UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

University of Bath

RELIGION *AS* SECURITY: AN INTRODUCTION

Giorgio Shani,

Professor of International Relations,

International Christian University, Japan

gshani@icu.ac.jp

Giorgio Shani PhD (London) is Professor of Politics and International Relations at International Christian University, Tokyo and Visiting Senior Fellow at the Centre of International Studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He is the author of *Sikh Nationalism and Identity in a Global Age* (Routledge 2008) and *Religion, Identity and Human Security* (Routledge 2014). He has published widely in internationally reviewed journals including *International Studies Review* and *The Cambridge Review of International Affairs*. Currently, he is serving as President of the Asia-Pacific region of the International Studies Association (2014-1017) and is series co-editor of *Critical Perspectives on Religion in International Politics* (http://www.rowmaninternational.com/series/critical-perspectives-religion-international-politics).

In recent years, the discipline of International Relations (IR) has undergone a religious renaissance. The previously stable distinctions between the religious and the secular, sacred and profane, and ontology and theology have been de-centered by a resurgence of interest in religion, culture and identity. This is reflected not only in the proliferation of studies focusing on the rise of religious violence in various parts of the world (and its capacity for peacebuilding) but also in efforts more generally to locate religion *in* IR itself as one of the constitutive elements of the discipline. Religion, broadly defined, may be seen to have been present in the foundations of the contemporary (European-based) international order at the Peace of Westphalia and greatly influenced the "expansion of international society" through the "civilizing mission" of modern colonialism. It was also, as Weber reminded us over a century ago, present in the development of capitalism as the dominant mode of production in the West. Consequently, the globalization of capitalism and the Westphalian states system or international community of territorialized nation-states has posed profound existential challenges for societies with very different faith traditions and cosmologies.

The "religious resurgence" in IR can be traced back not only to 9/11 and the ensuing "War on Terror" but to the globalization of transnational religious identities. Much of

the literature on religion and IR has *narrowly* focused on "Islamic exceptionalism" and, specifically, the security threats posed by "Islamic" terrorism. For explanatory IR theories, the pathologies of religion in general and Islam in particular constitute a *problem* to be contained by the "international community" through the establishment of secular security architectures which stress the importance of state-building, liberal peacebuilding and human rights. Realists favour the establishment of strong secular states capable of "securitizing" the threats posed by transnational religious movements from within their borders with the help of the "international community". Liberals believe that these secular state structures need to be legitimized through periodic elections, the establishment of human rights mechanisms and the rule of law, the so-called "Liberal Peace" (Doyle 2005). States are furthermore reminded of their "responsibility to protect" their citizens from religious-inspired extremist violence (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001). Failure to do so opens up the possibility of intervention by "the international community" in the form of periodic air-strikes.

Critical accounts, most particularly those influenced by postcolonial framings, problematize the representation of Islamic societies in mainstream IR discourse as

"orientalist" (Said 1978). However, efforts to "provincialize" (Chakrabarty 2000) IR by bringing in voices from "outside" the West have hitherto privileged the *secular*. This is noticeably the case with Marxist-inspired Critical Theory and its application to security studies and international political economy. Capitalism, the source of so-much insecurity today, is understood following Marx as a *secular* mode of production, abstracted from the cultural and social milieu. Critical Security Studies conceives of security as emancipation (Booth 1991, 2005) from various forms of structural and cultural violence represented by "religion". The atomized, unencumbered individual, unburdened by attachments imposed by membership of cultural and political communities, is similarly considered to be the main referent object of Human Security discourse, including attempts to steer Human Security in a more "critical" direction (Shani 2014) as will be discussed below.

However, critical theory has opened up space for the "return" of religion to IR through the deployment of "religion as critique" (Mendieta 2005). Viewed as a fundamental part of the "lifeworld", religion was pressed into the service of critical theory to rescue "reason" from the fetishism and idolatry of technology and the market. It was in the realm of "religion" that the "human" lived on. Yet capitalism itself was seen by

Benjamin among others as *religion* in that it "essentially serves to satisfy the same worries, anguish and disquiet formerly answered by so-called religion" (Benjamin in Mendieta 2005). Constructivist accounts open up space for the "return of religion" by focusing on the role of norms in IR but have hitherto failed to engage in religion *per se*. Poststructuralist approaches do so but tend to reduce faith-based claims to power relations.

More recently, attempts inspired by critical theory – in a broad sense – have been made to emancipate IR from its dominant secular moorings through an encounter with the "post-secular" which has opened up potentially productive avenues of inquiry. For Jürgen Habermas (2008), the term "post-secular" refers to the inclusion of religious-based world-views, translated into a language accessible to all, into the public sphere so as to guarantee its' neutrality. Recent critical scholarship has cast doubt on the extent to which translation is possible without doing violence to the 'vital core' of faith (Shani 2014) and how the inclusion of religious-based worldviews necessitates an essentialization of fluid faith-based traditions, in turn reifying religious boundaries and empowering unrepresentative elites to speak on behalf of religion, "religion-making" (Dressler and Mandair 2011). Attempts to apply the post-secular to IR are still in their

infancy (Petito and Mavelli 2012) but have taken the form of an engagement with culturally constituted *difference* (Pasha 2013). Most, however, have limited this engagement to the Abrahamic traditions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) leaving other cosmologies unexplored.

In the remaining section, I will attempt to briefly sketch a post-secular approach to Human Security. Two decades ago the United Nations Development Program introduced the concept of Human Security as safety from existential threats posed by hunger, disease and repression as an alternative to rampant neo-liberal globalization, which prioritizes the needs of markets over people, and conventional approaches to security, which continue to prioritize the needs of states over citizens (UNDP 1994). Despite its institutionalization in the United Nations system, Human Security- redefined by a United Nations General Assembly Resolution as "the right of people to live in freedom and dignity" (United Nations General Assembly 2012)-has failed to make significant inroads into the hegemony of the "national security paradigm" and has been co-opted into a neo-liberal world order based on ontological and methodological individualism.

Critically reworked, I have argued "human security" has the potential to constitute a powerful global ethic by engaging with the multiple religio-cultural contexts in which human dignity is embedded. Human security in lower case opens up the possibility of conceptualizing 'security' from multiple culturally informed perspectives of which the cosmopolitan liberal tradition is merely one. This entails locating the emancipatory impulse of contemporary Western-led attempts to liberate human beings everywhere from fear and poverty not in universal entitlements to security and freedom but in the "civilizing mission" of the Christian tradition and possibly in other traditions?

Christians affirm that all human beings have a "natural right" to be treated equally since we are all created in the image of God *(Imago Dei)*. Although it could be argued that the end result is the same – equal entitlements to freedom from fear and want – individuals, in the Christian tradition, cannot be the ultimate source of agency and autonomy. Roman Catholicism in particular considers *Imago Dei* to be foundational and grounds its post-Vatican II defence of human rights in the concept. Similarly, Islam holds that security resides not in individual autonomy and rationality but in our equal submission to the divine will of *Allah*. Those who submit form the *umma*, the universal community of believers. Muslims hold the *Qu'ran* to be the ultimate source of truth and relations

between Muslims are regulated by *Shar'ia* Law. Space, however, is allocated in Islamic law for *itjihad*, independent judicial reasoning, and interpretation of the *Quran*.

Indic religio-cultural traditions, however, have a different cosmology from the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and lack a central revealed text such as the *Qu'ran*, *Torah* or Bible. In South Asia, the collection of local faiths subsumed under the term 'Hinduism' have as their central concern the concept of *dharma.* Dharma governs all legitimate world ends (*purushartha*), prescribing different rights and duties for different 'castes.' Ontological security resides in following one's *karma*, the application of *dharma* to individual action. *Karma* in turn determines the cycle of birth, death and rebirth (*samsara*). Brahmans and other 'twice-born' castes have more 'security' than those of other castes as they are nearer to achieving *moksha* (liberation from suffering). There is, therefore, in Hinduism, a 'hierarchy of protection' (Brekke 2013). In Buddhism as in Hinduism, *dharma* is seen as the provider of protection, and thus, ontological security rests with following one's *karma*. However, *nirvana* (liberation from suffering) is possible through individual meditation or as part of a community, *sangha*. In Sikhism, *dharam* (a variant of *dharma*) guides action and liberation can be achieved through the recitation of the 'true name' (*Satnaam*). However,

the *communal* aspect of religious identity is emphasized through the wearing of the five external symbols of faith making a distinction between the 'religious' community (*Khalsa*) and 'nation' (*qaum*) difficult (Shani 2007). Gender equality is particularly emphasized in Sikhism whereas Buddhism extends the principle of equality to all sentient beings while questioning the uniqueness of individual identity through the doctrine of *anatman* (no self). Although this discussion was necessarily brief and drawn almost exclusively from the traditions with which I am most familiar, it serves to illustrate the main point of this brief paper; that religion can act *as* a form of security and that, furthermore, contemporary understandings of security are drawn almost exclusively from a particular tradition: the Judeo-Christian.

Three central concepts of modernity, which are constitutive of IR, have their origins in this tradition. First, the concept of the *nation* as an ethnic community has its origins in the Jewish idea of a "chosen people" transformed into a "community of blood" by Christianity through the act of transubstantiation. By partaking of Jesus's flesh and blood through the Eucharist, Christians formed a distinct "nation" or "race" which could be differentiated from others (Anidjar 2014). Second, the state, as Schmitt has argued, may be seen as a "secularized" theological concept. Schmitt based his understanding of

the 'sovereign' on the founding father of the 'realist tradition': Thomas Hobbes. Central

to Hobbes's thought is a view of the sovereign as a *Leviathan*, a secularized 'Mortal[l]

God, to which we owe under the Immortal God, our peace and defense' (Hobbes [1651]

1985, 227). This 'Mortal[l] God' alone is capable of bestowing protection on his

subjects in return for their liberty. Finally, the development of capitalism, as Weber

pointed out, cannot be understood in Europe without reference to the Protestant work

ethic and, more recently, as Anidjar has recently pointed out, to the concept of

circulation, which has its origins in the flow of Blood in Christ's body.

This collection of essays, based on a roundtable at the International Studies Association

Annual Convention held at New Orleans which I chaired with Mustapha Kamal Pasha,[1]

builds upon Carl Schmitt's insight that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of

the state are secularized theological concepts" (Schmitt 1985:1) by critically examining

the ontological and epistemological foundations of IR in general and security studies in

particular in the Judeo-Christian tradition and more specifically in a Protestant

world-view (Hurd 2008). If, as Jack Snyder (2011:1) has recently argued, "mainstream

---

[1] It also forms the basis for a book series, *Critical Perspectives on Religion in International Politics*, which we edit for Rowman and Littlefield International. For more details, see here:
http://www.rowmaninternational.com/series/critical-perspectives-religion-international-politics.

international relations scholars find it difficult to integrate religious subject matter into their normal conceptual frameworks", it is suggested here that this might be because their "normal" conceptual frameworks are themselves *secularized* theological frameworks.

References

Anidjar, Gil. *Blood: A Critique of Christianity.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2014.

Benjamin, Walter. "Capitalism as Religion." In *Religion as Critique: The Frankfurt School's Critique of Religion,* edited by Eduardo Mendieta, 259-262. Abingdon: Routledge, 2005.

Booth, Ken. Security and Emancipation. *Review of International Studies* 17:313–326, 1991.

Booth, Ken. Beyond Critical Security Studies. In K. Booth (ed.), *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*, 259-279. Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner, 2005.

Brekke, Torkel. "Hinduism and Security: A Hierarchy of Protection." In *The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Securit*y, edited by Chris Seiple, Dennis R. Hoover and Pauletta Otis Abingdon, 80-90. Abingdon: Routledge, 2013.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Commission on Human Security (CHS). *Human Security Now.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Doyle, Michael W. "Three Pillars of the Liberal Peace." *American Political Science Review* 99, No. 3 (2005): 463-466.

Dressler, Markus and Arvind-pal Singh Mandair (ed.). *Secularism and Religion-Making*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2011

Habermas, Jürgen. *Between Naturalism and Religion*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan* (edited with an introduction by C.B. Macpherson). London: Penguin, 1985.

Hurd, Elizabeth Shakman. *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Mavelli, Luca and Fabio Petito. 'The Postsecular in International Relations: an Overview', *Review of International Studies* 38 (Special Issue): 931-942.

Mendieta, Eduardo, ed. *The Frankfurt School on Religion: Key Writings by the Major Thinkers*. New York and London: Routledge, 2005.

Pasha, Mustapha Kamal, ed. *Globalization, Difference and Human Security*. Abingdon,

Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.

Shani, Giorgio. *Religion, Identity and Human Security*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2014.

Schmitt, Carl. *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (trans.

George Schwab), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, (1922) 1985.

Snyder, Jack L. 'Introduction.' In *Religion and International Relations Theory*, ed.

Jack L. Snyder. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 1994:*

New Dimensions of Human Security. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

United Nations General Assembly. "Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human   security

of the 2005 World Summit Outcome", September 10, available at:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol= A/RES/66/290 (Accessed

September 17, 2012).

THEODICY AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY: A SKETCH

David L. Blaney,

G. Theodore Mitau Professor of Political Science

Macalester College, USA

blaney@macalester.edu

David L. Blaney, G. Theodore Mitau Professor of Political Science, Macalester College, USA, writes on the political and social theory of international relations and global political economy. His two books (with Naeem Inayatullah), *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (Routledge, 2004) and *Savage Economics: Wealth, Poverty, and the Temporal Walls of Capitalism* (Routledge, 2010) explore international

relations/political economy as a cultural project constructing a modern Western identity that represses knowledge of the costs it imposes. With Arlene Tickner, he has edited *Thinking International Relations Differently* (Routledge, 2012) and *Claiming the International* (Routledge, 2013) which explore the provincialism of current IR scholarship and the possibilities of alternative modes of making the world.

One of international relations' (IR) patron saints, Martin Wight, once posed the question, "International Relations is a theodicy?   Discuss," on an MA exam.   My source, Zdenek Kavan, assures me *no one* opted for this question.   I see my task, however belatedly and out of context, as opting for Wight's question.   My answer at present takes the form of a sketch or, perhaps, a promissory note.[2]

It might seem obvious that IR in its realist variants may be little more than a theodicy, an attempt to explain the necessity of conflict and war to order itself.   Wight's references (1992, 16) to Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society* as involving "the frank acceptance of the disagreeable side of life" might restrict our attribution of theodicy to realism, but I argue against that reading.   Where Wight (1992, 18-20) explores the application of "mechanistic" and "biological" theory to international

politics, he opens the door wider. Mechanistic theories of balances and equilibrium have served realists *and* those he calls rationalists – from balance of power to trade and credit balances. And, Wight notes, balance and equilibrium occupy an ambiguous moral status, signalling the limits of international politics but also allotted a normative power linked to theories of cooperation, reciprocity and human improvement. Although Wight associates biological theories, in this case Darwin or Spencer, with racist theories of competition, we might easily associate them also with the mechanistic (and ostensibly de-racialized) theories of progress, which tend also to explain why *some must bear the costs* of progress.   If so, then answering the question about IR Theory as theodicy requires casting a wider net across the field....

Since I write as principally as a political economist, my thinking attends principally to the theodicies involved in classical political economy, neoclassical economics and their translation into strands of IR theorizing.   I can only paint that project in very broad strokes here..   First, I will discuss what I call the *symbolic structure of theodicy*. Second, I will briefly present three examples/moments, one drawing on Hegel, a second on Adam Smith, the third focusing on rationalist IPE, that stand in for a more comprehensive and systematic reading of the political economy tradition.

The Symbolic Structure of Early Modern Theodicy

Theology becomes theodicy when focused on the problem of pervasive and inexplicable

suffering and evil in a creation that God saw as "very good" (Siebert 2010, 13-15). The

"problem" of theodicy emerges because suffering and evil appear as an anomaly whose

existence must be accepted but simultaneously denied: accepted, on the one hand,

because evil's presence in the world motivates the theologians task, and maybe the

theorist's task more generally) of constructing the aspiration for and means towards the

good; denied, on the other, because its existence implies an imperfection in God's

creation of the natural order and therefore an imperfection or incompleteness in God.

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430), stands in for the Christian tradition of theodicy

for many thinkers (Griffin 1976; Connolly 1991), but Leibniz, who coins the term

(Rutherford 1995, 18) in *Theodicy* (2007 [1710]),[3], serves better to illustrate the features

of a modern political economic theology.[4]

Pierre Bayle plays a key role in this story, when he reintroduces Manicheanism into

public discussion after a several-century-long absence.   For thinkers committed to *both*

an intelligible and orderly world, perhaps on Newton's model, *and* (officially at least)

---

[3] Hereafter, TH.
[4] And often following Augustine （see TH 303-6),

Christian doctrine, Bayle's challenge that they *could not have both* – that the experience of evil and suffering requires a dualism of good and evil forces independently at work— "startled" them by throwing Christianity into doubt (Popkin 1967, 32).   Thus, Cassirer (1955, 136, 143-8) argues that the key intellectual problems engaging Enlightenment thinkers were "fused with religious problems;" and none was more troubling than how to reconcile a vision of creation as simple and harmonious with the disorderly "facts of human experience," a problem of theodicy to which "they recur untiringly."   While some, like Hume, thinks beyond Christian doctrine, opting for a vision of an orderly but valueless universe (Popkin 1967, 49-51), Leibniz rises to defend God's orderly creation.

In *Theodicy*, Leibniz acknowledges the force of Bayle's argument, but he pushes back against dualism, by insisting nothing escapes God's will.   At the same time, he denies that this good God is "the author of sin" and "misery," though a wise God must have foreseen the consequences of creating and knowingly allowed evil; as Leibniz puts it, God is not the cause, he "simply permits it" (Th, 63). This move seems to open a crack between God's perfection and his creation's capacity to choose evil and cause suffering. Leibniz recognizes, even embraces this gap, as Rutherford (1995, 7) notes, because the creation – as an emanation of God's will – cannot be identical to God and therefore

suffers a "privation," or is "limited in its essence," containing "an *original imperfection*" (Th 139, 144-5). God's identity requires a created other that, being less in form and order, is separate from God, but still can mirror God's goodness because it remains a good creation in its separateness.[5] Yet this necessarily created privation in being leads to additional privations, chains of choices and actions that result in evil and suffering, somehow set at a distance from God (Th 146, 161, 219, 306). As many contemporary theologians admit (Siebert 2010, 14-5), such reasoning appears tortured; cracks in its symbolic structure make theodicy both necessary *and* impossible.[6]

But Leibniz cannot leave this issue only tenuously resolved. Like Augustine before him (see Griffin 1976, 69-71), he works to characterize evil as only an apparent anomaly, playing a central role, even sometimes mysterious to us, in creation's harmony (Rutherford 1995, 9). The wise and good architect brings together diverse elements in "the most fitting plan" (Th, 168). As Rutherford (1995, 13-4) explains, Leibniz sees

---

[5] Weber (1963, 138-9) notes that "the legitimation of every distinctively ethical prophecy has always required the notion of a god characterized by attributes that set him sublimely above the world," but "the more the development tends toward the conception of a transcendental unitary god who is universal, the more there arises the problem of how the extraordinary power of such a god may be reconciled with the imperfection of the world that he (sic) has created and rules over."

[6] Zizek 2008, 319) calls this the Real: the "internal traumatic core of a symbolic order, including one organized around God: "it is a totality inherent to the Symbolic, its immanent crack or impossibility."

creation as uniting "a variety of things into a pleasing whole." Though each element

and creature appears as a "finite instantiation" and therefore limited, and less perfect in

form than we might desire, the whole, Leibniz insists, is the best possible combination

of these diverse elements. By "optimizing" the highest values – "richness in variety in

phenomena, and simplicity of laws" -- God's creation expresses a harmony of laws and

rules, "nature and grace," and past and future that are consistent with and can be

apprehended by the highest reason (Th, 160, 261, 344-5; Rutherford 1995, 22-4, 29).

Indeed, Leibniz assures us that what we see as "disorder in the part is order in the whole"

(Th, 204). It is the capacity to appreciate and live according to this harmony that

produces the greatest happiness possible for creatures (Th 192; Rutherford 1995, 52-4).

The apparent disorder of suffering serves not only "as a penalty owing to guilt," but as a

"means," guiding individuals by example and contributing to a "greater perfection" (Th

140). This tight "connection" of punishment and reward and "bad or good action"

exemplifies this "pre-established harmony" (Th 166). But, ultimately, the continuing

presence of evil and suffering requires an act of divine redemption that unfolds in

history (Th, 129). Here, as Blumenfeld (1995, 404-5) explains, grace unfolds along

with nature, evil redeemed by the good in the end. The ontological fracture is given a

temporal solution; the very fracturing of the social order—the presence of evil—appears

as the cause of a plan for redemption.[7]   Thus, evil only appears as truly evil from our

limited point of view.

A secularized theodicy responds to the fundamental fracture in the (natural) order in a

similar fashion.   We are tempted to displace evil and suffering outside of the given

order in order to preserve its goodness and order; walling off the good from these alien

and disruptive forces seems to secure the symbolic order's harmony.   But this act of

displacement also does what Leibniz resists: it creates a space beyond God's given order.

Alternative spaces would be opened; other logics of life would be on offer.

Preserving the harmony of order -- its completeness and lawfulness -- requires placing

evil and suffering within, but social order now is revealed as fractured internally: evil

and suffering confront the goodness of social order as an internal antagonism.

Restoring the goodness and power of creation requires a theodicy that turns (apparent)

evil into the good by revaluing social ills and moral failings as good, though doubts

---

[7] As Weber (1963, 139; see also 142) writes, the problem of evil in the world may be addressed via "messianic eschatologies," by a "future revolution in this world," in which evil and good would be again assigned their rightful places.   For Zizek (2008, 345), the relationship between evil and its covering by a promise of redemption is tighter.   Evil calls the Good forward: God's plan for redemption appears as a suturing of the fracture—as a domestication of force of the immanent impossibility of the good.

remain or by showing that these ills and failings are justified when they support or can be turned to the good of the social order, conceived variously and simultaneously as harmony, retributive justice, and historical deliverance. The world's riven-ness appears, then, possibly as tragedy, but always one smoothed by invisible hands and mechanisms of historical progress. But this revaluation and temporalization of the problem merely cover the ontological cracks in social order. Social ills and moral failings remain immune to complete revaluation or smoothing by the invisible hand in the present or in some future state. We are drawn to acts of disavowal of social evil when it appears that the theodicical covering can never be complete. In this way, theodicy reveals a fracture in an order even as it covers over that fracture. Moral or social evil serves as a "constitutive outside" in Timothy Mitchell's (2000, 4-5, 12-3) sense, or a "structural necessity" that is paradoxically outside but necessary to a symbolic order in Zizek's (1994, 306).

Reading Political Economy as Theodicy

As with Leibniz, early modern political economy begins with the assumption of a (mostly) good, or at least orderly and rationally explicable natural order. As Milbank

(1993, 40) suggests, for the political economist, "God-Nature" places dispositions in human beings, whose operations unfold in a regular fashion and "result in an overall harmony." Against that presumption of harmony, I will comment briefly on three thinkers or thought systems.

First, for Hegel, private and public, civil society and state are joined in *a totality*, dialectally bridged by a process of learning (Hegel 1967, especially Part 3; see also Dickey 1987, introduction, chapters 6 and 7, Epilogue). All of this is encompassed in history or accomplished as part of historical development. As a totality, history includes progress but also the costs, the suffering necessary to the learning process (see Blaney and Inayatullah 2010, chapter 5). Here the natural order appears as a whole. There is no outside on which to displace the costs. Hegel recognizes his philosophy of history as a theodicy, himself drawing the link to Leibniz (Hegel 1975, 42).

Second, Adam Smith's theodicy appears more complicated (and perhaps less coherent), but certainly more interesting also in that it both owns and denies the problem of suffering and evil in a good order.[8] In my account, Smith's justification of commercial

---

[8] On Smith's political economy as theodicy, see Long (2011) and Viner (1972). Smith's main mentor, Francis Hutcheson, contributed to the discussions launched by Bayle and

society exhibits a complex and vexed structure, where (in some combination):

(1)   Like Leibniz, he *re-values* certain of these social failings or evils, including self-interest and inequality, as good or, at least, relatively good (see Blaney and Inayatullah, 2010, chapter 2; Hirschman 1977).

(2)   But, unlike Leibniz and Hegel, he is tempted by dualism or Manicheanism. Like many market fundamentalists, Smith works to locate social suffering *outside* of his system of natural liberty, where individuals pursue their self-interest without regard to the good, yet produce the expansion of wealth and contribute to a more civilized society (Caporaso and Levine 1992, chapter 2).   Smith locates social suffering instead in the conscious pursuit of the good via government intervention in economic life, which, whatever the motive, impairs the system of natural liberty and creates costs.

(3)   Yet, like Hegel, he accepts some of these social evils and failings (poverty, perhaps empire) as *within* his system of natural liberty and as a cost *necessary* to social advance (Blaney and Inayatullah 2010, chapter 2).

(4)   Finally, like neoclassical economics and its derivatives, Smith disavows or hides from the necro-economic implications of his own thought, where he

---

Leibniz (Moore 2000)

glosses over the human suffering generated by the insecurities of market

distribution during times of famine and the population dynamics (infant

mortality rates) associated with wage determination (Blaney and Inayatullah

2010, chapter 2).   Since he can't make his theodicy work fully, he resorts to

denial.

Though surely a critical reading of Smith, I would want to draw attention to the

potential richness of Smith's account of commercial society.   Though he can't quite

face fully the suffering essential to natural order, at points Smith does acknowledge

these costs.   And, instead of offering us a valueless universe, he understands the

revision of values associated with market society, including the politics of insulating the

market from intrusive government.

Finally, the various methodological or ontological individualists that I identify with

rationalist IPE are distinct from Smith in that they repress the idea of the social whole or

social ethical evaluations as having any ontological weight or reality.   This is Hume's

valueless universe.   The social exists only in the sense that it is a realization of

individual preferences, traits and/or behaviors as they operate in a regular fashion

(Caparaso and Levine 1992, 79-86).   Yet, the fact that individual interactions add up to desirable outcomes, via something like an invisible hand, suggests the continuing Providential or faith element in their thinking.

Deborah Boucoyannis (2007, 709) lays out this intellectual edifice as it operates in IPE with great clarity.   She notes that the IPE "[u]tilitarians are the real radicals" in the IR discipline.   By assuming that "all preferences have a common denominator: rationality" and that "a bargaining space always exists, within which solutions can be found to reconcile initially competing demands, we can imagine a world in which harmony is possible." As she notes, "Human interests are negotiable, divisible, and exchangeable. The concept of an indifference curve—whereby one good can be substituted for another—represents the measurable expression of this idea (with the important substitution of measurable preferences for utility).   These principles lead to the expectation, if not of a harmony of interests, at least of a possible bargain" involving mutual gains.   The global political economy appears as harmonious: an outcome of bargaining that may disadvantage some relative to others, in that they may find their preferences or demands less well fulfilled, but without serious insecurities or domination and without any real moral loss.   And with that move, we lose something

of the richness of Smith's political economy.

Conclusion

The turn to religion is now well established in IR (Mavelli and Petito 2012; Lynch 2009; Shani 2014). Given events of the last several decades, a failure to react would have been a sign of malfeasance. Yet, a more pressing question might be: how is it that religion was placed outside the boundaries of IR so that it had to be brought in? (Hurd 2008). This is a powerful question and answers help us understand the character of IR,. But I begin from a position that accepts Wight's premise: IR has also always been *in some sense* theological.

Bibliography

Boucayannis, Deborah. "The International Wanderings of a Liberal Idea, or Why Liberals Can Learn to Stop Worrying and Love the Balance of Power," *Perspectives on Politics* 5. No. 4 (2007), 703-27.

Blaney, D. L. and N. Inayatullah. *Savage Economics: Wealth, Poverty, and the*

Temporal Walls of Capitalism. London: Routledge, 2010.

Blumenfeld, David. "Perfection and Happiness in the Best Possible World." In *The Cambridge Companion to Leibniz*, edited by Nicholas Jolly, 353-410. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995.

Caporaso, James A. and David P. Levine. *Theories of Political Economy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992.

Connolly, William E. *IdentityDifference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991.

Dickey, L. *Hegel: Religion, Economics and the Politics of Spirit, 1770-1807*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1987.

Griffin, David Ray. *God. Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

Hegel, G.W. F. *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, translated by T. M. Knox. London: Oxford, 1967.

Hegel, G. W. F. *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, translated by

H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1975.

Hirschman, A. O. *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1977.

Hurd, Elizabeth Shakman. *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2008.

Long, Brendan. "Adam Smith's Theodicy." In *Adam Smith as Theologian*., edited by Paul Oslington, 98-105. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Lynch, Cecilia. "A Neo-Weberian Approach to Religion in International Politics," *International Theory* 1, (2009): 381-408.

Mavelli, Lucia, and Fabio Petito. "The Postsecular in International Relations," *Review of International Studies* 38 (2012): 931-42.

Milbank, John. *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2012.

Moore, James. "Hutcheson's Theodicy: The Argument and the Contexts of a *System of Moral Philosophy*." In *The Scottish Enlightenment: Essays in Reinterpretation*, edited by Paul Wood, 239-65. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester, 2000.

Popkin, Richard H. "Manicheanism in the Enlightenment." In *The Critical Spirit: Essays in Honor of Herbert Marcuse*, edited by Kurt H. Wolff and Barrington Moore Jr., 31-54. Boston: Beacon. 1967.

Rutherford, Donald. *Leibniz and the Rational Order of Nature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995.

Shani, Giorgio. *Religion, Identity and Human Security*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2014.

Siebert, Rudolf. *Manifesto of the Critical Theory of Society and Religion: The Wholly Other, Liberation, Happiness and the Rescue of Hope, Vol. 1*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Viner, Jacob. *The Role of Providence in the Social Order: An Essay in Intellectual History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1972.

Weber, Max. *The Sociology of Religion*, translated by Ephraim Fischoff. Boston: Beacon, 1963.

Wight, Martin. *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, edited by Gabriele Wight

and Brian Porter. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1992.

Zizek, Slavoj. *In Defense of Lost Causes*. London, Verso, 2008.

Zizek, Slavoj. "The Spectre of Ideology," In *Mapping Ideology*, edited by Slavoj Zizek,

1-33. New York: Verso, 1994.

THE RELIGIOUS TURN RECONSIDERED

Scott M. Thomas,

Professor of International Relations,

Bath University, UK

S.M.Thomas@bath.ac.uk

Dr. Scott M. Thomas lectures in International Relations in the Department of Politics, Languages, and International Studies, University of Bath, and has been a reseach fellow in the Centre for Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue at Heythrop College, University of London. He has published *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), and his new book *God in the 21st Century: Critical Essays on Religion and International*

Relations (Routledge) should be out next year. He is a contributing editor of the *Review of Faith & International Affairs* and he is on the board of *Politics, Religion, and Ideology.* He continues to write and speak widely on the role of religion in international relations today.

It may be the case that even ten years ago the question posed in this collection would have been a very surprising - perhaps even a heretical - question to ask in the study of International Relations (heretical in the sense of challenging the secular self-understanding of the discipline). It is still probably a surprise for many scholars to hear the idea that there has been a 'religious renaissance' or 'religious turn' in the study of International Relations. This collection grapples with the idea that previously stable concepts, categories, or distinctions, which almost appear to those of us in Europe or the West as natural concepts or distinctions - what constitutes the religious, the sacred, the secular - and what constitutes the political or even the economic, have been de-centred - and, perhaps, even destabilized, by the impact on theory, and theorizing of the global resurgence of religion taking place in international relations.

This contribution seeks to briefly begin to examine this decentring or destabilizing of

established concepts, and their meanings, and its implications for the study of religion in international relations. It also points towards the implications for the theory of international relations, for the narratives of international history, and the history of the theory of International Relations. These research trajectories also have implications for how scholars, commentators, and policymakers interpret religion in contemporary international relations.

The Religious Turn as a 'Western Project' in the Study of International Relations?

What was interpreted towards the end of the twentieth century - perhaps, the last modern century (Thomas 2005:45) as empirical changes with the global resurgence of religion, eventually came to be seen as important for the study of International Relations. The discipline was (eventually) responding to the empirical changes - out there in the world, identifying the blinders, blind spots, regarding seeing what was new regarding religion, and what has always been happening in societies and communities embedded in religious traditions around the world. In other words, the religious turn or the religious renaissance is in some sense a response to the global religious resurgence - as it should be, in a discipline which claims to be so relevant to policy making to the changing events in international relations (Buzan & Little 2000). A variety of scholars at

the cusp of the new century successfully made the argument that religion was and is an important factor in international relations, and for a variety of reasons it has been ignored or marginalized in the study of International Relations (Haynes, 1994; Petito and Hatzopoulos 2000; Fox 2001; Thomas 1995, 2005).

However, while this argument has now largely been accepted by a variety of scholars, commentators, and in public opinion, in retrospect it is clear that the religious turn, the religious renaissance, emerged mainly as an essentially Western project in three ways. The first way the religious turn was a Western political project was as a project of Western conceptions of international security - like much of International Relations itself, especially as a factor in debates in the early 1990s over international security and the causes of international conflict (i.e. the debate before September 11, 2001). Similarly, the resurgence of nationalism goes back to the 1970s, and also pre-dates the end of the Cold War and September 11, 2001. The world after the Cold War turned out to be a world of violence, and not a world of peace, democracy, and free markets, at least from an American perspective (Mandelbaum 2002). The brave new world after the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall led to ethnic conflicts in and around Europe, in former Soviet states, and in the former Yugoslavia - surprisingly, unexpectedly, and

confusingly for so many Westerners or Europeans influenced by theories of modernization and secularization. The accounts of these ethnic conflicts at first avoided the religious dimension, preferring the concepts of ethnic conflict, nationalist conflict, or ethno-national conflict. There was a reluctance to engage with the 'religious' dimension (however it was conceived to be). However, many Europeans still wondered what were the sources of the seemingly sudden surge of aggression (Palaver 2013:16-17, 34).

These theories, concepts, and assumptions contributed to the way religion, to use the concept of the Copenhagen School, has been 'securitized' in Western and European foreign policy, public opinion, and in scholarly discourse. Religion - and its secular 'Other,' in International Relations came to be 'ignored until the late 1990s by critical as well as conventional international relations, and then emerged as a factor almost exclusively in security debates regarding the causes of post-Cold War conflict' (Lynch 2015: 84). Early in the religious turn, I called attention to the 'Westphalian presumption,' i.e. the notion that religious and cultural differences cannot be accommodated in international public life, and this was part of 'the political mythology of liberalism' surrounding the wars of religion in early modern Europe. According to this political

myth when religion politics are mixed together in domestic or international politics it inherently causes war, intolerance, devastation, political upheaval and perhaps the collapse of the international order. These assumptions often still underlies the European political imagination (Casanova 2008), and the debates over a variety concepts, such as 'religious violence,' wars of religion, the clash of civilizations, and the 'Westphalian' international order (Thomas 2005).

The second way the religious renaissance or religious turn was a Western project, is the way the religious turn has also partly been a response to the religious resurgence, but it is also part of efforts - more recent efforts, by a new generation of scholars of the religious turn, to "'provincialize' International Relations by bringing in voices from outside the West' - or perhaps, what Pope Francis might call bringing International Relations in from 'the margins of the world,' and even starting to interpret the events in international relations from the perspective of the margins of the world rather than from the perspective of the great powers (Ferrara 2015). However, this clearly has implications for the future of international order, and even for the concept of international order - or at least a neo-liberal interpretation of it, and this is perhaps upsetting to those committed to both of these understandings of international order.

In other words, these considerations suggest the discipline should examine, or at least begin to examine, how religion in the study of International Relations may go beyond some of the more rigid, less socially constructed, conceptions of the ambivalence of religion - its role in violence or peace-making. They begin to indicate a way of seeing how religion may fit more broadly into moves 'toward a post-Western IR' (Shani 2008; Shani 2014), and into the 'Worlding Beyond the West' research programme (Tickner and Waever 2009). The bringing in of voices from the margins, or from the non-Western world (which, of course, only metaphorically, represents the margins of the world) really does mean bringing in the voices - increasingly voices from the religious world of the global South, which means bringing in the voices of the religious world of the 21st century. Moreover, this is also why the global religious resurgence is more wide spread than what is usually conveyed by the concept of religious fundamentalism in international relations.

Therefore, is it possible the religious turn - beyond *Western* conceptions of it, given the religious world of the global South, might make an important contribution to developing a 'post-Western' International Relations, which deals with the issues, concepts, and

concerns of the rest of the world (which at least by 2050 will comprise 90 percent of the people in the world). It is now more widely recognized that there is a need for a genuinely global study of International Relations. What the move beyond Western conceptions of the religious turn does is also begin to open a genuinely global study of global or international security. What is global is not only its scope – the world (e.g. the debate in the 1980s between 'globalists' and 'regionalists,' for example on political change in southern Africa), but also its link to non-Western concepts, security concerns, and communities, which could now have an impact on what and whom is being secured in global security. Scholars from emerging great powers certainly have a larger contribution to make, but while these voices are important there is the problem this could simply lead to new voices, but still ones which echo the familiar forms of power, hierarchy, and hegemony. This was the problem with the call for a New International Economic Order in the 1970s. So, as before, a variety of voices, from a variety of peripheries, can still get marginalized in the discipline and in the world. It remains to be seen if the Catholic Church, with increasing composition from the global South, may come to represent these marginalized voices in international order - to the consternation of both the old Western great powers and new emerging ones (Allen 2009: 13-53, 338-374). Moreover, if the concepts and issues that matter as part of a post-Western IR

are more likely to gain greater recognition when it is done *within* the discipline of IR,

given the religious world of the global South, then can the religious turn crucially

contribute in new and different ways to a post-Western study of International Relations?

(Shani 2008, Tickner and Waever 2009)?

Thirdly, the religious turn in International Relations needs to be seen, and interpreted as

a part of this much wider phenomenon in the study of the humanities and social sciences,

which also includes theology and religious studies.   There is a 'radical scepticism of

traditional approaches to the field of cultural theory' since until recently it was

dominated by theories of secularization. Many scholars across the humanities and social

sciences now question the tenability of such a unilinear story, narrative, regarding

progress, modernization, and secularization to describe the global home of all of us. It is

why the crisis of modernity, as a type of cultural criticism, is often connected with the

global religious resurgence, and it is why the twentieth century was the last modern

century (Palaver 2013: 15-32; Thomas 2000, 2005).

The variety of foreign policy concerns - the religious resurgence, and what is now

branded as 'religiously motivated' violence - war, terrorism, ethnic conflicts, are all

factors which have been 'pushing the concept of religion back into the foreground of sociological debate' (Palaver 2013:17). This is a position central to the religious turn in International Relations, but these three points also indicate why the 'political' resurgence of religion needs to be more broadly connected to its social, cultural, religious, and economic dimensions in states and societies around the world.

This is also why sociological debate does not stop at this limited political recognition of religion, perhaps since it has wider interests, at different levels of analysis, in how the sacred, the secular, and modernity relate in cultures and societies around the world. The religious resurgence also includes the spread of sects, cults, and other forms of religious experience. 'In the modern world, for example, there has been a marked increase in practices of the occult, including sects, magic, and the esoteric. This growing need for religious experience on the individual level has carried political consequences in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, where social pressure has led the governments to use state aid in an attempt to control the growth and proliferation of sects' (i.e. the attempt by European governments to *define* the concept of religion, and so definitions have political significance (Palaver 2013:16).

Towards New Concepts in the Religious World of the Twenty-first Century

The modern concept of religion is now widely challenged in a variety of disciplines.
Many scholars in anthropology, sociology, theology and religious studies argues there
can be no universal concept of religion. It is a construction of European modernity, and
its constituent elements go back to the Renaissance and Reformation (Asad 1993). Later
on, the modern concept of religion influenced European imperialism. It was exported to
deny indigenous peoples their religion, and then to help rule them (Cavanaugh 2009:
57-102, 85-101; Masuzawa 2005). These are important arguments for a discipline that
claims to be 'international' in the religious world of the twenty-first century, and they
are also important for developing a post-Western IR.

What these disciplines in the humanities and social sciences indicate is the way the
concept of religion has returned to the foreground of scholarly debate, and so a variety
of phenomena, including the international events mentioned here, point to the need for
theory to better understand the role of the sacred, the role of religion, in political life and
in economic life, as part of the role of religion in general human existence (Palaver
2013:17). International Relations is only one part, although an integral part of this
understanding of the way the sacred, the secular, the religious function in the

twenty-first century. It is what makes these concepts an important part of what ideas and social groups are securitized or scapegoated (and which ones are not) in domestic politics, foreign policy, and international security (Thomas 2014; Thomas 2015).

These disciplines argue that substantive definitions of religion are exclusivist, based on the content of the religion - specific doctrines concerning gods, the sacred (so religion is often reduced to a religious ideology or political theology), and functional definitions have an expansive or inclusive idea of what religion is. Functional definitions focuses on what religions *do* in society – they create awe, division, solidarity, meaning, or a sense of what is of absolute or of ultimate concern.

What is often rejected is a functional, expansive, definition of religion, i.e. the idea that a variety of ideologies - like Marxism, capitalism, liberalism, or nationalism can be religions, even though they may share some of religion's characteristics. So nationalism, and virulent forms of nationalism like Hindu nationalism are excluded as a type of religion. It is argued rather straight forwardly, 'religion is something distinct, even if it sometimes shares characteristics with other forms of belief and belonging.' 'Religion' is about ideas, beliefs, doctrines (religious ideologies or political theologies), and

'religious actors' are those that identify with one of the world religions (Duffy Toft 2011: 21-24).

When the category of religion is expanded to include almost *any* or set of practices that can function as a religion it is argued the concept should be replaced by other categories - but, that is the problem, it obscures what really should be illuminated by political analysis. It allows the 'securitizing' of religion, or the scapegoating of religion, in ways that leave aside any critical analysis of (allegedly) secular practices in international relations. Labelling something as 'religious' (or really 'Islamic'?) can be used to legitimate the use of our good (secular) violence against their bad (religious) violence, and the good thing about our good violence is that it helps reinforce our patriotic adherence to the nation-state, which saves us for our other, more divisive, identities (Cavanaugh 2009: 12). Why is it, at least in the West, there is talk about Hamas or Hezbollah - and 'Islamic terrorism,' but the activities of the Israeli settler movements are not called 'Jewish terrorism?' Moreover, this kind of analysis of religion and violence helps to reinforce the cycles of violence, and also obscures a larger reality - there are plenty of Jews and Muslims opposed to violence, and the violence of their respective communities.

Substantive definitions, in contrast to functional ones, are much easier to use for scholars of international relations. It allows them to deal with religion in a straightforward manner, and so substantive definitions of religion have established the mainstream research agenda regarding religion and International Relations: what factors, under which conditions, does religion cause or contribute to violence or to peace? Only those issues that are apart of what critical theorists call problem-solving theory - religious terrorism, religious civil wars seem to be a part of this agenda.

Substantive definitions of religion are necessary to establish the allegedly essentialist characteristics of religion - it is divisive, absolutist, and non-rational to clearly *distinguish* between secular and religious violence. It is also argued political theology (e.g. ideas like cosmic war, just war, crusade, martyrdom) reinforces this distinction since it also legitimates sacrificial violence. Security specialists use these distinctions to invent new categories like 'religious civil wars' and 'religious terrorism,' and concluded, not surprisingly given the initial assumptions, they are more deadly, inflexible, and irrational, and so less prone to peace, negotiations, and compromise (Duffy Toft 2011: 121-146; Hoffman 1995: 271-280, Moghadam 2006: 707-729).

The problem is that constructing criteria that are substantive and essentialist separate culture, religion, and nationalism from religion, and ignore how the politics of origin, place, identity, and meaning function in modern culture, politics, and society. The modern preoccupation with autonomy, meaning, and authenticity - are intelligible as roots are being lost through modernization and globalization. The call for a return to roots through nationalism, religious fundamentalism, or a religious resurgence (or all indeed together), are distinctively modern projects of retrieval and construction, and are attempts to grapple with the central problems of modernity - identity, authenticity, and meaning (Kratochwil 2011: 241-261). Therefore, the idea nationalism only shares some of the essentialist characteristics of religion (which is correct) ignores how nationalism functions in the culture of modern societies. It should be recognized for what it is - 'the god of modernity,' going back to the state-building publicists Bodin, Locke, and Hobbes (Llobera 1996). Indeed, if nationalism can be described as a type of ontology, i.e. a doctrine about the essence of reality, then it surely functions with the same kind of nonrational, transcendental, sense of awe, passion, and devotion narrowly attributed to substantive definitions of religion (Kapferer 1989).

Constructing substantive, essentialist criteria of religion also ignores how the market can function in modern cultures and societies. There has not been a sustained engagement in the religious turn with how the sacred, the religious, and the secular are related to the ways the state can concentrate power and dominate society (in the extreme as a type of political religion), and also the way the market economy can concentrate capital, and transform society into a market society (in the extreme as a type of economic religion) (Cox 1999; Cavanaugh 2008). These concerns have been central to the rise of critical theory, and the Frankfurt school's criticisms of culture, capitalism, and consumerism.

However, these concerns are central to a set of theological criticisms of idolatry (i.e. the worship of false gods) which fit with the conception in the critical theory of IR as negative (or prophetic) critique, and theory as every day social practice, i.e. each of us every day live out a theory of international relations (Zalewski 1996: 340-353). In these conceptions of theory the social, the political, and the economic are not so separated, and there is concern for the social and economic consequences of poverty, inequality, social exclusion, and marginalization. Moreover, beyond negative or prophetic criticism (as if religion is mainly about ethics, or what Weber called value rationality), these

concerns have also been a part of Franciscan economic thought (a type of what Weber called the formal rationality of consensual scientific knowledge) (Thomas 2005:108-109). This is the Franciscan study going back to the thirteenth century of the way the market, the way economics operates, and can operate in society (with its emphasis on civic markets and the common good), and modern Catholic social teaching, seen most recently in the teaching of Benedict XVI and Pope Francis (Zamagni 2010).

Conclusion

These arguments in many ways go to one of the central problems of the forum - the religious turn in the study of International Relations has occurred at the same time many scholars of theology and religious studies argue religion as a category or concept - *separate* from the secular, the social, the political, or the economic does not exist but is a construction of the West. This is to the dismay of many scholars who argue this makes the concept of religion meaningless, and have tried for so long for religion to be taken seriously in the study of International Relations (Shah 2012:12). One response has been to let many flowers bloom, and a variety of scholars adopt their own definitions of key concepts. However, if there is no consensus on what is being studied, and what is distinctive about religion, then what is the significance of the research conclusions, and

their policy implications - on religion and peace, violence, democracy, human rights, humanitarianism, or economic development?

In fact, this kind of reaction seems to be embedded in the Western Enlightenment - which has been important for the development of a number of abstract concepts, such as religion, the sacred, the secular, humanity, and emancipation. Some aspects of the religious turn may represent the kind of sharp distinctions between the levels of analysis, and 'excessive abstractions' over the sacred and the secular, which more generally can be criticised as characteristic of the study of International Relations (Cho and Katzenstein 2011: 168-199).

Moreover, it is not 'religion' within which most individuals and communities around the world live and shape their lives, it is through *specific* cultural and religious traditions and communities (Thomas 2005; Shani 2014). This forum can be interpreted as part of the process in this critical reflection that opens up new directions for the study of religion and International Relations. 'There is nothing inherently sacred or profane,' as Jonathan Z. Smith famously says. 'These are *not* substantive categories, but rather situational or relational categories, mobile boundaries, which shift according to the map

being employed. There is nothing that is sacred in itself, only things sacred in relation (Smith 1988: 55). So what counts as religious, secular, political, or economic in any given context is not only socially, but is also politically constructed. It is a function of different configurations of *power* surrounding the *construction* of the categories: the religious, the secular, and the political, and the *boundaries* between them. In a research agenda this is what should interest scholars of International Relations, and scholars of religion and International Relations.

Moreover, these distinctions are also especially relevant to the study of global security since substantive definitions, essentialist characteristics, used to distinguish between what is labelled – and by whom, and in whose interest, as secular or religious actors and secular or religious violence can actually *obscure what should be investigated* - the role of politics and power in how, and in whose interests the concepts, the categories of religion, the secular, politics, or even economics are used and constructed. Ideas have consequences. Every Republican presidential candidate, for example, made a sharp distinction between 'religion,' 'politics,' and 'economics' in their opposition to *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis's encyclical, which the press called an encyclical on climate change, but which Francis called a social encyclical since global warming was only a symptom

of a deeper malaise in society, a cultural and economic worldview which affects the way we live, and puts short-term economic gain before people and the planet (Valley 2015). In other words, what critical theorists call everyday social practice, and so functional definitions make it easier to probe more deeply into how the sacred, the secular, and violence can be related to cultural politics - the politics of *how* the sacred, the secular, and violence function in any society and not only those which are the Western object of foreign policy, international security, or humanitarian intervention.

References

Allen, John. *The Future Church: How Ten Trends are Revolutionizing the Catholic Church.* New York: Doubleday, 2009..

Asad, Talal. *The Genealogy of Religion*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993

Barbato, Mariano, Chiara de Franco, and Brigitte Le Normand, "Is There a Specific Ambivalence of the Sacred? Illustrations from the Apparition of Medjugorje and the Movement of Sant'Egidio." *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 13, no. 1 (2012): 53-73.

Buzan, Barry and Richard Little, "Why International Relations has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do About it." *Millennium* 30, no. 1 (2001) 19-39.

Casanova, Jose 'The Problem of Religion and the Anxieties of European Secular Democracies, in Gabriel Motzkin and Yochi Fischer (eds.), *Religion and Democracy in Contemporary Europe* (London: Alliance Publishing, 2008), 63-74.

Cavanaugh, William T. *The Myth of Religious Violence.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Il Hyun Cho and Peter J. Katzenstein, 'In the Service of State and Nation: Religion in East Asia,' in Jack Snyder (ed.), Religion and International Relations Theory. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011,

Cox, Harvey. "The Market as God: Living in the New Dispensation." *The Atlantic*. March 1999: 306-397.

Duffy Toft, Monica, Daniel Philpott, Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century*: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics. New York: W.W. Norton, 2011.

Ferrara, Pasquale. "The Concept of Periphery in Pope Francis' Discourse: A Religious Alternative to Globalization?" *Religions*   6 (2015): 42–57.

Fox, Jonathan. 'Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations, *International Studies Review.* 3, no.3 (2001): 53-73.

Haynes, *Religion in Third World Politics*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994.

Hoffman, Bruce. "Holy Terror: The Implications of Terrorism Motivated by a Religious

Imperatives." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 18, no. 4 (1995): 271-280.

Kapferer, Bruce. *Legends of People: Myths of the State: Violence, Intolerance and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989.

Kratochwil, Friedrich. "The Politics of Place and Origin," in the *Puzzles of Politics: Inquiries into the genesis and transformation of international relations*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Llobera, Josip. *The God of Modernity: The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe*. London, Berg, 1996.

Lynch, Cecelia. *Interpreting International Politics*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Mandelbaum, Michael. *The Ideas That Conquered the World: Peace, Democracy, and Free Markets in the Twenty-First Century*. Oxford: Public Affairs, Ltd., 2002.

Masuzawa, Tomoko. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Mavelli, Luca and Fabio Petito (eds.), *Towards a Postsecular International Politics: New Forms of Community, Identity, and Power*. New York and London: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2014.

Moghadam, Assaf. "Suicide Terrorism, Occupation, and the Globalization of Martyrdom: A Critique of Dying to Win." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 8 (2006): 707-729.

Palaver, Wolfgang. *Rene Girard's Mimetic Theory* (2003), trans. from German by Gabriel Borrud. East Lancing: Michigan State University Press, 2003/2013.

Petito, Fabio and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, 'Religion and International Relations' *Millennium* 29, no. 3 (2000).

Philpott, Daniel. 'Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion.' *American Political Science Review*, 101 (2007): 505-525.

Shah, Tim. 'Introduction,' in Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stephan, and Monica Duffy Toft, ed. *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs*. Oxford.2012. 1-14

Shani, Giorgio. Religion, Identity and Human Security. London: Routledge, 2014.

Shani, Giorgio, 'Toward a Post-Western IR: The *Umma*, *Khalsa Panth*, and Critical International Relations Theory,' *International Studies Review*, 10, no. 4 (2008): 722-734.

Smith, Jonathan Z. *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1988.

Tickner Arlene B. and Ole Waever, eds. *International Relations Scholarship Around*

the World: Worlding Beyond the West. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Thomas, Scott M. 'A Globalized God,' *Foreign Affairs,* 89, 6 (2010): 93-102.

Thomas. Scott M. *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations*. New York: Palgrave, 2005.

Thomas, Scott M. 'Religious Resurgence, Postmodernism and World Politics,' in Mike Watson and John Esposito eds., *Religion and Global Order*. University of Wales Press, 2000).

Thomas, Scott M. 'The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Study of World Politics", *Millennium* 24, no. 2 (1995): 289-299.

Toft, Monica, Daniel Philpott, Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics.* New York: Norton, 2011.

Valley, Paul. 'The great persuader,' *The Tablet*, 29 August, 2015: 4-5.

Zamagni, Stefano, "Globalization: Guidance from Franciscan Economic Thought and *Caritas in Veritate* [Benedict XVI]." *Faith & Economics*, 56 (2010): 81-109.

Zalewski, Marysia. "All These Theories Yet The Bodies Keep Piling Up Piling Up: Theory, Theorists, Theorising," Marysia Zalewski, Steve Smith, Ken Booth, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.