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FEATURE STORY:

Evangelicals and charismatics enlarging the revival tent

Revivals are an integral part of evangelical and charismatic Christianity, but the idea of what makes for revival is undergoing strain as evangelicalism grows more diverse and has less of a public presence in American society. In the *Washington Post* (July 13), Michelle Bornstein reports on one of the largest modern day revival events, Together, which gathered thousands of evangelicals at the Washington Monument and had “heavy social media branding, major music from hip-hop to folktronica to hard rock, and popular evangelists who know to keep their messages TED-talk short.” The event was the brainchild of 34-year-old evangelist Nick Hall, who wanted to bring together evangelicals in a public venue, just as Billy Graham crusades had done in the past. But today such a gathering had to deal with contemporary quandaries, such as how it would reflect evangelicals’ ethnic and theological diversity and the growing leadership role of evangelical women; whether Catholics, even such a prominent one as Pope Francis, should participate (the pontiff spoke to the crowd via a video connection); and, more pertinently, whether this public presence of evangelicals would advance evangelism or Christian influence. Bornstein reports that about half of the speakers for Together are non-white and one-third are women.

Bornstein cites church growth specialist Ed Stetzer as saying that Together is not like the Graham crusades in that the latter emphasizes its mission to convert non-Christians while the Washington event appealed to Christians for the need to be “reenergized and



refocused.” The ways in which revival can mean different things to different Christians and has become decentralized is evident in the July issue of *Charisma* magazine, which is devoted to reports on recent outbreaks of revival in the U.S. and Latin America. In the past, the magazine has tended to conflate charismatic Christians gathering together to pray for revival with revival itself. But in this issue, the magazine reported that full-fledged revival, with miracles, salvations, and Christian renewal, is apparent in several regions and countries. Editor Jennifer LeClaire writes that “after decades of fervent prayer, identificational repentance and prophetic intercession, revival fire is breaking out in American cities.” LeClaire finds these outbreaks in places as disparate as San Diego (centered around the Heart of God Church), Seattle (based at the Seattle Revival Center), and Appalachia (in the Churches of God)

What LeClaire calls the “West Coast Rumble” is marked by “signs and wonders” such as alleged healings and the instantaneous appearances of gold fillings, while in West Virginia, the revivals are characterized by “mass salvations,” enough so that the secular media has taken notice. Evangelist James Goll says that “Eventually there will be so many different pockets and centers opening up that it will be impossible to track it all. It will not be like the past when there was primarily one location where the nation or the world came. ...There would be so many hubs opening up and so many new things happening that this movement will not be one ministry centered, not one city or region centered, not one apostolic center highlighted or one leader centered. But it all begins with someone and somewhere.” The accompanying report on revival in Latin America by LeClaire is somewhat different, tracing it to one church, World Headquarters of Revival in Bogota, Columbia, as it spreads to Peru and even Uruguay, a country long resistant to the Pentecostal surge. On a different note from her report on the U.S., she finds that church planting as well as the call for societal and even political change have been important parts of the Latin American revival.

(*Charisma*, 600 Rhinehart Rd., Lake Mary, FL 32746)

ARTICLES:

Nonreligion—a common name for a diverse landscape

Behind the generic label of nonreligion, one finds a variety of views and “multiple secularities,” suggesting that the religious nones are not a coherent group, according to researchers speaking at the conference “Approaching Nonreligion” that took place at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, from July 7–9, which **RW** attended. Due to the rise of unaffiliated and non-religious people in several countries of the West, research on those topics is enjoying a growing interest and is on the way to becoming an established field. “Atheism” being a social construction, researchers need to parse and dissect the term in order to proceed adequately with scientific work said Jonathan A. Lanman (Queen’s University Belfast), which could mean studying absence of beliefs in non-physical agents, moral judgments against religion, social identities featuring atheism, etc.

What counts as nonreligion is context-dependent stressed Johannes Quack (University of Zurich). In Israel, notes Stacey Gutkowski (King’s College London), being secular does not necessarily mean rejecting all types of traditional Jewish practices. But people who leave a religion such as Islam undergo very specific experiences as “apostates,” unlike fellow atheists without a Muslim background, according to Halima Begum (Birkbeck, University of London). Being an “ex-

Muslim” and not merely a non-believer is an essential part of their experience. Another aspect of diversity is the parallel existence of several non-religious organizations, as shown by research on the paths to organized nonreligion conducted by Amanda Schutz (University of Arizona) based on field research and 125 in-depth interviews in the Houston area. Organized, active atheism is a dynamic process over time, with people leaving one group for another (or none) due to disagreements or disillusionment about aspects of group life.

In contrast with nonreligious groups that merely want to differentiate themselves from religion, there are other secular groups that are keen to differentiate themselves both from religion and from other forms of nonreligion in which ceremonies and rituals are made available. In such a way, this second type of secularists wants to distinguish themselves from all normative offers, according to Quack. In her research on Humanisterna, the Swedish Humanist Association, Suzanne Schenk has identified those humanists who want to provide a replacement for the functions of religion, while other ones are aiming at a complete abolition of religions, without a functional replacement. While admitting that some people may need such support, these secularists do not believe that such a replacement should be provided by humanist, secular organizations. Schenk added that these conflicts also occur among German or Norwegian humanists, for instance.

Among people who are joining an organized secularist group, some are looking indeed for a dependable community that can act as a replacement for church, Schutz found in her research in the Houston area. Spiritual fulfillment can even be on the agenda, since some non-religious groups organize meditations. Alternately, some people do not join such groups because they are afraid of groupthink and feel that non-religious organizations resemble churches too much. For “reimagining the secular,” the Sunday Assembly that started in the UK in 2013 has followed the



“unimaginative way” of borrowing a number of practices from religious groups observed Josh Bullock (Kingston University London). An instance of “belonging without believing,” the Sunday Assembly claims to be a kind of secular church, intending to keep “the best aspects of Church” (i.e. music, singing, generating social capital). It is growing, but it only succeeds in attracting a small number of people without a religion, and some local branches have not survived.

CURRENT RESEARCH

● **The percentage of Americans believing that churches and other religious institutions contribute to solving social problems has dropped significantly in recent years, according to a survey by the Pew Research Center.** The survey finds that while a majority of Americans still say religious institution contribute either a “great deal” (19 percent) or “some” (38 percent) to solving important social problems, the combined figure of 58 percent is lower than when the same question was asked in 2012 (65 percent). In 2008, fully three-quarters of Americans (75 percent) said that religious institutions contributed “a great deal” or “some” in this way. This decrease is not necessarily just the result of the increase of non-affiliated Americans; the decrease in this view is also found among those who are affiliated with religions, though the “nones” and white Catholics showed the biggest drops (of around 18 percent from 2008 to 2016).



(Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/07/18/are-churches-key-to-solving-social-problems-fewer-americans-now-think-so/>)

● **The high Jewish intermarriage rates in the U.S. contrast significantly with the situation in the UK and may indicate that the Jewish community in Britain generates greater loyalty and remains more intact than in the U.S., according to a new survey reported in *The Economist's* “Erasmus” blog (July 9).**



The new survey on the Jewish community in Britain, which is found to be about 290,000 strong, finds that among Jews who had married since 2010, about 26 percent had found non-Jewish spouses. That figure is less than half the U.S. Jewish intermarriage rate. While the argument has been made that the higher intermarriage rate could be a sign of Jewish vitality, bringing outsiders into the

religion, by several indicators, including Sabbath observance and keeping a kosher diet, the “in-married” couples were found to be closer to the Jewish tradition than the mixed couples.

● **Nominal affiliation combined with moral disaffiliation has been on the increase in Ireland after the clerical sexual abuse scandals, while the non-religious identification is growing in a country where the level of religious practice remains comparatively high by European standards, reported Hugh Turpin (Queen’s University Belfast) at the conference “Approaching Nonreligion” in Zurich (July 7–9), which RW attended.** His research in progress is based on qualitative methods, with fieldwork focused on two Dublin parishes. In 2012, 89 percent of the Irish population still identified as Catholics. But such a high figure only tells part of the story: 1 in 6 self-identified Catholics report no belief in God, while atheism is on the rise. Turpin does not attribute such changes only to the clerical sexual abuse scandals; gradual separation from Christian orthodoxy started in the 1960s, with a sharp acceleration in the 1990s. The scandals created an abrupt collapse in the church’s moral stature [see the review of the book *Transforming Post-Catholic Ireland* in the *Findings & Footnotes* section]. There was a parallel decline in Mass attendance and institutional trust, with more people going to Mass less frequently. The moral pressure to attend as well as the respect to moral constraints diminished, with the scandals invoked as a reason for less attachment. This withdrawal from practice may also have long-term effects by weakening generational transmission of orthodox Catholicism, Turpin said.

Still, even fully atheistic reactions usually remain accompanied by a strong, lingering ethnic national affiliation as Catholics. This segment of “reluctant Catholics” complicates the identification of the category of nonreligion in the Irish context. For those with a non-religious identity, there appears to be a strong overlay with anti-Church sentiment. This contrasts with UK data, where non-religious identity may be merely apathetic. Turpin finds an increasing sense of need to justify overt religiosity, in contrast with the 1950s or even the 1980s. Unquestioning commitment to the church may even come to be seen as morally suspect.



GENERAL ARTICLES:

Brexit's unintended impact on immigration and religion

The decision by Britain to pull out of the European Union in late June has been cited as having a wide range of political and economic ramifications, but “Brexit’s” impact may likewise have various unintended religious consequences, particularly regarding immigration and interfaith relations. *The Tablet* (July 2), a British Catholic magazine, looked at how Brexit might affect Catholic school and church attendance in England. The popularity of Catholic schools and “still steady levels of Mass attendance” in and around London owe a debt to the immigrant communities: “If the Poles, Romanians, Italians, French, Spanish, Portuguese and even Irish no longer feel so welcome and go home, or if the steady stream of recent years is reduced to a mere trickle, there will be quite a few empty pews and classrooms in the capital. And a lot less cash in the diocesan coffers.” That Catholics were more supportive of the EU may be because its roots were in church social teachings, such as on solidarity and subsidiarity (the idea that local institutions closest to people should provide social services). But an overview of Catholic church leaders in the *National Catholic Register* (July 10) finds that church leaders have grown more critical of the EU, especially as it is seen as increasingly secularist.

The blog *Counting Religion in Britain* (July), a monthly roundup of new statistical sources, cites an online survey by the polling firm Populous that confirms the patterns shown elsewhere: Christians were disproportionately in favor of leaving the EU while non-Christians were “remainers.” The survey uniquely replicated questions that it had asked last February and then compared them with responses post-Brexit. In contrast to the frequent claims that the Brexit vote has increased public hostility toward immigrants and other outsiders, the survey shows that the rate of British saying that Muslims created major problems for the UK and the world actually fell in the period between the pre- and post-Brexit fieldwork. There were also modest reductions in those with negative views toward other religions.



(*The Tablet*, <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/>; *Counting Religion in Britain*, <http://www.brin.ac.uk/2016/counting-religion-in-britain-july-2016>; *National Catholic Register*, <http://www.ncregister.com/>)

Polish nationalist revival finding support by some church leaders

As in the rest of Europe, Poland is experiencing an upsurge in populist rightist groups and sentiment, with a measure of support from Polish church leaders, reports *Commonweal* magazine (July 8). The Polish church was in the spotlight in late July as it hosted Pope Francis and the World Youth Day, but there is considerable tension between the pope's pro-immigrant message and the nationalism of a growing number of Polish young people, writes historian Piotr Koski. The nationalist movement, "for which being Catholic and Polish implies also being anti-European, anti-pluralist, and anti-liberal," has gained seats in the Polish parliament for the first time since World War II. The rise of the nationalist Law and Justice party (PiS) last year emerged from class and regional divisions after Poland's entrance into the European Union in 2004 and especially the economic decline of 2008.

Koski writes that World Youth Day, established by Pope John Paul II, and the nationalist movement are appealing to the same demographic—young people under 35—but the pontiff's call to embrace migrants will be a tough sell. During his addresses at World Youth Day, the pope seemed to sense the ambivalence and tended to bundle together his pro-immigrant message with



the themes of the pro-life movement and "divine mercy," the Polish devotional spirituality, reports John Allen in the Catholic web site *Crux* (July 29). The Polish bishops' conference has "contributed to this disconnect between Polish youth and their pontiff's message of solidarity and tolerance." The episcopate's deputy head, as one of his first acts as archbishop of Lodz, liquidated the archdiocese's flagship ecumenical initiative. He also frequently criticizes lay Catholics for spreading Vatican II teachings and welcomed a nationalist procession in the city's main cathedral. "Meanwhile, his former superior, Archbishop Józef Michalik, has all but openly endorsed PiS. ...With bishops sending mixed messages," it is the independent civic organization Committee for the Defense of Democracy that has taken up the mission of protecting and repairing liberal democracy, Koski writes.

(*Commonweal*, 475 Riverside Dr., Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115; *Crux*, <https://cruxnow.com>)

Russian Christians integrating into Israeli society

The large number of Russian Christian immigrants in Israel are increasingly taking on an Israeli identity and embracing Hebrew language services, particularly Messianic Jews, writes Lisa Loden in *East-West Church & Ministry Report* (Summer). The Law of Return allowed waves of immigrants into Israel from the former Soviet Union if they could prove some Jewish lineage,

although as many as 250,000 Russians are considered “other” (because their mothers were not Jewish or had not converted to Orthodox Judaism), with up to half of that number counting themselves as Christian. There are approximately 70,000 to 100,000 Russian Orthodox believers in Israel, with many Jewish-Russians turning to the church after immigration. “Today, these Russian Orthodox Jewish Christians see their identity as being fully Israeli,” Loden writes. Other Russians embraced churches such as Anglican, Greek Orthodox, and Catholic, although Messianic Jews have drawn the most, with about 15,000 adherents. Messianic congregations are gradually shifting from Russian-speaking to using Hebrew in their worship.



The Messianic community is also increasingly involved in social outreach, starting rehabilitation centers ministering particularly to drug- and alcohol-abusers prevalent in the Russian-speaking population, even recently planting 12 churches targeted to this constituency. Loden adds that the strong evangelism efforts of the Messianic Jews and the way they have integrated their faith into Israeli society has led to a new generation of Russian-background Messianic believers who are

growing in numbers and are beginning to take leadership roles. In contrast, Loden concludes that the Russian Orthodox lack of evangelistic activity and less contextualized approach to living in Israeli society may mean that they will follow the path of other immigrants whose “children will not continue in the tradition of their fathers.”

(East-West Church & Ministry Report, Asbury University, 1 Macklem Dr., Wilmore, KY 40390)

Universalist thrust of Sufism appealing to Israelis

There is a growing interest in Sufism among Israeli Jews, often leading to new interfaith encounters that accompany this form of mystical Islam, according to the *Washington Post* (July 28). Recent years have seen the growth of whirling dervish practices as well as the rise of large-scale Sufi music festivals, Sufi study groups, and tours to Sufi holy places. In September, Jerusalem will host the fifth annual Sacred Music Festival, which will include Sufi-inspired performances. “It is part of the increasing general interest in spiritualism,” says anthropologist Chen Bram of Hebrew University. Sufism, which promotes a personal connection with God in both Islamic and more ecumenical variants, is appealing to non-Muslims because of its emphasis on universalism and

unity between cultures. Many Israelis interested in Sufism had tried Buddhism and several types of meditation but value the way Sufism has led them to more positive views of Islam.

There have been historical encounters between Judaism and Sufism, and in recent years Israeli academics have shown an interest in the history of Sufi-Jewish relations and in translating Sufi works into Hebrew. Translations of the Sufi mystic Rumi have particularly fed this popular Israeli interest. Those that participate in the whirling say that it has resulted in spiritual growth that they cannot find in Jewish rituals like eating kosher food or synagogue prayers alone. The way in which Sufism can inspire



Israeli-Palestinian cooperation can be seen in the nonprofit organization Orchard of Abraham, which operates a multicultural preschool for Jews, Muslims, and Christians and sponsors other activities bringing together Israelis and Palestinians in the midst of the ongoing conflict. The Muslim Sufi organizers of the group also hold public gatherings, where Sufi sheiks lead ceremonies involving prayer, music, and whirling for hundreds of attendees, most of them Jewish.

Islamic State losing caliphate but not jihadism

The Islamic State (IS) is gradually dismantling its “caliphate,” but such a process of “de-sanctuarization” of the movement is likely to make it more decentralized and active in jihadist terrorist activity throughout the world, according to recent reports. *The Terrorism Monitor* (July 22), published by the Jamestown Foundation, reports that the Islamic State’s own leaders and analysts increasingly see its serious losses on the battlefield as the end—for now—of its having a



stronghold in the Middle East that can serve as the Islamic caliphate. It might take some time to recapture key IS cities, such as Mosul and Raqqa, but already other strongholds including Fallujah

and Ramadi have fallen. It may be the case that there will be conflict between the Sunni, Shiite, and Christian groups once they resettle previously IS-controlled areas, as sectarian tensions have remained, Wladimir van Wilgenberg writes.

Not only intelligence analysts but also the public messages of the IS have acknowledged that the core structure of the IS in Iraq and Syria has been under serious attack and that such military setbacks will likely mean the group could lose all its territorial holdings, according to the *Washington Post* (July 12). From proclaiming a glorious new epoch of Islamic rule and power only two years ago, IS leaders are now preparing to go underground and assume an identity as a “shadowy and diffuse network with branches and cells on at least three continents,” writes Joby Warrick and Soud Mekhennet. “Where al-Queda was hierarchical and somewhat controlled, these guys are not. They have all the energy and unpredictability of a populist movement,” said Michael Hayden, the retired Air Force general who headed the CIA from 2006 to 2009. But IS leaders continue to insist that their vision of a caliphate is viable, even if it may be moved to North Africa or elsewhere from the Middle East.

(*Terrorism Monitor*, <http://www.jamestown.org/tm/>)

Tibetan nationalists reinterpret Buddhist resistance

The recent outbreak of self-immolation protests in the Tibetan movement for independence has been interpreted as nationalists’ rejecting of Buddhist teachings and the political authority of the Dalai Lama, but a new study finds Buddhism and its leader holding its relevance for this community. In the current issue of the journal *Contemporary South Asia* (Vol. 24, No. 1), Zara Ramsey writes that “political self-sacrifice,” meaning self-immolation and hunger protests among Tibetan protestors, and their wider acceptance



in the Tibetan refugee community, has been viewed as a sign of secularization, especially since the Dalai Lama condemns such practices. To test such arguments, Ramsey conducted research among the Tibetan exiles in Dharamasala, India, the political center of the diaspora, looking both at their beliefs and level of loyalty to the Dalai Lama. She finds that over 90 percent of the exiles consider themselves religious, and 95 percent agree that whatever the Dalai Lama says is correct.

Most of the respondents (74 percent) agreed that politics and religion should be combined, but many (77 percent) also believed that hunger strikes and self-immolation are non-violent methods of resistance, which goes against the Dalai Lama’s and Buddhist teachings in general. Yet Ramsey finds that the Dalai Lama’s views on political self-sacrifice are vague enough that Tibetan Buddhists are able to rationalize them, saying that he may be setting up an ideal but leaves “grey areas, leaving space for followers to (re)interpret his more general statements without challenging his traditional authority.” Ramsey finds wide admiration for Gandhi among the followers, and he supported and engaged in the method of hunger strikes. She predicts an “increasing movement

towards Gandhian methods within the broader framework of Tibetan Buddhism. The Dalai Lama is likely to maintain the positions of an object of worship and a symbolically unifying institution, but it seems like his rejection of common resistance methods...may well be ‘forgotten’ or explained away after his death.”

(*Contemporary South Asia*, <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ccsa20/current>)

Findings & Footnotes

■ Even as other types of religious movements seem to attract more scholarly interest in recent years, the Jehovah’s Witnesses nevertheless continue to draw attention from researchers as a paradigmatic instance of Christian nonconformity and an enduring expression of organized millenarianism. Two new publications in recent month’s witness to this reality. *Acta Comparanda* (Subsidia III, €36 Europe, €46 rest of the world), a journal published by the Faculty for Comparative Study of Religions and Humanism (Wilrijk-Antwerpen, Belgium), hosted a conference this year on scholarly perspectives of the Jehovah’s Witnesses—including a few scholars themselves associated with the Witnesses. The 14 articles (mostly in English) gathered in this 248-page-long issue are proceedings of that conference.

Among the interesting and unusual topics in this volume, Miquel Àngel Plaza-Navas (University of Barcelona, Spain) offers an historical perspective on the hymnal and music practices of the Witnesses. It shows how the movement’s musical experience went through several stages (including one, from 1938 to 1944, during which singing was largely discouraged, presumably because songs did no longer represent the current beliefs of the group), reaching the current situation with the publication of *Sing to Jehovah* (2009), with a maximum degree of musical exclusivity—the music now being free of external influences, including resemblance with hymns of other churches. An article authored by independent researcher Donald Raymond Jacobs examines the precarious situation of unofficial Jehovah’s Witness Apologetics. In contrast with Mormons, the movement discourages members from entering into the apologetical debates on a personal basis. This debate takes place nevertheless, encouraged also by the advent of the Internet. A statement in 2007 was critical of groups of Witnesses conducting independent research or websites not run under its oversight, and consequently, discussion forums were closed, with apologetics moving to blogs. Nevertheless, Watch Tower publications utilize results of independent apologetic research from time to time, but without acknowledging it or giving legitimacy to an independent scholarly community among Witnesses.

Some articles also deal with national situations while offering historical overviews. Thus Massimo Introvigne (CESNUR, Turin) analyzes the history and current situation of the Witnesses in Italy, where growth has been slowing in the 21st century. But the arrival of millions of immigrants to Italy is now considered as a source for new opportunities, and an impressive number for specific immigrant communities have been organized. While the issue of *Acta Comparanda* will of new congregations and groups definitely be of interest for scholars studying contemporary religious movements, a wider audience looking for a solid introduction on Jehovah’s Witnesses would be well-advised to consider *Jehovah’s Witnesses: Continuity and Change* (Ashgate, \$149) by George D. Chryssides (visiting Fellow at York St John University). Chryssides had already authored a useful *Historical Dictionary of Jehovah’s Witnesses* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2008), and the new book is likely to benefit both scholars and people with a general interest in the topic. The volume starts with a chapter on researching Witnesses, in

which Chryssides provides an overview of available literature and explains how a researcher looks at such a movement.

The book also has noteworthy chapters on the origins in Adventist networks, on Charles Taze Russell and on the Rutherford era, and on the themes of opposition, organization, the Bible, ethics and lifestyles, worship and rites of passages, and, obviously, prophecy. The concluding chapter of this 300-page-book deals with problems and prospects of the Witnesses. Initially wary of the Internet, the movement has nevertheless developed a strong online presence, with a massive amount of material now being made available, but it does not see it as a substitute for its traditional (biblical, in their view) method of evangelizing. Due to the decline of Christian influence and knowledge of Christianity in the West, Chryssides observes that there are fewer attempts to challenge mainstream Christian doctrines and more efforts to address contemporary issues. The book also examines changes in beliefs and practices over time. But it is difficult to advocate openly for reforms within the movement since policies are not being determined democratically and dissent could mean disfellowshipping. Thus it is difficult to assess how numerous so-called “liberal elders” are really since they express themselves anonymously online. The Watch Tower Society continues to hold the belief that it offers “the truth,” to base its doctrines on biblical inerrancy, and to believe that humankind lives in the last days. For more information on *Acta Comparanda*, visit: <http://www.antwerpfvg.org/publicaties-fvg-antwerpen/subsidia.html>.



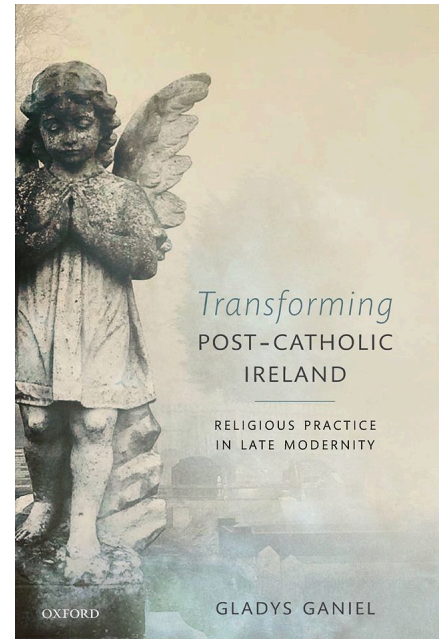
■ The current issue of the *Journal of Religious and Political Practice* (Vol. 2, No. 2) is devoted to the relations between democracy and religion. The articles in the issue don't so much argue for a direct relationship between religion and the transition to democracy but look at the way religion shapes the building of new institutions, the legal status of civil liberties, and patterns of political participation. Rather than focus on polarized religion and state relations or a linear process of secularization, the articles



compare interactions such as cooperation, competition, and adaption as well as reversals such as de-secularization and de-democratization across various religions and countries.

Noteworthy articles include an analysis by political scientist Jonathan Fox of change over time in government religion policies in 27 Western democracies, finding that those added in recent years have tended to limit religious institutions and practices of religious minorities; an examination of how Catholic political parties have declined in Latin America while religious actors have maintained their social relevance; and a comparative study looking at how religion was able to generate social trust and democratic culture in Tunisia in contrast to Egypt. For more on this issue, visit: <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rfrp20/current>

■ *Transforming Post-Catholic Ireland* (Oxford University Press, \$99), by Gladys Ganiel, documents both the decline of Catholicism and the beginnings of a new pluralism in Irish religion. Ganiel surveys the religious situation in both southern and Northern Ireland using both quantitative and qualitative methods and finds less of a clash than one might expect; the priest sex abuse crisis and secularization in general is impacting both the majority Catholicism of the south and the minority church to the north, with the former losing its political and social prestige. The Protestant churches of Northern Ireland show more traction but are isolated from the growing trend of immigration and pluralism in the republic. Given what Ganiel sees as Ireland's "mixed post-Catholic religious market," she presents several case studies of groups and congregations that she sees as embodying "extra-institutional" religion—from a Jesuit ministry (now defunct) to the mainly young to an interracial non-denominational charismatic church to a Benedictine monastery that is seen as a refuge for many disaffected by the sex abuse crisis. The author holds up these examples as agents of ecumenism and reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants and immigrants and native born because they show greater flexibility and cater to the growing interest in individualized religion more than establishment churches. When Ganiel writes it is a mixed post-Catholic market, she means that Catholicism still shapes religious groups and responses (even those reacting against the church), though the line between institutional Catholic and extra-institutional religion can seem blurry; one chapter is devoted to a parish pastoral council (PPC), a structure in many parishes promoting renewal and greater lay involvement (including addressing the sex abuse crisis). The book acknowledges that the extra-institutional sector is still small (Ganiel doesn't provide an estimate of such groups or adherents) and lacks network ties to other organizations that could give it more social influence. Yet because Ireland still allows a public role for religion, Ganiel concludes that the current upheaval in the religious establishment may provide an opening to these still marginal groups.



On/File: A Continuing Record of Groups, Movements, People, and Events Impacting Religion

1) **The Moorish Sovereign Citizen Movement** gained attention for its black nationalist beliefs and politics after adherent Gavin Eugene Long killed three Baton Rouge, Louisiana, police officers in mid-July. Sovereign citizen beliefs, holding that adherents can claim immunity from federal, state, and local laws, citing divine or common law, can be traced back to the 1970s when far right groups taught that government has authority over only those citizens who submit to a contract. The beliefs are similar to such a movement as the Moorish Science Temple of America (from which the Nation of Islam was derived), which teaches that black “Moors” had been America’s original inhabitants and were entitled to self-governing status as a nation within a nation, giving them rights that predate the Constitution. The current leader of the Moorish Science Temple said that sovereign citizen adherents are not members of the organization and misrepresent the religious group’s teachings. But sovereign citizen’s adherents have adapted the Moorish identity, often citing treaties signed more than 200 years ago between the U.S. and Barbary Coast states. New Jersey is reported to be a hotbed of Moorish sovereign citizen activity. A recent study found that law enforcement officials consider sovereign citizens to be the top terrorist threat in their communities, though, unlike Long, most adherents more typically commit acts of “paper terrorism” (filing fraudulent paperwork and court documents). (**Source:** *Raw Story*, July 18)



2) **NewVistas** is a planned group of sustainable, high tech communities based on the teachings of Mormon founder Joseph Smith. Wealthy Mormon engineer David Hall came upon a document of Smith where he recorded a detailed vision of a heavenly city that accommodates 15,000 to 20,000 people within one square mile. NewVista communities will also have multipurpose buildings serving as schools, conference centers, and houses of worship, both Mormon and non-Mormon. In keeping with the Mormon family ethos, each multi-family house will have house captains, consisting of a married couple. Hall is planning his first community in Provo, Utah, but plans 1,000 communities throughout the world. One proposed community in Sharon, Vermont (Smith's birthplace), has raised considerable opposition after residents learned that Hall had bought land extending over four rural towns to build a community housing 20,000 people. (**Source:** *Bloomberg Business Week*, July 20)

