

The danger of not addressing and giving space for the senses in churches is that we may indirectly signal that God does not care about that side of the human being, that our senses and emotions are less valuable than our minds. Our churches may not necessarily mean to say this, but they may just not be paying attention to ‘that creativity thing’. But to some of us the senses are so crucial to our way of experiencing life

The funny thing about art is that it is capable of saying things that you would very often not be able to say in ways that would make people listen.



EVA VASILEVA

control of our relationships, our work, our bodies, the meaning of life, etc.; just think of the lifestyle magazines and TV programmes. To many of us this creates burnout, a sense of inferiority, an estrangement towards ourselves and loneliness. We need art that hits us in our guts, releases suppressed emotions, promotes honesty, lifts us up, reminds us of our dignity and true selves and creates hope.

We also need resistance to the demands and massive sensory impressions of superficial entertainment that commercials, the internet, TV, etc., promote. We need art that can help us put the mentality of consumption aside, slow down and feel ourselves, each other, God and life.

Giving the Church a Chance

On the one hand, many artists should be using their skills outside the church, taking part in penetrating society with faith, hope, honesty and love. We should encourage and set free those who have this vocation to fulfil it wholeheartedly.

And then on the other hand, what if churches became known as oases where (former) non-churchgoers go to find honesty and identification – and thereby also comfort and hope? I believe that art could have a major role to play in this process.

We need more people who dare to express the confusion, the meaninglessness, the restlessness, the depression, the sin, the achievement-oriented focus of our time, as well as to point towards hope and future through different kinds of art. Art that blows our minds is needed, allowing us to recognize ourselves and others, drawing us out into a greater and truer reality, enabling us look at life with clearer eyes.

1 LAWHEAD Stephen, *The Endless Knot*.

and expressing ourselves that we may experience a split between Christianity and life – a split between theology and the beauty and joy that we experience through our senses – if they are not addressed or given room for expression. And those who are artistic themselves may experience a split between the gifts that they have been given to honour God and serve people with, and with what is recognized as valuable among Christians.

A prophetic Voice

In (partly) post modern cultures without confidence in the great narratives about the meaning of life and with great scepticism towards authoritarian voices, we need something that makes sense to us here and now in the reality that we experience – something that rings a bell on a deeper level and calls forward the deep godliness in us, reminding us who we are, for better and for worse, and that we were created to adore and worship our creator.

Our time has been marked by a striving for achievement and a search to be in control of life. We want to be in

Right Brain in a Left Brain World – A scientist's Take on Art and Image in Health Science Education

Michael HANNA

Michael HANNA has been working in university faculty administration for most of his career since 1975, firstly in Trinity College and then in University College Cork. The Professor of Genetics in Trinity at that time was Professor George DAWSON, himself an SCMer and committed Christian all his life. George was passionately interested in modern art and built up a considerable collection which hung on the walls of Trinity College buildings and in students' rooms, all insured by the College. He was a great generator of ideas and an excellent judge of the potential of people. His inspiration lies behind and beneath much of what follows in this paper, given as a lecture to the European Regional Conference and WSCF Senior Friends in Tulln, Austria on 2nd May, 2009.

All of us have the capacity to think in more than one way. We all have untapped power to think in images and to move from word to image and back again. This paper will seek to demonstrate that this ability to imagine in pictures, without the intervention of language, is fundamental to our nature and was indeed a key evolutionary adaption that aided our survival. But the university world is powerfully influenced by the left brain – that area of the brain that helps us to develop logical argument using the currency of words and numbers – such that we neglect the conscious use of our innate visual intelligence. In my current role as Manager of the College of Medicine and Health at University College

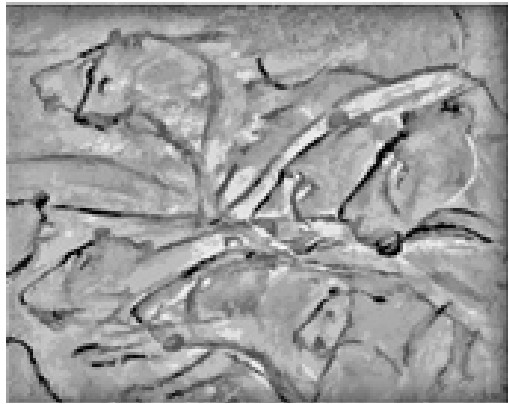
Cork I have developed an art gallery in the old house that forms the centre of the Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, and I gain enormous enjoyment and personal fulfilment using this to encourage staff and students to expand their creativity, increase their visual awareness and enhance their sense of community.

Art of Ancestors

What do you see in this picture (*Lions*, page 58)? Look at it closely. What ideas does it bring to your mind? These are wild cats certainly, large wild cats, maybe lions, more probably mountain lions like the North American Puma or Cougar. Note the strong facial line from the eye to the whiskers in the central animal – just like the Puma today. Multiple profiles layered over each other multiply the sense of power, of energy, of danger – and of wonder. Look at the anger in the eye of lion near the bottom middle. I think this is a wonderful picture. But who painted it? Look at the confident strokes that made these lines; no cross outs or rub outs, absolute accuracy of the bone structure of the face. The back ears stop at the line of the head, the front ears go down into the head, just where they would be in a photograph. This picture was painted by your ancestors and mine on a limestone wall deep in a cave at Chauvet, France. Carbon dating of the charcoal and ochre pigment gives a date of 35,000 years before present, the oldest cave paintings so far discovered in Europe, older than



Michael HANNA graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a bachelor's degree in Natural Sciences in 1972, specialising in Genetics. His professor at that time was George DAWSON, an ex-SCMer with a lifelong interest in the visual arts. Michael went on to take up a postgraduate scholarship in Finland in 1974 where he completed a masters degree in Cattle Breeding. In 1976 he took the post of Warden of Gurteen Agricultural College in the County Tipperary, and in 1978 returned to Trinity to become the administrator of the Science Faculty (coincidentally just at the time when Professor DAWSON was establishing the Douglas Hyde Gallery in TCD to provide a forum for avant garde abstract art). In 1992 he moved to a similar post as administrator of the Health Sciences Faculty. He left Trinity in 2002 to join University College Cork where he managed the expansion the Faculty of Medicine and Health. It was there that he developed the Jennings Gallery on the middle floor of the Brookfield Health Sciences Complex where it now promotes a lively interest in visual arts among staff and students. In recent months, he has moved sideways to work in the Irish health service on a transformation programme to create an integrated health service for Cork and Kerry with shared governance between the health service and the university.



Lions – Chauvet Cave, Ardèche, France 35,000 years ago

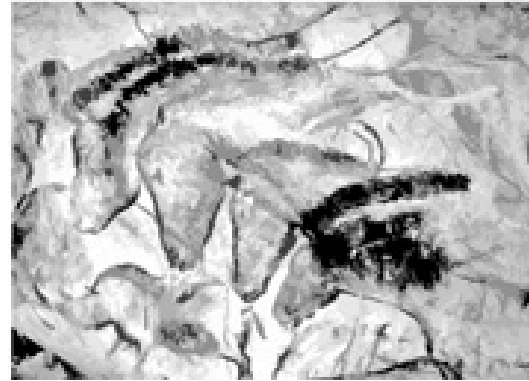


Rhinos Charging – Chauvet Cave, Ardèche, France 35,000 years ago

Images for Survival

How did such primitive people create these startling images of moving, living animals from memory, either in darkness or with the aid of a simple fire or flaming torches? The evidence of these cave paintings suggests that our ancestors had a high level of visual intelligence which may have become superseded as our brains slowly developed word and language which proved more subtle mental tools for passing on information, expressing the transcendent and enhancing the growth of culture. How did this visual intelligence help them survive? Certainly it helped them to hunt efficiently and effectively. It may also have helped them psychologically.

Let me explain by conjuring up an imaginary scene. Cave paintings are found in the inner recesses of caves which suggest they were considered special places. Bryan SYKES in his wonderful book *The 7 Daughters of Eve* imagines a scene where a family troupe of hunters, after eating by their fire, rise and solemnly walk into a nearby cave and by the light of their flaming torches, they confront in silence lifelike and life sized images, images they have ‘captured’ already by their art, of animals they will hunt at dawn. They gaze in silence until their fear is replaced by determination to face the herds again with flint spears and arrows. We know their technique from a startling picture found in Lascaux caves, with a carbon date of some 15,000 years before present. Some members of the hunting party probably went upwind of the herd which then stampeded away from them only to fall into an ambush. They focused



Wild Horses – Chauvet Cave, Ardèche, France 35,000 years ago

on only one or a few animals of the herd, suggested by the fact that arrows appear to have hit only three. These primitive weapons would not have killed outright so they would have to have sheltered somehow while the main herd passed over them and then made sure of the kill with spears and rocks.

Visual Identity

If we move to a different part of Europe, at a different time, we see again evidence etched in stone of the strong urge to make images of that which is important to life. On the next page you can see some pictures of Bornholm Bronze Age rock carvings (picked out in white) made on the island of Bornholm in Denmark and dating from about 2,700 before present. They show early ships and wheels, evidence that even then the people living in Scandinavia earned their livelihood from the sea.

If you need further proof of the universal language of art and image, you can travel to the other side of the world, to Australia, where there are many examples of cave art over 50,000 years old, from when the first human beings set foot on that ancient continent. The story of how Australian Aboriginal art was revived and translated on to canvas from the ancient traditions of sand markings and body painting is a very moving one.

Art for the Aboriginal people of Australia is of deep spiritual and cultural significance. It is also symbolic rather than figurative: lines indicate journeys; concentric circles indicate meeting places; U shaped half circles indicate

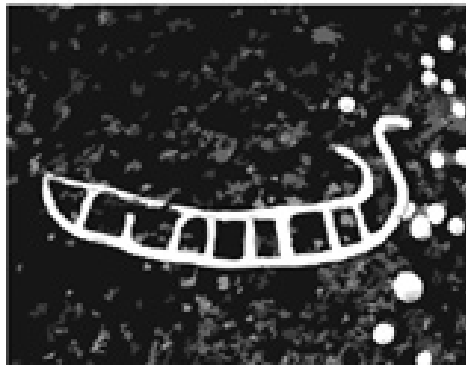


PRZEWALSKI'S Wild Horse or Tarpan from Mongolia – One of the world's rarest animals

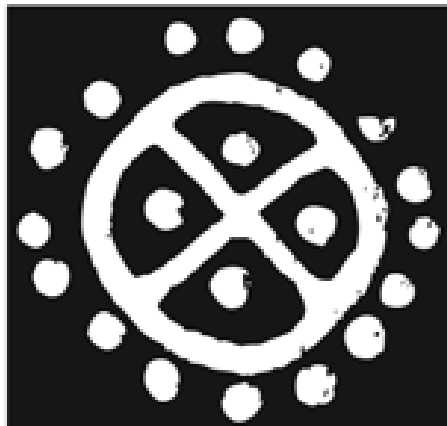
people talking; parallel wavy lines indicate rivers. The same symbol can mean different things so these drawings have to be interpreted. They express historical stories and creation myths.

In 1971, Geoffrey BARDON was working as a schoolteacher teaching art to children in the Papunya government settlement in the Central Desert of Australia, about 250km northwest of Alice Springs. It was a desolate place full of despair. BARDON writing later about it says “A sense of horror is what mostly comes back to me now, of a place where the human dignity of the Aboriginal people was held in utter contempt.” Over 1,000 people from a number of different tribes were confined there against their will. BARDON began encouraging children in the school to make their own marks on paper with crayons. This caught the interest of the adults who after three or four days practice had learnt how to use the crayons and paper. Then he began to collect together more paint and materials and make murals on the school walls. Soon the adults had taken over and began to design magnificent murals. The first and most famous of these was Honey Ant Dreaming, a story of creation painted by Kaapa TJAMPITJINPA who later won first prize in the Caltex Art Award in Alice Springs. This marked the first recognition of the new painting and from these beginnings a glorious flowering of creativity followed, eventually gaining world wide recognition.

Thus began a great movement where Aboriginal artists actually gained the respect of many white people nationally and internationally. Each tribe has different visual traditions and this has led to great variety in the use of colour, pattern and symbol.



Bronze age stone carvings from
Bornholm, Denmark, c700 BC
Ship

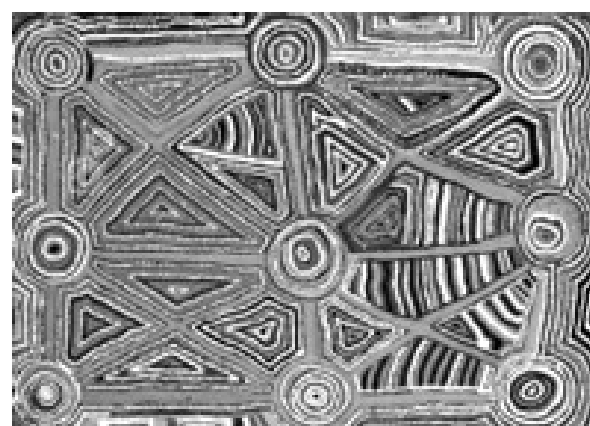


Bronze age stone carvings from
Bornholm, Denmark, c700 BC
Wheel

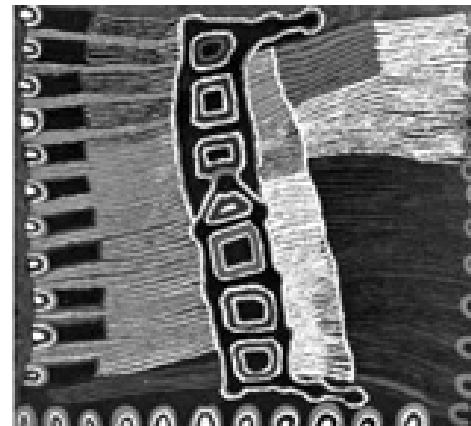
Art in Science

In the Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, the Jennings Gallery is on the middle floor of the Brookfield House (1898), where the different wings of the complex meet. You might say it forms the human heart of the building and the meeting place between Nursing, Medicine, Public Health, Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy.

Since the gallery opened in January 2008, we have had some wonderful exhibitions – artists with disabilities from the Kilkenny Collective for Art Talent, local secondary school students from disadvantaged backgrounds in Cork, first year Occupational Therapy students (an annual event), three practicing doctors, two of whom had never exhibited their work publicly before, and we are now planning a photographic exhibition that will show the work of three of our faculty members. The space makes use of what was already there in the old house: the doors of big store cupboards have been opened and clad with plaster board to increase the hanging space; old yellow brick fuel bunkers have been converted into glass fronted exhibition cases. The old pine floors have been restored. A collection of prints is available for annual hire by staff for their offices. For each exhibition we produce an invitation, a brochure and a pricelist. We return 70% of each sale to the artist and keep 30%. This maintains the gallery on a self funding basis so it is not a burden on the College. We have a small committee that runs the space locally and links in with the University arts committee.



Australian Aboriginal art from the Central
Desert region



Contemporary print by Aboriginal artist?

About 10 years later, a similar but totally unrelated thing happened in Ireland on a small island off the North coast of Donegal. The parallels are striking. Derek HILL, a well known British portrait painter came to live in Donegal and used to spend time painting on Tory Island, about 15 km from the mainland. One day, when he was on Tory, a local man came up behind him and began to watch him paint. “What do you think of it?” asked HILL. After a long period of silence, the man answered “Well, I think I could do better myself”. Shocked but undaunted, HILL gave him some paints and a canvas and some basic advice on how to use them. This man, Patsy Dan RODGERS, showed such flair that he had soon started a whole school of Tory Island painters that continues today. Their work is intimately reflective of their world – of sea, rocks, seabirds and their small colourful houses.

There are only about 200 people living on Tory Island. Yet it is able to support a small but vibrant group of painters who have exhibited their work frequently in Ireland and overseas.

We have therefore strong evidence from ancient times, from modern Aboriginal people in Australia and from a small island on the North Western edge of Europe, that this ability to express visual identity, and to be strengthened and encouraged when it is recognized and respected, is deeply a part of our humanity. I will now tell you how we have been encouraging this in my own workplace of University College Cork (UCC). UCC was founded in 1845 and today is home to about 14,000 students and 2,000 staff. It is a beautiful campus situated on a rocky outcrop overlooking the River Lee.

Recently we have designed a student competition that seeks to encourage health science students to think about the therapeutic relationship, sometimes also called the doctor-patient relationship, in new ways and to express their ideas visually using photography. They will be assisted in this by means of three or four workshops facilitated by experienced artists and photographers. The results of their work will be displayed in the gallery. When we were planning this competition, we were talking about the therapeutic relationship and how important it is for both sides to understand what the other person wants out of the relationship. I was saying to one of my occupational therapy colleagues that at least one side was simple enough – the patient wanted to get better. She looked at me in genuine surprise as if to say “how could I be so naive”. “But I know lots of patients who don’t want to get better!” So you see, things are not always what they seem.

Another project we are working on is to develop modules as options within our health science curricula that seek to enhance students’ visual and observational skills. These modules have been found elsewhere to have a significant impact on students’ ability to learn, to observe, to appreciate nuanced facial expression, to develop respect for each other and for their clients and patients. If you google art and medical education, you will find many such examples.

Links between art and medicine go back a long way. The Renaissance painters and sculptors were acute observers of the human body achieving utter fidelity to underlying physical structure. Medical doctors with a flair for art can diagnose common, and not so common, conditions from Renaissance paintings. In the 17th century, men like Robert

BOYLE began to lay the foundations of modern medicine and this led to a long and fruitful association of fine drawing and anatomy. Bernard Siegfried ALBINUS (1697-1770) pioneered this new approach, combining anatomical correctness with an artistic sense for anatomical illustration in his extraordinary *Tabulae sceleti et musculorum corporis humani* published in 1747. The old anatomical atlases contain stunning drawings of morbid anatomy. Irishmen such as Richard QUAIN (1800-1887) and Joseph MACLISE (born in Cork around 1815) achieve world fame for their work.

For medical students today, and for health professionals generally, visual awareness and perception are valuable aids to accurate diagnosis. Correct interpretation of visual signals from patient and client can assist an accurate reading of what is actually going on under the surface of the consultation. In evolutionary terms our visual intelligence preceded language and was a critical aid to survival. Cave art of Chauvet and Lascaux attests to this. Today we often neglect this aspect of our nature. Conscious use of our innate visual intelligence, using our right brain, can add not only to our professional tool kit but can also enrich us immeasurably as people.

You can visit Jennings Gallery website:
<http://www.ucc.ie/en/jennings-gallery/>

These pictures have been adapted into new pieces of artwork from the originals for printing. The originals of these cave images can be found here:
<http://coquinadaily.com/daily/htmldaily/080305.shtml>

There Is Another World, But It's This One



Alastair HULBERT was born in India of missionary parents and grew up in a Scottish manse. He studied for the ministry but is not ordained. From 1977-83 he was European Secretary of WSCF. He has worked for missionary and ecumenical organisations in Paris, Geneva, Brussels, Edinburgh and Dunblane.

Alastair HULBERT

*"Is it true, prince, that you said once that
'beauty' would save the world?...
What sort of beauty will save the world?"*
(DOSTOEVSKY)

... like doing my final philosophy exam at university nearly half a century ago! - *Discuss.*
You have one and a half hours for your answer ...

It was good to be in WSCF circles again, marking the first year of my retirement, with time to raise fundamental questions amongst a group of European students who accepted me with kindness and humour as if I were their best friend's grandfather.

Europe – Art and Spirituality was the theme of the conference in Tulln an der Donau, a clean little Austrian town near Vienna where Egon SCHIELE was born. Tulln was founded by the Romans on the south bank of the broad river Danube, two hundred yards wide here already, and still a thousand miles from its assignation with the waters of the Black Sea. Neither of Europe's two greatest rivers discharge their waters into the ocean, but rather into inland seas. The other the Volga, gathers Russia to herself and flows slowly and steadily into the Caspian. The Black Sea and the Caspian are both dying.

Twenty-eight students from across the continent, from Minsk to Münster, Bergen to Budapest, leant for a while on the question of the meaning of art and life, as Tulln leans on the mighty river.

*Manrique said our lives were rivers
going down to the sea which is death
but the death they flow down to is life...*

In 'Coplas a la muerte de MERTON', the elegy he wrote on receiving the news of the death of Thomas MERTON, Ernesto CARDENAL inverts one of the best-known quotations in all Spanish literature, the metaphor of our lives as rivers going down to the sea which is death, from Jorge Manrique's 'Coplas por la muerte de su padre' of 1476, into a joyous processional towards life. It is a long and complex poem, full of surprising observations about the world and the meaning of salvation.

*... a mystery
a doorway opening onto the universe
not onto the void
(like the door into an elevator which is
not there)
Definitive at last...
The voice of the lover saying
beloved take off your bra
The doorway opening
that no one can now close -*

As a creative force, beauty provokes and encourages the need to come to terms with the world, to seek its salvation. And thanks to art, instead of accepting things the way they are, we learn to measure them by standards of beauty and truth. The greater the gulf between the ideal and the real, the more inescapable is the question, Why is the world the way it is? How has it come to be what it is? DOSTOEVSKY again:

*"I challenge you now, all you atheists. With
what will you save the world,
and where have you found a normal line of
progress for it, you men of
science, of industry, of co-operation, of
labour-wage, and all the rest of it?
With what? With credit? What's credit?
Where will credit take you?"*

*Such images are mysterious. They exorcise the eye, leaving a visual
memory that works, differently from words, on the heart and soul.*

When Antwerp celebrated its year as European City of Culture in 1993, it published a poster with the question, "Can art save the world?" juxtaposed with Edouard MANET's *The Fifer*. The choice of painting was provocative. MANET's *Fifer* shows a Parisian street urchin portrayed as a Spanish grandee, a young bandsman of the light-infantry in a uniform of red and black and gold, playing his flute and looking straight at the spectator like a saint out of a stained glass window. But on a monochrome background of luminous grey, with no context and no perspective, as if the boy is surrounded by nothing but thin air.

How does art relate to its context and surroundings, the poster seems to be asking, either technically within the painting, or outside the canvas in the real world? Surely art cannot save the world – out of luminous grey, out of the blue!

Hope and History

There is so much bad news around. We are worried that humanity is irreparably ruining the planet. In many of the countries of Africa and the Middle East there is war and chaos. We are conditioned to live in fear of terrorism. We are experiencing a global recession and witnessing the collapse of once reliable economic institutions. Apart from the quick fix, our politicians have little idea what to do. The technocrats outnumber the idealists. It is as if the world were on autopilot and with no one knowing where it is going. If art and spirituality have any call on us, it is to engage with the world and seek its salvation. But what does salvation mean?

During the Troubles in Ireland, SEAMUS HEANEY wrote,

*History says, Don't hope
On this side of the grave.
But then, once in a lifetime
The longed-for tidal wave
Of justice can rise up,
And hope and history rhyme.*

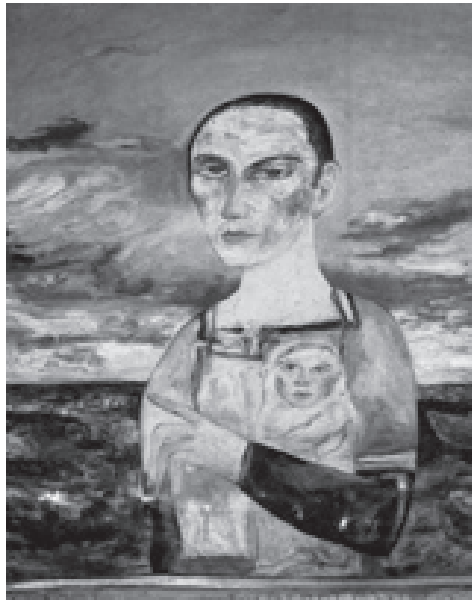
*So hope for a great sea-change
On the far side of revenge.
Believe that a further shore
Is reachable from here.
Believe in miracles
And cures and healing wells.*

Christian faith is rooted in hope and history. Its purpose is salvation. We must be ready and prepared to seize the time and respond to the movement of history when it happens. Twice in my lifetime – first, when I was a young man, during the cultural revolutions of the 'sixties, and then again after 1989, when I was working with the European churches after the fall of the Iron Curtain, "the longed-for tidal wave of justice" swept across Europe with a surge of hope and opportunity. But for the most part, in politics, church and society, Europe did not rise to the challenge.

In 1992 John BELLANY painted a picture for the newspaper *Scotland on Sunday*. It was called "Hope: a Scottish icon for these troubled times", an enigmatic figure - Virgin, man or woman, you are not sure - standing in front of a turbulent sea, looking straight at you, clutching a child under one arm and pointing a finger.

Hope, by the English Victorian George Frederick WATTS, is said to be Barak Obama's favourite painting. At first glance it is strange that such a picture should bear this title, but the imagery, if a little sentimental, is good enough. The heavens are illuminated by a solitary star, and Hope, a barefoot, blindfolded woman in a thin dress, sitting on a dusky globe that we take for the world, bends her head to catch the music from her lyre of which every string is broken, except one.

In GRUNEWALD's Issenheim Retable, the bony finger of John the Baptist points to the crucified Christ, the hope of the world, while in the lower panel of the altarpiece which depicts the Deposition, Christ's body is already putrefying.



Hope – a Scottish icon for these troubled times

Rescuing the Meaning of Existence

In our day the definition and evaluation of what art is has become problematic. Paintings and sculptures are significant forms of property, in the sense that a song or a poem are not. But with the emergence of consumerism as an ideology, they have acquired a glamour such as they have not enjoyed for centuries. The work of art is the ideal commodity. It is regarded as a spiritualized possession though it has nothing to do with salvation. People are dazzled and mystified not so much by the actual art work as by its market value.

One form of art that avoids the dangers of consumerism is the newspaper cartoon. A startling picture accompanying an analysis or report, particularly if it is wordless, can send a searching message to the reader. The final section of my presentation in Tulln was an introduction to the work of Selçuk DEMIREL.

Selçuk DEMIREL is an artist and cartoonist, whose surreal

images have long appeared in newspapers like *Le Monde* and *Le Monde Diplomatique*. He is Turkish and has lived for much of his life in exile in Paris. As a cartoonist, he escapes the art market as such, and yet his work has a diffusion and impact far beyond that of conventional artists.

Selçuk's paintings are surrealist, which is an art form concerned as much about communication as about creation, and therefore well suited for exposure in the media. It features the elements of shock and surprise, unexpected juxtaposition and non sequitur. His wistful tragi-comic paintings accompany a kind of journalism that goes beyond reporting, to pose searching questions about the history and culture of our age.

During the 1990s, when I was working with CEC in Brussels, our dialogue with the European Commission found me struggling to find a way to relate Ivan ILLICH's profound critique of Western culture to the vast domain of the European Union. In *Le Monde Diplomatique* I discovered a correspondence between what ILLICH was saying and Selçuk's wordless imagery.

Ivan ILLICH died eight years ago. He was a theologian and historian, whose critique of civilisation – church, school, medicine, development, technology, and much more – had a strong relevance for the policies of the European Union. It felt to me as if Selçuk's cartoons had been made to illustrate and explain his writings.

For example, I believe that Selçuk has grasped and illuminated in startling cartoons what ILLICH means by the “root metaphors” of the book (Cartoon 1) and the computer system (Cartoon 2) as alternative ways of understanding the world – two mindsets, two successive stages in western culture, which define and condition humankind in the most profound ways, and which struggle with each other today.¹

In the stillness of another Selçuk cartoon, a gull glides over an empty clock face, the shadow of its wings wistfully telling the time of what Illich calls the “untracked hope... which lies beyond the future.” Or again (Cartoon 3), a watch lies in the foreground of a great empty space, its

horizon the curvature of the world. The watch face has come off and the mechanism of the times and systems we live by is in pieces. In the background, two figures ride away on a horse and a donkey. In their hands they hold two lances, one long, one short. They are Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, their lances the hands of the broken clock.

Such images are mysterious. They exorcise the eye, leaving a visual memory that works, differently from words, on the heart and soul. As pictures about being and having, good and evil, they bear witness to beyond the way things are. Newsprint icons, they may be thrown into the wastepaper basket, but remembered, in their funny way they help to rescue the meaning of existence. They are a means of salvation.

Singing about the Dark Times

One afternoon our conference spilled out into the streets and parks of Vienna where, divided into teams, we followed a fun treasure hunt which revealed the history of the city to us.

Vienna is considered by many to be the cultural capital of Europe. It's certainly the grande dame of erstwhile imperial capitals; lacking maybe Rome's feeling for eternity, but as imperious as London, as stately and self-satisfied as Paris. How would it compare now with Berlin, if Berlin had been spared? After World War II, the failure of Austrians to address the reality of the Nazi era, as Germany did, created an identity crisis that has returned to haunt post war Austrian politics at different times. The rise to positions of influence and power of personalities like Kurt WALDHEIM and more recently Jörg HAIDER have brought it into focus again. We could have learned more about this in Tulln: how art and spirituality relate to it.

There was an exhibition of paintings by Egon SCHIELE (1890-1918) in Vienna's Leopold Gallery. Only one or two of his erotic paintings, but several beautiful canvases of townscapes, twisted streets and houses, exuberantly colourful, Jugendstil and Expressionism held together:

echoes of KLIMT of course and something of HUNDERTWASSER (who was born ten years after SCHIELE died). It included the photograph of SCHIELE lying in bed, a shock of dark hair between white sheets, dying of Spanish 'flu at the age of 28.

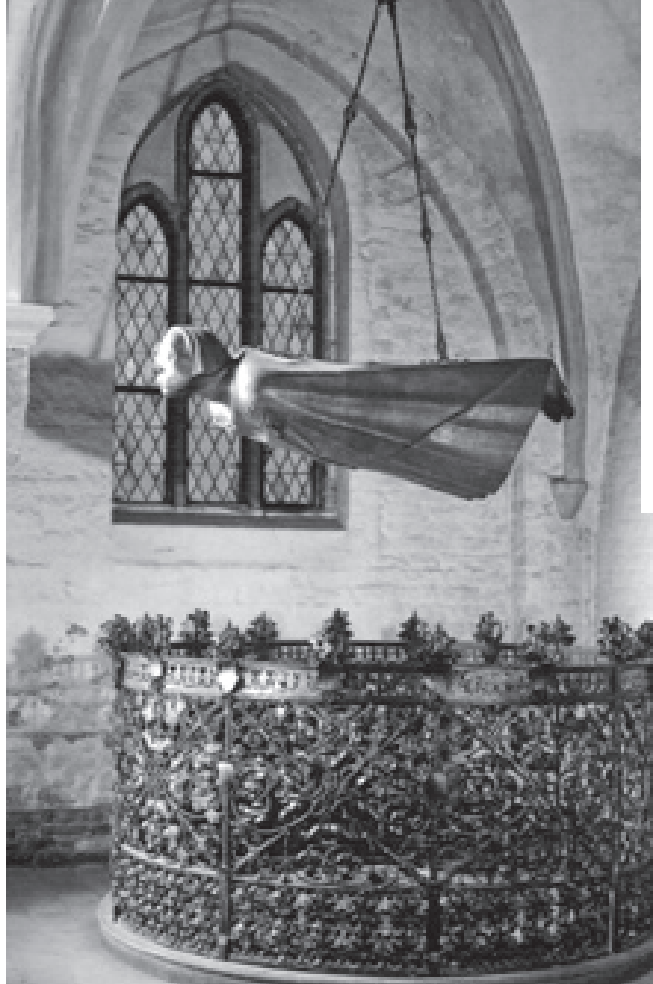
The same gallery also had an exhibition of sculptures and graphic art by Ernst BARLACH (1870-1938) and Käthe KOLLWITZ (1867-1945). What a contrast with SCHIELE, yet the art of the two exhibitions was from the same continent, the same period of European history! I wonder whether the curators of the Leopold realised what juxtaposing them did and meant.

I have seen BARLACH's War Memorial of 1926 in Güstrow Cathedral, the hovering angel with its steadfast face peering forward, eyes closed, art and spirituality suspended, as one – Europe: the beauty and the grief of it! It was destroyed by the Nazis in 1934, but recast from the original clay which had survived their campaign against “degenerate art”.



MANET, Edouard - Young Flautist, or The Fifer, 1866

¹ Alastair specifically mentions 3 of Selçuk's cartoons in this article, but unfortunately they could not be reprinted here. To view Selçuk's work, please visit his website at <http://www.selcuk-demirel.com/>



Ernst BARLACH, War Memorial, Güstrow Cathedral

There was a small bronze in the Leopold, reminiscent of the Güstrow *Hovering Angel*, entitled *The Avenger*. It portrayed a figure in the same horizontal position as the war memorial with a flowing cloak, but running with one foot on the ground. Wielded in both hands together over his shoulder is a sword.

The exhibition had a great wooden sculpture by BARLACH too: *Moses, the Lawgiver: March 1918*, rearing up two meters high, carved out of an old oak beam which he found in a pit shaft. “I feel compelled to work on a statue of Moses,” he explained in commentary on Germany after the First World War, “We need someone real who will throw this ‘Thou shalt’ at the entire people like ten punches of a fist against the head.”



Käthe KOLLWITZ, Tower of Mothers, (1937)

Käthe KOLLWITZ’s work comes from the same dark times. Hers is a searing picture of the human condition in the first part of the 20th century. Her feeling for the poor and oppressed is shown in drawings, woodcuts, etchings and sculpture – the Peasants’ War, the suffering of Berliners in the 1890s, the great hunger, the meaninglessness of war. Her art is tragic. It’s like BARLACH’s punches of a fist against the head.

A small bronze statue portrays a group of mothers standing in a circle, some facing inwards, some out, protecting their children behind the fortress of their broad figures and skirts against the evil day. The force of the work is quite disproportionate to its size. It grabs you with the metaphysical strength of these ordinary women’s resistance to a terror that had steeled their purpose. Can art not save the world? KOLLWITZ seems to be crying. Cannot this sort of beauty save the world? In her diary she wrote, “What use to me were principles of beauty like those of the Greeks, for example, principles that I could not feel as my own and identify with? The simple fact of the matter was that I found the proletariat beautiful.”

During these same years Bertolt BRECHT was writing plays and poems from exile.

*In the dark times
Will there also be singing?
Yes, there will also be singing
About the dark times*

But some issues haven’t changed: the 1957-58 Report on Student Movement House mentions that “during the past year, Pakistanis and Indians debated Kashmir, and Arabs met Jews over Israel.”

Giving the Gospel Hands and Feet

Ruth CONWAY

Ruth CONWAY, along with Biem LAP, Rebecca BLOCKSOME and Markus OJAKOSKI presented on the life and work of WSCF during the time when they were students in a panel discussion during the senior friends meeting in Tulln, Austria. What shaped the work of WSCF when they were students and what shapes it today?

Biem LAP, a senior friend from the Netherlands who was in the Dutch SCM in the early 1960s, reflected that in the SCM community nothing was accepted as fact but all was questioned. International solidarity was a common subject (with issues of the coloniser and the colonised), reflecting the challenge of the rich and poor – but the Gospel provided the possibility to transform all barriers. Biem challenged WSCF to continue “giving the Gospel hands and feet in social and political reality.”

Both Rebecca BLOCKSOME, who worked in the regional office from 2004 to 2006 and is a member of SCM Hungary, and Markus OJAKOSKI, from SCM Finland who also served as Treasurer on the ERC (2001-2005), commented on how they found a home in WSCF – where they were unconditionally accepted and where the social challenges of Christian faith were put into practice as well – a combination they have not found elsewhere.

As a student in the late 1950s, Ruth CONWAY was International Secretary of the Manchester University SCM and after graduating became an SCM staff secretary in the Liverpool region. Her close connection with the WSCF continued when she married Martin CONWAY, who joined the WSCF staff in 1961 as Study Secretary.

WSCF Past, Looking Forward to the Future

Travelling here on the bus to Vienna from London, I refreshed my memory by reading copies of the Federation News from the late 1950s/early 60s, and also the Annual Report of the British SCM 1957-8. The period was dominated by 3 major gatherings: The 1958 Edinburgh Congress of the British SCM which had a strong WSCF presence – among the 2,100 delegates there were 340 students and 60 seniors representing countries outside Britain; the 1960 Strasbourg conference which was the highlight of the WSCF programme on the Life and Mission of the Church; the WSCF General Committee which was held at Thessaloniki, shortly after the Strasbourg Conference.

The 1957-58 SCM Annual Report was significantly called ‘Life for the World’ and began with a quote from the WCC Evanston Assembly: “Without the gospel the world is without sense, but without the world the gospel is without reality”. That sense of holding the gospel and the world together – the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other – was dominant in those years, as I am sure it still is.

I have picked out some characteristics of the social, political, cultural and economic context which were being engaged in the light of the gospel, hoping this will stimulate thinking about how far the agenda of WSCF has changed, and how our engagement has now moved on.

But first a general comment: the language was entirely masculine! I’m confident we’ve come some way to addressing that!



Ruth Conway was a staff member of the British SCM from 1958-61. She is a graduate in Physics and wrote *Choices* at the Heart of Technology – A Christian Perspective (Trinity Press 1999) after co-founding the network Values in Design & Technology Education. She is a member of the UNESCO-UK Working Group on Education for Sustainable Development, leads the Education Group of the European Christian Environmental Network and represents it on the British churches’ Environmental Issues Network. She manages a once derelict churchyard as a wildlife space, earning the church an Eco-congregation Award.



All that has gone

At that time the Cold War divided Europe – two major ideologies, two super-powers, two economic systems confronting each other. WSCF was concerned to keep up relations with Eastern Europe, including participation in the Prague Peace Conference, and to promote Christian/Marxist dialogue. All that has gone – there is now one global economic system, characterised by the widening gulf between rich and poor, trade imbalances, rising levels of unpayable debt, the use of money as a commodity, and recently the financial implosion. This raises urgent questions about alternative economics, a green new deal, and most fundamentally, the unsustainability of individualistic, consumer societies.

From Industrialisation to Virtual Reality

Major questions arose from the impact that the industrial society was having on people's lives. SCM students took vacation jobs in factories in order to understand this through direct experience. Today the focus is rather on how instantaneous communication and virtual reality is shaping our lives. Related to this, in the 1960s it was the scientific world

view that was eagerly analysed and debated. Not much attention was given to the values inherent in the processes of technological development (though the WSCF at least produced in 1961 an issue of Student World on 'Christians in a technological era'). This is one reason why there has only been slow recognition that the pursuit of technological progress (as an end as well as a means, closely allied to economic profitability) is having a devastating impact on the ecological systems that sustain life.

What is a University for?

A question much debated was the Christian understanding of what a university is for. Davis McCaughey's *Christian Obedience in the University: Studies in the life of the S.C.M. 1930-50* was published on the first day of the Edinburgh Congress. There was a long discussion in the SCM 1957-58 Annual Report on the place and contribution of theology, not least in relation to other subjects. The WSCF Salonika General Committee raised the question: "What does it mean to live as Christians, or as Christian communities, in a university which is basically secular, in which the technical disciplines are becoming the most important ones, and in which students are coming increasingly from the whole of society and not from a middle or upper class *élite*?" The 1963 WSCF ExCo inaugurated a major project: 'Ecumenical Strategy in the Academic World'.

Race Relations and Dialogue

It was a different era in terms of race relations. The civil rights movement in the USA was just beginning. Apartheid was strengthening its hold in South Africa. But some issues haven't changed: the 1957-58 Report on Student Movement House mentions that "during the past year, Pakistanis and Indians debated Kashmir, and Arabs met Jews over Israel." Building relationships with Muslim students was a pioneer activity. The Federation News of May 1960 reported that the WSCF had sent an international team of 13 to North Africa with the specific purpose of establishing relationships with Muslim students (p.38). The making and testing of nuclear weapons was a dominant theme. This challenge remains – not least in relation to the hypocrisy of the original nuclear powers.

Intercommunion

The question of intercommunion was very live. A 1960 article summarising milestones in WSCF ecumenical history stated "The Federation has always been concerned with ecumenical worship, e.g. with the issue of intercommunion. Such practices as attendance without participation, successive celebrations according to different traditions, and common preparation for separate

Dear senior friends from all over Europe!

I take from the fact that you're reading this short message that you still keep a place in your heart for WSCF, that after many years you still treasure the memories, the experiences and the friendships that enriched your life, just as I do.

Our university years may have ended a longer or shorter while ago, but we all found something in WSCF and our local SCM that still connects us. For me personally, WSCF was (and still is) my spiritual home, an organization where I could discuss topics close to my heart, explore new themes, get to know people from different backgrounds and, most of all, where I could be myself AND live my faith in a fantastically open minded and non-judgemental atmosphere. Places like this are hard to find in a world where religion and faith are more and more linked with fundamentalism and terrorism. I believe from the bottom of my heart that this tradition is worth preserving for the future, that it is worth fighting for and that it can make a difference. It did make a difference in my life.

Over the past years quite a few steps have been made to establish a WSCF Europe Senior Friends Network. The main goals are to support the current work of the Federation and to provide a platform for Senior Friends interested in meeting once in a while. There are many ways in which we can help and enrich future events of WSCF. On the one hand, there is of course financial support, which may vary from supporting single students so that they can take part in events to donating smaller or larger amounts. On the other hand, we should not forget moral support, sharing our skills, experiences, knowledge and social networks. We could be lecturers or we might know someone who could lecture. Perhaps we are aware of a suitable venue for a conference or we might be able to help with fundraising – there are many things we can help with in any way we please.

Dear friends, it's now time to show WSCF the support that we once received. I'm sure that if we take the chance WSCF will once again enrich our lives and we can definitely make a difference!

Yours in Christ

Katharina



Katharina IGENBERGS received a degree in physics from Vienna University of Technology in 2007. She is currently researching for her PhD thesis in atomic and nuclear fusion physics. Although she never held any WSCF position, she was closely involved in WSCF activities for many years. She is currently the treasurer of the Austrian SCM.

If you are interested in joining the Senior Friends Network, finding out more about the online forum or future meetings, or contributing to WSCF Europe in any way, please contact the regional office at regionalloffice@wscf-europe.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Unity, Community and Continuity

services, were first introduced in Federation meetings” (Federation News, no 3 1960, p.10). The report of the ExCo in Bangalore in 1961 approved a statement insisting that the question should be faced squarely: “...We believe that within the Christian community there should be no contradiction between the Christian’s behaviour in his evangelical task and his spiritual life. ... Such a dichotomy is created when members of a fellowship who usually work and worship together are required by the rules of their respective churches to receive Holy Communion separately. In each such situation the responsible leaders of the churches concerned should be seriously requested to consider possible ways of overcoming this painful problem and the subsequent implications for the life of the churches as a whole.”

Many of these challenges still exist for WSCF as a region today (especially that of the shared Eucharist). Martin CONWAY told a story about the Graz conference of August 1962 when WSCF planned a common liturgy for communion. They mailed this liturgy out to participants before the conference and asked them to consult their pastors and priests about sharing in it. This was a unique liturgy – only formed for this time and place. Two students consulted the same bishop; one was given permission to partake and the other advised not to. Later, Martin met with this bishop and asked, “why?” The bishop responded, explaining that one student came to him, excited, “Look at what this amazing group is doing! May I partake?” The other came to him, wary and uncertain, “I don’t know about this. I cannot partake, can I?” Martin concluded then that shared communion is a pastoral rather than a doctrinal question.

Salter’s STERLING commented in response: “following after the Kingdom is way beyond, way beyond, following the institutional church.”

The panel discussion concluded with the question – what was the function of WSCF before and what is it today? As all in WSCF come from diverse backgrounds and participate in dialogue, unfortunately we cannot always have a unified voice as an organisation – but as a network we can support each



other. Though this question has many answers, one response seemed to summarise – perhaps the function of WSCF is to change individuals who can then change the world.

**Compiled by Rachael WEBER, also using some of her notes in addition to the submissions from the senior friends.*

Liam PURCELL

A Reflection on the WSCF Conference and Senior Friends’ Gathering in Tulln, Austria, May 2009

I’ve found it very difficult to write this article.

I was delighted when Friends of WSCF and national SCMs were invited to gather alongside WSCF-Europe’s conference on ‘Europe, Art and Spirituality’ this summer. Like many others across Europe, my life has been hugely influenced by the time I spent as part of a Student Christian Movement. I jumped at the chance to be part of a WSCF event again - and to talk to other Friends about how we could support the SCMs in our countries.

But coming to write this reflection, it took me a long time to identify the key themes or conclusions that emerged from the event. Since we Friends joined in parts of the student conference as well as having our own meetings, I had come away with an overwhelming wealth of impressions, ideas and inspirations. It was difficult to pick out a simple summary of the experience.

However, having had time to reflect and absorb a little, I find that three key themes emerged for me. These impressions reflect the nature of WSCF, and of this particular gathering, as much as they do the specific themes and topics that were covered at the conference.

Unity

When I recall my time at previous WSCF events, I am thankful for the opportunities I got to really live and work alongside people from different cultures and traditions. WSCF provides a unique opportunity to learn what values we all share, while respecting and celebrating the uniqueness of each of our own stories and traditions.

This experience can be striking and life-changing at a normal WSCF conference, when only students and young people take part. This time, it had an extra dimension. The presence of Senior Friends meant that our gathering included people of different generations, as well as the usual spread of traditions and nationalities.

And it was certainly not just the case that the Friends were there to provide wisdom and advice to our younger successors (although I hope we were able to do a little of that!). We learned a great deal from the current students as well and were inspired by the energy we saw in today’s SCMs.

The student conference’s focus on art and spirituality also revealed many surprising sources of ‘unity in difference’. People shared their own cultural and creative traditions, and found the points they had in common.

I am excited that the unity of WSCF allows us to learn and share across generations as well as across cultures. We all came away hoping that Friends will be able to play a stronger role alongside students in our own movements too.



Liam PURCELL was Co-ordinator of the UK Student Christian Movement from 2004 to 2007. He also edited the UK SCM magazine Movement from 2002 to 2007.

Community

WSCF's founding motto, 'Ut omnes unum sint' - 'That they all may be one' - emphasises our unity. But our community has always been founded on principles of equality for all and solidarity with those who are excluded. The conference reinforced those themes for me very strongly.

The keynote lecture by Angharad JONES, on gender in popular culture, explored how our ideas of femininity and masculinity are reflected, but also constructed and influenced, by art and the media. Friends and students alike were challenged to consider their own prejudices and stand alongside those who are excluded by the dominant views in our various cultures.

The participants in the conference produced their own creative responses to the theme. Many of these also emphasised community in various ways. For an old timer like me, it was inspiring to see new technologies being used in ways that were democratic, communitarian and empowering. Students were able to use video, photography and the internet to reflect on art and spirituality. Most importantly, technology now allows ideas to be shared, and worked on collaboratively, in a way that was not possible just a few years ago.

But one of the creative responses that stayed with me in a particularly powerful way did not require any technology at all. One evening, the students presented a series of dramatic performances for the Friends. Their theme was propaganda - exploring how art can be used or abused in the service of ideology. By finding the common ground amongst their own experiences and cultures, they presented their ideas in a simple and visual way. All of the performances brought home very powerfully the message that our creativity must be used to celebrate difference rather than enforce conformity.

I was reminded again that our community in the church



We built community amongst ourselves by learning and trying new things. We drew on our traditions and creative talents to respond to the conference's theme.

and WSCF should be prepared to be countercultural, standing alongside those who are excluded rather than being part of the establishment.

Continuity

The presence of Friends alongside current students reminded us of another vital aspect of community. As a movement, WSCF gains strength from its continuity. While it empowers students to build community in the present, it also has a vital connection with its roots and its past in the form of the Friends network. Working together, students and Friends can ensure the movement remains dynamic in the future.

That continuity was evident throughout our time in Tulln. As well as being impressed by the possibilities of new technologies for the future, I drew strength and inspiration from our past. I stayed up into the small hours several times, listening to the stories of people who had been present at some key moments in the history of SCM and WSCF – dramatic stories of big developments in the church's life, and personal stories that reminded me of the community that exists between me and the generations who have been part of this movement before me.

The gathering was an opportunity to make practical use of that continuity. As Friends, we talked about how we could do more to support the movements in our own countries, and safeguard WSCF's financial future. You'll read more details of the discussions we had elsewhere in this issue of Mozaik.

That sense of continuity was apparent in the students' conference too. Students responded to the challenges posed by today's world, making creative use of their various traditions to envision how things could be in the future.

A creative Conclusion

A final thread ran through all of these impressions for me. Appropriately for a conference looking at art, the common thread was creativity. We built community amongst ourselves by learning and trying new things. We drew on our traditions and creative talents to respond to the conference's theme. And we hope to work creatively together to build and support WSCF in the future.



The Meaning of SCM: From Yesterday till Tomorrow



Salters STERLING was born in 1937. He was a graduate of Magee University College, Derry, Trinity College Dublin and Queens University Belfast. He served as the Irish Secretary of the Student Christian Movement from 1961-1964, as the senior London Secretary of the SCM of Great Britain and Ireland and then as Assistant General Secretary from 1964-1966. His other work has been as follows: Secretary of the University Teachers Group and Research Officer of the Investigative Project into the development of Higher Education in Great Britain, 1966-1970; Warden of Gurteen Agricultural College in Ireland, 1969-1975; Faculty Secretary and subsequently Academic Secretary of Trinity College Dublin, 1975-1995. He participated in these SCM/ WSCF events: Jesus Christ the Light of the World, Edinburgh 1958; the Life and Mission of the Church, 1960; General Assembly of the WSCF Embalse, Rio Tercerro, Argentina 1964; Turku 1968; Montreal 2008 (as Senior Friend). He was the Co-chairperson of conversations between the Provisional IRA and the UDA in 1982 and the Irish administrator of Anglo-Irish Encounter, 1996-2006 (the group established by Margaret THATCHER and Garret FITZGERALD to maintain relations between the governments of Britain and Ireland). Salters is a member of the Council, Steering Committee and Executive Board of the Irish School of Ecumenics and a member of the Interim Executive of the School of Religions and Theology in TCD and the Irish School of Ecumenics in TCD.

Kate WILSON was a member of the British SCM (her first event was a conference on sexuality in Scotland in 1996 or 97) and she served on the Executive Committee of WSCF Global and on the European Regional Committee (ERC) from 1999 until 2004. To read more, please see her article on page 44.

*During the conference on Europe, Art and Spirituality, senior friends and current students joined together to reflect on the meaning of SCM and the challenges facing students in their times, reflecting on the present and past. Below are some of the reflections from **Kate Wilson (KW)** and Salters **STERLING (SS)**, two senior friends from different generations. The questions are in bold, before the answers.*

What was/is meaning of being an SCMer & WSCF/SCM in you life?

KW: In my first week at university I wanted to join a Christian group, so I went to the first meeting of the Christian Union (CU) and the Student Christian Movement (SCM). The CU had lots of free sandwiches, so there were lots of people, all smiley and friendly, but you had to sign something to join and my choir was on the same day – so I wasn't sure. The SCM were a few people in a basement room with brightly painted walls, sharing a pot of some unidentifiable dish which my brother would call “**veggie slop**”. They seemed unusual people, but little did I know that they would become my friends for life.

SCM means **friends for life**, from churches and countries all over the world. ERC was a core community for 4 years of my life as I lived in 3 different countries and seemed to spend all my free time on trains across the continent. Just a month ago I went to the 120th anniversary celebrations of British SCM, where we agreed that we need to found a church that meets on a train as we all still travel so much...

SCM is “**salad not soup**”, a place where diversity is honoured; I helped organise lots of conferences on gender and sexuality with WSCF – I went to a conference on gender in Romania in 1999! ¹

SCM is “the **Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other**”: a space to nurture a passion for justice and peace that has never left me and has shaped my future life

¹ The European Regional Assembly will be held in Romania in October 2009. The thematic portion of the conference is being organised by the WSCF-E Gender interest group on the theme ‘Gender, Society and Religion’.

decisions. I went on to work for a peace charity, live in religious community, and now I'm involved in local community projects, e.g. with refugees now in London.

SS: SCM and WSCF have meant being a member of a community, a fellowship who sought to acknowledge and lead others to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord; a **fellowship which was richer** in Christian tradition and experience than anything that an institutionally divided Church could produce; a fellowship convened by Jesus who presides over it and pioneers its pilgrimage.

It has meant discovering the Lordship of Christ in the life of the mind, so that I could give a **reason for the faith within me** that was of an intellectual competence with my growth in secular learning - in my case History and Political Science – through the study of the Bible and theology and through prayer.

It has meant **discovering** the Lordship of **Christ in the service of the World** he came to save, particularly in the case of the poor and of the infirm and through the study of contemporary social, political, economic and interpersonal themes of local, national and international significance and through prayer about them.

It has meant discovering the Lordship of Christ in the life of the Church, through accepting the reality of its divided sinfulness; through accepting the reality of the intention of Jesus and that of his and our Father when he prayed that they/ we might be one; and by discerning the active distinction between the Church and the Kingdom and by praying that **I and we might be part of the action of the Kingdom and of its coming**.

So it was a community of thinking, studying, acting and praying whose individual and corporate imagination and experience was nourished and developed in the shared life of the national



EVA VASILIEVA

SCM and the international WSCF, through conferences, seminars, committees, work-camps and publications. But only some could have these experiences at first hand and they were the key bearers and sharers of vision. It was an important aspect of leadership training.

What hardships and challenges did the students of your time face?

KW: I am blessed to come from Wales and study first in Scotland: these two countries still don't charge any fees for undergraduates, and even better, in my day (1993-98), many students still got a government grant to support them in their studies. So most students only had to work in the summer and there was loads of time for SCM, activism and campaigning. By the time I did my PhD that had changed; students are really **struggling financially** and need to work all year round to support themselves and have less time for other things like SCM. They will graduate with a lot of debt, which my generation did not have.

The big challenge for my generation was the **meeting of East and West** after communism had crumbled; students from behind each side of the ‘iron curtain’ could meet each other freely for the first time, and many of them became EU members, making travel much easier. WSCF was a space to build trust and relationships; I remember the reaction as the second Iraq war split the ERC as some people from former communist states sympathised with American plans to overthrow a dictator, while the ‘westerners’ felt the conflict was wrong.

As a Catholic, the pain that we still can't share **intercommunion** is real for me. At a CESR conference in Slovakia one of the friars brought the sheets with circle holes, from which the hosts

SCM is “the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other”: a space to nurture a passion for justice and peace that has never left me and has shaped my future life decisions.



had been punched out. We could not share the bread but we shared the edges round the bread in our free time. It is not enough, but it is a symbol of how far we have still to go.

SS: Memory has a wonderful ability to blot out the difficult and the ugly. So this question is the most difficult for me. Ireland, of course, was a divided country and different circumstances pertained in each part. The part that most influenced me experienced great poverty and almost no student grants were available, so most students came from relatively privileged backgrounds. There were a few very bright ones from very modest backgrounds who had scholarships and some who had to struggle very hard to survive. The SCM was a mix of all three groups and its **fellowship found ways of supporting those who had little if any spare cash**. And we did it in the most elegant of ways without, I hope and believe, being patronising.

Because it was a poor country, there was **very little employment for College graduates**. I was the only one of my year and my class who got a job in Ireland – thanks to the SCM. In that restricted job market there was a measure of discrimination, for almost no Trinity College graduates in the 1950s were employed in the civil or public Services.

The mention of discrimination brings to mind a third challenge. The SCM was an all island of Ireland organisation. That meant that it embraced students of **very different political loyalties** yet belonging to the same denomination or Church. Maintaining fellowship and inclusiveness needed to be a particularly creative exercise of such difficulty that thirty years later it led to the demise of the SCM in Ireland.

There was an interior challenge for all of us in the **tension between poverty and privilege**. Poverty was all around us in what were regarded as the worst slums in Europe. Even those who came to College poor were transformed into a privileged elite through education. We all still live with that tension, even after 50 years.

Also there was the challenge of living in a society deeply divided over both religious and political matters. I was a student during the IRA campaign of the 1950s. My first College bedroom was in a basement, its window at ground level. I slept with a weapon under my bed.

*I was the only one of my year and my class who got a job in Ireland
– thanks to the SCM.*

What hopes & visions did you have for the future? What happened to them?

KW: **Green issues** are more important now. Then, recycling paper and glass was quite radical, and you could only get fair-trade coffee in specialist stores, so SCMs doing these things were the avant-garde. Cheap flights didn't exist, so you had to go by coach to get around Europe on a budget. But getting around is the only way to learn.

I started on the Executive Committee (Ex-Co) at the 1999 General Assembly (GA) in Beirut. A Lebanese girl said "peace has come to our country, now we have McDonalds". The Africa secretary at the time was from Rwanda and my best memory of Ex-Co is hugging him at the sign of peace during mass in a church in Soweto in 2001. Members of the congregation stared – to see a white girl hugging a black man in church – when they were growing up, that seemed an impossible dream.

I'd say our vision of **global peace and justice** is the same; the focus has shifted from East Timor to Sri Lanka, Southern Sudan to Darfur, Rwanda to Congo.

Making friends through WSCF gives you a personal stake in overcoming such conflict.

SS: A much greater **unity between Christians**: The election of Pope John XXIII in 1958 gave us all that hope and expectation. It has been greatly realised on the ground and disappointingly less realised, and sometimes frustrated, nearer to the top of the systems and institutions.

Realising Europe as an undivided, un-warring entity: Many of us born before the Second World War, if not all, wanted to create **a Europe of peace** and if possible, of plenty. Much has been achieved both politically and economically to put flesh on that vision.

A **less divided world**: Colonialism was coming to an end. Ireland was regarded as a pioneer of independence by the newly independent nations of Africa and Asia. For some it has worked. For others, it hasn't. The United Nations was an inspirational organisation. We willed it to succeed where

the League of Nations had failed. Verdict – some success, much failure.

We envisioned a **world free from nuclear warfare**. The balance of terror was a frightening policy. So far, nuclear use for military purposes has not happened. Weapons have proliferated but not been used. You might say – some success.

We desired a **just world order** in which might is not the determiner of right. We are a long way from that. The instruments of oppression have become more subtle. Much aid is hypocritically controlled. Capitalism has proven to be as humanly corrupting as communism. It was a great SCM guru who said, after he returned from China in 1952/3, that China may well hold the clue to both political and economic world order. He was Tom BARKER, Irish Secretary 1911-13 and 1931-32.

At a personal level: a life of usefulness and faithfulness as determined by the criteria of the Kingdom. An evaluation of these belongs to others and to God.

In the question and answer time following this discussion, the panel participants from current SCMs as well as the participants stressed the need for students today to slow down, breaking from ever present technology, information overload and the increasing speed of life. Ruth CONWAY reiterated the challenges of the environment, emphasising also that this topic provides an avenue for WSCF and SCM to engage with others outside of our networks. She recommended the book Hell and High Water – Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition by Alistair McINTOSH and challenged all to evaluate how we are living ethically – individually and as groups and organisations.

Dorte KAPPELGAARD, a current student from the Denmark articulated a core point that also captures many of the issues mentioned by Kate and Salters: "Primary pace is the pace of relationship – there is no substitute for communion together".

**Compiled by
Rachael WEBER, using some of her notes in addition to the
submissions from the senior friends*

A Living Pilgrimage – The Taizé Way.



Rachael WEBER is from Virginia and recently accidentally introduced herself to a group of students by saying that she “lives and works for WSCF”, though of course she meant to say that she lives in Budapest and works in the European Regional Office of WSCF.



[HTTP://WWW.LCHWELCOME.ORG/WORSHIP/WORSHIP-FURNISH.HTML](http://www.lchwelcome.org/worship/worship-furnish.html)

Rachael WEBER

“...do everything to render more perceptible for each person the love that God has for all human beings without exception, for all peoples. He [Brother Roger] wished that our little community – through its life and its humble commitment with others - might manifest this mystery. So we brothers would like to take up this challenge, with all those who across the earth are seeking peace.”¹

Brother Alois, Prior of Taizé

From 2-8 August I had the privilege of joining the newly formed Western European Subregion (WESR) on a pilgrimage to highly acclaimed Taizé. WESR had its first gathering last year, during a work camp in Manchester, and currently involves cooperations of the British SCM and ESG (Evangelische StudentInnengemeinde), the SCM in Germany, though they have been trying to include other SCMs in Western Europe in their activities.

The Taizé symbol is a unique cross – a combination of a cross and a descending dove. At the beginning of my week in Taizé, my initial reaction was always to first perceive an odd, sort of modern style, curved cross; I had to focus to see the dove. But by the end of the week, I saw the descending dove of peace or the Holy Spirit (depending on interpretation) much more prominently – the two symbols now permanently enmeshed when I think of Taizé.

Perhaps I sugarcoat things in my reflections (the chocolate addition to the simple Taizé bread and butter breakfasts – making our own pain au chocolat – still echoing positively in my

mind). It has been a few weeks since I have been back, but these impressions remain in me – the transcendence of this living community over the divisions separating us and over the selfish consumerism and artificial speed of Western life and the beauty of spirituality and faith that naturally leads to action.

Church of Living Dialogue

*The dialogue of life is a vital part of any meaningful dialogue. It also functions as an important counterweight to theoretical thinking, because it is first and foremost concerned with alleviating suffering and healing wounds, not with correctness of thought.*² Brother Johannes

The Taizé community was founded in 1940 by Roger Louis SCHUTZ-MARSAUCHE, today known as Brother Roger.³ He found the mostly abandoned village of Taizé on a long distance bike ride from Geneva, raised enough money to purchase a home and, seeking to live out a biblical call to the poor, began to provide a place for political refugees during World War II. Brother Roger initially began praying privately, but gradually the prayer times played an important part in the daily schedule for much of the community – and Brother Roger later set up a Protestant and Catholic monastic community (an ecumenical community today).

Brother Roger saw the divisions in the Church as ridiculous, for Christ came not to create a new religion but to give people communion with God. The brothers seek to live a parable of reconciliation – not only of reconciliation of a divided Christianity but also of the whole



human community.⁴ He said, “Since my youth, I think that I have never lost the intuition that community life could be a sign that God is love, and love alone. Gradually the conviction took shape in me that it was essential to create a community with men determined to give their whole life and who would always try to understand one another and be reconciled, a community where kindness of heart and simplicity would be at the centre of everything.”⁵

Today, about one hundred brothers from 30 countries and Catholic and Protestant backgrounds form the Taizé community, welcoming about tens of thousands of visitors from all backgrounds, mostly young people, each year (especially during the summer and holy week). Some of the brothers live abroad, in Asia, Africa and South America, sharing in the living conditions of the locals and striving “to be a presence of love among the very poor, street children, prisoners, the dying, and those who are wounded by broken relationships, or who have been abandoned.”⁶

Brother Roger’s life, and death, overshadowed much conversation of Taizé (as it does in my brief history here) and clearly he set an example in faith, action, dialogue and ecumenism. Through the daily Bible studies, discussion groups, working teams, prayers and meals together, the Taizé community lifestyle of church together calls and challenges us as individuals and the Church to a dialogue of life. I was surprised at the sense of refreshment I had after leaving, a sense a rejuvenation for ecumenical work (especially that of WSCF).

The archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan WILLIAMS, visited during the week we were at Taizé and he spoke of finding a true sense of Church there: “What often we see most of is the Church in its institutional form and not enough of the Church in its worshipping, communal form. What is realised in a place like this is the Church in its most central reality. I have often spoken of some of those experiences where a Christian can say, ‘I have seen the Church for the first time.’ A person may have spent many years going to church, reading the Bible, saying prayers and yet never quite have seen the Church – the Church which is the new creation, the Church which is the New Jerusalem, the Church which



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is the hope of humanity. And so for that I want to thank you all for your continuing witness. Continue with that life.”⁷

Transcendence of Beauty

Veni Creator Spiritus. Viens, Esprit Créateur. Ven, Espíritu Creador. Come, Creator Spirit. Komm, Schöpfer Geist. Przybądź, Ducho Stworzycielu. Taizé song 13

Silence, broken by the rustle of feet, cracking joints and hidden whispers, as thousands file in for morning prayer – and the Taizé chapel is filled with a spirit of peace. Such a simple, utilitarian chapel extended almost as a warehouse to accommodate so many people, yet so beautiful. From the candles, the creative piling of ‘boxes’, to the orange fabric – a space made elegant.

After a few days, we had scouted the ‘best’ location. In the



middle of the second meeting room, we seemed to be at the meeting point of sound – 4500 voices singing ‘Cantate Domino’ in round, a harmonised prayer sung again and again. A repetition of beauty – of course the harmonies did not always come out so well and the melody prevailed, but to sit in silence or to sing along was transcendent. In one small group meeting, Brother Pedro said, “North Americans tend to get it wrong when they use Taizé songs. They use them for choir concerts and performances. But they are meant to be prayed, sung by all, the quality of sound is not important.”⁸ Wandering in the hills above the monastery of Montserrat outside Barcelona a few days later, I couldn’t help but sing Taizé songs while I hiked – and they flowed out as beautiful prayers (though I’m sure they did not actually sound so nice to any hikers that passed me on the trails).

Icons also are incorporated into Taizé worship life and practice – helping to lead the visitor into mediation; “Icons contribute to the beauty of worship. They are like windows open on the realities of the Kingdom of God, making them present in our prayer on earth...By the faith it expresses, by its beauty and its depth, an icon can create a space of peace and sustain an expectant waiting. It invites us to welcome salvation even in the flesh and in creation.”⁹ In our Bible study, Brother John referred to ‘The Friendship Icon’ and said, “We like to describe the yoke of Christ in this way – Christ’s yoke is his arm draped about your shoulders.”⁴

Simply by providing the community space, the simple songs, the icons, the play of candle light and the structure of silence, Taizé invites all to share in worship. The astounding linguistic abilities of the brothers as well as the languages and translations of the songs and scriptures add an even extra dimension to the beauty – celebrating cultural diversity. In our Bible study, Brother John explained the inadequacy of the translation of the word ‘blessed’ in the Beatitudes in English – and in our discussion groups we farther evaluated this in the context of our different native languages, thinking perhaps the German, ‘selig’, fit the context more accurately.

This living community – from the artistry of efficiently feeding thousands of young people three meals a day to the intercultural atmosphere where every question is encouraged in a genuine search for truth, all on a hilltop, dusty from so much daily trodding, surrounded by green hills and the romantic French countryside – truly is an pillar of living beauty.

A Visit from the Archbishop of Canterbury

The Lord calls folk to Him in many ways, And each has his particular gift from God, Some this, some that, even as He thinks good. -Geoffrey CHAUCER, *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue of the Wife of Bath’s Tale¹⁰

While we were in Taizé, Dr. Rowan WILLIAMS, the archbishop of Canterbury, came to visit and cameras followed him everywhere, even in chapel, breaking normal Taizé rules. As he clamoured awkwardly onto a table at one point, he commented “perfect photo opportunity”. While I am normally not so impressed by church hierarchy (coming from the Church of the Brethren tradition, with the reformed belief in a ‘priesthood of all believers’), I was very inspired by Archbishop WILLIAMS in a question and answer session he held during the meeting. He answered tough questions from the young people present – ranging from homosexuality to prayer – with honesty, intelligence and good humour. To one question about entrance fees to churches, like Canterbury Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, after conferring with the Archbishop of York, John SENTAMU (who was also present), to ask if they also charged fees in York, he commented “solidarity in sin” before explaining the necessity of the fees for restoration costs.

In answer to one question, he described vocation as God calling you to be yourself, your unique self, in a way that isn’t anxious, selfish, or destructive.¹¹ He also found his

In our week in Taizé about 4500 young people had visited; and somehow the promise and challenge of a universal Church could be felt in the spirit present in the community.

vocation as a poet in addition to a priest, as he needed to use words to express faith (and by the way – he has a very nice voice. I would like to listen to him reading his poetry sometime.). Prayer is a stream, he explained, we must step into it and God can deal with all thoughts that come along the way. He has found that those who pray the most tend to be the most aware. WILLIAMS came to Taizé before going to university and explained that “it does shape a vision.”

Communion Together

“The desire for communion with God has been set within the human heart since the dawn of time. The mystery of that communion touches what is most intimate in us, reaching down to the very depths of our being.” Taizé Letter 2004, ‘To the Wellsprings of Joy’

I was awed when I found that I too could accept communion each day in Taizé as it was open to all. This is normal in my Protestant tradition – but I am used to the deeply felt challenges we face in WSCF when discussing the Eucharist in an ecumenical setting. On Friday afternoon, Archbishop WILLIAMS led a special communion service. As Brother John explained in our Bible study, they usually do not like to do this because it emphasises disunity, as the Catholic communion then was offered at another part of the church at the same time. So even Taizé gets caught, needing to appease at times – but they do this in the quest for overall unity.

I was able to receive communion from a female Anglican priest (I diverted especially to her line). Coming from a tradition where we normally are able to have female pastors, I was surprised at how positively this affected me. Perhaps it was because I had only seen brothers around all week, though there are sister orders, the Sisters of St. Andrew, the Polish Ursuline Sisters and the Sisters of St Vincent de Paul, who also serve in Taizé, but they are not ‘Taizé sisters’. As it is for the Church in general, gender roles

also appear to be a challenge for Taizé and form perhaps my main critique. But I know from reading about Brother Roger that females played a large role in the community (for example, the contributions of his sister, Geneviève, and his life and vision was largely influenced by his mother and grandmother) and they still do today (from long term volunteers to the sister orders above). It seems that at one point Brother Roger did intend to create a sister community, but it never happened in reality.¹²

Though it does not compensate, it must also have been someone from Taizé who asked the female Anglican priest to help give communion. Female nuns from the other orders did lead workshops, etc, but were not present, for example, with the brothers in the centre of worship or as visible in the community.

Solidarity in Sin

The Gospel encourages simplicity of life. It calls believers to bring their own desires under control in order to succeed in setting limits, not by constraint but by choice. Taizé Letter from Kenya 2009

Taizé life is vibrant, but what of the churches? This also became one of the informal WESR discussions. Churches throughout Europe and North America complain of dwindling numbers, especially of young people. Are the churches out moded, over compromised, or what are they missing? Taizé seems to suggest new life, issuing a challenge and giving hope. As Archbishop WILLIAMS said, in Taizé they do not patronise young people – modern worship and special services are not necessarily essential to maintain high numbers of young worshipers. Taizé is an example; the services of silent prayer and meditative singing require introspection and are far from easy-access entertainment-style services. There are no easy solutions, as churches look for answers on these questions, but the



example of Taizé should be looked on for encouragement and perhaps accountability.

While discussing the financial crisis, probably while waiting in the line to drop off our dishes in Taizé, someone commented “The Taizé brothers had no blame in the crisis.” No sin of capitalism here – the brothers do not accept regular donations or even inheritances for their livelihood. They live off of their own work – from making pottery in the shop to writing books for publication. All pilgrims who come to Taizé are asked to pay a very small sliding-scale amount depending on their ability and nation of origin (which does not even seem to be enough to cover the simple meals and basic water/electricity costs), though donations are accepted to help cover the costs of pilgrims who cannot pay their own way.

No, the Taizé brothers had no part in the Western accumulation of wealth – rather they separated from it, setting an example. But how to live by this example and spread it? This is a challenge of our Christianity, the challenge I was reminded of and refreshed by in Taizé. Yes, from failing to truly witness our faith as individuals and churches to economic matters, we seem to be in “solidarity in sin” but Taizé seems to show a different way.

Recipe for Taizé Tea

If we are at present undertaking a pilgrimage of trust on earth with young people from every continent, it is because we are aware of how urgent peace is. We can contribute to peace to the extent that we try to respond to the following question by the life we live: Can I become a bearer of trust where I live? Am I ready to understand others better and better? Brother Roger, in a Taizé meeting in 2004

With our WESR group, we discussed previous critics of Taizé – is it truly radical enough? The brothers don’t openly call for all visitors to march in protest or to rally around a specific cause. Compromises are made for visiting officials and there is the challenge of gender equality.

We came to the conclusion that perhaps this type of direct advocacy is not Taizé’s role. Clearly in our Bible studies, we were challenged “So what now will you do?” in response to the devastating need in the world. Clearly they were advocating action – and allowing the seeker to sort out the lifestyle and answer on their own journey for truth. The brothers, by living separately in community, live themselves a radical lifestyle compared to our norms. As Brother John said often, “God is doing something new, and you have to do something too.”

This reminded me somewhat of what we have done at

recent WSCF conferences, always closing with “And what will you do now?” But I guess the answer is up to each participant, up to each of us.

In our week in Taizé about 4500 young people had visited; and somehow the promise and challenge of a universal Church could be felt in the spirit present in the community. In my meeting with others from North America (they always have regional meetings with a brother), someone asked if they would start another Taizé community elsewhere. This also later became a discussion in our WESR group. Taizé will not multiply communities though they do hold meetings throughout the world, meetings called ‘Pilgrimages of Trust on Earth’, gathering thousands of young people. They challenge all pilgrims who come to Taizé and these gatherings, sending all out with the experience of peace, reconciliation, prayer, silence and community. Hence the need for these regional meetings on ‘how to continue when you get home’.

I have tried to search for a recipe for Taizé tea online – at the beginning of the week, the powdered tea mixture offered at breakfast and tea time wasn’t so appealing. But by the second day I looked forward to each sip. Needless to say, google has failed me. Just as Taizé will not multiply their communities and challenges us all to continue in this ‘pilgrimage of trust on earth’ so I will have to make my own tea to share, adapting Taizé’s challenges to daily life. If we had counted, I’m almost sure we sang Taizé song 115 the most during the week, and the echoing words follow me:

The Kingdom of God is Justice and Peace and Joy in the Holy Spirit. Come Lord, and open in us, the gates of your kingdom.

- (Endnotes)
- 1 http://www.taize.fr/en_article3148.html
 - 2 Brother Johannes. *Dialogue and Sharing with Believers of Other Religions: Reflection based on a life-experience in Bangladesh*. Short Writings from Taizé. 9.
 - 3 It seems that before this, from 1937 to 1940, Brother Roger was a leader in the Swiss SCM of WSCF! He directed a spring conference near Geneva on ‘The formation of personality’ in 1940 - “The whole exercise was aimed at encouraging students to develop personal habits and spiritual discipline...At a time when so many others were fighting in Europe and elsewhere, it was also a means of inviting participants to join in a scheme of intercession for peace.” WEISER Thomas and POTTER Philip. *Seeking and Serving the Truth: The First Hundred Years of the World Student Christian Federation*. WCC Publications, Geneva, 1997. 145.
 - 4 Much of my information is taken from notes in my journal. Unfortunately I did not record which brother gave me which piece of information, though I realised later you can find this information also on the Taizé website: <http://www.taize.fr>
 - 5 Brother Roger, ‘God is Love alone’
 - 6 A “parable of community” http://www.taize.fr/en_article6525.html
 - 7 http://www.taize.fr/en_article8248.html
 - 8 These are my paraphrases, taken from my memory and notes.
 - 9 *Icons in worship*. http://www.taize.fr/en_article340.html
 - 10 Given my literary, and not theological (or Anglican) background, I must ashamedly confess that the *Canterbury Tales* always jump first to my mind immediately when I hear of Canterbury even in the context of the Archbishop. But CHAUCER was writing of a pilgrimage (and dialogue) of diverse characters then too...
 - 11 Also from my notes - I could not remember the last word, though I think it was ‘destructive’.
 - 12 BUUCK, Christiane, <http://www.saint-jacques.info/buuck2.htm>

Praying in the Streets

The lines in his face and the light in his eyes seem to translate the expression of his difficult past, but for all his fear (or anxiety) the man expresses hope.

This interreligious prayer walk is designed to promote dialogue, reflection and community. This is one format, and many different methods can be used to adapt it to each groups' needs. The walk contains the following optional parts, to be used in combination: readings of religious or related texts, prayers from different traditions focusing on one topic, moments of silence for prayer and reflection, sharing musical traditions, opportunities for verbal reflection and dialogue.

This combines ideas for both common and joint prayer. In common prayer each religious group present shares an aspect of their worship tradition with the others. In joint prayer, a symbolic action, reading and/or prayer is done, and it is not particular to any of the specific traditions present. To quote 2 tips from *Living Faiths Together* (see page 36):

- 1) "A common prayer ensures the distinctiveness of each tradition. On the other hand, it may emphasise difference rather than togetherness, leaving those present observers rather than participants."
- 2) "A joint prayer raises theological questions about the relation of religions to each other and critics may say that these ceremonies obscure the distinctiveness of religions. It is important to know your personal and your groups' expectations and borders, to know what kind of prayer you are ready to engage in."

To process this interreligious exchange, we suggest having a time of discussion and reflection both before, during and after the prayer walk, allowing the joint experience to have full effect and giving all those who join the opportunity to share their feelings, fears and joys experienced both before, in anticipation of the walk, and after, as a reflection.

Begin at a meeting place, perhaps a community centre, coffee shop or personal home. Pause at different places throughout the walk, whether a quiet alley, a city park or on a pedestrian street for discussion, singing, prayer and contemplation together (depending on how you structure it). Be sure to plan the walk and stopping points ahead of time (taking into account the need to face towards Mecca for Muslim participants or towards Jerusalem for Jewish participants – normally south-east). All should bring colorful scarfs, blankets or mats to sit on, as well as prayer or song materials as needed. The poem, *To Be Lost in the Call*, by Persian Sufi Poet Rumi (translated by Kabir HELMINSKI), which is divided in 2 parts for the readings, should be printed for all. In any place, other readings, prayers or actions could be substituted.

Open with these readings. Ask different participants to read them.

- *If you call for understanding [and] raise your voice for discernment, if you seek it like silver, and hunt for it like treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and you will find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth [come] knowledge and discernment.* The Book of Proverbs 2:4-6
- *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.* Matthew 7:7-8
- *Those who strive towards us, we will guide them to our paths.* Qur'an 29:69
- *Search with sincerity and in the end you will find the truth.* Buddhism
- *The sage who is intent on yoga comes to Brahman without long delay.* Bhagavad-Gita (Hinduism)

Welcoming words and explanation of the walk are given. A song from one or two of the traditions present should be shared.

Reading (part 1 from Rumi): *Lord, said David, since you do not need us, why did you create these two worlds? Reality replied: O prisoner of time, I was a secret treasure of kindness and generosity, and I wished this treasure to be known, so I created a mirror: its shining face, the heart; its darkened back, the world; The back would please you if you've never seen the face. Has anyone ever produced a mirror out of mud and straw? Yet clean away the mud and straw, and a mirror might be revealed. Until the juice ferments a while in the cask, it isn't wine. If you wish your heart to be bright, you must do a little work.*

A time of reflection and prayer together in silence should follow reading. All are sitting on mats or blankets. Afterwards, begin to walk to the first stopping point. Walking can be filled with discussion on reading or continuous silence and prayer for the present community and the city where the walk is taking place.



MUSTAFA ELMAS

Stopping points: At each stopping point a variety of things can be done. Prayers or songs from the traditions present should be shared. Selected news stories or announcements about the local area can be read or a current event briefly discussed. If you have more time, plan a volunteer action within your walk (for example, picking up trash or serving a meal at a local homeless shelter). Proceed with any combination of these activities at each stopping point along the way.

Last stopping point: Close with the ending of Rumi's poem (part 2). *My King addressed the soul of my flesh: You return just as you left. Where are the traces of my gifts? We know that alchemy transforms copper into gold. This Sun doesn't want a crown or robe from God's grace. He is a hat to a hundred bald men, a*

covering for ten who were naked. Jesus sat humbly on the back of an ass, my child! How could a zephyr ride an ass? Spirit, find your way, in seeking lowliness like a stream. Reason, tread the path of selflessness into eternity. Remember God so much that you are forgotten. Let the caller and the called disappear; be lost in the Call.

As after the first reading, a time of reflection and silence should follow, before closing discussion. All are sitting on mats or blankets. Sharing an informal meal together or snacks can provide good closure to the fellowship.

United in Grace –

Art and Theology

The following liturgy combines an ecumenical prayer from both the theology and the art conferences. For the activity, all are given 3 to 5 colored sticky notes and a pen before the worship. A large, empty piece of paper is place in the centre.

Opening Sentence

“I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.”
John 10.15c-16

Song/ chant

Reading: John 4.5-10, 19-30

Responsory

Reader: Christ is the true light that enlightens everyone who comes into the world.

All: You have reconciled all people and things,
O Christ. Strangers, lost ones and divided
humanity; you have drawn all to yourself.

Reader: To everyone who received him, he gave the
power to become children of God.

All: The riches of the glory of God’s mystery has
been made known among the peoples of the
world, even that Christ is in us.

Reader: Glory be to God, Creator, Liberator, Advocate.

All: Teach us to proclaim Christ with wisdom and
seek the maturity of Christ in every person.

Song/chant

Reading: Matthew 5:1-11

Activity: All write new beatitudes, following the pattern,
and then add them to a large piece of paper in the centre,
creating a mozaik.

Silence, writing and placing of beatitudes

Prayers of Intersession with sung response

The Lord’s Prayer in our own languages.

Song/ chant

Closing responses

Leader: From where we are to where you need us,

All: Christ be beside us.

Leader: From what we are to what you can make us,

All: Christ be before us.

Leader: From the mouthing of generalities to making
signs of your kingdom,

All: Christ be beneath us.

Leader: Through the streets of this world to the gates
of heaven,

All: Christ be above us.

Leader: Surround us with your presence, inspire us
with your purpose, confirm
confirm us in your love.

All: AMEN

Blessing

All:

*God’s blessing be yours,
And well may it befall you;
Christ’s blessing be yours,
And well be you entreated;
Spirit’s blessing be yours,
And well spend your lives,
Each day that you rise up,
Each night that you lie down,
And the blessing of God Almighty,
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
Be among us and remain with us always. Amen*

**The worship ends with the blessing. All should
feel free to stay and continue in prayer or to reflect
further on the mozaik of beatitudes. When you are
ready please leave the worship space quietly.**

THE OIL PAINTING MEASURES 70X110CM. IT IS ABSTRACT, WITH ARCHITECTURAL ISLAMIC MOTIVES, CURVED MOVEMENTS AND ARABIC CHARACTERS. THE PAINTING HAS NO INTENTION OF REPRESENTING A FACT OR AN OBJECT SPECIFICALLY, BUT THE WARM AND COLD COLOURS, CHARACTERS AND CURVES COMPOSE HARMONY. THE VIEWER CAN SEE WHAT HE OR SHE WANTS; NO IMPOSITION IS MADE. CHARACTERS FOR SCIENCE, ARCHITECTURE, AND KNOWLEDGE FORM THE SUN, EARTH, SKY AND SEA, ENABLING THE VIEWER TO VISIT SEVERAL WORLDS.

MUHAMMED ALI ÜNAL



Submissions



As the ecumenical journal of the European Region of WSCF, Mozaik aims to provide a forum to explore and share your ideas, experiences and faith. It is a space to take up burning questions from theology, society, culture, education and other arenas; to explore Christian experience; to clear up misinformation; to provide a firm basis for dialogue and cooperation and to suggest innovative answers to the challenges we face.

We accept essays and articles about 10.000-15.000 characters long (including spaces), with endnotes, including some suggested readings when appropriate. For information about format, consult previous Mozaiks.

Mozaik is also a space to share news about your SCMs, to reflect on discipleship and culture and to express your creativity. So we also value shorter articles, interviews, book and film reviews, reflections, and reports from your SCM. Contributions of artwork, poetry, short stories and liturgy are also encouraged.

Gender, Society and Religion

The next Mozaik will follow the October 2009 Gender conference in Romania and will be published in Spring 2010.

The issue will explore how gender and gender equality touch us at the very core of our existence as human beings. Our daily lives, identities and social structures, with their possibilities and limits, are all shaped by our conception of gender.

As a result of migration and globalization, Europe is becoming more heterogeneous, multi-religious and multi-cultural, while still having to deal with the spectre of its colonial past. Traditional conceptions of gender roles are in flux. This situation brings great challenge and promise for European citizens, communities and institutions, demanding an examination of how all can live together in peace, respect and dignity.

If you are interested in contributing to this or any issue of Mozaik, please inform the editors as soon as possible at wscfmozaik@yahoo.co.uk. They will also be able to help you with any questions.

