

APPENDIX B
DOCUMENTARY FILMS:
RELIGION AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

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The end of the twentieth century, and the bi-polar tension (1917-89) that characterized much of it, saw conflict break out in new ways around issues of identity. Such conflict, often engineered by cynical manipulative forces playing on group anxiety and historical grievance, made of religion a weapon for harm rather than healing.¹ If conflict has been drawn to identity marked by religious definition and foreign policy to how we understand political identity, then conflict and its resulting violence is now caught up in an ideological use of religious terminology. Dealing with conflict as such has become an aspect of Christian mission² and we need the work of theologians to help shape our understanding – precisely to avoid a new age of religious warfare.

It is in this context that a whole library of books has been written over the last quarter century. Books like *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (1994) have alerted policy makers to a new appreciation of the role of religion in public life;³ questions about reconciliation, truth commissions and the means of transitional justice in settings of political fragility have been raised in *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (1999);⁴ *The Ambivalence of the Sacred. Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (2000) has made us more keenly aware of religion's role to harm as well as to heal;⁵ and the need to

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deal with the most intransigent of religious groups is recognized in *Between Eden and Armageddon* (2000).⁶ *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy and Conflict Transformation* (2001) has caught these issues up with an awareness of the roles of Track One and Track Two diplomacy, that churches and mission or development agencies have a role to play in conflict transformation.⁷

Studies such as *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (2002) or *Religion and Peacebuilding* (2004) have sought to bring to bear upon policy the fact of the necessity to work with religious difference.⁸ The question of religion, reconciliation and political realism appear to be issues that will continue to shape the public mind well into the twenty-first century as marked by *The Politics of Past Evil* (2006).⁹ Issues of religion and conflict transformation shape concerns appropriate to Christian mission in the twenty-first century and will, no doubt, shape the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation planned for 2011 by the World Council of Churches.¹⁰

Étoile Productions (under the direction of John J. Michalczyk, Documentary Filmmaker, Fine Arts Professor & Film Studies Program Co-Director, Boston College), together with the Boston Theological Institute, has produced a series of documentaries on religion and conflict in world trouble spots that are available for use in different educational settings. The series focuses on Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Irish Prisoners, South Africa, the Middle East and the Struggle to Define a Rule of Law in Sicily. The series "Religion and Conflict" is available through "The Cinema Guild," the coordinates of which are indicated below.

Out of the Ashes Northern Ireland's Fragile Peace

"Out of the Ashes: Northern Ireland's Fragile Peace" (1998; 56 minutes), a documentary chronicling "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland, had its premiere at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts in March, 1998. "Out of the Ashes" offers personal and historical views of the unrest in Northern Ireland from the mid-1960s to present day, with interviews with political and religious leaders, former paramilitaries, and Catholic and Protestant children.

While some prominent personalities such as Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams appear, "the primary focus is on newer voices," according to Michalczyk, "ones seldom heard before: the women who are forced to take up so much of the day-to-day work in family and community life; and

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the former prisoners, who have undergone a radical change from using violence to pursuing social action. As the peace process goes on these are the people who are truly fostering a long-term change."

The documentary was shot on location in Ireland, specifically in Derry, Belfast and Dublin. The film also features the work of renowned musicians Phil Coulter, Robbie O'Connell, Ken Meltz and Seamus Connolly, music programs director for Boston College's Irish Studies Program. Boston Theological Institute Executive Director Dr. Rodney Petersen and Boston College Theologian Raymond Helmick, SJ, an expert in conflict resolution, served as executive producers of the film. "Out of the Ashes" was funded by Boston College (the Jesuit Institute and the President's Office), the Irish-American Partnership and the Boston Theological Institute. The film aired on Boston's PBS affiliate WGBH-TV in July, 1998 and on Los Angeles' PBS affiliate KCET in August, 1998.

Prelude to Kosovo

"Prelude to Kosovo: War and Peace in Bosnia and Croatia" (1999; 52 minutes), a film depicting the bitter civil war in the former Yugoslavia, premiered at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in September, 1999. Shot on location in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia, the documentary combines graphic footage and interviews with religious and political figures. The film addresses the ideology of "ethnic cleansing" and the massacres resulting from a nationalist quest for political, cultural and religious domination. The Serbian Orthodox, Bosnian Muslim and Croatian Catholic perspectives are all represented.

The film features original Balkan music by Alexis Gavras, Vedran Smailovic and Vuk Kulenovic. Boston PBS affiliates WGBH and WGBX aired the television premiere of "Prelude to Kosovo" in November, 1999.

"Prelude to Kosovo" was shown as part of the Common Ground Film Festival, a traveling, international film festival designed to recognize the achievements of socially-conscious filmmakers, to strengthen the influence of film and video in transforming conflict, and to move audiences beyond viewing to engagement and dialogue. It was sponsored by Search for Common Ground, a non-governmental, non-profit organization that promotes peaceful and cooperative approaches to conflict resolution. The festival made its debut in Washington, DC in October, 2001, toured college and university campuses across the United States, and concluded in Brussels in September, 2002.

Unexpected Openings: Northern Ireland's Prisoners

"Unexpected Openings: Northern Ireland's Prisoners" (2000; 60 minutes), a documentary that chronicles the evolution of the paramilitaries in Northern Ireland from the times of "The Troubles" through the tenuous peace process, premiered at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in September, 2000. The film also aired in October, 2000 on WGBH, Boston's PBS affiliate. The film received a New England Emmy Award nomination. In June 2004, it was screened as part of the Common Ground Film Festival held in Jerusalem.

Shot on location, including in the Maze and Crumlin Road prisons, the film tells the stories of former Irish Republican Army, Ulster Defense Association and Ulster Volunteer Force prisoners who have returned to society after 15 to 20 years in prison. In personal narratives, the prisoners—considered "freedom fighters" by some and "terrorists" by others—share reflections of their confinement and their realization that their objectives cannot be obtained by violence. Many of the men are now working in social work, politics and education, and "have become Northern Ireland's hidden resource in the peace process," according to Michalczyk. The documentary features interviews with government officials, politicians, police, prison chaplains and victims of the violence. Footage from the BBC and Ulster TV is also included. Boston College, the Thomas Tracy Family Foundation, the American Ireland Fund and the Boston Foundation all provided funding for the film. Boston College's Rev. Raymond Helmick, SJ, and BC alumnus Paul Goudreau are co-producers and co-writers.

South Africa: Beyond a Miracle

"South Africa: Beyond a Miracle" (2001; 55 minutes), chronicles the evolution of South Africa from the tragic years of apartheid to exhilarating elections, and finally to the cautious hopes of building a strong democracy. Shot on location in Johannesburg, Soweto, Pretoria, Capetown, Port Elizabeth, and Durban, the documentary features interviews from witnesses—representing various geographical areas and profession—to the rebirth of South Africa. The interviews were conducted by Boston journalist Clark Booth. "How nice that South Africa has shaken off its legacy of apartheid and become one less place to worry about. That's not quite the case, as

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local filmmaker John Michalczyk points out in South Africa: Beyond a Miracle." -- Peter Keough, The Boston Phoenix.

John Michalczyk and BC alumnus Paul Goudreau are the producers. Executive producers are Boston College Theologian Rev. Raymond Helmick, SJ and Dr. Rodney Petersen, executive director of the Boston Theological Institute. Funding for "Beyond a Miracle" was provided by BC, BTI, Martin Fund/Boston Foundation and the Thomas Tracy Family Foundation. Music for the documentary was composed by Vuk Kulenovic, with South African collaboration. The film had its world premiere at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in April, 2001 and aired on PBS television station WGBH-Boston in October, 2001. The film was shown in March, 2003 in Paris, France for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).

Different Drummers: Daring to Make Peace in the MidEast

"Different Drummers: Daring to Make Peace in the MidEast" (2003). This documentary is a one-hour portrait of several Israeli peacemakers who provoke others to join their voices for peace and justice. Well-known Palestinians briefly reply to their concerns. "The American media have portrayed Israel as a country scarred by the violence of suicide bombers, demolitions and collective punishments," says Michalczyk.

"The human rights issues unfortunately, appear to fade into the background. Despite the atmosphere of 'terror' that hovers over both Palestinian and Israeli, there are Israeli voices heard over the din that cry out for a just and lasting peace." The film premiered at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in November, 2003.

Killing Silence: Taking on the Mafia in Sicily

"Killing Silence: Taking on the Mafia in Sicily" (2004, 50 min.) looks at the historic rise of the Mafia from the waning days of World War II to the Mafia wars of the 1970s and '80s. The film continues with a depiction of the birth of the anti-Mafia movement when the citizens of Palermo, along with some fearless and charismatic leaders, literally took to the streets in outrage

following the horrific 1992 Mafia slayings of two leading prosecutors, Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino. In the film, Sicilians discuss the goal of the anti-Mafia movement: to break the code of silence (omerta) and reclaim their neighborhoods and their culture from Mafia rule. Interviews with the former mayor of Palermo, Leoluca Orlando, and Sicilian-born Cardinal Salvatore Papalardo, retired bishop of Palermo, reveal the power the Mafia exerted in Sicily. Authors, psychologists and the son of a business owner murdered by the Mafia speak with hope about a new generation willing to discuss and challenge the old ways of life in Mafia-controlled Sicily.

The film, shot on location in Sicily, received funding from the Thomas Tracy Foundation, Boston College, and the Barilla Family. BC alumnus Paul Goudreau and BC Fine Arts faculty member Charles Meyer serve as associate producers. Executive producer is Boston College Theologian Rev. Raymond Helmick, SJ. It had its world premiere at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in November, 2004.

"Killing Silence: Taking on the Mafia in Sicily" explores the devastation and valor left in the wake of a social revolution, a battle of good versus evil...[Michalczyk] is a seasoned documentarian, having directed and produced more than a dozen films, each of which explores conflict prompted by social discord." -- Sara Faith Alterman, NewEnglandFilm.com. "[Killing Silence] is a revealing travelogue into Sicilian society. Mixing history and sociology, Michalczyk examines how the Mafia became entrenched in Sicilian life and how its violent excesses drove the public to finally take a stand against it." -- Chris Bergeron, The MetroWest Daily News

Films are available through "The Cinema Guild," 130 Madison Avenue, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10016; Telephone: 1.800.723.5522; Fax: 212.685.4717: Ask for student discounts, church and non-profit pricing.

End Notes

¹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God. The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, 2003); the possibilities for a more healing role of religion are marked out in books such as, Jeffrey Gros and John D. Rempel, eds., *The Fragmentation of the Church and its Unity in Peacemaking* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) and Richard Falk, *Religion and Humane Global Governance* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

² Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates, eds., *Mission – Violence and Reconciliation* (Calver, Hope Valley, Sheffield, England: Cliff College, 2004); and Jacques

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Matthey and the Ecumenical Formation Team, "Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation," Preparatory Paper No. 1. Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, Athens, May, 2005.

- ³ Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds., *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (New York: Oxford, 1994); and Douglas Johnston, ed., *Faith-Based Diplomacy. Trumping Realpolitik* (New York: Oxford, 2003).
- ⁴ Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999).
- ⁵ R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred. Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000).
- ⁶ Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon. The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- ⁷ Raymond Helmick, S. J. and Rodney Petersen, eds., *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy and Conflict Transformation* (Philadelphia: Templeton Press, 2001/2).
- ⁸ David Smock, *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington, D. C.: United States Institute for Peace, 2002); Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith, eds., *Religion and Peacebuilding* (Albany: SUNY, 2004); and in this light, John Esposito, *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam* (New York: Oxford, 2002).
- ⁹ Daniel Philpott, ed., *The Politics of Past Evil. Religion, Reconciliation, and the Dilemmas of Transitional Justice* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2006).
- ¹⁰ Deenabandhu Manchala, ed., *Nurturing Peace. Theological Reflections on Overcoming Violence* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005); and see on the Decade to Overcome Violence: www.overcomingviolence.org.

