

Book reviews

Religion in public spaces: A European perspective

Silvio Ferrari & Sabrina Pastorelli (eds.)

Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012, 408 p., ISBN 978-1409450580, £ 63.00.

This book is part of the Religare-project (www.religareproject.eu), which describes itself as following: “The RELIGARE project is a three-year European research project funded by the European Commission Directorate General Research - Unit L Science, Economy and Society. It comprises 13 universities and research centres from across the European Union and Turkey.” “The RELIGARE project is about religions, belonging, beliefs and secularism in Europe. It examines the legal rules protecting or limiting (constraining) the experiences of religious or other belief-based communities.”

The Series “Cultural Diversity and Law in Association with RELIGARE” already contains “A Test of Faith? Religious Diversity and Accommodation in the European Workplace” (2012), and “The Burqa Affair Across Europe” (2013). The books are very expensive and thus only of interest to libraries and researchers.

This book rightfully claims to discuss „the much debated and controversial subject of the presence of religion in the public sphere. Covering a range of very different European countries including Turkey, the UK, Italy and Bulgaria, this book uses comparative case studies to illustrate how practice varies significantly even within Europe.” It is edited by Silvio Ferrari and Sabrina Pastorelli, both teaching at The University of Milan, Italy. Silvio Ferrari is Professor of Canon Law, University of Milan and President, International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies, Italy and is widely published in the areas of church and state in Europe and comparative law of religions. He is an elder statesman in the area of religious freedom research. His younger colleague Sabrina Pastorelli is research fellow at the Institute of International Law – section of Ecclesiastical and Canon Law – University of Milan. She is also a member of the Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités at École Pratique des Hautes Études-Sorbonne and teaching assistant at the Catholic University of Paris – Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences. She has similar interests as Ferrari, but views them more from the point of view of the sociology of religion. The authors come from universities across Europe, eg., in Belgium, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Sweden, Turkey, Great Britain, Denmark, and France. Three come from Canada and the USA.

The book is divided in three parts. The first part is a more theoretical one with contributions by lawyers, philosophers and sociologists on the question of “Religions and Public/Private Divide”. The second and third part discuss 1. concrete topics, 2.

religious dress codes in the public and 3. places of worship. Especially these two latter parts discuss some of the most controversial recent cases from around Europe.

It would be too lengthy to list and discuss all contributions. But taken all contributions together, I agree with German law professor Gerhard Robbers, University of Trier, who writes: "This is a highly important book in a remarkable controversy. Silvio Ferrari and Sabrina Pastorelli present a rich volume full of information, thought, and insight – presenting masterpieces of interdisciplinary research and political guidance. The book is a most valuable contribution to freedom and equality throughout Europe."

Here are my two favourite articles:

1. Alessandro Ferrari presents a brilliant article "Religious Freedom and the Public-Private Divide: A Broken Promise in Europe?" (pp. 71-91). Ferrari is right in criticising (p. 80-81) to define religious freedom according to a majority/minority scheme and based on "social cohesion risks", as they see the problems not as diverse as they are and tend to freeze problems for the future.

2. A great and well researched article is "'Stopp Minarett'? The Controversy over the Building of Minarets in Switzerland: Religious Freedom versus Collective Identity" (pp. 337 -352) by Vincenzo Pacillo.

Now to critical remark on some articles. In "Religion in the European Public Spaces: A Legal Overview" (pp. 139-156) the editor Silvio Ferrari sees "Three European Patterns of relation between States and Religions", 1. where the traditional majority religion still plays a central role (especially in some Catholic and Orthodox countries, 2. the opposite approach, where politics is in the main clearly divided from the former majority religion, and 3. multicultural and multireligious situations, where the second and third largest religions are rather great.

Even though Ferrari states, that there are no pure forms (p. 143). But there are major countries, which do not fit here or which have two approaches in the same country. Germany does not really fit here, because it mixes all three approaches, France follows the 2nd group, but in the former German area Elsass-Lothringen still has one of the strictest examples of the first category, while Greece follows group 1, but in the areas of Thracia following the treaty of Lausanne of 1923, Muslim leaders are paid out of the general taxes.

In the introduction (pp. 1-23) Marie-Claire Foblets states, that you find in the book "two principal scientific approaches drawn upon for the project: legal enquiry and sociological survey" (p. 4). That meanwhile should be standard in religious freedom research. Even though every author has his professional emphasis, I have to admit, that I found some articles mixing the two approaches and at the same time not distinguishing them clearly from the authors personal opinion. Sometimes the legal situation is not described based on original documents and court decisions, but following press releases or opinion pieces, probably because they were

available in English vs. other European languages of a given country. But those reports often mix legal description with opinion of the public or different actors.

As an example “Comparing Burqa Debates in Europe: Sartorial Styles, Religious Prescriptions and Political Ideologies” (pp. 275-294) by Sara Silvestri is not as convincing as Pacillo’s contribution. It only studies the Burqa and headscarf bans only in France and United Kingdom, and much to briefly in “other European countries”.

Too much informations stem from media reports or English reports about non-English-speaking countries. Eg the author speaks about a “headscarf ban” in “certain länders (states)” of Germany (p. 286). There is no headscarf ban in Germany, only some regulations concerning teachers in state schools. Private companies in Germany have to employ women with headscarfs, as several courts have decided. The complicated situation in Germany, diverse in the different states (“Länder”), and in flux due to a decision by the constitutional court, is not adequately described. There seems to be no original research.

On page 288 Sara Silvestri gives a very personal opinion in favour of the burqa and against any ban, and utters the generalisation that people who are against the burqa have not met Muslim women and do not see them as persons (p. 288), unfortunately without giving any proof for this judgement.

She reports that there are Muslim organisations and representatives in Germany that are against Muslims fighting for veils and burquas in public service. That is true of other countries too, and proves, that this is not just a black and white-issue, but often a very complicated matter with a wide range of opinions among people and legislators, and that many of them do not see a good compromise on the market.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher, Director, International Institute for Religious Freedom, Professor of the Sociology of Religion, Chair of the Theological Commission of World Evangelical Alliance

The Lautsi Papers: Multidisciplinary reflections on religious symbols in the public school classroom

Jeroen Temperman (ed.)

Leiden & Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2012, 443 p., ISBN 978-9004222502, US \$ 206.00.

In 2009 the Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the case of Lautsi v. Italy ruled that the compulsory display of a crucifix in the classrooms of Italian public schools violated the children’s right to believe or not to believe, and the right of parents to educate their children in accordance with their own

religious beliefs. However, the Grand Chamber overruled the Chamber's judgment and held that there was not adequate evidence before the Court proving that the display of a crucifix on a classroom wall might have an adverse effect on pupils; and that, in the final analysis, perpetuating such a majority tradition falls within the margin of appreciation of the state. As expected, these judgments (especially the Grand Chamber's) attracted substantial commentary in scholarly circles. This book (Lautsi Papers) provides an informed and critical multidisciplinary commentary on the Lautsi judgments. In the Lautsi Papers the focus is on religious symbols and judges, education and proselytism as well as on comparative perspectives on religious symbols and education. This is followed by specific comments pertaining to Lautsi covering areas such as 'neutrality', 'hate speech' and the 're-thinking of adjudication under the European Convention'.

More specifically, in Part I, the Lautsi Papers present informed findings from a quantitative analysis of the ECtHR cases concerning Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion) of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (the European Convention of Human Rights – ECHR). There is also commentary on the interpretation of the meaning of religious symbols by the judiciary in the context of the pressures and perils that secular courts face when they attempt to give authoritative meaning to religious symbols. Part I concludes with an argument supporting a modest approach to be taken by the ECtHR with regard to matters about which there is a plurality of legitimate options and no consensus amongst States which are members of the Council of Europe. This also qualifies opposition to radical state neutrality as well as the preservation of cultural heritage and collective identity.

In Part II, matters related to symbols, education, indoctrination and proselytism are investigated in the context of the Lautsi judgments. This part begins by criticising the Grand Chamber's denial of any evidence of influence that the display of the crucifix may have on pupils. It is commented that the ECtHR had missed an opportunity to set out and discuss the scope of the standards of Article 2 of Protocol I (which deals with 'every person's right to education' and that 'the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such teaching in conformity with their own religions and philosophical convictions) as they should apply to cases dealing with the influence of the display of religious symbols by the state. Following on this is a lengthy piece calling for the ECtHR to follow a path of 'open neutrality' (which requires the inclusion of all religions and beliefs in public life) as opposed to 'closed neutrality' (which requires the absence of religion from public life). How this relates to the protection of minority rights also makes for an interesting analysis. In the last chapter of Part II a critical analysis is made of the importance to be accorded to 'moral orthodoxy as represented by the majority' versus 'individual rights as represented

by the minority'. The Grand Chamber in *Lautsi* is also criticised from various angles. An example in this regard is the question of whether parental liberties are to be given more weight than the rights of children. The ECtHR's exclusion of any citation of authority for its conclusion that certain symbols such as crucifixes in classrooms are 'passive' is also emphasised.

Part III focuses on religious symbols in the context of neutrality. In this part, the idea of exclusive neutrality is opposed, adding that 'thick conceptions of the good' in public spaces should be avoided. This entails that the separation of church and state should not be understood as a principle that safeguards the public space from any infection of the religious beliefs of its citizens, but as a principle that requires that 'the religious and secular be prevented in exactly the same way from achieving anything like total victory'. Here the value of a 'default choice model' is emphasised. Following on this is a call to go beyond inclusive and exclusive ideas of neutrality. It is argued that constitutional values such as pluralism also have an integral role to play in the analysis of whether crucifixes should be displayed in public school classrooms. The Grand Chamber in *Lautsi*, by arguing only along Catholic persuasive lines, is said to have violated this value of pluralism. Part III ends with an examination of how neutrality is conceived within the ECtHR context generally. Divergent ways in which states have grappled with neutrality, specifically regarding the displaying of religious symbols by state teachers, is also investigated. From this arise the complexities of the concept of neutrality which make for multiple approaches being possible in assessing religious symbols. It would be good to read the first chapter of Part V together with this part where added insights are provided regarding the neutrality argument.

Part IV's theme is 'comparative perspectives on religious symbols and education'. This part begins with a summary of the Canadian jurisprudential approach to this topic, comparing this to approaches taken by the ECtHR. Interesting observations follow regarding the Canadian courts and the ECtHR pertaining to the separation between religion and politics. Following on this is an explanation as to why *Lautsi* serves as a useful guide to the ways in which the display of religious symbols in Romanian state schools violates the religious rights enshrined in the ECHR. The last chapter of this part argues that the crucifix is a religious symbol and its compulsory display in public schools is a state intervention in the sphere of religious freedom which does not qualify the ECtHR to call upon the 'margin of appreciation' doctrine.

In Part V it is the chapter on 'Fundamental Questions' of *Lautsi* that especially presents illuminating postulations in support of the Grand Chamber judgment in *Lautsi* as well as lucid opposition to the general trend of criticism in the *Lautsi Papers*. In this regard one finds credible scrutinisation of radical secularism and good

argumentation in support of tradition and history. This is followed by a chapter supporting the discriminatory effects of religious symbols in the public sphere adding that this may constitute hate speech towards vulnerable groups. The concluding chapter in this part proposes that it is time for the ECtHR to develop a new mode of adjudication which will make it possible to act as a counter-majoritarian institution and set a European standard, without infringing upon state sovereignty.

The plethora of chapters (by an array of scholars from various disciplines) in the Lautsi Papers provides for many important (and contentious) insights pertaining to religious rights and related matters. This work is of the utmost value for those interested in the display of religious symbols (and religious expression) in the public sphere and its inextricable implications for insights related to understanding the ECHR's approach to: the protection of human rights; proselytism; indoctrination; minority and majority rights protection; the parameters of a supranational judiciary; neutrality and the public sphere; children's rights; parental rights; pluralism; the nature of religious symbols; and a general understanding of the mind of the ECtHR (and related complexities) in matters related to religious rights and freedoms. The overwhelming part of the Lautsi Papers reflects a negative view towards the Grand Chamber's judgment in Lautsi, although those chapters in support of the said judgment present convincing argumentation so as to compensate for this imbalance.

Shaun de Freitas, Associate Professor, Department of Constitutional Law and Philosophy of Law, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa

The Routledge handbook of religion and security

Chris Seiple, Dennis R. Hoover & Pauletta Otis (eds.)

New York: Routledge, 2012, 282 p., ISBN 978-0415667449, US\$ 225.

The book is divided into three sections. In part one, nine religious traditions such as Judaism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Shi'a Islam, Sunni Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism were reviewed. In these chapters there is the point that the term 'security' is ambiguous and could not fall in line with religious strategy. Other discussions identify efforts of the Catholic Church in peace missions as it assists security worldwide. The passage shows that Protestantism's diversity and dynamism in relationship to security is difficult to assess because the religious tradition so heavily influenced the development of the contemporary world order. A line of demarcation can be seen here. A sharp difference in faith practices between Shi'a Islam and the adherents of Sunni Islam in regard to terrorist action is also identified. The passage shows that Sunni scholars are against violence and regard the sanctity

of life highly. The three Asian religious tenets considered here (Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism) are very indifferent with regards to security. The implication of this is a looming security challenge that may be experienced in Asia.

In the second part, explorations of religious benefits over against the prevalence violence are keenly emphasized. From feminist perspectives, Muslim-majority countries encouraged women's empowerment which helped in societal reform and thus assisted security. The writer in this passage sees a mediating role in conflict resolution as a way forward in issues that can lead to security problem. Other contributors identify the important impact of agency, institutions and group on security and these can serve as harbingers of peace in issues relating to religion and security.

In part three, religion and security challenges in some particular countries are analysed. The countries discussed are Nigeria, India, Israel, Yugoslavia and Iraq. The religious situation there is identified as sensitive and thus determine crises that pose security threats.

This book is a very timely publication. It covers several ethnoreligious crises as they affect governance, development, politics and security of different countries and becomes global challenges. The authors' views are scholarly and germane to world peace. However, the major criticism about the work is that nearly all the scholars are foreign to the crisis areas and no African scholar is represented. The implication is that when it comes to the discussion of African issues, the information that could be relied upon will simply be secondary. Apart from this, the work is an adequate publication for religion and security.

Oladosu Olusegun Adebolu, African Religions and Comparative Studies, Department of Religious Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

The Young Turk legacy and nation building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey

Erik J. Zürcher

London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010, 358 p., ISBN 978-1848852723, US\$ 32.00.

Erik-Jan Zürcher is a Dutch Professor of Turkish Studies at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. His special interest is in the years from 1880 to 1950 with the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. Zürcher's "Turkey – A Modern History" (1st ed. 2004) is one of the standard works about the recent past of today's Turkey.

"The Young Turk Legacy" is a collection of very diverse articles. Some of them offer very valuable insights to a better understanding of the perception of Christians in Turkey today. They may help to find answers on the puzzle of how the most secular state in the

Muslim world has been pursuing policies that practically yielded the result of almost extinguishing the once numerous Christian population. For this purpose the reader may focus mainly on the articles “The Young Turk Mindset” (pp. 110-123), “Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims and Turkish Nationalists: Identity Politics 1908-38” (pp. 213-235) and “Islam in the Service of the Caliphate and the Secular State” (pp. 271-284).

In a shrinking empire with Christian peoples (like Greek or Serbians) seceding and Muslims from new Christian states fleeing back to Anatolia, for the Ottoman ruler Abdülhamit II (ruled 1878 – 1909) “it made sense to ground this new basis of solidarity in the shared religious heritage of the Muslim solidarity” (p. 274). Abdülhamit’s policy aggravated the tensions with the Christians and finally led to massacres amongst Christians (1894 – 96).

About the movement of the Young Turks, a group of Ottoman officers starting a constitutional revolution in 1908. Zürcher analyzes: “Their collective identity was certainly formed in opposition to non-Muslims” (p. 111). Most of them personally had experienced how large parts of the Empire were lost, culminating in the Balkan Wars of 1912/13. More than this: “With half of the Young Turk leaders hailing from areas lost to the empire in 1911-13” (p. 118) many of them must have had a very personal feeling of being homeless as Ottoman Muslims. So the “new interest in Anatolia” (p. 120) led to a focus to keep this heartland of the Ottomans for the Muslims. Christians within and outside the Empire were perceived as the enemies.

Zürcher challenges the thesis that after a failed common multi-religious Ottoman identity and different from a (pan-) Islamism the Young Turks and especially Atatürk chose a nationalistic Turkism. He states instead that “the Unionists were motivated by a peculiar brand of Ottoman-Muslim nationalism, which was to a very high degree reactive” (p. 230), i.e. reactive to the secessions of Christians and the advance of Christian powers. Though later Mustafa Kemal in fact created a Turkish national state, “the predominance of Muslim nationalism in the formative phase of modern Turkey” (p. 231) seems to be of high importance to understand the very negative perceptions of Christians in Turkey until today.

The Young Turk’s and Mustafa Kemal’s main goal was not to create a pluralistic Western democracy, but to strengthen their state with an inseparable Turkish and Islamic identity. That helps to understand why secular people in Turkey are not necessarily defenders of the rights of Christians.

I recommend the book to every reader who wants to understand the difficult role of Christians in today’s Turkey and is willing to dig a bit deeper.

Wolfgang Haede, Turkey, author of “Faithful Until Death: The Story of Necati Aydin, a Turkish Martyr for Christ”, Living Sacrifice Books, 2012

The Ethics of Evangelism: A philosophical defence of proselytizing and persuasion

Elmer John Thiessen

London: Paternoster; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011, 285 p., ISBN 978-1842277249, US\$ 17.42.

In a multi-cultural world evangelism is often under attack, with those seeking to evangelise sometimes being branded arrogant, ignorant, hypocritical and meddling. Against such a backdrop this unique book asks what sort of evangelism is ethical in a liberal, post-Christian society. Thiessen discusses the immoral practices and attitudes that are sometimes associated with evangelism and then turns his insightful attention to a better way of approaching the subject. Should we try to bring people to Christ or not? He engages in a timely, relevant cultural debate about religion in public and social life. He examines cultural and intellectual objections to evangelism accurately and fairly and provides a thorough philosophical defense for public Christian practice. But the book is no lobbyism. It contains a lot of self criticism and takes it seriously, that unethical evangelism is plain wrong.

Christian witness is no zone free of ethics. Mission needs an ethical framework, if Christians want really to do the will of Jesus. This is the goal of the book: Not to defend proselytizing as such, but only to defend ethical proselytizing: “my overall aim is to provide a philosophical defence of proselytizing, showing that an ethical form of proselytizing is indeed possible” (p. 21).

This is a timely study, as the first ecumenical code of ethics for Christian witness discussed between the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and the World Evangelical Alliance has been recently published. Evangelism and ethics belong together and may not be separated. The same applies to legal and human rights questions related to any propagation of faith and values. Never before has this been studied so much in depth as by Thiessen, who discusses the topic both as an inner-Christian theological question as well as a general legal question with regard to all religions. This most extensive ethical analysis of evangelism to date is an invaluable service to the church as well as to anybody interested in a peaceful society.

Thiessen from Canada gained a Ph.D. from University of Waterloo taught philosophy and religious studies at Medicine Hat College in Alberta for over 35 years and is now Research Professor of Education at Tyndale University College in Toronto. He has written two other books with a similar depth of arguments, ‘Teaching for Commitment: Liberal education, indoctrination, and Christian nurture’ (1993) and ‘In Defence of Religious Schools and Colleges 2001’, in which he proves, that religious education is possible and should be without indoctrination.

He writes from a Christian perspective and defends Christian mission. But his arguments are directed to secular readers as well as adherents of other religions. And his general principles are valid for all kind of spreading a religion or worldview and thus the book is a major contribution to the course of religious freedom.

I think it is vital to understand Thiessen's argument, that proselytizing has a lot in common with many other kinds of advertising and marketing (p. 25). You cannot allow a free society to propagate more or less anything, and then single religions out. I would add: Proselytizing is very closely connected to the human rights of freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of press and others. As long as we insist, that Amnesty and Greenpeace, political parties of any kind, schools and universities, and many more, must be free to reach out to members of a free society, why in the world should religions or the Christian religion be an exception here?

Prof. Dr. Thomas Schirrmacher, Director, International Institute for Religious Freedom, Professor of the Sociology of Religion, Chair of the Theological Commission of World Evangelical Alliance

Durch Leiden geprägt

Ekkehard Graf

Münster: LIT Verlag, 2012, 343 p., ISBN 978-3643115959, €9.90.

Fortunately, the plight of persecuted Christians in many countries worldwide has finally become recognized as a tragic fact in the world of German academics. Whereas Christians in contact with the fellow believers around the world have been painfully aware of the sufferings millions of Christians are subjected to in certain countries and geographical areas, most of the established churches and theological faculties have either ignored or not recognized the problem. Since 1999 the Religious Liberty Commission of the German Evangelical Alliance has been publishing both items of news interest as well as scholarly research on the subject in the German language, and making a broader public more aware of the suffering so many Christians have to bear.

In 2011 I was privileged to advise Ekkehard Graff as the chairman of the German Religious Liberty Commission and the International Institute for Religious Freedom on his doctoral dissertation dealing with the history of suffering of the young Nethanya Church located in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa.

Graf tells the story of how this indigenous church grew from nothing to more than 200,000 believers with more than 1000 full-time workers amidst all kinds of adversity, hatred and persecution. Leading up to this he gives insights into his sources, forms of Hinduism pertinent to the situation in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, India's political, economic and sociological situation, in particular in view of the education system, the

caste system, the oppression of women, the tribal religions and the radical communist Naxalite Movement which all play a role in the suffering of the Nethanya church.

The rapid growth of the Nethanya Church was accompanied from the outset by adversity from various quarters. In a series of case studies Graf describes the various forms of difficulties and persecution the church has had to face throughout the last four decades. He describes the dynamic of being cast out or persecuted by one's family and society through ostracism, material loss and physical abuse even to the extent of being martyred. He points out the oppression originating in the Hindu religion and culture including the particularly vulnerable status of women. He also points out that believers from a tribal background were also persecuted by their coreligionists and by the Naxalite insurgents.

The major analytical contribution Graf has made in this thesis is his assessment of how persecution and suffering influenced the development, the growth, and the strengthening of the Nethanya Church. At the end of his treatise he compares the experience and suffering that the Nethanya Church has made with the suffering for Christ depicted in the New Testament especially in the Pauline letters.

All in all Ekkehard Graf has presented a thorough study of how one church in the modern Indian context is growing by leaps and bounds in spite of – or perhaps because of – severe adversity.

Dr. Paul Murdoch, Tübingen, Germany, Director of Studies in Missiology, Albrecht-Bengel-Haus, Tübingen and Board Member of IIRF

Martyrdom – A very short introduction

Jolyon Mitchell

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, 141 p., ISBN 978-0199585236, US\$ 9.42.

Jolyon Mitchell's addition to the Very Short Introductions series is a surprisingly comprehensive primer to the topic of martyrdom. The perspective that Mitchell takes, as is common these days, is not specific to one religious tradition. Rather, he traces the phenomena of martyrdom in different faiths and across history. Mitchell's stated goal is not to provide a particular theology or philosophy of martyrdom, but rather to 'draw on a wide range of examples to raise questions about martyrdom and to illuminate the different origins, kinds and uses of martyrdom' (p. 4). Mitchell certainly fulfills that aim, but this means that his book is largely descriptive on the one hand, and teasingly provocative on the other without ever really resolving anything. Taken from this perspective, martyrdom is always going to be a way of thinking about particular deaths that is contested and challenged, as different groups seek to legitimize themselves by means of martyr-stories. We learn, certainly, that martyrdom is a

powerful concept for religious and non-religious communities even today, and that it is part of the spiral of religious violence which is such a blight on our world. Mitchell is able to show how martyrdom is sometimes more of a pathology than anything else. The sanctification of war by reading the deaths of those who die in battle in terms of martyrdom is, as Mitchell amply illustrates, deeply problematic.

My question, however, is whether 'martyrdom', in fact a Christian concept patterned on the death of Jesus Christ, is the right descriptor for the broad collection of phenomena under Mitchell's scrutiny. As with many aspects of the (secular liberal) study of religion, the use of a Christianised terminology and criteria leads to the grouping together of many things that are outwardly similar but in such a way as to obscure profound differences. To group together the suicide bomber and an Oscar Romero, for example, makes one wonder whether the concept that provides the connection between the two is really well enough defined. Secular liberalism enjoys a kind of willful blindness to the difference between the two. To be fair to Mitchell, he certainly raises the sort of question, but without attempting to offer us a way forward.

The book is made more attractive by the addition of numerous illustrations and by Mitchell's excellent engagement with artistic and dramatic depictions of martyrdom. Mitchell's writing is both easy and perceptive, and his list of further reading is extensive.

Dr. Michael P. Jensen, Lecturer in Theology, Moore College, Sydney, Australia

Racism: With an essay on caste in India

Thomas Schirrmacher (author), Richard Howell (contributor)

Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, 2012, 120 p., ISBN 978-3862690350.

In "Racism" Thomas Schirrmacher sets about the task of discerning the roots of racism and the theological / ideological constructs that underpin it. Further, Schirrmacher uses science and Biblical material, to destroy the case for racism.

With regard to science, Schirrmacher digs into the literature and scholarship on both sides of the race debate, concluding that the category of race is genetically unsustainable and nonsensical. These are categories based less on biology than on prejudice.

Having traced the history of racism from antiquity to modern times, Schirrmacher gives a panoramic view of racial experiments around the world.

In addressing Israel's Zionism and South Africa's Apartheid, Schirrmacher falls short. With regard to Israel's Zionism and Palestinian responses to it, Schirrmacher does not deal with the atrocities of the state of Israel against Palestinians, both Christians and Muslims. The Palestinian struggle for freedom is unfairly presented as a form of anti-Semitism.

Similarly, his treatment of South African racism and the struggle to end it betrays a Euro centricity that tends to be less harsh in assessing the shortcomings of centuries of democratic practice in Europe, than it is with South Africa in the short time of its democratic journey

To the global picture of racism, Richard Howell adds a further thread to the story in his treatment of the caste system in his home country of India. As in the other versions of racism, religion is mobilised to prop up the idea that the world is divided between the damned and the blessed. Hindu sacred text affirm that: "When a Brahman is born, he springs to light above the world: he is the chief of all creatures, entitled by eminence of birth to the wealth of the world" (2012:95).

Howell traces the religious foundations of the caste system, its symbiotic relations with Indian culture, its survival through the democratisation of India and its persistence in spite of the many struggles waged to end it.

In spite of the fact that the caste mindset exists even within the church in India, Howell affirms that the gospel holds the key to dismantle the caste system.

Both Howell and Schirrmacher make the point that in spite of the persistence of racism in society today, Christianity holds an important antidote in its insistence that in Christ all are equal.

Rev. Moss Ntlba, General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of South Africa

The world's religions in figures: An introduction to international religious demography

Chicester, UK; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013, 376 p., ISBN 978-0470674543. US\$104.95.

Todd M. Johnson & Brian J. Grim

This book is a comprehensive introduction to religious demography, both by way of method and by way of data and results. The first of the three sections offers an introduction to the discipline by describing the religious composition of the world in 1910 and 2010, by trying to rank religious diversity in countries, and by projecting of religious populations from 2010 to 2050. This section is of prime interest for those who want to study the major result, statistics and tables.

The second section provides a discussion of the methodology both for the data of the 'World Religions Database' (WRD) and for the results drawn from it. It includes discussion of terms like 'religion' or 'religious identity', discussion of the sources for the data and also the dynamics of change in existing religious populations.

The third section is made up by "case studies", even though most topics are so broad, that the term seems to be an understatement. The largest 'case study' is the

counting of the global Muslim population, the changes of those in recent history, the future change rates, as well the possible reasons for those changes and the rise of the number of Muslims.

China's religious populations and the situation of the two Sudan's are much shorter 'case studies'. This last section ends with an extended discussion of migration of religious minorities and the resulting religious diasporas in the world.

As we know it from other books and studies of both authors, the book abounds in well done statistical charts, tables, graphs, and figures, always with concise, but clear comments going with them.

Let me give you some of the results, which I found interesting, as samples:

If it were not for Asia, Christianity would be by far the largest religion, from 48.3% in Africa to 92.3% in Latin America. But in Asia with its 4,164 billions only 8.2% of the population are Christians (p. 13).

Muslims otherwise range from 0.3% in Latin America, 1.6% in North America and 5.6% in Europe to 25.9% in Asia and 41.7% in Africa (p. 19).

Hindus instead virtually live all in one region, that is South-central Asia, where they make up 52.9% of the population (p. 24).

Of the 13,7 mio. spiritists worldwide, 9,4 mio. live in Brazil, the rest more or less in the South of Latin America and the Caribbean (pp. 54-55).

Orthodox Christians fell from 7.1% in 1910 to 4% in 2010 (p. 16) and are further declining in numbers and percentage.

In China there are 67 mio. Protestants and 9 mio. Catholics.

Islam and Christianity did grow both in Africa at the expense of animists and folk religions, rarely at the expense of each other (pp. 113, 243-246). There is one exception: In Uganda, one third of those saying they were raised as a Muslim, describe themselves as Christians (pp. 211-212).

Muslims grow twice as fast as the world's population (pp. 233-285), even though the growth is slowing down and will slow down further till 2050. But the growth is only due to the fertility rate, not due to conversions (pp. 113, 277-278), and happens mainly in Africa, not in other continents (p. 113). By 2050, two thirds of Muslims will live in the Asia-Pacific region, with Pakistan as the largest and Indonesia as the second largest Muslim countries (pp. 113, 119-121).

Agnostics will decline from 9.8% in 2010 to 7.3% in 2050, atheists from 2.0% in 2010 to 1.4% in 2050, mainly due to a decrease in East Asia (pp. 122-124).

If one wants to discuss the data undergirding the whole book, one would have to review the 'World Religion Database' (WRD, see pp. 198-204). Even though the books explain a lot about this database and its methodology, the WRD itself is only accessible in the Internet for a price only affordable for institutions.

There are many researchers that back the numbers, there are those that use them because often no others are available, and there are those (like Philip Jenkins) who criticize them in principle and do not use them. Everyone easily will find figures, where he wonders, how they were researched, especially when one knows the specific topic or country well, e.g. if I look at my native country Germany: How is it possible to know that there were 44.100 atheists in Germany in 1910 (p. 43)?

A comprehensive review by a top researcher not connected to WRD in any way, has not been done by anyone, as far as I know, even though Robert D. Woodberry ("World Religion Database: Impressive – but Improvable", *International Bulletin for Missionary Research* 34 [2010] 1: 21-22) did a great job already. (Jennifer Dekker, "World Religion Database", *The Charleston Archives* January 11 (2009) 3. pp. 57-60, <http://eprints.rclis.org/16890/>, concentrates not so much on the validity of the data, but on weaknesses of the website, e.g. search functions. She also lists alternative databases.) This desideratum cannot be filled by my review.

I just would want to make one remark concerning a very specialized topic that leads into the middle of an unsolved debate: The authors count 285,479,000 Evangelicals for 2010, because they do not consider the 583,371,000 Pentecostals and Charismatics to be part of them (pp. 16-17). There might be reasons for distinguishing non-Charismatic Evangelicals and Pentecostal/Charismatic Evangelicals. But in reality it is increasingly impossible to distinguish both, as the Pentecostals/Charismatics are more and more in line with a traditional Evangelical theology, while at the same time non-Charismatic Evangelicals take over style, music and ideas from the other camp. But even more importantly: Both camps more and more work closely together and are in the main represented by the bodies, the national alliances, the regional alliance and the World Evangelical Alliance, that speaks for approximately 600 mio. Christians, thus having the same size as the World Council of Churches. At the Global Christian Forum, the Pentecostal World Fellowship and other Pentecostal associations were asked, to which confessional meeting they would like to go, the Evangelical or an own Pentecostal one. Without any hesitation, they voted for a common meeting with the Evangelicals, seeing themselves as Evangelicals. At the leadership level of national, regional alliances and the WEA, it is no longer possible to distinguish between both camps and most leaders would no longer say, that they belong to either or, but that they just have a certain leaning to the one or the other side.

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