

Ryszard Michalak (ed.)

Religion and identity

Political conditions



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VANDENHOECK & RUPRECHT

The printing of this book was made possible with support provided by University of Zielona Góra.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek:
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie;
detailed bibliographic data available online: <https://dnb.de>.

© 2023 by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Robert-Bosch-Breite 10, 37079 Göttingen, Germany,
an imprint of the Brill-Group (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands;
Brill USA Inc., Boston MA, USA; Brill Asia Pte Ltd, Singapore; Brill Deutschland GmbH,
Paderborn, Germany, Brill Österreich GmbH, Vienna, Austria)
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Hotei,
Brill Schönigh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau,
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Typesetting: le-tex publishing services, Leipzig
Cover design: SchwabScantechnik, Göttingen

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage | www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com

ISBN 978-3-647-30220-1

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Ryszard Michalak

Preface: Political factors in processes of forming religious identity

Religious policy as an exemplification of a political factor

The task that the authors of this volume of collected papers have set for themselves is to show the significance of political factors in processes of shaping religious community identity. This shaping (in the form of both influence and impact) consists in some cases of reinforcing solutions, in others, of discouraging factors that lead to problems. This can be clearly seen, for example, when the political factor in question is religious policy.¹ This example can serve to illustrate the situation precisely, since it allows us to show quite clearly the dual role that shaping processes take. In almost every model of state in relation to religion, religious policies materialize dichotomously. On the one hand, such policies support and strengthen a given religious environment (for various reasons); on the other hand, they aim to weaken or annihilate certain religious entities (also motivated by a variety of reasons). Such situations can be found in both democratic secular states and non-democratic religious states. Let's trace this phenomenon with regard to Europe.

The largest group among the European countries are democratic, secular and friendly to religious associations. These countries follow the principle of soft separation.² They include: the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Belgium, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Republic of Lithuania, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Romania, the Republic of Moldova, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Kingdom of Spain, the Principality of Andorra, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Portugal, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Republic of Croatia,

1 Ryszard Michalak: Polityka wyznaniowa. Zakres zjawiska, in: *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio K*, Vol. XXVI, 2019, no. 1, pp. 23–35 DOI: 10.17951/k.2019.26.1.23-35; Dariusz Góra/Krzysztof Łabędź/Piotr Pochyły: *Polityka wyznaniowa. Perspektywa III RP*, Kraków 2019, pp. 156; Stefan Dudra: Religious policy in Poland after 1989, in: Dorota Szaban/Magdalena Zapotoczna/Piotr Pochyły (eds.): *Designing and Implementing Public Policy in Contemporary Society. New Perspectives*, Göttingen 2023, pp. 99–110.

2 Radosław Zenderowski/Ryszard Michalak: *Polityka wyznaniowa. Aspekty teoretyczne i egzemplifikacje*, Zielona Góra 2018, pp. 195.

the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, the Italian Republic, the Swiss Confederation, the Kingdom of Sweden (until 31 December 1999 a *de jure* religious state), and the Kingdom of Norway (a *de jure* religious state until 31 December 2016). These states intentionally pursue a religious policy that results in the licensing of all religious associations—without one religious organization being favored over others. Naturally, this is based on the proviso that these are not extreme in their goals and practices, nor are destructive sects or religious organizations that advocate violence or provide a base for terrorism. A model example of such a religious policy currently exists in the Federal Republic of Germany, which includes dozens of religious associations and “ideological communities” in its concession of approval. At the same time, Germany implements certain restrictive measures, including a policy of liquidation against two types of entities: the Church of Scientology,³ specifically, and generally, Muslim Salafist organizations.⁴ Moreover, rationing solutions apply to Muslim and Judaic organizations with regard to ritual slaughter of animals and circumcision of boys for religious reasons.⁵

Parallels can be found in the democratic policies of *de jure* religious states in Europe, which include: the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Finland, the Republic of Iceland, the Republic of Malta, the Principality of Monaco, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Republic of Greece, the Republic of Cyprus, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. On the other hand, slightly more liquidationist and rationing solutions can be observed in certain democratic and secular countries, such as the French Republic, the Republic of Ireland, and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, countries that are distanced from the phenomenon

3 See: Hanna Karp: Maski sekt. Strategie sekt i nowych ruchów religijnych w obliczu komercjalizacji rynku religijnego na przykładzie Kościoła Sjentologicznego, in: *Kultura – Media – Teologia*, 2010, vol. 3, pp. 21–32.

4 See: Artur Ciechanowicz: Państwo Islamskie w Niemczech, Niemcy w Państwie Islamskim. RFN wobec rodzimych dżihadystów, in: *Raport OSW*, no. 12, 2016, pp. 5–26; Barbara Pasamonik: Fenomen europejskich dżihadystów, in: *Multicultural Studies*, no. 2, 2016, pp. 13–30 DOI: 10.23734/mcs.2016.2.013.030; Mariusz Sulkowski: Polityczne konsekwencje kryzysu migracyjnego w Niemczech, in: *Chrześcijaństwo–Świat–Polityka*, No. 20, 2016, pp. 59–72; Małgorzata Świder/Sylvia Góra/Beata Springer: *Muzułmanie i islam w Niemczech – perspektywa polityczna, prawna i kulturowa*, Kraków 2019. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12797/9788381381024>

5 Ewa Tuora-Schwierskott: Wolność sumienia i religii – aspekty prawnomiędzynarodowe oraz konstytucyjne na przykładzie regulacji prawa polskiego, niemieckiego i czeskiego, in: Małgorzata Sosnowska/Piotr Szymaniec/Ewa Tuora-Schwierskott (eds.): *Przestrzeń wolności religijnej w Polsce, Czechach i Niemczech. Analiza prawna*, Wałbrzych 2017, pp. 92–96.

of religion through a form of an antagonistic separation between religion and state. Still more complicated is the policy of the European Union towards religion.⁶

Within the continental borders of Europe, there are also states that are *de facto* non-democratic, while being *de facto* religious. In these cases, dichotomous and extreme solutions prevail, such as maximum concession and support for some religious communities and restrictive policies towards others. This characterization applies to the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Turkey, and the Republic of Kazakhstan. The first of these countries unreservedly supports the Orthodox Church, and has a policy of liquidation for virtually all other churches and religious associations if elements competing with Orthodoxy are perceived in their activities.⁷ Particularly persecuted in Russia of the Vladimir Putin era is the Jehovah's Witness community, whose organization was banned in 2017 and its assets confiscated.⁸ There is also a clear antipathy directed at the Roman Catholic Church, which, like Muslim organizations,⁹ is subject to rationing policies. The religious policy of Belarus under Alexander Lukashenko is in practice an imitation of the Russian scheme.¹⁰

Related to this is Turkey of the Recep Tayyip Erdoğan era, which is undergoing systematic “resunnification.” Its foreign policy is accompanied by numerous religious tensions (particularly with Austria¹¹ and Germany,¹² among others). One feature in Turkey's foreign policy is to look after the interests of Sunnis around the world as part of its “mosque policy”— based on Ahmet Davutoğlu's doctrine of Turkey dominating the Muslim world. One part of this policy involves Turkey funding the construction or renovation of Sunni mosques in Islamic countries. A second pillar of this policy is the construction of mosques in non-Muslim states,

6 Michał Gierycz: *Chrześcijaństwo i Unia Europejska. Rola religii w procesie integracji europejskiej*, Kraków – Warszawa 2008, pp. 440; Piotr Mazurkiewicz/Patrycja Laszuk/Urszula Góral: *Unia Europejska wobec religii*, Warszawa 2021, pp. 203.

7 Ryszard Michalak: Państwo, Cerkiew i Kościół Rzymskokatolicki w Rosji w 2002 roku. Tajny raport “O ekstremizmie religijnym w Federacji Rosyjskiej,” in: Wiesław Hładkiewicz (ed.): *W kręgu historii, prawa i nauki o polityce*, Zielona Góra 2004, pp. 231–256.

8 Radosław Zenderowski/Ryszard Michalak: op. cit., pp. 105–107.

9 Ryszard Michalak: Religijne uwarunkowania radykalnego rosyjskiego nacjonalizmu. Tożsamość rosyjsko-prawosławna a islam – kwestia sprzężenia zwrotnego, in: *Athenaeum. Polskie Studia Polityczno-logiczne*, no. 33, 2012, pp. 23–35.

10 Jerzy Waszkiewicz: Identyfikacja religijna i państwowa polityka wyznaniowa Białorusi, in: *Studia Białorusinistyczne*, vol. 10, 2016, pp. 77–89. DOI: 10.17951/sb.2016.10.77

11 Wioletta Husar Poliszuk/Bartłomiej Secler/Piotr S. Ślusarczyk: *Polityka wyznaniowa. Konteksty innych polityk publicznych. Austria, Katalonia Polska*, Zielona Góra 2018, chapter I, pp. 13–34, chapter II, pp. 35–80.

12 Gérard-François Dumont: Germany. Geopolitics of Migration: The Chancellor Merkel's Tragedy in Five Acts, in: *Christianity – World – Politics. Journal of the Catholic Social Thought*, no. 25, 2021, pp. 34–49. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21697/CSP.2021.25.1.03>

with investments managed by Turkey's Directorate for Religious Affairs (Diyaret İşleri Başkanlığı). A third policy direction is to directly strengthen pro-government Sunni organizations on Turkish territory and systematically restrict the activities of Yazidis, Shiites, Alevi and Christians.¹³ Many similarities to this third direction can be found in the religious policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan under President Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev. This Sunni-dominated authoritarian state has begun a series of planned eradication and rationing measures targeting Christian churches and other religious circles deemed to be in competition with Hanafi Sunnism.¹⁴

**“I am an Orthodox Lemko,” “I am a Basque-Catholic,”
“I am Saam-Laestadian”**

The relevance of political factors as tools for influencing religious circles has gained particular importance in recent years in the face of questions regarding identities of individuals and collective groups. These questions have been posed by representatives of the scholarly community in relation to many disciplines and areas of life.¹⁵ Despite the increasing popularity of ideologies hostile to religion and processes of secularization, religion remains an important component of human identity. Sometimes religion is the most important element of identity. This can be seen in how people self-identify themselves: “First of all, I am a Buddhist, then a Sinhalese and a Sri Lankan”¹⁶; or “First of all, I am a Muslim belonging to the Ummah, then a Syrian and a Damascene”¹⁷; etc. A popular category of self-identification has also long been the combination of religious identity with ethnicity or nationality¹⁸: “I

13 Ryszard Michalak: The significance of the religious factor in the internal and external policies of Turkey, in: *Review of Nationalities*, vol. 9, 2019, pp. 165–174.

14 Kazakhstan. *International Religious Freedom Report for 2021 United States Department of State*, in: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/KAZAKHSTAN-2021-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf> [last accessed: 31.10.2022].

15 Matthew R. Miles: *Religious Identity in US Politics*, Boulder 2019, pp. 190.

16 Piotr Kłodkowski: Fenomen polityzacji buddyźmu w XXI wieku. Buddyżm jako narzędzie budowania ideowej tożsamości narodu w Birmie (Mjanma) i na Sri Lance oraz realizowania polityki zagranicznej w kontekście współzawodnictwa indyjsko-chińskiego w Azji, in: *Studia Religioznawcze* 50 (1) 2017, pp. 25–51. DOI: 10.4467/20844077SR.17.003.6523

17 Fuad Jomma: *Wpływ podziałów religijnych, narodowych i etnicznych na procesy polityczne w Syrii*, Szczecin 2018, pp. 641.

18 Radosław Zenderowski: Religia jako fundament i rdzeń tożsamości narodowej, in: Ryszard Michalak (ed.): *Polityka jako wyraz lub następstwo religijności*, Zielona Góra 2015, pp. 103–122.

am an Orthodox Lemko”¹⁹; “I am a Basque-Catholic”²⁰; “I am Saam-Laestadian”; etc.²¹ In some cases, self-identification based on religion can be quite complex, as for example, in the United States, the category of “white, evangelical, born-again Protestants,”²² who form the base of the religious-political movement of the New Religious Right.²³ It is worth noting here another truism: indeed, self-identification that negates a religious component is a *de facto* reference to religion, as for example, the 72 percent of Czech adults who include “atheism,” “agnosticism” or “irreligion” in their identity.²⁴

Increasingly, religion is also becoming an object of political influence, as well as the converse, with religion determining various phenomena in the political sphere.²⁵ All this means that studying the relationship between religion, identity and politics has become an important and timely task faced by political scientists. Among the most recent monographs that have appeared in Poland as part of this research current, it is worth noting the volumes by Stefan Dudra on the Orthodox community,²⁶ Rafał Prostak on the Baptists,²⁷ and Andrzej Dwojnych and Rafał Łętocha on the Mariavites.²⁸

19 Arkadiusz Tyda: The consequences of the 1989 changes in the socio-political activity of Lemkos in Poland and the United States of America, in: *Review of Nationalities*, vol. 11, 2021, pp. 81–91. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/pn-2021-0007>

20 Wioletta Husar-Poliszuk: Dios leyes viejas – religia w działalności politycznej Sabino de Arana y Goiri, in: Ryszard Michalak (ed.): *Polityka jako wyraz lub następstwo religijności...*, pp. 241–250.

21 Anne Heith: *Laestadius and Laestadianism in the Contested Field of Cultural Heritage. A Study of Contemporary Sámi and Tornedalian Texts*, Umeå 2018, pp. 249.

22 Rafał Prostak: Russell Moore jako recenzent udziału białych, ewangelikalnych, ”nowonarodzonych” protestantów w amerykańskich wyborach prezydenckich w 2016 roku, in: Stefan Dudra et al. (eds.): *Polityczne uwarunkowania religii—religijne uwarunkowania polityki*, Zielona Góra 2017, pp. 257–271.

23 Marcin Pomarański: *Współczesny amerykański fundamentalizm protestancki*, Lublin 2013, pp. 351.

24 Neha Sahgal/Alan Cooperman et al.: Religijność i przynależność narodowa w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej Przenikanie się tożsamości narodowej i religijnej w regionie dawniej zdominowanym przez ateistyczne reżimy, in: *Raport Pew Research Center*, 10.05.2017, p. 9.

25 Jeffrey Haynes (ed.): *The Politics of Religion. A Survey*, London and New York 2006, pp. 296.

26 Stefan Dudra: *Polski Autokefaliczny Kościół Prawosławny w obszarze polityki wyznaniowej oraz polityki narodowościowej Polski Ludowej i III Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 2019, pp. 958.

27 Rafał Prostak: *Ogród murem oddzielony od pustyni. Relacje Kościół-państwo, wolność sumienia i tolerancja religijna w myśli pierwszych baptystów*, Warszawa 2020, pp. 251.

28 Andrzej Dwojnych/Rafał Łętocha: *W stronę Królestwa Bożego na ziemi. Myśl społeczno-polityczna mariawitów polskich*, Kraków 2021, pp. 422.

The contents of this volume and its authors

This volume consists of fifteen chapters, which take into account both theoretical issues and various case studies. The research perspective is guided primarily by the determinants of the political science of religion,²⁹ understood as a subdiscipline of the political sciences, with its essence above all the political analysis of the phenomenon of religion or any of its components (doctrine, cult, religious organization), as well as the analysis of religion in relation to issues that are part of the political world. What makes this volume unique is that it contains, with one exception, explanations based on political science analysis in relation to current affairs. The individual chapters also reflect unique examples. Among the issues addressed here are religious policy of the state in each of its facets—concession, rationing, liquidation, instrumental actions of political actors to strengthen or limit ethno-religious orientation; the problem of tolerance in relation to religious identity; religious identity as a political tool; the role of religion in the process of building social trust; negation of identity shaped by religion from the position of political movements; confrontation of identity factions within a religious association; the policy of church authorities regarding the self-described identity of believers; theological proposals and ecclesial social teaching motivated or conditioned by politics; traditionalist identity as a determinant of action; autocephalization of the church as an element of identity; religion and nationality as tools for constructing narratives of memory in politics; and finally, legal, political and ethical aspects of military pastoral services.

Considerations include global and regional situations, as well as issues occurring in specific countries. The narrative features, among others: Ukraine, Russia, Germany, the United States, Canada, Poland, Hungary, Vatican City and Sweden. Among religious entities, the authors highlight, among others: the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, the Patriarchate of Moscow and All-Russia, the Greek Catholic Church, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Orthodox Church in Poland, the Lutheran World Federation, the Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland, the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Church of Sweden, the Hungarian Reformed Church, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Union, and the Muslim Council of Sweden.

29 Miroslub Jevtić: Political Science and Religion, in: *Politics and Religion Journal*, vol. 1, 2007, pp. 59–69; Ryszard Michalak: Politologia religii, in: Joanna Marszałek-Kawa, Danuta Plecka (eds.): *Leksykon wiedzy politologicznej*, Toruń 2018, pp. 344–348; idem: History of Politology of Religion in Poland. A Research Overview, in: *Politics and Religion Journal*, 2020, Vol. XIV, No. 2, pp. 219–262; Maria Marczevska-Rytko: Politologia religii jako subdyscyplina religioznawstwa i/lub nauk o polityce, in: Maria Marczevska-Rytko/Dorota Maj (eds.): *Politologia religii*, Lublin 2018; Maciej Potz: *Political Science of Religion – Theorising the Political Role of Religion*, Cham (Switzerland) 2020, pp. 187.

The authors represent five academic institutions in Poland: the University of Zielona Góra (Stefan Dudra, Tytus Jaskułowski, Ryszard Michalak, Marcin Pisarski, Piotr Pochyły, Anna Ratke-Majewska, Beata Springer, Dorota Szaban, Arkadiusz Tyda); the University of Opole (Joanna Kulska); Cracow University of Economics (Rafał Prostack); Father Jerzy Popiełuszko Academy of Democracy in Grudziądz (Waldemar Rogowski); and the Jacob of Paradies University in Gorzów Wielkopolski (Paweł Leszczyński).

This volume is another result of research in the political science of religion being conducted at the Institute of Political Science and Administration at the University of Zielona Góra in cooperation with other research institutions. Earlier multi-author volumes³⁰ have appeared in cooperation with scholars working at, among other places: the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, the Ignatianum Academy in Cracow, the Pedagogical University in Cracow, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, the University of Warsaw, the University of Szczecin, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Pomeranian University in Słupsk, the University of Rzeszów, the University of Łódź, the University of Silesia in Katowice, and the Institute of National Remembrance in Katowice.

Still other monographic publications have appeared in cooperation with scholars from the United States,³¹ Great Britain,³² Spain,³³ Sweden,³⁴ Slovakia,³⁵ and

30 See: Ryszard Michalak (ed.): *Religijne determinanty polityki*, Zielona Góra 2014, pp. 218; idem (ed.): *Polityka jako wyraz lub następstwo religijności*, Zielona Góra 2015, pp. 410; idem (ed.): *Implementacja zasad religijnych w sferze politycznej*, Zielona Góra 2016, pp. 239; Stefan Dudra et al. (eds.): *Polityczne uwarunkowania religii. Religijne uwarunkowania polityki*, Zielona Góra 2017, pp. 313.

31 Stefan Dudra: *Lemko identity and the Orthodox Church*, Higganum, Connecticut 2018, pp. 150 (in cooperation with Prof. Paul J. Best – Southern Connecticut State University).

32 Ryszard Michalak: *The Methodist Church in Poland Activity and Political Conditions, 1945–1989*, London – New York 2021, pp. 210. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003187417> (in cooperation with Prof. William Gibson – Oxford Brookes University).

33 Stefan Dudra/Jan Iwanek/Eduard Tarnawski: *Situación política de Espana a finales del siglo XX y a principios del siglo XXI*, Zielona Góra 2020, pp. 181 (Eduard Tarnawski held professorships at the universities of Granada, Barcelona, Murcia and Valencia).

34 Stefan Dudra/Piotr Pochyły (eds.): *From political and historical studies*, Stockholm 2014, pp. 157 (in cooperation with Dr. Khoushnaw Tillo of the Swedish Institute for Strategic Studies and Academic Research in Stockholm).

35 Michal Šmigel'/Bohdan Halczak/Roman Drozd/Stefan Dudra/Olena Kozakevych (eds.): *Lemkovia, Bojkovia, Rusíni: dejiny, súčasnosť, materiálna a duchovná kultúra*. T. 7, č.1-2, Banská Bystrica 2018, pp. 366 (vol. 1), pp. 332 (vol. 2). (Michal Šmigel' is Professor of history at the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica; Olena Kozakevych holds a PhD and is a research fellow at the Folk Art Department of the Ethnology Institute of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Lviv).

Ukraine.³⁶ Numerous articles in the field of political science of religion have also been published by scholars from countries around the world in *Review of Nationalities*,³⁷ a journal published by the Institute of Political Science and Administration of the University of Zielona Góra. More recently, a number of monographs published by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage have served to make Polish research in the field of political science of religion more widely known, especially research being done at Zielona Góra.³⁸

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36 Piotr Pochyły/Roman Sapeńko (eds.): *Wojna/pokój. Humanistyka wobec wyzwań współczesności*, Zielona Góra 2017, pp. 682 (in cooperation with researchers at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University and Rivne State Humanitarian University).

37 <http://reviewofnationalities.com>

38 Stefan Dudra/Tytus Jaskułowski/Ryszard Michalak (eds.): *Religious policy. Between theory and practice*, Göttingen 2022, pp. 184.

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Rafał Proszak

Chapter 1: The call for toleration

Non-normative religious identity in a confessional state and in a secular state

Introductory notes

Religious freedom, like the concept of human rights itself, is a product of Western civilization. Successive generations of participants in our cultural circle have experienced social rejection, political exclusion, legal restrictions and persecution for sharing unorthodox beliefs, for possibly participating in a cult incomprehensible to the majority, or for questioning the authority of a clergy that enjoys political support. The secular authority's reaching for the sword in defense of unity and social peace, which were threatened by heterodox teachings and "bizarre" practices, was long an unshakeable and widely accepted norm. Religion, in addition to meeting spiritual needs, was seen as a support, if not the very foundation of social peace and social norms. With such an assumption, state religion was, in fact, seen as the only true religion. This order has been maintained since the days of republican Rome, where Roman state worship was described as *religio*, and any unofficial worldview positions as *superstitio*. Despite changes in the content of state religion in subsequent eras, *religio* has continued to set the norm for beliefs and, above all, rituals, while any nonnormative worship continues to be considered *superstitio*.

Today, national constitutions as well as international human rights law point to religious freedom as one of the basic human rights. The legal guarantees associated with this affirm (1) the individual right to seek answers to ultimate questions, as well as (2) the right to take action in response to the content of those answers. The former right is supposed to be absolute, remaining beyond the reach of public authority; after all, "thoughts are tax-free,"¹ as Martin Luther was once to remind us. In contrast, the latter right is subject to restrictions in the name of the need to safeguard the public interest; this is capable of outweighing the legal interest of the individual seeking a guarantee of freedom of religious practice. Placing religious freedom within the framework of the competition of these two legal interests is common today: the individual's right (where the subject can be a single individual, but also a family, a religious association with a legal entity, or a civil law entity

1 Jene M. Porter: *Luther: Selected Political Writings*, Lanham/New York/London 1998, p. 62.

affiliated to it), and the right of the public.² Nevertheless, it is common to treat religious freedom in its internal dimension as a space in which a person makes an autonomous decision about the content of his or her beliefs without any restrictions: the promptings of conscience become a private matter for the individual.

However, the conditions under which religious freedom functions is a thread or context that is being neglected today in our public discourse; likewise being neglected are the goals of that freedom. Significantly, these questions predate the establishment of religious freedom as a universal, fundamental right. What we have in mind is the call for tolerance of the beliefs and attitudes defining an individual's identity, as well as the collective with which he or she identifies, if these are clearly and significantly separate from the worldview environment, which sometimes refers to such persons with open dislike. Although we are accustomed to aligning religious tolerance with religious freedom—that is, seeing tolerance as the legal and political consequence of recognizing the fundamental right to religious freedom—the two can be thought of as conceptual entities that function independently. To reiterate, the call for tolerating identities that meet general social rejection was articulated long before religious freedom was conceptualized in the sense of an inherent and inalienable right. The concept of religious freedom in the form recognizable by us today was the fruit of a process that lasted several centuries, despite the fact that we already find the notion of religious freedom (in essence, “freedom of conscience”) in the writings of Tertullian and in the Edict of Toleration of Constantine and Licinius of 313 CE. As a political demand, it appeared in the writings of the first English Baptists shortly before the English Civil War (1642–1652). But as a universal right,

2 The very distinction between private legal interest and public legal interest is also Roman in nature.

In 212 CE (or 213), Emperor Caracalla issued the edict *Constitutio Antoniniana* (known as the Edict of Caracalla). This act of extraordinary importance in reforming the Empire required commentary. Among the most prominent commentators was Ulpian (170–223? or 228? CE), who gave a new meaning to the distinction “public law” and “private law.” Previously, “public law” had been understood as established rules that are not subject to change as a result of “private agreements.” In Ulpian terms, the public–private distinction is based on the identification of legal interest. Public law refers objectively to public issues (the public interest) and the actions of the authorized organs of the state (magisterium) to secure it, while private law refers to the actions of individuals seeking to secure their individual interests. Issues of worship in Roman law were placed in the space of public law, Peter Stein: *Roman Law in European History*, Cambridge 1999, p. 21. In the opening of *The Digest of Justinian*, we find an oft-cited statement by Ulpian: “Of this subject there are two departments, public law and private law. Public law is that which regards the constitution of the Roman state, private law looks at the interest of individuals; as a matter of fact, some things are beneficial from the point of view of the state, and some with reference to private persons. Public law is concerned with sacred rites, with priests, with public officers.” [(Charles Henry Monro (trans.): *The Digest of Justinian*, vol. 1, Cambridge 1904, p. 3 (Book I.1.2)]. It is clear from this statement that the issues of worship and its administration (priestly office) were basic tasks of public law in ancient Rome.

inherent and inalienable, it only first resounds in the Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776).³

This chapter is an attempt to comment on the widespread bans in Europe on face covering by female followers of Islam. This is an obvious interference with the freedom of religious practice of these Muslims. If we weigh the legal, private and public interests of religious practice, as well as the limits of freedom, our viewpoint is narrowed significantly. Downplaying the importance of this religious practice for the self-identification, that is, identity, of those concerned and religious toleration as a principle of democratic constitutionalism precludes any possibility of grasping the essence of the matter. The issue is not only about an individual's freedom of choice and their autonomy (the decision to cover their face from outsiders). The juxtaposition of the importance of their choice with the need to protect the public interest ("living together") could possibly outweigh this choice: the doctrine of proportionality. The call of conscience and the need to follow the dictates of the religious law with which a follower of a particular religion identifies does not necessarily match with our modern understanding of the essence of freedom, in this case freedom of religion. Seeking to legally secure the possibility of practicing a religion that is "foreign" or bizarre, deviating from the social norm, or perhaps even repulsive, forces us to confront the question of the limits of tolerance: where is the limit of our willingness to recognize the right to persist in and live in accordance with "non-normative" teachings? While in the case of religious freedom, we focus our attention on the subject of that freedom, in the case of tolerance, the state comes first, since it is the state that is called upon to tolerate unpopular beliefs and practices. Among the various definitions of and approaches toward tolerance, it is worthwhile to look at the findings of Mario Turchetti, who saw in tolerance an attitude of sincere acceptance of the unbudging differences between a person's own position and the positions held by the person being tolerated, without any hope of these positions changing. Temporary concession, that is, the "consent to persist" (here Turchetti uses the term "concord") in anticipation of the moment when the seemingly tolerated person finally accepts one's point of view (in other words, conversion), when unity (or at least uniformity) of beliefs is achieved, is not a manifestation of tolerance. In this case, it is not tolerance that is actually at issue, but the unity to which tolerance is intended to lead. As Turchetti writes: "the foundation and maintenance of unity has been the goal of all social, political, economic, legal, and religious institutions. Concord has always been sought by

3 Section 16 of Virginia Declaration of Rights: "That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity toward each other."

forms of government, and was even worshipped as a goddess in ancient Greece as well as in the Roman Republic and Empire. Several temples were dedicated to Concord.”⁴

A starting point for this topic is a consideration of the legal situation of Christians in the pre-Constantinian era. Our attention is focused on Tertullian’s argument for extending a policy of tolerance to Christ’s followers. The early Christian call for tolerance was an appeal for the recognition, in the society of the Roman Empire, of the right to exist of a group whose characteristics did not fit the pattern of the Roman political community and whose social influence was widely perceived as a threat to Roman civilization due to their sabotaging established customs, not showing the expected respect for what was considered sacred, and refusing to participate in practices that integrated the civic community.

The search for analogies between the legal situation, and social reception, of Christians at the turn of the second and third centuries with the situation of female followers of Islam covering their faces in our day may seem a reckless undertaking. The distance in time between the two means we are dealing with cultural realities that are essentially incompatible. Nevertheless, the questions articulated by Tertullian appear to us to be still relevant today; his demands prompt us to reflect on the condition of religious freedom in our world.

Religious tolerance

While the focus of a discussion of religious freedom as a fundamental right is on the person (the entitled agent), this is not necessarily the case with religious tolerance. It should be noted here that religious tolerance can be thought of in two ways: *tolerance* and *toleration*.

The former refers to the disposition of a subject who is willing to tolerate dissent, which in this case is dissent involving worldview. As Bernard Crick has noted, tolerance functions here as a value or an attitude that gains in importance when the capacity for intolerance is retained. Intolerance is not the converse of tolerance; it conditions it, since tolerance is not absolute. Without identifying what will *not* be tolerated, it is impossible to identify what *will* be tolerated. In addition, the discussion of tolerance loses its meaning when we have no control over our behavior, when we are forced to adopt an “attitude of tolerance.”⁵ Tolerance requires self-restraint; it is not caused by a constraint coming from outside. The discussion of tolerance also

4 Mario Turchetti: Religious Concord and Political Tolerance in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France, in: *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1991), pp. 15–25.

5 Bernard Crick: Toleration and Tolerance in Theory and Practice, in: *Government and Opposition. An International Journal of Comparative Politics*, vol. 6, issue 2 (1971).

loses value when we reduce it to indifference or acceptance. According to Crick, the opposite of tolerance is precisely indifference; the opposite of intolerance is full acceptance. Being indifferent, I give up valuing and identifying with any beliefs, values or patterns of behavior. By accepting, I accept others' beliefs, values and patterns of behavior as my own. Using the concept of acceptance in describing tolerance is adequate in the following form: "I accept the fact that your opinions, values and attitudes are alien to me (they are not mine), which does not preclude our coexistence and cooperation." Acceptance here refers to the intransigence of differences; it is not the acceptance of another's position as your own. A tolerant attitude does not exclude worldview perfectionism, but respects worldview diversity: disapproval of differing opinions, values and attitudes is accompanied by a reluctance to impose my worldview position on those who abide beside me. We will say here, after Crick: "To be tolerant is never to accept fully; it is simply not to reject utterly."⁶ When we refer to tolerance as toleration, we do not prejudge the subject displaying it. This could be an individual or a group of people, but it could also be a public authority, even the state as a whole.

In contrast, tolerance as toleration is not an attitude, but a deliberate action of public authority that allows the functioning of certain denominational religious groups. In this view, our attention is focused on the political decision-maker who is willing to tolerate given views, attitudes, practices or religious associations by creating the appropriate legal guarantees through their power to issue an act of toleration. The political decision-maker here is driven by the need for tolerance of the governed, thus realizing the public interest of toleration. Political toleration here is expedient state policy. If it is expedient, then what is the motivation? Staying in the area of our considerations here, let us assume that political toleration is: (1) a rational response to the legitimate claims of an individual seeking to secure his or her religious freedom—prompting a co-linear juxtaposition of religious freedom and religious tolerance; alternatively, (2) a pragmatic need to preserve social peace in the state (e. g., the Warsaw Confederation, 1573; the Edict of Nantes, 1598; the Act of Toleration, 1688), or the peaceful coexistence of state actors (e. g., the Peace of Augsburg, 1555); or (3) a willingness to implement publicly affirmed values, such as pluralism and respect for others, as illustrated in Rawls' ideal of political liberalism. While in the case of (1) and (3) we can find congruence with Turchetti's notion of tolerance, in the case of (2) we are constantly confronted with doubts as to whether reducing tolerance to pragmatic toleration of dissent actually serves and permanently secures social peace. The history of acts of toleration in our own civilization only reinforces these doubts.

6 Ibid., p. 169.

Today, in our cultural circle, which is dominated by a liberal narrative, the discussion of tolerance is dominated by the portrayal of toleration as a deliberate action of the state in response to the legitimate claims of an individual seeking to secure his or her autonomy. Confirmation of this thesis can be found, for example, in the reflections of Susan Mendus, who argues that “the belief in autonomy and the requirement of neutrality both imply that ways of life, commitments, moral ideals, are at root matters of individual choice. Political toleration is then a necessity if such choice is to be fostered.”⁷ For Mendus, the liberal view of toleration, especially Mill’s, is not about recognizing the fact of diversity, but about affirming the right to follow one’s own path in life, to “make one’s own life.” In a similar vein, Will Kymlicka has noted: “Historically, liberals have believed in a very specific notion of tolerance—one that involves freedom of individual conscience, not just collective worship. Liberal tolerance protects the right of individuals to dissent from their group, as well as the right of groups not to be persecuted by the state [...] This shows, I think, that liberals have historically seen autonomy and tolerance as two sides of the same coin.”⁸

In opposition to the liberal position, we find the view of Michael Sandel, for whom the essence of tolerance is not the affirmation of autonomy, but the recognition of the integrity of the adherent’s life and their collective identification. For Sandel, the beliefs, professed values and moral commitments, together with life attitudes in response to them, making up the broad worldview are not the object of individual autonomous choice. They are an external force, a foundational situation constituting the individual’s identity that the individual recognizes and seeks to understand, and that precedes or, as expressed by Sandel, is antecedent to the individual’s will. Where the liberal sees individual choice, Sandel sees the meaning of life and a non-voluntary obligation without alternative. For the liberal, human beings create the context in which they answer the ultimate questions for themselves. For Sandel, this context already exists; human beings merely discover it and try to comprehend it,⁹ a process they do not plan and that is not under their control. Sandel’s position is explicitly compatibilist. In his understanding, religious freedom is the freedom of religious expression, of living in accordance with the promptings of conscience, even if these promptings are determined by outside entities, religious law or religious authorities. Religious freedom is not conditioned by the freedom of the will to determine the answers to ultimate questions, but by the willingness of the public authority to refrain from interfering with a religiously motivated way of life. Clearly, the principle of non-interference is not absolutized

7 Susan Mendus: *Toleration and the Limits of Liberalism*, London 1989, p. 149.

8 Will Kymlicka: *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford 1995, p. 158.

9 Michael J. Sandel: *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, Cambridge 2012, pp. 54–59.

here. The limits of non-interference are set by the limits of tolerance, i. e., what the public is willing to accept. This is the case even if, in the popular perception, certain religiously motivated practices appear incomprehensible or repulsive.

The early Christian call for tolerance

Christianity emerged in a world where the political order was closely linked, even fused, with religion. This interweaving has been described by Mark Lilla as an “indissoluble divine nexus,” in which the narrative about transcendent power, man, and the world intertwine.¹⁰ Indeed, any attempt to conceive of human activity, including in connection with his social and political obligations, without regard to the transcendent dimension, appeared at that time as preposterous, morally suspect and anti-social. The same was the case for any presumption that human spirituality had nothing to do with political, civic subjectivity. This observation reflects the reality of both ancient Judea and the Roman Empire,¹¹ under whose authority the former remained.

Christian doctrine challenged this established and heretofore unquestioned order. The follower of Christ was to dwell in two clearly distinguishable cities, the earthly (carnal) and the heavenly (spiritual). Dualism of citizenship meant dualism of rights, as well as of the duties associated with it (Mark 10:42–45).¹² The original impulse of “the way” was a call for the desacralization of political reality and the depoliticization of spiritual reality, a kind of alienation from the visible world, a spiritual release from its mechanisms. Although submission to political authority was treated as the realization of God’s command, since all authority is God’s tribute (John 19:11; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17), it nonetheless ceased to be an emanation of divinity. Both doctrinally and practically (rituals and the way of life that was promoted), Christians were something foreign and dangerous to Roman civilization, since the prosperity and future of Rome was determined by the display of piety (*pietas*) within the framework of state worship and military virtues (*virtu*) in defense of the “city.”¹³ The spread of a new, subversive doctrine, native to

10 Mark Lilla: *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West*, New York 2008, pp. 18–23.

11 Mary Beard/John North/Simon Price: *Religions of Rome, Vol. 1 History*, Cambridge 1998, pp. 42–54.

12 “So Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.’” (NLT).

13 Laurens Franciscus Janssen: ‘Superstitio’ and the Persecution of the Christians, in: *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (1979), p. 141.