Religion as a Tool Against the Bystander Problem in Genocide;

with Bosnia-Herzegovina as a Case Study

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Poppy D.Z.V. Murray

S4464079

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Abstract

  Genocides continue to occur today, with more areas showing signs of precursor stages. In previous studies, bystanders have been shown to have an effect on the continuation of a genocide through their inaction or passive acceptance of genocidal ideologies and/or actions by perpetrators. As such, this paper looked into what factors affect bystander inaction, and how religion could be used as a tool to alleviate these and stimulate more bystander intervention. This has been approached through an investigation of the case of the Bosnian genocide to determine the influences upon bystanders and how these could be resolved, if harmful to genocidal situations. Bystanders are determined to have a level of responsibility if they are aware of the ongoing situation and have the potential to act. This includes individual action, e.g. condemnation of perpetrators, which can have an effect as not doing so encourages perpetrator action. Bystanders are often subjected to psychological responses, such as denial, influenced by the contexts they are in, so there will be different influences upon them, for example, ideological. Religion is often used in genocidal ideologies to bolster claims, establish exclusionary group boundaries, and provide imagery and narratives. Psychological needs contribute to accepting these ideologies. However, religion can be applied differently in order to fulfil psychological needs of community and moral responsibility, and alternative worldviews to exclusionary ideologies, to encourage bystander action. Theorising on application of religion towards bystanders, directed towards specific reasons for bystander inaction, offers potential measures to lessen the bystander problem in genocides.

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1. Introduction

  The following research paper investigates the causes and factors influencing bystander non-intervention in genocidal conflicts, using the case of the Bosnian genocide of the 1990s to evaluate contributing factors. Despite the increase in genocide and genocide prevention studies since the *Shoah*, genocides continue to occur. At the time of writing, GenocideWatch (2021) records eighteen ongoing conflicts that can be either classed as genocides or are showing the signs and stages which precede genocidal violence against a group. Genocides involve the persecution and eventual killing of particular group, determined along ethnic, religious, political, or national lines, based in ideological, socio-political, and prejudicial beliefs. This paper theorises on potential means for genocide prevention through the issue of bystanders, both internal and external to the conflict zone. Though bystanders do not play the same role as perpetrators, their lack of involvement in intervening or passive acceptance by not condemning a regime or group is understood to play a role in the outcome of a genocide. This occurs during the earlier stages of a genocide, such as Classification and Dehumanisation, which come before instances of more extreme forms of violent persecution and mass killing (Extermination),[1] but are necessary to create the possibility of the later stages (GenocideWatch, 2021). By looking into the factors which affect bystander non-involvement, I aim to determine the possibilities religion has for potentially influencing bystander individuals and organisations, thus affecting situations showing signs of a future genocide. Bystanders are less studied in genocide research, but as they have an effect on the continuation and exacerbation of targeted conflicts, they are an important group to study further, including the possibilities for solutions to influence intervention.

  Intervention in the stages and events prior to the actual genocide are most effective. Totten (2011) argues that genocide prevention studies do not address often enough the areas of (long-term) conflict resolution, mediation, and peace-

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[1] See *Appendix I* for the Ten Stages of Genocide outlined by Stanton.

making, among others. As this research aims to develop some idea on preventing a particular problem that exacerbates the situation, and involves 'mediation' in the sense of inter-group beliefs and conflict, it will hopefully be able to cross these areas.

Religion is often important in the justification of genocides, with even 'secular' motivated genocides, such as the *Shoah*, utilising national mythos and ideologies which reflect 'religious' conceptions. Religion and religious imaginaries play a role in the creation and emphasis of a national or ethnic identity narrative which serves to 'other' the victim group, contributing to the early stages of genocide. Religion in itself serves important social, personal, and communal functions, and can be very powerful. This research investigates how this occurs to negative consequences in genocides and whether there are any ways it could be transferred to more positive uses, particularly to motivate bystander intervention. I hypothesise that there are certain aspects of religions that can be used to counter harmful, apathetic attitudes, and/or denial, but these will likely have to be addressed in relation to other factors.

1.2 Research Questions

This paper covers four questions, three developed in order to answer the main objective, on how religion could be used in motivating bystander intervention in genocidal conflicts. A cases study, that of the Bosnian genocide in the 1990s, is used to support the first three questions.

The first question is to identify who bystanders within genocide conflicts are, within and external to the area of conflict. Then, by determining what responsibility they have to the events, an understanding for the complex problem of bystander responsibility can be formed.

Question two is to determine how religious narratives and institutions are used in justification of genocidal ideology, again through the study of the Bosnian War and Srebrenica massacre. This will demonstrate how religion influences support for genocidal ideologies, lack of counter-action, and why it is an effective tool.

Additionally, this establishes how religions are used to detrimental effect, therefore how they could be used differently.

Both of these questions contribute to answering the question of what factors and influences are upon bystanders that contribute to their lack of intervention, e.g. ideological, psychological, social, which provide a baseline of factors that can be considered when theorising on stimulating bystander intervention.

Finally, once the causes and influences of non-intervention of bystanders in genocides are determined, what practical or theoretical possibilities there are for religion to stimulate bystander intervention can be answered. Extrapolating from the established factors, these are measures which could be applied to genocides more widely.

1.3 Methodology

This research takes a sociological perspective, including a socio-functionalist understanding of religion, though psychological discussions of the bystander phenomena will be mentioned explicitly alongside this. This research utilised the qualitative research methods of a case study and documentary analysis. The case study identified is the Bosnian War (1992-1995) including the Srebrenica massacre. This case offers the possibility for an analysis of the bystander problem, and using it will provide an area to analyse the bystander problem both within and outside the immediate area of the conflict, i.e. the international community. The international bystander role, including states and organisations such as NATO and the United Nations, has been heavily debated with reference to the Bosnian case, and Srebrenica massacre. Religion and religio-cultural mythologies and their relation to identity formations are a significant aspect of the case. Hence it seems a good example to use to assess where religious aspects were used and formulate possibilities for countering their consequences.

The main means of analysis is document analysis, using information on the case study. There is a wide variety of information available on the case, for example, official data, human right's reports, news articles, eyewitness testimonies, and

other primary material, as well as secondary sources that have been documented and translated material, which will give the possibility of analysing real situations of bystanders and the factors influencing their actions. As stated in the literature review, new connections between the analyses and literature that have not been addressed can be made. While this research is based on the case of the Bosnian genocide and Srebrenica, other genocide cases will be referenced to supplement this and support the argument as a whole. The case study analysis will identify features and areas that can be applied more widely to genocide situations. The case study will demonstrate reasons for bystander behaviour and influences upon them, including how religion is present in this. From this, alternative possibilities for religion as a tool for preventative measures can be developed.

To note the scope of this paper in relation to international bystander organisations or nation-states, practicalities and specifics of legal implementation from theoretical research will not be covered, though these are important to the global political sphere (Mennecke, 2018). Nonetheless, the implications and responsibility of the international community, and the reasons behind the lack of will to intervene, will be addressed.

1.4 Ethical Considerations

Though this study will not involve direct participation in conducting the research, the topic is a sensitive one, and therefore it is important to be aware of certain ethical considerations. The subject of genocide deals with vulnerable individuals, individual and collective trauma, and experiences of gross human rights violations. Genocide is not a historical phenomenon, continuing today, and past genocides continue to have effects on victims and others. Therefore, how documents are read, analysed, and what is written needs to be done with consideration that takes into account the context of events and the effects of the research. Awareness of context, power dynamics, prejudices, and victim experiences is necessary. The way information is expressed can have unintended consequences, hence writing, analysis, and conclusions should be accurate, nuanced, and considered, to avoid

misinterpretation or misrepresentation of individuals, events, meanings, or groups.

 1.5 Outline

  Chapter two is a literature review assessing what has been studied on the topics of bystander psychology, religion, and national identity, in relation to the case of Bosnia, genocides, and religious peacebuilding. The third chapter covers important theories that form the basis of and are used in this research. Chapter Four discusses and identifies who is a bystander, the factors influencing bystander non-intervention, and the question of bystander responsibility with regards to different groups of actors in the case of Bosnia, using the criteria of agency and awareness. Chapter Five identifies how religions contribute to genocides, through examples of how this occurred in the case of the Bosnian war and genocide, how these trends relate to the function of religion in exclusivist ideologies, and the effects of these ideologies on bystanders. Chapter Six follows from the previous two to analyse how religion could be a force for stimulating bystander intervention in the general public, on the basis of conclusions made on the reasons and factors for influencing non-intervention as a preventative measure, gained through examination of the case. This includes using religion to counter exclusivist ideologies, moral responsibility arguments, and as a counter to psychological responses of bystanders. The seventh chapter will present the conclusions of the research, with reference to these potential means and how these were determined.

2. Literature Review

This research is located within the fields of religious studies, genocide studies, and genocide prevention. The term genocide was coined by Raphael Lemkin, who also formed the Genocide Convention, in 1944. Genocide studies researches and compares instances of genocide, mass killings, and massacres, and their causes and effects (Lieberman, 2011). The process of genocide is often understood in ten stages[2], which begin with more 'subtle' societal actions or language that classify a certain group as 'other' and polarise society away from them. Scapegoating, for example, is the social concept (from Biblical ritual) of a particular subject taking on blame and punishment for problems of a group/society as a whole. While the idea nowadays does not necessarily include the punitive dimension, this can occur in genocidal ideologies, though the punishment is not for the crimes of society as a whole, but based on supposed guilt of the victim groups. Othering processes evolve to outright persecution, for example, legal instances like the Nuremberg Laws, or other erasure of rights and violence towards the group. These accompany issues of political or economic instability, leading to a need for social, economic, and cultural security (Staub, 1993). Extermination should legally class the event as a genocide (GenocideWatch, 2021). The tenth stage is denial of the occurrences. Genocide studies as a field emerged from Holocaust studies, developing into a more diverse, interdisciplinary field (Jones, 2011). As genocides in the twentieth century have occurred over the world, the field has also, for the most part, become less euro-centric.

Genocide studies covers many areas, e.g., culture, politics, prevention, justice, resistance, and gender. Valentino (2013), a prominent scholar in the area, has argued that social and ideological factors play less of a role in the outcome of a genocide than the role and aims of perpetrator groups. While he argues passive acceptance is less important to the consequences, I believe the role of bystanders and wider society remain relevant and necessary to address, as supported by the

[2] see *Appendix I*

arguments discussed below. The definition of genocide is and what can be classed as a genocide is disputed. What counts as a genocide and distinguishes it from other types of massacres in conflict can become complex, both for legal and academic circumstances (Lieberman, 2011). This issue can pose a problem in the condemnation of actions of certain states or groups. Blum et al. (2007) however, contend that the term should be used, as terminology like 'ethnic cleansing' is used to downplay events and, by extension, prevent action.

2.1 The Bystander Problem

The role of bystanders in conflicts, especially genocide, has been less studied than perpetrator and victim groups (Verdeja, 2011). A bystander is defined as a person who is present during an event, but not a direct participant. Verdeja (2011) argues that bystander responsibility is difficult to assess, given the complex variations of factors between bystanders. Acknowledging the complexities and differences between bystanders, he makes a case that bystander responsibility comes from one's membership within a group of shared identity, but that difference in reasoning should be acknowledged to avoid creating a false moral equivalency between all bystanders. Nonetheless, Verdeja maintains that their inaction has a non-negotiable affect. This includes allowing violence to continue and/or exacerbate, implicit condonation of the perpetrators' actions, and the abandonment of victim groups.

Important to understanding the effect of bystanders is how they influence each other; if one person acts, others are more likely to, while if no-one does, others will continue to not intervene (Staub, 1993; Verdeja, 2011). The most notable research on the bystander problem comes from the 1964 event of the murder of Kitty Genovese. Staub also, using examples from the *Shoah*, points to how bystander action can directly affect the abilities of perpetrators to carry out action. The possibilities for this, of course, will be dependent on the specifics of the situation.

Bystanders are not a monolithic group but vary in their knowledge, agency, power, and position towards the events (Vetlesen, 2000; Vollhardt and Bilewicz, 2013). Vollhardt and Bilewicz (2013) note that psychology tends towards studies of the psychology of bystanders in the aftermath of conflict, alongside studies of victims and perpetrators. This is an important area, but leaves a gap for studying bystanders before and during the evolution of genocide.

More elaborate theories on the nature of denial by bystanders have been put forward, most notably by Cohen (2001) and Slovic (2007). Slovic argues that 'psychic numbing', the process whereby large statistics and numbers of tragedies become too large to stimulate (re-)action, occurs because these numbers also cannot create an emotional reaction or convey the true meanings of atrocities. Cohen however, disagrees with this assessment, and argues that 'denial' is the normative state of an individual, necessary for the psychological survival of a person; without the ability to 'deny' certain things, life would be too overwhelming. However, both of their arguments have recourse to the effect of emotions. Sutton and Nordgaard (2013) have studied how individual methods of denial relate to wider social theories, and how this 'denial' of events is culturally upheld. Like Cohen, they conclude it is not the lack of information that causes a lack of awareness of situations, but psychological processes of denial. The solution to inaction is not necessarily to providing more information on a situation. Scholars such as Staub (1993) and Monroe (2008) have discussed how the psychology and attitudes of passive bystanders and those who intervene, i.e. helpers, have certain differences. As a discussion on these factors in combination with religion as a preventative tool, particularly with reference to bystanders and bystander psychology, I want to introduce and analyse them to the issue by assessing these areas in combination. Through this, I am to see whether there are possible alternate solutions from the social and psychological issues raised of within a genocidal context.

Mazur and Vollhardt (2016) have begun a discussion into what factors affect the chance people will be more likely to act, intervene, or support intervention in a genocide. They discuss how media, social and historical context, and awareness

may affect the willingness to intervene. From their research, they argue people are more likely to intervene if what is occurring fits a preconceived idea of what genocide is, often the murder of Jewish victims in the *Shoah*. This could mean neglecting 'lesser' conflicts or ignoring earlier stages of genocide. Conley-Zilkic (2012) has also noted the possibilities of getting outside individuals to engage in intervention by applying pressure to states and organisations, who have more power than the individual, to act. Anderson & Brakstad (2016) explore how media, rather than allowing more knowledge of events in the world to trigger action can contribute to distancing victims and can encourage passivity in how they respond and report events. Cohen (2001) and Verdeja (2011) also note the role of mass media. The social and psychological factors underlying (in)action are still understudied (Mazur and Vollhardt, 2016). If this area has a recognised affect, but remains understudied despite its potential for benefits, it seems important to look into possible actions and means to apply or stimulate these factors, which is where this research emerges from.

2.2 The Bosnian Genocide

The Bosnian genocide, including the Srebrenica massacre amongst other events, took place during the Yugoslav Wars (1991-2001), a period of ethnic conflicts and wars for independence in the former Yugoslavia. One of these was the Bosnian War, fought between Serbians, Croats, and Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), the violence in Bosnia occurring between 1992 and 1995 (Lowry and Ching, 2016). Bosnia-Herzegovina was a multi-ethnic republic within Yugoslavia. At the end of the Cold War, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia collapsed. This coincided with a rise in ethnic nationalism and Serb and Croat hostility, incorporating historical memories of persecution that occurred during the Second World War. Due to these grievances and political instability, exclusionary national identity groups were formed, including concepts of nationalism, religion, and mythology. To look into the case of the Bosnian genocide, it is important to be aware of the wider ongoing circumstances that fed into events. While Srebrenica has been the only incident during the Bosnian War to be classified as a genocide, surrounding

events, ideologies, and the nationalist and ethno-religious atmosphere allowed it to take place. Srebrenica was not the sole act of violence committed against the Bosnian Muslim community underpinned with intent for genocide or ethnic cleansing. Estimates of Bosniak individuals killed range between 100,000-200,000 (Mojzes, 2011, p.187), equating to 80 percent of the Bosnian Muslims population, further to injured and displaced people.

Paul Mojzes (2011), a well-established scholar in the areas of genocide and the Balkans, was one of the first to discuss lesser known events which took place in Bosnia, to raise awareness. He has discussed the issues of national identity and religion within the conflict and the history of groups in the Balkans, also writing during the time of the conflict (Penaskovic, 1996). Mojzes was also a proponent and actor in interfaith dialogue as a means of resolution during the conflict.

Now, more research has been done on the case of the Bosnian genocide and the surrounding conflict. Velikonja (2003) has written a history of the area, arguing that Bosnia was a tolerant, multi-religious area for the most of its history from the Middle Ages until the twentieth century. When the issue of ethno-nationalism became more prominent, its ideas were rooted in national religious and historical mythology. Velikonja traces the evolution of these myths and ideas, and how the religio-national identity factors became an exclusionary political issue. That these were used in creating a religious-cultural identity to an ethnic race to delegitimise Bosnian identity and culture seems to be a consensus. In his 1998 book, Sells focuses on the place of religion and religious mythology, also noting how these religious (Christian) understandings and national mythologies contributed to the genocidal ideologies and 'othering' of Bosnians, particularly Muslims, as illegitimate citizens. However, he goes further to argue that non-intervention by Western states was in part due to Orientalist and racist assumptions on Muslim and Balkan peoples, e.g., assuming violent behaviour was normal among the Balkan peoples. Campbell (1998) takes the discussion in a different way, stating that in Yugoslavia the need for national identity was filled by an identity politic defined by the differing of one's group to the external 'other'. He goes on to argue, by questioning normative assumptions of identity by the international community,

that solutions to the conflict that focused on demarcations of ethnic and national boundaries were harmful as they reinforce the idea of the negative 'other'.

Boundary creation and 'othering' are important theories to understand genocide. Hiebert (2008) raises the question of why certain exclusionary ideologies lead to genocide, but others do not. While the lines between genocide and policies such as expulsion can be thin, Hiebert's theory that the level of existential threat is instrumental in this, particularly if the victim group becomes the focal point to blame for a current crisis. Communal identities can be established by singling out the 'other', who can become positioned against or different to the community. This can continue to the victim group loosing their (legal or communal) status within the community, erasing their need for rights, by them no longer being classed as legitimate (Hiebert, 2008). In genocide, the aim is to make the group 'subhuman' so that persecuting and killing them becomes legitimate. The ways in which a group is characterised as a threat varies, from claiming their direct betrayal or controlling of the community to harm them; their conflict being a form of 'existential conflict'; or through adding cultural or biological impurities to the community. Ideological views often utilise historical or cultural motifs to create the outsider group as an existential threat and can become means used to justify non-intervention.

Further areas of the Bosnian conflict have been studied. Greenberg (2004) studied the area of language, contending that language in Yugoslavia played a role in the power dynamics and identity classification. Language here is seen as an important aspect of national identity formation, as seen in the codification of languages as specific to different groups, i.e. Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, and Montenegro. Bergholz (2014) argues that the dimension of social dynamics and experiences of individuals with mass killings and exposure to corpses needs to be addressed. He uses the Bosnian case to assess how these factors may contribute to silence around atrocities. While this is a different study to my focus, it demonstrates how the conversation of Bosnia and genocide is continuing in new ways and may offer further insights into social dynamics and why the atrocities continued, from a local level perspective.

Around Srebrenica, the responsibility of bystander states and the international community has been widely discussed. Vetlesen (2000) has traced the argument for bystander responsibility of the United Nations in the case of Bosnia, whilst Strydom (2008) has explained the legal processes now making states party to the Genocide Convention responsible for a lack of action. More widely, external state responsibility for genocides has been concluded. Particularly during the early stages of persecution, Cohen (2001) argues, intervention by external states or organisations could be the most effective. Of course, the actions and motives of nations are complex, potentially focused on self-interested goals over external conflict, but this leads back to Conley-Zilkic's suggestion of pressuring states. However, this should not discount discussions on issues of state intervention in other nations' affairs more widely. For example, Mozjes was critical of the arms embargo placed as a sanctions on Serbia, arguing that this caused more harm to the civilians in the area (Penaskovic, 1996). Discussions on what action is to be carried out by other nations and organisations is important to be assessed, even if we consider it important that some action is taken. The responsibility of churches, considering the Christian emphasis in the creation of national identity and fact that certain Churches were in support of the events, has also been observed.

2.3 The Role and Possibilities of Religion

Religious affiliation, religion as an aspect of national or group identity, and mythological ideas play a role in the preliminary stages of genocides, especially in creating possibilities for othering a particular group. The role of religions in genocides has been studied in relation to other conflicts, for example, Van't Spijker (2006) on Christian identity, history, and the authority of the Catholic Church in the Rwandan genocide. Similarly, Hayward (2010) has written on the possibilities for church intervention, also referring to the case of Rwanda. That religious institutions either support or do not condemn genocidal action by states emerges frequently in the topic, and the responsibility they, as societally powerful institutions, have to this. The uses religion can have in peacebuilding is an area being studied and addressed in practice. Smock (2010) notes ideas that are

becoming more prevalent in the field, including interfaith dialogue, reconciliation, and social justice values. Jacobs (2009), focusing on the Abrahamic religions, notes how they have been connected to underpinnings and justifications of genocides. His study looks into alternative ways of reading Abrahamic texts. Religious institutions can play an important role in peace-making, for example, because they are influential institutions or are related to the religious-identity formations in a conflict (Smock, 2010).

The subject of religious peacebuilding is highly important, and I suggest aspects of it can also relate to the area of prevention. Graham and Haidt (2010) explore positive aspects relating to religiosity using a functionalist approach to religion. They argue the social functions of a religion, in forming a moral community for the adherents and/or participants can help create communal moral behaviours, acts or beliefs. These positive functional aspects of religion are what I feel could be built upon to counter prejudices embedded within national mythos and/or create a psychological shift to stimulate bystanders action.

It seems that the social and psychological possibilities of religion for positive effects are demonstrated and theorised in the area, but often with regards to the ending or afterward of conflict, e.g. reconciliation. I wish to see whether there are aspects of religion, either as a social or psychological phenomena, which could be of use in the earlier stages of genocidal conflict, thereby serve as a potential preventative measure, or as a means of stimulating bystander intervention during conflict situations. That there is a link between religion and national identity formations is recognised, including in the context of the conflict around Bosnia. If then these types of national mythologies and exclusivist identities contribute to the creation of an arena where genocide becomes a possibility, creating different framings using religious conceptions seems a possibility, yet there does not appear to be much theory on this from the perspective of genocide prevention. As genocides and their preliminary signs can be seen in many instances continuing today, looking into possible genocide prevention tactics that could be applied before the later stages begin is crucial to research.

3. Conceptual Framework

  This research bases itself on previous studies in the areas of genocide, psychology, and religion to combine these in a new way to theorise on potential genocide prevention solutions, by way of the bystander problem. This chapter notes the concepts which are used as basis for this research, some of which were noted in the literature review.

  The classification of genocide is contested, and for the sake of this research, the understanding of genocide used is acts done, with the intent of destroying in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial, religious, or political group through direct killing or means of stopping the continuing survival of the group and their descendants (Cina, 1996). This broader definition of genocide additionally means that related concepts, such as cultural genocide[3], can be referred to. The Ten Stages of Genocide model (Stanton, 2016) is used as a base for understanding genocidal factors as beginning before mass killing, but influencing this. Precursors to genocide are often found in economic, political, and/or cultural instability, which may be internal or external. Genocide prevention then consists of any action undertaken to avert a genocide, through awareness and action taken when political, social, and cultural risk factors are identified in a context.

  The base definition of bystander for this research is an individual or group who is present (at some level) but not a direct participant or target in a genocide. Bystanders here do not necessarily need to be associated by identity to the perpetrator, but can be. Genocides are a collective event, where the action (and inaction) of several parties is necessary for it to continue to the final stages. In a genocide, the largest group will be made up of individuals who fall into the bystander category, but this does not make them all equal in levels of responsibility or complicity, which it needs to be acknowledged in assessing bystander responsibility. Bystander types can be understood in different ways,

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[3] actions undertaken to prevent the cultural and identity continuation of the group in ways different to physical extermination.

including passive bystanders, those connected by group involvement, and bystanders who have been assigned as impartial or responsible observers, i.e. of a third party outside (Vetlesen, 2000, p.520). Non-involved individuals who support or incite in some way, but do not act directly, can still be understood as bystanders, though more complicit.

To address the question of the bystander problem and bystander responsibility a framework will be used, based on Vetlesen's (2000) discussion of responsibility in the Bosnian case and different kinds of bystanders. The criterion are awareness of ongoing events and their implications and agency, i.e. power, to act in a situation and change the situation. Üngör (2016) has set out an analytical model for studying genocides from a political-sociological perspective. While the causes of a genocide is complex, he argues it can be approached through three different perspectives: the macro (international), meso (domestic), and micro (individual). From this, the question of bystanders have been determined along levels of international and internal, and individual and organisational, e.g. churches, NGOs, states.

How religion is a part of genocidal ideology will be determined via identifying 'othering' and other ideological features, and their effect, particularly in relation to how identity and boundaries are created. Hiebert (2008) argues identity construction needs to be understood with reference to prior societal views of the group, which if looking into how bystanders consider the victim group will be important to consider, and will be addressed in looking into the case study.

The definition of religion being utilised in this paper is as a system of beliefs and practices addressing existence, meaning, and behaviour, with a shared set of values and moral obligations, as well as ritual and social elements, and enable the formation of a binding moral community (Graham and Haidt, 2010). This understanding of religion is a social-functionalist one, which includes religion's functions of affecting individual and group identity, codification of beliefs, such as moral values, and behaviours, and as an authority. This leads to an understanding that religious beliefs and influences have an effect on the behaviours and responses of an individual towards the world (Bae, 2016). Thus, this research uses

this idea of religion to suggest that, if directed in a particular way, it could stimulate particular positive outcomes for individual or group re-action to events.

Theories of bystander psychology and psychological responses towards mass suffering outlined in the literature review, in particular Slovic's (2007) 'psychic numbing' and Cohen's (2001) theories of denial will be used to better understand behaviours, and thereafter find means of changing detrimental psychological reactions. Monroe's (2008) outline of six psychological factors which influence the responses of individuals to genocide, established from analysis of different actors during the Second World War will be relevant to this as well. Her categories are self-conception; identity (which can demonstrate ethical perspectives); relational worldview, including sense of agency; how certain values are integrated into self-understanding; personal suffering and vulnerability; and 'cognitive categorisation' (demonstrating how an individual views the 'other'). Many of these ideas link to ethical understandings and how ideological factors link to the self. Thus there is a possibility for religious imageries and social features to be applied in a more positive way. Factors determined to be influencing bystanders, or reasons for non-intervention will be addressed in combination with understandings of the functions of religion.

4. The Argument for Bystander Responsibility

This chapter covers the question of bystander responsibility. Designating or assigning the role of responsible bystander to an individual or organisation can be complicated. As noted in Chapter Three, role and responsibility of bystanders is here assessed by their knowledge of the situation and their power to act. Both internal and external bystanders, as individuals, groups, and organisations, through inaction or indirect support of the actions of the perpetrators, give legitimacy and confidence to the perpetrators, and create a setting where persecution of a group can continue without fear of repercussions. While through assessing awareness and agency, concluding responsibility on its own does not deal with the deeper issues of why there is inaction in a situation. The question of responsibility is not assessed here to assign blame, but to be used as a tool to see the areas a solution of prevention could be applied to.

To avoid using collective guilt or imposing responsibility for an event onto individuals who do not have the power to engage in counteractive measures to a genocide, bystander should be understood as a contextual term. The question of a bystander's responsibility to intervene in a genocide situation based around the main factors of awareness of the situation, agency, and power. When bystander groups, the influences upon them, and their abilities for action can be identified, the possibilities they have for influencing the course of a genocide and what factors should be addressed to increase the likelihood of intervention can be determined. Thus, in this chapter, the responsibility of different actors will be addressed with regards to these factors, specifically with instances of the case study, but relevant to genocides responses more widely. The importance of bystander intervention and its influence the outcome of a genocide is generally understood; if types of bystander intervention can have the potential to ameliorate a situation, then it makes non-intervention to an extent complicit, if the possibility to act is there.

4.1 Srebrenica in the Bosnian War

The Srebrenica massacre occurred during the Bosnian war, and some context is necessary for explaining the bystander relation. In July 1995, approximately 8,000 Bosnian Muslims were massacred by Serbian forces who entered Srebrenica, a UN declared safe-zone. The Srebrenica massacre has been the only event during the war to be legally determined as a genocide, under the International Court of Justice in 2007. While the Serbian state was not indicted as responsible for the genocide directly, its failure to prevent the massacre and sanction the perpetrators determined them to have failed its responsibility under the Genocide Convention, i.e. to take steps to prevent genocides (International Federation of Human Rights, 2007). The focus on Srebrenica does not involve only the massacre itself, but the circumstances which allowed for it to occur, which can be understood as the pre- or early genocide stages. The situation is linked to wider events of the Bosnian war, and towards the attitudes towards the Muslim population by Serbian militia and leaders that were ongoing in the surrounding region.

The figures for Muslim deaths during Srebrenica generally stand around 8,000, but as Mojzes (2011, p.149) notes, exact figures of those killed and wounded during the conflict are imprecise and contested, as with figures surrounding the conflict as a whole. Context and nuance are important in understanding the situation. Arguments of moral equivalency and equal guilt made (towards Bosniaks) are not helpful here as the actions of individuals on all sides does not equate to the aims and motivations of the Serbian side and militias as a whole. While groups of religio-national extremists were present in all three groups (Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks), the Serbian side had more power, equipment, and a wider spread of their ideology, particularly compared to Bosniaks (Sells, 1998, p.129). It is true that some Muslim groups, along with certain members of all sides of the conflict, did also commit war crimes[4]. However, this does not fall under the remit

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[4] For example, the recent indictment of a group of fourteen Muslim officers and soldiers for the torture and murder of Bosnian Serb civilians during the conflict (Reuters, 2017).

of attempted genocide, and arguments made utilising this[5] appear to lean towards moral equivalency[6] of sides during the Bosnian war and genocide. As Srebrenica occurred during a wider conflict, it does make an assessment of the situation more complex to an extent. Arguing for moral equivalency as war crimes were committed by individuals on all sides disregards the inequal power balance between sides and that the Serbian side maintained the goal of eliminating the Muslim population of the area (Cigar, 1995, p.117). Moreover, the focus of this research is on genocide, which involves the Srebrenica massacre and the ideology and bystander actions which allowed it to build and occur.

The chapter continues in three parts, to assess the question of bystander responsibility with regards to different actors. The first section covers the question of international bystanders, including states and supranational organisations with a legal obligation to protect individuals and prevent genocides (Vetlesen, 2000, p.519). The issues of international media coverage and their influence are also considered. The second section covers internal bystanders. While the case of the Bosnian war and the lead up to Srebrenica is the example that continues to be used, the case for internal bystanders would necessarily need to be addressed with regards to specific context, as this is likely the area where the most variation in terms of agency, knowledge, and danger to the individual. The third section concerns religious organisations. While this could be considered with reference to any religious institution globally, the question is here limited to those who proclaim the same religious affiliation as is being used to uphold a genocidal ideology or rule.

4.2 International Bystanders

Srebrenica and the surrounding areas were declared a safe zone by the Security Council of the United Nations on April 1993, due to continued attacks and shelling

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[5] Not just acknowledgement, but when applied for a particular aim.
[6] Moral equivalency suggests that, if all sides committed bad actions, then all are equally guilty. By extension, it implies Bosnians were no more victims or targeted, and to an extent, were deserving of actions committed against them.

of the civilian population by Bosnian Serb paramilitaries (Strydom, 2008, p.449). As a safe zone, Srebrenica was to remain free of hostilities and protected by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). In July 1995, Srebrenica fell to Serbian forces with insufficient resistance from the United Nations' forces and a lack of support from other states, resulting in the genocide.

What occurred in Srebrenica is viewed as failure on the part of the international community to act appropriately to prevent the massacre. This is not the only instance of criticism towards the international community for a lack of appropriate intervention into the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Srebrenica and the genocide of the Bosnian Muslim community in the region can be viewed as an example of ineffective measures and detrimental approaches. The international community is here divided into two groups. Firstly, supranational organisations, such as the United Nations and NATO. Secondly, other nation states, and while there arguments can be made around state sovereignty and to what extent a government can be responsible for another nation's actions, the Genocide Convention (1948), signed by members of the United Nations, gives nations an obligation to 'prevent and punish' genocides (Vetlesen, 2000, p.519). Moreover, genocide involves the deaths and suffering of innocent individuals, which, from a moral standpoint, should stimulate a level of obligation. While some countries and groups in the Middle East did act in the conflict, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey[7], the focus here is on Western nations (particularly European and the United States). The United States particularly is a highly powerful and influential country, which has been criticised along with other G7 nations for not taking enough action, or supporting actions which would have detrimental consequences, such as the partition plan which would endorse territorial conquest and endanger the Bosniak population (Human Rights Watch, 1995). How these can be seen as bystanders within conflict needs to take into account their obligations and responsibility, and potential for involvement that could change the course of events to prevent genocide.

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[7] Evidently, these nations also intervened with their own political motivations as well (MacDonald, 2002, p.242).

The lack of appropriate attempts to protect civilians on the part of the United Nation's forces and peacekeepers, despite authorisation by the Security Council for the use of force against Serbian paramilitaries drew criticism, and when utilised, was criticised for ineffectiveness due to lack of a wider goal (Human Rights Watch, 1995). The lack of appropriate action effects the credibility of the organisation, and the threat of repercussions to the perpetrators if they continue. The same problem arises if sanctions are not employed against perpetrators. An example is the arms embargo. While the aim of the embargo was to prevent the spread of the conflict in the Balkans and not impede humanitarian aid efforts[8], it did not take into account the unequal levels of equipment; Serbian forces had enough despite the embargo while Bosniaks did not have the necessary means to defend themselves in the conflict (Cigar, 1995, pp.139-140). The embargo therefore exacerbated power inequalities between sides.

The question arises as to why measures taken by NATO, the United Nations, and other Western states were ineffective. Though naturally international politics and the states' individual aims will influence this, I am here going to discuss how the international community interpreted the conflict. As mentioned, the genocide took place during a wider conflict, with three sides in combat with each other. However, that should not excuse the kinds of thinking which led to the lack of appropriate action.

Given the power dynamics in play, including force and armaments, and the Serbian anti-Islam campaign, blaming the Muslim population for responsibility to their victimisation seems especially egregious. Negative stereotypes about Muslims and Islam has never been unique to the Balkans, and a history of Orientalist discourse has occurred throughout the West. Moreover, Western discourse portrayed the Balkan people as violent and irrational in themselves, always at conflict with each other, further implying there was no reason to intervene as ethnic conflict in the Balkans was inevitable (Sells, 1998, p.124). Not

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[8] That is not to say humanitarian efforts were not important, but the implementation of the embargo policy had a detrimental effect despite the reasons made for it.

acknowledging the complexities of the situation and victimisation through particular narratives was visibly harmful.

The international media played a role in influencing the international community's attitudes, including promoting the ideas noted in the paragraph above, through how it framed and reported the conflict. This is not limited to this case; it applies generally, as outsiders mainly learn about global events and conflicts through news and mass media. How media presents information influences general perceptions of a situation and the actors involved, thus their response to events. External reporting of events often followed Serbian ideas of the Muslim population, which influenced policy responses (Cigar, 1995, p.113). An account given by a Serbian journalist notes how international media did not classify the Serbian forces as aggressors and maintained a stance of moral equivalency, for such a time that it prevented appropriate intervention. In the early stages of reporting the Bosnian war, this included selective omissions that implied the West should not intervene, thereby giving the Serbian forces more power to continue (Ricchiardi, 1996). One would hope (external) politicians and members of peace and conflict organisations would have a nuanced overview of a situation, but it is not unlikely certain individuals will still be influenced by media narratives. Moreover, how outside individuals view a conflict is important considering their possibilities of action, e.g. pressuring to organisations and governments to act.

This leads to the frequently arising discussion of when the use of the term genocide is appropriate. The exact definition of what constitutes a genocide is contested, and often compared to the classification of ethnic cleansing, but that does not mean events cannot be classified as such if they fit the appropriate designation, i.e. an attempt to destroy a particular ethnic, religious, etc. group. An article published in the Washington Post argued that calling what happened in Srebrenica a genocide weakens the horror of the *Shoah*, often seen as the prototypical genocide (Cigar, 1995, p.117). However, the term genocide should not be understood purely from a numerical standpoint, and appropriately naming a genocide as such is not an attempt to denigrate other events. Rather, it has been

shown that utilising correct terminology and comparing a case of mass violence to a prototype understanding of what a genocide is tends to create more support for intervention and prevention (Mazur and Vollhardt, 2016, pp.290)[9]. This also applies to identifying pre-genocide stages; the stages before killing takes place are the most effective for intervention, but if the term genocide becomes limited by numerical determinants, this could be harmful to acknowledging the importance of preventative measures. If serious preventative measures are to be taken before mass killings take place then it seems necessary to call the acts taking place appropriately. That is not to say the term genocide should be used lightly, but it is detrimental to prevention measures to avoid it in cases which appear to be following genocidal patterns.

The international community was aware of the situation, and while information about specifics of an event may have been distorted, for state governments and organisations whose obligation it is to intervene in these circumstances, the availability to look into the issue should have been there. Moreover, it can be argued these actors had more responsibility to the situation, as either signees of the Genocide Convention or with genocide prevention as part of their organisation's purpose. While ability to change events for individual citizens living outside the area is less, organisations and state governments did have the power to act and possibility of influencing events, outlined in the following paragraphs. While political circumstances and inter-state relationships will change, the responsibility and influential power of the international community seems the least likely to change with contemporary and future genocide situations.

The international community could have had an effect on the event through direct action or condemnation. Cigar (1995, p.86), in documenting the situation, explains that Serbian leadership was conscious of their image in the international sphere. Serbian leadership made attempts to deny their actions, including outright denial of any genocide, and accountability to maintain their relationship with the

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[9] Genocide comparisons can be made for propaganda purposes and without evidence, but proper analyses of situations by the appropriate people should be able to identify when a situation has the features of a genocide.

international community and not incur negative repercussions. This, and the fact that the international community had the means of force to intervene and protect, suggests that there was the possibility for international action to prevent what occurred in Srebrenica and Bosnia-Herzegovina. With genocidal violence usually originating with a small group (Lieberman, 2011, p.12), often sensitive to external repercussions, it seems evidence that international organisations have the power to prevent escalating conflict and violence. Both sanctions and military measures[10] can offer the possibility of prevention, if implemented effectively, as they can stop the physical possibilities of the perpetrators to cause harm (Cigar, 1995, p.159). Condemnation in itself can be utilised. However condemnation and punishment of perpetrators cannot be done without following out threats; this makes these measures ineffective as they have no real weight.

It should be noted that there are limitations. Not every individual involved would have the power to influence the actions of an organisation or government, but for institutions with power, their inaction had an effect on legitimising and allowing the acts of the Serbian government and militias to continue. Certain decisions which were detrimental were sometimes based on stereotypes or too basic understandings, as stated above. Moreover, I am not stating that nations should be given free rein to intervene in other states[11]. Some appropriate measures, however, could be used to stop or at least lessen the harm of a genocide, particularly through means of international condemnation.

4.3 Internal Bystanders

Is important to look into in bystanders within the setting of the genocide, here referred to as 'internal' bystanders. They may be associated with the perpetrator group by an emphasised socio-national or ethnic identity, or at the very least not members of a victimised group. There is wide variety here in how much knowledge

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[10] Within reason, such as protective measures. There is of course discussion around international intervention in conflicts of other nations, which is of course very important, but with the limits of scope, the specifics of acceptable international military intervention is not something which can be gone into in detail here.

[11] There have been instances of this which have had detrimental consequences.

an individual has about the situation, their level of agency, and how they are affected by societal phenomenon such as propaganda. It is therefore important to not classify all people who could be within this group as having the same level of responsibility to respond to the situation. Nonetheless, internal bystanders play a role in genocidal conflict, making the discussion of the nature of internal bystanders important for how to address prevention.

In the situation of Serbian militia targeting of Bosniaks, narratives and actions were undertaken to minimise protest or turn Bosnian Serbs against the Muslim population. Propaganda and indoctrination can be very effective. These ideas were based in historical ideas and sentiments, in combination with reference to socio-political situations. Furthermore, the ethno-religious dimension of the conflict and how it was framed was used to provide a sense of collective and personal identity. Mojzes (2011, p.147) uses the concept of ethno-religiosity in the setting, where ethnic and religious identities are merged to create this. While the details of ideological components, particularly in relation to religion, are given in more detail in Chapter Five, it seems pertinent to mention how this affected the general populace in the conflict for the question of bystander responsibility. Due to the political aims to remove the multicultural setting of Bosnia and a rapid increase in nationalisation and polarisation, individuals were forced to link themselves to an identity (Serbian or Croat) based upon name or religious affiliation (Lučić, 2013, pp.44).

It is well established that inaction of internal bystanders plays a role in allowing the exacerbation of a genocide, but it is important to go over certain specifics in relation to how this occurred in the Bosnian case, leading to the Srebrenica massacre. A process of denial and hiding events was put in place by governmental and religious leaders, directed towards the international audience and the internal populace. Public denial and acceptance made it easier for bystanders to not act and, furthermore, lessened Muslim resistance by downplaying certain events (Cigar, 1995, p.91). The question arises of how aware the average Serbian, Bosnian-Serbian, or other non-victim groups in the region (not involved in government or militia) would have been of what was ongoing, i.e. the persecution

of Bosnian Muslims. There would likely have been some awareness among internal bystander groups, either from witnessing events, the social spread of information internally, and accusations made by foreign reports (Cigar, 1995, p.102). This does not mean that awareness was full, for example, foreign reports would not necessarily be believed, especially with the force of Serbian propaganda and institutional denial. Propaganda and social denial have an effect on how information is received and processed; just being given the information that genocidal violence is taking place is not enough to provoke action (Staub, 1993, p.315). Therefore, in seeking to stimulate bystander action, it is not enough to simply provide proof, since the complexities of social context, the effects of ideology and indoctrination, and bystander psychology must be accounted for.

Nonetheless, understanding the place of bystanders within the conflict establishes how much of an impact bystander action could have had on the situation, thus making a case for bystander responsibility. Evidently, this is a complex issue, but is helpful in providing insight into the role of internal bystanders, and possibilities there may be to counteract mounting genocidal ideologies in future situation. The factors of agency and awareness will vary by situation, but bystander intervention nonetheless holds possibilities to change the outcome of events. That is not to say each individual should be held to a level of responsibility for the consequences of a genocide. This paper aims to find ways to influence bystanders to action, rather than to assume their intervention from concluding a level of responsibility.

There are identifiable factors that differ between bystanders responses of acting to help victims or against them. In Bosnia, there were documented cases of Bosnian Serbian bystanders who attempted to aid their Bosnian Muslim neighbours (Lučić, 2013) or disagreeing with the persecution. Genocidal ideologies have a focus on designating identity groups with boundaries, but as Monroe (2008, p.700) argues on the nature of bystander behaviour, having a wider understanding of inclusivity of identity is a common feature of rescuer behaviour and bystander intervention. Moreover, given how militias are structured, there are instances of possibility for individuals to act without reference to a central authority, which

implies some possibility for soldiers and others to act counter to the genocidal aims (Cigar, 1995, p.49). Cigar here gives the case of a Chetnik deciding not to kill a Muslim cleric at the request of the cleric's child. While possibilities for practical approaches are noted later, it is important to have this understanding of characteristics which make bystander intervention more likely, to see whether they can be evoked.

As internal bystanders generally seem to be the group with the largest variation in terms of agency in events, I would like to reiterate here the problematic nature of assigning collective responsibility. While internal bystanders may be implicated in the genocide through group identity association, their power to act or condemn actions varies. A group with more status will be more powerful than a single individual. Lučić (2013, pp.48-49) argues that during the conflict, Serbian militias used tactics to instil fear and uncertainty about their own safety at the hands of their 'own' groups[12], and thereby made it more difficult for individuals to intervene, due to the potential risk to themselves. The risk towards non-victim groups if they try to aid them or criticise the perpetrator party is another factor to be aware of when assessing bystander responsibility in genocides, and it is not reasonable or realistic to expect all individuals to put themselves or their families/communities in the way of danger. However, even Lučić acknowledges that this factor is more a feature during the later stages of genocide, e.g. when mass killing is occurring. That bystander intervention becomes more difficult in later stages also parallels genocide theory that it is best to intervene in earlier stages.

For internal bystanders, both during the Bosnian genocide and towards genocides more widely, the question of responsibility is hardest to assess, as the levels of awareness, complicated by factors such as propaganda, fear, and psychological denial, and depending on the specifics of the state and/or situation, risk. Once again, even if responsibility can be concluded, with reference to the fact that bystanders condemning perpetrator action or protecting individuals does

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[12] Classed within the same ethnic group, i.e. Serbian.

have an effect, the aim here is not to assign blame, but to see how bystander intervention can be used, and what factors and responses are preventing it, to find more widely applicable effective solutions.

4.4 Religious Institutions

Another group of actors to be considered with regards to the question of bystander responsibility are religious institutions. While they can fall under either category of internal and external, due to the specific influence religious institutions can have, and the focus of this research being around religious influences, they have been separated here. Many genocides use religious affiliation or aspects of beliefs as justification, as religion can function as a strong aspect of social and group identity and ideological justification[13].

If one is a member of a particular community implicated in the name of the acts carried out, whether one is obligated to distance themselves by condemning the acts. Of course, it is also important to consider the power dynamics and abilities of institutions. Religious institutions function at a different level to an individual. In reference to the arms embargo, Sells (1998, p.129) mentions that, in the case of Bosnia, where Serbian Orthodox Christianity was the most influential denomination, certain individual churches did speak out against the harm this policy would cause. However, these churches did not have as much influence or power as larger religious leaders and institutions, who opposed lifting the embargo and NATO defence involvement. Particularly for external religious leadership, they are unlikely to be in any danger themselves in doing so.

As noted, not condemning an action passively legitimises it, and allows perpetrators to continue without fear of punishment. If a religious or theological viewpoint is used to support, it gives religious institutions the opportunity and legitimacy to counter and question the validity of these uses of beliefs, as well as to condemn the actions in general. With regards to the conflict in Bosnia, where

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[13] The specific ways this occurs and more detail on the role of the churches will be elaborated on in Chapter Five.

ethno-religious nationalism played a large role, the role of the Church institution has been criticised. In post-Soviet nations, various religious leaders were able to become powerful spokespeople, proclaiming to defend their ethno-religious groups and historical traditions against threatening outside forces (Mojzes, 2011, p.149). *Pravoslavlje*, an official church publication in Serbia, published an article which legitimised the use of violence by Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, portraying the conflict as an historic or existential one between Serbs and Muslims (Cigar, 1995, p.32). The Serbian Orthodox Church was one of the prominent groups who publicly denied the events which took place, such as the existence of concentration camps and mistreatment (Cigar, 1995, pp.89-90). Denial is a powerful tool as it removes the responsibility of perpetrators, lessens the awareness factor of bystanders, and can be used to exonerate perpetrators of culpability. It is unlikely this was due to a lack of knowledge, rather a religio-political aim to portray a justified image to both the outside world and citizens within, similar to the Serbian government's own attempts to do the same. Of course, these actions[14] arguably make these religious institutions directly implicated in what happened, not passive bystanders. Cigar (1995, p.120) also notes that certain politicians in the West downplayed role of church.

Bosnia is not the only instance of religious institutions, particularly externally to the state where a genocide is occurring, have been questioned with regard to their inaction. For example, the role and (ideological) influence of the Catholic Church in the Rwandan genocide. Whether outside or internally, if religious institutions do not condemn dangerous religious narratives and genocidal victimisation of groups, especially if they have the power to do so and potentially legitimacy given to them by theological standing, it legitimises the actions. While condemnation or criticism is unlikely to wholly halt a situation, and is unlikely to deal with underlying socio-economic, political, or historical factors or grievances which have led to the genocide, it is nonetheless an important factor in how it can affect the willingness of bystanders to passively accept the events.

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[14] These will also be further elaborated on in Chapter Five.

4.5 Conclusion

   Material on the situation of different actors has been recorded in reports and assessments by scholars of the situation. In this chapter, I have assessed the question of bystander responsibility through the factors of awareness and agency. In the case of Bosnia and Srebrenica, clear arguments for responsibility can be made towards the international community and religious authorities; though internal bystanders could have had an effect in intervening, factors from being within the situation make it more complex. The evidence, through accounts and understandings of the Serbian leadership, provides proof that bystander intervention could have affected what occurred in Bosnia, including Srebrenica and the persecution of the Bosniak population, both in terms of the international community and internal groups. Trends in the precursors to and features of genocide suggest the ideas here can be seen in other genocide situations, which establishes their relevance in other situations. The wide condemnation of the international community in the aftermath of Srebrenica indicates there are lessons to be learned from it. The ability to assess bystander responsibility is essential for continuing to see where and how measures to stimulate bystander intervention should be targeted. Many bystanders will be influenced by propaganda and genocidal ideologies, and these factors, with reference to the case of Bosnia, will now be explored and discussed.

5. How Religion Contributes to Genocide

This chapter identifies how religion plays a role in contributing to setting the arena and context for a genocide to take place, discussing the different ways in which ethno-religious identification and religious affiliation were used to create identity boundaries, their purpose, and consequences in the Bosnian conflict and ultimately genocide, with reference to associated theoretical explanations. This also has implications for what influences are affecting bystanders. An analysis of the case study will be used to identify trends and phenomena, and how these work. Preparatory phases of a genocide involve ideological groundwork to justify and motivate action. Especially for internal bystanders, propaganda messages given consistently and by influential figures, such as political or religious leaders, can have an important effect on how events are understood, including the conception of self and other. As Cigar (1995, p.22) notes, although religion, history and culture will have been an important aspect of rising Serbian nationalism in the pre-war period (1980s), this is not enough to create full warfare or genocide. Instead, alongside socio-economic and historical factors, a political structure with an agenda and framework that justified a series of nationalist goals was developed. In this, religion became a marker of individual, group, and national identity, which allowed for collective cohesion and ideas such as victimisation to be amplified. Provocative religious language, religious mythos, and theology were exploited to justify ideology and action. Serbian and Croat nationalism became based on identification with a particular denomination of Christianity, Orthodox and Catholic respectively, into a ethnoreligious classification, thus othering and devaluing the Muslim population and others (Sells, 1998, p.8). This developed into programme of systematic persecution aimed at the elimination of the Bosnian Muslim people and their culture from the region. This chapter begins by explaining religio-national collective identity formations, then covers mythology, how these ideas formed a national identity against Bosnian Muslims, propaganda, territorial justifications, and finally the role of religious authority.

To understand how religion was utilised in genocidal ideology in the Bosnian war, its national and historical relevance within the context needs to be addressed. The conflict should not be understood in terms of a religious or ethnic war, despite these dimensions being utilised to an agenda and to form collective identity formations across all sides. It was influenced by many factors, including external events, such as the collapse of Yugoslavia, the weakening legitimacy of the Socialist political system and the Soviet Union, and economic crises (Velikonja, 2003, p.235). The nationalist movements and their effect were a modern creation using historical events and myths as justification, not an inevitable conflict due to constant negative relations and 'ancient hatreds' between ethnic groups, as Western media framed the conflict (Bennett, cit. in Goldsworthy, 2008). While in the Middle Ages, the Balkans, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, were the site of conflict between Christianity and Islam, later Bosnia-Herzegovina was an area with high rates of religious pluralism and co-existent, without the conflict and antagonisms of other areas in Europe (Velikonja, 2003, p.15). The wars in the twentieth century were link to a break in ethnic relations, and the need to establish collective cultural communities and identities, with a sense of historical and ancestral continuity (Greenberg, 2004, p.8). The Serbian nationalist agenda originated within intellectual and religious (the Serbian Orthodox Church) circles following the death of Tito in the 1980s. With the rise of Slobodan Milošević and his government, it became more prominent with their support of the agenda (Cigar, 1995, p.23). Establishing a delineation between 'us' versus 'them' was a necessary tool for the implementation, and popular support, of political goals. Employing collective identities that directly delineate a separate, 'dangerous' other is a feature of genocidal ideologies, and persecution or exclusivist ideologies in general.

Milošević allowed the re-establishment of various Chetnik political organisations, who came to form militia, who would contribute to the nationalist movement as another level (Cigar, 2003, pp.34-5). Simultaneously, state controlled media aimed to influence the population towards accepting the agenda and violence. This nationalist agenda came with the aim of establishing Greater Serbia, with the

question of whether Bosnia-Herzegovina could become a part of greater Serbia being contentious due to the Muslim population (Cigar, 2003, p.25)[15]. The question of demographic threat, i.e. that Muslims would, or were attempting, to overtake the 'national' population, is not unique to this circumstance, and is seen in other genocide cases. This demographic threat necessitates the eradication, through killing or other methods of ethnic cleansing, of all Muslims and their descendants. The large Muslim population was made illegitimate to the Serbian population through revisionist history removing them as an ethnic group, dehumanisation, and conspiracy narratives, in addition to a supposed need to 'liberate' the Serbian population of Bosnia-Herzegovina from a negatively-characterised Muslim-controlled state. This idea of Bosnia is in any case false. As of February 1993, the Bosnian government was made up of eight Bosniaks, five Croats, and six Serbians (Velikonja, 2003, p.255). Similarly, the government army included Croat and Serb soldiers, although as time went on, it became more exclusively Bosniak. The twofold approach of state institutions providing legal and political authority, and the institution of the Church as a morality authority, served to justify from all sides the actions taken towards the Bosniak population.

Compared to the emphasis in Serbian and Croat nationalism on ethnic and national origins supported by a collective mythological past, Bosnian Muslim nationalism had a heavier focus on common experiences, practices, and traditions. For Serbian and Croat nationalists, this was viewed as a weaker form of national collective identity, and without the ethnic, national or territorial aspect being emphasised, could be denounced as a false, illegitimate identity grouping. Velikonja (2003, p.261) cites that between 1988 and 1998, religious affiliation in Bosnia-Herzegovina increased[16]; religious heritage and identity became a more prevalent marker of personal and collective identity during the period for many on different sides. Compared to the Croat or Muslim population of Bosnia-Herzegovina, national consciousness developed more quickly in the Serbian

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[15] Similar attitudes were directed towards Albania.
[16] Polls suggest an increase from 37.3 percent to 78.3 percent of proclaimed religiosity in Bosniaks between 1988 to 1998, and from 18.6 percent to 81.6 percent in Serbians between 1988 and 2000 (Velikonja, 2003, p.261).

population, stimulated by narratives and propaganda around ideas of ethno-religious identity and mythologies, identified and explained below.

5.1 Modes of Identification

The ideology and statements used to justify the genocidal attitude towards the Bosniak people was based in religious and mythological ideas about the identities and histories of the Balkan peoples. In order to delegitimise the victim group, a clear boundary must be established between the group identity of the perpetrators and who they associate themselves to, here Serbians, and the victim group. Collective group identities can come with ancestral or ethnic links, socially or culturally shared elements, e.g. language or religion, and an idea of cultural/ethnic continuity that determines boundaries (Greenberg, 2004, p.8). The victim group becomes 'othered', and violence against them justified, through evocations of fear, threats, or impurity. These are commonly demonstrated in exclusivist, including genocidal, ideologies; outlining them here can create a framework and understanding of these features, thus a base for possibilities to counter them.

Despite the Communist suppression of religions in the previous period, religion was one of the few markers of identity, and so became more prominent and emphasised in the post-Communist era. Religion and religious affiliation as a notion was understood as a preconceived aspect of identity, not related to whether one was practicing (Mojzes, 2011, p.148). Members of militias, Serbian and others, would identify themselves via religious insignias (Sells, 1998, p.15), thereby the ethnic group they associated themselves with. Explicit, symbolic actions, such as blessing weapons, also took place.

While religion was not necessarily the source of conflict, it played a role in defining group boundaries and holding together collective identity. Religion is a powerful base for collective identity, and has had a long-term presence in societies as such (Velikonja, 2003, p.12). Throughout history, it has been a factor in the creation of national consciousness, thereby feeding into social and political events

and ideologies. Uniting a community becomes important during times of social crisis, and unity designated on the basis of a separate, especially antagonistic, identity to designated outsiders is an effective means to do so. For individuals in the Bosnian war, particularly the Serbian side, religious symbols were used for the creation of a sense of community rather than direct religiosity or belief (Herzfeld, 2007, p.111), which is still a feature religion can fulfil.

In using 'othering' to separate and reinforce boundaries of communal ethno-religious identities, historical grievances became more prominent. Antagonisms between ethnic groups lead to hateful and confrontational approaches towards other sides. For Serbians, Croats could be represented by *Ustaše*[17], and Bosnian Muslims as a threat through mythological stories. Muslims were supposedly attempting to overtake Serbians through demographic programmes or by killing them outright, and impose an Islamic state over Orthodox Christian Serbia and Serbians. In 1994, Dragoš Kalajić, a Serbian artist, journalist and associate of paramilitary organisations, argued that the 'Muslim assault' on Europe was being conducted via mass immigration and threatened to make Europeans powerless ethnic and cultural minorities in their own states (Velikonja, 2003, p.244).

Mixing ethnocentrism, superiority and national mythology led to the understanding that the nature of different ethno-religious groups was objective and scientifically provable (Velikonja, 2003, p.247). If the negative nature of Muslims is established as an ahistorical, apolitical fact, then violence against them is further justified. 'Scientific' justification being used to uphold a discriminatory or genocidal ideology is not a phenomenon unique to this case. Other well-known examples include persistent theories of scientific racism and the Nazi eugenic and racial policy. If biology can 'prove'[18] a certain group are lesser humans, it is a blatant means for dehumanisation, which is a step to legitimising violence against the group. Stopping the acceptance of dehumanising narratives is an essential

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[17] A Croatian fascist terror organisation active between 1929 and 1945.
[18] This kind of 'scientific' backing of these kinds of ideologies is not legitimate proof and based in false information.

component then to preventing acceptance of genocidal beliefs and actions. By 'rehumanising' the victim group, bystanders are more able to identify with them.

As cultural elements, for example, literature, language, artifacts, architecture, and rituals, make up a part of group identification, it follows that the destruction of these things, as occurred in Sarajevo, is another means to erase the identities of the victim group (Frieze, 2011). Additionally, in destroying historical memories of the group, it undermines their legitimacy as being a legitimate ethnic and historical community. Programmes of dehumanisation, humiliation and violence affect the identity, cohesion, and (psychological) strength of the group to resist. Serbian Orthodox extremists also sought to undermine the Islam, as aspect of the Muslim communal identity, by denigrating their religious symbols and practices. When used in combination with invoking their own religious symbolisms, furthered ideas and acts of Serbian religio-nationalism as justified (Temoney, 2017, p.12).

5.2 The Function of Mythology

Myths can be defined as traditional stories of a supposed ahistorical nature that explain natural or social phenomena, that while not necessarily historically true, reveal deeper truths about life and society. Myths can be powerful tools in establishing collective group identity and adding characteristics to that identity, such as ideas of a shared past, values, and nature. Myths in this context are not the same as the general term 'myth', to refer to something untrue. They can nonetheless be developed to fit contemporary social, cultural and politics events and changes. Myths serve sociological functions in integrating a group bond and boundaries, explaining events including the origination of a group or society and their future ideal, and providing ideas and ideals that binds and identifies the group. The 'eternal', ahistorical nature of myths lends to their potential for appropriation to new events and changes, as well as a guidance to the future of a group (Velikonja, 2003, p.7). Through their basis in traditional national mythologies and ancient histories, myths can become an important aspect of

ideologies and transformed to serve particular contemporary social interests of a group. Mythological pasts, grievances, purpose, or depictions can be utilised to solidify national ideologies and, when needed, political aims. Myths serve similar functions in collective identity to religions[19].

Myths featuring ancient national territories and peoples were used to create and sustain nationalist ideas in post-Communist states, to help mitigate the social instability (MacDonald, 2002 p. 224). With the collapse of the Communist bloc and Yugoslavia, a vacuum was left which could be replaced by religio-nationalist myths in these areas alongside the creation of national boundaries. Myths and mythological histories emphasising the Church as an essential (existential) feature to the nation, against alternative religions, and ideas of 'chosen-ness' of ethnic groups came alongside the reinstation of religion in post-Communist states. The religio-national Christoslavic mythology depicted Muslims as a group with negative (moral) characteristics. Contributing to this were myths emerging the in the nineteenth century, which associated Muslims with the negative archetypes of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish people. They portrayed Muslims as converts to Islam due to greed, cowardice, or degeneracy, and betrayers of the Slavic race and Christianism (Velikonja, 2003, p.92). *Svetosavlje*, a type of Serbian Orthodox mythology based on Saint Sava, emphasised the unity of Serbs with their own national, cultural, and social identity. Combined with notions of Serbian Orthodoxy as threatened by outsiders, it included a component of mistrust and demonisation of other religious and national groups. These religio-nationalist myths were spread through mass media, literature, and religious institutions.

This is not to claim mythologies are inherently negative; their social functions are important for social cohesion and (personal and communal) identity, which can be interpreted for positive, negative, or neutral possibilities. As with religion itself, mythologies may be interpreted and understood to positive, even inclusivist, imaginaries of a community, and their power for social and individual influence

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[19] Myths are often a component of religions in themselves, for example, in establishing the beginning of the religion or explaining rituals.

comes through their connection to existential, binding, and moral ideas, often holding authority through a religious or national understanding.

5.3 Religion and National Identification

In Serbia, the ethnoreligious understanding that justified exclusionary group boundaries and legitimised violence against Bosniaks, leading to the Srebrenica massacre, came from and were disseminated by the intellectual sphere, influential Church members, and political figures.

The intellectual and academic arena in Serbia, through various influential publications, was able to affect public perceptions in how they presented the Muslim population, Islam, and Serbians as compared to these. Academic tracts served to bolster political aims. The *Serbian Memorandum* (1986), written by the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, validated the goal of establishing a Greater Serbia in order to unite the Serbian people under an (expanded) state (Cigar, 1995, p.25).

The myth of Kosovo, retold in stories, became a prominent idea, linked to both the religious and ethnic aspects of Serbian collective identity. The Kosovo myth, based on the Battle of Kosovo (1389) is a national legend and myth of nation-building, where Prince Lazar fought against the Ottoman Sultan. Prince Lazar was martyred and in mythological understanding, did so to give the Serbian people a place in the Kingdom of Heaven. It was later conceptualised as a defeat which needed to be avenged (Velikonja, 2003, p.94). In the story from the nineteenth century, Prince Lazar becomes depicted as a Christ figure, linking the story to national identity and Christianity. This became key for the development of genocidal ideology through national and religious unity, and ideas of a collective past and future symbolised by the Battle of Kosovo[20], with links to historical territories. Portrayed Muslims and Serbians as the same as their mythic ancestors and in the same roles creates an existential dimension to the groups' relationship.

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[20] During the period, Serbia's influence in Kosovo was becoming less (Cigar, 1995, p.33).

Literary and cultural arenas could associate this story and the idea of avenging Kosovo with political goals of liberation and expansion (Velikonja, 2003, p.94).

Alongside the Kosovo myth, other anti-Muslim writings were popularised during the period. Vojislav Lubarda's *The Ascension* (1990) presents Muslims as violent and treacherous, as compared to noble, heroic, and forgiving Serbians (MacDonald, 2002, p.233), thereby creating adversarial stereotypes of both groups and continuing the portrayal of all Muslims collectively as the same in attitudes and behaviour as the mythic figure Vuk Brankovic. The novel, portraying a massacre of Serbs by Muslims, follows common themes of the threat and antagonism of Muslims towards Serbians. Novelists also fed the fear of an Islamic invasion and imposition in the Balkans. Other older texts of anti-Muslim or anti-Turkish sentiment which became popular during the nineteenth century include and *The Mountain Wreath* (1984) by Njegoš and Cvijić's *Dinaric Man* (MacDonald, 2002, p.233).

Draskovic's popular novel *Noz* (1984) served as an influential book in forwarding stereotypes of Muslims as violent and traitorous (Cigar, 1995, p.25). In the format of a novel, it could spread these ideas through public consciousness. Stereotypes and images of Islam and Muslims and their supposed backwardness, intolerance, and aggression as compared to Christian nations also follows from Orientalist ideas, which has played a role in promoting as acceptable narrow, stereotyped views of Islam as truth through academic justification in of the West. Orientalism stereotyped Eastern civilisations and Islam as uncivilised, exclusivist and fundamentalist to the point of violence, which plays into fears of invasion and having one's own identity and religion supressed from long-standing cultural ideas of the 'other'. In Serbia, the same occurred, providing a supposedly academic, thus justified, prejudiced view of Muslims and Islam that would justify and support governmental actions against the Bosniak people.

Religious language in itself can be utilised as a powerful tool. Language can be evocative through weight and association given to words, taking into consideration the social and historical context. Evoking strong ideas and feelings towards events and groups through religious language and framing is aided by

religion's powerful moral, communal, and existential standing. Serbian nationalism incorporated the notion of Christoslavism, whereby Slavic people are held to be necessarily Christian. If Christianity is an integral part of Slavic identity, then being Muslim, or converting to Islam, necessarily negates being Slavic. Through this and nationalist myths, Slavic Muslims became accused and named 'race-traitors' and 'Christ-killers'[21]. By being determined illegitimate people in the region, Bosniaks could be classed as lesser; this dehumanisation becomes a key aspect to sanction violence and genocidal action towards a group. On the other side, positive religious language was used with reference to Serbian political figures and the actions taken against their designated 'enemies'. Milošević in some works attained an image of a Christ-like figure (Velikonja, 2003, p.245). A blatant example of the use of religious imagery in this way to evoke and symbolise was the selling of commemorative posters depicting Christ, Prince Lazar, and Milošević in the form of the Trinity during a rally in 1989 (Herzfeld, 2007, p.111). In 1988, a number of Serbian clerics killed (martyred) by the *Ustaše* were canonised (Velikonja, 2003, p.264). Serbia became portrayed as a nation of victimised and suffering people, evoking religious ideas of holy suffering and martyrdom which have positive Christian implications. This furthered the link of Serbian nationalism with Orthodoxy and a national consciousness to protect their nation for religious reasons. The idea of a victim/martyred nation was developed into emphasising the strength and righteousness of patriotic[22] members by politicians such as Radovan Karadžic and Biljana Plavšić (Velikonja, 2003, p.258).

Though the Bosnian war and ensuing genocide were not religious conflicts as such, boundaries and ideologies were made by lines of religious affiliation. The Serbian campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Muslim population made use of religious imagery, mythologies, and rhetoric, and used this to magnify the conflict and nationalist aims into the framework of a sacred struggle against an 'eternal' evil enemy. Orthodox theologians and leaders who followed the nationalist ideas

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[21] While historically the term Christ-killer is often associated with anti-Judaism, which also relates to having associated national mythologies and figures such as Prince Lazar as national Christ-figures. The notion of Christ-killers in itself is evocative because of the theological implications of having killed a divine and saviour figure.

[22] Patriotism here identified with the ideas and goals of Serbian nationalism.

interpreted Serbians as a group of eternal victims who were to fight against evil (Velikonja, 2003, p.263). Under these ideas, Serbs became a 'chosen' nation, not only as a ethno-religious group, but also bound by a metaphysical history to territories reflected in the rhetoric of nationalist narratives.

5.4 Propaganda and Dissemination

Both during and preceding the Bosnian war there was an aggressive political and media propaganda campaign making use of the elements discussed above, thereby further disseminating them to the populace. Support by the intellectual community and moral authority given by the Serbian Orthodox Church facilitated the acceptance of the extremist political views of Milošević to the public. It is necessary to know the ways in which these ideas spread and become embedded, not just the ideas themselves, to counter their influence on bystander individuals. As stated previously, popular support is necessary for genocidal actions to be taken by a state government, so Serbian media spreading the ideas which justified and motivated these actions was necessary, and also fuelled participation through the use of fears and images. That is not to say every Serbian believed the stories, and in particular Bosnian Serbs who were in closer contact with the Muslim population were likely more aware of the propagandic nature proclamations (MacDonald, 2002, p.236).

In 1991, the Serbian military took control of radio and television media outlets in Bosnia-Herzegovina to be in control of what was broadcast and prevent Muslim leaders from having the platform (Ahmetasevic, 2010). Overall, Serbian-controlled media upheld the same rhetoric of ethnic division and conflict, demonising Bosnian Muslims and emphasising Serbians as victims.

These can be seen through conspiracy theories directed towards Muslims spread by propagandists. Conspiracies are defined as improbable beliefs explaining an event as being committed by a small, secret, but powerful group, with the intention to harm. They are effective in stimulating fear of the 'other', and demonstrate a need to regain social control over uncertainty. As such, they may

be identified in genocidal ideologies. Examples from other genocides of the twentieth century include Jewish conspiracies stemming from *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1903) and conspiracies in Myanmar about Rohingya Muslims manipulating international media in their favour (Freeman, 2017).

While conspiracies about the plan of Muslims to takeover and impose Islamist rule in the region were the most prominent, MacDonald (2002, p.237) identifies others. Various Serb and Bosnian Serb publications claimed Muslim youth were being encouraged to kill Serbs, creating of harems with Serbian women that Muslims had shelled Sarajevo themselves in order to gain sympathy and support from the West. Stories of Serbian women being raped by Bosniak men *en masse* as a religious act and weapon of war[23] as well as Serbian boys being forcefully converted to Islam circulated, to evoke outrage and fear of the threat of Muslims. The newspaper *Večernje Novosti* published a painting (1888) of a Serbian boy by a grave, made out to look like a photograph, and claimed to be of a Serbian child whose parents were killed by Bosniaks[24]. References to the supposed Muslim genocide of Serbians included references to the Nazis, for example, invoking images of concentration camps and direct comparisons of the Serbian people to Jewish people during the *Shoah*. These conspiracies and alleged threat to Serbians created pretexts for violent actions towards Bosnian Muslims. Alija Izetbegović, a Bosnian politician, published the *Islamic Declaration* in 1972, outlining his views on the relationships between Islam, state, and society. This publication was utilised by Serbians and Croats to 'prove' the plan of Islamist expansionism, and Muslims exclusivism and intolerant towards non-Muslim religions and institutions, though Izetbegović denied his views were related to the situation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (MacDonald, 2002, p.235). Conspiracy theories, while not always related to religion or theology, do take elements from cultural backgrounds, and can be a powerful force in stimulating and legitimising violence, and so should be identified in genocidal ideologies.

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[23] That is not to say individual instances of rape did not occur, across all sides of the conflict, but these imaginaries were used by propagandists to deflect criticism from Serbia and provoke fear and hatred towards Muslims.

[24] see *Appendix II*

In 2010, The Hague indicted Milan Grevo[25] for his role in the Srebrenica massacre. At the time of this trial, discussion arose around whether journalists could be held to a level of responsibility for what occurred in Srebrenica, due to dissemination of false information and by creating a popular atmosphere that condoned violence against Bosniaks (Ahmetasevic, 2010). While indicting journalists would not be possible due to difficulty in proving direct links between publications of propaganda and incitement to genocide, that propaganda played a role in the events is accepted. Media is not an unbiased source, and both subtle and outright propaganda tactics have an affect on individuals in society and how they view and interpret past and ongoing events, and can normalise hate and violence against a group. Consequently, media plays a role in how individuals respond to events, including internal bystanders.

5.5 Justifying Territorial Expansion and Violence

Justification for the necessity of violence against a group can employ other ideas which link issues more directly to socio-political grievances and aims. In the case of Bosnia the progression of this can be seen in ideas spread by the Serbian leadership.

Velikonja (2003, p.248) notes that in Serbian rural towns[26], which were more isolated and tended to be religiously conservative, were more easily drawn into the politics of Serbian nationalism at the time. The feelings generated by the fear of loss of traditional values, particularly during a period of social and economic change (modernisation) that did not necessarily reach the rural areas, lead to a backlash that re-emphasises traditional beliefs and ways of life against others, which was here also portrayed in the urban. Moreover, the setting of the rural could exemplify the mythological past that was being focused on in imageries with

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[25] During the Srebrenica massacre, Grevo was the Assistant Commander for Morale and Legal and Religious Affairs of the Army of *Republika Srpska.*

[26] A large proportion of the population of Serbia.

the rise of nationalism, an idea of 'true Serbia'. The movement would gain popular support from these regions.

Another aspect of this, as documented by Greenberg (2004, p.86) is the history of language in the post-Yugoslavic nations. Within Serbia, nationalist factions advocated for the Serbian language to have non-Serbian elements derived from 'enemy', othered groups, such as Croat, Arabic, and Turkish, removed in order to return to and preserve a 'pure' Serbian language. These concerns around language were ideologically driven, reflecting the concern for nationalistic 'purity' and also harkened back to an idealistic past, i.e. pure original linguistic roots, which mirrors general understandings in genocidal ideologies of creating a strong identity collective.

As mentioned above, Muslims in the Balkan regions were seen as once-Serbians or Croats who had been forced or chosen to convert after the Ottoman invasion during the Middle Ages[27], reflecting the idea of an Islamist invasion against Serbians. Given this, military leaders could argue they were attempting to liberate regions that had been a part of their nation, and 'liberate' the Muslim population therein (MacDonald, 2002, p.222). While motivations originally began with ideas of bringing Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina back to their supposed 'original' ethnic identity, the lack of response to this by the Muslim population, and their re-emphasis of their Muslim identity, necessitated a different approach to complete the Serbian nationalist goals.

Ideas fuelling hatred and violence towards the target group may not necessarily be, or begin, as explicit. They can relate to other ongoing social, political, and economic issues which become intertwined or directed towards the issue with the target group. Identifying different ideologies and ideas which relate and legitimise the genocidal sentiments directed towards particular group can be complex, but nonetheless important, as it can reveal underlying social issues.

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[27] This view was also supported by Muslims who claimed they were converts from the separate 'Bosnian Church', thus never Orthodox or Catholic (by extension, Serb or Croat) (MacDonald, 2002, p.230). Identifying the exact origins of an ethic group is complex and unlikely to be from a single cause, but progression.

5.6 Religious Authority

The importance of religious institutions as authorities on social and moral issues bears discussion with reference to specific ideological factors. As religion in general became more prevalent after Communist rule, the Serbian Orthodox Church did as well, and by the 1980s was regaining influence on the attitudes of their followers (Cigar, 1995, p.30). The Church also supported the merging of national-ethnic and religious identities. Church leadership emphasised factors of territorial expansion, Serbian religiosity, and the delegitimisation and threat of Islam (thus Muslims) in nearby regions. This supported the aims of the war from an explicitly religious-existential standpoint. From the Church, these ideas could be spread to followers and the general populace.

Religious identity and faith, as a force of social cohesion, moral guidance, and identity, can be framed to form hostile tendencies towards other groups and/or religions. A focus on one's religion as being the sole existential and moral truth means that other religions can be classed as false, dangerous, harmful, or sacrilegious. When religious beliefs and affiliations are use this focus, the elimination of other false beliefs can be made into a religious duty. Pushed to its furthest extent, killing individuals of other faiths becomes acceptable as it is seen as eradicating a dangerous or harmful other. In Serbia, religious leaders stressed the threat and fear of Islam as a religion that wished to harm Christianity and, by extension, Serbians. This alarmism meant actions against Muslim populations could be viewed as self-defence or legitimate, and ones with religious and moral implications. Existential framing of conflicts gives not only a moral, thus permissible, aspect to violence against of a group, but can also emphasise the need for a full eradication of the other, with the stakes put as existential and eternal. As stated in the previous chapter, religious institutions hold a particular authority, meaning that their actions and statements can have an important function in legitimising the ideologies they uphold and influencing individuals to particular actions, or inaction.

<u>5.7 Conclusion</u>

Religion, as a feature of national identity and history, and by providing moral authority, communal identity features, and existential truths, can easily be appropriated to fuel genocidal ideologies. The case of the Bosnian war and the Srebrenica massacre seems to exemplify ways in which this occurs. Religion can be utilised, through these features, to amplify the significance of threats and antagonistic relationships. Simultaneously, it can be used to erase or delegitimise other identities and individuals who are not a part of the religious denomination. Religious and ethno-religious ideas appear to be especially related to identity boundaries, but can also be used theologically to gain support and justify violence against a group. In the case of Bosnia, religion became an important feature in national mythologies, conspiracies, and other political goals. None of this is to argue religion in itself is inherently negative, rather to demonstrate how it was used in the case of Bosnia by the Serbian leadership. If religion can be appropriated through specific means to support exclusivist and genocidal ideologies to so effectively, it follows that it should be possible to utilise religion to the opposite effect and use it to mitigate harm.

6. Religion as a Trigger for Bystander Intervention

The previous chapter discussed how religion plays a role in genocidal ideologies and identity formations. This provides an understanding of some of the ways in which religion can be a powerful influence on individuals and communities towards developing and accepting genocidal ideologies. A broader but alternative exploration of the effects of religion is discussed in this chapter. Additionally, it demonstrates areas where intervention, especially towards internal bystanders who will be the most affected by these ideologies in terms of bystander groups, could be influenced to mitigate the bystander problem. This chapter, while using information established from the case study, will be more general. The relevant functions of religion will first be outlined, followed by a discussion of bystanders psychological. The analysis of religion as a tool will be covered through concepts of moral responsibility, values, framing, and practicality as an authority/institution. Finally, the limitations will be acknowledged.

6.1 Functions of Religion

In arguing that religion could be used in ways to stimulate bystander behaviour in a more positive way towards genocide prevention, it is necessary to discuss what features of religion make it suitable for this. Individuals and their behaviour are determined by many aspects, including social-historical context, their experiences, and worldview, which can include religious beliefs and attitudes. In Chapter Five, how religion is used to justify and uphold genocidal ideologies, including the affect it has on internal bystanders in the context of a genocide, whose inaction or implicit support of the ideology effects events. As such, it may be possible to utilise similar functions of religion with alternative emphases to the opposite effect.

Religion is understood and used here with a social-functionalist definition, the being placed on religion as having sociological and communal implications and

effects[28]. Religion has specific attributes which lend it to the possibility of affecting individuals (bystanders) in their response to genocides, both internal and external. Haar identifies the following dimensions: (1) the content of belief (including values, morality, and obligations), (2) practices and ritual behaviours, (3) communal and social bindings, and (4) direct religious/spiritual experiences which effect the individual and/or community (Smock, 2010, p.xvii). Religions also enable individuals and communities to create meaning in the world, and individual understandings of the world inform how they interact with it (Bae, 2016, p.12).[29]

Religion is not the only means by which people can form a community, and it certainly is not the sole means for people to establish their values and morality. However, approximately 84% percent of people worldwide are religiously affiliated[30], which is not insignificant and implies its continued importance, socially and individually (PEW, 2012). Religion can be used very effectively within genocidal ideologies, which is the focus here. Even 'secular' genocides can reflect ideas found in religion, insofar as ancient community understandings, moral obligations, and/or existential boundaries.

From a more practical standpoint, religious leaders and institutions can have a great amount of influence and legitimacy in directing followers. In Chapters Four and Five, this has been noted in reference to the more negative consequences this can have, i.e. supporting and legitimising exclusionary ideologies and violence. Nonetheless, cases of religious authorities being able to influence towards positive and peacebuilding ways are not unknown, including in cases of genocides, or conflicts with genocidal aspects. For example, Imams spreading messages of tolerance and hiding individuals during the Rwandan genocide or certain clergy in Nazi Germany preaching humanitarian theologies (Hayward, 2010, p.5). However,

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[28] See Chapter three for a full definition of religion being utilised in this paper.

[29] There are many different reasons people are religious and many different expressions of religiosity. Despite its link to identity, it is important to not be reductionist about either the nature of religion or religious individuals (Coleman and Collins, 2017, p.3), but given the argument of this paper, this will be the focus.

[30] Acknowledging religious affiliation and beliefs mean different things for different individuals/groups.

these are limited by their size and reach; passive bystanders make up a large group in conflicts.

6.2 Psychological Numbing Versus Helper Psychology

Different means of motivating bystander action have been studied, and it has been found that ways of using guilt and overloading information and images of suffering tend to be ineffective (Cohen, 2001, pp.176, 216). What aspects of religion can be applied to the effect of motivating bystanders can be assessed by identifying what particular characteristics are found in those who do intervene, often referred to as 'helpers', as compared to those who do not. These can then demonstrate what characteristics need to be accentuated.

Bystanders, particularly internal to the context where, as seen in Chapter Five, they will be influenced by the perpetrator ideology, come to have a worldview that is exclusionary to certain groups. This is an important factor which ends up influencing how bystanders see the victim group(s), the situation, and their responsibility. Helper groups, however, have an inclusivist understanding of the world, and are more likely to intervene in future situations (Staub, 1993, p.315).

In assessing bystander responsibility, factors of awareness of the situation and ability to help were used. Monroe (2008, p.700), in her study of bystanders and helpers in Nazi Germany, notes a distinction between bystanders and helpers in terms of their self-image. Bystanders tend to view themselves as having little power or control to change a situation, even if they were wanting to. This links to the reasons for the individual to engage in the 'us' 'them' dichotomy of the perpetrator and a worldview to fulfil this absence. Monroe (2008, p.723) argues that a sense of moral obligation to help is created through understanding another's suffering as relevant to oneself. This suggests, similar to Slovic's (2007) assessment of numerical data, that simply being aware of suffering, even if that creates feelings of empathy and distress, is not enough to definitively stimulate intervention.

The sense that one has the ability to change circumstances is linked to another idea which comes up in the traits of helpers. This is a strength of sense of self and confidence in individuality that allows the individual to separate their self from ideological and the status quo to pursue despite if this action is condemned within the context (Hirsch, 1995, p.150). The characteristics which need to be developed include the empathetic imagination[31], ability to address one's own prejudices; willingness to change beliefs, and being within a community that emphasises values of compassion and inclusivism (Hirsch, 1995, p.153). Religion can also serve to create positively reinforced communal groups with senses of meaning, control, and community in ways which fulfil the necessary needs with focus on positive group characteristics, e.g., on positive moral action.

Therefore, to motivate bystander action, emphasising identification with the victims and personal responsibility could be an effective way to affect the likelihood of bystander action, both internally and externally. How religion can be used to create identification with the victim and form a sense of responsibility towards the victim will be covered in the next section, with reference to Slovic's ideas of psychic numbing and psychological processes of bystanders.

6.3 Moral Responsibility

The first area of ideas for religious intervention to affect bystander behaviour concerns the psychological mechanisms used to cope with the effects of receiving overwhelming knowledge of horrors in the world on the individual. This phenomenon has been called 'psychic numbing' by Paul Slovic (2007), who discusses it with specific relation to genocide. Psychic numbing is the process by which learning about the suffering of many leads to indifference, numbness, and less will to help. This is an important defence for the psyche, so as to not become overloaded, and yet it leads to detrimental consequences. The defence mechanism of 'psychic numbing' appears similar to a particular kind of denial of

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[31] I.e. to be able to identify with another person, but here in relation to those more distantly removed from the self or who have been negatively 'othered' towards one.

genocide and atrocities. Cohen (2001, p.22) outlines this kind of denial as when information is known, but not acknowledged to the extent its significance is fully understood, whether as a defence against overwhelming information or to avoid acknowledging the reality within one's own situation. As Slovic's (2007) analysis states, knowledge of statistics and numbers of victims do not tend to provoke an emotional reaction that transforms into action. Creation of a limited number of images of individuals has a greater effect. An approach that humanises victims to bystanders while avoiding the problem of psychic numbing is therefore necessary.

For many, religion can be a source of motivation and perseverance for the individual in the face of hardship. As such, it could be utilised to emphasise the idea of responsibility, thus a call to action. Religious beliefs can be a strong motivating factor for individuals, as by their nature, religions provide a set of morals, obligations, and codes of behaviour for how an individual should act in life (Downson, 2005, p.20). Indeed, according to Staub's (1993, p.333) research, many rescuers come from backgrounds where responsibility to help was an emphasised trait, which seems to exemplify the affect this can have on the behaviour of individuals. While some argue religious commands are followed only due to a 'threat', e.g. hell, negative karma/reincarnations, this is not necessarily the case, as the same seen in religions without a similar construction of afterlife. Instead, there must be other factors for respect of religious teachings and the motivation they provide.[32] It should be noted that morality is not a fixed concept. In the case of genocidal ideologies, the structure of morality makes violence against the victim group justified, even to it becoming a moral act. Nonetheless, in being able to create and enforce norms and ideas of moral behaviour (Cohen, 2001, p.58), beliefs can be proponents of alternative inclusive theologies and worldviews.

In the case of bystanders, a decision to act may be based on, among other factors, the weight of the risks to utility or rewards of intervention (Cohen, 2011, p.71). While there may be a similar model at play in religion, religious beliefs, for many

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[32] This is a general point. It is not to say all individuals follow every rule of their religion at all times, or interpret the teachings of a religion in a single specific way.

adherents, have a greater significance[33]. To stimulate bystander intervention, personal responsibility to act should be emphasised, even if this is done within a communal setting. The issue of diffusion of responsibility is a factor in bystander behaviour, where if more people are present to an event, an individual is less likely to act, as they feel they are not the sole person and thus not fully responsible to the event (Cohen, 2011, p.70). Religion, as somewhere that provides moral understands, meanings, and obligations, would be an arena to reinforce this. As mentioned, methods such as guilt-based encouragement tend to be unhelpful in stimulating bystander action, hence this idea of more positive framing, e.g. responsibility, being a moral community/example. This is not suggesting religions need to be inherently changed. Values such as compassion, alleviation of suffering, and countering injustice are common to many religions, and changes or differences in emphasis are already common in religious development or between contexts. The issue that comes about is what aspects of a religion and how religious identity is being construed. Religions then, in these contexts, should establish a group which emphasises its identity through its values and actions of helping others and acting against injustice.

In sociological and psychological understanding, community and identity provide individuals with a sense of belonging, meaning and stability. Evidently, these are important during socio-political instability, which contribute to the formation of exclusivist and genocidal ideologies through group boundaries creation. The aim of this research is to see whether there is the possibility for religion to function to alleviate surrounding problems and then stimulate bystander intervention against these ideologies. Moreover, being a member of a community where individual or collective action to aid is stressed, can alleviate the sensation of helplessness, which also limits the potential of acting. Religious communities have distinct means to do this. These include the belief in divine or external help (in some religions), or another higher power, which may help some believers if they see their role as a part of an existential process (Dowson, 2005, p.26). Divinity,

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[33] Moral responsibility here applies to recognising and helping the other and condemning injustice.

communal connections, and religious leaders can also be a location for support, guidance, and encouragement. Religious practices, such as rituals, can serve a similar role. Rituals serve to re-emphasise aspects of a faith or religious belief, for example, a mythology that teaches the history of the community and their values/obligations, and at the same time, can be a source of motivation and support for the believer (Dowson, 2005, p.26). Given that the problems identified above is a lack of security[34] and sensations of powerlessness in the bystander individual, it seems religion is a possible alternative means of mitigating this issue alongside the other aspects of forming an understanding of responsibility and creating identification with the victim (see 7.4).

Both a surrounding communal group, and for some individuals, a form of religious or higher belief could reinforce the idea that they (bystander individuals) do have the power and opportunities to help the situation, which forms the stronger self-image mentioned as an aspect of helpers (Hirsch, 1995, p.156). The practical ways this can be done would vary depending on the situation of the bystander (e.g. local or international influence).

That religion can be used to justify ideologies that are exclusionary and violent in boundary maintenance does not preclude the creation of an alternative, where religious obligation and identity is focused on a different area, e.g. the obligation to help, compassion, etc., which leads onto the question of moral values and the framing of others and the worldview.

6.4 Values Approach and Humanising Images

It has been argued that positive religious values and moral teachings could play a role in how the responsibility to help, which can be applied widely to different kinds of bystanders (see Chapter Four). The use of values with regards to internal bystanders and ideology bares further development. As has been explored in Chapter Five, genocidal ideologies, often adopting religious aspects, can have a

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[34] Also in the sense of self understanding.

powerful impact on the internal bystander, how they interpret the situation, and their behaviour and attitudes towards the victim group. In the case of Bosnia, Serbian identity became categorised as counter to Bosniak/Muslim identity, characterised by negative, threatening, and antagonistic stereotypes, with Serbian Christianism as a defender and/or victim, to the point of existential proportions. To find solutions to the issue of bystanders[35] then, a way needs to be found to counter these narratives and ideologies, so that the likelihood of bystander intervention will be more likely. The following section argues that religious values could be used to emphasise counter narratives and different images[36] against the genocidal ideology of a group or state.

The ideological aspects of genocide, which serve to dehumanise and legitimise violence, connect into the second kind of denial of suffering. Compared to the first kind, where the violence is not acknowledged, consciously or unconsciously, the second kind does acknowledge the violence, but denies it as a negative. That the actions have taken place is not denied; the denial is of responsibility through justification of violence/inaction. These emerge as defence mechanisms, e.g., cognitive errors, rationalisation, justification and excuses, or blame of the victim, many of which could be seen in the case study of Bosnia. For example, as was demonstrated section 5.4, with instances of the Serbian Orthodox Church, media, and government making conspiracies claims against Muslims. This kind of denial is common by perpetrators when outright denial is not possible due to evidence. It can become politically fixed through cultural interpretations, i.e. ideological understandings, and encouragement of passive acceptance (Cohen, 2001, p.59). As such, for bystanders, this kind of denial needs to be avoided or, if already present, broken. Blame or hate towards bystanders and people involved in these ideologies is only likely to drive them more into the ideology and justification. Religious imageries could offer alternative understandings of the victim group and situation to counteract the normalisation of genocidal ideologies, leading to a

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[35] This mainly applies to the question of internal bystanders. However, in some cases depending on Western/outside perception of victim group, this could also be a problem with applies to external bystanders.
[36] By 'images' I refer to the aspects of ideology such as worldview, frameworks, or portrayals of other groups, etc.

greater chance of intervention. As with other genocide prevention methods, it would be most effective in early stages, particularly as ideological justification is what comes before a genocide in order to legitimise later stages of violence, and ideologies can become strongly embedded.

The creation of group boundaries involves the creation of the 'other' to set the limits and differences of the identity group. In conflicts, this then comes with negative views of those classed as the 'other' as the boundaries are maintained and acted against (Bouma, 2007, p.194). These boundaries are, however, are alterable (Coleman and Collins, 2017, p.4). Given the power and complexities of ideologies and the emotional and social grievances which underly them, demonstrating evidence that the perpetrator group is not under threat or that the victim group is not as stereotyped is not necessarily enough.

Creating different images of the victim group to counter ideas of propaganda would require different measures to those of responsibility and values. Certain ideas for how this could be achieved are covered here. It has been shown that demonstrating victims as individuals elicits more emotion and cause to action than statistics (Slovic, 2007). Being able to identify oneself with the victim or having a relation with them does similar. Religious beliefs may have the potential to utilise alternative frameworks that can emphasise the effect of mass suffering and identification on a larger scale, i.e. humanitarianism, without this leading to less psychological defences, which consequently limit action.

While religions can be exclusivist in their beliefs, they can also provide inclusivist worldviews or ideas of a common humanity. Combined with values and authority, this may mean religion can be used to make areas with an alternative understanding of the victim group and their relation to bystanders (especially if connected to the perpetrators through identity boundaries). While group identity boundaries are made by determining those outside of the group, there are ways to form this that do not necessarily position the other as negative. Cultural boundaries are implemented by emphasising certain elements of a cultural group, their cultural resources, e.g. traditions, and/or their historical continuity (Coleman and Collins, 2017, p.5). These serve to add weight to narratives and images of a

situation/group, presented in an arena with religious authority. If a state's narrative is there to legitimise violence, then other voices are needed to stop this from being normalised and accepted, which would have the most powerful effect on bystanders affected by the ideology not just by disagreement, but by replacing it with an alternative image that utilises the powerful elements of religion in the same way. Religions can justify and promote positive values, such as social justice, unity, and altruism, and these values do often correlate with religiosity (Feather, 2005, p.61), so could be placed as counter to worldviews and encouraged behaviours of exclusivist ideologies. Hirsch (1995, p.166) discusses the idea of 'cooperative internationalism' rather than antagonistic nationalisms. However, this could also be framed through less political frameworks, such as positive multi-culturalism or respect of difference while maintaining one's identity. For example, emphasising the values of social justice or prevention of harm as identifiers of group identity (even if alongside other, e.g. socio-historical religious ideas). Even if a theology focuses on in-group loyalty above outsiders (Graham and Haidt, 2010, p.143), this is still a beginning point to wider morality, which most religions tend to have, e.g. principles of non-harm, and can be worked on in combination with breaking down ideological boundaries that emphasise negatives of outsider groups. The necessity is to establish, through an understanding of morality or reassessing images of group relations, an alternative to the socio-cultural ideological belief that justifies discrimination and mass murder.

6.5 Practical Measures: Authority and Distribution

Sections 6.3-6.4 have discussed the theoretical aspects of religion which can be used to counteract harmful bystander behaviours, i.e. inaction and passive acceptance. Exclusivist ideologies and images of the victim group need to be distributed widely and pervasively throughout the society in order to normalise and justify violence against the group (Spencer, 2016, p.225). Propaganda is an important means, but as demonstrated above and in the case study with the Serbian Orthodox leadership, religious institutions are also strong vectors. However, religious institutions and leaders then arguably have the capacity to be

instrumental in spreading 'positive' counter-ideas to oppose (negative) propaganda towards the victim group.

Characteristics of religious institutions and leaders that facilitate this include their credibility, especially as a source of morals and values, their potential leverage in (local and/or international) political spheres[37], and their ability to influence the actions of a community (Smock, 2010, pp.xvi-xvii). Holding positions of moral authority, they have the ability to establish understandings of responsibility and wider explanations of the world. Naturally, this can and is used to negative effect as well, as demonstrated in Chapter Five with leaders in the Serbian Orthodox Church, but this should not mean it should not be utilised to positive effect. Authority in itself has the power to influence people to commit harmful actions[38] (Hirsch, 1995, p.105). Considering the bystander sense of self and need for external identity grouping, it does not necessarily mean replacing one ultimate or unquestioned authority with another. According to studies, in areas where the church and state are less aligned, i.e. arguably where authority is less fixed and different ideas more accessible/acceptable, religiosity can correlate more positively with ideas of universality and more negatively with ideas of conformity (Feather, 2005, p.55), which seems particularly relevant to the issue of internal bystanders and (active or passive) acceptance of state action.[39] Moral lessons and community are positive ways to give the individual independent thought from the state ideology, and status quo in general. Given the power they hold, religious leaders have a responsibility to not only condemn perpetrators, but also provide messages towards bystanders, if this would further aid the situation.

Another issue encountered is that bystanders feel powerless to aid in a situation. Utilising positive messaging and counter-narratives would not necessarily be enough to solve this issue. Thus, actions available to the bystanders in a situation should be outlined. With reference to the communal dimension, the power of a collective community will also have more power than an individual. These include

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[37] In some settings.
[38] Not that this necessarily removes individual responsibility.
[39] Compared to helper psychology (see section 6.2).

applying pressure to governments, e.g. by protests or boycotts,[40] and this can be applicable to holding institutions like the media and religious groups accountable. These also apply to internal bystanders during earlier stages of a conflict[41], where condemnation and pressure of a state's earlier actions, e.g. enacting discriminatory laws, can be done. Moreover, action can be performed through pre-established groups, such as NGOs, who document abuses, lobby, and establish aid programmes and larger movements (Ball, 2011, p.60), which can be a means for an individual bystander to be involved despite feeling powerless by themselves.

6.6 Limitations of Application

The ideas and theories proposed in this paper are an argument for why certain measures utilising religion should be a means to counteract bystander issues in genocidal conflict situations. These are propositions to supplement genocide prevention from the bystander issue; alone they cannot wholly solve genocide or the bystander issue due to the complexity of causes of genocide. That there are limitations to the propositions and ideas outlined in this chapter should be acknowledged.

To solve a genocide, the root causes need to be addressed (Valentino, 2013, p.236). However, the proposition of this research is to deal with the specific factor of bystanders, including the ideological conditions which follow from socio-political instability in the lead up to a genocide. Bystanders have an influence on events, particularly before violence and when more contained to a small group. The ideas outlined in this chapter should be accompanied by dealing with the deeper socio-political issues, including other wider preventative measures.

Moreover, preventative measures, such as those given in sections 6.2-6.4, are most effective when done early on. This requires adequate systems of monitoring

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[40] The reasons for the effectiveness of these is discussed in previous chapters, but essentially depends on states acting to not endanger their image and/or interests.
[41] Though, again, it should be acknowledged that individuals may be at risk depending on the nature and power of the perpetrator group/state.

to achieved. If the early signs are not acknowledged, prevention is more difficult. For internal bystanders this will be more complex, with regards to the infusion of ideology and potential endangerment. That a more complete monitoring system is needed has been suggested by others, such as Valentino (2013, p.2014) and Keeler (2002, p.176).

This research highlights that religion can be a counterforce, given particular attributes which religion has that can make it effective. However, religion is not a given factor for as certain individuals, including in places where religion is explicitly banned. Nevertheless, there may be alternate vectors of similar characteristics and influence, e.g. existential, through which positive values and identification can be emphasised in these situations.

Finally, as this paper explores, the 'us' versus 'them' dichotomy, hate, and fear are very powerful tools, perhaps even more so than 'positive' values. This is why I have examined specifically what factors lead to the acceptance of the exclusionary/genocidal ideologies and what socio-psychological needs they fulfil, to determine how religion can serve to fill these needs in an alternative way that simultaneously rejects the negative ideology.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter analyses why and how religion could be used to motivate bystander intervention in genocide situations. I argue that religion, as a social feature, is able to offer particular functions to deal with the many issues that limit bystander intervention, such as ideological influence for internal bystanders and psychological defence mechanisms. Religion is an area which offers moral teachings and obligations, which can be directed towards intervention approaches. Religion is able to create communities to offset difficulties that influence bystanders towards non-intervention. Evidence presented in this paper shows/argues that while identity boundaries can be used to negative effect, with reference to alternative images and common religious values, this can also be used to emphasise counternarratives. The majority of these are applicable to both

internal and external bystanders, if adapted to be contextual. Religious institutions and leaders themselves have the authority to disseminate these and protests towards state action and to state intervention. Religion has many means of approach available to it that should be utilised to stimulate bystander intervention, therefore mitigating the bystander problem in (pre-)genocide situations.

7. Conclusion

Numerous genocides have occurred across the past century. Moreover, ones are occurring and other areas demonstrate signs of developing genocides. The impact of bystanders and the negative consequences of their inaction in genocidal situations is recognised. Through a lack of engagement against the actions of a state or group or passive acceptance, particularly in the early stages of genocide which create the context for a genocide to take place, bystander inaction enables the continuation of genocide towards direct violence. Though bystanders are not the only parties in genocide, nor the most culpable, they do play a substantial role. From this statement, this research has looked for and analysed ways in which this problem can be mitigated, as an aspect of genocide prevention, through the use of religion as a tool.

To identify ways in which religion could be used, it was necessary to establish who is a bystander, and what affects them that contribute to their lack of intervention. This was examined via a case study, the Bosnian genocide (Srebrenica), with reference to the context of the wider Bosnian war and Serbian-Bosnian (socio-cultural) relations. This case study is a prime example of the problems of the bystander issue, particularly external bystanders, and the consequences of inaction. This paper addressed what could have been done, with reference to bystander inaction in Chapter Four. It provides insights into the different ways in which religion is used to bolster genocidal ideologies to negative consequences. The use of this case study enabled answering these questions by identifying important factors, which provided a base for wider application. While contextual differences in genocide are important, with reference to comparisons and known information on how genocides function, studying the case of Bosnia provided an assessment for bystander responsibility, ideologies, and influences upon bystanders.

Determining bystander responsibility is not clear-cut, and heavily depends on contextual circumstances. As such, the framework for determining bystander

responsibility was assessed in this paper via the criteria of awareness and agency, with reference to the Bosnian genocide, to determine the consequences of bystander inaction on the progression of a genocide. When the knowledge and the ability to effect the situation is there, the affects of inaction conclude bystanders have a responsibility, as their direct inaction is a contributing factor to the development and success of a genocidal group. As such, there is the possibility for bystander intervention from different levels, if stimulated, to affect the situation.

To be able to theorise on how this can be done, it was necessary to identify what factors act on bystanders, be these social, psychological, or ideological, or some combination, which stop the group or individual from intervening or condemning genocidal rhetoric and/or actions. Some of these come from the position of bystanders, e.g. awareness, but further factors were identified, particularly for individual bystanders, through comparison to helper psychology and attributes, e.g. the need for identity grouping, insecurity, distancing from the victim group/suffering, and sensations of powerlessness. The analysis demonstrated ideological influences upon different groups of bystanders (i.e. internal, external) which affect their view of events, the world, the victim group, and of their own responsibility, thus their likely response. Moreover, boundaries in genocidal ideologies serve to fulfil some of the psychological lacks in (internal) bystanders. These factors link with theories of bystander psychology, including different kinds of denial either to justify one's (in)action or as a defence mechanism against distressing knowledge. To reiterate, motivating action is not necessarily intended to be done in circumstances where bystanders will be endangered.

Religion becomes a part of genocidal ideologies and justification through its efficacy in reinforcing socio-cultural identities and boundaries which delegitimise the other. It is able to become linked to other forms of identity important to the genocidal boundaries, e.g. national identification. By its authority on a moral plane, it contributes to the justification of violent action and supports narratives of threats and particular worldviews which are magnified to existential and

'eternal' levels. Hence, these kinds of ideologies can have particularly strong effects on the attitudes of internal bystanders.

Despite this, religion still has elements which enable to it to be used to provide alternative understandings and motivate different behaviour. These factors include the contents of beliefs, teachings, and obligations, community, and authority. While the analysis of the Bosnian conflict highlights how these can be used to negative effect, contrary means for them to motivate bystander action have been identified over the course of this research. Given their authority as moral and sacred arenas, religions can provide alternative narratives to those in propaganda, but also establish new identity groupings which do not focus on exclusionary ideology. They can emphasise moral responsibility to bystanders (internally and externally), supplemented by the power of religious values, beliefs, and traditions, and a communal system of support to mitigate some of the other issues influencing bystander inaction. These can then contribute to actions to mitigate genocide development, e.g. condemnation, applying pressure to states, which can themselves be supported by religious authorities.

These ideas presented in this paper will hopefully serve as a basis for a new means for motivating bystander intervention, of bystanders of different kinds and in various contexts, to mitigate the bystander issue in the face of genocidal conflicts or situations that are showing early signs of genocides. These are relevant both for bystander individuals internal and external to the situation, when applied with contextual approaches. The theoretical underpinnings and propositions may be applied into practice by, for example, religious institutions or organisations working in these areas. Religions then, in these contexts, should establish communities and group understandings which emphasise their identity through their values and actions of helping others and acting against injustice. These would then stimulate more bystander intervention, for example, condemnation of government policy or exclusionary ideologies, or helper behaviours, firstly by offering both counter-ideologies and beliefs to ideas behind non-intervention, and secondly through alleviating psychological factors that contribute to the lack of intervention.

This research analyses approaches to genocide prevention from the focus on the bystander problem and the role of religion. Genocides are extremely complex and multi-faceted, and as such this research should be understood as addressing an aspect of this. The conclusions and proposals for measures given here need to be taken into account with and should complement wider genocide prevention measures. Given the scope, this research piece has not covered the direct application of the theories of religion as a tool for bystander action. This is something which should be developed through other direct research, or alternatively a example programme for religious institutions to use could be developed. Furthermore, explicit research into how the religion can be applied to specific situations, taking their context into account, could be further assessed from the basis of this research. This could include the applicability of the approaches presented in this paper to non-religious institutions or social concepts which serve similar functions to religion.

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9. Appendix

Appendix I – Ten Stages of Genocide

The Ten Stages of Genocide as outlined by Gregory Stanton (2016). Stages are not necessarily linear and can occur simultaneously.

1. Classification: Classification of members of a society as separate, to distinguish between 'us' and 'them', along lines of race, religion, ethnicity, or nationality
2. Symbolisation: Classification, by name or a distinguishing physical sign, of the 'other'. Not necessarily leading to genocide unless combined with dehumanisation and hatred
3. Discrimination: Denial of the rights of the group through law, politics, or custom, or attempts to gain full power over the victim group
4. Dehumanisation: Denying the humanity of a group, e.g. by hate speech, equating individuals to animals/less than human, and other forms of vilification
5. Organisation: Organisation, usually by the state, of militias to facilitate acts of genocide and/or stop opposition
6. Polarisation: Through indoctrination, e.g. propaganda, hate speech, media, encourage polarisation between the victim group and other citizens. Also includes the silencing of individuals against this
7. Preparation: Direct plans for genocidal killings are made by state/perpetrator group leaders, including practical preparations, e.g. acquiring arms. Generally made under euphemistic terms. Often accompanied by increased propaganda and justification
8. Persecution: Victims are identified and separated from other members of society. Actions at this stage include forced displacement, deportation to ghettos/concentration camps, denial of rights and resources (food, water, etc.), torture, seizure of property, means to prevent procreation, e.g. sterilisation, or removal of children, and extrajudicial killings
9. Extermination: Mass killing stage, what is legally called 'genocide'. Members of the victim group are to be killed, generally accompanied by other war crimes and destruction of cultural evidence of the group.
10. Denial: Attempts to deny the genocide occurred (generally taking place after the genocide, by perpetrators), including measures such as destroying mass graves and bodies, cover-ups, blocking investigation, etc.

Appendix II – Referenced Propaganda Article

БОЛНО ПОДСЕЋАЊЕ

Reference to example of Serbian propaganda during the Bosnian war. Version of Uroš Predić's painting "Siroče na majčinom grobu" (Trans.: Orphan at mother's grave), 1888, depicted as a photograph of "Serbian boy whose family was killed by Bosnian Muslims" (Trans.), published in Večernje novosti.

Image retrieved from: Wikipedia (2021) *Propaganda During the Yugoslav Wars.* Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda_during_the_Yugoslav_Wars [Accessed 06/06/2021].