PUBLIC LECTURES 2017

Peace, Trauma, and Religion in the Palestine-Israel Conflict

“People of faith are never without hope”
GENERAL

“I am not optimistic, but people of faith are never without hope!”

This was the answer of a religious leader from Israel/Palestine when he was recently asked how he imagines the future of the people of the “Holy Land”, given the current political situation.

Israel/Palestine has witnessed an on-going conflict that seems almost impossible to be transformed into a peaceful situation of justice. How to imagine peace with justice in this context of human rights violations, terror attacks, occupation and discrimination?

The complexity of the context involves historical trauma, land issues, economic interests, international law issues, even war, and many other aspects - last but not least religion! There is hardly any conflict in which it seems so obvious that religion and different peoples of faith play a significant role: Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

For some, religion is the root-cause of the conflict itself. For others, religion is the only hope left.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THIS CONFLICT?

It is this question that motivated the VU-students of the Master specialisation on Peace, Trauma, and Religion to visit the context itself (March 2017), hosted by the Tantur Ecumenical Institute on a hill in the outskirts of Jerusalem near Bethlehem.

In order to gain some deeper insight, we want to learn from people of different faiths in their contexts; experts from different disciplines about the role of religion - in the midst of trauma, violence and injustice.

In this series of Public Lectures 2017 we want to continue our analysis in the university-classroom. The lectures will address different aspects of the question at stake, addressed by scholars who have studied the context deeply for some time, some have even lived there. Their insights will help to:

- describe religious identities, and their interconnectedness,
- identify historical claims, memories and trauma of religious groups;
- gain clarity of the instrumentalisation of religion in the given context;
- gain insights about the potential role of religions in peacemaking;
- name concrete examples of building “just peace” from faith perspective.
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| 4 APRIL  | PEACE, TRAUMA AND RELIGION IN THE CONFLICT OF PALESTINE-ISRAEL               | Insights from the Excursion of VU-Students of the Master Specialization on Peace, Trauma, and Religion  
  Prof. Dr. Fernando Enns and Students |
| 11 APRIL | ZIONISM AND ITS EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN ROOTS                                    | Dr. Janneke Stegeman                                                                  |
| 18 APRIL | ECUMENICAL ACCOMPANYMENT WITH THE PEOPLES OF ISRAEL AND PALESTINE            | A Report from “Christian Peacemaker Teams” - Experience  
  Drs Han Cuperus                                                                         |
| 2 MAY    | RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE MIDDLE-EAST CONFLICT                                | Theological and Historical Perspectives  
  Dr. Yaser Ellethy                                                                        |
| 4 MAY    | WHO ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD?                                                  | A Comparative Theological Reading of the Story of Jacob and Esau  
  Prof. Dr. Marianne Moyaert                                                               |
| 9 MAY    | VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF OCCUPATION                      | A Christian-Palestine Perspective  
  Viola Raheb, University Assistant Mag.                                                    |
Prof. Dr Fernando Enns holds the Chair for Peace Theology and Ethics at the VU University’s Faculty of Theology and is the director of the Amsterdam Centre for Religion and Peace & Justice Studies.

Dr Janneke Stegeman was declared Theologian of the Year in 2016. She is involved with the debate centre De Nieuwe Liefde Amsterdam. She obtained her doctorate with her dissertation Decolonizing Jeremiah: Narratives, Conflict, and Identity in Religious Tradition (2014).

Drs Han Cuperus is a pastor for the Mennonite Churches in Rotterdam and Dordrecht. He worked in Palestine-Israel with the Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Dr Yasser Ellethy teaches Quran and Hadith Studies at the VU University’s Faculty of Theology and is involved in the Center for Islamic Theology.

Prof. Dr Marianne Moyaert holds the Chair for Comparative Theology and Hermeneutics of Interreligious Dialogue at the VU University’s Faculty of Theology.

Viola Raheb works at the University of Vienna. A member of numerous organisations and committees on intercultural and interreligious dialogue, she has conducted various research projects, including the comparative study Political Awareness and Political Participation of Palestinian Women.
FURTHER INFORMATION

TIME AND LOCATION

All lectures are held at the VU University Amsterdam in the lecture room HG09-A16 on Tuesdays from 13.30-15.15 hrs. We intend to begin at 13.30, so a timely presence is appreciated. The exception is Prof. Dr Moyaert’s session, which takes place on a Thursday (same timeslot and room).

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De Boelelaan 1105
1081 HV Amsterdam
NETHERLANDS

The University can be reached by public transport using the following lines:

Metro:  Line 51.  Stop: De Boelelaan/VU.

APPLICATION

These lectures are part of the Master course “Introduction to Peace-Theology” (year 1, period 5). However, we welcome anyone who takes an interest in Palestine-Israel to join us. Attendance is free of charge. However, it is highly appreciated if you inform us of your intended attendance via e-mail.

Please follow our website for the most up-to-date information regarding this series of lectures.

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www.religionpeacejustice.com