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ABSTRACTS

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Economics and Religion, What is the Relationship? -- A Case Study of Nordic Social Democracy

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I have long contended that the modern era remained as deeply religious as any previous era in western history. But the outward form of religion often changed radically; new "secular religions" claimed that they were grounded in science, even as the underlying belief systems remained surprisingly true to the Christian heritage from which they were derived. Many of the most important of such religions were what I have long called "economic religions." For both Marxism and the American progressive "gospel of efficiency," for example, the path of economic progress, leading eventually to the abolition of economic scarcity, would lead to a secular salvation of the world. As the possessors of the key knowledge to save the world, professional economists have become the leading priesthood of the modern age.

I propose to open a discussion by briefly summarizing this perspective as developed in my previous writings. These include *Reaching for Heaven on Earth: The Theological Meaning of Economics* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1991); *Economics as Religion* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); and *The New Holy Wars: Economic Religion versus Environmental Religion in Contemporary America* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010). Unlike most writers of such theological subjects, I bring to them the perspective of a professional economist (Princeton Ph.D.) with a deep interest in the role of religion in public policy making. I am a professor in the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland where I have written widely, not only on the theological elements of public policy making, but on the more straightforward aspects of public policy debate. My most recent exploration of economic theology is my book, *Lutheranism and the Nordic Spirit of Social Democracy: A Different Protestant Ethic*, published in June 2017 by Aarhus University Press in Denmark. The book examines Nordic social democracy as yet another case study in economic religion. It shows how Lutheranism was secularized in the twentieth century to become the economic religion of social democracy, which offered a path to a new Nordic heaven on earth.

Pascal's Wager and its Many Misinterpretations

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Blaise Pascal's *Pensées* is among the most fascinating and frustrating pieces of classic religious literature. These thoughts, jotted down over a period of several years toward the end of his life, have been fodder for much religious and philosophical commentary. His famous wager has been particularly subject to a great deal of scrutiny among atheistic commentators. Some imagine that he attempted a kind of proof for God's existence based on confusing "evidencing reasons" with "motivating reasons" (Flew). Others have framed it as faith based on pragmatic grounds (Grayling, Weltecke, Jordan, Dawkins), or probability theory (Brewster, Quack). Still others identify him as representing fideism, the position that faith has nothing to do with reason (Kors, Penelhum). In each case, these philosophers believe they have demonstrated Pascal's position to be an intellectual failure. What is odd among all of these assessments is that, not only do they regularly fail to cite much of the text (even fragment 680 containing the so-called wager), they

fail to understand Pascal at all; his intentions, reasoning, and solution to the problem of faith. This paper intends to rehabilitate Pascal by both analyzing what he actually says regarding this famous wager, and more importantly situating this part of the text in his overall theological agenda. While Pascal's *Pensées* hardly offer a cogent (or even consistent) theology, one can identity repeated theological and philosophical principles that clearly resist the interpretations of his many deriders. What I intend to show is that Pascal clearly locates saving faith as necessarily outside any possible motives of utility or pragmatism. Further, instead of being a fideist, he aligns faith and reason and asks the reader to scrutinize rationally the human condition and the possibilities for authentically responding to it.

Reading Agnes in Early Christianity: The Changing Images of St. Agnes of Rome
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The Roman martyr Agnes died in the midst of the Great Persecution of Diocletian was a particularly famous martyr among Early Christians. Nevertheless, despite archaeological evidence of her veneration around the Via Nomentana, where her catacomb and Basilica situate, there is no narrative of her life until late fourth and early fifth centuries. Agnes' popularity and undocumented life thus provided adequate potential and flexibility for early Christian leaders to develop the cult in a way that suits their religious and political concerns.

Focusing on three earliest accounts of Agnes' passion, this paper explores the development of St. Agnes' narratives in early Christianity. More specifically, this paper examines the historical context of these accounts and argues that authors shaped the martyrdom according to their agendas; while at the same time, they together formed an evolving virgin martyr tradition that represents the ideal Christian woman.

This paper bases on an established acknowledgment in early martyrdom studies that Christian communities used martyrdom to construct their own identity, as well stated by Elizabeth Castelli and Lucy Grig.

Who are you? Origen on Personal Identity and Post-Resurrection Life
Ben Craver, Professor, Wayland Baptist University, US
The objective of this paper is to examine the body-soul relationship in the theology of Origen Adamantius as delineated in Books 2 and 3 of the *Peri Archon*. As a native Alexandrian, Origen encountered philosophy early in his life; his theology epitomizes a dialectical tension between Christian faith and philosophy. This tension is nowhere more evident than in his complex, and to some extent, rambling teaching on the soul and its relationship to the human body. In particular, using Origen's theological-philosophical constructs, how is it that a resurrected body might be numerically identical to the corporeal body of the person who died? Take Origen's father, Leonides, who suffered martyrdom for his faith during the persecution of the Roman Emperor Septimus Severus in 202, when Origen was around seventeen years of age. How will Origen be able to identify his beloved, martyred father as one of those incorporeal souls rehabilitated from dust? Indeed, how will any of us know another in the afterlife? The method here fuses Origen's thinking with the work of the philosopher Saul Kripke (Naming and Necessity). Kripke's concept of "rigid designators" identifies persons and tracks them across imaginable worlds making it possible for Leonides' physical body to be identical to his glorified spiritual body. That is, it is a necessary truth, holding true in every imaginable world including the one in which we now live and a future heavenly one. Remarkably, after almost eighteen centuries, scholars still have not analyzed and categorized everything about Origen and have conducted only a modicum

of research in this segment of Origen studies. Yet, the identity problem is crucial to any full-orbed philosophy of religion. Conclusion: using Kripke's rigid designator theory would mean for Origen that Leonides in the physical body is numerically identical to Leonides in the spiritual body.

Bearing the Marks of Jesus: Affect and Religious Experience in "The Passion of the Christ"
Elisabeth Weagel, Independent Scholar, US
The essay explores the relationship between the material and immaterial and subject and object in Christian religious experience by comparing it to the liminality of cinema. (Film gives a perception of materiality, but is ultimately mere shadow.) Within Christian practice, the immaterial is sometimes represented through material symbols, which in some cases become so meaningful that they take on subjectivity. At times distinct and at other times obfuscated, the relationship between the material and immaterial and subject and object forms a chiasmic pattern in which these elements sometimes come together (as at the point of intersection) and at other times diverge (as at the four tips of the cross). Mel Gibson's 2004 film "The Passion of the Christ" invites a religious experience through faux-materiality. The brutality of the passion and its unapologetic portrayal in the film create an atmosphere for virtual-mortification for audiences, in which they are invited to "come unto Christ" through affected suffering that culminates in a pseudo-stigmata. The visceral presentation of the film uses the materiality of Christ's suffering as a bridge to ethereal religious experience, mimicking the function of icons and relics. By giving physical expression to spirituality, the affective experience of the spectator is a reflection of the founding myth of Christianity, in which God takes on physical form and material and immaterial intersect.

The Martyrs of El Salvador
Nancy Enright, Associate Professor, Seton Hall University, US
On May 23, 2015, Pope Francis beatified Archbishop Oscar Romero, moving him along on the road to official recognition as a saint of the Roman Catholic Church. The move is important because in calling Romero a "martyr," as Pope Francis has done in his beatification, the Pope recognizes that the defense of the poor and marginalized is so central to the Christian faith that to be killed for it is not simply a political assassination, but a martyrdom – a death resulting from "odium fidei" or "hatred of the faith." To hate the call for justice and peace, such as the voice of Romero articulated and for which he died, is to hate the faith. This beatification opens the doors for those of others, also martyrs from the civil war in El Salvador. This presentation will focus on several of them, as well as Romero: Fr. Rutilio Grande, Romero's friend and the person whose death prompted the Archbishop to become an activist; the four churchwomen killed in El Salvador in 1980 – Ita Ford, Maura Clark, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan; and the six Jesuits and their housekeeper and her daughter, brutally killed in 1989. Each of these deaths was a witness to the faith and its historical "option for the poor," a position going back to the earliest days of the church and expressive of the teachings and life of Jesus.

John Howard Yoder's Biblical Realism and His Anabaptist Historiography
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Through putting Yoder in conversation with other biblical realists, such as Claude Tresmontant, Edmond Cherbonnier, Hendrik Kraemer, and Paul Minear, this paper argues that Yoder's biblical realism consolidates and expands Minear's position by specifying God's acts in the historical objectivity of Jesus Christ and of the Church that Jesus founded and also, by enunciating the eschatological and ethical implications of Jesus. The Scripture – the early Church's witness to God's historical and real saving acts in Jesus – thus serves as a guiding norm for all later Christians who seek to be faithful to the eschatological, saving reality of Jesus in their contexts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Yoder's emphasis on the historical objectivity of Jesus and of the church as attested by Scripture is underpinned by the theological sources that Yoder uses for his constructive task: Yoder's Anabaptist historiography, especially his investigation of the Christology, Ecclesiology, and Biblicism of the Swiss Brethren, who Yoder calls "the first Anabaptists." This paper argues that Yoder's Anabaptist historiography has asserted formal, substantial, and paradigmatic influences on the ways in which he has consolidated and radicalised the methodological realism and historical realism within Minear's biblical realism. The result is that, contrary to Minear's existential approach to biblical realism, Yoder's biblical realism is concerned with God's particular, historical, and real act in Jesus Christ and the Church that Jesus founded (the content of biblical realism), as attested by the biblical point of views that require us to study on their own terms and in their particular historical-cultural forms, for the purpose of the edification and renewal of the church in the present.

Understanding the Context of the Emergence and Spread of Religious Fundamentalism; with an Emphasis on Islamic Fundamentalism in Kurdistan Province of Iran
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Religious fundamentalism is a return to pure religious thoughts, beliefs, laws, and identity in the era of Islamic authority. Given the ever-growing spread of religious fundamentalism and revivalism in today's world, and especially in Islamic countries, the present article aims at discussing the reasons behind the emergence and spread of this fundamentalist trend and the reasons that influence the contemporary man's tendency to join this fundamentalist trend. Research perspective of this paper is qualitative approach based on grounded theory research method. Samples have been selected by purposive sampling and, after doing in-depth interviews with fifteen participants, obtained theoretical saturation. In order to achieve the aim of this article, the interviews were analyzed in three phases by using open, axial, and selective coding processes. The central cores of reasons of participants for the tendency to religious fundamentalism are: 1. confronting modernism and secularism and their identities as opposites to Islamic identity; 2. the crisis of meaning in the individual and social life of the modern social actor; 3. uncertainty in the modern era and the concerns and worries resulting from that; 4. the need for the contemporary man to release himself from individuality and connecting with collective identity; 5. the weakness of religious spirituality in converting religion to a discourse with a visible presence in people's individual and social lives.

A Comparative Study of Equality Building Model Between Martin Luther King, Jr. and Four Castes of the Buddha
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"If you want to see how the poor die, come, see Grenfell tower." The Nigerian writer's impassioned poem on the fire June 2017, for the victims. This is the example that is similar to "I have a dream" speech. The revolution of social justice for races through non-violent resistance is harder and much more profound than using army tanks. Applying thought as the weapon, the standing is for the truth, the existence of the minority. Balancing the equality by nonviolent resistance achieves the goal of integration and serves as an example for the coming generation. The significant purpose is to compare the equality building model between Martin Luther King, Jr., and four castes of The Buddha. The significant differences of two great men are the religious background, however, the common great value that both share is the equality building model as the first priority.

The study begins with a brief description of the historical and social context of Martin Luther King, Jr., and four castes. For example, it studies basic rights for African-American citizens and the fear of the white community. For the four castes, Brahmin, Kshartriya, Vaishya, Sutra are presented. Next are the influencer and the model, such as the "I have a dream" speech. The last are the rights to be equal, have freedom, and maintain a standard of living. These are to ensure and establish justice and domestic tranquility for the common defense and promote the general welfare.

The way of nonviolent resistance means a willingness to suffer and sacrifice. Freedom is like a bird, if it is in the cage, we cannot observe how well it can fly. We must let it out into the wide world. Comply with freedom to challenge for equality and eternity. Let African-Americans grow up politically, culturally, and economically. Let the four castes unite.

Islamic Analysis of "The Last Supper" from Quran, Nt and Dead Sea Scrolls on the Basis of Five-Pronged Juxtaposing Approach
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This paper will further supplicate filter criteria, i.e. "Five-Pronged Juxtaposition," to cross-examine biblical traditions, duly verified, while studying tradition on "Seven Sleepers of the Cave." In this paper, Quranic references, New Testament, and DSS shall be expounded for corroboration and analysis of "The Last Supper" with the same objective. Certain questions need to be revisited to interrogate the actual happening with aforesaid approach. 1) Did this event actually occur from Islamic Quranic point of view? 2) If yes, where did it occur? 3) Are these two different events or single events? 4) What is existing historical evidence that expounds that wrath of God actually fell on the transgressors of the Last Supper? 5) What was the number who attended? 6) Is there any historical archaeology particularly amongst DSS exist claiming this incident? 7) Conclusions from newly constructed approach. Aforementioned aspects are pronounced once the subject of historical Jesus, itself, is a matter of quest in biblical scholarship. However, with reference to this study, these questions are paramount as juxtaposed analysis will establish credibility of Quranic references, particularly once studied under the parasol of DSS. This study will give innovative outlook to the world scholars to focus on Quranic references on the subject of DSS in order to cross-examine biblical traditions.

The Negative Representation of Muslim Diaspora in Non-Diasporic Media: Case Study of Indonesian Diaspora in the Netherlands
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The Chairman of Party for Freedom (PVV), Geert Wilders, is well-known around the globe for his anti-Islam campaign and sentiments toward Muslim migrants in the Netherlands. To garner

votes, Wilders very often employs an online media platform to negatively represent Islam as a religion and the group of Muslim migrants as a diasporic community from numerous different countries, including Indonesia. The film "Fitna," released in 2008, and Twitter account @geertwilderspvv used for his campaign in the 2017 Dutch election are two examples of Wilders' online media platforms to disseminate his idea of "Stop Islam." This research examines the issue from the viewpoint of the dialectic relationship between media, culture, and religious affiliation, to understand the identity construction of Muslim diaspora with religious tolerance (Hall, 1990; Madianou, 2005). It looks into the ongoing process of cultural exchanges and hybridity to construct the dynamic identity of Indonesian Muslim diaspora within their representation in both diasporic and non-diasporic media (Budarick, 2014; Flew, 2007; Georgiu, 2013). Specifically, it focuses on the reactions and interactions of Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands toward Wilders' anti-Islam campaign. In this respect, the film "Fitna" and Wilders' Twitter account are considered non-diasporic media that were used as tools of a political campaign to construct shared cultural and communicative practices among Indonesian Muslim diaspora to have a sense of being excluded, rather than belonging (Madianou, 2005). Nevertheless, with the analysis of identity in historical and political contexts, this research will argue that the constructive social interactions among Indonesian Muslim and Non-Muslim diaspora in and through their diasporic media can generate agonistic reactions towards Wilders' campaign, instead of antagonism. These reactions are essential to managing stability of the social relationship and religious tolerance between the local Dutch society and Indonesian Muslim diaspora.

Freedom from Physical and Mental Defects (Salamah) as a Prophetic Attribute in the Qur'an: Special Reference to the Case of Prophet Moses

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In classical Islamic sources, particularly in theological (kalamic) works, several characteristics have received acceptance as the essential necessary attributes (sifat al-wajibah/asliyyah) of prophets, like sidq (truthfulness) and amanah (trustworthiness). Alongside these, other characteristics are compiled under headings such as the non-essential permissible attributes (jāiz) of prophets, and characteristics that are not appropriate for prophets. For example: being male; being past the age of puberty; having ancestry composed of noble individuals who have steered clear of adultery, immorality and the like. In theological sources, generally as part of this second category of attributes or as linked to the attribute of infallibility, there is also an emphasis on prophets being perfect in their outward appearance, alongside their inward character, attractive conduct and being free from physical shortcomings and infectious/disturbing diseases like leprosy. Despite this general understanding, some scholars argue and consider this attribute among the essential and necessary ones. Those who tend to evaluate this as a separate attribute in the modern period, which I consider it to be more accurate, entitle it as salamah (soundness, safety, security and freedom of defects). In this article, different approaches to this attribute will be discussed in reference to classical and modern Islamic theologians. Its relation and difference to the attribute of infallibility will be analytically examined with reference to controversial discussions practised over the case of Prophet Moses. Comparisons among the different traditions, i.e. Islamic and Judeo-Christian, on speech impediment attributed to Prophet Moses will be carried out to clarify the Qur'anic approach to the subject matter. As one clear outcome of this paper that breaks an original ground, the following can be underlined: These kinds of allegations towards prophets are unequivocally rejected, since they are not in line with the understanding of prophethood in Islam when salamah is taken into account as a separate essential

attribute. The real nature of prophethood and prophets according to the Islamic tradition will be evidently explained to further elucidate the discussion.

What a Difference Race Makes: Intersections of Religion and Race in the Post-Conversion Narratives of White Australian Converts to Islam
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This paper explores the lived experiences of twenty-nine white Australian converts to Islam and analyses the impacts of racialisation on white Muslim converts in a national context, where Islam is racialised as non-white and constructed as oppositional to the Australian nation. It extends on previous sociological literature that deals with macro-level racialisation of Muslims deployed through institutions, legislation and policy, social structures, and national discourses, to detail how racialisation is reproduced and experienced in everyday interpersonal encounters by white converts. The paper summarises the various racialised frames through which white converts are understood by both Muslims and non-Muslims, evidenced by data gathered through in-depth interviews with white Muslim converts from Sydney, Australia. I argue that "Muslim" is constructed by many non-Muslim Australians as a highly racialised category that is incongruent with whiteness, and that white Muslim converts shift from an "unraced" or invisible white racial positioning to a highly racialised one. Interviews highlight that in interactions with non-Muslims, Islam is either explicitly framed as a non-white race, or constructed as antagonistic to the Australian nation, which is underpinned by a national imaginary of whiteness. Importantly, interviews revealed that non-white Muslims also had dualistic and reified perceptions of Islam and whiteness that constructed Islam as incompatible with whiteness, which lead some non-white Muslims to either question participants' commitment to the religion or conversely, glorified them for having the will to "abandon" their whiteness for Islam. The paper concludes with a brief description of how participants' racial and religious identities are impacted by their racialised interactions.

Godel and the Theological Ramifications for Mormonism
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Kurt Godel (1906-1978) produced a theorem, at age 23, in mathematical logic that is considered the greatest mathematical achievement in the twentieth century. The theorem is commonly called The Incompleteness Theorem. However, the actual name of the paper he wrote was entitled, "On Formally Undecidable Propositions of Principia Mathematica and Related Systems I." The actual proof is extremely technical, complicated, and labyrinthine. However, the idea behind the proof is simple, elegant, and beautiful. In essence, the proof demonstrated two powerful and interrelated concepts. First, that in any formal system as rich as basic arithmetic, there exists a true, but unprovable formula in that system. Second, that the consistency of any formal system as rich as basic arithmetic cannot be proven by that system. The first statement proves that all formal systems, as rich as basic arithmetic, are incomplete; that is, all formal systems are incapable of capturing all the truths of that system. The second theorem essentially states that one would have to go outside the formal system to prove the consistency of the system; the system cannot prove its own consistency. The proof of these two theorems has spawned philosophical and theological debate about the ramifications and implications of just what Godel did. One of the absolutely stupendous consequences of the theorems is that a mathematical result could have so much to say outside of mathematics. For my purposes here, I will focus on what I believe are three important results from Godel's Proof that connect with the teachings of the

LDS Church about the nature of humanity, the incompleteness of the Bible, and finally, the nature of the Restoration.

Buddha Wasn't a Buddhist: Release is Peace
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Siddhartha Gautama wasn't a Buddhist who promoted Buddhism. Instead, his teachings emphasized Nibbana, or full release, from entrenched views and rigid narratives. Furthermore, his first lessons didn't contain many of the traditional doctrinal lists often associated with Buddhism, for example, the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, or the Three Refuges. Nor do they contain complex teachings such as Emptiness and Not-Self. We will carefully examine what could be the Buddha's earliest and essential ideas after his enlightenment, but before his followers interpreted and canonized his teachings into Buddhism. Specifically, we will analyze selected verses from ancient poems, known as the *Book of Eights*, with their attention to peace rather than doctrinal or conceptual supremacy. The peace this text advocates is anchored in existential reality, and thus independent of attachment to transcendent metaphysical truths or ultimate knowledge claims. The *Book of Eights,* moreover, situates enlightenment within the pervasive conditionality of this world, rather than outside of it. The *Book of Eights* is a group of sixteen poems linked to a compilation of texts known as the *Minor Collection* or *Khuddaka Nikaya*. Buddhist scholar Gil Fronsdal has observed: "Here we find the Buddha's teachings pared down to their most essential elements, free of the more complex doctrines often associated with Buddhism. The *Book of Eights* does not espouse a religious doctrine that exists in opposition to other doctrines. Nor does it put forth a teaching that is meant to be seen as superior to other teachings. The value of these teachings is not [in]…their authority as 'scripture'; rather, they are valuable for the results they bring to those who live by them. Instead of doctrines to be believed, the *Book of Eights* describes means or practices for realizing peace." (*The Buddha before Buddhism: Wisdom from the Early Teachings*, Gil Fronsdal, Shambhala, Boulder 2016)

Was Blind, but Now We See: A Biblical Guideline for the Disabled (John 9:1-12)
McKenzie Fergus, Graduate Student, Yale Divinity School, US
In an exegesis of John 9:1-12, seek to corroborate that Jesus establishes an egalitarian *modus operandi* for a moral guideline regarding the disabled. After researching disability studies and the Bible, I apply my extrapolation of Jesus's lesson. I examine the following: "signs" symbolic role, historical comparisons, Jesus's progressive lesson in relation to his established authority, the contextual placement of John 9, the miracle's metaphorical lesson, and Christ's lesson in juxtaposition to the other gospels. Jesus discusses a light that shines on everyone, applicable to an over-arching audience. Christ's divine light emanates upon a prevailing injustice for the handicap, illuminating God's works of handicap equality. Utilizing my findings, I evaluate how Christ seeks to dispel ignorance and oppression by presenting a universal revelation. Jesus's lesson emphasizes that the works of God are associated with an egalitarian treatment for anyone disabled. The ambiguous origins of the blind man's disability and his name both emphasize the man's symbolic role. The blind man represents all differently abled individuals. In John 9:2, the disciples are specifically asking about generational issues emphasizing the stigma itself, not the blind man's condition. The man born blind does not ask anything of Christ. Jesus's contextual presentation and his metaphorical lesson in John 9 demonstrate that his miraculous act represents an uncharted biblical value. Jesus's lesson deals extensively with a theme of light and vision, enlightenment and ignorance, darkness and blindness. Jesus is anointing not just the blind man

with sight anew, but establishing an ethical ordinance of equality apropos to all. In John 9, I conclude that Christ not only disbands the traditional correlation between disability and sin, but that Jesus is implementing a foundational precedent for an ethical framework for the physically and mentally impaired.

Battle for Truth Between Religions: The Algebraic Calculus Approach
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There cannot be more than one Creator God, and there cannot be more than one Moral Law that the creator God set before the humankind. Indeed, the universe is one and human nature is one. Contrary to the belief of many people, the endless conflict between religions has a natural solution that no science and no human can deny, without denying a human as existence. Anyone can reach this conclusion from the Math of Existence, the Math of Life and the Math of Truth and Knowledge. My work, the *Sum of Existence Calculus*, is a detailed proof of this claim. Its conclusion testifies to the following: The Law of Nature of the Human Life that transcends all cultures exists and is one; the Fundamental Theorem of Knowledge testifies to this conclusion independently of all possible religions that can be claimed throughout time across the planet; and within the Sum of Existence that the Math laws of existence, of life, of truth and knowledge set the boundary, a religion is true if and only if the God it proclaims the existence of is the solution of the two equations that unifies the Sum of Existence, the Genesis and the Epistemic Equations. A claimed god is the solution of the Genesis Equation, if he is Life; and he is the solution of the Epistemic Equation, if the Moral Law he set before Man and the Law of Nature of the Human Life, as it reads from the Fundamental Theorem of Knowledge, are one. Unlike other proposed solutions, the *Sum of Existence Calculus*' metric that separates the one true religion from a culture's deformation of it for its own sake, rests solely upon the Laws of Limit and the Laws of Dynamical Systems, as they apply to the nature of human life.

The Influence of Christianity in the Process of Acceptance of Homosexuality: Guilt and Apostasy
Marcelo Fernandes, Graduate Student, Lusofona University, Portugal
The trilogy of money, sex, and power has always been actual. Only a naïve or demagogic vision would be able to deny the influence of them inside the churches. Sex and corruption scandals and false prophets with messianic and dictatorial postures are spread among us, grossly opposing the Gospel. A Christianity that does not have Jesus Christ in its core will demand a clear and common enemy to gather all the flock and, through fear and hatred, keep it together in the practice of tithing and, nowadays, serving as a political support to the ones appointed by their religious leaders. In a brainless Christianity (without the head, which should be Christ) so typical of Brazil, the elected enemy once were the Catholic, later the Freemasons, the Spiritualist, the Communist and, in the last ten years, the homosexuals and the LGBT movement. Our goal here is not to prove the coherence or not of such gospel "jihad" though the analysis of the canonical books searching for answers, instead will try to understand who and how many of such people there are there, to be aware of what they have been through in their pursuit of correcting their sexual drive, their religious dilemma when facing the Christian intolerance, and their subsequent apostasy.

"Kabiyak ng Puso": An Inculturated Approach to Genesis' Creation of the Woman
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"Kabiyak ng Puso" is a popular Filipino term for spouse. It is literally translated as "half of the heart," with a strong reference to the whole or the other half (of the heart). Its relevance to marriage attempts a modest investigation on the second chapter of Genesis, particularly on the creation of the woman from the ribs of the man. Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Bible from Hebrew has no reference to the "rib." What was found in the Greek literature is pleura which means from the "side of the body." The Hebrew Bible explicitly described tsela, (צְלָעֹת) which means "side." Henceforth, the succession in biblical narratives have categorically alluded to this Genesis account, and eventually considered as a principal source in the Catholic teachings on marriage, with more references on the creation of the woman from the "rib" of the man. The paper analyzes the creation of the woman from the rib of Adam and assesses the cultural and anthropological natures involved in the traditions of Genesis as described in both the Hebrew and Greek origins. After establishing the role of literary configuration in the biblical authorship, such as the traditionally accepted mythical structure of creation, there is a need to utilize these seemingly effective means to deliver a valid exposition of doctrinal teachings. The approach called Inculturation, however, limits the presentation from dissecting further into the anthropological nature of the human being, but rather focuses on affecting the human conditions of marriage with the use of an already existing Filipino concept- "Kabiyak ng Puso." The biblical "Rib of Adam" can be approached by deriving the "Kabiyak ng Puso" as a literary substitute to the biblical text in the pastoral ministries and catechesis towards a more meaningful and culturally appropriate understanding of marriage.

Manasipuja, a Hindu Meditative Ritual: Relationship between Religious Practices, Secular Concerns and Ordinary Ethics
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By examining how meditative rituals shape and are shaped by everyday actions of their practitioners, this paper analyzes the intricate relationship between temporal religious practices, secular concerns, and what Michael Lambek calls "ordinary ethics." As a case study, it explores how a Hindu ritual called "manasipuja" interacts with its practitioner's past recollections, current apprehensions, and future aspirations. The paper argues that such meditative rituals bring about temporal collapse of the past into the present and the future, and thereby, in contrast to common understanding of traditional religious practices, lend their practitioners moral agency and social adaptability for negotiating secular concerns and conditions.

In the Swaminarayan Hindu tradition, manasipuja is to meditate on God and guru by remembering their divine actions and worshipping them by performing devotional rituals in one's imagination. Devotees usually tap into public memory of God's divine actions and accounts, recollect the moments they have spent in their guru's presence, and mentally reenact these memories while augmenting them with their own imaginations and inclinations. Drawing on the theological doctrines related to manasipuja and the ethnographic research conducted in the Swaminarayan Hindu temple in London, this paper examines how cognitive, meditative practices make claims upon the rest of the day and thereby upon the broader understanding of the meaning of life. They allow practitioners to become located within a liminal existential space of selfhood and otherhood, which in turn affects moral actions outside the ritual sphere through judgments informed by religious imaginations, conversations, and experiences undergone in the ritual body. Such devotional rituals add inward affective elements to outwardly normative ethics, and therefore become an important location for understanding autonomous agency in religious communities. The paper further contributes to a scholarly discussion on how Hindu ethics can be extracted by inquiring into characteristics, performances, and experiences of religious rituals.