

Human Rights and Global Values

Introduction

► The boundaries separating people and places are rapidly eroding. Yet dramatic differences remain: Between rich and poor economies, between authoritarian and democratic states, between secular and religious societies. In a world that remains divided, exploring what constitutes global human rights and values has never been more important. At the OCF conference, an inter-generational dialogue between young activists and scholars and an older, more experienced generation touched on topics like international justice and the rule of law, religion and values, as well as migration.

“People who come from countries with great economic or constitutional problems are often much more informed about opportunities for change,” says Jutta Limbach, the former president of the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany. With experience on the ground that goes beyond the theoretical, local activists “provide concrete recommendations on how state organs and nongovernmental organizations can help promote democracy in areas where dictatorships still flourish.”

The conference’s geographic diversity highlighted issues beyond Europe’s borders – especially in some of the world’s emerging economies. Deep social changes occurring

in China, for example, will define this century in pivotal ways. A migration expert predicts that China’s creative approach to bringing emigrants home will allow the country to keep its most talented creative workers and move the country from a cheap production center to a more knowledge-based economy, for example. At the same time, scholars debated whether the same approaches states use to integrate migrants from other countries might apply to the oft-overlooked phenomenon of internal migration from the countryside to urban areas.

Just as migration transcends national boundaries, the international reach of religion makes it one of the most divisive and potentially benign forces in human society. Though the headlines may be about the clash between Islam and Christianity, some political scientists and historians at the OCF conference argued that an equally significant shift may be going on within Christianity, as evangelical strains of the faith sweep across Africa and South America and replace traditional denominations.

Societies across the world will be impacted by movements like these regardless of geographic location. “Without understanding the very different historical developments, realities and challenges in developing and

developed countries, we will not understand the dynamics of their social change in the future,” says Ludger Pries, a sociologist at Ruhr Universität Bochum and, like Limbach, one of the scientific advisors.

Underpinning all of the discussions during the OCF conference was the question of how policy shapes what rights are granted and what values are protected. As boundaries shift, more international organizations, from the UN and World Trade Organization to the European Union, are stepping into a regulatory role. Yet often this power exists without the constitutional checks and balances that most nations rely on.

“The question arises as to how this decision-making power can be democratically legitimized and submitted to certain fundamental rule-of-law principles,” says Dieter Grimm, professor emeritus of public law at the Humboldt University of Berlin. “There is no equivalent to a constitution on the international level, or only a very thin one at best.”

There is no one answer to the question of how to provide human rights on a global scale. But meetings like the OCF can provide a forum for identifying problems and generating concrete ideas for a more just common future. ◀

849 out of 7,112

petitioners were granted amnesty by South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

81

people per toilet seat in Mumbai, India.

144,000

Chinese students studied abroad in more than 100 countries in 2007.

90%

of people without basic necessities say religion is an important part of their lives.

60%

of people with their basic necessities met say religion is an important part of their lives.

33%

of U.S. citizens will be of Latino descent by 2050.

Culture, Community and Human Rights: South Africa's Lessons

“If truth has replaced justice
... has reconciliation turned
into an embrace of evil?”



Antjie Krog is a South African poet, writer and professor at the University of the Western Cape.



Addressing the Human Rights session of the OCF conference, South African poet and journalist Antjie Krog drew on African philosophy to explore how a world view that might seem alien to Europeans made the pioneering Truth and Reconciliation Commission project the right solution for South Africa.

Is a common understanding of human rights possible? Is a shared doctrine of human rights possible and desirable? Are all human rights universal?

I will first discuss two examples of strong and devastating criticism against the basic principles of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Both these criticisms suggest that some fatal flaws within the process itself hampered and are still hampering South Africans in cultivating a culture of human rights and building a fair and just society. Then I want to explore another way of interpreting these “fatal flaws” in order to show that a different kind of reading is possible which not only broadens the concept of human rights but also makes the building of a just society more probable.

The TRC was only a few months into its two-year workload when one of the strongest, most enduring and often quoted criticisms was leveled at the Commission. Prominent scholar Mahmood Mamdani, based at University of Cape Town when the TRC was active between 1996 and 1998, criticized the fact that the TRC decided to confine its gaze to the physical and repressive dimensions of apartheid rule such as severe ill-treatment, abduction, torture, and killing instead of addressing the structural violence of apartheid.

This, Mamdani suggested, obscured the co-dependency of racialized power and racialized privilege. Instead of regarding victims as “political activists” and perpetrators as “state agents”, the TRC should have gone “beyond notions of individual harm and individual responsibility, and located agency within the workings of a system. The

result would have been to explain apartheid as an evil system, not just to reduce it to evil operatives.”

Mamdani was particularly vocal about the forced removals of three and a half million people to create racially segregated residential areas as “South Africa’s gulag.” While some 25,000 people died between 1960 and 1994 in political violence, millions more were condemned to anguished lives of racially defined poverty. With the narrow focus of the TRC their dignity could never be restored while thousands of apartheid functionaries and millions of white beneficiaries were left unscathed, off the hook, and with all their loot intact. Instead of placing the complicity and culpability of beneficiaries center stage, white South Africans by and large were able to claim a false innocence.

In an interview with me, Mamdani sharply criticized the way in which the commission was settling for truth instead of trying to exact justice for the impoverished. “If truth has replaced justice in South Africa – has reconciliation then turned into an embrace of evil?” he asked.

South African scholar Claudia Braude is also critical of the commission’s approach. Having avoided a Nuremberg route in dealing with the crimes of the past, she says, South Africa has entrenched a pervasive culture of impunity. Using the “template of forgiveness,” many South African criminals were claiming the right to be forgiven. “Since amnesty cannot be granted for crimes against humanity, descriptions of apartheid mutated from being an internationally recognized crime against humanity into a gross human rights violation,” Braude writes.

She agrees with several scholars accusing Archbishop Desmond Tutu of cloaking the commission in a language of forgiveness which allows a political compromise, also called a pact between elites, to suddenly acquire a moral overlay. No wonder, the article continues, that the democratically chosen leaders of the new South Africa, who in recent years participated in a corrupt arms deal, now demand amnesty. Using the lan-

guage of amnesty, political context and forgiveness, South Africans are being asked to let off the hook the president (accused of raping a young woman), his financial advisor (accused of corrupt dealings in the arms deal), and the xenophobic attackers (accused of attacking and looting the businesses and houses of people from other African countries).

Mamdani and Braude are saying that those who benefited from a crime against humanity have walked off scot-free. Those who have killed, maimed, and tortured got amnesty. Because the structural injustice black people suffered has not been rectified, the rights and freedoms in the constitution remain a chimera. We are therefore NOT equal before the law and will never enjoy equal benefit or protection. The TRC single-handedly destroyed the possibility of restoring human dignity which forms the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. Therefore, the commission’s critics say, all South Africans have in a way been licensed to be as corrupt and criminal as they want, to make up for what they have been denied, or in protecting that which others want to take from them.

You will agree: This is devastating.

But allow me to look at the same issues framed by a different philosophy or worldview, namely that of being part of an interconnected community.

Is Autonomy European?

First things first. Is the concept of an “autonomous person” a European invention? It is important to realize that over the years, African philosophers have defined personhood in a specifically interconnected way. The self is not something private, hidden within our bodies, modern African theologians Gabriel Setiloane and Augustine Shutte maintain. The self is outside the body, present and open to all. It is not a thing, but the sum total of all interacting forces. The human self is therefore not something that first exists on its own and then enters into relationship with its surroundings. It exists ONLY in relationship to its surroundings.

This kind of interconnectedness is not an isolated exceptional phenomenon, but part of a much broader, more general context found in a variety of forms, under a variety of names, manifesting in a variety of cultures across the African continent. In his famous 1995 essay on African philosophical thought, Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Gyekye says that communitarianism is held by most of the scholarship involving cultures of Africa, as the most outstanding trademark as well as the most defining characteristic.

Poet and Wellesley College philosophy professor Ifeanyi Menkiti also maintains that “as far as Africans are concerned, the reality of the communal world takes precedence over the reality of the individual life histories” and therefore comes to three conclusions: The community defines the individual; personhood is not bestowed on somebody simply through birth, but is something to be acquired; personhood is something at which an individual could fail.

In other words: A person is fully dependent on others. In African philosophy this is at times described as interconnectedness towards fullness. Former Senegalese poet and President Leopold Senghor underlined the Latin meaning of “conspiring” – breathing together. Our deepest moral obligation is to become fully human and that we can only do through entering more and more deeply into community with others. The goal of morality is the fullness of humanity.

Being interconnected makes it possible to acquire personhood. Personhood is not bestowed on someone simply through birth. You have to “build” yourself into a person.

“Personhood refers not to a state of being but to a state of becoming. No living self can be static.”

Personhood refers not to a state of being but to a state of becoming. No living self can be static. Stasis means social death. According to early 20th century missionary Tom Brown, who lived over forty years among

the Batswana, the moment that a person starts living in disregard of the community, according to the each-man-for-himself principle, then “the light of the mind is darkened and [his] character deteriorates, so that it may be said that the real manhood is dead, though the body still lives; when they realize that to all intents and purposes the human being is alienated from fellowship with his kith and kin.”

How does this view interact with the notion of human dignity? Here for you, in Germany, human dignity is inviolable and innate. It forms the foundation and basis from which people can access the protection

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of their human rights. Gyekye says that the basis of a caring society could be ‘caring or compassion or generosity’ rather than justice.

The Essence of the TRC

Thousands and thousands of revenge killings were executed in Europe after the Second World War. Not a single direct revenge killing of victims took place during the TRC period – many murders of course, but they were generally linked to criminal activities. Why this absence of vengeance? Why did victims and perpetrators sit together in the same room talking about their experiences? I want to suggest that it was due to this sense of being part of and dependent on one another in order to build a personhood within a new democracy.

But we are a country split down the middle: White perpetrators use the brand-new bill of human rights to protect those very rights that they previously denied their victims.

Victims and the poor did not demand rights before the TRC, but hoped that by telling their collective story a country would be moved into changing everybody’s life. How powerful this kind of interconnectedness is,

was impressively formulated by a mother whose son was killed by an apartheid hit squad. Asked what she thought about reconciliation she answered as follows:

This thing called reconciliation [...] if I am understanding it correctly [...] if it means this perpetrator, this man who has killed Christopher Piet, if it means he becomes human again, this man, so that I, so that all of us, get our humanity back [...] then I agree, then I support it all.

In simple terms she spelt out the full complex implications of being interconnected-towards-wholeness and the role of reconciliation in it.

Her words, firstly, mean that she understood that the killer of her child could, and did, kill because he had lost his humanity; he was no longer human. Secondly, she understood that to forgive him would open up the possibility for him to regain his humanity; to change profoundly. Thirdly, she understood also that the loss of her son affected her own humanity; she herself had now an affected humanity. Fourthly and most importantly, she understood that if indeed the perpetrator felt himself driven by her forgiveness to regain his humanity, then it would open up for her the possibility to become fully human again.

This remarkable formulation affirms how somebody, who would be regarded by many as not effectively literate, let alone schooled in African philosophy, intimately understood her interconnectedness and could formulate it succinctly. But this view had profound implications for the workings of the TRC.

After 18 Truth Commissions around the world, from Chile and El Salvador to Canada, the South African one has been hailed and credited for being the first to hold victim hearings in public, individualize amnesty and allow victims fighting on both sides of the conflict to testify at the same forum.

Most scholars ascribe that to motivated and innovative thinking. But all three can be traced directly back to a strong awareness of interconnectedness. Because people share each others pain, the audience has as much right to be in the presence of the testimony

as the testifier, all of it is our story and therefore may be public; because people who are prepared to apply for amnesty are admitting wrongdoing, they could therefore begin to change in order to be eventually re-admitted

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to society; and because mothers who lost their loved ones, fighting for the ‘right’ or the ‘wrong’ side, suffer alike and can only try to heal when connected to one another.

Community in African Thought

What are the implications?

Mamdani’s criticism means that exchanging truth for justice or “embracing the evil one” could be the beginning of a humanizing process in which compassion and change bring the ultimate form of justice – a restored and caring society.

In fact it is important to know that the whole notion of evil, according to African philosophers, is different. Something is considered to be evil not because of its intrinsic nature, but by virtue of who does what to whom. According to Setiloane, evil can be described as living in disregard of the community. It is when you begin to deny your interconnectedness, step out of the corporate in which you should be ‘building’ yourself that you are committing evil. So it is exactly by refusing to forgive, refusing to embrace whom is regarded as evil that one begins to deny interconnectedness and is therefore busy with evil.

In terms of not addressing the structural devastation of apartheid: Within a communitarian worldview, one may assume that forgiving and embracing the perpetrator will demand of him to change into a fellow citizen that will begin to “build his personhood” through sharing and assisting his community. In terms of apartheid’s beneficiaries, interconnectedness assumes that whites will feel themselves linked to the few identified perpetrators and that THAT will propel them into processes of change, restoring, and reparation.

That no sharing or change has happened is more an indication of a dominating non-interconnecting culture clashing with an indigenous interconnecting one, than a TRC template encouraging people to be comfortable with “evil.”

It seems that those who do not bear interconnectedness in mind find the reasoning in and around the TRC confusing. In an essay on forgiveness, the late French philosopher Jacques Derrida describes Tutu as “confused” and oscillating “between a non-penal and non-reparative logic of ‘forgiveness’ (he calls it ‘restorative’) and a judicial logic of amnesty.” Through the interconnectedness-prism however, Tutu is not simply linking human rights and amnesty to religion, but is using the foundation of interconnectedness to allow people back into humanity through processes such as forgiveness and amnesty. In other words, concepts such as amnesty and judicial logic are not added on or simply linked to forgiveness but instead interpreted through interconnectedness which profoundly changes the way these two terms are used by people like Archbishop Tutu.

Again, interconnectedness does not simply regard extracting privileges and benefits from the one group to give to the other, as justice or restoring human rights. Interconnectedness depends on everybody’s moral awareness of a deep and potentially fatal connectedness which puts an imperative on beneficiaries to share and build, in order for them to regain their humanity. Interconnectedness lit up concepts like justice into restorative justice, amnesty into admitting wrong doing, forgiveness into re-admittance into the community of humanity and human rights into responsibilities towards a more humane society. You cannot have dignity or freedom if mine is affected.

This kind of interconnected responsibility shows up countries that are quick to put African leaders on trial for human rights abuses, while they themselves and their policies sow hunger, corruption, and destruction in Africa.

Is the template of forgiveness providing impunity to the corrupt? Yes, if amnesty is regarded in a strictly individual sense, it could be seen as a dishonest way to escape punishment. But if amnesty is regarded in an interconnected way, that it is an admittance of wrongdoing and stating of a willingness “to make up” for it in order to become part of the community again, then amnesty is NOT impunity, but profound change. It is therefore too simplistic a reading to regard all the amnesty-asking of the new dispensation as purely a desire for impunity. I am suggesting that much of the support for “criminals” in South Africa is embedded NOT in a desire for wrongs to go unpun-

“Because people who apply for amnesty are admitting wrongdoing, they could therefore begin to change.”

ished, but to be allowed, through negotiated *wiedergutmachen* back in the community of respectable citizens.

At the same time, the fact that many current political leaders regard amnesty indeed as the SAME impunity granted to the beneficiaries of apartheid, is a sign of how western notions of individual rights are dominating, overriding, and corroding the indigenous notion that nobody can be without others.

The Notion of Justice

The notion of justice was not left out of the equation of the TRC, as many have argued. Justice was interpreted through the worldview of interconnectedness towards a fuller humanity. In fact, justice entered and became rejuvenated through a radical rethinking of the grammar of justice itself and through the process of human compassion and restoration that is understood to be as important as, and should become part of, the rule of law. This rethinking should be used not only during times of difficult transitions, but in European countries desperately trying to protect themselves from those whose interconnectedness had been

destroyed through colonialism and things like collateral damage, who are now flocking to European shores to share the spoils.

This conference on Our Common Future asks whether a common understanding of human rights is possible. I would say yes, but only when there is an awareness within the human rights discourse that people can think about human rights through a frame OTHER than that of the western individual.

This is a condensed version of a speech given at the OCF conference's session on Human Rights. More can be found at www.ourcommonfuture.de/krog

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Truth Commissions: A Worldwide Phenomenon

Since 1974, more than 30 truth commissions were created in 28 countries. The model is being considered in the wake of mass human rights violations in other countries as well.

- Argentina (National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons, 1983)
- Bolivia (National Commission of Inquiry into Disappearances, 1982)
- Chad (Commission of Inquiry on the Crimes and Misappropriations Committed by the ex-President Habré, his Accomplices and/or Accessories, 1991)
- Chile (National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, 1990; National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture, 2003)
- Democratic Republic of Congo (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2003)
- Ecuador (Truth and Justice Commission, 1996; Truth Commission, 2007)
- El Salvador (Commission of Truth, 1992)
- Germany (Commission of Inquiry for the Assessment of History and Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany, 1992)
- Ghana (National Reconciliation Commission, 2002)
- Grenada (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2001)

- Guatemala (Commission for the Historical Clarification of Human Rights Violations and Acts of Violence which Caused Suffering to the Guatemalan People, 1997)
- Haiti (National Commission for Truth and Justice, 1995)
- Indonesia (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004)
- Liberia (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2005)
- Morocco (Equity and Reconciliation Commission, 2004)
- Nepal (Commission of Inquiry to Locate the Persons Disappeared during the Panchayat Period, 1990)
- Nigeria (Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission, 1999)
- Panama (Truth Commission, 2001)
- Paraguay (Truth and Justice Commission, 2003)
- Peru (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2000)
- Sierra Leone (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2002)
- South Africa (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1995)
- South Korea (Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths, 2000)
- Sri Lanka (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Involuntary Removal and

- Disappearances of Persons in Western, Southern and Sabaragamuwa Provinces, Presidential Commission of Inquiry in to Involuntary Removal and Disappearances of Persons in the Central, North Western, North Central and Uva Provinces; and Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Involuntary Removal and Disappearances of Persons in the Northern & Eastern Provinces, 1994)
- Timor-Leste (Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, 2002)
- Uganda (Commission of Inquiry into the Disappearance of people in Uganda, 1974; and Commission of inquiry into Violations of Human Rights, 1986)
- Uruguay (Investigative Commission on the Situation of Disappeared People and its Causes, 1985; and Peace Commission, 2000)
- Yugoslavia, Federal Republic of (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2001)

Source: www.amnesty.org/en/international-justice/issues/truth-commissions

The Changing Face of Global Migration

“It is ... important to recognize the transnational capacities of today’s migrants.”



Steven Vertovec is director at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen, Germany.

> There are hundreds of millions of global migrants each year, and their numbers are growing. But unlike the mass migrations of the 19th and 20th centuries, today’s migrants are more diverse, their destinations more varied and their reasons for leaving home more complex than ever before. In his keynote at the OCF conference’s session on Migration and Integration, social scientist Steven Vertovec explored some of the consequences of the new migration patterns.

► Most UN agencies put the number of international migrants at about 214 million people per year. Indeed, over the past 30 years, the number of international migrants has doubled. However, if we look at the proportion of international migrants, vis-à-vis the growth of the global population, we’ll see that international migration has stayed about the same – about three percent – for several decades. It is projected to continue to do so until about 2050.

Yet while the proportion of migrants is staying the same, I would argue that the nature of global migration has changed sub-

stantially in terms of its makeup in three key ways. First of all, the numbers of international migrants represent only a quarter of the estimated migrants in the world if we take internal, rural–urban migration into account. Even though we might be dealing with internal, rural–urban migration, in many countries this still entails considerable ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity.

Second, most international migration happens within regions. In Europe, we have 31 million people moving just within the continent. Thirteen million people are moving from country to country within Africa.

And in Asia, there are 35 million people moving from region to region.

Finally, a lot of people have the idea that international migration is mainly a matter of poor people moving to rich countries. But the reality is that only about a third of international migration is made up of people from developing countries moving to developed countries. The majority is comprised of people moving from developing countries to developing countries, or moving from developed countries to developed countries.

Fundamental Shift in Patterns

Over about the past 30 years, we've seen a fundamental shift in global migration patterns. Basically, post-war migration up until the 1970s can be characterized as large numbers of people going from a few places to a few other places. Large numbers of people from Turkey and Yugoslavia came to Germany, for example; lots of Algerians went to France, and large numbers of Mexicans emigrated to the United States.

Since the 1980s, global migration has consisted of small numbers from many places moving to many places. Not only do we see more people coming in small numbers from more countries, but I suggest that over the past 30 years, we've had a proliferation of migration categories: Students, asylum seekers, environmental refugees, internally displaced people, seasonal workers, family reunification and marriage migration, contract workers and the like. I think a lot of the public debate loses sight of this proliferation in different categories.

"In Europe, we have 31 million people moving just within the continent."

Furthermore, a lot of the public debate assumes that people from a particular country have automatically come under a certain migration category or a certain legal status: All Iraqis must be refugees; all Turks must be Gastarbeiter and descendants of Gastar-

beiter. This is a myth that needs breaking. Within the same group – indeed, within the same family – you often find people with many different legal statuses. That's a tremendously important factor to take into consideration because a person's legal status has implications on housing, jobs, families, and access to public resources. Ultimately, it impacts people's position in society, how long they're going to be there, their own strategies for integration, and so forth.

Another big change is what we can call churn, meaning something that's turning over and constantly moving. The fact is: Not only do you have varying numbers of people coming into the country, but also large numbers of people leaving the country at the same time. This is primarily felt in cities. For policy makers, this should have crucial impact: When you have populations that are turning over every year or every couple of years, it has an impact on how you have to plan.

Transnationalism's Importance

Transnationalism is another important dimension of global migration. Transnationalism refers to various kinds of intensified connections that migrants are able to sustain with their homelands now. Since the 1980s – and particularly since the 1990s – the capacity for migrants to be able to maintain various kinds of social, political, and economic connections with their homelands has reached unprecedented levels.

Migrants have always maintained connections with their homelands. But now, due in particular to cheap telephone calls, migrants can have a real-time connection with people on the other side of the world. The ability to electronically send money has also been enhanced over the last couple of years. It is increasingly important to recognize the transnational capacities of today's migrants, who are now able to have their feet in two places at least.

In certain political discourses it's assumed that transnationalism and integration represent what you can call a zero sum game. In other words, the more transnational migrants are, the less they integrate. There's a considerable amount of research that shows this is not true. Surprisingly, we

"What's the relationship between cities and the nation-states in which they are located?"

see that those who are more transnational and who maintain strong political, economic and social links with their homelands are actually more integrated. They have better employment and more to do politically in terms of engagement and participation than those who aren't. These are counter-intuitive findings that we need to get into public debates about migration and integration.

What does the future hold? In terms of global migration, flows, and diversification, I think we can, in significant ways, expect more of the same. One of the reasons we've seen more people from more parts of the world coming in smaller numbers has to do with a gradual increase in living standards around the world. Of course, terrible pockets of poverty remain, but on the whole many countries are rising up economically.

Migration's Future

It is not the poorest who migrate, but those who are economically mobile or slightly better-off. Given widespread patterns of development, this suggests that future migration will be more evenly spread around the world.

To be sure, there will be uneven effects and patterns, within nations and around the world. Some places receive more migrants under different conditions than others. Within countries, cities and their localized political economies are the engines of global migration: Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg, and London are going to have different patterns than other places. We are seeing rapid diver-

sification in rural areas in many countries, but nothing in comparison to the changes surrounding cities.

This raises an important question: In the future, what's the relationship between super-diverse cities and the nation-states in which they are located? Berlin already resembles the rest of Germany less and less. New York does not look like the United States, and London does not look like the rest of the UK.

How do you politically manage a situation like that? Cultural diversity is reaching a point where it is on the political agendas of most countries now. Migration-driven diversification is a core feature of contemporary global cultural transformation, just as globalization is a core aspect of economic transformation. This process has already happened. It is manageable, but it is here, and it is irreversible.

Now and in the future, a nation-state's social, political, and economic success will be determined by how well it adapts itself to increasing diversity and complexity and not by how it hides it, denies it, or fights against it. Policy makers have to make hard decisions and hard trade-offs, but they should do it with the knowledge that things are going to get more complex. They're going to get more diverse. And that is our common future. 

This is a condensed version of a speech given at the OCF conference's session on Migration and Integration.

“Cities and their localized political economies are the engines of global migration.”

The God Gap

“Rising existential security tends to bring declining emphasis on religion.”



Pippa Norris is the McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics with a focus on religion at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has served as an expert consultant for many international bodies including the UN, UNESCO and the World Bank.



In developing societies with rapidly growing populations, religion is strong and getting even stronger; in most advanced industrial societies, with dwindling populations, religion plays a steadily less-important role in public life. In a lecture at the OCF conference's session on Religion and Values, Harvard University political scientist Pippa Norris explains the facts behind this trend and why reducing social and economic inequality can smooth religious tensions in the future.

In recent years, debates about the role of religion have become increasingly prominent around the world. The persistence of high rates of churchgoing in the United States, the growing importance of liberation theology in Latin America, and religious conflict in the Balkans, demonstrated that religion had not faded as a potent force in many contemporary societies.

That point was reinforced by the events of 9/11 in the United States, ethnic and religious tensions in Asia, and repeated outbreaks of violent conflict between religious groups in Nigeria, Sudan, and India. In the

"The decline of religious values is not confined to Western Europe."

EU, the rapid settlement of Muslim migrants into European societies has raised important challenges for how policy makers manage cultural diversity, maintain social cohesion, and accommodate minorities.

Recently, events have intensified concern about the integration of Muslims within Europe. Sharp ethnic tensions arose in the Netherlands after the murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh by Islamic extremists in November 2004. Heated protests broke out in many countries, following the September 2005 publication of the 'Muhammad' cartoons in Denmark: The cartoons were seen

as blasphemous in Islamic countries, while demands for their suppression raised concerns about freedom of expression in Western countries. And violent riots occurred a few months later in suburban Paris housing projects involving disaffected Franco-Maghrebi communities.

Contemporary debates in Europe vividly demonstrate the continued relevance of understanding religious values, including arguments surrounding the role of visible religious symbols, like headscarves, in public arenas in France, bans on the construction of new minarets in Switzerland, and the role of multiculturalism and *Leitkultur* in Germany. One widespread assumption is that these sorts of disparate events reflect a worldwide revival of religion.

I suggest the picture is more complex, and empirical evidence derived from scores of societies demonstrate growing religious divergence worldwide. On one hand, religious values and practices remain strong in developing societies, which have rapidly growing populations; and religion is making a comeback in many ex-communist countries, filling the vacuum left by the collapse of communism. But at the same time, secularization has been occurring in most advanced industrial societies, with dwindling populations.

This erosion of church attendance, religious values, and beliefs has been most clearly observed in Scandinavia and Western Europe, which has led some scholars to claim that Western Europe is the exception – not the United States. The depth of change does vary across societies but the decline of religious values and practices is not confined to Western Europe, by any means. Similar developments are evident in comparable affluent postindustrial societies such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Canada; even in the United States, a trend toward secularization is discernable, though partly masked by the large-scale immigration of people with traditional worldviews.

The Growing Religiosity Gap

New evidence lends further support to the thesis that rising existential security tends to bring declining emphasis on religion in postindustrial societies, an argument first presented in my book *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*, written with Ronald Inglehart and first published in 2004. This – combined with the resurgence of religion in many developing countries – has led to the emergence of a growing religiosity gap worldwide. Demographic trends have reinforced this gap, with the shrinking population in secular Europe, and the growing population in developing societies. The dynamics of secularization are more complex than either the simple decline of religion that was proposed by some early

"Religions provide reassurance that ... a higher power will ensure things work out."

sociologists or the universal resurgence of religion that has been suggested by many contemporary commentators.

The central thesis of *Sacred and Secular* argued that the emergence of high levels of existential security are expected to diminish anxiety and stress, promoting feelings of psychological well-being – which, in turn, reduce the importance of religious values in people's lives. Although this hypothesis has been controversial, it can be argued that virtually all of the world's major transcendent religions provide reassurance that, even though the individual alone can't understand or predict what lies ahead, a higher power will ensure things work out. This belief reduces stress and anxiety, enabling people to focus on coping with their immediate problems. Under conditions of insecurity, people have a powerful need to see authority as both strong and benevolent – even in the face of evidence to the contrary. Through

strengthening feelings of security, the processes of societal modernization have significant consequences for religiosity; the conditions of growing security that usually accompany the transition from agrarian to industrial societies, and then into postindustrial societies, tends to reduce the salience of religion in people's lives.

Experiential Security

The empirical analysis presented in *Sacred and Secular* also demonstrated strong correlations between religiosity and national level indicators of social and economic security, such as health and wealth. But the evidence then available did not establish a direct individual level link between religiosity and measures of existential insecurity. What additional evidence would provide further confirmation of the relationship between existential security and religiosity?

Answering that question became possible in 2007 using new data which only became available after *Sacred and Secular* was first published. The 2007 Gallup World

“Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?”

Poll (GWP) provides data on living standards, social deprivation, exposure to societal risks, and religiosity among the public living in 132 societies worldwide.

Two items contained in the Gallup World Poll are particularly useful to measure religiosity. Hence religious values are monitored by: “Is religion an important part of your daily life?” Since this does not refer to any specific concept, meaning, or definition of ‘religion’, or to any particular practices and beliefs, this item is the most suitable for cross-faith comparisons. In addition, religious practices are monitored by Gallup: “Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?”

To measure the experience of insecurity, we monitor vulnerability to multiple risks and forms of social deprivation.

Since cash income is only a poor proxy, especially in subsistence economies, the Afro-Barometer – an African-led series of national public attitude surveys on democracy and governance in Africa – pioneered the use of a Lived Poverty scale which measures the extent to which people have been forced to go without basic necessities during the past year. To construct a similar objective scale, the Gallup World Poll contains eight items that ask respondents to report to what extent they had enough money to buy food or shelter in the previous year, how well they are satisfied with their standard of living and state of health, whether their home has basic facilities such as running water, electricity and a landline telephone, and whether they have experienced health problems. These multidimensional items were summed and proved to form a consistent “Lived Poverty Index.”

Comparing the Gallup and Afro-Barometer results confirms that the Lived Poverty Index was indeed strongly correlated with religious values; hence some of the poorest

developing societies in Africa, such as Chad, Rwanda and Mali, gave the highest priority to religious values.

By contrast, some of the most affluent postindustrial societies in the world, led by Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Britain, showed the most secular values. There are exceptions: Many post-communist states with relatively high levels of lived poverty were secular, while many moderate income countries with low levels of lived poverty are also highly religious in their values, notably the oil-rich Gulf states and other predominantly Muslim countries such as Lebanon and Algeria.

The comparison with religious practices shows a similar and almost equally strong relationship; thus without any controls, the Lived Poverty Index proved to be a significant predictor of participation in religious services. Roughly nine out of ten people worldwide who lack the most basic

necessities of life report that religion is an important part of their daily lives, but this proportion drops to just six out of ten people who have these basic needs met. Similar disparities can be observed for at least weekly religious participation, although behavioral indicators are always lower than the expression of religious values.

Inequality Equals Religiosity

Far from being an anomaly, the existential security thesis applies to the United States as well as to most other societies. Hence, among the poorest segments of American society almost everyone reports that religion is important to their lives, but among the most affluent segment, only six out of ten do so. Churchgoing is less strongly linked with existential security, but nevertheless the poorest group of Americans, as measured by the Lived Poverty Index, are also the most likely to attend religious services. Sharp inequalities in American society help to explain its relatively high religiosity.

It could be suggested that the patterns observed so far might apply only to Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian societies, but not to other religions. But the Lived Poverty Index predicts religious values across nearly all religions, including Muslims as well as Catholics, Buddhists and Confucian/Taoists, as well as Protestants and those of Orthodox faith. Across many comparisons, using data from both the Gallup World Poll survey and the World Values Survey – and across scores of nations and many types of faith, the findings are consistent and robust. The most vulnerable populations in the world – those who lack the basic necessities of life such as food, running water and electricity – are far more likely than others to feel that religion is important in their lives; and to participate more often in religious practices.

The indicators of both religious values and religious behavior are not simply correlated with experience of lived poverty. They are also strongly related to a range of societal level demographic indices. Hence there is a robust and consistent pattern; the

most religious societies (defined by both the importance of religion and attendance at religious services in the 2007 Gallup World Poll) are also usually the ones which have the highest fertility rates for women, the

“Most high-income countries show a declining emphasis on religion.”

greatest estimated population growth, and the highest proportion of young people in the total population.

The global contrasts are stark; hence in some of the world’s most affluent societies, such as Sweden, Japan and Russia, the average fertility rate for women is less than two, generating population decline. By contrast, in countries such as Chad, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan, the average fertility rate for women is around six. Patterns of longevity dampen overall population growth in the poorest societies, but nevertheless the general tendency is for populations to grow most in the developing world, which is also the most religious, and to fall in more secular postindustrial societies.

Resurgence of Religion?

Early versions of modernization theory, from Karl Marx to Max Weber, held that religious beliefs were dying out and would disappear with the spread of education and scientific knowledge. More recently, it has become apparent that religion continues to play a prominent role, leading to claims of a “Global Resurgence of Religion.” The truth lies between these two extremes. When examined in the global longitudinal perspective provided by the World Values Survey, it becomes evident that religion has indeed become more important in many countries – but it has continued to decline in many others.

We do not find a global resurgence of religion, as some observers have claimed. Most high-income countries show declining

emphasis on religion. Thus the public of Norway, Spain, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, the former East Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, Denmark, and Australia all shifted toward saying that God was less important in their lives from the earliest available survey to the latest one.

But many countries show increases, and all six of those showing the greatest gains are ex-communist countries: Bulgaria, Russia, China, Belarus, Serbia, and Romania. Overall, the public of 13 of the 15 ex-communist countries for which we have a substantial time series, increased their emphasis on religion. The sharp drop in economic, physical and psychological security experienced by ex-communist societies is what we suspect caused the resurgence of religion in most ex-communist countries. This development has multiple components: The collapse of the communist ideology was a central part of this, leaving people disoriented and psychologically insecure and opening an ideological vacuum that, for many people, religion fills. Although religion has long been weak in these countries, Marxist ideology once filled the function of a religion, providing psychological security, predictability, and a sense of meaning and purpose in life for many people.

It is impossible to understand the rise to power of communist movements in these countries without recognizing the motivating power that the communist worldview once had. Many thousands of true believers sacrificed their lives for the communist cause during the Russian revolution and civil war, during the Long March in China, and during the Vietnam War. For many decades, communism seemed to be the wave of the future. The belief that they were building a better society may have given a sense of purpose to the lives of many people. But during the 1970s and 1980s, Marxist ideology began losing credibility; fewer and fewer people believed that communist regimes were building an ideal society that represented the wave of the future. By 1990 communism was generally discredited, and communist

regimes collapsed throughout the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In China and Vietnam, hard-line communist regimes were replaced by more pragmatic communist regimes that have become increasingly market-oriented. In the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the collapse of communism was accompanied by severe economic and social decline which left an ideological vacuum everywhere.

Moreover, other factors contributing to sharply rising levels of insecurity experienced in many post-communist societies have been the social disruption caused by the transition to liberal market economies in the early 1990s, accompanied by drastic

“The collapse of communism left an ideological vacuum.”

cuts in the welfare state, rising unemployment, and falling standards of living for many social sectors. Mean levels of growth declined sharply in the early 1990s before recovering, at least in some countries, as measured by per capita GDP, but accompanied by higher inequalities of income and wealth. The most vulnerable populations, such as the low-skilled unemployed, the retired and the disabled, lost out heavily from the transition to market economies. Not surprisingly, some of the post-communist countries which made the most successful economic transitions, such as the Czech Republic, Poland, and East Germany, are also the ones where religiosity eroded.

Lastly the liberalization of expression and religious freedom also probably contributed towards the more open expression of religious values and practices, particularly in the Chinese case. In the past, communist regimes systematically repressed religion – but during the last decade, religion has been making a comeback. It has not recruited equally from all strata: It has tended to attract the least happy people – those who feel the greatest need for security, reassurance, predictability, and social support.

Religious values have indeed become more important in many countries – but this has continued to decline in salience in many others. And one finds a clear pattern underlying these changes. In recent decades religion has become increasingly important in two types of countries: Developing countries and ex-communist societies, where the collapse of communism has opened up new inequalities and insecurities, especially for vulnerable populations such as older women dependent upon state benefits. But this resurgence of religious values is by no means universal. Among the public of high-income countries – who have grown up with high levels of existential security – the importance of religious values is low and has continued to decline.

Conclusions and Implications

In recent decades public interest in religious contrasts around the world has grown tremendously, and the debate about secularization theory and its recent critiques has become increasingly relevant to contemporary concerns. The idea of secularization has a long and distinguished history in the social sciences with many seminal thinkers arguing that religiosity was declining throughout Western societies.

Yet the precise reasons for this erosion of spirituality were never entirely clear. Max Weber attributed secularization to the spread of education and scientific knowledge; our own interpretation emphasizes the role of existential security. But by the mid-1960s the claim that religion was in a state

“The world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious values than ever before.”

of terminal decline rested on flimsy evidence. Its proponents cited empirical evidence of declining churchgoing in Western Europe, and a handful of case studies that fit the thesis, rather than a systematic examination of empirical evidence from many countries.

It was not surprising, therefore, that during the last decade American sociologists mounted a sustained counterattack on the basic premises of secularization theory. This critique threw many former proponents on the defensive. The simplistic assumption that religion was in decline everywhere, common in earlier decades, had become implausible to even the casual observer. Too many counter-examples existed around the world.

The religious market argument – a set of explanations that applied supply-and-demand theories from economics to understand religion – sought to reconstruct our thinking about the primary drivers in religious faith. The attempt was long overdue, but the religious market theory was fundamentally mistaken in trying to generalize from the distinctive American experience to the world as a whole. It is clear that the U.S. public remains far more religious than the public of most other postindustrial societies, but we believe that this largely reflects other causes than those cited by religious market theory.

Security and Secularism

New evidence confirms the finding that, with rising levels of existential security, the public of virtually all advanced industrial societies tend to move toward more secular orientations. Earlier perceptions of this process gave rise to the mistaken assumption that religion was disappearing. “God is dead,” proclaimed Nietzsche more than a century ago. A massive body of empirical evidence indicates that his negative forecast for religious values was

wrong. As a result of contrasting demographic trends in rich and poor countries, the world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious views than ever before – and they constitute

a growing proportion of the world’s population. The social and political divisions between those with religious and secular values, beliefs, and identities are thus growing – contributing to many of the tensions observed today in contemporary Europe.

That doesn’t mean religiosity is growing stronger in secure high-income societies. Rather, growing acceptance of divorce, abortion, homosexuality, gender equality, and the spread of secular norms have led to the political mobilization of those with traditional religious orientations. Precisely because their numbers are declining, people with traditional religious values see key religious norms as eroding – and they have become more active, making religious issues increasingly salient. Conversely, in the long term, if high levels of existential security are conducive to secularization, then expanding human security through sustainable development around the world, and economic equality within societies, may contribute to reducing tensions over religious values. ◀

This is a condensed version of a speech given at the OCF conference’s session on Religion and Values. More can be found at www.ourcommonfuture.de/norris

Promoting Religious Dialogue in the Heart of the Ruhr

Few topics are more contentious in today’s Europe than the role of religion in public life. With voters in some countries restricting the building of mosques in traditionally Christian city centers, the discussion of how best to negotiate religious divides is more relevant than ever. Drawing from the expertise of architects, artists, students, and scholars, Global Young Faculty members created a multi-media project in Essen that tried to capture the essence of this debate.

▶ As much as religion deals with the intangible, dialogue about religious rights and beliefs is often characterized by hard edges. Boundaries arise between those religious groups allowed into the heart of the community and those relegated to its fringe. In Germany, where cities are growing more diverse every day, the question of who can worship where is becoming progressively more important.

The Global Young Faculty group on Religion and Values challenged conceptions of religious identity, belonging, and place in its project *Sondernutzung*, or “special permit.” When people want to place an object in a public square in Germany, they must apply for a *Sondernutzung* permit. This means the public space is not actually public. It is limited and governed. The Global Young Faculty group says this also refers to religious communities that are not Christian. To explore this topic of religious exclusion, the

group sought the help of local artists and architects and erected an interfaith pavilion in the downtown square of Essen – the center of Germany’s diverse Ruhr region – in the summer of 2010. The center of the pavilion consisted of a tower six meters high and two meters broad. The tower was surrounded by a building fence secured with barbed wire to hint at exclusion – but with a small entrance.

“The concept behind that was to have this tower as a placeholder for different religious traditions that might stand there,” says Alexander-Kenneth Nagel, the head of the project and a junior professor of the Sociology of Religion at the Ruhr-University in Bochum. “In Germany, churches are well acknowledged in our city centers because they are seen as a legitimate part of our self-understanding. But you will hardly ever see a mosque or Hindu temple.”

The group asked passersby to imagine that a mosque was being built on the spot. Nagel says they got “a lot of controversial reactions” – from people who agreed that they would be uncomfortable with a mosque in the middle of Essen to a group of Muslim men on their way back from Friday prayer who wondered why their faith wasn’t more a part of the city’s fabric.

The Global Young Fellows wanted to spark debate among Essen residents. Inside the tower, they placed questions and left paper for people to respond.

“This turned out to be the main attraction for people,” Nagel said. “Not the main

pavilion, not the student projects. It was the conversation. I am still really quite moved by that.” That spirit of dialogue characterized the project from its inception. The Global Young Faculty group sought the expertise of artists and architects who knew how to design and build public installations.

“Scientists have a completely different way of conveying things than the artists,” says Nagel. “Scientists are trained to go for the maximum unambiguity. The artists had to create objects which had to be interpreted. These were issues of translation that we have never been confronted with before.”

Nagel and the group had to figure out what story they wanted to tell with this project. They decided to highlight the idea that many people are moved by religious questions, and because of this, societies need to develop strategies on how to mediate between people when it comes to religious dialogue. “How this religious understanding can be put into context is one of the challenges that we have to face,” says Nagel. “The earlier we start to deal with that challenge, the greater the chance that the situation will end in harmony.”

More can be found at at
<http://sondernutzung.wordpress.com/>
The Sondernutzung documentary:
<http://vimeo.com/16850785>

Intellectual Capital

The Battle For the Best Minds

The West has historically led the global race for talent. Many of those students who travel abroad for their education never return to their home countries to live and work – or at least they didn't used to. China is a major example that educational patterns are changing. Chinese students abroad are going home after receiving their degrees. In an interview, immigrant expert Wei Shen, a professor of international affairs in France and a Chinese emigrant himself, explains how China is going from brain drain to brain gain.

► When economists evaluate the future prosperity of countries, education levels are sometimes overlooked or at least underplayed. How much of an impact does education have on a country's future?

Shen: I think what is more important is looking at the soft infrastructure of the economy – the people. In the end, it is people who make the economy. Winston Churchill once said, "The empires of the future are the empires of minds." So it is really the brainpower that will be important. That will differentiate between nations. That will decide who will have a better advantage for economic development.

How is this race for talent playing out?

Shen: I believe the brain race or the talent race starts from student migration. It's the competition to get the brightest students and to educate them both internally and to attract talents from outside the country. This also blends with the internationalization of higher education and in some countries the commercialization of higher education. Like what we've seen in England, Australia, America, and even Asia, getting international students has become a very important financial resource.

A lot of your research focuses on trends in Chinese migration. How has the flow of talent in and out of China changed?

Shen: Traditionally, we talk a lot about brain drain – where countries in the global



OCF Fellow Wei Shen, born in 1981, originally from Shanghai teaches international relations at the ESSCA School of Management in France's Loire Valley. He first came to Europe a decade ago as a doctoral student in the Netherlands.

south become main sending countries of talents to the global North. But my research shows that in China more and more people are returning to their home country. In China, we have a funny nickname for them. We call them sea turtles. Sea turtles leave the shore for the sea and then they come back to lay their eggs. Chinese people go to some of the best institutions in North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia to study. They accumulate knowledge and then they come

back to China. That has become a very important strategy. Some people even call this the Chinese government's calculated strategy for development.

How is China pushing return migration?

They give you a lot of titles and publicity to encourage return migration. Sometimes they give you administrative support. If you want to set up a start-up company, they give you tax breaks. They also have preferential policies for land use, so you see a mushrooming of science parks around China.

What impact will all of this return migration have? Will it result in liberalization?

Shen: I hope so! What I have told you is very positive: Win, win, win. Win for the sending countries, win for the receiving countries and win for the migrants. But some of them told me that they still have problems reintegrating. It's not just knowledge – it is also politics. A lot of them experience more culture shock in China than abroad. Most Chinese political leaders have studied abroad, including members of the top academies of science or social science. This kind of influence and impact will not change things overnight. You will see it gradually.

Do you think other countries are doing enough to keep their most gifted scholars?

Shen: There was interesting research by a foundation in the United States on why the country is losing its brightest talents. The study showed it's because the country takes it for granted that people will stay. There is not a lot of policy to encourage them to capitalize on their brainpower.

What do you think will happen in this race for talent? What does the future look like?

Shen: Whether you are traditional sending countries or traditional receiving countries, the future is being decided right now. Countries will have to get prepared because the talent war is a war without bombs or without weapons. It's a silent war. Different governments have already started developing new incentives and initiatives. The competition for the future will be fierce. ◀

South to North

Changes in Global Christianity

Christianity has long been viewed as a fundamentally European-American phenomenon. But that is changing, and fast: There are now more than 400 million Christians in Africa, compared to about 300 million in North America and nearly 600 million in Europe, according to the World Christian Database. By 2050 there will be a billion African Christians, while the numbers in the West will stay relatively stable. For Philip Jenkins, a historian of religion, these demographic shifts mark a dramatic change in how the faith is practiced – and are an important phenomenon for policy-makers to consider. In a conversation at the OCF conference, he talked about how the growth of Christianity in the global South will play out.

► You're arguing traditional concepts of Christianity as a white, European-American religion no longer apply. Why is this so important to understanding our common future?

Jenkins: Partly because most people have a kind of assumption as to the direction of the world. They know religion is declining in Europe and therefore the assumption is that the religion of the future is Islam and Islam seems to be the natural religion of the non-Euro-American world. What I want to suggest is Christianity has at least as important a role. If you are interested in the state of the poorer people of the world, if you are interested in issues of development, then Christianity is the key force for understanding that.

Why is the faith growing so rapidly in places like Africa?

Jenkins: There has been a lot of conversion to Christianity: In the last hundred years probably the most important single thing that happened in Africa is a large part of the population went from animist religions to Christianity or Islam. But the most important reason is demographic. We have far higher birth rates in Africa than we do in



Philip Jenkins is the Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Humanities at Pennsylvania State University, where he specializes in the study of history and religion, particularly Christianity.

Europe, and there's a great deal of migration and globalization. These countries are growing very rapidly.

Are these changes having an impact on how Christianity is practiced globally? Are Africans and others gravitating towards traditional Catholicism or towards more evangelical styles of worship?

Jenkins: At the moment, Christianity around the world is becoming much more charismatic. That's important because it means Christianity becomes a very liberating force, quite a radicalizing force on a personal basis. That means a distinctive kind of worship style, a belief in direct divine intervention in terms of healing and miracles. That represents quite a revolutionary social and political change.

Will the fact that Christianity is growing faster in the global South impact the way Westerners practice Christianity in the future?

Jenkins: It already is affecting the West, particularly Christianity in Europe. Because of migration, on a typical Sunday in London half the people in churches are black – either African or Afro-Caribbean. By 2050, the United States will be close to being a country in which whites will no longer form an absolute majority. That means much of the religious style in the United States will be of Latino, Asian or African origin. So when I talk about Christianity in the global South, the global South is increasingly influencing practices and theology in the North.

Has competition with other faiths, such as Islam, had an impact on the way Christianity is practiced in the global South today?

Jenkins: The normal experience of Christianity in most of the world is in the form of a minority religion or a religion coexisting with other faiths such as Islam. That position makes proselytizing and evangelizing much more difficult. It means you have to be much more conscious at every stage of your interactions with other religions. That competitive tension can have a moral impact, too. If you're in a society where Islam is the main competitor, it means you have to be much more cautious about appearing liberal and tolerating feminism or supporting gay rights issues. If you do, it may seem like you're forfeiting the moral high ground to Muslims. ◀

Integration and Values

Opening Doors, Closing Minds

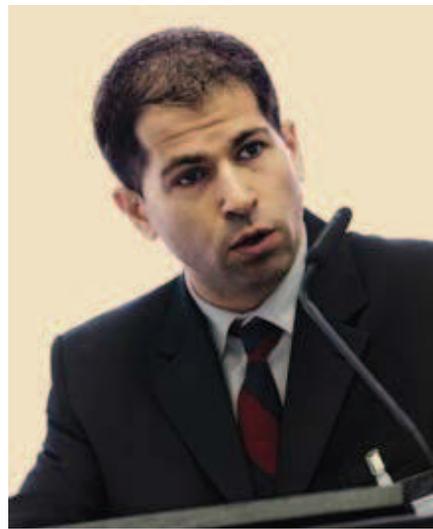
Immigration is one of the key issues facing Europe in the future. Across the continent, policy makers are grappling with ways to welcome immigrants without eroding the traditions and values of the dominant culture. Can liberal values withstand the pressures of immigration? Expert in immigration Liav Orgad, who took part in the conference's session on Human Rights, argues that efforts to force immigrants to conform to European norms ultimately backfire, and a more accommodating position will have more success.

► Immigration and integration questions seem to be constantly in the news – from German Chancellor Angela Merkel's controversial claim that multiculturalism in Germany has failed to aggressive positions against Muslim immigrants taken by politicians from the Netherlands to Switzerland and Italy.

As many Europeans have become alarmed that their cultural values are being eroded, countries have created immigration policies designed to protect liberal culture values. But should they be doing so?

Liav Orgad, an OCF Fellow and assistant law professor at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya in Israel, says European countries need to tread carefully. "Liberal states, in order to preserve and protect their liberal values, are turning to illiberal means – and this is contradictory," he says.

As an example of illiberal means, he points to documents prospective citizens in the Netherlands must sign affirming their support of things such as homosexuality, or to requirements in some German states that immigrants have a basic knowledge of Goethe or Beethoven to pass citizenship tests. Such requirements, which he says are often intended to quietly assimilate foreigners into the majority culture, single people out because of their culture and are ultimately counterproductive, Orgad argues.



Liav Orgad, born in 1977, is a law professor at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya in Israel.

"The proposition here is you must be liberal in order to live in a liberal state and this goes against the very concept of a liberal state," he says. "The idea of multiculturalism is you can pick and choose whatever culture or ideas you want."

Orgad has researched a broad range of topics – everything from constitutional questions to the law of war. But his greatest passions are immigration and citizenship, particularly how to reconcile nations' right to self-determination with immigrants' interests. He's in the midst of writing a book called *Cultural Defense of Nations: Liberal Democracy and Cultural Citizenship*, which he hopes to finish in 2011.

In his book he argues that countries should define culture in a limited way when pondering what should be expected of immigrants looking to integrate.

Orgad thinks Europeans should look to the United States, where immigrants are asked to subscribe to values enshrined in the national constitution but not specific cultural values. In Germany, for example, a hypothetical citizenship test that asks immigrants to accept the concepts of the rule of law and human dignity would be appropriate, but rules that asked them to promise to eat German food or listen to German music would not. "It's more legitimate for nation-states to protect their own constitution," he says.

Orgad acknowledges some Europeans are worried that increased immigration is literally changing the cultural framework of the continent. But at the same time, there are tough questions to be asked about what it really means to be European in the first place, and whether forced assimilation actually degrades the very idea of being European.

"In Europe there is an expectation you will be integrated into one dominant culture. There is an expectation Turks in Germany will become German – but what does it mean to become German?" Orgad asks. "Does this concept include some space for multicultural ideas? We have to look at the principal ideas and European values of protecting state neutrality and rejecting discrimination." ◀

Embracing Religion

Mixing Faith and Politics

Many of history's most powerful political leaders came from a religious background. Often, their religious motivations had a great impact on the political landscape. Today, Western societies ignore the powerful influence of religion – sometimes at their peril. That's why political psychologist Ashis Nandy, one of India's most eminent intellectuals, argues that we should embrace religious discourse in the public sphere rather than relegating it to the fringe. Ashis Nandy gave a lecture on the politics of religion at the session on Religion and Values of the Our Common Future conference.

► What role does religion play in a democracy?

Nandy: Most important in any democracy is that people have a right to bring their own preferences into politics. In many societies and communities, these preferences include personal religious beliefs. You cannot deploy thought police to make sure people don't mix religion and public life. I suspect this mixture of religion and politics is frowned upon by many societies where religion has gone into decline. Religion has become a private belief system. Faith, for many decades now, has been a matter to be settled within a family or a closed small community – not something that has an important role in politics, or for that matter social and economic choices. But in some societies and in some communities, it matters. And this contradiction, this conflict, cannot be easily solved within the model of religion available to the western societies because they are used to a tamed version of religion – a housebroken version of religion.

What happens when religion enters into political discourse?

Nandy: I come from a country that produced Gandhi, who explicitly mixed religion with politics; a country where at the moment one of the most interesting characters in international politics, the Dalai Lama, derives his



Ashis Nandy is a Senior Honorary Fellow at the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, India.

principles from Buddhism. I look at South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which I consider a magnificent effort. Whether it's successful or not is a different matter, but it is a superbly creative innovation. That was the brainchild of Bishop Desmond Tutu. So some of the most creative efforts in our times have been religious.

Do you think political leaders underestimate religion's role in democracies?

Nandy: Why blame politicians? The politicians have to go to the people. They have to cater to the tastes of the people. Even if they hate it, they have to take into account the preferences and the opinions of the people. What about the intellectuals? They talk as if

they're living in the 19th century. They talk about secular statecraft as if it is a God-given right of mankind, forgetting that some of the greatest killers of our times have been perfectly secular. Secular statesmen killed people or maimed them. They organized genocides on absolutely secular instrumental grounds. The United States has a very good example of that, with its campaigns against American Indians. So has the Soviet Union. So has China. So talking about secular statecraft as a be-all and end-all of human endeavor, I think is an exceedingly short-sighted and, if I might add, stupid endeavor. **Why have Western societies emphasized secularism so strongly?**

Nandy: Because Western intellectuals are guided by history. They are looking back at the times when religion led to wars. But the great wars of our time were not initiated by extremists like Al-Qaeda, whose adherents are a small, hopelessly outnumbered minority. I'm not a believer myself. I come to this position because I am coming through a democratic system and I do believe that a democracy just cannot ignore the desires of the people. If you do, then you get the worst out of religion and then you cannot deploy its strengths. You cannot get Martin Luther Kings from that kind of system – but you can always get Osama bin Ladens.

How do you open up a dialogue between the secular and religious spheres?

Nandy: By listening. Listening is a great art and I think in our times people have less time to listen. They would rather write a blog for the Internet or passively view a more entertaining speaker. I think listening to ordinary people going about their lives in ordinary ways is a great art. Often you have to read between the lines to find out what they are trying to say. Only then can you somehow summon the experiences of humankind, which do not fall within your known world. This leads to a kind of intuitive play with the unknown and the strange, which can be very creative. ◀

A Soft-Spoken Fighter for Religious Freedom

► **From the highest ranks of the Catholic Church, Joseph Cardinal Zen Ze-Kiun is keeping the world's focus on the freedoms of Chinese Catholics in Hong Kong and on the mainland. Through persistent, peaceful protest he's managed to give a voice to the underdog both inside and outside the church. His presence at the Our Common Future conference's session on Human Rights was a reminder of the challenges activists face when confronting authoritarian systems head-on.**

Since rule of Hong Kong was transferred from Britain to China in 1997, the island has become a sort of bridge to the mainland – but also a battleground where more than a century of British sensibilities and expectations clash continuously with a very different Chinese culture.

Joseph Cardinal Zen Ze-Kiun, a soft-spoken, slight man with a fierce reputation as a crusader for the rights of Hong Kong's

Zen hopes peaceful protest and consistent international pressure will change China for the better.

Catholics, has been in this mix for decades. “There were some very basic human rights problems in Hong Kong right after the handover,” Zen says now. “The British colonial regime couldn't have been called a democracy, but that regime respected many freedoms. After the handover, we had to defend ourselves from intervention from the totalitarian regime in China.”

Born in Shanghai in 1932, Zen studied theology in Rome and Hong Kong and taught theology at the Holy Spirit Seminary College in Hong Kong. He was named bishop of Hong Kong in 2002 and represented Hong Kong's 300,000 Catholics for seven years in all, ending with his retirement in 2009. In 2006, he was elevated to the College of Cardinals by Pope Benedict XVI. He remains a voice of conscience and a thorn in the side of the Chinese regime, which refuses to acknowledge the authority of the Pope in Rome and requires Catholic priests in China to answer first to Beijing.

As bishop, he took part in demonstrations against the Chinese government's interference in church affairs, from the right to organize public protests to the authority to control parochial schools in Hong Kong. “I think it's the duty of the pastor to lead the people in defending human rights whenever there's a challenge,” Zen says.

Zen has fought with the Chinese government over specific rights he feels the authorities are taking away from Hong Kong's Catholics, but he's also been a strong voice in favor of human rights beyond Hong Kong's borders. Sometimes, that means walking a narrow line between politics and religion. “The Catholic Church is never in favor of capitalism or socialism – we are against both,” Zen says. “We are in favor of the universal distribution of material goods for everybody, but also in support of disciplined market economy with a sup-

port of high human ideals.” One thing he is sure of is that China's hybrid of authoritarian control and unfettered market capitalism is a morally bankrupt system with a doubtful future, despite its rapid growth in the past two decades. “Surely we are not in favor of capitalism especially as it exists in China,” Zen says. “China has the worst kind of capitalism – it's capitalism without all those guarantees of fair competition.”

And unsurprisingly, Zen has spoken out in support of other activists targeted by authorities in Beijing. After Chinese democracy activist Liu Xiabo was prevented from accepting his Nobel Peace Prize in 2010, Zen was eager to lend his support to his imprisoned countryman. “We are happy that the commission was courageous enough to face the threat of the powerful government,” Zen said. “It's not acceptable today to condemn a man to 11 years just because he has peacefully presented some remedy to the very serious situation of a country” through his writing.

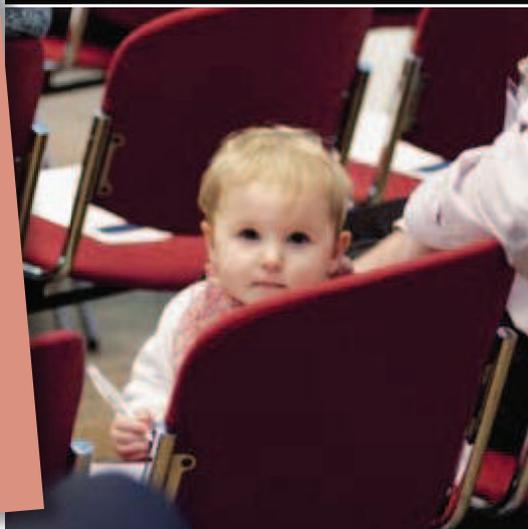
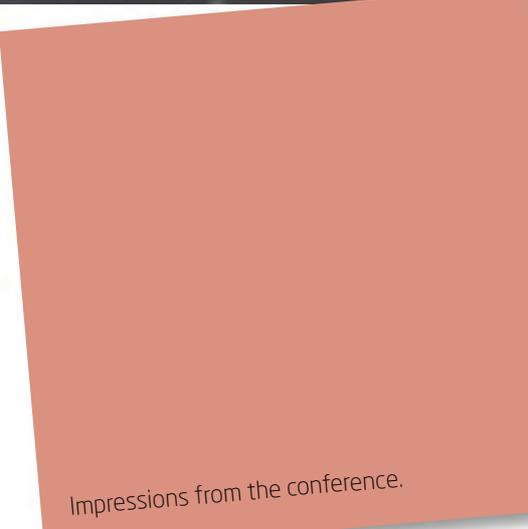
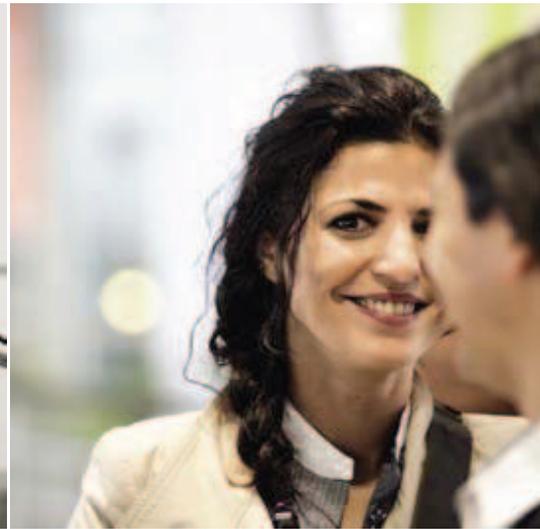
Now 79, Zen is retired from his duty as a bishop – but hardly inactive. He still teaches, writes, and attends conferences all over the world.

And he still hopes that peaceful protest and consistent international pressure will change China for the better, especially as younger, more internationally aware cadres enter the country's leadership. “In the long run, I think it will change,” he says. “I am sure in China, in the lower echelon of leadership, there are people who are looking to the world with their own eyes. They must feel the need for a change.”



Joseph Cardinal Zen Ze-Kiun served as Bishop of Hong Kong from 2002 to 2009 and was elevated to cardinal of the Catholic Church in 2006.





Impressions from the conference.

4 Questions, 12 Answers

“What fact makes you **the most optimistic** about our common future?”

Grimm: Humankind has always had a great capacity to imagine. This innate creativity will help us craft new solutions to pervasive problems.

Limbach: The readiness to think and act in global dimensions. We also shouldn't forget that the progress of science and technology should be combined with an ethical discourse.

Pries: I am optimistic that there are so many young scholars working together with senior scholars on problems that face us all. Stimulated by events like OCF they are specialists in some field and ready to intertwine with other specialists and disciplines.“

“What is the greatest **challenge facing us** in the next 25 years?”

Grimm: International organizations like the United Nations, European Union and World Trade Organization are making more and more political decisions with direct effect on state citizens. So we need to address how this decision-making power can be democratically legitimized and submitted to certain fundamental rules of law.

Limbach: I am concerned about the increasing violence of state agencies and private persons. Science gives us no clear answer as to what is the cause of this problem – whether it is television or something else – but I observe in capital towns like Berlin or Mexico City there is much more violence than ever before.

Pries: Science and knowledge is developing so fast it is increasingly difficult to keep pace. This leads us to the problematic situation where everyone is in a small box looking at small problems and no one overseas the landscape of boxes or would be able to put together all the pieces.

“What piece of advice would you give **young researchers** in your field today?”

Grimm: Up to now there is no (or only a very thin) equivalent to a constitution on the international level. We need more scholars working on this problem. A convincing solution is not yet in sight.

Limbach: Firstly, I advise studying transnational and international law; secondly, learn at least two foreign languages; and thirdly, spend some time studying abroad.

Pries: Young researchers should develop deep knowledge in specific fields while at the same time relating their findings to the big challenges of humankind and act interdisciplinary.

“What was the most **surprising insight** you had at this conference?”

Grimm: I was happy to see the young generation's passion and concern for human rights.

Limbach: The ability of the young faculty to combine theoretical thinking and empirical studies with a readiness to recommend concrete strategies.

Pries: I was struck by the deep social changes a country like China is experiencing and the lack of knowledge and sensitivity to those changes in Europe. We need to understand global developments for assessing local implications for topics like migration, global warming and social inequality.

Ludger Pries served as scientific advisor for the OCF session on Migration and Integration (together with Klaus J. Bade), Jutta Limbach and Dieter Grimm served as scientific advisors for the OCF session on Human Rights. Pries holds a chair for sociology at Ruhr Universität Bochum. Jutta Limbach is former president of the Goethe Institute and also of the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany. Dieter Grimm is professor emeritus of public law at the Humboldt University of Berlin and permanent fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg (Institute for Advanced Study) Berlin.