



FEAR NOT!
FEAR NOT!
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FEAR NOT!

NEBAIDIES!

REPORT OF THE
**STATE OF EUROPE
FORUM**

RIGA, LATVIA, MAY 8 & 9, 2015

with

*Tomáš Halík, Andrey Zubov, Tunne Kelam,
Cardinal Pujats, Ainars Bastiks, Jurgis Klottis, Inge Blte, Algis Petronis,
Prabhu Guptara, Evert Van der Poll, Julia Daxat-Purser, Christel Ngnambi,
Antoine Jaumes, Martin Kaonga, Cathy Nobles, Filip Hove Kristensen, Jonathan Tame,
Jeff Fountain, Johannes de Jong, Leo van Doesburg, George Rukhadze*

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Johannes de Jong, George Rukhadze, Ainars Bastiks, Inge Bite &*



SCHUMAN CENTRE
**EUROPEAN
STUDIES**
TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

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FRIDAY MAY 8, ST PETERS CHURCH

19.30, PUBLIC CELEBRATION

with **MC Kristaps Talbergs**;

forum introduction by **Jeff Fountain**

keynote talk by Monsignor Prof. **Tomas Halik**

and the **ARMONICO** youth chamber orchestra conducted by Mr **Normunds Dregis**

with **Iveta Romancāne**, soprano, **Jekaterina Suvorova**, harp



WHY ARE WE HERE?

Jeff Fountain, convenor, State of Europe Forum

TODAY AND TOMORROW, MAY 8TH & 9TH, WE COMMEMORATE an important milestone in European history: the 70th anniversary of the end of World War Two.

For some parts of Europe, that meant jubilation, freedom, reunion with loved ones, the chance to rebuild lives. For others it meant the exchange of one form of occupation for another. True liberation would wait another 45 years or so.

But tomorrow is a double commemoration. For 65 years ago, in Paris, an event took place which would be significant for the liberation that came to eastern Europe 25 years ago. Without this event in Paris, we may not have seen the collapse of communism and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The event I am referring to is the Schuman Declaration, officially recognized as the birth of what we now know as the European Union.

It was the start of a process of ever-closer union of European nations and peoples which became like a magnet for the peoples of eastern Europe, representing freedom and prosperity. It fed the revolution of the human spirit which culminated in the overthrow of communist dictatorships.

For on May 9, 65 years ago, the French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, laid a plan on the table which caught the nations by surprise, to quote a contemporary newspaper headline. This 'Schuman bomb', as others called it, was a plan for the defeated west German nation to become an equal partner with France and other west European nations, in a coal and steel community, bringing those industries necessary for the building of a war machine under an independent authority, thus making war between those nations impossible.

In Schuman's own words, *By pooling basic production and by instituting a new High Authority, whose decisions will bind France, Germany and other member countries, this proposal will lead to the realization of the first concrete foundation of a European federation indispensable to the preservation of peace.*

His speech lasted a mere three minutes, less time than it takes to boil an egg. Yet in those few minutes, Robert Schuman laid the foundations for the European house in which today 500 million Europeans from 28 nations live together in peace. This peace has lasted now for 70 years, an unprecedented period in European history in which war has been the norm.

In truth, the first five years after the cessation of war were anything but peaceful. We must remember the traumatic state of post-war Europe, with broken lives, shattered families, destroyed cities, and individuals racked with hatred, anger, bitterness, confusion, grief, loss, wounds physical and psychological. How could a new start be made? On what values could Europe be rebuilt?

Yes, we all know who won the war. But we need to recognize who won the peace, and the values on which that peace was built. For peace is not to be taken for granted. We must always continue to work for it, make choices for it, and nurture the values that make it possible. That's why tomorrow is a date worth commemorating.

We are all conscious as we come together this year in Riga that peace is more fragile than it seemed to be say two years ago when we gathered in Dublin for this same event. That is why we hold the State of Europe Forum each year in the capital of the country holding the EU presidency: to evaluate the state of Europe in the light of Robert Schuman's original vision of Europe to become a community of peoples deeply rooted in Christian values.

There's another way to answer the question, 'why are we here?'

Its worth reflecting on the question, what might have been, had Schuman and his colleagues not won the peace 65 years ago? Perhaps we would not be here today in a free, democratic nation. Perhaps there would have been no lasting peace, only lasting occupation by one form of totalitarianism or another. Again, that's why the kind of reflection we are engaging in in this forum is not a luxury.

Thank you all for coming and for your contribution to this forum.

A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE CONVENOR'S INTRODUCTION

by Latvian citizen, Vineta Poriņa

In Latvia as in the EU country on the 8th of May we commemorate victims of the WWII and also the win over Nazism. I can imagine that people who are in favor of Russia's present ideology would be very interested to spread it everywhere it is possible, and also to suggest in your speech mention the 9th of May as the end of WWII and even a victory. I am sending the explanation of both of these dates in Latvia's history.

On May 7 1945, Nazi Germany signed capitulation act with the Allied powers. At May 9 separate act was signed with the Soviets. That's why the end of World War II is celebrated in Russia at May 9. Latvian territory at this time was still fighting zone. The German army was encircled in Courland along with Latvian SS Legionnaires. The Soviet army could not capture Courland and Germans only surrendered there after the capitulation in Berlin.

May 9 was the beginning of second Soviet occupation. Latvia was an independent country until 1940 when it was occupied by the Soviet army. On August 23 1939 Latvia was included in the Soviet sphere of interest in secret protocols of the Nazi- Soviet pact. The Soviet army entered Latvia on June 17 1940. Latvian President Karlis Ulmanis decided not to resist because Soviet force was overwhelming and Latvian Army had no chance to withstand the attack. The legitimate Latvian government was placed out-of-order and Karlis Ulmanis was deported and he died in Krasnovodsk (Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan) in 1942. The Soviet occupation regime staged new elections with only one election list. The Communist parliament started socialist reforms and in August 5 Latvia was annexed in the Soviet Union. The Stalinist terror, deportations and killings gave to Latvians a mainly negative stance on the Russians. When in 1941 the German army entered Riga, the Latvian nation, frightened by the Soviet terror, greeted the Germans as liberators.

1944 was year of return for the Soviets in Latvia. The German army retreated and the Soviets pushed to Riga. Many Latvians were forced to

fight in Soviet lines against their Latvian brothers on German side. World war brought enormous losses to Latvia. 150,000 Latvians left Latvia when the Soviets returned. They resided in the Western world mainly in the US, UK and Australia. World war wiped away two important national minorities from Latvia. Baltic Germans emigrated at 1939-1940. 90,000 Jews were killed in the holocaust. Gypsies also were killed in thousands. Latvia lost third of its population as a result of the war.

May 9 is not a victory day for Latvia, since Latvia won nothing in the war. It lost her independence, a third of its population and was under Soviet occupation for 50 years.

However we cannot deny that for Russian speaking population living Latvia victory day is celebrated. Before the war 10% Russians lived in Latvia. Now there are about 30% Russians in Latvia. Such rise is because of Soviet enforced colonization and mass migration. Many of these people don't share Latvian views on the history of World War II and prefer to honour Russia rather than Latvia. Latvia today is divided into two sides Latvian pro-Western side and Russian pro-Moscow side.

FEAR NOT – 25 YEARS LATER

Professor Tomáš Halík, Charles University, Prague

“DON’T BE AFRAID!” –these words were the central message of the first sermon given by Karol Wojtyła, in his new role as head of the Catholic church. Karol Wojtyła ascended the throne of St Peter at a time when the church had long ceased to exercise any power in the world except the power of the word. “How many divisions does the Pope have?” a Soviet leader is said to have once asked with scorn. And yet Pope John Paul II, through the power of the word and his moral influence, became probably the most politically significant pontiff in the entire history of the papacy.

Solidarity, the independent Polish trade union movement, came into being in the atmosphere of the “Polish pope’s” first visit to his homeland. Solidarity - movement, from its establishment in 1980, to its underground activity during the period of military rule and the elections in 1988, represented for world communism a reversal comparable to Stalingrad for Nazism. Marx had dreamed of a “proletarian revolution”, but the emergence of communist regimes in Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and other countries was never the outcome of proletarian revolutions. Possibly the only truly proletarian revolts were the Polish workers’ rebellions against the communist regime.

The new pope’s first homily and his “Don’t be afraid!” in October 1978 meant a great deal to me personally. Just a few hours before, I was secretly ordained priest in a bishop’s private chapel in the then GDR and was about to commence my activity in the “underground church” in Czechoslovakia. “Don’t be afraid!” – these words helped many Christians to realise that Christian witness also involves accepting political co-responsibility for our world, responsibility for freedom, peace and justice in our societies.

On the threshold of the new millennium, the pope asked God and people to forgive the errors and crimes committed by the Catholic church in the course of its lengthy history. That symbolic act was the expression of a certain philosophy of history. The past is not a sealed

tomb in which deeds of the distant past lie like “bruta facta”, like dead facts that can no longer be changed in any way. The past walks alongside us and lives within us. It dwells in our memories and constitutes an important dimension of our existence, our identity. That applies not only to individuals but also to families and cultural communities, such as nations and churches. Cultures are memory communities. Like many things in our bodies and minds, memory too can be “injured”. It can contain things that we prefer to suppress and re-label because they have caused us pain and anxiety. These unhealed scars are often connected with guilt, the memory of having injured someone or of someone injuring us. These traumas can also have a super-individual, historical dimension: consider, for instance, “the history of the nation”, that collective memory which is part of the identity of each of us through many narratives, learning and cultural reminders. There are nations that have lived with a sense of resentment for centuries as a result of wrongs suffered and emotions that explode repeatedly over the ages in horrifying acts of vengeance.

To “come to terms with the communist past means pointing clearly to the “anthropological roots of totalitarianism”, to those forms of behaviour and character traits that enabled the totalitarian regime to survive for so long.

The persuasion that the mere existence of a free market and the privatization of property will give life to a new, better human type is as naive as was the Marxist expectation that this could be reached by collectivization and socialization. Man is simply not primarily determined by economic factors of social development, as Marx thought or as is the belief of some theoreticians of “upside-down Marxism”, the postcommunist market fundamentalists.

I heard a story about Indians who were being removed by colonists from their original settlements and brought to new ones. Before the end of the trip, the Indians asked for a break, explaining: “Our bodies might be almost at the end of the trip, but our souls are still in those old homes. We have to wait for our souls”.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn once answered the question what would follow communism: a very, very long period of healing.

Today not only the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are watching with great concern the attempts of the Kremlin rulers to resurrect the old empire. The ideology of communism died a long time ago in Russia, but old-style Russian nationalism and imperial dreams are still very much alive. The extremely dangerous developments in Putin's authoritarian regime in Russia, including the aggression against Ukraine and the annexation of the Crimea, ought to open the eyes of all "Eurosceptics" and demonstrate the need to enhance the political unity of democratic states in Europe.

The strong political integration of Europe is the only protection for the European nations, not only against external dangers but even more so against an explosion of barbarism within, against the extreme nationalism, chauvinism and xenophobia that are once more raising their ugly heads in the countries of Europe. If the dangerous temptation of national selfishness and isolationism were to triumph in Europe, leading to the tragic collapse of the European Union, the nation states of Europe would not acquire greater sovereignty, but instead would be exposed far more to the forces of chaos and destruction from within.

Since the fall of the atheistic religion of communism, nationalism and national egoism are now the dangerous opium of the nations. The fact that Putin's policies have the support of a great number of Russians proves that although the economic and political conditions of the old Soviet regime have been done away with, the main support of the old regime still remains, namely, *homo sovieticus*, Soviet man. The real strength and weakness of societies lie not in their economic and military power but in the mentality of their citizens.

If the common European home is to be a real home, it cannot be based solely on administration and trade. Culture has a decisive role to play in creating the spiritual and moral biosphere of society. The Communist system in which culture was controlled by ideology was unable to survive in the free global market of ideas. But what will happen to a society whose culture has lost its spiritual dimension and instead is dominated by the commercial entertainments industry?

Europe, our common homeland, the mother of a great culture that gave rise to great dreams but also destructive wars, needs a new generation

of educated people, who will be willing and able to assume responsibility in intellectual and political life. Two years after the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic, its founder President Masaryk declared: We now have a democracy; what we now need are democrats. In like vein we could say: We now have a European Union; what we now need are real Europeans.

Let me remember another personality, connected with the events 25 years ago, which I have the honour to know well too, Czech writer, dissident and later president of my country, Václav Havel. In his celebrated essay "Power of the Powerless," written during the communist period, Václav Havel writes about a greengrocer who displays in his shop window – as was the custom in those days – a poster with Marx and Engels' slogan "Workers of the World, Unite!" to coincide with the anniversary of the Russian October Revolution. What did the greengrocer mean by his action?

The greengrocer didn't intend to proclaim anything about workers and their unity. What the greengrocer was saying to his superiors by the slogan placed among the onions and carrots was: I am a loyal citizen, not a troublemaker. Leave me in peace! I am one of those who regularly takes part in elections in which the Communist Party regularly receives its 99.9 per cent of the votes. The regime can count on me when it needs to present the image of a unanimous and content mass of citizens.

In reality that was the secret of the communist regimes' stability. They were able to rely more on that unwritten covenant between the rulers and the ruled than on the army and the police: if the ruled were apathetic to public life, if they played the game by the rules, then the regime wouldn't interfere too much in their private lives. Both the rulers and the ruled would be content and wouldn't disturb each other. Peace – that empty propaganda word in the Soviet bloc that called itself the "camp of peace" – was the peace of the graveyard. In that climate of moral decay and corruption, there emerged a new type of human being: *homo sovieticus*.

In that atmosphere of constant mutual deception and fear, the only truly dangerous person was the one who, like the child in the story of the emperor's new clothes, unexpectedly stated the simple truth: that the

emperor is naked. I can recall the liberating power of Havel's texts: here were words that revealed the true nature of our everyday reality, concealed behind propaganda Newspeak.

The game of subterfuge was disrupted by the fact that its unwritten rules were uncovered and described. Words received the power of light and became a weapon of light, of the power of the powerless.

If we truly feel responsibility for the future of our nations, we will strive to understand more thoroughly the culture of our own nations in the European context and then strive to enrich, expand and enhance our awareness of our national identity with a European dimension. We need Europeans of the kind that Karol Wojtyla and Václav Havel were. The great project of European unity needs new spiritual strength and intellectual vitality. The Europe of today and tomorrow needs great Europeans.

SATURDAY MAY 9: RADISSON BLU DAUGAVA HOTEL

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Charles Kelley

"IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way."

This is the famous opening paragraph the 1859 novel, "A Tale of Two Cities." The two cities Charles Dickens referred to were London and Paris during the turmoil of the French Revolution. Remarkably, if he were alive today he could use those same words to describe Riga, Tallinn, Prague, Dublin, Copenhagen, Barcelona and Rome. For we live in a day of great contrast. On one hand, immense opportunity yet on the other desperation, confusion and fear.

It is fitting that once a year for women and men of faith and biblical values from all over Europe to gather together to discuss the State of Europe...in terms of economics, politics, social issues, the environment and faith.

The topics are most relevant and the questions that we will attempt to shed light on are:

- How is the political climate in Europe changing? What forces are at work?
- What is the root problem that economics addresses?
- Is Europe becoming post-secular?
- What environmental crises do we face? How should followers of Christ respond?
- Is there a future for democracy in Europe if biblical values are neglected?
- Are we facing a demographic winter? Have Europeans decided to die out? Latvia's fertility rate is among the lowest in the world. What does this mean?

· In light of Russia's aggressive posture and behavior. The Baltic nations are in greater danger today than since the Cold War. Is there a role for churches and followers of the Lord Jesus in peace-making?

· What about ethnic hatred, racism, and hard-core fascism, nationalism and fundamentalism? Are the teachings and examples of Jesus about forgiveness and reconciliation relevant? Are they possible?

Today we will hear many words. Some will inform, others will inspire. Some words may anger us while others give hope. As we participate let's sure to listen for wisdom.

Last night Professor Halik emphasized that Europe needs great Europeans...with spiritual strength and intellectual vitality. I would like to add one virtue. When Aristotle described political greatness, he said it included moral virtue, public spiritedness and practical wisdom which, though rooted in intellectual power, transcends it and helps us bridge the gap between truth and action. And this is what Europe needs.

So...welcome to the 2015 State of Europe Forum.

Charles (Chuck, Karlis) Kelley is a Latvian-American and is founder and president of Bridge Builders International

LIVING TOWARDS SHALOM (THE STORY SO FAR)

Jeff Fountain

'WHAT KIND OF EUROPE DOES GOD WANT?' This was the question in Robert Schuman's mind (perhaps formulated differently) in the last phase of the war as he prepared for what he believed to be the inevitable capitulation of the Germans, and the beginning of the long process of rebuilding Europe from the rubble. On what foundations, he pondered, can we rebuild a continent suffering a severe case of post-trauma stress disorder, with physical and mental wounds, bitterness, hatred, despair, unforgiveness and brokenness on every side?

We have come together once more, building on previous forums in Athens, Dublin, Copenhagen and Budapest, to continue our evaluation of Europe today in the light of Schuman's vision for a 'community of peoples deeply rooted in Christian values'. We will reflect on the values that shaped this remarkable and unprecedented period of 65 years of European peace, while recognizing the challenges and opportunities facing us in the fields of economics, politics, society, religion and environment.

Some years ago I came across this quote attributed to Schuman:

*'We are called to bethink ourselves of the Christian basics of Europe by forming a democratic model of governance which through reconciliation develops into a **community of peoples** in freedom, equality, solidarity and peace and which is **deeply rooted in Christian basic values.**'*

(Now I have a confession to make. I have not been able to track down the original source of this quote. It has all the hallmarks of Schuman's thinking and language, and I don't doubt that it comes from his pen, yet I have not been able to verify the quote. If I was a scholar, I would not be able to use this quote. So I will put on my journalist's hat with the excuse that a good journalist does not reveal his sources. ;-))

Schuman had a vision for Europe's future at a time when Europe was devastated and broken. What is our vision for Europe today? What kind of Europe do we believe God wants?

For surely it is always God's will that his will should be done - on earth, in Europe, 'as it is in heaven.' In other words, it is never God's will for his will *not* to be done. Yet many Christians seem to believe that it is God's will for things to get worse and worse in Europe.

Yet surely Jesus was serious when he told us to pray the Lord's Prayer; and we can't pray the Lord's Prayer if we believe God doesn't want his will to be done on earth, in Europe...

So we need a vision for Europe's future, a vision of what are we *for*, not what we are against; a vision of *shalom*.

In his book, *Living Toward a Vision: Biblical Reflections on Shalom* (1982), Walter Bruggeman declares the church's vocation to be 'shalom, peace, a subversive agenda, undermining systemic evil, stirring the irrepressible hope for freedom and justice'.

Shalom involves a vision of one community embracing all creation. In Ezekiel 34: 25 we read of God making a covenant of shalom with his people. Being on the road to shalom means seeking well-being, embracing the whole, being inclusive, excluding none. It has cosmic, historical-political and personal dimensions. Shalom means right-relatedness.

In Copenhagen three years ago, Tunne Kelam spoke of how Latvia had handled the economic challenge of moving from a communist command economy to free-market economy and suggested we had lessons to learn from the Baltics. We return to that theme today in one of our sessions.

Two years ago in Dublin, Dr Jim Memory spoke about five spheres of crisis. So in our working sessions today, we will seek to develop a vision of 'shalom' or right-relatedness in the fields he identified: economics, politics, society, religion and environment.

Last year in Athens, we drafted a summary of the forum's conclusions in the *Athens Declaration*, included in your information pack today to help us build on last year's discussions. (*see also appendix of this report*)

As we endeavour to formulate our responses to the various spheres of crisis, we suggest we use the lens of 'relational dynamics', using the five

parameters as developed by the Relationships Foundation and presented in your information pack:

DIRECTNESS: The face-to-face-factor in relationships. Important relationships and important situations demand directness, face to face communication. Direct communication stimulates openness and disclosure.

CONTINUITY: The time-factor within the relationship. Knowing people through time, builds trust.

MULTIPLICITY: Meeting people in more places helps us to experience the other person from various angles and helps us to perceive one another at a deeper level and meaning.

PARITY: Power divides people. Parity narrow this differential. The more we experience we live at the same level, the more we experience real communion, mutual respect and trust. It touches the area of shared decision-making.

COMMONALITY: Overlap in values and goals helps us to create a common culture working towards the common goal in a natural way.

•

At the root of history is the One who wills shalom; At its end is the One who calls us to shalom - Walter Bruggeman

Seek the *shalom* of the city (Europe) for in the *shalom* of the city (Europe) you will find your *shalom*. Jer 29:11

THE ROOT PROBLEM¹

Professor Prabhu Gupta

FEW MAINSTREAM ECONOMISTS REGARD THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS of a "school", but the founding fathers of classical economics were people such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Jeremy Bentham, & John Stuart Mill. The founding fathers of neo-classical or "mainstream" economics were people such as Carl Menger, William Stanley Jevons, Leon Walras, John Bates Clark. Since then, "mainstream" economics has been enriched by Keynesians, Austrians (Böhm von Bawerk, Friedrich von Wieser, Mises), Monetarists (Friedman) and Behaviouralists (Gabriel Tarde, Amos Tversky, and Daniel Kahneman).

Mainstream economics may indeed be "moving away from a strict adherence to the holy trinity - *rationality, selfishness, and equilibrium*" - but it is to be doubted how far it has moved.

"Economic Imperialism" 1999 paper by Ed Lazear (later, chief economic adviser to President George W Bush): *"Economics is not only a social science, it is a genuine science. Like the physical sciences, economics uses a methodology that produces refutable implications and tests these implications using solid statistical techniques. In particular, economics stresses three factors that distinguish it from other social sciences: Economists use the construct of rational individuals who engage in maximizing behavior. Economic models adhere strictly to the importance of equilibrium as part of any theory. Finally, a focus on efficiency leads economists to ask questions that other social sciences ignore. These ingredients have allowed economics to invade intellectual territory that was previously deemed to be outside the discipline's realm."*

Is there a connection between mainstream economics and 1) the sovereign debt crisis? 2) excessive levels of executive pay? 3) short termism in share trading? 4) the dominance of the financial economy over the real economy of goods and services? 5) the increasing volatility and vulnerability of our global economic system? ...

NEOCLASSICAL ECONOMICS

¹ <http://www.slideshare.net/PrabhuGuptara/whats-the-root-problem-with-the-discipline-of-economics?related=1>

ECONOMICS

Prabhu Gupta: *The root problem*

Prabhu Gupta: *Transforming capitalism*

Filip Hove Kristensen & Jonathan Tame: *The common good*

Tunne Kelam/Ainars Bastiks/Jurgis Klotis: *Lessons from the Baltics*

believes prices, outputs, and income distribution in markets are determined through supply and demand, which are mediated through a maximization of **utility** by income-constrained individuals and of **profits** by cost-constrained firms who employ available information and factors of production. *Neoclassical economics* also postulates scarcity and “rational” agents (modelled as maximizing their individual welfare), with the “rational choice” for any agent being an exercise in mathematical optimisation (“pareto optimality”).

Criticisms: *Neo-Classical economics* does not focus on explaining the actual world, but instead on describing a "utopia" in which Pareto optimality applies. Do individuals really act “rationally”? Is “economic man” not quite different from the real people that you and I know?

Thorsten Veblen: Neoclassical economics posits that a human being is "a lightning calculator of pleasures and pains, who oscillates like a homogeneous globule of desire of happiness under the impulse of stimuli that shift about the area, but leave him intact".

"Utility is the quality in commodities that makes individuals want to buy them, and the fact that individuals want to buy commodities shows that they have utility"(!)

- Joan Robinson.

Neoclassical economics explains neither mass unemployment nor unused national production capacity. Are all attempts to model a system as complex as a modern economy inherently unrealistic? A famous answer to this criticism is Milton Friedman's claim that theories should be judged by their ability to predict events rather than by the realism of their assumptions ("*Essays in Positive Economics*" III, IV & V)

So what *is* the record? The IMF's 2002 study looked at "consensus forecasts" (the forecasts of large groups of economists) that were made in advance of *sixty* different national recessions in the 1990s. In 97% of the cases the economists did not predict the contraction a year in advance. On those rare occasions when economists did successfully predict recessions, they significantly underestimated their severity - *"How Accurate Are Private Sector Forecasts? Cross-Country Evidence from Consensus Forecasts of Output Growth"*, by Prakash Loungani, IMF, December 2002

THE HISTORY OF ECONOMIC THOUGHT:

- Pre-modern (Greco-Roman, Indian, Persian, Arab, Chinese....)
- Early modern (mercantilist, physiocrat...)
- Modern (Adam Smith and other classical economists of the 18th century)
- NEO-CLASSICAL, ORTHODOX OR MAINSTREAM ECONOMICS
- Post-modern (from the 21st century)?

THE HISTORICAL SCHOOL:

- Founders: Georg Friedrich List, Bruno Hildebrand, Gustav von Schmoller, Max Weber.
- The orientation of most Economics in German universities from the 19th century–dominated not only Northern and Central Europe but also US economics, which was led by holders of German Ph.Ds till about 1900.
- Formed the conceptual and practical basis of the social market economy - for many decades the dominant economic paradigm in most of continental Europe (concerned with social reform and improved conditions for average people during industrialisation).
- The key source of knowledge about human actions and economic matters cannot be economic theorems, logic and self-referential mathematical models; economics can proceed only by careful empirical and historical analysis of politics and society, which are culture-specific: universals are simply not possible

ISLAMIC (JEWISH/CHRISTIAN) ECONOMICS

- What is the Koranic/Jewish/Christian understanding of the best economic goals and policies?

- Of tax? Of interest rates? Of gambling (speculation)? Of monetary commissions while trading in money? Of promissory notes? Of modern (fractional reserve) banking?

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH (1908–2006)

The Affluent Society (1958): voters reaching a certain level of material wealth begin to vote against the common good:

- Coined the term “conventional wisdom” to refer to the orthodox ideas that underpin the conservative consensus.
- In an age of big business, it is unrealistic to think only of markets of the primitive kind.
- Big businesses set their own terms in the marketplace, and use their combined resources e.g. for lobbying and for advertising in supporting demand for their products.
- So individual preferences come to reflect the preferences of entrenched corporations (“dependence effect”).

The economy as a whole tends to become geared to irrational goals.

The New Industrial State (1967): economic decisions are planned by a private bureaucracy, a technostructure of experts, who manipulate marketing and public relations channels.

- This hierarchy is self-serving, profits are no longer the prime motivator, and even managers are not in control: the goals of an affluent society and complicit government serve primarily the irrational technostructure.
- Because they are the new planners, corporations detest risk, requiring steady markets.
- They recruit governments to serve their interests – that is, by creating suitable fiscal and monetary policy.

Public space is simultaneously impoverished.

Economics and Public Purpose (1973) offers a “new socialism” as the solution, reducing inequality by: a) nationalisation of military production & of public services such as healthcare; b) disciplined salary and price controls.

MODERNISATION THEORY

All societies progress through similar stages of development. Today's underdeveloped areas are in a situation paralleling that in which today's developed areas were at some time in the past. "Development" means greater speed along this supposed common path of development - e.g. by investment, technology transfers, and closer integration into the world market.

DEPENDENCY THEORY

Opposed to Modernization Theory:

- Resources flow from a "periphery" of poor and underdeveloped states to a "core" of wealthy states, enriching the wealthy at the expense of the underdeveloped.
- Poor states become poorer, rich states become richer, by the fact of being weaker members of a world market economy. Underdeveloped countries are not merely primitive versions of developed countries, but have unique features and structures of their own which hold them back

WORLD SYSTEMS THEORY/ ANALYSIS/ PERSPECTIVE

- Immanuel Wallerstein traced the rise of "the world system" from the 15th century: Europe's feudal economy suffers a crisis, transforms into a capitalist economy.
- Europe utilizes its advantages and gains control over most of the world economy, presides over the development and spread of industrialisation and financialisation, indirectly resulting in unequal development.
- As the world system extends geographically and intensifies economically, a particular country becomes the world hegemon for a time (Portugal, Spain, France, Netherlands, Britain, and now USA).
- Uses the world system (not nation states) as the primary unit of analysis.
- Core countries focus on higher skill, capital-intensive production, while the rest of the world focuses on low-skill, labour-intensive production and extraction of raw materials
- This constantly reinforces the dominance of the core countries, but the system is dynamic, in part as a result of revolutions in technology: individual states can, over time, move in or out of core/semi-periphery/periphery.

- Considers itself a “knowledge movement” aiming to transcend the structures of knowledge inherited from the 19th century - especially, the divisions within the social sciences, and between the social sciences and history.
- Wishes to transcend the illusory separation of the “three supposedly distinctive arenas” of society/economy/politics (contra “Sphere Sovereignty”)

OTHER PERSPECTIVES:

- Evolutionary Economics
- Feminist economics criticizes the valuation of labour and argues female labour is systemically undervalued
- Green economics criticizes externalized and intangible status of ecosystems and wishes to bring them within the tangible measured capital asset model as natural capital.
- Post-autistic economics criticizes the focus on formal models at the expense of observation and values, arguing for a return to the moral philosophy within which Adam Smith originally located economics as a human science.
- New institutional economics tries to integrate developments in the theory of organizations, of information, and of property rights.
- Institute for New Economic Thinking “to inspire the economics profession to engage the challenges of the 21st century”.

SO THERE ARE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE ROOT PROBLEM!

- We don’t look at the history of economic thought (Historical School...)
- We don’t obey God (Islamic...)
- In our times, big business distorts global priorities (Galbraith)
- Hey, we’ve got to take power seriously (Dependency Theory)
- Look, we’re in a World System!
- It’s all to do with survival (Evolutionary)

RELATIONAL ECONOMICS:

Could the root problem be that Economics does not prioritise relationships?

In the 1980s, Michael Schluter threw up his hands at World Bank's approach to development.

- *The R Factor* (1993): Only through creation of relational markets and democracies will we find personal fulfilment and build a truly stable global order

- *Transforming Capitalism from Within: Relational Business Charter* (2011)

-*After Capitalism* (2012): "The problems of economics are not of a mathematical nature - and so cannot be cured by mathematics. It is the philosophy, the questions of the soul, that must be addressed"-Dr Tomas Sedlacek, Member of the Czech Republic's National Economic Council and former adviser to Vaclav Havel.

Is it possible to build a system that promotes economic well-being, financial stability environmental care, and social cohesion?: www.relationalthinking.net

CREATING JUST WORKPLACES: Transforming Capitalism From Within ²

Prabhu Gupta

A. WHY THE SORTS OF INITIATIVES MOST OF US REPRESENT ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO CREATE JUST WORKPLACES GLOBALLY.

1. They don't take into account the hierarchy of business and political life, which means that big companies have the greatest power and impact:

Big versus small:

- 1,000,000 small companies employed 30 million people
- 90,000 big firms employed 45 million people

Small companies=30; big companies=500 workplaces

If you had a chance of influencing only one company, it is obvious that the bigger company is the better one to try to influence. However, most of us, from the participant list, are involved in small companies. So, however much inspiration and knowledge we gather, our chances of impacting the workplace for the majority of the world's workers is rather small ...unless we can find a way of maximising our impact – and we will look at that....

- **Berkshire Hathaway** bigger than Hungary

Hungary's GDP: \$128.96 billion Berkshire Hathaway's Revenue: \$136.19 billion

- **General Electric** bigger than New Zealand

New Zealand's GDP: \$140.43 billion GE's Revenue: \$151.63 billion

- **Exxon Mobil** is bigger than Thailand

GDP: \$318.85 billion Exxon Mobil's Revenue: \$354.67 billion

Exxon Mobil the world's 30th biggest economy.

- **Walmart** is bigger than Norway

Norway's GDP: \$414.46 billion Walmart's Revenue: \$421.89 billion

Walmart the world's 25th biggest economy.

² <http://www.slideshare.net/PrabhuGuptara/creating-just-workplaces>

2. Whether in small companies or in big ones, such initiatives don't take into account the factor of levels of work and influence:

- a. Individual (personal peace and prosperity)
- b. Teams at Work (harmony, creativity, productivity)
- c. Corporate
- d. Global

B. UNJUST WORKPLACES: A SYMPTOM OF A DEEPER DISEASE!

Other symptoms:

- Financial sector instability
- Already glaring Inequalities growing even further
- Shrinking provision of 'public goods/ services'
- Environmental damage
- Imminent danger of war

Are we in Crisis?

1. Social Challenges to the Global Order:

• *Demography:*

The Demographic Challenge in Asia and Europe, 2014

Singapore 0.6; Hong Kong 1.2; Japan 1.4; Italy 1.4; Germany 1.4

Switzerland 1.55; China 1.55; Self-sustaining population 2.07

Number of children per adult woman (TFR)

• *Community deficit*

Debt mountain: Sovereign Debt; Corporate Debt; Personal Debt

Disengaged Investors

Disembodied welfare

2. Political Challenges to the Global Order

- Disengaged voters - low election voter turnouts (only Italy over 50% in EU elections of 2014), UK 33%, NL 36%
- Identity politics
- Size of multinationals

C. THE NEED FOR A REVOLUTION IN THINKING

A New Framework Understanding of: Personal identity • Work

• Poverty • Development • Technology • Business • Government

Relational Thinking: An Economic Strategy • From debt to equity • Engaged shareholders • Relational companies • Relational Ratings Agency

Relational Companies: • From debt to equity in corporate finance (through the tax system) • Measurement of stakeholder relationships • Relational Ratings Agency • Relational Capital Reporting

Relational Finance: • Ethical basis of return to capital? • Equity vs. debt • Engaged investors • Effective accountability

A New Slogan: *No investment without involvement; No profit without participation; No reward without responsibility*

Responsible Government: • Money supply • Regulation • Foreign Affairs

Relational Welfare: • Rootedness • Co-location of relatives • Family Associations

The Coming “Age of Relationships”

Any movement, to be successful, must touch you intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally... and get you to act! • Comprehensible • Comprehensive • Inspiring • Persuasive (Strategy or overall plan) • “Actionable”: tells you what you can contribute to the movement today

The Relational Thinking Network: a network of SECTORAL networks!
• Schools • Companies • Consultants • Scientists • Technologists • Politicians • Administrators • Lawyers •

The Relational Thinking Network: a network of Regional networks

• UK • South Africa • Singapore • Hong Kong • Australia • USA • (Switzerland)

Some Websites • <http://relationalthinking.net> • www.relationshipsfoundation.org • www.relationalresearch.org • www.relational-analytics.com • www.relationalschools.org

Filip Hove Kristensen & Jonathan Tame: *The common good*

The presentators were invited to share the core similarities and differences between personalism and relational thinking. Kristensen represented Jonas Mortensen, author of a book from which this seminar draws its title. The following contribution comes from the introduction to this book on personalism.

THE COMMON GOOD

WE LIVE IN WHAT WE IN THE WESTERN WORLD CALL A TIME OF CRISIS. A period of economic progress has given way to pessimism and bewilderment. It seems to be broadly agreed that the economic crisis has taken hold and may last several years, and yet there are no clear guidelines as to how we might move on. Simultaneously, the consequences of global climate change have begun to show, especially in the Third World. As far as we can tell, this set of problems seems likely to remain the great challenge for world leaders throughout the present century.

Crises are not something purely negative, though they may be grave enough for those suffering the consequences. One good thing about crises is that they provide an opportunity for us to reconsider our priorities as to what is most important in life. To ponder what we might call the big questions: What is the purpose of our lives and how does one attain a good life? Upon which values should our societies be built, and in what direction are we as a community moving? In a word: What's the point of it all?

The interesting—and depressing—thing is that, with very few exceptions, these big questions are neither asked nor answered by politicians. In the political world, attention has been directed almost exclusively towards the economy, and for several years growth has been the mantra of nearly every political party. It is symptomatic that not even those most critical of capitalism have abandoned the concept of growth, speaking instead of “green growth” or the like.

This puts us in a grotesque situation where politicians greet us in near unison with the message that “citizens must work more hours” because this is what “the economic system” demands, a necessity for our

“welfare.” But at the same time, many of us have found by experience that more work—and more material wealth—does not make us more happy. Quite the contrary. High on the list of things that people regret on their deathbed is having spent too much time working.

It does not take a very extensive or thorough analysis to establish that wealth does not guarantee happiness in life, not by a long shot. To be sure, this insight is by no means new. Wealth does not by necessity equal welfare. Regardless, we have managed to create societies defined to a great extent by economic thought, and it seems that human values have been forced into the background.

In a quiet moment, we might ask ourselves: Are there really no alternatives to working our way out of the crisis? Or to buying more flat screen TV sets? Is this ultimately what will bring about a better life for us? Or might we imagine an approach different from the one offered by the political left and right alike, with slight variation?

Individual or society

The European nation states can, to a varying degree, be seen as a number of attempts to combine the best of what is traditionally called the political “left” and “right”—care for the weak on the one hand and personal freedom on the other. The same may reasonably be said of the more liberal trends in American politics. The terms “left” and “right” usually stand for some variety of the ideological and historical heritage of socialism and liberalism, respectively.

This is not to say that the political left in general is associated with the totalitarian horrors of the 20th century state communism. The point is, rather, that socialism as an intellectual current may take, and indeed has taken, many other, more moderate forms. These forms of moderate socialism have mainly influenced the political left. Conversely, the intellectual heritage from Adam Smith and his economic liberalism is manifested mainly in the political right.

One internationally well-known variety of such left-right synthesis is the so-called “Scandinavian model” which attempts to mold a society in which all citizens share a part, and where “few people have too much,

and still fewer have too little,” as priest and popular educator N. F. S. Grundtvig put it.

For many years the struggle between right and left—between individualism and collectivism—has been the natural point of orientation in any political debate. These have been the models that were ready at hand, and our political solutions have been informed by this opposition—in the sense that one is either in favor of more freedom or of more community. Take, for instance, the sentiment of Democrat liberals in the U.S. that the government should have enough power to actively care for its citizens subject to it, as opposed to the extreme focus on individual autonomy found in the Tea Party movement.

The question is whether this dichotomy is not close to becoming obsolete. In Europe at least, one is bound to wonder sometimes: Have we turned things upside down, and are we moving towards societies that have taken the worst from the left: centralism and bureaucracy—coupled with the worst of the right: selfishness and greed?

It is important that we be aware of the values and the anthropology (philosophy of what a human being is) upon which we wish to build our societies. To be sure, over time ideology as a concept has picked up some very negative connotations—perhaps because many know from experience how rigid systems may prevent flexibility and compromise.

But values and anthropology may also make a positive contribution, providing us with a sense of direction; an inner compass for the individual and a compass to guide society in setting priorities and engaging in the struggles of our time. Such a compass is significant not with a high human cost.

If we as citizens fail to actively choose the values we want influencing our lives and societies, then they will be pushed on us from outside. They may be values such as higher efficiency, more competition, willingness to adapt, all of which stem from an underlying ideology of increased productivity. It may be a growing tendency to account for everything, including human life, in terms of dollars or euros. It may be the management culture of public sectors, where everything is monitored, tested, and evaluated in order to secure the rights of citizens.

There is an alternative

What if there were a school of thought that does not attempt to take the best from different ideologies, but which is in itself a coherent philosophical whole? An anthropology which acknowledges the individual's search for the good life and which simultaneously holds that it is in relation to other people that this search bears fruit? An anthropology which always puts humans at the center, so that ideology, economics, and systems are all secondary? An anthropology in which life is not measured by productivity or by what is of use to society? An anthropology that has driven and still drives social change all over the world?

The first item of good news is that such an anthropology exists. To be sure, it dates back quite a few years and could use a bit of dusting off—at least in some parts of the world, where it has been neglected for many years. But it is still relevant—perhaps now more than ever—and it holds potential for guiding us through the challenges we face concerning matters both national (such as the renewal of public social security) and international (such as peace, reconciliation, and accountable cooperation).

This is why the anthropology in question is called personalism. It was developed during a time when the young nation states had to decide how to treat their citizens. Unlike many other ideologies, personalism does not claim to have an answer ready at hand to all the challenges and problems that we as societies and individuals face. There is no answer book, but rather a collection of principles and guidelines that we may follow when attempting to say how we should treat one another and which role the state and other institutions should play in our societies.

This is why personalism is well suited as a compass in these times, marked as they are by great change in our societies and in the world at large. Globalization, financial crisis, climate change, scarce resources, and new technologies and forms of communication all demand that we make decisions with far-reaching consequences. Personalism offers some points of departure from which to make these decisions, points that are ambitious, but have also shown their applicability in practice.

The next piece of good news is that this anthropology is not so strange to us. Most of us would recognize practical examples of personalism, only perhaps not being aware of the underlying thoughts and values. For instance, personalism forms the backdrop of some of the greatest events of social change the world has seen over the past fifty years. Martin Luther King in the U.S. and the influential archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa were both influenced by a personalist anthropology, as were those who formulated the Declaration of Human Rights after the Second World War.

Likewise, many of the solutions that we intuitively consider sensible are often in tune with a personalist anthropology. One powerful example is found in the legal sphere, where good results have been achieved through so-called victim-offender conferences, which arrange for the perpetrator and the victim of a crime to meet face to face. This is a distinctly personalist way of thinking. Another example, but a negative one, is the nursing sectors of certain countries, where it is broadly agreed that surveillance and documentation have excessively become the order of the day—at the cost of actual care, contact, and conversation.

As we can see, personalism is not merely a philosophy or an ideology that looks interesting on paper. It has proved its worth both as inspiration and as a model for solving problems. In these times when politicians as well as regular citizens lack proper reference points, personalism may serve as a compass to show us the direction in which to move—as societies and individuals alike.

The fundamental values of personalism

Personalism holds a number of fundamental values that are here gathered together into three basic statements.

- Humans are relational and in need of a close and engaged interplay with other humans in larger or smaller communities, in order to thrive and develop our potential.
- Humans are beings that engage, i.e. beings that freely take responsibility for our own lives, but also for our fellow humans and for the community at large.

- Humans have inherent dignity that can never be relativized or diminished, and which our fellow humans and society have no right to suppress or violate.



PLACING PERSONALISM

According to personalism humans are relational, dignified, and engaged beings. The dignified and engaged human person comes into existence through relationship with others.

Personalism is thus on the one hand opposed to individualism, which sees persons as independent from fellow humans – and on the other hand to collectivism which sees persons as subjected to society or community. Personalism emphasizes the individual's freedom and responsibility for his or her own life while simultaneously stressing how humans can practice this responsibility only in relation to others. Conversely, community may never take precedence over the individual. Personalism is also opposed to a materialist anthropology, which claims that humans are reducible to something biological. Personalism holds that humans are spirit as well – not necessarily spirit in a religious sense, but as that which elevates humanity above nature (in the same sense that there used to be in some European languages a distinction between the natural sciences and the sciences of "spirit," which were concerned with "higher things" or with "high culture," conveying the notion that there is a something more to human existence, something accessible to the human intellect.)

Personalism thus stands in opposition to both individualism and collectivism (and thus also to the political ideologies of socialism and liberalism alike). Personalism emphasizes the individual person's freedom and responsibility for his or her own life, while simultaneously stressing that humans can realize this responsibility only in relation to

systems, including states and civil authorities, are only of use in as far as they serve to help individuals unfold their lives. It is therefore not the primary concern of personalists whether the state is large or small, but rather that power be put to the service of humans and that it be decentralized, in order for the individual to have the greatest possible say in the decisions that concern her or him.

Personalism, then, is critical of all systems that incapacitate, alienate, and violate the individual, no matter in whose name these things are done. Systems and institutions should here be taken in the broadest possible sense, including intellectual systems, management systems, and the systems of society at large.

The capacity of humans to engage means that we are able to form and shape our lives through the opportunities and challenges given to us. Human creativity and initiative are resources that are expressed through our personality and can lead to the greatest achievements. According to personalism human potential is inexhaustible since each individual will always have the opportunity to influence the community with his or her ideas and creative responses to life's challenges and dilemmas.

Personalism neglected

In most political contexts, personalism is largely unknown. Among personalists, several models have emerged to explain this lack of a breakthrough. In some cases one might say that personalism faded into the background because a suitable blend of collectivist and individualist trends was found—one which was easily mistaken for personalism. Another reason, no doubt, was the competing worldview of existentialism which, in Jean-Paul Sartre's version, became so popular as to force personalism off the stage.

But has the content of personalism not been carried over into other strands of thought under a different heading, e.g. social liberalism in some countries? There are several points of similarity, but the peculiar—and decisive—aspects of personalism were not carried over into its replacements, among which is also the so-called “third way” of British New Labour, inspired by sociologist Anthony Giddens.

Most importantly, these strands of thought lack an anthropology that would serve as a safeguard against the depersonalization and alienation that continue to show their face time and again.

There are thus many contexts for which the time has come to reintroduce personalism; this is not to claim that this way of thinking will solve all our problems, but rather to suggest that a renewal of our imagination is sorely needed: Is there a different road that we might take? In Europe in particular, a reintroduction of personalism might pertain to the question of the welfare state. It may come as a crucial source of inspiration, given the widespread suggestion that the welfare state, as it was constructed after the Second World War, is nearing the end of its life, and that a replacement must be found.

The thesis of this book

This book's thesis is that we have created a depersonalized society—a society which is increasingly moving away from the very basics, from the close relations between dignified humans engaged in their communities, replacing such things with ideology, economics, systems, institutions. The result is an ever greater mistrust of our fellow citizens and of society itself. This mistrust causes a meltdown of society and leaves us unable to handle the serious challenges we face. This tendency is amplified in a globalized world, where challenges from all over the globe quickly become concrete and present to us all. Our manner of organizing society as separate countries, and as the western world in general, has immediate consequences in remote areas of the world – and vice versa. It is today an inescapable truth that human lives are all interwoven, more so than at any other point in all of history.

THE PERSONALIST ANTHROPOLOGY

- Humans are relational beings in need of a close and engaged interplay with other humans in larger or smaller communities, in order to thrive and develop our potential.
- Humans have the capacity to engage, a capacity that we realize in freely taking responsibility for our own lives, but also for our fellow humans in local communities and in society at large.
- Humans have inherent dignity that can never be relativized or diminished, and which other humans and society have no right to suppress or violate.

The depersonalization that has taken place in society is not part of a malicious conspiracy for which somebody is to blame. It has arisen through the choices—in many cases sensible choices—we as societies have made over the past decades, and in many cases it has crept in quite unnoticed. The mechanisms behind such an almost inevitable development will also be subjected to further enquiry. Against this backdrop, the book will outline the potential contributions of personalism in this situation into which we have brought ourselves. We will not remain at a theoretical level—a number of examples will be provided as to how a personalist anthropology might influence solutions in a number of political areas. These descriptions should not be understood as complete answers or ready-made solutions, since life is not so easily captured in universal or eternal boxes and categories. Rather, they are windows into a way of thinking that may expand our imagination, and they are examples of how our societies might turn out if together we take steps in this direction.

Throughout history personalist thought has sometimes been described as admirable, but nonetheless written off as too naïve when held up against the harsh realities. This is not a valid objection. It is precisely “naïve” persons that have changed the world – people with the courage in an apparently hopeless situation to imagine another possible path, people like Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, and Václav Havel. With such proponents and role models, personalism deserves to be taken seriously and considered afresh.

RELATIONAL THINKING AND PERSONALISM:

Jonathan Tame is director of the Jubilee Centre, a Cambridge-based think tank founded by Dr Michael Schluter, who developed the concept of Relational Thinking. Here he shares about Relational Thinking and its similarities and differences with personalism.

PERSONALISM AND RELATIONAL THINKING SHARE the same understanding of reality, and the same normative values. They also share the same concerns about individualism and collectivism, and many aspects of materialism. Yet they have different starting points. Personalism responds to individualism and collectivism; relational thinking attempts to provide an alternative to capitalism and statism.

The two approaches also have different views of personal & public relationship. relational thinking moves beyond the I-Thou encounter to examine also the third party impact of relationships.

Developed in the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century by thinkers in France, the US, the UK and Germany, *Personalism* stresses the central significance of the person in human affairs, where the person's identity is discovered and defined through their relationships.

Personalism found political expression in the Christian Democratic parties, which held power in a number of European countries after the war, and is still very influential in Germany, France, the Netherlands

WHY IT IS CALLED PERSONALISM

Personalism is a strand of philosophical and political thought which attempts to capture what a human being is – and to then articulate the social and structural consequences. The fact that this anthropology was given the label “personalism” has its historical causes, but primarily it denotes that the human person, and in particular the dignity and engagement and the relationship among persons, is everywhere the point of departure: Humans have inherent dignity, and the good relationship between humans and the engagement of humans in a life of community is essential to the good life and to good societies.

and Poland, as well as in the European Peoples Party in the European

Parliament. Its influence on public policy can be seen in issues like urban planning (small cities in Germany), the strength of trade associations and resistance to embryo research.

Dr Michael Schluter, however, believes Personalism lacks vital dimensions. But, he would add, it could be translated into a coherent political and economic system through a symbiotic relationship with something he calls *Relational Thinking*.

Dr Schluter was an economist with the world bank in East Africa in the 1970's. Observing the social disruption caused by socialism in Tanzania, Marxism in Ethiopia and capitalism in Kenya, he was searching for a biblical alternative. Looking at the Old Testament as an ethical foundation for public life, he noted a remarkable consistency in an apparently random collection of laws. The Jubilee laws for land, the ban on interest, the role of the Levites, political structures, welfare arrangements and military organisation all cohered in a central theme, the key to which he discovered in Jesus' brilliant synopsis of this Mosaic Law in the New Testament: *Love God and neighbour!* The glue of society was love, Jesus implied, or right relationships.

In today's real world, of course, such an answer is considered naïve, impractical and unrealistic. That is not the language of money, economics, politics and military power. It's not a language widely spoken in Moscow or London, Berlin or Paris, Rome or Brussels.

Yet, according to Schluter, it is this imperative to love God and neighbour that provides a biblical alternative to the dominant western ideologies of global capitalism and market socialism. The Big Idea, believes Schluter, is to see the world from the perspective of relationships, which offers the way forward beyond today's pragmatism.

While capitalism was concerned primarily with the deployment and growth of capital, and socialism focused on the role and organisation of the collective, Jesus emphasised the quality of relationships. The Big Idea of Old Testament law was relationships. All these seemingly unrelated Mosaic laws protected and promoted relationships in the long run. In other words, a society should not be evaluated by its GDP, or the

efficiency of its markets, but in how that society fosters healthy relationships.

So relationships are the key both to interpreting and applying biblical law today, and to evaluating society today.

Schluter often challenges his audiences to think of an undeveloped (or 'developing') country. After a few moments, he asks which continent or region they were thinking of. Most think of Africa, Asia or the Caribbean. Then he asks, in what sense did you think of 'undeveloped'? In terms of economics? or of relationships? Which countries are least developed *relationally* these days? Which countries have the highest divorce rates, for example? America and Britain, perhaps?

Schluter calls this language of relationships *Relational Thinking*. He has developed this idea to embrace a wide range of social initiatives and has spelt this out in his writings and speaking.³ So is Relational Thinking just another '-ism'? Is it yet another Christian ideology? Schluter admits that ideologies 'smack of idolatry, solutions apart from salvation, and frameworks of political thought and action which do not acknowledge the Lordship of Christ. While Relational Thinking could perhaps be regarded as an ideology in the sense of flowing from a worldview which is not shared by everybody, it should certainly not be regarded as an autonomous body of human thought.'

Yet he warns that the potential for Relational Thinking's long-term impact on western society will depend on whether or not it stays in touch with its biblical roots. Divorced from biblical teaching, it will lack the essential motivation for building strong social bonds and restoring broken relationships: love for God.

³ Co-author of *The R Factor* and *The R Option*, Dr Schluter has founded the *Relationship Foundation*, the *Jubilee Centre* in Cambridge and the think tank that produces *The Cambridge Papers*. He has initiated a range of projects underway in England and other countries including employment schemes, relationships audits in multinationals, and the *Keep Sunday Special* campaign in England. He has worked with the Scottish Prison Service to promote better warder/prisoner relationships, and advocates 'relational healthcare' and 'relational justice'. The latter views crime as a breakdown of relationship between offender and victim/community.

Relational Thinking shares much common ground with Personalism. Both reject the view of people and nature as just commodities (e.g. people as 'labour', 'human resources' or 'human capital'; or a tree as just 'timber'); that human beings exist primarily for the building up of efficient societies, or that the 'development' of a society should be measured in terms of its economic growth.

Both perspectives reject the idea that individuals can and should be self-sufficient in themselves, economically and psychologically ('the atomic self'); that a person can or should have a different self across different areas of life, or the view that the self has no ultimate significance because it is only a small part of a universal self. Because of the focus on the individual, the common ground between Relational Thinking and Personalism is strongest around lifestyle issues. Both stress that identity, meaning, security and value are found principally in a person's relationships.

However Dr Schluter identifies key differences between Personalism and Relational Thinking, and believes Relational Thinking can point the way forward for Europe in areas where Personalism, he believes, falls short. Personalism, he argues, has not had an answer for the Christian Democratic Parties on key issues in economic policy, for example. 'As Mrs Thatcher puts it in her usual acerbic fashion, "Anything from full-bloodied enterprise on the one-hand to corporatism on the other could be dressed up in the language of Christian Democracy"'.⁴

Neither does Personalism take into account the biblical warning on national and personal debt, as does Relational Thinking—an emphasis which has come into its own most recently. The two views have different starting points, which lead them to different emphases. Personalism is primarily a response to individualism and collectivism. Relational Thinking is primarily a response to Marxism and Capitalism. Personalism is more of a philosophical endeavour to describe what it means to be an authentically human person; Relational Thinking is

⁴ Quoted in Cole, Graham & Schluter, Michael, *'From Personalism to Relationism: Commonalities and Distinctives'*, 2004, on which this section is based. See www.jubilee-centre.org/resources.

more concerned with how social life should be ordered to give maximum benefit to persons in relationship.

This means that Personalism has little to say about group or organisational relationships, and has difficulty addressing the concerns of public policy.

One consequence of the term 'Personalism' has been to focus attention primarily on the individual, especially in an individualistic culture. This is unhelpful if the significance of the person lies in their relationships with others.

Relational Thinking has a more explicit dependence than Personalism on the ethical values of the Judeo-Christian tradition in defining normative values of relevance to persons-in-relation. Relational Thinking draws its inspiration from the shared scriptures of Christians and Jews, especially the Mosaic law. It builds on the values which underpin the political, economic and social life described there, taking proper account of the historical and geographical context. Yet it does not draw exclusively on the Old Testament, as the church also provides a counter-cultural model of relational community.

One question Relational Thinking poses is: How do alternative constitutional arrangements, such as federalism or, negatively, a centralisation of government decision-making, change the pattern of human relating and thus impact on personal well-being?

Schluter believes such questions will help develop the Personalism-Relational Thinking approach into a fully-fledged social paradigm, to challenge materialist-capitalism as the dominant ideology of our day. This challenge is not just at the level of social philosophy, but also at the level of the laws, institutional structures and working practices to which it gives rise.

He seeks a meaningful symbiotic relationship between Personalist thought and Relational Thinking. He believes Relational Thinking provides the needed dynamic for translating Personalism into a coherent political and economic system.

LESSONS FROM THE BALTICS

Jurgis Klotins, Riga City Councillor

LATVIA'S 25 YEARS SINCE REGAINING OF INDEPENDENCE, since 4th of May 1990, when the Supreme Council accepted the declaration that Latvia starts the process to regain the full independence.

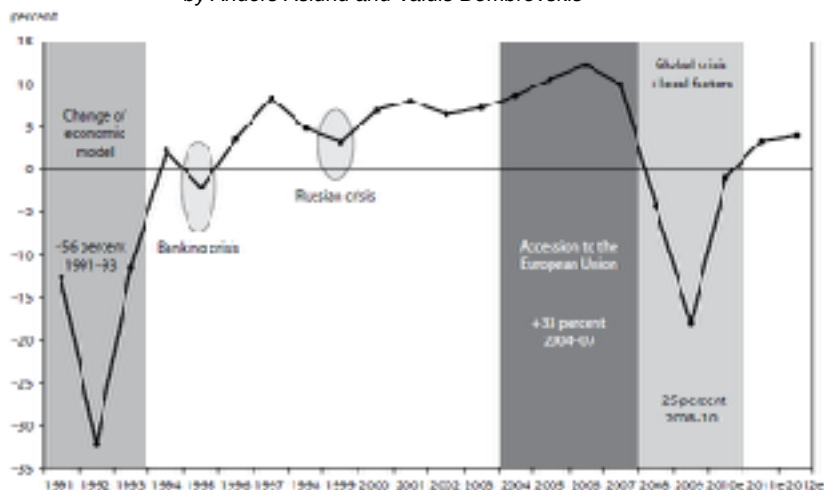
We can look back to 25 years in Latvia's economy:

- Transition from Soviet planning to full market economy in 1990's.
- Privatisation, Fall of GDP 1990 –1993: 49%, extreme inflation.
- Some recall this time as «shock therapy».
- Despite Banking Crisis and Russian Crisis year by year Latvia develops and strengthens its orientation to Western Europe.
- Successful development and joining the NATO and EU.
- Economy grows very fast, even by 8 –10 % a year. But in 2008 the huge crisis starts–GDP falls rapidly.
- Valdis Dombrovskis' plan for overcoming the crisis in action.
- GDP starts to grow again in 2011
- 2014 –Latvia joins Eurozone

Annual GDP growth 1991 -2012

Chart from: «How Latvia Came through the Financial Crisis»

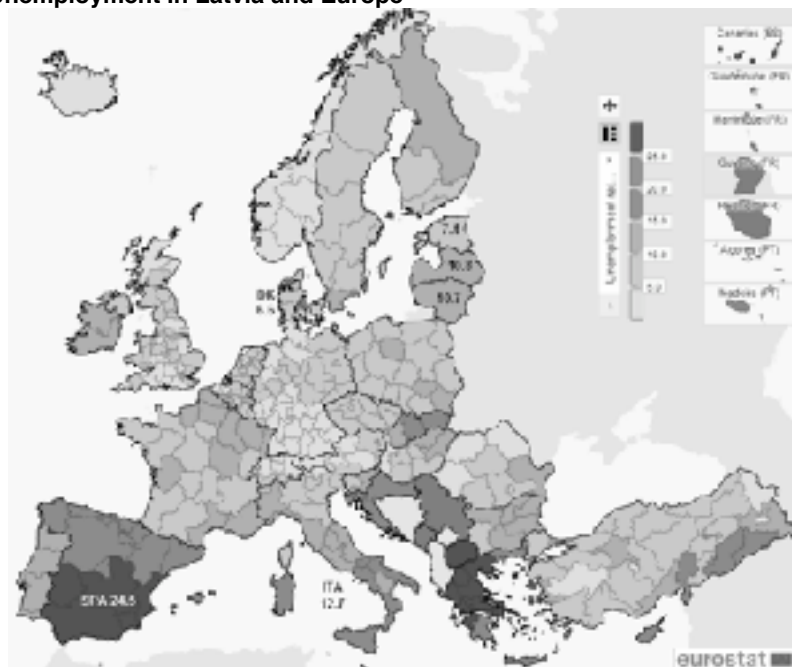
by Anders Åslund and Valdis Dombrovskis



Source: IMF estimates

Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; Ch. 4, Sec. 2010 (accessed on November 28, 2012)

Unemployment in Latvia and Europe

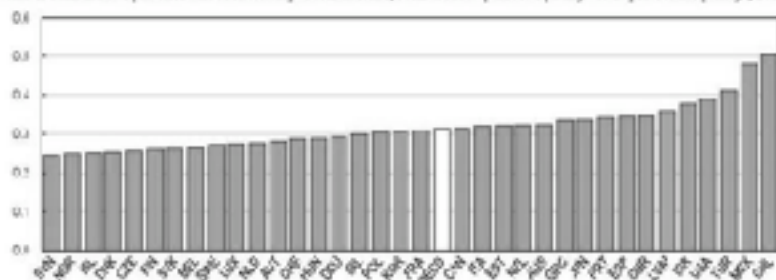


2. Some of the most visible problems

• Income inequality

Figure 7. Income inequality is among the highest compared with OECD countries

Gini coefficient of equivalised household disposable income, scale from 0 "perfect equality" to 1 "perfect inequality", 2010¹



Note: The Gini index is a measure of income inequality. A Gini index of 0 represents perfect equality, while an index of 1 implies perfect inequality. Equivalised household disposable income refers to income after tax and transfers adjusted for household size.

1. 2009 for Japan, 2010 for Belgium, 2012 for Australia, Finland, Hungary, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands and the United States.

2. OECD Secretariat calculations from EU-SILC – preliminary results.

Source: OECD Income Distribution database and OECD calculations

Source: Eurostat <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

• ***Latvia's emigration issue***

210.000 of Latvia's population have left our country in the previous 10 years. Around 10% of Latvia's citizens live outside Latvia and this number is growing. Young people are leaving the country and more often whole families with children. What does it mean for Latvia and Latvian nation?

- loss of people for Latvian economy
- Latvia's demographic problems are getting bigger

The good news is:

-Latvian people abroad feel 'belonging' to Latvia and want to come back, if economical and social circumstances are improving.

-BUT children assimilation is fast. Latvian University is working on a big research about Latvian people in emigration. The results is due to be published in August 2015.

What to do?

Latvian government must work for our people in emigration and offer real solutions:

- to help individuals and families who want to return to Latvia
- to help to maintain contacts and ties with Latvia and Latvian culture for those people who are staying in emigration for undefined period of time.
- support for Latvian language schools, cultural and economical activities.
- We experienced extra big participation of Latvian 'emigration choirs and dance groups' in the Latvian Nationwide Song and Dance Festival in 2013. (Somehow I feel similarities with the 1990.)
- June 2015 -'Cultural Days of Latvians in Europe' in Brussels

Currently most of them think the Latvian government is not interested in them. Let us see the situation, when so many Latvians live in western Europe, as an opportunity for 'informal diplomacy' for our entrepreneurs to find new partners and markets.

• ***Latvia's economy: highly developed, but with low income?***

'Latvia is a highly developed country, but for the present with inadequately low level of income' *Pēteris Strautiņš, economist 23.07.2013.*

Latvia is a land, where level of education, institutions, infrastructure, labour structure and international trade structure in general corresponds to the profile of highly developed countries.

Some data:

Among 25–64 year olds, 71,4% have received secondary education.

Average in EU: 64,7% (Spain: 41,1%)

The average real income in Latvia is just over 60% of the EU's average number of real income. But so called nominal wage differences in comparison with Germany and Scandinavian countries are multiple.

How to raise income?

Our hope is Latvian entrepreneurs and companies (both national and foreign). Factors, which hold our income below the EU's average level, is not our education quality (although there are a lot to say about it) or roads, but such aspects related to our companies as product portfolio, capital, competence, integration in world markets (or diversification) and productivity. These aspects are influenced by circumstances, that in the 1990's opportunities for development loans were very bad, as well as the legal and bureaucratic situation.

3. Recommendations.

- *Mutual understanding* between state, entrepreneurs and employees.
 - *The state has to support those companies* which can create new values for Latvia's market and export; NOT those companies whose products are bought in market in any case.
 - *Education-state, universities and entrepreneurs* should not give up motivating youth to study technical and engineer professions.
 - *Investments in research and development* in the state and entrepreneur level.
 - *Local municipalities have to provide infrastructure*—industrial parks –and motivation—business incubators—to help new companies to be started.
 - *Companies' market diversification*
- Angela Merkel in 2010 in Riga: Latvian entrepreneurs have to widen their markets in different countries.
- Putin left Russians without our food products.

-In 2015 Ministry of Economy: Latvian entrepreneurs have been succesful in market diversification and Latvia's economy continues to grow by 2% in spite of geopolitical hardship.

- *Defining branches*, which have more companies and can create possibly the bigegst added value: InformationTechnologies –hardware and software.
- *Corporation tax and employee tax policy*. Chaotic tax system means less investments come to Latvia.
- *Contraband is still an issue in Latvia*. Turnover is huge. A new railway x-ray equipment is needed on the border with Russia and Belorussia. But only recently in April this issue has started to move forward.
- *Energy policy*: -State and private investments to promote housing energo-effectivity. Diversification of energy supplies–gas connection to Lithuania and Poland

Charts from: <http://www.lddk.lv/lapa/ekonomista-blogs/nacionalaapvieniba.lv>
http://www.kase.gov.lv/uploaded_files/Investor%20Presentation/Latvia-Investor-presentation_march.pdf

POLITICS

Andrey Zubov, Tomas Halik, Tunne Kelam: *Changing times, changing paradigms*

Leo van Doesburg: *Promoting Christian values in a post-modern political world*

CHANGING TIMES, CHANGING PARADIGMS

As no recordings were made of these sessions, the following is drawn from other open sources in which the contributors share similar perspectives as shared at the forum.

Andrey Zubov

IF YOU SEE THAT A FRIEND IS DELIRIOUS IN HIS SLEEP, under no circumstances should he be woken up suddenly. You need to quietly start saying something pleasant to him, then the dream will change, and he will wake up in a good mood. This is what we are doing now in regard to our sick society. In the Soviet Union, the technology of myth creation was developed at the highest level. Great historical stages and important facts were either silenced or distorted. We practically did not know real history.

It was done differently in different times: in the 1920s, some facts were distorted, in the 1940s others. We are not used to the pricelessness of historical fact. Until now, in Russia, history was not treated as knowledge that needs to be learned for the benefit it brings, but as ideology, which needs to be created. In the Soviet Union, in order to smear something, especially after World War II, it was enough to call it fascism.

(Putin's Russia) is not a return to the USSR. All the property is not owned by the state but by a handful of people. Everyone who cooperates with the government gets their share of the property.

Our regime is not socialist by economical standards. It is much more reminiscent of the regime of a fascist state, where private corporations were created under state control. It is not by accident that the fascist states were called corporative. Such corporative capitalism is being built in Russia at the moment.

Will Putin manage to construct a fascist-type state? I don't think so, not in this global context. In the beginning of the century, after the fiasco of the Trilateral Union (Triple Entente) in World War I, everyone on the continent was fascinated with fascism.

The people of these countries had a complex that they were fooled, robbed, and that they needed to get revenge. When it comes to revenge, a national leader and economical mobilization are always necessary. And from this, totalitarian regimes to one degree or another emerged all over Europe. Then Europe considered nations to be akin to organisms.

And after 1945, the Western part of Europe came to a completely different concept—from “the individual is a cell in the national organism” to “the individual is of the greatest value.” This completely different mentality allowed the building of a new democratic Europe.

(But in Russia) we never had our consciousness “de-totalitarized.” In Germany, Austria, Italy, denazification and defascization of the consciousness was carried out. This process took many decades.

In the 90s, the process of de-communisation began in the Baltic states and Bulgaria. The same way precisely the communist period was deemed criminal, along with ideologists and leaders of communism, people who committed crimes—and fighters against communism, heroes. Also, the property that was taken away by communists was returned. This is an entire complex set of measures.

We never had this. And we remained the carriers of the Soviet mentality. What the world condemns is not considered even bad by us. And this affects perceptions of reality. Starting 1993, I have been talking about the necessity of decommunization in Russia and generally on all post-Soviet territory.

The issue of restitution must also be solved. This issue has already been settled in Poland, the Czech Republic, the Baltic states. Two years ago Serbia passed a law on the restitution of property rights. Given the confiscation of private property in Ukraine by the Soviet system, Ukraine can't (yet) join Europe, where human rights are respected, including property rights. Therefore, Ukraine faces the same tasks. If

they do not set them out and work in this direction, the Ukrainians will have a Soviet relapse.

In Russia, the same Soviet people are sitting in government offices. They want to justify the "Soviet" as a basis for the current course of the country. And they, of course, are against all this talk of de-communisation; instead, they celebrate Andropov.

Crimea is also a Soviet relapse. Those regions of Ukraine in which the Soviet mentality was retained the most-Eastern Ukraine and Crimea-it is they who are gathering around Lenin's memorials. People do not think critically; they are once again governed by Soviet cliches.

Our (Russian) elections of 2007, 2008, 2011 and 2012 were rigged. We have a ruling illegal illegitimate regime, we do not stop repeating this. The regime that came to power in Ukraine is revolutionary, of course. It was not totally legitimate. But it tried to return to full legitimacy as soon as possible by holding presidential elections in adherence to all rules and norms.

(The Russian leadership) called the Ukrainian politicians that have now come to power a junta just because they did want to deal with them. It was convenient for Russia to deal with Yanukovych, who represented the same thieving regime Russia has.

And to deal with politicians elected by the people and who have the goal of building a real democratic state in Ukraine is dangerous to the Kremlin regime. It is dangerous to have such a state at its side, because Russia is different.

Ukraine has been different from Russia for many centuries. This is another Russia, more European, more cultured. In the XVII century, during the first Romanov Tzars, Ukraine was very fashionable. Ukrainian educated priests came to Russia, created schools, taught the Tsar's children. The other Russia gave a cultural vaccine to Muscovite Rus.

And now it may be repeated. Not in the sense that Russia will capture Ukraine. But in the sense that independent Ukraine, being quite close in terms of culture, language, religion, may give a lot after it survives this

difficult road to European integration and the re-establishment of the cultural forms that were destroyed during the communist regime.

I am an old man, and I can tell you that I have been working on construction my entire life: writing, teaching, speaking. But this is our way. Be prepared to dedicate your entire working life to this. Formal reforms will take five years. But it will take more time to alter the structure of consciousness.

(source: *Ukrainska Pravda Life*)

During the Soviet Union, we were laboring under the illusion that we were one of the two greatest countries on Earth. When the Iron Curtain fell, we woke up. Yet Putin has managed to reintroduce this concept to our people.

Russia now has two options before her that probably have never been so clear since the collapse of communism. Unfortunately, many Russians who had lived in oppression failed to spot that all those 25 years they were essentially living in a non-country. A country that failed to bid farewell to its soviet past, unlike Lithuania and all the Central European nations that freed themselves from communism.

The same Soviet elite still runs the country, redistributing wealth that the Bolshevik government took after the 1917 revolution. The current Russian leadership does not even dream of returning that property to legitimate owners-not even parts of it. Russia has not carried out lustration (purging and purification). People who used to be KGB generals and colonels, chairmen of the Communist Party Central Committee and Komsomol still run the country, occupy high and honourable positions in all walks of life. Nothing was done about it. People lived their lives and didn't bother about anything-as long as oil price was high, Russia lived rather well. Most people were satisfied with what they had, no one wanted to hear anything.

I warned 20 years ago that this way was taking us towards catastrophe, because unless you root out the totalitarian regime completely, you simply cannot expect that it won't come back. People failed to realize that, they lived one day at a time, quite understandably. After all, following so many years of soviet dictatorship, poverty and moral pain,

they were obviously fascinated by the freedom to earn money, to get information, to travel abroad and enjoy freedom of speech. Understandable, but short-sighted nonetheless.

So in 2014 the moment of truth came and everything that they had failed to do in 1991-1993 came back. We are witnessing the return of the Soviet order—this time, however, not as communism, but in the guise of corporate fascist government. Let me make it clear—not nazi, but fascist, because we do not have racial policies. The government is authoritarian, with a predilection for totalitarianism.

There are two ways out of it, so I am not unduly pessimistic. Everything has become clearer, and people themselves have to decide what they want: either they like authoritarian government that feeds them with sweet fairytales about the resurrection of the empire (which, in fact, never rose and never will, just like the empires of Spain, Austria or Britain cannot be resurrected); or they want to start building a normal, modern, European, democratic market economy state that will have all opportunities open to it.

In other words, it is time to make the choice. It seems that, the critical part of the Russian society notwithstanding, the majority supports the current government and its policies. That cannot be explained away by propaganda alone.

What's the reason for such widespread support? First, figures published by even respectable institutions like the Levada Center do not take into account the fear factor, because it is beyond the grasp of sociological enquiry. Moreover, this fear has less to do with the current atrocities, which are not very widespread, than with the resurgent sovieticity, with memories about what happened in the soviet era. People remember horrible events back then and think that the same can happen again, at any moment. They feel it with their entire bodies. First, the fear of revolution is seated deep in Russian hearts—they are afraid of what was happening between 1917 and the 1930s.

Second, there's the fear of Soviet repressions. Everyone is afraid of that, so whenever the question of trusting Putin comes up or when they are asked how they voted in elections, this is what they think: "Who is this

person asking me this? Is he really from the Levada Ceter, or can he be from the FSB?"

So all their answers are skewed by fear, while what Russians actually think about their government is completely different now from what it was last September, because people have experienced first-hand what it means to be hit economically, our money losing value and goods going off the shelves. They cannot continue to cheer Putin as enthusiastically as before. That is obvious.

On the other hand, there is one more long-term factor. All these 25 years since the collapse of the Soviet government, people in Russia felt lost, especially in the 1990s. They were given freedom, but not economic opportunity.

Let me remind you that, in the Soviet era, people did not have their own sources of income. Everyone was living on government-paid salaries. When communist regimes in Central Europe and the Baltic states ended, they implemented substantial ownership rights restitution programmes. It was a complicated process, in part related to property restitution, privatization of securities, which made many feel like they were owners, they actually became owners and so spelled the end of the proletarian Soviet societies in those countries.

In Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan they did not end. Everything stayed just the way it had been under the Soviet government—a small fraction of people run everything and the majority have nothing at all. This is why people did not feel that the new freedom was worth anything. Intellectuals appreciated the freedom.

Ordinary people value economic results that weren't there. There were some under Putin, mostly because of the oil money, but there is no true economic base, therefore people support Putin's regime, because they can recall that, unlike under Yeltsin, they lived decently under Putin, even though they do not recall the source of their decent living. The standards of living rose not because they were given opportunities to work, own property and derive income from it, but only because they were let in on a little share of the oil money. This is why Putin is popular.

People are afraid that someone else, someone like Yeltsin, won't share with them—but now Putin won't share either, because there is nothing to share. Disillusionment with Putin and his policies is nearing. At the moment, it is important to explain to Russians why their hopes pinned on Putin were unjustified.

How can we explain Putin sympathies among Europe's far-right parties? Putin has support from about 20% of all political factions at the European Parliament, enough to block any law or legislative initiative. It's his Trojan Horse. It is a serious question of deep political psychology. The main struggle is not between left- and right-wing beliefs, but between "*personalist and antipersonalist*" beliefs—racist, statist, and extremist attitudes are arrayed against principal human values. Putin wins some support by presenting himself as a traditional and conservative politician with European values. Russian military forces are relatively weak, but there is a real moral danger from Russia, as anti-Americanism is strong in Russia and Europe and human values could easily be undermined.

The key aspect here is that these forces are unhappy with their situation in the EU, where the right is obviously marginalized (although so is the extreme left). For his part, Putin offers a version of conservative Russian nationalism, based on a rather narrow reading of religious values, which differs from the communist stalinist nationalism. This form of nationalism seems like a good alternative to the EU path and provides opportunities for politicians who are currently marginalized in Europe.

This gives rise to a weird form of the international that the world has not seen before. Those on the right and left, for their part, appeal to the old values like race, national culture, historic religion, class, the glorious past of their nations, etc. We are dealing here with a clash of two value systems—personal and group. The contemporary West gives primacy to the personal, while European marginals on the right and left champion one or another group.

Putin's thinking makes him a man of group culture from early-twentieth-century totalitarian regimes. Moreover, the class view that was taught in KGB schools has morphed into the nationalist view which

was in vogue in the circles of [Yuri] Andropov, who came to be Putin's mentor, in the late 1970s. Everything else stayed the same, Soviet style. He finds the contemporary West disagreeable and incomprehensible, while extreme right and extreme left politicians from the West are comprehensible, if not very agreeable. Journalist Leonid Parfenov has noted that most of the Russian citizenry is made up of people who grew up in the Soviet era, therefore their history is the uninterrupted history of the USSR plus the latest Russian period. So they have little in common with the pre-revolutionary Russia.

The way out is very simple and at the same time complex. Theoretically, it is simple enough, the complexity is, as always, in practical implementation. We need to do what wasn't done in 1991—and what retired Boris Yeltsin regretted when he was dictating his 'The Presidential Marathon'. We had to declare continuity with pre-communist Russia, which means (purging of the 'villains') and property restitution. These kinds of things encourage ordinary people to take interest in their forebears who lived before the revolution.

This would have meant a bridge to the past, it's very important. In 1990, we didn't even start to build this bridge. We need to do it now. There is no other way, because education, explanations, films are only side-dishes. There needs to be something that could directly and solidly connect contemporary Russians with the past—and that something is juristic continuity which, in turn, leads to property rights restitution. This is the only way to root out totalitarian mentality from the minds of the people who (half of them or even more) think Stalin was the most glorious man in Russian history.

But this requires immense political resolve, power and mastery. The current government does not show any intention and no one knows which group in the current opposition would be up for the task of creating such a programme, convincingly explaining it to the society and following through with it. No one knows when such a group could come to power democratically. When such a government appears, it will undoubtedly deserve to be remembered as the force that resurrected the real Russia. (source— <http://en.delfi.lt/central-eastern-europe/historian-andrey-zubov-moment-of-truth-is-upon-russia.d?id=66911822>)

Tomas Halik

IN THE EXCITING DAYS OF NOVEMBER 1989, during the occupation strike at Charles University in Prague, the students initiated a cycle of lectures under the rubric of “what they did not teach us at school.” Philosophers, economists, and historians who for political reasons had not been allowed to teach, often working as stokers or night porters, met at last with eager students to discuss banned authors and tabooed themes.

Among the forbidden fruits on which the students feasted, theology and the philosophy of religion were prominent. Every ironic comment about state-enforced atheism filled the students’ hall with a thunder of laughter and applause. In the audience were many recent converts who had been holding secret prayer meetings and distributing illegal literature. But even among the nonbelievers, there was a conspicuous sympathy and solidarity, a joy in recognizing that “everything was now different,” that another of the things demonized by communism was now available for them.

Five years later, I was invited by a student club to discuss religion in the same building in which we had met during the “Velvet Revolution.” But religion had lost its aura of forbidden fruit. During those five years, my listeners had seen mass assemblies of Jehovah’s Witnesses and evangelical TV programs by American-style Pentecostal preachers. They had read polemics about church property restitution, they had met Hari Krishnas in saffron robes, they could find Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* sitting beside *Discussions with Cardinal Ratzinger* in bookstores.

“Do you really believe that you have been bought by the blood of Jesus Christ?” asked the first student questioner at the end of my lecture. “You speak of the necessity for interreligious dialogue and tolerance. Do you believe that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and that whoever does not believe in Him will be condemned?”

“I object to your partiality to Christianity,” said a second questioner. “In the Age of Aquarius, no single religion dominates any more. All religions give the same account. They’re merely ships to convey us to the coast of spiritual knowledge, where faith is no longer required.”

"There exists no absolute understanding and no eternal Truth," declared a third. "All claims of truth and binding morality must be deconstructed. Everything is relative. In a pluralist system of political and economic democracy, each and every one may enter into the free competition of ideas, but he who claims an absolute truth threatens the foundations of the very system: he is a potential fascist."

I answered, as best I could, in the spirit of post-Vatican II Catholicism, which assumes and relies upon secular humanism to be its dialogue partner. But I fear my words were somewhat lost, for my required partner did not show up. I stood instead in a postmodern scene, facing the three living heirs of dead modernism: *fundamentalism*, with its attempt to return to the premodern; *syncretism*, with its New Age and neo-gnosticism; and *deconstruction*, with its skeptical nihilism and moral relativism.

Though I could sympathize with portions of what each of my questioners had to say, the fact that modernism could disappear so completely in five short years signals grave dangers for the post-Communist societies of Eastern Europe. Fundamentalists warn us against the godless West. Polls show, however, that the majority of post-Communist countries (especially the Czech Republic) are far more de-Christianized than America and Western Europe.

The result of the Communists' forty-year atheistic propaganda effort was not a convinced atheist, the new socialist man, possessing all the divine attributes. For a long time, in fact, the divine attributes were not owned by any kind of man but by the State and Party. The Marxist regime, having squeezed religion out of public life, immediately became a pseudo-religious and pseudo-ecclesiastical system in its own right.

The base of socialism was an unwritten contract: the citizen was not to attempt to interfere in public life, and the State would guarantee a problem-free vegetation (neither poor nor rich). To this end, the State would tolerate almost everything: a poor work ethic, petty theft of communal property, irresponsible and inconsiderate behavior toward nature and neighbour. This contract logically led to a moral corruption and disintegration of values on a scale previously unknown. Marxism

did in fact cultivate a new man, but one about as far from the superman of the socialist realism novels as Sancho Panza was from Don Quixote. *Homo Sovieticus* was the ultimate conformer, lacking all creativity, responsibility, and initiative.

The Soviet Man may have seemed the ideal contractual partner for the Soviet State. But though he gave up his claim to conscience, he by no means gave up his claim to material wealth; *Homo Sovieticus* was on average much poorer than Western man, but certainly no less consumption-oriented. Socialism predictably began to fall behind the West in practically all respects, but most conspicuously economically. And quite naturally the system began meeting with opposition not only from the few moral critics who refused to suppress their consciences, but also from the masses whose consumerism could not be satisfied by the system.

The Polish Catholic Church deserves enormous recognition for providing intellectual dissidents a place to meet with each other and with unsatisfied workers. The Solidarity movement, born in the wake of John Paul II's first visit to his homeland, brought to the history of dissent against communism a new and decisive quality. The Czech 'Velvet Revolution' was also stimulated to a certain extent by a religious event: a pilgrimage of ten thousand Czechs and Slovaks to Rome for the sanctification of Agnes of Bohemia.

Although all the Communist states fought religion in remarkably similar ways, the tactics of the Church varied considerably from country to country. A decisive factor was the type of inculturation of faith in the society, an aspect of long-term historical development. The most conspicuously diverse are Poland and the Czech Republic. In Poland, the Church relied on its traditional role as bearer of national identity. Cardinal Wyszynski was the archetype of moral leader and societal focal point at a time when the nation had no legitimate political leader. The Polish Church managed to link the popular religion of the masses with the advanced thought of the Catholic intellectual elites, influenced by French personalism, Thomism, and phenomenology: this was the environment that produced Karol Wojtyla. Poland has always been drawn to its Church at times of national threat. The rise of Stalinism

reawakened this instinct and the Church became a power that even the Polish Communist regime had to respect.

The years since the fall of communism, however, have required the Polish Church to redefine its role. Prior to 1989, it had stood as a political, cultural, and moral antagonist of the State. The success of this role at building national consensus has caused difficulty in abandoning it for the role of a social partner. The recent political offensive of the Polish neo-Communists has made it even more difficult for the Church to shed its counterculture mantle.

Unlike Polish history, Czech history has been marked by a painful tension between national identity and Catholicism. The tension, which dates back to the Hussite wars and the violent re-Catholicizing of the seventeenth century, was intensified by the nationalism of the last century. The already highly secularized Czechs seemed ideal for a radically atheistic society. The goal of communism, a town without God, seemed almost within reach in the Czech lands.

The Czech Communists yielded to the temptation of trying to accelerate the already promising process of secularization with an especially hard-line persecution of the Church. And in the psychology of the Czech national, there is a traditional tendency to identify with the oppressed. The result of the persecution was a growth in the Church's moral prestige—to a degree unheard of in the whole of modern Czech history. Instead of a ghetto, the underground Czech Church found an intense and fruitful dialogue with the equally outlawed secular humanist intellectuals. Although the official Church in Czechoslovakia had been affected by the reforms of Vatican II only to a limited extent, a number of the Czech Catholic intelligentsia maintained strong ties to modern intellectual discourse.

Although the popular Czech Church was quite small, the number of converts and sympathizers grew—especially among youth and the intelligentsia, and in the larger towns. Several of the Catholic intelligentsia understood that to lead a democratic confrontation with the dying Communist despotism would allow the Church to fulfill two of its roles: defender of human rights and initiator of the moral renewal

of society. The assumption of these roles, however, carried the requirement that the Church cooperate widely, with both nonbelievers and other denominations, in “solidarity with all those seeking truth and loving freedom.” An awareness of this requirement resulted in a program for the “Decade of Spiritual Renewal of the Nation,” open letters by Cardinal Tomasek, and the effort at a new and more positive evaluation of Jan Hus.

In November 1989, Cardinal Tomasek uttered the memorable words, “At this historic moment in our history, I stand, as does the entire Catholic Church, on the side of the people.” The Prague Cathedral, filled with both believers and nonbelievers, thundered in delight. The great hopes of the Church—that the scars of the past would heal, that the wall between Church and nation would crumble, that the sacrifices of believers in times of persecution would now bear fruit—seemed ready to be fulfilled.

But these hopes were not fulfilled in the years after communism’s fall. And the moral prestige of the Church has fallen again in the eyes of the Czech people.

The flag of moral renewal in society, which the Church had hoist during the dramatic days of November 1989, was soon lost in a forest of other (mostly political and economic) banners. The moral flag even began to appear embarrassing, not only because the time of flag-waving had passed so quickly, but also because the Church itself was unable to hold its ranks together, and its words were not followed by sufficiently tangible and credible actions.

After forty years of persecutions, the Church was in a markedly weak state when it faced the mountain of new tasks in the new society, and it was not able to establish its priorities and take advantage of its new possibilities. The believers and the sympathizers who expected inspiring personalities at key positions in the Church were disappointed by a procession of tired bureaucrats who lacked the magnanimity, vision, and creativity necessary to prepare the Church for the coming decade. A perfunctory patching-up of the institution of the Church began without any debate about the need to adapt to the changed

conditions. Nor did the Church fully appreciate the role of the media in a free society, and soon—instead of a subject of inspiration or dialogue partner in the media—the Church became a curious object of marginal interest, occasional scandal, and, sometimes, a whipping boy.

The discussion surrounding the restitution of Church property in the Czech Republic became a smoke screen obscuring the real question of the role and influence of the Church in a free society. (A similar situation has emerged in Poland with the debate over abortion.) The restitution problem—particularly the question of whether the Cathedral in Prague Castle is a national landmark or a Roman Catholic church—has been manipulated by the political parties and vulgarized by the media to such a degree that the awakened emotions and prejudices have made it impossible to address the essential question.

Sociological research on the attitudes of the Czech people indicates that in the first four years of freedom confidence in the Church fell rapidly and the number of declared Catholics declined by almost one-half. But at the same time the number of declared atheists also declined by one-third. The crisis in the Church is not a crisis in religion.

My three postmodern questioners among the students at Charles University—the fundamentalist, the syncretist, and the deconstructionist—each in his own way represents a portion of post-Communist Czech society. In falling away from the Church during the years since the ‘Velvet Revolution’, they did not become the Communist or even pre-Communist Enlightenment atheists we theologians too often assume we are addressing. Though the model of the Church as defending the ancient truths of faith against the attacks of modern atheism may have been the correct model during the years of Communist persecution, the contemporary, post-Communist Czech Church continues to maintain the model in massively changed times. In doing so, it misses the best lesson the revolution against communism taught us, that—as John Paul II has consistently emphasized—the Christian Church is the true bulwark for modern political liberties. Beyond that, the Church also, in mistaking its situation, misses its only opportunity in centuries to reclaim the Czech people for its own.

SOURCE: *FIRST THINGS*, JANUARY 1996

Tunne Kelam

LIBERATION BEGINS FROM THE UNDERSTANDING THAT AN INDIVIDUAL makes a difference in all circumstances.

Hitler and Stalin started WW2 together. Hitler needed Stalin to secure his back. Stalin and the Soviet Union helped Hitler for the first 18 months, with food, grain, oil, political support, ordered the French communists not to oppose Hitler.

The Baltic states were assimilated into the SU like the Crimea recently. The US refused to recognise this takeover. This was not a legal marriage between Estonia and USSR as we were taught at school. There was no need therefore for a legal divorce. In 1918, Estonia has been established as an independent state.

I was born of Christian parents. That meant also spiritual resistance to the evil, violence and lies. My father died in 1957. He was a leader in Christian Endeavour but was not allowed to preach. His congregation had been shut down. What does it mean to live under constant fear?

In my university years, I studied history, falsified history. I worked for 10 years editing the first Soviet Scientific Encyclopaedia, and tried to be as objective as possible.

Yes, Christianity was important but fear was much more practical. What to do with a dictatorship? There were no fair elections. My mother, a composer, was excluded from the union of composers. She gave me the first practical lessons. My mother was ill, and I had to take her ballot and vote against the party, despite the rumours of consequences. That lessons stuck: never in my life did I vote for the Soviet regime, even though 'everybody did it'.

Liberation begins from the understanding that an individual makes a difference in all circumstances. Later, I translated Alex. Solz. writings in to Estonian and spread them underground. Our stance was: let us live without lying. This was a recipe based on Christ's teaching.

Every dictatorship is founded on two pillars: 1. Violence: cruel, blatant violence. No dictatorship can survive without disguising or justifying this state by: Propaganda, lies, by using myths. People living under

dictatorship have no chance to oppose by armed resistance. The only possibility is to distance yourself from official lies and propaganda.

This is the beginning of liberation because revolution has to first happen inside every individual person. There must be a (personal) change if something is to change. The refusal to go with the mainstream. This is as relevant for today's western society where Christianity is in a niche position - not within the mainstream.

My first year of university gave me the opportunity to protest. On May 1, everyone was expected to participate in the 1917 October Revolution parade. The march was practised several evenings beforehand. I realised my opportunity. While 99% voted for the Communists, I had to distance myself from the official propaganda. I decided not to participate in the marches. I realised this would disturb the harmonious picture and that my absence would be conspicuous.

But one has to do something to start building a genuine democratic alternative. That is difficult in a totalitarian society, and also in today's western society. Democracy is based on alternatives to the present government, different approaches. In a totalitarian society, the advantage is your alternative will make a bigger impact.

More than 40 years ago, a group of us decided we needed to send a message abroad to demonstrate that 99% did *not* support the Soviet cause. Fortunately the US never recognised Estonian assimilation. Every year the US ambassador would send a message (of support) to the Estonians. Our message was sent to the UN in 1987 without expecting a response. We demanded UN help based on the UN Charter, to evacuate USSR troops and to have free elections.

What makes you strong is the knowledge that your tenacity is based on truth. The message was intended to raise awareness of the (secret) Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of August 1939 to conquer the nations between Germany and Russia and divide them along an agreed border. It worked. Soon after, Gorbachev finally managed to find the authoritative document. The truth was coming out. The next step was to recognise there had never been a marriage, giving a very solid basis for aspiring for the restoration of freedom.

Estonia was able to generate a victory for a democratic alternative while still under Soviet rule, with the presence of 80,000 Soviet troops in a country of only 1,5 million. Maybe the fact that the Kremlin knew the US and others didn't recognise Estonia's assimilation made it difficult for them to clamp down on they did elsewhere.

The first non-communist party was established in 1988 as the Estonian Nationalists Independence Party. The party received support from 90% of those who were legal Estonian citizens in 1940. They elected the Estonian Congress. In two years, a democratic initiative took the lead in the nation. The official reactions were weaker than ever. In spring 1990, after the election of the Congress of Estonia, the Communist Party lost control, fell apart and then ceased to exist.

Christianity was there, the message of Christianity. The ENIP was founded in a church, and started every commencement in prayer - still does. It was a miracle that Estonia was succesful in liberating itself without one person being killed-despite the presence of the SU troops, and 40% Russian population introduced by Stalin being opposed to freedom.

It's a miracle I can't explain-a miracle of native citizens who realised where the borderline was not to cross. They refused to be provoked to violence, and extended the hand to the other side, offering non-citizens to become citizens of an independent Estonia. That was a faith offer. They were promised that when Estonia became independent, they would get estonian citizenship wihtout any qualification.

It's a miracle I can be here today. It has been my privilege not only to study history but to make it; to be a founder of the first non-communist party, the leader of the Congress of Estonia, to lead Estonia into the EU. I began familiarising myself with the story of Robert Schuman. My personal discovery was his statement about democracy: Democracy will be either Christian or it will not be. A non-Christian democracy will result in tyranny or anarchy. These are the same choiced before us today.

(SOURCE: Schuman Symposium on spirituality and politics, Brussels 1.12.15)

PROMOTING CHRISTIAN VALUES IN A POST-MODERN POLITICAL WORLD

Leo van Doesburg

1. The Consequences of developments in the West over the past 50 years, with the feminist revolution, the sexual and cultural revolution and secular dominance has been:

- Fragmentation in family, in society and between generations
- Loneliness
- Abandonment of elderly
- Emotional troubles
- Suffering of children in single parent or reconstructed families
- Increases in cases of depression
- Increase suicides
- Insecurity of young people, drugs
- Loss of cultural tradition
- Sexual diseases, culture of fear
 - Family>Couples, Spouses>partners, marriage>free love, happiness>quality of life, parental authority>children's rights, self-giving>ownership over one's body, conscience>free choice, male/female complementariness>contract between sexes, parents>reproducers; pro-creation>reproductions

2. Globalization of values and the change of language

After the Fall of the Wall 1989, came:

- new era of humanity: 'new era of humanity'
- 'end of ideologies'
- 'state of consensus'
- humanity became global, not only global solutions but with global values
- UN sought to reinforce its institutions to increase global power
- claiming to have received an 'ethical mandate'
- capable of making globalisation: human, ethical and sustainable
- absolutization of democracy and freedom
- new language: shift from modernism to postmodernism: 1996 – now
- changing of paradigms: dignity, equality, discrimination etc.
- main values: freedom (to choose), and equality (of groups who are considered to be considered to be traditionally discriminated against.
- education vs awareness-raising

3. Post-democratic era? From traditional to participatory democracy

Western influence:

- power international western media
- technological revolution of internet
- cultural sunami
- generation of '60s presented as 'the experts' to new challenges of humanity
- good governance, bottom up, consensus
- Secular dominance
- church, family entrepreneurs were excluded from the 'civil society'
- multi stakeholder instead of intergouvermental: informal practice became a normative principle

4. Global ethics weaved into international rights

Political revolution

- transfer power to the 'civil society' and 'partners'
- new form of democracy: "participatory democracy": born on UN level: now national and local
- based on promotion of new values: participation, freedom of choice, equality and solidarity
- based on 'universal values'
- transnational networks not to be controlled by national parliaments (international pressure): who is governing us??
- Language: Good governance, participatory democracy, consensus process, public private partnerships, transnational governance networks, global governance etc

What to do?

- Overcome ignorance
- Discern: use good things, but be discern
- Don't be tempted to accept new paradigms behind the language
- Identify the cracks in the system: social costs of divorce, socio-economic consequences
- Don't be afraid: create space for your opinion in public discourse
- Use solid arguments
- Use their own ambiguous language against those using it
- Use the networks for help

SOCIETY & RELIGION

TOWARDS A 'POST-SECULAR' SOCIETY

Evert Van de Poll

ACCORDING TO THE CLASSIC SECULARISATION THEORY, our future society would be 'a secular city', to borrow the title of the well-known book of Harvey Cox. This would be the inevitable result of modernisation and urbanisation. Already in modern cities, skyscrapers are overshadowing church towers. In due time, churches will play no role any more in the public place.⁵ Once we enter the secularised phase, there is no return to whatever religion of the past. Only people with a residual religious worldview might link up with the church again, but people with no notion of divine reality whatsoever, are unlikely to do so. They would have to completely change their non-religious worldview, but in the mind of many people that amounts to going against the tide of history. You are not going 'back' to religion, aren't you?

Such was the assumption, and it is still shared by many journalists, teachers, artists, politicians, and so on. Secularist philosophers give ample food to this idea. They argue that religion is a temporary phase in the development of humanity. Once this phase is past, there is no turning back. Massive decline in church membership in the post-war decades seems to substantiate this scenario.

More than just an interpretation of what was happening in Western-Europe, and to a lesser extent in other Western countries, this theory also had a predictive side. This would happen everywhere else. Any society that becomes more and more modernised, ruled by rational science and technology, religious practice will gradually vanish from the public sphere. It is an inexorable process.

But is it true to the facts? Several indicators seem to point to the contrary. The past century has been marked by secularisation in the West, but this does not mean that the present century will just follow the same path. We cannot draw a straight line from yesterday to tomorrow.

⁵ Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (1966).

There are several signs that the future might well be different, less secularised.

In this respect, the term post-secular society has been used by social and political scientists, although there is no general agreement about the meaning or the utility of the term. Our aim in this chapter is to look more closely at this term, and the phenomena to which it is related.

1. Post-secular society – concept and meanings

The term post-secular society refers to the persistence or resurgence of religious beliefs and practices in the Western world that has undergone a long process of secularisation. Generally, the prefix ‘post’ is used to indicate a new period or situation in which something of the preceding period is retained. **In our case, it means that the secular trend continues, but that we are entering a new situation in which this is not the only and not even the predominant trend.** There is also another trend: the persistence of Christianity, and the development of new religious communities in the secularised countries of Europe.

We are now in a post-secular situation, which is quite different from the scenario of the secular city, predicted by the classic secularisation theory. Jürgen Habermas is widely credited for popularizing the term.⁶

Although Charles Taylor does not employ the term ‘post-secular’ in his seminal work *A Secular Age* (2009), he is frequently invoked as pointing out the same phenomena as what others would call ‘post-secular society’.⁷

To sum it up in a few phrases, this term refers to the situation in which secularists and believers are living side by side. The first group is not going to take the place of the second group, not even in the long run. And the second group should reckon with the continued presence of the first. A range of theories has been developed to analyse this new situation. Moreover, secularists and believers have to work together in

⁶ Michel Reder and Josef Schmidt. ‘Habermas and Religion’. In: Jürgen Habermas, et al. *An Awareness of What Is Missing: Faith and Reason in a Post-Secular Age*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2010. p. 1-14.

⁷ Philip S. Gorski, et al (ed.), *The Post-Secular in Question: Religion in Contemporary Society*. New York, NY: New York UP, 2012.

society. The latter have already internalised this fact, but now the secularists also have to accept that believers are here to stay, and that they have important things to say about issues of daily life—let alone questions that transcend the visible and the tangible.

However, while this change of situation can be clearly observed, there is considerable debate about the idea of a post-secular society.⁸ Some suggest that the term is so conflicted as to be of little use.⁹ Others suggest that the flexibility of the term is one of its strengths.¹⁰

Particularly debated is the question of whether ‘post-secular’ refers to a new phenomenon in society, or to a new awareness of a phenomenon that already existed, namely the role of religious communities in the public sphere. Was society secular until recently and is it now becoming post-secular? Or has society never been really secular though many people had thought it was or that it was soon going to be?

In other words, what really is ‘post’? Are we entering a new period in which secularism as such is coming to an end, or is it just the end of the beginning period of secularism?

2. Secular trend continues

Clearly, we are not witnessing the end of secularisation as such. The secular trends continue.

In quantitative terms, Christianity continues to decline—at least in Western Europe. Despite the growth of some churches. They often attract people from other churches and people with some residual church background. Despite also the upsurge of migrant churches, mainly due to continued immigration. Their numbers grow and they are

⁸ Jens Koehrsen, ‘How religious is the public sphere? – A critical stance on the debate about public religion and post-secularity’. In *Acta Sociologica*, 55 (2012), p. 273-288. Hent de Vries, Lawrence E. Sullivan, Ian Ward, ‘Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World’. *Journal of church and state*, vol. 17:50 (2008) p. 150-151. Ferrara, Alessandro. ‘The separation of religion and politics in a post-secular society’. *Philosophy & social criticism*, vol. 35. (2009), p. 77-92.

⁹ James A. Beckford, ‘Public Religions and the Post-secular: Critical Reflections’. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. Vol. 51:1 (2012): 1-19.

¹⁰ Allen Dunn, ‘The Precarious Integrity of the Post-secular’. *Boundary 2: An International Journal of Literature and Culture*, vol. 37:3 (2010): 91-99.

becoming more visible in society, but that does not make up for so many dwindling churches. And they are faced with a process of secularisation among their second and third generations.

Other religious communities are growing, largely due to immigration, especially Islam, but there again we can observe a process of secularisation, among intellectuals and among second and third generations of immigrants.

Secular humanism is having a strong influence in political and intellectual circles. Its agenda is to keep churches and religious groups away from politics, and away from public society. Education, hospitals, institutions for social care and humanitarian aid should not be based on religion, but be 'neutral' and monitored by the neutral state. Ethical issues should be discussed without reference to religious norms (which are considered to be a 'private matter').

The secular trend is quite strong when it comes to ethical and family issues: legislation of abortion, same sex marriages, and child adoption by same sex couples, biomedical engineering. Here we see a clear shift with traditional Christian norms and values. We observe the same secularist agenda in the United States, Canada, Australia and a few other countries (Uruguay, Argentina), but it is particularly strong in Western Europe.

Secularism continues to dominate universities and science, and the media.

And then there are the militant atheists who are very vocal, e.g. in the United Kingdom (Richard Dawkins, Stephen Hawkins). They argue that religion is dangerous, and that it hinders progress. It goes without saying that their negative representation of religion is easily enhanced by terrorist attacks inspired by radical Islamic beliefs. But even then it comes as a surprise that in a country like Great-Britain, with such a rich heritage of Christian social concern, a majority of the population now considers religion to be 'a danger for society'—according to a recent opinion poll (2014).

3. Religious trend

At the same time, we can observe a trend that emerged during the last decades: a resurgence of religion, worldwide as well as in secularised Europe. We notice a number of things.

There is a widespread search for spirituality among secularised population. Charles Taylor speaks of the 'uneasy frontiers of modernism' and the 'supernova of movements offering religious experience and spirituality'.¹¹

This might explain the popularity of sacred music among a wide public. Apparently, it touches a string deep within them. Allan Billings characterises these people through the phrase: 'while they live secular lives, they still have sacred hearts'.

Look at the new religiosity that has spread among Europeans who have not been brought up in a religious context. Often labelled as New Age or New Religious Movements, this can take the form of Eastern meditation, esoteric speculation, an interest in heretical movements of the past (Catharism for example), neo-paganism (Celtic cults revisited), or an ethical form of Buddhism combined with a bit of 'spirituality': seeking transcendental truth in the inner self.

There is also a new interest in Christianity. The number of adult baptisms in Roman Catholic churches, the popularity of Gospel music, the number of people taking part in spiritual retreats in a monastery, the ongoing success of Taizé, the charismatic movements in historic churches, the young people with no Christian background whatsoever who are attracted to evangelical musical events, and so on. Although the people concerned often are nominal church members, we also find among them people who come out of a completely secularised environment.

While the process of secularisation is still going on, we are witnessing new forms of church life (all kinds of missionary and 'emerging' churches, religious communities) and a host of revitalised existing churches.

¹¹ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (2009)

Peter Berger provides an interesting example of a scholar who had to change his mind and who had the honesty to openly admit it. Like most other sociologists of religion of the 1960s onwards, he once predicted the all-encompassing secularization of the world.¹² However, he has admitted to his own miscalculations. Faced with the evidence of resurgent religious practice and belief, even in the modernised Western world has proven otherwise. Now he writes extensively about what he called 'the return of religion'—which quickly became a catch phrase among researchers and popular writers on the place of religion on today's society. At the turn of the 21st century, he published a book about the 'de-secularisation of the world', arguing that Western intellectuals and Western Europe are in fact exceptions. These cultures have remained highly secularized despite the resurgence of religion in the rest of the world. Berger finds that his and most sociologists' ideas about secularisation may have been the result of their own bias as members of the academic world that has such a large concentration of non-religious people.¹³

A European mutation

Grace Davie and other researchers notice not so much a process of extinction but rather a change of pattern, an 'authentically European mutation', both inside and outside the historic churches. She speaks of a gradual shift away from an understanding of religion as an obligation and towards an increasing emphasis on consumption.

In other words, what until moderately recently was simply imposed, or inherited (a rather more positive spin) becomes instead a matter of personal choice. I go to church (or to another religious organisation) because I want to, maybe for a short period of maybe for longer, to fulfil a particular rather than a general need in my life..., but I have no obligation either to attend in the first place or to continue if I don't want to....¹⁴

¹² Peter BERGER, *The heretical imperative : contemporary possibilities of religious affirmation*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1979.

¹³ Peter BERGER, *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Ethics and Policy Center, 1999.

¹⁴ Grace DAVIE, *Europe: the Exceptional Case*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2007, p. 148.

According to the mentioned classic secularisation theory, Christianity will only survive in a privatised form, among a minority of the population. Prompted by discussions with sociologists in Denmark and other Nordic countries, Grace Davie 'is no longer convinced that this is so. Those who opt seriously for religion in European societies will want to make their views heard in public as well as private debate.'¹⁵ French sociologist Jean-Paul Willaime concurs, when he notices the following paradox:

It is precisely the secularisation of society that reinforces forms of religion in which people are committed, outspoken, and actively spreading their faith to others. Even because the structures of society and the framework of daily life is no longer religious, religion is no longer something that can be taken for granted but something to chose for, something to actively develop, something to defend against detractors... This is the religion of the convert.¹⁶

All over Europe, but especially in the Western part, these new forms of religion develop. It is characteristic that they apply the faith to all areas of life, both in private as in civil society. Moreover, they are perfectly adapted to the postmodern outlook of today. According to Jean-Paul Willaime, Evangelical Christianity is the most outstanding example of what he calls the 'postmodern recomposition of the religious landscape'. In a secularised and pluralist society, the individual is faced with numerous options. In the context of Evangelical groups, individuals become responsible actors. They take their life in hands, as they deliberately follow the revealed will of God and become part of a community of believers.¹⁷

Leaving journalistic hyperbole aside, the facts they collected are telling us that a new kind of religious adherence is winning ground all over Europe. While fewer people are inclined to remain faithful to the tradition of former generations, hence the decline of historic churches, a growing number of people is receptive to the Christian faith through a

¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 150.

¹⁶ Jean-Paul WILLAIME, *Europe et religions: les enjeux du XXI^e siècle*, Paris: Fayard, 2009, p. 252.

¹⁷ *Idem*, p. 257.

process of personal enquiry, leading to a spiritual experience and to some kind of conversion. This corresponds with the observations of sociologists like Danièle Hervieu-Léger that the typical twenty-first-century believer is a 'pilgrim' and a 'convert.'¹⁸ Evangelical, especially Pentecostal and Charismatic, faith expressions are finding increasing response. According to the *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, these churches and movements accounted for 8.2 percent of Europe's population in 2000, nearly the double of the percentage in 1970.

Meanwhile, migrant churches are thriving in all the larger cities in Western Europe, thus changing the perceptions of Christianity among the general population.

Not only Christianity but also Islam, Hinduism and other religions are progressing in highly modernised societies, including Europe.

'Return of religion' in the public sphere

Notice, secondly, the 'return of religion' in the public sphere, in the arts, in popular music, in philosophical debates. There is a growing interest in spiritual matters among a wide range of people raised in a secular environment. So much is happening in the area of religion and society that catches the attention of journalists, as well as social researchers.

To begin with, there is an increased visibility of religious practice. Muslims, but also Jews, and Christians are marking their difference, for everybody else to see. They show their religious convictions through hair dress, attire, amulets, public meetings, demonstrations, participation in public discussions, etc.

Above all, they have invested the Internet, that public domain in the true sense of the term, a world apart that largely escapes the hold of political rulers. Social networks, blogs, websites, they have become privileged sphere for churches, religious groups and individuals of all stripes to share their faith experiences, diffuse their convictions, and invite others to join them. Including extremists and cranks, not to mention the nebulous networks of jihadist, calling for holy war in the name of Allah.

¹⁸ The title of one of the main publications of Danièle HERVIEU-LÉGER: *Le pèlerin et le converti* (Paris, 2005).

4. Secular and religious trends side by side

So is Europe's future going to be secular or religious? Or both? 'Predicting the future about religion in Europe is tricky as more than one thing is happening at once,' says Grace Davie, whose analyses we have found useful to get a picture of the place of Christianity in today's society. A few years ago, a journalist of *The Guardian* put this question to her, 'Is Europe's future Christian?' Her answer was:

The historic Churches of Europe are losing the ability to discipline both the beliefs and behaviour of the vast majority of Europeans. The process is unlikely to be reversed and will lead, other things being equal, to an increase in secularisation in most parts of the continent. Other things, however, are not equal, given that the rest of the world is arriving in Europe – pretty fast. New communities have arrived, which understand their religious lives very differently from their European hosts. Among them are forms of Christianity which challenge the historic Churches of Europe—in terms of fervour as well as belief; they are markedly more conservative. Among them also are other-faith communities, some of which do not fit easily into our societies which regard the privatisation of religion as 'normal.' Hence the series of heated controversies about the wearing of the veil in public school, for instance.¹⁹

We find this nuanced approach quite appropriate. There is a danger to concentrate too much on the secular trend, and have bad dreams about tomorrow's society, or to focus only on religious trend and think that the days of secularism are counted, and soon be over. For the time being, Europe is secular and religious at the same time.

Public debate on religious issues

All of this has a double effect. On the one hand, upsurge in religious practice, even in the secularised urban areas, comes as a surprise to the largely secularised world of social sciences. Traditional religious practices are not disappearing as secularist intellectuals have thought they would, but remain important for a considerable part of the population.

Moreover, the place of religious communities and their customs in society is a regular issue in political discussions. Governments find themselves increasingly involved in matters of religious practice and

¹⁹ Grace DAVIE, 'Is Europe's Future Christian?', interview, *The Guardian*, 1 June 2009.

freedom of conscience. Issues keep coming up. Of course, most attention is paid to Muslims claiming the right to behave differently from the rest of society in matters of food, clothing, medical care, education, family, marriage etc.

This creates problems (should ritual slaughter by Jews and Muslims be allowed; should the state help migrant communities to build better places of worship; what kind of religious education should be taught in public schools?), but politicians are often ill equipped to take decisions. Here we notice the effects of secularisation, one of which is the systematic loss of religious knowledge. It follows that necessarily sensitive debates are very often engaged by people who, literally, do not know what they are talking about—with respect to their own faith, never mind anyone else's.

Such ignorance is a real problem. Religious communities often feel—and rightly so—that they are misunderstood, misrepresented, and treated with suspicion by decision makers and so-called experts with a secularist mind-set. It is little wonder that things get out of hand when politicians try and deal with tensions in society around issues of religious practice (should believers be obliged to work on their holidays, should schools serve ritually prepared meat, is circumcision acceptable in modern society...?). Little will be gained, conversely, by denying the realities of the past, by contempt for the seriously religious, and by the sometimes deliberate cultivation of ignorance about faiths of any kind. We agree with Grace Davie when she emphasises that...

Europeans should be better informed about their religious heritage, and build on its positive dimensions – those of generosity and welcome. Europeans, moreover, should ensure that there is a place in their societies for those who take faith seriously, whatever that faith might be. 'The largest proportion of these people will still be Christian, but in ways rather different from their forebears.'²⁰

Churches involved in political issues

On the other hand there is the increased involvement of churches and Christian organisations in ethical political issues (bio-engineering,

²⁰ Grace DAVIE, *op cit*.

euthanasia, human rights and immigration). A telling example is the *Manif pour tous* in France, with a series of huge demonstrations against legislation of same-sex marriage in France)

Among a wider population there are strong reactions to secularist agendas. A recent example is the referendum in Croatia about the question whether or not the constitution should define marriage as ‘a union between a man and a woman’—a large majority was in favour.

5. Post-secular Eastern Europe

In Eastern Europe, the same term ‘post-secular society’ is being used, but with a different ring to it. Secularisation has been the deliberate policy of communist governments, since 1917 in the Soviet-Union, and since around 1945 in the countries that became part of the Soviet Union.

In the 1920s and the 1930s persecutions were most cruel: most of the clergy were executed, all monasteries, theological schools and the majority of churches were closed. A less brutal period followed in the aftermath of the World War II, when some monasteries and a few theological schools were reopened. In the 1960s a new wave of severe persecutions began, which aimed at the complete extermination of religion by the beginning of the 1980s. In the mid-eighties, however, the Church was not only still alive but was in fact slowly growing. As the Soviet ideological system began to decay, this growth was becoming ever more rapid and the state increasingly viewed the Church with favour. Some noticeable changes of the state’s attitude to religion were therefore taking place. But one thing forever remained unchanged: religion was forbidden to come out of the ghetto into which it was driven by the atheist regime; it was always far removed from any exposure to the life of society, and society was well shielded from any possible religious influence. To be a believer meant to be a social outcast. Matters relating to faith were not openly discussed, religious views were concealed, and conversations on spiritual topics were avoided.

In short, a secular worldview and a secular way of life were imposed, top-down—even though the atheist ideology never won the heart of the majority

All of this came to an end, quite suddenly, through a mostly non-violent revolution, of which the destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was the focal point.

Since then, these countries entered a post-secular, that is to say, a post-communist situation, in which churches had the freedom to play an important role in society. Both the historic churches (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant) and the evangelical free churches (Baptist, Pentecostal). During the 1990's they made a remarkable 'come-back'. New churches were restored and new ones were built, monasteries and Christian schools reopened, all kinds of social activities developed. During the communist era, the Christian faith had been a source of inspiration for people to resist. This has given the Churches quite some credit, so that people look to them for guidance in spiritual and in moral issues.

So the situation in these countries is post-secular in the sense of post-communist. Several authors writing on the place of religion in this context, point out that the historic churches readily seize on the opportunities offered by the new situation, but that evangelical and protestant churches find it difficult to do the same. Traditionally, they have been marginalised by the historic churches, and during the communist era most of them were illegal. That has created an attitude of isolation, of mistrust towards authorities, and distance towards other churches, while concentrating on evangelism and church development which have always been key concerns. However, a young generation of evangelical theologians and church leaders are calling for a broader view of the mission of church in society. That also includes involvement in social and political action society.²¹ In Ukraine, evangelical churches have become actively involved in the peaceful revolution named after the Maidan square in Kyiv where huge demonstrations took place in 2013 and 2014. They are sending volunteer chaplains to minister to the soldiers at the frontline. A Baptist pastor even became interim president after the turnover of the pro-Russian government in 2014. Leaders like Mikhael Cherenkov point out that this could well mean a definite

²¹ See e.g. Wojciech Kowalewski, *Transforming Mission in Post-Communist Context, an Integrative Approach*. Stuttgart: VDM Verlag, 2009.

change in the attitude of evangelicals. In a post-secular society, they have the freedom and the responsibility to contribute to the transformation of society, by fostering Biblical values, combating corruption, and so forth.²²

After more than twenty years since the fall of the USSR, the evangelical movement in post-Soviet society has entered a crucial phase in its historical development. Setting out a transformative vision of mission and theological education, this book makes an important contribution towards the renewal of the church in this fascinating--but deeply troubled--part of the world.

After the violent and disruptive events that followed the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity and Freedom in 2013/14, the evangelical movement in post-Soviet society now has an unprecedented opportunity to become a shining example of a "church without walls."

Searle and Cherenkov reflect on the political, social, cultural, and intellectual legacy of the Soviet Union and offer bold and innovative proposals on how the church can rediscover its prophetic voice by relinquishing its debilitating dependence on the state and, instead, expressing solidarity with the people in their legitimate aspirations for freedom and democracy. Notwithstanding the pessimism and lament expressed on many pages, the authors conclude on a positive note, predicting that the coming years will witness a flowering of evangelical ecumenism in action as Christian solidarity flourishes and overflows denominational boundaries and parochial interests.

6. Changing relation between state and religion

Saying that we now live in a post-secular situation, is a way of recognising the trends mentioned above. One of the implications is a changing relationship between the secular state and religion in the public sphere (civil society).

On a European level

This change in the relation between religion and politics is taking place, not only on a national but also on the level of the European Union.

²² Mykhailo Cherenkov, Joshua T. Searle, *A Future and a Hope: Mission and Theological Education in Ukraine and the Former Soviet Union*. Eugene Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2014.

The European Commission itself has undertaken a permanent dialogue with faith groups.

The same goes for the European Union. Like any national democracy, it is based on shared values such as human rights, to which all members should agree, but it cannot impose them. For the project of European integration to succeed, it needs a 'soul'. If not, it will be just a matter of economics and power politics, and this will not last. The expression 'soul for Europe' was introduced by Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission in 1992, when he talked about the cultural values on which the European project was based. He invited leaders of churches and other faith communities to cooperate with the EU by promoting these fundamental values in their countries.

As a result, the European Commission has developed a regular dialogue with faith groups, inviting them to participate in the discussion on social and ethical issues. It recognises the positive role that faith communities can play in fostering the values that are needed for social cohesion in a multicultural society.

Appealing to faith communities in this way does not equal de-secularising politics. Let there be no mistake: relations between faith groups and the European Commission are taking place in a neutral and pluralistic context. The European Commission has introduced a forum for dialogue and informal contacts, and provided a legal basis to the so-called 'open, transparent and regular dialogue' between faith communities and European institutions.

However, there is the important principle of subsidiarity, which is one of the keys to the functioning of the European institutions. According to this principle, the management of religion remains first and foremost an area of national competency.

Moreover, the European Commission has shown itself to be neutral in its relations with faith communities. It does not choose the faiths included in this informal dialogue and does not fix the contours of a 'proper faith'. Some very minority groups therefore attend the bi-annual briefing meetings.

Meanwhile, proponents of a secularist agenda continue to exert their influence within the European Parliament. So there is a confrontation of world views, secular and religious, with the European institutions sometimes in the middle, and more often than not inclined to the secularist position in current issues.

We should remain realistic.

Second era of secularisation

Having said that, the example of the dialogue between the European Commission and faith groups is in keeping with the times in which we live. National governments are moving in the same direction. Some researchers speak of the 'second era of secularisation'.

The relationship between European institutions and faith groups demonstrates that the first stage of secularisation, characterised by the privatisation of religion and the deification of politics, has been surpassed.

This current relationship unfolds according to a second model of secularisation, whereby the de-sacralisation of politics is equivalent to the public expression of faith in a democratic, pluralistic and neutral setting. Interaction between faith groups and politics is increased on the border between public and private.²³

In the first phase, the tendency was that the secularised state took over the role of the churches in society (education, health, transmission of values, social care, defining ethical norms, etc.). The 'neutral' state had the tendency to secularise the public sphere, while it took over the central place, as if the state were God—or a sort of divine Caesar.

In the second phase, the state recognises its limits and the value of religious and other institutions in civil society. The state is neither God nor Caesar, it cannot regulate everything and should leave more room for religious practice, also in the public sphere

French sociologist Jean-Paul Willaime summarises this change very well when he writes:

²³ Bérengère Massignon, *Relations between Churches and the EU in the second era of secularisation* Published in 2008 on <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2008-01-28-massignon-en.html>

Secular politics more and more denies that it is an end in itself. Thereby it reintroduces religion to the public sphere as a medium for a civil, ethical faith that could repair social cohesion, currently in a state of crisis.

The power religion used to have over the political class is not being restored.

Rather, faith groups are being asked, according to their capacity, to adopt the language of human rights as the foundation for a democratic society.²⁴

So there should be dialogue. A democracy can only function if there is some degree of consensus about fundamental values in society. In a multicultural society and in a democratic political system, a state has no absolute power to impose these values, because it is dependent on a democracy in which every stream in society has the right to express itself. The principle of the neutrality of the state implies that the state cannot short circuit the public discussions in the social-ethical domain. Instead, it has to reckon with public opinion, so other sectors in civil society are needed to foster common values. It is here that Churches have a key role to play.

7. Changing positions of secular and religious people

The post-secular situation does not mean that secularisation is coming to an end. Religious people should admit and accept that. Having said that, there should also be acceptance and tolerance in the other direction. The theory according to which the disappearance of religion in the modernised, technological Western society is only a matter of time, is not brought out by the facts. On the contrary, secular people should recognise that religion is here to stay, and that it is becoming increasingly important. So they cannot consider religion to be irrelevant for scientific, ethical and political issues.

Saying that we are in a 'post-secular situation' is a way of admitting this state of affairs. The implication is a changing relationship between politicians, philosophers and scientists with a secular worldview on the one hand, and those who think and act on the basis of a religious worldview. When it comes to the political realm, secular rationalism and secular humanism should no longer think that they have the final word

²⁴ Jean-Paul Willaime, 'État, éthique et religion', *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, vol. 88, 1990, pp. 189-213.

in matters of law and values and norms, but recognise that churches and other religious communities have important things to contribute. So there should be dialogue.

Dialogue between Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Ratzinger

The well-known German philosopher Jürgen Habermas has aroused much interest in recent years, by a shift in his thinking—in particular, his rethinking of the public role of religion. Habermas says that he has always written as a ‘methodological atheist’, which means that when doing philosophy or social science, he presumes nothing in advance about particular religious beliefs. Yet while writing from this perspective his evolving position towards the role of religion in society has led him to some challenging questions, and as a result conceding some ground in his dialogue with the Pope. Already in an interview in 1999, Habermas had stated that,

For the normative self-understanding of modernity, Christianity has functioned as more than just a precursor or catalyst. Universalistic egalitarianism, from which sprang the ideals of freedom and a collective life in solidarity, the autonomous conduct of life and emancipation, the individual morality of conscience, human rights and democracy, is the direct legacy of the Judaic ethic of justice and the Christian ethic of love. This legacy, substantially unchanged, has been the object of a continual critical reappropriation and reinterpretation. Up to this very day there is no alternative to it. And in light of the current challenges of a post-national constellation, we must draw sustenance now, as in the past, from this substance. Everything else is idle postmodern talk.

Jürgen Habermas, Time of Transitions, Polity Press, 2006, pp. 150–151.

This realisation has consequences for the way in which we look for a rational solution to the problems posed by modernity, solutions that are formulated in terms that everybody can understand.

On January 14, 2004, an important dialogue took place between Jürgen Habermas and the then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Holy Office Joseph Ratzinger (elected as Pope Benedict XVI in 2005), after an invitation to both thinkers by the Catholic Academy of Bavaria in Munich. Subsequently, they developed their discussion in a book, entitled *The Dialectics of Secularization* (2007), that

was to have a considerable influence in political, scientific and religious circles.²⁵

In their dialogue and their book, Habermas and Ratzinger address such important contemporary questions as these:

- Is a public culture of reason and ordered liberty possible in our post-metaphysical age?
- Is philosophy permanently cut adrift from its grounding in being and anthropology?
- Does this decline of rationality signal an opportunity or a deep crisis for religion itself?

According to Habermas, we are now witnessing the emergence of what he calls a 'post-secular societies' in which secular and religious people have to reckon with each other's views. He argues that secular tolerance is a two-way street: secular people need to tolerate the role of religious people in the public square, and vice versa. Secular philosophers and scientists do not have the last word in matters of law and economics and ethics. Fundamental questions in society cannot be reduced to secular rational ideas and theories. Religious people have their word to say. They also are rational, the fundamental difference with secularism being that they take into account the influence of a transcendent reality.

Tolerance means that believers of one faith, of a different faith and non-believers must mutually concede one another the right to those convictions, practices and ways of living that they themselves reject.²⁶

So there should be a 'pluralistic dialogue' as Pieter Boersema has called it, in which people try to get beyond stereotype images of the other into a deeper understanding of what really motivates them.²⁷ We would say, a dialogue in which people agree to disagree on many matters, but

²⁵ Jürgen Habermas and Joseph Ratzinger, *The dialectics of Secularization*, Rome: Ignatius Press 2007. Published in English, German, French, and Italian.

²⁶ Jürgen Habermas, 'A "post-secular" society – what does that mean?' Nexus lecture at the University of Tilburg, The Netherlands, March 15, 2007. Published on <http://www.resetdoc.org/story/00000000926>.

²⁷ Pieter Boersema et al, *Christenen verkennen andere godsdiensten in West-Europa*, Boekencentrum 2009, ch. 14.

acknowledge that they cannot determine the law without taking into account the point of view of others. The democratic process must include all streams in society.

The language of dialogue

Any dialogue can only be fruitful when no party imposes his own language to the discussion. This is particularly difficult for secularist people to admit, since they are used to putting everything that refers to the transcendent within the brackets of 'private persuasion', so as to conveniently ignore what the other is saying. In this respect, Jürgen Habermas, in his own dialogue with Joseph Ratzinger, makes some important points:

Persons who are neither willing nor able to divide their moral convictions and their vocabulary into profane and religious strands must be permitted to take part in political will formation even if they use religious language.

The democratic state must not pre-emptively reduce the polyphonic complexity of the diverse public voices, because it cannot know whether it is not otherwise cutting society off from scarce resources for the generation of meanings and the shaping of identities. Particularly with regard to vulnerable social relations, religious traditions possess the power to convincingly articulate moral sensitivities and solidaristic intuitions.²⁸

8. Conclusions, implications

We want to conclude this chapter by formulating a few challenges. In the old days, there was the *confessional* society, during which all spheres of human life and social coexistence were determined by a religious outlook. Then came the *secularised* society, during which political religions (the state, the 'people', the nation, or political ideologies) took over the integrative role formerly played by religion. Now we see the emergence of a situation which is characterized by democracy and pluralism and by the re-negotiation of the place of religion in the public sphere. Some call this the *post-secular* society. In this context, both secular and religious people are challenged to reconsider their positions.

²⁸ Jürgen Habermas, *The dialectics of Secularization*, op. cit.

- a. Political actors should recognise the vital role of Churches and of Christian institutions in civil society, for generating societal cohesion and solidarity necessary for the functioning of democracy.
- b. The concept of separation of Church and State needs to be revalued. The neutrality of the state should not be stretched to mean separating the Churches from civil society and the political debate.
- c. Intellectual elites in Western-Europe have the habit of formulating social, cultural and political issues in rational, secular language, thus excluding religious language from the public debate. But in so doing, they ignore the importance of a religious worldview for the daily life of religious people, also for their political viewpoints. Why shouldn't they be allowed to appeal to their faith convictions as a reason for taking this or that position? Religious answers to life questions are not to be excluded simply because they are founded on a transcendent reality and on revealed truth. In fact, more and more people find peace of mind in religious answers rather than in secular explanations.
- d. There still are forms of militant secularism that aspire at casting religion out of the social and political spheres, reducing it to the realm of private devotion. Unwritten rules of 'political correctness' are often applied to religious institutions. In many cases this implies that believers can no longer express their convictions openly, since public expression of religious views may be regarded as an infringement of the rights of those who do not share them.

In a post-secular situation, there is, on the contrary, a need to agree that people disagree, and a willingness to learn. Only then can there be dialogue.

FACING A DEMOGRAPHIC WINTER

Mg.iur. Inga Bite, MP of Latvia

IN THE VERY BEGINNING OF THIS WORLD, Genesis Chapter 1, the very first thing God says to the man and the woman He has just created is: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”. We see throughout the Bible, that this is not a so much of a command—it is a blessing. A blessing for Adam and Eve. A blessing for Noah in Genesis 9, a blessing for Isaac in Genesis 26, for Jacob in Genesis 35; for Israel in Jeremiah 23 and for all of us.

Lack of fruitfulness, on the other hand is a sign of God turning away his face, a lack of God’s blessing or even in some places of the Bible a curse.

I am aware that the issue of demography is much wider than birth rates. It includes migration, life expectancies, and health situations. But in my speech I will concentrate on children to be born. Since I see family, which is based on marriage as a main key to melt our demographic ice.

A lot can be said about why we as Europeans, Latvians, Germans, Italians or people from other European countries need more babies. Of course it is about economic sustainability (not even growth). Of course it is about pension systems. Of course it is about workforce and immigration. Therefore it seems weird that demography and birth issues are not on the top of today’s Europe’s political agenda. We are ready to discuss immigration quotas, increase of productivity, motorization of production, extension of working life, teaching people in their sixties to work with modern technologies but we are not ready to discuss the motivators for families to have more children.

Surely, people will not start having more children because “the state wants them to” and the state cannot force people to have more children. But what the state really can do is to support, recognize and meet peoples’ needs, care for the people who want to have more children. Yet despite of setting demography as a priority in words and government

declarations, hardly any real steps are being taken or if they are, they come with enormous opposition and objection.

When Jesus was crucified, He asked the Father to ‘forgive them, for they know not what they do’. In the first years of my Christianity I could not understand how it was possible for people not to know what they do. Yet I see it explicitly now. Undermining human dignity, destroying the natural family, advertising choice in cases when choice in fact imposed on people by the circumstances or other people. Destroying the sustainability of our society is a deliberate goal only for some, very few people and spirits behind them. The biggest part simply know not what they do—because of ignorance, lack of interest, self-interest or other fairly human reasons. Because of lack of deeper insight and inability to see things not only physically but also spiritually. But I believe that people are waking up. I believe that the turning point is close and our focus from merely economic goods is returning back to see the beauty of other people and real world relationships.

Very recently Eurostat released its 2015 survey “Being young in Europe” and I would like to quote some of its executive summary.

The European Union (EU) is continuing to age and the share of children and young people in its population has been decreasing continuously over recent years. In 2014, the EU population stood at 507 million people, of whom only 169 million (or 33.3%) were children or young people (aged under 30). Furthermore, the number of elderly people (aged 65 or more) has been exceeding the number of children (aged under 15) since 2004. Although this ageing phenomenon has been recorded across the world’s industrialised societies, it has impacted the EU population more than others.

As a consequence, the median age has risen on average by four months each year over the last two decades in the EU. It stood at 35 years in 1990 and had grown to 42 years in 2013. This was the result of the combination of decreased fertility rates and increased life expectancy,

The share of households with children has generally declined in the EU over the last few years. Single person households and couples without children made up

*the majority of households in the EU, although the figures varied between EU Member States*²⁹.

With the sexual revolution and development of contraception we have entitled ourselves to choose when, how and whether to accept—or not to accept—the blessing God has for us. Again, quoting the last year’s “State of Europe” forum, *Europeans have decided to die out. Abortion, euthanasia, suicide, low birth-rates all contribute to a crisis of demography. No European country has the birth rate of 2.1 sufficient to sustain its own population. This fact carries serious consequences for Europe’s future: economically, socially and politically. Yet a neo-liberal, secular pursuit of constant economic growth and ever expanding GDP without regard to relational implications tends to undermine sustainability.*

The demographic challenge we face is a result of relational poverty in the sense that people are choosing careers over families and short term gratification over long-term sustainability.

Before having a family we want to have a good education, preferably several master’s degrees, a brilliant career, a brand new car and a big house or at least apartment of our own. To get all of this material stuff ourselves takes a lot of time, while some people never do. After we have worked hard to earn, we want to rest and spend a little traveling and enjoying ourselves. In our vision of perfect and happy life children rarely play a key role. If asked directly, the answer is—yes, of course I want to have children (or more children)—somewhere, somehow, some time... Which might as well never come.

Raising sex to the first rows of our necessities and putting mutual consent as a prerequisite for having sex instead of such prerequisites as love, care, responsibility and commitment has lowered people and relationships to the level of things to be chosen and gained or bought. If I cannot get something here, I will go and get it somewhere else. If this “thing” does not suit me, fit me or if I don’t like it any more, I can throw it out and get another one.

A 2013 research of families in Latvia showed that on the average families would like to have three children. Three children is their ideal.

²⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-statistical-books/-/KS-05-14-031>

But in the reality the Latvian fertility rate in 2013 was 1.52 instead of the 2.1 necessary for sustainability. I dare to say that the picture might be similar in other European countries.

People who are willing to have more children nowadays face different kinds of fears. Will the society understand me? Will they not treat me as a freak? Will I be able to give all the best to my children—to pay for their development, education, to help them start their own life? Will I have enough moral resources to help them grow? Will my employer understand me? Maybe I will lose my job?

One of the keys to melt the demographic ice is **a change of the attitude**. Since having a child is nowadays a choice, we tend to perceive people with children as having made this choice, therefore their choice is their problem. They have to face and live with the consequences of their choice. They have to “carry the burden” they have chosen and they should not put this on other peoples’ or the society’s shoulders. Some even dare to laugh and offer such parents lessons in using condoms.

But what if we as a society and firstly we as Christians started to see children as a blessing? I see it happening in Latvia. I see many Christian families having or expecting the fourth child. I see families with five, six, seven or even eight children. I see fathers taking their responsibilities as fathers and as men, and I see mothers being able to open themselves to their motherhood. I see the people in the street smile seeing children, laugh at their activities even if they sometimes are louder than we would like them to be. I see both-men and women—helping each other. Helping to carry shopping bags of the mother with children, opening the doors to a person with prams, handing a handkerchief to a child in such a need and many other everyday possibilities to show attention, support and appreciation.

Having children is one of the biggest fears of today’s society. Because there are hundreds of ‘what if’s’. We want to be in charge of our lives and able to control everything happening in our lives. We are afraid of losing this control. But fear not! from having children. They are God’s blessing themselves, but they come together with all kinds of other blessings you need.

After winter there always comes spring. The sun melts the ice and sprouts of new life come through the layer of earth. Despite all the hardships it takes. Because that is how God has created this world.

I believe that after the demographic winter, demographic spring will come in Europe. I believe that the sun of God will melt our hearts and the sprouts of new life will find their way to live, laugh, run, and jump and rejoice with us. To be our blessing again.

Julia Doxat-Purser & Christel Ngnambi: *Defending freedom of conscience and religion*

FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF (FoRB) IS FOR ALL.

IF GOVERNMENTS & SOCIETY DON'T SUPPORT IT, our job is to persuade. Global Charter of Conscience's vision of a civil public square.

The kinds of problems across Europe.

What is your government doing on FoRB – worldwide or nationally? What are the reasons/barriers why they are not doing a better job?

1. Religion will/should go away? People will conform e.g. on supporting gay marriage
2. FoRB is for religious fanatics.
3. We want to preserve the religious status quo of our nation. Everything else is dangerous or dilutes our national identity.
4. Fear of radical / dangerous Islam
5. Concern for challenge on LGBT & gender issues
6. Secularism is best and secularism = neutrality = no visible religious faith.

Bearing in mind these barriers, what are the key messages your government or media need to hear on FoRB? *(This will differ depending on country.)*

1. FoRB worldwide is a huge issue that deserves a response. This is now an EU obligation through the EU guidelines. It's time to take FoRB seriously everywhere
2. FoRB is for ALL, including Christian minorities, and including Muslims. Religion cannot be suppressed and attempts to do so lead to extremism. Security services and friends within the community stop terrorism, not limiting FoRB.
3. FoRB has limits. No genuine harm. But State cannot decide on validity of faith beyond this. (Not capable, and not its sphere). State

cannot decide what's a core belief and what is a fringe one that can be discounted.

4. FoRB is a core human right. It is not of lesser importance. As governments make sure that different minorities within society are OK, religious communities are as important.

5. Religion may be a choice but it is a vital, non-negotiable part of millions of people's identities. It is foundational and cannot easily be dropped at work etc

6. FoRB includes the right to manifest one's belief, not just to quietly believe it. Eg Ladele case. NB right to resign is no longer a valid argument. Limits on right to manifest are limited.

7. FoRB is not against equality rights & legislation. It is part of them. (Let's break down the idea of a battle between "them & us").

8. Freedom *from* religion/secular worldview does not exist legally. Of course, witness must be respectful and appropriate for the context and there should be no imposition but it is not reasonable to expect people to hide their religious or secular worldview identity. That would be an affront to their autonomy and dignity and is imposition. Of course we are all exposed to beliefs we disagree with and might even find offensive—that's the price of living in a free society.

9. Free speech means freedom to offend—anyone.

10. Freedom to offend, yes, but also let's cultivate a growing culture of civility and living together through education in schools, community work and modelling by public leaders.

11. Reasonable accommodation: seek a balanced way of resolving clashes. Good practice exists. Fair on client, employer, employee and colleagues. Reasonable health and safety re clothing, shift flexibility, discreet conscientious objection. All aims must be proportionate.

12. Faith groups deserve public funding for excellent contributions to society's well-being because we are tax payers like everyone else. Of course, we don't expect funding for evangelism.

13. Imposing non-religious views and a non-religious realm on people is as oppressive as theocracy. It is dictating moral thought.

14. Religious communities & organisations have an ethos which means things are expected within them that may differ from outside. Non-religious organisations are the same, e.g. feminist, environmental, pacifist, LGBT group. There should be a reasonable freedom for organisations with a faith/worldview ethos to be able to do things their way. Often groups prioritise their own rights at expense of others. This is unfortunate but it is not just the religious who are guilty. We have to have a better vision of a civil public square.

15. Equal Treatment Directive: we need to familiarise ourselves on what it is and how to respond.

16. What is the government's role on FoRB? To ensure the peaceful co-existence of people of different faiths & worldviews, to maximise their freedom to live as they wish and to share their beliefs but to encourage respect of the rights of others, to unite all these people in a vision for a shared realm of civility. Balancing the demands of groups. Neutral does not mean pushing faith into private sphere, that's dictating moral thought. Don't go beyond your own governmental sphere.

What is the Christian community (of any denomination) doing which is making a difference positively or negatively on FoRB within the nation? What could they do?

1. Overcome the idea of secular versus religious. We all believe in something and want to live according to these beliefs
2. Show the value of faith to society through good works, telling the story and counting the impact.
3. Secular should mean the realm where all beliefs and worldviews are welcome, not excluded. If you mean secular is a religion free society, then say so.
4. FoRB is important for gender rights. Women should be free to live as they wish. (You can have other laws to stop abuse within the family).
5. Promote reasonable accommodation in society & among Christians. Civility. Compromise.
6. Train Christians how to witness wisely.

Opportunities for action:

1. Equip Christians re witness at work, school, in public regarding witness. Point to resources.
2. Equip Christians re speaking and preaching on sensitive issues e.g. gay rights.
3. Activating politicians. MP groups.
4. Dialogue with the media.
5. Look for good practice where FoRB is respected and reasonable accommodation is working.
6. (Athens Forum idea) Encourage a freedom of conscience day in schools.

CARDINAL PUJATS, ANTOINE JAULMES, CATHY NOBLES: EUROPE'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ADDRESSING EUROPE'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS ON FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

Antoine Jaulmes, president of the CAUX-Initiatives of Change Foundation

ON THIS VERY SPECIAL EUROPE DAY, it is a great pleasure to be here with you in Riga-the capital city of a country which has suffered a lot from our intra-European wars. I will introduce to you both the Swiss Foundation CAUX-Initiatives of Change and our European project "Addressing Europe's Unfinished Business".

This morning Jeff Fountain kindly introduced the INITIATIVES OF CHANGE international movement and our Foundation. They were distinguished last year by the Ousseimi Prize for Tolerance. Our calling is to work for a world in which people would act from a sense of their global responsibility and interdependence, and that our key approach is to bring global change through personal change in line with the core values of absolute respect for human dignity, truth, solidarity and care at every level of public or personal life.

Practically, our Foundation is serving those who want to engage effectively in promoting of trust, ethical leadership, sustainable living and human security. This is done through conferences, seminars and training, mainly in our Conference Centre in Caux, above Montreux, in Switzerland. Specifics of our approach is that we believe in the benefits of silent meditation and recommend its regular practice as a way towards inner peace as well as concrete creativity and strategic inspiration.

In the 1930s our founder the Lutheran American pastor Frank Buchman and his international team engaged in the fight against totalitarianism and against the war; they were calling for personal change and looking beyond physical disarmament towards "Moral Rearmament", a phrase which became the identity of the movement for over 60 years. Practicing a form of personal evangelism, actively propagating change and forgiveness, Initiatives of Change became an important behind the scene

contributor to European unity. Caux was bought and renovated in 1946 by Swiss friends of Initiatives of Change in order to contribute to the rebuilding of Europe. Immediately, hundreds of representatives from all European nations poured into Caux, including thousands of Germans, almost all the Länder's Minister-Presidents, university rectors, industrialists, trade-unionists and politicians who could meet other Europeans there, wanting to build a common future.

An example of the depth of the change which later enabled the Franco-German reconciliation is the story of French socialist MP Irène Laure. A Resistance fighter who had one of her children tortured by Gestapo, she arrived in Caux full of resentment. Then she was invited to meet a German woman. Irène Laure started by pouring her heart out about all the suffering she had had to endure. When she was finished her interlocutor started with her own story. She was Clarita von Trott, the widow of one of the Germans who had been executed after the failed murder attempt against Hitler. She asked for Irène Laure's forgiveness because, she said, "all this suffering happened because we, Germans, resisted too little and too late". A few days later, Irène Laure spontaneously declared in front of a full meeting hall: "I have hated Germany so much that my dearest wish was to see her wiped off the world's map. I was wrong. For my hate I ask your forgiveness." The Germans present, especially those who were prepared to sustain blame and to combat accusations, were left totally speechless. The future CDU MP Peter Petersen who had been a member of the Hitler Youth and a soldier later said that on that day, Irène Laure had shown him the only way ahead for Germany. For several months Irène Laure toured Germany. She said sorry about 200 times in front of regional parliaments, in great political and trade-unions' meetings and on the radio. This was before TV and it was really effective. Paul Hoffmann, administrator of the Marshall Plan said that this work had been the ideological equivalent of the Marshall Plan.

Back in 1945, the distrust of the French for Germany was so deep that the French diplomats were absolutely determined to get Germany split in three states. Whether that was going to create peace wasn't a consideration, only immediate security counted. In 1949, the French

foreign minister Robert Schuman was in Caux and told Frank Buchman about his doubts; he admitted that he didn't know any trustworthy Germans. Now, in Caux, Frank Buchman had personally met with literally hundreds of German politicians and leaders. He gave a dozen names of trusted friends to Robert Schuman with his personal guarantee that they were highly trustworthy. Among them was Konrad Adenauer who at the time was trusted neither by the Americans nor by the French, nor by Robert Schuman who had had a pretty bad first encounter with Adenauer. Their mutual introduction by Frank Buchman allowed an exceptional trust relationship to develop between the two men. It was to be the key factor in the approval of the Schuman plan by the German cabinet in less than 24 hours in May 1950.

This prophetic appeal set high objectives for a future united Europe: freedom and prosperity in Europe, world peace and international development. The Schuman Declaration remains to this day the most meaningful official text on the goals and philosophy of the European Union, and it is the basis for all subsequent European treaties.

How did all this become possible? In the name of a better future for each country's population but primarily because of the reestablishment of trust, enabled by forgiveness. Deep forgiveness between France and Germany produced the European Coal and Steel Community. Willy Brandt knelt in front of the Warsaw ghetto memorial in 1970 and enabled the massive eastern EU enlargement. We will need new such steps with Turkey, with Russia and others. Europe is built on trust and trust is built on forgiveness.

But why then do we regard Europe as 'unfinished'? After all, it has achieved a lot: the EU was awarded the Peace Nobel Prize, and the Council of Europe is widely acclaimed for its work on human rights and justice.

It's pretty simple. For the AEUB Seminar last year, we took a good look at our continent in 2014. This was the 100th anniversary of the start of WWI and the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall. We made three findings which I would call: *ignorance*, *open wounds* and *fatalism*.

Firstly: We found a lot of **ignorance** among old and new members of the European Union.

Joining the European Union mainly for economic motives is understandable. But is it clear that the deep peace and reconciliation process that forms the basis of the European project must also be joined? When a country doesn't adhere to this process, it puts a question mark on the future of Europe. Even within the founding members of the European Union, people are often unaware of that aspect. I posted something on Europe on my Facebook page yesterday, and one of my friends answered: "Should May 9 not become the Europe DAY?" I had to answer back: "Trouble is, May 9 has already been declared Europe Day, but nobody knows. Please pass the word around and celebrate!" How come there is no European policy on European history school textbooks or on common war commemorations? How come Europeans do not know about Europe Day?

Secondly: We found a lot of **open wounds** which have caused a string of conflicts in Europe over the last 25 years. Whereas the fall of the Berlin Wall was supposed to mark the end of the East-West confrontation, there were more than 25 conflicts in Europe in those 25 years. Europe is the continent with the highest number of conflicts relating to identity and self-government. Do I need to talk here about the issues around the Armenian holocaust? I feel extremely sorry for the Armenians that Turkey has adopted denial as a policy. But I am also sorry for the Turks when I hear confession being demanded by people who haven't cleaned their own slate. As a Frenchman, I am painfully aware that France was involved in at least four mass massacres or genocides since 1945, one in Algeria starting exactly 70 years ago, one in Madagascar only two years later, one in Cameroon and one in Rwanda. The truth is now widely available to all, thanks to the work of journalists and historians. I-and I hope many other French-will ask for forgiveness. I believe that this is one precondition for European peace.

Thirdly: We found that there is a lack of European projects. But is that because of lack of leadership or because of a lack of popular support? We found that we could not stop at that and just hope that politicians would solve it all for us. So the CAUX-Initiatives of Change Foundation

decided to open the Conference centre of Caux to our fellow Europeans and try to enter in new initiatives and in new partnerships in order to 'enlarge mentalities', creating new links across Europe and increasing popular demand for dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.

This is the AEUB programme. The process will consist in a series of meetings and consultations through Europe in Caux to start with, and whenever possible in other places.

We would like to see it culminate with a 'Peace Voyage' through Europe, which would:

- link different hot spots of war and peace in Europe, bringing along stories of reconciliation;
- highlight places where the 'weapons of the spirit' were used and often prevailed over brutal force;
- reach out to governments to invite a reflection on Europe and a new European commitment.

We believe that the current generation deeply identifies with the European ideals of tolerance, respect, social justice, freedom, democracy, solidarity with the developing world... as the resounding success of the pamphlet 'Get Outraged' shows. Nothing is impossible.

With two conditions:

a) that we understand that the one distinctive Christian value which is at the very heart of Europe is forgiveness. Jesus taught it the hard way: "if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering", so says the gospel of Matthew chapter 5 (v.23 & 24). So let's humbly and consistently go back to those who may have something against us, ask for forgiveness, and grant it if required. In that way we will be sure that Europe will be based on Christian values.

b) that the forces for good join forces. We have powerful enemies. As professor Tomáš Halík said yesterday, *homo sovieticus* hasn't disappeared.

THE RECONCILIATION WALK, A TESTIMONY

Cathy Nobles, Youth With A Mission

AS WE LOOK AT THE RECENT EVENTS IN EUROPE—mass migration and the rise of anti-immigration politics—the issue of Europe’s Unfinished Business becomes crucial for unravelling some of the problems today.

In 1994, I heard Lynn Green of *Youth With A Mission* announce the idea of the Reconciliation Walk (RW), calling Western Christians to walk along the route of the First Crusade with a message of apology on the 900th anniversary of the original event. The year before I had led a Discipleship Training School in Lausanne, Switzerland, focussed around the Crusades. School participants had gone as mission teams to Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Kazakhstan. Each team had reported being often in conversations with Muslims or Jews apologizing for the Crusades.

As we prepared for the RW, I tested out the message of apology with another DTS in 1995. In 1996, I joined the Reconciliation Walk team and moved to Istanbul, Turkey, to train teams who came to apologize for the Crusades. For six months we lived in Lebanon and Syria, sending teams out to meet with Christians and Muslims in these areas. Finally in 1999, we moved to Israel/Palestine to apologize and to culminate the RW in July 1999. Over the course of the time from 1996 to 1999, we had over 2500 Christians from around the world meet with Middle Easterners. We found open doors of hospitality in each country at all levels of society.

After this phase of the RW, I returned to Beirut in 2000 and opened a RW training office for our team to continue to help Western Christians to meet with Lebanese, Syrians, and Turks in order to continue to break down walls of misunderstanding and to begin a process of building friendships.

At every level of engagement, government leaders, religious leaders or the man on the street, participants found themselves learning that listening to other people’s stories changed their own perceptions about the Middle East. Many had been deeply suspicious and afraid when they first arrived, but as they met people face to face, they began to

discover how much more we had in common when we focus on our shared dreams and humanity. As we talked about God's love for all, and our call to love our enemies, their vision of the gospel and Jesus' role in his world seemed to shift for many.

I developed training in peacebuilding and journeys of understanding to help people engage in regions of the world that we might misunderstand. From this step, our small team moved to Luton in 2013 to pioneer a reconciliation project in conjunction with a local Anglican church. In stepping into a community that is diverse ethnically and religiously, we hoped to put the principles of the RW to work. After the July 2007 bombings, Luton was known as the town where the bombers parked their cars and took the train into London. In reaction to a local demonstration by a group of radical Muslims against the soldiers returning from the Iraqi War, a neo Nazi group, the English Defense League was developed in Farley Hill, Luton. Their aim was to confront the Muslim community and this group has been followed by another wishing to divide the community with fear.

The response on the part of the town has been for the Luton Council of Faiths, which represents the wide variety of faiths in the town to call for unity through many different responses to these challenges. Over the last year, several pro-peace rallies have been held to counter the negative image. By working together with all faiths and with both public community cohesion officers and the police, a core group has helped draw people away from fear and into hope of what a multicultural/faith town can look like. We have held peace rallies, engaged the church in praying for the town, and held an Iftar meal for the town at the end of Ramadan for the last few years and many other events. All setting in place a sense that the people of the town will rally together to project a different image of their town.

Today the message of the RW is still relevant as we see the gathering tensions around the world, and the fear that is generated by hatred. We are attempting to live it out in a multicultural town with many others to overcome evil by doing good. Our hope is to continue to undo the legacy of the Crusades through these ongoing projects of change.

ENVIRONMENT - I

HOW SERIOUS IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS?

Martin Kaonga,

Director of Science and Conservation, A Rocha International

I. What is an environmental crisis?

An *environmental crisis* is distinguished by rapid and largely unexpected changes in environmental quality that are difficult if not impossible to reverse.

Preconditions of a crisis:

- *Imperfect regulation of resource use*
- *A tipping point in natural growth*
- *A feedback effect arising from the economic activity and the environment*

II. Is there an environmental crisis?

Some would deny it.

E.g. Climate Crisis Hoax: Climate of Corruption: Politics and Power Behind the Global Warming Hoax. Larry Bell (2011)

“Through worldwide acts of professional and criminal misconduct, the science behind global warming has been invented or distorted for ideological or financial reasons, or both” (*Global warming conspiracy theory: Inhofe and Achenbach, 2010*)

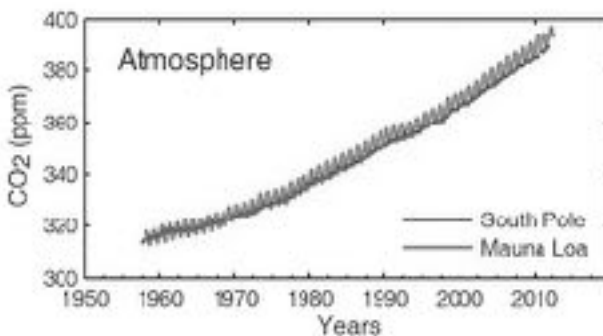
- Biodiversity Bombshell: Polar Bears And Penguins Prospering, But Pity Those Paramecium! (Larry Bell 2012)
- Biodiversity, the Left's Next Big Hoax (Dave Blount, 2010)
- The Developing Diversity Scam (Doug Hoffman, 2010)

State of environment in Europe 2015

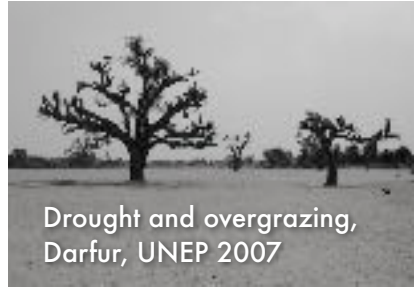
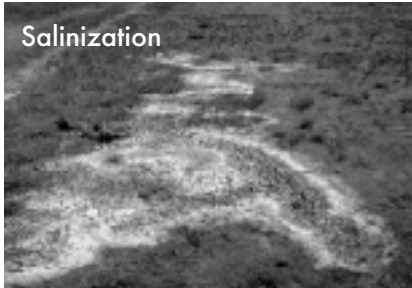
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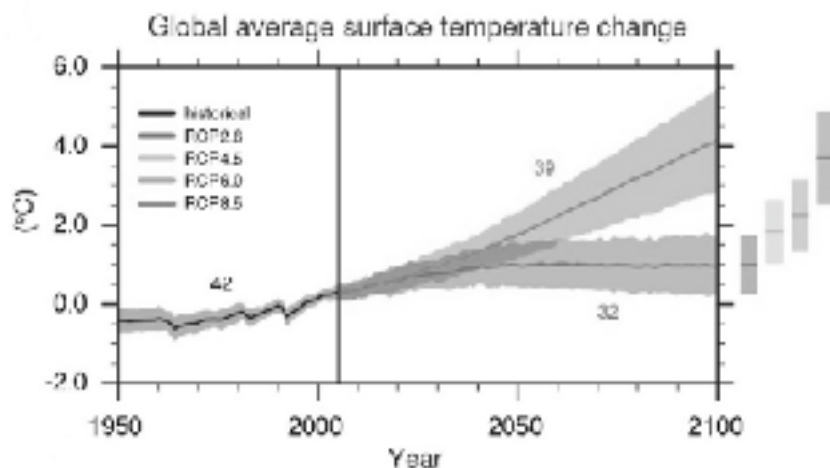
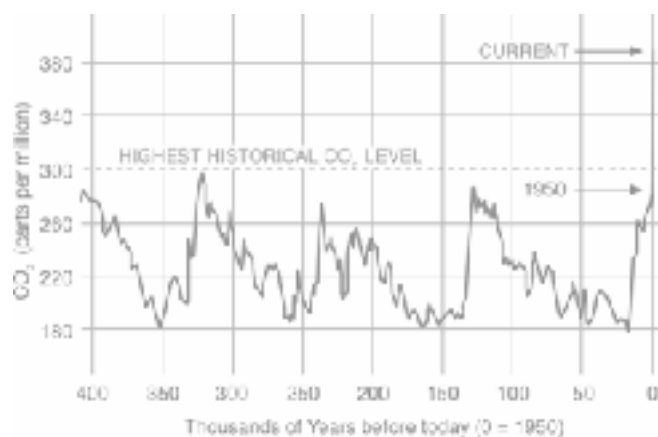
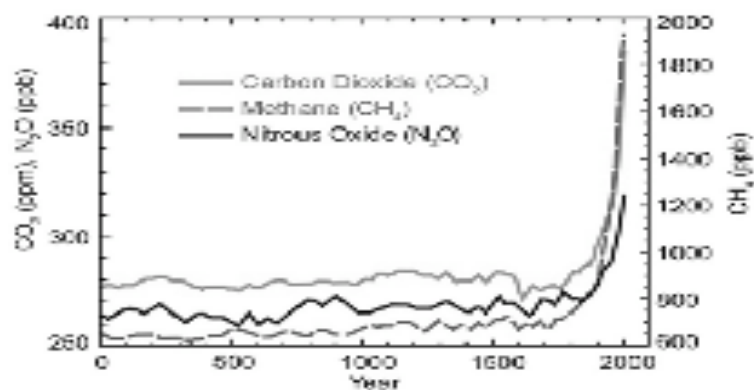
- Air and water quality and selected ecosystem
- Nature protection and waste management
- Breeding patterns of some fish species
- Resource use—declined by 19% since 2007
- Europe has not met ecosystem protection, conservation and enhancement targets set in the 7th Environment Action plan

- 60% of protected species and 77% of habitat types are in unfavourable conservation status
- Europe is not on track to meet its overall target of halting biodiversity loss by 2020
- Greenhouse gas emissions are currently insufficient to meet the 2050 target of reducing emissions by 80-95%
- Water Directive objective of reaching good ecological status by 2015 to be met by only 53% of surface water bodies
- 25% of ground water has poor status
- Chemical status of 40% of Europe's surface water remains unknown
- 40% of rivers and coastal water bodies are affected by agricultural pollutants
- Many commercial fish stocks are not assessed
- Terrestrial and fresh water biodiversity is declining
- Land use and soil functions are declining

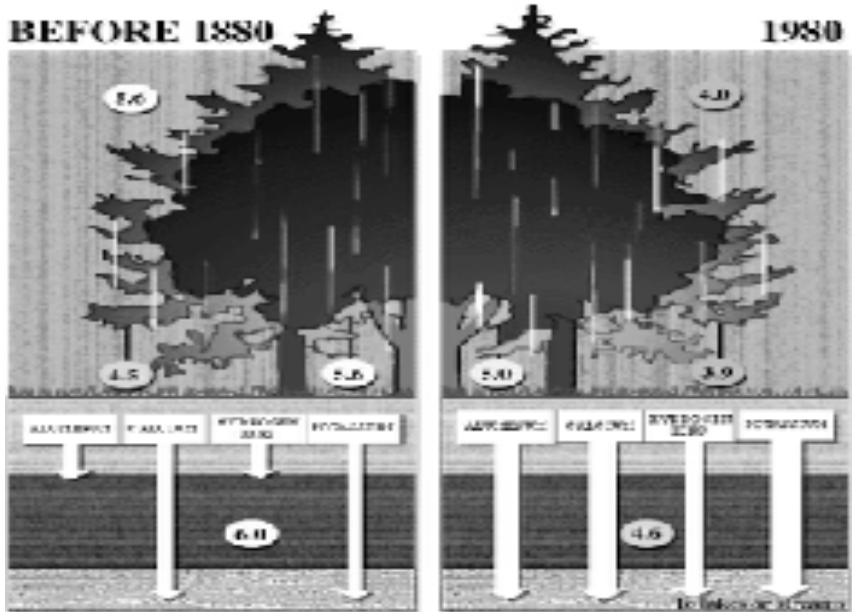


Land use effects:





Bio-diversity loss:



includes the extinction of various species including -

- The Golden Toad, Costa Rica (1986 87),*
- The Pyrenean Ibex (2000)*
- Tecopa pupfish (1970),*
- Caribbean Monk seal (2008),*
- West African Black Rhinoceros (2011),*
- Sea Mink (19th Century),*
- Javan Tiger (1976)*
- The Quagga (1883)*

III. How serious is the crisis?

What do the statistics tell us?

- Is there an environmental crisis? – YES!
- How serious is the crisis? – VERY SERIOUS!!
 - *Environmental crises are real and serious*
 - *Environmental crises cannot be solved by technical interventions alone*
 - *Environmental crises are merely symptoms of a far bigger hidden problem*
 - *Environmental crises have a spiritual root*
 - *False dichotomy between science and faith*
 - *Christians have neglected their God-given responsibility*
 - *Christians have a role addressing the environmental crises*

ENVIRONMENT - I I

DARE TO CARE (GOD DOESN'T DO WASTE)

Martin Kaonga

Director of Science and Conservation, A Rocha International

I. What does it mean to waste resources?

• **Loss of resources due to inaction:** An assignment to be carried out at a given time comes with an allocation of resources that must be used for that purpose. Failure to implement an activity results in a waste of resources. In food production systems, deciding not to carry out an activity will result in wasting of resources. Thus, inaction is costly. We know that some fishermen are using wrong fishing gear resulting in catching fishes of all sizes. Unless such activities are curbed quickly, the fish populations may significantly drop. On the other hand, we need to act quickly to cut down carbon dioxide emissions from combustion of fossil fuels and unsustainable land use systems. Inaction could only result in excessive loading of CO₂ in the atmosphere.

• **Inefficient utilisation of resources:** Using more resources than needed to achieve an objective is wasteful. In economic terms the return on investment is less than the accepted level. If you are preparing a cup of tea and you end up boiling three-cup equivalents of water, you end up using more electricity for just one cup of tea.

• **Overharvesting of resources:** Ecosystems need certain quantities of different resources to function. Humans must harvest resources at a rate that will not compromise the system's ability to replace what is harvested. Systems therefore have a harvesting limit beyond which it could collapse. In managing the ecosystems, ecologists define harvest quotas to ensure the system continues to function effectively even after harvesting a portion of resources. For example, if fishermen overharvest cod or salmon, their population could decline to the extent that they may never recover and could become extinct.

• **Destroying resources:** Activities that destroy resources in the ecosystem result in waste of resources. Acid rain destroys vegetation

and dead plants do not only stop fixing carbon, but they actually breakdown and release carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Living things that depend on living plants also lose their habitat. Chemical spills, waste dumping, and illegal harvesting techniques result in destruction of marine life.

- **Overconsumption:** Human beings, especially in developed countries use more resources than required for their normal living. This results in inefficient utilization of resources.

The average family throws away £700 worth of perfectly good food a year, or almost or almost £60 worth of food a month. The average weekly expenditure on food and non-alcoholic drinks in 2013 was £58.80 according to the ONS, which means a typical family throws away a week's worth of groceries each month.

In 2011, FAO published a first report assessing global food losses and food waste (FAO 2011). This study estimated that each year, one-third of all food produced for human consumption in the world is lost or wasted. Grown but uneaten food has significant environmental and economical costs.

In addition, by 2050, food production will need to be 60 percent higher than in 2005/2007 (Alexandratos & Bruinsma 2012), if production is to meet demand of the increasing world population. Making better use of food already available with the current level of production would help meet future demand with a lower increase in agricultural production.

To date, no study has analyzed the impacts of global food wastage from an environmental perspective. It is now recognized that food production, processing, marketing, consumption and disposal have important environmental externalities because of energy and natural resources usage and associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Broadly speaking, the environmental impacts of food mostly occur during the production phase. However, beyond this general trend, large discrepancies in food consumption and waste-generation patterns exist around the world. In a context of increasing commercial flows, there are significant differences in the intensity of wastage impacts among

agricultural commodities, depending on their region of origin and the environmental issue considered.

This study highlights global environmental hotspots related to food wastage at regional and sub-sectoral levels, for consideration by decision-makers wishing to engage into waste reduction:

Wastage of cereals in Asia emerges as a significant problem for the environment, with major impacts on carbon, blue water and arable land. Rice represents a significant share of these impacts, given the high carbon-intensity of rice production methods (e.g. paddies are major emitters of methane), combined with high quantities of rice wastage.

Wastage of meat, even though wastage volumes in all regions are comparatively low, generates a substantial impact on the environment in terms of land occupation and carbon footprint, especially in high income regions (that waste about 67 percent of meat) and Latin America. Fruit wastage emerges as a blue water hotspot in Asia, Latin America, and Europe because of food wastage volumes. Vegetables wastage in industrialised Asia, Europe, and South and South East Asia constitutes a high carbon footprint, mainly due to large wastage volumes.

Food wastage in Europe

- 50% of the food bought is binned
- 30% of vegetables are discarded on farming due to grading requirements
- Europe is ranked 2nd in terms of fruit and vegetable wastage
- Europe, with other western countries account for 67% of meat wastage

Environmental footprint

- Carbon footprint of food produced and not eaten is estimated at 3.3 GT of CO₂ eq
- Blue water carbon footprint of food is about 250 km³ – three times the size of Lake Geneva
- Produced, but uneaten food occupies 1.4 billion ha of land (30% of agricultural land area)
- The impact of food wastage on biodiversity loss is still unknown

Water wastage

- Since 1970, per capita water availability has fallen by 40%
- Today, more than 1.2 billion people lack clean water, mainly due to water loss and water wastage
- In 2008, there were 400 dead zones and several new dead zones have sprung up at an alarming rate in the last 50 years
- In 2007 summer, a 377,000km³ dead zone appeared in the Baltic sea

Energy wastage

Cheap and abundant fossil fuels have cemented bad energy habits, especially in rich countries. Most of our methods of producing, distributing and using energy are massively inefficient. These inefficiencies run across all production and use of energy, from the power plants to our everyday use of cars, heating and cooling systems, air travel and stand-by power. Power plants typically only turn about 30% of the energy input into usable electricity. We are losing up to 75 % of the energy in the fuel at the start of the process. Energy companies could do much better—combining power and heat production can lift efficiency to over 70%. But power producers insist on working to old models—the production of large quantities of energy in one plant far from where people live. Many of the new plants that are proposed now will remain below 40% efficiency—but power producers still try to persuade us that this is good. Is wasting 60% really what we want?

Cars

An average car emits approximately 3 times its weight in CO₂ per year*. And it is typically used to take ONE person to work and back—exceeding the weight of an 80 kg person 37.5 times. Of course, light-weight solutions exist which minimise fuel use.

** A car with a fuel consumption of around 7.8 litres/100 km (36 miles per gallon) travelling 16,000 km (10,000 miles) per year emits almost 3 tonnes (6,500 lbs) of CO₂ per year.*

Heating and cooling:

These systems are some of the biggest culprits when it comes to wasting energy. How often have you seen the windows open in a house that was overheated? The equivalent exists in the tropics where people cool

their places down to 20°C and then open the windows because they are freezing. Construction can help in a big way—near-to-zero energy homes and offices are possible at an economic scale. But it is also personal habit. Even simple things like choosing to wear a sweater rather than turning up the heating can help.

Flying

Airlines and their industry have been hit by rising oil prices. The industry is aware of the danger this poses to its profitability and is seeking to develop more efficient planes which can travel further.

However, the fact is that flying is inefficient in principle, resulting in much higher energy use and much higher CO₂ emissions than any other form of travel. The best advice is simply not to fly—travel by other means wherever possible.

-

Walk round your house at night and count the little red lights—on the TV and its set-top box, the CD player, the PC, your "shower toilet" if you're in Japan, your Minitel communications systems if you're in France, the charger for your electrified fence if you're an Australian farmer.

All these appliances are in "standby" mode—not really doing anything useful, except waiting to spring into life instantly. For some (but only some) products like printers and copiers, standby can be efficient, decreasing the total energy the device consumes. For others, it's just waste.

In a detailed study in 2001, the International Energy Agency (IEA) found that from 3% (Switzerland) to a scarcely credible 13% (Australia) of residential electricity used in OECD countries was standby.

Even though common sense would make you think that people should put their environment first, most people making the decisions are old and will not be alive to see the negative outcomes of their decisions. They want their country to make money and think if they don't use up the natural resources, someone else will.

God does not do waste

- God created the universe that was very good (Gen. 1:31)
- God built circularity within His creation (environment)
- God created man in His image, after His likeness to care for His creation (Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:15)
- Man sinned and attracted a curse
- God took a wasted man and creation and redeemed

Examples of God's sustainable use

- Israelites were instructed to share their passover lambs with neighbours (Exodus 12:4)
- Disciples collected 12 basketfuls of remains after feeding over five thousand people (Matthew 14: 13-21)
- The parable of a banquet (Luke 14:16)
- The parable of talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

What should be our response?

We should not waste:

- For God's sake
- For the sake of humanity
- For our sake and our children
- For the sake of creation

Are you wasting God's resources?

Save the planet through:

- Worship
- Discipleship
- Mission
- Lifestyle

ENVIRONMENT - I I I

SUSTAINABILITY: EAST-WEST TENSIONS

Martin Kaonga

Director of Science and Conservation, A Rocha International

I. East-west tensions within Europe:

(based on Sustainable Development as Seen by the Residents of Eastern and Western Europe on the Basis of ISSP Environment Data–Paweł Rydzewski College of Enterprise and Administration in Lublin)

The issue of sustainability turns out to be vital for residents of Europe. Out of the three pillars of sustainable development (social, economic and ecological), social issues are considered to be the most important both by Eastern and Western Europeans. Economic issues are viewed as slightly less important while environmental problems rank only in the third place. At the same time, the biggest differences between regions can be observed within this last category.

The residents of Western Europe give priority to environmental issues much more frequently than those of Eastern Europe but overall, these issues are not identified as the most important problems in Europe and lag far behind social and economic problems.

Declared concern in environmental protection is higher in Western Europe than in Eastern Europe, but it is associated with the same socio-demographic characteristics and almost identical hierarchy of their influence.

Another noticeable difference between Eastern and Western Europe concerns the question of threats to the environment. Residents of Eastern Europe more often consider water pollution and problems connected with domestic waste disposal to be burdensome while for those living in Western Europe, these are climate change and using up natural resources.

Western Europe is characterized by a much higher level of social capital, which constitutes part of the social pillar of sustainable development, and the level of which is also linked to the economic potential.

In conclusion, if it is assumed that the concept of sustainable development involves a relative balance among the three pillars), then opinions of the residents of Western Europe are more in line with this assumption. On the other hand, a disproportion can be observed in the

case of Eastern Europe, where the environmental pillar is clearly underestimated and the social pillar is much weaker.

II. East-west tensions globally:

(based on the EU SOER 2015 Report, Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director)

Global megatrends affect the prospects for the European environment

Globalisation and the unfolding of global trends imply that environmental conditions and policies in Europe cannot be fully understood — or properly managed — in isolation from global dynamics. Global megatrends will alter future European consumption patterns and influence the European environment and climate. By anticipating these developments Europe can harvest the opportunities they create to reach environmental targets and move towards the objectives stated in the 7th Environment Action Programme.

Such megatrends relate to demographics, economic growth, patterns of production and trade, technological progress, the degradation of ecosystems, and climate change.

Global megatrends analysed in SOER 2015

(see <http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2015/global/demography>)

Diverging global population trends: The world population has doubled to 7 billion since the 1960s and is projected to continue growing, although in advanced economies populations are ageing and in some cases reducing in size. Conversely, populations in the least developed countries are expanding rapidly.

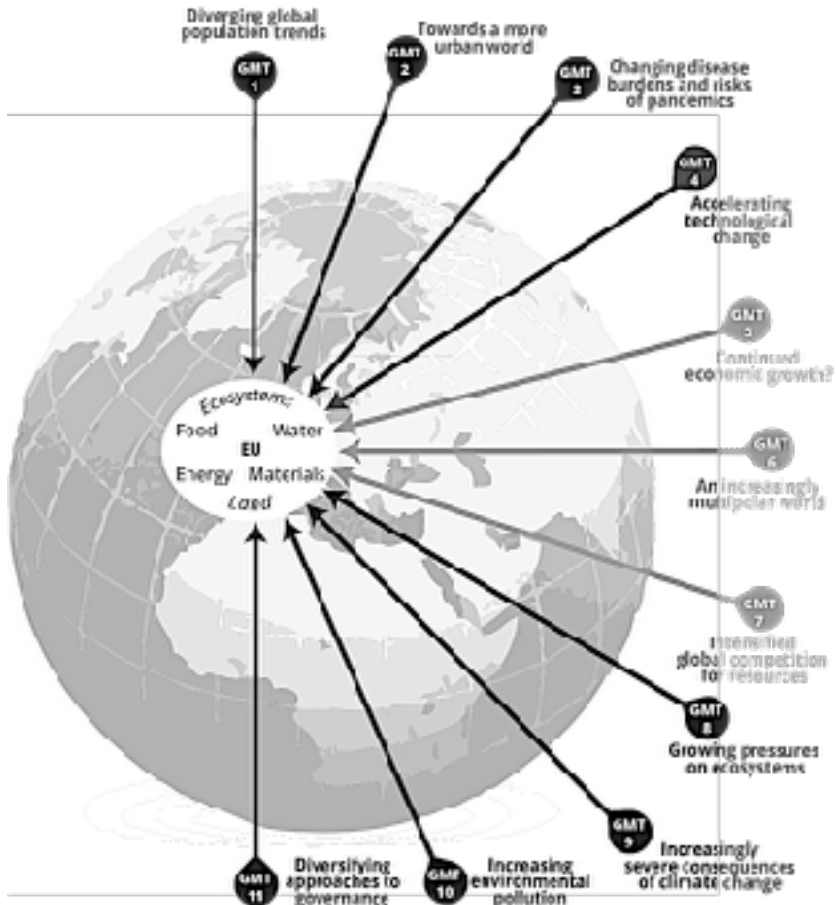
Towards a more urban world: Today, about half of the global population lives in urban areas, and this share is projected to increase to two thirds by 2050. With adequate investment this continued urbanisation can boost innovative solutions to environmental problems, but may also increase resource use and pollution.

Changing disease burdens and risks of pandemics: The risk of exposure to new, emerging and re-emerging diseases, and new pandemics is linked to poverty and grows with climate change and the increasing mobility of people and goods.

Accelerating technological change: New technologies are radically

transforming the world, particularly in the fields of nano-, bio-, information and communication technologies. This provides opportunities to reduce humanity's environmental impacts and increase resource security but also brings risks and uncertainties.

A selection of global megatrends, as analysed in SOER 2010 and SOER 2015:



Source: EEA.

Continued economic growth?: While the continuing impact of the recent economic recession still dampens economic optimism in Europe, most outlook studies foresee continued economic expansion globally in the coming decades – with accelerating consumption and resource use, particularly in Asia and Latin America.

An increasingly multipolar world: In the past, a relatively small number of countries have dominated global production and consumption. Today, a significant rebalancing of economic power is under way, as Asian countries in particular are coming to the fore, with impacts on global interdependence and trade.

Intensified global competition for resources: As they grow, economies tend to use more resources, both renewable biological resources and non-renewable stocks of minerals, metals and fossil fuels. Industrial developments and changing consumption patterns all contribute to this increase in demand.

Growing pressures on ecosystems: Driven by global population growth and associated food and energy needs, as well as by evolving consumption patterns, the loss of global biodiversity and the degradation of natural ecosystems is set to continue – affecting most severely poor people in developing countries.

Increasingly severe consequences of climate change: Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia. As climate change unfolds, severe impacts are anticipated for both ecosystems and human societies (including food security, drought frequency and extreme weather).

Increasing environmental pollution: Across the world, ecosystems are today exposed to critical levels of pollution in increasingly complex mixtures. Human activities, global population growth and changing consumption patterns are the key drivers behind this growing environmental burden.

Diversifying approaches to governance: A mismatch between the increasingly long-term global challenges facing society and the more limited powers of governments is creating demand for additional governance approaches, with a greater role for business and civil society. These changes are necessary but raise concerns about coordination, effectiveness and accountability.

By 2050, the global population is expected to exceed 9 billion, according

to projections by the United Nations (UN, 2013). Today, the global population is 7 billion, and in 1950 it stood at less than 3 billion. Since 1900, materials use has increased tenfold (Krausmann et al., 2009), and may double again by 2030 (SERI, 2013). World demand for energy and water are both projected to rise by between 30% and 40% over the next 20 years (*see, for example, IEA, 2013, or The 2030 Water Resource Group, 2009*).

Similarly, total demand for food, feed, and fibre is projected to grow by about 60% between now and 2050 (FAO, 2012), while the area of arable land per person may decrease by 1.5% per year if no major policy changes are initiated (FAO, 2009).

Human appropriation of net primary production (i.e. the share of vegetation growth that is directly or indirectly used by humans) has steadily increased with population growth. Human-induced land-use changes, such as the conversion of forest to cropland or infrastructure (including mining), account for a major part of the annual appropriation of biomass in Africa, the Middle East, eastern Europe, central Asia and Russia. In contrast, crops or timber account for most of the appropriation in western industrial countries and Asia.

Seen individually, each of the above global trends is striking in its own right. Taken together they look set to have a profound impact on the state of the environment and the availability of key resources globally.

Growing concerns about food, water and energy security have fuelled transnational land acquisitions in the last 5–10 years, primarily in developing countries. Between 2005 and 2009 alone, global foreign land acquisitions totalled some 470 000 km², which is comparable to the size of Spain. In some countries (particularly in Africa) large parts of the agricultural area have been sold to foreign investors, mostly from Europe, North America, China and the Middle East.

Combined with population growth and climate change, increasing demand for food is also expected to create significant threats to the availability of freshwater (Murray et al., 2012). Even if we continue to use water more efficiently, the absolute agricultural intensification needed to meet the world's growing food and feed demand—due to

population growth and changing diets—could lead to severe water stress in many world regions (Pfister et al., 2011).

The escalating resource scarcities in other parts of the world that could result from these trends have far-reaching implications for Europe. Most obviously, increased competition raises concerns about security of access to supplies of key resources. Prices of major resource categories have risen in recent years after several decades when they seemed to be in long-term decline. Higher prices reduce the spending power of all consumers but the effects are often felt most keenly by the poorest.

These developments have both direct and indirect implications for the outlook on resource security. Europe's long-term supply of—and access to—food, energy, water and material resources depends not only on improving resource efficiency and ensuring resilient ecosystems in Europe but also on global dynamics beyond Europe's control. European efforts to reduce environmental pressures are increasingly offset by accelerating trends in other parts of the world.

CLOSING PLENARY PANEL:

WHAT SHOULD EUROPE LOOK LIKE?

Julia Doxat Purser

EUROPE NEEDS GOOD NEWS PEOPLE proving value to society, breaking down “them & us” in face of opposition and of fear. We will be misunderstood and criticised but “Let your good deeds shine before men so that, though they hate you, they will glorify your Father in heaven” 1 Peter 2v12

What does society think about the Christian community? Or maybe it doesn't think anything because we are invisible or thought to be irrelevant? Let's ask people what they think and then we will really know how we need to correct the impression we give.

What image do we want society to have of Christians? What does society need to hear? What does it need from Christians? What does it need from Christians in politics? Transformed lives through faith in Jesus. And you are all welcome. The Gospel is our priority. The Church is a welcoming community.

Hope! A vision of Shalom-neighbourly love. Good Samaritan love. Forgiveness of hurts, repentance for mistakes and holding on to hurt.

Unconditional love, acceptance & dignity shown through practical care. Supporting the elderly, lonely, disabled, broken families, poor, sick, children, bereaved, ex-prisoners, young people, refugee & immigrant, people in danger of sexual exploitation and trafficking... We are doing great things. But let's look for more opportunities to be leaders in bringing hope.

Politics? Let's explain what we mean by “Christian values”. Or people will guess and they will guess wrong-conservative views on family and that's it. Instead, it is about the dignity of every individual, and that means acceptance and inclusion. It's about society that cares for all its members. It transcends the label of left or right wing. It's about families and sexual relationships that enable people to flourish. It's about so much more too.

There are prejudices and misconceptions to overcome-and it is our job to overcome them, not to moan that they exist. Christianity is not old fashioned, oppressive, anti-women, anti-gay, anti-other faiths, or it shouldn't be. So we need to prove it. The Church is not trying to control and impose-or at least it shouldn't be. In a democracy, it can't. It is

imply trying to contribute its voice and its community care. Let's show it. Christianity is not dying out. People have no idea that church can be a vibrant, multi-generational welcoming community. Let's show them.

Is Christianity useful to society? Let's prove our impact! Good community action stories in the local press. Count the numbers of non-church people who benefit from different ministries. Count the numbers of volunteer hours given for the benefit of non-church people.

E.g. Spanish FEREDÉ 2013 counted numbers of people helped, the types of care. To avoid being arrogant, their comment was that they want to be even more effective.

In 2008, a university study showed that the churches of Rotterdam saved the city council €130 million per year through all their voluntary work for the community.

Highlight past & present faith-inspired admired leaders & heroes in society. Politicians, scientists, social justice campaigners, charity workers...

Show how people of different faiths normally understand one another and live as neighbours far better than people who define themselves as non-religious. UK research showed that places of worship were the best places to bring people of different ages, ethnicities and backgrounds together.

Challenges:

- **Public funding being cut?** There is no automatic right to funding. But, if we can demonstrate that we are doing a good service that's offered to all regardless of faith/interest in faith, then it would be discrimination not to offer it. Members of faith groups pay tax along with everyone else so they should be able to compete for public money.

- **Negative media coverage?** What stories does the media cover about Christians and how? Can you change this? What do you want to be known for? Break negativity (if working on controversial issues, change the tone. Stay calm. Confidence without arrogance. And work on positive too). Get good news stories in. Grace & truth. Cultivate relationships. Local media. (But media will always look for controversy and challenge to normal values on consumerism & sexuality. We can't be dull).

- **How to witness?** Equip Christians to know how to witness appropriately at work, school etc. Dialogue. Testimony.

Inga Bite

My VISION for Europe

I dream about Europe truly based on common values where people truly live out the command of Jesus to “love your neighbour as yourself”.

We are now at the first stage of achieving this—we are learning to love ourselves. And we are succeeding well. We have crowned and inaugurated ourselves and put ourselves in the center, expecting everybody and everything to serve our good.

I see us all passing on to the second stage soon. I see us caring for other people like we care for ourselves. I see us thinking of other people like we think of ourselves and I see us valuing other people as we value ourselves.

I see Europe taking a family, which is based on marriage between one man and one woman, for granted—just as we take a meter or a kilogram. I see children being perceived as a blessing, not annoyance. I see families on their 50th marriage anniversaries being interviewed on the TV and being asked about their key to building sustainable relationships.

I see women’s magazines full of pictures of mothers of several children being interviewed about their wisdom of rising European citizens with dignity, patience and love. I see men’s magazines with pictures of fathers being able to love and take care of their families.

I see Christians in Europe raising their voice and saying: Europe is ours! We are not giving it away to the evil. We are brave enough to proclaim our values and we are proud of being children of God living under His Power, Authority and Grace.

YOUTH FORUM REPORT: *a parallel programme for youth was organised alongside the State of Europe Forum. The following is a summary of the presentation on nationalism.*

WHEN IS NATIONALISM ACCEPTABLE?

THE STATE OF EUROPE YOUTH FORUM OF 2015 discussed the following question: ‘**When is nationalism acceptable?**’ with a special focus on how to combat excessive nationalism. In this paper we will outline the main points raised and the solutions proposed to the question. In order to create a solid foundation for the discussion, it is first essential to understand what nationalism can be so as to avoid misunderstanding. *Rosemary Caudwell*, the mentor of the group working on the question, sets up the background in the following way: “We live our lives in the context of a particular nation or region, and it is natural to have a sense of belonging to that nation, and a desire that it should flourish.” She then goes on to point out that “when that attachment is linked with a sense of cultural superiority, with hostility to those outside the particular national group, whether they are minorities within the nation or neighbouring countries, or even a lack of solidarity or compassion, then it is excessive nationalism”.

With the above statement in mind, we have structured the discussion at the youth forum in two parts: combating excessive nationalism as a nation and combating excessive nationalism as the Church. Below is a summary of the debates.

A. How can a nation combat excessive nationalism?

Let us first turn to discuss the response a nation should have with regard to nationalism.

From the point of view of the old-stock people in a nation, there are several issues that we affirm as essential in fighting excessive nationalism. Firstly, it is of primary importance to foster appreciation for the good in the nation while not being silent about the negative in the present or past of the nation. Secondly, as we are living in an extremely individualized society, the sense of a nation as a community of people living together is being challenged. It is therefore vital to promote positive relationships within the nation. Thirdly, respect towards

minority people groups and migrants within the nation should be supported.

Fourthly, in order to create a healthy mentality within the nation, it is important to not look solely at how the nation perceives itself but also at how it behaves towards those outside the society, and especially towards the foreigners living in the land. Sadly, the tendency of endorsing nationalistic/populist political movements has been a growing phenomenon during these last years, which in turn creates greater distance between people groups. This is why we believe that developing a sense of hospitality towards foreigners can help to bridge the cultural gap between old-stock and migrants. Finally, it is important that a nation develops healthy relationships with the neighbouring countries. This can prevent the reactionary rise of unhealthy nationalism. As the Latvian case with Russia shows, however, this point can be a great challenge.

We would like to add that the above issues could be more complex to endorse for a migrant. Migrants can have worldviews that are totally opposite to those embraced in their host country. It is therefore important that also migrants develop respectful attitudes towards people of other convictions. Some examples of clashing convictions are the attitude towards women (especially in the case of Islam) and the values of democracy and the rule of law. Finally, the learning of the national language(s) by migrants must be a required step to facilitate the integration of the migrant.

B. How can the Church combat excessive nationalism?

As the first part of this paper depicted ways to combat excessive nationalism from the point of view of a whole nation, we will now focus on the response of the Church to this same question. This includes the spiritual component in the discussion. Whereas the first section only dealt with external behavior, this section addresses the state of the heart. How can the Church see the nation the way God sees it? Are there steps that only the Church can take?

Egil Levits, a Latvian former member of the European Court of Justice, formulated five necessary steps that the nation of Latvia should go

through as a nation to deal with its past and develop hope for the future:

1. Acknowledge the truth
2. Admit their own guilt and repent
3. Extend forgiveness to whom it may be needed
4. Restitute (redemption) where needed
5. Reconciliation

These five steps can be of great meaning for the Church at large in defining its response to society. The Church should aim to seek out and acknowledge the truth about the history of the nations where it is located. Practically, the Church should pray that God would reveal the 'idols' of the nation. Nationalistic thinking is always developed around an idolatrous view towards the nation. And often, the Church can also have the tendency to embrace it. So as God reveals the idols of the nation, the Church should, first of all, take steps of repentance. This means dealing with any nationalistic thinking that has taken root within the Christian community, and then to promote repentance and even repent on behalf of the nation towards God and, if necessary, towards other nations or people groups (e.g. John-Paul II's repentance for the killing of Jews).

Another practical step that the Church should engage with is in developing teachers that would encourage people to be willing to admit the truth in history, and promote repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. Similarly, the Church could develop history curricula concerning the nation, putting the focus on what God has done in the past.

The Church can also play a great role in promoting healthy relationships within the nation, whether locally or internationally and encouraging the respect of minorities. Likewise, the Church plays a key role towards migrant communities. As God commanded Israel to treat the foreigners well (for they were themselves foreigners in Egypt), the Church must take good care of the migrants and refugees. Church communities could start developing services in the languages of the migrants, for example. In addition, the Church can foster good relationships between old-stock

and migrant people groups (e.g. by helping people from both groups who are struggling economically, by participating in or creating dialogue between both groups, etc.)

As a conclusion, we believe that the Church needs a paradigm shift to become the community that listens to and obeys God, and encourages the nation to listen the voice of God. The Church has the calling to serve society and to be the prophetic voice in the public square, and thus bring a godly perspective on issues such as nationalism.

With special thanks to Rosemary Caudwell who mentored the discussion group and Ineta Lansdowne for having brought the Latvian perspective on nationalism

CONTRIBUTOR PROFILES



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Inga Bite is a Latvian politician, member of the Zatlers' Reform Party and a deputy of the 11th Saeima (Latvian Parliament), currently on maternity leave. She has graduated as a lawyer from the University of Latvia.



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Julia Doxat-Purser is EEA's socio-political representative and religious liberty coordinator, and previously EEA's first Brussels representative. She helps Evangelicals engage in the public arena effectively and with solid biblical foundations of how one engages "Christianly".



Jeff Fountain is director of the Schuman Centre for European Studies and the convenor of the State of Europe Forum. Originally from New Zealand, Jeff has lived in the Netherlands for forty years where he met his wife Romkje. He has ministered in almost every European country and is author of several books on Europe including 'Living as people of hope' and 'Deeply Rooted'.



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Cardinal Jānis Pujats is the archbishop emeritus of Riga, Latvia, and a Cardinal. Ordained in secret during the Soviet occupation of Latvia, he was made archbishop of Riga in 1991, and a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 1998. He speaks Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, German and Latin in addition to his native Latvian.



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