

Comparative Political Theology

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Abstract: For a research project I engaged in from 2004-2007, I gathered and analysed statements made by representatives of Islamist terrorist movements on the Internet and compared key themes of their ideology (such as "democracy", "capitalism", "globalization", "colonialism" and "underdevelopment") to the writings and ideology of authors in various traditions of Christian "political theology". In this paper, it is being established that there are clear similarities in the socio-political analysis advanced by Christian political and liberation theologians and representatives of Islamist terrorist movements and radical Islam, respectively. The paper also offers a short history and extended discussion of the concept of "political theology" and elaborates on radical Islam's understanding of theology and politics. Primary and secondary literature on Christian and Islamic political and liberation theologies and radical Islam are being reviewed (including the most recent writings on "political theology" emanating from, mainly leftist, theory circles in Europe and the US). In an attempt to expand the term "political theology" to cover the socio-political analysis, arguments, and ideology of radical Islam, anti-liberalism is revealed as the single most important factor underlying all political theology. The argument is made that being anti-liberal means being (at least potentially) anti-democratic as well. A discussion of future lines of academic inquiry opens up the possibility of a common definition or framework covering all forms of political and liberation theologies and asks whether comparative political theology may be the ultimate political theory.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preliminary remark on "terrorism"

I am aware that the term "terrorism" in many parts of the world has connotations that are – for historical reasons – somewhat different from the "West". Being European, I am however writing from a Western perspective and use the term "terrorism" in the meaning it has acquired in the politico-scientific discourse on violent Islamist attacks against (mainly) Western (or perceived Western-influenced) targets all over the world. Sometimes, today's terrorist movements are tomorrow's lauded liberators from political oppression (as, for example, in South Africa). That is the unknown course of history. Nevertheless, I think that the term "terrorists" appropriately describes the outside view on a movement of resistance against a given socio-political situation that employs violent means (particularly mass murder) against its (perceived) enemies (or sometimes its own people) in order to achieve its political goals. Of course, "terrorists" are always *the others*.

1.2 Purpose of the study

Although Islamist terrorists use information technology very actively, terrorist statements in Arabic are routinely removed from the Internet (by governmental authorities and/or private, largely Jewish, initiatives) as soon as they appear (for instance as postings in Islamist fora and newsgroups). Links to websites hardly ever work: "This site has been removed from the server". Only a small part of terrorist statements has been translated into English, and very few (available) Islamist websites are being published (partly) in English. Because of the restricted access to original sources, documents and messages, it is difficult for people in the West and in the Arab world alike to know what the terrorists really want and fight for (or against).

If we wish to understand the motivation driving adherents of radical Islam and, indeed, terrorists it is of utmost importance for us to explore and analyse at least the available translated terrorist statements. All too often the "War Against Terrorism" (or "The Long War" – a war, some say, for hearts and minds) is fought on the basis of propaganda that does not sufficiently engage the politico-theological arguments of the terrorists. Only once we take seriously the terrorists' own statements will we be able to understand that, in the terrorists' view, there is an "inherent incompatibility between the belief of the people, Islam, and the system being forced down their throats" in the process of globalization by the United States and the West, "Democracy/Capitalism" (British website *Al Muhajiroun*, 2004f: par. 7). The prophet Muhammad

struggled to uproot all man made laws and systems in order to replace them with Islam, while Democracy/Capitalism zealously pursues the establishment of man made laws (par. 8).

Speaking of fundamentalist Muslims we should never forget that the very word *Islam* means "to submit" to the rule of Allah (Castells, 2002: 14). "The Muslim MUST reject anything that is obeyed, worshipped, followed or submitted to other than Allah" including the devil, "all the present rulers in the world, the United Nations, British Law, Freedom, Democracy, Secularism, Liberalism" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004h: par. 11).

Thus, Islam is inherently political. In Islam theology *is* politics. Theology cannot be separated from or replaced by politics, it seems.

In this paper I will suggest that representatives of terrorist movements such as *al-Qaeda* see an intrinsic linkage between democracy and capitalism and that they operate from the premises that whoever wants to fight capitalism, and maybe sees globalization as today's primary manifestation of it, needs to abandon democracy and its values first. Whoever wants to fight capitalism, it appears, needs to fight democracy as well (see

Kofmel, 2004, on various other traditions of a linkage between democracy and capitalism, for example classic liberalism, modernization theory, and empirical evidence).

In contrast to this, Christian "political theology" often aims at establishing democratic and humane conditions where no such exist. Many of its proponents assume (as does, for example, the anti-/alter-globalization movement: Kofmel, 2004) that a non-capitalist democracy is possible. This very notion, in spite of political theologians' arguing for a political role of religion, is based on Western secularism and the separation of politics and religion that is possible in Christianity but is arguably not possible in Islam. While most political and liberation theologians advocate non-violence, some (for example in the Philippines and Nicaragua) justified violent means in the struggle for (political) liberation.

At the same time, the terrorists quite often refer to or appear to be influenced by older (non-violent) traditions of radical Islam. I will therefore not exclusively focus on the violent component of radical Islam, but also take into account earlier and non-violent expressions of this line of thought.

It will be interesting to see to what extent the socio-political analysis of globalization/colonialism, underdevelopment, poverty, etc. of the various kinds of Christian "political theology" meets the socio-political analysis of Islamist terrorist movements and radical Islam and where they differ.

As a hypothesis I will assume that there are clear similarities in some key themes of the socio-political analysis of Christian political and liberation theologians and representatives of Islamist terrorist movements and radical Islam, respectively (particularly regarding "democracy", "capitalism", "globalization", "colonialism", and "underdevelopment").

1.3 Methodology and outline of the paper

The hypothesis I postulate is to be tested primarily by method of "literature" review and comparative analysis. There are a number of Internet-based archives such as the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) and Why War? that collect English translations (mostly from Arabic) of statements by leading representatives of terrorist organizations. I will explore and analyse these texts. Other parts of the research paper will be based on a very extensive exploratory literature review on Islam, "terrorism" and various traditions of "political theology".

In the immediately following second chapter I will define the term "political theology" and offer a short history and extended discussion of the concept and socio-political analysis advanced by political and liberation theologians.

In the third chapter I will analyse statements by representatives of Islamist terrorist movements posted on the Internet. Both in the second and third chapter I will focus on key themes such as democracy, capitalism, globalization, colonialism, and underdevelopment. I will argue that the terrorists view democracy and capitalism as inextricably linked and elaborate on radical Islam's understanding of theology and politics.

In the fourth chapter I will review secondary (and some primary) literature on Christian and Islamic political and liberation theologies and how they interlink and compare. I will situate Islamist terrorism within Islam by reviewing a number of recent publications by Western authors and some Islamic scholars concerning Islam, terrorism and (non-)violence. Can it be argued that the political analysis in mainstream Islam is the same as in the terrorist movements and that the difference lies in the theology/politics of (non-)violence? Furthermore, I will review authors (particularly theologians) who have written on terrorism and radical Islam from an explicitly Christian perspective and will see if someone has written on it in the context of "political theology". Finally, I will explore the most recent writings on "political theology" emanating from (mainly leftist) theory circles in Europe and the US.

In the last chapter I will compare radical Islam and Christian "political theology", asking whether (as I assume as a hypothesis) there are clear similarities in key themes of the socio-political analysis of and the arguments advanced by Christian political and liberation theologians and representatives of Islamist terrorist movements and radical Islam, respectively. If my study proves this hypothesis to be well-founded, I will argue that there is a kind of "political theology" underlying Islamist terrorism and radical Islam that can be set in relation to the Christian concepts of political theology and theology of liberation, and I will attempt to expand the term "political theology" to cover the socio-political analysis, arguments and ideology of radical Islam.

The validity and reliability of my research findings may be affected by a number of limitations that I cannot easily evade.

While English translations of terrorists' statements are conveniently to be found on the Internet, translators are not usually named and it is not possible to check the reliability of the translations – most of them hail from websites that are opposed to terrorism. I do not have the possibility to compare the English translation to the original Arabic terms and their meanings.

It is also not possible to verify if the statements made by the terrorists (or Christian political and liberation theologians, for that matter, for example with regard to non-violence) correspond to their real intentions.

Given the restrictions of a research paper, I will not be able to elaborate on many interesting side tracks, such as the Christian tradition of a "just war", dating back to the Middle Ages, or the intricacies of political theology arising in violent environments in the Philippines, Nicaragua and South Africa. When analysing political theology I will have to restrict myself to the ideology and beliefs expressed and the reasons given, with little possibility to research the historical context in which these ideologies and beliefs arose.

I will only be able to cover the most relevant authors in any one of the fields of literature reviewed. My analysis both of the statements of Islamist terrorist movements and Christian political theology will have to be restricted to socio-political key themes (such as how they view the nature of the linkage between democracy and capitalism, globalization, colonialism, underdevelopment) in order to be manageable.

Due to a lack of available data, I will abstain from comparing the organizational structures of radical Islam (terrorist *movements*) and Christian "political theology" (for example movements of liberation) and focus on the analysis and comparison of the underlying ideologies and beliefs.

The interpretation and analysis of data and information is, of course, qualitative and subjective.

While it could be deemed unethical to provide a platform for the thought of terrorist groups, I am of opinion that it must be possible to explore and analyse the terrorists' arguments in an academic setting.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONCEPT OF "POLITICAL THEOLOGY"

2.1 Carl Schmitt

The term "political theology" is generally said to have been coined in 1922 by a German professor of law, Carl Schmitt, in an essay of the same title, *Politische Theologie: Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität* – Political theology: four chapters on the concept of sovereignty (1985/22 and 1979/22). According to a remark in a little regarded later article by Schmitt (1965: 65), it appears however that, earlier in the same year, the first three chapters of that now famous essay had been published under the title *Soziologie des*

Souveränitätsbegriffs und politische Theologie (Sociology of the concept of sovereignty and political theology; my translation) in the collection *Hauptprobleme der Soziologie. Erinnerungsgabe für Max Weber* (Main problems of sociology: Souvenir for Max Weber; my translation), edited by Melchior Pályi (Böckenförde, 1983: 19, takes this as evidence for the significance of *Politische Theologie* for a sociology of concepts and in particular legal and constitutional concepts). Chapter four of the essay, according to the same notice, had first been published in *Archiv für Rechts- und Wirtschaftsphilosophie*, an academic journal, also earlier in the year 1922. While Schmitt himself argued convincingly against Alois Dempf who, in a 1969 article, credited Erik Peterson with originating the term "political theology" (Schmitt, 1970: 21) – which may in fact have triggered the publication of a follow-up, *Politische Theologie II*, in 1970, in which Schmitt sought to refute Peterson's contributions to the study of political theology (Schmitt, 1970) –, Heinrich Meier traces the term just as convincingly back to Bakunin's derogatory 1871 attack, *La Théologie politique de Mazzini et l'Internationale* (Meier, 2006: 22). It remains unclear whether Schmitt knew Bakunin's text.

Schmitt's main thesis has it that the political organization of a society always reflects the religious or theological beliefs (or non-beliefs) of that society and time: "The metaphysical image that a definite epoch forges of the world has the same structure as what the world immediately understands to be appropriate as a form of its political organization" (1985/22: 46; Ball points out that already Descartes and Leibniz knew of the existence of such analogies: 1983/24: 112). This idea is based on the notion of "the two kingdoms and spheres of the teaching of St Augustine", the two "*societates perfectae*", "*Civitas Dei* and *Civitas Terrena* – religion and politics, *kingdom come and earthly kingdom [Jenseits und Diesseits]*", "Church and state" – and transcends it in the secular twentieth century (Schmitt, 1970: 18-19; my translation; Schmitt's italics; St Augustine and Varro are frequently identified as critics of an early form of practiced "political theology", namely Roman "civil religion": see, for example, Meier, 2006: 21-22; also Koslowski, 1983: 31, on the subjugation of "the truth of religion to its political usefulness" in ancient "political theology"; my translation; Blumenberg, 1983: 101, refers to Aristotle's promotion of "the idea of religion being '*tantum politicam inventionem*' [only a political invention]"; Blumenberg's brackets; my italics).

All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development – in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver (Schmitt, 1985/22: 36).

Schmitt, whose essay is primarily concerned with the concept of sovereignty, holds that "[t]he 'omnipotence' of the modern lawgiver, of which one reads in every textbook on public law, is not only linguistically derived from theology" (38). The "miracle in theology" is for Schmitt analogous to the "exception" in a state's legal order – that is, a state of emergency (36).

Only by being aware of this analogy can we appreciate the manner in which the philosophical ideas of the state developed in the last centuries. The idea of the modern constitutional state triumphed together with deism, a theology and metaphysics that banished the miracle from the world. This theology and metaphysics rejected not only the transgression of the laws of nature through an exception brought about by direct intervention, as is found in the idea of a miracle, but also the sovereign's direct intervention in a valid legal order. The rationalism of the Enlightenment rejected the exception in every form (36-37).

Schmitt's concept of political theology applies equally, for instance, to the seventeenth century in which "the monarch is identified with God and has in the state a position exactly analogous to that attributed to God in the Cartesian system of the world" (46), "the 'neutral' power of the nineteenth century, 'which reigned but did not rule,'" and later "conceptions of the pure measure and administrative state, 'which administers but does not rule'" (1-2). While the "liberal constitutionalism" of France's July Monarchy "attempted to paralyze the king through parliament but permitted him to remain on the throne – an inconsistency committed by deism when it excluded God from the world but held onto his existence" (59) –, the liberalism of Schmitt's days "discusses and negotiates every political detail, so it also wants to dissolve metaphysical truth in a discussion" (63). "Although the liberal bourgeoisie wanted a god, its god could not become active; it wanted a monarch, but he had to be powerless" (59).

Tocqueville in his account of American democracy observed that in democratic thought the people hover above the entire political life of the state, just as God does above the world, as the cause and the end of all things, as the point from which everything emanates and to which everything returns (49).

Democracy and that the "the people became the sovereign" (48) is "as self-evident in the consciousness of that period as" monarchy was in an earlier time (46). Even "the economic postulates of free trade and commerce are, for an examination within the realm of the history of ideas, only derivatives of a metaphysical core" (62).

In the "battle against God" (50),

the radicals who opposed all existing order directed, with heightened awareness, their ideological efforts against the belief in god altogether, fighting that belief as if it were the most fundamental expression of the belief in any authority and unity (50).

They proclaimed "that mankind had to be substituted for God" (51).

It is important to note that since the twentieth century, in Schmitt's opinion, there can be no theology anymore that is not political:

We have come to recognize that the political is the total, and as a result we know that any decision about whether something is *unpolitical* is always a *political* decision, irrespective of who decides and what reasons are advanced. This also holds for the question whether a particular theology is a political or an unpolitical theology (2; his italics).

In his subsequent essay, *Politische Theologie II: Die Legende von der Erledigung jeder Politischen Theologie* (Political Theology II: The legend of all political theology having been finished off; my rough translation; 1970), Schmitt explains that "the historically inherited institutions of Church and state had successfully been challenged by a revolutionary class ..., the industrial proletariat", a "new subject of the political", and to it "*the state lost the monopoly of the political*" (1970: 24; my translation; his italics). "The two 'kingdoms'" of St Augustine are not clearly distinguishable anymore (Schmitt, 1970: 23; my translation). It is true that there has always been the Thomas-Hobbes-question

Quis judicabit? Quis interpretabitur? Who decides in concreto ... what is religious and what is secular and what is the case with the res mixtae that make up, in the interim between the arrival and the return of the Lord, the entire earthly existence of this religious-secular, spiritual-temporal double being man? (107; my translation; Schmitt's italics)

However: "Today the political can no longer be defined from the state, but that what still can be called state today has rather to be defined and understood from the political" (25; my translation). Besides the industrial proletariat there are now many other non-state political actors, one must add.

2.2 The German debate, 1922-85

In 1970, Schmitt also discussed how the concept of political theology had developed in the legal, political and theological thought of Germany and the German-speaking countries between 1922 and 1969. He recalls a vivid academic debate in these countries of which we may be largely unaware today. (For a discussion of Schmitt's reception in Spain since 1929, including his *Politische Theologie* and *Politische Theologie II*, see Beneyto, 1983: 20-61 and bibliography, 190-215.) In support of his argument Schmitt points to a number of publications (that are not easily – or not at all – available in English) such as (in chronological order) in 1924 an article on *Politische Theologie* by Hugo Ball, the former actor, dramaturge and co-founder of the centre for dadaism in Zurich (Scholz, 1983: 167), in the Catholic journal *Hochland* (which still published articles on the subject in the 1960s) (Ball, 1983/24); Carl Eschweiler's essay *Politische Theologie* in the journal *Religiöse Besinnung* in 1931/32; a book called *Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem; ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der politischen Theologie im Imperium Romanum* (Monotheism as

a political problem: a contribution to the history of political theology in the Roman empire; my translation), published 1935 by the Catholic professor of theology, Erik Peterson; after a noticeable period of silence, caused probably by the clouds of the Hitler regime (as a comment on which Peterson's book was read at the time of its appearance: Schmitt, 1970: 16) and the Second World War, Ernst Topitsch's 1955 essay *Kosmos und Herrschaft, Ursprünge der politischen Theologie* (Cosmos and power: origins of political theology; my translation) in the Catholic journal *Wort und Wahrheit*; the book *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit* of 1966 in which Hans Blumenberg attempted a scientific negation of any political theology (extended and revised edition 1974 under the title: *Säkularisierung und Selbstbehauptung – Secularization and self-assertion*; my translation; English translation: *The legitimacy of the modern age*: Blumenberg, 1983); Robert Hepp's dissertation on *Politische Theologie und Theologische Politik: Studien zur Säkularisierung des Protestantismus im Weltkrieg und in der Weimarer Republik* (Political theology and theological politics: studies on the secularization of protestantism during World War I and the Weimar republic; my translation), submitted 1967 at the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg; Hans Barion's article *Weltgeschichtliche Machtform? Eine Studie zur Politischen Theologie des II. Vatikanischen Konzils* (roughly translated as: A political power in world history? A study on the political theology of the second Vatican council) (1968), published in a volume of articles honouring Carl Schmitt's 80th birthday (such presents to highly regarded scholars by friends, colleagues and former students are a much respected German tradition); the protestant theologian Jürgen Moltmann's 1969 talk on *Politische Theologie* on the occasion of a further-training-day for German physicians; and, finally, one more article *Politische Theologie*, this one – directed particularly against the "new political theology" of J. B. Metz – published by Hans Maier, a leading German political scientist, in the February 1969 issue of *Stimmen der Zeit*.

Most of these authors seem to argue, in different ways and for different reasons, against the concept of a political theology, building up on Peterson's attempt to demonstrate, on the example of the Roman empire, the impossibility of any political theology (Schmitt, 1970). However, as Schmitt shows (1970: 52-60, 65-68, 94), even Peterson dismisses political theology only for monotheistic-trinitarian Christianity in absolute monarchies and concedes forms of political theology in other, non-Christian or pre-trinitarian Christian societies (an example is Peterson: 1983/33). According to Schmitt, political theology is an extremely "double-sided and bipolar field": "There are many political theologies, since there are on the one hand many different religions and on the other hand many different kinds and methods of politics" (1970: 51; my translation). Peterson's

argument has since been refuted by Schmitt (1970) – not least because it was itself "a political answer to a political question" of the years around 1935 (Schmitt, 1970: 85; my translation), making use of a "highly theological alienation effect" (87; my translation) – as well as by the subsequent development of Christian political theologies, particularly in the guise of "liberation theology" in Latin America.

In the meantime – since 1935 – the two complexes left out of consideration [by Peterson], democracy and revolution, have thoroughly avenged themselves. The intense debate, conducted by Catholic and protestant theologians alike, on a 'Christian revolution' does not feel affected in any way by Peterson's verdict (Schmitt, 1970: 63; my translation).

George Schwab, Schmitt's translator (Schmitt, 1985), adds some authors to the list who wrote after 1969, and more favourably, for example 1983 José Maria Beneyto in his book *Politische Theologie als politische Theorie* (Political theology as political theory; my translation); and Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, *Politische Theorie und politische Theologie: Bemerkungen zu ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältnis* (Political theory and political theology: comments on their mutual relationship; my translation) (1983), in a book called *Der Fürst dieser Welt: Carl Schmitt und die Folgen* (Taubes, 1983) (roughly translated as: The prince of this world: Carl Schmitt and the consequences). The book was based on talks given on occasion of the meetings of a 1980 working group on "*Religionstheorie und politische Theologie*" (Theory of religion and political theology; my translation) (Taubes, 1983: 5) and was to be volume 1 of a series, commissioned by two German publishers, bearing the same name as the working group. The book refers back to the earlier publications by Ball and Peterson (publishing them in part) and contains many other articles on political theology such as (to give an indication of the breadth of the German debate) *Politische Theologie als Theologie repolitizierter Religion* (Political theology as theology of repoliticized religion; my translation) by Hermann Lübbe; *Politischer Polytheismus – auch eine politische Theologie?* (Political polytheism – also a political theology?; my translation) by Odo Marquard; *Jenseits von politischer Theologie und unpolitischer Theologie: Zum Ansatz der "Dialektischen Theologie"* (Beyond political theology and apolitical theology – on the approach of "dialectical theology"; my translation) by Dieter Schellong; as well as discussions of the "political theologies" of Hobbes, Hegel, Schmitt and Max Weber, among others.

The number of authors and the variety of contributions gathered in this book clearly demonstrate that even parallel to the rise of Metz' "new political theology" the lively debate on Schmitt's earlier concept of political theology did neither cease nor diminish and that Metz was merely taken as one expression of the general concept.

Further publications referred to in the book include the collections edited by Helmut Peukert, *Diskussion zur "politischen Theologie"* (Discussion on "political theology"; my translation) (1969), and by Ernst Feil and Rudolf Weth, *Diskussion zur "Theologie der Revolution"* (Discussion on the "theology of revolution"; my translation) (1969); the books by Hans Maier, *Kritik der politischen Theologie* (Criticism of political theology; my translation) (1970), and Klaus-Michael Kodalle, *Politik als Macht und Mythos: Carl Schmitts "Politische Theologie"* (Politics as power and myth: Carl Schmitt's "political theology"; my translation) (1973); as well as Robert Spaemann's chapter *Theologie, Prophetie, Politik: Zur Kritik der politischen Theologie* (Theology, prophecy, politics: on the criticism of political theology; my translation) (1977).

Beneyto (1983) lists two more collections, by Gustav E. Kafka and Ulrich Matz (Eds.), *Zur Kritik der politischen Theologie* (On the criticism of political theology; my translation) (1970 and/or 1973, both dates are given in different places of Beneyto's book), and by Manfred Baumotte, Hans-Walter Schütte, Falk Wagner and Horst Renz (Eds.), *Kritik der politischen Theologie* (1973), as well as two articles nowhere else noted – Heinrich Getzeny's *Wieweit ist die politische Theologie des Reichs heute noch sinnvoll?* (To what extent is the political theology of the *Reich* still useful [or meaningful] today?; my translation and italics), published in *Hochland* in 1933, and Martin Greiffenhagen's *Zum Problem einer "Politischen Theologie"* (On the problem of a "political theology"; my translation) in *Zeitwende* in 1961 – and a book-length publication in French: François Biot, *Théologie du politique* (1972).

2.3 The "new political theology" of J. B. Metz and its relation to Schmitt

While the authors and proponents of "liberation theology" in Latin America were not, to my knowledge, aware of the earlier German debate, or did not take note of it, another German, Johann Baptist Metz, appropriated the term "political theology" rather unceremoniously in the late 1960s (*Zur Theologie der Welt* was published in 1968) (Metz, 1969b: 107-140). It appears that among theologians it is his more than Schmitt's use of the term that we mean when we speak of "political theology" today (although Metz' approach is often also referred to as the "new political theology").

The wording of a paragraph in Schmitt (1970) referring to Metz lets one assume that, although Schmitt obviously had read Metz' book, the two had not met each other nor, indeed, had they had any contact by 1969: Maier's criticism, Schmitt writes, was directed against "what the Catholic theologian *J. B. Metz* presents openly as his *political theology*

under this designation. ... Metz uses the term *political theology* expressly for this his cause" (Schmitt, 1970: 31; my translation; Schmitt's italics). Metz does not seem to have sought Schmitt's counsel on using the latter's terminology. Given the reputation Schmitt enjoyed in post-World War II Germany, and his high visibility (see Lilla, 1997: 39), this is not easily to be explained. An acknowledgement of his intellectual indebtedness to Schmitt is not readily to be found in Metz' writings (a fact others have noticed as well: see for example Lübke, 1983: 48; Maier, 1970: 14). A very short reference is contained in a rather obscure early article (1969: 278) where Metz refers to Schmitt as the author of "classical political theology" (my translation; presumably as opposed to Metz' "new political theology") and accuses "classical political theology" of being ambiguous in its criticism of society.

Most likely we have to seek the reason for Metz' reluctance to acknowledge Schmitt in a change of political direction that Metz gave the term "political theology". We may have to understand it as a kind of Marxist appropriation of the means of (in this case: intellectual) production. (Equally, we could call it a symptom of the politics of theology – or academia in general.) Schmitt used the term "political theology" to designate the authors of the Catholic counter-revolution – Donoso Cortés, Bonald, and de Maistre, "authors ... who were theists" and attempted "to support the personal sovereignty of the monarch ideologically, with the aid of analogies from a theistic theology" (1985/22: 37). They were anti-liberal and anti-democratic, Schmitt argues, in that they

considered continuous discussion a method of circumventing responsibility and of ascribing to freedom of speech and of the press an excessive importance that in the final analysis permits the decision to be evaded. ... The essence of liberalism is negotiation, a cautious half measure, in the hope that the definitive dispute, the decisive bloody battle, can be transformed into a parliamentary debate and permit the decision to be suspended forever in an everlasting discussion (63).

They opposed all "contradictions and compromises". Liberalism existed for them "only in that short interim period in which it was possible to answer the question 'Christ or Barabbas?' with a proposal to adjourn or appoint a commission of investigation" (62).

The kind of economic-technical thinking that prevails today is no longer capable of perceiving a political idea. ... Political ideas are generally recognized only when groups can be identified that have a plausible economic interest in turning them to their advantage. Whereas, on the one hand, the political vanishes into the economic or technical-organizational, on the other hand the political dissolves into the everlasting discussion of cultural and philosophical-historical commonplaces ... The core of the political idea, the exacting moral decision, is evaded in both. The true significance of those counter-revolutionary philosophers of the state lies precisely in the consistency with which they decide. They heightened the moment of the decision to such an extent that the notion of legitimacy, their starting point, was finally dissolved (65).

Schmitt calls this "decisionism". Its "logical conclusion" for Donoso Cortés, once he had found "that the period of monarchy had come to an end because there no longer were

kings and no one would have the courage to be king in any way other than by the will of the people", was for him to advocate "a political dictatorship" (66). "It is the solution that Hobbes also reached by the same kind of decisionist thinking, though mixed with mathematical relativism. *Autoritas, non veritas facit legem*" (52; his italics).

Metz, on the other hand, went on to write a book, *Faith in History and Society* (1980), that appears to have been heavily influenced by Marxism (Metz does not deny this – see, for example, his remarks in 1980: 53; one would be hard pressed to say if the name of Jesus or Marx is evoked more often throughout the book).

In 1968, writing still comparatively temperate, Metz himself defined "political theology" thus (in a way not incompatible with Schmitt):

I understand political theology, first of all, to be a critical correction of present-day theology inasmuch as this theology shows an extreme privatizing tendency (a tendency, that is, to center upon the private person rather than 'public,' 'political' society) (1969b: 107).

And he insists: "*The deprivatizing of theology is the primary critical task of political theology*" (110; his italics). Our very existence is for Metz political and

any existential and personal theology that does not understand existence as a political problem in the widest sense of the word, must inevitably restrict its considerations to an abstraction. ... With this, the *positive task* of political theology comes to light. It is, to determine anew the relation between religion and society, between Church and societal 'publicness,' between eschatological faith and societal life (111; his italics).

"*Every eschatological theology, therefore, must become a political theology, that is, a (socio-)critical theology*" (115; his italics). He holds that "our intention is not, once again, to mix faith and 'politics' in a reactionary manner" (112-113) – and, saying this, he may well have thought of Schmitt (he later refers to Donoso Cortés, Bonald and de Maistre, among other "traditionalist" authors: 1980: 20). Rhetorically he asks:

When was the [Catholic] Church truly an institution of critical liberty? When was she in fact critically revolutionary? When was she not simply counterrevolutionary resentful, and nagging in her relation to the societal world? (1969b: 117)

In this context we ought to expose that it was Bonald who said "reality is *in society and in history [in der Gesellschaft und in der Geschichte]*" (in Schmitt, 1970: 36; my translation and italics) – knowing the title of Metz' most famous book one might suspect here another case of unaccounted-for appropriation.

Before entering into a discussion of the left-leaning writings of the "new political theology", "liberation theology", and related theologies, let us just remember once more that Carl Schmitt's original concept of "political theology" is much broader than to cover only the revolutionary movements of Latin America, Asia and Africa. Something we may, outside the German-speaking countries, not sufficiently have taken note of. As Metz said himself: we must though "prevent the Church from being uncritically identified with specific

political ideologies and thus having it sink to the level of a purely political religion" – by which, of course, *he* meant right-wing ideologies (1980: 89), but *we* may as well understand the one-sided identification with *his* brand of political theology. (Whenever Metz speaks of the "Church" in his writings it is the Roman-Catholic Church he refers to, and his political theology is in the first instance meant to rouse this denomination.) Rightly, Schmitt noted that "in the changing friend-enemy-formations of world history theology can politically just as well become an object of the revolution as of the counter-revolution" (1970: 22; my translation).

In *Faith in History and Society* (in German-speaking theological circles fondly called "GGG", shorthand for *Glaube in Geschichte und Gesellschaft*), Metz, a student of Karl Rahner and professor of fundamental theology at the University of Münster, set out to draw up what he called a "practical fundamental theology", or a theology "that operates subject to the primacy of praxis" (1980: 50) – the latter consisting of "communication and action" (51) –, that does not subordinate "praxis to theory or the idea" (50). Today, this book is generally acknowledged as a standard work of modern theology.

Nevertheless we should not spare it the criticism that, in my opinion, the book and its author richly deserve. First and foremost, there are its many contradictions. For example, Metz demands a "biographical dogmatic theology", that is, an articulation of the subjective mystical biography of a theologian in his theology rather than a vain attempt at scientific objectivity (220) – while on the other hand slamming the "middle-class, privatistic subjectivity which led to the crisis in Christianity and the Church and which therefore not so easily can be given theological honours" (36). He demands a restoration of the "radically Christian concept of praxis" (28) and insists that theology "must again and again be interrupted by praxis and experience" and transcend "the narrow sphere of professional theology" (59), while we cannot but notice that his is a thoroughly theoretical approach that does neither enlighten us as to its author's "mystical biography of religious experience" (220) nor refer to any concrete situations and realities of suffering save in the most general and abstract terms. Suffice it to say that no reader will be moved, by this book, to any practical action.

I somewhat mistrust the English translation as I do not *re*-cognize terms that are quite central to Metz' argument. Can one really translate "*Bürger*" as "middle-class subject" (29; my italics)? In German the word's meaning is surely closer to "bourgeois" (the educated and cultivated lower upper class of times past rather than the middle class of our times; Shanks, 1991: 216, footnote no. 2, seems to confirm this observation). I also think I have not come across derivatives such as the "*bürgerlich-egoistische*" (bourgeois-

egotistic; my translation and italics) subject. What happened to the catchy slogan "*Glaube als Praxis*" (faith as praxis; my translation and italics)? And "*verlorene Zeit*" (Metz, 1992: 165; my italics) is not "forgotten time" (Metz, 1980: 169) – rather "lost time" (as in Proust).

Favourably we can notice that the English version reads somewhat easier than the heavy-handed German text. The translator spares us the worst of Metz' offences against (the German) language – such as his "*Pointe des Christentums*" (1992: 120 – the punchline of Christianity; my translation and italics), "*Geschichte mit reiner Weste*" (127 – history with a clean waistcoat, figurative for: a clean record; my translation and italics; actually, in German, one speaks of a clean *conscience* but a *white* waistcoat) or a "*pausbäckig-kleinbürgerliche*" idea of progress (195 – chubby-bourgeois; my translation and italics, but in all its absurdity and demeaning undertones not really translatable). Many terms Metz coined that are not even to be found in German dictionaries or dictionaries of foreign words in use in the German language as well as terms he misused (for example "*imperatorisch*" instead of "*imperativ*") have not found their way into the English translation either. All these mistakes, in German, are noticeably to the disadvantage of Metz himself and the power of persuasion of his argument. Under the crushing weight of the linguistic ballast much remains vague.

The most devastating critique, however, is being levelled by Fierro:

Unfortunately repetition rather than in-depth treatment is the characteristic feature of most political theologies. The work of Metz, for example, is very repetitive. What he says in two or three works seems to be repeated ad infinitum in all his other writings. Some articles seem so similar to each other that the reader can only wonder whether one and the same text has been slightly corrected by the author, whether he is dealing with different versions of the same text, or simply whether the author is being exploited by his publishers (1977: 130).

2.4 The socio-political analysis of Christian "political theology"

2.4.1 Metz

Our interest lies with the common ideology and socio-political analysis arguably underlying Christian political theologies – including European "political theology", "new political theology" and "theology of hope", Latin American "liberation theology" and "theology of revolution", Philippine "theology of struggle", Korean "*minjung* theology" and African "black theology". An analysis of the writings of major representatives of these theological movements may lead to the emergence of common aspects and characteristics of Christian "political theology".

Already in 1922, Schmitt advanced a seemingly very contemporary analysis of Western society:

Today nothing is more modern than the onslaught against the political. American financiers, industrial technicians, Marxist socialists, and anarchic-syndicalist revolutionaries unite in demanding that the biased rule of politics over unbiased economic management be done away with. There must no longer be political problems, only organizational-technical and economic-sociological tasks. ... The modern state seems to have actually become what Max Weber envisioned: a huge industrial plant (1985/22: 65).

Metz chose as the starting point of his political theology a criticism of the ideological upholder of Western "affluent society" (1980: 103). He propagates the rise of a "subject who is not yet established" (28), fundamentally different from the Western middle-class citizen whose "practical understanding is orientated almost exclusively ... on the satisfaction of his own needs" (29) and "control of nature in the interest of the market" (43), who follows "the laws of profit and success" (37) – centring around "[p]roduction, trade and consumption" and "the principle of exchange" –, who is "private" and "individual" and "no longer sustained by any all-embracing traditions, let alone religious traditions" (35).

From the political point of view, this results in his claim to self-determination and self-government on the one hand and a precarious separation between private and public interests on the other. Religion has become a private matter. It is possible to make use of it to satisfy cultural needs, but it is no longer necessary to have it in order to be a subject (35).

Ball shows that again already Schmitt deplored that "the religion of modern European society" had become "a religion of private matter [*Privatsache*] and private property" (Ball, 1983/24: 113; my translation and italics; Spaemann holds that "the precedence of saving one's own soul over against changing any worldly conditions" is inherent in the New Testament: 1977: 67; my translation; de Quervain, 1931, stresses that although the individual human being stands in the centre of faith – rather than a people or community –, humans are united in being part of creation). This despised "middle-class subject" (Metz, 1980: 29), true to Metz' nature, is a theoretical construct, it seems, rather than a human presence deserving of Christian consideration:

Theology, which believes that it is bound to defend the contemporary human subject uncritically as a religious subject, is, in this perspective, simply a late reflection of this middle-class religion (*'bürgerliche Religion'*) (33; his or translator's italics).

The world we Westerners inhabit is defined by Metz as a "technological and scientific culture which produces apathy and in which the death of the subject, the destruction of language and the end of history are anticipated, at least in theory" (74; interestingly, Metz predates with this remark Fukuyama's *The end of history* thesis by fifteen or twenty years, see Fukuyama, 1989 and 1992). In this time of "genetic manipulation and a computer ideology" (Metz, 1980: 103), an "all-encroaching and anonymous production process"

(101) "prefabricates man's pattern of life and produces a weariness with human identity that eats at man's soul" (221). The "form of freedom" of these societies "with the liberal pluralism" "is increasingly formal and without content" (104). "The eschaton of that society is boredom" (92; again a remark strangely reminiscent of Fukuyama's later writings, see for example Fukuyama, 1989: 18).

We are becoming ever more conscious of the dangers and antagonisms that arise when technological and economic processes are left to their own nature. Laws and our political and social control systems break down: dying cities, ruined environments, population explosions, chaotic information channels, an increasingly aggressive and vicious intensification of the North-South conflict, ... and so on (Metz, 1980: 100).

Early in his seminal work Metz refers to what has since become known as the phenomenon of "globalization":

Socio-political and economic relationships are becoming increasingly interdependent and for this reason no situation can be determined in the concrete without considering this global aspect. Any attempt to obtain a practical result without taking the global aspect into consideration will only be dubiously abstract (4).

Already in the 1970s,

[g]lobal interventions have become the concrete theme of political action. This is why politics can no longer be conducted simply within the framework of national action and exclusively with the interest of national security, which are often ideologically motivated, in mind (103).

This also involves the "globalisation" of theology away from its situation in "middle-class, Central-European society" (4) and acceptance of the "world-wide scale in political theology" (12) and its "global significance" (103):

The conflict between North and South that is so extensively discussed nowadays cannot be defined or resolved in regional terms, nor can it be neutralized by the Church and theologians as a purely political and economic event. It is above all a conflict with significant effects on the one Church throughout the world (4).

Metz stresses that there are "various points of contact and opportunities for a critical exchange of ideas between the political theology and the theology of liberation" (11):

This applies not only to their mutual insistence on an analysis of the situation on a world-wide scale, but also to many important elements of the theology ... These include a concentration on the primacy of praxis, the basic category of solidarity and a theology of the subject based on the idea of the whole of mankind in solidarity and subjection to God (11).

This solidarity means "to suffer the sufferings of others" (95). It includes the sharing of "sorrow and melancholy" and present "suffering" (57) with "the living and future generations" (76) and "openness to past suffering, in other words, as solidarity with the dead and those who have been overcome" (57) – remembering the "sacrifices of history" (58) and that "the happiness of the descendants cannot compensate for the suffering of the ancestors" (75) – as well as an "attitude of resistance to the interiorization and privatization of these pathetic forms of expression of social praxis" (57).

Can the rich churches of the North only redress the balance between them and the poor churches of the South that has been destroyed by what has been recognized as the mechanics of exploitation and structural injustice by means of almsgiving? (70-71)

In Metz' opinion, "the struggle for God and the struggle to enable all men to be free subjects does not operate in the opposite direction, but proportionally in the same direction" (62). "Any theology that aims to justify Christian faith and its tradition critically" has to address questions of "public life, justice and freedom" (88). Though "there is certainly religion in an authentic form even when there is oppression" (71), political theology aims at "speaking about God by making the connection between the Christian message and the modern world visible" (89):

[T]he Church must understand and justify itself as the public witness and bearer of the tradition of a dangerous memory of freedom in the 'systems' of our emancipative society. ... In faith, Christians accomplish the *memoria passionis, mortis et resurrectionis Jesu Christi*. ... This *memoria Jesu Christi* ... anticipates the future as a future of those who are oppressed, without hope and doomed to fail. ... Christian faith can and must, in my opinion, be seen in this way as a subversive memory (90-91; his or translator's italics).

2.4.2 Political theologies in Europe and North America

At the borderline of "political theology and theological politics" (Schmitt, 1965: 53; my translation), political theology is seen as controversial because interests often take precedence over against academic rigour, claims Taubes (1983: 5; my translation). Richard Faber agrees with Blumenberg that "the term 'political theology' generally conceals that what is meant is 'theology as politics'" (Faber, 1983: 86; my translation; see Blumenberg, 1983: 97-98). Böckenförde warns of "[t]he danger of the transition from argumentatively justified theology to merely engaged theological politics (often inspired by Marxism)" (1983: 21; my translation) and Marquard sees the "new – eschatological – 'political theology'" as burdened with an "immense blindness for the reality of the political (through infantilization) and ... reduction of love of neighbour [*Nächstenliebe*] in favour of love of the furthest [*Fernstenliebe*]" (1983: 78; my translation and italics). Barion argues that the eschatological nature of the Catholic Church means that she has "no political ideal, only political goals" (1965: 162; my translation). Spaemann gives the example of how the goals of the Church in post-World War II Germany – anticommunism, social market economy, confessional schools and state funding for ecclesiastical welfare institutions, among others – led to her supporting the Christian-Democratic Party (1977: 58). In this light, "the political decisions of the Church must by definition take the form of an interim" (Barion, 1965: 162; my translation). It could be argued that both Schmitt's

"classical" and Metz' "new" political theology may then be compatible with faith if seen in their historic context (although Spaemann claims that the new political theology sought to break with the sort of political Christianity, and particularly political Catholicism, of 1950s Germany: 1977: 58-59). Maier lists a number of cases in which the Church did side with liberal and revolutionary movements, such as in the Belgians' fight for independence in 1830, or "healing" (*Heilung*) the Bolivarian Revolution in Latin America in 1827 by appointing new bishops for Greater Columbia (1970: 75). Maier understands political theology "as a means of a contemporary hermeneutics" that analyses society in the critical light of the Gospel and attempts "to formulate the eschatological message under the conditions of today's society" (12; my translation). He sees the "new political theology" as a "secularised 'dialectic' variant of the old one" (103; my translation) – "instead of order, change, 'God's action in history', is being theologised" (62; my translation). He criticizes that the most progressive currents of theology, such as the new political theology and theology of revolution, had already forgotten the important message of the Second Vatican Council, a few years earlier, that unity in faith can go together with plurality in political belief and that, in particular, the faithful as citizens, acting in private capacity or as associations, and the Church as an institution may differ in political convictions (13; see also Barion, 1968, particularly 16). The quest for democratization of the Catholic Church Maier calls "naïve" in its assumption of a rule of homogeneity according to which "the Church can and must not be constituted in any other way than the state" (100; my translation). Metz, in his eyes, uncritically adopts Marxist patterns of interpretation (34). Rohmoser speaks of a "theologisation of Marxism and a sociologisation of theology" (1968: 618; my translation).

The importance of political theology for political theory is highlighted by Böckenförde who says that "if God exists, if a divine revelation has happened, if theological statements contain truth" this must have an impact on politics (1983: 17; my translation). Barion, with Schmitt, derives the role of the Church as a challenger for political authority from the fact that she represents "'civitas humana' and 'Christ himself, personally, the God who has become man in historical reality'". The Church thus constitutes itself as inherently political (1968: 14; my translation). Metz' vision of the Church is "a Church in which the people have emerged from their natural collective patterns of identity as a nation, race and class", have become "a new people and have found a new identity in the presence of God" (Metz, 1980: 151). Kodalla, referring to later writings of Schmitt's, thinks though that "with progressing de-theologisation the *historic* religiosity of Europe, the Christian faith, has lost its political power" (1973: 53; my translation; his italics). Schmitt himself says, in 1970, that

"the de-theologisation contains a de-politicisation in the sense that the world stops being 'politomorph'" (1970: 119; my translation). In a world without theology, there will be no political participation either, it seems. Koslowski holds that non-dogmatic theological reflection (such as "*political theology as analogy*") might help to make political theory more reasonable (1983: 34; my translation; his italics).

Maier points out that there are no clear definitions distinguishing "political theology" and "theology of revolution" and that both very much merge into one another, with some authors using the terms interchangeably (1970: 62-65; Metz claims though to have critically distanced himself and the new political theology from certain forms of "theology of revolution": 1969a: 280). The main proponent of theology of revolution, Moltmann, to confuse things even further, called his book *The gospel of liberation* (1973) and generally seems to be speaking of global, rather than Western, phenomena. He aims at "liberating the internally and externally oppressed man for faith, love, and hope ... in the name of the crucified and resurrected Christ, and in the name of his smallest brother in our world" (1973: 11) because "[t]here is no redemption of the soul without a liberation of the body" (22). "Man is subjected bodily to death, sicknesses, hunger, exploitation, and degradation by other men" (88).

[W]e often hear the cry of the hungry in Biafra and South America and other war-torn and disaster-stricken countries. However, there are more unheard cries and requests in the world than there are ears to hear them or hands to fulfil them (20).

Without wanting us to be "accusers of other men, of the bad, godless society" (40), Moltmann, who conveys the impression of being more religiously inspired than Metz, passionately prays (in writing): "*Out of the depths the dead in Viet Nam cry to you, and also those who have killed them. ... Out of the depths cry to you the hungry in Africa, Asia, and South America; and also the satiated in Europe who let them hunger*" (24; his italics).

In the West,

[f]reedom and living space are there for the clever and for those who have arrived. But where is freedom for the children on our streets, for the aged, the handicapped and the injured? The old in our rest homes, the sick in our hospitals, the prisoners in our jails, the handicapped in our institutions (61)?

There is "*apartheid* politics, persecution of Communists, Democratic hunts, persecution of Christians, anti-Semitism, racial hate, and so on" (67; his italics). There is "idolization of the living standard, of nation, of race, of progress, etc." (101). People are "brought to sacrifice to the fetishism of goods and consumption" (83) that "impoverish man in the search for pleasure and fulfilment and let him return empty". Moltmann asks us to destroy the "many idols in our lives" (26) because "the destruction of hate and power begins with the liberation from fetishes, idols, and person cults which promise security and lead into

death " (102). According to him, they are "idols without future" (26; on "idolatry" and fetishism see Hinkelammert, 1983 and 1986).

Because "religion is misused for the purpose of keeping the poor quiet so that the sufferers will be satisfied with unrighteousness and not protest it strongly" (Moltmann, 1973: 80), we should "break out of our churches and out of the anxious egoism of our nations and develop a new piety of solidarity with all the damned of this earth", Moltmann says (88). "Theology of revolution is ... not a theology for bishops, but a lay theology of the suffering and fighting Christians of this world" and part of it is "a revolution of theology" (1969: 68; my translation). Like Metz, Moltmann urges us to "understand again the 'revolutionary' character of the Bible. ... We must obtain again the sharpness of the gospel if we want to spread the freedom of the Crucified out into this chaotic world" (1973: 90). "Christianity is not only a religion of salvation, but at the same time an encompassing revolution of earthly affairs" (126).

The "God of Hope" of Romans 15:13 "steps over the boundary of race, in which man loathes man, and the boundaries of class and strata in society. He despises the difference between black and white, poor and rich, educated and uneducated" (26-27). "Jesus himself proclaimed the kingdom to the poor, but not only to the poor. He proclaimed it to the rich also" (41). He "became an intense partisan of the weak, the discriminated against, and the hopeless" (89). Too often, however, the faithful do not follow him (28), refusing to be "agents of reconciliation in this society" (39-40). Moltmann fears that suffering, migration and (Western) multiculturalism will lead to dire consequences if not tempered by "hope": "The more we grow together today into one world, the more men of different types mix together, the more dangerous will this be considered by society" (67). The exclusive "friend/enemy-thinking", promulgated by Schmitt (1996/32) and fuelled by "hate", comes with "apocalyptic terrorism which pushes toward 'the last battle'" (Moltmann, 1973: 67). "The law of life of a Christian community", according to him, demands however the "'acceptance of the other' in his differentness" (91).

Change without reconciliation leads to terrorism. Revolutionaries should recognize that today. For not until there is reconciliation will the compulsion of the evil deed which bears continuous evil be broken. Not until there is reconciliation will the devilish circle of revenge be destroyed. Not until there is reconciliation will the law of retaliation be conquered (92).

"Love includes the opponent in its thoughts and affairs. It sees in him the reconciled and liberated friend of tomorrow" and has "a permanent mistrust against the justice of one's own position". Christians "cannot justify the use of power, for then they assume guilt which must be forgiven" (92-93).

Strangely, Moltmann is less squeamish in a 1969 speech in which he appears to be arguing in favour of revolutionary violence. "*The problem of the use of violence or non-violence is a fictitious problem [Scheinproblem]*", he says (1969: 77; my translation; his italics).

The only question is that after justified and unjustified use of violence ... power needs to be justified. Else it is naked violence. The use of revolutionary power must be legitimised by the humane goals of the revolution. ... If not all possible means are being made use of, the revolutionary future becomes implausible [unglaublich]. ... The humane goals of the revolution may not be discredited through disproportionate use of violence (77-78; my translation; his italics).

"All means are justified, but they must be different from and better than those of the enemy, in order to confuse the enemy" (79; my translation).

Although Moltmann claims to dislike Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction (Moltmann, 1973: 67), it is not without reason that Schmitt concludes that "Moltmann is right when he stresses the intensely political meaning that is irreducibly contained in the worship of a ... crucified God and that cannot be sublimated into the 'mere theological'" (1970: 118).

Oliver O'Donovan, who when speaking of "political theology" most often seems to mean (revolutionary) Latin American liberation theology, argues that this "Southern school remains important for theologians in other contexts, despite its inability to address the major practical questions of the North" (1996: 21). We will therefore now take a closer look at non-Western political theologies.

2.4.3 Liberation theologies in Latin America, Asia, and Africa

2.4.3.1 Liberation theology, political theology, and the Church

While Matthew 5:43-44 affirms: "You have heard that it was said: 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you" (USCCB, 1970), liberation theology, in accord with theology of revolution, appears to be focussing on love of neighbour to the detriment of love of enemy (for example, it is them, not us, who, although being "loved by God", "are constantly being called to conversion": Gutiérrez, 1993: 160). Liberation theology thus sometimes shows an unforgivingness, even vindictiveness, that reminds one of the (Jewish) Old Testament more than of the (Christian) New Testament.

In the following I will be focussing on the socio-political analysis advanced by those who designate themselves as liberation theologians (including "black theology" in Africa, "theology of struggle" and "*minjung* theology" in Asia). It has to be noted that documents

along argumentatively similar lines and critical of social and political conditions in Latin America and other parts of the world may have been issued by Church authorities, for example episcopal conferences, that did not (want to) identify themselves as writing in the tradition of either liberation or political theology and are therefore not subject to my analysis. (On the other hand, Segundo means to know that the adoption of "the terminology of liberation" by "ecclesiastical authorities ... has led to a watering down of its content, so that the language of liberation is emptied of all real meaning": 1976: 4.)

Gustavo Gutiérrez, the first and foremost liberation theologian, in what is arguably the most important book of liberation theology, *A theology of liberation*, published in the original in 1971, explicitly refers to Metz' political theology (1993: 126-130; as does Juan Luis Segundo in *The liberation of theology* when he says that "a very respectable and scientific 'political theology' does presently exist in Europe": 1976: 70). Gutiérrez also notices "the rather abstract level on which the political sphere is at times treated in Metz's writings" (1993: 129; equally Segundo, 1976: 144-145, on Metz and Moltmann; and Alves on Moltmann: see Fiorenza, 1975: 24) and attributes this to the fact that

the climate in which his reflections develop is far from the revolutionary ferment of the Third World countries, he cannot penetrate the situation of dependency, injustice, and exploitation in which most of humankind finds itself. His conception of the political sphere lacks what could be acquired both by the experience of the confrontations and conflicts stemming from the rejection of this oppression of some persons by others and of some countries by others, as well as by the experience of the aspiration to liberation which emerges from the heart of these conditions (Gutiérrez, 1993: 129).

A defining difference between liberation theology and political theology is, according to Gutiérrez, that "[f]aith, the Gospel, the Church, have in Latin America a complex public dimension" that they have lost in Europe (1993: 129; although Segundo seems to think that the "majority Christianity" in Latin America is "of very low religious caliber" and only "a minority Christianity" has a "much more profound grasp of the Christian message ..., however much one may accuse it of being class-conscious and intellectualistic": 1976: 185; this is confirmed by Löwy, 1996: 48-49). In Europe, "the universal existence of a secularized world and the privatization of the faith seem to have been taken for granted by political theology without further critical examination". While Gutiérrez attests Metz to react "to a conformist theology" in Europe, he admits that religion in Latin America also "played (and still plays) an important role in support of the established order, although currently it seems to be withdrawing its support – with unforeseeable consequences" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 129-130). Latin America is "a continent in which socio-economic structures are in the service of the powerful and work against the weak of society" (xxx; Camara speaks of an "inner colonialism" of "a small number of privileged in a country" who enjoy their wealth

at the expense of "millions of their countrymen": 1969: 261) and "[p]eople are ... painfully aware that a large part of the Church is in one way or another linked to those who wield economic and political power" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 40; he goes as far as to speak of "the moral failure of an institution which seems to be on the verge of bankruptcy": 141). Joan Casañas sees "traditional Christianity chained to capitalism" (1983: 119) and defies "any landholding and fascist bishop in Latin America" (124), and Segundo claims that "at a certain moment in history the Church stopped listening to the voice of Christ and began to listen to the voice of the ruling classes and their selfish interests" instead (1976: 42).

Today,

[t]he dominant groups, who have always used the Church to defend their interests and maintain their privileged position, ... – as they see 'subversive' tendencies gaining ground in the heart of the Christian community – call for a return to the purely religious and spiritual function of the Church (Gutiérrez, 1993: 41).

Too long, in Gutiérrez opinion, "as a result of a Latin American cultural tradition imposed by colonization, theology as practiced among us simply echoed the theology developed in Europe" (xxviii). It is then strange to see that liberation theology seems to be echoing the new political theology of Metz, once more developed in Europe. (Along similar lines, Segundo, 1976, speaks out against the use of Western concepts in Latin America just to continue unabashedly to employ Marxist perspectives and the hermeneutic circle – also without ever pausing to think that in an hermeneutic circle non-"liberation" interpretations would be just as valid – and so on.) Gutiérrez does not want liberation theology to be seen as "as the radical, political wing of European progressive theology" though (1993: xxix) and Segundo thinks that they do "not have a great deal in common" because liberation theology derives directly from "man's most urgent problems" rather than from theological speculation (1976: 81; see also Araya G., 1983: 105).

2.4.3.2 Dependency and development, democracy and capitalism

It is not possible to distinguish a clear-cut socio-political analysis in Gutiérrez. This may be because he thinks that "[t]he ultimate reason for commitment to the poor and oppressed is not to be found in the social analysis we use, or in human compassion, or in any direct experience we ourselves may have of poverty", but in the Christians' "theocentric, prophetic option that has its roots in the unmerited love of God and is demanded by this love" (1993: xxvii). Gutiérrez heavily relies on others' theories, and, to some extent, presents them as his own (just as Segundo, 1976, does not acknowledge the origins of the "hermeneutic circle"), for example "class analysis" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 54) and dependency

theory, a theory of the causes of underdevelopment very much in vogue throughout the developing world in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1971, he unequivocally holds that the status of the "rich countries ... is the fruit of injustice and coercion" (14) and "underdevelopment is only the by-product of the development of other countries, because of the kind of relationship which exists between the rich and the poor countries" (17; see also Boff, 1995: 276; according to Hinkelammert, "[t]he exploitation of the Third World" guarantees "the social gains of labor movements in First World countries", their "high wages and generous social spending": 1983: 189), although he relativates this in the foreword to a later edition of his book when saying that dependency theory "does not take sufficient account of the internal dynamics of each country or of the vast dimensions of the world of the poor" and has become "an inadequate tool" as "the world economy has evolved" and new factors had to be taken into account (Gutiérrez, 1993: xxiv).

Gutiérrez does however not approve of the Western concept of "development" – particularly when "approached from an economic and modernizing point of view" (17) – altogether: "It is my opinion that the term *development* does not well express these profound aspirations" (xiv; his italics) of the Latin American people "to overcome material insufficiency and misery ... in order to achieve a more human society" (14).

In the final analysis, poverty means death: lack of food and housing, the inability to attend properly to health and education needs, the exploitation of workers, permanent unemployment, the lack of respect for one's human dignity, and unjust limitations placed on personal freedom in the areas of self-expression, politics, and religion. Poverty is a situation that destroys peoples, families, and individuals (xxi).

Leonardo Boff specifies "malnutrition; a high infant mortality rate; endemic diseases; low income; ... lack of social security; lack of health care, hospitals, schools, and housing facilities" as what "is commonly called underdevelopment" (1995: 268). Franz Hinkelammert laments that "countries, with their natural resources, are being despoiled, destroyed, and plundered", with "hundreds of thousands" having "to leave their homes and wander about the country, living from beggary" (1983: 175), while "there are concentration camps everywhere to terrorize the dominated classes". The rich countries "maintain their own so-called political freedoms while overturning and destroying the most basic human rights in most countries of the underdeveloped world" (174).

"Development ... has been frequently promoted by international organizations closely linked to groups and governments which control the world economy" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 17) and as a result the world is now "experiencing a profound and rapid socio-cultural transformation" (13). While "[t]he old forms of imperialistic presence ... still exist" (for example, mining and plantations), "currently foreign investment is gravitating towards the modern sector of the economy ..., binding it ever more closely to international capitalism.

In this way a new kind of dependence arises, less apparent, but no less real". The economic interest groups now discernable across Latin America have acquired "the character of great multinational corporations" (52; the term "multinational corporations" is also being used by others, for example Hinkelammert, 1983: 178) and "countries are being kept in a condition of neocolonialism" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 64; the term "neocolonialism" is being used by others too, for example Assmann, 1969: 226; my translation) with "the centers of decision-making ... to be found outside the continent" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 64).

Almeri Bezerra de Melo ranks all forms of "development aid" – such as "technical cooperation" and "loans" – among the new "instruments of control and economic and political domination" (1969: 250; my translation). Hinkelammert succours him, holding the "International Monetary Fund (IMF)" responsible for "the current subjugation of Third World countries" inasmuch "as all these countries have debts that they cannot pay" (1983: 177).

The IMF missions plot the destruction of the human being and of nature, nature being the future life of humans. Hence, they leave a trail of blood behind them: the blood of the poor, which they convert into money, which is the blood of their economy, the blood of the Leviathan. The sound of the dollar becomes a cry of terror (178).

Segundo seems to contradict this however by arguing that

the hope of Latin American countries does not lie in an impossible attempt to preserve their more primitive cultures, however much respect we may show for their humane values and their proper pace of transformation. The only road open to them is to pass through the modernization that is a precondition for survival to a revolution that will thoroughly and radically humanize the social structures of the population as a whole (1976: 202).

One cannot but wonder whether Boff's 1972 analysis of the short-comings of "modern" Western society does not refute such expectations:

The utopia of a global consumer society, a society without dire needs, revealed itself as truly illusionary. Technology, instead of liberating, enslaved people in the most subtle form. Urban society and secular empirical technology, instead of creating greater conditions of personal liberty, restricted citizens ever more thoroughly (1995: 29).

The (Marxist) revolution that would change this situation, in line with Segundo's hopes for Latin America, never became reality in the West and Boff therefore argues against "the myth of progress in the capitalist mould" (269) which "benefits only some strata of the population, marginalizing broader sectors. ... The social tax of inequality levied by modern progress is immense, and is paid by the common masses" (1985: 7; Assmann, 1969: 226, emphasizes this by giving the example of Brazil; see also Hinkelammert, 1983: 175, on the human drawbacks of economic and production reforms in other Latin American and African countries). Hugo Assmann, again slightly shifting the perspective, thinks that there are "countries that are being kept underdeveloped" (1969: 224; my translation) and that most of them are on an "increasingly regressive, by no means progressive, way" (225; my translation).

Eleazar Fernandez, from the Philippines, in *Toward a theology of struggle*, links capitalism to an "*elite democracy*" in the West: in "capitalist-liberal democracy" "you have dictatorship by the few – the wealthy and the powerful". "Deceptive and elusive are fitting descriptions" of the socio-political system of "the core capitalist-democratic countries, like the United States", that hide the "system's crimes against the people" by blaming the victims (1994: 92-93; his italics). Segundo finds equally worrying that in Latin America democratic governments are being overthrown "by military dictatorships which can keep discontent under control though they may not be able to control its cause" (1976: 4).

In an article dated 1987 (but apparently written much later as it speaks of the fall of communism and uses the language of the anti-globalization movement of the late nineties and early 2000s), Yong-Bok Kim, a major representative of Korean "*minjung* theology", deplores that "[a]ll life on earth is now condemned to the global market" with "no realistic option for life outside of" it left (1987b: par. 6). Even "nation states ... are ... losing control over the economic life of their own people" to "corporate entities of capital ... controlling modern science and technology as well as information and communication" (par. 8; which "hi-tech" media, in turn, control "economic, political and cultural" "feelings and perceptions of the people" in an "intensive and brutally effective" manner: 1989: par. 75). Social safety nets, where they exist, "are rapidly eroded in the name of the open market". "The economic victimization of the people ... will be absolute and limitless in the global market", he predicts (1987b: par. 10). In a 1989 dated piece (implausibly mentioning the first gulf war), he adds that "giant transnational corporations ... create arbitrary needs among consumers" (1989: par. 84), stereotyping "people of low social class or status" (par. 90) as "lazy or violent; dirty and ignorant" (par. 91) and "as second-class humans in religious and cultural terms, as well as in socio-economic terms" (par. 90).

2.4.3.3 Liberation and Marxism

Rather than of "development", Gutiérrez prefers to speak of "economic, social, and political *liberation*" (1993: 55; my italics):

Liberation ... expresses the inescapable moment of radical change which is foreign to the ordinary use of the term *development*. Only in the context of such a process can a policy of development be effectively implemented, have any real meaning, and avoid misleading formulations (17; his italics).

People "should 'feel their hunger' and become aware that this hunger is due to a situation which the Gospel repudiates". That is the "politicizing function" of the Gospel (153). Gutiérrez sees liberation theology as a "critical reflection on humankind" (9), standing in

"the struggle to construct a just and fraternal society, where persons can live with dignity and be the agents of their own destiny" (xiv). The current "state of affairs is offensive to humankind and therefore to God" (40). He gives the example of Moses, the "liberator", who was called by God to lead the Jewish people out of unjust oppression, enslavement and "alienated work" in Egypt (88; see Segundo, 1976: 116-117, for an attempt to rationalize this analogy). "[I]n liberation theology, faith and life are inseparable" (Gutiérrez, 1993: xix). While Assmann demands a "prophetic theology" that "will not shy away from the political consequences of its language" (1969: 232; my translation), Gutiérrez says the "kingdom of peace", announced by the prophets, "presupposes the establishment of justice". He stresses that "[p]eace, justice, love, and freedom" are not a private matter, they are "social realities" and "eschatological promises" with all that implies for the conduct of Christians and the Church. "[T]he struggle for a just society is in its own right very much a part of salvation history" (1993: 97). "Far from showing no interest in this liberation, Jesus rather placed it on a deeper level, with far-reaching consequences" (134). For Segundo, as for Schmitt (see 1985/22: 2), "[e]very theology is political, even one that does not speak or think in political terms. The influence of politics on theology and every other cultural sphere cannot be evaded" (Segundo, 1976: 74). For him, "there is no such thing as Christian theology or a Christian interpretation of the gospel message in the absence of a prior political commitment" (94-95). "We can only have an authentic faith ... when we have committed ourselves to an authentic struggle" (97).

"Sin" has "collective dimensions" that are "evident ... in concrete instances, in particular alienations" such as domination, oppression, and exploitation, says Gutiérrez (1993: 102-103). Boff claims: "Where social analysis says 'structural poverty,' faith will say 'structural sin.' Where analysis says 'private accumulation of wealth,' faith will say 'sin of selfishness.'" (1985: 9). "Sin demands a radical liberation, which in turn necessarily implies a political liberation" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 103). Distinct dimensions of liberation, according to Gutiérrez, are: "economic, social, and political liberation; liberation which leads to the creation of a new humanity in a new society of solidarity; and liberation from sin and entrance into communion with God and with all persons" (137; Boff agrees: "The salvation proclaimed by Christianity is an all-embracing one. It is not restricted to economic, political, social, and ideological emancipation, but neither can it be realized without them": 1995: 275).

In his book, *Jesus Christ liberator*, Boff criticizes

the traditional images of Christ that do not foster liberation, that tend instead to prop up the whole process of colonization and domination. ... The Virgin pierced with a sword of sorrow personifies the submission and domination of women; her tears of sorrow are

for her children slain in the colonizer's quest for power and gold. Similar criticisms can be made of the imperial and monarchical Christs crowned with gold, or of Christ the warrior king; these images seem to hearken back to the glorious kings of Spain and Portugal (1995: 271).

Instead, Boff holds, Jesus "rejects wealth, viewing it dialectically" (*avant la lettre*, one supposes) "as a result of the exploitation of the poor and regarding it as outright dishonest (Luke 16:9). Jesus' ideal is not a society of affluence or one of poverty but a society of justice and brotherhood" (285). Boff envisages "an organization of society based on everyone's labor, with everyone sharing, in the means and the goods of production as well as in the means of power. And this is called liberation" (1985: 8). J. Severino Croatto stresses the need for people in Latin America to experience "God as their liberator" as did the Jews in Egypt (1983: 43; "God is the resistance leader against the despotic and imperial powers": Kim, 1987a: par. 93). Casañas refuses the idea of an "Omnipotent who, because he so chooses, shelves his omnipotence and allows himself to be oppressed and massacred with the people for the alleged reason that it is love that must conquer" (1983: 116) because it has nothing to offer to the activist who stands in "anti-capitalist revolution" (119) – "(long may it live!)" (120).

Gutiérrez deplores that "[l]iving in a capitalist society" has "placed some Christians among the oppressed and persecuted and others among the oppressors and persecutors, some among the tortured and others among the torturers or those who condone torture" (1993: 75). This means, according to Segundo, "that Christians of whatever denomination feel closer to those who" also engage in the struggle for liberation "than they do to other members of their own denomination". Liberation theology thus is inherently "ecumenical theology" and even "extends beyond the boundaries of Christianity, in fact, uniting all men of good will" (1976: 149-150). Only "within the framework of the worldwide class struggle" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 54) can "the untenable circumstances of poverty, alienation, and exploitation" be overcome (55). Latin America's "own development will come about only with a struggle to break the domination of the rich countries" (17) and classes. Marxists and Christians face "a common adversary", Gutiérrez claims (60; while Segundo demands "a new interpretation" of "the Christian message favoring the class struggle of the proletariat": 1976: 17): all "the problems are rooted in the structures of capitalist society" (Gutiérrez, 1993: 65). Unequivocally, Boff, who left the Franciscan Order in 1992 and became a lay theologian in order to escape Roman confinement (Löwy, 1996: 89), admits that "Christian faith helps a person choose a particular instrument of social analysis ... the Christian ideal is closer to socialism than to capitalism" (Boff, 1985: 10), and Ernesto Cardenal, who calls himself "a Marxist for Christ and his gospel" and "a revolutionary for

the sake of his kingdom", argues that Jesus "did not tell us which scientific methods to use in order to arrive at the goal" of "perfect humanity" and that "[t]here's no incompatibility between Christianity and Marxism ... a scientific method for studying society and changing it" (Cabestrero, 1983: 31-32). Kim thinks that "one can say that Marxism has played an important role in the theological development in recent years. Perhaps its role can be compared to the role of Aristotle in the theology of Thomas Aquinas" (n. d.: par. 35).

Ernesto's brother, Fernando Cardenal, sees the presence of a priest in the revolution (in his case as National Vice-Coordinator of the Sandinista Youth Movement in Nicaragua) as "a sermon in itself, a witness, an ecclesial and pastoral sign" (Cabestrero, 1983: 53), trying to help bring alive, "for the first time in history, ... a socialism that wouldn't be anti-Christian or anticlerical" (64). For Camilo Torres, "[r]evolution is ... the way to obtain a government that will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and teach the unschooled. ... This is why the revolution is not only permissible but obligatory" for Christians (1973: 374). Casañas urges us not to be "on the theological lookout to fit" the language of revolutionary action, "from its first stammers onward, into categories, formulas, and patterns of the Bible or of subsequent Christian tradition" (1983: 120). For "the Christian Marxist activist" (126) "the first and last goal is neither to remain in the church nor to speak about the matter of God in a revolutionary way, but rather to carry on the revolution as soon as possible, and well" (129).

2.4.3.4 Revolution and violence

Segundo thinks that "[w]e are fortunate that our God takes a stand in history, and our interpretation of his word must follow the same path" (1976: 27). He urges that "theologizing" must become a "dangerous" activity again (26; compare this to Metz' "dangerous memory": 1980: 90). Indeed, for many liberation theologians it seems to be:

Frequently in Latin America today certain priests are considered 'subversive.' Many are under surveillance or are being sought by the police. Others are in prison, have been expelled from their country (Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic are significant examples), or have been murdered by terrorist anti-communist groups. For the defenders of the status quo, 'priestly subversion' is surprising. They are not used to it. The political activity of some leftist groups, we might say, is – within certain limits – assimilated and tolerated by the system and is even useful to it to justify some of its repressive measures; the dissidence of priests and religious, however, appears as particularly dangerous, especially if we consider the role which they have traditionally played (Gutiérrez, 1993: 62).

The brothers Cardenal may be seen as an example of this type of priest. The Nicaraguan government described their activities as "part of the guerrilla struggle, or 'terrorism and communism,' as they called it", according to Fernando Cardenal (Cabestrero, 1983: 62),

who values "the opportunity of daily risking my life for the cause of the poor" as Jesus "risked his life for these same persons, and actually died for them" (80; see Gerassi, 1973: 11-22, for examples of other priest-revolutionaries in various Latin American countries).

Assmann believes in "just use of violence [*gerechten Gewaltanwendung*]" (1969: 243; my translation), for example in cases "where extreme use of violence takes place in order to overcome violence" – by which he means "the defence of the oppressed against the oppressing powers that is motivated by true 'love of neighbour'". In a somewhat convoluted paragraph, he gives the impression to see the use of violence in this way as a "positive" "fundamental decision" made by the Christian "with historic realism" (242; my translation) who is faced with "institutionalised violence" such as hunger and malnutrition that produce "worldwide 30 million" of "violently killed victims [*gewaltsam Ermordeten*]" every year (244; my translation). In this sense, the revolutionary use of violence may help to overcome violence "more concretely and more seriously" than "passive" non-violence (245; my translation). Bezerra de Melo points out that the Church only condones the concepts of "just war" and "'legitimate violence'" exercised by state authorities to uphold "existing power relations" (1969: 256; my translation), while Gutiérrez warns of "falling into the pitfalls of a double standard which assumes that violence is acceptable when the oppressor uses it to maintain 'order' and is bad when the oppressed invoke it to change this 'order.'" (1993: 63-64). Helder Camara respects "those who feel that their conscience obliges them to decide for use of violence" if they are willing to pay for their "sincerity [*Aufrichtigkeit*]" with the sacrifice of their lives". He names Torres and Che Guevara. He also says that he personally prefers "a thousand times to be killed rather than to kill" as this was his "personal calling" (1969: 267; my translation). "Archbishop Oscar Romero, whose stand against the U.S.-supported junta in El Salvador led to his assassination while he was saying mass, is only one of thousands who have paid the price of death so that finally others may live" (Brown, 1987: xix-xx). Ernesto Cardenal calls the Cuban revolution "love for neighbour – the gospel in action" and describes how Christians in Nicaragua were "evolving" from non-violence to use of violence: comparing the situation to "Hitler's Germany", they "saw that in Nicaragua an armed struggle was becoming more and more necessary" (Cabestrero, 1983: 27). An often cited case is Camilo Torres, styled the "revolutionary priest", who was killed in action. While early on he said "No, we do not want violence. We do not want to use force. But we do want majority rule" (1973: 370), this later turned into: "our final objective – the seizure of power by the people, whatever the cost" (415). After joining the guerrillas, he announced in an open letter that he meant "to continue the struggle, arms in hand, until power has been won by the people" (423), "the

popular classes" – "NOT ONE STEP BACK! LIBERATION OR DEATH!" (424-425; his capitals).

Buti Tlhagale, now Archbishop of Johannesburg, once wrote, in the context of the struggle against *apartheid* in South Africa and in an article entitled *Christian soldiers*, that many passages of the New Testament demanding non-violence of Christians and indeed "the entire Sermon on the Mount do not make sense in the face of continuing repression and the barbarous behaviour of the servants of the state and also tend to cultivate fatalistic attitudes among the oppressed" (1987: 87). He deplores "that the gospel ... makes no room for the use of violence to right the wrongs of society remains a massive scandal among the oppressed" (88), while Charles Villa-Vicencio says that

an ecumenical consensus has ... emerged in relation to a theological response to revolution. It is a cautious consensus which does not promote revolutionary violence but seeks rather to understand it as an inevitable response to a situation where violence is already part of the existing order (1987a: 244).

His scholarly contribution argues that "[a]bsolute pacifism has never been more than a minority theme within Christendom, although always one that haunts the more dominant tradition of reluctant if justified violence" being permitted (245-246) as "justice may not be possible without violence" (249). He gives the theme an interesting twist though when saying that

[t]his is not because the weak are inherently less avaricious, potentially less exploitative, or intrinsically more egalitarian than the powerful. It is rather because social and historical circumstances are such that they are prevented from being avaricious, exploitative and class-dominant (249; see also Schall, 1982: 126).

"[R]evolutionary violence" is more justified than "institutionalised violence" only because the former "is an attempt to destroy existing evil" whereas the latter "is designed to entrench it, and ultimately because institutionalised violence always precedes and precipitates revolutionary violence". Revolutionary violence fulfils "[t]he task of the Christian ... to eliminate the major source of evil" as long as this is being "accomplished with a minimum loss of life" (251). Segundo thinks that "Jesus is urging us to use the least amount of violence compatible with truly effective love" (1976: 166), while coming "to the logical and obvious – but scandalous – conclusion that *the end justifies the means*. ... Christian morality is precisely a *morality of ends* ... that are the most communitarian and generous-hearted ends imaginable" (171-172).

Radical Muslims, even Islamist terrorists, might not contradict such a statement if applied to Islam.

CHAPTER 3: THE POLITICO-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF RADICAL ISLAM

3.1 "Democracy/Capitalism" *versus* Islam

In the third chapter I will be looking at statements by leading representatives of terrorist movements gathered from the Internet and submit the emerging discourse to an analysis in accordance with the concerns of "political theology" as outlined in the last chapter. I will focus on key themes such as "democracy", "capitalism", "globalization", "colonialism" and "underdevelopment". This will allow me, in subsequent chapters, to compare the socio-political (or arguably rather politico-theological) analysis advanced by radical Islam to the socio-political analysis of Christian proponents of political and liberation theologies.

In this chapter, brackets inside quotes (save such indicating capitalization and [*sic*]) and italics are always the original author's or have been inserted into the original text by a translator or the Internet source I took the translation from.

I have proposed elsewhere (Kofmel, 2004) that if someone wants to fight capitalism, and maybe sees globalization as today's primary manifestation of it, one needs to abandon democracy and its values first. Social and political theory (such as liberal theory, modernization theory and a number of socialist theorists) as well as historical and empirical evidence suggest that capitalism and democracy are inextricably linked. One cannot fight capitalism, it seems, and replace it with any form of grassroots democracy because every form of democracy, in turn, leads to capitalism. Being anti-capitalist, it appears, one needs to be anti-democratic as well. In contrast to the grassroots-democratic anti-/alter-globalization movement, non-democratic movements such as the terrorist network of *al-Qaeda* fully recognize this fact.

With the Christian religion, the British website *Al Muhajiroun* argues,

Democracy/Capitalism calls the people to the creed of '*Give what belongs to Caesar to Caesar and give what belongs to God to God*'. Allah ... on the other hand says, '*... His are all things that are in the heavens and all that are on Earth ...*' ..., including Caesar and his throne (2004f: par. 9).

"Democracy/Capitalism is firmly rooted in the concept of secularism, of separation" of church and state, of faith, "and consequently Allah ..., from life. This is the cornerstone of their ideology and it is the antithesis of the Islamic belief", they hold (par. 10). *Al-Qaeda* leader Osama bin Laden seconds in an audio message broadcast by the independent *Al-Jazeera* satellite channel television, the transcript of which was posted on the website of *al-Qaeda's* Center for Islamic Studies and Research (CISR) (Why War?, 2004: par. 2), that "the religion of Islam encompasses all the affairs of life, including the religious and the

worldly, such as economic, military, and political affairs" (in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 67). "They want Islam to play the role of Christianity, Judaism, or Buddhism, a passive creed which accepts to be overwhelmed by the creed of Democracy/Capitalism" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004f: par. 26). But "Islam is based on guidance from Allah ... to conduct all the affairs of the people" (par. 10), "a complete system of life with its own unique political, social, and economic system" (par. 26).

With "American secularism" being "imposed forcefully" upon the Middle East, "[t]he Islamic world will change from dictatorships to democracy, which means sub-human degradation in all walks of life" and a serious threat to "the dominance of *Shari'a* [Islamic law]", according to *Al-Neda* (in MEMRI, 2003e: par. 6), a website affiliated to *al-Qaeda* (MEMRI, 2003e: par. 2).

America is the head of heresy in our modern world, and it leads an infidel democratic regime that is based upon separation of religion and state and on ruling the people by the people via legislating laws that contradict the way of Allah and permit what Allah has prohibited. This compels the other countries to act in accordance with the same laws in the same ways ... and punishes any country [that rebels against these laws] by besieging it, and then by boycotting it. By so doing, [America] seeks to impose on the world a religion that is not Allah's (Suleiman Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par. 13),

namely the "money religion". Abu Gheith is identified as an *al-Qaeda* spokesman who posted some articles on the CISR website which replaced *al-Neda* (MEMRI, 2002c: par. 2). Abu Ubayd al-Qirshi too speaks of "a world of material globalization and money-worshipping" (2002: par. 141) and Abu Ayman al-Hilali of "the worship of neoliberalism and democracy" (2002: par. 274).

The Americans' intentions have also become clear in statements about the need to change the beliefs, curricula, and morals of Muslims to become more tolerant, as they put it. In clearer terms, it is a religious-economic war. They want the believers to desist from worshipping God so that they can enslave them, occupy their countries, and loot their wealth. It is strange that they want to dictate democracy and Americanize our culture through their jet bombers (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 8).

Abu-Muhammad al-Ablaj, responsible for the training of *al-Qaeda* members (*Why War?*, 2003a: par. 2), said in an electronic message sent to the Dubai correspondent of the London-based Saudi-owned weekly *Al-Majallah* (par. 37): "Americans want a misfit religion, a 'modern Islam'" (in *Why War?*, 2003a: par. 6).

3.2 "Globalization/Americanization"

It is quite common for the terrorists to speak of (and confuse) "globalization/Americanization" (for example al-Hilali, 2002: par. 234). While "two powers have dominated the world in all ages" (CISR, 2003: par. 16), "[t]he United States has been able to deviate from this rule" (par. 18), as a book holds that was published by CISR on the

Internet. "[T]he political and economic collapse of communism cleared the way for it to spread its gospel without heed or constraint" (Abu Sa'd Al-Amili, 2002: par. 343), and now "the US world order wants to destroy Islam universally in order for even this to be replaced by the capitalism ideology since it sees Islam as the only real challenge to global hegemony" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004d: par. 7).

The United States

got rid of the restrictions, which the conflict with the Soviet Union had imposed on it, and adopted a new policy. This policy is summed up in taking a direct approach to secure its interests in the world without regard to the interests of others, because it considers itself the sole power in the world and the world should adapt to what it wants (CISR, 2003: par. 20).

In a collection of essays also published as a book on the Internet (*Majallat al-Ansar*, 2002), al-Hilali claims that "[c]ultural globalization imposes the United States' culture and way of life through US schools and restaurants" (2002: par. 202), while "[e]ducational globalization" achieves the same through means such as development aid (par. 201).

Economic globalization links the global economy to the United States for ultimate control over capital through World Trade Organization, transnational corporations, the IMF, and the World Bank. Political globalization entails direct political interference in various countries, the division of the world into geopolitical regions, the creation of a strategic framework based on vital interests, the imposition of economic sanctions on those who resist (under the pretext that they practice terror, human rights violations, and political despotism), and protection for the children of Zion and all of their allies through the veto weapon (par. 199-200).

The latter referring to the United States' veto power in the Security Council of the United Nations, the West's interests are, in al-Hilali's view, protected by "[s]ecurity globalization" (par. 203). In a "sham global democracy" (par. 274), "[t]he United Nations acts as the executive branch of US policy" (par. 264), making "laws for relations between the masters of veto and the slaves of the General Assembly", the common members, with the aim "to deceive and exploit peoples", says bin Laden (in BBC, 2004: par. 24) according to the transcript of an audiotape broadcast by *Al-Jazeera* and the pan-Arab *Al-Arabiya* satellite channel (BBC, 2004: par. 2-3).

In "moving earnestly to Americanize the entire world", the United States seek "forcefully to impose a system on the countries of the world similar to the systems governments impose on individuals" (CISR, 2003: par. 88).

Naming the highly regarded anti-/alter-globalization activist Walden Bello as a source for his criticism (al-Qirshi, 2002: par. 191), al-Qirshi speaks of "the US empire" (par. 162) – the very words Sayf al-Din al-Ansari uses (2002: par. 101).

One of the most important tools to control countries of the world was the World Trade Agreement project, which was the hanging rope for the economic independence of any state and its liberation from American hegemony. However, this project failed, thank

God, after the heroes hit the Trade Towers in the 11 September operation (CISR, 2003: par. 92).

What the non-violent mass protests of "Seattle" for the anti-/alter-globalization movement, are the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon for the terrorist movements – a major victory over the apparently invincible world power, the United States.

Not wholly surprisingly, the terrorists seek a common front with the anti-/ alter-globalization movement, speaking of

the rising consciousness in what people say and in the popular marches condemning US-Zionist terror, in the demonstrations opposing globalization/Americanization, and in the operations that target their symbols. The downtrodden, oppressed, and destitute are united in their fight against US-Zionist tyranny (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 314).

"The Islamic nation is struggling against globalization, and it continues with its negative attitude towards Western rhetoric and explanations", says Abu 'Ubeid Al-Qurashi (in MEMRI, 2002b: par. 8), a close aid to bin Laden (MEMRI, 2002a: par. 2), in a column he wrote for *al-Qaeda's* online magazine *Al-Ansar – For the Struggle Against the Crusader War* (MEMRI, 2002b: par. 2).

The slogans of reconciliation and cooperation are Western slogans. They are being used to crush the resistance. The Western civilization has launched a fierce war against the other civilizations. The Westerners are calling on others to surrender ... They want their civilization to be the dominant one in the world. ... They are trying to impose their way of life on the poor peoples (Gulboddin Hekmatyar in MEMRI, 2003a: par. 40).

Hekmatyar, quoted from an interview in the London-based Arabic daily *Al-Hayat*, fought against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and later joined with his group *Hezb-e-Islami* the *Taliban* and *al-Qaeda* in fighting the Americans and other international troops in that country (MEMRI, 2003a: par. 2). He claimed that "the war between the civilizations has indeed begun, and this war will continue forever" (in MEMRI, 2003a: par. 40).

The advocates of globalization/Americanization are not content with their own blatant corruption and atheism. They want to impose it by force on all humanity, including those who have accepted God's law and implemented it on their land (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 234).

3.3 Colonialism and moral corruption

The terrorists also confound (perhaps with intent) globalization and colonialism. "The Muslim countries today are colonized. Colonialism is either direct or veiled" (CISR, 2003: par. 24).

The [Arab] nation-states ... are a Western model that the West created to allow it to build up its general colonialist plan for the Islamic East. These countries have no religious foundation, and have neither a right to exist nor a popular base. They were

forced upon the Muslim peoples, and their survival is linked to the Western forces that created them (Louis Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2003k: par. 36).

Attiya Allah is described as one of *al-Qaeda's* leading ideologues (MEMRI, 2003k: par. 11) and gave an interview to another of the organization's online magazines, *The Voice of Jihad* (par. 5), a biweekly launched by *al-Qaeda* supporters in Saudi Arabia (MEMRI, 2004d: par. 2). The Muslim Nation, he said, is "denied the position in the World Arena as One Ummah, One Nation, One State [Ummatun Wahidah], as our Blessed Lands that have been carved and severed into smaller entities, remain disunited and divided" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 20).

Historically, with colonialism "[s]ecularism and Westernization held sway throughout the Islamic world" (al-Qirshi, 2002: par. 120). "The republics and kingdoms" artificially created by the colonisers "embraced several earthly religions in the region, like pan-Arabism, socialism, communism, democracy, and other doctrines" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 22). The consequence was, it is claimed, "the political impotence that has resulted from a reliance on such mythical concepts as civil society, political participation, and development" (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 265).

"Disunity, division and disarray" among the Muslim Nation "arose not just as a mere coincidence. The fall of Muslims ... was a direct result, a consequence, of the massive military, cultural and missionary savage invasion of the Muslim World by the" infidels (non-Muslims), "such that, Muslim Land was torn apart and certain systems and ideologies were forced upon our lands, and these remain to exist today". The infidels "not only colonized the Muslim Land but also the Muslim Mind using Ideological Warfare, as foreign concepts and ideas were fused with the Ideology of Islam". They instilled "many diseases into the heart of the Muslim" Nation (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 21). "As Muslims we must be aware and vigilant of the conspiracy of the" infidels "to keep Muslims disunited. Their main aim and agenda is to destroy the Muslim" Nation "itself, either directly through military and economic coercion or indirectly using 'Ideological Warfare'" (par. 27). Speaking of the war in Iraq, the short-time leader of the Palestinian *Hamas*, Dr Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rantisi, who was assassinated by Israel, said in an article posted on the organization's website (MEMRI, 2003b: par. 2) that the Western powers "are not satisfied with controlling the land and natural resources. Even if this is one of their goals, after the conquest of the land and the plundering of its natural resources they will target the faith of this nation" (in MEMRI, 2003b: par. 18). "America wants to eradicate our identity and remove our religion from us" (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 10).

The "foreign policy of the west" seeks

to destroy everything and everyone in their path to gain power. Examples of this can be seen when the British and French colonised [*sic*] the 'developing world'. Women were raped, Land and natural resources were pillaged and plundered and the rich were made richer whereas the poor became even poorer than before (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004c: par. 19).

Today's governments in the Middle East are seen as "traitor-collaborator Arab governments" installed "to take over resources of Muslims", each of them "a cliental government ... that follows its masters in Washington and Tel Aviv" (bin Laden in *Al-Jazeera*, 2003a: par. 9) who "have succeeded in placing leaders over us that are treacherous and ruthless 'puppets', all part of a grand master plan" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 26) – a "puppet regime" (Abu Gheith in *Why War?*, 2002: par. 18) and

a cover for the colonialists. Colonialism is manifested [*sic*] in the economy, in the military bases ..., in political decision-making, and in international relations. Veiled colonialism has reached a point unmatched by direct colonialism (CISR, 2003: par. 41).

"The matter of America's attempt to take over the world is not new. What is new is that it appears with such a grim face", told "Muslim Brotherhood" leader Muhammad Mahdi Othman 'Akef (in MEMRI, 2004e: par. 16) the independent Egyptian weekly *Nadhat Misr* (MEMRI, 2004e: par. 16), revealing "its contempt of others, and its aspiration to create facts on the ground" (al-Qurashi in MEMRI, 2003b: par. 3). "In the past, they fought secretly, and now they are fighting openly" (par. 17). The United States are in the Middle East "to secure the oil fields, in accordance with an old plan" (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2003k: par. 29). "For the big powers believe that the Gulf and the Gulf states are the key to controlling the world due to the presence of the largest oil reserves there" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 8). The region is "occupied by American female soldiers", according to Suleiman Al-Dosari (in MEMRI, 2003g: par. 7), in an editorial written for *The Voice of Jihad* (MEMRI, 2003g: par. 4), "the [American] military headquarters in the" wars against Afghanistan and Iraq were "located in the Arabian Peninsula, and ... its logistical support was located in" Saudi Arabia (*The Voice of Jihad* editorial board in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 31). In many countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia "the American planes take off whenever they want, with no prior notification, night or day", as bin Laden reminds (in MEMRI, 2003f: par. 22) in a speech posted in a number of Islamist Internet fora (MEMRI, 2003f: par. 2).

In Saudi Arabia, some neighbourhoods

are full of American housing complexes ... There has been an agreement between the client government of the Land of the Two Holy Places and the United States that these complexes should be a piece of American land. Americans in them have religious freedom and are not forbidden anything of their religion and their desires. The complexes have churches and bars; they have dance halls and mixed swimming pools and various kinds of unbelief and licentiousness. Shari'ah law is not imposed on them; indeed, they are not subject to the sovereignty of the government itself. The police,

security forces, and organizations that command virtue and forbid vice do not enter them (CISR, 2003: par. 219-220).

They do also "not restrict access to these" "houses of immorality" "to themselves" but rather they are "opened by them to Muslim men and women", elaborates Bin-Nasir al-Rashid (in CISR, 2003: par. 294) in another book (CISR, 2003: par. 240). Arab "TV companies ... mock Islam via documentaries, dramas, plays etc.", they show foreign "programs, alcohol advertising, uncovered women etc." – "what Allah forbids" (*Al-Muhajiroun*, 2004l: par. 26).

The Americans "occupy the former capital of Islam", Baghdad (bin Laden in *Al-Jazeera*, 2003a: par. 9), "the house of the caliphate, under the trick of weapons of mass destruction" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 7). Treacherous clerics "ignore the bank towers next to the Al-Haram Mosque", the main mosque in Mecca, "that charge interest [which is forbidden in Islam]" (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2003f: par. 35). "The same – if not worse – is taking place in the other Muslim countries" and the diaspora (CISR, 2003: par. 44).

Desires and wealth is what prevented the people of the book from believing in the message of Islam as they feared a loss of food, property and money. They were fully aware that Islam condemns some of their economic transactions i. e. riba (interest) and any money that was earned in haraam (prohibited) means [*sic*] would need to be donated as sadaqah (charity) or Zakaat. The people of the book (Jews and Christians) did not want to donate their money to charity, nor stop dealing with riba (*Al-Muhajiroun*, 2004g: par. 8).

But "[t]he one who is always concerned about money worships it, and the messenger Muhammad ... doomed the one who worships ... dinar (money) and women etc.", according to *Al-Muhajiroun* (2004i: par. 29). Other "people grow up with certain worldly aspirations such as to get a top job, a position" (2004g: par. 18). "When they here [*sic*] free-mixing, cinemas, credit cards and mortgages etc. are haraam they will say 'I wonder what is halaal?' or 'everything is haraam for you people!'" (par. 21). This is "materialism, an incessant pursuit for [*sic*] material satisfaction that only considers the temporary world as the ultimate material end in itself", rejecting "the reality of the transcendental order, arguing for material fulfilment as the exclusive prerequisite for human fulfilment" (2004e: par. 12). "Weddings like so many other events, has [*sic*] become a purely commercialised occasion" (2004a: par. 4). Capitalism "views all lifes [*sic*] affairs from a superficial stand-point. It is to be expected, therefore the Capitalists' view of society is also superficial. They consider society to be merely a group of individuals" (2004k: par. 4).

The "collaborating and treacherous" governments of the Middle East, as Abu Salma Al-Hijazi (in MEMRI, 2003j: par. 6), an *al-Qaeda* commander close to bin Laden, calls them in an interview posted in the Internet forum *Al-Qal'a* (MEMRI, 2003j: par. 2), attempt

"to lead" the region through "secularization" "to moral collapse, in accordance with the dictates of the White House", holds Abu Hajjer (in MEMRI, 2003h: par. 30), identified as one of Saudi Arabia's most wanted terrorists and quoted from an interview in *The Voice of Jihad* (MEMRI, 2003h: par. 2). "[I]t is generally agreed that they are powerless", states bin Laden (in MEMRI, 2003c: par. 41) in a sermon published on Islamist websites and broadcast on *Al-Jazeera* (MEMRI, 2003c: par. 2).

The rulers of the Muslim lands today are a gang of apostates [and] criminals, the most evil creatures created on the face of the earth, whose crimes are known to all, and they are a paradigm of treachery, deceit, misleading, and repression. How many commitments have they given their people, only to then fill their graveyards and prisons with them? ... They have shed blood and violated the religious prohibitions. They have wasted the property of the Muslims on forbidden things. All that interested them was their bellies and their enslavement to the West (Nabil Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 10).

Sahrawi, a leader of the Algerian "*Salafi* Group for *Da'wa* and Fighting", gave an interview to *Al-Hayat* that, prior to publication, was also posted on Islamist websites (MEMRI, 2004c: par. 2). "Anyone who examines the policy of those rulers will easily see that they follow their whims and desires and their personal interests and Crusader loyalties" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 62), referring to the "US-led Crusader Zionist alliance" (par. 23), another historical comparison popular among the terrorists. "Those hypocrites, worshippers of money, claim that they are our leaders and will defend us" (par. 31), but they act "tyrannically, erring [themselves] and leading others into flagrant error" (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2003c: par. 45). "These rulers have violated" Islam

by allying themselves with unbelievers, by passing man-made laws and by approving and applying the infidel laws of the UN. As far as religious law is concerned, their rule has long been null and void, and it is impossible to remain under their dominion (par. 42).

"They have replaced Shari'a law, and they rule Muslims with the laws of Europe and America" (Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 10). "Allah is Al-Hakam (the legislator) but they insist on playing the role of Allah" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004I: par. 43) by "embracing democracy, by legislating it and calling for it" (par. 36). They "use parliaments and democracy as a cover" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 65) and "rule Muslim countries by way of the cursed laws [i. e. man-made law]", according to Sheikh Nasser Al-Najdi's (in MEMRI, 2003h: par. 12) article in *The Voice of Jihad* (MEMRI, 2003h: par. 10). "All their constitutions ... declare sovereignty for" man-made law "rather than to Allah [*sic*]" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004I: par. 46). "It has become clear that the rulers are not qualified to apply the religion and defend the Muslims" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 62) because they

believe in the principle of supporting the infidels against Muslims and leave the blood, honor, and property of their brothers to be easy prey for their enemy in order to remain

safe, claiming that they love their brothers but are being forced to take such a path (par. 44).

"Because of this despicable cooperation, the prisons" in many Arab countries, but particularly in Saudi Arabia,

have become full of prisoners, held on charges of fighting with al-Qa'ida and Taliban against the United States or fighting with Khattab, and recently on charges of attempting to infiltrate into Iraq to fight there. The shari'ah duty imposed on all the nation has become a punishable crime. They are doing all this to please the United States (CISR, 2003: par. 39).

"This situation prevents us from following educational, economical [*sic*], social, judicial and foreign policies in accordance with Islam", claims *Al Muhajiroun* (2004k: par. 3). The rulers "ridicule Allah, his messenger", Muhammad, and "the Muslims" and have therefore become infidels themselves (2004l: par. 9).

3.4 American and Israeli atrocities

The terrorists refuse "everything" the United States offer "in the name of democracy, human rights, education, and the war on terror. ... It is proven that they [i. e. the Americans] bring with them nothing but tyranny", says Othman 'Akef (in MEMRI, 2004e: par. 15) in the Saudi daily *Al-Watan* (MEMRI, 2004e: par. 14). "American tyranny" (Othman 'Akef in MEMRI, 2004e: par. 17); "US tyranny" (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 206); "its tyranny" (al-Qurashi in MEMRI, 2002b: par. 3) is another keynote in the terrorists' thinking. "America, Oh sword of oppression, arrogance and sin", exclaims Dr 'Atallah Abu Al-Subh (in MEMRI, 2001: par. 4) in a letter "To America", published by the *Hamas* weekly *Al-Risala* (MEMRI, 2001: par. 2).

The sufferings of your Muslim brothers and of the *Mujahideen* around the world is no secret to you, our brothers. [They suffer] oppression, tyranny, imprisonment, murder, and banishment by the masters of oppressions and lies in the world, the American rulers, who think [of] themselves as good-doers (*Islamic Bayan Movement* in MEMRI, 2003i: par. 6),

states a communiqué that appeared on the *al-Qaeda*-affiliated website *Al-Farooq* and in the Yahoo newsgroup "Global Islamic Media" (MEMRI, 2003i: par. 2-3).

"Some have the impression that you", the Americans,

are a reasonable people. But the majority of you are vulgar and without sound ethics or good manners. You elect the evil from among you, the greatest liars and the least decent and you are enslaved by your richest and the most influential among you, especially the Jews, who lead you using the lie of democracy (bin Laden in *Al-Jazeera*, 2003b: par. 4).

Bin Laden's message to the American people was broadcast on *Al-Jazeera* (*Al-Jazeera*, 2003b: par. 1). "[T]he infidel United States ... [w]ith its policies ... sets itself up as a rival to God in His magnificence, greatness, rule, and law" (al-Ansari, 2002: par. 234), using its

strength and power not to actualize justice and equality for the oppressed, but to besiege the[se] peoples, murder them, and spill their blood. It did not follow any law, unless the law was passed to strengthen its hegemony and its power (Dr Ghazi Hamad in MEMRI, 2001: par. 18),

wrote the editor of *Al-Risala* in a column (MEMRI, 2001: par. 17-18).

"Due to the American bombings" (Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par 17), the ongoing "violent airstrikes on Iraq", as elaborates bin Laden (in *Why War?*, 2001: par. 21) in a recorded statement broadcast on *Al-Jazeera* (*Why War?*, 2001: par. 4), and "the West's barbaric savagery, namely, sanctions" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 26), "an unjust embargo, a slow killing operation" (al-Ansari, 2002: par. 45), the

siege of Iraq, more than 1,200,000 Muslims were killed in the past decade. Due to the siege, over a million children are killed [annually] – that is 83,333 children on average per month, 2,777 children on average per day (Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par. 17; see also Bergen, 2001: 22),

who "starve to death" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 26) in an "engineered ... genocide ... The United States imposed an embargo on Afghanistan that killed more than 500,000 people" (al-Ansari, 2002: par. 45-46). "Hundreds of thousands of Muslims were slaughtered by the infidels", holds *al-Qaeda* leader Abu Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi (in MEMRI, 2004b: par. 10) in an audio recording posted in Islamist Internet fora (MEMRI, 2004b: par. 2), namely "in Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, the Philippines, Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya, and Afghanistan" (Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par. 33) as well as "Indonesia, Kosovo, ... Libya". "The United States killed Muslims ... using all varieties of internationally banned weapons against them. ... Its hands are dripping with the blood of all Muslim peoples" (al-Ansari, 2002: par. 45-46). The Islamic "nation of 1,200 million Muslims is being butchered from east to west every day" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2001: par. 40).

[D]on't you see the Muslims being killed in Afghanistan and in Iraq?! Don't you see, on the television screens, the bereaved women crying out for the Muslims' help?! Don't you see the torn parts of children, and their skulls and brains scattered...? (*Voice of Jihad* editorial board in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 31)

The terrorists also continually confound Israel and America. "It suffices to see the event that shocked the world – the" assassination "of the wheelchair-bound old man", *Hammas* founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin by Israel, "– Allah's mercy upon him – and we pledge to Allah to avenge [his murder] on America, Allah willing" (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2004g: par. 6). "Israel perpetrates terrorism, with funding and military and diplomatic support from the U.S.", said Taj Al-Din Hamed Abdallah Al-Hilali (in MEMRI, 2004f: par. 15), the Egypt-born Mufti of Australia and New Zealand (MEMRI, 2004f: par. 2), in an interview (par. 15). The

United States "support the Israelis and their schemes" (bin Laden in *Al-Jazeera*, 2003b: par. 4) and "Israel's daily ongoing aggression against the Palestinian people", according to Othman 'Akef (in MEMRI, 2004e: par. 13), in the Jordanian weekly *Al-Sabil* (MEMRI, 2004e: par. 13).

The wars in the Middle East bring "billions of dollars in profit" (bin Laden in BBC, 2004: par. 22) to the "big corporations, either weapons manufacturers" (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2004g: par. 12) "or those that contribute to reconstruction" (bin Laden in BBC, 2004: par. 22). Bin Laden criticizes corporations along the same lines as does the anti-/alter-globalization movement. Multinational corporations "are directly responsible for starving and impoverishing people and exploiting the natural wealth of the oppressed" (al-Ansari, 2002: par. 49). "It is crystal clear who benefits from igniting the fire of this war and this bloodshed: They are the merchants of war, the bloodsuckers who run the policy of the world from behind the scenes" (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2004g: par. 13).

And to the American soldiers ... I say, ... [i]t shows that you are selling your lives for the lives of others. And you are spilling your blood to swell the bank accounts of the White House gang and their fellow arms dealers and the proprietors of great companies (bin Laden in *Al-Jazeera*, 2003b: par. 22-23).

The American leaders "enjoy lying, war and looting to serve their own ambitions. ... They have fooled you ... and they have lied to you and the whole world" (par. 10). They are "concealing" their own "ambitions and the ambitions of the Zionist lobby and their own desire for oil", but are "still following the mentality of" their "ancestors who killed the Native Americans to take their land and wealth" (par. 8).

Have you asked yourself about your actions against your 'original' inhabitants, the Indians, the Apaches? Your white feet crushed them, and then used their name, Apache, for a helicopter bearing death, demolition, and destruction for anyone with rights, who dared to whisper in his own ear that he has those rights? This is loathsome and malignant behavior, because it made us hate the Apache Indians, without realizing that they actually were victims like us (Abu Al-Subh in MEMRI, 2001: par. 4).

The American leaders, "with their heavy sticks and hard hearts, are an evil to all humankind" (bin Laden in *Al-Jazeera*, 2003b: par. 7). "The blood of the children of Vietnam ... is still dripping from their teeth" (par. 10). "They have stabbed into the truth, until they have killed it altogether in the eyes of the world. ... [T]hey have encouraged hypocrisy, and spread vice and political bribes shamelessly at the level of heads of state" (par. 7-8). The United States, "the leader of the free world and the symbol of the liberal democracy that some madmen still worship" (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 275), "with the collaboration of the Jews, is the leader of corruption and the breakdown [of values], whether moral, ideological, political, or economic corruption" (Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par. 14).

3.5 *Jihad*: theology is politics

The "salient reality" is

that Islam is an inherently political doctrine. ... It is spiritual for the obvious reason that it is firmly rooted in the belief in Allah, but of equal political significance because Allah alone is the sovereign law maker. Politics is therefore not part of Islam, for this denotes that in origin it is a distinctly separate sphere of existence which is then eventually amalgamated with Islam; politics is the inherent core of the Islamic imperative of Allah's sovereignty – Islam thus cannot be described except in political terms. ... Islam is not a religion that is struggling to synthesise itself with the supposedly different domain of politics, it is a way of life that is inherently and quintessentially political (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 16).

Thus, says Attiya Allah, *al-Qaeda* does not have a

political program compatible with the existing world order, simply because the existing world order does not recognize us as an independent Islamic state, and forces us to be its satellite, to adapt ourselves to its secular laws and to be subjugated to its military rule (in MEMRI, 2003k: par. 32).

According to al-Hilali, "[a]l-Qa'ida laid the foundation for a new political line and new political concepts for the global arena".

Every objective political thinker must note the historic fact that al-Qa'ida under the leadership of Imam Bin Ladin rescued the oppressed and downtrodden from the state of impotence, stagnation, confusion, and contradiction that had gripped them as various political bodies slowed, sickened, and died yet remained unburied (2002: par. 267).

"Islam stands against the domination of man by man – a problem that continues to relentlessly inflict the modern world", be it "in the form of ... economic exploitation" or "political oppression" – including "religious persecution". "Islam thus stands for the liberation of human beings by the guidance and mercy of Allah" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 9).

According to bin Laden, "*Jihad* is the way to attain truth and abolish falsehood" (in MEMRI, 2003f: par. 33). "We are now engaged in *Jihad* between the armies of faith, truth, and goodness as opposed to the armies of unbelief, falsehood, and evil", seconds Abu Abd Al-Rahman Al-Turkemani (in Carmon, 2003: par. 23) on the "Global Islamic Media" website (Carmon, 2003: par. 21). "The Jihad is not dependent on the Al-Qaida organization nor on Osama bin Laden or anyone else but rather it is a cause of the whole Ummah, and a battle between truth and falsehood!" (Abu Ghait in *Why War?*, 2002: par. 35)

Allah has imposed the obligation of *Jihad* in [several] cases, all of which exist in this generation: starting from repelling the aggression of the infidels, through fighting the apostates, supporting the oppressed, and liberating captives and prisoners (Al-Dosari in MEMRI, 2003g: par. 4).

"The entire world has become a battlefield in practice and not in theory" (CISR, 2003: par. 175). "The Islamic State will not arise through means of slogans, demonstrations, parties, and elections, but through blood, body parts, and [sacrifice of] lives" (Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 23).

The various forms and types of jihad are the true and ideal means of political participation in light of globalization/Americanization because real political participation consists of material action and tangible behavior, not just intentions and feelings. A strike against the economy affects politics (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 280).

"Even if religion did not urge us to fight the United States", its "crimes against the Muslims" "are sufficient to move us to seek justice. Even if religion and manhood did not demand it, logic and a rational view of the situation demands that we deter the enemy as much as possible" (CISR, 2003: par. 73).

As everyone knows, political realism entails an awareness of reality without excessive optimism or pessimism, a knowledge [sic] of one's capabilities, the use of realistic methods, and an unwavering commitment to one's goals. There can be no excuses about weak resources or ability. Instead, one must strive to make the best possible use of one's abilities no matter how weak or humble they may be. This is what al-Qa'ida's mujahidin did. They stuck to their stated goal of striking the US enemy's institutions. They used realistic tools at their disposal like airplanes (al-Hilali, 2002: par. 283-284).

Americans, "[w]e announce to you the immanent end of your pleasant lives", warns Abu Shibab Al-Qandahari (in MEMRI, 2002d: par. 9), the deputy moderator of the *News about the Jihad and the Mujahideen* forum of the Islamist website www.mojahedoon.net, in a communiqué posted there (MEMRI, 2002d: par. 2). "We do not recognize your agreement with the [Muslim] governments that have renounced their religion" (Al-Qandahari in MEMRI, 2002d: par. 7). "Leave our land and stop supporting the plundering Jews; return to your countries, otherwise the sword will be between us and you" (par. 5).

What happened to America is something natural, an expected event for a country that uses terror, arrogant policy, and suppression against the nations and the peoples, and imposes a single method, thought, and way of life, as if the people of the entire world are clerks in its government offices and employed by its commercial companies and institutions (Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par. 6).

The Muslim Nation "is finally ... beginning to reject the notion of democracy/ capitalism ruling over us". It is "healing from the poison of freedom, democracy, capitalism, nationalism, and secular thought which the fangs of the imperialist" infidels "injected in our thinking", states *Al Muhajiroun* (2004f: par. 12). "It is an obligation that we dismantle and demolish the ... concepts and ideas" of the infidels "that cast a dark shadow over our lands today" (2004e: par. 32).

The phenomenon of Muslims rejecting the Western concepts in exchange for Islam is not limited to the Muslim world. This historic event can be witnessed all around the world, even in the Western nations. This has greatly worried the policy makers in the West (2004f: par. 13).

Al Muhajiroun, the London-based website, even claimed that "living among the" infidels, for example in Britain, "must be ONLY for the sake of carrying da'wah or for involvement in Jihad purposes" (2004j: par. 31; their capitals).

Every day we grow weaker and weaker. Every day America attacks us in another country, so what is preferable? That we act now while our veins still pulse, or that we wait until we see an American soldier [sic] arranging the worshipers' entrance into the mosque in Mecca...? (Yahyah bin Ali Al-Ghamdi in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 36).

Al-Ghamdi wrote a study entitled "The Years of Deception" (MEMRI, 2004d: par. 33) that was published in *The Voice of Jihad* (par. 2).

"America, have you ever tasted the taste of horror, sorrow, and pain? This is the taste that has been our lot for so long. This is the taste that has filled our stomachs, torn our guts, and burned our skin" (Abu Al-Subh in MEMRI, 2001: par. 6). "People live in perpetual fear and paralyzing terror, awaiting death at any moment from a missile or shell which will destroy their homes, kill their sisters and bury their babies alive" (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2003c: par. 14).

America, you planted in the hearts of all men and animals the seedling of hatred of you! You never considered that the day would come when the saplings would grow and put out your eyes, even if those eyes were placed at the top of the World Trade Center, among the clouds. Those saplings grew and spread and struck at the liver of the Pentagon, the biggest and most secure site on the planet. ... America, why did you evacuate the biggest building in the world, and I refer to the Sears Tower, as we, the weak, do every night in order to protect ourselves from your laser-eyed missiles? Are you as frightened as we are, Oh America? Do the giants fear and flee, as the oppressed do, Oh America? (Abu Al-Subh in MEMRI, 2001: par. 10-11)

"What happened on 11 September is nothing but a reaction to the continuing injustice being done to our children" that "concerns the nation in its entirety. This is something that requires people to rise from their slumber and rush to find a solution to this disaster, which threatens mankind" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2001: par. 18).

What use was your navy to you? What use were your intercontinental missiles and your nuclear power plants? What use was the fact that you had almost completely conquered space with satellites and AWACS planes. What use was NATO, and the world leadership that you hold in your hands? (Abu Al-Subh in MEMRI, 2001: par. 16)

"The world is divided into two parts: the part of belief, and the part of unbelief and falsehood. There is no third part" (Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 19). "The conflict in the world today" (par. 21), "[t]he battle between us and the Americans", "is not a battle based on interests or personal differences but rather a battle between truth and falsehood" (Abu Gheith in *Why War?*, 2002: par. 6), "belief and unbelief" (Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 21) "– it is a conflict between the good and evil. America represents the head of this falsehood and the body of this evil" (Abu Gheith in *Why War?*, 2002: par. 6).

The war in Palestine, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Algeria, in Chechnya, and in the Philippines is one war. This is a war between the camp of Islam and the camp of the

Cross, to which the Americans, Zionists, Jews, their apostate allies, and others belong (Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 21).

"America is the head of this alliance and the worldwide Kufr [disbelief] today" (Abu Gheith in Why War?, 2002: par. 6).

As for those who lie to people and say that we hate freedom and kill for the sake of killing – reality proves that we are the speakers of truth and they lie, because the killing of the Russians took place only after their invasion of Afghanistan and Chechnya; the killing of the Europeans took place only after the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan; the killing of the Americans in the Battle of New York took place only after their support for the Jews in Palestine and their invasion of the Arabian Peninsula (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2004g: par. 22).

"Also, killing them in Somalia was after their invasion of it in Operation Restore Hope. We made them leave without hope, praise be to God" (bin Laden in BBC, 2004: par. 42).

"What happened on 11 September [2001] and 11 March [the Madrid train bombings] is your commodity that was returned to you" (par. 10).

We hereby advise you ... that your definition of us and of our actions as terrorism is nothing but a definition of yourselves by yourselves, since our reaction is of the same kind as your act. Our actions are a reaction to yours, which are destruction and killing of our people as is happening in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2004g: par. 5).

"Which religion considers your killed ones innocent and our killed ones worthless? And which principle considers your blood real blood and our blood water?" (bin Laden in BBC, 2004: par. 15). "It is known that security is a pressing necessity for all mankind. We do not agree that you should monopolise it only for yourselves" (par. 11). "Reciprocal treatment is fair and the one who starts injustice bears greater blame" (par. 15).

According to the numbers ... of the lives lost from among the Muslims because of the Americans, directly or indirectly, we still are at the beginning of the way. The Americans have still not tasted from our hands what we have tasted from theirs. ... We have not reached parity with them. We have the right to kill 4 million Americans – 2 million of them children – and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands. Furthermore, it is our right to fight them with chemical and biological weapons, so as to afflict them with the fatal maladies that have afflicted the Muslims because of the [Americans'] chemical and biological weapons (Abu Gheith in MEMRI, 2002c: par. 34).

"What is said above is sufficient to cause the" Muslim

to burn with desire for the blood of the infidel, to slaughter the enemy of Allah, and to cut him up into pieces. This is not strange at all. If a believer would not be willing to stand the sight of someone walking on the earth whom he had heard cursing his father or harming his honor, then how much more so when someone curses his God, Whom he loves more than the love he feels for his beloved. How [will he stand it] while Allah permits him [to kill the infidel] and he knows that killing this man, as far as Allah is concerned, is like killing a dog? (Al-Najdi in MEMRI, 2003g: par. 11)

"Oh Allah, America came with its horses and knights to challenge Allah and his Messenger [Muhammad] ... Oh Allah, rend the kingdom of Bush as you rent the kingdom of Caesar" (Al-Zarqawi in MEMRI, 2004b: par. 13). "Bush, the son of Bush, is a dog and the son of a

dog; his blood is the blood of a dog; his bark is the bark of a dog; and he has all the traits of a dog except for loyalty. Thus, he is a hyena" (Al-Najdi in MEMRI, 2003g: par. 13).

The truth is that I do not wish that Bush would be killed. I wish he would live to die a thousand times as he sees America collapses in front of his eyes. We want to kill him a thousand times every hour. We want the Americans to hang him and leave him dangling from their Statue of Liberty for being responsible for the destruction of their alleged civilization (al-Ablaj in *Why War?*, 2003a: par. 36).

"God willing, the end of America is imminent" (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2001: par. 35).

3.6 One state under Allah: the Caliphate

"In conclusion, Unity is what we must strive for: not on the basis of it being desirable, rather, on the basis of it being an Islamic Obligation defined clearly by Allah ... and His Messenger Muhammad" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 32).

Therefore, the general aim of the *Jihad* and the Mujahideen is to strike at the foundations and infrastructure of the Western colonialist program or at the so-called world order – or, to put it bluntly, to defeat Crusaders in the battle that has been going on for over a century. Their defeat means, simply, the elimination of all forms of nation-states, such that all that remains is the natural existence familiar to Islam – the regional entity under the great Islamic state (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2003k: par. 36).

"It is ... obligatory upon us to tear down the imaginary political borders and boundaries currently dividing" the Muslim Nation. "[I]t is an absolute necessity that we strive continuously to unite the Muslim Lands as One Land under the Khalifah State" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004e: par. 32).

The world order must be removed from the region and defeated, first of all militarily. Then, the Islamic state must be reestablished, in accordance with the Islamic regime. This means that we will control our fate, rule over ourselves, and control our resources. More generally, we will rebuild our lives according to our foundations and our principles. The experience [of an Islamic state] is real, and it existed 1,300 years ago. The peoples of the East ruled themselves and lived according to their own rules long before the West was in the region. There is nothing to prevent the revival of these rules, which are based on the Koran and the Sunna (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2003k: par. 33).

"The goal of" what the Americans "falsely called a war on terror, is to prevent the Muslims from establishing an Islamic state whose regime will be in accordance with the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet" (Sahrawi in MEMRI, 2004c: par. 22). "Covert and open Islamic groups have been trying for decades to establish the Islamic state". "*Jihad* for the sake of Allah has managed to establish blessed states and entities that defended the Muslims and succeeded in applying Islamic *Shari'ah* law for certain periods", for example in Afghanistan or Chechnya. "Yesterday, we did not dream of a state; today we established states and they fall. Tomorrow, Allah willing, a state will arise and will not fall" (Al-Ghamdi in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 39).

No political program has a chance of succeeding if we do not defeat the West, militarily and culturally, and remove it from Muslim countries. Then, it will not be difficult for the nation, with the help of its tremendous resources, to rebuild life according to religious Islamic principles. We will become the masters of the world, as the world's economic fate depends on us because we have the resources the world needs and all the elements of controlling the world are in our hands (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2003k: par. 34).

But, then, quite contradictory: "What we are lacking is to live free and to rule ourselves by ourselves, cut off from the West and its agents" (par. 34).

Bin Laden asks the "honest people" among the Muslims "who are concerned about this situation, such as the ulema, leaders who are obeyed among their people" (in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 72), "preachers and merchants" (bin Laden in BBC, 2004: par. 28) to "get together and meet in a safe place away from the shadow of" the "suppressive regimes" of the Middle East

and form a council for *Ahl al-Hall wa al-Aqd* (reference to honest, wise, and righteous people who can appoint or remove a ruler in Islamic tradition) to fill the vacuum caused by the religious invalidation of these regimes and their mental deficiency (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 72).

This "Authoritative Council" (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 15)

should be made up of the minimum number of available personnel, who should be tough on the rest of the nation, except what the religion allows in case of necessity, until the number is increased when the situation improves, God willing (bin Laden in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 73).

The council "will crown an Imam from among the Muslims who will manage the affairs of the direct confrontation with the Crusaders" (Attiya Allah in MEMRI, 2004d: par. 15). The Americans "will not enjoy our wealth and land as long as we remain mujahid Muslims", promises bin Laden (in *Why War?*, 2004: par. 10), and we "will defeat the Zionist Jewish invaders [and] return them to the place from whence they came", threatens Abu Banan (in MEMRI, 2002d: par. 19), announcing the establishment of an *al-Qaeda* organization in Palestine (MEMRI, 2002d: par. 18) in the *News about the Jihad and the Mujahideen* forum (par. 2). "All that the Jews have built in Palestine will, God willing, be a booty for our Palestinian people, including Haifa, Yafo, Sidon, Ashqelon, and all these places" (al-Ablaj in *Why War?*, 2003a: par. 16).

Another aim of the Authoritative Council would be "to enlighten European peoples of the justice of our causes, above all Palestine". Its members "can make use of the huge potential of the media" (bin Laden in BBC, 2004: par. 28).

Lastly, we should tell the world that Islam is a mercy from Allah ... which is desperately needed today. It is the only solution to the problems of this chaotic world. The only reason the policy makers in the West are fighting against the return of Islam is because once people get a chance to live under the Islamic system, they will abandon the corrupt Democratic/ Capitalist ideology and embrace the mercy of Allah ... as did the

people of North Africa, Spain, Indonesia, and other lands in the past (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004f: par. 28).

"I have complete faith that Islam will invade Europe and America, because Islam has logic and a mission", says Othman 'Akef (in MEMRI, 2004e: par. 31) on the "Muslim Brotherhood" website (MEMRI, 2004e: par. 30).

In conclusion of this chapter we must note that the terrorists view the media (including the Internet) and the publicity they receive from it as one weapon in the ongoing *jihād*. On the one hand they think that they are being misrepresented by Western media. Even in the Middle East,

[t]he heresy against Allah and His Prophet is being carried out before the eyes and ears of all in newspapers, television, radio, and symposiums, and none oppose it ... The nation has never been as damaged by a catastrophe like the one that damages them today. In the past, there was imperfection, but it was partial. Today, however, the imperfection touches the entire public because of the communications revolution and because the media enter every home (bin Laden in MEMRI, 2003f: par. 17-19).

"The media all over the world are controlled by Zionist fingers, particularly the Western media" (Hamed Abdallah Al-Hilali in MEMRI, 2004f: par. 10), orchestrating "the psychological war on us that has continued to slander us before and after 11 September" (al-Ablaj in *Why War?*, 2003b: par. 23).

On the other hand, the terrorists pride themselves of manipulating the Western media machine: "The cameras of CNN and other Western media dinosaurs undertook the task of filming the raid and sowing fear in its aftermath" (al-Qirshi, 2002: par. 160).

The Westerners' rage increased once it became clear to them that [Muslims] could use the same computers that they did without espousing the same values. Against all their assessments, [Islamic] culture cannot be shattered by technology (al-Qurashi in MEMRI, 2002b: par. 8).

We must thus exercise care when dealing with terrorist statements on the Internet – and remain critical.

CHAPTER 4: THE RESURGENCE OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY

4.1 On the relationship of political theology and liberation theology

I will start off this chapter by reviewing secondary literature on Christian and Islamic political and liberation theologies and how they interlink and compare. I will then follow this up with a review of secondary literature on radical Islam and terrorism, trying further to establish whether radical Islam could rightly be called a political theology. Finally, I will

explore the most recent writings on "political theology" emanating from (mainly leftist) theory circles in Europe and the US.

Few secondary sources concern themselves with the relation between political theology and liberation theology. Francis Schüssler Fiorenza proposes that political theology's "primary task is hermeneutical" in that it tries to elaborate "a new hermeneutic of the relationship between theory and praxis" (1975: 5). He goes on to calling this a "political hermeneutic" (13). While Dorothea Sölle prefers "the expressions 'political interpretation' or 'political hermeneutics'" over against "political theology" so as to avoid that the latter be falsely understood as providing "a theological solution to properly political and social questions" (Fiorenza, 1975: 14), Fiorenza argues that liberation theology, in its raised awareness of "the conflicts and antagonisms of the present societal structures" (24), provides the proper foundation of any political theology:

the hermeneutical function of political theology can only be achieved when political theology becomes liberation theology. Similarly, the liberating function of liberation theology can only be effected when liberation theology also takes up a hermeneutical task (24).

Alfredo Fierro, also seeking to discover the communalities of (German) political theology and (Latin American) liberation theology, thinks that the most obvious is that they are both "operating under the sign of Marx" (1977: 80). Philippe André-Vincent claims that liberation theology "carries the stamp 'made in Germany'" and has given "the theological utopias born in sad old Europe" a new lease of life, "grounded in the hope of a 'new earth'", in Latin America (1982: 192-193). So too, liberation theology's "political analysis came ready made from the hands of others": they chose the "'socialist option'" and applied a "Marxist hermeneutic of the Bible" (196). They labour under the impression, he says, that "[i]n the twentieth century, there are no oppressed persons within the socialist camp ... In this 'camp', one finds only liberation" (200). Some liberation theologians "(influenced by Althusser) refer to Marxism simply as one (or the) social science", explains Michael Löwy (1996: 72). He points out that most liberation theologians reject aspects of Marxism, such as its "economistic tendency" (that may view "capitalist development" as a precondition for communism ultimately being able to arise), and they "replace the proletariat as the unique subject of emancipation by broader concepts" like "'the poor'" or "'the people'" (77). Moreover, since the inglorious end of the Soviet Union there is a marked trend "to de-emphasize the relationship of liberationist Christianity to Marxism" (80).

According to Phillip Berryman, even the concept of "liberation" was provided for liberation theology by "the quasi-consensus of Latin American social theorists that basic structural change – liberation – is necessary" (1987: 93). "Paradoxically", James Schall

wonders, "liberation thought again makes South America theoretically insignificant since it claims that the real fault is in the North" (1982: 64). He speaks of an "unacknowledged intellectual neo-colonialism", introduced to Latin America by the very liberation theologians who studied themselves "under Italian, French, Spanish and German – sometimes even North American – theologians" (17-18). There are also inconsistencies in their argument: "the very notion of the possibility of change forces the recognition that things can also be worse. Poverty in fact is worse in parts of Asia or Africa than in Latin America as a rule" (124). And: "All the sympathy for the poor is not designed to keep them that way. The often-encountered tradition in Christianity that, spiritually, poverty is much safer than riches, is not stressed" in liberation theology at all (37). The (yet again, Western) concept of "justice" has "largely replaced the older Christian idea of charity" (39). With regard to liberation theology's status as a political theology,

[t]he point to emphasize, however, is that politics in this model has again taken on a religious enthusiasm and earnestness, a kind of divine assurance that it has been the effort of modern thought, including Christian thought, to deny to it. This will mean in practice dealing with political and economic questions as if they were directly religious ones (43).

4.2 Islamic political and liberation theologies

The South African, Farid Esack, argues that in his country's struggle against *apartheid* a form of "liberation theology" emerged, to varying degrees, amongst Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, and adherents of "African Traditional Religion". It manifested itself "in the growing numbers of religious figures and organizations who confessed the sin of silence in the face of oppression, acquiescence in the face of exploitation and power in the face of want" in this deeply religious multifaith society (1997: 8). This cannot be attributed solely to the spread of Latin American liberation theology to other continents and cultures, though, since Esack says that he is "unaware of any of the progressive Islamists, including myself, having read any work on liberation theology during the 1980s". He and others were only vaguely familiar with it and knew little of its impact in Latin America and parts of Asia (18). Nevertheless, he now holds that "[t]he attitude of the progressive Islamists finds a resonance in Christian liberation theology in Latin America" (109).

Esack deplores traditional Islamic theology's "reduction of Islam to the formal rituals, themselves stripped of spiritual depth by the preponderance of legalities", just as much as the fact that modern Islamic theology "is located in and addresses itself to the secularity of the privileged world" (110). He bases what he calls an "Islamic theology of liberation" (83) on the Qur'anic principle that

one arrives at correct beliefs (orthodoxy) through correct actions (orthopraxis) (29:69). The latter is the criterion by which the former is decided. In a society where injustice and poverty drive people to say 'Even God has left, no one cares anymore', orthopraxis really means activity which supports justice, i. e., liberative praxis (13).

Liberation theology insists that the Muslim cannot be "surrounded by oppression, institutionalized or not, without searching for ways in which the Qur'an can be used against it. Neutrality or objectivity in such a context is, in fact, a sin". The Qur'an and awareness of "the struggles of all the prophets" (83) demand "comprehensive insurrection against oppression in all its manifestations" (106) – "including those of race, gender, class and religion" (83) – and "*jihad*", according to the Qur'an, is "the path to establishing justice and praxis as the way of experiencing and comprehending truth. *Jihad*, as praxis serving as a hermeneutical key, assumes that human life is essentially practical; theology follows" (107-108; his italics). *Jihad*, then, is intended "to transform both oneself and society" (107). Islamic liberation theology is "participatory" (83) and pro-democratic (see, for example, 95-96), complying with Allah's "preferential option" (110) for "'the people' in general" (193) and "the oppressed and marginalized" in particular (110) by actively involving those "whose socio-political liberation it seeks and whose personal liberation becomes real through their participation in this process" (83). In South Africa, Muslims "refused to distinguish between their commitment to Islam and their commitment to the liberation struggle. ... Instead, faith and political solidarity were fused, without one being reduced to the other" (199).

Asghar Ali Engineer (1990), who published his book, *Islam and liberation theology*, in India, makes no reference to Christian liberation theology at all. He does however appear to be trying to embed concepts of Latin American liberation theology in the context of the Qur'an ("a charter of liberation for the oppressed": 1990: 36), often using the same terms the Latin Americans use (although, as we saw, they borrowed them from elsewhere too). His socio-political analysis is similar, nay identical, to that of Christian liberation theology and radical Islam – "negation of justice, oppression of the weak, suppression of legitimate aspirations of the common people, discrimination on grounds of colour, nationality or sex, concentration of wealth and political power" –, except that he is favourably inclined toward both democracy and socialism (7-8). "It is highly necessary to abolish the capitalist system based on exploitation of man by man ... Islam took shape as a powerful challenge to the rich traders of Mecca who headed the establishment" (6). He issues a call to stand up to "the domination of economy by the multinationals" on which "the West Asian rulers rely heavily". All these predicaments, he thinks, have contributed to the "rise of fundamentalist Islam" (106):

Exploitative economic 'development' ... leads to Westernisation (in contradistinction to modernisation), permissiveness among a section of people (usually collaborating upper

classes) and change-resisting conservatism among another section (usually the lower middle-classes) (106).

Engineer holds that "[a]ny society which perpetuates exploitation of the weak and the oppressed cannot be termed as an Islamic society" (5). Like Jesus in Latin America, Muhammad is seen here as "liberator". Islam is inherently "praxis-oriented" and thus Islamic liberation theology "must ... wage *jihad* against all that perpetuates poverty" (7). "Without ... liberationist *jihad*, one's faith would remain incomplete" (8).

The same understanding of *jihad* is to be found in A. G. Noorani, also an Indian Muslim, who defines Islamic "liberation theology in its best form" (2002: 118) as

a true jihad against alien rule fought by non-violent means along with compatriots. A jihad is yet to be fought out against ignorance, economic deprivation, social injustice, constitutional abuse and political wrongs. In this battle, the Muslim must not only accept, but seek the association of, all, irrespective of their faith. Above all, the Muslim must wage the Greater Jihad, the Jihad-e-Akbar, within himself and in his own society. For, as the Quran says: 'Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves' (13:11) (118).

Qamar-ul Huda, professor of theology at Boston College, more recently proposed an Islamic liberation theology significantly influenced by Sufi mysticism. Admitting that Christian "liberation theology was very influential" in his life, for him liberation theology "is a place where faith and reason mix and match", leading to the faithful becoming "more inclusive and pluralistic and tolerant, both in theological and in non-theological terms" (Ethics and Public Policy Centre, 2002: par. 41-42). What Ali Banuazizi, professor of psychology, also at Boston College, calls "'Revolutionary Radical Islam,'" no to be confused with radical Islam in the usual sense of the term, "espouses something like a liberation theology". Influenced "by Marxism and other Third World initiatives", its proponents promise "a more egalitarian, democratic society" (*The Boisi Centre Report*, 2002: par. 3). Such movements cut "across the traditional Sunni/Shi'ite divide in Islam" (par. 5).

Manochehr Dorraj seeks out the "liberationist" element in radical Islam. He views "the development of liberation theology and Islamic fundamentalism" as caused by "socio-economic dislocations" resulting from the "rapid and uneven processes of industrialization and urbanization taking place in the Third World" that catapult whole societies "from the religious and cultural world of the Middle Ages to the 20th century" (1999: 226). Radical Islam and Christian political theology have much in common, he says:

Khomeini's radical reinterpretation of Islamic eschatology that the Muslims should not passively await the return of the twelfth Imam to restore justice, and Seyyed Qutb's ... emphasis on praxis find their parallel in Gustavo Gutierrez's liberation theology (230).

They also both emerged as a challenge to "established religion" as well as "secular authority" (230) and speak the same language, being "strongly influenced by Third-

Worldist ideologies" (231). "The writings of Muslim fundamentalists abound with the revival, politicization and populist reinvigoration of the image of Prophet Muhammad, Imam Ali, the first Shi'ite Imam, and Imam Husayn, his martyred son", just as much as liberation theologians keep invoking Jesus and the prophets (232).

Daniel Philpott understands what he calls "radical Islamic revivalism" to occupy "only a small niche in the spectrum of Islamic views of political theology" and only "the most ardent proponents" of radical Islam "advocate a violent antidote" to what they identify as barbaric degeneration of "Islamic civilization" (2002: 84). Very reasonably, he proposes to view radical Islam as a "political theology" based on a "social critique that measures the distance between that theology and contemporary social conditions and prescribes action accordingly" (92-93).

Mahmoud Sadri designates, in a number of articles on the topic, various dissident positions in Iran as "political theology" (2002: par. 45). Political theology he defines "as a form of theology that concerns religious legitimacy or admissibility of government" (n. d.: footnote no. 4). Different from Dorraj, he sees such "political theology" in (scholarly) opposition to "the absolutist and totalitarian theology of the ruling clerical elites in the Islamic Republic" (2002: par. 47). Iranian "varieties of political theology ... complement each other" (par. 45), he argues, some engaging "with Western social and political philosophy and theology", others, "of indigenous Islamic and Shiite" origin, "reclaiming and reinterpreting its pluralistic and democratic elements and relying on the contested nature of knowledge it produces" (par. 48). In Iran, where the revolution led to a conservative theocratic government, political theologians are united by their "innovative discourses of secularism" (n. d.: par. 1).

Other (less easily available) books include Hassan Hanafi's *Islam, religious dialogue and liberation theology*, and *Islam and reconciliation* of 1997 and Shabbir Akhtar's *The final imperative: an Islamic theology of liberation* of 1991. Tariq Ramadan deplores that few are aware of similar endeavours to interpret the Qur'an and Islamic values in a liberative way "in Indonesia and some parts of Africa, particularly in Maghreb and Egypt" (Paxchristi International, 2004: par. 45). The Spanish theologian, Juan José Tamayo, sums up that "the Christian liberation theology is more known and developed than the Muslim liberation theology, but this does not mean that the latter does not exist" (Paxchristi International, 2004: par. 9).

4.3 On radical Islam

4.3.1 Causes and extent of Islamic fundamentalism

According to Bassam Tibi, "Islamic fundamentalism – or Islamism – should not be equated with Islam, but it would be an eyewash to deny the fact that political Islam is a major stream within contemporary Islamic civilization" (2003: ix). To validate the terrorists' claims and situate Islamist terrorism within Islam and the broader context of political and liberation theologies it will be worthwhile to review some of the recent secondary literature on Islam, terrorism and (non-) violence.

Lilla notes that Schmitt, in his book of 1950, *The nomos of the Earth*, "saw in the growing geographical ability of modern man to move and exert influence throughout the globe the cause of the simultaneous dissolution of sovereignty and the extension of enmity". In his *Theory of the Partisan*, 1963, "Schmitt further speculated that the rise of guerrilla warfare and terrorism was linked to this same historical process, as wars between nations gave way to civil wars or wars of national liberation waged by supranational networks of partisans" (Lilla, 1997: 40). Francis Fukuyama believes that religious fundamentalism – "[t]he revival of religion" at a time of near-universal dominance of capitalism and liberal democracy – "in some way attests to a broad unhappiness with the impersonality and spiritual vacancy of liberal consumerist societies ... The emptiness of the core of liberalism is most certainly a defect in the ideology" (1989: 14). According to Dorraj, "postmodern religious fundamentalism is as much a revolt against the cultural and social dislocations of modernity as it is a way of adjusting to its dislocations" (1999: 235).

Conditions in the World of Islam, particularly in its heartland, the Middle East, are by all accounts devastatingly desperate: economic crisis, ruthless dictatorships, delegitimization and decay of political rule, and a monumental crisis of meaning – all leading to dislocation, disruption, and violence (Tibi, 2003: 60).

Students, who "had a traditional childhood upbringing", but were exposed "to the technological and cultural manifestations of the post-modern era" during their education "constitute the most vulnerable social bearers of the glaring contradictions of modernity" and are therefore the most fertile "base of support for the fundamentalists" (Dorraj, 1999: 235; on the social upheavals brought about by "globalization", see Ahmed, 2003: 51-52, and Lewis, 2003: 87, 91). Samuel Huntington sees more generally "the new middle class" of young urban "people who ... pursue careers in the professions, government, and commerce" as the bearers of "the religious revival" (1996: 101; see also 112-113, and Tibi, 2003: 33). "Their greater familiarity with the West makes their angst all the more

formidable" (Tibi, 2003: 78). In addition, "through the universality of the modern media, ... inequalities" have become "painfully visible" (Lewis, 2003: 100). Radical Islam, says Manuel Castells, is but one instance of "the widespread surge of powerful expressions of collective identity that challenge globalization and cosmopolitanism on behalf of cultural singularity and people's control over their lives and environment", building "trenches of resistance on behalf of God, nation, ethnicity, family, locality, that is, the fundamental categories of millennial existence now threatened under the combined, contradictory assault of techno-economic forces and transformative social movements. ... More often than not" movements of resistance, such as *al-Qaeda*, employ "new, powerful technological media, such as worldwide, interactive telecommunication networks, ... amplifying and sharpening their struggle" (2002: 2; on the use of ICTs by Islamist terrorists, see also, for example, Bergen, 2001: 20, and Juergensmeyer, 2003: 144). *Al-Qaeda* "is as much a creation of globalization as a response to it" (Bergen, 2001: 196).

Thanks to the rapid development of the media, and especially of television, the more recent forms of terrorism are aimed not at specific and limited enemy objectives but at world opinion. Their primary purpose is not to defeat or even to weaken the enemy militarily but to gain publicity and to inspire fear – a psychological victory (Lewis, 2003: 114).

Peter Bergen likens radical Islam to "the Protestant Reformation's attempt to correct the abuses of the medieval Catholic Church and to return Christianity to its founding principles" (2001: 3; for an account of the so-called "Islamic Resurgence" since the 1970s, see Huntington: 1996: 111-116). Bin Laden is "the ideologue" and looked to "for guidance and inspiration" even by Muslims who are not part of *al-Qaeda* – "millions of admirers ... view him as a symbol of resistance to the West" (Bergen, 2001: 33). The Muslim countries' "radicalised population", "radical Islamists who see the world as a Manichaeian struggle of believers and nonbelievers, ... are not ... a small and isolated group of fanatics" (Fukuyama, 2002: 6). "Muslim parents in their thousands are naming their sons Osama" (Ahmed, 2003: 29). Bin Laden's "ideas are influencing the beliefs and actions of militants from Yemen to Kenya to England" (Bergen, 2001: 37). "[T]he line is very thin between 'terrorists' and their 'non-terrorist' supporters", says Juergensmeyer (2003: 8). Therefore, "Islamic fundamentalists are far more dangerous as ideologues of power than as extremists who ... throw bombs" (Tibi, 2003: xxvii). Mark Juergensmeyer views acts of terrorism as "symbolic statements aimed at providing a sense of empowerment to desperate communities" (2003: xi). Because "groups that have made a long-term impact ... have used violence not only to draw attention to themselves but also to articulate the concerns of those within their wider cultures", "they have not been marginal at all" within their communities (224). And Tibi adds: "the terrorists of New York and Washington were

not a crazed gang, inasmuch as they represent an existing significant stream with numerous followers within Islamic civilization" (2003: xvi).

While possibly disapproving of violence themselves, many Muslims "who live within cultures of violence ... understand that often the violence that emerges from within their own ranks, though not morally justified, is a reaction to the experience of being oppressed and violated" (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 225).

Like peoples in non-Western civilizations, Muslims suffer the concrete effects of disruption and dislocation, but unlike the others they have a worldview that entitles them to dominate. But to the contrary, they are dominated by others, to whom they feel – thanks to their divine revelation – superior. If this point is missed, Western observers will fail to grasp how Muslims feel about the current world order (Tibi, 2003: 61; the same view is expressed by Lewis, 2003: 16).

In addition, many Muslims see the West's "War On Terror" as "a war against Islam" (Ahmed, 2003: 1).

4.3.2 Secularism, democracy, and the nation-state

Bergen confirms the terrorists' view that there is no distinction in Islam "between the secular and the sacred ... Indeed, Muhammad's success as a prophet was inextricably entwined with his role as a political and military leader" (2001: 97; but compare Tibi's claim opposing the historicity of "Allah's rule": 2003: 18-19, 77). According to Bernard Lewis, "[t]he Founder of Islam was his own Constantine, and founded his own state and empire ... The dichotomy of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, so crucial in the history of Western Christendom" does not therefore exist in Islam (2003: 5; Lewis' italics). In the century following Muhammad's death, Islam conquered "a vast empire that stretched from the African coast of the North Atlantic to northern India. It is to this golden age of Islam that bin Laden harks back" (Bergen, 2001: 97; see also Huntington, 1996: 263; Lewis, 2003: 5-6; and Brown, 2000: 44-47). Muslims must strive "to achieve the divinely ordained political community in this world, the *dunya*", which includes both "*din* (religion)" and "*dawla* (state)" in a non-separated form, claims L. Carl Brown (2000: 1; his italics). They cannot "heed secular authority that would make religion a private concern" (141).

Increasingly, Muslims attack the West not for adhering to an imperfect, erroneous religion, which is nonetheless a 'religion of the book,' but for not adhering to any religion at all. In Muslim eyes Western secularism, irreligiosity, and hence immorality are worse evils than the Western Christianity that produced them (Huntington, 1996: 213).

Modernity and secularism are "almost by definition corrupting to all religion", but "above all to ... Islam, which prefers that men render everything unto Allah, ecclesiastic and worldly, spiritual and temporal alike" (Barber, 1996: 210; on Islam and secularism, see also

Juergensmeyer, 2003: 77, and Huntington, 1996: 70; on failed attempts since the 1830s to introduce "technical modernization without excessive cultural Westernization" to Muslim countries, see Huntington, 1996: 74, 114). Particularly "the institution of the nation-state denies Islam's claim to a universal Islamic order constructed along the lines of the *shari'a*/Islamic law" (Tibi, 2003: 38; his italics; on the concept of *shari'a* and legitimacy of government, see also 154, 165, and Lewis, 2003: 103).

In the Arab world, existing states have legitimacy problems because they are for the most part the arbitrary, if not capricious, products of European imperialism, and their boundaries often did not even coincide with those of ethnic groups such as Berbers and Kurds. These states divided the Arab nation, but a Pan-Arab state, on the other hand, has never materialized. In addition, the idea of sovereign nation states is incompatible with belief in the sovereignty of Allah and the primacy of the *ummah*. As a revolutionary movement, Islamist fundamentalism rejects the nation state in favor of the unity of Islam (Huntington, 1996: 175; his italics).

While "the monotheism of Islam does not allow for a division between the world and the spirit – for it does not recognize that duality – it does allow for a struggle against duality itself", it was argued by Banisadr, an associate of Khomeini's (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 157). Radical Islam is therefore "a powerful challenge to the existing order of the international system of secular nation-states" (Tibi, 2003: 3).

This problem was further aggravated because "[t]he West, and especially the United States, which has always been a missionary nation", was strengthened by the collapse of communism in its belief "that its ideology of democratic liberalism had triumphed globally and hence was universally valid" and that it was justified to continue spreading "the Western values of democracy, free markets, limited government, human rights, individualism, the rule of law", often against the wishes of the majority of the population, to Muslim countries. "The West is attempting and will continue to attempt to sustain its preeminent position and defend its interests by defining those interests as the interests of the 'world community.'" Muslims cannot but identify this Western "universalism" as a new form of "imperialism" (Huntington, 1996: 183-184; Tibi, 2003: 61-62, 65, confirms this view, as does Lewis, 2003: 42-43; Huntington reminds us however that Islam seems to get just as easily in conflict with non-Western "civilizations", namely its "Hindu, Chinese, Buddhist" neighbours: "In the early 1990s ... two-thirds to three-quarters of intercivilizational wars were between Muslims and non-Muslims. Islam's borders *are* bloody, and so are its innards": Huntington, 1996: 255-258, 264; his italics; see also Ahmed, 2003: 7).

Bergen thinks that that "[t]here is nothing inherently 'antidemocratic' in Islam, and there are Muslim concepts, such as *shura* – 'consultation with the people' – that fit rather neatly into a democratic framework" (2001: 226; his italics). Tibi however argues that it is rather a question of "*shura*/consultation versus secular democracy" (2003: 138; his italics).

Moderates insist that the sovereignty of Allah's will "still leaves ample room for the majority to exercise political authority as long as it does so within a framework that acknowledges the ultimate hegemony of divine power" (Barber, 1996: 209; see also Tibi, 2003: 26).

Just as Franco's fascism, seventeenth-century Europe's divine right of kings, and America's 1960s civil rights movement all emerged from Christian societies, any number of political models is possible in an Islamic environment. The proof lies in Indonesia: With more than two hundred million inhabitants, it is one of the world's largest democracies and the world's largest Muslim country (Bergen, 2001: 227).

As another successful example, in Africa, one might mention Senegal – a smaller Muslim country with a long-standing democratic tradition. Benjamin Barber observes however the fact that Islam "has less room for secularism than any other major world religion" (1996: 206) and holds that

[a]n empirical survey of existing governments in Islamic nations certainly affirms a certain lack of affinity between Islam and democracy. In nearly all Muslim nations, democracy has never been tried or has been pushed aside after unsuccessful experiments (207; see also Huntington, 1996: 113).

Huntington claims that "Islamic culture explains in large part the failure of democracy to emerge in much of the Muslim world" (1996: 29), while Barber proposes to look back to "ancient antecedents" of democracy which "in its premodern and preliberal forms is not necessarily at odds ... with fundamentalist Islam" (1996: 209). Tibi explains that not all fundamentalists approve of the use of violence – which does however not equate to being sympathetic to "democratization." (2003: xxiii).

4.3.3 History and ideological roots of *jihad*

Juergensmeyer offers a discussion of various notions of the use of violence in Islam (2003: 80-83). His view of there being a strong tradition of non-violence is being contradicted by Huntington though (1996: 263). Juergensmeyer argues that it is only a recent phenomenon "that the approval of force for the defense of Islam can be expanded to include struggles against political and social injustice" and claims that Abd al-Salam Faraj, the Egyptian author of a pamphlet, *Al-Faridah al-Gha'ibah* (The neglected duty; Juergensmeyer's translation) – "a remarkably cogent argument for waging war against the political enemies of Islam" that was first published in Cairo in the early 1980s –, may have "had greater influence in ... reinterpreting the traditional Muslim idea of struggle – jihad –" than any other thinker. *Jihad* is "the 'duty' that has been profoundly 'neglected'" by being interpreted allegorically rather than taken literally. "The true soldier of Islam is allowed to use virtually any means available to achieve a just goal" (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 82). Most importantly, Faraj was only the last to write "in a tradition of radical Islamic political writers

reaching back to the beginning of this century and before" (83). Noorani, referring to bin Laden, claims that "there was not a spark of originality ... in the ideas he put forth" (2002: 8). Ayatollah Khomeini, for instance, the author of a 1970 book-form collection of lectures on *Islamic government* (Lewis, 2003: 64; Brown, 2000: 170), already "remarked that "Islam is politics or it is nothing" (Lewis, 2003: 6). Sayyid Qutb, a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, was executed in 1966 (Tibi, 2003: 34) after writing prolifically throughout the 1950s and 1960s, including a "six-volume Qur'anic commentary" (Brown, 2000: 156). His

most powerful accusation ... is the degeneracy and debauchery of the American way of life, and the threat that it offers to Islam. This threat ... became a regular part of the vocabulary and ideology of Islamic fundamentalists, and most notably, in the language of the Iranian Revolution. This is what is meant by the term the Great Satan, applied to the United States by ... Khomeini. Satan as depicted in the Qur'an is neither an imperialist nor an exploiter. He is a seducer, 'an insidious tempter who whispers in the hearts of men' (Qur'an CXIV, 4, 5) (Lewis, 2003: 61).

Tibi traces what he calls "*neo-jihad*" (2003: xv; his italics; for a discussion of more traditional forms of missionary *jihad* as "exertion" rather than "holy war", see 54-55) – that is, "an irregular war" – back to Hassan al-Banna, founder, in 1928, of the already "fundamentalist" Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and his essay, *Risalat al-Jihad* (Essay on jihad; Tibi's translation), published in the first part of the twentieth century (xvi, 52-53). Al-Banna is said to have "envisaged an Islamic utopia with no political parties, no class antagonism, and no legitimate differences of personal or group interests: the Islamist equivalent of the utopian Marxist classless society" (Brown, 2000: 146). "Al-Banna accepted nationalism but only as a part of God's greater community – the *umma*" (148; his italics). Still earlier, the "Pan-Islam" "movement that appealed to Muslims and caused concern to the West from roughly the 1870s until the First World War ... prefigured the internationalized political Islam characterizing today's world" (107). Some of "the most basic readings of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism" are the writings of the medieval "Muslim jurist Ibn Taimiyya" who "dismisses 'human rule' as *ta'til*, the suspension of God's rule" (Tibi, 2003: 38; Tibi's italics). Taimiyya's name is no longer known only to specialists as his ideas "appeared in the popular media" (Brown, 2000: 122).

Lewis argues that "[t]he overwhelming majority of early authorities, citing the relevant passages in the Qur'an, the commentaries, and the traditions of the Prophet, discuss jihad in military terms" and only "modern Muslims, particularly when addressing the outside world, explain the duty of jihad in a spiritual and moral sense" (2003: 24). According to Huntington, "[t]he parallel concepts of 'jihad' and 'crusade' not only resemble each other but distinguish these two faiths from other major world religions" (1996: 211). "The presumption is that the duty of jihad will continue, interrupted only by truces, until all the

world either adopts the Muslim faith or submits to Muslim rule" (Lewis, 2003: 25). The first, successful, *jihad* against an occupying foreign power, based "on Islamic principles", was waged against the Soviets in Afghanistan (Huntington, 1996: 246). That war

left behind ... a legacy of expert and experienced fighters, camps, training grounds, and logistical facilities, elaborate trans-Islam networks of personal and organizational relationships, a substantial amount of military equipment ... and, most important, a heady sense of power and self-confidence over what had been achieved and a driving desire to move on to other victories (247; see also 273, 287).

Some students of radical Islam claim that "[t]he new religious revival is not simply a revival of the old, ... the dynamics of religious revivalism must be understood against the ongoing dialectic of the modernization of tradition and the traditionalization of modernity" (Dorraj, 1999: 235). Tibi holds that "fundamentalists invent the tradition of *shari'a*, as an Islamic constitution of the state. This is the interpretation of *din wa dawla*/unity of religion and state, which is a fundamentalist 'invention of tradition,' as Eric Hobsbawm puts it" (Tibi, 2003: 165; his italics; on the fundamentalists Jarisha and Zaibaq's "play of language" with the term *shari'a*, "mixing old and new concepts, as well as introducing new meanings and simultaneously claiming both originality and authenticity", see 154). Also, fundamentalism dismisses "cultural modernity while embracing instrumental modernization" (66) and uses "the language of modernity to contest the evils of modernity" (68):

In discussions I have had with Islamic fundamentalists I have at times been quite amazed to see them cite the postmodernist and cultural-relativist approaches posited in the West itself to sustain their conviction that modernity is on the verge of decay, and to support their neo-absolutist program (106).

It may be that "some of the fundamentalists operate in an intellectually schizoid program", Tibi thinks (68). Bryan Turner proposes not to "regard Islamic fundamentalism as anti-modern, because the implication of this opposition is to equate fundamentalism with traditionalism". Islamic fundamentalism has however been as "opposed to traditional religiosity, such as Sufi mysticism, as it has been to the corruption of western consumerism", criticizing traditional Islam "as a principal source of weakness in the face of modernization". Turner points out that "[t]here are sociological arguments in favour of regarding puritanical forms of ... fundamentalism – whether Christian or Islamic or Jewish – as sources of modernity in opposition to traditional patterns of spiritual mysticism" (2002: 113).

Some scholars equally operate in an intellectually schizoid mode, it would appear. They find their intellectual judgement clouded by their personal dislike of radical Islam, but cannot abstain from discussing it. This statement by a Princeton Professor in Foreign Affairs Emeritus sums up the feeling:

I am intellectually fascinated by establishment-challenging religious movements, of whatever religion, but they disturb me. To say that they are distasteful would be entirely too weak. I simply do not like those individuals, in past history or present times, who believe that God has given them a clear message of what is required and has also mandated that they employ any means necessary to impose that message on others. I would go so far as to insist that such arrogance (as I see it) offers a poor parody of Islam or, for that matter, of Judaism and Christianity. Given this prejudice, I have made a conscious effort to be fair to those religious radicals whose ideology and actions I deplore (Brown, 2000: 4-5).

4.4 Slavoj Žižek and the new debate

The most recent writings on Christian "political theology" emerged from rather unexpected quarters. Post-1989 and, with increased urgency, post-2001, political theology has become a concept of choice in (mainly leftist, post-Marxist) circles of social and political thought, cultural, legal and international relations theory, social and cultural criticism, and philosophy in Europe and the US (Lilla, 1997: 32, dates the left's interest in Schmitt back to the 1970s and attributes it to the influence of Taubes). From there it has begun to reflect back into the realm of theology once more. Surprisingly, the language of political theology appears to have changed from German to English. A number of topical publications, often multidisciplinary, have appeared over the past few years, most notably titles such as John McCormick's article *Political theory and political theology: the second wave of Carl Schmitt in English*, published in the journal *Political Theory* in 1998; and books such as Oliver O'Donovan's *The desire of the nations: rediscovering the roots of political theology* (1996); *Sergii Bulgakov: towards a Russian political theology*, edited by Rowan Williams (1999); in 2003, Heinrich Meier's *Das theologisch-politische Problem: zum Thema von Leo Strauss* (English translation, *Leo Strauss and the theologico-political problem*, published in 2006); and Meier's bilingual *Was ist politische Theologie? What is political theology?* (2006); *Religion and violence in a secular world: toward a new political theology*, edited by Clayton Crockett (2006); and, also in 2006, *Political theologies: public religion in a post-secular world*, edited by Hent de Vries and Lawrence Sullivan; *Theology and the political: the new debate*, edited by Creston Davis, John Milbank and Slavoj Žižek (2005); in 2004, by the same editors, *Ontological politics: radical secular and religious thought*; as well as, in 2006, edited by Žižek together with Eric Santner and Kenneth Reinhard, *The neighbor: three inquiries in political theology*; and finally a paper, presented by Geoff Boucher at the 2006 Australian Society for Continental Philosophy Conference, *Misrecognising the neighbours as friends: against leftwing political theology*.

Many of the most recent books are still hardly available outside their country of publication, the United States (there being, for example, no holding in any UK library, including the British Library). It may therefore be little known that a resurgence of (Christian, or at least Christian-inspired) "political theology" appears to be taking place in our time (quite possibly as a reaction to the more visible rise of Islamic political theology). The urgency and immediacy of this endeavour seems properly expressed by the fact that most of these publications are collections (joint efforts, carried and legitimated by a broad array of scholars and thinkers) rather than monographs. Often these writings read more like petitions – addressed to a higher authority the authors do not believe in anymore, but wish they could believe in (again), be this God or Marx – than manifestos. An uncertainty and confusion shines through that was not present in earlier political and liberation theologies, and is not present now in radical Islam. Differently from the new political theology of the 1960s and liberation theology, both of the Christian and Islamic persuasion, this latest political theology often acknowledges its indebtedness to Schmitt (for example, Žižek, 1999: 113-116), while Metz hardly finds mention and Christian liberation theology is cited seldom. Many authors seem particularly drawn to Schmitt's straight-forward friend/enemy distinction (Schmitt, 1996/32; see Schmitt, 1970: 22; remember Moltmann's critique, 1973: 67, afore mentioned). Most participants in the current English-language debate appear utterly ignorant of the preceding German debate and the decades of scholarship that sustained it. (The essay by Davis and Riches, 2005, for example, betrays, without making it explicit, the influence of liberation theology, much of which is available in English translation, while the German debate, that has not been rendered into English, is simply ignored.)

Theological strongholds of the new debate are the Centre of Theology and Philosophy, under the direction of Milbank, at the University of Nottingham, founded in 2005, coinciding with the new interest in political theology, and the Chair of Philosophical Theology, formerly held by Milbank, at the University of Virginia, where Davis did his PhD. A 2002 conference at Virginia organised by Davis and attended, among many others, by Žižek, Williams, and Antonio Negri (who is said, although ailing, to be currently working on a book on Lenin and theology) appears to be a focal point for the development of much of the new debate. The book, *Theology and the political: the new debate*, resulted directly from that conference and many of the, often rather unlikely, participants of the conference and/or contributors to the book subsequently sustained an interest in political theology and are currently working on monographs. Some contributors or participants (not all contributors to the book participated in the conference and not all participants in the

conference contributed to the book), such as Žižek, may of course have a history with political theology dating back slightly further, that previously had just not been coordinated with others. It is noticeable that many of the contributors to this and other books come from a philosophical (or ontological) rather than a theological angle, and such an interest is apparent even in the contributing theologians. A multidisciplinary 2007 symposium, "The Resurgence of Political Theology", organised by myself and the Sussex Centre for the Individual and Society (SCIS) and taking place at the University of Pisa, Italy, in September, attracted almost twenty papers on the subject of political theology as political theory and will include scholars from all five continents, among them Davis, Jürgen Manemann (a student of Metz') and Graham Ward and Michael Hoelzl (the translators of Schmitt's *Politische Theologie II*, to be published in English in 2008).

The attempt by some to introduce earlier texts into the new debate has led to the belated translation or republication of books such as *Politische Theologie II*; Meier's *Was ist politische Theologie? What is political theology?*, an updated version of a German 1992 publication; and Taubes' *The political theology of Paul*, published in 2004, but based on lectures given in 1987 (at Schmitt's urging: Reinhard, 2007: 1) and first published in German in 1993. Somewhat independently from and predating the political theology debate, Saint Paul found renewed reception in a number of theorists and philosophers such as Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, and again Žižek. The interest in Paul and the new debate on political theology are explicitly linked, for example, in Reinhard's paper, *Paul and the political theology of the neighbor* (2007). In this erudite piece Reinhard gives the impression to be arguing that in the concept of political theology the notion of "God" should be replaced with the notion of "neighbor" (as Paul arguably did, with regard to the commandments, in Romans 13, contradicting Jesus' call to love of God *and* neighbour). In a laborious argument, Reinhard employs the Bible, Taubes, Freud, Lacan, Benjamin, Badiou, Agamben, and many others to let them (apparently) make the point (on his behalf) that a "political theology of the neighbor" would "enact ... a *profanation* of the sacred, ... *restore to common usage* something that was previously sacrosanct" (2007: 28; his italics) – in effect, constitute a political theology without God, one might be led to think.

Moreover, this is also to rescue neighbor-love from the banalization of secularization, where it functions at best as a platitude of ethical reason, the empty universal *par excellence*, or at worst as the ideological cloak for institutional indifference and social cruelty. The political theology of the neighbor would reappropriate a certain *space*, in order to open it for renewed use, as *neighborhood* (28; his italics).

Once more secular Western political theology appears to be devising the most abstract arguments to elaborate points of social critique rather similar to those put simply by liberation theology both in Latin American Christianity and Islam. According to William

Desmond, political theologians usually "do not do a good job in keeping before us the reminders of a higher measure that comes from the community of agapeic service" (2005: 180-181).

A critique of this latest political theology can be made manifest at the example of Žižek who is its most vocal representative – a man who, as recently as 2000, opened a book with the statement that "[o]ne of the most deplorable aspects of the postmodern era and its so-called 'thought' is the return of the religious dimension in all its different guises" (2001: 1). The assumption of the mantle of "political theology" by Žižek and other contributors to the new debate may appear so "silly" (this at least is the word that springs to mind) and to make little sense because in the texts they produce so many different influences are being used in such an idiosyncratic (not to say "idiotic") manner. For example, Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction is part *not* of *Politische Theologie*, but of his later book, *Der Begriff des Politischen* (English translation: *The concept of the political*: 1996/32). Differently from Žižek, Reinhard, and other contributors to the new debate, Schmitt did not use Bible quotes or references to popular culture to make his point. Paul is often being (mis-)used to construct *pseudo*-theological arguments that in the end only expose their authors' limited knowledge or grasp of (or care for) either theology or Paul. (Saint Paul has in Žižek the same value as the continuous references to films, books and jokes: providing a convenient prop for Žižek to engage in discussions only marginally related to Paul, Christianity, or religion. The new debate is in danger of treating "the Scriptures ... as a mine for random sociological analogies dug out from the ancient world", finds O'Donovan: 1996: 22. As Žižek is famed for being a pop philosopher, we can only hope that Paul will soon become unfashionable again.) Žižek in particular, in books like *The ticklish subject* (1999) and *The puppet and the dwarf* (2003), shows himself to be theologically naïve, falling (nay, jumping) into about every trap of "God-talk" that theologians learn to avoid. His brand of amateur theology – while quite possibly trying to convey the impression of talking about Christianity to non-Christians, or lapsed Christians – takes the Bible more literal than most trained theologians nowadays would. He does not reflect on the Bible or specific passages and their meaning as he undoubtedly would on any other text. Equally unreflective is his use of the very word "theology".

The new debate can rightfully be called the first truly postmodern engagement with political theology – with patchwork all too often replacing coherence. The attitude of many participants in this debate is crassly instrumental and areligious and consequently results in scholarship of questionable value. Often it may seem that for these writers, religion has merits only in so far as it can be placed in the genealogy of a particular philosophy or

ontology. First, political and liberation theologians discovered Marxism and socialism for their aims, now former Marxists and socialists appear to have discovered Christianity as a replaceable means of argumentatively justifying their preformed beliefs. In Žižek's own words this reads:

Following Alain Badiou's path-breaking book on Saint Paul, our premiss here is exactly the opposite one: instead of adopting such a defensive stance, allowing the enemy to define the terrain of the struggle, what one should do is to reverse the strategy by *fully endorsing what one is accused of*: yes, there *is* a direct lineage from Christianity to Marxism; yes, Christianity and Marxism *should* fight on the same side of the barricade against the onslaught of new spiritualisms – the authentic Christian legacy is much too precious to be left to fundamentalist freaks (2001: 2; his italics).

Žižek calls this, not wholly original, "the subversive core of Christianity" (119; or, in the subtitle of his 2003 book: *The perverse core of Christianity*). As theologically shallow as much liberation theology may appear to be, it has still a lot more depth than the reverse attempt by atheistic Marxists to appropriate Christianity.

One may be tempted to interpret the "patricide" that Reinhard means to detect in Paul's omission of the commandment to love God, as transference from the political sphere. Postmodern post-Marxists are unlikely to spend much time "killing" God, God is always presumed dead already and to have been so for more than a hundred years. So why the emphasis on Paul and the omission of God in Romans 13? May we take a clue from the fact that Negri is writing a book on Lenin and theology, and Milbank refers to the "tragic subject" in Žižek's writings as "the new Lacanian-Leninist revolutionary" (who may visit violence upon those still adhering to outdated laws, or commandments) (Milbank, 2005: 422)? Should we maybe read "Lenin" instead of "Paul" and "Marx" in lieu of "God"? Then, "Marx is dead" and Lenin killed him, but Lenin (like Paul) has been dead for a long time too, and the new debate tells us that all that remains is love of neighbour, in a way that may have been better understood by Christian doctrine than by either communism or socialism. It should be seen as the meek capitulation of a short-lived political ideology before a world-historic force that outlasted two millennia (Meier, 2006: 32, seems to agree with this assessment). Davis and Riches approach this thought, without fully grasping it, thus:

After the given failure of Soviet scientific materialism and the seeming triumph of capitalist hegemony, socialism by its own force must (re)turn to the theological. Socialism, as the true and beautiful alternative to capitalist barbarism, must recapture the force of its own political desire. To do so, it must finally and irrevocably jettison its alliance with modernity, progressivism, and atheism. Socialism's theological turn is necessarily the (re)turn to political desire as spontaneous liberation. It is the sanctification of the political body and the redemption of political time (2005: 22).

This reverse Schmittian operation (a secular concept being theologized) may even be the new debate's only claim to formulating something approaching political theology in the

original sense of the term – although Desmond speaks of such cases as "a counterfeit double of the political and a debasement of the theological" (2005: 181). Meier defines political theology as "a political theory, political doctrine, or a political position for which, on the self-understanding of the political theologian, divine revelation is the supreme authority and the ultimate ground" (2006: 29) – which certainly is not the case for much of the new debate. Differently from liberation theology and earlier manifestations of Christian political theology, the new debate does not translate its "neo-Christian" impulses into praxis (such as a praxis of liberation). It seems altogether self-referential, pointless, does not go anywhere, has no consequences, and is therefore entirely un-Christian. Its appropriation of the term "political theology" must be doubted (if not rejected outright), as all political theology certainly must be about praxis first and foremost. Much of the new debate appears artificially sustained by bad "theology".

Terrorism is a reference that keeps coming up in books, articles and essays of the new debate, but no one seems to link the resurgence of political theology explicitly to terrorism. Only rarely contributors to the new debate formulate a socio-political analysis:

In recent years, we have seen increasing attention turn toward the importance, the incredible opportunities, and the considerable downsides of globalization, global capital, and new technological media, and at the same time an unexpected, increasingly unpredictable return of religions – indeed, a turn to the religious – as a political factor of worldwide, indeed, global significance. The result seems to be an ever more globalized and, I will suggest, 'global' concern with 'religion' – one that is, often, dislocated, mediated, mediatized, and virtualized, yet also deprivatized or politicized, and whose implications and consequences extend well beyond the assumptions concerning differentiation, disenchantment, and rationalization held by most theories of modernization, which until recently remained unquestioned (de Vries, 2005: 366).

Meier sees the "revealed religions" – including both Christianity and Islam – as offering "an effective foothold for resisting the global triumph of the union of liberalism and capitalism, or rather to present an alternative to the secularism of modernity in its entirety" (2006: 32). According to Žižek, "capitalism entails the radical secularization of social life – it mercilessly tears apart any aura of authentic nobility, sacredness, honour, and so on" (2001: 14). However, Lilla means to detect among those on the left basing their theories on Schmitt "a remarkable lack of seriousness ..., whatever their partisan motivations, an unwillingness to probe too deeply into his moral universe" and go beyond his references to contemporary issues such as, for example, the "dangers of economic globalization" and guerrilla warfare (1997: 42). Žižek does offer at least one very sharp observation in the best Schmittian tradition:

It is also crucial to bear in mind the interconnection between the Decalogue (the traumatically imposed Divine Commandments) and its modern obverse, the celebrated 'human Rights'. As the experience of our post-political liberal-permissive society amply demonstrates, human Rights are ultimately, at their core, simply *Rights to violate the*

Ten Commandments. 'The right to privacy' – the right to *adultery*, in secret, where no one sees me or has the right to probe into my life. 'The right to pursue happiness and to possess private property' – the right to *steal* (to exploit others). 'Freedom of the press and of the expression of opinion' – the right to *lie*. 'The right of free citizens to possess weapons' – the right to *kill*. And, ultimately, 'freedom of religious belief' – the right to worship false gods (2001 : 110; his italics).

In spite of the new debate on political theology, what Jacques Derrida calls "*the theologico-political*" (for example, 2002b: 46; his italics) requires

a unifying conceptual structure ... that will connect political themes with the history of salvation as a whole. Political hermeneutic has to yield theology – and I don't say 'a' theology as though any improvisation upon theological themes would do, but 'theology', an account of God's dealings which has the authenticity to command Christian faith and conscience (O'Donovan, 1996: 22).

In our day, Milbank succours, political and liberation theologies write forth a "*Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*", which is precisely the hermeneutic 'capturing' of the text of the Bible" whose "rational meaning", recognized already by Spinoza (1997a and 1997b/1670), is "a political one, relating to the formal logic of the exercise of ... sovereign power" (Milbank, 1995: 242). In a time defined by "War On Terror", and an almost constant state of emergency (or "exception"), Schmitt's "political theology" has lost nothing of either its historic validity or currency.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Radical Islam as a political theology

Schmitt noted that "in the changing friend-enemy-formations of world history theology can politically just as well become an object of the revolution as of the counter-revolution" (1970: 22; my translation). Metz' definition of political theology is therefore not incompatible with Schmitt's. Nor is the appropriation of the mantle of political theology by contributors to the new debate entirely without foundation. One doubtlessly could use political theology to describe or legitimize decisionist left-wing authoritarian regimes just as much as right-wing dictatorships or feudal rule, and a left Schmittian political theology, as recently brought into the discussion by some social and political theorists, appears possible.

In addition, Böckenförde stresses that political theology is not limited to the realm of the Christian religion, but that "there is political theology beyond it" (1983: 16; my translation). I hope that my study proved this. Meier further notices, without explicitly referring, for example, to the adversity between Christian fundamentalism in the US and radical Islam, that

[o]ne reason why political theology is a controversial concept is that political theologians themselves prefer to use it as a weapon in their battles ... it is frequently used by other political theologians ... in order to distance themselves from political theologians whose political doctrines they disapprove of and to attack any political theology that is not grounded in their own faith (2006: 26-27).

As a hypothesis I assumed that there are clear similarities in some key themes of the socio-political analysis of Christian political and liberation theologians and representatives of Islamist terrorist movements and radical Islam, respectively – particularly regarding "democracy", "capitalism", "globalization", "colonialism", and "underdevelopment". The structured presentation of their arguments in, respectively, chapters two and three, and the review of the secondary (and some primary) literature in chapter four did show this to be true. In the first chapter I announced that if my hypothesis should prove to be well-founded, I would argue that there is a kind of "political theology" underlying Islamist terrorism and radical Islam that can be set in relation to the Christian concepts of political theology and theology of liberation, and I will now attempt to expand the term "political theology" to cover the socio-political analysis, arguments, and ideology of radical Islam. To do so it will be useful to look more closely at some differences and similarities of Christian political and liberation theologies and radical Islam and aspects of their respective socio-political (or politico-theological) analyses.

Other writers showed that there are Islamic political and liberation theologies and discussed how they interlink with and compare to Christian political theology. Some even likened Khomeini's radical Islamic theology to liberation theology (for example, Dorraj, 1999: 230). In the last chapter it has also become clear that the terrorists quite often refer to or appear to be influenced by older (non-violent) traditions of radical Islam. I have therefore not exclusively focussed on the violent component of radical Islam, but also taken into account earlier and non-violent expressions of this line of thought. Along the same lines, I have taken account of instances in which Christian political and liberation theologians justify the use of violence or even turned violent themselves in the struggle for (political) liberation (for example, in the Philippines and Nicaragua). Liberation theology appears particularly prone to the justification of (revolutionary) violence, with many liberation theologians advocating it and some taking action. Even the German Moltmann supports violent means, though, and Schmitt, proponent of the violence-loaded friend/enemy distinction, notoriously joined the National Socialist Party in the early 1930s. While I found few authors (theologians or otherwise) who wrote on terrorism and radical Islam from an explicitly Christian perspective – and, apart from some slight hints in contributions to the new debate, even less who wrote on it in the context of "political theology" –, examples of Christian political and liberation theologians' justification of the

use of violence serve to further highlight the uncanny similarities to radical Islam (and possibly terrorism) in analysis, discussion and resolution. "Just as liberation theologians justify the use of unauthorized force for the sake of their vision of a moral order" (Juergensmeyer, 2003: 30), so does the ambiguous stance of radical Islam on the use of violence, its unequivocal naming of the enemy, and the often experienced difficulty to distinguish between (non-violent) radical Islam, Islamic fundamentalism, and terrorism, underline radical Islam's claim to be identified as a political theology.

5.2 Remembrance, solidarity, and praxis

Should we want to agree with Metz that proper theology can be written by non-theologians too? If so, the terrorists and ideologues of radical Islam, many of whom are not trained theologians, are justified in proclaiming their own theology, devised outside of university faculties of Islamic theology, in the midst of a battlefield even. The critics of radical Islam advocate a safe, institutionalized theology. The sort of privatized and sanitized religion political theologies of all kinds will always be opposed to. Radical Islam remembers the "dangerous memory of freedom" (Metz, 1980: 90) that is Muhammad's victory in armed struggle over against enemy armies that vastly outnumbered him and his followers. Radical Islam also has not forgotten "past suffering". It keeps the "solidarity with the dead and those who have been overcome" that Metz demands of a true political theology (57). The terrorists' recurrent references to the crusades, for example, keep alive the memory of those who stood in the *jihad* before them and succumbed to the Christian "enemy". The West's "War On Terror", a Schmittian all-out war for geopolitical domination and arguably "universal" Western values – which is seen by radical Muslims as only a new "Crusader War" (MEMRI, 2002b: par. 2) –, equals what the terrorists call *jihad* or "Holy War". It is the same war. In usual openness, the *Al Muhajiroun* website states its belief that: "There is such a great emphasis of [*sic*] this subject, that some commentators and scholars of the Quran have remarked that the topic of the Quran is Jihad" (2004b: par. 9).

The terrorists do not use the term, or concept of, "underdevelopment". This stands in sharp contrast to claims in much of the secondary literature that attributes the rise of Islamic fundamentalism to social and economic deprivation. Being anti-capitalists, radical Islamists do not compare their lands to the West in economic terms *per se*, it appears. If anything, terrorists boast of the oil-riches of the Middle East, and deplore Western influence and neo-colonialism and global economic governance structures that hinder them from enjoying the wealth of their countries.

Radical Islam gains much of its influence from the social activities that follow on from its socio-political analysis. In line with what Metz calls a political theology "that operates subject to the primacy of praxis" (1980: 50) – the latter consisting of "communication and action" (51) –, not subordinating "praxis to theory" (50), "an extensive network" of Islamic and Islamist organizations, particularly in the Middle East, engages in the provision of basic "health, welfare, educational, and other services" to deprived, mainly urban populations, they run "orphanages" and retirement homes, "hospitals, ... clinics, ... Islamic schools, ... Koranic study centers" and Islamic universities, but also "paid particular attention ... to expanding Islamic influence in state schools". Radical Islamists formed "student unions, youth organizations, and religious, social, and educational associations". As a result, they "brought into existence an Islamic 'civil society' which paralleled, surpassed, and often supplanted in scope and activity the frequently frail institutions of secular civil society" and filled a "vacuum" left by governments, caring for "a large number of ... poor" (Huntington, 1996: 111-113). This movement could be said to find its equivalent in the Christian ecclesiastic base communities of Latin America and some parts of Asia that have become commonly associated with liberation theology (see, for example, Löwy, 1996: 48-49; Gutiérrez, 1993: xix, xli; Segundo, 1996: 190; Kim, 1987a: par. 126).

[T]he Christian-based communities also function as self-reliance, self-help organizations. In this capacity, they focus on matters such as literacy and health care. These alternative sources of education, cooperation, mobilization and power have their counterparts among Muslims (Dorraj, 1999: 232).

The Islamic and Islamist organizations seem to answer, for Muslims, the question Moltmann posed thus:

What would it be like if just once the time were to come when one did not receive negative answers to the question what is a Christian; that is, that he is one that does not do this or that, but instead, a positive answer ...?! What would it be like if the time were to come when men would say, as they did about the Christians in old Rome, that they feed not only their poor but the entire city? (1973: 62)

At the same time, political theology seems to be always reactionary, never pro-active. Not only does Schmitt frequently refer back to writers of the counterrevolution such as Donoso Cortés, Bonald, and de Maistre, his political theology and many of his other early writings were devised in reaction to the experience of World War One and the Russian Revolution. The second wave of political theology (Metz and Moltmann, liberation theologies, and radical Islam) resulted from the end of colonialism and the emerging new world order. The third wave, the new debate of our time, can be seen as a reaction to September 11, the end of the Soviet Union, and new friend/enemy divides opening up.

The resurgence of interest in political theology, among intellectuals of the political left, most of them clearly influenced by postmodernism, reveals another interesting fact:

political theology is inherently positivist. It does not lend itself easily to a postmodern treatment as, in most of its expressions, it is set on effecting social and political change. Even according to Žižek, "'postmodern' individuals" – "today's Last Men" –, will "dedicate their life to a survival replete with more and more refined and artificially excited/aroused small pleasures" and "reject all 'higher' goals as terrorist" (2003: 39). However, as already indicated, the further left political theology moves, the less substance, generally speaking, there is and the more (empty) sentiment.

5.3 Anti-liberalism and democracy

I suggested that representatives of terrorist movements such as *al-Qaeda* see an intrinsic linkage between democracy and capitalism and that they operate from the premises that whoever wants to fight capitalism, and maybe sees globalization as today's primary manifestation of it, needs to abandon democracy and its values first. Whoever wants to fight capitalism, it appears, needs to fight democracy as well. In contrast to this, as has been shown, Christian "political theology" often aims at establishing democratic and humane conditions where no such exist. Many of its proponents assume that a non-capitalist democracy is possible. This very notion, in spite of political theologians' arguing for a political role of religion, is based on Western secularism and the separation of politics and religion that is possible in Christianity but is arguably not possible in Islam.

Schmitt's entire politico-theological concept of the analogy between religious beliefs and political organization of any given society seems to be founded on the assumption that state and religion are separate entities. This idea is not necessarily secular, though, as it is inherent already in Augustine's teaching of *Civitas Dei* and *Civitas Terrena* and before that in Jesus' command to "repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar" (USCCB, 1970: Luke 20:25). Also, that simple distinction seems to be blurring in the West, with ever more non-state political actors appearing on the stage. Nevertheless, one might be led to ask whether the composite term "political theology" does make sense in a context that refuses to distinguish between politics and religion (or that has no concept of such a separation), or if indeed the concept of political theology presupposes a Western mindset? Not so. In Schmittian terms, Allah is sovereign in (radical) Islam, and political legitimacy is gained from adherence to "Allah's rule". *Jihad* may be defined as the "state of emergency" that is central to Schmitt's concept of political theology. In a state of emergency all means are fair. (And radical Islam appears to be living in a near permanent state of emergency.) Schmitt's insights help to explain why democracy stands little chance in Muslim countries.

It is hard to view democracy as in any way analogous to Muslim societies' prevalent religious beliefs. This would seem to indicate that while democratic governments may be compatible with Western political theology, Islamic political theology has greater affinity with authoritarian regimes.

What then is the single most important factor responsible for the similarities we detected in the socio-political analyses of Christian political and liberation theologies and radical Islam? Political theology, as we were told frequently, stands in opposition to the privatized religion of liberal western societies. Not only that, though. The major finding of this research is that *all* genuine and developed political theologies appear to be inherently anti-liberal. This seems to be next to unavoidable. Schmitt is as anti-liberal as are Metz, Moltmann, the liberation theologians, and radical Islamists. The particular expression of anti-liberalism is of course always contextualized. Schmitt's main thrust is directed against the empty pretensions of parliamentarism that he saw as synonymous with the liberal democracy of the Weimar Republic. Radical Islam, on the other hand, is set against neoliberal globalization and the world domination of "Democracy/Capitalism" (*Al Muhajiroun*, 2004f: par. 7). Political theology can be applied to all struggles against liberalism, capitalism, and associated phenomena – even in societies that are not liberal themselves, as was often the case in liberation theology with its evocation of dependency theory (it is of course odd, but not to be doubted, that *liberation* theology should be *anti-liberal*). The new debate in leftist circles arose as an alternative anti-liberal option after communism and socialism had been discredited.

Anti-liberalism thus is at the basis of political theology. This fact would explain why, although earlier attempts at formulating the relationship of politics and religion have clearly been made, "political theology" as such only really arose once liberalism had taken hold. Only after liberalism had become the dominant ideology could political theology take a stance against it. Such a sequence of theoretical developments seems corroborated by the fact that a key event of the early stages of pro-democratic liberalism was the French revolution, and Schmitt bases his political theology on the thought of writers of the counterrevolution.

Anti-liberal political theology even seems able to overcome the political left/right divide. Political theologians arrived at anti-liberal political theologies from the right (Schmitt, Christian fundamentalism, some forms of Jewish political theology), the left (Metz, liberation theology, the new debate), and from outside the democratic spectrum altogether (radical Islam).

Often anti-liberalism leads to political theology being anti-democratic as well. If one assumes, as I do, that a non-liberal democracy is not possible (that is, that every kind of democracy inevitably leads to some form of capitalism), then being anti-liberal means being (at least potentially) anti-democratic as well. Schmitt's biography seems exemplary and consequential. While Schmitt initially argued against liberalism rather than democracy *per se*, the threshold for him to support a decisionist anti-democratic regime was low. In many cases Latin American liberation theologians started out from a position of conscientious non-violence and critical support of democracy, but gradually became apologetic of violent means and supportive of revolutionary movements that would enact "justice" outside of formal democratic processes. This is one thing the contributors to the new debate have yet to learn (but in doing so their closeness to Marxism will assist them greatly): they still seem to hold on to some socialist ideal of a non-liberal democracy (or "neighbourhood") and want to use political theology as a means to get there. That is naïve. Radical Islam is truest to the essence of political theology in its outright damnation of both liberalism and democracy.

The only exceptions from the rule are some avowedly pro-liberal Islamic liberation theologies (Esack's, for example, resulting from the struggle against the anti-liberal *apartheid* government in South Africa). These minor political or liberation theologies have however not been theoretically developed in any meaningful manner, and cannot be taken as sufficient evidence against an underlying anti-liberal principle of all political theology.

5.4 Future lines of inquiry

I set out to argue that radical Islam can justifiably be called a "political theology". In order to substantiate my claim, I elaborated on radical Islam's understanding of theology and politics. I showed that radical Islam agrees with the definitions of political theology stipulated by writers such as Schmitt and Metz, and that there is a social engagement accompanying it similar to that of liberation theology. Radical Islam is as anti-liberal as other forms of political theology. My proposition is therefore that radical Islam from now on be seen unequivocally as a political theology and treated as such.

This opens up various lines for future academic inquiry into, and the (comparative) study of, political theology – as well as for the theoretical development of political theology to meet the constantly evolving requirements of the 21st century. An interesting question that should be addressed is, for example, whether one could imagine a multi-religious political theology – either based on a multicultural nation-state or at the global level?

Other questions to be addressed may include the (contested) nature of political theology as political theory; its place in political research rather than just in theology; reasons, consequences, and meaning of the clash of political theologies (particularly Christian fundamentalism and radical Islam) that we have been experiencing for some years; the role of the new debate within (academic) theology, within religion, within the community of the faithful, and within the Catholic Church and other churches; and possible inferences from the new debate that would enrich theology. A common definition or framework covering all forms of political and liberation theologies has thus far proven elusive, but does not need to remain so. Further inquiries into the apparently inherent linkage between anti-liberal (possibly even anti-democratic) thought or sentiment and all (major) political theologies may provide valuable pointers for such an enterprise. For example, why is anti-liberalism conducive for political theologies to develop? Is it because liberalism is, in its turn, inherently anti-religious? It can certainly not be said that anti-liberalism is necessarily pro-religion, as there are plenty of examples to the contrary (communism, National Socialism, etc.). Along the same lines, it needs to be established whether political theology does have the properties to permanently overcome the political left/right divide and find an epistemological and eschatological location outside the democratic spectrum.

Finally, the most serious question that arises may be whether (comparative) political theology could replace political theory and/or religion in the approaching end phase of Spengler's *Decline of the west*. He predicts that in the final stages of Western civilization ideological concepts, such as Marxism, and theories will lose their meaning – "and their end comes not from refutation, but from boredom" (1971/22: II/454) –, power politics will reaffirm itself over the vanishing forces of capitalism (II/465, 506), and there will be a rise of religious belief: "In the midst of the land lie the old world-cities, empty receptacles of an extinguished soul, in which a historyless mankind slowly nests itself". "And while in high places there is eternal alternance of victory and defeat, those in the depths pray, pray with that mighty piety of the Second Religiousness that has overcome all doubts for ever" (II/435).

Comparative political theology may be the ultimate political theory to explain all this.

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