Religion, politics, and death

Martyrdom and persecution in twentieth-century Latin America

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Abstract

The paper recounts the stories of Christian martyrs in Latin America from the 1920s to the present, so as to illustrate the causes of the killings of both Protestants and Catholics. The review of cases reveals the differences over time, with the Second Vatican Council marking the primary dividing point, as it produced a complex transformation of faith-based social movements in Latin America. The impact of liberation theology recurs in many cases of clergy and lay believers targeted by civil wars and dictatorships.

Keywords Latin America, martyrdom, dictatorship, Civil War, Vatican II.

1. Introduction

In contemporary Christian thought, most discussion of martyrs concerns people who lived either in the first few centuries of the church or during the years after the Protestant Reformation. The term is rarely used for people living in liberal, pluralistic and secular societies today.

However, the reality of martyrdom continues, and not only in countries typically associated with religious persecution. It has evolved in modern times and appeared in novel shapes, sometimes transfiguring partisan struggles and broad political landscapes. Latin American countries in particular have demonstrated a tendency both to create and to memorialize martyrs.

This essay collects and interprets stories of Christians who died for practicing their beliefs. Priests, seminary students, former priests, nuns and laypeople lost their lives while attempting to change the reality surrounding them. Twentieth-century Latin American countries experienced a rapid secularization process in which martyrdom and persecution bore specific features. In the case of Catholics, this experience was associated with transnational church policies. Persecution among Protestants remained constant but was in general more associated with their political stances in a variety of countries and circumstances.

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All the examples presented in this essay were selected attending to two criteria: the death occurred in a Latin American country and the person manifestly belonged to a church, community or religious congregation. I left out cases such as the 1936 death of the Cuban Blessed José López Piteira, long considered a martyr by Catholics, who perished in the Spanish Civil War and was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI along with 497 other people who perished then (Catholic News Agency 2007).

A further consideration in the selection of cases was that these persons' demises all occurred in the twentieth century and stirred up political controversy. Taken together, these stories offer an unusual but revealing way to look at how the political and religious spheres interrelate in modern Western societies.

I treat the accounts of martyrdoms as social facts, in a very Durkheimian fashion. I am following the well-known Thomas theorem inasmuch[2] as Christian communities have defined these martyrdoms as real and, yes, they are real in their social consequences. Here I do not investigate whether the accounts are completely factual or not, since the pressing issue is the meaning placed on the stories. Thus, narratives of martyrdom are at the center of this essay not because all the specific details of the accounts are necessarily true, but because they have been passed down as a sort of mnemonic device, infusing with meaning the recollection of those who died.

One clarification is important for this analysis. The first thirty years of the twentieth century remain part of the pre-Concordat times period of church-state relations in the Catholic Church, and it bears specific features. Militant Catholics, social enterprises derived from the encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* (Avila Espinosa 2005), and strong anti-Protestant movements erupted in some countries, particularly in Mexico after the 1910 revolution. These developments contributed to a confrontational climate, which often led to armed struggles; the most significant case is the 1926-1929 church-state conflict in Mexico, or the so-called "Cristero war" (Quirk 1973; Meyer 2005). At the time, martyrdom and persecution were usually portrayed following the classic early Christian pattern: priests, bishops and lay Catholics were being persecuted for opposing an anti-Christian, impious government (Lopez-Menendez 2016). Thus- the "Mexican martyrdom" (Parsons 2012) became one of the most conspicuous episodes of the time, to be replicated in Spain during the 1936-1939 civil war. Catholics of Mexico and Spain vindicated the cult of Christ the King, originally formulated by Pope Pius XI in *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* (1922) and *Quas Primas* (1925). This understanding of Catholicism rejected nationalism and emphasized the notion that Catholics around the world

[2] The Thomas theorem was formulated in 1928 by William Isaac Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas (1899-1977): If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

must first be subjects of their spiritual ruler (Christ) before giving their allegiance to human ones.

In organizing this essay, I attempted to identify the causes beyond Christian victims' assassinations, torture or disappearances. However, the Chilean, Argentinian, Brazilian and Paraguayan cases make such distinctions murky since Christian militancy – by Catholics and Protestants alike – led many of the faithful to become involved in social movements opposing their governments, sometimes resorting to armed means.

The first half of the twentieth century was, religiously speaking, completely different from the second half. The main issue generating martyrs in the period before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was the conflict between churches and states, followed by the consolidation of Protestant communities in most Latin American countries (Bastian 1994). The killings were mostly perpetrated against those who sought to restore a Christian social order. Catholic militancy in the context of conflicting positions on church-state issues was particularly extreme in Roman Catholic countries with secular governments, such as Mexico (Carpio 2015; Lopez-Menendez 2016).

The situation changed significantly after Vatican II and the follow-up Second Episcopal Conference of Latin America (CELAM II, held in Medellin, Colombia in 1968), which introduced a different relationship between the Catholic Church and dictatorships and coups d'état in the region. An immense number of people died or disappeared in the context of political persecution derived from dictatorial regimes. Given the importance of liberation theology, grey areas are frequent and unavoidable with regard to the cause of such actions, since priests, bishops, archbishops and lay people were murdered or disappeared due to their political *and* religious beliefs at the same time.

In spite of the evident differences between these two varieties of martyrdom, a similar trend must be highlighted: Just as *Quas primas* stated in 1925, most Christians in the second half of the century who testified to their faith did so in the belief that heavenly laws should prevail over human ones. We have Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero's last homily (of 23 March 1980) to remind us:

> I would like to make a special appeal to the men of the army, and specifically to the ranks of the National Guard, the police and the military. Brothers, you come from our own people. You are killing your own brother peasants when any human order to kill must be subordinate to the law of God which says, "Thou shalt not kill." … In the name of God, in the name of this suffering people whose cries rise to heaven more loudly each day, I implore you, I beg you, I order you in the name of God: Stop the repression.

2. Martyrdom in pre-conciliar Roman Catholicism

Until the late 1930s, Latin American martyrdoms were related to attempts to restore a Christian social and political order. One of the best examples is the death of Miguel Pro, S.J., the most famous of Latin American pre-conciliar martyrs. Foremost among the so-called Martyrs of Christ the King, Father Pro became an exemplary figure whose influence stretched as far as Guatemala, Brazil, Belize, Ecuador, Panama and the United States (mainly Texas and Colorado). Father Pro's martyrdom neatly fits the classic tenets: arrested for his alleged participation in an assassination attempt against Mexican President-elect Alvaro Obregon, he faced a firing squad without a proper trial, kneeled and prayed before his death, and faced the squad holding a rosary in his hand and crying "Long live Christ the King!"

National newspapers publicized his execution and he became an instant example of militant anti-Catholicism in secular governments. Pro was not the only priest to die in Mexico (scholars calculate between 80 and 100 priestly victims in the 1926-1929 conflict) (Lopez-Menendez 2016), but his martyrdom remains one of the most telling ones due to the lack of a proper legal procedure and his evident willingness to die for his faith.

In the meantime, the Catholic Church and conservative groups in many countries defended the 'Hispanic and Catholic tradition' of Latin America against Protestant missionaries and communities. They argued that Protestant associations were in fact part of an imperialist (United States) plot to undermine and conquer unions, indigenous communities and youth. This led to confrontations between Catholic groups and communities and Protestant missionaries. Several missionaries died in their efforts to evangelize, such as Jim Elliot (1927-1956), one of five missionaries killed while participating in Operation Auca, an attempt to evangelize the Huaorani people of Ecuador. His death had a strong impact on future evangelistic missions (Long 2019).

3. Protestant martyrs in Latin American democratic struggles, 1916-1962

Moreover, a large number of Protestants from many denominations participated fervently in democratic struggles in their countries: Methodist Pastor Ruben Jaramillo (México, d. 1962), in El Salvador, Evangelical pastor Pedro Bonito and Eulalio Rivera, and the congregation of Nahuizaco, involved in the 1932 insurrection in that country are among the best examples of this pattern. Their deaths, however, are seldom linked to their religious affiliation.

Between 1916 and 1929, nationalism also erupted in the Latin American Protestant milieu and weakened the dependence of Anglo-Saxon support in many countries. This led to the strengthening of national Protestant churches and the creation

of new ones among what Jean Pierre Bastian named the historical Protestant movements and churches, while Pentecostal and Evangelical groups grew in importance, number and influence.

4. Martyrdom and persecution after the Second Vatican Council

If Vatican II paved the way for liberation theology, CELAM II of 1968 strongly supported it and introduced a new strand of martyrdom in the region. Christians and revolutionaries at the same time, people from all walks of life have been referred to as martyrs. Many of them were priests or catechists, pastors or members of religious orders; many others were lay Christians, politicians, members of indigenous communities, human rights advocates and social workers who began to perceive in their worldly vocation a need to reflect their deeply felt religious beliefs. This was particularly so in the case of Catholics. The Vatican Council and CELAM II had created a climate that allowed Catholic faithful to move beyond intimist piety and devotional Catholicism, both features of the 1930-1960 period (Dussell 1979).

Moreover, ecumenism became trendier among Christian militants on the left, while conservatism tended to subside and remained at the margins of these new apostolic demands (Dussel 1981). The preferential option for the poor soon became embodied in the demand for justice; while the Catholic Church renovated itself and the Protestant denominations struggled for democracy, the ferocious wave of dictatorships that swept across Latin America between 1960 and 1994 entangled economic justice, human rights and basic freedoms (CEPLA editors 1977; Arroyo 1996).

Camilo Torres Restrepo is an early example of the conflicting, agonistic experience of Christian militants in the post-conciliar Catholic milieu. Considered a predecessor of liberation theology, he was a Colombian Catholic priest and a member of the National Liberation Army (ELN). His attempts to reconcile Catholicism and Marxist views resulted in his leaving the priesthood to join the armed struggle in his country. He died in his first combat on 15 February 1966. Torres' appeal for the vindication of solidarity and justice was among the first of many that marked a reawakening of the militant Catholic Church (Theisen 1974; Funk 2002).

Latin American 'new' martyrs started proliferating in the 1970s. In Chile, the coup d'état led by Augusto Pinochet claimed its first Christian victims almost immediately, as Fathers Joan Alsina and Gerardo Poblete were detained and killed a few days later (Jorda 2001). Many others disappeared or were tortured and executed between 1973 and 1990. Chilean Christians such as Germán Cortés, lay student of theology and strong proponent of liberation theology (d. 1978 in Villa Grimaldi) and siblings Eduardo and Rafael Vergara Toledo (d. 1985) were militants in the Young Catholic Workers Movement (JOC). The Chilean Catholic Church was very active in the registration, denunciation and litigation of human rights violations in

the country. The Vicaría de la Solidaridad, founded by Bishop Raúl Silva Henriquez in 1976, had an immense impact in the struggle for justice and democracy in Chile and in the region at large. The Vicaría was preceded by the Comité de Cooperación para la Paz (also known as Comité Pro Paz), an ecumenical organization founded in October 1973 by an inter-religious group and led by the Archdiocese of Santiago. Comité Pro Paz was the first active human rights organization in Chile and arguably the first on the continent (Gutiérrez Fuente 1986).

Comité Pro Paz was founded and operated by Christian activists from Lutheran, Pentecostal, Methodist, Orthodox and Catholic communities, along with some Jews. Its members were targeted by the Chilean dictatorship, and the organization was dissolved in response to a demand by Pinochet's government in December 1975. The Vicaría was born the next day (Aranda 2004).

Argentina's situation was somewhat different since the Catholic church took the opposite stance regarding the 1976 coup against President Maria Estela Martinez de Perón and the dictatorship that followed. Scholars agree that the majority of the Catholic hierarchy supported the coup and the junta (the so-called Proceso of 1976-1983). However, this stance was far from unanimous.

In May 1976, only two months after the coup, Fathers Orlando Yorio and Francisco Jalics were arrested (Mallimaci 2013), while French priest Santiago Renevot was expelled from the country. Repression at the time was strong against priests, bishops and members of religious orders, as well as against militants of Catholic organizations, namely the Catholic University Youth and the Young Catholic Workers. Ten of its members disappeared at that time. Later, Ascensionist Fathers Carlos di Pietro and Raúl Rodriguez were arrested in an episode that produced diplomatic tensions between the Argentinian government and the Vatican (Monumento a las víctimas del terrorismo de Estado. Parque de la memoria, 2020). Just a few weeks later, the killing of Bishop Enrique Angelelli in a fake car accident became a major political event. Three of his collaborators had been recently killed in La Rioja. Father Angelelli is now a Servant of God[3], although there seems to be still some opposition to this honour (Siwak 2000). Conservative sectors in Argentina consider him unworthy of the title that Pope Francis gave him in 2015.

Another significant group was the Movement of Priests of the Third World, a group of priests who were also workers and peasants. Many of them abandoned their priestly condition, as Camilo Torres had done in the 1960s, to join armed movements. Such was the case of Saletian Father José Tedeschi (d. 1976), who joined the Revolutionary People´s Army and was killed in Buenos Aires (MIEC-JECL 1976).

[3] A Servant of God is the title given to a candidate for sainthood whose cause is still under investigation, prior to being declared Venerable. It makes part of the Catholic canonization process. (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops n.d.)

The website Mártires Cristianos en Argentina (Gravet 2019) lists some victims of the repression unleashed by the junta. Along these conspicuous names there are those of people who were arrested, disappeared or were assassinated due to their Christian faith and their participation in religious activities. Among those listed are Zulma Zingaretti, a Methodist arrested in 1976 and still missing, and Silvia Wollert (d. 1977), an Evangelical whose remains were identified in 1999 by the Argentinean Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF in Spanish) (EAAF 1999). Many other names vindicate the Christian faith of victims, although not many show direct links between the persecution they suffered and their participation in popular movements against the regime. One such example is Father Francisco Soares (d. 1976), vicar at Our Lady of Carupá in Buenos Aires. Father Soares was arrested along with two workers who belonged to the Navy Union and the wife of one of them, a catechist herself. Father Soares, also a shoemaker, is widely remembered as one of the first ecclesial victims of the junta in Argentina (Morello 2015). He was known among conservative circles as "communist" and "anti-Catholic" because of his open preferential option for the poor. Father Soares' case, along with many others, highlights the difficulty of distinguishing between religious martyrdom and other causes of death after Vatican II.

Other dictatorships in the region exhibited similar patterns of repression. In Paraguay, the long military government of President Alfredo Stroessner (1954-1989) did not have a smooth relationship with the Catholic hierarchy. Bishop Ismael Rolón (d. 2010) became one of the greatest symbols of resistance to the repressive regime which, like most of the countries in the region, participated in the infamous Condor Operation. A particularly gruesome case was that of Albino Amarilla (d. 1981), a peasant catechist in Caazapá and father of nine, who was assassinated by the army because he refused to name some of his companions (Instituto Histórco Centroamericano 1983).

Brazil's situation is somewhat special because of this country's strong connections with the liberation theology, mainly through Bishop Hélder Cámara and theologian Leonardo Boff. Peruvian Gustavo Gutiérrez wrote *Teología de la Liberación* in 1971, but the Brazilian movement was arguably one of the most progressive in the world (Romero 2014). During the military regime of 1964-1985, the Catholic Church took a progressive stance and organized the faithful into Base Ecclesial Communities (CEBs), a decentralized model that encouraged political resistance and action against the consequences of the military regime. CEBs created a different kind of persecution, since the church leadership was more diverse and in close proximity with unions, student organizations and lay Catholics (Romero 2014).

One of the most notorious instances of persecution was that of Father Antonio Henrique Pereira da Silva Nieto (d. 1969). He headed the Catholic University Youth in Recife, in the northern part of Brazil, and was close to Bishop Cámara, who had

received frequent death threats. Father Henrique was kidnapped on 29 May 1969 by police officers of Pernambuco and an anti-Communist police unit. His body was found the next morning; he had been tortured and executed. The case is among those researched by the National Truth Commission, which produced its final report in 2014, long after the rest of the Latin American countries had come to terms with their pasts. Other victims of the military regime whose deaths seem to have been directly linked to their faith are Rodolfo Lunkenbein and Simao Bororo (d. 1976). Lunkenbein was a Salesian priest and Bororo was a lay volunteer working on the indigenous reservation of Meruri; both were killed in the courtyard of the Salesian mission (Brites 2020). Another internationally relevant case was the death of lawyer Franz de Castro Holzwarth (d. 1981), a Dehonian priest who passed as one of the casualties of a shooting. However, his death seems to have been orchestrated to stop him from providing legal aid for prisoners in Jacarei.

5. Civil wars and Christian martyrs in Central America

Civil war and authoritarian regimes were intertwined in most Central American countries. Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras all experienced bloody conflicts from the 1960s onwards. Central America stands out for its dire poverty, violence and rooted, systemic inequality (Dussel 1981; Berryman 1984).

In El Salvador, the smallest country in the region, a ferocious civil war erupted after a series of military-led governments took power starting with the 1932 insurrection cited above. The 1960s and 1970s saw mounting concern about human rights abuses, and starting in 1979, the umbrella organization Frente Farabundo Marti de Liberación Nacional (FMLN) started a civil war in which Christians became deeply involved, mainly attempting to protect human rights victims and refugees, but also on the battle lines.

Some of the most conspicuous cases of martyrdom in Latin America occurred in El Salvador. Among Catholics, there is the death of Father Rutilio Grande, S. J. (d. 1977). He was assassinated by security forces in the small town of Aguilares, fully two years before the war officially started. Three young children witnessed the episode, so his death has been well documented (Cardenal 1985). His canonization process began in March 2014. Grande was a close friend to Archbishop Oscar Romero, and his martyrdom deeply affected the attitudes of the Archbishop, who had been quiet and obedient up to that point. After listening over and over again to stories of poverty, violence and injustice following his longtime friend's execution, Romero started vigorously defending human rights and documenting and denouncing abuses. Romero found in Socorro Jurídico Cristiano (Cristian Legal Aid of El Salvador, founded in 1975) a helping hand. By 1977 it was working at full speed and in 1982 it had over 50,000 open cases.

Socorro Jurídico moved to Mexico after Romero's slaying (1980), and Salvadoran Archbishop Rivera y Damas created his own legal aid organization, Tutela Legal del Arzobispado. Romero's death is probably the most relevant of all martyrdom instances in Latin America since it neatly fits classical martyrial patterns. Moreover, the Archbishop's personal conversion to radical opposition also mirrors that of the Catholic Church in the second half of the century and exemplifies the flourishing of liberation theology (Sobrino 1981).

Romero's strong advocacy for human rights and against violence, social injustice and poverty in the context of civil war put him at odds with the Salvadoran government. The pressure mounted against him until, on 24 March 1980 he was killed while conducting a mass in the chapel of the Hospital of Divine Providence, in San Salvador. He was beatified in 2015 and canonized in 2018.

Salvadoran martyrs fit neatly into the Tertullian canon of martyrs begetting more Christian martyrs, as Grande's and Romero's fates inspired many others to follow. One such case was Lutheran pastor Ernesto Fernandez Espino (d. 1985), killed by the National Salvadoran Army in an attack linked to his work on behalf of refugees and displaced people.

By 1989, the civil war was at its height. Governmental agencies regarded most religious activities with suspicion, and among the leading targets were the Jesuits in charge of Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA). Early in the morning on 15 November 1989, a military command broke into the University premises and attacked the Jesuit residence. Fathers Ignacio Ellacuría (rector), Ignacio Martin-Baró (vice-rector), Segundo Montes, Juan Ramón Moreno, Amando López and Joaquín López y López were all murdered. Elba and Celina Ramos, two women who worked and lived there, died as well in one of the most atrocious crimes in the history of the Latin American Catholic Church (Tojeira 2005; Tamez 2005).

Ellacuría, Martin-Baró and Montes had frequently taken public stands against Salvadoran governmental policies regarding human rights, systemic injustice and poverty. Ellacuría in particular was very vocal about the need to achieve a peace agreement with full respect for victims of violence and to make structural changes to promote true peace. All three were powerful thinkers who left behind a prominent theological legacy (Tojeira 2005). The UCA priests' murders became probably the most contentious case in El Salvador and one of the most difficult in the Inter-American Human Rights system, involving both the Commission and the Inter-American Court. In his final report, the Truth Commission for El Salvador (1993) attributed responsibility for the crimes to high-ranking military officers. However, no individuals were ever identified as the perpetrators. In March 2019, the case was reopened in the Salvadoran courts.

One last case to mention from El Salvador is the rape, torture and execution of three Ursuline nuns and one lay volunteer. Dorothy Kassel, Ita Catherine Ford,

Maura Clark and Jean Donovan were kidnapped, tortured and killed by security personnel in December 1980 (Brett 2018).

Taken together, the five Salvadoran cases mentioned here constitute a compelling portrait of Christian martyrdom in the country. They illustrated the idea of "collective martyrdom," a term often used in reference to the cruel persecution through which El Salvador suffered.

Guatemala has also its share of Christian martyrs in the context of the long civil war that bled the country from 1960 to 1996 (Manewal 2007). In June 1980, members of the National Army executed Father José María Gran Cirera and Domingo del Barrio in Chajul, Quiché. They had been threatened and were accused of collaborating with guerrilla groups.

Stanley Francis Rother (d. 1981) was a priest from Oklahoma City until 1968, when he was assigned to a mission in Guatemala. During the late 1970s, many of his catechists and parishioners died, disappeared or fled the country due to the brutal governmental repression against suspected left-wing supporters. Father Rother received death threats, and then on 28 July 1981, a group of gunmen broke into the rectory of his church in Santiago Atitlán and executed him. He was beatified in 2016. A similar story is that of La Sallian Brother James Miller (d. 1981), killed in Huehuetenango. His teaching among the poor made him a target in a context of appalling violence against Mayan communities (Ruiz Scaperlanda, 2017).

Franciscan Father Tullio Merluzzo and layman Obdulio Arroyo (who belonged to the Third Order of St. Francis) were also victims of the pattern of violence against church workers who endorsed the preferential option for the poor. Like Cirera and Barrio, Father Merluzzo and Arroyo had been accused of collaborating with guerrilla groups – an accusation that would become quite typical in Central America. They were ambushed and killed in early July 1981 (Brett 2018).

In Guatemala, Evangelical Protestantism was seen as counteracting Catholic efforts to advance liberation theology. In general, Evangelicals were much more conservative than in other countries. This trend became even more noticeable during the administration of Efraín Ríos Montt (1982-1983) (Manewal 2017).

Nicaragua holds a special place among the Central American countries for several reasons. Liberation theology was especially strong there and CEBs became an active part of the Sandinista movement which was able to take power in 1979. The Catholic Church in Nicaragua was transformed after the Medellin Conference, and by 1978 the Bishops' Conference in the country took a stance against the Somoza government. Many of the bishops sided with the Frente Sandinista, and most Catholics in the country celebrated the dictator's departure. Catholics then divided into a more progressive wing that helped the Sandinistas win the 1984 elections and a conservative one more aligned with traditional views. In the meantime, the

Ortega regime evolved to reject popular protest. Claims of religious persecution in the country piled up and mass attendants were kidnapped by police agents. In one such instance, Abelardo Mata, Bishop of Esteli, served as mediator helping to win the freedom of Ramón Alcides Peña Silva, parish priest of the church of Jicaro. Alcides had been arrested by the police on 7 December 2019, while returning from a celebration in the church of Nueva Segovia. Many other claims about police abuses against Christians have been in the press during 2018 and 2019, making Nicaragua the only Latin American country where notable persecution continues.

6. Conclusions

In Latin America, the impact of Vatican II cannot be underestimated. Martyrial patterns emerging from the late 1960s that continued until the 1990s in most countries of the region show the importance of liberation theology as one of the novelties encouraged by the results of the Council. Military rule, violence, poverty, inequality and structural injustices in the region all motivated many Catholic clergy and leaders in other Christian denominations to take a stand and defend those in need. The shift in theological point of view remains one of the key factors explaining the large number of violent deaths suffered by Christians during this time period, thus "extending" the concept of martyrdom into new debates and characters (Cattagio 2020, 446).

Latin America remains one of the most violent regions of the world. According to the lay Catholic website *Aleteia*, the increase in delinquency on the continent poses significant challenges to missionary work. Although dictatorships and civil wars have subsided, in 2017 alone eleven missionaries died (eight priests, a religious brother and two lay volunteers), representing the tragic cost of the insecurity experienced by many. In Mexico, four priests were killed in 2017, along with three in Colombia; one in Brazil and one more in Haiti.

There may be no more official persecution and no martyrdom, but Latin America has become the world's most dangerous continent for missionaries. Most of the victims of violence against Christian believers knew the risks and voluntarily embraced their calling anyhow.

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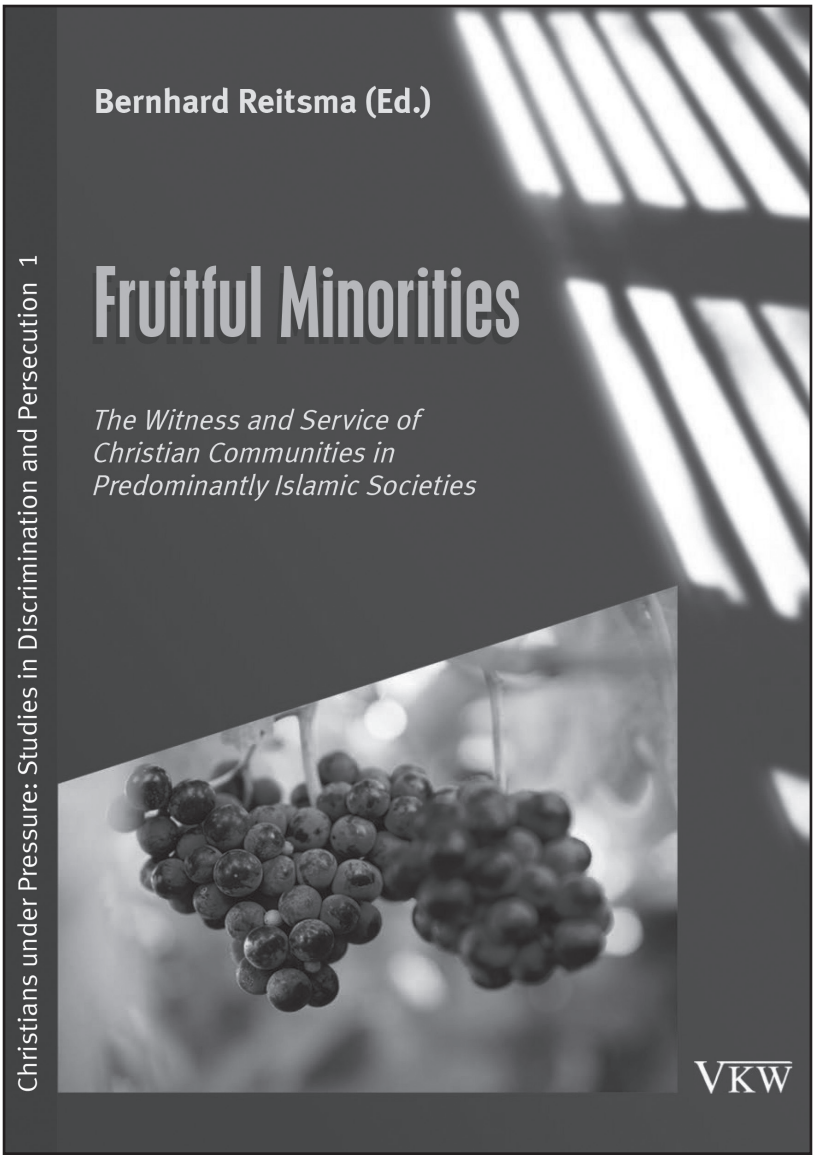

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