

NEWS
BULLETIN
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NO. 2
06
2019

IN DIEM

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religiose Giovanni XXIII

A SOLID BUILDING OF KNOWLEDGE AGAINST THE RELIGIOUS GLOBAL WARMING

Alberto Melloni

Religious climate is changing visibly. It produces a religious global warming which offers room and roots to violent extremism; it changes the proportions between confessional components and spiritual moods. And it challenges the religious policy of the public decision-makers both at a national and a supranational level.

The EU religious policy has tried to respond to this challenge, marked by fundamentalism, integralism, terrorism, and suprematism, with two instruments.

On the one hand the commitment against violence undertaken by the religious leaders, which is *per se* a good thing. This attitude and a "structured dialogue" have proven that "to utter words of wisdom" during a public ceremony - where religious diversity is discernible in the different colours, head coverings, and hairstyles of (male) adults - can have a positive effect on society. Such practice reminds me of the story told by the Veterinary Society that affirms that "true lions are vegetarians", even though there are very few specimens left.

On the other, the European Union has largely neglected historical-criticism research, theology, and exegesis preferring to delegate sociology, or religious sociology, to provide a quick analysis of the social emergencies (migrations, terrorism,

gender-based violence, etc.) or ideological opportunities (roots, identity, etc.) that have changed societies on all sides of the Mediterranean.

Within this landscape Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII (Fscire) presents three basic convictions that originate from our scientific history: i) knowledge is a factor of renewal: to reveal different readings, historicise interpretations and institutions, or still, to reintroduce hermeneutical and exegetical variables, is an antidote to the closure of the mind and of the heart much needed by integralists and terrorists; ii) the international dimension of this research is essential to share and connect specialist knowledges among scholars that usually are separate and non-communicating; iii) the antagonisms, even violent, that originate within and among faith communities or among communities in general (there is no difference between secularised integralism and bigot integralism) need knowledge, which does not derive from the mere dedication of an individual or a small group of scholars: research in history, philology, philosophy, and law, and still, theology and anthropology, needs networks not less widespread and complex as those that nurture ignorance and violence. And if all this is not recognised within the FP9 - the EU Framework Programme which provides large sums of money to projects that express the strategies of the countries and the evolution of the public opinion - we need to find other "European" instruments.

It is upon these postulates that Fscire has operated in the past five years, reaping some results from the effort.

Indeed, in December 2015 Fscire launched the European Academy of Religion (EuARE), a research initiative which offers scholars and researchers from EU countries, countries of the MENASA region, of the Balkans, Caucasus, and Russia, an exchange platform across disciplines to which the religious experience is relevant; the idea was to offer the scientific communities that have their own scholarly societies (EABS) or that nor-

mally are represented within general disciplines (Leeds) an occasion of exchange that makes the whole *mare magnum* of knowledge visible to research policy-makers.

The result has been astonishing: more than 500 universities and research centres were accounted as part of the network in 2015 and some 1200 speakers attended the convention in 2019.

Fscire has initiated a process of development of research infrastructures, more than ever necessary. When Italy managed to launch a call for projects on Religious Diversity, forty applications were received, some of which were ephemeral and rather weak, but many comparable in level to the ReToPea which received the bursary award. It was a case in which the extent of fragmentation was extreme and this led Fscire to apply for the 2017 INFRAIA call with a network project dubbed ReIReS: a significant experience that allowed to identify, as a medium term target, the establishment of an infrastructure within the ESFRI framework - which already in the 2018 roadmap had defined these studies as a "highly potential strategic area": the RI - standing for RESILIENCE - has become a medium term target which wants a new legal entity to be established; an establishment the countries need to reinforce and make stable, and without which religious analphabetism will not be taken care of and will become incurable.

Nothing could be done for FP9, where the words "religion" and "religious" will be absent. An attempt on the part of the Romanian presidency to have them included failed: probably also due to the involvement of the religious leaders, which created a saturation effect increasing the suspicion that the Churches and faith communities were only trying to gain a victory over secularism... The real problem, however, remains: the religious climate change requires knowledge, or rather the slow, solid building of knowledge. And this, for us in Bologna as in Palermo is the driving force behind our work.

HUDIRE HUMAN DIGNITY & RELIGIONS

The Conference in Brussels

The Fondazione per le scienze religiose (Fscire), in cooperation with the research infrastructure starting community ReReS, the research infrastructure programme RESILIENCE, and the Adyan Foundation for Diversity, Solidarity and Human Dignity (Beirut, Lebanon), organises a seminar on challenges and perspectives for mobilising religious scholars around a “Human dignity and religions” strategy (HUDIRE). This initiative is supported by the European Commission, Directorate General on International Cooperation and Development and is sponsored by Ján Figel’, Special Envoy for the promotion of Freedom of Religion or Belief outside the European Union.

The seminar, hosted in Brussels on 15 and 16 June 2019, aims at connecting religious studies scholars and actors from different institutions with the universal Human Rights (HR) agenda, through knowledge and history, with a focus on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB).

HUDIRE seminar main goals are: facilitating exchange and shared understanding between religious studies scholars and actors coming from different institutions and traditions; identifying initiatives and avenues for cooperation and creating a new framework for dialogue among religious scholars on Human Rights that could be further mobilised and replicated.

FoRB is not a value to preach: it is a seed to be planted and irrigated.

To preach FoRB is never easy and not always useful: very frequently where and when the reduction or legal limitation to religious freedom comes from a religious background, there are invis-

ible walls in the theological hermeneutics and in the history of doctrines that make universal human rights and religion either far, or hostile, or both.

For this reason, it is important to plant and cultivate these rights in the territories of religion in order to manage the risk of empowering only religious leaders to decide if, when, and where these rights can be implemented. All religious experiences can be fertile or hostile to this agenda and the purpose of the seminar is to test the conditions, difficulties, and opportunities coming from the involvement of scholars in it.

It is also crucial to support a “shared space” between religions and human rights, in order to boost narratives enabling some scholars to actively promote human rights and hinder the recruiting campaign of fundamentalists. Indeed, an empowered scholarship will reduce the religious illiteracy that represents one of the successful strategies of the fundamentalist movements: their arguments are neither profound nor invincible and can be challenged by cultivated ideas.

Encouraging religious leaders to participate into “interreligious dialogues” and addressing where is the red line between what is revealed/non-negotiable and where lies the obligation to protect human rights will also be relevant. Historical research and theological knowledge are capable to help them in defining and re-defining the very concept of human dignity and its foundation.

HUDIRE opens a safe space for discussion among scholars and public figures with different roles and responsibilities.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE BORN
FREE AND EQUAL IN DIGNITY AND RIGHTS

يولد جميع الناس أحراراً ومتساوين في الكرامة والحقوق

ВСЕ ЛЮДИ РОЖДАЮТСЯ
СВОБОДНЫМИ И РАВНЫМИ

TUTTI GLI **ESSERI** UMANI NASCONO
LIBERI ED EGUALI IN DIGNITÀ E DIRITTI

В СВОЕМ ДОСТОИНСТВЕ И ПРАВАХ

ALLE MENSCHEN SIND FREI UND **GLEICH**
AN WÜRDE UND RECHTEN GEBOREN

在尊嚴和權利上人人一律平等

TOUS LES ÊTRES HUMAINS
NAISSENT **LIBRES** ET ÉGAUX
EN DIGNITÉ ET EN DROITS

BÜTÜN İNSANLAR HÜR,
HAYSIYET VE **HAKLAR**

WATU WOTE
WAMEZALIWA
HURU, HADHI NA
HAKI **ZAO** NI SAWA

BAKİMİNDAN EŞİT
DOĞARLAR

ALLA MÄNNISKOR ÄRO FÖDDA
FRIA OCH LIKA I **VÄRDE**
OCH RÄTTIGHETER

ALLA MÄNNISKOR ÄRO FÖDDA
FRIA OCH LIKA I **VÄRDE**
OCH RÄTTIGHETER

BIO



FADI DAOU is the chairman and CEO of Adyan Foundation in Beirut (Lebanon), and professor of Interreligious Dialogue and Geopolitics of Religion. He has authored a few books and studies, the last one being *L'hospitalité divine: l'autre dans le dialogue des théologies chrétienne et musulmane* (co-authored with Nayla Tabbara, Berlin, 2013) and published in Arabic (الرحابة الإلهية, Beirut, 2011). In the framework of Adyan Foundation, and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and CRDP, he is the head of the national reformation project to the education to citizenship and coexistence.



STEFANO MANSERVIGI is Director-General of Directorate-General International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO). He holds a law degree from the University of Bologna and also studied at the University of Paris I Panthéon – Sorbonne, and the University of Strasbourg. He joined the European Commission in 1983 where he worked as administrator in the Directorates-General of Agriculture and Development. He has been Head of Cabinet to Commissioner Mario Monti and President Romano Prodi. From 2014 to 2016, he served as Head of Cabinet of the High Representative Federica Mogherini.



JÁN FIGEL' is Special Envoy for Promotion of Freedom of Religion outside the EU. Member of the European Commission since 2004, he served briefly in the Prodi Commission. Given the importance of promoting and protecting Freedom of Religion or Belief outside the EU in the context of the European Union's dialogue and assistance programmes with third countries, the Special Envoy serves as Special Adviser to the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO).

AGENDA

Saturday, 15th June

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

10:00–11:00

Welcome address:

Stefano Manservigi (Director General for International Cooperation and Development, Brussels)

Ján Figel' (Special Envoy for Promotion of Freedom of Religion outside the EU, Brussels)

Introductory speech:

Alberto Melloni (Fscire, Bologna)

**UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCES OF RELIGION
UPHOLDING HUMAN DIGNITY**

11:00–13:00

Silvia Cristofori (Link Campus University, Rome)

Thabang Nkadameng (University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg)

**RELIGION BOOSTING VIOLENCE
AGAINST HUMAN DIGNITY**

14:00–16:00

Davide Dainese (University of Bologna)

Taraneh Wilkinson (Georgetown University/Fscire, Bologna)

**TRAINING THE ACTORS OF DIALOGUE
(LEADERS, INSTITUTIONS, COMMUNITIES)**

16:00–18:00

Bernard Philippe (Team of the Special Envoy, Brussels)

Dicky Sofjan (Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies, Yogyakarta)

HOLY PLACES AND HUMAN DIGNITY

18:00–20:00

Peter Petkoff (Regent's Park College, Oxford)

Redi Shtino (Ministry of Education, Sports, and Youth, Tirana)

This seminar focuses on the knowledge of history and of the past, a past where religious experience in its main pillars (hermeneutics of the text, translation of religious views into regulations, practices of cohabitation, ideas on the roots and consequences of human dignity) may offer a memory of forgotten solutions for peaceful coexistence.

Moreover, the seminar will also offer opportunities to raise awareness on the need to develop religious literacy within the EU system, bringing in the unusual perspective of religious studies, hermeneutics and history as underused resources to face today's challenges. The participants are a group of up to 50 persons: academics, practitioners, trainers of religious leaders, theologians from different denominations and conflicting affiliations within the same religion, either in the Abrahamic and non-Abrahamic faiths. The seminar is open to EU staff and EU member states. Speakers' and participants' countries of origin and residence take account of a number of criteria such as diversity of background and worldviews; synergies with the activity of the Special Envoy Ján Figel', and/or liaisons with academia and centers of expertise keen to join and develop strategic partnerships.

Finally, the seminar represents a chance to dig further the idea of a master program to be implemented indicatively in 5 countries and research centers, bringing together a group of 30 selected participants which will all spend a few weeks in each center, benefiting from academic activities and encounters. The objective will be to create a network of competences and to develop a presence where participants may start their own initiative and scholarship.

NINTH ANNUAL REFORC CONFERENCE ON EARLY MODERN CHRISTIANITY

Karla Boersma,
Director of Operations of Refo500

Bologna is a perfect location for an international conference. The construction of Fscire, exuding knowledge, research and religion, is very well equipped, so scholars can present their work, meet and hold discussions there. The historic city of Bologna with its impressive palaces, university buildings, churches, museums and wonderful food is a further reason for going there. Fscire and the international platform Refo500 have been partners since the year 2011 and have collaborated on topics related to 16th-century Reformations and Early Modern Christianity, mainly within the framework of Refo500's academic department, Reformation Research Consortium (RefoRC). The Annual RefoRC Conference is RefoRC's main event and it was hosted by Fscire in Bologna from 15 to 17 May 2019.

The plenary lectures focused on a single theme, namely "War and Peace in Sixteenth-Century Religions", dealing roughly with the period from the Diet of Augsburg (1530) to the Peace of Westphalia (1648). Angela De Benedictis (Bologna) took the audience to the heart of the conference during the opening session in the Archiginnasio. She revealed the deep roots of several Italian conflicts, namely problems with taxes. Mark Greengrass (Sheffield) added the element of trust. Can we trust our eyes? Who and how should we trust in times of change? The lines to today were so clear in this respect that Greengrass did not even have to mention them.

Rebecca Giselbrecht (Bern) introduced the female aspect: women from Switzerland were involved in situations of war and conflicts and played their own role. Ian Campbell (Belfast) presented debates on war and religion in the Early Modern university, whereas Vincen-



Herman Selderhuis' opening speech. Stabat Mater Lecture Hall, Archiginnasio Palace. Photo: Fscire

zo Lavenia (Bologna) focused the spotlight on the soldiers during the European wars of religions and on how they were motivated in their faith via catechisms and pastoral care.

Needless to say, the conference was also about peace. Irene Dingel (Mainz) gave an overview of the religious peace treaties after the Reformation. These were agreements in which it was agreed how Catholics and Protestants would respect one another's beliefs and the way in which they would take shape on a daily basis. This is also the connection with the next Annual RefoRC conference in 2020 in Aarhus (Denmark), where the main theme will be: "Reformation and everyday life". Graeme Murdock (Dublin) presented a paper on Geneva's attempt at the end of the 16th century to coexist with its neighbours of a different religion.

The conference was attended by over 120 people from all over Europe and beyond, for example America and Indonesia, and included theologians, historians, musicologists and philosophers, who presented their research on a variety of topics in the short paper sessions.

The publishers in the book fair presented numerous new books in such a way that it became a struggle to look at them without feeling

the urge to purchase them. These books show that research in this field will not only continue but will also expand. In the domains of theology, music, art and law, for example, there is still a great deal of research to be carried out, and it was very pleasing to see how many young academics are working on these topics.

During the conference, the winner of the RefoRC Book Award was announced: it was Liesbeth Corens (London) for her book *Confessional Mobility and English Catholics in Counter-Reformation Europe*. The side programme of the conference included a very interesting tour of the former Jewish ghetto and of the Jewish Museum in Bologna.

Indeed, Bologna is a perfect location for a conference. However, we could not have held this wonderful conference without the support of the whole Fscire team, under the excellent guidance of the organisers, Gianmarco Braghi and Davide Dainese. It was a great pleasure for me to work with them, and attending the conference was very inspirational. It is gratifying and a privilege for RefoRC to collaborate with Fscire, and we hope to continue to do so in the future.

F S C I R E ' S N E W M A S T E R

THE EDUCATIONAL PLAN

1. Texts involved (30 hours)

Exegesis and history of interpretation of the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Quran.

2. History and cultures (30 hours)

History of Judaism, Christianity and Islam from antiquity to the contemporary age.

3. Doctrines (30 hours)

The ancient and modern philosophy and theology of the three monotheist religions.

4. In-depth analysis, practices and contemporary issues (30 hours)

Interreligious dialogue, fundamentalisms, Vatican II, the Shoah, Iran and state-church relations.

PluRes – The Master's Degree in Religious Pluralism and Historical Knowledge offers participants a wide range of notions in the field of historical-religious sciences and provides tools for comprehending the texts, cultures, traditions and practices of the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

World-famous researchers and university professors have been invited to hold lectures and seminars aiming to give participants the skills with which to interpret the historical-religious phenomena of the past and understand the dynamics of the present time, also with a view to foreseen future developments.



PluRes – The Master's Degree in Religious Pluralism and Historical Knowledge

NUMBERS

3
RELIGIONS
CONSIDERED

4
MODULES

30
PARTICIPANTS

25
TEACHERS FROM
17 DIFFERENT
INSTITUTIONS

120
HOURS
OF CLASSWORK

11
WEEKENDS

100 €
ENROLMENT FEE

25
SEPTEMBER 2019
ENROLMENT
DEADLINE

INFORMATION

Where and when

The course will take place at the Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII (via San Vitale 114, 40125 Bologna), from November 2019 to April 2020. Classes will be held on Fridays, from 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., and on Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The complete calendar is available on the Fscire website.

Who can apply

Students, graduates, scholars, teachers and employees in the public or private sector. Attending the Master's Degree course will award teachers official credit for having followed a refresher course.

Admission requirements

Holders of any type of three-year or Master's Degree will be admitted.

Information and enrolment

master@fscire.it

Directors:

Francesca Cadeddu and Alberto Melloni

Coordinator:

Laura Righi

THE “DESTRUCTION” THAT GENERATED EUROPE

Christendom Destroyed: Europe 1517–1648 and its success stand as eloquent testimonies to Mark Greengrass’ distinction as a scholar

Could you tell us more about the wording of *Christendom Destroyed*?

Thank you for your generous complement about this book. But, you know, books are “orphans” as far as their authors are concerned. From the moment that they are published, for their authors they must stand on their own two feet. It may appear strange to many people, but authors are often not even responsible for the title of their books. In this case, it was the choice of the editorial committee at Penguin, and not mine at all. I resisted it initially because it distorts what the book is about, which is to write the history of Reformation Europe looking backwards at a project (“Christendom”) that ultimately failed” in order to explain the emergence of something called “Europe” in the reflected image of the discovery of America and the struggle with the Ottomans. And the distinguished cartoonist in the United Kingdom, “Griz”, promptly did a brilliant sketch for the cover (a medieval town that looks as though a bomb has hit it), with the title “Christendom Destroyed by Mark Greengrass”, and the caption, besides a cartoon figure of myself and the Penguin editor, with a line spoken by Michael Caine from a comedy film called *The Italian Job*: “You were only supposed to blow the bloody doors off!”.

It is not as though the title has translated very well. *La destrucción de la Cristiandad. Europa 1517–1648* in Spanish is literal, and flat. *Das verlorene Paradies (The Lost Paradise)* distorts the book in another way. I can’t figure out the Chinese translation of the title because I do not read Mandarin. Michele Sanpaolo, the brilliant and sensitive translator of the work into Italian, has it perfectly: *La cristianità infrantumi*. I would have loved that title for the book!



Mark Greengrass during 9th RefoRc Conference
Photo: Fscire

Were religious wars different from other wars? And why did religious wars generate issues with trust?

I think we should distinguish between “religious violence” and “religious wars”. Religious violence does, I think, have distinctive characteristics that tend to turn it into what modern political scientists call “extreme violence”. Those characteristics include: a) the willingness on the part of the perpetrators to see themselves as the instruments of God; b) the desire, on His behalf, to “purify” society of those rituals, representatives or individuals, who are “polluting” His truth; c) the willingness, therefore, to defile the objects, or to dehumanise the victims, as idolatrous, or less than human, because they are part of an alien, polluting “other”. These are all qualities that we find in the “extreme violence” perpetrated in the massacres of the wars of religion – as analysed by the great French early-modern historian, Denis Crouzet. He stresses how such extreme

violence also had an eschatological dimension. Those who felt inspired to carry out acts of extreme religious violence thought that they were bringing the coming of the Millennium. “Religious wars”, however, are much more complex phenomena. Even the Crusades, the archetypal religious wars, were a complex mixtures of posture and politics, and the fascinating thing about the period known as the “wars of religion” is that it corresponded, in reality, with the waning of Crusades and the pragmatic attempts to come to an accommodation with the Ottoman Empire by various states. The term “wars of religion” was not one that was used by contemporaries often, or without qualification. They understood well enough that the princes and others who were the main players acted for complex motives, dynastic and political, and that there was a difference between the justifications that they put out for public consumption and the real motivations that inspired them. These were wars *with* religion. And that difference takes us to where the “problem of trust” comes in. In my lecture, I suggested that the Reformation created a “problem of trust” that became an existential dilemma in the post-Reformation era because the “wars with religion” created “trust deficits” between what people said they believed and how they behaved. I tried to emphasise, too, that these deficits were at their most evident in cases of civil war, where public trust was most undermined. And I tried to show that these deficits had an impact on people’s lived experience. They were not simply polemical or debating points.

My history has to be about the present as much as the past. The great French historian Marc Bloch once wrote: “Misunderstanding of the present is the inevitable consequence of ignorance of the past. But a man may wear himself out just as fruitlessly in seeking to understand the past, if he is totally ignorant of the present...”. *Christendom Destroyed* was a “warning piece” about what the gathering storm (as it was when I wrote it) of Brexit. My lecture here in Bologna, besides being a tribute to the very great Paolo Prodi and his wonderful book *Il sacramento del potere*, was about what people commonly describe as the “trust deficit” today. We can understand what we mean by that phrase better if we try to examine it in the past.

In a nutshell, how would you describe the present global situation? Can religion be a catalyst for peace?

The constant dialogue between past and present that is the privilege of the historian does not mean that the historian has any better insight into the present than any of the rest of us. We can all see the tensions that are being created around us by the gross inequalities exacerbated by the expansion of credit to deal with the crisis in 2008-9. We can all read and see for ourselves the increased international tensions as the instruments for handling them are weakened or eliminated, and as the USA struggles to come to terms with the economic and political power of China, and so forth. The role of historians is to be guardians of the past, gatekeepers to its right utilisation. And the risks of the present global situation include the fact that the past will be “rescripted” for the benefit of those with a view to promote, or an action to project, in the present. The various attempts at arriving at a peace, both within Europe’s polities and between them in the post-Reformation period, would lead one to be pessimistic. They contribute to the “trust deficit rather than to eliminating it. The edicts of pacification, for example, in France, in the wars of religion, stack up tensions that become the catalyst to future conflict. The peace of Augsburg in the Empire becomes, in the longer term, part of the origins of the Thirty Years’ War. Only when religion is seen as an instrument for generating a commonly accepted degree of human trust can it probably be the catalyst for peace.

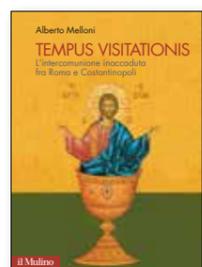
BIBLIO

Alberto Melloni

TEMPUS VISITATIONIS L’intercomuniione inaccaduta fra Roma e Costantinopoli

In June 1970 a “quartet” of theologians, appointed by the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Pope in Rome, completed a report on the possible Eucharistic con-celebration by Athenagoras and Paul VI. The liturgy, ratified during the last days of Vatican II, represented the act that would turn the annulment of excommunication on the part of Rome and Constantinople into a full, effective communion. However, this act, the dream of the ancient patriarch Athenagoras, would fade into obscurity.

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(Testi, ricerche e fonti), pp. 381
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Giuseppe Ruggieri (ed.)

CRISTIANESIMO NELLA STORIA 40, 1 (2019)

The first 2019 issue of “Cristianesimo nella storia” – the journal founded by Giuseppe Alberigo in 1980 – focuses on a subject of major interest for the institution, that is the authority and reception of councils. The analysis of the Council of Jerusalem and the Councils of Serdica, of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, Trento and of Vatican I and Vatican II highlights an articulate framework and makes clear that the reception of a council was influenced not only by ecclesial factors, but also by political causes alien to the very specific dynamics of the ecclesial community.

Il Mulino,
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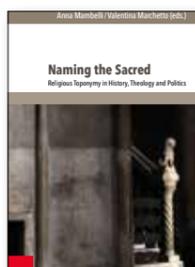
Anna Mambelli,

Valentina Marchetto (eds.)

NAMING THE SACRED Religious Toponymy in History, Theology and Politics

At what point is a place perceived as holy? And when does it become officially so in its definition? Inspired by the UNESCO debate and decisions made concerning holy places, the authors seek answers to these questions. *Naming the Sacred* is a diachronic excursus into the issues of perception and denomination of holy places. The work appertains to an ongoing, evolving global debate where the challenge of the reciprocal recognition of holy sites has become increasingly complex.

V&R Unipress
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THANK YOU

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