

# Bonner Querschnitte

## Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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## BQ 153 – No. 31/2010

### Compendium on suffering, persecution and martyrdom

#### Results of *Bad Urach Consultation* published

(Cape Town, South Africa / Bonn, Germany, 10.12.2010) During the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization held in Cape Town, 17-24 October 2010, the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) presented the book "Suffering, persecution and martyrdom – Theological reflections" to the participants.

The editors, Dr Christof Sauer (Cape Town, South Africa), Co-Director of the International Institute for Religious Freedom of the World Evangelical Alliance and Dr Richard Howell (New Delhi, India), General Secretary of the Asia Evangelical Alliance stated: "There is an urgent need for a deeper evangelical understanding of the theology of the cross with regard to suffering, persecution and martyrdom for Christ and its relevance for the global church in mission."

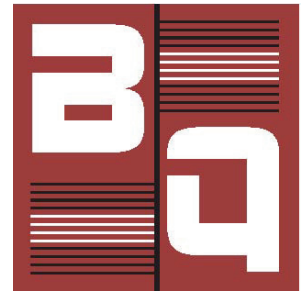
In a foreword Prof. Dr Thomas Schirrmacher (Bonn, Germany), Director of the IIRF and Godfrey Yogarajah (Colombo, Sri Lanka), Executive Director of the Religious Liberty Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance, voiced the opinion that many leaders and theologians living under persecution have developed a sound biblical and theological evaluation of suffering and its consequences for believers, churches and the world at large. They appeal: "It is time that international theology and especially Western theology starts taking this contribution seriously as a major part of a contemporary approach to our world and of systematic and historical theology."

*Suffering, persecution and martyrdom* emanates from a consultation convened by the editors in Bad Urach, Germany, September 16-18, 2009. The consultation was organized by the International Institute for Religious Freedom, sponsored by the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission, together with the Theological Commission and Mission Commission, and the Lausanne Theology Working Group in preparation towards the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Cape Town 2010.

In addition to the full text of the extensive Bad Urach Statement "Towards an evangelical theology of suffering, persecution and martyrdom for the global church in

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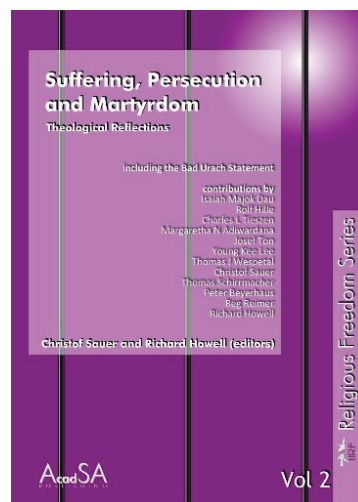
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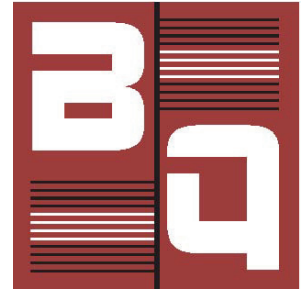
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mission” and the short Bad Urach Call, the compendium includes papers from twelve contributors covering a wide perspective on the theology of suffering.

Isaiah Majok Dau from Sudan addresses how to face human suffering from a biblical and theological perspective.

Rolf Hille from Germany contributes a biblical-theological response to the problem of theodicy in the context of modern criticism of religion.

Charles L Tieszen from the United States attempts a comprehensive definition of persecution from a theological perspective which is communicable with a sociological perspective.

Margaretha N Adiwardana from Brazil, a Chinese-Indonesian who left her country of birth due to harassment, examines the biblical teaching on perseverance. She maintains that from an eschatological perspective, suffering leads to blessing for those who endure it.

Josef Ton from Romania, retired in the United States, describes suffering and martyrdom as a defining and essential Christian characteristic, with the major example being Christ’s death on the cross.

Young Kee Lee, a South Korean now living in the United States tries to trace God’s mission in suffering and martyrdom. He postulates that there is a kind of suffering that is instrumental in advancing God’s kingdom.

Thomas J Wespetal, a theological lecturer in Ukraine, from the United States deals with how God’s plan is furthered through the martyrdom event and attempts to highlight the value of dying for the Christian faith.

Christof Sauer, a German living in South Africa, analyzes the work of the influential German mission leader Karl Hartenstein (1894-1952) who has developed a “theology of mission under the cross”. He maintains that suffering and martyrdom characterize the mission of the church which takes place in the interim between Christ’s ascension and second coming.

Thomas Schirmacher from Germany addresses a variety of theological and ethical issues. One of his emphases is on the sustaining role of the Holy Spirit in suffering and martyrdom.

Peter Beyerhaus, also from Germany, was given the task to focus on an eschatological perspective, concerning the church of Christ in the shadow of the approaching Antichrist. According to his opinion present day persecution can be regarded as a foreshadowing of the apocalyptic escalation of persecution.

Reg Reimer from Canada and with lifelong experience in advocacy in South-East Asia, shares his insights on persecution, advocacy and mission at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Richard Howell from India, dealing with the recent killings of Christians in Orissa, maintains that forgiveness and reconciliation are proper Christian responses to suffering and martyrdom.

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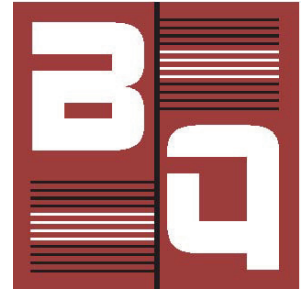
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The book appears in the Religious Freedom Series, produced by the International Institute for Religious Freedom (Bonn – Cape Town – Colombo). It is dedicated to the scholarly discourse on the issue of religious freedom in general and the persecution of Christians in particular. It is an interdisciplinary, international, scholarly series. It is published by AcadSA Publishing, Kempton Park, Johannesburg, South Africa and Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft (Dr Thomas Schirmmacher), Bonn, Germany.

The book is also available freely online at [www.iirf.eu](http://www.iirf.eu).

### Contact:

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### Downloads:

- Suffering, persecution, martyrdom (pdf)
- Cover (jpg)
- Picture 1: Christof Sauer in conversation with congress participants

### Related press releases:

- BQ 147 – No. 25/2010 (eng) International theological declaration on theology of martyrdom released
- BQ 118 – No. 34/2009 (eng) International theological declaration on persecution of Christians in the process of being drafted

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You can order this book at the online book dealer CobbleCrab:  
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