

**Fullness of Life and  
Justice for All**

**Dominican Perspectives**

**Edited by**

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## Table of Contents

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|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>  | <b>ix</b> |
| <i>Ellen Van Stichel, Thomas Eggenesperger, OP,<br/>Manuela Kalsky, Ulrich Engel, OP</i>                                 |           |
| <b>Biblical Introduction</b>   |           |
| 1. Life in its Fullness According to the Gospel of John  | 3         |
| <i>Francis J Moloney, SDB</i>  |           |
| <b>Fullness of Life and Pluralism</b>  |           |
| 2. Religious Pluralism and the Longing for the<br>Fullness of Life in Dutch Society                                      | 13        |
| <i>Manuela Kalsky</i>  |           |
| 3. Seeking Fullness of Life in an 'Oasis of Peace':<br>Bruno Hussar's Vision of a Shared Jewish-Palestinian<br>Community | 33        |
| <i>Dennis Halft, OP</i>  |           |
| Best Practice: An Open House   | 45        |
| <i>Corinne Van Nistelrooij, OPL</i>  |           |
| <b>Fullness of Life and Ecology</b>  |           |
| 4. Hope to Embrace Radical Uncertainty in Climate Change   | 51        |
| <i>Jan Jorrit Hasselaar</i>  |           |

5. Wellbeing of Indigenous People in Guatemala:  
Case Study of the Maya-Q'echi People 69  
*Christoph Gempp, OP*

- Best Practice: The Plastic Climate Madonna 89  
*Arjan Broers*

### Fullness of Life and Justice

6. How to Link Fullness of Life and Justice for All? Theological  
Explorations Inspired by Schillebeeckx and Lebreton 95  
*Ellen Van Stichel*

7. Forced to Flee as a Search for a Better Life:  
Philosophical-Theological Reflections to a  
Global Policy of Justice 115  
*Ulrich Engel, OP*

8. Leaving No-one Behind: The Urgent Challenge of  
Poverty and Injustice 135  
*Sabine Schratz, OP*

9. Artists and the Poor: A Dialogue for Fullness of Life 153  
*Dominic White, OP*

- Best Practice: 'What Can I Do For You?' 169  
*Holkje van der Veer, OP*

### Fullness of Life and Embodiment

10. Gender and Fullness of Life for All:  
Contextuality as a Catalyst for Rereading Sources 175  
*Peter-Ben Smit*

11. A Queer-oriented Fullness of Life:  
Theological Reflections after *The Shape of Water* 193  
*Ángel Francisco Méndez Montoya, OPL*

- Best Practice: *Ecce homo!* 211  
*Theo Koster, OP*

### Fullness of Life and Spirituality

12. Contemplating the Nearness of God's Reign:  
Fullness of Life for All as an Engaging Gift 217  
*Erik Borgman, OPL*

13. The Challenge of Youth Spirituality for Dominican Theology:  
An Italian Perspective 237  
*Alessandro Cortesi, OP*

- Best Practice: Youth Retreat 253  
*Jesse Reith*

### Fullness of Life and Society

14. Virtues as a Foundation for Society 257  
*Madeleine Fredell, OP*

15. Between Populism, Religion and the Search for  
Fullness of Life for All 275  
*Marcin Lisak, OP*

16. Prudent Governance Leadership: Aquinas' Virtue and  
Modern Political and Business Management 289  
*Thomas Eggensperger, OP*

- Best Practice: Mysticism on the Streets 307  
*Leon R de Jong, OP*

- Authors 309**

- Index of Names and Organisations 313**

with its scapegoat principle.<sup>53</sup> Together we gave to shape the dialogical platform 'New We' at the DSTS. We were not searching for a new big WE, but small new we-networks, trying to connect all of this without losing sight of the differences.<sup>54</sup> We share the conviction that Dominican theology must always be a societally relevant theology, focusing on communication with the O/other, because of the *salus animarum*, the fullness of life and justice for all.

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53. André Lascaris, *Het soevereine slachtoffer: Een theologisch essay over geweld en onderdrukking*, (Baarn: Ten Have, 1993). See for a bibliography of the work of André Lascaris OP, can be found at <<http://www.meerdanikzelf.nl/2018/01/bibliografie-andre-lascaris-o-p/>> (assessed 9 April 2020).
54. Manuela Kalsky, 'In Search of a 'New We' in the Netherlands: Interreligious Multimedia Projects and their Contribution to Social Science', in *Religion and Social Cohesion. Western, Chinese and Intercultural Perspectives*, edited by André van der Braak, Dedong Wei and Caifang Zhu (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2015), 169–179.

## Seeking Fullness of Life in an 'Oasis of Peace': Bruno Hussar's Vision of a Shared Jewish-Palestinian Community<sup>1</sup>

Dennis Halft, OP

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*I have lived for Israel and her fulfilment, for the Church and her fulfilment,  
for reconciliation, peace and brotherly love between the children of Abraham,  
for the Good News to be given to the world . . .<sup>2</sup>*

In contrast to an individualistic notion of a 'fullness of life', the concept of a 'fullness of life for all' is aimed at community-building and the promotion of peace, equality, and social justice. To achieve a satisfactory standard of living for all, the 'fullness of life for all' approach encourages individuals to engage with each other and to collaborate for the common good.<sup>3</sup> Working towards this goal can be seen as an attempt to put Jesus' promise of an abundant life into practice. In the well-known story of the Good Shepherd, Jesus identifies as the shepherd who leads his sheep to the pasture of life: 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (Jn 10:10). While the mission of the 'Son of Man' has, without doubt, an eschatological dimension, it is also one of service and solidarity with the needy and the suffering. As the 'good life for

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1. This essay was written with the support of the Martin Buber Society of Fellows at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
  2. Bruno Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted: The Testimony of an Israeli Priest*, translated from French by Alison Megroz (Dublin: Veritas, 1989), 116.
  3. For Christian theological responses to socio-economic challenges based on a 'good life for all' approach, see, for example, L Shannon Jung, *Building the Good Life for All: Transforming Income Inequality in Our Communities* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2017), as well as the publications by Miroslav Volf and the 'Theology of Joy and the Good Life' project at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, most recently M Volf and Matthew Croasmun, *For the Life of the World: Theology that Makes a Difference* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2019).

all' approach speaks to all people, religious and secular alike, it is particularly suitable for connecting with contemporary society. In a multi-religious and multi-ethnic context such as the Middle East, promoting a 'good life for all' in mutual respect and equality is essential for peace.

The shared Jewish-Palestinian 'Oasis of Peace' village, officially called *Wahat al-Salam/Neve Shalom*, aims at providing a better life for both Jews and Palestinians in the Holy Land, whether they identify as Jewish, Muslim, Christian or non-religious.<sup>4</sup> Named after Isaiah 32:18 ('My people shall dwell in an oasis of peace'), the village was founded in 1970 as the country's first cooperative community of Jewish Israelis and Palestinians possessing Israeli citizenship (Arab Israelis) who live together on the basis of the idea of bi-cultural, bi-national, and tri-religious coexistence. Located on a hilltop near the Trappist Monastery of Latrun, equidistant from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem on the Israeli side of the 1949 Armistice line (Green Line), the 'Oasis of Peace' community is currently home to sixty-five Jewish and Palestinian Arab families, that is about 240 residents.<sup>5</sup> Some families living here are already of the second generation. An extension of the village is planned, probably doubling the number of residents in the near future. In a seemingly never-ending conflict between the Jewish and Palestinian peoples, the mixed 'Oasis of Peace' community is, for almost fifty years now, a hopeful 'sign of the times.'<sup>6</sup>

4. *Wahat al-Salam* (Arabic) and *Neve Shalom* (Hebrew) both mean 'Oasis of Peace'. Instead of the official bilingual name of the village, we use here the English translation. For recent publications on the history of the village, see Maria Chiara Rioli, 'A Christian Look at the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Bruno Hussar and the Foundation of "Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam"', *Quest*, E-Journal of Fondazione CDEC, No 5, July 2013, can be found at <[http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/files/2.%20Rioli-DEF\\_DEF.pdf](http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/files/2.%20Rioli-DEF_DEF.pdf)> (accessed on 1 November 2018); Brunetto Salvarani (editor), *Il folle sogno di Neve Shalom Wahat al-Salam. Israeliani e palestinesi insieme sulla stessa terra*, (Milano: Terra Santa, 2017); Freundinnen und Freunde von Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (editor), *Oase des Friedens, Neve Shalom, Wahat al-Salam. Gemeinsam zum Frieden* (Zeitschrift israel & palästina), (Berlin: AphorismA, 2018).

5. See Freundinnen und Freunde von Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (editor), *Oase des Friedens*, 4–5.

6. This is true regardless of the internal conflicts and controversies that shake the community every now and then. As Amia Lieblich has rightly observed, '[I]f in an ideological village in a split and democratic world, creates arguments, disagreements, and scuffles at every step of the way.' See her book, *Against All Odds: The Story of a Binational Village*, translated from Hebrew by Mor Shavit, and edited by Gayla Goodman (Tel Aviv: Contento Now, 2015), 21. The book is based on interviews with forty residents of the village.

In what follows, we examine the beginnings of what became the 'Oasis of Peace' village as an exemplary grassroots project, reflecting a 'good life for all' approach. Since the endeavor was initiated by the Dominican friar and peace activist Bruno Hussar (1911–1996), we are particularly interested in two—partly controversial—aspects of the village, namely the religious motivation of the founder and the subsequent non-religious orientation of the community, as well as Hussar's underlying Dominican spirituality and its impact on the project. Before tackling these issues, we will briefly sketch the life of the founder.

### Hussar: A Visionary of Peace in the Holy Land

Born in Cairo in 1911 of non-practicing Jewish parents who hailed from Hungary and France, André Hussar—who later became Brother Bruno—was educated at English and Italian schools in Egypt.<sup>7</sup> In 1929, he went to Paris to study engineering. In France, Hussar discovered Christianity and was baptised in to the Catholic Church six years later. 'From that moment', as he puts it in his autobiography, 'I entered a world where all was holy, unaware then to what extent my Jewish self was finding expression. I lived only for God, with God and in God.'<sup>8</sup> Hussar's spiritual journey eventually led him to the consecrated life. Shortly after World War II, he joined the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) and was given the name Brother Bruno. Through his studies of philosophy, theology, and, in particular, the Bible in the

7. As Maria Chiara Rioli has pointed out, Hussar's biography has not yet been sufficiently studied in its contemporary context. For a discussion of textual sources and preliminary conclusions, see her article, 'A Christian Look'. For a biographical sketch, see Paulus Engelhardt, 'Ein Weg der Versöhnung. Bruno Hussar OP', in *Wort und Antwort*, 33 (1992): 44–45; Engelhardt, 'Erinnerungen an einen Träumer. Zum Tod von Bruno Hussar OP', in *Kontakt*, 24 (1996): 51–55; and the contributions by Raffaello Zini, Pietro Lazagna, Dan Eliezer, Raniero Fontana, Claudio Monge, Claire Maligot, Giorgio Bernardelli, and Antonietta Augruso in Salvarani (editor), *Il folle sogno*, 17–106. Daniëlle Delmaire is currently preparing a study on the history of the community of Hebrew-speaking Catholics in Israel, in which Hussar served temporarily as a chaplain. See her preliminary study, 'La communauté catholique d'expression hébraïque en Israël. Shoa, judaïsme et christianisme', in *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah*, 192 (2010): 237–287. I thank Olivier Catel for bringing Delmaire's work to my attention.

8. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 15.

Dominican house of studies, *Le Saulchoir*, he connected more and more to his Jewish roots, which also became an important part of his Catholic identity. As a result of his deep affection for the Jewish people, Hussar devoted his life to interreligious dialogue, focusing especially on reconciliation between Christians and Jews.

In 1953, three years after his ordination as a priest, Hussar was sent on a mission to the newly established State of Israel in order to prepare the foundation of a Dominican center in the Israeli (western) part of Jerusalem, which would be dedicated to the study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations.<sup>9</sup> There already existed a Dominican presence in the, at times, Jordanian (eastern) part of Jerusalem, the French *Ecole Biblique et Archéologique*, which, however, did not include Jewish studies. Nevertheless, the friars in East Jerusalem feared competition and prohibited their confreres in West Jerusalem, *inter alia*, to use the term 'Dominican' in their official name.<sup>10</sup> In 1959/60, after years of preparing the ground, the new center, called *House of Isaiah*, ultimately opened its doors and quickly became a leading institution for Christian-Jewish understanding.<sup>11</sup> During the Second Vatican Council, when the Church reconsidered her relationship to Judaism and ended its age-long anti-Semitism, Hussar was among those who contributed to this paradigm shift, which found expression in Section 4 of the declaration *Nostra aetate* (1965).<sup>12</sup>

With the Six-Day War of June 1967, Hussar began to realise the dire need for collaboration among all people living in the Holy Land.

9. It is not entirely clear whether Hussar or his superior, the provincial of the Dominican Province of France, initiated the foundation of such a center. See Claudio Monge, 'Père Bruno Hussar: un Prophète du Dialogue Judéo-chrétien et un des pères du quatrième paragraphe de *Nostra Aetate*', in *The Promise of Renewal: Dominicans and Vatican II*, edited by Michael Attridge, Darren Dias, Matthew Eaton, and Nicholas Olkovich (Adelaide: ATF Theology, 2017), 285–301, here at 286.

10. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 73.

11. By 1967, the Dominican community had grown to four members: Bruno Hussar, Jacques Fontaine, Marcel-Jacques Dubois, and Gabriel Grossman. On the *House of Isaiah*, see Annie Laurent, 'Petite histoire de la Maison Saint-Isaïe', in Marcel-Jacques Dubois, *Nostalgie d'Israël. Entretiens avec Olivier-Thomas Venard*, (Paris: Cerf, 2006), 381–388; Danielle Delmaire, 'Naissance de la Maison Saint-Isaïe, Jérusalem (1959)', in *Tsafon* 69 (2015): 125–154. See also Rina Geftman, *Guetteurs d'aurore* [Interview with Gilbert Lancenet], (Paris: Cerf, 1985), 131–133; Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 73–81.

12. For details, see Monge, 'Père Bruno Hussar'.

The war had made the fragmentation of Israeli society and the conflicts between its different religious, national, and cultural communities more evident than ever. In reaction to this situation, Hussar and his friends, among them Rina Geftman (1914–2001), decided 'that something must be *done* to change it, that there is a need to work, in collaboration with others who have the same aspiration, for peace and reconciliation in Israel.'<sup>13</sup> The Dominican was increasingly convinced that intellectual exchanges, although indispensable, were not enough to promote change and that certain actions had to be taken. As Anne Le Meignen, a close companion of Hussar since the early days of the village, points out, 'Bruno's greatness was his vision of a community [. . .] a village where we would live together as a community, with awareness of our identity and that of the others', respecting one another.'<sup>14</sup> Hussar's diverse background as 'a Christian and a priest', 'a Jew', 'an Israeli', and someone who 'at least feel[s] very close to the Arabs', as he once described his 'fourfold' identity, made him an advocate of peace between religions and nations.<sup>15</sup> The Dominican remained a member of the 'Oasis of Peace' community until his death in 1996.

### The 'Oasis of Peace' Village: A Religious Endeavor?

Under the impact of Vatican II, Hussar originally thought of founding a Christian-Jewish community centered on the process of reconciliation between the two religions. 'Jews and Christians', he writes, 'are so divided by history and prejudice, shouldn't we try to find a way for them to share life together, a community where they may be faithful to their own faith and traditions while fully respecting each other's?'<sup>16</sup> He soon realised that there was no peace without the inclusion of the Palestinians, both Muslim and Christian. Hussar henceforth envisioned an 'Oasis of Peace' village based on the three 'Abrahamic' religions, of which the overall aim was 'to break down walls of indifference or prejudice or misunderstanding, and so on, between those

13. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 103 (emphasis in the text). See also Geftman, *Guetteurs d'aurore*, especially 176.

14. Quoted in Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 33.

15. For all quotations, see Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 10.

16. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 102.

communities, and [to] build bridges of respect and understanding.<sup>17</sup> However, the religious orientation of the project was ultimately disputed by the fact that the Jews and Palestinians who joined the 'Oasis of Peace' community from the mid-1970s onwards were mostly secular and more interested in the political aspects of the Jewish-Arab conflict.<sup>18</sup> This was also a learning process for Hussar, as Le Meignen stresses: 'In the end, he [Bruno] met a very different reality than the one he expected when he envisioned a village of the three faiths. He suddenly discovered the wealth and profoundness to accepting and living with a person as he or she is, even if not faithful.'<sup>19</sup>

Hussar and his companions quickly understood that the roots of the conflict were not religious. Instead, the clash between two national identities, Jewish and Palestinian-Arab, and their respective claims turned out to be the most pressing obstacle to peace. As a result, the orientation of the 'Oasis of Peace' village shifted to a predominantly political project. However, not every member of the community accepted this fundamental change. Geftman and some others left disappointed.<sup>20</sup> In the following years, the village went through various transformations, of which several autobiographical publications by current and former residents give witness.<sup>21</sup> Looking back to the beginnings of the community, Hussar analyzes that

[t]he first idea of Neve Shalom was religious in character. This was natural since it originated in the setting of the House of Isaiah [. . .] In fact, Neve Shalom has become a non-religious undertaking, dedicated to bringing together

17. Bruno Hussar, 'Father of the Dream: An Interview with Bruno Hussar [1991]', in Grace Feuerverger, *Oasis of Dreams: Teaching and Learning Peace in a Jewish-Palestinian Village in Israel* (New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001), 118–131, here at 124.

18. See, for example, Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 34, 40, 49–50.

19. Quoted in Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 35.

20. See Geftman, *Guetteurs d'aurore*, 180.

21. See Geftman, *Guetteurs d'aurore*, especially 125–127, 131–134, 176–180; Reuven Moskovitz, *Der lange Weg zum Frieden. Deutschland–Israel–Palästina. Episoden aus dem Leben eines Friedensabenteurers*, edited by Birgit Rux, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Berlin: amBEATion/randlage, 1999), especially 243–269, 304; Evi Guggenheim Shbeta and Eyas Shbeta, *Le Mariage de la Paix. Au cœur du conflit, une Juive et un Palestinien dans le village de la tolérance* (Paris: Michel Lafon, 2004); Rayek R Rizek, *The Anteater and the Jaguar. Is This Our Destiny? A Story from the Oasis of Peace* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2017).

the Jews and Arabs in Israel. This is because of the overriding predominance of the Judaeo-Arabic conflict [. . .] Among its members there are, as it happens, believers, but their faith doesn't play a decisive role in the life of the community or in educational activities.<sup>22</sup>

From its earliest days, the 'Oasis of Peace' community had the vision not only to promote peace through sharing life, but also through education. As Hussar states:

[W]e wanted to found a school for peace, for peace too is an art. It doesn't appear spontaneously, it has to be learnt. People would come here from all over the country to meet those from whom they were estranged, wanting to break down the barriers of fear, mistrust, ignorance, misunderstanding, preconceived ideas—all things that separate us—and to build bridges of trust, respect, mutual understanding, and, if possible, friendship.<sup>23</sup>

'[I]t [the village] was to be the framework for a school for peace, a place where people come from all over the country with a motivation of just learning to listen to the other one.'<sup>24</sup> The foundation of the 'School for Peace' was a crucial step in promoting a 'good life for all' in the Holy Land beyond the village community. Over time, the school developed its own pedagogy to contribute to conflict resolution and reconciliation between the two peoples.<sup>25</sup> More than 65,000 Israelis and Palestinians from both Israel and the West Bank have so far been trained in the community's values of peaceful coexistence, based on the awareness and recognition of the other's national and cultural identity. In recent years, the 'School for Peace' has 'focus[ed]

22. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 108–109. See also Hussar, 'Father of the Dream', 124.

23. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 103.

24. Hussar, 'Father of the Dream', 124.

25. For details see *Israeli and Palestinian Identities in Dialogue: The School for Peace Approach*, edited by Rabah Halabi translated from Hebrew by Deb Reich (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000); Grace Feuerverger, *Oasis of Dreams: Teaching and Learning Peace in a Jewish-Palestinian Village in Israel* (New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001); Nava Sonnenschein, *The Power of Dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians: Stories of Change from the School for Peace*, edited and translated from Hebrew by Deb Reich (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2019).

on courses for change agents, namely, professionals who bear an impact on the conflict, in order for them to employ their occupations to initiate and lead a change', as Nava Sonnenschein, a founding member of the School and its current director, explains.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the overall non-religious character of the 'Oasis of Peace' village, Hussar continued to dream of 'a House of Prayer on the hill [. . .] [which] will be a place of silence, where anyone may come to meditate, where each creed may worship God, faithful to its own traditions, respectful of those of others.'<sup>27</sup> This 'House of Silence', founded by the community in the 1980s and renamed 'The Bruno Hussar Spiritual-Pluralistic Center' after Hussar's death, provides everyone with a place of prayer and meditation, regardless of his or her personal convictions. The Dominican was convinced that '[w]e need to hear that thin silence [as discussed in 1 Kings 19:12; D.H.] in the midst of the din of conflict and pain in our world. That thin voice in the silence guides us. That voice has guided me to this village.'<sup>28</sup> Le Meignen who has been engaged in the development of the Center for years, relates that 'Bruno used to say, "Silence is a common language to all". Each person may enter with his or her own personal beliefs.'<sup>29</sup> Hussar's holistic approach and his emphasis on inclusivity and inter-religious acceptance even found support among the secular residents of the village. Today, '[w]hen I talk to people', Le Meignen stresses, 'I explain that the Pluralistic Spiritual Center recognizes everyone, and that in every person, and to every action, there is a spiritual dimension [. . .] This concept can unite a lot of people.'<sup>30</sup> This spirituality of silence and contemplation, as understood by Hussar and Le Meignen, aims at crossing religious boundaries and bridging differences between people. The future of the Center is currently under discussion among the members of the community.<sup>31</sup>

26. Quoted in Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 365. See also Sonnenschein, *The Power of Dialogue*, especially the Preface.

27. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 110.

28. Hussar, 'Father of the Dream', 130.

29. Quoted in Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 41.

30. Quoted in Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 42-43.

31. Under such a circumstance, the impact of the Center on the 'good life for all' approach cannot be evaluated.

### The Dominican Spirituality: An Inspiration for Hussar?

We may wonder how Hussar's idea to found the 'Oasis of Peace' village was related to his vocation as a Dominican friar. Did his Dominican spirituality affect his vision for a peaceful coexistence between Jews and Palestinians? We learn little, unfortunately, from Hussar's autobiography to answer this question. However, it becomes clear that he joined the Order of Preachers, because he opted for a form of religious life that is grounded in a Dominican spirituality of contemplation *and* action, as reflected in Thomas Aquinas' expression 'to contemplate and to hand on to others the fruits of contemplation' (*contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*).<sup>32</sup> 'I certainly had a so-called contemplative vocation', Hussar insists, 'but it became increasingly clear to me that in my case it wasn't necessarily linked to the traditional forms of this way of life. It was with my whole being that I wanted to praise God, [. . .] with all the "talents" he had entrusted to me, with all the desire he had put in my heart—including that urgent desire to communicate with others, the need to console the afflicted by sharing with them the Word of God which burned within me.'<sup>33</sup> As a man of action, Hussar proclaimed the Good News by bringing people of different faiths and convictions together in order to facilitate peace between them. He saw himself not as an intellectual, but rather as someone '[whose] vocation comes into the category of "doing".'<sup>34</sup>

Hussar's work was repeatedly a source of conflict with his confreres and friends in Jerusalem, mainly because his unconventional vision did not conform to people's expectations of being a friar and a priest. In the pioneering years of the 'Oasis of Peace' community, when the living conditions on the hilltop were still precarious and the project had not yet attracted local participation, Hussar and his companions were confronted with a strong critique of the endeavor. As Hussar reveals in an interview,

my friends in Jerusalem were very cross with me because they said I'm a priest, I'm a Dominican, and they said that I was wasting my time on the hill [. . .] And they needed me as a priest in Jerusalem. I pretended to be strong—I was not strong but I pretended to be—and I said that there was no country,

32. See Thomas Aquinas, *S.th.* II-II 188, 6c.

33. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 26.

34. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 80.



no town in the world, except perhaps Rome, where there are so many priests as in Jerusalem [. . .] But if Neve Shalom is to develop and to be known, it will only do so if there is presence on the hill and I must remain.<sup>35</sup>

Hussar did not return to the ecclesiastical milieu in Jerusalem, but pursued his 'utopian' vision, as critics called it, of building a peace village.<sup>36</sup> Le Meignen notes that 'he [Bruno] was a man of great perseverance, who stuck to his dream despite all the difficulties and challenges, even when many opposed and criticized his actions.'<sup>37</sup>

I believe that Hussar's attitude toward his companions and the 'Oasis of Peace' community tells us indirectly about his motivation as a Dominican to engage in dialogue and peace-building. He understood his personal mission as not being limited to the inner life of the Church, but as transcending its boundaries by breaking new ground towards other religions and ideologies, in a respectful and inclusive way.<sup>38</sup> This also meant leaving the 'safe haven' of the Church, not imposing his religious views on others, and embracing uncertainty and change. Hussar was once asked by German Protestant visitors to the 'Oasis of Peace' village how he, as a Catholic priest, could "live among Jews, Muslims and atheists, without trying to convince them of the truth of the Christian faith?"<sup>39</sup> Hussar answered with a reference to the Beatitudes (Matt 25:31–40) that all those working for peace and reconciliation—religious and secular alike—are 'doing God's work.'<sup>40</sup> The Dominican strongly believed in a communion of people who may not share the same religion, but who are nevertheless committed to charity by welcoming and integrating everyone as he or she is. As Bob Mark, a companion of Hussar, puts it, '[t]he struggle for peace is in itself the spiritual value shared by people of all religions and by people without

35. Hussar, 'Father of the Dream', 125.

36. See Geftman, *Guetteurs d'aurore*, 177; Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 104; as well as the allocution by Hussar's confrere Bernard Dupuy during the requiem service in Paris, on 7 March 1996, in *Shalom, Bruno*, edited by Bruno Segre (Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, 1997), 63–68, here at 64.

37. Quoted in Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 35.

38. This corresponds to the priorities defined by the Dominican General Chapter of Ávila in 1986, to which the Dominican Order is particularly committed. See *Acta Capituli Generalis Diffinitorum Ordinis Praedicatorum Abulensis* 1986, chapter 2, No 22.

39. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 109.

40. Hussar, *When the Cloud Lifted*, 110.

religion. His [Bruno's] dream was to create a village in which we could learn how to put these values into practice.<sup>41</sup> Hussar's openness and respect toward the diversity of God's people, paired with optimism and trust in jointly building a future of a 'good life for all', is characteristic of Dominican spirituality.<sup>42</sup> This spiritual attitude fit well with the idea of founding a peace village beyond all national and religious boundaries.

## Conclusion

The shared Jewish-Palestinian 'Oasis of Peace' community can be seen as an attempt to contribute to a 'good life for all' in the Holy Land in the context of the Jewish-Arab conflict. In a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and, at the same time, secular society, the concept of a 'good life for all' can offer a suitable approach to promote the values of peace and equality. Although Hussar initially had a different vision, he adapted—thanks to his spiritual background—to the needs of those he encountered in this endeavor. After Hussar's death, the 'Oasis of Peace' community lauded him as their visionary and pioneer who had dreamed of a cooperative village that overcomes cultural, religious, and national divide.<sup>43</sup> In his last will, the Dominican recalls the purpose of the village community as follows:

Here in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, we have one aim: peaceful reconciliation between our two peoples. In order to work fruitfully towards this aim, we need to have mutual understanding and consideration of each other. This means love. I really want that what we do together will be done as an act of love, reconciliation and peace between all the members of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam [. . .] Faith in the ultimate victory of love over hate—this is the real and deepest aim of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.<sup>44</sup>

41. Bob Mark, 'Bruno', translated from French, in *Our Brother Bruno*, edited by Anne Le Meignen (Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, 2016), 8. See also Lieblich, *Against All Odds*, 72.

42. See Ulrich Engel, *Gott der Menschen. Wegmarken dominikanischer Theologie* (Ostfildern: Grünewald, 2010).

43. See "The Community of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, "Bruno Hussar, 1911–1996", in Segre, *Shalom, Bruno*, 5; Anne Le Meignen, 'Nous, enfants de son rêve', in Segre, *Shalom, Bruno*, 17.

44. Bruno Hussar, 'Bruno's "Will"', translated from Hebrew, in Le Meignen, *Our Brother Bruno*, 5.