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Guest Article

Battle Shi'ism: Martyrdom and Messianism in Urdu Shi'i "Music" Videos

This article seeks to explore the utilisation of music-like recitations, known as *nohay*, by Pakistani Shi'a Muslims in the face of sectarian violence as political resistance and constituting "weapons of the weak" (Scott 1985). Through drawing on themes of resistance, resilience, martyrdom, and Messianic expectation that abound Shi'i theology and history, I argue that Pakistani Shi'a Muslims consolidate their belief through devotional music and thereby resist violence in a highly charged sectarian context. The first section discusses the permissibility of music within Islamic law, with a specific focus on the rulings of two contemporary Shi'a scholars and the second section will analyse the contents of one *noha* video by Ali Safdar, a prominent Pakistani *nohakhawan*.

Legal Permissibility of Music

Music is a contested territory in Islamic law: what defines music, what sort is permissible, what sort is forbidden, and where instruments fit into the discussion are questions that have faced Muslim scholars for centuries, but a unanimous opinion is yet to be reached. Although, unlike Sunnis, Twelver Shi'as have a common school of legal thought (Momen, 1985), there are differing opinions amongst living scholars on how to address contemporary contexts and challenges.

The differences of opinion emerge out of the conditions scholars set to define and categorise what is "music," and consequently, end up differing delicately on what is permitted (*ḥalāl*) and what is forbidden (*ḥarām*). The purpose of this article is not to survey the various rulings of different schools and scholars (for this see al-Kanadi and Bhimji), but to complete the foundation of this brief study into Shi'I *nohay*, I will mention the opinions of the two most prominent Shi'I *maraja' al-Taqlīd* ("sources of emulation" whose rulings are followed) on the topic as stated on their websites.

> "*Any music which is lahwī [amusing] and deviating people from the way of Allah which is suitable for gatherings of merry making is ḥarām... To distinguish the subject of a ruling depends on the view of the mukallaf [follower] as a part of common people"* - Ayatullah Khamanei (Office of the Supreme Leader)
>
> "*If the music... is suitable for entertainment and amusement gatherings, it is not permissible to listen to it... However, singing praise [of the Prophet or [his family]] that is sung with a good tune but is not in ghinā' form is without problem."* - Ayatullah Ali al-Sistani (Sistani.org)

It is thus within these frameworks religious Shi'a Muslims compose devotional music.

To summarise, there is variation within the Muslim world vis-à-vis music's permissibility: it is dominated by general hesitance among Muslim scholars and devout followers to consider music permissible, but according to the two most prominent contemporary Shi'i scholars, certain types of music are permissible particularly if they are in the praise of the Prophet Muhammad .

Nohay and Pakistani's Shi'as

Nohay is poetry of mourning, melodiously recited in an acapella manner often in groups, and particularly during the Islamic month of Muharram. Muharram is an annual mourning period observed by Shi'a Muslims globally to commemorate the anniversary of the martyrdom of the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, Husayn ibn Ali in 680CE (Hyder 2006).

Nohay are accepted by Shi'a Muslims as permissible, even encouraged. In this section I will analyse YouTube videos for one *noha* by a famous Pakistani reciter called Ali Safdar. Shi'a Muslims in Pakistan have faced historic persecution and particularly since the 1970s have faced increased marginalisation. The post 9/11 period and war on terror led to increased terrorist attacks in Pakistan and especially those targeting minority groups and target killings of Shi'a individuals such as doctors, scholars and poets (Rieck 2015) and Shi'as have mentioned these events in their *nohay*. All italic quotes below are verses from the *noha* and the translations are my own.

Resilience and Martyrdom

The 2012 *noha "Ishq-e-Haider Madad"* draws on historic Islamic battle stories, creating parallels between contemporary Shi'as who are faced with sectarian persecution and the early warriors and martyrs of Islam. In particular, this *noha* focusses on the character of Imam Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, who Muslims regard as a ferocious warrior in the early days of Islam and who Shi'as revere as the rightful spiritual and political successor to the Prophet Muhammad (Tabatabai 2010).

The opening lines of the *noha* begins with an obstinate declaration that *"'Haider Haider'* (a title of Ali) *is our slogan, we have no fear of the blood shedders/ When the name of Ali is heard in the battlefield, life from every sword is taken.*" The imagery here evokes the physical and spiritual strength of Ali, whose very name is used to bolster the morale of the Shi'a listeners and intimidate the enemies who seek to kill them. The absolute resilience in face of persecution and death is amplified in a later line where the *noha* brings attention to Karbala, the place where Ali's son Husayn was killed: "*Go to Karbala and see how the killers have lost."* This reiterates a common trope in Shi'a thought (Pinault 2016, Hyder 2006), that those killed at Karbala are not only martyrs, but their deaths inspired first, a political uprising that overthrew the regime, but more significantly, a spiritual revolution which is alive in the Shi'a of today who remember Husayn, mourn for him, and stand fearless in the face of injustice. Thus the implication is that whether the Shi'a are martyred without being able to defend themselves, be it in shootings or bombings, or they are given the opportunity to fight those who fight them, they will end up victorious and that there is no way for the anti-Shi'a parties to win.

Truth and Messianic Expectation

This *noha* often shifts from being directed to the enemies of contemporary Shi'as to Ali himself. In between the main stanzas, a sort of chorus is repeated in which the words vary but they all serve to praise Ali and put the listeners in conversation with him. These verses include recalling famous titles of Ali such as *"Lion of the almighty," "Manifestation of divine [power]"* which is subsequently followed by requests for him such as to *"Eradicate oppression."* There is a centuries long debate within Shi'ism as to the theological reality and legal permissibility of calling directly for a Prophet, Imam or saint to perform an act rather than asking God: proponents of this belief within orthodoxy argue that God has given such powers to these individuals (Modaressi and Tabatabai 1993). Whatever the case, this *noha* is popularising the idea that Ali can and should directly be called upon, but for the purpose of this study, the effect is that the listener is made to feel that this being, Ali, who is favoured by God is on their side, and by extension God and the entire universe in conspiring and working for their victory.

Addressing their killers, the *noha "[Just wait] we will show you what true jihād is."* Here the reciter delegitimises the ideology of the terrorist groups attacking Shi'as in Pakistan and claims that their understanding of "*jihad* "is incorrect and that it is the Shi'a who are on the truth. Within Shi'ism, offensive violent *jihād* is generally deemed impermissible and the presence of a divinely appointed leader required to legitimately initiate it (Sabbagahchi 2017). Several times the *noha* asks Ali for permission to fight and at a later point says, "*When [the Mahdi, his descendant] returns, his light will change the mountains of evil into the [sacred] valley of Toor/ Beware, followers of evil, there is not long left to go."*

This belief in the Mahdi is pivotal to Shi'ism (Limba 2010) and vital in this *noha*. Imam Mahdi is believed to be a descendant of Muhammad and Ali who disappeared 1200 years ago and is set to return to bring justice to the world alongside Jesus son of Mary (Hussain 1982). Combining all this together we understand that the only reason oppressors are still dominant and hurting humanity, and particularly Shi'as is that the Shi'a are waiting for their promised Imam to return and to lead them to victory and to overthrow global injustice, but when he does return, their enemies "*will perish straight away."*

To conclude, the *noha* has two aspects: the material and the metaphysical. It firstly links the past war exploits of Ali, the revolutionary martyrdom of Husayn with the imminent arrival of the Mahdi who will come and overthrow regimes of injustice and transform the world into a sacred dwelling filled with peace instilling in followers a resilience that their deaths are actually a moral and spiritual victory, just like Husayn's, and that when the battle does come they will be unstoppable like Ali. The metaphysical realities of Ali, Husayn and Imam Mahdi are prominent and interlinked in this *noha*: references to supernatural powers and divine light consolidate the transcendent reality of Shi'ism and create an anticipation for imminent global revolution, cementing both belief and passion and thereby nullifying the attempts to terrorise Shi'as.

- *Raahim Zafar, University of St Andrews*

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Review

"Battle Shi'ism: Martyrdom and Messianism in Urdu Shi'i "Music" Videos"

The article's subject is important and relevant in two primary ways. Firstly, it is a reminder that theology is not limited to academia and all its technical trappings, but that it concerns everyday life; people and their many tribulations which, in this case, are the very result of religious affiliation. Music and poetry embody this living theology which acts as a medium between the human and the divine. As Hans Christian Andersen once wrote, "where words fail, music speaks." Secondly, it addresses sectarian extremism within Islam which is often omitted from the Western consciousness due to the perceived idea that Muslims do not suffer the same as those of other faiths as a result of Islamic extremism. In the wake of 9/11, Muslims have often been presented as the perpetrators of violence and not the victims, but sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shi'as in Pakistan has resulted in Muslims being the primary victims. Therefore, the article is important in emphasising that Muslims suffer too.

A strength of the article is the clear approach to the subject because the writer does not assume that the reader is familiar with Islam's approach to music. Through references to contemporary, authoritative scholars, the writer is able to identify that music composed in praise of Muhammad (peace be upon him) is considered *halal* (permissible). The concept of *nohay* as a form of poetry of mourning is introduced as a staple of Shi'a culture, which is used in commemoration of the martyrdom of Muhammad's (pbuh) grandson, Husayn. Some *noha* lament sectarian extremism perpetrated against Shi'a Muslims today and the selected example of this is called "Ishq-e-Haider Madad," which draws parallels between those who suffer from extremism today and the experiences of Muhammad's (pbuh) son-in-law, Imam Ali. The recitation is powerful as it celebrates the strength of Ali as a source of hope and fervour for Muslims today. This message is then further bolstered by the messianic imagery of the *noha*, as it details the return of the *Mahdi* who Shi'a Muslims believe will return alongside Jesus to defeat the oppressors of evil who terrorise the Shi'ite population. The writer concludes by emphasising the two aspects of this *noha*: "the material and the metaphysical," with the former seemingly referring to the historical elements associated with Ali and martyrdom which relates to the latter in reference to the eschatological return of the *Mahdi* and the divine powers that will quell the oppressors.

Having watched the music video of this *noha*, the writer's emphasis on the power of the poem to boost the morale of the Shi'a Muslims is accurate. The reference to the Shi'a understanding of *jihad* as a non-violent concept complements the thesis that *nohay* embodies the heart of the persecuted Shi'a Muslims. They do not respond to violence with violence, but with awe-inspiring praise of the Prophet's (pbuh) descendants who provide strength to the oppressed and with a call for patience and steadfastness in the face of terrorism with the promise of the *Mahdi's* return. The writer thus captures the cry of the people while also emphasising that violent retaliation is not the answer. This thesis is thus an inherent form of resistance to

extremism in itself because it reclaims the meanings of *jihad* and duty to which Muslims are called.

The focus on martyrdom is significant given the importance of martyrdom within Islamic and Pakistani culture. It is a way in which the people conceive of and mourn the deaths of their loved ones, which are premature or for some dutiful cause. If someone is a *shahid* (martyr), they will go to *Jannah* (heaven) as suggested in the Islamic tradition. Thus, if innocent Shi'a Muslims are martyred by sectarian extremists, their deaths are mourned but there is comfort in the knowledge that they will return to their creator. As stated in the *Qur'an*, "Indeed we belong to *Allah*, and indeed to Him we will return" (Q2:156). Messianism is similarly a source of comfort to those persecuted by extremism, that believers may suffer now but they will be vindicated in the eschaton. Therefore, the writer's focus on the two concepts highlights how *nohay* not only gives a voice to the persecuted but it also acts as a source of messianic hope.

In sum, the article opens the world of our readers to new horizons through an immersion into Shi'a music. The poetry powerfully captures the feelings of Shi'a Muslims persecuted for their religion and provides them with strength in the knowledge that their forefathers were similarly martyred but that they too will be vindicated. Theology ought to be about the real world that contains authentic people with lamentable experiences. The exploration of messianism and martyrdom as a source of power to the persecuted is an example of this lived theology in action; one that all of the world's persecuted and marginalized can relate to. The article captures the hope that the world's innocent people, persecuted for their faith, will eventually win the day. That the peaceful power of Islam will overcome the hateful destruction of sectarian extremism.

- *Anonymous, University of St Andrews*

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Article 2

'Who are you to reject her?' Looking for the Historical Mary Magdalene

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'If the Saviour made her worthy, who are you to reject her?' Levi to Peter in The Gospel of Mary Magdalene.[1]

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Mary Magdalene has been the interest of many an article, book and, more recently, film. In the homilies of Gregory the Great, the *apostola apostolorum* (apostle of the apostles),[2] inherits a brother and sister, a past as a sex-worker and is the inspiration for the contemplative life.[3] This version of Mary Magdalene has persisted from Gregory the Great's homilies until 1969 where the Catholic church severed Mary Magdalene from Luke's unknown sinner and Mary of Bethany.[4] But what does scripture and early Christian literature have to say about Mary Magdalene?

As many a scholar has lamented, the New Testament has precious little to say about Mary. In the gospels she suddenly appears at the crucifixion (with a brief introduction from Luke as a woman who was possessed) and remains through to Christ's resurrection. After delivering the Easter message, she promptly melts back into obscurity as quickly as she had appeared. There is no mention of her in Acts.

Ann Brock believes this absence to be something akin to an early church conspiracy to wrench her free of her place as a church leader.[5] In her very own gospel, Peter is quick to dismiss Mary Magdalene's authority on account of her gender: 'Did he [Christ] really speak with Mary, a woman, without our knowing? Are we to listen to her? Did he favour her more than us?'[6] Furthermore, Brock goes on to analyse the canonical gospels as evidence of this struggle for authority. The New Testament presents two first witnesses to Christ's resurrection: Mary Magdalene (John 20: 14-17) and Simon Peter (Luke 24:34).[7] In whichever gospel Peter is presented as a bumbling fool who does not understand Christ, Mary Magdalene is presented as his opposite – we see this most clearly in John where Peter fails to comprehend Christ (John 13:6-9 serves as just one example) whereas Mary Magdalene is 'single-handedly responsible for sharing the resurrection news with the others.'[8]

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[1] Ann Graham Brock, *Mary Magdalene, the First Apostle: The Struggle for Authority.* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2003), 85.
[2] Ibid., 60.
[3] Gregory the Great, *Forty Gospel Homilies* trans. David Hurst (Michigan: Cistercian Publications 1990), 268-79.
[4] Michael Haag, *The Quest for Mary Magdalene: History & Legend* (London: Profile Books, 2016), ix.
[5] Brock, *First Apostle*.
[6] Ibid., 60.
[7] Ibid., 140.
[8] Ibid., 60.

This struggle for authority is more pronounced in the gnostic gospels. Brock writes that there are two camps within these non-canonical gospels and early church texts. There is a pro-Mary Magdalene camp (*Gospel of Mary Magdalene, Philip and Thomas,*[9] *and The First Apocalypse of James*[10]) and the pro-Peter camp is shown in later translations and editions of those same early church texts.[11] Where Mary Magdalene is presented as a teacher, apostle, leader in one version of those gospels,[12] in other versions her prominent status is replaced, conceded or diminished.[13] Brock says that it is no coincidence that where Mary Magdalene's role is reduced, Peter's is more prominent.[14]

Could it be that Mary Magdalene lost this war for church authority to Peter, and that is the reason for her obscurity? It is nearly impossible to tell two thousand years later. But there certainly seems enough evidence to make it a possibility. This possibility is toyed with in the international best-seller, *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown.

There is yet more to be gleaned from the few mentions of Mary Magdalene in the New Testament. There is, first of all, her name: Magdalene. Part of what makes Mary Magdalene so fascinating is that her last name does not derive from 'belonging' to man by being either her husband or father.[15]

In the original manuscripts, she is not Mary Magdalene, but rather 'Mary called Magdalene, or 'the Magdalene Mary' or 'Mary the Magdalene.'[16] This, suggests Michael Haas, implies that 'Magdalene' was a nickname. Just like Christ gave Simon the nickname Peter (*cephas*) or the brothers John and James 'sons of thunder (*Boanerges*), Haas believes Mary was given the nickname *Migdal* or:

> 'the watchtower, the lighthouse, the beacon; a powerful name, the woman who helped the Good Shepherd protect his flock; and also a beacon at night, an illuminator, a visionary,'[17]

Another theory is the Mary Magdalene got her name from her birthplace: Magdala.[18] Magdala was mentioned in Matthew 15:39 where Christ performed the feeding of the four thousand. Magdala was said to be a bountiful, rich place when described by Josephus.[19] The idea of Magdala being a prosperous place, as well being attached to Mary's name, may have fuelled the medieval belief that Mary Magdalene was a noble woman; ruler of Magdala.[20] However, if Mary Magdalene was to be associated with the positive aspects of Magdala she would also be associated with the negative. Magdala was destroyed in AD 75 for 'infamy and the licentious

[9]Ibid., 76.
[10] Ibid., 85.
[11] Ibid., 129.
[12] Ibid., 141.
[13] Ibid., 128-9.
[14] Ibid., 141.
[15] Esther de Boer, *Mary Magdalene: Beyond the Myth*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1997), 30.
[16] Haag, *Quest*, 10.
[17] Ibid., 17.
[18] De Boer, *Myth*, 21.
[19]Ibid., 24.
[20] Jacobus de Vorgaine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 375.

behaviour of its inhabitants,' which may have helped to 'colour' Mary Magdalene's already soiled reputation.[21]

How exactly the image of Mary Magdalene changed to the first apostle to the penitent prostitute is another essay. The biblical and early church texts themselves present Mary Magdalene as a diligent, pious, brave woman, who, perhaps, was in a position to lead the Church beside or even instead of Peter. This may seem like a scandalous idea, but this journal is called *The Heretic.*

- *Molly Hudson, University of St Andrews*

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[21] Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: Myth and Metaphor* (London: HarperCollins, 1993), 15.

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Review

"'Who are you to reject her?' Looking for the Historical Mary Magdalene"

The author of this article hopes to provoke thought about and pave the way for meaningful discussion of the character of Mary Magdalene and of her role in the early church. Pointing out the importance of Mary Magdalene's role in the canonical gospels—as is well known, she is present in all four resurrection accounts, and according to those sources, she, along with other disciples who were women, was one of the first to witness Jesus' empty tomb—the author wishes to examine the post-Easter silence concerning Mary Magdalene more closely. Why is her role restricted to the last few chapters of the gospels? Why do we not hear of her in the early church? Essentially, the author is asking, Has the church historically misunderstood the true nature of Mary Magdalene, and rejected her as a result?

The author argues for consideration of the possibility, due to the silence of canonical sources and evidence in some extrabiblical sources, that the reason for Mary Magdalene's absence after Easter is "an early church conspiracy to wrench her from her place as a church leader." The author traces the origin of such strife in the early church to a theoretical conflict between Mary Magdalene and early church leaders, and points to passages in the extrabiblical *Gospel of Mary* which seem to posit the authority of Mary Magdalene as a church leader, given to her by Jesus himself. One example of this is the *Gospel of Mary* 5.5-7:

> Peter said to Mary, Sister we know that the Savior loved you more than the rest of woman. Tell us the words of the Savior which you remember which you know, but we do not, nor have we heard them. Mary answered and said, What is hidden from you I will proclaim to you.[22]

With this in mind, the author asks: "Could it be that Mary Magdalene lost this war for church authority to Peter, and that is the reason for her obscurity?...there certainly seems enough evidence to make it a possibility."

This idea of Mary Magdalene as a church leader who was rejected in favour of Peter is an interesting thought for consideration, but it must be examined more closely. An argument from silence requires substantial and compelling evidence to be convincing. The author cites the existence of earlier pro-Mary Magdalene and later pro-Peter "camps" in several extrabiblical sources, stating that "the pro-Peter camp is shown in later translations and editions of those...early church texts." It would be helpful if at this point the author provided an example of an older, pro-Mary version of an early church text and compared it with a later, pro-Peter version. This would help the reader to see how this hypothesized split between Mary and Peter manifested itself in these sources.

If the obscurity of Mary Magdalene's role in church history stems from a conspiracy in the early church, then the burden of proof is on the one who postulates the conspiracy. The author needs

[22] "The Gospel According To Mary Magdalene," The Gnostic Society Library, accessed 25 April 2020, http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm.

to be able to answer questions such as, 'How did this come about?' and, 'If the voice of Mary Magdalene has been forcibly silenced, why did this happen?' If we are to dig deeply into the history of the person of Mary Magdalene, we must take pains to make sure that our discourse is rooted in fact and not based on speculation.

All this having been said, though, this theory of Mary Magdalene as forgotten church leader is put forward as just that: a theory, an idea. The author's goal in this article is not to systematically and incontrovertibly prove the truth of this theory, but to invite the reader to consider it, and the author has been successful in this respect. This theory should provoke consideration and thoughtful, academically responsible discourse concerning the person of Mary Magdalene.

- *Anonymous, University of St Andrews*

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Article 3

The B Theory of Time and the Immutability of God

The book of Revelations proclaims that God is He "who is and who was and who is to come" (Revelations 1:4, NRSV). The past, the present and the future. God lives in all of time. But in what way are we to understand time? For centuries, scholars have debated over what time is to God: how He might perceive time; if he transcends it or flows through it with us. But philosophical developments in the field of time demand that we now ask what time is at all. In this paper, I look to explore an increasingly popular theory known as the 'B-theory' of time and how this affects the immutability of God. The so-called 'A-theory' of time is the common-sense approach to time. However, in this essay I will look to show how the 'B-theory' of time might actually help to defend the claim that God is immutable. I shall presume for the sake of this paper that the 'B-theory' is true, in order to show how it affects the doctrine of divine immutability, but theory is of course contested. I therefore propose that if God is immutable, then the 'B-theory' offers a more convincing account of time, given that the 'A'-theory forms a flimsy edifice to build upon arguments for the immutability of God. The 'B-theory' therefore helps to defend the doctrine of divine immutability and furthermore propounds a more personal God.

We live in an ever-changing world, in a constant state of flux. We see the clock tick, the kettle boil, the sun set. We constantly observe the world in a changing and evolving state. It is only natural then for us to presume that there is a dynamic flux which is the passage of time. This is known as the 'A-theory' of time.[23] It is a more intuitive conception of how time works. Since we feel that the phenomenon of time passing, a change from one moment to the next, we suppose that there is a flow of time and that the present really does exist.

One popular formulation of the 'A' theory which I will focus on in this paper is known as 'presentism'. This theory holds that reality consists only of the present and the passage of time is a constant changing of the temporally unextended reality.[24] This would mean that there is no expansion of reality that exists outside of right now. The 'A' theory finds most of its plausibility in our experience of the passage of time, and it is thus the most common-sense view. Presentism in particular seems rather appealing as it is able to account for why the present feels special in comparison to other times as it claims that experience is always of the present because this is all that reality consists of.[25]

However, there is a crucial difficulty for the 'A-theory' with regards to the doctrine of divine immutability. Under this way of thinking about time, we are constantly experiencing change.

[23] J. Ellis McTaggart. "The Unreality of Time." *Mind*, New Series, 17, no. 68 (1908): 457-74.

[24] M. Joshua Mezersky. "Presentism" *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Time.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). 122-123

[25] Simon Prosser. "Introduction: The Metaphysics of time" *Experiencing Time.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2026). 7

When action x takes place, we are in a state where we don't experience x, then change to experiencing x, and then we will no longer experience x. For example, if I pray to God then I am originally in a state of non-prayer, then when I pray I change to being in a state of prayer, and finally when I am finished, then I change back to being in a state of non-prayer.

Surely then we could say the same of God. If God is in a state of not doing an action to then doing that action then this would constitute a change. Under the 'a' theory, then God must inevitably change since reality would change from God not doing x to doing x. This is especially true when we consider that God entered into our world, and was truly acting and changing.

The 'b' theory by contrast is not an intuitive response to the nature of time, but its growing popularity therefore demands its attention. The theory holds that although times are ordered, there is no metaphysical asymmetry between the present and any other time. This means that there is no objective 'now' from which time emanates. As such there is also no 'past' or 'future' since the present would have to exist to create a relationship with some other time. It would be possible to say that x precedes y, for in this, the two points are not understood in relation to some present time. Additionally, crucial for the question of God which I am concerned with here, there is no passage of time in the 'b' theory. Since there is no present, there is no movement from one point which we call 'now' to another and as such, we cannot say that there is a passage of time.

One way of understanding this theory is through a comparison with space. When considering space, we say that there is spatial extension and we know that there are different points in space. However, it seems that there is no one point from which space 'extends', certainly not from an objective point of view. We can also see that there is no 'passage' of space in which space moves from one point to another. Similarly then, the 'b' theorist claims that time is extended along some timeline but there is not some 'now' from which time extends and passes from one point to another.[26]

Genuine change requires that time can be represented in 'A-series'. It follows then that if the 'B-theory' is true then there is no change since all moments already exist; we are not experiencing these moments in time sequentially, and moreover we do not flow through them. As such, it is not possible to say that change occurs since there is no transition from one state into another in which things are different. Therefore, under the 'B-theory' neither us nor God undergo any kind of change.

As such, time is the same for us and God. God does not transcend to some higher plane of time that is constructed different to that of our own. Although we might experience the illusion of time passing, it is entirely plausible that time operates in the same way for us as it does for God. To me, this is also able to support the account of a personal God. When we consider a God that is outside of our time, he seems distant. Yet throughout scripture, we can see that God interacts with his people. Famously, with Adam, and Abraham, and Moses. He is not wholly distinct from us. To think of time in this way, is to see God as a part of our world.

If it is the case that time does function according to the 'B-series' then the doctrine of divine immutability would be safeguarded. Similarly, if we are to assume that God must be immutable then this would support the claim that the 'B-theory' is correct. It is the contention of this writer,

[26] Prosser. "Introduction: The Metaphysics of time" 10-11

therefore, that a 'B-theory' of time is a reasonable way to think of time, and in fact is in accordance with much of our beliefs about God, in particular, the doctrine of divine immutability.

Historically, we have seen the study of what time is for God, and what time is for us, as two distinct fields of study. God's time and our time were separate. However, given the rise of the 'B-theory' of time in philosophical discussion, they need no longer be so separate. It is entirely plausible to posit that time operates within the same field for us and for God. As such, he becomes more personal; not a being transcending our world but living as part of it, and sustaining it. In this paper, I have offered arguments to suppose that if God is immutable, then the 'B-theory' offers a more convincing account of time. In particular, that if the 'A-theory' is true then God is liable to change. The 'B-theory' therefore helps to defend the doctrine of divine immutability and furthermore propounds a more personal God.

- *Elise Morrison, University of St Andrews*

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Review

"The B Theory of Time and the Immutability of God"

In this article, the author tackles some of the most complex issues in analytic theology, namely those concerning theories of time. These theories are important to theology in asking how we can understand God's relationship to time, and consequently how this impacts upon the attributes we usually ascribe to God. Many of the attributes of God that classical theism holds to, such as the immutability and transcendence of God, are impacted by how we conceptualise time. In terms of immutability, that is, God's inability to change, it seems that we must argue He is completely removed from time, that is, atemporal, or that time can be conceptualised in a different way. The author's argument here is that the 'B-theory' of time is the most compelling way for us to think about time, so long as we hold that God is immutable. The author offers a convincing argument for how it is difficult to defend God's immutability in the context of an 'A-theory' of time; if God is within time and time is marked by change, God must change. Furthermore they argue that God's time must be the same as our time, thus, God does not transcend time as an atemporal being. Their justification of this is that a truly transcendent God is not a personal God, He would be too distant from his creation, and not the God we see in scripture, a God who interacts with his people. The author thus sees God's immutability as more worthwhile to defend than His transcendence. It is not necessarily true however that God's transcendence entails distance and an impersonal God. T.J Mawson, writing in defence of the atemporal God, defines transcendence as the fact that God cannot depend on anything for His essential attributes'.[27] He disagrees that a God who transcends time is thus not a 'personal' God, arguing instead that this is covered by the doctrine of God's immanence. Immanence, or omnipresence, means that God is involved in every moment of creation, as Mawson notes, by virtue of 'God's knowing everything about anything other than God directly…and his being able to affect anything other than God directly'.[28] Therefore, this article lacks a suitable explanation of why immutability is so necessary to defend as an attribute of God. An explanation of the author's views on what is meant by immutability, such as whether they are defending a strong or weak view of immutability, might allow a greater sense of why this defence is so necessary, and thus, why the 'B-theory' of time is the best way in which to conceptualise time.

- *Anonymous, University of St Andrews*

[27] T.J. Mawson, *The Divine Attributes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 19
[28] Mawson, *Divine Attributes*, 20

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Article 4

The Paradox Of Christian Anti-Semitism

On the 22nd of November 2019, a clip that was circulated by the BBC shows a man aggressively confronting and reading Bible passages to two young Jewish boys, whilst on a busy train on the Northern Line on the London Underground.[29] It was described by a commuter who witnessed the abuse as '"horrific in every sense."'[30]

This paper focuses on the paradox of having a faith based on and that continues to hold sacred Ancient Jewish Literature, and yet has a clear history of anti-Semitism. The New Testament demonstrates the misinterpretation of Scripture that has taken place which has contributed to this historical paradox.

Hare distinguishes between three different types of anti-Judaism sentiment within early Christian literature. The first of these is prophetic anti-Judaism. Hare states that some anti-Jewish sentiment was a factor within Christ's teaching specifically on God's displacement with Israel, and that its members needed to respond with faith and practice in order to reach Salvation in the Kingdom of heaven.[31] Hare emphasises that prophetic anti-Judaism was an established feature of prophet religion, namely the accusations levelled at the priests and other teachers of Judaism by the prophets, and therefore preceded the teachings of Jesus.[32]

The second type of anti-Judaism Hare defines is that which he refers to as Jewish-Christian anti-Judaism. This refers to the period following the death and resurrection of Jesus, during which Judaism as a faith rejected his teachings, and eventually formally condemned those who prescribed to Christianity, as Jewish Christians and as gentile Christians.[33] This formal condemnation came in the form of the revision made to the Birkath ha-Minim, "Benediction against Heretics." The twelfth benediction of the weekday Amidah that dates from the Hellenistic era named 'Nazarenes and heretics' as enemies of Yahweh's people. This revision was possibly the theological/liturgical response to Judeo-Christians' interpretation of the 70 CE destruction of Jerusalem as divine retribution.[34]

The third type of anti-Judaism is referred to as gentilising anti-Judaism. This is anti-Judaism exhibited by those who were gentiles and by those Jews who renounced their Jewish identity.

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[29] "Man arrested over anti-Semitic abuse on Tube," bbc.co.uk, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-50533617
[30] Ibid.
[31] Douglas Hare, "The Rejection of the Jews in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts," in *Antisemitism and the Foundations of Christianity*, ed. Alan T. Davies (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 29.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 29-30.
[34] "Birkat Ha Minim" in *The New Encyclopedia of Judaism*, eds. Geoffrey Wigoder, Fred Skolnik, and Shmuel Himelstein, 2nd ed (New York: New York University Press, 2002), https://search-credoreference-com.ezproxy.st-andrews.ac.uk/content/entry/nyupencyjud/birkat_ha_minim/0?institutionId=2454.

This form eventually surpassed the latter two, adding to the persecutions that Israel is beyond salvation, and that God would designate a new Chosen People.

Langmuir directly opposes Hare in the statement that 'Jesus of Nazareth was neither anti-Jewish nor anti-Judaic,'[35] as Hare instead highlights Jesus' opposition to Jewish religious leaders as a secondary form of prophetic anti-Judaism.[36] In a similar vein, Langmuir insists that the Pauline movement was not anti-gentile or anti-Jewish, crucially arguing Paul did not require his followers to adopt Jewish symbolism or leave behind their Greek and Roman ties.[37]

Chazan argues that the Gospel according to Mark is not an overtly anti-Jewish gospel but contains both instances of applaudable and condemnable behaviour on the part of the Jews. Mark contains Jewish leaders accepting Jesus' mission, with the synagogue president pleading Jesus to cure his sick daughter in Mark 5, and Joseph of Arimathea, 'a respected member of the council' (Mark 15:43), who funds Jesus' burial having obtained his body with the permission of Pontus Pilate.[38] This is alongside descriptions of less receptive Jewish leaders, the most blatant being Mark 11:18 'And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it [Jesus' words against the traders in the Temple at Jerusalem], they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him.' Contempt for Jesus by Jewish figures of authority is also evidenced in the deliberate questioning of the chief priests, scribes and elders who sent Pharisees and Herodians 'to trap him in what he said' (Mark 12:13). This opposition is offset by the gospel's indication of Jewish public support for Jesus: Jesus' reception at Jerusalem with the crowds laying their cloaks and leafy branches on the ground for him to walk on (Mark 11:8), and the chief priests' and scribes' hesitation to kill him due to the presence of the large crowd in support of Jesus (Mark 11:18).

The gospel according to Luke contains an interesting addition to Mark's narrative, that the crowd of spectators to Jesus' death 'returned home, beating their breasts' (Luke 23:48). Chazan interprets this as a purely Jewish audience that are remorsefully acknowledging their role in Jesus' death.[39] This, Chazan argues, is a replacement of Matthew's depiction of the Jewish spectators to Jesus' death as defiantly accepting their role.[40] This is made clear in Pontus Pilate's public display of distancing himself from Jesus' fate, washing his hands in sight of the crowd (Matthew 27:24), due to the warning of his wife's dream (Matthew 27:19). Declaring the crowd should decide Jesus' fate, they answer '"His blood be on us and on our children!"' (Matthew 27:25), an apparent Christian reinterpretation of events, in the enthusiasm of the crowd and their words, which drip with dramatic irony.

Fredriksen boldly claims that the 'gospels are no more intrinsically "anti-Jewish" than is the Bible itself.'[41] Her justification for this is through the Gospels being termed as Jewish sectarian texts, and so are comparable to the Dead Sea Scrolls,[42] becoming texts that evidence 'intra-

[35] Gavin I. Langmuir, *History, Religion, and Antisemitism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 276.
[36] Hare, 29.
[37] Langmuir, 280.
[38] Robert Chazan, *From Anti-Judaism to Anti-Semitism: Ancient and Medieval Christian Constructions of Jewish History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 10.
[39] Ibid., 19.
[40] Ibid., 15.
[41] Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defence of Jews and Judaism* (New York: Doubleday, 2008), 81.
[42] Ibid.

Jewish controversies.'[43] For Fredriksen, the nature of Jewish sectarian texts, in their negative presentation of other Jews, was integral for forming what would become 'anti-Jewish rhetoric.'[44] Relating to the Gospels, Fredriksen claims that their composition after the Jewish war with Rome in 66-73 CE, specifically the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 CE, affected their later interpretation by those outside of the communities they were composed for and by.[45] Indeed their composition as unique responses to such theologically tremendous historical events meant that their eventual circulation beyond the intended audience directly contributed 'to the arsenal of gentile Christian anti-Jewish invective.'[46] Through this analysis, Fredriksen has linked the theology behind what would become anti-Semitism to an existing Jewish theological tradition of religious factionalism. Care must be taken here in this argument as it makes Jewish literary theology responsible for established Christian anti-Semitic theology, a fine line that was previously observed in identifying who was responsible for the origins of anti-Semitism.

Other texts beyond the Gospels further complicate the notion of anti-Jewish narratives in the New Testament. In the Acts of the Apostles, Peter repeatedly accuses a crowd of Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem for Pentecost of the crucifixion of Jesus, '"You that are Israelites…this man [Jesus]…you crucified and killed"' (Acts 2:22-23) , and '"this Jesus whom you crucified"' (Acts 2:36). Paul also makes such accusations of the Jews in his letter to the Thessalonians, '"for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out"' (1 Thessalonians 2:14-15). For Paul in this letter the Jews are the continued antithesis of both Jesus and his followers, as he goes on to further accuse them of hindering Paul and the Thessalonian church in speaking to the gentiles (1 Thessalonians 2:16). How can Peter and Paul be so accusatory to a people who he and none the less Jesus once counted themselves a part of?

It is possible to interpret such blatant anti-Semitic sentiment through the presence of later Christian edits of the original text and reimagining of the actual events. It is the New Testament's ability to separate Jesus and his followers from their Jewish identity, while at the same time have the New Testament as a literal sequel to the Old Testament, that later allowed for anti-Semitic sentiment to permeate Christian scholarship. This paradox of an anti-Semitic theology being based on a foundation of Jewish Literature may therefore not be referred to as a process of reconciliation, but in fact wilful literary and historical ignorance on the part of its participants. Investigation of the possible elements of anti-Semitism and passages within the New Testament ultimately only further the argument that the New Testament is a text that has been rewritten and interpreted to support various later Christian theologies.

- *Anna Haynes, University of St Andrews*

[43] Ibid., 80.
[44] Ibid., 82.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.

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Review

"The Paradox Of Christian Anti-Semitism"

In *The Paradox of Christian Anti-Semitism,* the author argues that Jewish literature, namely the New Testament, is used by interpreters to fuel anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic sentiments. The author discusses three types of anti-Judaism in early Christian literature, outlined by Douglas Hare: prophetic, Jewish-Christian, and gentiling. She summarizes Hare's argument that Jesus includes anti-Jewish ideas in his teaching and places Hare in conversation with Gavin Langmuir; Langmuir asserts that neither Jesus nor Paul were anti-Jewish.

The author then examines early Christian literature for positive and negative characterization of Jews. She notes that Mark's gospel includes a mixed portrayal of the Jewish people. The synagogue leader begs Jesus to heal his sick daughter (Mark 5), but the chief priests and scribes are the ones who seek to kill Jesus because of his teaching (Mark 11:18), demonstrating the varied character of Mark's descriptions. The author highlights Luke's addition to Mark's gospel: that the spectators of Jesus' death beat their breasts (Luke 23:38). In contrast to Luke's depiction of a remorseful audience, Matthew says that the crowd, in response to Pilate, assumes responsibility for Jesus' death (Matt 27:24). According to the author, this addition to Matthew's gospel constitutes "an apparent Christian reinterpretation of events, in the enthusiasm of the crowd and their words, which drip with dramatic irony."

She moves on to discuss Paula Fredriksen's view of anti-Judaism in the gospels. Fredriksen argues that the gospels are Jewish sectarian texts that demonstrate arguments between Jewish groups. While asserting that the gospels are not inherently anti-Jewish, Fredriksen observes that the way that such Jewish sectarian texts portray other Jews negatively has been part of the development of anti-Judaism. Further, Fredriksen says that differing and often contentious Jewish interpretations of historical events, viewed by those outside of the community, provided Gentiles with ammunition for anti-Jewish ideas. The author notes that Fredriksen connects the sources used for anti-Jewish arguments with Jewish sectarian literature. The author then asserts that this argument could be interpreted as portraying Jewish theology as responsible for the basis of Christian anti-Semitism and cautions against such logic.

The author cites passages from Acts and Thessalonians that describes Jews as those who crucified Jesus, highlighting the paradox of Christian anti-Semitism. She concludes that the New Testament "has been rewritten and interpreted to support various later Christian theologies."

The author skilfully synthesizes scholarship and puts scholars in dialogue with one another, drawing out the complexities of the New Testament's relationship to anti-Semitism. She provides a helpful overview of some of the main texts that have been used to support anti-

Jewish rhetoric. Further, her contribution to the discussion of anti-Semitism is significant in a time when anti-Semitism is on the rise.

However, while the author's discussion of the three types of anti-Judaism is informative, it is at times inaccurate and lacks analysis of Hare and Langmuir's claims. She describes Hare's argument that "some anti-Jewish sentiment was a factor within Christ's teaching specifically on God's displacement with Israel," but fails to engage with the statement. The argument is factually incorrect: The Jewish Jesus arguably never teaches that God is displacing Israel. Early Christianity was one of many Jewish sects, and so disagreement between Jews is expected. The texts from Qumran demonstrate the intensity of disagreement between Jews, and the fact that Jesus disagreed with Jewish leaders fits within the world of multiple first-century 'Judaisms.' Such disagreement does not make Jesus anti-Jewish, although Hare argues that Jesus' teaching is representative of anti-Jewish ideas. James Dunn comments that "what [the Dead Sea Scrolls] illustrate vividly is the *diversity* of Second Temple Judaism," and adds that "second Temple Judaism was made up of a number of more fragmented and diverse interest groups."[47] This paper would have benefited from recognition of the inaccuracy of Hare's assertion, proper engagement with his statement, and discussion of the context of second Temple Judaism.

Perhaps the most serious flaw in this paper is the conflation of what the New Testament says and what (anti-Jewish) Christian scholars have said. The author writes that "it is the New Testament's ability to separate Jesus and his followers from their Jewish identity, while at the same time have the New Testament as a literal sequel to the Old Testament, that allowed for later anti-Semitic sentiment to permeate Christian scholarship." The New Testament itself does not separate Jesus from Judaism. Jesus is called the King of the Jews, is portrayed as the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy, and himself upholds Torah. Anti-Jewish Christian scholars have claimed that Jesus separates himself from Judaism, but viewed as intra-Jewish debate, the New Testament texts themselves do not do so. This is supported by the Council of Jerusalem described in Acts. Approximately twenty years after the death of Jesus, the Council was held to discuss whether Gentiles had to become Jewish in order to be part of the Jesus-followers (Acts 15). It was assumed among the earliest Jesus-followers that Gentiles had to become Jewish until Paul challenged the idea. An analysis of the Council's position calls into question the author's statement that the New Testament severed Jesus and his followers from their Jewish identity.

The Paradox of Christian Anti-Semitism provides insight into the tragic reality of anti-Semitism and the abuse of New Testament texts in creating the *Adversus Judeos*, the anti-Jewish Christian literature which later developed. While the paper includes some inaccuracies, it is a helpful contribution to understanding the relationship between the New Testament and anti-Semitism.

- *Anonymous, University of St Andrews*

[47] James. D.G. Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, 2nd ed. (London: SCM, 2006), 16.

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