

Gied ten Berge



# PILGRIMAGE WITH A MISSION

The Palestinian 'Come and see' initiative  
from a social-cultural and  
historical-theological perspective





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theological perspective**

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## **Colophon**

Pilgrimages with a mission, by Gied ten Berge

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# PILGRIMAGE WITH A MISSION

*“The Gospel assures us that God can make all things new, that history does not have to be repeated, that memories can be healed, that the bitter fruits of vengeance and hostility can be overcome... It is with these words of encouragement that I conclude my pilgrimage to the holy places of our redemption and rebirth in Christ”.*

Pope Francis in the Holy Sepulchre Church in Jerusalem on the last day of his pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ 15 May 2009.





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and historical-theological perspective**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEI	<i>Arab Educational Institute</i>
ATG	<i>Alternative Tourism Group</i>
BDS	<i>Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions</i>
CM	<i>Congregatio Missionis</i>
CREST	<i>Centre for Responsible Tourism</i>
CvI	<i>Christenen voor Israël / Christians for Israel</i>
ECOT	<i>Ecumenical Coalition On Tourism</i>
GVP	<i>Gaza Visioning Project</i>
HLC	<i>Holy Land Coordination (rc)</i>
ICCI	<i>Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (Interreligious Department of Rabbis for Human Rights)</i>
ICCO	<i>Interkerkelijke Coördinatie Commissie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking / Inter-Church Organisation for Development Cooperation (Dutch Protestant Church)</i>
KBS	<i>Katholieke Bijbel Stichting / Catholic Bible Foundation</i>
Kd	<i>Kairos</i> -document
KDC	<i>Katholiek Documentatie Centrum / Catholic Documentation Centre</i>
MSC	Sacré Coeur missionaries
NBG	<i>Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap / Dutch Bible Society (protestant)</i>
NCCOP	National Coalition of Christian Organizations in Palestine
OSA	<i>Ordo Sancti Augustini (Augustinians)</i>
PCI	<i>Pax Christi International</i>
PIRT	<i>Palestinian Initiative for Responsible Tourism</i>
PKN	<i>Protestantse Kerk in Nederland / Protestant Church in the Netherlands</i>
PThU	Protestant Theological University of Utrecht
PLO	<i>Palestine Liberation Organization</i>
SCEPTRE	<i>Senate Centre for Extension and Pastoral Theological Research (Tainan, Taiwan)</i>
SIVMO	<i>Steuncomité Israëliische Vredes en Mensenrechtenorganisaties / Support Committee for Israeli Peace and Human Rights Organisations</i>
SJ	Societas Jesu (Jesuits)
UNRWA	<i>United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Middle East</i>
WCC-EAPPI	<i>World Council of Churches - Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel</i>

## FOREWORD

While doing my Master's degree in theology in Utrecht and Tilburg after my retirement, one of my teachers told me that a dissertation for an academic is 'a sin of youth'. After completing my studies it seemed instructive to me to have tasted of all the sins before old age really struck. First of all I would like to thank 'Paul and Paul', Prof. Dr. Paul van Geest and Prof. Dr. Paul Post, my supervisors who stimulated me to this trajectory and patiently guided me for many years.

After my training as a 'macrosociologist' in Leiden (NL), in which I was able to combine broad visions of society with a socio-educational interest, I worked for most of my life in the peace movement of the churches. What my teachers in Leiden - Beerling, Lammers, Vervoort and others - had taught me was that theory, empiricism and social relevance for a social scientist should be connected. For me, that attitude has always remained a foundation for the practice of science, and that did not change during my years in Religious Studies and while working on this dissertation.

During my years in Utrecht and Tilburg the lectures of Dr. Louis van Tongeren inspired me to write my first piece of work on pilgrimages. I am grateful to Dr Erik Borgman for his exciting lectures on the possibilities and the cliffs of the 'Judeo-Christian dialogue'. Prof. Dr. Theo de Wit introduced me to the politico-philosophical debate on 'particularism' and 'universalism', which is so relevant to 'the Land' as well. Dr. Tineke Nugteren advised me in thinking through the empirical research that became the prelude to this dissertation.

I visited 'the Land' for the first time in 2000, for my work for Pax Christi Netherlands.<sup>1</sup> I was impressed by my contact with the Latin patriarch Michel Sabbah who encouraged pilgrims to pray at a checkpoint. I spoke to a deeply frustrated young Palestinian woman who confessed that sometimes she felt so desperate that she too had thought of blowing herself up. I was impressed by a visit to an Orthodox Jewish House of Learning and also had a curious encounter in Jerusalem with a Jewish Dutchman who was zealous for the rebuilding of the Temple. In Bethlehem I came into contact with an old Indonesian Muslim who, after his pilgrimage to Mecca in the Church of the Nativity, came to venerate 'his' prophet Isa - Jesus, Son of God in my tradition. In the following years, together with anthropologist Dr. Toine van Teeffelen, who works in

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1 In this book, the term 'the Land' will often be used (instead of terms such as 'the Holy Land' and Israel and 'territories occupied by Israel' and 'territories under Palestinian authority'), on the one hand to distance itself from the suggestion that travel to this area is travel to a 'holy' land, and on the other hand to make it clear that it is always an area with a particular conflicting history with religious dimensions.

Bethlehem, I organised several ‘solidarity pilgrimages’ to Israel and Palestine, aimed at encounters with people from ‘the Land’.

My contacts in ‘the Land’ expanded in several directions when, in the years following my retirement, I combined the chairmanship of the Dutch ‘Israeli Peace and Human Rights Support Committee’ (SIVMO) with a membership of the board of *Kairos-Sabeel*, an international organization that gives voice to Palestinian Christians. I got to know the Israeli rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, who does not read the Torah in a ‘Zionist’ way, but he looks for examples of ‘Jewish humanism’ and ‘classical universalism’ also in his *parashats*<sup>2</sup>. He told me that foreigners who are committed to peace and justice in ‘the Land’ keep him ‘alive’.

I also got to know and appreciate the Palestinian liberation theology. Rifat Kassis inspired me with his Palestinian, but also Christian vision on pilgrimages and tourism in ‘the Land’. The Palestinian Christian peace activist Nora Carmi asked me to research ‘Come and see’ travel. I also owe a lot of thanks to the Dutch ‘Come and see’-guide Meta Floor who enabled me to research one of her travel groups.

I am also grateful for the advice of interlocutors and co-readers. Fred van Iersel already spoke with me when he was General Secretary of Pax Christi about the importance of the combination of ‘pastoral care’ and ‘apostolate’ within pilgrimages to ‘the Land’. Harm van Grol gave me a *privatissimum* about the ‘Pilgrim’s psalms’. Martijn Schrama OSA pointed out to me the importance of the Church Father Augustine, who should not be underestimated, also for modern thinking about pilgrimages.

Finally, I would like to thank my good friend Wilbert Linnemans, because he blew wind in my sails every time I threatened to fall silent; Liz Bettles who, as a native speaker, read the English ‘Summary’ critically, and last but not least Wantje Fritschy, with whom I have been ‘travelling’ through life for fifty years now, and who has always tried to keep me on the right scientific path with her strict editorial-critical comments.

Gied ten Berge, Maarssen, November 2019.

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2 *Parashat for Shabbat Shuva*: <https://kairos-sabeel.nl/jeremy-milgrom-ecn-juweel-van-joodsuniversalisme-parashat-voor-shabbat-shuva/>



## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### The reason for writing this book

On 11 December 2009, a group of 15 Palestinian Christians under the name Kairos Palestine, with the support of 13 church leaders of all local Christian denominations, published a worldwide appeal to fellow Christians under the title: ‘The hour of truth: a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering’.<sup>3</sup> This so-called ‘Kairos document’ contained, under the motto ‘Come and see’, an appeal to Christians all over the world, despite the continuing tense situation in this area, to continue pilgrimages to Palestine and Israel, to ‘pray and bring a message of peace, love and reconciliation’, but also to want to see ‘the truth of our harsh reality’.<sup>4</sup> It was not a theological treatise but a document of faith, which stressed universal, Christian and universal human values in order to mobilize support among Christians against the way in which Palestinians are treated by the State of Israel.<sup>5</sup>

The Alternative Tourism Group (ATG), a Christian organization linked to Kairos Palestine, which aims to promote alternative forms of pilgrimage and tourism, was set up in Bethlehem as long ago as 1995. This initiative arose, on the one hand, from the need for the inhabitants of Bethlehem and the Palestinian Territories to share in the revenues from tourist trips and pilgrimages to the ‘Holy Land’,<sup>6</sup> which now largely end up in Israeli hotels, tour operators and guides. On the other hand, the ATG hoped that receiving foreigners would be a means of staying in touch with the outside world, as well as with its own heritage through a conscious presentation of it to visitors. In 2014 the ATG also published a theological elaboration of the idea of the ‘Come and see’ pilgrimages, in the form of a treatise entitled “Listening to the Living Stones. Towards Theological Explorations of Kairos Pilgrimages for Justice”.<sup>7</sup>

In these documents, an originally religious practice such as pilgrimage is linked to socio-economic and political objectives. The appeal by Palestinian Christians and their leaders for a new way of pilgrimage to ‘the Land’, in combination with its further

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3 M. DIJKSTRA & J. STEGEMAN(ed.): *Hour of truth. A word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering* (ICCO, Utrecht 2009). WCC: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/other-ecumenical-bodies/kairos-palestine-document.pdf> (accessed 10 05 2019).

4 <http://www.kairopalestine.ps/sites/default/files/Dutch.pdf> Sections 6.2 and 6.3 (accessed 10 05 2019).

5 NB The document does not refer in the preface to the use of the term *kairos* to its appearance in the New Testament where Jesus says: “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is near; repent and believe in the Good News” (Marcus 1,14-20), but to a document of the same name published in South Africa in 1985 as a call to support the fight against the apartheid regime: <http://www.kairopalestine.ps/sites/default/files/Dutch.pdf> (accessed 10 05 2019).

6 See note 1 to the Foreword.

7 ATG: <http://atg.ps/en/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Living-Stones-New-Nasri-Email.pdf> (accessed 27 12 2018).

elaboration in the ATG-treatise, thus raises questions about the relationship of the old, religious phenomenon of pilgrimage to a modern, socio-cultural phenomenon such as tourism, and about the relationship between pilgrimages and the political-social context.

### A ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage in practice

The idea of dedicating a dissertation to these questions was partly the result of a trip, about which I already published before.<sup>8</sup> In 2013, I was given the opportunity to join a trip to ‘the Land’ as a ‘participatory observer’, responding to the ‘Come and see’ call. The trip was organized from an explicit engagement, both religious and social, with Christian-Palestinian victims of the situation of Israel’s continuous occupation of their country. The objectives of the trip were in both Israeli and Palestinian territory. On the way, the participants stayed in the Palestinian city of Bethlehem, partly, if they so wished, with Palestinian Christians at home and in Arabic-Christian accommodations in Jaffa and Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup>

A characteristic feature of the program was that it included not just conventional places such as the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, but unconventional locations and organizations were also visited, such as a checkpoint for Palestinians at the border with Israel, and the center of the Palestinian city of Hebron claimed and occupied by settlers. Contacts during the trip were mainly focused on Christian Palestinians, but there was also a visit to an Israeli settlement in the West Bank. The itinerary also included meetings with Israelis who feel involved in the fate of the Palestinians, such as the Israeli movement Breaking the Silence, a group of former soldiers who, as implementers of the occupation, publicly share their moral struggle.

Religious activities took place partly in more or less conventional places, such as a Bible reading on the Sea of Galilee and participation in a Eucharist celebration at the Annunciation Basilica in Nazareth, but also in places less conventional for Christian pilgrims. I cite as examples the participation in a Jewish prayer celebration in the Kol Haneshema synagogue in Jerusalem and a prayer celebration in the cave chapel of the Tent of Nations, on the grounds of the Christian-Palestinian fruit and olive grower Daoud Nasser. Most of his trees had been knocked down by the Israeli army in 2014, but he had nevertheless erected a stone at the entrance to his company with the text: “We refuse to be enemies”.<sup>10</sup>

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8 G. TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie! Nieuwe pelgrims in het Heilige Land / 'Come and see! New pilgrims in the Holy Land* (Nijmegen 2016) Part 2 is a (Dutch) case study 49-139.

9 Organizer was the theologian Meta Floor, who had previously worked in Jerusalem for the organization ‘Kerk in Aktie’ of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN).

10 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 79-100.

My request to participate as a ‘participatory observer’ arose from a need to examine whether, in this torn country, Christian pilgrims with an open eye both for the Palestinian victims of the conflict and for Israel, with concerns about the fate of the Palestinians, can and want to play a unifying role. Through both, group interviews and personal ‘open interviews’ with each of the participants, before, during and after the journey, I investigated the reasons for their participation, their experiences during the journey, and the effect it had on them afterwards. For a number of them there appeared to have been a sometimes radical change in their thinking about Israel. I summarize for this book some examples of this, which helped me to wonder if, and how, the processes that took place during this journey fit in with the phenomenon of pilgrimage in general.<sup>11</sup>

For one participant who had already travelled around ‘the Land’ in the 1970s from a sense of belonging to the State of Israel that was taken for granted, the perspective of the perpetrator/victim had been reversed by this journey. This turned out to be a shocking insight for him, that hit him hard. He spoke of “a kind of faith experience”. Another had experienced the Israeli action against Palestinians that she had observed along the way as “injustice as a mission”. Its systematic and ruthless nature “within a people to which I am so indebted” [as a Christian theologian GtB] had taken hold of her.

An entirely different process of change had taken place in the case of a Jesuit who had worked in Lebanon for decades and whose experiences of war there had led him to take a decidedly negative view of Israel. He was very impressed by Yehuda Shaul, the founder of Breaking the Silence. His experience with Ta’Ayush, a group of Israeli volunteers who protect Palestinian farmers and Bedouins from threats from settlers, also contributed to this. Meetings with these Israelis had, he said, “broken my 50-year-old enemy’s image for the first time”.

One NGO employee highlighted the difference between this ‘Come and see’ trip and her regular professional trips to gather information for policy planning purposes. The stories she told during personal meetings with ordinary people in Palestine turned out to be ‘a message’ for herself and those around her. “Tell, tell and tell again... to family, friends and so on”. This urgent need, experienced by her as a new one, had been the most remarkable effect of this journey for her.

For an artist, the motive to go along had initially been that he wanted to experience the other side of a conflict about which, until then, his view had only been fed by one-sided media coverage and by stories told by others. Afterwards, to his own surprise, he had come to see the journey as “certainly a pilgrimage”, because it had changed him so much. This had even influenced his way of working as an artist. He made nine life-sized

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11 The examples are successively based on TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 100, 102-103, 59, 102-103, 116, 121-122, 133.

so-called “reversal canvases”, which were exhibited many times, often in churches, and which expressed his emotional struggles during the journey, his urgent need for dialogue and the multitude of sometimes contradictory impressions.<sup>12</sup>

A striking result of my earlier research was that certainly not all participants were inclined beforehand to consider themselves as “pilgrims”, something that the ‘Come and see’ call for this type of journey more or less takes for granted. For example, one of the theologians stressed that he wanted to see his “journey of faith” as a pilgrimage, but that he himself did not feel like mixing politics and pilgrimage. He had taken part “for the service of justice, attention to injustice and inequality in an area that has my warm interest because of a partly common spiritual history”.<sup>13</sup> For him, pilgrimage turned out to be inseparable from rest and contemplation, and that is precisely what this trip was not about. Only later did he wonder if the sadness of the journey should perhaps be seen as “the pilgrim’s grief (...) that is also allowed to be there”. Another theologian wanted to become more aware of the problems of ‘the Land’, but still preferred not to call himself a pilgrim, nor a tourist, nor someone on a ‘biblical journey’. The missionary who had worked in the Lebanon had no problem with the word ‘pilgrim’, but it did not feel to him “like a pious pilgrimage, (...) but one with a strong social and political dimension”.

Despite the common religious interest, the trip was undertaken from a variety of backgrounds and motives. In retrospect, however, all participants were remarkably positive about the special support they had experienced during the process of the trip from the group they had been part of. They appreciated the special sense of community that had arisen, which was described with words such as “friendship”, “familiar” and “inspiring”.

From the need to place the results of my research into this journey in a somewhat broader context, I added to the report on this journey, in the earlier book, a brief exploration of the theoretical approaches to pilgrimages within the social and cultural sciences, and also an initial impetus for an overview of the thinking about pilgrimages among theologians past and present. At the time, I had already decided to elaborate on these two sections at a later date, if possible.<sup>14</sup>

This intention took on a more solid form when the reaction of some scientists to the book suggested that it was worth developing into a dissertation. I decided to take up this challenge and to orientate myself much more thoroughly on, and deepen my

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12 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 140-152.

13 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 113-114, 71-72, 73.

14 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 13.



knowledge of the literature relevant to my subject. This led to the present study, which is therefore partly based on preliminary work in my earlier book.<sup>15</sup>

The primary aim of the earlier book was to demonstrate the social and ecclesiastical relevance of such a journey. An important conclusion was that after their return all participants felt the need to somehow contribute to asking for more attention within the churches for the situation of Christian Palestinians in ‘the Land’ instead of only for the problems of the State of Israel. My primary aim in writing this dissertation was to show that the ‘Come and see’<sup>16</sup> initiative is not only an important social and ecclesiastical phenomenon, but that it is also – from a social-cultural, as well as a historical and theological perspective – scientifically interesting and relevant.

### **Pilgrimages: some theoretical approaches**

New developments since the 1980s and 1990s, within the social and cultural sciences on the one hand and theology on the other, were a good initial impetus for this study. In 1981, an important anthropologists’ conference was held in Pittsburgh on the phenomenon of pilgrimage. During this congress, the main question was how different forms of modern tourism relate to traditional pilgrimages. As a result the collection “Sacred Journeys. The Anthropology of Pilgrimage”,<sup>16</sup> appeared in 1992, after which a broad field of new research opened up into what is now referred to as “the Topos of Pilgrim and Tourist”,<sup>17</sup> in order to emphasize the notion of the connection between the two phenomena that has become common in pilgrimage research. The foreword to this conference collection from 1992 was written by the anthropologist Victor Turner, who died in 1983 and is regarded as the godfather of pilgrimage studies. Turner had already written the study “Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture” with his wife Edith in 1978,<sup>18</sup> in which the Topos became clearly visible for the first time.<sup>19</sup>

At the same time, new research of an entirely different nature appeared to have developed. The anthropologists John Eade (b. 1956) and Michael Sallnow (1949-1990) published in 1991 – as a result of a conference in 1988 – a collection of studies on Christian pilgrimages all over the world entitled “Contesting the Sacred. The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage”. In doing so, these authors presented a

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15 N.B. Where the earlier book was used for the presentation of this book, this will of course always be accounted for in the annotation.

16 A. MORINIS (ed.): *Sacred Journeys. The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (Westport/London 1992) 9.

17 P. POST: ‘Beyond the Topos of the Pilgrim and the Tourist’, in P. POST & S. VAN DER BEEK (eds.): *Doing Ritual Criticism in a Network Society. Online and Offline Explorations into Pilgrimage and Sacred Place* (Leuven 2016) 25.

18 V. TURNER & E. TURNER: *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York 2011; origin. 1978). The reprint of 2011 has a new introduction by Deborah Ross.

19 For the sake of brevity, this book will in the future often use the term Topos to replace rather cumbersome formulations such as the ‘from pilgrim to tourist-Topos’ or variants thereof.

research agenda that focused mainly on rival and conflicting aspects of pilgrimages. A place of pilgrimage is, on the one hand, as they put it, “perhaps (...) a symbolic powerhouse productive of its own religious meanings”; on the other hand, it is also, and sometimes mainly, “an arena for the interplay of a variety of imported perceptions and understandings, in some cases finely differentiated from one another, in others radically polarized”.<sup>20</sup> Jerusalem is presented by the authors as a prime example of this. This collection was even reprinted in 2000.

In addition, theologians also became more interested in the phenomenon of ‘pilgrimage’ in the 1990s. In 1996 a thematic issue of the international Catholic theological journal “Concilium” appeared on the subject, published in several languages.<sup>21</sup> Augustine’s concept of the *peregrinus* obviously played an important role in the contributions to the pilgrimage issue of this periodical, which was influential in those years, a term which can be translated by both ‘pilgrim’ and ‘stranger’. In the contribution of the Brazilian theologian José Oscar Beozzo, the current ‘world in motion’ was even perceived as a world in which migrants, refugees and foreigners in particular are constantly moving ‘like pilgrims’. According to Beozzo, they are looking for a dignified existence. In his preface to the collection “Sacred Journeys”, Turner had already described pilgrimage and tourism as metaphors for “a world on the move”.<sup>22</sup>

Research into pilgrimages has not stood still since then. This book will, of course, pay further attention to further developments around the Topos,<sup>23</sup> as well as to both older and newer research into groups within the pilgrim ‘arena’ of ‘the Land’,<sup>24</sup> and to developments within tourism studies that are relevant to our topic.<sup>25</sup> The same is true of new studies since the 1990s that pay attention to the history of thinking

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20 J. EADE & M. J. SALLNOW(eds.): *Contesting the Sacred. The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London/New York 1991) 10. The 2nd edition from 2000 contains a new foreword by J. Eade on recent developments in pilgrim studies at the time.

21 *Concilium* 32, 4 (1996). This journal was founded in 1965 to continue the theological discussion ‘in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council’, and was open to new developments such as liberation theology and feminist theology; it was published by important theologians such as Hans Küng, Karl Rahner, Edward Schillebeeckx, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza etc.

22 V. TURNER: ‘Foreword’, in A. MORINIS (ed.) *Sacred Journeys* (1992) VIII.

23 E. BADONE & S. R. ROSEMAN: ‘Approaches of the Anthropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism’, in E. BADONE & S.R. ROSEMAN (eds.) : *Intersecting Journeys. The Antropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism* (Urbana/Chicago 2004) 1-21. For a recent overview in general: POST: ‘Beyond the Topos’ 25-35.

24 E.H. COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel: Educational Experiences of the Diaspora* (Clevedon/ Buffalo 2008).

25 R. K ISAAC: ‘Moving from pilgrimage to responsible tourism: the case of Palestine’, in *Current Issues in Tourism* (2010) 579-590.

about pilgrimage and to current theological thinking about it.<sup>26</sup> In that context, some attention will also be paid to what is known as ‘Land Theology’ that makes it so difficult for some Christians to see the Palestinian suffering, because it is clear to them that since God gave it to the Jewish people, Israel has a right to ‘the Land’.<sup>27</sup>

### **Question, method and structure of this book**

The question of my earlier book primarily concerned the backgrounds, experiences and change processes of participants in a ‘Come and see’ trip before, during and after the trip. In the question of this new study, the character of the ‘Come and see’ initiative itself is central. What place and meaning can be given to this initiative in current scientific thinking about pilgrimages?

The two Palestinian-Christian documents mentioned above - in which a conscious and explicit link is made between a religious practice such as pilgrimage and both a political stance and a desire to promote tourism - were the main reason for this thesis. My need to clarify the relationship between pilgrimage and tourism and between religion and social context in ‘the Land’ was greatly increased by my participation in the trip I mentioned earlier.

My findings about differences and similarities of opinion among a group of people who had responded to the call ‘Come and see’ - from a common Christian inspiration, but also with clear differences in religious backgrounds - had strengthened my awareness that a good understanding of the phenomenon of pilgrimage requires a multi-disciplinary approach, not only from the cultural and social sciences, but also from history and theology.

Based on a much more extensive study of the cultural and social scientific literature on pilgrimage than in my earlier book, and through a new, more structured reflection on its results, this book provides insight into contemporary theoretical analyses of the pilgrimage phenomenon and replaces the ‘Come and see’ initiative within it. The material is studied from three perspectives: a ‘linear’, a ‘spatial’ and a ‘depth’ perspective. With the analysis from the linear perspective I aim to place ‘Come and see’ as a separate phenomenon within pilgrim and tourism studies. The study from the spatial perspective aims to situate the phenomenon within the political-social field. By means of the in-depth perspective, insight is gained into the historical and theological stratification. Within this perspective, characteristics of the ‘Come and see’ initiative

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26 E.g.: C. BARTHOLOMEW & F. H. HUGHES(eds.): *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Farnham/Burlington 20152). L. CHANTRE, P. D’HOLLANDER & J. GRÉVY( eds.): *Politics of Pilgrimage from the 17th century to the present day* (Rennes 2014).

27 W. BRUEGGEMANN: *Uitverkoren volk? Bijbellezen met het oog op het Israëliisch-Palestijnse conflict* (Utrecht 2017). Original title: ‘Chosen’, Knox Press 2015.

and of a journey based on it are first of all tested against theoretical insights derived from literature. This makes visible to what extent these insights fit in. Secondly, it is made clear that the analysis from the respective perspectives is not sufficient to adequately describe all aspects of this new phenomenon. A multidisciplinary approach to pilgrimage phenomena is therefore scientifically important here.

The cultural-scientific approach turned out to offer the possibility of what I called a 'linear perspective'. First of all, it focused on question of where a 'Come and See' pilgrimage is on the theoretical line from pilgrimage to tourism (and - equally linearly - back). Secondly, the cultural-scientific approach offers the theoretical model for interpreting pilgrimage as a rite of passage.

A 'spatial perspective' could be derived from the social-scientific approach. This approach made it possible to offer insight into the place that phenomena such as the 'Come and see' pilgrimage occupies within the political-social field in which it unfolds. This perspective made it possible - and interesting - to compare the ambitions of the 'Come and see' initiative with the results of empirical research into other journeys to 'the Land' in which a relationship with religion played a role. On the other hand, from this perspective, the research is the prelude to a discussion with a philosophical-sociological approach in which pilgrimages are no longer considered to be of this (postmodern) age.

Finally, a historical-theological approach can form the basis for a study from an 'in-depth perspective'. From this perspective, taking into account the chronology, on the one hand it is possible to look for motifs in the ambitions of the 'Come and see' initiative that show a certain commonality with the motifs that have previously manifested themselves in the practice of and thinking about pilgrimage since the emergence of Christianity from Judaism. On the other hand, for a good understanding of the phenomenon of the 'Come and see' pilgrimage, it is useful to interpret this phenomenon in the light of the discussions on religious norms and values around pilgrimages in the past and present. Augustine's approach to life as a pilgrimage to a heavenly Jerusalem proved to be both a good starting point and an important thread.

The questions in this study therefore have a theoretical and empirical dimension: How does the specific phenomenon of the 'Come and see' pilgrimage theoretically and empirically fit within the spectrum of contemporary forms of pilgrimage and tourism? How do anthropologists analyze phenomena such as pilgrimage and tourism in general? How does the phenomenon of the 'Come and See' pilgrimage relate to new forms of tourism based on the idea that people should always be called upon ethically to feel responsible for the world in which they travel? How does it relate to phenomena visible in empirical social research, including other groups travelling within the specific context of 'the Land', with all the conflicts and tensions that this entails?

On the other hand, they have a historical-theological connotation. To what extent is the ‘Come and see’ appeal a theologically new, modern or postmodern phenomenon? To what extent is it a ‘historical layering’ that deserves at least as much attention as the seemingly new of the Palestinian-Christian appeal? Within the history of the pilgrimage of Christians and of the theological thinking about pilgrimages, can we distinguish recurrent motives that are meaningful in understanding the ‘Come and see’ phenomenon?

In terms of method, this study therefore opted for a multidisciplinary approach to the ‘Come and see’ initiative of Palestinian Christians and their church leaders: multidisciplinary, because the social-cultural and historical-theological approaches side by side lead to different and deeper insights into the aforementioned initiative.

The book therefore consists of two parts. Part I examines whether and how the ‘Come and see’ initiative has a place in the field of social-cultural research on pilgrimages. Part II explores whether and how it fits within the history of theological thinking about pilgrimages.

Each part consists of three chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on theoretical approaches. We start with the theoretical perspective of the *Topos* of ‘the pilgrim and the tourist’, as it became visible in the work of Victor and Edith Turner. This chapter discusses the discussion between, on the one hand, scholars who believe that a fundamental distinction should be made between ‘pilgrims’ and ‘tourists’, and, on the other hand, those who, on the basis of the *Topos* approach, believe that it is theoretically more fruitful to start from a gradual transition between the two, from a ‘horizon’ on which many phenomena related to pilgrimage and tourism become visible.

As a follow-up, the approach to pilgrimage as a ritual will be discussed in comparison to the phenomena and processes that appeared during a ‘Come and see’ journey. Attention is also paid to literature on the potential critical dimension of rituals, focusing on pilgrimages. Chapter 1 will be concluded with a discussion of relatively new theoretical concepts such as “Justice Pilgrimage” and “Justice Tourism” within research on what is called “Responsible Tourism”.

Chapter 2 starts from the ‘arena’ approach as advocated by the anthropologists Eade and Sallnow. This chapter mainly compares the results of empirical research of journeys from different religious backgrounds and different motifs to the ‘arena’ of ‘the Land’ with what is advocated in the ‘Come and see’ initiative, and with what was put into practice within the journey in which I participated as an ‘observant participant’. In addition to the diverse motifs and pilgrim practices in Christian journeys and the remarkable phenomenon of what will be referred to here as ‘Christian Zionist’ pilgrimages, this chapter pays ample attention to the phenomenon of the Jewish

‘Birthright’ journeys, and also briefly examines the ideas of Muslim students in Gaza about travelling to Al Quds (Jerusalem).

This chapter ends with the question under which conditions the need to share the politically charged space of ‘the Land’ appears to lead to experiences of ‘transgression’ in relation to each other’s rituals, and to what extent pilgrim rituals within the same space can also be associated with ‘sharing’, and with examples of initiatives aimed at transcending politicized religious differences.

Finally, Chapter 3 shifts attention to a culture-critical ‘macro’ approach that actually declares ‘the pilgrim’ dead. According to this approach, the human type of ‘pilgrim’ no longer has a place in post-modern society. Subsequently, this chapter discusses the criticism of this view in the literature. While chapters 1 and 2 want to argue that both the Topos approach and the ‘arena’ approach from the social and cultural sciences can contribute to a good understanding of the Palestinian-Christian pilgrimage appeal, chapter 3, in which philosophical, theological and social-cultural considerations and criticisms are combined, in fact provides the stepping stone to the second part of the book, in which it will be argued that cultural and social-cultural approaches alone offer insufficient insight into the phenomenon at stake in this book.

Discussions on aspects of pilgrimages, and differences in pilgrimage practices, have not only theoretical and topical dimensions, but also theological and historical ones. Research into this can provide insight into the stratification of the ‘Come and see’ initiative and the discussions and processes that took place during the aforementioned ‘Come and see’ journey.

The three following chapters of Part II are descriptive and historiographical in character. Historical sources writing about the pilgrimage of Christians or sources revealing the theological thinking about pilgrimages have looked for recurrent motifs of pilgrimages that could be associated with the ‘Come and see’ appeal. Part II *does not* claim to offer a general history of Christian pilgrimage. The guide in following the trail back was a search for the presence in the past of motifs that also play a role in the new phenomenon of a ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage. Part II, above all, wants to argue that there are many more similarities between what is characteristic of the remarkable ‘Come and see’ initiative on the one hand, and Christian pilgrimages in general in the course of history on the other, than one might at first sight expect.

Chapter 4 covers the period from the beginning of Christianity to the end of the Middle Ages, the period in which pilgrimages often took the form of missionary journeys. This was also the period in which Augustine developed his important concept of all life as a pilgrimage to the ‘New Jerusalem’. At the same time, the physical, earthly Jerusalem became more and more the focus of pilgrims’ attention, which was contradictory even then. In addition, partly in line with the ‘arena’ approach in Part I,

brief attention is given to the history of the attitude of Jews and Muslims, in addition to the different forms of Christian pilgrimages to Jerusalem and 'the Land' in the past. This chapter ends with what in this book is called the 'armed pilgrimage' of crusaders, with 'militant pilgrims' in other words, and as a contrast Francis of Assisi, the 'peace pilgrim'.

Chapter 5 first discusses the criticism of petrified forms of pilgrimage at the end of the Middle Ages, then the emergence of the concept of moral pilgrim, both within the Reformation and among more or less related Catholic thinkers at the same time, and finally renewed attempts since the nineteenth century to 'mobilize' Christian pilgrims, albeit now for purposes other than 'crusades'.

Chapter 6 zooms in on theological discussions and activities since the Second World War around pilgrimages to 'the Land', now with special attention to both the Christian-Zionist ideas on this subject and the Christian-theological criticism thereof, as well as to the so-called 'Land Theology' and to the theology of the Living Stones, partly developed in 'the Land' itself, on which the ATG treaty of 2014 was based. Attention is also given to Western and non-Western criticism of postmodern Western pilgrimages and how that relates to the 'Come and see' idea. The chapter ends with an evaluation of the views of Palestinian theologians on pilgrimages.

At the end of each chapter the most important findings are summarized. At the end of the book, we will take stock of the results of this multidisciplinary research into a new phenomenon, which is both part of current social and political developments in today's world, and part of a history of centuries of discussions about pilgrimages. However unfavorable the perspectives may seem for a vigorous further development of the remarkable Palestinian-Christian pilgrimage initiative, it will be possible to conclude that it deserves special attention within the field of 'pilgrim studies', precisely because a good understanding of it requires a multidisciplinary approach.





'From pilgrim to tourist' on the Via Dolorosa.  
Photo: Igo Corbiere.



# **PART I**

## **PILGRIMAGES: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

## Introduction to Part I

The call ‘Come and see’ by Palestinian Christians implies a challenge to reflect on its relation to the age-old religious and cultural phenomenon of ‘pilgrimage’. Part I of this book will focus on how the phenomenon of ‘pilgrimage’ is approached within the cultural and social sciences, both in theory and empirical research. The connection between the politically as well as religiously inspired ‘Come and see’ appeal and the related ‘alternative tourism’ initiative raises questions about the relationship between the ‘sacred’ and the ‘profane’. Part I examines the availability of a theoretical toolkit, which can contribute to an understanding of the character of this appeal by Palestinian Christians to fellow Christians elsewhere in the world, to continue pilgrimizing what they refer to as the ‘Holy Land’, while at the same time having an eye for the ‘unholy’ political reality.

In the General Introduction it was already briefly indicated that the concept of the Topos will be looked at first.<sup>28</sup> On the ‘horizon’ from pilgrim to tourist both more or less religious and more or less profane travellers move. They meet each other: in theory, but also physically. It may even involve multiple roles and motives within one and the same traveller. The pilgrim who walks into the desert for an afternoon and gets photographed on a camel can suddenly become a ‘tourist’ for a moment, and the tourist who feels the need to retreat to a church for a moment can become a ‘pilgrim’ at such a moment. Should research on pilgrimages strive to establish unambiguous definitions of the two concepts? Or should the focus be more on describing phenomena that are constantly evolving? The challenging, underlying questions here are: are ancient religious phenomena conventional, do they only have a conserving function and do they carry an unworldly character, or are they developing and are they always part of their own time and context?

In the first chapter of this part we will first discuss the view that within science a structural opposition between ‘the Pilgrim’ and ‘the Tourist’ must be assumed and in the second paragraph the view that it is characteristic of pilgrimages in the present time that these dividing lines can no longer be drawn so clearly.

An important insight within the Topos approach is that there are ritual practices within both pilgrimages and tourism.<sup>29</sup> The discussion around the Topos therefore calls for an answer to the question of what the social scientific literature sees as the most important characteristics of pilgrimage rituals, a question that will be addressed in the third section. In the context of the subject of this book, the question then arises as to

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28 P. POST: ‘De Pelgrim en de Toerist: Verkenning van een topos’, in *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 67,2 (2013) 135-149.

29 TURNER & TURNER: *Image and Pilgrimage* 20.

what extent ritual practices, a term that evokes associations with unchanging traditions, offer opportunities to criticize existing social relationships. This is the subject of the fourth paragraph.

Finally, the tourism aspect of the Topos raises the question of the relationship between the 'Come and see' initiative and the development of various, more or less related forms of what is called 'responsible tourism' in the literature. This is the subject of the last paragraph of chapter 1.

In the historiographical section of the General Introduction, it was already indicated that a conference in 1988 on pilgrimages within Christianity had also put the concept of the 'arena' on the agenda of pilgrimage research. With this, the scientific discourse on pilgrimages also provided another concept which could be helpful for an adequate interpretation of the 'Come and see' initiative. Particularly for a study of pilgrimages in the tense political context of 'the Land', this 'spatial' metaphor proved to be a useful addition to the more 'linear' metaphor of a 'horizon' - such as the Topos approach that evokes - a horizon along which a multitude of - sometimes gradually merging - manifestations of pilgrims and tourists become visible.

The 'arena'-approach of pilgrimages is the starting point for chapter 2, not so much as an alternative, but rather as an addition, to the Topos approach, an alternative in which elements of the Topos continue to play a role. Whereas in chapter 1 theoretical concepts were central, in chapter 2 the focus will be on empirical research into journeys with a religious motive in 'the Land'. To begin with, the politically motivated Jewish 'Birthright'-journeys offer an incisive possibility of comparison with the 'Come and see' initiative. Next, the extent to which journeys to 'the Land' from different Christian denominations have a political aspect, with particular attention to the remarkable phenomenon of what will be referred to as 'Christian Zionist pilgrimages'. As far as Islam is concerned, research into the thinking of Muslim students about travelling to Jerusalem turned out to yield interesting comparisons with the 'Come and see' idea.

The 'arena'-approach requires not only the differentiation of very diverse and often rival pilgrim flows in 'the Land'. It also requires research into what is referred to in literature as the concepts of 'sharing' and 'transgression': the sharing of, and whether or not tolerated crossing of, each other's ritual boundaries, and the insight into the possible consequences of this. What is the place of the 'Come and see' initiative there? What does scholarly research in this respect teach us about travelling to 'the Land' by groups with often very different religious backgrounds? In view of the context of the special political situation in 'the Land', '*sharing*' and '*transgression*', in their interrelationship, also deserve special attention in a chapter based on the concept of the 'arena'.

Finally, the third chapter of Part I zooms in on the work of sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman, for whom ‘the Pilgrim’ and ‘the Tourist’ no longer move along a single horizon, but have become literary metaphors for a vanished and a new, post-modern human type respectively. In addition, this chapter looks at the different reactions to Bauman’s cultural-critical use of these two concepts, both from a social and cultural research perspective and from a religious sociological and theological perspective.

These concluding remarks then serve as a stepping stone to Part II. After the more or less ‘linear’ oriented theoretical approach and the more ‘spatially’ oriented empirical approach in Part I, the ‘depth’ of the history of theological thinking about the age-old religious phenomenon of pilgrimages is explored for further insight into the ‘Come and see’ application.

## Chapter 1. On the horizon 'from pilgrim to tourist'

### 1.1 'The Pilgrim' and 'The Tourist': a structural contradiction?

For Victor and Edith Turner, the most important founders of modern pilgrimage research, pilgrimage and tourism were anthropologically closely related phenomena, a vision they succinctly expressed in their famous, often quoted quote from 1978: "A tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist".<sup>30</sup>

In his preface to the 1992 *Sacred Journeys* conference volume, Victor Turner recalled the situation that existed within his field at the beginning of the 1970s. At that time there was little interest in studies of the phenomenon of pilgrimage, both because of a certain preference among anthropologists for 'static' unchanging subjects in other, still relatively closed societies, and because of a lack of interdisciplinary teamwork.<sup>31</sup> The Turners' open approach to 'a world in motion' wanted to change this.

Their emphasis on the close relationship between pilgrimage and tourism was not widely shared, either in this conference collection or in the more recent pilgrims' research. In his contribution to the anthropologist Erik Cohen, who works in Israel, he explicitly opted for a structuralist approach that emphasizes the contrast between pilgrimage and tourism.<sup>32</sup> The assumption of a structural contrast between 'the profane' and 'the sacred', as was the starting point of the anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss and the sociology of Emile Durkheim, plays a part in this.<sup>33</sup> Cohen sees 'the Pilgrim' emphatically as someone who disengages from his everydayness and undertakes a journey to a sacred center, as a self-imposed obligation with a central meaning for his life. For him, on the other hand, there is 'the Traveller' who leaves everyday life behind in order to be able to distance himself from his obligations and to seek the periphery.

In his archetypal elaboration of this dichotomy, Cohen places 'the pilgrim' who moves *straight* through 'the chaos' to a 'holy center', i.e. opposite an unfocused 'traveller' to 'the other'. The difference between the two is that for the pilgrim the

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30 TURNER & TURNER: *Image and Pilgrimage 20*. Post rightly describes the pronunciation as rather "enigmatic". To this day, however, it appears to be extraordinarily stimulating for the questions within the research. POST: *Beyond the Topos* 35.

31 V. TURNER: 'Foreword', in A. MORINIS (ed.): *Sacred Journeys. The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (Westport/London 1992) vii.

32 E. COHEN: 'Pilgrimage and Tourism: Convergence and Divergence', in A. MORINIS (ed.): *Sacred Journeys* 47-61.

33 In his book *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (1912), Emile Durkheim defended the view that collective views within a culture consist of binary opposites. A central contradiction would be, for example, that between 'the sacred' and 'the profane' (or 'everyday'). In his classic book *Structural Anthropology* (1967), Claude Lévi-Strauss also assumed the existence of such "unconscious" social structures that influence everyday life.

## Chapter 1

center contains the promise of a desired order, whereas the ‘traveller’ wishes to escape from a compelling everyday order.<sup>34</sup> Tourism, says Cohen, which is also debatable, is less institutionalized, has a less binding character than pilgrimage and derives its attractiveness precisely from this. It is less fixed, less normative, less regulated.<sup>35</sup>

While the quest of ‘the Pilgrim’ to ‘the Centre’ was, according to Cohen, in earlier centuries considered socially legitimate and meritorious, other journeys were, according to him, originally seen as an unpopular outbreak from the group to which one belonged. Cohen describes the traveller from earlier times, who simply moves away from home, as a lonely, inwardly contradictory phenomenon, while the pilgrim followed a prescribed path.<sup>36</sup>

The non-binding mode, which is also characteristic of the estranged mass tourist, is for Cohen the one extreme on the line from pilgrim to tourist. The other extreme is the existential mode of ‘the Pilgrim’ who seeks the experience of a sacred ‘center’. Although he emphasizes the structural distinction between the two in his vision, he does point out that modern society can absorb old structural social functions of religion in its own, modern phenomena. The former ‘holy days’ that have been transformed into ‘vacations’ in the contemporary world are an example of this. He refers to Dean MacCannell’s classic 1978 study ‘The Tourist’, in which tourism is considered the pilgrimage of modern times, because tourists often cherish a sacred veneration for the ‘authentic’ uniqueness of places they visit, which, according to MacCannell, makes such places “the shrines of modernity”.<sup>37</sup> But it is no less important for him to continue to emphasize the structural difference between tourism and pilgrimages.

In much more recent publications, Peter Jan Margry still emphasizes that pilgrimage, as opposed to ‘tourism’, should be seen as exclusively related to ‘religion’ in order to avoid unnecessary epistemological confusion.<sup>38</sup> This is partly in response to what Knox and Hannam consider to be a vague, unscientific concept of ‘hedonistic pilgrim’.<sup>39</sup> They see the emergence of the type of ‘hedonistic pilgrim’ as part of a general development from pilgrim to tourist via intermediate forms in which differences between the profane and the sacred are dissolving. They presuppose a close connection between hedonism, tourism and pilgrimage today.

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34 COHEN: *Pilgrimage and Tourism* 51.

35 COHEN: *Pilgrimage and Tourism* 59.

36 COHEN: *Pilgrimage and Tourism* 58-60.

37 COHEN: *Pilgrimage and Tourism* 48.

38 P. J. MARGRY: ‘Secular Pilgrimage: A Contradiction in Terms?’, in *Shrines and Pilgrimage in the Modern World. New Itineraries into the Sacred* (Chicago 2008). P. J. MARGRY: ‘Whiskey and Pilgrimage: Clearing Up Commonalities’, in *Tourism Recreation Research* (2014) 39,2 243-247.

39 D. KNOX & K. HANNAM: ‘The secular Pilgrim: Are we Flogging a Dead Metaphor?’, in *Tourism Recreation Research* (2014) 39, 235-242.

## On the horizon ‘from pilgrim to tourist’

Margry, on the other hand, still sees pilgrimage as a complex of behaviors and rituals specifically within the realms of the sacred and the transcendent. In his view, pilgrimage is a special phenomenon, which can still be identified as such worldwide. Religion, and *a fortiori* religious people, manifest themselves within it in a powerful, collective and ‘performative’ way. That is why, in his view, pilgrimage should be studied as an independent entity, and not as a phenomenon that is an extension of tourism.<sup>40</sup> Margry defines a pilgrimage as:

“(...) a journey based on religious or spiritual inspiration, undertaken by individuals or groups, to a place that is regarded as more sacred or salutary than the environment of everyday life, to seek a transcendental encounter with a specific cult object, for the purpose of acquiring spiritual, emotional or physical healing or benefit.”<sup>41</sup>

According to him, without these elements there would be no pilgrimage.

Following on from authors such as Cohen, he thus criticizes a view in which the focus is primarily on gradual transitions between pilgrimage and tourism and constantly new forms of mixing. Margry recognizes that the behavior of tourists and pilgrims can have similarities, but believes that a journey can never be called a ‘pilgrimage’ as long as there is no religious motive to go to a holy place.<sup>42</sup> In his view, therefore, one cannot use the term ‘pilgrimage’ for, for example, an individualized, secular phenomenon such as that which has emerged within our postmodern culture, such as a trip to Santiago de Compostela for reasons other than religious ones. One does not have to share Margry’s criticism of the trend to consider pilgrimage and tourism as open to each other, to recognize that his approach can also have value. The pilgrimage as a journey with a religious motive can always be regarded as a phenomenon with its own prior development within a specific religion, without the pilgrimage having to close itself off from other, not always religious, developments and phenomena within the journey. This prior development will only be further elaborated in Part II. Its importance for an understanding of the ‘Come and see’ initiative will also be discussed and made clear there. The Topos in which the connection of both phenomena in the current social and cultural sciences is emphasized will now be discussed in more detail.

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40 MARGRY: ‘Secular Pilgrimage’ 14.

41 MARGRY: ‘Secular Pilgrimage’ 17. Misschien speelt in Margry’s benadering mee, dat hij specialist is op het gebied van Nederlandse ‘bedevaarten’; de term ‘bedevaart’ suggereert een directere verbinding met religie dan het woord ‘pelgrimage’, terwijl er in het Engels geen afzonderlijk woord voor ‘bedevaart’ bestaat.

42 MARGRY: ‘Whiskey and Pilgrimage’ 244.

## 1.2 The Topos under the microscope

Research in the 1990's on pilgrims whose destination was Santiago de Compostela still assumed that in principle it was possible to distinguish the 'true pilgrim' from types such as the 'Religious Tourist', the 'Museum Tourist', the 'Believing Tourist' and the 'Seeking Tourist'.<sup>43</sup> Since then, research has increasingly emphasized similarities between 'pilgrims' and 'tourists'.<sup>44</sup>

In a recent study of Santiago pilgrims by Suzanne van der Beek, it was proposed to give the concept of 'authenticity' a central place in pilgrim studies as a substitute for a fixation on the concept of the 'true pilgrim'.<sup>45</sup> The author concludes from conversations with current Santiago pilgrims that on the *Camino Santiago* there are not so much individuals with differently definable identities as 'authentic' identity seekers.<sup>46</sup> Whoever walks the road turns out to feel part of a community of Santiago goers, but as such also develops a 'personalize' identity along the way as a result of 'a mixture of personal desire, practical necessities, cultural interest, spiritual needs, and societal critique'.<sup>47</sup>

The reluctance of some Santiago travellers to call themselves pilgrims was due both to the extent to which they joined ritual practices during the journey - such as staying overnight in special *Camino* shelters, the length of the day's march and the number of consecutive days they walked - and to personal views on what is considered to be the core values of a pilgrimage.<sup>48</sup> A reluctance to call oneself a 'pilgrim' was, as already mentioned in the General Introduction, also to be found among some participants of the 'Come and see' trip, as well as the phenomenon that this could change during the trip. A participant who at first certainly did not see his journey as a pilgrimage described his painful experiences as "the grief of a pilgrim", as already mentioned.<sup>49</sup>

Already in a nice overview from 2004, on approaches to pilgrimage within anthropology, Ellen Badone and Sharon Roseman had pointed out that the distinction

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43 A. MULDER: 'Op zoek naar de ware pelgrim. Over pelgrimage en toerisme', in M. VAN UDEN, J. PIEPER & P. POST (ed.): *Oude sporen nieuwe wegen. Ontwikkelingen in bedevaartonderzoek* (Baarn 1995) 31-32.

44 BADONE & ROSEMAN: *Intersecting Journeys 2*. POST: *Beyond the Topos 30*.

45 S. VAN DER BEEK: *New Pilgrim Stories: Narratives, Identities, Authenticity* (Tilburg 2018). See: <https://research.tilburguniversity.edu/en/publications/new-pilgrim-stories-narratives-identities-authenticity> (accessed 27 12 2018).

46 Thus, Van der Beek is not primarily concerned with the 'authenticity' of places that are considered venerable by tourists, as in the case of MacCannell (see above: I 1.1).

47 VAN DER BEEK: *New Pilgrim Stories 234*.

48 VAN DER BEEK: *New Pilgrim Stories 222*. Van der Beek mentions values such as 'perseverance, slowing down, spirituality, adventure, religious and historical awareness' and points out that in fact each individual pilgrim is currently creating his own Camino.

49 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 114.



between, on the one hand, 'secular journeys', which involve 'self-renewal' and a 'search for authenticity', and, on the other hand, specifically religiously-motivated pilgrimages disappears as soon as religion is understood as a search for meaning.<sup>50</sup> For them it was self-evident - well before the 'Come and see' call of Palestinian Christians - to classify a visit by tourists to "the embattled homes of West Bank Palestinians" as a "sacred", for example.<sup>51</sup>

While a scientist like Margry would probably find it difficult to label a 'Come and see' trip as a pilgrimage, if only because of the fact that 'unholy' places are also visited, open approaches within the field of pilgrim studies of the phenomenon of contemporary pilgrimages, such as those of Van der Beek and those of Badone and Roseman, thus leave obvious room for a new phenomenon such as 'Come and see' pilgrimages. Those participants on such a journey who at first did not feel much like calling themselves pilgrims, would probably have had no objection to being characterized as 'authentic seekers' of what can be expected of them as Christians on a journey to 'the Land'.

The Topos approach no longer focusses exclusively on the old type of pilgrimage, that is now no longer motivated from a specific religion, but also from other motives with attention for new types of contemporary pilgrimages. Badone's distinction between 'conventional' and 'unconventional' pilgrimages offers a meaningful approach to get a better grasp of the relationship between religious and secular elements in contemporary 'pilgrimage-like' journeys.<sup>52</sup>

Badone distinguishes, on the one hand, journeys connected with established religions, such as Mecca and Lourdes, and, on the other hand, journeys to historical places that are explicitly not, such as former European battlefields and war memorials, or Ground Zero in New York, but also, for example, graves of pop stars, such as that of Elvis Presley in Graceland. Although traveling to such places will not always be a religious experience, it cannot be excluded that visiting such places can be a more or less 'holy' activity for the person concerned.<sup>53</sup>

This interpretation of the Topos approach clearly also offers room for the concept of a journey that combines 'conventional' and 'unconventional' pilgrimage goals. An example of such an 'unconventional' place of pilgrimage during the 'Come and see' trip that I published earlier was a checkpoint in Bethlehem, where at five o'clock in

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50 E. BADONE & S. R. ROSEMAN: 'Approaches of the Anthropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism', in E. BADONE & S. R. ROSEMAN: *Intersecting Journeys. The Anthropology of Pilgrimage and Tourism* (Urbana/Chicago 2004) 2.

51 BADONE & ROSEMAN: 'Approaches' 2.

52 E. BADONE: 'Conventional and Unconventional Pilgrimage. New Perspectives on Pilgrimage: Conceptualizing Travel in the Twenty-First Century', in A. PAZOS (ed.): *Redefining Pilgrimage. New Perspectives on Historical and Contemporary Pilgrimages* (Farham/Burlington 2014) 7-31.

53 BADONE: 'Conventional and Unconventional Pilgrimage' 25.

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the morning Palestinian workers are squeezed through gates and revolving doors on their way to work in large numbers, “like cattle”, as one of the participants put it and he added:

“I had such a great feeling of shame about it... I thought: this is all happening here, I am now standing with my nose on top of it and I didn't know that that came to me when very deep inside ‘Israel’ means, among other things, ‘God frees’. I now see in that name a dark side... a side that does not liberate, on the contrary, a side I have never thought about (...).”<sup>54</sup>

It became very clear in this example that not only a trip to conventional ‘holy’ places, but also a conscious search for places, where there is a confrontation with a harsh reality, can have a deepening and transcendent effect and can lead to these visitors going through a process of change.

In 2016 Paul Post made a preliminary assessment of the development of the Topos within pilgrim research. He saw both developments that seem to indicate that the concept of the Topos might become less important, and indications that it is making another comeback.<sup>55</sup>

Post himself proposed at the end of his article that the concept of ‘sacredness’ in general should no longer be seen as reserved for a secluded ‘religious field’. For him there is an ‘a-centric’ dynamic between the religious field, the memory-culture, the field of culture (art, architecture, music) and that of the culture of relaxation (sporting achievements, nature-experiences), ‘fields’ which, precisely on pilgrim routes, easily merge into one another and of which the religious element does not always have to be the obvious center.<sup>56</sup> Post’s estimation that the Topos are on their way back is partly based on the conviction that it makes more sense to shift the focus to a concept such as ‘authenticity’, as developed by Van der Beek. His estimation is also based on a suspicion that a new phenomenon such as ‘cyberpilgrimage’ is likely to receive more attention in the future. However, this development will not be considered here.

For this book it is especially important that Post does not completely exclude a comeback of the Topos. He pointed in that respect to the concept of ‘secular pilgrims’ that has surfaced in literature.<sup>57</sup> The participants of the previously researched ‘Come and see’ travel did not automatically see themselves as ‘secular pilgrims’. Margry

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54 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 102.

55 POST: ‘Beyond the Topos’ 35-36.

56 POST: ‘Beyond the Topos’ 33-34.

57 See: Knox & Hamman, Margry, Olsen, Salazar, all in *Tourist Recreation Research* 39,2 (2014) 235-267.

firmly rejected that concept. It shows that the Topos in any case still lives as a focus for discussion within the field. A phenomenon like the Palestinian Alternative Tourism Group can in any case only be traced back to the connection between pilgrimages and tourism.

### 1.3 Pilgrimage as voluntary *rite de passage*

In literature the characteristic of the phenomenon 'pilgrimage' is also described in other ways than by emphasizing a transcendental encounter with a specific cult object in a sacred place, as in Margry's definition. For their understanding of the phenomenon of pilgrimage, the Turner couple focused not so much on the individual pilgrim and the specific place of pilgrimage, but more on general social characteristics of pilgrimages.

Important concepts for them are for example '(quasi-)liminality' and *communitas*. They derived the concept of 'liminal' from the classical study of 1908 on rites de passages by Arnold Van Gennep. 1873-1957). Van Gennep distinguished three phases within a 'rite of passage': 'separation', 'transition' and 'incorporation', the duration and importance of which may vary according to the type of 'passage'<sup>58</sup>. The term 'liminal' referred to the 'transition'- phase, i.e. the phase between the moment in which one has crossed the boundary of an old situation but not yet the boundary with the new .

The term *rite de passage* is mainly used for transitions between basic stages of life such as birth, puberty, marriage and death. But in the last chapter of his book Van Gennep already mentioned the possibility of studying pilgrimages as a *rite de passage*.<sup>59</sup> The Turners summarize a chapter with the title 'Pilgrimage as a liminoid phenomenon' in their book itself:

"Pilgrimage, then, has some of the attributes of liminality in passage rites: release from mundane structure; (...); *communitas*; ordeal; reflection on the meaning of basic religious and cultural values. (...) But since it is voluntary, not an obligatory social mechanism to mark the transition of an individual or group from one state or status to another within the mundane sphere, pilgrimage is perhaps best thought of as 'liminoid' or 'quasi-liminal'."<sup>60</sup>

With the concept of *communitas*, the Turners aimed at a group in which, without loss of personal identity, there can be spontaneous, direct, equal communication and camaraderie, and in which one can distance oneself from the structure and the norms

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58 A. VAN GENNEP: *Rites of Passage* (transl. by M. Vizedom and G. Caffee) (Chicago 1960) 11, 183-184.

59 VAN GENNEP: *Rites of Passage* 183-185.

60 TURNER & TURNER: *Image and Pilgrimage* 34-35.

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and values of the social order in which one found oneself.<sup>61</sup> According to the Turners, this *communitas* has an ‘evolutionary potential’ and they point out that there can be ‘ordeal’ and the need to reflect on the meaning of basic cultural and religious values. The Turners’ approach thus offers a description of phenomena that also occurred during the ‘Come and see’ journey. The account of a conversation on the last night of the journey from my earlier book offers this clue, among other things:

“An hour and a half was spoken intensely in terms of ‘confusion’, ‘shame’, ‘changes’ and ‘deepening’ one had observed in oneself and each other, ‘a faith experience’ even. [...] As keywords they can be brought together under the topics: ‘change’, ‘stories’ and ‘inspiration’. [...] Several participants emphasized the meaning of being in the company of precisely this group; a *communitas* [...].”<sup>62</sup>

For Van Gennep it was obvious that to the persons involved, the world before the ‘rite de passage’ had different characteristics to their world afterwards. That makes the idea of a pilgrimage as a voluntary ‘rite de passage’ in which old values can be released in order to make room for new ones, a useful tool for a proper understanding of the ‘Come and see’ initiative. That applies not only to the ‘transition’-phase but to the whole process, including thus the separation of what used to be normal,<sup>63</sup> and incorporating, within these new connections, people who went through the same transition.

The elaboration of Van Gennep’s theory in the pilgrimage study of the Turners shows that it is fruitful and helpful to consider ‘Come and see’ travel partly as a rite of passage. This notion will be further elaborated in the next section on the basis of the work of scientists who have dealt with ‘evolutionary potential’ and in particular with the potentially critical dimension of rituals.

### 1.4 The potentially critical dimension of rituals

In the third part of his famous classic ‘The Interpretation of Culture’, Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) drew attention to the influence of rituals on a society.<sup>64</sup> Geertz came to the conclusion that participating in a ritual not only enables people to maintain the social system to which they belong, but also to shape it and thus change it. Geertz saw

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61 TURNER & TURNER: *Image and Pilgrimage* 250-251. Cit.: ‘It does not merge identities; it liberates them from conformity to general norms’.

62 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 110-111.

63 See for the sometimes problematic of this in the case of the ‘Come and see’ trip. TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 62-63.

64 C. GEERTZ: *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London 1973).

## On the horizon 'from pilgrim to tourist'

that the symbolism of the ritual in particular can influence the process of shaping one's own worldview.<sup>65</sup>

Unlike a previous generation of anthropologists, for Geertz the function of religion was not only to help *maintain* the social order. For him religion in particular played a role in *shaping* ethos and worldview. By bringing forward the formative meaning of religion and ritual, he turned the liberal, Western secularization paradigm in a certain sense:

“Religion is sociologically interesting not because, as vulgar positivism would have it, it describes the social order (which, in so far as it does, it does not only very obliquely but very incompletely) but because, like environment, political power, wealth, jural obligation, personal affection, and a sense of beauty, it shapes it.”<sup>66</sup>

His approach to the relationship between religion and society thus offers, as it were, a 'tripod' for the various theoretical 'instruments' with which the idea of the 'Come and see' pilgrimages that originated from Palestinian society can be viewed.

Geertz approach is related to the work of Milton Singer (1912-1994) who investigated temple ceremonies of Brahmins and non-Brahmins in India in their relation to social change processes. Singer described these ceremonial processions as 'cultural performances'. They had, he concluded,...

“... many elements in common with the more secular cultural performances in the theater, concert hall, radio programs, and films (...) these linkages revealed not only the outlines of a cultural structure but also many indications of the trend and process of change in that structure.”<sup>67</sup>

With regard to such processional rituals within a seemingly isolated village culture, he came to the conclusion that the participants thus lifted each other up, as it were, to a level that he described as 'rural cosmopolitanism'<sup>68</sup>. And what applied to these temple processions in miniature, Singer saw on a large scale in mega pilgrimages to the river Ganges. He pointed out their significance for 'cultural communication': the exchange on the great themes of the time with fellow believers from other parts of India.<sup>69</sup> In the

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65 GEERTZ: *The Interpretation of Cultures* 142-146.

66 GEERTZ: *The Interpretation of Cultures* 119.

67 M. SINGER: *When a Great Tradition Modernizes. An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization* (London 1972) 64.

68 SINGER: *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* 79.

69 SINGER: *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* 89.

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pre-war Indian context Singer reminded in particular of places and situations where emerging patriotism was politically colouring conventional pilgrimages.<sup>70</sup>

For Singer, processions and pilgrimages were not unchanging phenomena, but a combination of ‘cultural performance’ and instantly perceptible action. As ‘drama’ they were changeable and constantly influenced the participants during the performance. Singer pointed out how much the accompanist of such processions played a specific role as ‘cultural policymaker’,<sup>71</sup> a phenomenon reminiscent of the influential role of guides in journeys to ‘the Land’, to which we will return in chapter 2.

In connection with Singer and his special attention to rituals as ‘cultural performances’, Catherine Bell made an inventory of four concepts that are used in a ‘performance’-approach to rituals, concepts that also turned out to be a useful analysis tool for the study of the ‘Come and see’ initiative.<sup>72</sup>

In a ‘performance’ approach a ritual is first and foremost an event. This refers to a set of activities in which cultural values and symbols not only become visible, but also bring about changes in the perceptions and interpretations of those who participate in the ritual. The ATG also strives to bring ‘Come and see’ travellers into contact with expressions of Palestinian culture, in order to convince them that Palestinian national identity cannot simply be ignored. The wall built by Israel and the checkpoints for Palestinians can be seen as symbols of the way in which Israel treats Palestinians. Excursions there aim to bring about changes in the perceptions and interpretations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by ‘Come and see’ travelers, and to open their eyes to what is being done to the Palestinians by Israel.

A second important concept is ‘framing’, which means that within ritual activities there is often a specific use of language, which makes the actions and words of participants interpretable after the ritual. From the frame of a ‘Come and see’ journey, for instance, the explicit call to become ‘pilgrims with a message of peace, love and reconciliation’ can be seen as an attempt at ‘framing’. Reference can also be made to the use by participants of a term originating from the so-called ‘contextual theology’ as ‘multiple connectedness’. In this case ‘connectedness’, understood as a necessary and lasting contact with both Palestinian and Jewish-Israelian people, which implies a different kind of ‘framing’ than, for example, the concept of the ‘undeniable bond with Israel’ which many Dutch Protestants take for granted.<sup>73</sup> ‘Framing’ can therefore contribute to the fact that after returning from a ‘Come and see’ trip people start

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70 SINGER: *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* 190.

71 SINGER: *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* 89.

72 C. BELL: *Ritual. Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York/Oxford 1997) 74-75.

73 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 74, 75, 80, 122. The first term comes from the so called ‘contextual theology’, the second is more related to the so called ‘Land-theology’.

talking about 'the Land' in a different way, and that they support activities aimed at improving the unbearable position of Palestinians.

This is in line with a third concept that plays a role in the 'performance'- approach to rituals, namely 'efficacy', i.e. the efficacy of the 'performance', in view of its effect. In the case of a 'rite of passage' as a pilgrimage it is about the acceptance of a different role in society by those involved than before. In the case of the 'Come and see' journey it is clear that visits to 'unholy' places in 'the Land' in particular did indeed contribute to this.<sup>74</sup>

Finally Bell mentions the concept of 'reflexivity' as a characteristic of the 'performance' approach to rituals. This refers to the coincidence of self-reflection and interpretation within a ritual and to the fact that the taking place of a ritual holds up a mirror to a community of people, as it were, which enables them to take a step back and reflect on their actions and their identity as a community.

Interestingly enough, Bell concludes by adding that at the end of his scientific career Turner even suggested that "the ethnographic study of ritual should be supplemented with performances of it by the theorists themselves, in order for them to grasp its meanings".<sup>75</sup> Thus my intuitive wish to participate as a 'participating observer' in a 'Come and see' journey turned out to have the support of the godfather of modern pilgrim studies.

For this chapter it is especially relevant that Bell also noted that Ronald L. Grimes (b. 1943), in connection with the 'performance' approach of rituals, introduced the concept of 'ritual criticism' within the social and cultural sciences. His research fits in with the line of Geertz and the Turners, but his theoretical interest is much more explicit in the critical dimensions of a ritual,<sup>76</sup> i.e. rituals as actions through which dissatisfaction with the existing circumstance can be expressed.

Grimes appreciates a broad definition of what a ritual is, as he found it in Turner's work: "...formal behavior prescribed for occasions not given over to technological routine that have reference to beliefs of mystical beings or powers".<sup>77</sup> But for him a ritual does not have to maintain a special relationship with a deity or with the mystical. According to Grimes that idea is a "Western preoccupation".<sup>78</sup> He thinks that anthropologists should realize more often during fieldwork that religion and

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74 These are visits to 'places of concern' (see: II 5.2). On the trip examined, these included the separate villages of Ein Hod and Ein Hud, the Ayda refugee camp, the wall through Bethlehem, the Efrat settlement, the Tent of Nations, the village of At-Tuwani, a destroyed orchard near Nablus, the center of Hebron. TEN BERGE: *Come and see!* 79-100.

75 BELL: *Ritual* 75.

76 R. GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism. Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory* (Waterloo Canada: 2014) 1.

77 GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism* 9.

78 GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism* 10.

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ritual can relate dissonantly to each other. ‘Ritual criticism’ describes Grimes as: “... the interpretation of a rite or ritual system with a view to implicating its practice”.<sup>79</sup>

Grimes is in fact more interested in the critical potential of rituals than in a definition of them. For him, ‘ritual criticism’ therefore relates to an open, multifaceted praxis, which can imply both ‘aesthetics and poetry’ and ‘ethics and politics’.<sup>80</sup> Such a critical approach requires attention to ‘re-contextualization’, to look again and again at the situation in which certain rituals take place and to listen to the information that becomes available during their ‘performance’. This also touches on the core of pilgrimage from the ‘Come and see’ idea.

‘Ritual criticism’ is always value-charged and dialectical in nature and ideally it is also reflexive, i.e. self-critical, according to Grimes,<sup>81</sup> but it is not reserved for the religious domain alone. ‘Ritual criticism’ is also not a ready-made instrument, it develops through trial and error. It walks informal paths, both in a popular and scientific sense, because the context can be so varied. Rituals do not belong to any authority. But neither are they an unchanging and unusually ‘pure’ genre of human action. This is precisely where their special, critical potential lies.

An example of ‘ritual criticism’ with a Christian-religious background were the protests to former nuclear test sites in the Nevada desert in America in the 1980s, which were explicitly referred to as ‘pilgrimages’ in a study by Ken Butigan.<sup>82</sup> Like the ‘Come and see’ initiative, these protests were not only political-ethical but also clearly religious. Participants referred to the journey through the desert to the ‘Promised Land’ in the book Exodus, as well as to the desert fathers of early Christianity and their critical relationship to the world.<sup>83</sup> According to the author, these contextually motivated pilgrims in the Nevada desert were “...an ascetical practice seeking personal and social transformation”.<sup>84</sup>

The order of the Franciscans can be mentioned as the main inspirer of these pilgrimages, after what Turner might have considered as an example of a place of ‘ordeal’. The author of the study of these pilgrimages comes from the American Franciscan movement *Pace e Bene*. Ancient Christian representations and rituals were used in a special way. On Christian holidays such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and Easter (Eucharist) celebrations were held on the spot. From 1983 onwards the Franciscans in the Netherlands had a counterpart in the form of the so-called

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79 GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism* 16.

80 GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism* 13.

81 GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism* 224.

82 K. BUTIGAN: *Pilgrimage Through a Burning World: Spiritual Practice and Nonviolent Protest at the Nevada Test Site* (2003) 206, 211.

83 For the relationship between pilgrimages and the Desert Fathers in early Christianity, see II.4.2.

84 BUTIGAN: *Pilgrimage Through a Burning World* XI.



Franciscan Peace Guard who for a time organized daily silent tours and wakes at the then intended base for nuclear cruise missiles in Woensdrecht (Netherlands).<sup>85</sup> This religious order plays an important role in the care for holy places and pilgrims 'the Land' (II 4.5, II 5.5).

Grimes was aware that the term 'ritual criticism' could be received with reservations by scientists. He suspected that liturgical scientists might not be charmed by the current use of the term 'critical' because it would sound "too negative" to them. He thought that historians would judge his 'critical' approach to rituals as "too reductive" instead of simply interpreting them, and that social scientists might view his approach as "too prescriptive".<sup>86</sup> Grimes argues, on the other hand, that researchers can be expected to be aware of what drives their interpretations of rituals, and that their focus should not only be on preserving values with which the concept of ritual is usually primarily associated, but that they should develop an eye for the critical potential of rituals in a changing context.

### 1.5 'Responsible tourism'

In the previous paragraphs the Topos were mainly approached from the pilgrim's point of view. The last paragraph of this chapter starts from the other side and discusses research, within tourism science, on ethically motivated tourism. The work of Rami K. Isaac turned out to be an interesting starting point for this.<sup>87</sup> Not only are there many publications by him on forms of 'alternative tourism', often in collaboration with others, but from his personal background he also has a special interest in expressions of this in Palestine and Bethlehem.<sup>88</sup>

Isaac identifies a variety of forms of 'alternative tourism' that have emerged in response to mass tourism since the 1960s and 1970s, such as 'sustainable tourism', 'pro-poor tourism', 'peace through tourism', often summarized under the term 'responsible tourism'<sup>89</sup>. He also discusses to what is referred to by the collective term 'dark tourism',<sup>90</sup> travel to places that are somehow connected with death, destruction

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85 P. VAN VELDHoven, R. VAN REIJSBERGEN & S. HERTOOG (ed.): *Vrede en alle goede, vier jaar franciscaanse vredeswacht in Woensdrecht* (Utrecht 1988).

86 GRIMES: *Ritual Criticism* 13.

87 Rami.K. Isaac was born in Palestine, and is connected to the *Breda University of Applied Sciences* (NHTV) as a tourism scientist.

88 See: R. K. ISAAC: 'Moving from Pilgrimage to Responsible Tourism the Case of Palestine', in *Current Issues in Tourism* (2010) 579-590. R. K. ISAAC: 'Alternative Tourism: New Forms of Tourism in Bethlehem for the Palestinian Tourism Industry', in *Current Issues in Tourism* (2009) 13, No.1, p. 21-36.

89 ISAAC: 'Alternative Tourism' 23-24.

90 M. FOLEY & J. LENNON: 'JFK and Dark Tourism: A Fascination with Assassination', in *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 2 (1996) 198-211.

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(disasters), conflict and war. In the 1990s, other related terms also emerged, such as ‘black spot tourism’, ‘atrocities heritage tourism’, ‘morbid tourism’, ‘thanatourism’ and ‘sensation tourism’. These are pilgrimages to former scenes of war violence, not only during the First and Second World Wars in Europe, but also in Vietnam, former Yugoslavia or Cambodia.<sup>91</sup> The growth in the number of terms can be seen as illustrative for the ever-refining structure of the Topos.

Founded in 1982, the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT, formerly Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism) has played an important role in the emergence of the phenomenon of ‘responsible tourism’.<sup>92</sup> Isaac himself is not primarily interested in the meaning of religion for this type of tourism. His interest lies more with what he calls ‘ethicality’.<sup>93</sup> In the concrete case of Palestine and Bethlehem, his main concern is that tourism in a poor country can be an engine for economic development, and also that tourism is a means for the inhabitants of Palestinian territory to remain connected to the outside world, despite the Wall and the Israeli checkpoints that enclose them. He also points out, just like the ATG, that the possibility of being able to show one’s own heritage to others also promotes the perception of one’s own national identity.<sup>93</sup>

Isaac devotes a lot of attention to analyzing the State of Israel’s structural grip on commercial activities around Bethlehem’s cultural and tourist attractions,<sup>94</sup> i.e. the political context of tourism to this city. He describes how since 2008, despite a damning ruling of the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Bethlehem was almost completely enclosed by an 8 to 9.5 meter high wall, and meanwhile also surrounded by a ring of illegal Israeli settlements. Since then, Bethlehem has offered the sight of a kind of permanently besieged city awaiting full capture. Against this background, he discusses the role that tourism could play in promoting justice.<sup>95</sup>

He mentions the work of the ATG,<sup>96</sup> and he also discusses the so-called Palestinian Initiative for Responsible Tourism (PIRT), a network of organizations, including the ATG, from which a Code of Conduct was developed for both tourists and pilgrims, which aims to encourage them to contribute to a more equitable distribution of tourism by including Palestinian towns and villages in their itineraries through ‘the Land’.<sup>97</sup>

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91 R. K. ISAAC & G. J. ASHWORTH: ‘Moving from Pilgrimage to ‘Dark’ Tourism: Leveraging Tourism in Palestine’, in *Tourism, Culture & Communication 11* (2012) 149-164, p. 157.

92 R. K. ISAAC & D. HODGE: ‘An Exploratory Study: Justice Tourism in Controversial Areas. The Case of Palestine’, in *Tourism Planning and Development 8,1* (2011) 101-108, p. 102.

93 ISAAC: ‘Alternative Tourism’ 33.

94 ISAAC: ‘Alternative Tourism’ 27-30.

95 ISAAC: ‘Moving from Pilgrimage to Responsible Tourism’ 580-583.

96 ISAAC: ‘Alternative Tourism’ 21-36.

97 ISAAC: ‘Moving from Pilgrimage to Responsible Tourism’ 586.

## On the horizon 'from pilgrim to tourist'

One of the other organizations, the Siraj Center for Holy Land Studies, sees itself as a pioneer in the field of 'responsible tourism' programs and joins with it

"...local community tourism, home stays, interfaith pilgrimages, cultural and fact-finding, as well as other special interest programs, such as environmentally friendly tourism packages, including, the Nativity Trail, Sufi Trail, Jerusalem Wilderness and Abraham Path - the first long distance walking route through the West Bank."<sup>98</sup>

The Code insists on a willingness to visit 'places of trial', here referred to 'places of bother' that are often shunned or discouraged by Israeli guides, such as Hebron in Palestine. Here are the graves of the patriarchs and arch mothers revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims alike, housed in a single building containing both a mosque and a synagogue that served as a church at the time of the Crusades. Hebron was included in the travel program of the research group. Since many hundreds of illegal Jewish settlers have settled in the neighborhood, the center of the city has regularly been a place of unrest, even when this group visited the place.<sup>99</sup>

Isaac and Hodge also point to Regine Scheyvens' analysis of the concept of 'justice tourism', also inspired by developments in tourism in Bethlehem. She identified various possible forms such as contacts during their stay in Palestinian families telling their guests about their own experiences of repression, or the participation of these tourists/pilgrims in local development work, to learn about the Palestinian poverty problem.<sup>100</sup>

Isaac also discusses the phenomenon of 'dark tourism'<sup>101</sup>. This term is also used by the aforementioned Erik Cohen (I.1.1) for trips to Yad Vashem in Israel and for 'pilgrimages' of Jewish youth to the former extermination camps in Germany and Poland.<sup>102</sup> In a publication together with Gregory Ashworth, Isaac outlines the possibility of a 'dark tourism' program in Bethlehem, which could consist of a walk along the Separation Wall, encounters with residents separated from their land by this wall, and with residents of a refugee camp, confrontations with the checkpoints and the many closed stores. Educational meetings about history and current affairs, where for example the 'spaciocide', the destruction of what was originally Palestinian 'space' and

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98 *Siraj Center*: <https://www.sirajcenter.org/index.php/en/> (accessed 27 12 2018).

99 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 96-97.

100 ISAAC & HODGE: 'An Exploratory Study' 103.

101 ISAAC & ASHWORTH: 'Moving from Pilgrimage to 'Dark' Tourism', in *Tourism, Culture & Communication II*, 149-160, pp. 150, 151-152.

102 E. H. COHEN: 'Educational Dark Tourism at an In Populo Site. The Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem', in *Annals of Tourism Research* (2011) 38,1 p. 193-209. This is an investigation into whether difference in 'authenticity' of the location makes a difference to the experience of the visitors.

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‘urbicide’ (the ‘murder’ of Palestinian cities as a result of the wall) would also fit in.<sup>103</sup> He is thus concerned with ‘dark tourism’ as a form of ‘responsible tourism’ and with the educational effect of the contrast between such a travel program and a traditional (pilgrimage) trip to ‘the Land’. With Darlene Hodge, Isaac concluded that justice tourism leads to a form of ‘moralization’ of the tourist, which can incite him to stand up for political and human rights for the original inhabitants of Palestine. In a small survey of participants in so-called ‘justice tours’ in Palestine, partly organized by travel organizations, partly by religious groups or a non-travel organization such as a trade union, the majority (83%) of the 26 respondents emphasized that their perceptions of the situation in the area had changed as a result of the trip and that they had gained a deeper understanding of the situation of the Palestinians. They turned out to feel a ‘connection’ or even a ‘duty’ with regard to the resolution of the conflict in ‘the Land’.<sup>104</sup>

Although tourism scientists are less inclined to explicitly address the current perceptible link between tourism and pilgrimage than scientists in the field of pilgrim studies, it is evident that what is intended by ‘responsible tourism’, especially in the context of the Palestinian Territories, is not very far removed from what the ‘Come and see’ initiative aims to achieve. Isaac does not investigate ‘Come and see’ herself and therefore not particularly the religiously inspired motives that may emerge from travellers in this form of travel. His research does show, however, how relevant the Topos approach is to understanding the character of this initiative and how it is part of the general developments from which these Topos have emerged within the social and cultural sciences.

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103 ISAAC & ASHWORTH: ‘Moving from Pilgrimage to ‘Dark’ Tourism’ 157-159.

104 ISAAC & HODGE: ‘An Exploratory Study’ 105-107. *The term ‘moralization’ is also used by J. BUTCHER: *The Moralization of Tourism* (Abingdon 2002).*

## Chapter 2. In the pilgrims' 'arena' of 'the Land'

### 2.1 A pilgrims' 'arena'

While the Topos approach emphasized the similarities between pilgrimage and tourism and the gradual transitions between them, John Eade (b. 1946) and Michael Sallnow (1949-1990) envisioned an otherwise focused new agenda of pilgrimage studies, in which conflicting aspects of pilgrimage would be more central. In the early 1990s they introduced the spatial concept of the 'arena', as mentioned above. What they advocated was

“a recognition that pilgrimage is above all an arena for competing religious and secular discourses, for both the official co-optation and the non-official recovery of religious meanings, for conflict between orthodoxies, sects, and confessional groups, for drives towards consensus and *communitas*, and for counter-movements towards separateness and division.”<sup>105</sup>

Eade and Sallnow felt that these aspects, which are very recognizable in the case of pilgrimages to 'the Land', were insufficiently reflected in theoretical models such as Victor Turner's paradigm. Although, on the one hand, as within the Topos approach, they were no longer satisfied with the idea that the phenomenon of 'pilgrimage' should be summed up in one uniform definition, on the other hand, according to Eade and Sallnow, Turner's analytical notions did not reveal the extent to which the phenomenon of pilgrimage can be a 'realm of competing discourses'. That is why they introduced the metaphor of the 'arena'.<sup>106</sup> Jerusalem, 'the first true pilgrimage site of the Christian tradition', is nowadays, according to their introduction, 'a kind of microcosm of all the antagonistic creeds, sects and denominations into which the Judeo-Christian tradition has splintered over the centuries'.<sup>107</sup>

The most famous example of contestation of two of the three religions in Jerusalem within the same ritual space can be found on and near the Temple Mount, where some Jewish groups want to rebuild the Temple on, or near the place where the Dome of the Rock sanctuary has stood since the seventh century; a holy place for Muslims. But there are also problems between Orthodox Jews and Greek Orthodox Christians at the place that is considered to be the 'Hall of the Last Supper', because it is located right above the place that is considered to be the tomb of King David.<sup>108</sup> It can be added

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105 EADE & SALLNOW: *Contesting the Sacred* 2.

106 EADE & SALLNOW: *Contesting the Sacred* 5.

107 EADE & SALLNOW: *Contesting the Sacred* 1.

108 *Haaretz*: <http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.726345> (accessed 7 04 2017).

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that in 2017 there were attacks on the pilgrimage churches of the ‘Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes’ in Tabgha near Lake Galilee, and for the third time on the church of ‘Saint Stephen’ west of Jerusalem.<sup>109</sup> At that time there was criticism from several sides, including Jewish Israelis, of the actions of the authorities, and also warned of the consequences for the attraction to pilgrims.

Rabbi Ron Kronish, founder of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI) pointed out in a blog of June 24, 2015 on the website of the Rabbi’s for Human Rights, a list of 43 destructions by Jewish extremists to churches, mosques and monasteries between 2011 and 2015. There are now more than 53.<sup>110</sup> Kronish expressed great concern that Jews who have experienced so much persecution and pogroms in their own history are doing things similar and pointed out to the authorities the effect on pilgrims if they came face to face with the destruction. He called it amazing “that not a single culprit has been caught, arrested or brought to justice! (...) If the culprits were Palestinians, they would certainly have been caught, arrested and sentenced a long time ago”.<sup>111</sup>

This also belongs to the phenomena of an ‘arena’ of pilgrims that not only forms the context for the ‘Come and see’ initiative. They repeatedly show a broader spectrum of reactions, in which even the violent confrontation with pilgrimage by dissidents is not shunned.

In this chapter, we will first address the question of what is known from empirical research about the motives and activities of journeys within this ‘arena’, especially for participants with a Jewish background, and those of journeys from various Christian denominations, and how these journeys relate to the Christian-Palestinian ‘Come and see’ initiative. Thinking among a group of Palestinian Muslim students about travelling to Jerusalem will also be discussed. Finally, attention will be paid to forms of and attempts at ‘sharing’ at pilgrim sites and thus to transcending the ‘arena’ character of the pilgrim spaces of ‘the Land’.

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109 *The Guardian*: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/18/catholic-church-multiplication-israel-damaged-possible-arson-attack> (accessed 25 06 2018).

110 See: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/53-mosques-churches-vandalized-in-israel-only-9-indictments-filed-1.5452856> (accessed 26 09 2017).

111 *Rabbis for Human Rights*: <http://rhr.org.il/eng/2015/06/burning-churches-in-the-jewish-stateimpossible-new-blog-post-by-rabbi-ron-kronish/> (accessed 10 08 2017). In the case of the arson in the pilgrimage church of ‘Multiplication of Loaves and Fishes’ in Tabgha in 2015, the perpetrator was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment, which provoked several reactions pointing out the inequality of justice with Palestinian detainees. On appeal, the perpetrator was sentenced to four years. *Times of Israel*: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/judges-extend-sentence-for-jewish-extremist-who-torched-church-of-multiplication/> (accessed 07 04 2019).

## 2.2 The Jewish ‘Birthright’ travels

Erik Cohen is not only a leading theorist in pilgrimage research who emphasized the structural theoretical distinction between pilgrimage and tourism (see I 2.1). He has also led a large-scale study of young Jewish travellers in ‘the Land’ in the age group of 18 to 32 years, who participated in so-called ‘Taglit-Birthright’ journeys, also known as the ‘Israel Experience’.<sup>112</sup>

An important objective of these ‘Birthright’ journeys is to help shape and develop the Jewish identity of the participants. The history of the travels began in 1947 and they are still free to this day for young adults with a Jewish background.<sup>113</sup> They are organized and paid for by various Jewish institutions in cooperation with the Israeli Ministry of Education and the Jewish Agency for Israel. Meanwhile, more than half a million young adults worldwide have participated in these ‘diaspora tours’.

The results of the research consist of analyses based on no less than 65,000 respondents. The research used a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. It is considered by the performers themselves to be the longest-running, most consciously designed and most thoroughly documented example of research into educational ‘heritage tourism’ in our time.

In view of the substantial subsidies, these trips are not primarily of economic-tourism interest. In the explanation of the trips, the relationship between what is seen as a *diaspora* population and their ‘homeland’ is central. Originally they were also aimed at promoting immigration. In their explanation of what these trips are about, Cohen distinguishes four regions for which they may be of interest: “In the spiritual region it is ‘Pilgrimage’, in the symbolic (Zionist) region it is ‘Aliya’, in the home region it is ‘Shelter’ and in the pragmatic region it is ‘Immigration’.”<sup>114</sup>

Cohen’s research shows a phenomenon that is both complex and exclusive due to the context of ‘the Land’. ‘Birthright’-travellers appear to be both ‘pilgrims’ and ‘tourists’ in turns, and sometimes both at the same time. But given Cohen’s own image of ‘the Pilgrim’ as a ‘traveller’ who avoids ‘chaos’ and is attracted to a ‘sacred center’, the ‘Birthright’ traveller corresponds more to his archetype of ‘the Pilgrim’ than to that of ‘the Tourist’ who is simply driven by the need for something other than his ordinary daily life.

The Israel Experience programmatically offers a wide variety of topics. The trips may include informal activities, seminars and lectures. Content can include recreational

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112 E.H. COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel. Educational Experiences of the Diaspora* (Clevedon/ Buffalo/ Toronto 2008).

See: <https://www.birthrightisrael.com/countries> (seen 28 04 2017). ‘*Taglit*’ means ‘discovery’.

113 *Taglit Birth Right Israel*: <https://www.birthrightisrael.com/countries> (accessed 28 04 2017).

114 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 92-94. In II.4.1 the term *aliya* will be discussed.

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activities and experiencing nature, as well as history and visiting places of symbolic-religious and/or national importance. There are lectures and discussions on Judaism, the state of Israel, the Holocaust, the political situation in the Middle East, and so on. The participants visit museums, an army training camp, a kibbutz, they can also go with an ambulance or visit villages of Druze or Bedouin.<sup>115</sup> Above all, the organizers want the participants to be able to fully focus on their own things during their trip. Confusing, contradictory and negative impressions that could be the result of, for example, contacts with Palestinian peers are avoided.<sup>116</sup>

The evaluations show that visits to places with a powerful symbolic meaning are most popular with the participants. Examples are the Western Wall of the plateau on which the second Jewish temple stood (also known as the 'Wailing Wall'), the Yad Veshem- monument in memory of Holocaust victims in Europe, and the fortress Massada.<sup>117</sup> Not only the choice of these sites and activities in the program, but also the way in which these sites are presented, convey a message.<sup>118</sup> For example, at the rock Massada, a height overlooking the Dead Sea, where in the year 73 Jewish rebels committed collective suicide in the face of their defeat against the Romans, said the participants are regaled with the story that young officers there today take the oath that Massada 'will never fall again'. The place had been made a symbol of national survival by Zionist settlers during the Second World War.<sup>119</sup>

Writing about the trip is an obligatory part of the trip, to ensure that the experiences are internalized by the participants. This is - with a pun on Van Gennep's *rite de passage* - called a 'write of passage'<sup>120</sup>. The aim of the trips is to promote the developing Jewish identity of the young 'diaspora'- Jews during the visit. The researchers conclude that the young participants are often in search of 'authenticity' and 'wholeness'. The initiators hope for a process of integration between Israeli society and *diaspora*- Jews, the differences between the two should be experienced as an apparent contradiction and a sense of principled connectedness should arise.<sup>121</sup> Over the years the goal of the journeys appeared to have shifted from stimulating emigration to countering assimilation and cultivating Jewish leadership in the *diaspora*. Only for a small part of

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115 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 206.

116 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 126-128.

117 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 206-207.

118 E. H. COHEN: 'Educational Dark Tourism' 193-209, p. 197. Cohen points out that the presentation of modern Israel at the end of the tour is the apotheosis of the visit to *Yad Vashem*. Jewish 'tourism' to the extermination camps in Europe, in his view, represents more the aspect of a 'pilgrimage'.

119 A. SHAVIT: *My Promised Land. The triumph and tragedy of Israel* (Capt. Hfdstk. 4, 'Massada 1942') (2013) 87-116.

120 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 194.

121 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 189.



the participants studied the journey still leads to the decision to emigrate to the state of Israel.<sup>122</sup>

It turned out that many participants later describe their visit in pilgrimage-like terms. They were spiritually moved by praying at the Western Wall, or by spending a night on the rock Massada and experiencing the sunrise. Such experiences were described in terms that belong to a 'transition'. Cohen noticed the growing 'solidarity' and 'pride'. All in all he calls it an exploration of "their heritage and a religious pilgrimage", but also "a recreational vacation".<sup>123</sup> The participants sometimes spontaneously made a comparison with the *bar (c.q. bat) mitzvah* ritual,<sup>124</sup> as many of them had undergone at the age of 13. Given the timing in the lives of these young adults, a 'Birthright'-trip can indeed be seen as a more or less secular sequel to the *bar (bat) mitzvah*.<sup>125</sup> The pilgrim-like character of the journeys does not imply that the goal is to make the Jewish religious experience of the participants more important. Above all, they want to be motivated and able to express within their Jewish community a more intensive involvement in the State of Israel after their return. The journeys are still primarily inspired by a secular Zionist ethic, of which the state of Israel is 'the holy center' and of which the Jews in the diaspora are supposed to be the periphery.

Although the Jewish religion and rituals among the participants seem to receive a temporary impulse, the effect does not appear to lead to a significant proportion of them become more practicing Jews; the Jewish spectrum that is served is too broad and different for that to happen: religious/non-religious, significant differences in national origin, and so on.<sup>126</sup>

It seems that the Zionist approach to the 'Birthright' journeys has become somewhat controversial by now. Cohen's research already shows that some participants felt uncomfortable, for example, with the way in which the collective suicide in Massada by Zionists was placed in a romantic national perspective. Cohen<sup>127</sup> also pointed out that sometimes an organizer, such as Rabbi David Forman for example, took the view that the participants should be given more opportunities to learn more about the problems of Israeli society, such as the integration problems of Russian and Ethiopian immigrants and the backgrounds of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>128</sup> Cohen doubts whether the

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122 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 90.

123 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 187.

124 The rite of passage through which young people become part of the Jewish faith community and take responsibility for keeping the commandments of God. The terms mean respectively 'son of the commandment' and 'daughter of the commandment'.

125 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 194.

126 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 193.

127 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 128.

128 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 126-128.

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visitors *want* to see the real Israel. He wonders whether they don't rather want "a holistic Jewish experience".<sup>129</sup>

In any case, there is no general open call to 'come' and 'see', but explicitly a call to come and see a country to which, according to the organizers, the participants in such a trip have a 'birthright'. The fact that during such a journey they enter an 'arena' in which pilgrims are also present who feel drawn to the story of people who have often lived in this area for generations is not made explicit.

That the concept of the 'arena' of pilgrims already applies *within* the framework of Jewish journeys to 'the Land' is even more evident from the fact that some participants have started to use the free 'Birthright' journeys to independently come into contact with reformist parts of Israeli society that are striving for a 'shared Israel' with the Arab population. 'Habonim-Dror' (= Builders of Freedom) is a fusion of two Jewish Zionist youth movements from the beginning of the last century that ostentatiously promote their participation in 'Birthright' as 'Birthleft'.<sup>130</sup> Another example of Jewish disagreement over these travels is the organization 'Birthright Unplugged', founded in the US in 2005, which organizes informative journeys through Palestine "as a rejection of the notion of a 'birthright' for Jewish people to the land of Israel/Palestine [while] Israel has denied Palestinians the internationally recognized right of return for refugees".<sup>131</sup>

'Birthright Unplugged' explicitly mentions that their travels, including visits to Palestinian refugee camps, are in no way affiliated with the State of Israel.

In Israel itself, Israeli human rights organizations such as 'Rabbi's for Human Rights', 'Zohrot', 'Machsum Watch' and 'Ta' Ayush' also offer alternative tours to pilgrims and tourists on a small scale.<sup>132</sup> No studies on such alternative travel activities are available yet.

The Israeli Jewish 'Birthright' initiative and the Christian-Palestinian 'Come and see' initiative show both interesting similarities and important differences. Above the important substantive difference between a 'Birthright'- appeal and a 'Come and see' appeal has already been pointed out. But an important similarity, of course, is the idea of a missionary and educational program with the aim of forming and strengthening feelings of solidarity. In both cases one wants to achieve this by showing one's own

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129 COHEN: *Youth Tourism to Israel* 189.

130 *Habonim-Hashomer Birthright*: <https://www.habonimdror.org/birthleft-israel/>. S. DE VRIES: *Next to Birthright, now Birthleft. Critical journeys to Israel at the expense of right-wing financiers*, in *De Brug* (Amsterdam, March 2018) or SIVMO: <http://www.sivmo.nl/de-brug/> (both accessed 08 06 2018).

131 *Birthright Unplugged*: <http://www.birthrightunplugged.org/mission> (accessed 03 04 2018).

132 Information about these and other Israeli peace and human rights organizations can be found on *Zochrot*: [www.zochrot.org](http://www.zochrot.org) and on SIVMO: [www.sivmo.nl](http://www.sivmo.nl) (accessed 03 11 2017).

country with its dramatic history to a group of people with whom one can appeal to a shared history and culture. A big difference between the two is the scale on which this has been happening on the Jewish side for more than seventy years, compared to the relatively modest degree to which the Palestinian appeal to fellow Christians of 2009 has been answered. This is not unrelated to the fact that the 'Birthright' trips are free of charge for the participants thanks to donations from wealthy private individuals and subsidies from the Israeli state.

There is also a big difference in recruitment. The 'Birthright' trips focus exclusively on young people, who are searching for their identity, and in the offered program parts of the trip one carefully takes into account expected differences in interest within the group from which one is recruiting. 'Come and see' focuses on fellow Christians and their churches outside Palestine in general, and cannot, for example, simply focus on Palestinian Christians who have fled abroad.

The important difference in content is that the Kairos document (Kd) has an inclusive orientation and advocates interreligious encounters and dialogue, not only between Christian and Muslim Palestinians, but also with Jewish Israelis (Kd 3.3.2). It points to the existence of Jewish and Israeli voices for peace and justice and for political rights for Palestinians (Kd 3.3.4). It asks pilgrims to support 'the right of return' of Palestinians and not to justify an interpretation of the Old Testament which denies the rights of others in 'the Land'. 'Come and see' takes as its starting point the existence of 'two peoples and three religions' in 'the Land', and considers that they have a common duty to liberate 'the Land' from injustice and war (Kd 2.3.1).<sup>133</sup>

It is expected of 'Come and see' pilgrims that seeing the Palestinian/Israeli reality opens their eyes to the unacceptability of believing in the existence of a 'birthright' to 'the Land' that applies only to Jews, even those who were not born there, while non-Jewish residents who were born there and whose ancestors have often lived there for centuries have been driven out and cannot return. But the 'Come and see' appeal has primarily a peace and justice-promoting character.

### **2.3 Travelling by Christians in 'the Land'**

In addition to young Jewish 'Birthright' travelers, the pilgrim 'arena' of 'the Land' is of course also visited on a large scale by Christian visitors from a wide variety of

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133 *Kairos Palestine*: <http://kairopalestine.ps/index.php/about-us/kairos-palestine-document> (accessed 23 04 2018).

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backgrounds.<sup>134</sup> They also experience aspects of their own history, both because Christianity originated here, and because the Christians living in ‘the Land’ are as torn apart as in the rest of the world, as well as that ‘the Land’ was, in some periods of history, usurped by Christian powers for extended periods of time, all of which has left its marks. This paragraph examines what is characteristic of the ways of pilgrimages of successively Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Christianzionist groups, and to what extent the different Christian traditions make a connection with the political context of ‘the Land’, and to what extent these journeys in the ‘arena’ of ‘the Land’ can be called conflict-oriented, conflict-preserving, or, on the contrary, perhaps rather peace-promoting.

### *Greek Orthodox pilgrimage: a glimpse of ‘Paradise’*

In Eade and Sallnow’s collection ‘Contesting the Sacred’, Glen Bowman published a comparison of travelling to Jerusalem from different Christian denominations. Characteristic of the Greek Orthodox pilgrim’s way turned out to be a focus on the transformation from fall to redemption and celebrating the pilgrimage as a prelude to Paradise. With their pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Greek Orthodox pilgrims want to free themselves from the ‘impurities’, i.e. the shortcomings, of which their lives carry the inscriptions.<sup>135</sup> According to their original customs, Greek (and Cypriot) Orthodox pilgrims make their pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ preferably when they have reached an age when they want to gradually prepare themselves for a ‘good death’ and the transition to Paradise.

They seek recovery for the ‘dullness’ and ‘corruption’ that have affected their souls on their life path. They prefer to do this in a group that shares the same goals. Special rites support their need for purification and give form to it, for example by means of foot washing, immersion and confession. It’s about experiencing these rituals in the Holy Land, and especially about visiting specific places that are mentioned in the Bible and where there are also churches of their own. There such celebrations are experienced as a foretaste of Paradise, as a kind of participation in eternity within the present.

In fact, every Greek Orthodox church, even outside ‘the Land’, mediated by icons, gives a glimpse of a redeemed world. This spiritual perspective is not more or less

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134 A. FLEISCHER: ‘The Tourist behind the Pilgrim in the Holy Land’, in *Pergamon. International Journal of Hospitality Management* 19 (2000) 311-326, pp. 315-316. On the basis of a report of the Israeli Ministry of Tourism it is mentioned that ca. 5000 respondents from a sample of ca. 18.000 tourists declared religion ‘Jewish’ and ca. 6750 a Christian denomination. Of the 18,000, 23% called themselves ‘pilgrims’, of whom less than 300 were Jews. Fleischer notes that Jews only refer to the journey to Jerusalem during three Jewish holidays as a ‘pilgrimage’ (II 4.1).

135 G. BOWMAN: ‘Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land. The Place of Jerusalem Pilgrimage in the Various Christianities’, in EADE & SALLNOW: *Contesting the Sacred* 98-121.

strong in one place or the other. But it is still experienced as special when this can happen in 'the Land' where Jesus performed his work of redemption, and the Church's own branches in 'the Land' therefore play an important role in this.

In the Orthodox tradition, pilgrimages to Jerusalem preferably coincide with participation in church high feasts. Highest feasts are celebrated from a universally understood Christian perspective, in the community of mankind 'in Christ'. Christ sacrificed himself not only for the few, is the fundamentally universal view here, but for all mankind. During the ceremonies, especially during Holy Week and Easter, but also during the feast of the Assumption of Virgin Mary and the Feast of the Discovery of the Cross, these orthodox pilgrims thus remember themselves as members of the community who were allowed to share in Christ's work of redemption.<sup>136</sup>

The Greek Orthodox pilgrimage to 'the Land' is thus potentially strongly inward looking, and in Bowman's description certainly does not seem to be conflict-oriented in a political sense. The Greek Orthodox Church stands in a tradition of cooperation with the state. In the Palestinian branch of the church this is no longer so self-evident. In 2009, the head of the Greek Orthodox community in Jerusalem, Archbishop Theodosius (Attalah Hanna), a Palestinian Christian, belonged to the thirteen high ecclesiastical leaders of various Christian denominations in 'the Land' who openly supported the 'Kairos document', thus endorsing the 'Come and see' appeal for a new type of pilgrimage. Within his own church Hanna opposes land sales from the church to the state and to settlers<sup>137</sup>. Sotiris Roussos pointed out in 2005 that in the case of Israel the Greek Orthodox Church finds it difficult to give shape to its cooperation with the state as it exists elsewhere in the Orthodox world. In particular, land sales from the church to the state can be interpreted as an expression of incomprehension by the Greek leadership of the church for the symbolic and strategic importance of land for the Palestinian believers.<sup>138</sup>

It is unclear whether and how Theodosius' attitude also influences Greek Orthodox pilgrims, but Theodosius certainly cannot be said to be aloof from the conflicting political reality in 'the Land'. There should be no doubt that this is more than just occasional verbal support, or standing up for the private material interest of this church alone. For example, he did not hesitate to label Christian Zionists, whose trips to 'the Land' aimed at supporting Israel will be discussed separately below, as foreign to the

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136 BOWMAN: 'Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land' 108-112.

137 *Al Jazeera*: <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/09/palestinians-decry-church-patriarch-role-land-deal-170913065512328.html> (accessed 10 11 2019).

138 S. ROUSSOS: 'Eastern Orthodox Perspectives on Church-State Relations and Religion and Politics in Modern Jerusalem', in *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, 5,2 (2005) 103-122.

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Christian church as such. He calls them “foreign bodies to the Church of Christ”.<sup>139</sup> Before he was archbishop, he was arrested several times by the Israeli authorities for political activism in favor of the Palestinians, and afterwards he has not stopped criticizing the Israeli government policy.

### *The Latin-Christian need for ‘spiritual revitalization’*

Within the Latin Christian tradition, a pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ is not valued, as with the Greek Orthodox, as a personal or collective foretaste of eternity, but more as an opportunity for what Bowman calls “spiritual revitalization” in the present, although he did note differences in emphasis between Catholics and Protestants. An Israeli tourism researcher who was only interested in “the tourist behind the pilgrim in the Holy Land” from a marketing perspective also pointed out such differences between these two target groups on the basis of other literature.<sup>140</sup>

For Roman Catholics - comparable to the Greek Orthodox - in addition to visiting biblical places, visiting ancient Christian churches and monuments in the Holy Land and especially being able to celebrate the Eucharist there together is an important source of inspiration.<sup>141</sup>

Protestants, too, expect a ‘spiritual revitalization’ from their journey, but this must be able to come to them directly from a biblical location, not, as is the case with Orthodox and Roman Catholics, mediated by priests, icons and historical places.<sup>142</sup> They would rather see the landscape that Jesus also saw. Devotion to ‘the Land’ among Protestants only started to increase at the beginning of the twentieth century. That was in the latter days of the Ottoman Empire, when the influence of Western imperial powers with a large Protestant population began to grow.

Bowman gives an example for each of the two groups of Christians of the character of their spirituality presented to him. During the visit of a Roman Catholic group to what is considered to be the place of Jesus’ ascension he heard the travel guide say that it is in fact not so important whether this was the real place: after Jesus’ ascension angels had already told the apostles not to keep staring at heaven but to go out into the world to proclaim Jesus’ message.<sup>143</sup> An American evangelical pastor had just told her

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139 G. FALK: *The Restoration of Israel. Christian Zionism in Religion, Literature, and Politics* (New York 2006) 53.

140 FLEISCHER: ‘The Tourist behind the Pilgrim in the Holy Land’ 315-316. In a sample of ca. pilgrims in 1996 were 33% Protestant, 45% Catholic; *ibidem* 317 (see also note 138).

141 BOWMAN: ‘Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land’ 112-116.

142 BOWMAN: ‘Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land’ 116-120.

143 BOWMAN: ‘Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land’ 114.

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group during a visit to the so-called Garden tomb in Jerusalem that<sup>144</sup> “[since we have] today seen that the tomb is empty, we know that everything the Bible says is true”.<sup>145</sup>

In the meantime the need of Christians for ‘spiritual revitalization’ also appears to take on new forms from time to time, and foreign church leaders appear to be increasingly setting an example. Pope Benedict XVI was the first of the Popes to visit the Muslim sanctuary on the Haram al-Sharif.<sup>146</sup> Pope Francis started his pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ in 2014 in Jordan and Palestine instead of Israel. Moreover, he decided not only to visit traditionally known holy places, but also an ‘unholy’ place like the Wall of Secession around Bethlehem to pray there. By doing so he implicitly indicated this place as a possible place of prayer for other pilgrims as well and thus gave a personal example of what Grimes understands by ‘ritual criticism’ (I 2.4).

But developments in that direction began earlier. As an aside, the already centuries-old, structural Franciscan presence in ‘the Land’ is mentioned here, as well as the charitable support by the Knights of the Holy Tomb for its Christian inhabitants and for churches and pilgrimage sites in ‘the Land’.<sup>147</sup> Since 2000 there has been the example of the Holy Land Coordination (HLC), an international group of Roman Catholic bishops from about 15 countries that conducts an annual research-oriented pilgrimage to ‘the Land’.<sup>148</sup> In recent years, the trips of the HLC have included meetings with Palestinian and Israeli youth and visits not only to the Church in Galilee, Jerusalem and Bethlehem but also to the Church in Gaza. The ecumenical peace center the Tent of Nations on the West Bank, set up by the Lutheran Palestinian fruit and olive grower Daoud Nassar to attract pilgrims and tourists, was also visited.

Also on the Protestant side, new developments are visible in the interest in ‘the Land’. From the former Dutch Christian ‘kibbutz’ Nes Ammim, who was founded in 1963 to specifically promote dialogue between Jews and Christians, tours are now organized for meetings with the Palestinian population in Israel.<sup>149</sup> Nes Ammim was the first destination of the trip that was central as a case study in my earlier book. The participants were impressed by the interreligious symbolism of a sculpture in the reception hall of the visitor center, sculptures of Jews, Christians and Muslims praying from three different directions towards Jerusalem. It turned out that the center

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144 A rock tomb found in the 19th century, probably dating from the 8th or 7th century B.C., but which some assume to be the tomb of Jesus.

145 BOWMAN: ‘Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land’ 117.

146 *Trouw*: <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/voor-het-eerst-een-paus-in-moslimheilgdom~b4c8d8b1/> (accessed 11 2018).

147 *Knights of the Holy Sepulchre*: <https://www.heilig-graf.nl/>

148 CCEE (*Holy Land Coordination*: HLC): <http://www.ccee.eu/news/86-2017/252-09-01-2017-holyland-co-ordination-2017> and <https://www.indatholicnews.com/news/34171> (accessed 04 04 2018). To date, no Dutch and/or Belgian bishops have participated in the HLC.

149 *Nes Ammim*: <http://www.nesammim.nl/vakantie/> (accessed 23 04 2018).

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is currently focusing on dialogue projects between Jewish and Palestinian (Arab) Israelis. For example, Nes Ammim supports the integrated Arabic-Ivy education of so-called ‘Hand in Hand schools’. But the center also offers accommodation to groups and organizes all kinds of activities, including its own ‘Come and see’ trips.<sup>150</sup>

Since 2001, the World Council of Churches has given shape to the monitoring of human rights by Christian volunteers who also meet and speak to pilgrim groups through the establishment of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (WCC-EAPPI).<sup>151</sup> The Kairos document has been distributed in many member churches since 2009 and was published on the World Council website. In 2016, a declaration of the World Council recalled the responsibility of Christians in view of the poor economic situation in the occupied territories of ‘the Land’.<sup>152</sup> There are relations of several Protestant churches in the world with the Palestinian Alternative Tourism Group in Bethlehem. Thus, despite the historical differences between church denominations, important movements in recent years seem to have developed a common ground for a new, shared vision on pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ for today and in the near future, and thus for the thoughts behind the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

A somewhat surprising interpretation of the ‘arena’ perspective on pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ is given by the Israeli anthropologist Jackie Feldman. In a book published in 2016, based on his experiences as a Judeo-Israeli pilgrim guide, he describes the way in which Christian pilgrims manifest themselves as a ‘Christianization’ of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially in Bethlehem, which is located in occupied territory and which falls under the Palestinian Authority.<sup>153</sup>

A clear example of this manifestation for him is the way in which the ‘Separation Wall’, also called ‘Apartheid Wall’ on the Palestinian side, is provided with texts and images. He observes that this wall on the Israeli side radiates more and more hegemony and has been given a ‘sophisticated’ decoration, with which an attempt is made to integrate it into the landscape as a matter of course, while the same wall on the Palestinian side not only looks like an ongoing symbol of resistance, but has also been given a distinctly ‘Christian’ appearance in various places in Bethlehem.

On the Bethlehem side, windows and doors painted on the wall accentuate the break in the landscape and also the hoped-for transience of the structure. “With love and kisses. Nothing Lasts for Ever” is an inscription on the wall just beyond the metal

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150 TEN BERGE: ‘Kom en zie!’ 79-80.

151 EAPPI: <https://eappi.org/en> (accessed 23 04 2018).

152 WCC : <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/central-committee/geneva-2014/statement-on-economic-measures-and-christian-responsibility-toward-israel-and-palestine> (accessed 23 04 2018).

153 J. FELDMAN: ‘Christianizing the conflict’ (Chapt. 4) in J. FELDMAN: *A Jewish Guide in the Holy Land. How Christian Pilgrims Made Me Israeli* (Bloomington/Indianapolis 2016).



entrance gate in Bethlehem, welcoming pilgrims and other passers-by.<sup>154</sup> Also known is the icon that was given the name ‘Our Lady of the Wall’, placed on the wall by a British artist in Bethlehem in 2010 on the initiative of Benedictines and has grown into a ritual place where Roman Catholics and Orthodox come to pray.<sup>155</sup> Near Jerusalem there is a painting with the Old Testament image of a (Jacobs) ladder around which the separation wall has fallen down.<sup>156</sup> In many cases pilgrims and tourists are the authors of such texts and the makers of paintings. On travels of Pax Christi Netherlands the so-called ‘Painting on the Wall’ formed a recurring part of the activities.<sup>157</sup> One of the most photographed iconic murals is that of a dove of peace made into a target.<sup>158</sup>

In support of his ‘Christianization’-hypothesis, Feldman also recalls the visit of Pope Francis in 2014 who went to pray at the Separation Wall in Bethlehem, which in his view portrayed the wall as an alternative, Christian ‘Wailing Wall’. Yet another example of ‘Christianizing’ for Feldman are the Christmas groups with a removable Wall between the Holy Family on one side and the Shepherds and the Three Wise Men on the other side, as they are for sale today in many souvenir stores in Bethlehem. To pay homage to the Child in the manger, the wooden wall can be removed in an instant, thus intersecting a religious and political symbolism.<sup>159</sup> Feldman also points to a Christian blogger who wrote about centuries-old olive trees on display in the streets of Bethlehem: ‘It was like witnessing a crucifixion’.<sup>160</sup> These were trees that had been torn from the ground in Palestinian territory by the Israeli army. Feldman believes that the ‘Christianization’ of the conflict, as he called it, seems to lead to a Christian pro-Palestinian and Jewish pro-Israeli perspective increasingly coming together in Bethlehem.

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154 FELDMAN: *A Jewish Guide in the Holy Land* 88.

155 ‘Our Lady of the Wall’. Hebrew University of Jerusalem: <http://sacredplaces.huji.ac.il/sites/our-lady-wall> (gezien 19 04 2018). FELDMAN: *A Jewish Guide in the Holy Land* 83.

156 G. TEN BERGE: ‘Pelgrimeren in een conflictgebied. Een casus van nieuwe pelgrims in Israël en Palestina en hun missie’, in P. POST & S. VAN DER BEEK (ed.): *Onderweg met een missie. Verkenning van de opkomend trend, om te lopen, fietsen, pelgrimeren met een missie of een goed doel*. Cahier 1 (Utrecht 2017) 23-34, p. 34.

157 G. TEN BERGE: *Tweede Solidariteitspelgrimage. Verslag, evaluatie, leermomenten en aanbevelingen* (Pax Christi Utrecht 2007) 25.

158 FELDMAN: *A Jewish Guide in the Holy Land* 79.

159 The idea for a contextual nativity scene was developed by the British Christian organization *Amos Trust*, which, among other things, focuses on alternative pilgrimages. *Amos Trust*: <http://www.amostrust.org/amos-travel/alternative-pilgrimages/> (accessed 05 07 2017). The idea was adopted in Bethlehem by local woodcarvers and shopkeepers. E.g.: *Video Webshop Claire Anastas*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lc7VG3zfxeA> (accessed 05 07 2017).

160 FELDMAN: *A Jewish Guide in the Holy Land* 80.

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The question is whether this framing is entirely correct, and whether the Christian ‘Come and see’ initiative should therefore be understood primarily as an expression of political or religious polarization.

In any case, Feldman’s use of the verb ‘Christianizing’ does not correspond to the historical meaning of this term, which is usually used for the – offensive – spreading of Christianity without leaving room for other religions. In fact, the percentage of Christians living in Bethlehem is constantly decreasing.<sup>161</sup> After the 1948<sup>162</sup> *Nakba* and after the 1967 war, when it was flooded by mainly Muslim Palestinian refugees, the formerly almost homogenous Christian city acquired the character of an isolated Christian hometown in occupied territory with a now predominantly Muslim population.

Feldman does not seem to have realized how much the Mene Tekels on the Wall and the religious tourist articles such as the alternative nativity scene manifest themselves within an asymmetrical political conflict in which Christians as a group play an increasingly minor role. He is unaware that they rather attempt to express an attitude of *sumud*, the Arabic term for ‘perseverance’ and ‘steadfastness’ (II 6.4, II 6.5).<sup>163</sup> According to Palestinian theologian Mitri Raheb, Palestinian *sumud* should be seen as an ‘art of breathing’.<sup>164</sup> As images of hope for change, of anger and sometimes irony, the texts and images on the Wall are similar to expressions that appeared on the West side of the Berlin Wall from the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>165</sup> They offer support to a ‘pedagogy of hope’, according to the theologian Mary Grey.<sup>166</sup> The ‘Come and see’ initiative also fits better in this frame than in the ‘Christianization’ frame that Feldman proposes as a frame of interpretation.

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161 According to the *National Catholic Reporter* (NCR), the percentage of Christians in Bethlehem fell from 86% to 12% between 1950 and 2016. NCR: <https://www.ncronline.org/news/world/bethlehems-declining-christian-population-casts-shadow-over-christmas> (accessed 08 03 2018).

162 *Nakba* means ‘catastrophe’, it refers to the massive expulsion and flight of the Palestinians after the foundation of the state of Israel.

163 T. VAN TEEFFELEN et al.: *Sumud. Soul of the Palestinian People. Reflections and Experiences* (Bethlehem 2011) 27, 97, 107.

164 M. RAHEB: ‘Culture as the art of breathing’, in T. VAN TEEFFELEN (ed.): *Challenging the Wall. Toward a Pedagogy of Hope*, Culture and Palestine Series (AEI Bethlehem 2007) 16-19.

165 G. TEN BERGE: ‘Imagination - Mene Tekels on the Wall’, in VAN TEEFFELEN (ed.): *Challenging the Wall* 105-110.

166 M. C. GREY: ‘Deep Breath - Taking a Deep Breath: Spiritual Resources for a Pedagogy of Hope’, in T. VAN TEEFFELEN (ed.): *Challenging the Wall* 9-15, p. 14.

### *Christian Zionist pilgrimages to a 'sacred state'*

Bowman characterized Christian Zionism as 'a small but influential sector' within Protestantism.<sup>167</sup> For him, pilgrimages by Christian Zionists are similar to pilgrimages of the Latin-Christian type, because they are also experienced by Christian Zionists as inspiring for their faith. However, their journeys are remarkably different in content from other Christian journeys. From the separate theological point of view of this group, the question is whether it is sufficient to speak here of 'sector' or whether a successful 'sect' should also be mentioned. For Christian Zionists it is not the historical places that appear in the Bible that are their primary source of inspiration, but the current state of Israel. For them, the successful existence of this state shows that the 'End Time' has begun, which is proof that God literally keeps his word. The wait is now only for the moment that all Jews will have 'returned' within the state of Israel.<sup>168</sup> Christian Zionists are generally convinced that God will lead 'the Jews' out of their diaspora and back to 'the Land' to restore the Kingdom of Israel and rebuild the Temple. They believe that Christians can be expected to promote this process as much as possible.<sup>169</sup>

The "shocking sacrality"<sup>170</sup> of the current state of Israel to Christian Zionists is presented in an article by the Israeli religious scientist Faydra Shapiro as an important argument for classifying them as 'pilgrims', even though they themselves have no objection to being regarded as 'tourists'. For example, she mentions how Christian Zionists received a special welcome speech in 2006 from the Israeli Minister of Tourism, in which they were addressed as 'tourists' and that they had no problem with that.<sup>171</sup> The remarkable thing in the case of the Christian Zionists is that in their case 'the pilgrim' is neither a 'half tourist' nor 'the tourist', as the Turner couple argued, but that in this group 'the pilgrim' and 'the tourist' coincide completely.

Christian Zionists on the one hand visit typically 'Protestant' places of pilgrimage such as the Garden Tomb, and Yardenit, the place on the Israeli side of the Jordan which is seen as the baptismal place of Jesus, and on the other hand the location on the Jordanian side which was already considered as such in Byzantine times and which still applies to Orthodox and Roman Catholics.<sup>172</sup> Furthermore, an important pilgrimage

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167 *Unity Coalition for Israel*: [https://unitycoalitionforisrael.org/?page\\_id=2](https://unitycoalitionforisrael.org/?page_id=2) (accessed 03 12 2018). The American Christian-Zionist '*Unity Coalition for Israel*' claims that there are '*more than 200 autonomous partners*', covering more than 40 million people worldwide. These figures have been claimed for many years, according to Sizer. S. SIZER: *Christian Zionism. Road-map to Armageddon?* 24.

168 BOWMAN: 'Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land' 118-20.

169 See also II 6.1.1 for the theological content of this thinking.

170 F. SHAPIRO: 'The Apple of God's Eye: Christian Zionist Travel to Israel', in *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 23 (2008) 307-320, p. 311.

171 SHAPIRO: 'The Apple of God's Eye' 308.

172 *Wikipedia*: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism\\_of\\_Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism_of_Jesus) (accessed 10 02 2019).

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goal is Megiddo, an Israeli national park, where according to the Christian Zionists the violent Final Battle at the Second Coming of Jesus will take place.<sup>173</sup> But on the other hand, for Christian Zionists the Independence Hall, where in 1948 the independence of the state of Israel was proclaimed, is also an important pilgrimage goal, as well as the military cemetery Har Herzl, named after the founder of Zionism. Characteristic for their travels are also visits to lectures on the restoration of the Temple and on the necessity of the demolition of the Islamic shrines on the Temple Mount.

Christian Zionists also like to visit Jewish settlements on the West Bank, which they refer to as 'Judea' and 'Samaria', land given to the Jews by God, and to them alone. In addition, during their travels there are projects that aim to promote the social welfare of the Jewish people in Israel, ranging from giving blood to Israeli hospitals to volunteering for Jewish handicapped people.<sup>174</sup> Following Jesus by alleviating the suffering of their fellow human beings is their exclusive focus.

They show no interest in contacts with Palestinians in 'the Land', not even with Palestinian fellow Christians.<sup>175</sup> Islam is seen by Christian Zionists as a reprehensible religion, and they are not very eager to visit places like Bethlehem, which is in Palestinian territory, or Nazareth in Northern Israel, with its large Arab population. However much the metaphor of the 'arena' applies in the case of the Christian Zionists, it is evident from the fact that such places of pilgrimage, especially loved by Orthodox and Roman Catholics, are considered by many Christian Zionists to be

“anti-sites, representing for visitors a mistaken Christianity, connected with paganism and antisemitism.”<sup>176</sup>

There appears to be a very special mixture of religion and politics within this movement. An important ritual within Christian Zionist pilgrimage, for example, is the mass celebration of the Jewish *Sukkot* (Feast of Tabernacles) in order to be 'God's witnesses' on the spot and to 'encourage' the Jews. The number of Christian Zionist pilgrims in Israel who specially came to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in 2005 was estimated at about 5000, coming from about 80 countries.<sup>177</sup> In 2017, an Israeli news site mentioned the number of approximately 6000 participants in this ritual,

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173 SHAPIRO: 'The Apple of God's Eye' 309.

174 Y. BELHASSEN: 'Fundamentalist Christian Pilgrimages as a Political Force', in *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 4,2 (2009) 131-144, p. 139.

175 SIZER: *Christian Zionism* 219.

176 SHAPIRO: 'The Apple of God's Eye' 310.

177 SHAPIRO: 'The Apple of God's Eye' 307-320, p. 308.

coming from about 100 countries.<sup>178</sup> The Christianzionist participation in the feast ends with a procession, with which they want to depict the procession of ‘the nations’ to Jerusalem. Bowman described how the thousands of pilgrims are then sorted by their national origins, and how they end up waving their national flags and singing psalms at the Western Wall to join the prayer of Jews there.<sup>179</sup>

Christianzionist pilgrimage is a phenomenon that, due to the remarkable fusion of religion and politics, attracts the attention of cultural scientists time and time again.<sup>180</sup> Shapiro noted with astonishment that traditional Christian pilgrimages appear to cause little religious emotion among Christianzionists. “What appeared to move them the most”, she writes, “were places and experiences associated with the modern political state of Israel”.<sup>181</sup> Incidentally, Shapiro’s article expresses not only amazement but also appreciation for the Christianzionist phenomenon.<sup>182</sup> Their religious motives of Christianzionist travelers were sufficient reason for her to call them ‘pilgrims’ without hesitation.

The political character of these pilgrimages is shown by their explicit support of the right side of the Israeli political spectrum. This is warmly accepted by Israeli politicians from that corner, despite the religious expectation within Christianzionism that the Jews will all convert to Jesus at the dawn of the ‘End Times’. This did not at all prevent Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, for example, from choosing the Christian Embassy, founded by Christianzionists in Jerusalem in 2016, as the place where he came to congratulate ‘the Christians’ all over the world for the Christmas celebration and to encourage them to continue to travel to Israel.<sup>183</sup>

In an article on pilgrimages and Christianzionism in the United States, religious scientist Katia Batut-Lucas insists that *activistes sionistes* would be a sufficiently adequate qualification for this group.<sup>184</sup> She cites as an example a trip to ‘the Land’ organized in 2011 by Christians United for Israel especially for pastors, in order to make them feel called to enthuse their ecclesiastical congregation about political

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178 *Breaking Israel News*: <https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/95879/feast-of-tabernacles-celebrating-37-years-of-christians-prophetic-gathering-in-jerusalem-photos/> (accessed 23 04 2018).  
*Christenzionistische promotie-video van het Feast of Tabernacles' 2019*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjaVpDVQh7Y> (accessed 18 10 2019).

179 BOWMAN: ‘Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land’ 98-120.

180 BELHASSEN: ‘Fundamentalist Christian pilgrimages’ 4,2 131-144. See also: K. BATUT-LUCAS: ‘Le pèlerinage et le sionisme chrétien aux États-Unis. Le cas du Christians United For Israel’, in CHANTRE et al: *Politiques du pèlerinage* 100.

181 SHAPIRO: ‘The Apple of God’s Eye’ 310.

182 SHAPIRO: ‘The Apple of God’s Eye’ 311

183 Visit Prime Minister Netanyahu at the *Christian Embassy* (ICEJ): <https://us.iccj.org/news/special-reports/pm-netanyahu-visits-christian-embassy> (accessed 28 01 2018).

184 BATUT-LUCAS: ‘Le pèlerinage et le sionisme chrétien’ 93.

Zionism when they return to America.<sup>185</sup> Just like Shapiro pays relatively little attention to the political element in Christian Zionist journeys, the rejection of the religious element by Batut-Lucas is not entirely convincing.

The phenomenon of Christian Zionist travel to Israel is reminiscent of the studies on political tourism by the sociologist Paul Hollander. These were the journeys of left-wing intellectuals in the 1970s and 1980s to communist or socialist states such as China, Cuba and Nicaragua, which they saw as forerunners of a bright future for mankind and for themselves. He had in mind earlier examples of journeys by communist-minded ‘fellow-travellers’ in the 1930s to the Soviet Union. Hollander sees them on the one hand as “by-products of secularization and modernization that shifted the pursuit of meaning, sense of identity and spiritual needs from the religious to the political sphere”.<sup>186</sup> On the other hand, for Hollander, these political pilgrimages also reflect “the unmet needs for self-transcendence” of certain intellectuals at that time, a phenomenon that he considers general for the merging of religious and political pilgrimage.<sup>187</sup> They were rooted in the belief that with the final victory of communism, a ‘salvation state’ could be realized and that these countries therefore deserved support and encouragement. This is clearly associated with the political-religious messianic idea of a ‘return of Jesus’ and a ‘millennial empire’ that would have begun with the foundation of this Jewish state.

Within the pilgrim ‘arena’ of ‘the Land’ should pro-Israeli Christian Zionist pilgrimages now be seen as the counterpart to the Israel-critical ‘Come and see’ initiative that is the subject of this book? The idea seems obvious, but an essential difference between the two is that the ‘Come and see’ appeal is explicitly open to contacts with Jews and Muslims, and that the Kairos document does not express itself in negative terms about other religions. Exclusivism is the starting point of both the ‘Birthright’ journeys and the Christian Zionist journeys, inclusivism is the starting point of the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

## 2.4 ‘Imagined’ pilgrimages to Jerusalem by students in Gaza

For Muslims, their sanctuaries, as far as they lie within the state of Israel and in state-occupied territory, have become an ambiguous fact: of great significance, but accessible to few Muslims. Within ‘the Land’ it is in practice almost exclusively the Muslim inhabitants of East-Jerusalem who have access to them. From outside Israel, the

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185 “[so] that they can then mobilize a large number of activists for the Zionist cause in order to put pressure on state political leaders, (...)” in BATUT-LUCAS: ‘Le pèlerinage et le sionisme chrétien’ 95.

186 P. HOLLANDER: ‘Heaven on Earth: Political Pilgrimages and the Pursuit of Meaning and Self-Transcendence’, in A. PAZOS (ed.): *Redefining Pilgrimage* 71-85, p. 85.

187 HOLLANDER: ‘Heaven on Earth’ 78.

sanctuaries of Muslims in Al-Quds (= 'The Holy One'), the Arabic name for Jerusalem, can currently be visited almost exclusively by Muslim pilgrims from Southeast Asia.<sup>188</sup> I don't know of any research on Muslim pilgrimages in 'the Land' that would allow a comparison with the 'Come and see' initiative. There is, however, a study available from which we can learn something about the thinking of a group of Palestinian students in Gaza, Muslims, about pilgrimages to Jerusalem in the future. An actual pilgrimage to the *Haram al-Sharif* (= 'The Honorable Sanctuary'), the Arabic name of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, is something these students can only dream of at the moment.<sup>189</sup>

The anthropologist Ian McIntosh found, in research into 'forbidden pilgrimages', that several places that have become inaccessible due to current power relations, play an important role in young people's visions of the future, because this inaccessibility appears to strengthen the desire for these places. He mentioned as an example the pilgrimage to Mount Ararat, situated on the border between Turkey and Armenia, where Noah's ark is said to have landed. The mountain is the national symbol of Armenia, but nowadays it is located just across the border in Turkey, making it inaccessible for Armenians since 1918. As another example he mentions the pilgrimages to the Tibetan Potala Palace, which until the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959 was the residence of the Dalai Lama, a place that has been inaccessible to Buddhist Tibetan refugees ever since. McIntosh took advantage of his insight into 'forbidden pilgrimages' to continue a joint educational project for American students in Indianapolis and Palestinian students in Gaza.

Together with political scientist Jamil Alfalet of Gaza University, he supervised the interuniversity Gaza Visioning Project (GVP) between 2012 and 2014. This was a project in which, via Skype, American students from Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis, who were involved in the movement Christians for Peace and Justice in the Middle-East, and Palestinian Islamic students from Gaza University, who live less than 80 km away from Jerusalem but are unable to visit the city, could communicate. The number of 30 students involved at the beginning grew to 170 during the time the project ran.

They drew their inspiration for the GVP from the so-called visioning workshops of Elise Boulding, a sociologist with a Quaker background, who in the 1980s assumed that it would contribute to peace if parties to a conflict were prepared to try to

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188 I. S. McINTOSH: 'Dreaming of Al-Quds (Jerusalem): Pilgrimage and Visioning', in I. S. McINTOSH, E. MOORE QUINN & V. KEELY: *Pilgrimage in Practice, Narration, Reclamation and Healing* (Oxfordshire/Boston 2018) 122-136, p. 126.

189 <sup>157</sup> For Palestinians there is a complicated, constantly changing system of travel restrictions in 'the Land', where no equal rules apply. Palestinian Christians in Bethlehem have on Christian holidays, with own passes, limited access to Jerusalem. Muslim inhabitants of Bethlehem do not have these exceptions at their feasts. For Gazans, also Christians, travelling is almost impossible.

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imagine a future in which the conflict no longer exists. The initiators hoped that it would have a ‘healing’ effect on students who are often traumatized by the conflict with Israel, providing them with a safe space to think creatively about their future. Alfahed, McIntosh’s Islamic partner at Gaza University, also placed special emphasis on building a “culture of peace” in Gaza itself, and on “closing the gap in the conflict of civilizations”.<sup>190</sup> The GVP wanted to encourage these students to develop dreams of the future in which, in addition to personal well-being, ideals such as prosperity and peace also play a role. After all, they could be expected to play leading roles in their society at the end of their studies. That is why they were challenged to develop a vision of the policy that would be needed to realize such ideals in Jerusalem by 2050. McIntosh expected that his students, because of the desire to visit the Muslim sanctuaries in the Al-Quds, only 80 km away, would one day be able to do so themselves,<sup>191</sup> assuming that pilgrimages could play an important role for a prosperous and peaceful Jerusalem in 2050. So he saw pilgrimages as an opportunity for personal healing and wealth promotion,<sup>192</sup> and he saw a potential that deviated from the focus of Eade and Sallnow because of the hoped-for effect on peace promotion.<sup>193</sup>

The focus on peace and justice for all who live in Jerusalem made the motivation behind this research similar to the ideas from which the call to ‘Come and see’ was made. A big difference of course is that the dreamed pilgrimages of these students of the GVP were by necessity completely virtual. Nevertheless, it is relevant to note that attempts to transcend the ‘arena’ approach of pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ have resonated not only on the Christian side, but also among Muslim youngsters who themselves live in this conflict area.

### 2.5 ‘Sharing’ in the ‘arena’

Within the field of ‘ritual studies’, as part of ‘cultural studies’, the concepts of ‘sharing’ and ‘transgression’ are frequently used; ‘sharing’ in respect to sharing of ritual spaces or participating in each other’s rituals, and ‘transgression’ for crossing ritual boundaries of the other. Following the idea of a relationship between pilgrimage and the promotion of peace, as expressed in the previous section, these phenomena and their relationship to the ‘Come and see’ initiative also deserve attention within the ‘arena’ approach to pilgrimages in ‘the Land’.

Studies of interreligious practice in this day and age do point to the phenomenon that, under the influence of postmodernism, people today are often much more

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190 McINTOSH: ‘Dreaming of Al-Quds’ 125.

191 McINTOSH: ‘Dreaming of Al-Quds’ 123.

192 *Healing* was a main theme of the aforementioned collection in which McIntosh published his article.

193 McINTOSH: ‘Dreaming of Al-Quds’ 122, 123.



permissive than before towards crossing ritual boundaries and sometimes follow their own paths in doing so. Marianne Moyaert uses the term “subjective turn” for this purpose, and in this context she also points to what is called ‘detraditionalisation’, a need not only to hold on to one’s own old traditions, but also to make kinship with other religions visible, also within rituals.<sup>194</sup> She points out that a phenomenon such as ‘sharing’ can also arise from consciously wanting to show a special connectedness under difficult circumstances in a non-ordinary context, and thus not only because of a permissiveness that has arisen from postmodernity.<sup>195</sup>

It is indeed striking within the context of ‘the Land’ that at least Muslims and Christians, under pressure from the political and military situation, sometimes enter into special alliances with each other, which can lead to the search for space within the given religious ritual repertoire. In the summer of 2017, for example, Christians took part in the Islamic Friday afternoon prayer during the rising tensions in Jerusalem over the accessibility of the Haram Al-Sharif. Christian and Muslim clergy also went together in prayer in the Al-Aqsa Mosque.<sup>196</sup> Clearly there was no postmodern convergence here, but it was the shared, oppressive political circumstances that stimulated those involved to express their solidarity by participating in each other’s - normally exclusive - rituals.

Examples of ‘sharing’ and ‘transgression’ and of the relationship with the political context will be discussed in more detail below for two other places in ‘the Land’, first for Bethlehem, a small town in occupied territory under Palestinian authority,<sup>197</sup> and second for Nazareth,<sup>198</sup> a small town in Israel, where relatively many Christians still live.

### *Bethlehem*

For Bethlehem there are relatively many examples of ‘sharing’, both of rituals and ritual spaces. Moyaert gives the example of Christians in Bethlehem who fasted “with their

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194 M. MOYAERT: ‘Introduction: Exploring the Phenomenon of Interreligious Ritual Participation’, in M. MOYAERT & J. GELDHOF: *Ritual Participation and Interreligious Dialogue* (London 2015) 1-18, p. 11.

195 MOYAERT: ‘Exploring the Phenomenon of Interreligious Ritual Participation’ 9-11.

196 Christian prays along with the Friday prayer. *Egyptian Streets*: <https://egyptianstreets.com/2017/07/24/jerusalem-solidarity-one-christian-joins-muslim-prayers-makes-cross-signs-as-they-recite-quran/> Christian and Muslim leaders pray together for peace in the *Al Aqsa mosque*. WCC: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/muslim-and-christians-pray-together-for-just-peace-in-alaqsa-mosque> (both accessed 07 04 2019).

197 Excluding surrounding villages, Bethlehem had about 25,000 inhabitants in 2007 (in 2013 it had about 16,000 Christians), incl. surrounding villages the number was about 90,000 inhabitants in 2007. At that time, about 110,000 Jewish settlers lived in the neighbouring illegal settlements. *Wikipedia*: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethlehem> (accessed 08-12-2018).

198 Nazareth had in 2007 including later agglomerations, approx. 210,000 inhabitants. The old part of Nazareth had about 65,000 inhabitants at that time, of which about one third were Christians and about two thirds Muslims. *Wikipedia*: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazareth#Nazarenes,\\_Nasranis,\\_Notzrim,\\_Christians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazareth#Nazarenes,_Nasranis,_Notzrim,_Christians) (accessed 08-12-2018).

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Muslim brothers and sisters” during Ramadan, which shows how ‘sharing’ can play a role in expressing solidarity between people with different religious identities.<sup>199</sup> Similar accounts of pilgrims to Bethlehem are known. During a Christmas celebration in 2006 for visiting ‘solidarity game pilgrims’ of Pax Christi, the story of the birth of Jesus/Isa was read both by a Christian according to Luke (2:1-21) and by a Muslim according to the Koran (sura 19: 16-40).<sup>200</sup>

Initiatives to participate in each other’s ‘rituals’ can sometimes have as a side effect, that what one person experiences positively as ‘sharing’ can by another - negatively - be seen as ‘transgression’. During the mass celebration of the Eucharist in Bethlehem in 2009, which was preceded by Pope Benedict XVI, it was observed that some of those present who were known to be Muslims had also been given communion when they spontaneously participated in this Catholic rite. This was interpreted by one as an impulsive need for rapprochement, while another saw it as a questionable form of heteropraxis, and thus an excess of what is acceptable.<sup>201</sup>

A very clear example of ‘sharing’ spaces in Bethlehem is the so-called Nativity Cave, the place where Jesus was supposedly born. This place, like the Tomb of the Virgin Mary in East Jerusalem, is visited by both Christians and Muslims, because Jesus under the name Isa is considered one of the most important prophets within Islam and his mother Maryam (Mary) also enjoys special veneration. Bowman mentions in a relatively recent study that he also found other examples of interreligious sharing of places in Bethlehem and its surrounding area, such as Bir es-Sayideh (The Well of the Lady), a water source located within the Palestinian municipality of Beit Shahour bordering Bethlehem that is visited by both Muslims and Christians, and a place in the Greek Orthodox monastery Mar Elyas between Bethlehem and Jerusalem where the prophet Elijah and St. George (Al-Khader) are venerated by both Christians and Muslims.<sup>202</sup> He noted that this contributed to the awareness among the residents of Beit Shahour that despite differences in religion, they belong to one local community.

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199 MOYAERT: ‘Exploring the Phenomenon of Interreligious Ritual Participation’ 5.

200 G. TEN BERGE: *Tweede Solidariteitspelgrimage Bethlehem* 15.

201 I was told this in Bethlehem in 2012 by a clergyman who emphasized that no one had been refused communion, but that this participation was of course unusual. A far-fetched expression of “*sharing*” on the Catholic side in the Middle East was practiced by the murdered Jesuit Frans Van der Lugt. When the bombs were falling around his church in Homs, he continued to celebrate Mass and gave communion to the imam’s wife (who had read a part of the Koran during Mass). *IHS.Jesuits*: See: <https://www.jezuieten.org/nieuws/twee-medebroedersover-frans-van-der-lugt-sj/> (seen 07 04 2019).

202 G. BOWMAN: ‘Identification and Identity Formations around Shared Shrines in West Bank Palestine and Western Macedonia’, in D. ALBERA & M. COUROUCLI: *Sharing Sacred Spaces in the Mediterranean. Christians, Muslims, and Jews at Shrines and Sanctuaries* (Bloomington, Indiana USA 2012) 10-28.

Such examples of ‘sharing’ pilgrimage sites are also gladly presented by local authorities during alternative sightseeing tours in the ‘arena’ of ‘the Land’ as a sign of the generally peaceful coexistence of Muslims and Christians. This cannot be denied, even if it does not mean that their coexistence in and around Bethlehem is always wrinkle-free. For example, relationships between boys and girls belonging to different religions can give rise to tensions between families, although the problems do not always have to stem from religious differences. Muslims and Christians differ in their level of prosperity, which dates back to the massive influx of Muslim refugees during the 1967 war, and there are issues of land ownership and house sales when Christians emigrate abroad.

‘Sharing’ is often politically charged in the circumstances of ‘the Land’ today. A very clear example of this is the fact that the Palestinian President, who is a Muslim himself, comes to celebrate the Service of the Word every year at Christmas during the Catholic Night Mass in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, while, as already mentioned, the Israeli political leader Netanyahu prefers to visit the Christian Embassy of the Christian Zionists (I 2.3) at this feast.<sup>203</sup>

An example of how an initially protracted situation of ‘sharing’ at a pilgrimage site at the hands of the Israeli state eventually led to the exclusion of others than Jews is the place known as Rachel’s Tomb located on the arterial road from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, an interreligious sanctuary for Muslims, Christians and Mizrahim (Oriental Jews) who for centuries was a staging post for pilgrims.<sup>204</sup> In a study of ‘sharing’ and ‘transgression’ at this tomb Bowman mentions the biblical figure of Rachel “the Old Testament original of the ‘Mater Dolorosa’”.<sup>205</sup> At her grave, women from the different religions of ‘the Land’ sought intercession in case of infertility.

After the Arab conquest of ‘the Land’ at the time of Omar, a small mosque-like building was built over the shrine, which nevertheless remained accessible to Jews and Christians. For centuries, Muslims buried their dead near the grave. In 1841, when the Jewish-British banker Moses Montefiore financed a renovation, separate prayer rooms were built for Jews and Muslims.<sup>206</sup> According to Bowman, the need for this separation was a consequence of the growing influence of orthodox Ashkenazi Jews from Europe in the 19th century. In contrast to the Oriental Jews, they were unfamiliar with interreligious ‘sharing’. They complained about the poor hygiene and the noise

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203 *United with Israel*: <https://unitedwithisrael.org/in-christmas-message-netanyahu-underscores-thriving-christian-community-in-israel/> (accessed 07 04 2019).

204 *Mizrahim* is a synonym for Jews living in or coming from oriental countries.

205 G. BOWMAN: ‘Sharing and Exclusion, ‘The Case of ‘Rachel’s Tomb’’, in *Jerusalem Quarterly* 58 (2014) 25.

206 BOWMAN: ‘Sharing and Exclusion’ 34, 38-39.

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nuisance at the Islamic funerals around the building.<sup>207</sup> Since the 1940s, Jews from Europe had stimulated the exclusive claim to the shrine. In their eyes, Rachel became the woman who conquered infertility and death. She became a revitalized symbol of fertility, but from then on only that of the Jewish people.<sup>208</sup>

After the Six-Day War in 1967, Rachel's Tomb was seized by Israel. Since then there has been nothing left of 'sharing'. The shrine enjoys the exclusive status of Israeli National Heritage Site. It now lies within a heavily guarded military compound that is no longer accessible from Bethlehem in Palestine. Bowman describes the site as 'a fortress'.<sup>209</sup> The peace songs that Pax Christi's Christian pilgrims hoisted in front of the compound in 2004 when the Wall was still under construction were apparently perceived by a soldier on duty as an unacceptable form of 'transgression'; he summoned the pilgrims to leave.<sup>210</sup> From the Israeli side Rachel's Tomb is almost exclusively visited in bulletproof buses by groups of orthodox Jews.<sup>211</sup> In a recent book, the Israeli political and Islamologist Yitzhak Reiter calls Rachel's Tomb an example of how the Israeli state succeeded in putting an end to peaceful forms of 'sharing'.<sup>212</sup>

To the inhabitants of Bethlehem and for pilgrims and tourists, the memory of how this tomb had functioned for centuries as a shared place of pilgrimage for three religions seemed to have disappeared completely for a while. On Palestinian websites such as the Palestine Heritage Museum, Rachel's Tomb didn't even appear for a while. Recently this seems to have changed. Efforts are being made in Bethlehem to revive the memory of interreligious devotion in this place, both for themselves and for visiting pilgrims and tourists.<sup>213</sup> Whoever now walks along the Separation Wall on the Palestinian side is informed about the history of the place by means of special billboards.

### *Nazareth*

A remarkable example of an affair that was interpreted as 'transgression' by two religious sides took place in Nazareth. It was an affair in which the relationship between

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207 BOWMAN: 'Sharing and Exclusion' 30-49, 33-35.

208 S. SERED: 'Rachel's Tomb: Societal Liminality and the Revitalisation of a Shrine' 34, 37, cit. in BOWMAN: 'The Case of "Rachel's Tomb"' 45.

209 BOWMAN: 'The Case of "Rachel's Tomb"' 36-38.

210 G. TEN BERGE: *De Solidariteitsplegning naar Bethlehem* 16.

211 BOWMAN: 'The Case of "Rachel's Tomb"' 36-38.

212 Y. REITER: *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine. Sharing and Conflict Resolution* (London/New York 2017) 274.

213 According to the Bethlehem-based anthropologist Toine Van Teeffelen, 'Rachel's Tomb' currently has no religious significance for those living in Bethlehem, but a number of posters have been put up that show what the place looked like in different periods over the past 150 years (e-mail dated 27 February 2017). An imaginable next step could be to revive the place as a meeting place for Jewish, Christian and Muslim women who are committed to peace and human rights movements by means of religious means.

Christians and Muslims was at stake, but in which the very close interwovenness between religion and politics in ‘the Land’ becomes visible again. Pilgrims come across this on a daily basis. It concerns the complex issue, dating from the end of the last century, of the Roman Catholic Annunciation Basilica in Nazareth, a large pilgrimage church completed in 1969. According to a tradition dating from the fourth century it is the place where the angel Gabriel is said to have announced the birth of Jesus to Mary. As the city of Jesus’ youth, Nazareth has of course always been a popular place of pilgrimage for Christians.

In 1997, the city council began implementing a national government-sponsored plan to enlarge the square at this church to promote economically important pilgrim tourism for Israel. A local Islamic politician decided to go against the plan. Because the grave of a well-known Muslim is located on the square, this was apparently an unacceptable form of profane ‘transgression’ for him and as a countermove he started a campaign to build a mosque on the church square above this grave, of which the minaret should protrude above the dome of the church. This plan to build a mosque right in front of this important pilgrimage church was then conceived by Christians as a provocative form of ‘transgression’ within their ritual space.<sup>214</sup>

Important background information for this conflict is that Nazareth, similar to Bethlehem, had belonged to the places of refuge for Palestinians especially during the *Nakba*.<sup>215</sup> Before that Nazareth, just like Bethlehem, had been a predominantly Christian city. Nowadays there are about twice as many Palestinian Muslims living in the old city as Palestinian Christians.<sup>216</sup> Some more important background information is that for a very long time there has been a relatively peaceful coexistence of the two religions in the old city center, probably because many Christians in Nazareth supported the secular Palestinian nationalism of PLO leader Yasser Arafat (1929-2004).

When the construction of the mosque was started without a building permit, the municipal council of Nazareth objected, with riots as a result; of which the police turned out to be aloof. It turned out that the national government did not want to prevent the construction of the mosque, even though the land was clearly government property and so money had initially been made available from the national government for the

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214 For a detailed description and analysis of the events in Nazareth see: REITER: *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine* 149-152.

215 According to Ilan Pappé, the initial order of the Israeli army command to depopulate Nazareth with its 16,000 inhabitants, 10,000 of whom were Christians, was rescinded by order of Ben Gurion for fear of world opinion. I. PAPPÉ: *The ethnic cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford 2006) 170-171.

216 In 1956 Illit was founded as a suburb of Nazareth for Jewish settlers. In 2007, the settlers made up about 40% of the population, including later conurbations of about 210,000 inhabitants. *Wikipedia*: <https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazareth> (accessed 08-12-2018).

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construction of a larger church square. There were fierce protests, both from Christians in Israel and Palestine and worldwide. Partly in connection with the Pope's visit planned for the year 2000, the Vatican reminded the government of Israel of the agreements made at the foundation of the State of Israel regarding the duty to respect all religions.

One year after the attacks by extremist Muslims in New York and Washington on 9/11 (2001), the Israeli government, under pressure from the U.S. government, decided to call off the construction of the mosque in the church square. To date, the mosque has not been built, but as of 2013 the church square where Christian pilgrims travel every day is full of banners and speakers that advertise Islam as the better religion. One of the participants of the 'Come and see' trip of 2013 wondered if the Israeli authorities would tolerate such a thing at the Wailing Wall.<sup>217</sup>

Political scientist Reiter is of the opinion that Nazareth is one of the many examples that show the inadequacy of the Israeli state in its task to act as an impartial 'mediator' in 'contested holy places' and to move the parties to a peaceful way of 'sharing'.<sup>218</sup>

A few years before Reiter's article, three other Israeli authors published on 'confrontation' and 'harmony' at three pilgrimage sites in Israel.<sup>219</sup> The same affair in Nazareth served as an example for 'confrontation' between two traditionally rival religions. Attention was drawn to two examples of harmonious 'sharing' and accommodation between Jews and adherents of non-Jewish religions.

The first example was in Haifa (Jaffa), where the mausoleum of the tomb of Báb, one of the leaders of the Bahá'í religion, functions without problems as an international pilgrimage center for this religion.<sup>220</sup> It is located in a public park that at the same time is a tourist attraction in a predominantly secular Israeli city. The second example is Brigham Young University, a location in East Jerusalem of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as the 'Mormons'. When Orthodox Jews objected to the conversion work of this church among Jews, negotiations between Jewish leaders and this society appeared to lead to a willingness to renounce further conversion work.<sup>221</sup>

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217 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 83-84.

218 REITER: *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine* 151.

219 N. COLLINS-KREINER, D. SHMUELI & M. BEN GAL: 'Pilgrimage Sites in the Holy Land: Pathways to Harmony and Understanding or sources of Confrontation', in A. PAZOS (ed.): *Pilgrims and Pilgrimages as Peacemakers in Christianity* 177-201.

220 N. SMART: *Godsdiensten van de wereld* (Kampen 2003) 538-540. The Baha'i originated from Shiite Islam and emphasize the underlying unity of all religions. This religion has apocalyptic characteristics and is further characterized by obedience to government and non-involvement in party politics, but is nevertheless exposed to persecution in Iran, where it is a relatively large minority. It is particularly attractive in Africa and Asia among those who are dissatisfied with the rivalry between traditional religions.

221 COLLINS-KREINER et al.: 'Pilgrimage Sites in the Holy Land' 186-187.

The authors limited their research in Nazareth to local political actors and, unlike Reiter, did not comment on the role and responsibility of the national government in the affair. Nor did they analyze why harmonious ‘sharing’ does not exist in many more places than just Nazareth.<sup>222</sup>

In summary, it can be concluded from this chapter that, in order to understand the phenomenon of the ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage, it is not only useful to use the concept of the *Topos*, but also that the concept of the ‘arena’ can make an important contribution to understanding the character of this phenomenon.

The comparisons with the purpose and program of other pilgrimage-like journeys to ‘the Land’ in which there is a relationship with religion made it clear that there is a big difference between the ‘Come and see’ on the one hand and especially the Jewish Birthright journeys and the Christian Zionist journeys on the other hand. This is because these journeys have a fundamentally particularistic and exclusive character and do not see any problem at all in perpetuating the tense situation of permanent conflict in ‘the Land’, while the ‘Come and see’ initiative, in deviation from that, is based on the importance of a dialogue between Judaism, Christianity and Islam and the promotion of peace and justice.

Having to share common pilgrim places in ‘the Land’ sometimes turned out to have been a matter of course in the past. It seems that this is now decreasingly the case. In situations in which ‘sharing’ appears to assume the character of ‘transgression’, questions of power of a broader political scale often appear to play a role in the background. The Israeli state sometimes appears to play a controversial role in this.

All this therefore underlines the ‘arena’ character of the pilgrimage space of ‘the Land’. It explains why the ‘Come and see’ initiative summons pilgrims to ‘the Land’, not only to go and see historical religious sites, but also to want to see the disturbing political reality within which they are embedded, and the consequences that the political situation has for Christian Palestinians.

In literature, however, it has been observed that a liberal, postmodern permissiveness seems to make the joint use of ritual spaces, and even the sharing of rituals, increasingly possible. In ‘the Land’, however, it appears to be the political situation of oppressed groups - a situation in which the state does not always appear to play a mediating role - that can act as a catalyst for a conscious ‘sharing’ of rituals and ritual spaces, as was shown in the case of Palestinian Christians and Muslims in Bethlehem.

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222 COLLINS-KREINER et al.: ‘Pilgrimage Sites in the Holy Land’ 188-190.

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The program of a 'Come and see' journey, in which the promotion of peace and justice is an important objective, asks participants to be open to the fact that rites do not have to serve only to confirm one's own identity. If others are also admitted, they also appear to serve as a means of expressing the desire to break down daily barriers between people of different faiths.



## Chapter 3. The death of 'the pilgrim'?

### 3.1 'The pilgrim' as an anachronism

Since the end of the 1980s, social and cultural scientists have been concerned both with 'the pilgrim' in his relation to 'the tourist' and with the phenomenon of pilgrimage within a specific social context, i.e. both the 'micro' and 'meso' level of the phenomenon. But also a macro-sociologist and cultural philosopher like Zygmunt Bauman (1925-2017) turned out to be fascinated by the phenomenon.<sup>223</sup> The big difference with the approaches discussed above is that he discusses 'the pilgrim' as a metaphor for a human type that has now vanished. Bauman did not perceive a spectrum from 'pilgrim' to 'tourist' in which pilgrims can partly be tourists and vice versa. To him, 'the tourist' is one of several postmodern descendants of 'the pilgrim'.<sup>224</sup> Apart from the 'tourist', in today's society he perceived the 'stroller', the 'vagabond' and the 'player'.<sup>225</sup> He described these types of people as 'symptoms' of the postmodern strategy of life. They are metaphors with which he tried to offer insight into the human way of existence as it occurs in postmodern society.

In the masses, but not of the masses, Bauman sketched the type of 'stroller'; in 'strolling' as an attitude to life, others are seen as strangers, worth looking at, but no more than that. For him, the 'vagabond' was the metaphor for man without firmness in his life, dependent on others, who goes everywhere without a specific destination, and who has no real ties. A figure who used to be a fringe figure in a society, now omnipresent. The 'player' is the one for whom life in the world is a game in which you have to take risks, which requires the passion to want to win, where there is no place for compassion with others, and where you can stop at will in search of the next challenge. The 'tourist' comes as a traveller to many different places, but is never 'from' those places. He has a home to which he always returns, but to which he does not want to be bound. The world of 'the tourist' is structured by 'aesthetic criteria' and the assurance of his safety 'at home'.

According to Bauman, in the Late Antiquity of the Church Father Augustine, the now vanished human type of 'pilgrim' consisted of the believing man who is on his way to heavenly Jerusalem, and who must not lose sight of his final goal within the problems of earthly life. The only ones who managed to escape from that field of tension during life were those who went out into the desert to live as hermits (see II 4.2 below). Bauman

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223 Z. BAUMAN: 'From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity', in S. HALL & P. DU GAY: *Questions of Cultural Identity* (Chapt. 2) (1996) 18-36. See: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446221907.n2> (accessed 14 06 2019).

224 BAUMAN: 'From Pilgrim to Tourist' 26.

225 BAUMAN: 'From Pilgrim to Tourist' 26-32.

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views both Augustine's critical metaphor and the hermits with some sympathy, but they belong to the past for him. After the Middle Ages, in what is called the 'Modern Age', he saw the emergence of a new type of 'pilgrim' who experienced the world of his own society as a desert, in which he could not lose his way, a world in which people had to be 'innerworldly pilgrims' (see II 5.1, 5.3):

"(...) instead of travelling to the desert the Protestant worked hard to make desert come to him - to remake the world in the likeness of desert (...) In such a land, commonly called modern society, pilgrimage (...) is what one does of necessity, to avoid being lost in a desert."<sup>226</sup>

Protestantism and the purposefulness of the Modern Era created "a world in which one can tell life as (...) a sense-making story".

Characteristic of the postmodern period for Bauman is its demise. Characteristic of post-modernity is the phenomenon that 'time' is no longer experienced as a river flowing somewhere, no longer as a coherent story with a direction, but rather as a fragmented incoherent series of episodes without a past or future: "Time is no longer a river, but a collection of ponds and pools". In such a world, the human type of pilgrim can no longer exist. There are only 'strollers', 'vagabonds', 'tourists' and 'players'.

"The world is not hospitable to the pilgrims any more (...) No consistent and cohesive life strategy emerges from the experience which can be gathered in such a world - none remotely reminiscent of the sense of purpose and the rugged determination of the pilgrimage."<sup>227</sup>

From Bauman's point of view, a phenomenon such as the 'Come and see' initiative therefore becomes an anachronistic, irrelevant phenomenon. But his bird's eye view of the history of pilgrimages could rightly be subjected to some criticism as soon as this world is looked at more closely. Part II of this book will elaborate on this in more detail. As a prelude to this, however, here follows a limited number of general reactions, both from a cultural-scientific and philosophical point of view, as well as from a theological point of view.

### **3.2 Responses to Bauman's vision of the 'pilgrim' and the 'tourist'**

Bauman's vision has of course not gone unnoticed in the 'pilgrimage' studies. Post's opinion of Bauman boils down to the fact that he has made caricatures of 'the pilgrim'

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226 BAUMAN: 'From Pilgrim to Tourist' 20-21.

227 BAUMAN: 'From Pilgrim to Tourist' 23 and 25.

## The death of 'the pilgrim'?

and 'the tourist'. He believes that Bauman does not pay attention to the convergence between the phenomena of pilgrimage and tourism in today's society and to the many forms that both can take today (see I.1.5 above). Post points to authors who, on the contrary, encounter in postmodern society new types of pilgrims, such as the 'authentic seekers' who want to make a personal, spiritual voyage of discovery on the Pilgrim's Way to Santiago,<sup>228</sup> and who bear little resemblance to Bauman's 'strollers', 'vagabonds', 'tourists' and 'players'.

In a publication from 2016, Post also identified the new phenomenon of 'walking with a mission', of which he wonders whether it should not be characterized as a form of 're-inventing pilgrimage'. Within the new phenomenon of 'walking with a mission', Post distinguishes between trips with a 'material' mission and trips with an 'ideal' mission. The former serve to raise money for some kind of charity, often primarily a sporting achievement, which can be seen as 'the sacrifice' made for charity.<sup>229</sup> In the case of trips with an 'idealistic', or possibly politicized, goal, the above mentioned protests in the Nevada desert against nuclear tests, of which we saw that the participants explicitly refer to them as 'pilgrimages'.

The type of travel advocated by the 'Come and see' initiative can also be counted among today's forms of pilgrimages 'with a mission'. This is in fact a combination of an idealistic and a material goal, namely to draw attention to the position of the Palestinians in 'the Land', and to promote tourism with a fairer distribution of tourism aspirations. For Post it is obvious that the ritual of pilgrimage is still a vital phenomenon even today and can be studied well in relation to new phenomena within tourism.

Bauman's analysis of the present time also led to other reactions. The philosopher Ruud Welten, who deals with ethical aspects of tourism, was impressed by Bauman's sharp contrast in postmodern society between 'the tourist' and the 'vagabond'.<sup>230</sup> Bauman had already explicitly set the 'vagabond' and the 'tourist' against each other in his earlier book 'Globalization' and had noticed this:

"The tourists travel because they want to; the vagabonds have no other bearable choice. The vagabonds are, one may say, involuntary tourists; but the notion of 'involuntary tourist' is a contradiction on terms."<sup>231</sup>

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228 POST: 'Beyond the Topos' 29.

229 P. POST: 'Lopen met een missie. Mapping the field', in P. POST, S. VAN DER BEEK (ed.): *Onderweg met een missie* (Camino Cahier 1, 2017) 20.

230 R. WELTEN: *Het ware leven is elders. Filosofie van het toerisme* (Zoetermeer 2013).

231 Z. BAUMAN: *Globalisation, The Human Consequences* (Oxford UK 1998) 92-93.

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In today's world Bauman's 'vagabond' therefore often takes the form of the foreigner, the migrant and the refugee.<sup>232</sup> At first sight, the 'vagabond' does not seem to be a category on the horizon from pilgrim to tourist, as discussed in chapter 1 above. Nor did he play a role in the concept of the 'space' of the pilgrim's 'arena' of chapter 2. But if we enter into the 'depth' of theological thinking on pilgrimages in Part II, it will become clear that 'the refugee' and 'the migrant' in the work of the South American liberation theologian José Oscar Beozzo are considered to be the 'pilgrims' of today. In the practice of a pilgrimage of the 'Come and see' type, they come to the fore because these travellers are inevitably confronted with the Palestinian refugee and migration problem resulting from the creation of the State of Israel (see II 6.3).

Welten, like Bauman, emphasizes that nowadays everything is done to make the world seem a safe and pleasant place for tourists, but the opposite is the case. Tourism itself is dragging a continuous collateral damage behind it, he quotes Bauman, because tourists find it embarrassing when they are confronted with the less fortunate people on this earth during their travels, which powerful policymakers try to prevent at all costs. In fact, tourists should feel more co-responsible for the misery kept out of their sight, according to Welten.<sup>233</sup> In Part II this view will be discussed in more detail in the section on the criticism of Western pilgrimages by the theologians of the Global South who recognize themselves in the 'Come and see' appeal (see also II 6.3).

Welten is impressed by Bauman, because he opens people's eyes to the desirability of ethics in what he himself calls a 'touristized world'.<sup>234</sup> He shares Bauman's view of the strong tendency to underestimate the ethical impact of most tourists' own actions. He believes that moral self-reflection should be banned from tourism as much as possible, and replaced by 'ethical surrogates', such as sustainability certificates and ethical codes that suggest that they curb the harmful effects of tourism in order to uphold the principle "that those who rest should not be disturbed".<sup>235</sup>

The question is whether such 'ethical codes' are always intended to provide 'ethical surrogates'. The Palestinian ATG has also drawn up a Code of Conduct, intended for both pilgrims and tourists in 'the Land'. But one difference is, that for them the 'disturbing' of the pilgrim and the tourist, and the opening of their eyes, is precisely the intention.<sup>236</sup>

In his vision of 'the pilgrim' Welten actually goes a step further than Bauman. He believes that "all kinds of journeys, crusades, pilgrimages or even military excursions

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232 R. WELTEN: *Het ware leven is elders* 148.

233 WELTEN: *Het ware leven is elders* 149.

234 WELTEN: *Het ware leven is elders* 147-148.

235 WELTEN: *Het ware leven is elders* 153.

236 *Code of Conduct* ATG: [http://www.atg.ps/print.php?page=code\\_english](http://www.atg.ps/print.php?page=code_english) (accessed 14 06 2019).

This *Code of Conduct* has been translated and edited for a brochure of Kairos-Sabeel Nederland.

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(...) from the outset were often activities of amusement and adventure or (...) undertaken out of escapism".<sup>237</sup> In his opinion, therefore, 'the pilgrim' did not disappear only in the postmodern period and 'the tourist' already existed well before this time.

Although for Welten the pilgrim can be a tourist at the same time, he is not concerned with the question of connections between the two phenomena, nor with research into the 'arena' in which religious and non-religiously motivated travellers can end up. He does, however, nicely show how impossible it is for travellers to actually escape the world by means of travel. That is an insight that also underlies the 'Come and see' initiative, and was the starting point for an initiative for ethically sound forms of pilgrimage and tourism.

### 3.3 Pilgrims longing for a better world

We conclude this chapter with the criticism of the religious sociologist and theologian Derek Tidball on Bauman's vision of the pilgrim. Bauman can, according to Tidball, be seen "as a prophet of postmodernity" (...) [who] (...) "unmasks the pretentious and diagnoses the sickness that lies at the heart of society".<sup>238</sup>

Indeed, Bauman's style of writing seems akin to that of a 'prophet of doom' whose faith in humanity has been severely tested. However, in response to Bauman's assertion that today's postmodern world is no longer a place for pilgrims, Tidball as a *sociologist* believes that Bauman's work is in fact nothing more than an "impressionistic picture" and not the result of reliable, empirical research.<sup>239</sup>

Tidball relates Bauman's pessimistic view of the fragmented and directionless nature of postmodernity to his biography.<sup>240</sup> As a Polish Jew, Bauman fought with the Russians against Nazi Germany during the Second World War, became a member of the Communist Party, fell into disfavour, lost his confidence in Marxism in the late 1960s and then moved from country to country, temporarily to Israel. His violated trust in humanity and the disappointment about the effect of his choices in practice may explain his skeptical and pessimistic interpretation of postmodernity. As a result, according to Tidball, Bauman could not see the responsible 'tourist' or the authentic desire of people to help improve themselves or the world by means of a trip or journey.<sup>241</sup>

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237 WELTEN: *Het ware leven is elders* 42. The crusades as 'armed pilgrimages' are mentioned in part II of this book.

238 D. TIDBALL: 'The Pilgrim and the Tourist: Zygmunt Bauman and Postmodern Identity', in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Farnham UK/ Burlington USA 20152) 184-200, p. 192.

239 TIDBALL: 'The Pilgrim and the Tourist' 192, 194.

240 TIDBALL: 'The Pilgrim and the Tourist' 184-200.

241 TIDBALL: 'The Pilgrim and the Tourist' 185.

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In addition, it is crucial for the *theologian* Tidball that Bauman could not understand the phenomenon of the religiously motivated ‘pilgrim’ because he was not at all able to imagine the continued meaning of religion for the course of history. As a result of this too, Bauman insufficiently realized that this social phenomenon still remains more than concretely perceptible in various cultural contexts.

Tidball, like Welten, is not explicitly interested in the Topos of the development from pilgrim to tourist and *vice versa*. For example, he did note that leaflets about pilgrimages to the ‘Holy Land’ often differ little from leaflets for trips to Bali or Corfu, but for him such pilgrimages are simply “tourism with another name”. Remarkable is that in his - nevertheless rather broad - definition of the term ‘pilgrim’ he connects the notion of transcendence with the need of people to try to leave the world behind better than they found it.

“The essential marks of the pilgrim, however differently they are worked out in different cultural contexts, are these: pilgrims are on a journey, in response to a transcendent authority, as well as to fulfil an inner desire, towards a definite destination, transforming the world for the better as they go.”<sup>242</sup>

There is no need to despair, says Tidball, that there will always be people who will take up this challenge from there.

So *as a sociologist*, Tidball in fact shares Post’s criticism of Bauman’s inability to empirically observe new pilgrim phenomena. Post identified the phenomenon of ‘walking with a mission’ (see I 3.2). *As a theologian*, Tidball particularly identifies the phenomenon of the traveller with a transcendent ‘desire’ for a better world.

In summary, it can be concluded from this chapter three that Bauman’s significance for pilgrims’ research lies primarily in the fact that he has challenged scientists who study pilgrims and tourists from different perspectives to contradict and further articulate their views. This dissertation wants to interfere in this debate by arguing that the ‘Come and see’ initiative is not an anachronistic phenomenon without relevance to the present time, but a relevant subject of scholarly research.

The content of the first two chapters of Volume I already showed that this book shares Post’s criticism that Bauman is not empirically interested, and that he doesn’t see what’s really going on in the world of pilgrims when he only observes ‘strollers’, ‘vagabonds’, ‘players’ and ‘tourists’ there. Nevertheless, Welten’s agreement with Bauman’s gloomy vision of today’s tourism is understandable. Indeed, it is unlikely

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242 TIDBALL: ‘The Pilgrim and the Tourist’ 196.

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that business codes of conduct of their own can really solve the problem of the damage caused by increasing tourism worldwide, as long as it aims to avoid that tourists themselves face the disastrous consequences of their travel needs. The big difference with the 'Come and see' call is, of course, that this call wants to open people's eyes to what the state of Israel is doing and has done to the Palestinians with the support of Western powers. What matters is that tourists themselves will feel their ethical responsibility on a much larger scale.

Part II of this book will mainly follow Tidball's criticism, which ultimately boils down to the fact that both religion and pilgrimages among people will always occur, which in fact supports Taylor's rejection of the secularization thesis (II 5.5). For societies it is intrinsically important that it will continue to characterize people in order to be able to strive for meaning and a better world from a religious motivation, and also by means of rituals. Considering the long history of pilgrimage, and the new forms it appears to take over and over again, it is highly unlikely that the 'pilgrim' will really disappear from the history of mankind.

### **Conclusion on Part I**

The way in which pilgrims and pilgrimages have been researched in the social and cultural sciences in recent decades makes it clear both how the Palestinian 'Come and see' initiative has a place in the wider phenomenon of pilgrimages, and what its special characteristics are.

The research instrument of the Topos showed that the interwovenness of the profane and the sacred in this initiative is not an anomaly, but fits into the rich variety of phenomena in today's society that can be seen on the scale from tourist to pilgrim (and back again). This seemed to imply that research into a desire for 'authenticity' among travellers can be more fruitful for the theoretical interpretation of new pilgrimage phenomena than the search for the 'true pilgrim', but the available case study of a 'Come and see' pilgrimage offered few clues to the idea that it is relevant for this type of pilgrimage to look further in that direction.

The Turners' study showed how pilgrimage research can be more than just research into individual pilgrims and into specific places of pilgrimage, and that a conceptual apparatus is also needed to investigate pilgrimage as a group phenomenon. Their approach, which was at the cradle of modern pilgrimage research, showed how fruitful, for example, a theoretical approach to pilgrimage as a 'rite of passage' can be.

It is in itself understandable that doubts have been expressed about the realistic value of the concept of *communitas* that played such an important role in the Turners' theory, particularly on the basis of what can be observed within the 'space' of an important pilgrimage destination such as Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the Turners'

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approach, with its emphasis on both the creation of a *communitas* and the occurrence of a 'transition' within pilgrimages, proved to be of great importance for a better understanding of the 'Come and see' initiative, which after all is about people going through a process of change in the way they perceive 'the Land' as a result of their pilgrimage.

On a much more general level, Geertz's approach to the relationship between religion and society, in particular, proved to provide an adequate tripod for the scientific instruments with which to explore the place of the 'Come and see' initiative within the phenomenon of pilgrimage. Grimes' concept of 'ritual criticism' - which partly results from Geertz's emphasis on the (re)forming power of religion - turned out to offer possibilities, and in connection with the work of the Turners, to show even more concretely how an activity like 'pilgrimage' can possess a potential for change.

Viewed from the perspective of the concept of the Topos, the journeys that this initiative is intended to bring about clearly have a place within the spectrum of the phenomena referred to by the term 'responsible tourism'. However, Isaac's existing research into travel in Palestine in this context also made it clear that the effect of such travel on travellers can be at least as interesting as its economic and socio-political influence on the area itself.

In addition to the concept of the Topos, Eade and Sallnow's concept of the pilgrim's 'arena' also proved important to gain a better understanding of the nature and meaning of the 'Come and see' initiative, as it implied an invitation to compare what this initiative aims to achieve with other groups within the pilgrim's 'arena' of 'the Land'. Bowman's research into pilgrim groups and Cohen's research into the 'Birthright' journeys proved to be a good starting point for this. The similarities and differences with 'Birthright' tourism and with the Christian Zionist trips to Israel were especially illuminating for insight into the distinction between their exclusive aspirations and the much more inclusive aspirations of the 'Come and see' appeal. In addition, the rise of criticism of the 'Birthright' travels, also in their own Jewish circles, showed once again how meaningful the 'arena' concept can be within pilgrimage studies. Moreover, the shift of focus to the 'arena' of pilgrims led to attention for phenomena such as 'sharing' and 'transgression' and the extent to which these can be determined by the political context.

The discussion in response to Bauman's conviction that 'the pilgrim' is now dead made it especially clear how important it is to take a closer look at the touching philosophical and theological discussions about pilgrimages in the course of history. As fascinating as Zygmunt Bauman's analysis of the disappearance of 'the pilgrim' as a result of the rise of postmodernity is, and as much as he may certainly be taken seriously as a moral 'prophet of doom', it is clear that his extremely skeptical and pessimistic view of reality, but also his essayistic approach to the subject of 'the pilgrim', does not



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sufficiently cover what is currently going on, also in 'the Land', around the phenomena of pilgrimage and tourism. It goes without saying that concrete and changeable phenomena must continue to form the starting point for the research. The phenomenon of religion has not disappeared from society either, although manifestations of organized religion, especially in the West, are under considerable pressure and are changing. The 'Come and see' initiative is an example of this.



The Pax Christi pilgrims icon.

# **PART II**

## **PILGRIMS IN HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

## Introduction to Part II

Part II will examine whether and how the new phenomenon ‘Come and see’ fits within the centuries of Christian history of pilgrimages and the theological thinking about it. It does not pretend to offer a comprehensive overview of Christian pilgrimage through the centuries and what was thought about it. It is deliberately eclectic, because it will primarily be about offering insight into the historical stratification of the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

To this end, a search was undertaken for ‘motives’ that regularly recur in the history of pilgrimage. This is not a subject on which monographs have been written. Lemma’s about pilgrimages in encyclopedic theological works offered a first step. The development of ‘pilgrimage studies’ over the past decades appeared to have yielded enough recent theological literature in the form of scattered articles in journals and collections to make the intended research possible.

Aimé Solignac’s lemma on pilgrimage, in an encyclopedic standard work on the doctrine and history of various forms of spirituality, appeared to distinguish three characteristics of pilgrimages which are important not only for a basic theological understanding of the phenomenon of pilgrimage, but also show a clear similarity with the non-theological theoretical approach which was central to Part I. To be able to tie in to Part I, a summary of Solignac’s theological approach is therefore presented here as an introduction.<sup>243</sup>

First of all, he mentions the need for a detachment or ‘detachment from the fatherland’ (*détachement de la patrie*) at the pilgrim’s departure: Abraham who left Ur with a religious motivation. Secondly, there is the perception of earthly life as a life ‘far from God’ (*loin du seigneur*), as an exile thus, because “this life is not the true life and this earth is not the true fatherland”. Thirdly, he points to the perspective of ‘progressing’ towards the ‘heavenly Jerusalem’, the true fatherland. In this threefold-approach, reference is made both to biblical texts such as Hebrews 13, 4, Apocalypse 23 and the book of Exodus, and to Augustine of Hippo, in whose great work ‘About the City of God’ (*De Civitate Dei*), after all, the Christian’s journey as a ‘pilgrim’ to heavenly Jerusalem is central.<sup>244</sup>

Solignac’s description of the phenomenon of ‘pilgrimage’, which is based on Christian hermeneutics, i.e. on reflection and the formation of theories on the basis of the interpretation of biblical texts, shows, in terms of its content, on the one hand

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243 A. SOLIGNAC: ‘Pèlerinages, in *Dictionnaire de la Spiritualité: Ascétique et Mystique. Doctrine and History* XII (Paris 1984) 888-893.

244 SOLIGNAC: ‘Pèlerinages’ 890.

important differences with what the social scientist Erik Cohen observed (I.1.1), but on the other hand also remarkable similarities from an analytical point of view.

Just like Cohen, Solignac emphasized as the first element the detachment from ‘the familiar’, secondly he describes closely related to what Cohen describes as a journey through ‘chaos’, the earthly life as a journey through life ‘far from God’. But where, thirdly, in Cohen’s case the pilgrim’s way concentrates on a geographically localized center of cult, in Solignac’s case it focuses on the ‘Eternal Jerusalem’, which transcends all conceivable holy places, including the tangible Jerusalem. This shows that the cultural scientist, on the one hand, and the theologian, on the other hand, differ in their approach to the pilgrimage phenomenon, but that they do not need to be disconnected too drastically and that they can be informative and deepening to each other.

In the current social and cultural discourse on the ‘progress’ of pilgrim, the question of ‘the true pilgrim’ and his eternal destiny, as mentioned earlier (see I 1.2), no longer plays a dominant role. Within pilgrims’ theological thinking and reflections on their pilgrimage this is, of course, still the case. From their own religion and their own experience, questions always arise about the value of a need for pilgrimages that has existed within humanity throughout the centuries and therefore also about the norm of what a pilgrim ‘actually’ is. Theologically the work of Augustine of Hippo has in principle become the most important anchor point within Christianity.

However, the Augustinian doctrinary focus on the ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ in thinking about pilgrimages could not prevent the earthly Jerusalem from retaining a strongly religiously motivated attraction for pilgrims over the course of history. After all, Jerusalem was the place of an important part of the preaching and suffering, dying and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, who was experienced by Christians from the very beginning as the actual ‘center’ of their Christian faith. This implies a field of tension for theologians - as well as for the research in this book. How should thinking about pilgrimages to the ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ relate to pilgrimages to the earthly Jerusalem, partly in view of the socio-political situation in ‘the Land’ today?

Other places of pilgrimage can also be experienced by Christians as important for the way they experience their faith, because they seem to offer them a physical, localized form of contact with the Love of God already here on earth. The question of the relationship to ‘the pilgrimage of life’ obviously also applies here. But the question of that relationship is particularly pressing when it comes to ‘the Land’ where the Christian faith began and which has subsequently remained a place of contestation throughout the centuries.

Part II, as said above, does not pretend to be a general historiography of the Christian pilgrim phenomenon, nor does it strive to make ‘the true pilgrim’ known after all. It is about the question how in the course of time theologians and religious figures

have dealt with the special field of tension of ‘heaven’ and ‘earth’ and also how political developments played a role in this. The call of Palestinian Christians for a new form of pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ has been highlighted in part I as a cultural phenomenon that fits within the Topos of ‘the Pilgrim and the Tourist’ and also within the concept of the ‘arena’ of pilgrims, in particular that of ‘the Land’. But the call can also be placed against the background of historical experiences and theological insights of Christians throughout time. In the literature consulted for this part, therefore, particular attention has been paid to those experiences and discussions which can offer more insight into the historical stratification of the new phenomenon of the ‘Come and See’ initiative.

To this end, chapter 4 first examines the period from the testimonies of the Jewish disciples about Jesus of Nazareth during the time of the Roman empire to the establishment of Byzantine Christian power in ‘the Land’ (330). Given the origin of Christianity from Judaism, brief attention will also be given to the Jewish journeys to Jerusalem before the Roman destruction of the Temple in the year 70.

Thereafter Augustine’s vision on the concept of ‘pilgrimages’ after the fall of Rome and the ‘pilgrimages’ of, among others, the early Irish monks will be discussed. Finally, developments in pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ during the period of the Islamic Arab rulers (640-1516) will be discussed, up to the capture of the territory of Palestine by the Ottoman Empire. The relationship with Islam in the period of the Crusades from the 11th to the 13th century is discussed in particular.

Chapter 5 will deal with developments in thinking about pilgrimages from the fourteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century, a period which, partly under the influence of the Reformation, was initially characterized mainly by a crisis of ‘place-based’ pilgrimages and the emphasis on the ‘moral’, ‘internalized’ pilgrimage.

French nationalism of the 19th century after the French Revolution was accompanied by a revitalization of pilgrimages directed at certain locations, in the context of an effort to revitalize the Catholic Church, which became attractive across its borders. Over time, the rise of colonialism facilitated a revival of ‘place-based’ pilgrimages, even further afield. Christian pilgrims to ‘the Land’ seemed to have little hesitation to ‘hitch a ride’ with the rise of colonial powers in this area.

After Palestine had been part of the Roman, Byzantine, Arab and Ottoman empires respectively, in 1920 the British empire had taken Palestine under its mandate with the intention to establish a ‘national home’ for ‘the Jewish people’ in accordance with the Balfour declaration of 1916. After the dramatic extermination of European Jews in the Nazi era, this would culminate in the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948 and the related tragedy of the Palestinian *Nakba* (I 1.5).

These were the political developments that after 1948 led, on the one hand, to the rise of apocalyptically inspired Christianzionist pilgrimages and to the Jewish

Birthright- journeys, on the other hand to their own Jewish counterparts and (later) in the twenty-first century to the 'Come and See' call of Palestinian Christians (I 2.3). The experiences of the Second World War also led to initiatives for international peace-oriented pilgrimages, also to 'the Land'.

Chapter 6 discusses the more recent Christian theological thinking on pilgrimages to 'the Land' after 1945 and the related praxis, including that of the ecclesiastical peace movement. Particular attention is paid to the theological criticism of the ideas behind Christian Zionist pilgrimages. The significance of both Western theologians and Southern 'liberation theology' for a renewal of thinking about 'the Land' is highlighted. Contemporary theologians from 'the South' and their criticism of Western postmodern pilgrimages and of the balance of power within tourism, including that within 'the Land', are reviewed. It is noted that under the influence of the contemporary occupation of 'the Land' and in interaction with theologians from the West and the South, Palestinian theologians have increasingly formed their own 'school' which also influences the praxis of pilgrimage and tourism.

The conclusion will summarize which 'motives' (incentives to act) as well as 'motifs' (themes) in the practice of and thinking about pilgrimages have made this literature research visible. It will show the extent to which the new pilgrimage phenomenon of the Palestinian 'Come and See' appeal not only has a clear place on the horizon of contemporary pilgrimage as studied within the social and cultural sciences, but that this phenomenon can be understood more fully if attention is also paid to the historical and theological layered meaning of Christian pilgrimage.

## Chapter 4. Pilgrimages and ‘the Land’ from the beginning of Christianity to the end of the Middle Ages

### 4.1 Way out of Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem, where the preaching of Christianity began, would only develop into a Christian pilgrimage place a few centuries after the death of Jesus. Jerusalem was for Jews the city of the Temple, and thus a ‘holy city’. Initially the city lost that halo of holiness within the earliest Christianity. How can the development from ‘gone’ to then ‘back to’ Jerusalem in Christian pilgrimage be explained?

Christianity is rooted in Judaism. But within Christian theology it has often been emphasized that the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, which can be celebrated all over the world, has replaced the Jewish experience of God’s presence in the Temple. Can the departure from Jerusalem of some of Jesus’ apostles be seen as a form of pilgrimage? Is this not in contrast to the ‘Come and See’ call, which calls for pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ to continue? Before addressing these questions, however, this section will first consider the Jewish journey to Jerusalem.

In the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* in which Solignac wrote his above-mentioned contribution on Christian theological hermeneutics regarding pilgrimages, there are lemma’s about pilgrimages by Christians, but also lemma’s about pilgrimages by Buddhists and Muslims, but not by Jews. This is partly understandable, because the question of what ‘Jewish’ pilgrimages are, is not so easy to answer. We know the fifteen so-called ‘pilgrim’s psalms’ of David and Solomon.<sup>245</sup> Little is known about the practice of pilgrimages in early Biblical times, but perhaps the pilgrim’s psalms were sung during the ‘ascents’ to the Temple on the occasion of the great Jewish festivals (II 6.2.2).<sup>246</sup>

Therefore, apart from the psalms, some passages from the New Testament deserve attention for answering the question of Jewish pilgrimage. The book Acts mentions that when the disciples of Jesus came out in Jerusalem after their Pentecostal experience, they had to deal with “pious Jews who came from every people on earth”.<sup>247</sup> According to the (Dutch) Willibrord translation, they “lived” there, but according to the Israeli scientist Yoram Tsafrir, they had come as “pilgrims” from far and wide to celebrate *Shavuot*, the Feast of Weeks, the end of the seven weeks after the Passover celebration of the Exodus from Egypt and the return to the Promised Land.<sup>248</sup> In any case, there

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245 The Psalms 120-134.

246 NBG: <https://www.debijbel.nl/kennis-achtergronden/bijbelboeken-artikelen/2939/pelgrimspsalmen> (accessed 12 12 2019).

247 Book of Acts 2: 5-10. KBS: <https://rkbijbel.nl/kbs/bijbel/willibrord1975//handelingen/2>.

248 Y. TSAFRIR: ‘Jewish Pilgrimage in the Roman and Byzantine Periods’, in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* Erg.Bd. 20,1 (1995) 369.



## Christian pilgrimages to the end of the Middle Ages

should be no doubt that a trip to Jerusalem was not always just a profane activity within Judaism, especially the so-called *aliyas*, the ‘ascents’ to Jerusalem. Nowadays the term *aliya* is often used for the great 19th and 20th century emigration waves of Jewish settlers from mainly Europe and later from other parts of the world to the area of Ancient Israel and Judea. But originally it was a Hebrew religious term, *aliya l’revel*, meaning ‘go to the feast’.<sup>249</sup> The purpose of the *aliya l’revel* was explicitly to be in the ‘Presence of God’.

In addition, within Judaism pilgrimage to the graves of saints also occurred, just as it would develop within Christianity and Islam. From an orthodox, Jewish theological perspective, pilgrimage to the graves in particular is a questionable activity, as it is within certain directions of Islam and within the Protestant part of Christianity.<sup>250</sup> But non-Jewish Christians who went on pilgrimages may have adopted the custom of visiting graves to some extent even from the Jews. For Jews, these were graves of ‘righteous’ (*tsaddikim*) who had excelled in their behavior in their obedience to the Torah. Jesus is described in the New Testament in the same terms with which holy, deceased Jews were referred to, such as ‘Righteous’ and ‘Holy of God’.<sup>251</sup>

The orthodox rabbi and scholar Norman Solomon dislikes the term ‘pilgrimage’ because it does not occur in the Talmud. From a cultural and scientific point of view, however, this is not a sufficient reason not to refer to a journey to Jerusalem with religious motives, such as the *aliya l’revel*, as a ‘pilgrimage’.<sup>252</sup> The New Testament mentions both Jesus of Nazareth as a twelve year old boy and his parents’ journey to the Temple,<sup>253</sup> and Jesus’ own four *aliyas* during his public life.

The account in the admittedly late John Gospel (ca. 70-110 AD) of these four visits of Jesus to Jerusalem, the ‘holiness’ of the city and the Temple - and in any case that of its servants - even before the execution of Jesus in Jerusalem seems to be increasingly questioned. The structure of the Gospel of John has even been composed around the four ‘failed’ *aliyas* of Jesus by the New Testamentarian Lincoln.<sup>254</sup> The movement ‘away from Jerusalem’ became visible in the events of his life.

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249 N. SOLOMON: ‘Jewish Pilgrimage and Peace’, in PAZOS: *Pilgrims as Peacemakers* 39-61.

250 SOLOMON: Jewish Pilgrimage and Peace 48-56.

251 See e.g. Luke 4, 34 and 23, 50, Matth. 27, 19-24.

252 For the theological difference in appreciation between Zionist and a- or anti-Zionist religious Jews when it comes to travelling or emigrating to Israel, see A. RAVITSKY: *Messianic, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (Chicago & London 1993) 42-46. See also: Y. M. RABKIN: *In the name of the Torah. De geschiedenis van de antizionistische joden* (Antwerp/Amsterdam 2006).

253 Lucas 2: 41-52.

254 A. T. LINCOLN: ‘Pilgrimage and the New Testament’, in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* 29-49, 37-39.

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There is a sequence of ascending incidents during Jesus' *aliyas*. His first journey resulted in the 'cleaning of the temple' as a symbolic, but also activist act.<sup>255</sup> At his second *aliya* he cured a blind man on the Sabbath with the water from the pond of Siloam. The Pharisees then warned people that Jesus had profaned the Sabbath, and that anyone who believed that Jesus was the Messiah was therefore sinful.<sup>256</sup> The third trip of Jesus to Jerusalem, now in connection with *Sukot* (the Feast of Tabernacles), after some hesitation, led to fierce discussions with the Pharisees in the Temple. It reinforced the thought among Jewish religious leaders that Jesus had to die because he said he was sent by God.<sup>257</sup> Jesus' fourth and last *aliya* during the Jewish feast of Easter, in the time of the year that Easter lambs were sacrificed for this feast, ended in his arrest and his simultaneous 'sacrificial death' on the cross.

The goal of the Jewish 'pilgrimage', the worship of God in the Temple at the great Jewish feasts, was thus thoroughly transformed in a christological sense. Lincoln formulates it in this way:

"It is in Jesus that the divine presence is now to be located (...). The goal of pilgrimage, temple worship, has been transformed Christologically (...) to go on pilgrimage is to come to Jesus".<sup>258</sup>

The conception of Jerusalem as a 'holy city' was negated by Jesus' suffering and dying there in such a way that a pilgrimage to Jerusalem could never become something obligatory for Christians. Participating in Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection, and experiencing God's presence for Christians, also within 'the Land', was henceforth made possible first and foremost by participating in the Eucharist, and not by a journey to the very place where these events had taken place.<sup>259</sup>

In the contemporary political theology of both Roman Catholic William Cavanaugh and Anglican Peter Scott, Christian political practice can be radically 'embodied' by the Eucharist.<sup>260</sup> Scott therefore emphasizes the importance of pilgrims celebrating the Eucharist also in 'the Land' itself, and preferably together with Christians living

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255 Joh. 2, 13 - 3, 21.

256 Joh. 9, 7, 34, 41. The clear water in the pond of Siloam may have served, among other things, to clean the dishes of the Temple.

257 Joh. 7, 1 - 10, 39.

258 LINCOLN: 'Pilgrimage and the New Testament' 39.

259 LINCOLN: 'Pilgrimage and the New Testament' 46.

260 W. T. CAVANAUGH: *Torture and Eucharist, Theology, Politics and the Body of Christ* (Oxford 20023).

According to Cavanaugh, the Eucharist contains the radical, ritualistic response of the Church to the torture and killing of people as a means of social discipline. The context of his book is the regime of Pinochet and the role that the Chilean Church played at that time.

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there. He warns that there is no “general principle of sacramentality” with regard to pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ in itself.<sup>261</sup>

In a reflection on ‘Jesus, the pilgrim’ the Irish theologian Seán Freyne (1935-2013) argued that the earliest period of the church in Jerusalem formed an ‘interim’, in which part of Jesus’ disciples (the ‘Hellenists’) became further removed from the Temple as a central place of worship of God. This group became increasingly aware that their vocation was not in this city but elsewhere. But the Jewish followers of Jesus (the ‘Hebrews’) continued to feel the need to travel to a center where God could be experienced, as had existed within Judaism. The ‘Hellenists’ held up Abraham and Moses to the Hebrews as examples, because they had to leave their familiar surroundings to meet God elsewhere.<sup>262</sup>

Freyne emphasizes more than Lincoln the legitimacy of the tension that has existed, from the beginning, between the Hellenists and the Hebrews. According to him, the “pilgrim theology of the Hellenists” arose “from an experience of enmity on the part of leading Judaism”. The Hebrews held on to texts of for example Isaiah that confirmed them in their love for the heavenly and the earthly Jerusalem.<sup>263</sup> In his view, the ‘pilgrimage’ to which Christians are called, transcends the characteristics of Jewish expectations, but goes up and down between two poles: that of seeking righteousness and that of remembering that the restless heart ultimately comes to rest only in God.<sup>264</sup>

The significance of the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 for the ‘pilgrimage’ of the early Jewish followers of Jesus should not be underestimated.<sup>265</sup> The local Christians may have remembered that Jesus had foreseen that there would come a time when there would be no stone of the Temple left on top of the other. He had also told them that when they saw ‘the horror of destruction’ they had to flee to the mountains.<sup>266</sup> Jesus had urged his disciples after his Resurrection that they had to go into the world and that he would stay with them forever.<sup>267</sup> But for the first Jewish Christians it was not immediately certain that God’s presence was not to be sought in Jerusalem at all. It was the destruction of the temple in the year 70 after the fall of Jerusalem that led to the fact that both, the young church and Judaism ultimately had to function without a geographical center.

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261 P. SCOTT: ‘A Theology of Eucharistic Place: Pilgrimage as Sacramental’, in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, pp. 161, 163-165.

262 S. FREYNE: ‘Jezus de pelgrim’ *Concilium. International journal of theology* 4 (1996) 22-31, pp. 22, 27, 30.

263 FREYNE: ‘Jezus de pelgrim’ 28. Isaiah 2, 2-4.

264 FREYNE: ‘Jezus de pelgrim’ 26, 31.

265 P. WALKER: ‘Pilgrimage in the Early Church’, in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* 73-91.

266 Marc. 13, 2 and 14, 26.

267 Matt. 28, 19.

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The Church Fathers Eusebius (circa 263-339) and Epiphanius (circa 310-403) assumed that the first generation of Jewish Christians had fled to Pella in present-day Jordan after the destruction of the Temple. The Gospels and the Acts, however, offer no indications for this.<sup>268</sup> However, it can be concluded that the Gospels and the Acts also offer no concrete indications that locations connected with Jesus' life and death immediately enjoyed a special veneration among the first Christians. Nevertheless, it was to be expected that importance would continue to be attached to the Gospel as a fact-based story and that the preservation of memories of certain physical places where Jesus' life had taken place could contribute to this.<sup>269</sup>

The apostle Paul plays a crucial role in this development as a transitional figure, even though he was not the only apostle who 'set off' in accordance with Jesus' commission. It is the New Testament scholar Steve Motyer who explicitly considers Paul's travels as 'pilgrimages' and thus brings us closer to the oldest Christian pilgrim motif. With Paul there was no longer a special covenant of God with 'Israel' alone. Yet even Paul, after his conversion on his way to Damascus, went back to Jerusalem again, even though he had been warned that it was no longer safe for him there. He had,<sup>270</sup> at the insistence of Jews in Jerusalem who were followers of Jesus, even been prepared to participate in a specific purification ritual in the Temple by which he showed that he did not only continue to obey Jesus, but also the law of Moses, and that he therefore still saw the Temple as a holy place. But on that occasion he was harshly 'dragged out' of the Temple, because he was suspected of wanting to smuggle pagans into the Temple. Roman soldiers could barely prevent him from being murdered.<sup>271</sup> Paul could point out to the Roman commander, that he was not only 'a Jew from Tarsus', but also a Roman citizen. At night he dreams of Jesus telling him that in the future he will testify about Him *in Rome* [my curs. CtB].<sup>272</sup>

In the Galatians' letter Paul spoke only of 'the heavenly Jerusalem', as a place to which Christians had to go as a matter of course.<sup>273</sup> Also the letter to the Hebrews, of which it is unlikely that Paul wrote it, speaks only of 'the Jerusalem from above'.<sup>274</sup> Among the earliest Bible scholars of the church, Origen (ca. 185- ca. 254) and Eusebius, and later Augustine (354-430), this concept has definitively taken the place

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268 P. WALKER: 'Pilgrimage in the Early Church' 75. In an article in *Nederlandsch Theologisch Tijdschrift* 56 (2002) 89-98 and later in *Geschiedenis Magazine* 3 (2010) 52-56 B. Wagemakers questions the assumption of Eusebius and Epiphanius.

269 The only exception could be the visit of the women to Jesus' grave on Easter morning.

270 S. MOTYER: 'Paul and Pilgrimage', in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* 60, 64.

271 Acts 21, 15-37.

272 Acts 23, 11.

273 Gal. 4, 26.

274 Hebr. 12, 22.

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of the Jerusalem ‘from below’. Jesus loved the Temple, but had not called his disciples to ‘pilgrimages’ after his Resurrection, not even to the Temple; he sent them further into the world with his message.

It can be concluded that the ancient *aliya*, the experiencing of God in the Temple, played no longer a role in the early period of Christianity. Not only because of the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, but also because of the experiences of Jesus and Paul in Jerusalem, and because the message of Jesus had to be passed on to ‘all peoples’, the special worship of God in the Temple came to an end. Jesus had promised his disciples that he would be ‘with them’ until the end of the world on their journeys to all peoples.<sup>275</sup> The Eucharist thus became the liturgical place *par excellence* of the Meeting of God and it could be celebrated everywhere. Jesus’ experiences in Jerusalem, his mission and promise set this change in motion, but the action of Paul and other missionary apostles also played a catalysing role in this, according to Freyne.<sup>276</sup>

In the vision of theologians such as Motyer, Walker and Freyne, the missions of the apostles and of Paul into the world are the first true Christian pilgrimages. ‘Missionary’, bringing the message of the Gospel to all peoples of the world, is thus the oldest and most important Christian theological motif for pilgrimage. As we will see below, this ‘mission’ motif is constantly returning, for example to the early medieval Irish and other monks (II.4.4), to Francis of Assisi (II.4.5) and to Ignatius of Loyola (II.5.3). It is evident that the call of the ‘Come and see’ initiative to continue pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ itself at this very moment does not contradict this ‘motif’. It is a call that on the one hand connects to the desire of Christians to visit places that can confirm to them that the Gospel is a true story, places where Jesus also stayed, in the hope of a deeper religious experience. But on the other hand, it is above all a call to make contact with the people who live in ‘the Land’ and to bring them ‘a message of peace, love and reconciliation’ (I 1.4). Moreover, the signatories of the Kairos document put forward their own ‘message’ in return:

“Our message to all our brothers and sisters in Christ is a word of hope, patience, steadfastness, and of new actions for a better future. Our message is that, as Christians in this country, we have a task to fulfill.”<sup>277</sup>

The Kairos document hopes that Christians feel called, that they are willing, if necessary, to go through a ‘transition’, and that they are then, like Paul, willing to set out to continue this mission, also elsewhere in the world.

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<sup>275</sup> Matt. 28, 19.

<sup>276</sup> FREYNE: ‘Jezus de pelgrim’ 27.

<sup>277</sup> M. DIJKSTRA & J. STEGEMAN (ed.): Uur van de waarheid 5.1.

## 4.2 Back to Jerusalem

After about three centuries, Christianity has become the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. At the hands of the emperors Constantine (ca. 280-337) and Theodosius (ca. 346-395) it became the state religion. What was the influence of this becoming part of the identity state power of Christianity on the development of popular religiosity in the centuries that followed and on the experience of many Christians with regard to the localizability and touchability of 'the sacred' in particular? How did the church react? From when can we speak of a 'Christian pilgrimage culture'? Was there unanimity among new pilgrims and Christians who took part in or observed the new phenomenon, and how did this help to form a relatively new phenomenon for Christians up to our time? These are questions that have been raised by various historical and theological authors who have dealt with early pilgrims, pilgrimages and key figures within them. Answers were also sought on the basis of some old pilgrim's reports themselves. It should be reiterated that the aim was not completeness, but answering the question whether there are motives and motifs in the history of pilgrimages to the physical Jerusalem that make the historical layered meaning of the 'Come and see' initiative visible.

From the middle of the fourth century basilicas were built all over the Roman Empire, especially in many places in 'the Land', where new churches and monasteries could receive a growing stream of Christian pilgrims.<sup>278</sup> These were not only religious centers, but also symbols with which Constantine united his empire and gave it prestige. In that context he also put Jerusalem back on the map, on his map. The Christians who were no longer second-class citizens clearly rejoiced at the imperial interest and flocked towards it.<sup>279</sup>

Sources dating from the second century also show for the first time that Christians were particularly interested in places that could be associated with biblical events. For example, the philosopher Justin, who came from Nablus in Palestine and later found martyrdom as a Christian in Rome and became known as 'Justin the Martyr', wrote in about 130 that in Bethlehem they had shown him the cave where Jesus was born, which may indicate a rather early culture of remembrance.<sup>280</sup> But the creation of a real pilgrimage culture to the Holy Land probably only dates back to the fourth century.<sup>281</sup> The oldest known pilgrim report from the first centuries is that of the anonymous, so-

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278 J. WILKINSON: 'Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades' (England 1977) map 7a.

279 P. MARAVAL: 'II. Christian pilgrimages. A. En Orient des origines au 7e siècle', in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité. Asceticism and Mysticism, Doctrine and History* XII (Paris 1984) 901-909.

280 J. WILKINSON: 'Christian Pilgrims in Jerusalem during the Byzantine Period', in *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 108,2 (1976) 75-101.

281 J. ENGEMANN: 'Das Jerusalem der Pilger. Kreuzauffindung und Wallfahrt', in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* Erg. Bd. 20,1 (1995) 26.

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called ‘Pilgrim of Bordeaux’, written around 335. The many pilgrim’s reports since then show that at that time the journeys were still relatively safe, and that already long before the Crusaders thousands of Christians visited the ‘Holy Land’.<sup>282</sup>

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was to become, next to Nazareth and Bethlehem among others, a main goal of the pilgrimages.<sup>283</sup> The Romans had built a temple dedicated to Venus above the place where Jesus was buried. When, after its demolition in 325, they started digging to the buried grave, the visibility of the cave led to profound reactions by bystanders. For Eusebius, who was present as bishop of Caesarea, it became clear how important this discovery was for the further proclamation of the Christian faith. He saw in the discovery, as he himself formulated it in his biography of Emperor Constantine, even

“a parable with the Resurrection of the Savior, in the sense that, having fallen into darkness, it came to light again and to those who had come to the spectacle provided an opportunity to see with their own eyes the history of the miracles that happened there, and he [the cave] testified with facts that speak louder than any other voice of the Resurrection of the Savior.”<sup>284</sup>

Eusebius called the place found “most sacred”, a qualification for which the city of Jerusalem as a whole probably did not yet qualify at that time. He praised the emperor not only because he had had a grave dug at that spot, but also because he had a church built around that cave “with imperial splendor”.

*Aelia Capitolina* (the Roman name for Jerusalem until 638) first received a bishop resident there in 348. That was Cyrillus who remained bishop until 384. Cyrillus successfully resisted plans of emperor Julian to rebuild the Jewish Temple.<sup>285</sup> It was Cyril who explicitly upgraded the city for Christians as the place where the Incarnation had become visible, where the Eucharist had been instituted and where Jesus’ Passion, Death and Resurrection had taken place. He worked energetically for the promotion of the symbol of the cross and for the worship of the cross. His mention of the presence of the tangible, physical cross in Jerusalem set in motion the spread of many relics throughout the world known at that time and so tangibly connected Christianity to Jerusalem. Cyril thus also became a key figure in the rise of the physical pilgrimage of

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282 R. WISSKIRCHEN: ‘Der Reisebericht des Pilgers von Bordeaux: wirtschaftliche und rechtliche : Überlegungen’, in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* Erg. Bd. 20,2 (1995) 1289.

283 J. ENGEMANN: ‘Das Jerusalem der Pilger’ 24-35, 28.

284 J. W. DRIJVERS & P. W. VAN DER HORST (intr. and transl.): Keizer Constantijn, *Zijn levensbeschrijving door Eusebius van Caesarea* (Hilversum 2012) 117.

285 R. PUMMER: ‘Early Christian Authors on Samaritans and Samaritanism’, in *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism* (Tübingen 2002) 92.

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Christian pilgrims to ‘the earthly Jerusalem’ and of the emerging veneration of relics.<sup>286</sup> It was mainly through his actions that the city still received the qualification of ‘Holy City’ for Christians.<sup>287</sup>

It is now striking that meeting local holy monks and hermits soon became as important within a pilgrimage to the ‘Holy Land’ as visiting the places where Jesus and the first martyrs had lived. The contrast between just pilgrimages to ‘dead stones’ and relics, and the search for the encounter with living saints thus goes back a long way. The earliest monastic foundations in Egypt and Palestine of monks together, are dated in the last quarter of the fourth century. Once the pilgrimages to the Holy Land and to the martyr’s graves began, these monasteries also had to deal with a rapidly growing stream of visitors.<sup>288</sup>

This is evidenced by a remarkable pilgrimage report by a woman named Egeria, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and its surroundings between ca. 381 and 384.<sup>289</sup> Her report reads like a fourth century edition of the Lonely Planet and offers unique, factual information, not only about the way of travelling and the shelters, but also, for example, about what liturgical customs were in various places at that time. For example, she describes a massive tidal celebration on Sunday ‘before the crowing of the cocks’ in the basilica on Mount Golgotha at which she is present. Her description shows how Jerusalem had already become a ‘holy center’ for Christians and how such a place contributed to their religious experience.

Candles and incense holders are carried into the church after praying the psalms and prayers. When the bishop read about Suffering and Resurrection in the Gospel, there is a tremendous support and groaning of all people and a tremendous amount of tears. Yes, even the stubborn heart can be stirred to tears: the Lord has endured so much for our sake.<sup>290</sup>

In Sinai, Egeria climbs the mountain and reverently looks at the thorn bush from which God would have spoken to Moses (“branches are still coming”). She searches the desert for the places where manna and quail would have rained.<sup>291</sup> Her account is not only colorful, it also shows how much the new ‘pilgrim tourism’ had taken root among Christians from several corners of the world and how they became acquainted with the local ritual behaviors and liturgical customs.

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286 E. THUNØ: *Imago and Relic Mediating in Early Medieval Rome* (Rome 2002) 14.

287 J. W. DRIJVERS: *Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishop and City* (Leiden/Boston 2004) 24, 29.

288 G. J. M. BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn. De wereld van het vroege monachisme* (Baarn 1993) 60-62. The phenomenon of pilgrimage is described by Bartelink as ‘a Christian counterpart’ to the travels in antiquity to ‘cult places’ and ‘oracle temples’ for healing and good advice.

289 V. HUNINK (intr.) & J.W. DRIJVERS: *In het land van de Bijbel. Reisverslag van Egeria, een dame uit de vierde eeuw* (Hilversum 2011).

290 HUNINK & DRIJVERS: *In het land van de Bijbel* 121.

291 HUNINK & DRIJVERS: *In het land van de Bijbel* 49, 53.



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But in addition, Egeria speaks with warmth about her contacts with the clergy, especially about her encounters with groups of hermits living in the desert near Mount Nebo. She met hermits everywhere: an ascetic who lived alone in the *wadi* Quelt near the cave where Elijah is said to have stayed, in Edessa where they lived near martyr graves, on the way to Antioch, and so on.<sup>292</sup>

Among the monks were soon ‘Latin speakers’ who had moved from Europe to Palestine to live a life of prayer and penance in the vicinity of the holy places.<sup>293</sup> Many of them preferred to seek God in the emptiness of the desert rather than in the crowded pilgrimage places themselves with their many non-religious attractions and temptations. A study on early monasticism mentions that

“the hermits gladly called themselves *aksenaje* (in Greek: *xenoi*, i.e. ‘strangers, pilgrims’) to make it clear how much they were aware that they did not have a permanent city here on earth (Hebrews, 13:14) and that their spirit wanted to remain foreign to what was worldly.”<sup>294</sup>

Christian pilgrims were attracted to ‘the Land’ by biblical places and tombs of saints, but also sought to meet monks who tried to live an exemplary Christian life in the desert.<sup>295</sup> Monasteries have been compared to “lighthouses, safe beacons that with their beams of light guide the ships into the harbor”.<sup>296</sup>

This metaphor can be applied even more literally to the eccentric stylites or pillar saints who sat on pillars leading an extremely austere life and attracted masses of pilgrims. But the spectacular nature of this phenomenon often made such saints part of a ‘bazaar-like’ context.<sup>297</sup> There was even talk of a ‘stylite route’. The first and most famous pillar saint, Simeon the Stylite (ca. 390 - 459), lived in present-day Syria in a place called *Qal’at Sem’an* (‘the fortress of Simeon’), a complex in northern Syria that included a basilica, a monastery and a hospice for pilgrims. It was thanks to him that this town became one of the largest pilgrimage sites in the Christian world at that time for several centuries.<sup>298</sup>

The curious phenomenon of the pillar saints also appears in the account of a pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ in the year 587 by two monks, Saint Moschus (ca. 550-634) and Saint Sophronius (560-638), the later patriarch of Jerusalem. They crossed the

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292 HUNINK & DRIJVERS: *In het land van de Bijbel* 69-71, 81, 89, 99.

293 BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn* 133.

294 BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn* 117-118, 131.

295 MARAVAL: ‘Il. Pèlerinages Chrétiens’ 918-919.

296 BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn* 119.

297 BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn* 125-126.

298 BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn* 127-128.

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Byzantine Empire, the successor of the Eastern Roman Empire, from the Bosphorus to the desert of Egypt. They visited many sacred sites in the regions they passed through in their journey in the 'Holy Land'. They too appeared to have searched out, while on their journey, the spiritual counsel of the pillar saints, desert fathers and monks.<sup>299</sup> Moreover, the report written by Moschus gives a vivid picture of the Christian Byzantine Empire just before the birth of Islam and it is still considered an important source for studies on pilgrimages and the encounters with desert fathers in that period.<sup>300</sup>

The rapidly growing phenomenon of Christian pilgrimage since the 4th century also aroused reservations among theologians and leading clergy. Saint Gregory Bishop of Nyssa in Asia Minor (335 - after 394) can be regarded as an early apologist for the inner, spiritual pilgrimage as it was advocated much later on the threshold of the Modern Age and to which we will return even more extensively. He was reluctant towards the practice of physical pilgrimage because he did not find it in the Gospels and he opposed the abuses around it.<sup>301</sup>

This is already known from Saint Jerome of Stridon (347-420), one of the four great Church Fathers of Christianity, who was brought up in Rome, but who went to 'the Land' in 385 and from 386 onward lived as a hermit in Bethlehem where he translated the Bible into Latin. "He who truly worships God does so in the spirit, not in Jerusalem," Jerome wrote. He warned pilgrims against 'whores', 'mime players' and 'clowns'. Like Gregory, he pointed out the dangers of 'fornication and adultery' that lurk in holy places, in addition to 'theft, idolatry, poisoning, hatred and murder'. Jerusalem's conclusion: "To have been in Jerusalem is not that which deserves praise, but to have lived there in a proper way".<sup>302</sup>

For Cohen a pilgrim, as we saw in Part I, was a traveller who rushed *linea recta* through the 'chaos' to a physically holy center. It is a vision of pilgrimage that is already reflected in the ambition of Bishop Cyrillus to make Jerusalem a 'holy city'. But Gregory and Jerusalem were obviously not impressed by the 'holiness' of the physical, localized pilgrims' goals in their time, and indeed a large number of pilgrims moved on to meet the desert fathers, the 'living stones' of that period.<sup>303</sup> They may have experienced for themselves by now how much the world of pilgrimages could be at odds with the message of the Gospel.

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299 BARTELINK: *De bloeiende woestijn* 132-133.

300 W. DALRYMPLE: *In de schaduw van Byzantium* (Amsterdam 1998).

301 MARAVAL: 'Il. Pèlerinages Chrétiens' 906.

302 MARAVAL: 'Il. Pèlerinages Chrétiens' 905-906.

303 A term Michael Prior borrowed from 1 Peter 2:5. Prior felt that pilgrims should meet the 'living stones', i.e. Christians living in Palestine today; see about Prior's theology below II.6.3.

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As living witnesses to their faith, the hermits held the function of moral beacons for a long time.<sup>304</sup> Peter Brown concluded in his study of the rise and function of ‘the holy man’ in Late Antiquity that in the centuries between the disappearance of the pagan temples and the emergence of the medieval cathedrals “the locus of the supernatural was thought of as resting on individual men”.<sup>305</sup>

Contemporary pilgrims and tourists who follow the path on the West Bank through the ravine of the *wadi* Qelt on their way to the Elia Monastery are reminded of the many dozens of caves where hermits lived. Thus, the first pilgrims heading towards ‘the Land’ from the fourth century onwards already felt the need to be able to meet ‘living saints’ there and to consult them as spiritual guides. Even then there was already a critical sense among pilgrims, not only to be impressed by the splendor of the new church buildings in holy places, but also to seek depth and reflection through such encounters. Well-known writers such as Gregory of Nyssa and Hieronymus of Stridon showed that there were certainly doubts about the growing pilgrimage phenomenon.

The ‘Come and See’ initiative, which now calls pilgrims and tourists to ‘the Land’ to seek contact with residents who believe in the peaceful coexistence of Christians, Muslims and Jews, is also part of an age-old tradition of pilgrimages that goes hand in hand with encounters in ‘the Land’. The ‘Come and see’ approach to pilgrimages involves both encounters with own young people from among the Christian Palestinians who are committed as ‘active apostles of justice and peace’ (Kd 3.3) and with members of their own church families, as well as encounters within the framework of the dialogue between the three religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The meetings with local people were clearly experienced by the participants in a ‘Come and see’ trip as the most important element of the program.

As will be shown in the following chapters, the importance of meeting the right people during a pilgrimage can be seen as a second motif in which the historical layered meaning of the phenomenon of a ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage becomes visible. The ‘Come and see’ initiative hopes for pilgrims who are not just looking for church buildings that mark historical holy places. It hopes for pilgrims who not only seek holiness or healing for themselves, but also for contacts between people who represent Christian and generally human values, and who can be witnesses to each other’s faith.

### 4.3 Augustine and pilgrims on the *Via Amoris*

The third major historical-political turning point in early Christianity was the plunder of Rome by the Visigoths in 410, not long after Christianity had become the state

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304 WALKER: ‘Pilgrimage in the Early Church’ 86-87.

305 P. BROWN: ‘The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Later Antiquity’, in *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971) 80-101, 101.

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religion in the Roman Empire. The first had been the already mentioned destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. and the second the Edict of Milan that ended the Roman persecutions of Christians in 313. The Gothic migrations, followed by the Great Migration of Vandals, Visigoths, Huns, Franks and Slavic peoples, brought Europe, but also North Africa, into a huge maelstrom. The fall of Rome in 410 formed the background for the great work *De Civitate Dei*, 'About the City of God', by Augustine, bishop of Hippo in North Africa (354-430). For him 'Rome' was a symbol for 'the city of man'.

The looting of Rome in 410 as a result of the migration of the people had been an enormous shock to the world at that time. The fall of Rome was a symbol for the definitive end of the Christian Western Roman Empire that had been ravaged by the migrations. Augustine had a keen eye for the ways of thinking of his time and for historical events, which he always saw as events that take place in times that are ever changing. For him, 'the times' are the people themselves who are part of a history in which they are 'on the road' together. Rome just like its fall, was the work of man and had simply become part of human history. For him, people are also on their way to the 'Heavenly Jerusalem' in their lives. For him this is not the metaphorical counterpart of Rome, 'the city of man' but of 'Babylon', the city of the devil. Augustine did not want to alienate the believer from his life in earthly contexts. In fact, he saw history as a school on the way to eternal life.<sup>306</sup>

Augustine's writings imbued Christianity more deeply with the notions of pilgrimage (*peregrinatio*) and pilgrim (*peregrinus*) than those of any other thinker. We come across the term *peregrinus* more than eight hundred times in his works, in *De Civitate Dei* alone more than a hundred times.<sup>307</sup> The term *peregrinus* means not only 'pilgrim' but also 'stranger'. But Van Oort has made it plausible that Augustine's use of the term *peregrinus* in *De Civitate Dei* is mainly about 'the pilgrim believer'.<sup>308</sup> It is Augustine's work that for Christians would form the basis for the allegorical meaning of the concept of pilgrimage. This raises the question of Augustine's own attitude towards physical pilgrimage, which in his time in particular began to stand up strongly. He did not express himself directly about it, but against the background of his relationship to Bishop Ambrosius of Milan (339-397), it is still possible indirectly to comment on it.

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306 AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS: *Van aangezicht tot aangezicht. Preken over teksten uit het evangelie volgens Matteüs* [sermones de scripturis 51-94] (transl. & notes J. VAN NEER (intr.), M. SCHRAMA & A. TICCHELAAR) (Budel 2010) Cf. sermo 80 13-14.

307 M. A. CLAUSSEN: 'Peregrinatio and peregrini in Augustine's City of God', in *Traditio* (1991) 33-75, pp. 46, 62.

308 J. VAN OORT: *Jerusalem en Babylon. Een onderzoek van Augustinus. De stad van God en de bronnen van zijn leer der twee steden (rijken)* ('s-Gravenhage 1986) 117; the italicization is by Van Oort.

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When Augustine arrived in Milan in 384, as early as his thirties from North Africa, he was impressed by the intellectual power of Ambrose's allegorical biblical explanation and allowed himself to be baptized by him. Forms of Christian thought were already known to him through his mother, who had adopted Christianity before him. Initially he was particularly fascinated by the dualistic Manichaeism which in his time was still an important movement within Christianity, and by the Christian form of Neoplatonism. Augustine became a priest and eventually a bishop in Hippo in his native North Africa. His teacher Ambrose would later go down in history, like the already mentioned Hieronymus of Stridon and Pope Gregory the Great and Augustine himself, as one of the four great Church Fathers of Western Christianity.

In the context of the history of early Christian pilgrimage, the time of Ambrose in the Western Roman Empire was similar to the period of intensive church building in the Eastern Roman Empire since Constantine (280-337) and in particular to the period of Cyrillus (about 375-444) in 'the Land'. Both Ambrosius, the son of a Praetorian prefect, and Augustine, who was initially a judge, must have been familiar with Roman political power thinking. As a bishop, Ambrosius, like Cyril, had endeavoured to make the Church more visible and influential by providing his diocese with many new basilicas, partly in order to curb the influence of Arianism, a movement in which the Trinity and divinity of Jesus were thought differently.<sup>309</sup>

Remarkable in the context of a historical study of the pilgrimage phenomenon is that Ambrose took the initiative to excavate and transfer the relics of two martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, to a church in his diocese. Until that time, the veneration of martyrs among Christians concentrated on the place of their grave, similar to the above mentioned controversial Jewish 'pilgrimages' to graves of venerated persons. In the Eastern Roman Empire, Emperor Theodosius I (346-395), among whom Christianity became *de facto* state religion, had even explicitly forbidden the exhumation of martyrs to move them for pilgrimage purposes.<sup>310</sup>

In early Christian antiquity pilgrim's reports often contain reports of finds of relics. The desire to attract pilgrims, and the desire of pilgrims to be able to see (also) mortal remains and other material remains of dead saints, could take on curious forms. The already mentioned 'Pilgrim of Bordeaux' from the fourth century, for example, reported

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309 P. VAN GEEST: 'Timor est servus caritatis (s. 156.13-14). Augustine's vision on *Coercion* in the Process of Returning Heretics to the Catholic Church and his Underlying Principles' in A. DUPONT, M. GAUMER, M. LAMBERIGTS (eds.): *The Uniquely African Controversy: Studies on Donatist Christianity (Late Antique History and Religion 9)* (Leuven/Louvain 2015) 289-309.

310 *Letter of Ambrose of Milan on the Discovery of the Relics of Sts. Gervasius and Protasius*, on *Web Archive - Internet Archive*: <https://web.archive.org/web/20080516012528/http://urban.hunter.cuny.edu/~thead/gervase.htm> (accessed 10 12 2017): 'Let no one transfer a body, once buried, to another place. Let no one dismember a martyr. Let no one make commerce [of a martyr]'.

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that he had made a trip to a country house where the dung heap of Job could be visited. It cannot be denied that something like this also fitted in with the trend of which the relics policy of a bishop like Ambrosius was part. On the other hand, it can be considered that Ambrosius met a rather authentic religious need among people have the holy, somewhat tangible, present in there here and now.<sup>311</sup>

Augustine does not comment on Ambrose's efforts to stimulate pilgrimages by transferring the bones of martyrs to a church in his diocese. He never advocated the physical practice of pilgrimages, but never opposed it in so many words. As a bishop, he showed himself to be an opponent of 'worshipping' saints, but the arrival of relics of St. Stephen in the surroundings of Hippo (there is a St. Stephen's Chapel known in this context) somewhat nuanced his attitude. From sermons by him it appears that he saw the value of gathering Christians as a community around the 'dust' of martyrs. It could function as a special admonition that Christians had been prepared to become martyrs.<sup>312</sup>

Given his attitude towards Stephen's relics, it was perhaps even the rising pilgrimage phenomenon of his time that stimulated him to reflect on the paradox of the physical need to approach an unknowable God. The fact that he chose the metaphor of life as a lifelong pilgrimage path may suggest some understanding, or even acceptance, of people's need to be able to approach the 'holy' already in the here and now. Above all, however, his work offers a thorough plea for a deeper, theologically sound conception of pilgrimages. Perhaps the belief in the incarnation, which was crucial to him, also gave room for a certain physical intervention which offers the material dimension of a grave for the approach to God also within the tangible frameworks of space and time.

In 2017, Sarah Stewart-Kroeker published a study on "Pilgrimage as Moral and Aesthetic Formation in Augustine's Thought". She emphasizes that Augustine's portrayal of man as a *peregrinus* on the way to the Celestial House does not imply that a pilgrim should not pay attention to earthly life and to his fellow human beings and thus to moral questions of peace and justice. She emphasizes in this context 'the beauty of justice' (*pulchritudo iustitiae*) as Augustine's moral message. It is the purpose of the pilgrimage of life to be formed as a pilgrim into a person who learns to love in the right way. This is possible, she says, through the action of the Holy Spirit who exists "in kindling love and cleansing the eye [of the pilgrim]. (...) The Spirit's affective and

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311 B. KÖTTING: *Peregrinatio Religiosa. Pilgrimages in antiquity and the pilgrimage in the old church* (Münster 1950) 106.

312 A. NIGHTINGALE: *Once out of Nature. Augustine on Time and the Body* (Chicago / London 2011) 173-179.

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pedagogical activity animates both love for Christ and for the neighbour”.<sup>313</sup> That is exactly what the theology of the ‘Come and see’ call is all about.

According to Stewart-Kroeker, the term ‘beauty’ (*pulchrum*) in Augustine’s work refers on the one hand to the ‘beauty of Christ’ and thus to that of His love for people, but on the other hand to the ‘beauty of justice’.<sup>314</sup> Charity and love of justice are central categories in her argument. During the ‘pilgrimage of life’ the pilgrim has to be formed morally and aesthetically and in this way experience the special connection between ‘the truth, the good and the beautiful’ (*verum, bonum, pulchrum*).

A pilgrimage, and certainly ‘the pilgrimage of life’, will also painfully confront people with the real brokenness or imperfection of this world (like in particular that of ‘the Land’ today, GTB) in which he could experience an alienation from God. But, she writes, quoting Augustine, by giving mankind the Holy Spirit, Christ enabled them to continue to hope in the world while wandering, “for if we had no hope, we would not be able to stay on the road (*ambularemus*)”.<sup>315</sup>

Via another route Paul van Geest came to a similar conclusion that the pilgrimage of life for Augustine must primarily be a *Via Amoris*, a Way of Love. Starting point for Van Geest was the well-known medieval triad of (intellectual) ways of approaching God: firstly the *Via Affirmationis* which makes positive statements about God’s attributes, secondly the *Via Negationis* which states that every statement about God, such as “God is righteous” for example, must in fact be denied again, because God’s justice cannot be expressed with the human concept of justice, and thirdly the *Via Eminenciae* which assumes that God transcends everything that people try to say about him.<sup>316</sup> But according to Van Geest, for Augustine the *Via Amoris*, ‘the way of love’, was still the most suitable way to experience God, while at the same time still implying that God is unknowable.<sup>317</sup>

Stewart-Kroeker especially emphasizes ‘the beauty of justice’ that can be sensed by the pilgrim on the *Via Affirmativa*, which can not only bring him closer to God, but also helps them to perceive society in a critical, distinctive way. Both her exposition and that

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313 STEWART-KROEKER: *Pilgrimage as Moral and Aesthetic Formation in Augustine’s Thought* (Oxford 2017) 6, 85, 92-93.

314 STEWART-KROEKER: *Pilgrimage as Moral and Aesthetic Formation* 98. She gives (translated) quotes from Augustine’s *Enarrationes in psalmos* that support this.

315 STEWART-KROEKER: *Pilgrimage as Moral and Aesthetic Formation* 92 and 109.

316 P. VAN GEEST: *Stellig maar onzeker. Augustinus’ benadering van God* (Budel 2007) 208-223.

317 P. VAN GEEST: *The Incomprehensibility of God. Augustine as a Negative Theologian* (Leuven etc. 2011) 221.

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of Van Geest are of the opinion that the best way to approach God, even if he remains fundamentally unknowable, is ultimately the *Via Amoris* for the Church Father.<sup>318</sup>

For a proper understanding of the ‘Come and See’ journey as it was discussed in the ‘General Introduction’ and in particular for a proper understanding of the processes which appear to take place within it among the participants, the Augustinian meaning of pilgrimage, as interpreted by Stewart-Kroeker and Van Geest, is of great importance. Against this background it makes sense to briefly discuss another Augustinian concept, namely that of ‘obedience’ (*obedientia*).

Augustine was not a political philosopher, let alone a political theologian in the contemporary sense. Nevertheless, Martijn Schrama emphasizes that in the view of the church teacher “the life of a wise man is a social life”. According to him, Augustine connected the idea that the Christian in the world does not have a fixed abode, but is on his way to his heavenly home, with the idea of the desirability of “a sincere Christian devotion to life in society”.<sup>319</sup> Schrama drew this conclusion after a consideration of Augustine’s view of the obedient. ‘Obedience’ certainly does not equate to submission. Rather, it constitutes a special mental condition, a willingness as a human being, and thus as a ‘pilgrim’ in the typical Augustinian sense of the word, not so much to bow to the arbitrariness of those in power, but to be prepared to respect the higher ‘will of God’ even when man does not immediately understand it. What does that mean for the participants in a ‘Come and see’ journey? Especially in the confrontation with the tragic side of what can happen to people in the sublunar world, among other things at the hands of those in power, a conscious obedience is of special importance.<sup>320</sup>

In other words: it is precisely from a sense of the coming eternity that the *peregrinus* must practice in order to remain engaged in the present. Even when he is confronted with circumstances of great suffering and repression, a follower of Jesus can be asked to try to endure precisely in those circumstances, not by passively resigning himself to injustice or by making a flight forwards, but by then continuing to focus on God as the source of Love in meditation and prayer, to continue to master the passions which arise from his engagement and yet to continue fearlessly along the path of his love for neighbour, including his enemies. “The fate of men does not lie in the power of their own control and overview, their salvation does not lie in the power of politics”, according to Schrama’s conclusion. In fact, he drew attention to the fact that Augustine

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318 P. VAN GEEEST: *Stellig maar onzeker* 113, 217. In his earlier book about ‘Augustine as a negative theologian’ Van Geest gives a more detailed overview of the ways to approach God. P. VAN GEEEST: *The Incomprehensibility of God. Augustine as a Negative Theologian* (Leuven, Paris, Walpole MA 2011) *passim*.

319 M. SCHRAMA: *Augustinus. De binnenkant van zijn denken* (Zoetermeer 1999) 91, 98.

320 SCHRAMA: *Augustinus* 95-96.



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does not give politics the last word and that ‘resistance’ and ‘surrender’ for a pilgrim, as with the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, for example, are in line with each other.<sup>321</sup>

Is a dispute about Augustine a purely intra-Christian matter? The German-American Jewish political philosopher Hanna Ahrendt (1906-1975) obtained her doctorate with a thesis “*Liebesbegriff bei Augustin*” (“Concept of Love in Augustin”, which was remarkable for a secular Jewish woman. She was known for her firm criticism of Zionism and her radical demythologization of Adolf Eichmann as a symbol of ‘evil’ during his trial in Jerusalem.<sup>322</sup> It should therefore come as no surprise that a youthful Jewish-American researcher such as Leora Alcheck also envisions “a distinctive and coherent political theology” which she wants to base on Augustine. She criticizes the Judeo-Israeli conception of state and the (Christian) Zionist theology to which she returns in 6.2 as reprehensible “idealistic” and according to her that conception of state has unfortunately moved away from the Augustinian “realistic” view of the temporary and imperfect of the *civitas terrena*. According to her the Augustinian vision does not differ substantially from the Torah, which ultimately sees only God as the owner of ‘the Land’ and considers exclusive physical, territorial claims on ‘the Land’ to be contrary to the Jewish *moral polis*. Alcheck looks for remarkable support from the Church Father for, according to her, that both Jewish and Christian ‘pilgrims’ ethics’ with regard to ‘the Land’.<sup>323</sup>

We note that for Augustine all Christians are primarily ‘pilgrims’ on their way to ‘heavenly Jerusalem’. His admiration for the allegorical thinking of Ambrosius and his Christian Neoplatonism fed his metaphorical imagination of man on his life path. Through him, the concept of *peregrinus* in the sense of ‘pilgrim’ - just like the concept of *peregrinatio* for life as a pilgrimage - became a widespread metaphor, which did not make him as a bishop dismissive, but made him react cautiously to physical pilgrimages, of which he saw the point when it came to collecting the faithful around mortal remains of martyrs in order to stimulate a grateful and vigilant attitude.

The Church Father was not an ‘anarchist’. He recognized the role and responsibility of the state and thus of ‘politics’ in the lives of people as a community, including Christians. But he was apprehensive about idealizing the responsibility of the state, let alone absolving state power. To Schrama’s conclusion that people should not seek

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321 SCHRAMA: *Augustinus* 97-98.

322 H. AHRENDT: *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil* (Penguin Books, New York 1963).

323 L. ALCHECK: ‘Between Augustine and Religious Zionism: Ethical Negotiations for the Present’, in *Christian Thought & Culture* (Term Paper) (2019) 1-19. She connects her ‘pilgrims’ ethics’ with a plea for a ‘total democratization’ of the state of Israel that should guarantee ‘equal representation’ to all ethnic, religious and ideological groups present there. See: [https://www.academia.edu/38859733/Between\\_Augustine\\_and\\_Religious\\_Zionism\\_De\\_civitate\\_Dei\\_and\\_Ethical\\_Negotiations\\_for\\_the\\_Present?email\\_work\\_card=interaction\\_paper](https://www.academia.edu/38859733/Between_Augustine_and_Religious_Zionism_De_civitate_Dei_and_Ethical_Negotiations_for_the_Present?email_work_card=interaction_paper) (accessed 10 11 2019).

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their salvation ‘in the power of politics’ alone, it can be added that Augustine’s meaning for ‘Come and see’ can be sought in the encouragement of the Church Father to seek God in ‘the beauty of justice’, but also that ‘the pilgrim’ must keep the peace in his own soul. Thinking and doing, according to Augustine, must be in balance, especially in times of war, discontent and injustice. Through repentance man thus gains access to the spiritual domain of ‘truth’.<sup>324</sup>

For Augustine it was important to break away from the skepticism of his time, for ‘Come and see’ pilgrims who can be overwhelmed on their way by doubt and feelings of meaninglessness and the abuse of power they encounter, that importance applies at least as much. Continuing to search for ‘the Light’ that radiates from ‘the Celestial City’ can also help a ‘Come and see’ pilgrim to maintain it in communion with others on the *Via Amoris*.

This critical attitude towards skepticism is perhaps the most important mental attitude that Augustine’s thinking of ‘Come and see’ pilgrims today can give them. A pilgrim is asked to walk the path of love by continuing to strive for justice in the world, even though that path sometimes seems hopelessly impassable.

### 4.4 Missionary Monks

As the Roman Empire disintegrated further and further, Christianity began to spread in the footsteps of the missionary pilgrimages of Paul and other apostles. The role of the Irish monks became of great importance in this. Pierre-André Sigal (1938-), a French religious historian of the Middle Ages, studied both pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ of Irish monks in the 7th century and their travels far beyond their country of origin. He gave the evangelizing pilgrimages these Irish monks made on the then northwestern fringes of the Christian world the name *pérégrination missionnaire*.<sup>325</sup> The monk, author and peace activist Thomas Merton (1911-1968) pointed out that Irish monks went out to sea from the same motives as the earliest monks: “The pilgrimage of the Celtic monk was (...) a journey to (...) the place of the monk’s ultimate meeting with God”.<sup>326</sup> Another interesting aspect of this new development is that pilgrimisation and evangelisation were, as a matter of course, accompanied by care for Christian civilization.

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324 AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS: *The City of God*, Cf. ciu XIX 17.

325 P.-A. SIGAL: ‘C. Western Middle Ages’, in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité. Ascétique et Mystique, Doctrine et Histoire* XII (Paris 1984) 918.

326 T. MERTON: ‘From Pilgrimage to Crusade’, in: T. MERTON: *Mystics and Zen Masters* (New York 1961/1999) 91-107, pp. 96-97.

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According to popular opinion, Christianity came to Ireland from Rome in 431, where St Patrick (†461) became the most important pilgrim missionary.<sup>327</sup> He took on the construction of monasteries, which were given an important function in the process of Christianization and the founding, spreading and preservation of a Christian civilization. Brendan (born about 486) and Columba (born about 540) left these monasteries on their missions outside Ireland. The Anglo-Saxon Willibrord (circa 658-729) stayed in one of these monasteries for 13 years and then came to our regions to mission there.

The ‘missionary pilgrimages’ of these monks are on the one hand reminiscent of how Paul and other first apostle missionaries set off. Just like Paul, these missionary monks did not want to avoid the hardships and suffering along the way (the ‘chaos’) and went on and on. They went on a journey hoping for new conversions. On the other hand, at the same time, they worked for themselves on a *stabilias loci* within new, stable monastic establishments. They combined Augustine’s ‘alien’ existence in the world with missionary pilgrim activities that at the same time served an ideal of civilization. After all, it was Irish and Anglo-Saxon monks who ensured that Greek and Roman cultural and religious sources for Western Europe were preserved in and from their monasteries in very turbulent times.

The Rule of Benedict of Nursia (480-550) was to become leading for Western European monasticism. The Benedictines also combined mission and civilization as motives for founding churches and monasteries all over Europe. In addition, the Rule of Benedict required monasteries to offer loving hospitality to the poor and foreigners (pilgrims).<sup>328</sup> The special, historical combination of monastic values and civilizing activity on the one hand and missionary motives on the other hand deserves attention in the context of this book, because the striving to preserve the Christian share in the culture of ‘the Land’ as a motive is also explicitly woven into the Kairos-document. It attaches importance to the importance of their own monasteries, churches, scientific and educational institutions for ‘the Land’ now and in the future. The Kairos document is not about a ‘musefied’ pilgrim culture, but the authors find it important to indicate

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327 Among Egyptologists and art historians there is a debate as to whether (also) Coptic Christianity may have played a role in the birth of Irish Christianity. The Egyptologist Robert Ritner derives this role, among other things, from (rare) allusions in texts, but above all from striking similarities between ecclesiastical art in both cultures. R. K. RITNER jr.: Egyptians in Ireland: A Question of Coptic Peregrinations (Rice University Studies 1976) 62 no. 2. Handle.net: <http://hdl.handle.net/1911/63225> (accessed 27 12 2018).

328 BENEDICTUS OF NURSIA: *Regel. Richtsnoer voor monastiek leven..* (Dutch transl. V. Hunink). Intr. and notes Th. QUARTIER & G. AARDEN OCSO (Budel 2014) 53.17 (Rule Benedict). From much later date (1121) are the Premonstratensians who based themselves on the Rule of Augustine and in their monastic life gave much weight to their own *communio* and combined that life with a ‘pastoral’ mission. They also spread over Europe with peaks and troughs.

that they themselves are “deeply rooted” “in the history and geography” of their country.<sup>329</sup>

#### 4.5 Islam, the Crusades and Francis of Assisi

In 637 Jerusalem was conquered by caliph Omar I (Omar ibn al-Chattab 584–644), one of the companions of the prophet Muhammad during his life (circa 570–632). It was the above mentioned pilgrim Sophronius who became Patriarch of Jerusalem in 634, who surrendered the city to Omar in 637. That was the beginning of a period in which Muslims also left their mark on Jerusalem and ‘the Land’, as rulers, but also as pilgrims. This had far-reaching consequences for the character of pilgrimages to Jerusalem, when crusades became the dominant form from the 11th century onwards. Nevertheless, the motives of making contacts and that of the pilgrim’s way as a *Via Amoris* would not completely disappear in this period of ‘armed pilgrimages’. Indeed, the same period would show an example of peaceful missionary pilgrimages in the action of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Even before Omar’s capture, Jerusalem was a holy place for Muslims. One of the legends about Muhammad is the story that at the end of his life, the angel Gabriel brought him from Mecca to Al-Quds to be taken to heaven on the horse *Bulaaq* from the Temple Mount. Moreover, since 610 he would have received his revelations from the angel Gabriel. This ‘voyage to heaven’ could therefore explain why in the earliest period of Islam people turned in the direction of the Temple Mount while praying. Only later was the *qibla* (direction of prayer) changed to the *Ka’aba* in Mecca. Before Islam, the *Ka’aba* had already been an important multi-religious center, where many gods were worshipped, later the *Ka’aba* was considered the house of God similar to the Tabernacle in the Temple and in Catholic church buildings. After the conquest of Mecca, the polytheism of the Arab tribes came to an end. In 630 Mohammed built in Mecca around the *Ka’aba* the Great Mosque, which became the religious heart of Islam.

But also Jerusalem remained important. Muslims designated the Temple Mount in Jerusalem as the *Haram el-Sharif* (= ‘the noble sanctuary’). Omar soon had a small mosque built there - possibly among the ruins of the Jewish temple. After the coming to power of the Omajad dynasty (661–750) his successor Abdel-Malik (646–705) had the imposing *Qubbat al-Şakhra* (= ‘the Dome of the Rock’) built in 690 on the supposed site of Mohammed’s ascension. Remarkable in the Arabic text around the outside of this sanctuary is that Isa (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary), is explicitly recognized as

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329 Kd 2.3.2

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the ‘envoy of God’, although explicitly not as his son, as in sura 112 of the Koran.<sup>330</sup> Not more than a stone’s throw away from the Dome of the Rock, the *Al-Aqsa* mosque was built around 710, both not far from the 4th century Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Holy Sepulchre Basilica was severely damaged during the disastrous looting of Jerusalem by the Persians in 615, but then restored again. During the capture of Jerusalem by the (Arab) Muslims, the presumed site of Isa’s tomb was left untouched. There even seems to be an (apocryphal) Muslim source that tells that Sophronius himself showed Omar around the church and invited him to pray there when it was the time for Islamic prayer. Omar would have answered that he shouldn’t have done that to prevent that from being seen as a reason to turn the church into a mosque.<sup>331</sup>

The *Al-Aqsa* mosque on Temple Mount became, with the mosques of Mecca and Medina, one of the three most important mosques in Islam. The efforts of the Omajads to erect imposing religious structures in Jerusalem are sometimes seen as an indication of their ambition to make Jerusalem as important as Mecca.<sup>332</sup> However, there is no doubt that it was not the *Haram al-Sharif* in Jerusalem, but the *Ka’aba* in Mecca that became by far the most important pilgrimage destination for Muslims, to which every Muslim should make a pilgrimage, if possible once in his life, the *Hadj*.

Nevertheless, throughout the centuries Jerusalem remained an important place of pilgrimage for Muslims. The Islamologist Sophia Arjana mentions 15 places of pilgrimage in Jerusalem that were visited by Muslims in the Middle Ages.<sup>333</sup> A guide for Muslim pilgrims from the middle of the 16th century offers an interesting overview of as many as 22 religious sites that Muslims could visit in Al-Quds at that time, both places that were specific to their own tradition, as well as several places that were also significant for Jews and Christians.<sup>334</sup>

The lemma on *pilgrimages* in Islam in the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* emphasizes the distinction between the *Hadj* to Mecca and (translated as *pèlerinages*) *ziyārāt*, which means visiting and venerating graves of holy persons. It calls the *ziyārāt* for

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330 P. S. VAN KONINGSVELD & G. WIEGERS: ‘De betekenis van Jeruzalem in de islam’, in W. BARTELS, G. TENBERGE & P. VAN GEEST (ed.): *Jeruzalem. Stad van vrede, vrede voor de stad* (Kampen 2000) 147-148. Van Koningsveld and Wiegers point out that “in the language of architecture and the texts of the newly installed *haram* in Jerusalem”, the emphasis was placed “on the future eschatological drama”. According to some lore, at the Last Judgment “God’s throne would be placed on the Rock”. The authors mention as the second most important message that the new religious center of Islam had to proclaim “the triumph of Islam over Christianity”. That is why explicit reference was made to sura 112 which opposes the view that Jesus is the Son of God.

331 *Wikipedia*: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophronius\\_of\\_Jerusalem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophronius_of_Jerusalem) (accessed 10 11 2019).

332 A. ELAD: *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship, Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage* (Leiden 1994) 159-163.

333 S. R. ARJANA: *Pilgrimage in Islam: Traditions and Modern Practices* (London 2017) 49.

334 ELAD: *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship* 164-173.

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Muslims ‘secondary’.<sup>335</sup> Sometimes they are even under the suspicion of superstition, just as the veneration of graves in certain orthodox currents of Judaism and Protestant Christianity is not uncontroversial. But there is no need to doubt that the phenomenon of pilgrimages also encompasses more in Islam than the *Hadj* alone. Particularly with regard to *ziyārat*, elements of *sharing* have always been visible in history, although today Jerusalem has largely become an ‘arena’ of mutually ignoring or ill-tolerant and nowadays even state-separated pilgrim groups (see I.2.5).

The development of Jerusalem as an ‘arena’ of opposing religious groups can of course not be seen in isolation from the rise of the Crusades, the most important development in the history of pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ during the later Middle Ages. This despite the fact that Muslims were initially not hostile to Christian pilgrims. Pilgrim’s reports show that journeys to ‘the Land’ were relatively safe until the 11th century.<sup>336</sup> But at the end of the 11th century, Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118), the emperor of the Byzantine Empire, which then still existed north of the Islamic Empire, turned to the Pope of Rome with a request for help. He knew himself seriously threatened, not so much by the Arab Muslims as by the ‘Turkish’ Seljuks advancing from the East. His request had far-reaching consequences. The Christian world was shocked by the great defeat of the Byzantine emperor against the Seljuks in the battle of Manzikert (1071).

In response to this Byzantine call for help, Pope Urbanus II decided to call for an anti-Muslim crusade through Asia Minor with the remarkable goal of liberating Jerusalem. In 1096, 459 years (!) after the capture of Jerusalem by the Arabs, five armies of between 50,000 and 60,000 men from all over Europe set out on a journey to Jerusalem. This undertaking had been preceded a few months earlier by Peter the Hermit’s so-called “People’s Crusade”, an ill-prepared “armed pilgrimage” characterized by fighting along the way, indiscipline and attacks on Jews. Alexios was even forced to protect himself against the misconduct of these ‘crusader pilgrims’. He transferred them to the Bosphorus, after which they were soundly defeated by the Seljuks in Asia Minor, resulting in thousands of deaths.<sup>337</sup>

The Crusades were essentially seen by popes as a kind of peace-promoting super pilgrimage. If Christians could act together to defeat Islam - for them the incarnation of evil - as atonement for their sins, they would then be able to live together in peace. For example, according to the songs that were sung along the way, the crusades were indeed seen by many participants as penance for their misdeeds in mutual wars between

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335 L. POUZET SJ: ‘B. Pèlerinages en Islam’, in: *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité. Ascétique et Mystique. Doctrine et Histoire* XII (Paris 1984) 897-901.

336 WILKINSON: *Jerusalem pilgrims before the Crusades*, map 7A.

337 J. PHILLIPS: *In the name of God. A new history of the Crusades* (Tietl 2009) 30, 31.

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Christians.<sup>338</sup> The disastrous thing about the concept of the Crusades was that, under the guise of penance, extreme violence against fellow men was sanctified.<sup>339</sup> Atonement for killing changed in killing as atonement.

The first official crusade led to the capture of Antioch in Syria in 1098 and to the capture of Jerusalem on July 15, 1099. The governor and his garrison were released, but the entire Jewish and Muslim community (possibly 40,000 people) of Jerusalem was massacred. Moreover, the priests of Eastern churches were expelled from the Holy Sepulchre as a sign that from then on the 'Latins' were in charge and no longer the Eastern Christians. The memory of the massacre would overshadow not only the relationship between Latin Christians and Muslims, but also those with Eastern Orthodox Christians for centuries to come.<sup>340</sup>

Though pilgrimages by Christians before the Crusades in general were not hindered by Islamic rulers, they had to be suspended after the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre in 1010 by the Shi'ite, Fatimid caliph Al-Hakim, whose intolerance was a notorious exception to earlier and later medieval Muslim rulers.<sup>341</sup> Sometimes acts of war on the Mediterranean Sea blocked the way for pilgrims. But in the century before the Crusades, there were indeed unhindered peaceful pilgrimages of sometimes hundreds of believers at a time, such as the one in 1025/26 under the leadership of the Count of Angoulême and Abbot Richard de Saint Vanne. Symeon of Trier is another well-known example, he was a pilgrim's guide in 'the Land' for seven years before the crusades began.<sup>342</sup>

Especially in the period after the recapture of Jerusalem (1187) by Salah ad-Din (Saladin) the interest for Al-Quds and for 'the land of the prophets' flourished again among Muslims.<sup>343</sup> Specialists in the history of relations between Christians and Muslims point to the longstanding suspicion against the intentions of Western Christianity in 'the Land' since the Crusades. They also stimulated a revival of Islamic expansionism and a new emphasis on Jerusalem as one of the holiest places of Muslims.<sup>344</sup>

The Crusades can be considered as 'armed pilgrimages' because both political and religious motives played a role. Pope Innocent II (?-1143) viewed the Crusade in a distinctly apocalyptic perspective. He identified Islam with the beast of the Apocalypse. With this he thought he could give the crusades a place within the window of what

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338 MERTON: 'From Pilgrimage to Crusade' 104.

339 MERTON: 'From Pilgrimage to Crusade' 107.

340 H. GODDARD: *A History of Christian-Muslim relations* (2000) 85-86.

341 A. HOURANI: *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London 2002) 118.

342 SIGAL: 'C. Moyen âge occidental' 925-926.

343 D. SOURDEL: 'Filastin', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* Vol. II (Leiden 1965) 910.

344 GODDARD: *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* 91-92.

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he saw as God's final plan with the history of mankind.<sup>345</sup> Crusades also offered a temporary effective alternative to the ongoing wars between Christians. Bernardus of Clairvaux (1090-1153) preached the Second Crusade (1146) at the request of Pope Eugenius III (1145-1153), his friend and fellow Cistercian. Both Pope Innocentius and Bernardus presented the Crusades as an opportunity to prove themselves as 'true Christians'. They were seen as 'an adapted form of lay spirituality'.<sup>346</sup>

Another well-known apologist of the Crusades was Jacob Van Vitry (1160/70-1250) who first undertook a 'preaching trip' to 'the Land' with the missionary motive to convert the 'Saracens'. But also Van Vitry believed that by participating in a crusade the life of the Christian could be brought to a higher spiritual and moral level. He later became a cardinal. Hugh Goddard characterized the crusades that lasted until about 1270 as "a movement of militant Christianity".<sup>347</sup> But a simple desire to gain booty and land, fame and glory, and an increased need to see more of the world, certainly played an important role alongside the religious motive.<sup>348</sup>

The Crusades developed their own dynamics, which did not always focus on the protection of the remnants of the Christian Eastern Roman Empire or civil Christian pilgrims. The Fourth Crusade in 1204 was even taken advantage of by Venice to plunder competitor Constantinople. After four centuries of Muslim presence which they saw as occupation and after their initially successful expedition, the crusaders not only wanted to liberate 'the Land' but also to claim it for themselves: an early urge for colonization on the part of Western powers. The Franks established several small states there that would hold out for another two centuries. The medievalist Steven Runciman (1903-2000) spoke in his large three-volume, frequently reprinted history of the Crusades of "a tragic and destructive period (...) so much courage and so little honour, so much devotion and so little understanding".<sup>349</sup>

During the Fifth Crusade (1213-1221) in which first attempts were made (in vain) to conquer Egypt and from there to push on to Jerusalem, Francis of Assisi opted for 'a stay in the service of the Saracens' (Muslims) and in 1219 first went with his brothers to 'the Land' and then took the boat from Acre to Damiate for a personal mission to the Sultan, who he visited from the camp of the Crusaders.<sup>350</sup> Helene Nolthenius emphasized in her much praised study of Francis his 'conversion zeal' and

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345 J. HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de islam* (Assen 1994) 18.

346 HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de islam* 12.

347 HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de islam* 26-33.

348 GODDARD: *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* 84.

349 GODDARD: *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* 90 (cit.).

350 HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de Islam* 22. During the Fifth Crusade, the Egyptian cities of Alexandria and Damiate (Damiatta) were conquered, but the crusaders were unable to take Cairo. The initial goal was to exchange the conquered cities for Jerusalem in negotiations, but the crusaders could only trade the conquered cities for their own safe conduct. See: PHILLIPS: *In the name of God* 253-261.



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his willingness to undergo martyrdom if necessary.<sup>351</sup> But she also noticed that Francis, because of his visit to the sultan, had apparently become less negative about Islam. After his return, for example, he had not hesitated to advise Christian city regents to regularly call on the people in public to give praise and thanks to God, a Muslim custom he had become acquainted with in 'the Land' and in Egypt.<sup>352</sup> The more recent study by Hoerberichts on Francis especially emphasizes Francis's willingness to have a mutual conversation with the sultan and the fact that he did not hesitate to visit him unarmed. Without denying that Francis was trying to convert, Hoerberichts emphasizes that there is no negative word from him about Muhammad or Islam.<sup>353</sup>

For Francis of Assisi the taking up of the cross and the imitation of Jesus were central. He went his way non-violent and non-possessing and thus commanded respect. In the practice of his Christianity he seems to be partly in line with the focus on peace of an old generation of Christian writers.<sup>354</sup> Hoerberichts points in his analysis of Francis' world of thought not only to his spirit of peace and non-violence, but also to his inclusiveness, because he recognized that God's activity as the source of all good is also present among Muslims.<sup>355</sup> It is an attitude that can also be found in documents of Vatican II. The characteristics of Francis of Assisi collected by Hoerberichts clearly give him the profile of a 'peace pilgrim'.<sup>356</sup> It is this peace orientation which makes his action comparable to what is intended in the 'Come and see' appeal. In an extraordinarily violent period he was capable of a completely different conception of Scripture than the Apocalyptic conception of ecclesiastical authorities such as Pope Innocentius.<sup>357</sup>

How did thinking about 'the armed pilgrimage' develop in Christianity after the Middle Ages? The most important book to be mentioned in this context is the famous *Gerusalemme libertata* (Jerusalem liberated) by the Italian Torquato Tasso (1544-1595).<sup>358</sup> It was published five times in the Netherlands alone and was translated by

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351 H. NOLTHENIUS: *Een man uit het dal van Spoleto. Franciscus tussen zijn tijdgenoten*. (Amsterdam 1988) 228-229, 89.

352 NOLTHENIUS: *Een man uit het dal van Spoleto* 140-141.

353 HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de islam* 34.

354 L. DE BLOIS: 'De vroegchristelijke vredesopvatting en het vraagstuk van de oorlog', in L. DE BLOIS & A. H. BREDERO (ed.): *Kerk en vrede in oudheid en middeleeuwen* (1980) 11. The author mentions, for example, the 'pacifist' Church Father Tertullianus (ca. 160-ca. 230).

355 HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de Islam* 104-107.

356 'Nostra Aetate' on Islam (3): <https://www.rkddocumenten.nl/rkddocs/index.php?mi=600&doc=610&al=3> (accessed 10 11 2019). "The Church also regards with esteem the Muslims, who worship the one, living and self-existent, merciful and almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth, who spoke to mankind".

357 HOEBERICHTS: *Franciscus en de Islam* 104.

358 TORQUATO TASSO: *Jeruzalem bevrijd*, transl. and intr. F. VAN DOOREN (Amsterdam 2003). A translation from the 19th century is titled *Jerusalem verlost* (= *redeemed*) transl. J. J. L. TEN KATE (Haarlem 1856/ Amsterdam 2003).

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the famous Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel, among others, even before the first translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia* was published (II 5.1). It became the theme of no less than seven operas. The impact of this work on the image of the Crusades, not only at the end of the Renaissance, but also during the Baroque, Enlightenment and Romantic periods, is exemplary and can hardly be underestimated.<sup>359</sup> In fact, this image remained active until 20th century representations of heroic crusaders, also within the Dutch education.<sup>360</sup> Tasso tells in 20 canto's about the hero Rinaldo and his companion Tancredi who took part in the First Crusade, about how, during the siege of Jerusalem, they succumbed to the charms of Muslim women, who finally repent and submit to them.<sup>361</sup> Godfrey of Bouillon can, by the end of the day, worship the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.<sup>362</sup> A more eloquent literary example that nurtured later idealized views on crusades and the orientalist image of the Middle East is hardly conceivable. Many a pilgrim to 'the Land' must also have been influenced by it not so long ago.

Finally, this raises the question of how vital the opposite ideal type of 'peace pilgrim' actually was in the centuries after Francis of Assisi. When the Franciscans settled in 'the Land' - from 1347 onwards they were officially present in Bethlehem<sup>363</sup> - they were not so much concerned in their monasteries with dialogue with Islam as with non-violent presence in holy places and service to Christian pilgrims.<sup>364</sup> Nowadays, Franciscans in 'the Land' focus their care on refugees and on education.<sup>365</sup> It is the principle of non-violence and the readiness for dialogue in combination with continuing to bear witness to one's own Christian identity that makes a Franciscan 'layering' visible in today's call for 'Come and see' pilgrimages.

Already in 1961, well before the emergence of the 'Come and see' initiative in 2009, the monk, theologian and peace activist Thomas Merton had concluded his penetrating analysis of the medieval development 'from pilgrimage to crusade' with the call to continue pilgrimages to 'the Land', but in the spirit of Saint Francis, namely to meet the people there, not with a message of violence and arrogant power, but one of humility, simplicity and love.<sup>366</sup>

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359 F. VAN DOOREN (intr.): 'Torquato en zijn Gerusalemme', in TASSO: *Jeruzalem bevrijd* 7-19, p. 19.

360 See the historical school pictures drawn by J.H. Isings: <http://www.jh-isings.nl/historischeschool-platen-getekend-door-j-h-isings/> (accessed 10 11 2019).

361 TASSO: *Jeruzalem bevrijd* Canto 12, 66 (p. 349).

362 TASSO: *Jeruzalem bevrijd* Canto 20, 144 (p. 592).

363 *Custodia Terrae Sanctae*: [www.custodia.org/en/custody-and-its-history](http://www.custodia.org/en/custody-and-its-history) (accessed 10 11 2019).

364 *Custodia Terrae Sanctae*: [www.custodia.org/en/custody-and-its-history](http://www.custodia.org/en/custody-and-its-history) (accessed 10 11 2019).

365 *Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America*: <https://myfranciscan.org/holy-land/holy-land-history/> (accessed 10 11 2019).

366 MERTON: 'From Pilgrimage to Crusade' 112.

## Christian pilgrimages to the end of the Middle Ages

To sum up, at the end of this chapter we can conclude that the ‘missionary motive’, i.e. the call to travel ‘with a message of love and reconciliation’, as well as the call to visit not only physical places but also to make contact with people during pilgrimages, have been important ‘motifs’ of Christian pilgrimages from the beginning. Diametrically opposed to this was the concept of the ‘armed pilgrimage’ which was theologically justified with Apocalyptic interpretations of the Bible. Its elaboration in the bloody crusades of the late Middle Ages, in which a penance for killing one’s fellow men, was seen as penance, would for centuries burden the relations between ‘the Land’ and Western Christianity. But long before that, Augustine already had proclaimed the pilgrimage as the metaphor *par excellence* for man’s life journey. On that journey, people should be concerned with “the beauty of justice” and, in spite of everything, holding on to the hope of reaching that ideal without violence and animated by Love for God and neighbour.

In the next chapter we will examine, on the one hand, how within the Protestantism of the Modern Era the ideal of ‘interior pilgrimage’ would become particularly important. It was a protest that had already been audible in Antiquity: against the moral excesses with which ‘physical pilgrimage’ often went hand in hand, even apart from ‘armed pilgrimages’. It was also a protest against a rigid fixation on places, instead of on God and the fellow human being. On the other hand, it will be made visible how physical pilgrimages continue to develop and, especially since the 19th century, take on new forms, in which the ‘missionary motif’ also returns in new forms.

## Chapter 5. Criticism and renewal: ‘inner’, ‘national’ and ‘peace-oriented’ pilgrimages

With the demise of Byzantium, after which the Turks advanced as far as Vienna (1529), and the farewell to the religious experience of the Middle Ages, a spiritual crisis took shape in the Western Christian world. The arrival of the new spirit of the Renaissance and thus of the Modern Age was accompanied by powerful contractions of labor. This also left its traces in the thinking about pilgrims and pilgrimages in that period and in the centuries that followed. What did pilgrimage practice look like in the transition between the Middle Ages and the Modern Era, what critical reaction became visible and what impulses did it give to opposition and criticism as well as to the renewal and, in the long run, the revival of pilgrimage?

By the end of the Middle Ages, pilgrimages had often become nothing more than petrified rituals within a defined *ordo peregrinationis*.<sup>367</sup> In Jerusalem, pilgrims only seemed to attach importance to going to the places where Jesus had been according to the precepts. One could also note that there was an increasing amount of what - in a variant of the term idolatry - could be referred to as ‘localatry’. This *ordo peregrinationis* had meanwhile become far removed from the ‘missionary pilgrim’ and his initial alienation from Jerusalem. But at that time we hear the criticism of the petrified rituals of pilgrimages becoming louder and louder.

This criticism, especially by reformers, but also by Catholic critics, would lead to the emergence of concepts such as the *moral pilgrim* and ‘inner pilgrimage’, phenomena that would become influential in large parts of Europe and America in the 17th and 18th centuries. Attention will be paid to changes in thinking about pilgrimage among Catholics in the sixteenth century. Ignatius of Loyola is a remarkable figure in this context. Although he too said goodbye to the penitential practices of the Middle Ages in particular, Ignatius continued to see himself explicitly as a ‘pilgrim’ and again as one of the missionary type, as had been visible in the early days of Christianity and among Irish monks.

The transition to the 19th century, when pilgrimages aimed at holy places, as a reaction to the French Revolution, regained a great deal of interest, is the third theme in this chapter. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem and to ‘the Land’ would receive impulses both from this revival and from the new opportunities offered by the growth of colonial imperialism in the region. The Second World War would be a turning point, with as important a fact, also for the later ‘Come and see’, that a start would be made with

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367 SIGAL: ‘C. Moyen âge occidental’ 923.

journeys to mobilize young people, but with a special emphasis on peace and dialogue between peoples and religions.

### 5.1 Criticism at the end of the Middle Ages

The criticism of medieval pilgrimage practices is already echoed in the work of Dante Alighieri (1265–1321). In his great literary work *La Divina Comedia*, he allows himself to make a journey to his beloved Beatrice along the three places he imagines in the afterlife: Hell, Purgatory and Heaven (*Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*).<sup>368</sup> These are metaphors for a ‘pilgrimage to God’. The ancient writer Virgil always accompanies him on this journey. Dante constantly refers in his work to classical antiquity, to the Bible and to Christian authors. He always uses metaphors, which refer to representations and reflections that would probably be qualified as ‘liminal’ today.<sup>369</sup>

Dante began the journey in the *Inferno*, deep in ‘middle-earth’,<sup>370</sup> a realm of shadows that he called ‘The City of Pain’ (*La Città dolente*). In the second part, his path leads past the *Purgatorio*, “that Second Empire, where people’s souls are purified until it is time for them to ascend to heaven”.<sup>371</sup> After Beatrice strongly rebukes him for his lack of understanding regarding his own ‘ascension’,<sup>372</sup> he was allowed to complete his journey and arrive in Paradise where he was allowed to behold the Goodness of God himself: God “who has made so many mirrors in which he shines in countless ways, while still remaining one himself as before”.<sup>373</sup>

In heaven Beatrice makes him aware of Saint James, “for whom one gathers on earth to Galicia”. By the way, Dante does not use this passage to criticize the famous medieval pilgrimage site of Santiago de Compostela.<sup>374</sup> But in Canto 18 of the *Inferno* section, the poet had not hesitated to compare a mass of devilishly whipped souls in hell with the mass of pilgrims passing through Rome in 1300.<sup>375</sup>

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368 R. OWEN: ‘The Image of Dante, Poet and Pilgrim’, in A. BRAIDA and L. CALÈ (eds.): *Dante on View: The Reception of Dante in the Visual and Performing Arts* (2007). The RC Church incorporated the idea of ‘the purification of the deceased souls’ after their death, referring to certain parts of the Bible (e.g. 2 Makk. 12: 43–45 and 1 Kor. 3: 15) during the councils of Florence (1439) and Trento (1563) as ecclesiastical doctrine.

369 S. FETOKAKI: ‘Ritual in Dante’s Purgatorio’ (University of Amsterdam s.a.). *Academia*: [https://www.academia.edu/39086585/Ritual\\_in\\_Dantes\\_Purgatorio?email\\_work\\_card=view-paper](https://www.academia.edu/39086585/Ritual_in_Dantes_Purgatorio?email_work_card=view-paper) (accessed 10 11 2019).

370 DANTE ALIGHIERI: *La Divina Commedia* (2016) *Inferno* Canto 2 83. Voll. Italian-Dutch edition. Vert. Rob Brouwer (Leiden 2016). *Princeton Dante Project*: <https://etcweb.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/dante/campuscgi/mpb/GetCantoSection.pl> (accessed 10 11 2019).

371 DANTE: *La Divina Commedia* Purgatorio, Canto 1 4–6.

372 DANTE: *La Divina Commedia* Paradiso, Canto 1 90–141.

373 DANTE: *La Divina Commedia* Paradiso, Canto 29 142–145.

374 DANTE: *La Divina Commedia* Paradiso, Canto 25 13–18.

375 DANTE: *La Divina Commedia* Inferno, Canto 18 28–30.

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Dante's criticism of the Rome pilgrimage of his time is also evident in the way Pope Bonifatius VIII (1235-1303) appears in his work. The pilgrimage routes to Jerusalem had been blocked after the fall of Acre in 1291, which had encouraged this pope to upgrade Rome as an alternative pilgrimage destination. To this end, the city was given new *grandeur* by master builders and artists. Pope Boniface also decided to declare the year 1300 a Holy Year in which every pilgrim who came to Rome could earn a full indulgence by worshipping the relics of saints present in Rome. In return, pilgrims were expected to make a generous sacrifice for the church. At the place in Hell where the simonists were punished,<sup>376</sup> Dante had one of them express the expectation that Pope Boniface would soon have to join them.<sup>377</sup>

Thus, from the 14th century onwards, there has been a morally-theologically motivated criticism of pilgrimages.<sup>378</sup> The English Dominican John Bromyard (ca. 1350) warned that some people “do not make pilgrimages for God, but for the devil”.<sup>379</sup> Bromyard often saw pilgrimages as a pretext for immoral behavior, including that of the clergy itself. It is a criticism that is also echoed in 14th century secular literature, especially in Geoffrey Chaucer's ‘Canterbury Tales’ (1340/1345 - 1400) in which a group of pilgrims enjoy each other's juicy, often erotic anecdotes during a pilgrimage to Canterbury.<sup>380</sup>

For John Wycliff (1330-1384) - the early radical English preacher who opposed both the church as an institution and the pilgrimage practice of his day - life itself had to be ‘a moral journey of obedience’.<sup>381</sup> Like Bromyard, Wycliff criticized pilgrimage as a pretext for immoral behavior and the idea that there was merit in pilgrimage as a journey of penance. The last criticism was to be elaborated on by Martin Luther a century and a half later (see II 5.2).

The Dutch mystic Thomas a Kempis (c. 1380-1472) was of the opinion that “those who go on pilgrimages a lot seldom become holy” in his famous book ‘The Imitation of Christ’ (*De Imitatione Christi*), which has been widespread within Christianity for

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376 ‘Simony’ is the term for profit trading of ecclesiastical goods and services.

377 DANTE: *La Divina Commedia*, Inferno Canto 19 1-6; 49-61. *Shmoop Editorial Team: Pope Boniface VIII in Inferno*, *Shmoop University, Inc.*, Last modified November 11, 2008.

*Shmoop*: <https://www.shmoop.com/inferno/pope-boniface-8.html> (accessed 21 08 2018), and J.R. CHRYSTIE: ‘The Pilgrims Way’, in *Christian History Magazine* 70 (2001). *Christian History Institute*: <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/dante-pilgrims-way> (accessed 20 08 2018).

378 D. DYAS: ‘Medieval Patterns of Pilgrimage: a Mirror for Today’, in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (2015) 92-109. NB: the three strokes in the title of my chapter 5 are taken from this article.

379 DYAS: ‘Medieval Patterns of Pilgrimage’ 96, 98.

380 G. CHAUCER: *The Canterbury Tales* (intr. and transl. E. VAN ALTENA) (Amsterdam 1995).

381 DYAS: ‘Medieval Patterns of Pilgrimage’ 96.

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centuries.<sup>382</sup> He lived a century after Wycliff and was part of the late medieval critical movement of Modern Devotion. Although Thomas a Kempis never broke with the church, he is also considered a forerunner of the Reformation because of his critical attitude to certain theological and spiritual beliefs and practices of his time. He does not, however, reject place- or object-oriented pilgrimages in the quotation mentioned and apparently sees pilgrimages in his time mainly as an activity for the sick. Like Augustine, he believes that man should see his whole life on earth as a pilgrimage. He called Jesus on that pilgrimage “consolation of the soul that wanders in the stranger”.<sup>383</sup>

*De Imitatio Christi* can be placed in what Post and Van der Beek call the tradition of the virtual ‘mental pilgrimage’, also called the ‘interior pilgrimage’.<sup>384</sup> Post and Van der Beek have in mind the spiritual, mental and inner journey with devotions that participate in the suffering of Jesus in spirit. They refer to the studies of Kathryn Rudie, who researched a virtual type of pilgrim’s literature that aimed at those at home with books and prints. In the 14th and 15th centuries this type of literature was particularly popular in women’s monasteries in the Rhineland. The writers were often under the influence of Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179), who lived much later as a church teacher. The multi-faceted abbess is considered one of the most important representatives of Rhineland mysticism and as such a pioneer of Modern Devotion.<sup>385</sup> Jeroen Deploigne situates Hildegard against the backdrop of a century marked by crusades, radical evangelical *Wanderprediger* (itinerant preachers) and resurgent Manichaeism. He sees her as an attempt at “reconciliation between her traditional monastic worldview and the new religious ideals in God’s experience that her time produced”, with a focus on Christ as the ‘Cornerstone of the New Jerusalem’.<sup>386</sup>

The ‘true’ pilgrimage, conceived as a moral journey in obedience to God, which assumes that the pilgrim is critical and innovative of existing pilgrimage practices and of ‘the Land’ as a place of destination, is the thrust of today’s ‘Come and see’ initiative. By interpreting pilgrimages today in this way, ‘Come and see’ is also in keeping with the motif of pilgrim criticism which arose at the end of the Middle Ages and then developed further.

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382 THOMAS A KEMPIS: *De Navolging van Christus (Imitatione Christi)* (transl. G. WIJDEVELD, intr. P. VAN GEEST) (Baarn 1973) First Tract. 32th Chapter 25. (Chapels, Kampen 20014) 76.

383 THOMAS A KEMPIS: *De Navolging van Christus* (Fourth) Tract. 21th Chapter 10, p. 185.

384 DYAS: ‘Medieval Patterns of Pilgrimage’ 99.

385 P. POST & S. VAN DER BEEK: ‘Virtual Pilgrimage as a Mental Journey’, in POST & VAN DER BEEK: *Doing Ritual Criticism* 87-94.

386 J. DEPLOIGNE: *In nomine femineo indocta. Kennisprofiel en ideologie van Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)* (Hilversum 1998) 24, 77, 78.

## 5.2 Luther and Calvin

Maarten Luther (1483-1546), with his criticism of pilgrimages, mainly aimed at the so-called ‘salvation by works’ the idea he despised that grace could be earned with pilgrimages. According to the Anglican theologian and bishop Graham Tomlin, who intensively studied the relationship between Protestantism and pilgrimage, Luther was in fact not so much concerned with the phenomenon of pilgrimage *an sich* (‘in itself’). He wanted to put a stop to unworthy forms of abuse and corruption in Christianity. The other great reformer, Johannes Calvin (1509-1564), tended to banish the practice of pilgrimage altogether. His main concern was that it was only appropriate for a Christian to worship Christ and nothing and nobody else.<sup>387</sup>

Certainly in the beginning, Luther was more moderate than Calvin when it came to tolerating visits to concrete places or objects that played a role in people’s religious experience. Only later would Luther further radicalize because of his conflict with Rome. Initially he even found the desire for an indulgence as a result of a pilgrimage “tolerable, albeit not a very good idea”, as long as there was no trade in the papers in question.<sup>388</sup> The only really worthy reasons for a pilgrimage were for Luther pilgrimages as an ordeal and as a penance for sins committed, but he did not find pilgrimages “in honour of the saints, the honour of God and of one’s own spiritual formation” entirely reprehensible either.<sup>389</sup>

Nevertheless, because of the evil practices that had developed both in those places and on the way, the medieval pilgrimage places were in practice so badly scented that the tradition of place-directed or object-oriented pilgrimages would remain unacceptable to the followers of the reformers for a long time.

In fact, Calvin wanted to use Augustine’s theme of the pilgrimage as a metaphor.<sup>390</sup> “Eternal salvation cannot be earned with sweat or blisters”, sums up De Lange Calvin’s aversion to the physical pilgrimage. Calvin saw the journey of life as ‘a pedagogical journey towards eternity’, to which ‘contempt for the world’, ‘humility’ and ‘self-denial’ fit.<sup>391</sup> Calvin’s theology was easily grafted onto the ethos of the then emerging, forward-looking middle class, for whom hard work and simplicity were virtues par excellence.<sup>392</sup> For them, prolonged pilgrimages were merely undesirable interruptions of human

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387 G.TOMLIN: ‘Protestants and Pilgrimage’, in BARTHOLOMEW & HUGHES: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage Explorations* (2004/2015) 110-125, pp. 111, 119.

388 TOMLIN: ‘Protestants and Pilgrimage’ 111.

389 TOMLIN: ‘Protestants and Pilgrimage’ 111-116.

390 F. DE LANGE: *Heilige Onrust. Een pelgrimage naar het hart van de religie* (Utrecht 2017) 18.

391 DE LANGE: *Heilige Onrust* 61.

392 M. WEBER: *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* (Berliner Ausgabe 2016; orig. 1905).



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obligations. But even in Calvin’s Protestant vocabulary, the pilgrimage continued to exist as a metaphor for life, in other words, as an inner journey.<sup>393</sup>

Tomlin wanted to show, with a historical-theological approach, that Luther and Calvin’s work does not provide sufficient arguments for the still common aversion to pilgrimages among Protestants. According to Tomlin, a pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ can lead to ‘a renewed sense of the true humanity of Christ’, which is in line with the central meaning of Christ in Protestant theology. Precisely a pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ can take on the character of “an experience which enables the pilgrims to reassess their ‘regular’ Christian existence, and reorient it to its true identity and goal”.<sup>394</sup>

Tomlin’s article thus shows that the call of the Kairos document to continue pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ by Protestants need not be seen at all as contrary to Protestant theology and the reservations against certain excesses of pilgrimages as they have developed since the sixteenth century.

Tomlin’s article was first published in 2004 – well before the 2009 ‘Come and see’ call – in a collection of articles on the Christian theology of pilgrimage, which was reprinted in 2015.<sup>395</sup> But he explicitly points out that a pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ today can also be an ‘unsettling experience’:

“Travelling to new and disturbing places can be an unsettling and disorienting experience, just what is sometimes needed to help re-evaluate ‘normal’ life which has become stuck in a debilitating routine.”<sup>396</sup>

He does this without explicitly mentioning phenomena such as the Separation Wall, the checkpoints and refugee camps. Although Tomlin ends his argument with the warning that the Reformation’s criticism of the forms that pilgrimages often took in the past is still important today, he emphasizes above all that there is indeed room for forms of ethical pilgrimage. He then appears to be thinking in particular of pilgrimages accompanied by support for local Christian communities, and not only as a pilgrimage directly aimed at the heavenly Jerusalem, but as one which also strives for a ‘new earth’:

“(…) there is scope for the rediscovery of pilgrimage as ethically responsible, supportive of local Christian communities, renewing faith in and understanding

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393 F. DE LANGE: ‘Life as a Pilgrimage. John Bunyan and the Modern Life Course’, in P.N. HOLLTROP, F. DE LANGE, R. ROUKEMA (eds.): *Passion of Protestants* (Kampen 2004) 95-126.

394 TOMLIN: ‘Protestants and Pilgrimage’ 123-124.

395 See note 390 above.

396 TOMLIN: ‘Protestants and Pilgrimage’ 123.

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of Christ and rooted in Christian life as pilgrimage towards the goal of a new heaven and a new earth.”

His ecumenically inspired article thus shows how the ‘Come and see’ call ‘from the heart of Palestinian suffering’ in local communities, to continue pilgrimizing to ‘the Land’, is indeed rooted in a tradition of Protestant values.<sup>397</sup>

### 5.3 Erasmus’ inner pilgrimage and Ignatius’ way out into the world

The increased criticism of pilgrimage practices and the development of a new vision on pilgrimages since the end of the Middle Ages was not only perceptible among Protestants. Two Catholics, who in the transition to the Modern Age showed a changed vision of the practice of pilgrimage, also deserve special attention in this respect: the Dutch priest and humanist Desiderius Erasmus (ca. 1466-1566) and the Spaniard Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), founder of the illustrious Society of Jesus.

Erasmus was very skeptical about many ritual customs as they had developed within the Roman Catholic Church at that time, including pilgrimages.

“Worship of saints, relics and statues, pilgrimages, whether or not on the basis of promises, indulgences, the ostentatious observance of mass or ostentatious prayer, they were in his eyes completely unnecessary signs of devotion, empty shells, meaningless ritual...”

thus a summary of Erasmus expert Jan van Herwaarden.<sup>398</sup>

Erasmus did not turn against the ritual of pilgrimage on its own. Van Herwaarden points out that Erasmus, for example, could see the moral and formative significance of a pilgrimage that had been imposed as penance in confession. But the mere visiting of places of pilgrimage in order to get something done by God, or by saints through the veneration of their relics, aroused his revulsion. For him, ‘the tomb of Peter or the bones of Paul’ could not be mercy-working locations and objects. In his *Enchiridion* he wrote:

“Do you want to commit Peter and Paul to you? Then try to imitate one in his faith and the other in his love, for then you will have accomplished more than when you run back and forth to Rome ten times.”<sup>399</sup>

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397 For the quote see the Foreword of the Kairos document (<https://www.kairospalestine.ps/sites/default/files/Dutch.pdf>).

398 J. VAN HERWAARDEN: *Dan weer leed Jacobus van Compostela honger, Overpeinzingen over de relatie tussen Erasmus en Santiago*, [About the relation between Erasmus and Santiago] 28th Erasmus Birthday Lecture honouring J. Kelly Sowards (Leiden/Amersfoort 2007) 2.

399 VAN HERWAARDEN: *Dan weer leed Jacobus van Compostela honger* 2.

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'Holy places' did not exert any religious attraction on Erasmus as such, and in his own aversion to 'work sanctity' and his turn to modernity he was not far removed from the Reformers. In fact, he can be regarded as a nuanced representative of the tradition of the aforementioned 'interior pilgrimage' (II 5.1).

This includes Ignatius of Loyola.<sup>400</sup> But in his case, his journey towards this conviction did coincide with the physical aspects of a literal journey. In the autobiography recorded by J ronimo Nadal, Ignatius recounts that he spent seventeen years of his life as a 'pilgrim' on the road, to find out where and how best to unite service to God and to men.<sup>401</sup> Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, which have the function of clarifying dilemmas that people could experience at the crossroads of the pilgrimage of their lives, in order to finally make a responsible choice.<sup>402</sup> Ignatius decided to leave the military profession after his healing and after much hesitation. He decided, albeit still full of all sorts of doubts, to undertake a physical pilgrimage to come to terms with himself.<sup>403</sup>

Physical pilgrimage brought him a moment of great inner enlightenment at the end of this journey. It brought him to the modern insight that God does not require from man an inhuman asceticism, self-flagellation, rigorous fasting etc. but rather a healthy development of body and mind. As a result of that journey he made 'a turn to the world', according to John O'Malley.<sup>404</sup> After the mystical experience of inner enlightenment that had befallen him after his arrival in Manresa, Ignatius then took the remarkable decision to go to Jerusalem.<sup>405</sup>

Was he mirroring Saint Francis? In any case, he felt called to take on a pastoral task there, in a society dominated by Muslims, thus clearly placing himself in the tradition of pilgrimage with a mission. In 1532 he embarked. He describes the experiencing great consolation when, after a long sea journey via Venice and Cyprus and on a donkey from Jaffa to Jerusalem, he finally sees the 'Holy City'. The Franciscans, the *custodes* of the holy places, appreciated his devotion but didn't feel like using his services and put

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400 POST & VAN DER BEEK: 'Virtual Pilgrimage' 89.

401 IGNATIUS VAN LOYOLA: *Het verhaal van de pelgrim, ingeleid door J ronimo Nadal* (transl. and notes C. VAN BUIJTENEN, rev. M. BLICKMAN, B. FRIE SJ & M. ROTSAERT SJ) (Genua 1555 / Averbode 2010).

402 M. ROTSAERT (transl. and notes): *Geestelijke onderscheiding bij Ignatius van Loyola* (2012). See also: J. W. O'MALLEY: *De Jez eten. Hun geschiedenis van Ignatius tot heden*. (2015) 19-20.

403 The route, which is now also walked by novices of the order, goes via Logro o, along the Ebro to Zaragoza, to reach Manresa (Montserrat) and is known as the *Camino Ignaciano*. The *Camino Ignaciano* is being modernized because of the approaching centenary of the Jesuits. *Camino Ignaciano*: <http://caminoignaciano.org/en> (accessed 29 01 2018).

404 O'MALLEY: *De Jez eten* 21.

405 IGNATIUS VAN LOYOLA: *Het verhaal van de pelgrim* II 13-19.

pressure on him to return.<sup>406</sup> His ‘pilgrimage with a mission’ to Jerusalem thus failed, but turned out to have been another decisive moment in his life.

Returning to Europe, he started a new, modern, missionary religious order with a few companions.<sup>407</sup> Within Europe, this resulted in the establishment of numerous institutions of secondary and higher education, and excellent modern scientific activities, thus maintaining a link between an increasingly secular modern culture and their religious mission.<sup>408</sup> Outside of Europe, the whole world became their field of activity for Jesuits. Ignatius did not ask his fellow brothers to leave ‘the world’ behind them, but to go to places where their presence could do some good. That brought them to South America and far into Asia. In this way they took as ‘pilgrims with a mission’, a new step in the tradition in which Paul and the missionary monks had gone before them.

Ignatius, who is considered a typical representative of the Counter-Reformation, like Erasmus and the Reformers, has a modern focus on ‘inner’ travel (*in casu*, methods are at the service of ‘spiritual discernment’). But he developed this focus after having first completed a heavy physical pilgrimage from Loyola to Manresa, after which he let go of the severe medieval asceticism. It had been this physical pilgrimage that had gradually made him long for a truly ‘missionary’ oriented pilgrimage.

You could say that, in fact, that also resonates in the ‘Come and see’ call. The Palestinian initiative urges fellow Christians to make the journey physically and to really experience and see ‘the Land’ with all its problems, even though this is often a shocking and unpleasant experience. The ‘Come and see’ initiative asks pilgrims to make choices based on their actual experiences, which may require a radical ‘transition’ from them, and to continue to cherish ‘peace, love and reconciliation’ as their message.

#### 5.4 Bunyan and the *moral pilgrim*

In spite of the Reformers’ criticism of reprehensible practices within pilgrimage in the late Middle Ages, the term ‘pilgrim’ remained part of Christian thought even within Protestantism. This is particularly clear from the title of the famous book by the British Puritan evangelist John Bunyan (1628-1688) “The Pilgrims Progress from This World to That Is to Come” (1678), for brevity’s sake usually called “The Pilgrim’s Progress”.<sup>409</sup> This book has been translated into more than 200 languages, which shows the great influence it has had.<sup>410</sup> Even today, new editions are still appearing. How did John

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406 IGNATIUS VAN LOYOLA: *Het verhaal van de pelgrim* IV 38-48.

407 O’MALLEY: *De Jezüieten* 43-62.

408 O’MALLEY: *De Jezüieten* 25, 41.

409 F. DE LANGE: ‘Life as a Pilgrimage. John Bunyan and the Modern Life Course’, in P.N. HOLTROP et al (eds.) 111.

410 For a recent annotated edition see J. BUNYAN: *The Pilgrim’s Progress. Penguin Classics* (Harmondsworth 2008), but there is also a simple edition (‘updated, modern English’) from 2015 for sale.

## ‘Inner’, ‘national’ and ‘peace-oriented’ pilgrimages

Bunyan depict the life journey of a Reformed Christian as a pilgrimage, and how does this early modern approach to pilgrimage relate to other forms of pilgrimage and to a pilgrimage of the ‘Come and see’ type?

Bunyan’s book, like Dante’s, is literary in scope and can be read as a sequence of allegorical narratives with a strongly moralizing educational slant. Bunyan describes the many encounters of his main character “Christian”, during his journey from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly City, with characters such as “Mr. Wordly-Wiseman”, the “Interpreter”, “Ignorance”, “Faith” and “Good Will”. The journey he describes is the story of a human soul in search of individual salvation. It recalls both the classical metaphor of Augustine and the work of Dante, as well as the “mental pilgrimage” of the 14th and 15th centuries. Moreover, Bunyan’s extraordinary literary portrayal of an in-worldly, but not worldly ‘pilgrim’ bears more resemblance to the spirituality of Ignatius’ pilgrim-in-the-world than one might expect given the 16th-century church rupture and the well-known role of the Jesuits in the Counter-Reformation (in fact: the ‘Catholic’ Reformation).<sup>411</sup>

Bunyan distinguishes himself from Calvin by his remarkable emphasis on the desirability of good ‘travel companionship’ during every human’s life. But in the background the predestination doctrine always plays a role: man has the choice to go the right way and of course he has to do the right thing, but mercy for a good ending cannot be earned with it. God has foreknowledge which people do or do not lose.<sup>412</sup> But although it always remains uncertain whether he will reach eternity with it, this does not alter the fact that a Christian must constantly feel encouraged to make a personal effort in this life.<sup>413</sup> Bunyan’s ‘pilgrim’ carries his own moral responsibility and he carries it out, which makes him socially active during his ‘pilgrimage’.

Bunyan’s ‘pilgrim’, De Lange concludes, is anything but a calm, introverted ‘loner’. On the one hand he withdraws from ‘the world’, but on the other hand he cultivates communication and conversation. Perhaps even more than Ignatius he seems to be a ‘social animal’, a passionate interlocutor, someone who practices camaraderie. But also someone who realizes that he has to be critical in his contacts and that in all his encounters his soul’s salvation can be at stake.

The journey of Bunyan’s pilgrim is not a quest for the ‘authentic self’, which leads to ‘self-renewal’ (see I 1.2). It is not a quest “for his own failure and salvation, a search for self-realization” as in the case of a contemporary novel figure on a pilgrimage to

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411 *Trouw*: <https://www.trouw.nl/home/jezuïeten-betreuren-de-reformatie-nog~accb6f35/> (accessed 28 12 2018).

412 DELANGE: ‘Life as a Pilgrimage’ 100, 105-108.

413 DELANGE: ‘Life as a Pilgrimage’ 120.

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Santiago.<sup>414</sup> His journey has a fundamentally different character than post-modern pilgrimage based on the ideal of ‘self-renewal’. This is an ideal that is reminiscent of what Carl Jung understood by ‘the realization of self’. For Jung this was part of a process, in which contradictions in a human being, such as ‘good’ and ‘evil’, ‘light’ and ‘shadow’, ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, have to be united and transcended if he is to be able to heal psychologically.<sup>415</sup> The concept of ‘self-renewal’ has a longing for a far-reaching emancipation of ‘free will’ as a starting point.

This distinguishes itself from the pedagogical path, aimed at social and moral individuation as Bunyan and Ignatius advocated. The Protestant Bunyan’s point of departure in this was the responsibility of man despite God’s ‘foreknowledge’. The starting point for Ignatius was the freedom of choice to follow Jesus. But for both of them the ‘I’ is, as De Lange put it, an ‘ethical project’, not a project of ‘self-renewal’ purely for the sake of ‘the self’.<sup>416</sup>

The pilgrimage conception to which the ‘Come and see’ initiative appeals does not fit in with such deeper historical ‘layers’ of the ideal of ‘self-renewal’. Pilgrimage as Bunyan meant it is in line with what Augustine had in mind. Evil is only effectively combated and transcended, not by reconciling light and dark in ‘the self’, but by loving others. Being in harmony with oneself, especially in view of the relationship between thinking and doing, is not unimportant for a Christian pilgrim either, but that harmony arises only when you act as God wants you to do, and it was Augustine’s conviction that man will only find the essence of God “if he loves or is loved”.<sup>417</sup>

Bunyan’s ‘pilgrim’, with his many, by no means always easy encounters and confrontations, exhibits characteristics that are also relevant to the ‘Come and see’ pilgrim: he does not shy away from evil, remains attentive and steadfast and is a keen discussor. But although Bunyan’s pilgrim is not loveless, his journey remains somewhat of an ‘ego project’, a competition with himself of which only he can be the winner. Bunyan’s pilgrim is a ‘social animal’. But Augustine’s attention for people’s responsibility for ‘the city of man’, and for the fact that ‘the times’ are the people themselves, in other words, his attention for people’s social responsibility, is not so much discussed in Bunyan’s book.

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414 P. COELHO: *The Pilgrimage to Santiago. Diary of a magician* (1999). Cit.: summary on the cover of the book.

415 C.G. JUNG: *Verzameled werk, deel 3* (Rotterdam 1990) 120.

416 DE LANGE: ‘Life as a Pilgrimage’ 53, 65.

417 VAN GEEST: *Stellig maar onzeker* 111.

### 5.5 Pilgrimage as ‘mobilisation’ in secular time

Finally, when the leap to the 19th and 20th centuries is made, the question arises as to the influence of secular thinking and the Enlightenment on the form and content of Christian pilgrimage. Is there a relationship between what is called secularization and changes in the supply of pilgrimages? In addition, the question needs to be asked what role the rise of imperialism and the beginning of tourism in this period, in what was then Palestine, played for the character of pilgrimages to ‘the Land’. Against these backgrounds it is therefore a question of the extent to which the thinking behind the ‘Come and see’ initiative also has specific roots in this period.

#### *Secularization and the revival of pilgrimage*

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (b. 1931) published a broad study of the secular era in 2007, which resulted from a series of lectures whose title ended with a question mark: “Living in a secular age?” The thesis defended in his book is that the prevailing ‘secularization thesis’ for the historical development since the Enlightenment will prove less and less convincing in the future, because modernity has proved incapable of definitively neutralizing the human desire for transcendence.<sup>418</sup> Taylor’s hypothesis seemed to be confirmed in 2017 by the results of a large-scale study by the Pew Research Center, which showed an increase in the number of people with a religion and a decrease in the number of people without a religion.<sup>419</sup>

In his studies, Taylor historically examines, among other things, the revival of French places of pilgrimage in the course of the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>420</sup> He sees this period for the French Catholic Church as ‘the era of mobilisation’, for him a characteristic aspect of the era that precedes what he calls ‘the era of authenticity’.<sup>421</sup>

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418 C. TAYLOR: *Een seculiere tijd* [A secular time] (Rotterdam 2009/Harvard UP 2007/) 31, 563-635.

The secularization thesis was developed as a sociological thesis of religion at the beginning of the twentieth century by i.a. Max Weber and later spread by Peter Berger in his book “The Sacred Canopy. Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion” (1967). According to the theory, further modernisation of society would lead to a decline in the significance of religion. For the secularization paradigm and its critiques see S. HELLEMANS: *Het tijdperk van de wereldreligies. Religie in agrarische civilisaties en modern samenlevingen* (Zoetermeer/ Kapellen 2007) 17-22.

419 C. HACKETT, A. COOPERMAN, A. SCHILLER: *The Changing Global Religious Landscape. Babies born to Muslims will begin to outnumber Christian births by 2035; people with no religion face a birth dearth* (Pew Research Centre, April 5, 2017) 25-33. The report forecasts, based on birth rates, between 2015 and 2060 i.a. percentages of the number of Christians in the world (from 31.2% to 31.8%), of Muslims (from 24.1% to 31.1%) and of Jews (constant 0.2%). The number of people without religion is expected to decrease from 16% to 12.5%. See: <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/04/05/the-changing-global-religious-landscape/> (accessed 04 02 2020).

420 TAYLOR: *Een seculiere tijd* 98-106.

421 TAYLOR: *Een seculiere tijd* 625 ff.

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On the Protestant side Taylor compares the ‘mobilisation’ with the *Réveil*, the religious revival and revival that arose in Geneva in the first half of the 19th century in reaction to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and which also found much resonance among Protestants in the Netherlands.

In post-Revolution France, i.e. after the destruction and dissolution of monasteries and church property, the need arose for new forms of ecclesiastical experience and mutual Christian solidarity. More specifically, Taylor points in this context to the need for temporary forms of *communitas* and ‘antistructure’, i.e. possibilities for a temporary suspension of the normal structure of society with differences in status and rights and duties.<sup>422</sup> This was a need, that was met before the Revolution by religious feasts and activities. Taylor explicitly derived these two terms from Turner’s study “The Ritual Process” (1969). As we saw in Part I, these terms also play an important role in Turner’s theoretical approach to the phenomenon of pilgrimage (see I.1.1).

In the 19th century there was a clear revival of the phenomenon of pilgrimages, but often in new forms. New Marian apparitions were accompanied by a shift from traditional, isolated, village pilgrimages to modern, regional, national and international pilgrimage centers, such as La Salette, Lourdes and Paray le Monial. This brought with it new forms of religiously nourished communio. The emerging ultramontanean, restorative Catholicism actively sought to ‘mobilize’ the Catholic population by reforming the phenomenon of pilgrimage. Strong efforts were made to purify the old, *Christianisme festif* in the villages from licentious and pre-Christian practices. In doing so, the church tried to bring its members to a higher moral and modern plan.<sup>423</sup>

This shows that the pursuit of a new form of pilgrimage, in which special attention is asked for what can and cannot be expected of a good pilgrim, is not something that only occurred for the first time in the Palestinian ‘Come and see’ initiative. In fact, the pursuit of ‘mobilisation’ of believers can be seen as a new form of the old ‘missionary’ motive to bring people together in communities where Christian norms and values apply, and where everyone is equal before God.

### *Pilgrimage as a political and social instrument*

Part I already pointed out - with the Birthright journeys and Christian-Zionism as clear examples - that under modern pilgrim phenomena, there can be a specific interplay of religious and political factors (I 1.3), which can also be noted under ‘Come and see’, albeit with a totally different content and orientation. Here too developments in that direction began as early as the 19th century.

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422 TAYLOR: *Een seculiere tijd* 101.

423 TAYLOR: *Een seculiere tijd* 618-619.



## ‘Inner’, ‘national’ and ‘peace-oriented’ pilgrimages

The French collection *Politiques du pèlerinage* contains a series of pregnant examples of how ecclesiastical and secular powers have wanted to use the pilgrimage phenomenon for political and social purposes over the last two centuries. The book does not approach pilgrimage as a purely individual matter, but primarily as a social phenomenon. Even more than Taylor did, it draws attention to specific socio-political aspects of pilgrimages, among others to Lourdes. Parishes in the 19th century, for example, were called upon to finance national pilgrimages of the sick, as a national penance for the increased infidelity in France. A new militant, socio-political Catholicism tried to resurrect itself and become visible again, by investing in an extensive charitable organization for the benefit of the needy sick, a task that the state hardly saw as its task at the time.<sup>424</sup>

Another remarkable example is the pilgrimage in 1857 from Pope Pius IX to Loreto, which was partly intended to mobilize support among “his people” in the areas north of Rome for the ecclesiastical state, which at that time was still quite extensive but threatened.<sup>425</sup>

In a much later period, between 1937 and 1965, the Spanish dictator Franco used the extensive pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela with the help of the Spanish ‘Catholic Action’ to generate support for his regime.<sup>426</sup>

In ‘the Land’ itself, it is not political leaders, but Franciscans who have been trying to continue to mobilise and inspire the Christian community in the country for years, partly through pilgrimages by and for Palestinian Christians themselves. With their ‘Holy Land March’ in recent years they have focused in particular on collecting, motivating and spiritually inspiring their own Christian Palestinian youth. On the occasion of the ‘Holy Land March’ of 2019, in which about 100 young people between 17 and 27 participated, the *custos* of the Franciscan order spoke about the fruitful combination of spirituality and physical effort and of ‘commitment and joy’ from a Christian perspective.<sup>427</sup>

The ‘Come and see’ initiative focuses on mobilising foreign Christian pilgrims for the empowerment of Palestinian Christians. It thus reveals a ‘modernized’ missionary motive in which the activating and mobilising capacities of pilgrimage are exploited, as is the case with the ‘Birthright’- journeys and the Christianzionist pilgrimages.

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424J. TERADO: ‘Les trois aspects politiques du pèlerinage de Lourdes’, in CHANTRE et al: *Politiques du pèlerinage* 199, 206.

425 S. VISCIOLO: ‘Entre dévotion et politique. Le pèlerinage de Pie IX à Lorette et la visite à ses Peuples (1857)’, in CHANTRE et al: *Politiques du pèlerinage* 271.

426D. PÉRICARD-MÉA: ‘Franco, Saint Jacques et Compostelle. Éclairages donnés par les célébrations des années saintes 1937-1965’, in CHANTRE et al: *Politiques du Pèlerinages* 45.

427 *Custodia Terrae Sanctae*: <https://www.custodia.org/en/news/franciscan-march-holy-land-1> (accessed 01 08 2019).

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Intrinsically speaking, the differences with what ‘Come and see’ advocates, remain obvious, of course. The ‘Come and see’ initiative is an ecumenical and not a typically Catholic, restorative or ultramontanean phenomenon, and, from a political point of view, it is not a question of gaining support for those in power, but of paying attention to the injustice done to people by those in power.

The ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage that gave rise to this book explicitly showed that the political effect of participating in a ‘Come and see’ trip was not that the participants developed into exclusive partygoers, but that importance was attached above all to religiously motivated, multiple relationships, and to the opportunities offered to look beyond political and religious walls and borders.<sup>428</sup> The journey sharpened the participants’ desire for inclusiveness in order to be able to practice a ‘multiple connectedness’, an insight from pastoral, contextual theology that appeared to have been carried in their luggage by a few on the journey and that was taken back home by several of them (see I 1.4).<sup>429</sup>

### *Pilgrimage and tourism riding the coat-tails of imperialism*

Finally, it is necessary to examine the ways in which the churches of the West, and partly also those of the East, tried to strengthen their positions in ‘the Land’ in the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, by hitchhiking on the strength of the then British, French, German and Russian empires. The strengthening of the position of Western powers there can be shown, for example, in the expansion of pilgrim’s lodgings, which were often organized by nationality. Since around 1850, destinations such as Alexandria, Beirut and Jaffa had become easier to reach thanks to the commissioning of the steamship, and opening up ‘tourism’ for the wealthy in the West, including that to ‘the Land’.

As early as 1858 a ‘Handbook for Travelers in Syria and Palestine’ was published. In 1869 Thomas Cook came up with a so-called ‘World Tour’ that ended with visits to Egypt and Palestine. This well-known British travel agency in particular played a particular role in the development of Protestant pilgrimages to Israel, including that of evangelicals, fundamentalists and Christianzionists.<sup>430</sup> One has to wonder, though, to what extent the participants in this initial phase of tourism to ‘the Land’ were ‘already tourists’ or ‘still pilgrims’ or perhaps both roles combined in one another, or even became more pilgrims than tourists in the process. In any case the ‘Handbook’ explicitly told the traveler: “the Bible is the best Handbook for Palestine”, and the first

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428 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 153.

429 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 139.

430 M. STAUSBERG: *Religion and Tourism, Crossroads, Destinations and Encounters* (London/New York 2011) 62.

## ‘Inner’, ‘national’ and ‘peace-oriented’ pilgrimages

Baedeker for Palestine from 1875 did exactly the same. Also British Protestants at that time were far from using the later by Zionists rediscovered name ‘Israel’. In America the Methodist bishop John Vincent introduced a travel book of two fellow believers entitled “Early Footsteps of the Man of Galilee”. In Germany the (apparently Catholic) ‘Msgr.’ L. Richen in 1900 published a photo book “*Das Heilige Land in Wort und Bild*” (The Holy Land in Word and Image) especially for pilgrims as a “supplement to what the Holy Scriptures already report”.<sup>431</sup>

The construction of Roman Catholic monasteries, schools, theological institutes and pilgrimage centers also received strong impulses in several places in the ‘Holy Land’.<sup>432</sup> French Catholics were particularly active in this, but the Anglicans, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Russian Orthodox were also very active.<sup>433</sup> The monastic orders of the Dominicans and the Assumptionists founded research centers in Jerusalem, did research in ‘the Land’ itself and invested in the development of their orders there. The Vatican also financed initiatives. Later, the archaeological research of the French Dominican Roland De Vaux into the Dead Sea Scrolls became known. He was the director of the renowned *École biblique et archéologique française de Jérusalem*.

They also came into contact with the rapidly changing context of ‘the Land’, as it is known for example to Dutch clergymen who stayed there for some time, such as the later Cardinal Bernardus Alfrink and the Bible scholar Nico Greitemann. The Biblical expert Lucas Grollenberg witnessed the *Nakba* in 1948. There were conflicts with Zionists who feared a greater Christian influence in ‘the Land’ and conversely these Catholic scientists were opposed to the rapidly expanding influence of the political and military branch of secular Zionism. They saw it as a threat to indigenous ‘biblical life’ in Palestine.<sup>434</sup> These and other scientists combined a resurgent Catholic fascination with sacred places in ‘the Land’ with new scientific historical and archaeological research, and their fascination partly spread to a new generation of pilgrims. If the journey turned out to be too costly for them, they could always make a trip to the devotional park ‘De Heilige Land Stichting’ in Nijmegen where biblical places had been reconstructed.

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431 The information in this paragraph was largely taken from G. VAN DER KOOIJ: ‘Early photography in Palestine (1839 - ca. 1900)’, in *Phoenix. Tijdschrift voor de archeologie en geschiedenis van het Nabije Oosten* 64,3 (2018) 29.

432 Foundation dates of schools and institutes in “the Land” on *Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land for the visit of Pope Francis in the Holy Land 24 - 26 May 2014*: <http://popefrancisholyland2014.lpj.org/blog/2014/03/03/catholic-institutions-of-higher-education-in-the-holy-land/> (accessed 13 06 2017).

433 M. RAHEB: ‘Die Evangelische lutherische Kirche in Palästina und Jordanien: Vergangenheit und Gegenwart’, in K.-H. RONECKER (ed.): *Dem Erlöser der Welt zur Ehre; Festschrift zum hundertjährigen Jubiläum der Einweihung der evangelischen Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem (1998)* 183-200.

434 M. POORTHUIS & Th. SALEMINK: *Een donkere Spiegel. Nederlandse katholieken over joden, 1870-2005. Tussen antisemitisme en erkenning*. (Nijmegen 2006) 248-249, 619-621.

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Fathers Montfortans were in charge here, they were also important accompanists of pilgrimages to the ‘Holy Land’.<sup>435</sup>

In 1860 the construction began of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Jerusalem, located on a site known today as the ‘Russian Compound’, after which Russian pilgrims began to arrive.<sup>436</sup> The Palestinian Evangelical-Lutheran theologian Mitri Raheb writes that the Western churches were apparently geopolitically neutral in their pilgrimages, but actually supported the politics of *empire* (= structures of superpowers) in the region and helped give their presence a face.<sup>437</sup> Thus, pilgrimage, tourism and politics met even then, albeit differently coloured than in the Kairos document today.

A remarkable example of the way in which a Western political ruler tried to play a role in ‘the Land’ was the German Emperor Wilhelm II (1859-1941). In 1898 he went from Venice to ‘the Land’ with 1300 horses and mules, 100 carriages and 230 tents on what he called the *Evangelische Kreuzfahrt*. According to the historian Herfried Münkler, who mentions this almost forgotten achievement without arms of imperial German Christianity, he had in mind the example of his ‘predecessor’ Friedrich Barbarossa (1122-1190), who, incidentally, had drowned during the Third Crusade in 1190 in the Selef river in present-day Turkey. On Reformation Day, October 31, Wilhelm held his entry into Jerusalem, after which the Lutheran *Erlöserkirche* in the Old City was consecrated in his presence. Wilhelm’s symbolic act contained a clear message to his British and French fellow players, and to the Pope, that they were not the only ones with ‘Christian’ interests within the ‘arena’ of pilgrims in the Holy Land, and that he also claimed a part of that ‘arena’.<sup>438</sup>

The Roman Catholic French general Henri Gouraud (1867-1946) had also not hesitated to evoke the memory of the Crusades when he in turn represented France near ‘the Land’ in 1920. “Saladin we are back!”, Gouraud exclaimed at Saladins grave after his entry into the Great Mosque in Damascus.<sup>439</sup> It wasn’t that Western pilgrims in the 19th and 20th centuries dreamed of becoming again lords of ‘the Land’ like a

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435 M. POORTHUIS & Th. SALEMINK: *Een donkere Spiegel* 249-252. *Montfortanen*: <https://www.montfortanen.nl/heilig-land-stichting-1922.html> (accessed 08 10 2019)

436 *Jewish Virtual Library*: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jerusalem-architecture-in-the-late-ottoman-period> (accessed 15 12 2017).

437 M. RAHEB: *Geloven onder bezetting. Een Palestijnse theologie van verzet en hoop*. Intr.: E. BORG-MAN (New York 2014/Zoetermeer 2015) 25-27, 57 and next. Raheb describes ‘the empire’ in ‘the Land’ as a constant, ongoing development with different players through time. In his view, the current occupation by Israel is the most current manifestation of the modern ‘empire’ in ‘the Land’.

438 H. MÜNKLER: *Die Deutschen und Ihre Mythen* (Berlin 2000) 65.

439 PHILLIPS: *In naam van God* 388.

kind of returned Christian settlers.<sup>440</sup> But it was the imperial interest in ‘the Land’ that made the Zionist colonization of ‘the Land’ a feasible option. In the years after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the European Zionists did want to become the new lords of ‘the Land’.

In the course of the Zionist colonization process, the British imperial role was by far the most far-reaching. When the Ottoman Empire was split up in 1920, Palestine came under British protectorate. At the end of World War I, the British foreign minister Arthur J. Balfour (1863-1945) had started to try to win the Zionist movement, which had remained neutral until then, and the Jewish population groups in Europe on both sides of the front for the Allied cause in order to weaken the position of Germany and Austria. Like a number of other prominent British politicians at the time, including Prime Minister David Lloyd George (1863-1945),<sup>441</sup> Balfour sympathized with the chiliastic Puritan Protestant ideology in which the role that the return of the Jews should play in the return of Jesus had become central (see II.6.1.1).<sup>442</sup> The Balfour Declaration of 1917, which declared itself in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, was thus the result of both political and religious motives.<sup>443</sup> On the French side, diplomatic assurances were given in support of this endeavour, but no representatives of the indigenous Palestinian population of ‘the Land’ were consulted during the preparations for the declaration.<sup>444</sup>

Within ‘the Land’ a war arose between Western Zionist militias and the Palestinian resistance that operated together with the Jordanians. Pilgrimages would not have been common during this period. The Zionists gained the upper hand in matters of military, which at the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948 would lead to the *Nakba* (I 2.3). The Second World War and the horrors of the Holocaust would cause a massive influx of Jews from many European countries. In this way, the foundations were laid for a mainly Western state, in which secular ‘cultural Jews’ and religious Jews, both of whom, ethnically speaking, could come from very different peoples, were to be forged into a single nation.

Since then, pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ by Christianzionist pilgrims would gain in importance. They were supported by the American *empire*. When the old European imperial frames within which the increase in ‘tourist’ pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ could

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440 S. SAND: *The invention of the Land of Israel. From Holy Land to Homeland* (London/New York 2012) 18.

441 S. SIZER: *Christian Zionism. Road-map to Armageddon?* (Nottingham 2004) 56, 64-65.

442 SIZER: *Christian Zionism* 213-215.

443 Text *Balfour Declaration* with cover letter, in *Jewish Virtual Library*: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/text-of-the-balfour-declaration> (accessed 02 05 2019).

444 A. SHLAIM: *The Iron Wall. Israel and the Arab World* (London 2001) 5-11. See also: SIZER: *Christian Zionism* 63-66.

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have flourished became less important, the existence of the new state became the cornerstone for the American exercise of power in the region.

Remarkably, Christian Zionist thinking (I 2.3 and II 6.2) gradually began to penetrate into the highest American political circles. In his study of Christian Zionism, Sizer points to, among other things, the Christian Zionist ‘White House seminars’ that emerged during the reign of President Ronald Reagan, and to the ‘National Prayer Breakfast’, meetings of Christian Zionists in Washington that provided services to the so-called ‘Likud lobby’ in America.<sup>445</sup>

The Palestinians, both Muslims and Christians, feel miserably abandoned by all these developments. This feeling is particularly strong among Christians, who had enjoyed at least some state protection at the time of the Ottoman Empire, whereas this has in fact been less and less the case since the assumption of power by Western ‘Christian’ powers. Christian religious motives had played a role in the Western imperial interest in ‘the Land’ because it was seen by Western Christians as an important Christian pilgrimage destination. But the West appeared to be less interested in the fate of the Christians living in ‘the Land’. The initially secular state of Israel is now sounding more and more religious-Zionist. For Christian Palestinians it is incomprehensible that so many of their fellow Christians in the West seem to care so little about the fate of the Palestinians, while this also contributes to a growing anti-Western resentment among Muslim Palestinians. As a result, Christian church leaders in ‘the Land’ repeatedly state that they have come to the brink of the abyss and that they blame this mainly because of the ongoing, internationally tolerated occupation that has now, as far as the American Trump administration was concerned, reached the stage of final annexation.<sup>446</sup>

By 2015, the number of Palestinian Christians represented about 1 to 2.5% of the population of the West Bank and less than 1% of the population of Gaza.<sup>447</sup> According to official British estimates, the Christian population of Palestine still represented 9.5% of the total Palestinian population in 1922.<sup>448</sup> Today, there seems to be some growth of Christians in Israel as a result of ‘guest labor’ from the Philippines, among others, but on the other hand, more and more native and more highly educated Palestinian Christians no longer see a future in ‘the Land’.<sup>449</sup>

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445 SIZER: *Christian Zionism* 214.

446 NCCOP-document: <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/open-letter-from-the-national-coalition-of-christian-organizations-in-palestine> (accessed 21 01 2018).

447 *Reuters*: <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-pope-mideast-christians-sb/factbox-christians-in-israelwest-bank-and-gaza-idUKTRE5491FH20090510> (accessed 28 12 2018).

448 *Web Archive - Internet Archive*: <https://web.archive.org/web/20130923061547/http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/7BDD2C11C1> (accessed 28 12 2018).

449 *America magazine*: <https://www.americamagazine.org/content/all-things/vanishing-church> (accessed 28 12 2018).

## ‘Inner’, ‘national’ and ‘peace-oriented’ pilgrimages

In summary, we can observe that Christian pilgrimage in the Middle Ages had increasingly suffered from abuses and rigidity, after it had been strongly missionary in antiquity, and the more place-oriented pilgrimage had often been accompanied by the search for contact with local people who were seen as ‘living saints’. This, in combination with the rise of Protestantism, had led to a strong emphasis on inner pilgrimage, as had already been prepared by the work of Augustine.

In response to the attempts to reduce religious expressions during the period of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, a revival of pilgrimages began in the 19th century in which the missionary element was once again found, but in new forms regulated by ecclesiastical leaders, who used pilgrimages as a means of mobilizing people in which political motives could also play a role.

The pilgrimage and tourism of Christians from the Western world to ‘the Land’ was facilitated by the rise of Western imperialism, in which there appeared to be little inclination to feel connected with local, fellow Palestinian Christians. On the other hand, with the remarkable support of conservative American political circles, a ‘Christian Zionist pilgrimage’ strongly focused on the interests of the State of Israel developed, which mobilizes Christians primarily to support this State, and which has long attracted attention as an anthropological phenomenon.

The ‘Come and see’ initiative fits in with these new developments because the ambition to mobilize Christians from elsewhere for political purposes also plays a role in this. But an important difference is of course that this initiative, like the ‘Franciscan’ mobilisation of Palestinian youth, is no longer a mobilisation riding the coat-tails of an ‘empire’, and also that there is a strong principle to be open rather than exclusive in attitude towards other religions.

Taylor’s rejection of the ‘secularization thesis’ makes clear the intrinsic importance of the ‘Come and see’ initiative within the history of pilgrimage, however relatively small in scale it may be, because in its characteristics it is both rooted in the long history of Christian pilgrimage and clearly fits in with the present time and context.

## Chapter 6. Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

This last chapter of Part II deals first of all with new developments in Western Christian pilgrimage under the influence of the Second World War, in which ‘pilgrim movement’ and ‘peace movement’ became partly linked. Thereafter, special attention is paid to the theology of the mainly strongly emerging post-war Christian Zionist pilgrimage movement with its emphasis on the religious importance of unconditional support for the present state of Israel and for the Protestant and Catholic critique thereof. At the same time, this section will explore the way in which Protestant and Catholic theology itself deals with the problematic relationship between thinking about ‘the Land’ and thinking about the state of Israel.

The third paragraph focuses on the criticism of the new forms of Western pilgrimages that have developed since the 1980s. Particular attention is paid to the criticism from the so-called ‘liberation theology’ and to non-Western criticism of Western pilgrimages. Finally, this section will show how non-western theology of liberation deals with the dual meaning of the Augustinian concept of *peregrinus*, which means ‘stranger’ as well as ‘pilgrim’.

In the last two paragraphs we return to ‘the Land’. In the fourth paragraph we will elaborate on the theology of the ‘living stones’ which is so important to the ‘Come and see’ initiative and on the thinking of contemporary Palestinian theologians themselves. Finally, the last paragraph discusses the theological document of the Christian Palestinian Alternative Tourism Group in the light of the findings of the previous paragraphs.

### 6.1 The peace movement as a ‘pilgrim’s movement’ after 1945

Even as the Second World War was still raging, among a number of Catholic resistance fighters in France the conviction grew that the two great wars between the peoples of the traditionally Christian Europe should be called shameful and asked for an answer from the Church. At the initiative of Marthe Dorthel-Claudot and Bishop Pierre-Marie Théas of Montauban (France), the Catholic peace movement Pax Christi came into being.<sup>450</sup> This happened partly at the instigation of the then nuncio in Paris, Angelo Roncalli, the later Pope John XXIII. Over the years, this Franco-German initiative developed into a peace movement with 150 affiliated organizations, which today operate in about 50 countries.<sup>451</sup>

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450 *Diocèse de Montauban*: <http://catholique-montauban.ccf.fr/rubriques/gauche/histoire-et-patri-moine/listes-des-veques/mgr-theas/mgr-pierre-marie-theas> (accessed 15 12 2017).

451 PCI: <https://www.paxchristi.net/about-us> (accessed 15 12 2017).



## Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

In order to mobilize young people for peace work, the remarkable form of international meetings in existing places of pilgrimage was chosen. This shows that this new peace movement was aware of the mobilising potential of pilgrimages, and in particular of ‘missionary pilgrimages’. In 1947, the first international meeting took place, for which the Lourdes pilgrimage site in France was chosen. In 1948, the place of pilgrimage to Kvelaer in Germany was the centre for such an international meeting. In Alsace, in the following years, several pilgrimages for peace and reconciliation were organized in the Franco-German border region, trips that ran between French and German villages with the so-called ‘Aachen Peace Cross’ in the foreground, which later got a special place in the Cathedral of Aachen.<sup>452</sup>

In the Netherlands between 1957 and 1984 the Pax Christi hikes for young people took place, through the province of Brabant to the ‘Sint Jansbasiliek’ in Den Bosch. The goal was to promote the theological and philosophical conversion of young people. Through mutual discussion, joint prayer and joint singing, in the *communitas* of so-called *kapittels* (Chapters), they wanted to stimulate both identity formation and the development of a vision of society and evangelical involvement.<sup>453</sup>

In Taizé in Burgundy, an ecumenical community had already been founded during the war by the Reformed and later Catholic theologian and resistance fighter Roger Louis Schutz-Marsauch (1915-2005), where the post-war focus was on reconciliation between nations and religions with young people as a special target group. From the late fifties onward Taizé would develop into a place of pilgrimage to which thousands of young people from all over the world still travel to meet, discuss, pray and sing together. These kinds of post-war initiatives are still pilgrim-like *communitas* events today.<sup>454</sup> They had explicitly the mission to promote peace and dialogue through meetings between participants from countries that had been at war with each other and are characterized by both their educational and mobilizing character. We saw a similar approach in the work of the Franciscans with Palestinian youth after the war (see: II 5.5).

The Pax Christi initiative expanded beyond Europe and especially to the Middle East. In the beginning the Dutch Pax Christi trips to the Middle East were mainly

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452 PCI: <http://www.paxchristi.net/about-us/pax-christi-international-history-timeline-1945-2015> (accessed 16 06 2017).

453 KDC: [https://www.ru.nl/kdc/bladeren/archieven-thema/subpagina-archieven-thema/jeugd/archives\\_of\\_0/archives\\_young\\_i/foundation\\_pax/](https://www.ru.nl/kdc/bladeren/archieven-thema/subpagina-archieven-thema/jeugd/archives_of_0/archives_young_i/foundation_pax/) (accessed 16 06 2017).

454 Taizé: <http://www.taize.fr> (accessed 20 10 2018).

political *fact finding missions*, with all the accompanying pitfalls and challenges.<sup>455</sup> However, the first major international Pax Christi gathering outside Europe changed all that. It took place in Amman and Jerusalem in 1999, when the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Michel Sabbah, was elected International President. In the years that followed, the ‘Christmas Prayer Action for Peace and Justice in the Holy Land’ was spread internationally, also in the Netherlands. It was a ‘prayer action’ that brought participants in Christmas Eve celebrations into contact with Christians in Bethlehem via the internet. On December 31, 2001 Pax Christi carried the responsibility for a special peace trip from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. Upon arrival in Jerusalem, thousands of Jews, Christians and Muslims formed ‘a human chain of peace’ around the Old City centre, which contains the famous shrines of the three world religions.<sup>456</sup>

In the years following the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on November 9, 2001, Pax Christi hikes in the Netherlands were briefly given a second life when the KRO (Catholic Broadcast Cooperation) and Pax Christi together organized so-called ‘Advent Walks to Peace’, culminating in more than a thousand participants.<sup>457</sup> In the following years, so-called ‘solidarity pilgrimages’ into ‘the Land’ developed in several sections (in the Netherlands in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2012) (see: I.2.5). These were a combination of a spiritually as well as a socio-politically motivated form of ‘pilgrimage with a mission’.

## 6.2 Christian Zionist theology and Protestant and Catholic reactions

The superficial resemblance between the missionary mobilisation motif within Christian Zionism and within the ‘Come and see’ call makes it necessary for an adequate positioning of this new pilgrimage initiative to address both the content of Christian Zionist theology and the Protestant and Catholic reactions to it.

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455 N. MEGENS & H. REIDING: *Bewegen in smalle marges. Pax Christi Nederland 1965-1990* (1996) 67-69. In the Dutch Pax Christi section it appeared that with regard to the Middle East the positions initially still showed considerable differences of opinion, which led to some apprehension on the part of the leadership, such as, for example, the open recognition of the PLO. It is noteworthy that after a political study trip to ‘the Land’, in the Netherlands in 1978 the findings of that trip were not widely publicized because it was felt that public opinion with regard to the state of Israel should be spared.

456 *Human chain of peace 2001*: <http://www.angelfire.com/hero/eto/paxint1.html> (accessed 16 06 2017).

457 *Wandelzoek-pagina*: <https://www.wandelzoekpagina.nl/nieuws/adventstocht-kro-en-pax-christi/137/> (accessed 28 12 2018).

*Trouw (newspaper)*: <https://www.trouw.nl/home/vredesbeweging-pax-christi-wil-elke-advent-spirituele-voettocht~a73099b5/> (accessed 28 05 2019).

*Christian Zionist theology*

In Part I the growth of Christian Zionist pilgrimage to 'the Land' since the foundation of the State of Israel (I 2.2.3) was already noted. A proper understanding of this phenomenon requires first a brief discussion of 'dispensationalism' underlying Christian Zionism, a theological concept linked to the so-called 'premillennialism' which encompasses a diversity of very literally views on the End Times. A premillennialist idea that is prevalent among Christian Zionists is for example the expectation of the arrival of a 'Millennial Kingdom of Peace' preceded by an epoch in which the Messiah returns to prepare for this millennium. It is a faith that is therefore - according to the Greek word for a thousand - also referred to as 'chiliasm'.

The name of the 19th century British preacher John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) is linked to dispensationalism.<sup>458</sup> Its development up to and including contemporary political Christian Zionism was described in a study by Stephen Sizer.<sup>459</sup> An early predecessor of Darby was the German Johann Alsted (1588-1638), a Calvinist theologian and 'millennialist' who on the basis of his Bible interpretations believed that in the 'End Times' the return of 'the twelve tribes of Israel' to 'the Land' would actually take place.<sup>460</sup>

Although the dispensationalist ideology had its origins among pietists in Germany, it later spread via the Netherlands mainly to England and the United States, where it flourished. The doctrine of dispensationalism assumes that God's actions in history since the creation of man are visible in so-called 'dispensations' which indicate what in the course of time God's intentions have been with mankind. According to a dispensationalist website the Bible shows that in the course of history there has been a series of such divine 'dispensations'. In the course of time man was for example 'endowed' by God with Conscience, Law, Promise and Grace.<sup>461</sup>

Contemporary premillennialists believe that the foundation of the State of Israel is the announcement of the coming of the Millennial Kingdom of Peace. The coming of this empire is seen by Christian Zionists as the beginning of 'the last dispensation'. In order to understand the foundation of the state of Israel as the beginning of that last 'dispensation', biblical texts, among others certain parts from the books of Revelation (Apocalypse) and Daniel, are explained as predictions that are realizing themselves in today's political actuality. There are several variants of the chiliastic representations, but each one is a literal conception of texts about the 'End Times'. In any case, it is

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458 SIZER: *Christian Zionism* 50-52.

459 SIZER: *Christian Zionism* 103-105.

460 H. HOWARD: *Paradise postponed. Johann Heinrich Alsted and the Birth of Calvinist Millenarianism* (Dordrecht 2001) 67. Alsted's best known work is '*Diatriben mille annis apocalypticis*' (Frankfurt 1627).

461 *Got Questions* (a non-church bound "fundamental" and "evangelical" site): <https://www.gotquestions.org/Nederlands/seven-contributions.html> (accessed 15 08 2018).

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suspected that Jesus will soon return as king of the Jews and that all Jews will convert to him.<sup>462</sup>

But before the Millennial Kingdom of Peace can truly begin, a final, devastating battle between good and evil is expected on the battlefield of Armageddon near Megiddo in Galilee. Here, Jesus will lead his own as warlord, and after his victory, he will establish his ‘Kingdom of Peace’. That is why it is considered necessary to constantly exhort and help the Jews all over the world to leave for Israel. In the Netherlands, for example, this is done by an organization called *Breng de Joden thuis* (“Bring the Jews home”).<sup>463</sup>

The vision of the ‘Millennial Kingdom of Peace’ thus transformed in the 19th and 20th centuries from a theological allegory into a modern, activist political ideology in which this interpretation of the foundation of the Jewish state and the resulting need for unconditional support for it developed into unassailable truths of faith. Support for the State of Israel and for Zionist emigrations became the cornerstone for Christian Zionists in their conceptions of Judeo-Christian relations. According to this doctrine, Jesus would not return to earth until all Jews in Israel had been assembled in the state Israel.

Another characteristic part of the premillennialist ideas of the Christian Zionists is their vision of the so-called ‘substitution’ or ‘substitutionism’, also known as ‘supersessionism’. You can read about it on the website of ‘Christians for Israel’:

“While Jesus Himself taught us that ‘salvation’ ‘belongs to the Jews’, while Paul Himself taught us that converted pagans (and we are) are conscripted into Israel, and while Revelation to John reveals both 144,000 from the twelve tribes and a great multitude that no one can count from the nations, in Christianity a deathly and destructive substitute doctrine has emerged as if the Jews had cut the bond with God because of the murder of Jesus, [making now only] the Christians God’s people.”<sup>464</sup>

The reaction of Dutch Christian Zionists to the Kairos document was devastating, because it would once again prove this ‘substitution’-thinking. The churches were urged to refrain from doing so because of the anti-Jewish attitude that would be expressed in the document. A Dutch Christian Zionist website formulated it as follows

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462 Apocalypse 13-16 and 19-20. Daniel 7 and 10. Via the Dutch (Christian Zionist) TV-station *Family 7* the physicist/mathematician Jan van Barneveld (1936) regularly spoke about the End Times, and about the role that the state of Israel, according to God’s plan, will soon play in it. His video messages: <http://janvanbarneveld.nl> (accessed 07-01-2018).

463 *Digibron - knowledge center, reformed minded*: [https://www.digibron.nl/search/detail/012dc22c7f-2ca916dbe15332/exodus-forecast emigration stop](https://www.digibron.nl/search/detail/012dc22c7f-2ca916dbe15332/exodus-forecast%20emigration%20stop) (accessed 18 07 2019).

464 Cvl: <https://christenenvoorisrael.nl/2015/01/plaatsvervangende-schaamte/> (accessed 25 08 2018).

“We appeal to the church of the Netherlands not to strengthen these Palestinian Christians if they demonize Israel and go along with the propaganda and lies. Rather, the church should bless Israel and those Palestinian Christians who love Israel.”<sup>465</sup>

*Protestant criticism of Christian-Zionism and ‘Land Theology’*

With ‘the Church of the Netherlands’ the Christianzionists are probably referring in particular to the *Protestantse Kerk in Nederland* (Protestant Church in the Netherlands), which after a merger of the ‘Dutch Reformed Church’, the ‘Reformed Churches in the Netherlands’ and the ‘Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands’ in 2004, is the largest Protestant denomination in the Netherlands. Article 1, paragraph 7 of the PKN’s Church Order explicitly includes the formulation: “The church is called to give shape to her connectedness with the people of Israel that cannot be given up”. In the elaboration of this article the desirability of the “conversation with Israel” is discussed, but without it becoming clear whether “Israel” means the state of Israel, or perhaps only Judaism as a religion.

In the summer of 2018 a number of pastors of the PKN came up with a manifesto asking for the ambiguous formulation of “the connectedness” that “cannot be given up” to revisit this “connectedness” because, according to them, connectedness with Judaism should not mean unconditional support for “Israel”, a problem that also occurred, for example, with the phenomenon of the so-called annual “Sunday of Israel” within the Protestant Church. However, the call still evoked both disapproval and consent within the PKN, which will have been an important reason why it has not been answered for the time being.<sup>466</sup>

The historian Gert van Klinken noted in the PKN the existence of a “left flank (...) that hopes for a dialogue on the basis of universal principles, without postulating a special bond with one specific people”, and a right flank that objects “to those forms of liberation theology that deny Israel’s position as a chosen people, and thus also the promise of land”.<sup>467</sup> Theologian Janneke Stegeman, who also comes from the PKN and who in 1917 was given the title of “theologian of the fatherland” for a year, is of the

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465 Cvl: <https://christenenvoorisrael.nl/2009/12/reactie-kairos-palestijns-document/> (accessed 13 05 2019).

466 *Liberal Christianity*: <https://liberaalchristendom.wordpress.com/2018/09/14/de-kerk-kan-priema-zonder-israeltheologic/> (accessed 24 09 2018).

467 G. VAN KLINKEN *Onopgeefbaar verbonden. Oorsprongen van het Israel artikel in de kerkorde van de PKN* [The connectedness that cannot be given up - Origins of the Israel article in the church order of the PKN] (PThU, November 2018). *Factsheet* PThU: <https://www.pthu.nl/actueel/informatie-events/kerk-en-israel-docs/unbearably-connected-gert-van-klinken-7-nov-2018.pdf> (accessed 22 07 2019).

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opinion that Protestant discussions about ‘the Land’ are still too much determined by tensions evoked by the so-called ‘Land theology’.

Stegeman makes an appeal to ecclesiastical congregations to seek more expert support and to Bible scholars to give that support. Prior to an ‘Israel study tour’, for example, an ecclesiastical congregation should be made explicitly aware that they cannot simply apply uninhibited texts from the Old Testament, which arose within a totally different context, to the current political entities of Israel and Palestine and their inhabitants. She hopes for change and for a radically different, open reading of Scripture with a more active role for Bible scholars.<sup>468</sup>

In her thesis Stegeman refers to a publication by the Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann (b. 1933) from 2015 who, as he himself writes, was initially happy and thankful for the foundation of the state of Israel, because the *Shoah* had shown the need for a homeland for Jews. But Brueggemann realized that a lot has changed since 1948. For him, the recognition of Israel’s right to exist certainly does not mean that a Christian should not criticise the politics of the present state of Israel and the financial support of the United States for violating the human rights of Palestinians. He cites with approval a book by two American authors with a Jewish background who “reject the unshakeable adherence to the wild idea of divine election” and for whom a future without the continuation of violence in ‘the Land’ is only possible if one renounces that claim to election. The core of Judaism with which Christianity will always feel connected consists for him in “explaining and obeying the Torah which requires justice and holiness” and he points out that intense fidelity to the Torah can be put into practice everywhere.<sup>469</sup>

Not only in the USA, but also in the Netherlands, the influence of both Christian Zionism and ‘Land Theology’ on Protestant Christianity has been felt for many years, also at the level of individual ecclesiastical congregations, and also in politics. One of the participants in the ‘Come and see’ trip discussed in the General Introduction, appeared to have come from such an environment with Christian Zionist ideas, but had previously shirked this influence. That had not gone without tensions and ‘silences’ in her family, she said. She remarked about her own ‘transition’:

“...I went to read the Bible critically myself. I noticed more and more that what had been given to me was only inventions and interpretations. Although Jesus

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468 J. STEGEMAN: *Decolonizing Jeremiah. Identity, Narratives and Power in Religious Tradition* (2014) 258.

469 W. BRUEGGEMANN: *Uitverkoren volk? Bijbel lezen met het oog op het Israëliësch-Palestijnse conflict* [Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict] (Utrecht 2017) 13-14, 33-4, 42.

himself lived under a strange, occupying power, I read nowhere about any allusion to the Promise of God in the sense of a nation.”<sup>470</sup>

She had deliberately opted for a ‘Come and see’ journey, hoping that this would help deepen her changed insights. A participant who was a pastor (PKN) indicated that his training had given him too little room to develop a critical view of the present Land. He had been offered a substantial portion of Judaica, but no opportunity to delve into the current context of the country and its diverse population. “I thought it was all too orthodox there”, he said, “and that distressed me”. Above all, he had come to experience this as a problem in discussions with members of the congregation about ‘the Land’.<sup>471</sup>

The discussion among Protestants about the influence of Christian Zionism in the Netherlands also took place before the establishment of the PKN. Well-known theologians from before and just after the Second World War, such as Kornelis Heiko Miskotte (1894-1976) and Willem Aalders (1909-2005) already took a stand against the Christian “Israel hobby”, as Miskotte called the Christian Zionists ironically. He could not agree with the sacralization of the Jews as a people or of the Jewish state.

Miskotte called this a fixation on “a historical-biological fact”, which he qualified as “semi-pagan, semi-sacral”.<sup>472</sup> The “synodal-reformed” and later “orthodox-reformed” Aalders mainly resisted the “chiliastic aberrations” within this tendency.<sup>473</sup>

The Christian Reformed theologians Steven Paas and Dirk Visser have since 2012 more or less continued in the line of Miskotte and Aalders, by emphasizing within their generally Israel-oriented church that it is indefensible that God-given exclusive ‘ethnic’ and political privileges for the state of Israel should exist. Paas had made a critical sound about this, after he himself had been on a ‘study trip’ of the organization ‘Christians for Israel’. He was shocked by the political-chiliastic views with which he and his travelling companions were confronted on that trip. This had prompted him to raise in his ecclesiastical circle the question to what extent the current diversity of Jews in Israel can still be regarded as ‘the people of God’ and whether exclusive political claims can be granted to the state of Israel that are denied to others. According to the Gospel, all nations are equal.<sup>474</sup>

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470 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 62, 68.

471 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 60.

472 K. H. MISKOTTE: ‘De kern van de zaak. Toelichting bij een proeve van hernieuwd belijden’, in *Verzameld Werk, K.H. Miskotte* 11 (Kampen 1950/1989) 243-244.

473 W. AALDERS: *Het Herstel van Israël volgens het Oude Testament. De chiliastische uitlegging getoetst* (Kampen z.d.) 250, 253, 259.

474 S. PAAS: *Christian Zionism Examined. A Review of Ideas on Israel, the Church and the Kingdom* (Hamburg 2012) 13, 25, 45, 46, 56; see also S. PAAS: *Liefde voor Israël nader bekeken* (Kampen 2015).

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His books sometimes elicited fierce reactions within his own circle, but also received approval, remarkably enough among related South African Orthodox Protestant theologians<sup>475</sup>. This can be seen as an indication that it may be too easy to dismiss discussions about ‘Land Theology’ as a left-right opposition within Protestantism.

### *Roman Catholic criticism of Israel as a ‘Glaubensstaat’*

Neither Christian Zionism nor ‘Land Theology’ are today the subject of deeply divisive discussions within the Roman Catholic Church. In an extensive study of the relationship between Catholics and Jews in the Netherlands between 1870 and 2005, Poorthuis and Salemink showed that, at least in ultra-conservative Catholic circles, there has certainly been religious ‘anti-Semitism’. This resulted from a mixture of older religious and more modern ‘racial’ motives, and also contributed to a ‘socioeconomic and political anti-Semitism’, as it then spread in Europe.<sup>476</sup>

According to a study by Livia Rockach, from the end of the 19th century and especially after 1948, especially in the French and American Catholic churches, there has also been the influence of an explicitly pro-Zionist lobby.<sup>477</sup> Poorthuis and Salemink also give examples of this in the Dutch context, in particular in respect to the ‘salvation-historical sympathy’ for political Zionism of the Jewish-Catholic convert Francisca van Leer and *Amici Israel*, a movement, which existed in the Netherlands from 1926 to 1928. But Poorthuis and Salemink argue that the highest authority of the Catholic Church ultimately intervened effectively in the visible attempts to give Zionism more than a political meaning.<sup>478</sup>

In 2018, Pope Emeritus Joseph Ratzinger considered it important to demonstrate in writing that the ‘substitution theory’, to which the Christian Zionists were so fiercely opposed, has never been an official doctrine of the Catholic Church, and that this ‘doctrine’ was even clearly rejected at the Second Vatican Council, but also that, for the RC Church, Judaism is not just a religion among many others.<sup>479</sup>

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475 Several mostly positive reviews appeared in South African Protestant theological journals and church magazines, including in *Tydskrif vir Christelike Wetenskap* (2014, 3rd and 4th quarters) and in *Die Kerkblad* (November 2014).

476 M. POORTHUIS and Th. SALEMINK: *Een donkere Spiegel. Nederlandse katholieken over joden, 1870-2005. Tussen antisemitisme en erkenning.* (Nijmegen 2006) 799-800.

477 L. ROKACH: *The Catholic Church and the Question of Palestine* (Worcester 1987). Livia Rokach was born from Jewish-Israeli parents, left Israel and worked as a ‘Palestinian’ journalist in Italy. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs tried to stop the publication of her book in the US. The actions of the then Knesset member, the peace activist Uri Avnery, prevented this at the time. *See also:* <http://cosmos.ucc.ie/cs1064/jabowen/IPSC/php/authors.php?auid=601> (accessed 17 08 2019).

478 POORTHUIS & SALEMINK: *Een donkere Spiegel*, 198 and 253-267.

479 J. RATZINGER - Benedict XVI: ‘Gnade und Berufung ohne Reue. Anmerkungen zum Traktat ‘De Iudaeis’, in *Communio* 4 (2018) 387-404, 392. *Communio:* [https://www.communio.de/pdf/vorab-veroeffentlichung/Communio-Benedikt\\_XVI-2018.pdf](https://www.communio.de/pdf/vorab-veroeffentlichung/Communio-Benedikt_XVI-2018.pdf) (accessed 24 08 2018).



Ratzinger opens his argument with the observation that ‘Auschwitz’ certainly required a reconsideration by the Church of its relationship to Judaism. However, he also emphasizes that the recognition of the State of Israel by the Vatican in 1994 certainly did not mean recognition of this State as a “*Glaubensstaat*” (‘Belief State’) and that claims to ‘the Land’ arising from “*eine theologisch verstandene Landnahme im Sinne eines neuen politischen Messianismus*” [= a theologically understood Land acquisition in the sense of a new political messianism] have been inconceivable and unacceptable to the Catholic Church from the outset. Thus he clearly rejects Land theology, Christian Zionism and Jewish religious-nationalism as well.<sup>480</sup> It can be added that despite the lack of a two-state solution, the Vatican also recognized Palestine as a state in 2015.<sup>481</sup>

### *An ‘imagined’ theological vision of ‘the Land’ especially for pilgrims*

Since the 1990s, the international Catholic peace movement Pax Christi considered it particularly important that the discussion about ‘the Land’ should no longer be limited to a discussion about the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. It was considered desirable to broaden it to include an interreligious dialogue in which all three Abrahamic religions in ‘the Land’, including Islam, would be discussed. This was expressed visually in 1999 by having a remarkable icon painted for pilgrims to ‘the Land’.

The assignment was given to the monastery ‘St. John in the desert’ in Palestine, which presents itself on its website to pilgrims as a *bridge for peace*.<sup>482</sup> In 2000 the icon was consecrated in Jerusalem in the presence of Pax Christi pilgrims on the occasion of both the 50th anniversary of the movement and the millennium celebration, the celebration of the birth of Christ 2000 years ago.

The icon brings twelve smaller icons together within one tableau, so it is actually a mini *iconostasis* or *templon*. The middle image at the bottom depicts the ‘Heavenly Jerusalem’, with Christ in the middle, which according to the text underneath refers to “the joyful message that Christ is our Atonement”. This can be seen as a reference to the Epistle of the Romans in which Paul emphasizes that “there is no distinction between Jews and other peoples, for they all have the same Lord”.<sup>483</sup> The Old Testament image

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480 RATZINGER: ‘Gnade und Berufung ohne Reue’, 393, 400, 401.

481 *Wikipedia*: [https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestina\\_\(state\)#International\\_relationships](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestina_(state)#International_relationships) (accessed 02 10 2018). Of the 193 member states of the United Nations, 137 have now recognized Palestine as a state. The Dutch parliament voted with a narrow majority against a proposal to that proposal in 2016.

482 *Holy Land Pilgrimage. A Bridge for Peace*: <http://www.holyland-pilgrimage.org/st-john-in-the-desert> (accessed 02 10 2017).

483 Rom. 10:12.

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at the top in the middle, of Jacob and Esau, both trampling on a sword, is strikingly prominent. Of Esau is said in an explanation: “He is the one who bridges the distance between the two brothers and that, while he had every reason to take revenge on his brother”.<sup>484</sup>

In the ten smaller icons on either side of these two not only images of persons important within Christianity can be seen, both that of the West as well as that of the East, such as the Samaritan woman and saints Sofia, Boris and Gleb, and such as Clara and Francis, but also persons important within Judaism and Islam such as Sara and Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau.

The icon is, of course, primarily a Christian icon, but it also emphasizes connections that can be made between the three monotheistic religions. In the terms of the theologian Jacques Dupuis SJ, it could be said that this icon, which depicts Christ amidst representations that may have meaning for believers from several religions, shows a “paradigm shift” from an “exclusive” to a more “inclusive” presence of the Redeemer.<sup>485</sup> From this perspective, all people are fundamentally seen as ‘redeemed’ and therefore able to act in such a way that they can find peaceful and just solutions for their coexistence with others, regardless of their beliefs.

The icon invites us to think about what can and cannot be expected of a Christian pilgrim in ‘the Land’ today. It is also a call to reflect on the demand of Christian Palestinians to pay attention to the fact that they have been seen and treated as undesirable aliens and second-class citizens by the State of Israel for decades. By focusing on what might be called theologically ‘a vision of reconciliation’, the Pax Christi icon implies a fundamental rejection of the contrasting, apocalyptic vision of a bloody Final War, as a necessary and compelling perspective that must give direction to Christian action.

The icon is not a manual for what pilgrims to ‘the Land’ can actually do. It wants to stimulate reflection, and it offers pilgrims and people back home the opportunity to come together around an image and to reflect on the old phenomenon of pilgrimages to ‘the Land’, a phenomenon in which old motives keep returning, but which can also take on new forms over and over again. After its consecration in Jerusalem, the icon itself went on a ‘journey’ and was displayed in churches in several countries in Western Europe. Thousands of printed reproductions of the image have been distributed, along with handouts for reflection on the icon, at home or in a church.

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484 S. FRITSCHY: *Christus is onze verzoening. Handreikingen voor ontmoetingen met de Pax Christi-icoon* (Pax Christi Netherlands, Utrecht & Vastenactie, Den Haag 2003) 7-15. *Eikonikon*: <http://www.eikonikon.nl/bulletin/2003/ontmoeting-met-de-pax-christi-ikoon/> (accessed 21 08 2018) 11.

485 J. DUPUIS SJ: *Christianity and the Religions. From Confrontation to Dialogue* (New York/London 2002) 52, 76-79.

## Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

In this way, a peace movement in which physical, missionary and meeting pilgrimages had always played an important role returned to a 'pilgrimage of the mind'. But less than two years later, on 31 December 2001, Pax Christi International was again jointly responsible for an actual Peace Walk from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, this mobilisation of thousands of peace pilgrims, including Jews, Christians, and Muslims, formed "a human chain of peace" around the Old City, which contains famous shrines of the three world religions.<sup>486</sup>

In summary, it can be observed that within the Catholic tradition the boundaries with respect to Christian Zionist thought are more clearly marked than within the Reformation. The right of existence of the State of Israel is recognized, but not the right to an exclusive way of existence as a *Glaubensstaat* with special benefits for one religious group.

In addition, the Roman Catholic peace movement appeared to have made use of an ancient religious image tradition. It did so in a way that in fact closely matches the emphasis on the importance of an 'inner pilgrimage' that we also encountered in Protestant tradition, but also in the visual culture in the churches of the East. The invitation to meditate around an icon can be seen as an invitation to the pilgrim, but also to the person staying at home, to make an inner pilgrimage; an invitation to reflect further on questions that the journey has brought, but also on questions about the relationships between religions that both pilgrims and people staying at home encounter close to home.

### 6.3 'Come and see' and the criticism of Western pilgrimage

From II 6.1 above, it became clear that since the Second World War, especially in religiously motivated Catholic pilgrimages, there have been interesting innovations which partly anticipated pilgrimages as advocated in the 'Come and see' initiative. But since the '80s of the twentieth century, in fact, pilgrimage from other than religious motives in particular has taken off. In an article in the international theological journal *Concilium* in 1996, Paul Post presented a contribution in which he analysed a number of Dutch pilgrim reports from the '80s and '90s - four to Santiago, one to Assisi and one to Rome.

In this analysis he identified the presence of three general themes: 'pilgrimage' as a contrast to everyday life, the encounters during the journey, and the relationship with the culture of the past.<sup>487</sup> In the last point, Post pointed to a tendency towards

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486 E. DE JONGHE, Secretary-General of *Pax Christi International* (letter): <http://www.angelfire.com/hero/eto/paxintl.html> (accessed 16 06 2017).

487 P. POST: 'De moderne pelgrim: (een) christelijk ritueel tussen traditie (post-)moderniteit', in *Concilium. International journal of theology* 4 (1996) 114-125.

## Chapter 6

‘musicalisation’ of pilgrimage, a phenomenon that has also been observed with regard to traditional pilgrimages to ‘the Land’, which tend to see ‘the land’ as little more than a kind of ‘Biblical Open Air Museum’.<sup>488</sup> One point that is more similar to the concept of the ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage is the theme of the encounters.<sup>489</sup>

Moreover, Post noted in a general sense that in the new pilgrim’s boom in Europe there are “changed and changing attempts to give meaning to a constantly changing world”.<sup>490</sup> He wondered whether the revival of pilgrimages was not an expression of a new (post)modern form of meaning or an appropriation of what was traditionally a Christian ritual from an individual need for spiritual experiences.<sup>491</sup>

This new pilgrimage, which was Post’s topic, has led to quite a few critical reactions from a religious point of view, especially - but not only - from both the Western and Southern ‘liberation theology’, a theology that appears to have relations with the tourism critique that is also emerging in the South.

### *Pilgrimage as ‘healing’ that is at the same time a resist*

In her *magnum opus* “Mystik und Widerstand / Du stilles Geschrei” [“Mysticism and resistance / You silent screaming”], the Lutheran liberation theologian Dorothee Sölle (1929-2003) distances herself from postmodern forms of meaning.<sup>492</sup> In her work, the answer to the question “by which way can the secret of God be approached” turns out to be a moral obligation to resist prevailing, negative powers.<sup>493</sup> Man who seeks God cannot only draw on spiritual experiences of happiness, she found. Of course, a human being may sometimes be speechless of happiness as a result of a ‘peak experience’ during a physical pilgrimage, but a Christian must remain prepared to face up to injustice in the world as well, and thus be prepared to become speechless with dismay. Thus, for Sölle, not ‘self-realization’ is the highest good of a ‘mystical journey’, not ‘letting go’ in the sense of ‘breathing in’ alone. She pleads for people to be open to a transformation loaded with social values that leads to a new engagement. For her, “praising God” is the first impetus for such a journey and at the same time its first stop. “Missing God”, as a result of a letting go in the sense of asceticism, a “renunciation” in which the lack of God becomes noticeable, is an inevitable second stop. She formulates the third staging point as a “healing that is at the same time a resist”.<sup>494</sup> ‘In’ Christ this

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488 POORTHUIS & POSTMA: ‘Pelgrimeren naar Palestina’ 34 ff.

489 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 136.

490 POST: ‘De moderne pelgrim’ 118-119.

491 POST: ‘De moderne pilgrim’ 121-122.

492 D. SÖLLE: *Mystiek en verzet. ‘Gij stilgeschreeuw’* (Baarn 19983) 135.

493 SÖLLE: *Mystiek en verzet* 136.

494 SÖLLE: *Mystiek en verzet* 140.

Christian transformation by renunciation takes shape. “Christ enlightens and forms a human being” on his pilgrim’s way.<sup>495</sup>

For Sölle, the mystical journey of the ‘unification’ of the soul with God (the *perfectio*) is not just a way ‘inside’. The road ‘outside’ that must follow is at least as important. It therefore advocates a movement back and forth, as in fact became visible within the pilgrimage approach of the Catholic peace organization Pax Christi: meditations around an icon and trying to be present in the society of ‘the Land’ in a spirit of solidarity and reconciliation. She mentioned three components that must be present in the lives of Christians: sharp perception, compassion and doing justice. According to her, the ‘mystical journey’ would be stripped of its Christian meaning if the traveller closed his eyes to suffering and to the possibility of a “healing that is at the same time a resistance”. For her, life should not merely be about individual realization, but above all about changing an unacceptable reality.<sup>496</sup>

The Protestant ethicist Frits de Lange also, as we saw before (I.5.4), does not perceive the pilgrimage as a spiritual hype of our time without reservation. In his book *“Heilige Onrust”* [“Holy Unrest”] he is at the same time mild to the “pilgrim 2.0” as he calls him, but he remains somewhat allergic to the jargon of “self-realization”. His criticism is similar to Luther’s criticism of “saved by works”: it is not the efforts of the ‘I’-man, but grace “for free” that ultimately has the first and the last word in a human life. De Lange found it astonishing to even hear Pope John Paul II speak the ‘self-renewal’ language in Santiago in 1989 on a World Youth Day, such as: “Renew the encounter with yourself” and “Discover your origins. Experience your roots”. But at the same time he also has respect for what he calls the “open, vulnerable self-image” of the postmodern pilgrim. He sees that, in his own way, this gives an answer to “the neoliberal vision of man, which forces him to a clear, unambiguous, stable and rounded understanding of himself”.<sup>497</sup> But for De Lange the ‘I’ at stake here must be primarily an “ethical project” (see also II.5.4).

Sölle’s understanding of the ‘mystical journey’, but also De Lange’s view have led to ‘pilgrims’ being actually expected to be more open to challenges; for example in the field of peace and justice as they arise today from globalisation and inequality, from migration and refugee flows, and from the climate crisis. Sölle’s approach, as well as that of De Lange, can thus be seen as the return of the critical motive of the ‘moral pilgrim’ for our time, which originated in the Late Middle Ages and at the beginning of the Modern Era, but which Augustine was the first to elaborate thoroughly (II 4.3).

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495 SÖLLE: *Mystiek en verzet* 125.

496 SÖLLE: *Mystiek en verzet* 140.

497 F. DE LANGE: *Heilige Onrust* 71.

*Non-Christian criticism of the western pilgrim and western tourist*

Against the background of the supposed, noncommittal character of the postmodern Western pilgrimage, De Lange introduced in his 2017 book a remarkable critique of the Western pilgrim by the Indian Hindu philosopher Jarava Lal Mehta (1912-1988), with which he placed the discussion in a much broader interreligious context. A study on Mehta was published in 2013 by Thomas Ellis under the title “The Death of the Pilgrim: the Postcolonial Hermeneutics of Jarava Lal Mehta”.<sup>498</sup>

India has countless *tirthas*, which mainly show that these Hindu pilgrimages are not meant as a kind of ‘ointment’ for the soul. Rather, a *tirtha* is an activity in which ‘the inconvenience’ is consciously sought out and in which the pilgrim is tested on his capacities in relation to awkward and painful relationships with others. The confrontation which is sought also has another character than Sölle’s paradox of ‘healing that is a resistance’. The word *tirtha* originally stands for the fordable place in a river, which offers a possibility to come from one side to the other, albeit not without risks. The *tirtha* is about, as De Lange sums it up:

“...taking risks, being confronted with your own limitations and powerlessness, being thrown back and forth between fear and dread, going through hardships, encountering seemingly impregnable obstacles.”<sup>499</sup>

So it is not just about spiritual ‘self-enrichment’. But it is not even about Mehta’s understanding of each other, but rather about the willingness, to be able to let the other be and not even to want to interpret him in order to gain ‘control’ over him. This can involve “a precarious, frightening and sometimes painful experience of loss”. Mehta speaks of pilgrimage as an *Irregang* [‘twists and turns’]<sup>500</sup>, an activity that sharpens the uncertainty of all human existence with its relationships and thus wants to form the individual in respect and understanding towards each other. It is then the personal ordeal which forms the primary goal and means of the *tirtha*’s school of learning.<sup>501</sup>

Ellis shows that Mehta’s sharp criticism of the Western way of pilgrimage should be placed against the background of his postcolonial, philosophical position.

For Mehta, pilgrimage meant no pleasant, deepening Sabbath leave, no ‘quest’ and no healing path for the ‘self’. Moreover, Mehta distrusted a comparative theology and philosophy that was too fast and idealistic, a ‘fusion of horizons’ of different cultures.<sup>502</sup>

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498 Th. B. ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim: The Postcolonial Hermeneutics of Jarava Lal Mehta* (Dordrecht 2013).

499 DE LANGE: *Heilige Onrust* 92.

500 ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim* 107.

501 ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim* 108.

502 ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim* 68-71.

## Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

He did not just agree with what he saw as a Western Christian ideal that people should always share everything with each other. From the typically 'colonial' assumption in which the other always has to be controlled, this, he warned, can degenerate into an idealistic 'sharing' between partisans who, because of their fundamental inequality, are not partners at all.<sup>503</sup> He also resisted the, in his view, exaggerated self-criticism of advocates of interreligious dialogue, which would be a symptom of a 'hidden prejudice' in which, on a deeper level, there is no equal and symmetrical relationship at all but rather a desire for control of one over the other.<sup>504</sup>

Mehta's thinking about the phenomenon of pilgrimage in general does not show much kinship with that of Western theologians, not even with that of liberation theologians. In his view 'the center', around which a pilgrim continues to revolve, is 'an emptiness'. According to Mehta, the longing of Westerners for universal values has its origin in their own limited European, philosophical and colonial frame of mind.<sup>505</sup> In Sölle and De Lange the pilgrim does not circle, as in Mehta's case, around a 'void', but around God and God in Christianity is a filled, 'incarnated Secret', not a 'void'. Moreover, God is a Secret that remains accessible in all circumstances through 'the Other', for example by means of a pilgrimage that confronts a pilgrim with the suffering of others.

Mehta's significance for this study of the 'Come and see' initiative lies in the fact that he warns against the obstacles that can play a role in a dialogue between religions, when that dialogue is stimulated unilaterally from the West. In this way uncomfortable inequalities can arise between dialogue partners from the Western and non-Western side.

Palestinian Christians, for example, may want to stay away from the, for them asymmetrical, relationship that can occur within a Western framed Judaeo-Christian dialogue. Mehta's analysis can help to understand this repulsed reaction when Palestinian Christians - however 'Western' they may often be - may feel 'forced' by Western Christians to participate in a Judaeo-Christian conversation led by Westerners about the situation in 'the Land'.<sup>506</sup>

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503 ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim* 96.

504 ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim* 89.

505 ELLIS: *On the Death of the Pilgrim* 109.

506 During the organization of the Kairos conference at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam in 2011, Kerk in Aktie (PKN) proposed to have a Jewish-Israeli rabbi participate together with a Palestinian in one of the forums. Participating Palestinian theologians, however, felt that priority should have been given to exclusively discussing the differences of opinion between themselves and those of their Western fellow Christians, because in their view these are already far-reaching enough. They did not want to be automatically part of a triangle, because Judeo-Christian relations in the West have a totally different history and impact on which they do not want to become self-evident addressed

*Christian tourism and pilgrimage criticism from the “Global South”*

In 2014 a collection from Christian theologians from the “Global South” (mainly from Taiwan and India) was published in India, entitled “Deconstructing Tourism? Who Benefits?” with critical, ethical evaluations of tourism in several places around the world.<sup>507</sup> An important source of inspiration for the tourism criticism expressed herein was a study by the sociologist John Urry from 1990 with the eloquent title “The Tourist Gaze”.<sup>508</sup> The collection contains on the one hand a radical contribution by the evangelical Lutheran ethicist M.P. Joseph who rejects all forms of tourism, but on the other hand also many contributions with a reformist agenda that keep open the possibility of a responsible, Biblically inspired perspective on travel.

Joseph’s radical rejection of all tourism sees the tourism industry not only as “an economic instrument for neo-liberal expansion”, but also as a form of travel that inevitably fosters ‘the objectification’ of fellow human beings, as analysed by Urry.<sup>509</sup> Proposals for alternative forms of tourism are fundamentally distrusted by Joseph.<sup>510</sup> The idea that tourism could be good for a local population because they would otherwise have no sources of livelihood is, in his view, the result of a ‘ruse’ by the ‘technobureaucrats of developmentalism’ who decide what is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ for people in poor countries. Joseph’s analysis makes sense in many ways, but, like Bauman’s pessimistic analysis of pilgrims, he has no eye for possible alternatives.

Other authors, for example, do see opportunities in a ‘Community Based Tourism’ as advocated by the ‘Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism’ (ECOT).<sup>511</sup> It is believed that tourism can benefit the local population if travelers are enabled to do so. Guests and hosts should have the opportunity to meet and work together in a spirit of openness, sensitivity and respect, with an eye to mutual cultural enrichment and lasting contacts.<sup>512</sup> It is pointed out that “theological communities” and “faith-based movements” in particular can play a role in this.<sup>513</sup> For theology students there should

507 C. D’MELLO et al. (eds.): *Deconstructing Tourism? Who Benefits* (Tainan Taiwan & Kolkata India 2014)155-175. The book was an initiative of, among others, *The Senate Centre for Extension* (SCEPTRE) in Tainan (Taiwan) and the *Pastoral Theological Research Senate of Serampore University* (PTCA) in Kolkata (West Bengal India).

508 J. URRY & J. LARSEN: *The Tourist Gaze 3.0. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London 1990, 3<sup>rd</sup>. ed. 2012).

509 M. P. JOSEPH: ‘The Objectified People and the Objectified God of Tourism’, in: C. D’MELLO et al. (eds.): *Deconstructing Tourism? Who Benefits* (Tainan, Taiwan 2014) 154, 158.

510 JOSEPH: ‘The Objectified People’ 160.

511 K. SRISANG: ‘The ecumenical coalition on third world tourism’, in *Annals of Tourism Research* 16 (1989) 119-121. See: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/0160738389900340> (accessed 22 09 2019).

512 C. D’MELLO: ‘Introduction’, in D’MELLO et al.: *Deconstructing Tourism* 15.

513 D’MELLO: ‘Deconstructing Tourism. A Challenge of Justice for the Church’, in D’MELLO et al.: *Deconstructing Tourism* xxiv, 7.



be curricula on this subject. Since such a thing is usually lacking in theology courses so far, it is no wonder that most people in churches and their predecessors do not question tourist travel, despite the injustice and ecological devastation it can cause.<sup>514</sup>

One of the theologians in the collection points out the desirability that pilgrims on church trips manage to transform their ‘tourist gaze’ into a ‘gaze of compassionate justice’, also known as the “Jesus gaze”. This does not refer to ‘looking’ but to ‘wanting to see’, a gaze that knows how to perceive injustice and wants to resist it. Here the influence of the American professor, author and social activist Gloria Watkins (born 1952, better known under her author’s name ‘Bell Hooks’) who herself uses the term “oppositional gaze” is noticeable. This is a way of wanting to ‘see’ that calls for courage and dedication to the marginalized. Theologians should be prepared to learn from the marginalized in a society in order to acquire knowledge about the “experience of marginalization” and to realize that theologically relevant “oppositional knowledge” is created in communities of marginalized people.<sup>515</sup>

These non-Western theological developments are thus closely in line with what is advocated in the ‘Come and see’ initiative. The Palestinian Melkite Archbishop Elias Chacour and the Palestinian ‘Alternative Tourism Group’ are mentioned in this book as examples that help to develop an ‘oppositional gaze’ for tourists and pilgrims, especially in ‘the Land’.

Finally, the Palestinian Christian Rifat Odeh Kassis, not a professional theologian, but co-founder of both Kairos Palestine and the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG), and who can be seen as the most important ‘strategist’ behind the ‘Come and see’ initiative. He sees it as a Christian mission to help promote lasting peace and justice with the efforts of both pilgrims and tourists. He was imprisoned in Israel several times because of his political activities.<sup>516</sup>

With approval he quotes the ECOT’s religiously inspired paradigm for tourism “...by means of which tourism becomes a quest for spirituality through encounters, a quest in search of God’s truth”. Given the importance of Kassis’ role and text for the subject matter of this book, below follows a summary of the most important elements of his contribution.<sup>517</sup>

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514 D’MELLO: ‘Introduction’, in D’MELLO et al.: *Deconstructing Tourism* 15. UCA news. See: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/tourism-should-be-part-of-theology/9640> (accessed 27 05 2019).

515 G. ZACHARIAH: ‘Tourist Gaze and the Subaltern Oppositional Gaze: Theological Re-imaginings’, in D’MELLO et al.: *Deconstructing Tourism* 33, 45.

516 *Kairos Palestine*: <http://www.kairospalestine.ps/index.php/about-us/leadership/33-kairos-palestine-co-authors/20-rifat-kassis> (accessed 12 12 2017).

517 R.O. KASSIS: ‘Tourism and Conflict. A Perspective from Kairos Palestine Experience and Holy Land Tourism’, in C. D’MELLO et al.: *Deconstructing Tourism* 186-206, 197.

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Kassis sees both pilgrimage and tourism as an opportunity to facilitate understanding and dialogue between cultures in a world profoundly disturbed by inequality, xenophobia and violence. For him, the concept of ‘justice tourism’ has a special ‘missionary’ connotation and unlike the aforementioned author Joseph, this is not necessarily a *contradictio in terminis*. He believes without hesitation that under the right conditions tourism can certainly benefit local communities. To this end, he also appeals to the ideas of Martha Honey, co-founder of the “Centre for Responsible Tourism” (CREST), which was founded in 2003.<sup>518</sup>

He has the same objections against most pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ today as he has against ordinary tourist trips: namely that they are monopolized by the Israeli tourist industry. He points to the negative impact for passing on the biblical message within a tourist context dominated by Israelis. He sees that pilgrims in ‘the Land’ are often conditioned in the same way as tourists, namely to “condemn us and distrust us, without knowing and seeing us”. According to Kassis, this begins when border officials at *Ben Gurion* airport ask travellers the suggestive question “if they know any Arabs”.

Kassis departs personally from a Christian perspective, but he expects the pilgrim and the tourist to ask themselves the same thing, namely, what are the moral implications of their journey: What do they see? What stories are told to them about what they see and by whom? Who has ‘the power’ over those stories and who doesn’t? Does their way of travelling or not contribute to the perpetuation of injustice? What is their own responsibility in this?

But he also advocates what he calls “facilitating the sight”, i.e. a type of ‘responsible tourism’ in which both pilgrims and tourists are actually enabled to use their senses independently, because they are also brought to places that are ‘disturbing’ and where Israeli guides usually do not take them. He thus points to the influential role that Israeli guides have as ‘policymakers’ (Singer I 1.4), by what they do show and by what they leave out. What is almost always omitted is the Palestinian story of the *Nakba*. Kassis enriched the extensive vocabulary of the Topos of ‘the pilgrim and the tourist’ with the term “occupation-orchestrated tourism”.

By the way, he criticizes the search for places where demonstrators clash with the army and police, even though some want to go there out of solidarity with ‘the Palestinian cause’. In this context, he rejects ‘thrill tourism’, which can be seen as a negative form of the previously discussed ‘dark tourism’ (see I 1.5). He is convinced that such an interest can mainly throw oil on the fire and that tourists and pilgrims in a conflict area should be aware of their special responsibility in this respect when it comes to situations that can lead to violence. Like Honey, he believes that ‘responsible

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518 CREST: <https://www.responsibletravel.org/whoWeAre/aboutUs.php> (accessed 23-11-2019).

tourism' should therefore be explicitly linked to the pursuit of 'conflict prevention'. Kassis has worked for a long time at the World Council of Churches, which also considers 'justice' and 'world peace' of paramount importance and where the Christian imperative certainly plays a role in order to promote 'peace through justice'.

The conventional pilgrimages in 'the Land' appear, to Kassis, a mere 'tourist ritual'. He has the same expectations of the pilgrim as of the tourist, but he does not hesitate to confront the pilgrim with the challenging questions.

“Does the pilgrim search for God in the Holy Land? Are pilgrims willing to listen to the local narratives of the people whom they visit? Can we call someone a pilgrim who visits the Holy Land if he / she does not encounter the local communities and accompany them in their struggle for life and justice?”<sup>519</sup>

For Kassis it's always about the fundamental difference between 'seeing' and 'looking'. 'Looking' remains on the outside. For him 'seeing' is part of a transition and implies a decision to 'face up to injustice', it implies involvement and regretting previous ignorance: "(...) 'See' becomes an act of repentance for the sins of silence and ignorance”.

It is a formulation reminiscent of a statement made by one of the participants of the 'Come and see' trip discussed in General Introduction, who spoke of "the pilgrim's grief that may also be there". For a modern pilgrim, the willingness to finally face the pain of the Palestinian inhabitants of the country can thus make his journey a modern 'penance journey' as it were.

### *Migrants and refugees considered as pilgrims*

During his trip to 'the Land' in 2014, Pope Francis not only set the tone for another type of pilgrim with his prayer at both the Wall of Secession and the Wailing Wall (I 1.2). Just like his predecessor in 2009 he also did so by visiting the Palestinian refugee camp *Ayda* in order to speak with refugees there.<sup>520</sup> This pope showed himself to be an advocate for migrants and refugees more generally. For him they are a part of a broader problem of inequality, against which walls and barbed wire are not the solution. Morally, according to the Pope, the encounter with refugees and migrants calls for a thorough transition, 'a conversion':

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519 R.O. KASSIS: 'Tourism and Conflict' 206.

520 The speech of Benedict XVI during his visit to the *Ayda* refugee camp in Bethlehem in 2009: <https://www.rkddocumenten.nl/rkdocs/index.php?mi=600&doc=3349> (accessed 10 11 2019).

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“This is about all of us, about the present, about the future of mankind and mankind. Especially the very vulnerable migrants help us to read the ‘signs of the times’. Through them, the Lord calls us to repent: to free ourselves from exclusion, from indifference and from a disposable culture.”<sup>521</sup>

The Kairos document describes being a ‘refugee’ as a special part of the identity of the majority of Palestinians: “Refugees are [...] part of our reality. Many of them still live in camps under difficult circumstances. They are entitled to return and have been waiting generation after generation to return to their country. What will their fate be?” (Kd 1.1.6).

The document describes the emigration of Palestinians as a continuous, painful drain: “Emigration is another element of our reality. Many young Palestinians, Christians and Muslims, decide to emigrate because they lack vision and even a glimmer of hope for peace and freedom”. (Kd 1.3).

How and where do the physical ‘refugee’ and physical ‘pilgrim’ touch each other in the special context of ‘the Land’? Is there a difference or a similarity between ‘the pilgrim’ on the one hand and ‘the migrant’ and ‘the refugee’ on the other hand? And is there a difference between interpreting and describing both phenomena between the theologian and the cultural scientist?

To answer these questions, we will first go back to the term *peregrinus* used by Augustine and the special desire for the *pulchritudo iustitiae* which he presents to the *peregrinus* (II.4.3). This is in fact the basis on which the Brazilian Catholic liberation theologian José Oscar Beozzo (b. 1941) approached the phenomenon of pilgrimage (*peregrinatio*) in the mid-1990s in the issue of *Concilium* dedicated to pilgrimage. He wrote about “The poor immigrant: on a pilgrimage to a dignified existence”, a wavelength of the migration discourse to which Pope Francis also refers.

It is to be expected that theologians with reservations about the so-called liberation theology, but also cultural scientists who are engaged in pilgrimage, have difficulty in equating the notions of ‘pilgrim’ and ‘foreigner’. Badone, for example (I.1.2), acknowledges that the growing scientific interest in pilgrimage and tourism stems from questions raised by the enormously increased mobility of people, but for her, tourism and pilgrimages are both, ultimately, primarily voluntary forms of travel; the mobility of refugees and migrants is not.<sup>522</sup> For her, as for Bauman and Welten, the involuntariness

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521 *RK Documenten.nl*: <https://www.rkdocumenten.nl/rkdocs/index.php?mi=600&doc=7386&al=10> (accessed 10 11 2019).

522 BADONE: ‘Conventional and Unconventional Pilgrimage’ 7-8.

of refugees and migrants therefore makes the decisive difference. Bauman refers to “vagabonds” as “involuntary tourists”<sup>523</sup> (see I.3.2).

Beozzo shows that in the phenomenon of pilgrimage, the distinction between voluntariness and involuntariness does not seem reasonable in *an sich* (in itself). In the 1990s, he deliberately used the term ‘pilgrim’ for those who do not wish to resign themselves to their fate and seek liberation from a depressing situation. Beozzo lifts the distinction between the notion of pilgrim and the concepts of refugee and migrant, in order to be able to draw attention to the ‘pilgrim condition of the whole human existence’, as he found it with Augustine and with Thomas Aquinas, in whose *Summa Theologiae* the *homo viator*, man as traveller, is the central concept.<sup>524</sup>

From his own South American context, Beozzo recalls the so-called ‘messianic migrations’ of South American peoples such as the Guarini, who from the 16th century to the present day are looking for a ‘Land where there is no evil’ and where the tension between desire and reality will have been lifted.<sup>525</sup>

People who believe they are heirs of Western civilization should receive migrants and refugees with the same hospitality that ‘pilgrims’ are often received on traditional pilgrim routes, according to Beozzo. They should reflect ‘a central virtue of the nomads’, namely ‘hospitality’, because in that mirror they can sense God, just like Abraham, when he received three strangers in his tent.<sup>526</sup> He points to Paul’s statement: “and do not forget hospitality; through it, some have unwittingly welcomed angels”,<sup>527</sup> to the book of Exodus and to the first letter of Peter which, in his opinion, was written to encourage Christians in their *diaspora* of the time, also known as ‘those without a home’, or *parokoi*.

This is an appeal to the roots of both the Jewish and Christian traditions, in order to strengthen the commitment to migrants and refugees with a religious vision of both the pilgrimage phenomenon and the migration phenomenon. Beozzo would like ‘believers’ and ‘non-believers’ to unite in new, activist pilgrim movements. He cites as examples the marches for peace in Assisi and Sarajevo in the 1990s, marches by fighters for equal civil rights and against racial discrimination to Washington, and the marches of the ‘No Land’ movement in Brazil. Despite all the differences and contradictions,

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523 Z. BAUMAN: *Globalisation, The Human Consequences* (Oxford UK 1998) 92-93.

524 J. O. BEOZZO: ‘The poor migrant: on a pilgrimage to a dignified existence’ (in Portuguese by C. Bartels), in *Concilium. International journal of theology* 4 (1996) 63-72, p. 68-69.

525 BEOZZO: ‘The poor migrant’ 66.

526 Gen. 18, 1-5.

527 Hebr. 13,2.

the moral and often difficult question of whether people, regardless of their identity, are willing to be each other's 'fellow pilgrim' in life is continually being asked here.<sup>528</sup>

Also in the Israeli/Palestinian context, Beozzo's moral question remains topical because of the large numbers of Palestinian refugees residing both in 'the Land' itself, and in the countries around it, as well as in other places in the world.<sup>529</sup> The Kairos document, with its 'Come and See' call primarily addressed to fellow Christians, speaks out about the involuntary emigration of these refugees, for their 'right of return' and their rights as fellow human beings and fellow citizens.

It can be concluded that Beozzo does not make it easy for its readers to equate the terms 'pilgrim' and 'stranger'.

But of course it could easily be justified with the term *peregrinus* in Augustine's work. Beozzo's approach may serve, in particular, to place extra emphasis on the ambition to promote a spiritual and humane connection between the 'voluntary' and the 'involuntary' 'pilgrim'. The difference between Badone and Beozzo is that Badone, as a social scientist, attaches great importance to the clear analytical distinction of terms, while the theologian Beozzo wants to argue above all that all people in life are 'pilgrims on the move' and that it is the migrants and refugees in particular who must be able to count on a hospitality such as that which pilgrims depend on.

Finally, it can be noted that the 'Come and see' initiative ties in with this to the extent that encounters with refugees, for example in refugee camps such as *Ayda* in Bethlehem, were not only part of Pope Francis' visit but were also explicitly part of Pax Christi's 'pilgrimages of solidarity' in 2004, 2006 and 2008<sup>530</sup>, and of the program of the previously discussed 'Come and see' trip of 2013.<sup>531</sup>

#### 6.4 The theology of the 'Living Stones'

The concept of 'Living Stones', as a counterpart to 'dead stones' to which pilgrimages aimed at holy places are often directed, was mentioned several times before. There should be no doubt that the 'Come and see' initiative is especially connected with this new development in post-war theological thinking about pilgrimages. Therefore,

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528 SOLOMON: 'Jewish Pilgrimage and Peace' 57-58. In his commentary on pilgrimages, Solomon points to the divergence between 'secular pilgrimages' of Jews who are either exclusively intended to promote loyalty to the State of Israel, or who join universal projects and movements for peace and human rights. He concludes on the second: "*The marches could easily provide an opportunity for reconciliation and peace, and it is to be hoped that the modifications so far made will lead in this direction*".

529 UNRWA. Palestine and Israel each use very different definitions of "Palestinian refugees", which therefore vary in numbers from e.g. "five million" (UNRWA) to "several thousands" (Israel). UNRWA: <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees> (accessed 19 11 2018).

530 IKVPAXCHRISTI: *Onderweg in Israël en de Palestijnse gebieden. Solidariteitspelgrimage* (Utrecht 2009) 6.

531 TEN BERGE: *Solidariteitspelgrimage naar Bethlehem* 24; TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 86.

before summarizing the theology of the Palestinian Alternative Tourism Group in the last section of this chapter, this section will first focus on the thinking of Michael Prior who can be seen as an important founder of this theological approach. Next, the work of the theologian Mary Grey will be discussed, who has interpreted this theology in a special way, and finally it will be examined what characterizes the work of a number of Palestinian theologians in 'the Land' itself.

*Michael Priors 'Living Stones'*

The Roman Catholic Father Michael Prior CM<sup>532</sup> (1942-2004) united several qualities: that of Professor of Biblical theology, linguist, liberation theologian and peace activist. He was an early defender of Palestinian rights with a special eye for the Christians among them.<sup>533</sup>

In one of the two posthumously published collections of articles by his hand, Prior explained, on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount, that pilgrims can be expected to be alert to integrating both the personal and the political into their lives.<sup>534</sup> His work boils down to a plea for a theology of action that faces political and social realities and is unwilling to accept them.

Prior pointed to the a-religious, nationalistic roots of Zionism as it arose in the nineteenth century, as an essentially secular 'ideology'. He explained that the founding fathers and the first generation of Jewish settlers, well before the *Holocaust*, believed they could appropriate an empty land in Palestine, which would have become empty after the destruction of the Temple in the year 70 and then remained empty. Prior drew the conclusion that the *Nakba* should not be condoned afterwards by invoking the Holocaust, nor with the myth of an 'empty land'.

He spoke of the *Nakba* as an 'original sin' that has stuck to the state of Israel since 1948 and turned against the way in which certain parts of the Bible, such as the book of Exodus and the conquest of Canaan, have been used in a political-theological sense as narratives to justify the modern colonization of 'the Land' and the oppression of the indigenous population.<sup>535</sup>

In his reflections on pilgrimages, Prior drew on an experience in 1983, when Christian pilgrims in Ibillin in Galilee were urged by local Christians not to confine

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532 CM = *Congregatio Missionis*. The members of this priestly congregation are called both 'Vincentians' and 'Lazarists'.

533 At the death of Michael Prior CM, Duncan Macpherson wrote a biographical essay on him and later collected his essays. *Independent*: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/professor-michael-prior-550327.html> (accessed 12 04 2017).

534 M. PRIOR CM: 'Jesus' Teaching on the Mount', in D. MACPHERSON (ed. and intr.): *A Living Stone, Selected Essays & Addresses Michael Prior* (London 2006) 54-67, p. 65-67.

535 PRIOR: 'Reading the Bible with the eyes of the Canaanites. Hommage to Edward Said', in *A Living Stone* 273.

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themselves to visiting stone remains from the past, but to meet the Living Stones of our time. This experience laid the foundation for the program of a retreat of his congregation in 'the Land' in 1988.

In 1996 Prior gave a lecture in Jerusalem which is still particularly relevant to 'Come and see' and in which he set out his views on pilgrimage. He emphasized a new type of pilgrimage in which the awareness of pilgrims could happen 'first hand', so that "moral issues are not submerged in archeology or tourism, while the local Christianity is relegated to sentiment and the museum".<sup>536</sup> Pilgrims appeared to him as a category of travellers to whom special moral demands should be made, a view that was also noted at Rifat Kassis.

Prior also remains relevant, because he met with a lot of opposition, also in his own church. In the post-war period, when churches were mainly focused on improving relations between Jews and Christians, they fell silent when Prior raised the grievances and desires of Palestinians. Sometimes the reactions were angry and extreme and he was accused, for example, of 'anti-Semitism'. On the other hand, he argued that 'anti-Zionism' and 'anti-Semitism' are of a very different order. In the first place because, according to Prior, Zionism is infected with ideas that emanate from ethnicism and on that basis do not object to ethnic cleansing and even show some affinity with the 'pangermanism' that arose at the same time.<sup>537</sup> Secondly, because the original Zionism held radical-secularist views in which the Jewish religion was often viewed by these secular Jews as a 'regressive' relict. He considered the suggestion of a link between 'anti-Zionism' and 'anti-Semitism' as 'a disaster' for an honest Judeo-Christian dialogue about 'the Land' and its people. On the day before his sudden death, Prior pleaded for the establishment of a forum for Judeo-Christian dialogue that would henceforth include Jews and Christians who criticize political Zionism.<sup>538</sup>

For this study Prior is particularly significant, because he was one of the first to criticize the one-sided theological-tourist interest in a petrified, 'museified' past. He did not think that people should set aside their Biblical historical interests in 'the Land', but that they should connect them with an interest in the population groups that now live there. He was one of the first inventors and performers of contextual pilgrimages in 'the Land'.<sup>539</sup>

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536 M. PRIOR CM: 'Considering Pilgrimage', in D. MACPHERSON (ed. and intr.): *Remembering Michael Prior Selected Essays and Adresses. Ten Years On* (s.l. 2014) 30.

537 'Pangermanism' is the name for a German-nationalist movement that originated in the nineteenth century, according to which all ethnic-Germanic peoples or all German speakers had to be united in one state.

538 M. PRIOR CM: 'Antizionism Equals Antisemitism?', in *A Living Stone* 265-272. M. PRIOR CM: 'A Disaster for Dialogue', in *A Living Stone* 297-300.

539 For a definition of 'contextual theology' see e.g. *Protestant.nu*: <http://www.protestant.nu/Encyclopedic/tabid/359/Default.aspx?Page=Contextuele%20theologie> (accessed 10 11 2019).



*Mary Grey's pilgrimages to storied places*

Like Prior, the Catholic theologian Mary Cecilia Grey (1941) combines the role of a hermeneutically trained liberation theologian with that of a pilgrimage developer in publications on journeys to the Holy Land. Grey criticizes tour operators who offer pilgrimages as vacations with tourist excursions that ignore the ethical dilemmas of tourism in this area.<sup>540</sup> She focusses on contextual exegesis of 'Holy Places' for pilgrims in the Land. To this end she collaborated with pastor Pat Clegg, who added questions for reflection to Grey's commentaries, aimed towards the people who visit these places. Their approach reflects the choice for 'moral pilgrimages' within a given context. They want to make an educational contribution to this.

Grey reports on her travel experiences and considerations in two publications, in which she mirrors the path of Jesus and that of the earliest Christians with that of the Palestinian Christians today. The course of the ecclesiastical year offers her the pattern for this. In the first part with the title "The Advent of Peace" (2010) she 'travels' with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem and points out the consequences of the occupation on the present life of people in Bethlehem. In the second part, "The Resurrection of Peace. A gospel journey to Easter and beyond" (2012), the focus is on Jesus' journeys in Galilee under Roman occupation, on his non-violence and on his death and resurrection as sources of inspiration. "Walking the Via Dolorosa" in the Old City of Jerusalem, where pilgrims walk with crosses, to Grey is the starting point for a contextual meditation on Jesus' "non-violent journey to redemption", as a message for pilgrims today. She sees Easter Saturday, the day between Good Friday and Easter, as a special metaphor for the reality of the contemporary life of Palestinians; a day characterized by waiting, with "sorrow, fear, but in silent hope".<sup>541</sup>

Grey does not treat the places she visits as 'holy' places, she presents them as, what with Lincoln (II.4.1) can be called "storied places". Lincoln wants the memory of what the God of Israel did in Jesus to be brought back to life in the places that remind us of it.<sup>542</sup> Grey does the same, but goes one step further. From the current context of such places she wants to show pilgrims that they are not dead stories, because the stories are told and understood differently in every time and situation. During a visit to 'the tomb of Lazarus' in the Palestinian village Al-Eizaria (= place of Lazarus) on the Westbank, the themes of suffering, resurrection and transformation come to the fore. She hopes

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540 M.GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace. A Gospel Journey to Easter and Beyond. Questions for Reflection by Pat Clegg* (London 2012) 8.

541 GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace* 89.

542 LINCOLN: 'Pilgrimage and the New Testament' 45.

that by empathizing with this story, pilgrims will become more empathetic towards the people in 'the Land' today.<sup>543</sup>

On the occasion of a visit to 'Jacobs Well', the place where the Samaritan woman went through a 'transformation' through her conversation with Jesus, Grey asks for striking attention for three Jewish authors, Mark Ellis, Marc Braverman and the rabbi Michael Lerner, who also went through 'transformations' that opened their eyes to the situation of the Palestinians. *En passant* she also points to the Iranian Islamic liberation theologian Hamid Dabashi, who insists that Jewish, Christian and Muslim theologians, from their own backgrounds, speak a universal language of liberation.<sup>544</sup>

At the end of "The Resurrection of Peace", in the questions added by Pat Clegg, pilgrims are explicitly encouraged to read the Kairos document with the 'Come and see' call and ask themselves the question: "when shall we 'Come, see, and witness' to further the resurrection of peace?"<sup>545</sup> Grey and Clegg, like Palestinian theologians, try to put 'reading glasses' on pilgrims other than those of the Christian Zionists, and, with a different exegesis, transfer a spirit of *sumud* to pilgrims.

*Sumud*, the Arabic concept that can be described as 'steadfastness' and 'perseverance', can be compared to the virtue of *fortitudo*, or 'courage' and 'strength' that is part of the 'cardinal virtues' and comes from classical doctrine of virtues. The concept got a specific, appealing meaning, of both 'perseverance' to stay in 'the Land', and to do so in a dignified way with attention to ethical and aesthetic values, rooted in one's own culture, democratic and determined and with respect for the diverse life stories of people in 'the Land'.<sup>546</sup>

Through the work of the Arab Educational Institute and the meetings of many pilgrims with the women of the Sumud Choir in the Sumud House in Bethlehem, this concept has become part of the vocabulary of many 'Come and see' pilgrims,<sup>547</sup> *sumud*, especially of the women.<sup>548</sup>

### *Palestinian theologians and Christian pilgrims*

A characteristic of Palestinian liberation theologians since the 1980s is that they see it as their task not only to criticize violence in general, but also, in particular, to play a role in the criticism of the expulsion and oppression of Palestinians since the 1948 Nakba,

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543 GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace* 71-74. In a third part entitled *The Spirit of Peace. Pentecost and Affliction in the Middle East* (London 2015) follows Grey as the Holy Spirit spread in the earliest Christian communities in the Near East and the problems that came with it, she does so against the backdrop of the deadlocked 'Arab Spring', a series of uprisings in Arab countries that began in 2010.

544 GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace* 55-56, 58.

545 GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace* 99.

546 GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace* 47.

547 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 84, 106, 107, 117, 120.

548 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 117.

which has forced more and more, especially Palestinian Christians, to emigrate from the Land. A second characteristic is that Palestinian Christians are rather reluctant to accept Old Testament texts which, according to them, are too often used to undermine the universal mission of Christianity.

This is not only true for texts that both Jews and non-Palestinian Christians tend to use to justify the way in which the (as a result of the Balfour declaration and the Holocaust) modern state of Israel has treated Palestinians. However, Palestinian theologians, for example, are not expected to pay much attention to texts such as the so-called ‘pilgrim’s psalms’ referred to in II 4.1 when we were looking for Jewish pilgrimages. Such texts are too exclusively Jewish for them and do not correspond to the basically universal approach of humanity within Christianity. Criticism of the legitimization of the occupation on the basis of Scripture frequently recurs within the Palestinian liberation theology.

Elizabeth Marteiijn shows that “Palestinian theology” has meanwhile “become a systematized field of contextual theology”.<sup>549</sup> She gives an overview of thirteen important players in this field, including female religious from the Roman Catholic Congregation of the Rosary,<sup>550</sup> and Cedar Duyabis, the co-founder of Sabeel, the international Palestinian Centre for Ecumenical Liberation Theology.<sup>551</sup> Marteiijn also gives an overview of recurring themes within Palestinian theology, which she summarizes with the terms ‘liberation’, ‘reconciliation’, ‘testimony’ and ‘ecumenism & interreligious dialogue’.

There was a long way to go for these Palestinian theologians, while also faced with a lot of theological resistance. The influential German evangelical-lutheran theologian Friedrich W. Marquardt (1928 - 2002), referring to ‘Auschwitz’, had after all started arguing that, in the eyes of God, Jews had a *status aparte* that should also apply within the current international community and that Christians therefore had to defend this exceptionality. Marquardt saw the so-called ‘Noahite commandments’ as the starting point for the theologically self-evident of an extraordinary relationship between Jews and other peoples.<sup>552</sup>

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549 E. MARTEIJJN: ‘The public role of Palestinian theology. Theology in dialogue with the Palestinian context’, in *Radix* 45,2 (2019) 36-50.

550 *Congregation of the Rosary*: [www.rosary-cong.com](http://www.rosary-cong.com) (accessed 10 11 2019).

551 *Sabeel*: <https://sabeel.org/> (accessed 24-11-2019).

552 F.W. MARQUARDT: *De gebroken hemel. De misère van de theologie en de hoop op God* (München 1988 / Zoetermeer 1999). According to Marquardt, ‘Israel’ has made the ‘offer’ to other peoples (p. 114), that for Gentiles who want to live according to God’s laws, only apply seven of the Ten Commandments God gave to Israel (the so-called ‘Noahite Commandments’). On this basis, Marquardt believed that Christians can be expected to keep some distance from “an internationalism that equalizes all relations between peoples” (p. 113). *See also*: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven\\_Laws\\_of\\_Noah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Laws_of_Noah) (accessed 24 11 2019).

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The American Episcopalian theologian Paul Van Buren (1924-1998) quotes with approval Marquardt where he writes: “Auschwitz confronts us as a call to repentance” and therefore he too took it for granted that “not only our behaviour but our faith itself should change”.<sup>553</sup> For Van Buren, this meant that the church had to endorse ‘the covenant between God and Israel’, ‘Auschwitz’, ‘the birth of the state of Israel’, and henceforth ‘the church’s relationship to the Jewish people’ should be considered in the same perspective. In II 6.1 it was already pointed out that, for example, the Dutch theologians Miskotte and Aalders did not go along with this, and that the important American theologian Brueggemann explicitly distanced himself from this in 2015.<sup>554</sup>

It is unacceptable to Palestinian Christian theologians that because of the repentance of Western theologians about the Holocaust, Palestinians had to pay the price. They feel that they themselves had no part at all in the Holocaust. Palestinian theologians see it as a big problem that political-theological views like those of Van Buren and Marquardt still travel in the ‘baggage’ of many Christian pilgrims.

The Kairos document argues that the ‘Vow of God to Abraham’ in the Bible cannot be understood as proof of ownership for the modern state of Israel. After all, the present state of Israel was not created by God, but by Western superpowers. In other words, the document considers it evident that the Promise of God to Abraham from thousands of years ago cannot be seen as a God-given licence to Jews to expel Palestinians from the Land in 1948. On the contrary, according to the Kairos document, the Old Testament Promise should be read today as “the beginning of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God on earth” and thus as the symbol of a promise to all mankind (Kd 2.3).

In his book “A Palestinian Cry for Reconciliation” from 1989, the Anglican-Palestinian theologian Naim Ateek (b. 1937) mentions several texts in the Bible which, according to him, are infected with exclusivism and xenophobia, such as those in the book Nehemiah.<sup>555</sup> He points out that in the Old Testament it can also be found that God lectured the prophet Jonah when he was angry, because God wanted to spare Nineveh, and that God wanted to make the people of Israel understand “that they constitute but one small part of the people of God”.<sup>556</sup> For him, the author of the book Jonah thus became “the first Palestinian liberation theologian”.<sup>557</sup> Abraham Heschel puts a similar focus on the story of Jonah, but goes deeper into the question why God does not punish. It might have been easier for our ears, he says, if God had dropped

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553 P.M. VAN BUREN: *A Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality. Part III Christ in Context* (London 1988) 157.

554 VAN BUREN: *A Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality* 12.

555 N. ATEEK: *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation* (New York 2008) 131, 142-143.

556 ATEEK: *A Palestinian Christian Cry* (Chapt. 5) 67-77, p.74.

557 ATEEK: *A Palestinian Christian Cry* 67. Ateek took the initiative in 1989 to establish the *Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center* (in Jerusalem).

the depraved Nineveh. “But behind justice and wrath lies the mystery of compassion”, including that of God with evildoers.<sup>558</sup> Jonah is also a well-known prophet for Muslims; he appears with the name Yūnus in several places in the Koran. The figure of Jonah can thus stimulate an interreligious dialogue about ‘the Land’ between the three religions, which made it all the more important for Ateek to emphasize this prophet of the Old Testament.<sup>559</sup>

The special attention for, and treatment of pilgrims by Palestinian liberation theologians is, of course, a particular point of attention for this book. On their more general theological differences in modality, reference can be made to the thesis of Samuel Kuruvilla who, for example, observes some difference between the somewhat more Christocentric Ateek and Raheb, who is less Christocentric and more focused on dialogue with Palestinian Muslims. But these differences seem gradual.<sup>560</sup>

Ateek insists that pilgrims should not visit “the holy land”, but “the land of the holy one”, and that pilgrims should meet Christ in the Eucharist.<sup>561</sup> He also celebrated the Eucharist with the participants of the ‘Come and see’ trip discussed in the General Introduction.<sup>562</sup> By the way, Ateek points out the need for ‘reconciliation’ between Christians, Muslims and Jews and between Palestinians and Israelis. He has a special affinity with those Muslims who do not practice an exclusive Land Theology.<sup>563</sup>

The reconciliation and peaceful coexistence of different religions is also the theme of the already mentioned Elias Chacour (b. 1939), who between 2006 and 2014 was the Melkite Archbishop of Acre, Haifa (Jaffa) and Nazareth. He too is not only concerned with the reconciliation of Jews and Christians. He also explicitly involves Muslims and he gave concrete form to this in a school he founded.<sup>564</sup> As a bishop, Chacour had the habit of receiving pilgrim groups regularly. In my earlier ‘Come and see’ book you can read how he welcomes such a group on the one hand, but on the other hand his ‘brothers and sisters’ in the West are not spared his criticism, because

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558 A.J. HESCHEL: *De Profeten* (Vught 2013) 372.

559 *The Koran*: passim, in particular Sura 37: 139-148.

560 S.J. KURUVILLA: *Radical Christianity in The Holy Land. A comparative Study of Liberation and Contextual Theology in Palestine-Israel* (University of Exeter 2009) 199-216. *Academia*: [https://www.academia.edu/9948824/RADICAL\\_CHRISTIANITY\\_IN\\_THE\\_HOLY\\_LAND\\_A\\_COMPARATIVE\\_STUDY\\_OF\\_LIBERATION\\_AND\\_CONTEXTUAL\\_THEOLOGY\\_IN\\_PALESTINE-ISRAEL?email\\_work\\_card=title](https://www.academia.edu/9948824/RADICAL_CHRISTIANITY_IN_THE_HOLY_LAND_A_COMPARATIVE_STUDY_OF_LIBERATION_AND_CONTEXTUAL_THEOLOGY_IN_PALESTINE-ISRAEL?email_work_card=title) (accessed 07 08 2019).

561 RAMI KASSIS (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones. Towards Theological Explorations of Kairos Pilgrimage for Justice* (ATG, Beit Sahour 2014) 53 (cit.).

562 TEN BERGE: *Kom en zie!* 101.

563 ATEEK: *A Palestinian Christian Cry* (2008) 51-52.

564 E. CHACOUR (R. VAN MIERLO ed.): *Kinderen van één vader. Over de dialoog tussen Palestijnen en Joden* (Tilburg 1987) 208.

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“...who often have no idea of the history of Arab Christians and focus exclusively on the Jews of the Middle East. “But we are also your older brothers and sisters in the faith”, he says defiantly. This results in a lively discussion.”<sup>565</sup>

Like Ateek and Chacour, the Latin emeritus patriarch Michel Sabbah (b. 1933), also emphasizes that God has revealed Himself in ‘the Land’ not to just one people, but to all mankind. ‘The Land’ belongs to all its inhabitants, according to Sabbah. As chairman of Pax Christi International he placed the discourse on human rights, like Chacour, in a general interreligious perspective.

“In order to achieve a situation of stable peace, each of Jerusalem’s children, Israelis and Palestinians, Jews, Christians and Muslims should be able to feel at home in this city. This means concretely that they should be able to enjoy the same freedom and that the same rights and duties apply to them.”<sup>566</sup>

Sabbah gave pilgrims a remarkably concrete advice. At the time when he, as archbishop, was regularly receiving pilgrims, he strongly suggested to them that they pray in places other than the conventional ones, that is to say, in places which are troubled, and thus to make the “roadblocks” and “checkpoint” into “places of prayer”.<sup>567</sup>

The Anglican Ateek and the Roman Catholic (Melkite) Chacour and Sabbah form an older generation of Palestinian theologians. The somewhat younger Lutheran Mitri Raheb (b. 1962) also meets Christian pilgrims in his hometown of Bethlehem, but has not particularly expressed what he expects of pilgrims. He did, however, strongly criticise Christianzionist pilgrimages, as mentioned earlier. He is also rather critical of the flow of pilgrims which, at the end of the 19th century, with the support of the European ‘empire’ of the time, accelerated and gave the Holy Land a dubious Western appearance (II 5.5). He also rejects purely nostalgic forms of pilgrimage.

Palestinian evangelical theologians tend to think in a rather strong ‘Christocentric’ direction. For example, Yohanna Katanacho (b. 1967) parallels all claims to ‘the Land’ by Zionists and their Christianzionist followers with the proposition “Christ is the Owner of Haaretz” (‘Haaretz’ = the Land of Israel). The reason he expresses himself

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565 TEN BERGE: *“Come and see!”* 86.

566 M. SABBAB: ‘Jeruzalem: twee nationaliteiten, drie godsdiensten en de roeping van de stad’ (transl. P. VAN GEEST), in W. BARTELS et al. (ed.): *Jeruzalem, stad van vrede* etc. 131.

567 G. TEN BERGE: ‘Kom, laat ons naar Bethlehem gaan!’, in G. TEN BERGE: *‘Vredesbeweger’. Ervaringen in de vredesbeweging 1973-2008* (Nijmegen 2008) 81.

in this way follows to him from the doctrine that, in principle, no man, people or land is exempt from the redemption through Christ.<sup>568</sup>

Katanacho and another evangelical theologian, Münther Isaac, are both closely involved in a series of theological conferences called “Christ at the Checkpoint”, an initiative of progressive, evangelical Christians, a name that can be seen as related to Sabbath’s call for pilgrims to pray at the checkpoints.<sup>569</sup> Participants to these ‘checkpoint conferences’ in Bethlehem usually combine their presence with tours of the ‘Come and see’ type.<sup>570</sup>

### 6.5 The pilgrim theology of the ‘Alternative Tourism Group’

In this last paragraph we will discuss the theological text - already mentioned in the General Introduction - which originates from the Palestinian ATG. The document does not have an author, but upon inquiry it appeared that it is based on preliminary research by the Indian Methodist Raj Bharath Patta, who spent some time in Bethlehem, travelled around ‘the Land’, showed great interest in liberation theology and became fascinated by pilgrimages and ‘justice tourism’.<sup>571</sup>

Following this, attention is also paid to a conference in Madaba, Jordan (2017), in which aimed to further develop pilgrim theology behind the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

Finally, there is a brief discussion of the theological vision of some Roman Catholic authors of the last century which - in the light of the total theological tradition in which this initiative is rooted, as shown by the content of Part II - may be of importance for a further discussion of pilgrim theology behind the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

#### *‘Listening to the Living Stones’*

In 2014 the Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) , affiliated with Kairos Palestine, published its own theological treatise on pilgrimages under the title: “Listening to the Living Stones. Towards Theological Explorations of Kairos Pilgrimages for Justice”.<sup>572</sup> The treatise wants to offer a counterbalance to a Western ‘feel-good’ spirituality, a criticism that corresponds with that of Sölle, De Lange and Mehta (II 6.2.2 and 6.2.3).

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568 Y. KATANACHO: ‘Christ is the Owner of Haaretz’, in *Christian Scholar’s Review* July 10 (2005) 435-442. See: <http://katanacho.com/datadir/en-events/ev30/files/Christ%20is%20the%20Owner%20of%20Haaretz.pdf> (accessed 20 11 2018).

569 *Christ at the Checkpoint*: <https://christatthecheckpoint.bethbc.edu/> (accessed 10 05 2019).

570 *Tashuf Tours* provides such tours in cooperation with the Bethlehem Bible College. ‘*Christ at the Checkpoint*’-conference: <http://tashuftours.com/current-trips.php> (accessed 20 12 2017).

571 The information comes from Rami Kassis (director of the ATG center, not to be confused with Rifat Kassis). He wrote the foreword for the treatise. Patta later became a pastor at ‘*Stockport Methodist Circuit*’ in England.

572 KASSIS, RAMI (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones* 6-8. See also: <http://atg.ps/study-center/publications> (accessed 20-12-2018).

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But it also wants to counterbalance the growing influence of Christian Zionism in ‘the Land’.

The text points to the growing number of - often subsidized - pilgrimages from countries in the ‘Global South’, where aspiring pilgrims often have little notion of the political situation in ‘the Land’ and prove susceptible to the promotion of Christian Zionist travel. This is especially the case when, because of the situation in their own country, they are susceptible to a Christian-Islamic and ‘therefore’ also to a Jewish-Islamic polarization. The document wants to contribute to more depth and spirituality in pilgrimages to ‘the Land’ by providing insight into the specific situation of the Palestinians.

The ATG treatise considers it the duty of a pilgrim to spend time in the local faith communities, the ‘living stones’ as Prior called them, in order to be able to return home as a ‘transformed pilgrim’. “Being and becoming an advocate pilgrim” is called “the greatest relevance of the theology of pilgrimage”.<sup>573</sup> The ATG argues that pilgrims to ‘the Land’ should be inspired by the idea of a “listening theology”<sup>574</sup> and that pilgrims on the Via Dolorosa should focus on people, “who have been under the Cross of occupation, crucified and longing for an experience of resurrection, of new life”.<sup>575</sup> This is an approach that is strongly reminiscent of the work of Mary Grey, for whom the Via Dolorosa gave rise to a meditation on the “non-violent journey to redemption” as a message for today.<sup>576</sup>

In line with, among others, Brueggemann and Ratzinger and directly following Palestinian theologians such as Masalha,<sup>577</sup> Ateek and Sabbah, Zionist interpretations of the Bible are explicitly rejected in the treatise. The reference to Jesus in order to be able to undergo the special ‘transition’ that is necessary to follow Him and to be able to truly show solidarity, reminds us of Sölle (II 6.3). In concrete terms, pilgrims are expected to plead for justice for Palestinians in their own churches and governments. The treatise hopes, for example, that these pilgrims will actively contribute to a ‘no violence’- movement such as BDS that strives for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israeli products, companies and organizations that profit from the occupation and human rights violations.<sup>578</sup>

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573 KASSIS, RAMI (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones* 65-70.

574 KASSIS, RAMI (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones* 65.

575 KASSIS, RAMI (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones* 67.

576 GREY: *The Resurrection of Peace* 81.

577 N. MASALHA: ‘Reading the Bible with the Eyes of the Canaanites: Political Theology and the Land. Traditions of the Bible (1967 till Gaza 2009)’, in *Holy Land Studies* (Edinburgh 2009) 8, 55-108. *Edinburgh University Press*: <https://www.euppublishing.com/doi/10.3366/E1474947509000407> (accessed 10 11 2019).

578 BDS- *movement*: <https://bdsmovement.net/> (accessed 18 10 2018).



However, the text also points to the significance of the relationship between pilgrimage and the Eucharist, as already discussed at the beginning of chapter 4 (II 4.1) and elsewhere, and in this context, following on from Scott, speaks remarkably of pilgrimage as “the sacrament of geography”, a concept in which both Scott and Cavanaugh might have their reservations (II 4.1).<sup>579</sup>

The most remarkable aspect of the text is the firm image of God that is put forward in it. As a source of inspiration for the nomenclature used, reference is made to the Protestant theologian Karl Barth.<sup>580</sup> Barth was a theologian who believed that theology should not only concern itself with the divinity of God, but above all with his humanity.<sup>581</sup> In direct connection with this, God is presented to pilgrims in the ATG document as a “co-companion, a listening one”, in the difficult political context of ‘the Land’. He not only listens to the oppressed, but also stands up for people: “God is an advocate”. He is not only righteous (God is “a just one”) but also present in solidarity (“God is in solidarity”) and moreover he is politically committed: “God is an activist”. The ATG hopes for pilgrims who want to mirror the image of this “co-companion”.

### *Madaba Conference of 2017*

The further exploration of a ‘Theology of Pilgrimage’ was the subject of an international conference in Madaba (Jordan) in 2017 organized jointly by the Alternative Tourism Group and Kairos Palestine. This meeting was intended for theologians, tourism scientists, travel organizers, etcetera. Participants were mainly from Protestant churches.<sup>582</sup> Participation of Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants in each other’s networks in order to go to ‘the Land’ as a tourist or as a pilgrim is not yet very common: not in the Netherlands and not worldwide, although prominent representatives from all denominations together did stand at the cradle of the Kairos document and the call ‘Come and see’.

The mood at this conference in Madaba three years after the publication of the ATG-treaty, due to a lack of political perspective, was quite depressed among the Palestinian participants. In order for all foreigners to be able to participate, it even turned out to have been too risky to let the conference take place in Bethlehem, as usual. The final declaration confirmed the commitment of the participants, but mainly talked about the deteriorated situation in ‘the Land’. An ‘Action Plan’, later handed out to the participants, mainly focused on a number of major Protestant churches in the

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579 KASSIS, RAMI (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones* 53.

580 KASSIS, RAMI (intr.): *Listening to the Living Stones* 44.

581 See *Karl Barth's lecture on this theme from 1956*: <https://www.karlbarth.nl/menselijkheid-gods/>.

582 *The final declaration of Madaba (letter to the churches)*: [https://gallery.mailchimp.com/1b775d-32bafb29effab3bd398/files/16f49acf-42c7-47ae-ac5f-c822428f1887/Manaba\\_Letter\\_to\\_Churches\\_2017.02.pdf?mc\\_cid=67b3a5ac57&mc\\_cid=d377ab8fd4](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/1b775d-32bafb29effab3bd398/files/16f49acf-42c7-47ae-ac5f-c822428f1887/Manaba_Letter_to_Churches_2017.02.pdf?mc_cid=67b3a5ac57&mc_cid=d377ab8fd4) (accessed 14-12-2017).

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United States and Canada and on international Protestant church networks, as well as independent/progressive Jewish voices and Jewish secular groups. However, an upgrading of a document on pilgrim theology for ‘the Land’ was postponed. For the time being it seems to remain primarily a Protestant matter.<sup>583</sup>

There was also little reflection on what the confrontation with the situation in ‘the Land’ actually does to Christian pilgrims. One may wonder whether a theology that focuses on listening to Palestinians and concrete forms of resistance to Israel’s policies cannot become one-sided if it does not also provide sufficient pastoral support to pilgrims to sustain a mission of multiple solidarity for the rights of Palestinians ( I 2.3.2 and II 6.3.2).

### *Thomas Merton, the Berrigans and the Augustinian ‘obedientia’*

In a more general sense, one may wonder whether a somewhat ‘broader’ theology is needed, one that does not ‘bring God in’ as easily as in the current version of the ATG document. In this context it is useful to return for a moment to the work of the monk Thomas Merton, who was involved in the politics of his time and in the peace movement, and who was also discussed in chapter 4.

With his book “The Ascent to Truth”, translated into Dutch under the title “*Louteringsberg*” (= the Mountain of Purification) he in fact repeats the metaphors of Dante (II 5.1) and Bunyan (II 5.4) to sort out the questions about his own political and religious life in the second half of the 20th century. Karin Armstrong used “The Spiral Staircase. A Memoir” in her autobiography, by the way, of a similar metaphor.<sup>584</sup>

The theology of “The Ascent to Truth” is in keeping with the apophatic tradition of ‘Via Negativa’ (II 4.3). As indicated earlier (see II 4.3), it speaks of God in terms of who He is *not*. It has been argued by Van Geest that for Augustine ultimately only the experience of love makes God known to people and that at the same time this implies above all a denial of the knowability of God.<sup>585</sup> In the ATG document, following in the footsteps of Karl Barth, an attempt was made to approach God in precisely what he is, as we saw. Jim Forest, himself first Roman Catholic, later Eastern Orthodox and lifelong peace activist, says in his biography about Merton that for him God was “no idea, no concept, no theory”. “The light of reason can only partially serve the pilgrim”, according to Forest about Merton. He quotes a mystical statement of Merton: “We must always walk in darkness. We must travel in silence. We must fly at night”.<sup>586</sup>

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583 ATG-Kairos International Reference Group Meeting. Action Plan. October 2017 (Mail dated 21 10 2017).

584 K. ARMSTRONG: *The Spiral Staircase. My Climb Out of Darkness* (New York 2003).

585 VAN GEEST: *The Incomprehensibility of God* 60, 107, 221.

586 J. FOREST: *Living with wisdom. A biography of Thomas Merton* (Maryknoll 2008/Eindhoven 2018) 136. Cit. from Th. MERTON: *The Ascent to Truth* (New York 1951) 179.

## Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

It may be necessary in situations of conflict and oppression for activists to be able to speak with a little more reservation about God. After all, it is not impossible that ‘resisting’ does not always immediately equate with ‘healing’. In such situations it is of great importance that there also remains room for ‘surrender’, i.e. for the Augustinian *obedientia* (see II.4.3). After all, the ‘Divine’ can be experienced, as appears from the title of the famous work “*Widerstand und Ergebung*” (=Resistance and Surrender) by the Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), both on one and the other path. Bonhoeffer’s book shows that it can also consist of knowing oneself “miraculously secured by good powers”, however difficult the circumstances may be and whatever the future may bring.<sup>587</sup>

In addition to Merton, peace activists such as the Jesuit Daniel Berrigan (1921-2016) and his brother Philip (1923-2002) were also looking for the relationship between ‘the activist’ and ‘the mystic’.<sup>588</sup> ‘The Night’ of their non-violent political resistance to the Vietnam War ended in arrests and imprisonment. Searching for Light, they could then, like Merton, end up with John of the Cross and his mystical statement about the Night that makes happy,

In an introduction to his lines of poetry about a difficult climb, ‘the poet’ Daniel Berrigan evoked the comforting image of a ‘table’ on which food can be found that gives his soul rest after the difficult climb. Then he is not dependent on the ‘food of sense’ that he has to eat in order to be able to keep up the climb, but that actually doesn’t taste like it anymore:<sup>589</sup>

*At a certain point  
man no longer enjoys  
that food of sense  
He needs another kind of food*

*More delicate more internal  
A food which imparts to his soul  
Deep quietude and repose of spirit*

Christian activists can only sustain their pilgrimage if they can ‘feed’ from time to time on the food of contemplation, which can be sought in the ‘darkness’ and the ‘silence’, in which God does not always have to be experienced as a “co-companion”. To also equip

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587 D. BONHOEFFER: *Verzet en Overgave* (Baarn 1972) [*Widerstand und Ergebung*] 332.

588 D. BERRIGAN: *The Dark Night of the Resistance* (Eugene OR<sup>20072</sup>). Ph.BERRIGAN & F. A .

WILCOX: *Fighting the Lamb’s War: Skirmishes with the American Empire* (Eugene OR 2011).

589 D. BERRIGAN: *The Dark Night of the Resistance* 138.

‘Come and see’ pilgrims themselves with the *sumud* they so admire in Palestinians they meet in ‘the Land’, it can be important to arrive at a broader and deeper pilgrim theology, of which mystical-political contemplation can also be a part. Such a pilgrim theology can be at the service of the ‘peace pastorate’ for and by pilgrims, as well as important for the mission of their ‘peace apostolate’. It can in particular involve situations of being ‘overwhelmed’, in which the tension between hope and despair, the tension between despair and a desire for liberation that has become inexorable, and in which “the listening one” seems to be infinitely absent, both, to the peoples of ‘the Land’ and the pilgrims.

### **Conclusion on Part II**

In the three chapters of Part II we searched for ‘motives’ that have played a role more than once within ‘holy’ journeys since the birth of Christianity, and which are also recognizable within the ‘Come and see’ initiative. This made views, discussions and practices visible which offer insight into the rich historical layered meaning within which the new phenomenon of the ‘Come and See’ pilgrimage so clearly exists, in contrast to many other phenomena of ‘responsible tourism’. In conclusion, these motives and their relationship with the ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage, here summarized once more.

In literature, the journeys of Jesus’ followers after his death, and in particular those of Paul, who was converted to Christianity afterwards, have been identified by several contemporary authors as the oldest form of Christian pilgrimage. On the basis of their religious conviction, the apostles travelled into the world, away from their own city, country and people, in order to bring a message of love and peace, which is also central to the ‘Come and see’ call. *The ‘missionary’ motif thus turned out to be the oldest.*

We saw it returning to Irish, and later Benedictine, monks, who no longer settled in the desert like earlier monks did, but as missionaries followed Paul’s example and went out into the world. For both Paul and these monks, ‘being called’ was the universal dimension of their faith, namely that the message of the Gospel was one of and for all peoples, something that is also emphasized in the Kairos-document. Even the focus in monastic monasteries on the preservation of the Greek and Latin roots of Christian civilization was reflected in the ‘Come and see’ initiative, in the responsibility one feels for the preservation of Palestinian culture and of Palestinian monasteries, churches, and scientific and educational institutions.

The missionary motif then became visible again with Francis of Assisi and Ignatius of Loyola. Francis went along with the ‘armed pilgrimage’ of a crusade, but in order to deviate from it without violence, contrary to the tendency in the Church at that time.

## Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

He hoped in vain to convert the sultan, but he also found it worthwhile to listen to another believer. In this way he already gave profile to the phenomenon of the 'peace pilgrim', which also stands for the 'Come and see' initiative. With Ignatius of Loyola we saw how missionary journeys of his brothers followed an earlier individual pilgrimage of his own in Spain followed by a journey to Jerusalem. Missions remained the basic pattern for both Francis and Ignatius for their pilgrimages. For Franciscans, among other things, 'The Land' itself became a place of settlement. The Jesuits travelled the world to Asia and America.

The goal of the 'armed pilgrimages' of the medieval crusades had in fact been the restoration of the Constantine based 'Christian' empire in 'the Land', by means of an - according to church leaders wanted by God - occupation and colonization of 'the Land'. But Francis of Assisi at the same time counterbalanced this with his peace mission. The motif of 'mobilisation' in pilgrimage after the Age of Enlightenment and the French Revolution can be seen as a modernized variant of the 'missionary' motif, in which the Church saw it, above all, as its mission to correct the undesirable, 'pre-Christian' side-effects of pilgrimages from the time before the Enlightenment. Mobilising people by means of pilgrimages also sometimes bore extremely conservative political characteristics during this period. The pilgrimages of the Catholic peace movement after the Second World War clearly had as their main 'mission' to help promote international peace and dialogue. These pilgrimages can therefore in fact be seen as a kind of predecessors of what the 'Come and see' initiative was intended to achieve.

In the Kairos call to the Christian churches in the world, the desire was expressed that 'the Land' itself would be a 'universal mission', "a land of reconciliation, peace and love" where Judaism, Christianity and Islam could coexist peacefully, as a sign of the beginning "of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God on earth" (Kd 2.3.1). With this universal approach, the document not only rejected the exclusive claims to the Land of Zionist and Christianzionist groups. The many Christian groups in 'the Land' who signed this document did so together, but without giving up their individuality. In doing so, they also positioned themselves diametrically opposed to Christianzionism, which sees the 'arena' of 'the Land' as the stage for an apocalyptic final battle, to be taken literally, and which thus fundamentally rejects a universal message of love and peace.

*A second motif* soon became visible in history that is important within the 'Come and see' initiative. That was *the motif of 'the living stones'* the encounter with living Christians on the spot. In the greatly increasing journeys of Christian pilgrims to 'the Land' under Constantine after the epiphany of Christianity, they were not only attracted to places in the history of the life of Jesus, which were increasingly

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experienced as ‘holy’ and to which the visit was propagated by, among other things, the costly construction of beautiful churches. Even then, they also appeared to seek contact with inspiring, unconventional witnesses of their faith: the monks, hermits and mystics, such as the pillar saints, who, on the contrary, kept a radical distance from the worldly and ecclesiastical powers in ‘the Land’.

That motive has returned in the Kairos- document in the call to come to the inhabitants of the Palestinian territory in ‘the Land’, who, the document says, will be happy to receive them in order to teach them the facts of ‘the Land’ (Kd 6.2). Travellers to ‘the Land’ today should look for people who can explain to them what needs to change in order to make ‘the Land’ a land of “peace, love and reconciliation” (Kd 6.2), so that at the same time they themselves are open to participate in such a change.

The call to come and listen to the ‘Living Stones’ of ‘the Land’ is in fact the main theme of the theological treatise of the ATG: a Christian pilgrim to ‘the Land’ cannot only be interested in ‘dead stones’, and certainly not, like Christian Zionists, only in Old Testament texts taken out of context in order to mobilize people to support the occupation policy of the current state in ‘the Land’. For a Palestinian theologian such as Ateek, the ritual of celebrating the Eucharist together - in which, after all, Jesus’ message of love for all people, and especially for the poor and oppressed, is central - contributes to the engagement of pilgrims with people who live and are oppressed in the Land. It offers pilgrims and pilgrim-receiving Christians the opportunity to feel intensely and attentively connected to each other.

This closely connects to *a third motif* that has been visible for centuries in the course of the history of thinking about pilgrimages, that of ‘*the moral pilgrim*’. It began with Augustine, then developed further under the influence of people like Thomas a Kempis, Erasmus, Luther and Calvin and later Bunyan. The shift to the inner pilgrimage from the Modern Devotion and under the influence of the Reformation brought the Augustinian metaphor of ‘all life as a pilgrimage’ back more emphatically into theological thinking. New after the Middle Ages was the emphasis on the importance of ‘good company’ along the way, choosing the right interlocutors. Much later we see this motif worked out again in Sölle’s metaphor of the ‘mystical journey’.

Chaucer denounced the fact that late medieval pilgrims were not always ‘good company’ for each other. Bunyan let pilgrim ‘Christian’ in his metaphorical story constantly meet people with whom he has conversations that help him stay on the right path or of whom he knows he can avoid them better. At the same time, the motif of the ‘moral pilgrim’ also shows the importance of seeking contact with people who actively pursue Christian values. The Kairos document and the ATG treatise can be understood as an extension of this as a plea, addressed to fellow Christians, that during their pilgrimage into practice together (Kd II. 5.3 and 5.4).

## Pilgrimage and theology since the Second World War

The special Christian Zionist interpretation of specially selected passages in the Old Testament turned out to be diametrically opposed to such an aspiration, because it refers to a sacralisation of the present state of Israel. Moreover, these apocalypticists are convinced that Christians must encourage all Jews to come to Israel so that they can convert to him *en masse* at the return of Jesus and contribute to the struggle that will precede the creation of a Millennial Kingdom of Peace. Within the PKN these visions are in general not shared, but there the 'Land Theology' still appears to enjoy so much support that it has not yet been possible to come to a clear distinction between the need for a feeling of solidarity with Judaism and with the present state of Israel. Within the Catholic Church neither Zionism nor the 'Land' theology turned out to be continuing subjects of deep division, although the previous pope recently found it necessary to distance oneself from them. This does not mean that Catholic pilgrimages to 'the Land' are always a kind of 'Come and see' journey. But the current pope has shown in practice to be behind the pilgrims' idea of the 'Come and see' initiative.

Finally, it can be concluded that the ATG treatise attempted to initiate a theology for pilgrims to 'the Land'. On the one hand this appears to be broadly rooted in the history of Christian pilgrimage, but on the other hand it is perhaps a bit too 'lean', because of the sometimes too one-sidedly human image of God that is used in it. That image of God takes little account of the despair and despair to which both Christian Palestinian inhabitants of 'the Land' and 'Come and see' pilgrims to 'the Land' may be exposed as a result of the specific context with which they are confronted.

In order to counter this despair, and in order to be able to continue to bring up the *sumud* needed to persevere, Augustine's theology, which played a central role so early in the history of Christianity, could also today be an important additional source of inspiration. This on the one hand because of the Augustinian concept of the *peregrinus*, in which the pilgrim and the stranger coincide, and in which it must be noted that in today's world 'stranger' in fact means migrant or refugee. On the other hand, for a pilgrim theology specifically aimed at 'the Land', the Augustinian concept of the *obedientia*, in which resistance to injustice, and surrender to a God who can never be fully understood by human beings, can go hand in hand.





‘Come and see’ pilgrims, together with Israeli activists, help a Palestinian farmer bring in his harvest from an olive grove threatened by settlers near Nablus.

Photo: Gied ten Berge



# **BALANCE & PERSPECTIVES**

The above has shown that the new phenomenon of the ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage deserves special attention in the research on pilgrimages because it can be positioned, on the one hand, within the current social and cultural scientific research on the relationship between pilgrimages and tourism and on the social context of pilgrimages and, on the other hand, within the historical and theological research on the long history of Christian theological thought on pilgrimages. This implies, therefore, that it can only be properly understood on the basis of a multidisciplinary approach, and this is important because multidisciplinary approaches increase the chance that scientific research will also gain in social relevance.

Qualitative empirical research into a ‘Come and see’ journey, which was reported in an earlier book, had shown how much the participants in such a journey had been aware of its normative and moral intentions. Although they had certainly not all regarded themselves as pilgrims from the outset, neither had they regarded themselves as tourists with a purely cultural-historical or political interest. They were certainly not looking for ‘themselves’ or for ‘healing’. On the contrary, they did not shy away from places and situations that ‘upset’ them. They behaved like ‘moral explorers’, paying attention to the political and social context in which they found themselves. From there they had focused on ‘multi-sided encounters’ with the various inhabitants of ‘the Land’, and they also attached importance to recurring moments of meditation and prayer.

The research in the social and cultural literature of which the first part of this dissertation reports, made it clear that in this travel group the phenomenon of what is referred to in theoretical literature on pilgrimages as a *communitas*, a travel community in which there is frequent and frank exchange of ideas, including about what the participants are ‘holy’. Contrary to a second characteristic element of this theory, however, the *communitas* that developed in this group did not appear to have been experienced to a large extent as an ‘antistructure’ for an everyday, disciplinary reality from which one had temporarily detached oneself. Rather, the experience in this group had been one of constant confrontation with the troublesome, disturbing political reality of the area to which they had travelled. However, the resulting *communitas* offered the desired security for a joint search for a moral integrity that could stimulate them to continue communicating about the disturbing reality in ‘the Land’ at home afterwards.

For most of the participants in this journey, there had obviously also been a ‘transition’ in their thinking about their relationship as Christians to ‘the Land’, the third important concept within the theoretical approach to pilgrimage. On the one hand the apparatus of concepts of this theoretical approach therefore certainly offered further insight into phenomena which occurred during a ‘Come and see’ journey. On

the other hand, it is not surprising that for some participants the question remained, whether or not they had been 'pilgrims'.

From the so-called Topos approach to pilgrimage, which focuses on the relationship between this old phenomenon and the newer phenomenon of tourism, the way of travelling advocated in the 'Come and see' initiative seemed to be a clear example of the type of traveller referred to as the 'responsible tourist'. The questions of travellers, however, often turned out to have a moral theological slant that is certainly not a fixed characteristic of what is referred to as 'responsible tourism'. For the 'Come and see' travellers it was primarily a compelling question how the political form of Judaism they encountered on their travels related to the Jewish, prophetic roots of their own Christian faith, and how that faith related to their possible experiences with defenders of political Zionism from a Jewish or Christian angle. One question that followed was how their criticism of the current Jewish state should relate to their encounters with Judeo-Israeli peace and human rights activists who stand up for native inhabitants of 'the Land' and who are also in a minority position. Within the Topos approach, which focused primarily on an analysis of objectively perceptible phenomena, the content of such questions could, of course, at most be dealt with sideways.

The paradigm of the 'arena', which turned out to be additionally developed within the approach of social and cultural sciences to pilgrimage, included an invitation to analyse the character of the 'Come and see' initiative on the basis of this, among other things by means of comparisons with a multitude of types of pilgrim-like journeys in 'the Land', aimed at target groups with diverse religious backgrounds. There appeared to be a striking difference in the programming of journeys within the arena of 'the Land', and the analysis thereof was important for a good insight into the specific character of the 'Come and see' initiative. A striking difference between this initiative and other religiously inspired travel ideas turned out to be the emphasis on an inclusive approach, i.e. the willingness to come closer to other religions, and to a certain 'universalism', in contrast to the generally much more 'particularistic' approaches of other travel initiatives to 'the Land' related to religious groups. This applied in particular to the fundamentally exclusive Jewish Birthright journeys and to the Christianzionist-inspired journeys. Two other clear differences emerged from these comparisons, namely the more recent date of origin and the lesser quantitative significance of the 'Come and see' initiative; the 'Come and see' call deserves attention mainly because of its character rather than the extent to which it has been acted upon so far.

The idea of 'Come and see' pilgrimages could be positioned from the Topos approach as a phenomenon related to current developments within tourism such as responsible tourism, i.e. as a phenomenon with typically 'fluid' borders. From the

‘arena’ approach it could be positioned as the initiative of a strongly threatened small minority in the very tense social situation of an ongoing conflict resulting from far-reaching international political developments. However, the travel program and the mutual discussions between the participants in a ‘Come and see’ trip also showed characteristics that primarily required insight into the history of theological thinking about pilgrimages.

In addition to the previously published case study, and in addition to the social and cultural literature research of Part I, the theological-historical literature research formed the third leg of this research into the phenomenon of the ‘Come and see’ pilgrimage. It exposed the historical stratification of this phenomenon. The choice for a consciously eclectic approach - instead of a striving for a balanced historical overview - made visible in the history of thinking about pilgrimages three recurrent ‘motives’, both in the sense of ‘motives’ and in the sense of ‘patterns’ - which can also be indicated in the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

The missionary motif, ‘travelling with a mission’ into the world, had taken the form of travelling in the earliest Christianity and with medieval monks to bring a message of peace and love. But it could also have taken the disastrous form of the medieval ‘armed pilgrimages’ of the crusaders, albeit with the peace journey of Francis to ‘the Land’ as an inspiring counterpart. In the course of time, the missionary motive was often accompanied by mobilisation, an element that is also important for the ‘Come and see’ initiative. It occurred not only during the Crusades, but also in a modern form in the 19th century national, often politically oriented, endeavour to attract people to ‘holy places’. In the second half of the 20th century it also appeared to be able to take the form of mobilizing young people for peace rallies aimed precisely at international fraternization, and increasingly interreligiously oriented, which can be seen as a forerunner of the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

An important second motif, closely linked to the idea of ‘pilgrimizing with a mission’, turned out to be that of meeting people on the spot, such as the visit to holy men in early Christianity as a counterbalance to the excesses that pilgrimage sometimes accompanied. But also the metaphorical story with which an author like Bunyan wanted to convince people of the conception of Balance and perspectives.

The whole life as an inner pilgrimage often took the form of conversations of pilgrim Christian with all kinds of characters on his way. In the twentieth century this appeared to return in the ‘theology of the Living Stones’, which became central to the ‘Come and see’ initiative.

Finally, the motif of the *moral pilgrim*, for whom the whole life is a pilgrimage to a ‘heavenly Jerusalem’ based on the work of Augustine, via Bunyan and others, both in the Catholic and Protestant tradition, appeared to return again and again, to

the discussions within a 21st century 'Come and see' travel group. In fact, this is the motive of the 'true pilgrim', a category which in the Topos and the 'arena' approach to pilgrimage as such no longer played a role. More or less to replace it, the notion of 'authenticity' appeared to have arisen in pilgrim studies, where it sometimes functions as the central element within a structuralist discourse which, in contrast to Christian theological thinking, places the existence and the rediscovery of a subjectively constructed 'self' at its center. The fixed, recurrent motive in Christian theological thinking about pilgrimages, however, is that the 'true pilgrim' sees the 'I' during his journey primarily as an 'ethical project' and that, in the case of 'Come and see', communicating a message of love and peace is ultimately more important to him than his own 'wholeness' or finding a 'holy place'.

The motive of the "true pilgrim" led the so-called "liberation theology" to ask pilgrims today primarily for a critical perception and to keep compassion and practical justice together on their way. From this Christian perspective, the 'Come and see' initiative also appeals to pilgrims' willingness and ability to make complex moral considerations on their journey. Contrary to the more outward-looking 'responsible tourism' in which an external goal, such as reducing poverty or environmental damage, is central, a 'Come and see' pilgrimage requires above all a receptive attitude through which 'difficult' information can be received and processed and internalized in one's own conscience, in order to give direction to action.

Pope Francis gave shape to the importance of such a rethink on pilgrimages to 'the Land' by not only visiting the Wailing Wall, but also praying before the eyes of the world at the Seclusion Wall and by - like his predecessor Benedict - attaching importance to showing good contacts, not only between Christians and Jews, but also with Muslims. These are the values which are also explicitly expressed in the Kairos document. This new development is not limited to the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestant reconsideration of the importance of pilgrimages to 'the Land' in new forms became visible in practice by, for example, placing the 'Come and see' call on the website of the World Council of Churches and, very practically, through the EAPPI initiative and the support for 'The Tent of Nations'.

It seems that even with larger travel agencies facilitating pilgrimages - albeit on the fringes of their conventional, commercial practice - some movement is now noticeable in the nature of travel programs to 'the Land'. Whether this movement is the result of a growing openness of the travel world itself to the new phenomenon or of pressure from ecclesiastical circles is unclear. At the level of parishes and ecclesiastical congregations, however, there are clearly still tasks to offer more stimulation and protection to forms of travel in which contacts, not only Christians, but also Jewish and Muslim groups in 'the Land', who are attached to peace and reconciliation, play a role. An important

problem for the ‘Come and see’ initiative, however, is that the churches in the West - and especially in the Netherlands - are less able to meet the need for ‘justice pilgrims’ for ‘the Land’, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

However, it is plausible that Christianity as a world religion remains important and that the demand for such pilgrims will therefore more often be made in other places in the world. In 2017, the Pew Research Center confirmed Taylor’s expectation that the percentage of people in the world without religion will decrease in the next 40 years and that the percentage of Christians worldwide will continue to increase. In the ‘Global South’, Christianity has become more important than before in recent decades and theologians are profiling themselves more explicitly on the themes of pilgrimage and tourism than in the West.

Changes in forms of pilgrimage to ‘the Land’ are therefore also conceivable through influence along non-western, international lines. Theologians from ‘the South’ make that increasingly clear. The mere fact that the text of the ATG document was written by a theologian of Indian origin can be seen as an indication.

The call ‘Come and see’ is, in terms of origin and addressing, clearly an ecumenical call. It is potentially open to adaptation and broadening so that it can also be considered as addressed to like-minded Jews, Muslims, other pilgrims and ‘tourists of good will’. In any case, the call is an appeal not only addressed to church leaders, their national and international bodies, but above all to churches all over the world on a local level. At its core, it is an appeal to coincide the desire to travel to ‘the Land’ with the desire for ‘the beauty of justice’ that people can participate in on their life’s journey.

## SUMMARY

On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009 a group of Christian Palestinians calling itself 'Kairos Palestine', with the explicit support of the leaders of all thirteen Christian denominations in their country, published an urgent worldwide cry "from the heart of Palestinian suffering". With the motto 'Come and See', they urged Christians around the world, despite the continuing state of political tension in the region, to continue making pilgrimages to the land of the Bible, so that they could receive "a message of faith, hope and love", and they could "know the facts and the people of this land, Palestinians and Israelis alike". In addition, they urged their fellow-Christians "to take a position of truth with regard to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land".

An organization called 'Alternative Tourism Group' (ATG) had already been founded in 1995, largely by the same group of Palestinian Christians. Their aim was to convince tourists and pilgrims to stay in Palestinian accommodations and to listen to Palestinian guides during their trip. They viewed this as a means of allowing Palestinians to benefit from a share of the economic advantages of pilgrimage and tourism, while also offering an opportunity to visitors to gain a broader perspective on the current situation in this region. In 2014 this ATG published a document with the title "Listening to the Living Stones. Towards a Theological Exploration of Kairos Pilgrimages for Justice". The document defines tourism "as a form of pilgrimage" and as "a theater of opportunity for solidarity, sharing and caring". Tourism itself must become "a quest of spirituality through encounters in which humankind seeks God's truth".

In this book the author offers a thorough re-evaluation of the remarkable initiative made in 2009 which involved a religious appeal to pilgrims and tourists combined with political and socio-economic objectives.

Part I of the book, "Pilgrimages: theoretical approaches and empirical research", explores the concept of pilgrimage within the academic arena of social science and cultural studies. In addition to analyzing the two above-mentioned documents, it also examines the results of an earlier published case study on a 'Come and See' pilgrimage in which the author participated in 2013. By researching into scholarly literature on the history of and the theological discussions on pilgrimage, the aim is to identify main motifs and motives - in the sense of 'patterns' as well as 'incentives' - in the history of pilgrimage that may be comparable with the Kairos-initiative. The viewpoint expressed here is that the idea of a 'Come and See' pilgrimage has a particular significance for the specialism of 'pilgrimage studies', the multidisciplinary approach adopted being essential to achieve a multifaceted understanding of this phenomenon, one which can enhance and broaden the socio-cultural scientific relevance of the subject.

## Attachments

The need for an multidisciplinary investigation, combining cultural-scientific, historical and theological analysis presented itself to the author when he was participating in the case study in 2013. This concerned an independent, ecumenical group of 16 Christians, who had been attracted by the call 'Come and see'. They not only visited conventional Holy Places but also explored unconventional locations such as a checkpoint at the border between Israel and Palestine, and the by settlers claimed (and occupied) center of the Palestinian city of Hebron. The encounters during the trip mainly involved Christian Palestinians, but for example the program also incorporated a visit to an Israeli settlement in the West Bank as well as meetings with Jewish and Arab Israelis who were committed to the fate of the Palestinians living under occupation. Every day the group of Christians had short meetings for common prayer and meditation.

The experiences of the participants in this 'Come and See' pilgrimage appeared to reflect, though not completely, the concepts of *communitas* and 'transition'. The former concept denotes an intimate travel community in which there is frequent and frank exchanging of views, in which the participants discuss what they consider is 'holy'; while the latter involves a voluntary *rite de passage* in which old values and views are tested and released to make way for new ones. Both concepts are currently prominent in theoretical approaches to pilgrimage studies. Yet the participants themselves were not always ready to view themselves as 'pilgrims'. This resulted in an invitation for further reflection on who the participants thought they really were and the reasons why they were there. At first sight, they seemed to fit into - what has come to be called in pilgrim-studies - 'the Topos of the Pilgrim and the Tourist', where the focus lies not on an exploration of a definition of the 'true pilgrim', but rather on an exploration of more or less merging phenomena to be observed on a conceptual line that connects and distinguishes contemporary forms of pilgrimage and tourism. This way of observation recalls the famous remark of Edith and Victor Turner: "A tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist".

The 'Come and See' appeal may be classified among various forms of alternative 'committed' tourism which emerged during the 1990s and which are classified in the literature under the heading 'responsible tourism'.

Chapter 2 leads on from this point to an analysis of the socio-religious aspect of the 'Come and See' phenomenon where pilgrimages take place in what can be termed an 'arena', characterized by conflicting views or even outright conflicts between local religious groups and pilgrims from different religious backgrounds. A comparison with other examples of (in part at least) religiously-motivated travelling in the pilgrimage 'arena' of Israel/Palestine reveals that the fundamental distinctive characteristic of this 'Come and See' pilgrimage is that it aims explicitly to encourage the furtherance



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of peace and reconciliation in addition to the exhortation of peaceful contact with mutual respect between those of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths. This is decidedly not the case with so-called Jewish 'Birthright' trips and in the travelling of 'Christian Zionists' to Israel, which emphasize the exclusive rights of Jewish people to this land. It is also hardly the case in guided trips through Israel which regard the area as if it were a 'Biblical Open-Air Museum' and lack any real interaction with the local population.

Chapter 3 offers a short discussion on Zygmunt Bauman's pessimistic view of postmodern society nowadays, which can no longer accommodate the phenomenon of 'the pilgrim'. Viewed from Bauman's rather metaphorical and impressionistic approach, the phenomenon of 'Come and see' could achieve the rating of an anachronistic, irrelevant phenomenon. Social scientists as well as theologians, criticized his use of the metaphor of 'the pilgrim' mainly on the grounds that he apparently seemed to ignore what is still clearly visible 'on the ground' nowadays. This applies in particular with respect to those who responded to the 'Come and see' call, is more than an irrelevant manifestation of postmodern lifestyle.

In recent research on pilgrimage it has been argued that striving for 'authenticity' and 'self-renewal' can be seen as significant factors in instigating developments in modern-day pilgrimage. From the point of view of the 'Come and See' initiative, however, the 'I' ('me') is rather an 'ethical project' which is consciously directed towards fellow human beings rather than being a search for the 'true self'. The type of discussions which were conducted with and among participants in the 'Come and See' trip during the case study made it clear that to achieve an adequate understanding of the phenomenon of the 'Come and See' pilgrimage it was necessary to delve into the historical background of the practice of Christian pilgrimages, and examine theological and historical factors which gave rise to the pilgrimage phenomenon from the very beginning of Christianity.

In Part II of the book, "Pilgrims in historical and theological perspective" (Chapters 4 to 6) three main 'motives' are identified which denote to what extent the characteristics of 'Come and see' pilgrimages are recognizable as being attributes embedded within its long-term history. The 'Come and See' initiative involves three important 'motives' in common with other varieties of Christian pilgrimage through the ages:

1. the missionary motif, that originally coincided with evangelism and that over time produced both violent pilgrims and peacemakers, individual pilgrims but also 'mobilisations' of groups of them;
2. the motif of contact with what has come nowadays to be called 'Living Stones': meeting those people who lived in or near the 'dead stones' of a pilgrimage

location, as a means of deepening the personal spirituality of 'the pilgrim' through encounters with 'witnesses of faith';

3. the motif of the 'moral pilgrim' for whom the whole of life is the ultimate pilgrimage, this pilgrimage to 'the Land' is particularly worthwhile as it is in response to a plea from fellow Christians to be 'true Christians' and to combine Christian moral values of peace and justice in practice.

The decision of Jesus' apostles not to stay in Jerusalem after His death, but to travel the world in order to spread God's message of love to all peoples is identified in the literature as the oldest form of Christian pilgrimage. The implication of this missionary movement 'away from Jerusalem' was that specific places, like the Temple of Jerusalem in the Jewish faith, were no longer the only places where God's presence among human beings could be experienced. Jesus had taught them that His ritual presence could best be experienced in the coming together of people in the celebration of the Eucharist. In contemporary political theology, the significance of celebrating the Eucharist is underlined with a special plea for pilgrims to celebrate The Lord's Meal first and all together with fellow-Christians who are living in 'the Land'.

It soon became evident to early Church leaders, however, that the spread of Christianity and the devotion of Christians would be encouraged by the construction of magnificent churches throughout the world especially, of course, in the land of the Bible. The wish of people to visit places where Jesus himself had lived - or were linked in some way to the remains of holy men or women - emerged at a rapid pace after Constantine had given Christians freedom of religion.

At the same time, however, warnings were expressed within the Church against possible abuses and evils that might result from such a wish to undertake pilgrimage to visit places and see objects, leading to moral decay and corruption due to the accompanying cheap entertainments.

The 'armed pilgrimages' of the Crusades, that mobilized people to conquer 'holy places', and massacre fellow human beings who lived there, can be seen as the most regrettable and despicable form of pilgrimage in the history of Christianity. Simultaneously, however, the example of Saint Francis of Assisi, the poor, non-violent preacher from Umbria whose journey to the Holy Land was given a surprising twist. He demonstrated a constructive alternative whereby the value for a pilgrim lay not so much in visiting holy places, but rather in the encounters with the people there, including meetings with 'the enemy', and listening to what they had to say.

Even the tendency to reject all forms of physical pilgrimage and to confine oneself to an 'inner pilgrimage' of the human spirit did not prevent Bunyan from introducing personages with whom his pilgrim 'Christian' had to talk during his pilgrimage, in order to stimulate his reflections on what might be expected of a true Christian during

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his life. The life of Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits reveals how physically heeding the call of Jesus, first it brought him to a moment of great enlightenment and transformation, in consequence to travel to Jerusalem, just to devote himself 'to help the souls' there. Actually he combined 'a journey into the world' to spread a Message of Love to all peoples with that of an inner pilgrimage. He called himself 'the pilgrim', one who placed great emphasis on self-reflection in making choices that must follow 'the will of God'.

In the nineteenth century the tendency for the 'mobilisation' of large groups of pilgrims to travel to special holy places becomes striking. Such religious 'mobilisations' increasingly took place with a backdrop of national and imperial political turbulence, also in respect to 'the Land'.

The pilgrimages of the international Roman Catholic peace movement after the Second World War, in contrast, encouraged young pilgrims to a more inclusive international approach with a distinct commitment to international reconciliation, justice and later also to inter-religious dialogue. As such, these pilgrimages can be seen as precursors of the Palestinian 'Come and See' initiative. They emphasized the importance of a (mutual) need for a mission of peace and reconciliation and for a dialogue between Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and called for pilgrims primarily to be interested in listening to 'Living Stones'. The Separation Wall forms a severe physical barrier to realise the values of this movement.

The concept of the 'moral pilgrim' is not confined to Bunyan and the Reformation but had previously emerged with the *peregrinus* in the work of Augustine. In *De Civitate Dei* he examined the metaphor of 'the pilgrim's journey of life', a journey where the brokenness and imperfection of this world would be painfully confronted as a sad consequence of alienation from God but not seen as eternally hopeless.

Augustine's concept re-emerged time and again, also within Roman Catholicism, as for instance in the late medieval movement of the Modern Devotion, during the Reformation and in the period of the Contra-Reformation, also in the work of Ignatius of Loyola. In much more recent non-western theology on pilgrimage the double meaning of *peregrinus* ('pilgrim' and 'stranger') has come into relevance once again through the plight of migrants and refugees who are the foreigners *par excellence*, and who should be viewed as fellow pilgrims in life, requiring hospitality as much as pilgrims during a pilgrimage.

Part II ends with the observation that Augustine's theology is significant for the 'Come and See' initiative in another respect, namely his concept of the *obedientia*, with its sense of 'obedience' or 'surrender' to the incomprehensible 'will of God', which is assuredly not the same with relation to the rulers of this world.

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A mood of despair was manifestly visible among participants of the 'Come and See' pilgrimage of 2013, witnessing what may be considered brutality, with Palestinians treated as refugees without rights in their own country. That mood also predominated in a conference dedicated to a further exploration of a theology of pilgrimage organized by Palestinian Christians in Madaba in 2017. A careful use of the Augustinian concept of *obedientia* may offer an important complement to the perhaps too optimistically 'affirmative' approach of God in the theology of the ATG document, where He is presented not only as, for instance, a 'Co-Companion', 'a Listening One', but also as 'an Activist'. In the Augustinian concept of *obedientia*, 'resistance' against injustice can be combined - as was argued sublimely by theologians like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Thomas Merton - with 'submission' to a God, who can be experienced in human love, but who remains, inevitably, unknowable and incomprehensible to human beings.

In the last part of the book, 'Balance and Perspectives', it is argued that the outcome of the 'Come and See' initiative may not seem to be encouraging, especially in what is becoming an increasingly secularized western world. Nevertheless, pilgrimages also from the non-western world to 'the Land of the Bible' are increasing in number. This encourages the thought that 'Liberation theologians' in the 'Global South' who value 'responsible tourism', are feeling inspired by the theology of the 'Come and See' initiative. Moreover, the thesis of an irreversible secularization process of the Western world has impressively been refuted by Charles Taylor who has proposed that the current 'secularization thesis' will prove to be increasingly less convincing in the future, because modernity has not been able to destroy the human desire for transcendence. His proposition can also influence expectations with regard to the future of pilgrimages, which may be becoming more secular but which could also be seeking ways to renew its religious roots.

The positive response that the 'Come and see' initiative received from the World Council of Churches who facilitated international meetings on the subject by the ATG, in addition to the special example set by Pope Francis for committed forms of pilgrimage to Israel and Palestine, constitute an important incentive globally for the development of religiously inspired pilgrimages for the furtherance of peace and justice, which will be initiated by local churches and church-related organizations in the future.

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#### **Amos Trust**

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#### **Birthleft?: Habonim-Hashomer**

<https://www.hdnaisrael.org/israel-seminars>

#### **Birthright Unplugged**

<http://www.birthrightunplugged.org/>

#### **Unity Coalition for Israel**

<https://unitycoalitionforisrael.org/>

#### **Christians for Israel**

<https://christenenvoorisrael.nl/2015/01/plaatsvervangende-schaamte/>

#### **Christian Embassy (ICEJ)**

<https://us.icej.org/news/special-reports/pm-netanyahu-visits-christian-embassy>

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<https://www.custodia.org/en>

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#### **St. John in the Desert (Holy Land Pilgrimage. A Bridge for Peace)**

<http://www.holyland-pilgrimage.org/st-john-in-the-desert>

#### **Kairos-Palestine**

<https://www.kairospalestine.ps/>



## Attachments

### **Kairos-Sabeel (NL)**

<https://kairos-sabeel.nl/>

### **“Kommt und seht!”**

<https://shop.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/images/Kommt%20und%20seht!%20-%20Travel%20and%20Pilgrims%20in%20Holy%20Land.pdf>

### **‘Listening to the Living Stones’ (theological tract ATG)**

<http://atg.ps/en/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Living-Stones-New-Nasri-Email.pdf>

### **Nes Ammim**

<http://www.nesammim.nl/vakantie/>

### **‘Our Lady of the Wall**

‘<http://sacredplaces.huji.ac.il/sites/our-lady-wall>

### **Pax Christi Flanders (travel report):**

[www.paxchristi.be/nieuws/reisverslag-uit-palestina-en-israel](http://www.paxchristi.be/nieuws/reisverslag-uit-palestina-en-israel)

### **PAX ‘With Christmas to Bethlehem ‘**

<https://www.paxvoorvrede.nl/actueel/nieuwsberichten/met-kerst-naar-bethlehem>

### **Rabbis for Human Rights**

<https://rhr.org.il/eng/>

### **The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem**

<http://www.oessh.va/content/ordineequestresantosepolcro/en.html>

### **Siraj Center**

<https://www.sirajcenter.org/index.php/en/>

### **Taglit Birth Right Israel**

[www.birthrightisrael.com/](http://www.birthrightisrael.com/) <https://www.birthrightisrael.com/countries>

### **Tent of Nations**

<http://www.tentofnations.org/>



## Main websites

### **The Kairos document**

*Hour of truth: a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering*. ('The Kairos Document'. Vert. R. Neat & Y. For her). See:

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/other-ecumenical-bodies/kairopalestine-document>

### **Zochrot (tours)**

[www.zochrot.org](http://www.zochrot.org)

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Egidius J.J.M. (Gied) ten Berge was born on 1 May 1948 in Overveen (Haarlem). In 1966 he took his final exam at the Triniteitslyceum there. At the University of Leiden he completed his study Western Sociology in 1973 with specialisations in the field of philosophical and educational sociology.

After working for some time at the Polemological Institute of the University of Groningen, he worked for 35 years in various positions within the Interkerkelijk Vredesberaad (IKV) [Interchurch Peace Council] and Pax Christi Nederland. As a Pax Christi employee he took the initiative in 2004 and 2006, in collaboration with the *Arabic Educational Institute* in Bethlehem, to organize and supervise so-called 'solidarity pilgrimages'.

After his retirement in 2008 he completed the Master 'World Religions in Confrontation and Dialogue' *cum laude* at the Tilburg University School of Catholic Theology in 2011 with a thesis that appeared as a book under the (here translated) title "Land of People. Christians, Jews and Muslims between confrontation and dialogue" (Nijmegen 2011). In 2013 he participated as an 'observant participant' in a 'Come and see' travel. On that basis he published a book with the (here translated) title "Come and see! New pilgrims in the Holy Land" (Nijmegen 2016).

In 2010 he was co-founder of Kairos Palestine Netherlands, which in 2016 merged with the Dutch branch of the "Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center" in Jerusalem, which has existed since 2006. From 2010 to 2018 he was chairman of the "Support Committee for Israeli Peace and Human Rights Organizations" (SIVMO) in Amsterdam.







## Eindnoten



For most religiously motivated tourists to 'the Land' Palestinian Christians have remained too much out of the picture in recent decades. Moreover, the financial proceeds of pilgrimages and tourism has ended up unilaterally in Israel. That is why in 2009 Christian Palestinians, under the motto 'Come and see', made an appeal to their fellow Christians, supported by the World Council of Churches, to continue pilgrimages to their home-country and to do so with a Christian message 'of peace, love and reconciliation'.

In this PhD thesis, following a case study previously published as a book in 2016, Gied ten Berge offers reflections on this new phenomenon. With an eye for questions around 'religion' and 'politics', he investigates the relationship between the old, religious pilgrimage phenomenon and a modern, socio-cultural phenomenon such as tourism.

He throws light on the varied nature of travelling to 'the Land' on the basis of theories from the cultural and social sciences and from recent 'pilgrim studies'. Ten Berge shows how a phenomenon such as 'Come and see' fits within broader developments of 'pilgrimage with a mission', and also of responsible tourism. Paying attention to the historical and theological layering of pilgrimages, different 'motives' – indeed 'patterns' as well as 'motives' - for pilgrimages have been detected since the emergence of Christianity from Judaism.

The author concludes with an call for a contextual theology of pilgrimages to 'the Land' which takes into account both the despair of Christian Palestinian residents about their situation as well as the commitment of 'Come and see' pilgrims who feel multiple connections with 'the Land' and its residents.

Gied ten Berge (1948) studied sociology in Leiden (NL) and theology in Tilburg (NL). He has worked for most of his life in the Christian peace-movement: IKV and Pax Christi. His Master degree at the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology (NL) resulted in a book about the different opinions and conflicts among Jews, Christians and Muslims with respect to the future of 'the Land'. He is co-founder of Kairos Palestine in the Netherlands and ex-chairman of SIVMO (Support Committee for Israeli Peace and Human Rights Organisations).

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