



**THE ROLE OF RELIGION
IN GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY
IN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN**

A Discussion with
Practitioners and Academics
January 2010

Sponsored by the
Henry R. Luce Initiative on
Religion and International Affairs

WORKSHOP GOALS

The purpose of this workshop, which brought together expert scholars with leaders of international NGOs working in Latin America and the Caribbean, was to gain region-specific understanding of the issues related to religion and humanitarian activities.

The insights gained from this workshop will be used, explained Mark Juergensmeyer, workshop convener, "to improve the quality of teaching of global studies and international affairs by better incorporating the role religion plays into the classroom experience."

This report is a summary of the highlights from the workshop.



Religion: Help or Hindrance?

In general, workshop panelists agreed that religion has played a positive role in humanitarian work. Victoria Riskin reflected the perspective of her organization's work in responding that, "one of the growth spurts for human rights in the 1970s and 1980s stemmed from the Catholic Church and from the liberation theologians who were so deeply engaged in fighting dictatorships on behalf of those people who were being crushed underneath repressive regimes."

Mary Becker noted a reciprocal relationship between religion and humanitarian organizations. Fonkoze, for instance, "has benefited both from religious ideas and religious institutions'

"Do NGOs find religious ideas and/or institutions a help or a hindrance? The answer to the question is... yes. At times they help and at times, religion seems to be a hindrance."

— Mary Becker

involvement." The founder of Fonkoze, Father Joseph Philippe, was strongly influenced by Paulo Freire, whose ideas on popular education made a strong impression on him. Fonkoze is a "synthesis

of liberation theology, Freire's ideas of education, and microcredit." Becker pointed out that Fonkoze's first and longest-running supporters have been a group of Catholic women.

Based on thirty years of experience working in Latin America, Marianne Loewe believes that, "not only are [Concern America trained medical practitioners] helping their communities medically but they are building civil society; they are building what they need for their community to really move forward and transform itself... It is a transformation that is quite real and quite lasting. And in the areas where we work I believe the church facilitates it."



Desperate and Growing Unmet Needs

“My answer [to the question of whether religion helps] would be yes, no, sometimes, depends,” stated Otto Maduro. He questioned the utility of even asking whether religion in general is a help or a hindrance to humanitarian work given the desperate and growing unmet needs throughout Latin America. Maduro recounted a litany of social problems that have been on the rise throughout the last 30 years, including “poverty, illiteracy, homeless-

ness, non-political violence... all sorts of diseases—particularly, but not only, HIV/AIDs... but also diseases that were thought to be eliminated, like tuberculosis. All of these are on the rise in the last 30 years in, I think, every single country in Latin America, without exception. So we are living through a catastrophe of lesser or greater proportions, depending on the period, the region, the country... We find fewer and fewer public agencies meeting this catastrophe

because the dogma of the IMF, World Bank, WTO and North Atlantic countries is, ‘you don’t do that.’” Given this context, Maduro believes that it is beside the point to debate whether religion is helping or not. “More and more leaders, more and more denominations, more and more congregations are... doing stuff they normally wouldn’t do, that they were not asked to do, 10, 15, 20, 50 years ago in relation to the growing needs emerging within this catastrophe.”

Cooperation and Coordination Between the Religious and the Secular Technology Solutions for Non-Profits

“Religious institutions draw tremendous power from their ability to coordinate information and goods in areas where analogous secular networks are often lacking,” offered Thomas Tighe. “These networks are often deeply embedded within the social and cultural framework, which aggravates risk for secular NGOs.”

Virginia Garrard-Burnett concurred, saying that while

“there are tremendous grounds for conflict between faith-based organizations and secular NGOs... there are areas of promise there for collaboration and cooperation and non-duplication of efforts.”

“As difficult a task as this may be,” added Toby Volkman, “it is important to try to differentiate between the role that the [relief delivery] institution will play and what role the church will play.”

According to Katherine Marshall, how one perceives religion’s role within humanitarian work depends on how one defines humanitarian work: “It depends on what sort of activities you are talking about.” Marshall observed that religious groups have increasingly migrated towards relief activities and, when engaged in this type of work, they function more as “logistics operations.” Marshall stressed that while

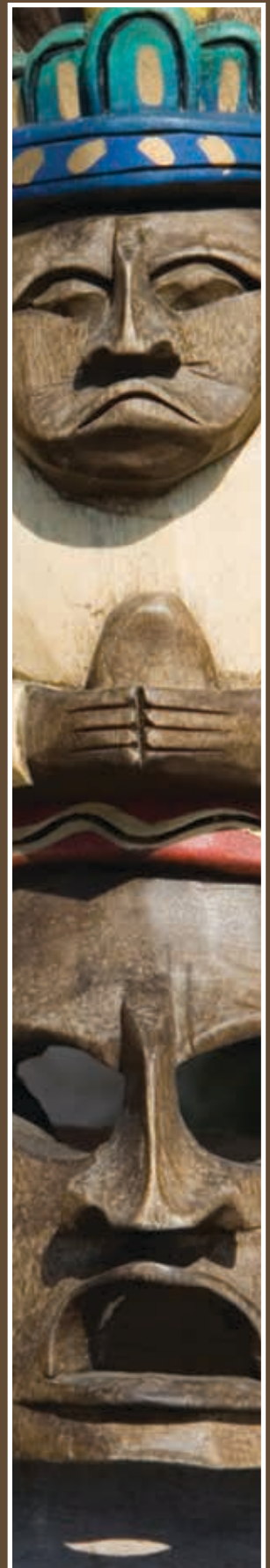


Photo at left: Children at a camp located at the former Pietonville Golf Club in Haiti where Catholic Relief Services assisted almost 60,000 displaced residents very shortly after the January 2010 earthquake. (Photo courtesy of Karel Zelenka.)

Mayan masks for sale at Tulum ruins site in Mexico.

DEFINITIONS OF “HUMANITARIAN”

“We are talking about this word “humanitarian” in many different ways. ... The first one is sort of the classic, UN definition of humanitarian, which is really emergency relief and assistance to people in the most desperate states. Within the international community, that’s what humanitarian means.

The second is more human needs, almost the Amartya Sen Human Capabilities Approach, including education, health, HIV/AIDS, etc.

The third is this distinction... which is an evolution in the way people think about the development world, between “charity” and efforts that are based on compassion and, really, the ancient religious traditions of charity, which, ironically, were more for the benefit of the person who gave than the person who received.”

(continued in side bar on page 5)



the more immediate logistics of trucks, procurement, water, etc. is “noble, wonderful work,” the challenges raised by issues in development are “not really about band-aids.” Other panelists used the example of the recent disaster in Haiti to discuss the role that civil society organizations can play during reconstruction efforts. Garrard-Burnett noted that “in Haiti you can find NGOs and faith-based organizations moving in to fill a void where there were no government organizations to do the job.”

Further underscoring the contribution of faith-based organizations to civil society, Tighe related that, “at times, we tend to look at the functions that religious institutions perform as a non-sectarian humanitarian organization. You tend to look and see, as in Haiti today, well,

who’s capable of getting the job done? There is [a need to deliver] food, water, shelter and medical attention, medical supplies and medical services. Who can do that?”

Religion, Politics, and Social Policy

Speaking to the issue of health delivery options, Kurt Frieder, offered that the Catholic Church’s powerful role in shaping social relations means that the Church is at least partially responsible for Argentina’s high level of inequity: “The reality is that in this region, local conservative groups still hold great power in political and constitutional structures. And the Catholic Church’s voice and opinion is almost decisive when it comes to some conflictive matters related to

education, health, and civil society activity. Government has to deal with enormous social complexities in Latin America, and public policies are often mixed with politics in the struggle for power.” Frieder stressed the profound influence of religion, and specifically the Catholic Church, on social matters. He pointed out that religious views on HIV/AIDS and abortion result in millions of unnecessary deaths.

Is Religion Filling a Void Left by the State?

Several panelists noted that, in recent decades, religious institutions have had to compensate for retreating state infrastructure. Thomas Tighe put this development into historical perspective, making

the case that religious institutions were in fact the earliest NGOs: “First there was the sovereign, and then as commerce evolved... they figured out the shared responsibilities of the taxing authority, and then religious institutions took up the social services.” Otto Maduro responded: “It is this last aspect that is in dire need of restoring in Latin America and Caribbean, which is why religious institutions are flourishing in the area—but not without critique.” Maduro also criticized the neoliberal policies that “have been imposed in recent decades on states all over the world... [and] have ended

up disabling Latin America and Caribbean states and governments.” As government revenues have plummeted, the ability of states “as actors in the processes of meeting basic needs and of responding to humanitarian emergencies” has been inhibited accordingly. These roles, “therefore, have basically automatically been thrown in the lap of NGOs, including churches.”

The absence of government has caused many to find refuge in social services provided by religious institutions. This dynamic was played out in Guatemala after the

1976 earthquake. Garrard-Burnett’s research indicates that “nobody was in charge for about a month and a half.” During this period, “churches and NGOs were the first responders and helped to frame what happened in the aftermath, which is one of the reasons why Guatemala is so heavily Protestant today.” She summarized: “[Where] church groups can do some things very well, NGOs can do other things very well and if there’s a comity agreement of how best to distribute the many tasks that need to be met, there is real promise in that sort of structure, especially when no one is in charge.”

“...And finally, to the contemporary view, which is important but hard to translate to a rights-based approach: trying to provide people with basic support — whether it’s for orphans, for children, or for mothers, or for whatever — that is being given from the goodness of your heart, not because you happen to feel like writing a check or responding to an email, but because it’s basically the right thing to do.”

— Katherine Marshall



Religious-themed graffiti in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Human *and* Divine Agency

One unanticipated theme of the workshop was the degree and frequency of the disconnect between northern—often secular—NGO workers and their in-country constituents, who often possess, as Jennifer Hughes put it, “belief systems in which divine agency has equal weight with human agency... In order to really understand and to feel close to people in their faith is to figure out where is the place of divine agency of the people that we’re trying to serve.”

Kyrah Daniels suggested to panelists that “in addition to looking at short-term relief efforts which include water, food, shelter and medicine... we also need to think about considering religion as a sustenance for short-term and long-term development.”

Jim Wellman agreed, arguing “that religious groups, be they NGOs or churches, fulfill an important human need that secular organizations are rarely able to acknowledge, much less satisfy. What religious groups do [is] give culture from which a village can be sustained. That is a totally different mechanism than what secular organizations have in their toolkit.”

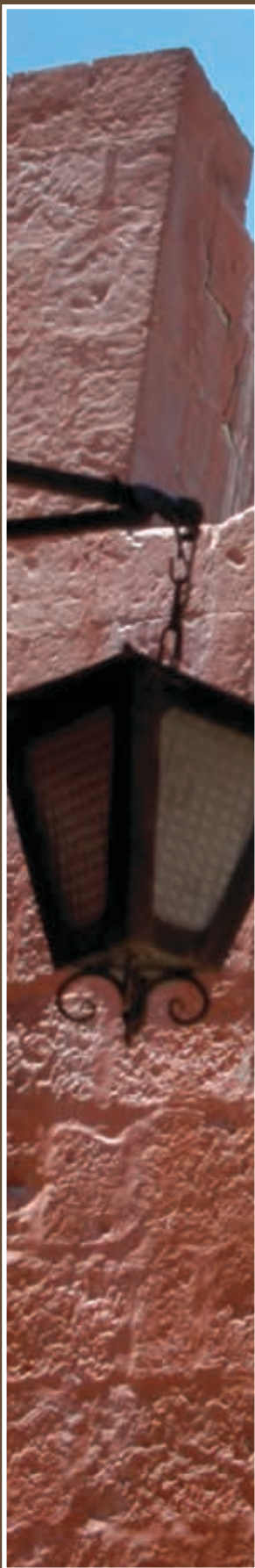
Socially Enacted Desire For The Ultimate

A study Wellman conducted of eleven large North American mega-churches showed that what the people in those congregations seemed to really bring to their church “was not a belief system but a form of deep desire and longing for what they call the divine. I did not expect to

find that.” Wellman related findings from his research: “I expected to find some theology and I found none... What I did find was an enormous desire for a sense of God’s presence, a sense of God’s activity, a sense of healing, a sense of hope, and it was so overwhelming that I recently wrote a paper on six forms of desire from the data that I collected.” In this paper, Wellman proposed a new definition of religion as “a socially enacted desire for the ultimate.”

How Useful are Academic Conversations?

Given the disastrous earthquake that struck Haiti just days before the workshop, some participants questioned the extent of academia’s contribution in the face of such real-world suffering. Workshop participants





Catechists learning about HIV/AIDS prevention. Peten, Guatemala. (Photo courtesy of Marianne Loewe.)

"There is such incredible need and urgency in Haiti. It is real and it is right now—and I am going to talk about angels dancing on the head of a pin."

— Virginia Garrard-Burnett

came to the consensus that academia does provide a useful context in which to view the situations occurring around them. Virginia Garrard-Burnett provided her perspective: "One thing that those of us who are in the academy and aren't on the ground doing real things can provide is some sort of context and ideas for people who are really doing it. Perhaps we

are providing some sort of a useful service in that."

To Claudine Michel, a Haitian who is also a professor of Black Studies and who clearly had Haiti at the forefront of her thoughts, the question was hardly worthy of discussion: "It is a moral imperative to do engaged scholarship. There is no other way to go about it. Regarding theory

and praxis, merging academia and community, there is no choice," she said; "they rely on each other."

Toby Volkman stressed the "need for specific knowledge about context and history. The challenge of having academics and activists in the same room is to try to learn from each other" and to try to



Detail of the monastery Santa Catalina in Arequipa, Peru.



A young boy at a camp located at the former Pietonville Golf Club in Haiti where Catholic Relief Services assisted almost 60,000 displaced residents very shortly after the January 2010 earthquake, helping to move people into transitional shelter areas. (Photo courtesy of Karel Zelenka.)

figure out “who is doing what for whom.”

Fernando Lopez-Alves spoke on the topic from a historical perspective. “Fifty years ago we would not be here, academics and practitioners... we would not be sharing the same table... we had two different worlds... Today we are sharing this and we are not the only ones. I have been to many conferences where practitioners and academics are sitting around the same table. I think that’s some kind of good news.”

Cellular Groups and Social Movements

From the comments of several conference participants it appears that religious groups throughout Latin America are harnessing the power of small,

organized “cells” of believers to improve lives while simultaneously strengthening their religious movement in general. Garrard-Burnett, in particular, discussed how evangelical churches throughout Latin America are leveraging “cell group” models to allow believers to empower themselves. By such models, small groups of believers “do Bible study, apply the Bible to their lives, and they also talk about very practical things.” For instance, how does one “establish a bank account, make an investment, cope in a world where you don’t drink alcohol anymore?... What should I do to manifest this in the world I live in?” Garrard-Burnett cited her research indicating that “evangelical cell groups take a very religious point of view into society, and this has dramatic implications for civil society... What they talk about is on a

very local level and yet the implications are very large.”

Jim Wellman drew parallels to North American Reverend Rick Warren’s philosophy of empowering small groups, wondering if anyone had compared these cell groups to base communities. From Wellman’s point of view “these small groups are enormously powerful ways of creating social movements” which “many outsiders underestimate.”

One workshop audience member wondered whether there is any evidence that the cellular movement in Latin America has actually connected to civil society organizations. It turns out that it has. In Columbia, political parties support evangelical-influenced political candidates. In Garrard-Burnett’s view, this has to do with the



fact that “Columbia has such a troubled political system.” Throughout Latin America “Evangélicos are often seen as incorruptible and honest and will avoid graft. This has made them very successful.” She concluded: “These potentially powerful small groups can be manipulated, but in general they do tend to be very supportive and nurturing, building up capabilities and leadership.”

"On some level, there's no such thing as Catholicism, there is in fact no such thing as Christianity. If you look at local expressions, if you have a sort of local view or local approach to looking at global Christianities ... the fact is that on the ground there is no one idea, belief, practice, text that could possibly unite even most Christians in the world."

— Jennifer Hughes

Multiplicities of Christianity

How meaningful is the term “Christianity” when considering, as Jennifer Hughes put it, “the “prismatic kind of local diversity of Christian expression?” Several panelists agreed that Christianity is an amorphous concept in general, and in Latin America in particular. Garrard-Burnett discussed the “dramatic increase in religious pluralism in Latin America and the Caribbean, in what was generally speaking a very Catholic part of the world... There has always been some level of unrecognized pluralism—the religions of the African Diaspora, native practices, and varieties of local knowledges represented in Latin American Catholicism have

always been present in the region.” Christian churches around the world often look similar and read similar texts and even believe the same things, but while “on the surface they may look similar... the personal spiritual experiences in the pews have little in common. The resonances and cultural references” shift from one church to the next. Jim Wellman agreed that the multiplicity of Christianities makes it difficult to talk about “Christians,” as if that term meant something uniform. After completing his research, Wellman found himself trying to determine “what kind of Christians these are... How would you define them? As people who desire the ulti-

mate? That is not very helpful. Latin America is a variety of Christianities.”

Cecelia Lynch related this fluidity of religious identity to her own research experiences. “One of the things I’m finding in Africa is that the numbers don’t add up. So that if you have 80% of the population in Cameroon following traditional religions and 60% following Christianity and somewhere between 20-40% following Islam, then obviously that’s way over 100% and I just think that seeing these things as more fluid and more of a pentimento is important.”



The world's only synagogue located directly next to a mosque. Paramaribo, Suriname.

“Despite every reason for it to die out, liberation theology has not gone away, because it has its roots at the grass roots. Very deep roots. It has undergone some changes and it has certainly retracted... but it's still there.

— Victoria Riskin



Workshop participants, left to right: Katherine Marshall, Berkley Center, Georgetown University; Otto Maduro, Drew University; Toby Volkman, Luce Foundation; Cecelia Lynch, University of California, Irvine; and James Wellman, Jackson School, University of Washington.

Liberation Theology's "Hugely Significant" Legacy

Liberation theology's influence on the course of Latin American history during the second half of the 20th century would be difficult to measure but impossible to deny, according to Maduro. What started as a movement by leftist Latin American priests, and at one point became a leading force for progressive social change in Latin America, was never very popular with Vatican-based Catholic leaders. "But," continued Maduro, "a very significant rightwing backlash [developed] within Catholicism from the very last years of Pope John Paul the VI himself, not just the people around him." By the early 2000s, liberation theology had been largely elimi-

nated as an institutional force within the Catholic Church. Even then the "structural critique that has emanated out of Latin America in the last generation remains quite powerful" and still inspires liberationist efforts of both religious and secular civil society, Lynch underscored.

On this same subject, Lynch recalled attending a major civil society conference in San Salvador that had been organized by a North American foundation. No religious perspective was represented in the programming. Lynch remembered feeling "very embarrassed" when she talked to Jon Sobrino, a leading Salvadorian liberation theologian who had not been invited. "The legacy of liberationism in El Salvador in the late 1990's was huge, and for a major North American organization to go down there and ignore that was significant."

Religious "Power" and the Intersection of Competing Social Forces

Social forces in Latin America are often expressed in religious terms. As the region has been buffeted by powerful economic and political forces associated with globalization, the religious landscape seems to have become increasingly dynamic and difficult to define, much less to understand in any sort of empirical way. Virginia Garrard-Burnett pointed out that, "the religious marketplace has opened up in Latin America," with a particular burgeoning of Protestant faiths. Even so, the Catholic Church remains the predominant religious institution in the region. While the Catholic Church is often perceived





Health Promoter Practitioner Course. Peten, Guatemala. (Photo courtesy of Marianne Loewe.)

as being an extremely hierarchical organization, the reality is much more interesting. Several panelists pointed out that the relationship between the Catholic Church and self-identified Catholics is, in the words of Jennifer Hughes, “profoundly local.” Throughout the region individual Catholic parishes organize their own religious practices “around locally specific saints, fiestas, and religious images. These preserve, shape and narrate very spe-

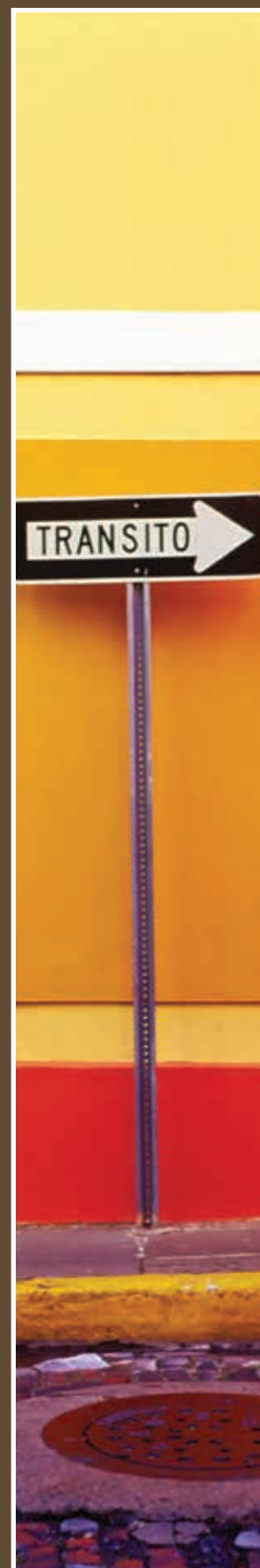
cific community identities that are cultural, ethnic, and spiritual. These religio-cultural local institutions that persist in most of Latin America... are structures of lay religious authority orchestrating the collective practice of local religion.”

Marianne Loewe gave some real-world examples of this dynamic: “I would say that Oscar Romero is a saint in many homes in El Salvador. It is the base communities

that formed Oscar Romero, it wasn't Oscar Romero that formed the base communities... He changed because he went to the people, listened to the people, and [was] changed by the people. He understood their needs, understood that the people themselves want to be part of the transformation. They don't want it imposed on them.”

"This changed religious landscape has, potentially, significant implications for civil society, although it is hard to tell in which direction these implications point. As people redefine their identities through religion in a way they did not necessarily do in the past, antipathy for political participation... seems to be changing. As a new generation of Evangélicos begin to redefine their place in the world, they see politics as a place where they can bring about 'redemption' and reform. This, certainly, is a trend to be watched."

— Virginia Garrard Burnett



One way street in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico.

“American students often identify religion with a particular brand of social conservatism and they completely do not understand Christian Democrats, Liberation Theology, and all of these other things that are going on in Latin America and they are very surprised to learn that there are people in Latin America who are both Evangelical Christians and Social Progressives. This does not make sense to them. So my question is: What would be the main things that you’d have to teach them that are different about Latin America from what they experience of the role of religion in the United States?”

— Kathleen Bruhn

"I would say, let people read what people themselves are producing. To introduce them to liberation theology let them read a little section from the Gospel in Solentinami. Let them look at the murals that were produced in Nicaragua. Let them listen to Archbishop Romero give his last radio address, which you can find on YouTube with English subtitles. I think YouTube is a great pedagogical tool."

— Virginia Garrard-Burnett



Fundación Huésped members prepare for community prevention activities with women. (Photo courtesy of Kurt Frieder.)

What Do American College Students Need to Know About Religion in Latin America?

Sarah Cline called herself an “evangelical for the kind of work that can be done.” Cline incorporates as much practical knowledge as possible into her classes, teaching about “commodity chains, sustainable development, and NGOs [as well as making] presentations on microfinance and the various kinds of work that

NGOs do.” Students seem to be responding. Cline said she receives “lots of emails from students who want to work in NGOs.”

Giles Gunn offered his thoughts on the way teaching about religion can be useful in programs that train future NGO leaders. Summarizing one of his core concerns, he said: “I want to talk about religion in the way in which ideas of human rights are informed by religious traditions.”

In his closing remarks, Mark Juergensmeyer shared some of his “take-away insights” from the discussion. “The lessons that I learned during this conference were very similar to the lessons that I often learn when I talk with experts

in these areas. Labels need to be questioned and units of analysis need to be disaggregated. For example, Latin America is a convenient geographic lens, but to consider Latin America monolithically would be patently erroneous. Haiti is different from Brazil which is different from Venezuela and within each of those states are diverse and unique regions and localities that are also important to understand in their own right. The same goes for any religion and for civil society. Each institution needs to be understood on its own terms and only then will we be able to intelligently contextualize it. Local, national, and global processes and institutions need to be understood individually as well as relationally.”

WORKSHOP PANELISTS



Mary Becker

Member, National Board,
Fonkoze USA

"One of the things that has been a powerful idea that has emerged over the last twenty-five years is microfinance. It's happening all over the world in various cultures and is primarily being carried forward by women in those cultures, and has proved to have many, many effects. Not just in those women gaining economic self-sufficiency, but it raises the level of living of their children, their families and, in fact, shows that as women become economically self-sufficient, they choose to limit the size of their families, so it has an effect upon population control as well."



Kurt Frieder

Executive Director
Fundación Huésped,
Buenos Aires, Argentina

"The Catholic Church's voice and opinion is almost decisive when it comes to some controversial matters related to education, health, and civil society activity... Social reality clashes with and confronts religious and dogmatic beliefs maintained by the church, not only by the Catholic Church, but mainly by the Catholic Church. Issues like homosexuality, diverse sexual orientations or identities, gay marriage, adoption, and multi-parental families are controversial for the society and for religion, for all of us really."



Virginia Garrard-Burnett

Professor, Department of Religious Studies
University of Texas, Austin

"While there are tremendous grounds for conflict between faith-based organizations and secular NGOs... There are areas of great promise for collaboration and cooperation and non-duplication of efforts."



Giles Gunn

Chair, Global & International Studies,
University of California, Santa Barbara

"Can the roles that religions, have played, or do play, or could play, or should play in Latin American/Caribbean life be examined academically? I would answer yes. Can academic programs be reshaped to accommodate this focus? I suspect they might, but it all depends on the program."

MODERATORS



KATHLEEN BRUHN

Professor, Comparative
Politics, Identity, Latin
American Studies
Department of Political
Science
UC Santa Barbara

"From trying to teach American college students about religion in Latin America I have found that there's a problem with false cognates in that they assume that the role of religion is the same as in the United States."



SARAH CLINE

Professor, Latin
America, Mexico, Race,
Religion
Department of History
UC Santa Barbara

"Theory is fine, but I am the Praxis Axis... There can be a useful dialogue between academia and work that can be done on the ground."



FERNANDO LOPEZ-ALVES

Professor, Political Sociology, Latin American Society and Politics
Department of Sociology
UC Santa Barbara

“What is the problem really? It is a good thing that this connection is being built and seems to be working... Religions and NGOs can come together.”



CLAUDINE MICHEL

Professor, Moral Development African American Women and Youth
Department of Black Studies
UC Santa Barbara

We have no choice but to merge academia and community. It is a moral imperative to do engaged scholarship, there is no other way to go about it.

WORKSHOP PANELISTS



Jennifer Hughes

Associate Professor, Religious Studies
University of California, Riverside

“Strong states [are needed] for that social function of the state, and NGOs can't replace that.”



Marianne Loewe

Executive Director, Concern America
Santa Ana, California

“Religious institutions are building the trust and reciprocity of cooperative work.”



Cecelia Lynch

Director, Center for Global Peace & Conflict Studies
University of California, Irvine

“Clearly, the structural critique that has emanated out of Latin America in the last generation remains quite powerful.”



Otto Maduro

Professor of World Christianity
Drew University,
Madison, New Jersey

“One of the things that I want to underscore is that part of what has happened in recent years, is that things that were not considered humanitarian activities, but at best charitable give outs or hand outs, have become so urgent... for such a large percentage of the population, that we can hardly continue to deride those activities.”



Katherine Marshall

Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs
Georgetown University,
Washington, DC

“Development is the process of trying; it's progress, it's modernization, it's trying to follow human rights, it's trying to have jobs, it's trying to have education, health, fighting trafficking—all of that is development. However, organizations are migrating away from these ideas.”



Victoria Riskin

Founder, Southern California Committee and National Board Member,
Human Rights Watch

"Although academia can be frustrating, theoretical, and disengaged, it does allow us to understand historical context, social context, tribal context, and religious context. That has to help inform how we look at situations."



Thomas Tighe

President, Direct Relief International,
Santa Barbara, California

"I have been impressed by the tremendous value that religious institutions bring at a functional level... Religious institutions have an effect on people's lives—through identification, culture, and social interactions—that is divorced from the religiosity of the faith itself."



James Wellman

Chair, Comparative Religion Program and
Associate Professor, Jackson School of International Studies,
University of Washington

"The more you study Christianity, the more multiplied it becomes."

WORKSHOP CONVENER



Mark Juergensmeyer
Director, Orfalea Center
for Global & International
Studies
UC Santa Barbara

"What we have learned in this workshop is that local religious forces in Latin America are strong and distinctive, but in an era of globalization very little is truly local. The forces of globalization -- including international NGOs -- affect these regional forms of religiosity, just as cultural and ideological currents from Latin America and the Caribbean affect the rest of the world in significant ways."

CONTRIBUTOR



Karel Zalenka
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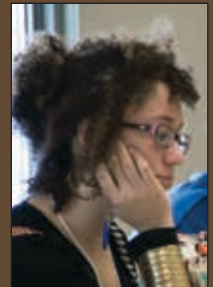
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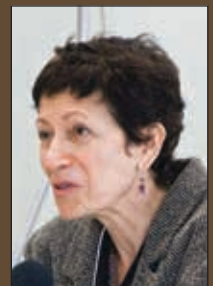
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ABOUT THE ORFALEA CENTER PROJECT ON THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY

This workshop summary is one in a series that is part of a Luce Foundation Sponsored initiative on the role of religion and international relations.

The Orfalea Center project will host regional workshops to:

- bring scholars and practitioners together to identify and discuss issues relating to religion that are important in the field
- develop curriculum and resource materials that will be available as a teaching tool for programs training international NGO leaders
- infuse the study of religion in the curriculum of UCSB's own graduate program in global and international studies.



This workshop was funded with generous support from the Henry Luce Foundation.

The Luce Foundation's Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion and International Affairs, seeks to deepen American understanding of religion as a critical but often neglected factor in international policy issues.



Workshop logistics team, left to right: Nick Cook, Sara Kamali, Dinah Van Wingerden, Collin Dvorak, Paul Lynch, Aleksandra Malinowska, and Barbara Morra.

The Orfalea Center for Global & International Studies at UCSB, inaugurated in the 2005-06 academic year, provides an intellectual and programmatic focus for the University's activities in global, international, and area studies. The Center provides financial support and arrangement facilities to sponsor public programs, seminars, publications, and research planning for units across the campus.