

The Religious Alien
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Who are your religious aliens and what is to be done about them? These are among the more important questions raised by the facts of religious diversity. They can be asked and answered by those who think of themselves as religious as well as by those who do not; and they can be asked and answered by the institutions of governance (legislatures, judiciaries), by particular churches, and by individuals, among others. The questions are unavoidable once the categories that constitute them ('religion', 'religious', 'alien') are allowed, and for citizens of late-capitalist democracies, as most readers of this volume are likely to be, the categories are so thoroughly at home in local speech and thought that they cannot be easily ignored or evaded. This means, in turn, that the questions are avoidable for us at neither the theoretical nor the practical level: our political and social habits prescribe them for us. Engaging the questions may certainly take the form of objecting to the terms in which they are put, perhaps by revealing the dubious genealogy of those terms; but this will not exempt us from the engagement.

How then to understand the terms of the question?

To call someone alien sounds neither welcoming nor affirming, connoting as it does both otherness and danger. In contemporary English, the word is most commonly used as a label for extra-terrestrial visitors, those extreme others whose imagined characteristics permit us to clarify what we think about our own. Close behind this is the legal usage, according to which aliens are non-citizens, strangers from elsewhere whose legal and moral status is ambiguous exactly because they are aliens. In both usages, there is a fundamental structural opposition between them and us, whether the 'us' is as broad as the entire human race or as narrow as those who live in our neighborhood.

This opposition gives the fundamental syntax of thought about the alien. Thinking and acting within it requires attention to boundaries (is it always—or ever—clear who is inside and who outside?), identity-tests (the shibboleth), the scope of permissible relations (may we reproduce with the aliens? eat with them? touch them? sing with them? study with them?), and much else. Such thought and action is not avoidable: every culture uses a syntax of kinship, every state attends to its boundaries and to what constitutes citizenship, every corporation uses regulations to determine who is and who is not among its employees, and every sports team cultivates a division between supporters and foes. Whether to think and act within this syntax is not in question: we all do because we all must, even when we try to overturn it or leave it behind. The question is only how: what will our understanding and treatment of our aliens be? Here there are many and rich possibilities: we may think the aliens, whoever they are, capable of overrunning us, erasing us, forcing themselves upon us sexually, enriching us, becoming like us, transforming us into their likeness, living alongside us in harmonious difference, being our friends, and so on.

We may combine these inventions (they are all inventions) about aliens with an equally wide range of kinds of engagement: we may attempt their domestication, violently or otherwise, or failing that, their erasure, for which violence is almost always

necessary; we may shun them, hoping they will do likewise; we may tolerate them, enduring their otherness within limits, and hoping for the same from them; we may acknowledge their superiority and do all we can to become like them; we may cooperate with them in some agreed particular campaign; we may seek to learn from them; we may fight them in an attempt to get them to acknowledge our superiority and to assume a subject position before us; or, most difficult, we may love them exactly in their otherness, offering ourselves to them as servants. In most cases, our engagements with our aliens will exhibit aspects of several of these attitudes at once. Among those who administered the British Raj, for instance, there were those who thought of their Indian subjects as aliens whose labor and goods should be expropriated to ornament the British crown; there were those who thought of themselves as gift-bringers who would move the aliens in the direction of domestication; there were those eager to learn from local literary and philosophical traditions; there were those who abandoned their Englishness for an imagined Indianness; and some combined aspects of all these in their engagements with the locals.

To add the modifier 'religious' to 'alien' may be to intensify the difficulties already noted. This is certainly true if, as I shall assume in what follows, to be religious is (at least) to inhabit a form of life which seems to you comprehensive (it takes account of everything), of central importance to the ordering of your life (all other aspects of your life are subsumed into it, or circle it, satellite-like), and unsurpassable (it cannot be exceeded by any other, being *id quo nihil maius cogitari possit* among forms of life, as Anselm wrote of God, and for closely-associated reasons). This is certainly not the only possible understanding of 'religion' and its derivatives; but the complex and disputed history of the term and its understandings is explored elsewhere in this volume, and so I shall here leave this understanding as simply stipulated.

If some such understanding of religion is in play, then to think someone a religious alien may be to intensify the otherness and danger of the aliens so categorized by locating them in a form of life with a very high opinion of itself. Thinking of someone as an alien of that kind may encourage the more extreme among the inventions already mentioned, whether or not those making the judgment are themselves religious according to the understanding given. Such extreme imaginations are especially likely for those who do not themselves inhabit a religious form of life, or who take themselves not to: they are more likely than those who are themselves religious to imagine that all the religious are violently disposed toward erasure of their aliens. But in fact, the variety of religious forms of life, on the understanding of religion given, is very great, which means that the ways in which the religious think of and respond to their aliens will be equally great: ways of thinking about the alien and more general ways of thinking about the world and the human are intimate with one another, and since these latter are very varied both among religions and between the religious and the nonreligious, so, correspondingly, are judgments about and attitudes toward aliens. There are no easy generalizations, therefore, about how the religious are likely to think about their aliens. It is also a matter of observable fact that the nonreligious are not notably less violent in their responses to their aliens than are the religious to theirs. Nevertheless, it is true that the questions provoked by aliens can be especially and intensely pressing for the religious just because they inhabit what seems to them an unsurpassable and comprehensive form of life.

To think of someone or some group as religiously alien according to the understandings in play here is to make an indexical judgment: the religious alien is anyone who seems to you to inhabit a religious form of life which you do not take yourself to inhabit. You may make this judgment as a nonreligious person. In this case, all those who do seem to you to inhabit a religious form of life are your religious aliens. Or you may make it as a religious person, in which case all and only those who seem to you to inhabit a religious form of life other than yours are your religious aliens. Understanding 'religious alien' in this way permits avoidance of difficulties about boundaries and identity-markers by leaving those difficulties to those making the judgments. If a Baptist chooses to consider a Catholic a religious alien (or vice versa), this suffices to make her one, without further discussion of difficulties about the relations between sortals such as 'Christianity' and 'Baptist' and 'Catholic'. And if a Gelug Buddhist chooses not to consider a Catholic Christian a religious alien, this suffices for him not to be one, without further discussion of sortals such as 'Christianity' and 'Buddhism'.

The questions with which I began—who are your religious aliens and what should be done about them?—should now be clearer. What kinds of answer to them are possible?

Domestication

There is, first, the hope for domestication, typically, but not necessarily, coupled with actions aimed at bringing that result about. Domestication, thus, is evident in a set of attitudes and actions, belonging to those who take themselves to be religious and aimed at removing whatever is taken to separate the alien from the home community, and providing whatever is thought necessary for making the alien a member of it. So, for example, Christian missionaries might take faith in the triune God and baptism in the triune name to be severally requisite for membership in the Church and conjointly sufficient to bring it about; they might also take the practice of making offerings to members of the Sangha, the Buddhist monastic community, as an insuperable barrier to the possession of such faith and the reception of such baptism. They will, then, to the extent they think domestication desirable, and themselves effective agents in bringing it about, attempt to bring the offerings to an end and to preach the gospel with one hand while offering baptism with the other. Once the barriers have been removed and the offerings received, the alien will have been domesticated, which is just to say that she will now be thought of by the missionary and those who share her understandings to be one of themselves. In similar ways (though usually lacking the missionary emphasis), those who have undergone the ritual and legal aspects of naturalization as citizens of the USA will, as a result, be understood by native-born citizens—or at least by those who know and care about such things—no longer to be alien in respect of citizenship, but rather to have been domesticated.

These examples show that an interest in domestication does not require erasure of every mark of alien identity. That would be impossible in any case; but even where a particular religious community uses the rhetoric of death and rebirth to describe the passage from being alien to being kin (as many do: such tropes are essential to the practice of Christian baptism, for instance), the idea is not complete replacement, but rather partial re-making and re-ordering of what is already present. The old Adam (or Eve), though drowned in the baptismal bath and refigured as a new creation, does not vanish: he (or she) rises to the surface of the chaos-waters along with the newly-made Christian. This is a typical pattern of thought among those who seek to domesticate the alien.

Many religious forms of life shape those who live within them as missionaries, which is to say as advocates for domesticating the religious alien and performers of whatever seems necessary to bring this about. It is easy enough to see why. To claim comprehensiveness, unsurpassability, and centrality for your form of life bears a strong affinity to thinking it good to share it with others, to persuading those alien to it of the goodness of their domestication, and to doing what you can to bring that transition about. The strength of this affinity is linked to the extent to which a particular religion understands itself to offer a gift of universal significance, as many, but by no means all, religions do. There is no strong missionary impulse among Orthodox Jews, for example, as there is also not among Brahmanical Hindus, and for much the same reasons: these are religious forms of life whose adherents are likely to think of it as being appropriate for only a small subset of human beings, even if it might have other kinds of relevance (as beacon, as warning, as lure) for that majority for whom domestication is inappropriate or

impossible. But for religions like Buddhism or Christianity or Islam, self-conscious in their universalism, missionary activity of one kind or another is close to unavoidable.

Seeking to domesticate the alien can, but need not, co-exist with a high evaluation of the benefits brought to the home community by newly-domesticated aliens. When it does, emphasis will be placed by the home community on the importance of the newly-domesticated alien placing what he knows and what he can do at the service of his new home community. When it does not—when, as Augustine wrote of Scripture, the domesticating religion thinks that whatever is good among aliens is already found in the home community and whatever is bad is already condemned there—then it is more likely that what the aliens bring will be treated at best as a thing indifferent. The three world-historical missionary religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Islam) have varied considerably within themselves along this spectrum, sometimes eager to embrace the alien gift (as Muslims once were with respect to Aristotle), and sometimes equally eager to reject the need for any such gifts (as Jerome was in his occasional repudiation of the idea that Christians might benefit from reading pagan literature). In this range of attitudes to alien gifts they are like nonreligious missionaries—those who evangelize, for instance, in the service of the free market, or of democracy.

Religious aliens faced by attempted domestication may find themselves under threat of compulsion by violence or seduction by the loving embrace. It is fair to say, I think, that those religions with deep and intense missionary inclinations are more likely than those without to find it attractive—or defensible—to strong-arm aliens into domestication. But there is no necessary connection even here; it is just that those communities for which domestication is of marginal interest are less likely to find it important enough to attempt compulsion. There may be a similar range of responses on the part of the religious alien: everything from happy acquiescence to the offer (or demand) of domestication to the violent rejection of that offer. Everything will depend upon the particulars of the religious form of life to which the alien belongs.

Shunning

The impulse to domesticate seeks to make the alien kin, and it is a very common, probably the most common, religious response to the religious alien. But it is by no means the only one. Another set of attitudes and responses to the religious alien, whether by those who are themselves religious or by those who are not, seeks not domestication but separation. This response comes in kinds, but its fundamental grammar is most apparent in shunning. To shun the alien is to refuse contact of any kind: no touch, no sharing of food, no exchange of gaze, no reciprocal speech, no shared space. To shun is to seek to remove the shunned from your presence and thought, to make her as if she were not.

In its most extreme form, shunning requires killing followed by the removal of all evidence that those killed have ever inhabited the world. When the Romans erased Carthage, or, much later, attempted the same with Jerusalem, they wanted not only to kill its inhabitants but also to destroy any evidence that they had ever been and to make impossible the future habitation of the places in which they had lived. Carthage's buildings were levelled, its land ploughed over, its ground salted. In still more extreme form, the Nazi final solution had the same goal: Europe's Jews were not only to be slaughtered, but the memory of their presence erased as well, which required the destruction of books and buildings and all other carriers of memory. Final and irreversible erasure is shunning's ideal goal, and it has been attempted often, sometimes by the religious but more often by the irreligious, sometimes directed at those who are religiously alien and sometimes directed at those whose alienness took other forms.

Shunning need not be as radical as this, and most often is not. Its most common less-radical forms are separation by removal (exile), separation by enclosure (ghettoization), and prevention of an impending alien incursion by erecting a barrier against it (exclusion); none of these requires erasure, even though that always beckons as a possible end.

To separate yourself from your aliens by removing them means that their bodies and possessions must be shipped out, taken from the homeland to somewhere else, a place of exile where they can safely be forgotten. The architects of the final solution considered this possibility for Europe's Jews, and might perhaps have preferred it had it not proved impractical because of war's exigencies and other practical difficulties. In the 1930's, the idea of removing all Europe's Jews to Madagascar was seriously canvassed by Nazi theorists. Somewhat less dramatically, shunning-by-removal was one of the main strategies used by the federal government of the USA during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in its handling of Native Americans. Evidence of this strategy remain in the reservation system—and it is clear that Native Americans were regarded by the law- and policy-makers who developed and applied these strategies as alien religiously, as well as in many other ways.

Closely similar to exiling your aliens is the strategy of enclosing them. This is to keep close the aliens who are already here, but to erect barriers that prevent their interaction with you. They are ideally to be kept invisible, though sometimes used. The late-medieval and renaissance Christian practice of ghettoizing Jews was like this: they were not sent away, but their movements were restricted, as were the places where they could legally live or work. In that case, the separation was usually given legal sanction;

but often it is not, being enforced instead by powerful local habits, backed by the imagination—and sometimes the reality—of violence. Contemporary urban ghettos usually work in this way; and when the locals throw up physical barriers intended to keep their undesirable aliens—ethnically, economically, and sometimes also religiously alien—enclosed in their places, as they did on the south side of Chicago and in many other American cities in the 1960s, they are giving physical form to an already-present local habit of enclosure.

Exclusion is like enclosure, except that the aliens at whom it is directed are not yet here. Their continued absence must be ensured by a physical barrier—a wall. The purpose of the wall is therefore not to enclose them but to keep them out, and thereby to maintain a separation already in place. Hadrian's Wall, built in the second century AD across the neck of land separating (roughly) what is now England from what is now Scotland, was of this sort. The aliens to be kept out in that case were the Pictish tribes. Contemporary instances include the walls now under construction along the US-Mexican border and along the boundary between Israel and (inter alia) the West Bank. The aliens in the US case are Spanish-speaking Catholics, understood by the wall-builders to be an economic, religious, and cultural threat to the USA; those in the Israel case are, mostly, Arabic-speaking Muslims, understood by the wall-builders to be an economic, religious, and cultural threat to the State of Israel. Walls can be intended to keep the locals in rather than the aliens out (the Berlin Wall was of that sort); but the kind of walling I have in mind here is an act of exclusion aimed at those outside, and therefore a kind of shunning.

The examples given of each of these methods for shunning the alien show them in use by those with power to enforce them whether or not those at whom they are directed wish to accept them. This is the usual thing. But exile and enclosure, at least, may also be used voluntarily by groups without power. If you think contact with local religious aliens undesirable for one reason or another, but you lack the power to do anything to or about the aliens you would like to shun, then you may exile yourself by leaving, or you may stay where you are but, to the extent possible, ghettoize yourself. Both strategies are widely evident among religious groups. Some Christian groups (Puritans, Mennonites, and many others) whose members found inhospitable or otherwise problematic the religious settlements of various European states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries left for the new promised land of the Americas. This is a form of shunning by self-exile.

Self-enclosure is also possible. This is likely to happen when those who inhabit a minority form of religious life consider their local aliens—usually a powerful majority—dangerous or threatening or impure. The minority may have no choice but to stay where they are, and when that is the case they are likely to try self-enclosure, though with varying degrees of intensity and consistency. To do this they may adopt or preserve locally distinctive marks of identity (of dress, diet, language, education, reproduction, economic exchange), whose effect (and sometimes also purpose) is to show their difference; and they may refuse many or most forms of exchange with their aliens, the local majority, thus in effect ghettoizing themselves. Violence is less likely in cases like these than in those where shunning is enforced by a powerful majority; local minorities of these kinds usually lack the power effectively to be violent. But the syntax of the response may nonetheless be implicitly violent, suggesting, as it often does, that the world would be better were these aliens not in it.

These varieties of shunning are variously motivated. Fear and hatred of the alien may often be in play, which is why violence is typically near the surface when aliens are shunned. But shunning may also be motivated by a judgment that the world as presently constituted is deeply and apparently irreversibly hostile to what is held most dear, and that shunning is essential to self-preservation. There is nothing peculiarly religious about these motives, or about the varieties of shunning they prompt, or about the violence which often accompanies them. It is at least arguably the case that secular groups, perhaps most especially nation-states, are more likely than the religious to shun their aliens and to seek their erasure, exile, enclosure, or exclusion. But it is also the case that shunning will be a response to the alien, religious or not, especially attractive to those who inhabit a religious form of life that combines a strong sense of difference with a correspondingly weak sense of the importance of conversion. If it seems to you that you are definitively and fundamentally unlike the aliens, and you have no interest in domesticating them (perhaps they are so different that domestication seems hopeless), then shunning them will be attractive. How you do that will depend upon what power you have, as well as upon your reasons for wanting to do it in the first place.

Toleration

The powers-that-be in contemporary late-capitalist democracies do not ordinarily attempt the domestication of their religious aliens; neither do they usually shun them or otherwise seek physical separation from them. Those responses are likely to be more attractive to totalitarian states: the recent persecutions of practitioners of Falun Gong by the authorities of the People's Republic of China provide a good instance. In late-capitalist democracies, however, the religious alien is likely to be tolerated, and toleration to be advocated as a civic virtue. Toleration is a set of responses to the religious alien distinct in some important ways from both domestication and separation. What is its syntax?

To advocate that an alien, whether religious or not, be tolerated is first to imply that there is something at least idiosyncratic about him, and more likely something unpleasant or threatening. There is no need to tolerate something you like or are fascinated by: toleration is, rather, a habit that requires the effort of putting up with something you do not like. Those who practice it grant those at whom it is directed space to do (or to think) something they would rather not have done (or thought); toleration is therefore ordinarily a gesture by the powerful toward the powerless, granting them space they cannot take for themselves. The gesture ordinarily rules out the thought that the tolerant might have something to learn from the alien, or that they might think of those they tolerate as possible recipients of love, or service, or admiration. In all these ways, those who practice toleration are likely to be less receptive to the importance of the alien's particular otherness than are those who seek her domestication. The tolerant differ from those who seek separation from their aliens, but perhaps not as much as is ordinarily thought. To tolerate some alien person or group locates them in a conceptual space in essential ways like the physical space of the ghetto; so while toleration rules out exiling or excluding the aliens, and certainly bars seeking their erasure, it remains, in this attenuated fashion, a kind of separation.

For example: Christians and Jews have at various times been tolerated by Islamic states. Most often by being given the status of dhimmi, 'protected one,' which meant (usually) that they were recognized as subjects in a Muslim state, and given a specific set of legal protections regarded as proper for non-Muslims. Those in this status could own property, marry, and do most of the other things ordinarily open to citizens. They could also, within limits (which could be severe), practice their religion without prompting thereby state-sponsored efforts to domesticate them by making Muslims of them. They were, in short, tolerated by Muslim states in very much the same way that a deep-rooted tree tolerates drought. Drought is neither natural to it nor good for it, but it can for a while be put up with and even adapted to as a long-term condition. So, *mutatis mutandis*, for the presence of Jews and Christians in a Muslim polity; and for the presence of any religious community in a secular one.

The toleration of religious aliens advocated and practiced in the USA is of essentially this sort. They are given legal (constitutional) guarantees of freedom to practice their religions, and the state also gives them some privileges not granted to the nonreligious—for example, exemption from some kinds of taxation, and from some kinds of otherwise universally-applicable public law (the Amish need not send their children to school beyond the age of 14; Jehovah's Witnesses need not repeat the Pledge of

Allegiance in school; Quakers need not bear arms in the service of the state; Catholics need not abide by laws banning the provision of alcohol to minors—and so on). But at the same time, public space and state-owned property (a distinction now almost without purchase) are required by law to be free of some signs of religious observance, and the public profession of some religious identities has often, de facto if not de jure, barred those who make it from holding certain kinds of public office. Continuing judicial debate about the nature of the relation between the two religion clauses of the First Amendment to the US Constitution ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, nor prohibiting the free exercise thereof") provides the principal engine for the construal of what tolerance for religious aliens means in the USA, and this is still very much a work in progress, as well as a work whose incoherence is becoming gradually more apparent. Refusing to establish requires, for instance, prohibition of free exercise for those religious aliens whose self-understanding requires their establishment. The logic of toleration remains the same, however: the body politic endures these more-or-less alien guests with the hope that eventually their otherness will be diluted to the point where it no longer calls for toleration because it is scarcely any longer recognizable as alien. And in this respect toleration as a response to the religious alien approaches domestication in its outcome.

Love's Embrace

A fourth family of responses to the religious alien differs from the other three—domestication, separation, toleration—in a fundamental way. Unlike them, it understands religious aliens as a gift, and responds to them by embracing them as such, which is to say as an unmerited and in-principle delightful gratuity, to be enjoyed exactly because of their otherness. Each of the other three families of response assumes that the alien's presence is in one way or another a difficulty, something to be changed or erased or removed or—at best—put up with until a better state of affairs can be brought about. There are religious and nonreligious versions of these three families of response. The fourth family, however, is much more likely itself to be religious than not, and in the brief exposition of it to follow, I give it an explicitly Christian flavor. This is not to say that only Christians can or do advocate responses to the alien of this kind. There are certainly approximate Buddhist analogues, and no doubt others not known to me; and there may also be secular versions, although these, I suspect (but will not here argue), have come into being as more-or-less degenerate offspring of Christianity.

To welcome your others as gift exactly in their otherness; to make your alien's alien-ness precisely what is to be loved about them;—these things seem not only difficult to do, but also to understand. This is most fundamentally because it seems obvious that sometimes my aliens, religious or not, seek my woe rather than my weal, to damage rather than to heal me; and when that is the case, how can I regard their very otherness as gift to be celebrated? The difficulty in understanding what is at stake here extends further than this, however. What makes my aliens alien may often appear not in their desire to damage me or mine, but rather in their apparent desire to damage themselves, whether by refusing to acknowledge or receive the good things I bring them, or by actively seeking and performing, because of their own false and harmful understanding of the world and their place in it, what diminishes themselves. Love's embrace of the religious alien requires that these difficulties be met, or at least that a trajectory be established toward meeting them.

The first move in the Christian form of love's embrace of the alien is to acknowledge the deep damage—the Christian word is sin—already present in oneself, the embracer. This is known with a depth and directness not available in the case of what seems to be the other's damage. Love's embrace requires, therefore, deep epistemic modesty about one's capacity accurately to judge the extent or nature of what is wrong with the other.

The second move is to distinguish good from evil as fullness is distinguished from lack. Even if, on this view, the alien is damaged, malevolent, and about to damage you, these will be understood as lacks in him, not positive attributes of his. In judging these lacks for what they are, then, no judgment is offered about what the alien is in her otherness; the only judgment made—and tentatively, at that—is that the alien lacks some goods he might have had. It is not the case that his otherness, as a whole or in part, is itself to be resisted or erased or shunned or domesticated.

The third move is to accept martyrdom if it is offered. If, as will sometimes be the case (as has sometimes been the case), your religious aliens offer you violence just because you seem alien to them—if, that is, they take the path of erasure—those who offer love's embrace cannot respond in kind. They should instead respond by accepting

the erasure offered. That is the syntax of the position, its deep structure. If they are Christians, they will know that erasure is not the outcome of being killed; and they will know, too, that God's providence can bring good out of even this agonizingly dreadful situation.

The fourth move, and the last, is to distinguish between offering the gift of oneself and what one knows from the aspiration to domesticate. The gifts one bears and offers may include, as they do for Christians, knowledge of the triune God and his incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection; they may include, as well, the hope that the blessing of this gift will finally be accepted by all. But bearing and offering these gifts neither requires nor even suggests that the point of offering them is conversion. The point is simply to offer them: love's embrace of the religious alien requires that. What follows from the offer is quite another question, and a standard Christian mode of putting that point is to say that God is the agent of conversion, not the evangelist or the Church, except in so far as they serve as God's agents. I wrote above that Christians have been disposed to respond to their religious aliens with efforts aimed at domestication, and that is true. But the specifically Christian mode of that response, sketched in this fourth section, undercuts its logic.

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This sketch of the modes of deciding who your religious aliens are and what to do about them is meant only to identify the most common among them. Others are possible, and even among those identified, many more sub-kinds could be discriminated. Some thought about even the few modes of decision about the religious alien discussed here should strongly suggest that this is perhaps the most intractable among the questions prompted by religious diversity. No stable solution seems possible at the level of the state: the tolerance advocated by democracies is certainly not one. And while some of the other families of response to the question are likely to prove attractive to one or another religious form of life—the last discussed to Christians, for instance—there is little hope that any among them will appeal to most, or even many, among the religions. The most that can be hoped for is that those inhabiting particular forms of life, whether religious or not, will come to see with increasing clarity the particularity of their own preferred modes of identifying and responding to their religious aliens. The deepest and most systematic violence in such responses comes from those blind to their own particularity.

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