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2 Notes on Contributors

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Editorial Introduction: Religion and World Order

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LEA-FRIEDERIKE NEUBERT AND NAYSAN RAFATI

Less than two years after *The Economist's* 'fin de millénaire' publication of God's obituary, the events of September 11, 2001 catapulted discussions of religion back into the public sphere.¹ There they have remained firmly planted, challenging long-held Western assumptions about religious decline in the face of modernity and calling for new debates about what role religion should and is likely to play in the new century. The question of *whether* it will play a role—a reasonable enquiry barely a decade before—no longer seems moot; dynamics between and within religious groups, as well as between religious groups and secularists, are clearly helping to shape the political and cultural landscape internationally. Far from being confined, as one sociologist predicted in 1968, to 'small enclaves and pockets,'² religiosity is set to rise (according to data on religious affiliation), with as many as four in five people around the world expected to indentify themselves with Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, or Hinduism by 2050.³ In the words of American commentator David Brooks, 'We are living through one of the great periods of scientific progress and the creation of wealth. At the same time, we are in the midst of a religious boom.'⁴

The marginalization—if not outright neglect—of religion, which in the past was pervasive among many intellectuals and academics in the West, also frequently permeated the policy-making establishment. Madeleine Albright, who served as Washington's ambassador to the United Nations as well as secretary of state during a period when religion was interwoven with numerous conflicts around the world, noted that 'diplomats in my era were taught not to invite trouble, and no subject seemed more inherently treacherous than religion ... We had in mind a future in which nations and regions would draw closer as democratic bonds grew stronger, not a world splitting apart along historic fault lines of culture and creed.'⁵ Yet the fact of the matter is that faith never truly disappeared from political life, even in democratic states. Today, the resurgence of religion is the result as much of popular will as of state sponsorship.

Far from being an anachronism in an age of technological development, faith plays a role that is both real and relevant in issues as diverse as medical research, terrorism, electoral politics, and climate

change. At present, the specter of sectarian warfare in Iraq potentially jeopardizes stability in the wider Middle East while the threat of religiously-inspired terrorism hangs over Europe and rising numbers of Muslim immigrants are facing Europeans who increasingly fear Islam as a threat to European civilization. Concurrently, international bestsellers such as Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* and Christopher Hitchens' *God is Not Great* have emphasized the growing rift between naturalists and religionists.⁶ Fundamentalist expressions of religion may be surging, but we are also witnessing a rising number of liberal believers. Given the growing popularity of public practices of religion, secularism (in global terms) constitutes a peculiarity rather than the norm.⁷ It could even be suggested that we are witnessing a secular overreach. As unquestionably as this subject extends beyond ivory towers and research institutes, so will the many uncertainties surrounding the international reassertion of religiosity undoubtedly call for extended research in the future. It is within the context of these developments that the *St Antony's International Review* (STAIR) addresses the issue of 'Religion and World Order,' drawing on a range of academic disciplines to approach intricate and multidimensional processes.

Structure of the Issue

In his introductory commentary, James N. Rosenau addresses the parallel phenomena of continuous global integration and increasing fragmentation. The idea of a 'global village,' a supposed inevitability forty years ago, has proven to be partly illusory.⁸ In place of an all-encompassing order, outbreaks of disorder, regional conflicts, and transnational security threats endure. A crucial question, according to Rosenau, is whether the destabilizing effects of disorder may be alleviated if identity is located and practiced more consciously in local environments. Religious thinking has gone global, and spiritual answers are increasingly sought in response to global challenges.

John D. Carlson and Matt Correa examine the renewed focus given to religion as a variable in academic scholarship in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001 and question whether the academic community is sufficiently equipped to deal with questions related to religion and conflict. In their article, the authors argue that religious studies need to be complemented by the work of scholars across disciplines in order to provide an integrated approach to a multifaceted issue that may be one of the most pressing public controversies of the coming decades.

André Laliberté's analysis of religion in the People's Republic of China (PRC) traces how a growing body of thought among China's leaders has come to reconsider the potential contribution of religion to social and economic stability. Indeed, China's experience over the past half-century calls into question the assumption that modernization leads to a decline in the relevance and strength of religion and faith. Regions within the PRC are undergoing ground-breaking economic and industrial changes. Yet, since some of this progress is being undermined by corruption and growing inequalities, many of those disaffected by economic change become susceptible to socio-political alternatives. It is perhaps not surprising that religious movements that thrive on resistance to ideologies of the state are prospering. The escalation of religious-secular antagonisms into forms of extremist and militant religiosity is, however, only one possible outcome of the challenges that evolve from burgeoning religious communities. According to Laliberté, the PRC represents a case study that shows how a complex interrelationship between the state and its religious subjects can, in a setting of mutual dependency, be maintained without recourse to extremist violence.

Nikita Sud shifts the focus from one rising Asian power to another and explores the links between the Indian diaspora and the *Hindutva*, or Hindu Right, within India. Elucidating how the local and the global branches of the same religion feed off each other, Sud highlights the pivotal role that transnational networks may play in shaping domestic inter-religious controversies. In the case of the *Hindutva*, its ultra-religious activism within India, and the less religious and more strongly cultural focus of its transnational diasporic work, generates an uneasy relationship of faith-based and cultural identity. Pablo Bose offers a reply to Sud in his contribution.

Luca Mavelli analyzes the continuity of a European Christian worldview underpinned by secularism. In the light of increasing popular and intellectual discontent with the integration of Muslim minorities in Europe, understanding undercurrents of exclusivity and intolerance is centrally important. Mavelli questions European secular-humanist and pluralist claims to cultural impartiality. Basing his argument on Foucauldian notions of social order, Mavelli locates the origins of the European predicament over integration in a European need for identity and will to self-definition, invoking uncoded traditions of European systems of thought. Yet, if intellectual biases are not to gain salience in shaping the relation between religion and politics, it is imperative that their origins are probed.

Tariq Ramadan concludes the features section with an interview addressing the separation of church and state, the relationship between

faith and conflict, and the importance of inter-faith dialogue. Ramadan, one of the most eloquent and influential Muslim thinkers in Europe, calls for collaboration among believers and non-believers alike in the production of ethics and values, the application of which he views as essential in political life. The issue is rounded off with a selection of book reviews discussing some of the latest literature dealing with religion.

Conclusion

In retrospect, it is clear that reports of the death of religion have been greatly exaggerated. Religion remains pivotal to current affairs. The stakes of a precarious manipulation of 'religion' in international politics are once again mounting and so may the instances of its imprudent use. It is worth recalling that just months after American President George H.W. Bush spoke of a 'New World Order' to describe the post-Cold War world, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein added the phrase *Allahu Akbar* ('God is Great') to his country's flag in a move calculated to win over Muslim sympathies during the Gulf War. With literally a stroke of his pen, Saddam had captured a certain truth—whatever shape a New Order takes, religion will certainly be a part of it. ■

Notes

¹ 'Obituary: God,' *The Economist*, December 31, 1999, III.

² Peter L. Berger, quoted in *The New York Times*, February 25, 1968.

³ 'In God's Name,' *The Economist*, November 3, 2007, 4.

⁴ David Brooks, 'Kicking the Secularist Habit,' *The Atlantic*, March 2003.

⁵ Madeleine Albright, *The Mighty and the Almighty* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2006), 8.

⁶ Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Bantam Press, 2006) and Christopher Hitchens, *God is Not Great* (London: Atlantic Books, 2006).

⁷ For detailed data, see <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>.

⁸ As originally developed by Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s.

JAMES N. ROSENAU

In the wake of Pope John Paul II's death and the election of his successor, speculation about the future of the Catholic Church focused on whether the papacy would revert back to an Italian pope, with whom it had been for 455 years prior to John Paul II. In this context Cardinal Fiorenzo Angelini was quoted as observing, 'Our perception of the church has broadened, to the point of reaching really global dimensions. You can't reason any more with a national mentality, and not even a Continental one.'¹ In other words, religious thinking—like reflections from many other perspectives—has become global in scope as new technologies have reduced time and distance among locales and peoples. We live and think in globalized space even as we may pray in localized space, a contradiction that has urgently posed the question of what kind of order does and should prevail in the world.

The concern with world order has not superseded preoccupations with local concerns such as family, jobs, communities, or deities. Indeed, pervasive tensions between local and global forces have become a central feature of our time, and they seem likely to endure for the foreseeable future. To be sure, the proximate and the distant have always been uneasily linked, but in recent decades the 'distant' has become global in scope, thus intensifying absorption with the prospects for world order and the dangers of world disorder. It is an absorption that has heightened religiosity everywhere, with many individuals and peoples feeling a need to find encompassing meaning in a world that has become increasingly complex, both more proximate and more distant. This need has fostered a revival and spread of fundamentalism—of thought that leaves no room for doubt and answers all questions—in virtually every religion. In so doing, it has intensified tensions both within and among most world religions.

Irrespective of whether they prevail in religions or other aspects of life, these tensions between the local and the global, the proximate and the distant, have led to two contrary tendencies: one integration

James N. Rosenau, 'Commentary: Think Globally, Pray Locally,'

STAIR 3:2 (2008): 7-12.

and the other fragmentation. John Paul II wanted to reach out to people of other faiths even as he and other Catholic leaders sought to return to strict doctrinal perspectives. The same contradictory tensions also prevail among Muslims, Jews, and the faithful of other religions. Viewed holistically, these contrary tendencies are instances of the worldwide clash of the integration and fragmentation processes that are unfolding simultaneously and endlessly interacting in all walks of life. I have labeled these interactive dynamics as ‘framegration,’² an awkward and grating designation but one that fills a gaping whole in our vocabulary.³ Numerous analysts depict the present world order as marked by globalization, but this designation does not capture the two prime processes at work at every level of community. It does not allow for the propensity wherein organizations, communities, societies, and international systems splinter and fragment into several parts as a means of resolving their tensions. We live in a messy, framegrative world sustained by forces that move in crazy-quilt and contradictory directions. The dynamics of framegration are sustaining a world order marked by high degrees of disorder. That is, while some of the prevailing structures and processes are conducive to integration among and within groups, others foster disintegrative tendencies. The European Union (EU) is a conspicuous example of these framegrative dynamics—even as efforts to write a constitution further unifying the EU countries unfold, so are they accompanied by factions intent upon derailing the momentum in this direction.

Troubled by the uncertainties on which the pervasiveness of framegration rests, and often unable to comprehend its implications for themselves, numerous people in all parts of the world and from all walks of life are inclined to look for answers in spiritual outlooks that depict one or another form of world order. Of course, such inclinations are hardly new. Concerns about ‘final events,’ the ‘end of time,’ the ‘coming of Christ,’ the ‘return of the Buddha,’ the ‘new Jerusalem,’ the establishment of the ‘Kingdom of God on earth,’ otherworldliness, apocalyptic events, and ‘Armageddon’ have a long history. What is new about such concerns is the intensity with which they are held and their spread on a global scale. Indeed, it can reasonably be observed that no other line of thought is as concerned about world order as those founded on spiritual sources and the fears induced by framegrative dynamics. If the clash between the global and the local cannot be readily resolved, if the disorder that follows from the intrusion of the distant upon the

Fundamentalism as a Source of Frangement

It follows that the spread of religious fundamentalism both mirrors and intensifies frangement dynamics. Whatever may be their religious commitments, fundamentalists adhere to rigid values in their search for certainty, and they do so rigidly, leaving little or no room for compromise with fellow religionists whose views are more open and tolerant. In more than a few cases, their fundamentalism reaches an extreme that results in violence and mayhem. In the case of a few Muslims, for example, the certainties born of uncertainties and hatred have led them to become suicide bombers. And even short of this extreme, their rigidity and intolerance tends to wreck havoc within societies where their numbers are sufficient to roil neighborhoods and communities. It can fairly be said that fundamentalists of any religious stripe have a view of world order that so resolutely rejects alternative perspectives as to generate enduring frangement conflicts. Illustrative in this regard are those who subscribe to Salafism, a fundamentalist school of Islam, and who constitute a radical fringe that advocates war against non-Muslims.

Disclaimers notwithstanding (such as religions of 'any stripe'), it is highly misleading to cite Muslims as the only example of fundamentalists. Muslim suicide bombers are very much in the news at the present time, but they are hardly the only believers whose perspectives are rigid and intolerant and whose violent actions can dominate the headlines. In the United States those known as the 'religious right' are no less conspicuous and no less strident. Their interpretation of Christianity that condemns abortion and gay marriage has come to pervade political discourse, thereby lending credence to disorderly tendencies even as they promote the need for order. In some rare instances devotees interpret world order as permitting the murder of doctors who perform abortions.

Likewise, in Israel some fanatic Orthodox Jews have resorted to acts of violence or otherwise sought to block policies that would greatly alleviate tensions between Israelis and Palestinians. In 1994, for example, Baruch Goldstein, a well-known leader of the Jewish extremist Kach group, entered Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in the West Bank town of Al-Khalil and emptied two clips of a machine gun into Muslim worshippers

gathered for the dawn prayer, killing dozens of people and injuring scores of others. Extremism on behalf of a religious world order has also marred recent history in Japan. Some 500 Japanese, for example, have subscribed to the religious fanaticism of Asahara Shoko, who named his group *Aum Shinrikyo*. *Aum* is Sanskrit for the 'powers of destruction and creation in the universe,' and *Shinrikyo* is the 'teaching of the supreme truth,' a perspective which, among other violent acts, led to placing a deadly sarin gas in several Tokyo subway stations that killed twelve people and incapacitated thousands.⁴

This is not to imply that religious fundamentalism necessarily culminates in violence; the eschatological foundations of diverse religions outline notions of world order without advocating a resort to brutality. To be sure, conceptions, even paintings of hell as a form of world order can be pervaded with savage barbarity that depicts extreme disorder. Nonetheless, for every account of a barbarous world one can point to, more than a few eschatological formulations stress an orderly world in which peace and non-violence prevail. Such formulations are also marked by rigid certainties as to how the world is or ought to be ordered, but they nevertheless stop short of urging the use of violent methods to put the world on a proper path.

World Order as Disaggregated Complexity

It is surely not surprising that the onset and dynamics of an ever more frangible world have intensified religious fundamentalism and fostered concerns for a more orderly world. Faced with disarray that seems threatening and irresolvable, many people look for simple answers, or at least for clear-cut forms of world order that allow them to presume that better circumstances lie ahead. While constructing models of world order is relatively easy, all of them seem destined to be inappropriate in the sense of falling far short of the tendencies presently at work in the world. For not only are societies and their international systems increasingly complex, but the complexity appears to be rooted in processes whereby authority is increasingly disaggregated.

New electronic technologies, increasingly skillful people everywhere, proliferating organizations that are crowding the global stage, the mounting movement of people around the world, the greater onset of authority crises in many societies and communities, the bifurcation of

global structures that have led to the state-centric world having to cope with a multicentric world comprised of non-governmental organizations, corporations, professional societies, and many other collective actors that have clambered onto the global stage—all these dynamics are fostering decentralization and new nodes of authority.⁵ More than that, the various dynamics are interactive and thus further deepen the complexities with which people and their collectivities have to cope. Unless one falls back on the clarity of religious convictions, the emerging epoch is thus marked as much by disorder as order, and it is difficult to imagine these dynamics coming to a halt or turning in aggregative directions. Some religious precepts may insist that progress is inevitable, but movement toward a world marked by order and decency is far from certain.

Still, as people increasingly develop the skills to manage the complexities they face in their large urban communities, the disorder of their worlds may seem increasingly manageable. The skill revolution is global in scope and it may not always foster more responsible citizens, but for the most part the expanded competence of individuals in all parts of the world seems likely to foster pockets of order within communities and societies.⁶ Or at least such a likelihood seems greater as long as tendencies toward closed religious fundamentalism do not accelerate and overwhelm those fundamentalisms that preach love, tolerance, forgiveness, and other positive orientations. If devotees pray locally even as they think globally, the chances of disorder overwhelming the pockets of order will probably not increase, and they may even lessen. ■

¹ Jason Horowitz, 'Italians Hope Next Pope is One of Their Own,' *International Herald Tribune*, April 16, 2005.

² For an extensive conceptualization of frammegration, see James N. Rosenau, *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), chap. 6.

³ Other terms suggestive of the void in our vocabulary that highlight the contradictory tensions pulling systems toward both coherence and collapse are 'chaord,' a label that juxtaposes the dynamics of chaos and order, 'glocalization,' which points to the simultaneity of globalizing and localizing dynamics, and 'regcal,' a term designed to focus attention on the links between regional and local phenomena. The chaord designation is proposed in Dee W. Hock, *Birth of the Chaordic Age* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1999); the glocalization concept is elaborately developed in Roland Robertson, 'Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity,' in *Global Modernities*, ed. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), 25-44; and the regcal formulation can be found in Susan H.C. Tai and Y.H. Wong, 'Advertising Decision Making in Asia: "Glocal" versus "Regcal" Approach,' *Journal of Managerial Issues* 10 (Fall 1998): 318-39. Here the term 'frammegration' is preferred because it does not imply a territorial scale and broadens the focus to include tensions at work in organizations as well as those that pervade communities.

⁴ Ian Reader, *Religious Violence in Contemporary Japan: The Case of Aum Shinrikyo* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

⁵ For an elaboration of these several dynamics, see James N. Rosenau, *Distant Proximities: Dynamics Beyond Globalization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), chap. 3.

⁶ For an empirical test of the hypothesized skill revolution, see James N. Rosenau and W. Michael Fagen, 'Increasingly Skillful Citizens: A New Dynamism in World Politics?,' *International Studies Quarterly* 41 (December 1997): 655-86.

How Shall We Study Religion and Conflict? Challenges and Opportunities in the Early Twenty-first Century

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JOHN D. CARLSON AND MATT CORREA

When a major international publication like *The Economist* publishes an eighteen-page special report dedicated to ‘the new wars of religion,’ as it did it in its November 3, 2007 issue, scholars of religion and an array of disciplines sit up and take notice. The eye-catching cover certainly helps—an ominous hand descends from foreboding grey clouds, index finger slightly extended, suggesting a menacing—presumably monotheistic—deity delivering orders to his followers below. The image vividly captures religion’s notoriously explosive potential, for clasped within the heavenly hand is a grenade, the pin still in place.

What was striking to some of us who study religion, particularly its political and conflictual dimensions, is that, overall, the articles within are laced with the nuance and subtlety often found wanting in many journalistic treatments of religion and conflict.¹ The frequent lament among scholars of religion—that the mainstream media peddles patchy stereotypes because it just ‘doesn’t “get” religion’—may not hold in the case of *The Economist*’s special report. One possible explanation for this development is that in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001, religion—at least religion’s relation to war, violence, and large-scale public conflict—has ceased to be the province of specialists. More than ever, religion seems to impact other fields and disciplines outside the formal study of religion. Perhaps, it is now, crudely put, everyone’s concern.

This article explores this development by examining the interdisciplinary state of scholarship on issues and themes falling under the broad rubric of ‘religion and conflict,’ a term which we discuss in greater detail below. We sketch out a framework of what may be an emerging interdisciplinary ‘field’ or, at least, a shared set of enquiries formed by the overlap of established, new or reinvigorated areas of study. Our thesis is straightforward—the study of ‘religion and conflict’ is best conceived as an interdisciplinary enterprise, and its successful pursuit requires the collective energies and diverse insights of scholars of religion as well as historians, political scientists, sociologists, and others.

John D. Carlson and Matt Correa, ‘How Shall We Study Religion and Conflict? Challenges and Opportunities in the Early Twenty-first Century,’ *STAIR* 3:2 (2008): 13-30.

We begin with a narrative that seeks to make sense of our current moment. We consider warrants for an interdisciplinary approach by taking stock of institutions on the frontlines of some particularly complex challenges faced in the early part of the twenty-first century. We then briefly outline some contours of a potentially emerging field of religion and conflict. As scholars of religion, we discuss the resources our discipline contributes to such scholarship as well as its limitations, both of which reinforce the need to join efforts with other fields that approach matters of religion differently.

A 'New' Post-secular Moment?

The refrain 'everything has changed' was uttered with such frequency and conviction following September 11 that it came to announce a new era in global political life. One defining feature of the new century, it was widely held, would be the dramatic capacity of religion to shape the social and political universe. One emerging lesson was that for too long the West had ignored the violent impact religion can have in world affairs, and scholars from many disciplines took notice of these concerns.

Looking back at this ostensibly liminal moment, however, there may be other ways to interpret the state of world affairs. One response holds that we have not learned much at all from September 11. If anything, the events of that dreadful day only entrenched the conviction that when religion and politics converge, violence readily ensues. Recent examples range from terrorists' commitments to radical Islamism to religiously charged conflicts in Kashmir, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Israel and the Palestinian territories. A cottage industry of scholarship affirming the 'religion can be violent' thesis has cropped up.² For many, the public faces of religion remain Osama bin Laden and other epitomes of religiously inspired violence rather than the Dalai Lama or Pope John Paul II. Some particularly strident voices began warning about the intolerant dangers of religion, calling us back to our secularist ideals.³

However others, including many who study religion, saw in the events of September 11 more continuity in historical patterns than a significant shift in paradigms. Well before religiously-justified acts of terrorism became a leitmotif of the twenty-first century, they pointed out that religion has long been a force of often dramatic social transformation and political influence, and, at times, violence.⁴ Such scholarship is marked by differences over religion's valences—whether religion more

often serves forces for good or for ill. There is a consensus among these scholars, though, that religion's linkage to violence is real even if understudied or overstated.

One need not be a religion scholar to appreciate the importance of such events as the Crusades, the Reformation, or the explosive growth of Christianity and Islam around the world that has begun to overshadow the secularization of Western Europe.⁵ But scholars of religion may have been less surprised by what has been called the 'post-secular' turn and religious corrections to, or backlashes against, secularization.

But does all this mean that nothing really has changed in how we understand religion and public conflicts in the twenty-first century? While it is true that assumptions about secularization were being challenged long before long before 2001, whether looking to the influence of the religious right on politics in the United States (US), the Iranian Revolution, religious nationalism in India, or ethno-religious fracturing in the Balkans, September 11 concretized the dangers of religious violence with unprecedented force. It also opened or reopened our eyes to a longer history and wider global view of religion's public resurgence, this time drawing more people in. Unconverted secularists quickly grasped religion's public import.⁶

The State of Our Institutions

Since September 11, the public has been seeking greater knowledge about religion and its role in violence and political conflict. Yet, some of the most vital institutions of public life, at least from a US-based perspective, are still lagging behind. Institutional culture in the US is steeped in the assumptions of secularization theory. The paucity of instruction about religion in public schools—basic literacy is essential for citizens to understand the religious features of our world and its history—has been noted with concern by some scholars.⁷ Early failures to distinguish teaching religion (i.e. religious instruction) from teaching *about* religion have put children and citizens behind in understanding how religion shapes human identity, history, and global society.

Institutionally, religion is treated as a private matter. For those serving in government, traditional training in the social sciences has often marginalized religion's public importance. This comes at great cost to those who serve as government officials, foreign service officers, and policy-makers. The legal principle of separation of church and state does not relieve us from understanding the multifaceted relationships

between religion and politics. Many religion scholars have described the challenge of being taken seriously by those on the political scene about the varied roles religion plays in international conflict. Peace-builders attest that religious non-governmental organizations (NGOs) offer crucial knowledge, contacts, and skills for which secular diplomats are no substitute. The secularist two-stage strategy of 'avoid and contain' still prevails across too many government sectors, as attested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's inadequate handling of the Branch Davidian raid. Religion's influence cannot be ignored and simply contained once deemed a threat.⁸

Military service academies and war colleges have yet to provide sufficient curricular space for the study of religion despite the obvious ways in which the armed forces have been implicated in ethno-religious and sectarian conflicts. If during the Cold War, thriving Soviet studies programs were developed to help understand 'the adversary,' why ignore the religious dimensions of the most important security dynamics today? Fortunately, more attention is paid to 'culture' than has been the case, and religion seems to be working its way into this context.⁹ However, one wonders whether earlier *education* about religion might provide a more solid foundation for *training* about specific religious customs and practices.

There are, however, indications that the disregard of religion in politics is changing. Many political scientists are engaging religion, sometimes even theology.¹⁰ Prominent figures such as Madeline Albright have begun arguing for the need to take religion seriously as part of state diplomacy.¹¹ Scholarship by those who appreciate the significant role religious leaders can play in fomenting or resolving political conflicts is ongoing.¹² Religion experts have been placed in pivotal government agencies like the Central Intelligence Agency. New programs are sprouting up, such as the Council on Foreign Relations' Religion and Foreign Policy program,¹³ and among US universities, there is now a bevy of research centers devoted to religion's importance in political and cultural issues.¹⁴ Nevertheless, many public institutions still have not fully positioned themselves to engage the complex religious challenges of our day, which stands to have corrosive effects unless corrected.

Post-secular Challenges

Several observations, trends, and problems confronting us in the early twenty-first century call for greater attention to the ways we conceive

and study religion and conflict. These challenges are sufficiently complex to warrant significant mobilization of diverse intellectual resources and interdisciplinary scholarship. In particular, the convergence of normative and empirical analysis offers a constructive path forward.

One prevailing challenge involves the now faltering theory of secularization, which presumed that the ascent of human reason toward new heights would force religion's retreat into private life, desacralizing the public pursuits of citizens and polities. Followed to its logical conclusion, this theory suggests that the irresistible tide of secularization may one day wash away individual faith altogether. Secularization narratives also have included, implicitly if not explicitly, a normative component claiming that religion's privatization and dwindling influence are situated within a broader teleology.

Whether or not the empirical strand of the secularization thesis is fraying, we are still left with a trenchant question—what *ought* to be the role of religion in national and international political life, given that certain secular assumptions are still in place? The answer does not follow inevitably from either the empirical claims of secularization theory or from more recent evidence that undermines it. Scholars who see their primary task to think normatively must be part of a common venture informed by empirical accounts of what is happening in the world. Traditional divisions in the academy, however—within religious studies as well—have not postured us well to confront this problem. Interdisciplinary scholarship could help provide a needed correction. The brief history of the twenty-first century thus far urges us to consider some other questions, too, involving the intersections of religion, politics, and culture. For example:

- (1) What, if any, overarching relationships can be discerned between the public resurgence of religion and its propensity for pernicious conflict? What are the factors, institutions, commitments, and mores that prevent public conflict from turning violent? What are the causes that give way to religious factionalism and religion's alliances with tribalism or nationalism? Are secularization and democracy universal antidotes?
- (2) Democracy's relationship to religion has often been complex but is becoming no simpler. Religion has been rooted in many young democracies and democratic movements from the United States to Poland and other nations around the world. But many established democracies increasingly feel threatened by emerging and struggling popular democratic movements in places where religion or 'religious

extremism' challenge certain secular democratic presuppositions. Must proponents of democracy be committed to the value of a secular realm? And which, if any, theological beliefs must underwrite such religious commitments to secular life?

- (3) Many people worry that violent forms of fundamentalism comprise the greatest security threat to religious and non-religious communities alike. Many states, however, do not appreciate the reactionary nature of fundamentalism and what has been seen to be its parasitic relationship upon secularization.¹⁵ Assuming this is true, how can secular governments offer a tenable path for defeating violent forms of religious extremism? Could it be that some problems with religion can only be resolved by granting more—not less—space to religion?
- (4) It is often claimed that religion is an important cause or factor in violence and war. Yet others will note that distinctively a-religious movements and ideas lay behind the worst atrocities and bloodiest struggles in the twentieth century. Are secular forms of violence under-examined compared to religious violence? How shall we assess the religious and non-religious sources and dynamics of violence or war such that each receives the scrutiny that is due? Such a question, however, raises other concerns over how we define religion or distinguish religious facets from other economic, political, or cultural facets of human life. For that matter, how is violence defined, and how, if at all, should it be distinguished from the state's use of force? These are not simple empirical questions, as we show below, but call for normative evaluation as well.
- (5) Given the historic specter of the Crusades and Europe's wars of religion, those in the West are loath to invoke religion to justify the use of force. Yet, the influential just war tradition, with its longstanding religious roots, provides guidance for when force may be morally justifiable if not required. Certain Islamic notions of defensive *jihad* argue similarly. Can or should such religious beliefs be called upon to justify coercion or force? Or can religious believers only repair to their faiths when calling for non-violence? Similarly, while some religious peace-builders resist the notion that military force is a justifiable means for ending conflict, just war advocates often overlook the impact of religious peace-builders in political conflicts. Can deeper insight be achieved by bringing together these different approaches?

- (6) National political scenes are being transformed by religious forces. Turkey's recent election placed a religious party at the helm of its secular state. The American religious scene also contains contradictions—a recent poll indicates that a majority of Americans felt that religion held either too much or too little influence over their respective parties.¹⁶ How can religious citizens, across many countries, both support and withstand the principles of secular government? How might comparative study of these questions yield insight about the boundaries where religion ends and secular begins? Or, do these categories no longer yield the clarity they once did?¹⁷

These are far-ranging questions that signal distinctive challenges for our age. As no single academic discipline possesses the wisdom, methods, or resources for resolving these daunting issues, the energies, talents, and insights of many minds and disciplinary methods will be required. There are indications that such an incipient venture may be underway already.

Signs of an Emerging Field? Outlining the Study of Religion and Conflict

Across an array of fields—history, religious studies, ethics, theology, peace studies, political science, and governmental studies, sociology, international studies, and others—there are many scholars who, in profound and intriguing ways, are addressing *religion and conflict*—that is, dimensions of violence or other significant forms of public conflict.¹⁸ Many were hard at work long before global jihadism or the 'war on terrorism' dominated the headlines. Together, they point the way toward what may be an emerging field that explores how religion is involved in multiple forms of conflict. Many areas of study in which religion and conflict are central themes overlap, so the research interests of many scholars and their audiences flow simultaneously into several disciplinary tributaries. Thus, what follows is more of an effort to chart the waters than to 'map out' the terrain that defines a field, fencing in certain approaches, fencing out others. We aim to point out some of the emerging contours in order to elicit discussion about the warrants of further scholarly transit across these various regions of study. We offer one way to describe the several areas—at different stages of development—in

which the study of religion and conflict is pursued. Due to constraints of space, works cited should not be seen as exhaustive.

One body of literature is devoted to *religious and ethical perspectives on conflict*, including numerous theological and moral traditions that reflect upon war and peace. The just war tradition, particularly, has burgeoned in the last fifty years, with continuing controversy over its relationship to pacifism, another formidable tradition of ethical reflection.¹⁹ There also has been renewed interest in Christian realism and the work of Reinhold Niebuhr.²⁰ More recently, Islamic perspectives on war and peace have become acutely germane.²¹ Important comparative projects examine different perspectives on war and peace across religious traditions and between secular and religious frameworks.²²

The study of *religion in international politics and international relations* has surged with recent activity.²³ New classes devoted to these themes appear in both religion and political science departments. Among the 'religion and' sub-themes being explored are 'religion and security,'²⁴ 'religion and diplomacy,'²⁵ and 'religion and democracy.'²⁶ The issues addressed include religion's relationship to sovereignty, statecraft, foreign policy, and non-state political movements, terrorism, and counter-terrorism.

A third area of concerted focus is *religion and violence*. Foci within this field include defining, conceptualizing, and cataloguing religious and non-religious forms of violence: assessing the causes and dynamics of religious conflict; understanding religion's role in conflict escalation and other forms of violence in which religion is involved; and finally, examining the psychology and sociology of religion and violence.²⁷ We discuss the challenges presented by this category of scholarship in greater detail below.

The study of *religion and national public life* in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas has also blossomed in recent years. In the context we know best, the US, the debates brought on by the publications of such landmark books as *The Naked Public Square*, *Habits of the Heart*, and *Culture Wars* are cases in point.²⁸ Major works by Rawls, Rorty, and others have issued challenges to the ways in which religious language and ideas are deployed in the discourse of public conflicts,²⁹ which themselves have sparked a range of religious and secular critiques.³⁰ A steady stream of legislative initiatives, cultural events, and cases coming before the US Supreme Court, not to mention electoral politics and the 2000 election of another evangelical Christian to the presidency, have flooded US political life with questions about the public role of religion. From fields of law, religion, politics, journalism, public policy, and sociology—many are contributing to and expanding this lively conversation. Interestingly, the conflicts at the border of religion and science have become increasingly

fraught in American public life, often shaping, or shaped by, binary categories like religion and secular, reason and faith.

Another area of study that has attracted the attention of scholars and practitioners alike has been the area of religion and peace-building.³¹ The locus of this region of enquiry and practice has involved the study and application of religious principles to prevent violent conflicts from occurring (conflict prevention), to limit their escalation (conflict management), to resolve existing conflicts (conflict resolution) and to seek justice and ensure 'resolved' conflicts do not lapse back into violence (reconciliation). From the preponderance of disputed territories (e.g., Kashmir) to the scourge of war and violent conflicts (e.g., in the Balkans, Rwanda, and Iraq), to the need for post-conflict reconciliation measures such as war crimes tribunals and truth and reconciliation commissions in nations recovering from violent conflict (e.g., South Africa, Chile, and, again, Rwanda and Iraq), there is no shortage of work for scholars and practitioners active in peace-building, peacemaking, or inter-religious dialogue movements. Theologians and others seeking to bring forgiveness to bear on political life also contribute vitally to this area.³²

These recent trends in scholarship indicate that a significant body of literature has amassed points toward shared areas of scholarly investigation that we might refer to collectively as 'religion and conflict.' The existence of pre-September 11 scholarship suggests this form of enquiry has been present inchoately for some time and has grown further since then. No doubt the divisions here entail problematic presuppositions as well. The attempt, however, is to provide a working framework that allows one to explore untapped possibilities for further scholarly investigations, particularly those that bring together distinctive areas of study as part of a larger research enterprise. As the works cited make clear, religion and conflict can be approached from numerous existing disciplines such as religious studies, ethics and theology; political science, international relations and foreign affairs; history, sociology, and psychology among others. The interdisciplinary character of religion and conflict scholarship is something we urge to continue so as to enhance intellectual richness, pool together disparate bodies of knowledge and sharpen collective insight. The reality is that scholars studying religion and conflict may have more in common with people in other disciplines than in their own. As a further warrant for interdisciplinary approaches, we consider the contributions and limitations of our own field, the study of religion, for thinking about religion and conflict.

Problems with ‘Religion,’ ‘Conflict,’ and ‘Religion and Conflict’

Returning briefly to *The Economist* cover described above is instructive, for it represents visually a problem to which scholars of religion often are attentive: the hazards of defining and deploying the category of ‘religion.’ The stakes are no where higher than when religion is associated with violence. The image of the divine hand and grenade suggests that ‘religion’ is a tangible thing—like some cosmic entity descending from the heavens reifying itself to alter earthly political affairs. Conceiving religion as such a distinct, ahistorical intervention from above gives lie to the reality that, in spite of humanity’s connection to the sacred or beliefs about the divine, religion is, and always has been, an earthly phenomenon.

Some scholars of religion claim the academic category of religion—as distinct from other social, ethnic, economic, political, and cultural features of life—is a fiction, created by those who study religion and who believe it can be isolated from other features of human life.³³ Some might go so far as to say that there is no such ‘thing’ or ‘object’ as religion; there are only people who hold and act upon beliefs that many understand as religious. Such beliefs are themselves diverse, conflicting, and contested even within traditions. This approach to religion breeds caution and restraint about making broader generalizations about the role religion does or should play in politics, culture, and all matters of violent or non-violent forms of conflict. The effort to categorize religion and religious violence—often followed by the effort to remove or contain religion so as to minimize violence—overlooks the deeper reality that conflict and violence are, foremost, part of the human condition, not religion or secular life. These issues, raised most directly in the discipline of religious studies, invite us to question basic assumptions about ‘religious violence’ that not only permeate popular and academic discourse but that also underwrite existing systems and practices.

Interestingly, both popular and scholarly studies of religion tend to offer a relatively narrow range of perspectives about religion’s relationship to conflict or violence. Two common approaches point up the different valences attached to religion. The ‘blame’ position involves an anti-religious thrust in which religion is deemed the cause or root of violence. Religious violence, according to this view, is particularly pernicious—more so than non-secular violence.³⁴ Religion is seen, fundamentally, as a problem (if not *the* problem), and it would be best if religion simply went away. Such anti-religious voices seek to roll back

the tide of 'post-secular' forces in the world. In the 'exonerate' category, others seek to demonstrate how acts of so-called 'religious violence' are not essentially religious at all. For these apologists, religious violence occurs when religion is 'hijacked' or corrupted for political, ideological, or non-religious reasons. From this standpoint, true or authentic religion is peaceful and constructive. Violent religion is false or heretical.

The picture is certainly more complex than either the blame or exonerate positions can explain. Some religious studies scholars have tried to locate themselves between the anti-religious and exculpatory poles. In this 'middle position,' the concept of *religious violence* is useful, since it explains how violence can be authentically religious without arguing that religion is inherently prone to violence and intolerance.³⁵ Surely there are types of violence that are most accurately described as religious, even if that label inevitably also permits some distortion. The medieval Crusades serve as an apt illustration given the deep religious justifications for those conflicts. As historians of the Crusades note, however, there were mutually entangling political dimensions we ought not overlook.³⁶ Likewise, exclusive attention to Islamist terrorists' religious ideologies can limit awareness of their deep detestation of many US foreign policies.³⁷ One should also be clear that those who justify violence on religious grounds are often critiqued by others who hold a different interpretation of the same faith. This is the reality of religious pluralism internal to any particular religious tradition or faith. Furthermore, different appeals to religion, whether calling for violence or extolling peace, reveal different levels of religious literacy.³⁸ In short, to dismiss the place of religious ideas for those who wage violence in religion's name is just as problematic as ignoring those who argue from within their faith against such violence.

Other scholars of religion, however, ask what is signified and obscured when a discrete concept of religious violence is used to frame a wide range of fierce conflicts across the globe and throughout history? William T. Cavanaugh considers how an Enlightenment definition of religion and a bias against religious violence obscure our evaluation of secular violence carried out by the state.³⁹ Over-reliance on religious categories of violence could, for example, shroud consideration of the United States' use of atomic weapons in World War II, which were far more devastating than any terrorist actions have been.

But religion may not be the most problematic category either. Perhaps we need to think more carefully about 'violence.' Here, other forms of religious and moral reflection must be brought to bear. In certain religious (and secular) accounts of the just war tradition, the use of atomic weapons is just as abhorrent since it violates *jus in bello*

principles of non-combatant immunity that prohibit targeting cities and population centers. Religiously grounded just war theorists, however, also might invite greater distinctions between violence and justifiable use of force—a distinction the critics above do not discuss.⁴⁰ Just war considerations of ‘right authority’ and ‘just cause’ that permit and may require state use of force to protect citizens from harm introduce moral questions of legitimacy alongside empirical discussions of violence and destruction. As Hannah Arendt reminds us, illegitimacy—whether exercised by the state or its opponents—is the salient feature of violence⁴¹ Just as we ought not take the importance of ‘religion’ for granted, we should scrutinize more thoroughly such apparently intuitive categories as ‘violence,’ not all forms of which may be equally condemnable.

Finally, a focus on religion and conflict may obscure the reality that not all conflict is bad. However true it may be that religious movements and actors have spurred odious forms of conflict, they also have served some of the noblest struggles in modern times. Religious actors and ideas have played indispensable roles challenging oppressive governments, as we saw recently in Burma—ending morally corrupt, authoritarian regimes in South Africa and Eastern Europe, and witnessing to justice, human rights, and the cessation of violence in other parts of the world. Major progressive and social reforms in the West—abolitionism and the Civil Rights movement—entailed crucial forms of conflict that could not have succeeded without their religious dimensions. President Eisenhower’s show of force in sending in the US Army to enforce desegregation of public schools also exemplifies that some displays of force may be a necessary dimension of conflict. Violence and conflict exist on a continuum. Empirically speaking, there is a spectrum of power and coercion that exists in any conflict, from the force of non-violent demonstrations to the barrel of the policeman’s gun. Questions of legitimacy must be situated and evaluated along a separate, intersecting axis, because sometimes those who stand for ‘peace’ and ‘order’ perform the greatest violence of all.⁴²

This discussion suggests that if we are to think further about problems involving ‘religion and conflict,’ we shall need to scrutinize carefully our categories and terms. Collectively, scholars who study religion often puzzle over such matters, though they must be joined by scholars from other fields. Sorting out crucial distinctions—between religion and secular, violence and power, illegitimacy and legitimacy—requires the work of empirical study, critical analysis, *and* constructive ethical thinking across a range of scholarship on religion.

While current theories of religion provide a crucial critical lens for examining religion and conflict, the humanities, including fields

of religion or religious studies, often have suffered from their own institutional and disciplinary shortcomings. Within religious studies, scholars sometimes have focused on discrete traditions with relatively little reference to their larger interactions. The study of religion can presuppose theoretical models of abstraction and detachment, which do not attend sufficiently to the lived religious beliefs of real people. Yet, the forms of religion most in need of engagement are very much alive, vigorously interacting and shaping global public life. Some religion scholars have begun to enliven their own research agendas by engaging these forces head on; others might do well to follow.

Furthermore, serious discussion of the political realm is too often neglected in religious studies, ceded to the domain of political science. Power usually affords a lens for critique—those who have power are critiqued. Within religious studies circles, one often finds assumptions about government and politics that resist certain basic truths about power, coercion, and other inescapable features of human life. Appreciation of such realities, however, permits more modest proposals to emerge from within these inevitably imperfect constraints. The risk of not engaging political thinking more concertedly is the perception of utopianism or disengagement from the polis. Interdisciplinary engagement invites assessment of the strengths and insights brought to bear by various fields and disciplines. It also calls for modesty about their limitations, in the hope of offsetting them through further intellectual and disciplinary cross-pollination.

Future Directions

Military and intelligence communities speak of ‘stovepipes’ to represent the image of numerous people working on a common problem in which each party possesses only a partial, tubular view of the overall picture. This article has argued for the value of bringing different disciplines into common conversation about the study of religion and conflict in hopes of breaking down disciplinary barriers, offering a more comprehensive view and cultivating deeper forms of discernment.

Warrants for further cultivating such an interdisciplinary ‘field’ include public accessibility, comprehensiveness, and the sheer exigency of the challenges we face in the early twenty-first century. Research that incorporates materials, techniques, and approaches on religion and conflict from a range of disciplines across the humanities and social sciences stands to yield more fecund, balanced, and sharpened

scholarship. There are more resources, methodologies, and points of view available to those who share common interests with others outside their own methodological discipline. There is particular need to integrate empirical work with normative analysis and reflection. Working with scholars and writing for readers outside one's immediate discipline also challenges scholars to be more precise and explicit and less wedded to disciplinary jargon and assumptions. In turn, those outside of one's own field, in which certain assumptions may not be shared, may demand more rigorous forms of evidence and argumentation than would otherwise be required. Finally, interdisciplinary engagement serves to make scholarship more interesting and accessible to general readers and, by extension, to those outside the academy and within public institutions working on 'real world' issues of religion and conflict, expanding the tangible impact of academic studies. The problems of a global era, in the end, are simply too great and multisided to encourage forging ahead in narrow and insular ways. An interdisciplinary approach irreducible to one area, methodology; or discipline stands a better chance of understanding and resolving problems of religion and conflict in this complex age. ■

Notes

¹ Martin E. Marty, 'The Economist on Religion,' *Sightings*, November 11, 2007.

² Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2002); Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking About Religion after September 11*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); and Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: Ecco, 2003).

³ Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: Norton, 2004); Christopher Hitchens, *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve/Hachette, 2007); and Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

⁴ For example, R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000) and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁵ See Philip Jenkins' global Christianity trilogy including *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁶ David Brooks, 'Kicking the Secularist Habit,' *Atlantic Monthly*, February 24, 2003.

- ⁷ Stephen R. Prothero, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know—and Doesn't* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2007).
- ⁸ Todd Kerstetter, *God's Country, Uncle Sam's Land: Faith and Conflict in the American West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).
- ⁹ Raymond Bingham, 'Bridging the Religious Divide,' *Parameters* (Autumn, 2006): 50–66.
- ¹⁰ Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and Joseph Piscatori, eds., *Transnational Religion and Fading States* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); Elizabeth Hurd, *The Politics of Secularization in International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Joshua Mitchell, *Not by Reason Alone: Religion, History, and Identity in Early Modern Political Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
- ¹¹ Madeleine Albright, *The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006).
- ¹² Douglas Johnston, ed., *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- ¹³ More established programs—such as those sponsored by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, the Center for Religion and Public Life, Ethics and Public Policy Center, the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy, and the Institute for Global Engagement—must not be overlooked.
- ¹⁴ A few of which include the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict (Arizona State University), the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (University of Notre Dame), and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs (Georgetown University).
- ¹⁵ This is a recurring theme in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby's five-volume work on 'fundamentalism', which includes *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies, and Militance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- ¹⁶ Pew Research Center and the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 'Many Americans Uneasy with Mix of Religion and Politics,' August 24, 2006.
- ¹⁷ Linell E. Cady, 'Categories, Conflicts, Conundrums: Reflections on the Religion/Secular Divide,' in Peter French and Jason Short, eds., *War and Border Crossings: Ethics When Cultures Clash* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).
- ¹⁸ This working notion of 'religion and conflict' may strike some as too broad or ambivalent. It captures, however, important cultural dimensions that 'religion and violence' or 'religion and politics' exclude. Yet these sometimes distinct categories share common features (e.g., relational dynamics between fundamentalism and secularism) that 'religion and conflict' would seek to address. Others may object that the study of religion is the study of conflict. While no doubt true, not all intra- or inter-religious conflict assumes a strong public, violent, or global character.
- ¹⁹ Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility* (New York: Scribner, 1968); Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic, 1977), and *Arguing About War* (New Haven, CT: Yale

University Press, 2004); James Turner Johnson, *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War: A Moral and Historical Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response: A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1983); Richard B. Miller, *Interpretations of Conflict: Ethics, Pacifism, and the Just-War Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); and Charles Reed and David Ryall, eds., *The Price of Peace: Just War in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

²⁰ Colm McKeogh, *The Political Realism of Reinhold Niebuhr: A Pragmatic Approach to Just War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Ronald H. Stone, *Prophetic Realism: Beyond Militarism and Pacifism in an Age of Terror* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2005); and Anatol Lieven and John Hulsman, *Ethical Realism: A Vision for America's Role in the World* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006).

²¹ John Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007); Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Violence and Rebellion in Islamic Law* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006); and Sohail H. Hashmi, ed., *Islamic Political Ethics: Civil Society, Pluralism, and Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

²² Terry Nardin, ed., *The Ethics of War and Peace: Religious and Secular Perspectives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Richard Sorabji and David Rodin, eds., *The Ethics of War: Shared Problems in Different Traditions* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); R. Joseph Hoffmann, ed., *The Just War and Jihad: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 2006); James Turner Johnson and John Kelsay, *Cross, Crescent, and Sword: The Justification and Limitation of War in Western and Islamic Tradition* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); and James Turner Johnson, *The Holy War Idea in Western and Islamic Traditions* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

²³ John D. Carlson and Erik C. Owens, eds., *The Sacred and the Sovereign: Religion and International Politics* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003); Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, *Bringing Religion into International Relations* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004); Ted Gerard Jelen and Clyde Wilcox, eds., *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective: The One, The Few, and The Many* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, eds., *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003); and Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

²⁴ Robert A. Seiple and Dennis R. Hoover, *Religion and Security: The New Nexus in International Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004) and Thomas F. Farr, *World of Faith and Freedom: Why International Religious Liberty is Vital to American National Security* (forthcoming, Oxford University Press).

²⁵ Johnston, *Faith-Based Diplomacy*; Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, eds., *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

²⁶ Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, and Philip J. Costopoulos, eds., *World Religions and Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); and Noah Feldman, *After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003).

²⁷ René Girard, *The Scapegoat* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) and *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*; William T. Cavanaugh, 'Sins of Omission: What "Religion and Violence" Arguments Ignore,' *The Hedgehog Review* 6:1 (Spring 2004): 34-50; J. Harold Ellens, ed., *The Destructive Power of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, 4 vols. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004). See also, Regina M. Schwartz, *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Hector Avalos, *Fighting Words: The Origins of Religious Violence* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005); and works by Charles Kimball, Bruce Lincoln, and Jessica Stern. There are also extensive works dedicated to religious violence in specific regional settings.

²⁸ Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984); Robert N. Bellah, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); and James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: Basic, 1991).

²⁹ John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Richard Rorty, 'Religion as a Conversation-Stopper,' in *Philosophy and Social Hope* (London: Penguin, 1999): 168-74 and 'Religion in the Public Square: A Reconsideration,' *Journal of Religious Ethics* 31:1 (Spring 2003): 141-49.

³⁰ Steven Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion* (New York: Anchor, 1993); Michael J. Perry, *Religion in Politics: Constitutional and Moral Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

³¹ John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) and *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1997); Marc Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2002) and *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*.

³² John W. de Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002) and Donald W. Shriver, *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

³³ Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); Russell McCutcheon, *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions*

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³⁴ Hitchens, *God is Not Great*; Harris, *End of Faith*.

³⁵ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*; Mark Juergensmeyer, 'Review Essay: Thinking About Religion after September 11,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 72:1 (March 2004): 221-234.

³⁶ Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) and Christopher Tyerman, *Fighting for Christendom: Holy War and the Crusades* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³⁷ Michael Scheuer, *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books Inc., 2005).

³⁸ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*.

³⁹ Cavanaugh, 'Sins of Omission.' See also Janet Jakobsen, 'Is Secularism Less Violent than Religion?' in Elizabeth A. Castelli and Janet R. Jakobsen, eds., *Interventions: Activists and Academics Respond to Violence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004): 53-70.

⁴⁰ James Turner Johnson observes important moral distinctions between *bellum*, involving public use of force reserved to the state's effort to protect its citizens, and *duellum*, or private acts of force by those not charged with the protection of the community, *Just War Tradition*, 44-49.

⁴¹ Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: HBJ/Harcourt Brace, 1970).

⁴² Martin Luther King's famous 'Letter from a Birmingham City Jail' elaborates this point.

The Political Consequences of Religious Revival in the People's Republic of China

31

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One of the premises of this essay is that China faces a crisis of modernity caused by growing inequities, a rigid political system, and the widespread perception in the population that the elites are corrupt. In many other societies, such conditions have often triggered the emergence of political movements that construct new ideologies of resistance from out of a variegated pool of religious traditions, social practices, and beliefs.¹ The central question this essay considers is whether China is following a similar path. It explores whether China is witnessing extreme religious movements that propose alternatives to the existing social and political order by way of a response to the crisis of legitimacy experienced by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The present conditions of globalization offer religious organizations of all kinds unprecedented opportunities for growth and expansion.² In particular, thanks to the complex web of global networks developed over centuries by overseas Chinese communities, China's traditional religions currently possess more means than ever before to elude the wrath of the state and, if they so wish, channel resources back within the country to effect change. Chinese state officials who believe in the potentially subversive effects of religion assume it represents a resource for political mobilization. This raises the issue of whether they believe religion can also act as an integrative force. This essay explores both these issues. It first considers the plausibility of extremist religious movements emerging in China. It will then briefly review some of the policies the CCP has adopted to prevent the emergence of radical religious movements and the measures it has taken to channel religious fervour to its advantage.

The Potential for Religious Violence against the Chinese State

China has a long history of conflict between the state and religious movements. Religious violence in the past often manifested itself in

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rebellions against the ruling government and in some cases even the founding of new political regimes. Numerous of religious beliefs have inspired this form of violence, with rebels in the past claiming authority from various forms of China's ancient religions. For example, Taoist and Buddhist scripture were used to instigate uprisings against the government. In later stages of the imperial period, leaders claimed inspiration from other religions, including Islam and Christianity. The first instance of this relates to the founding of the Late Han dynasty (25-220 CE), which took place partly as a result of a massive insurrection of peasants led by the spiritual leaders of a shamanistic religion, the Red Eyebrows (*Chimei*).³ The result of this rebellion was short-lived, but it presaged a pattern of rebellions led by charismatic leaders who challenged existing rulers and proposed utopian alternatives. Barely two centuries later, a combination of political decline, economic crisis, and social unrest triggered another wave of rebellions by religious leaders.⁴

Many rebels claimed inspiration from Taoism. During the Eastern Han dynasty and throughout the period of the Three Kingdoms (220-280 CE) and the Jin dynasty (265-420 CE) that followed, Taoist masters inspired rebellious movements against inept governments. The first of them, the Way of the Heavenly Master (*Tianshidao*), was a reference to the powers of Zhang Daoling (142 CE), a Taoist master who had developed a doctrine of salvation based on repentance and healing practices.⁵ His grandson Zhang Jiao further advanced these precepts when he became leader of that movement and propagated the teachings of the Classic of the Great Peace (*Taipingjing*). This teaching provided the inspiration for the Yellow Turban Revolt (*Huangjinluan*), a massive uprising that broke out in 184 CE in Henan and Shandong provinces and involved an army of 360,000 soldiers at its peak.⁶ The defeated rebellion left a lasting impression and fatally weakened the regime, which barely survived another three decades. The term *Taiping* recurs throughout Chinese history as an expression of the eschatological hopes of successive uprisings led by religious movements. For the following century and a half, while China remained divided into three kingdoms, the Heavenly Masters tradition continued to inspire some rebellions. In the late Tang dynasty, however, Taoism became part of the establishment and few uprisings claimed affiliation with it.

Comparably, several rebellions found inspiration in Buddhism. The Yuan dynasty (1277-1367), established after the Mongol conquest, generated widespread resistance in Chinese society, and opposition to

the regime took increasingly religious forms. The White Lotus (*Bailian*) tradition, which emerged in the late Song dynasty, encouraged its followers to refuse the payment of taxes. Uprisings led by believers in a Buddha of the future (*Maitreya* in Sanskrit, or *Mifelo*) broke out all over the country from 1335 to 1338, and from 1351 to 1366 the rebellion of the Red Turbans (*Hongjin*) prompted the dynasty's downfall.⁷ Although the Ming rulers (1368-1644) endeavored to eliminate the influence of these movements, adherents to the White Lotus tradition continued to organize themselves clandestinely and worshipped in a multitude of religious associations over the following centuries.⁸ In some cases, movements vaguely related to that trend, such as the Eight Trigrams, launched sporadic upheavals as late as 1831.⁹ Although Buddhist institutions continued to inspire reformist thinking in the political arena up until the nineteenth century, they have ceased to exercise any significant political influence since 1949.¹⁰

Tibetan Buddhism does not represent a source of political upheaval against the central government, even if the CCP routinely denounces the 'splittism' of the Dalai Lama and his government in exile. Tibetan Buddhism is increasingly popular among Chinese, but is devoid of any political motivation. The rebellion against Chinese intervention in 1959 was not a challenge to the state, but a response to what many Tibetans viewed as an alien occupation of their country. The Chinese state may regard foreign sympathy to the trials of Tibet as a sign of connivance and proof of ulterior motives to divide China, but this fear is exaggerated. The Dalai Lama has repeatedly insisted that he only seeks substantial autonomy for Tibet within the People's Republic of China (PRC). There is no guarantee, however, that after his eventual passing the Chinese government will find an interlocutor willing to negotiate a peaceful solution to the predicament of Tibet in China, especially as the insecurity of Tibetans in the Tibetan Autonomous Region increases with the influx of Chinese migrants.¹¹

Islam also inspired large-scale rebellions up until the nineteenth century in China. However, Hui (Chinese Muslims) are quietist. Their religious practices are variegated and there is no unity of purpose among their branches.¹² The Uyghurs, as Turkic-speaking Muslims, certainly represent an especially aggrieved community among China's Muslims because of successive attempts to dilute their importance within their eponymous autonomous region. The central government, through its policy of development, internal migration, and control by the military

and security forces, has succeeded in making them a minority within the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang, in which they had hitherto represented a majority.¹³ Moreover, Uyghurs lack a unified political consciousness around which to launch political action.

Historically, the Christian churches and the Catholic Church have never led uprisings against the central government, but they also represent a source of concern for the CCP. It is true that transnational links with sister organizations abroad can offer Chinese churches some moral support and that some evangelical churches aggressively proselytize in China. Their belief that Chinese conversions may change the global balance of power certainly makes Chinese authorities nervous, especially if, according to theologians associated with these churches, conversion to Christianity favors the expansion of liberal and democratic ideals.¹⁴ Many Chinese Christians look to the role of the church in past transitions to democracy in Eastern Europe and East Asia.¹⁵ Accordingly, the Chinese state may fear regime transition more than violence. That said, it is true that the constant repression meted against the Protestant churches that stray from the official theology, even pushing some underground, has favored the emergence of extremist churches with very authoritarian structures.¹⁶ Heterodox organizations such as the Eastern Lightning (*dongfang shandian*), the Three Degree Servants (*sanban puren*), and the Screammers have even prompted localized religious guerrillas to convert rivals to their own beliefs.¹⁷ Yet, in the world of Chinese Christianity, these trends are marginal and closely monitored by most believers who prefer to associate Christianity with a romanticized view of Western modernity.

The most recent, and arguably the most formidable, political challenge to the state raised by a religious organization—or rather a military organization led by a religious leader—remains the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace (*Taiping Tianguo*). This movement did not belong to the Taoist Great Peace nor the Buddhist White Lotus traditions, nor was it Christian, despite the assertion by its leader Hong Xiuquan that he was Jesus Christ's Cadet Brother. Instead, it represented one variant in a general trend toward religious syncretism that incorporated elements of various Chinese religious traditions. Its leader's claim that God had called upon him to create a new utopia led to a civil war that killed around thirty million people and fatally affected the Qing dynasty.¹⁸ The Boxer rebellion, which broke out a few decades later, represented another case of religious rebellion that was inspired by neither Taoism,

nor Buddhism, nor Christianity. In fact, it was opposed to Christian missionaries. This trend represented an amalgamation of more ancient trends in Chinese religiosity, including the practice of breathing exercises known as *Qigong*.¹⁹

To the leaders of the CCP, the *Falun Gong* (a *Qigong* association registered in the State Administration of Sports in the 1990s) belongs to a variant of that trend.²⁰ However, it differs in significant ways from the *Taiping Tianguo* and the Boxers because it does not have overt political objectives; it never advocated violence against the state and its demographic composition is different from that of these two organizations. While the *Taiping Tianguo* and the Boxers were paramilitary organizations with a majority of young males, the membership of the *Falun Gong* includes a large number of women, pensioners, and unemployed.²¹ This particular composition does not represent an immediate threat but rather a powerful symbolic rebuttal of the state's failure in public services.²² In the end, CCP investigations in 1999 reached the conclusion that the *Falun Gong* represented a threat to the regime because its members had infiltrated the party, it is an urban phenomenon, and it has developed connections abroad. The sheer size of its membership alone was enough to make CCP leaders nervous: high estimates reckoned over one hundred million people, more than the number of CCP members. Even though these figures are exaggerated, the group's connections abroad and its capacity to use sophisticated technology and exploit mass media only increase the insecurity of the CCP.²³

Communal religions linked to family shrines and local deities have never represented a challenge to the central government, but they have been a constant source of preoccupation for local authorities to this day. Research by Elizabeth J. Perry has documented the continued existence of such organizations since the founding of the PRC. In particular, she mentions the variety of roles they have performed, and the different kinds of political challenges they have presented to the state.²⁴ During the first decades of the new regime, they resisted the CCP's attempts to assert its authority and often sided with landowners. In the 1980s, in the midst of decollectivization, many of these organizations still defended the interests of clans, but this time, Perry argues, their adversary was not the state but rival clans.²⁵ However, in the context of a rapidly urbanizing economy, we cannot treat these syncretistic movements as serious threats, not least since their use of violence is self-destructive rather than directed against the state. Furthermore, mounting empirical

evidence shows that they tend to be part of local political structures of power rather than sources of opposition.²⁶

Although the rebellions by the religious movements mentioned above often had tremendous consequences and left a deep imprint on collective psyche both in China and elsewhere, most of the Taoist and Buddhist religious associations (no matter how far from orthodoxy they departed), and most of the syncretistic religious movements, have been largely peaceful. Only a few of them have harbored overtly political objectives.²⁷ Some of these movements have developed into what Prasenjit Duara terms 'redemptive societies' such as the Red Swastika Society, the *Tiandijiao*, or the *Yiguandao*, which were active in charitable giving and prospered during the Republican period when the state lacked the capacity to clamp down on them.²⁸ For obvious reasons, the CCP preferred to downplay this latter reality and emphasized the exceptional nature of religious extremism and violence when it wanted to assert its control over Chinese society after 1949. The CCP has been largely successful in preventing the emergence of violence from existing religious traditions thanks to its tight control of established institutions and the complicity of the latter in enforcing orthodoxy and orthopraxy within their own ranks. In fact, the leaders of established religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, and Christianity initially believed that the CCP would respect their institutions and cooperated with the new regime.

The State Control of Religions

Since 1949, the CCP has based its policy toward religion on two sets of beliefs: that the state must control religion to ensure it will not oppose the regime, and that religion is bound to disappear in the wake of modernization. While the former set of beliefs has remained central to the CCP's policy toward religion from the founding of the PRC throughout the Reform Era, intellectuals, and even political leaders increasingly question the second set of beliefs and as a result are developing a more nuanced understanding of religion in contemporary Chinese society. The belief in state control of religion is not a feature unique to modern China; there is a long tradition of state supervision of religious practice and regulation of legitimate belief. On the one hand, modernity facilitates a greater capacity for the Chinese state to control religion. But on the other, it provides the greater challenges of a diversity

of beliefs and of international ramifications that have both arisen in the context of globalization.

The state has a long tradition of controlling religion. The Confucian *literati* have often looked down on popular religions, if not religion itself. In addition, and in collusion with the leaders of established religious institutions, *literati* have often disapproved of the activities of heterodox religious organizations. The current persecution of the *Falun Gong*, which rests on the denunciation of allegedly harmful health practices, is not without precedents. It echoes the 1768 widespread persecutions and false accusations launched against innocent people suspected of stealing the souls of their victims during the rule of Emperor Qianlong (1736-1796).²⁹ During the same rule, *literati* denounced Christians as adherents of a 'dangerous and perverse religion,' and the state persecuted them accordingly. Today, Catholicism and Protestantism represent official religions, but the CCP considers 'underground' and 'house' churches a threat to social stability. The fear remains that Western-based religions could again act against China, as was the case during the 'century of shame' when adherents of Christian churches received the military support of Western powers.³⁰

The CCP is also perpetuating the policy briefly adopted by radical wings of the *Guomindang* (GMD) at the beginning of the Republican regime. In the first decade of that period, radical critiques of religion held sway and the new regime in China was in tune with the spirit of the time, when Atatürk was trying to enforce *laïcité* in Turkey. These policies sought to convert temples and churches into schools and to impose state authority on local religious leaders. Chiang Kai-shek repudiated this approach after he had consolidated his control over the GMD. Himself a Methodist Christian, he sought to encourage a movement for a New Culture that fostered a watered-down version of Confucianism.³¹ During the years that followed, the Chinese state moved away from strict control of religion and sought to implement the principle of church-state separation and pass legislation protecting freedom of religion. To qualify for this, however, Buddhism and Taoism had to reform their structure according to Western concepts of congregational religion by forming their own national associations.³² However, this more lenient policy could never have lasting effects because the GMD was unable to assert its control over the whole country, hampered by Japanese aggression, CCP insurrection, and political divisions.

To begin with, the CCP sought to achieve a more radical program than that of any of its predecessors, with the possible exception of the radical wings of the GMD mentioned above. For the most doctrinaire among the CCP intellectuals, religion had to yield to the forces of modernity. If Marx believed that religion would ‘naturally’ wither away in a socialist society, Mao believed that religion was part of the infrastructure that the CCP needed to dismantle before attempting to create a new society.³³ Early on, the CCP targeted two types of religious practices: communal religions and a number of religious associations it considered heterodox because they could not fit into a typology that included only Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, and Christianity. With respect to religions with a long scriptural tradition in China, such as Buddhism and Taoism, the CCP considered it more expedient to grant them recognition and tried to impose on them a structure of governance ensuring that the state could control their activities.³⁴ It adopted the same approach for Christians and Muslims, because it realized the benefits of granting recognition to the dominant religions of countries with which it sought to develop good relations.

As mentioned above, Confucian *literati* looked upon popular religions with disdain during the imperial era. Nevertheless, these religions constituted an integral part of the structure of legitimacy put in place during this period.³⁵ By incorporating practices as varied as ancestor worship, geomancy (*feng shui*), and Shamanism, they supported the traditional social order. The CCP ideologues understood this very well and for this reason sought the constant persecution of these trends. Deprived of any form of support after the land reform and the transformation of rural society, these practices became vulnerable. The laws on marriage and land reform from 1950, which sought to entrench the authority of the state over traditional power structures, specifically targeted these religious practices. In supporting the development of the five officially-recognized religions, the CCP was also aware that in reinforcing the power and influence of officially-sanctioned clerics, monks, and priests over religious believers, it would receive their enthusiastic support.

The same logic prevailed in the CCP’s efforts to eradicate the ‘redemptive societies’ that practiced some forms of syncretism, such as *Yiguandao*, *Lijiao*, or *Tiandijiao*. From the beginning, the new regime subjected these movements to systematic attacks, fearing subversion generated by their links to overseas Chinese communities. Contrary to communal religious practices, however, these unrecognized religious

associations represented a more difficult challenge. They had a long tradition of resistance, dating from previous experiences of persecution during imperial times, and had developed extended networks within the Chinese diaspora. Their strategy of secrecy reminded CCP cadres too well of the means they themselves had used to gain power, and in addition, these illegal associations' doctrines of salvation suggested a predisposition toward the use of violence in order to accelerate the realization of their eschatological hopes.³⁶ During the Republican period, many of these movements fought the GMD, and they continue to fight against the CCP.

It is only because the 'United Front' required the creation of the largest possible alliance that the CCP originally accepted a provisory policy of co-opting religious institutions. The state encouraged the creation of five national religious associations, and believers had to worship at the temples, churches, and mosques recognized as their legally-approved affiliates. In 1953, the CCP approved the formation of the Buddhist Association of China (*zhongguo fojiao xiehui*) and the Islamic Association of China (*zhongguo yisilanjiao xiehui*). In 1954, it oversaw the establishment of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Committee for the Protestant Church of China (*zhongguo jidujiao sanzi aiguo yundong weiyuanhui*), and in 1957 it approved the creation of the Patriotic Catholic Association of China (*zhongguo tianzhujiao aiguo*) and the Taoist Association of China (*zhongguo daojiang xiehui*). The CCP sanctioned these associations to lure people away from communal religions or 'redemptive societies' that practice syncretism and to encourage people to adopt forms of religious practice it judged more acceptable.

The resilience of communal religious practice amidst all the major political upheavals of the 1950s made CCP cadres realize that their 'United Front' strategy was ineffective. Unrecognized religious associations continued to exist despite campaigns to eliminate them and people continued to practice the rituals of communal religions despite efforts to eradicate them. In some cases, associations supported resistance to land reform from property owners.³⁷ Far from reconsidering their strategies, CCP cadres concluded instead that they should strike harder against all religious institutions. The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) exacerbated these trends and attacked all forms of religiosity, including the five officially-sanctioned associations, which had to stop their activities and dissolve. Ironically, far from removing the influence of religion in Chinese society, this turbulent period merely relocated it to the

center—the adulation of Mao Zedong represented a cult of personality that embodied a new variant of socialist civil religion. Once Mao passed away, however, the failure of that policy became manifest. Although temples, churches, and mosques had been destroyed, religious practices had survived.

In the end, Mao's policy may appear to be an aberration. Successive campaigns of socialist education have failed to eliminate religious practice, which has survived intact, if not thrived in new forms. When, after 1981, Deng Xiaoping sought to overturn the legacy of Mao, he encouraged the CCP to rethink its attitude toward religion. Not only did he consider a renewal of the policy of co-opting religious institutions through the mechanisms of state control, but debates were also encouraged over the relevance of religion to modernity and its possible contribution to socialist society.³⁸ By the end of the twentieth century, many intellectuals no longer considered religion a symptom of backwardness but instead regarded it as a source of social stability compatible with modernity.³⁹ This rethinking, however, has yet to reach a consensus, and at the beginning of the millennium many CCP cadres continue to view religion as a 'problem' for the party to manage.⁴⁰

The new approach to religion has not made any change regarding the recognition of *Yiguandao* and other religious traditions that count many followers outside the PRC.⁴¹ For such associations that emerged in the nineteenth century, or more recent ones like the *Falun Gong*, CCP leaders believe that punishment for membership of them is the only option.⁴² The state still maintains this policy even though it has largely failed. Despite four decades of ideological campaigns, police persecution, and successive attempts to 'strike hard' against them, such associations continue to attract adherents.⁴³ In particular, the emergence of the *Falun Gong* and like-minded movements in the broader tradition of *Qigong* has demonstrated how efforts by the state to control religion can backfire. The obligation imposed on *Qigong* associations to register with the National Administration of Sports (*Guojia tiyu zongju*) has offered these organizations a structure in which to prosper and develop. It was the demand expressed by the leader of the *Falun Gong*, Li Hongzhi, to have his organization recognized as a legal religious association that triggered the state's repression of it; the CCP interpreted his demands as a questioning of the state's monopoly in determining acceptable religiosity.⁴⁴

Many Chinese leaders, worried by the social instability that their reform policies engender, still detect a destabilizing potential in the

transnational links of such Chinese religious movements. For them, they represent subversive associations guilty of cooperating with foreign powers suspected of harboring sinister designs against China. It is impossible to conclude authoritatively whether these claims have any basis in reality. There is no credible evidence presented by Chinese authorities to prove their case. Investigation by independent observers is impossible. However, trends observed in other societies where states have repressed religious expression altogether or sought to regulate religions with a heavy hand often demonstrate the emergence of radical religious movements.⁴⁵ The CCP has only recently started to understand that a religious policy limited to control and repression will not eliminate religion from China. During the Jiang Zemin era, a few members went further by proclaiming that religion can represent an asset serving Chinese society. Initiatives adopted in the 1990s that appeared more favorable toward religious institutions reflect the influence of these views.

The State Embrace of Religion

An increasing body of evidence shows that the CCP has sought to co-opt religion in contemporary China.⁴⁶ Outside observers are aware of the repressive dimension of the CCP's policy toward religion, but fewer are aware of another dimension of this policy that has emerged in the 1990s and is becoming increasingly salient: the recognition of religion's positive contribution to society. This awareness has taken various forms. The CCP has encouraged debates on the nature of religion in China and has approved changes in the regulation of religion. Local officials have cooperated with religious institutions, and more recently, national leaders have even adopted national goals that carry religious overtones. Many reasons lie behind this acceptance, but two stand out—the belief that religious revival can improve economic development, and the realization that religious organizations can help offset some of the worst aspects of the current strategy for economic development.

Debates on the possible contribution of religion to contemporary China started not long after the end of the Maoist era. Only one year after the initial launch of the 1978 economic reforms, the authorities of Nanjing University sponsored the founding of the Institute for Religious Studies (*zongjiao yanjiusuo*), providing a favorable academic

environment in which to reflect on this issue. Shifting political contexts and the requirement to help the CCP achieve its religious work have never ceased to affect scholars, but the tone has evolved. In the 1990s, scholars were influenced by campaigns to build a 'socialist spiritual civilization' (*jingshen wenming*) and looked to the goal of 'government by virtue' (*dezhi*). After the xvth Congress of the CCP in 2002, debates over the role of religious organizations in China reached a stage that would have been unthinkable only a few years before. Scholars in social policy discussed the hypothesis that religious organizations could act as providers of social services.⁴⁷ In 2005, religious institutions took the initiative; the Catholic Church sponsored two conferences on religion and social ethics in Shijiazhuang and in Beijing to discuss the issue of religious participation in the provision of social services.⁴⁸

During the reform era, the CCP approved a number of rules, regulations, and directives that gave the illusion of a belief that religion would remain an important component of Chinese society. In 1990, these moves were timid. The CCP issued 'Document 6,' which recognized the need to tolerate religion but failed to enact comprehensive legislation.⁴⁹ Only ten years later, however, despite the clampdown on the *Falun Gong*, some leaders voiced ideas that were unheard of before and were anathema under Mao. This can be seen in the declaration made in 2001 by Pan Yue (an important member of the CCP Youth League and Deputy Director of the State Council Office for Economic Restructuring) that the CCP should lift its ban on religious believers joining the party.⁵⁰ In 2002, the Beijing municipal government went further than the central government by authorizing the practices of divination, chiromancy, physiognomy, and exorcism.⁵¹ In 2004, the process reached a new level when the CCP Central Party School decided to establish a special unit for the study of, and research on, religion.⁵²

Perhaps the most spectacular sign of a change in attitude from the CCP toward religion is the shift in policy toward communal religions and practices derided until recently as 'feudal superstitions' (*fengjian mixin*). One of the most visible manifestations of this is the display of shrines and statues to the God of Health in restaurants in large cities such as Beijing and Shanghai. They were long a source of embarrassment for the regime. Party leaders, intellectuals, and business leaders saw them as damaging to the modern image of these cities and criticized restaurants and shop owners who put them on view for their 'unscientific' behavior.⁵³ There were campaigns in 1995 and 1996 to get rid of these shrines, but

since 2002 they have reappeared in these cities.⁵⁴ This leniency toward manifestations of basic forms of religion also affects remote locations in rural China. The evidence available suggests that there exists a greater tolerance than ever before toward communal religions adopted by local governments. Sometimes the central government ignores the activities of communities that pursue these practices. Sometimes local governments even encourage them. This interaction between local officials and the personnel of folk religions exists in provinces as diverse as Fujian,⁵⁵ Guangdong,⁵⁶ and Shanxi.⁵⁷

The official rhetoric about a 'harmonious society' that the government of Hu Jintao deploys may give the impression that the state is more ready than ever before to accommodate the interests of religious believers. Although the substantive content of this public discourse remains vague, the terminology clearly marks a departure from classical Maoist discursive strategy—'harmony' represents a definitive repudiation of the concept of 'class struggle.' However, the slogan of 'harmonious society' primarily expresses anxiety over economic inequality and the social instability it generates. Much uncertainty surrounds the mechanisms that the government wants to put in place to address these issues. A rehabilitation of Confucianism is often evoked, but nothing suggests that the CCP will adopt the proposal made by Pan Yue for welcoming religious believers into its midst. In 2008, the seventy million CCP members and their leaders remain convinced atheists. The state has instrumental reasons to encourage the development of religion but does not seek to give religious groups too much power.

The CCP is interested in the wealth of religious institutions because it realizes that religious revival can improve economic development for local governments. Hence, for example, there is an acceptance of temple renewal, religious festivals, and pilgrimages because of the economic activity they generate. Temple-rebuilding illustrates a global trend in which China is playing an increasingly important role—the rediscovery of heritage. Encouraged by international organizations like UNICEF and pressed by Chinese associations that seek to preserve local patrimony, Chinese authorities have ended up celebrating folk arts and popular culture. In this process, they realize the difficulties of dismissing folk religion and its contribution to Chinese culture. The state, too, seeks to benefit from religious festivals and pilgrimages. The former generate surpluses that can help finance local social welfare while pilgrimages

connect people with co-religionists abroad.⁵⁸ Therefore, far from being a remnant of the past, they help to show that China is modern.

This economic dimension to religious activity shows why the CCP may consider that religious associations have the ability to offset some of the worst aspects of the current strategy of economic development. In terms of the local welfare provided by communal religions, Buddhist, and Christian lay associations are active in relief of the poor and in other forms of philanthropy. In addition, many leaders believe that the promotion of traditional values from Chinese religions can serve to counter the growing sense of anomie that emerged in the 1990s. However, current political leaders have not appealed directly to religious leaders to decide on the content of public morality. Religious believers themselves, and outsiders who are sympathetic to them, often comment that religion will offer Chinese people guidance, consolation, or new forms of solidarity. Yet CCP thinkers can hardly go that far. Doing so would amount to admitting that they have failed on these counts and could raise questions about the regime's legitimacy.

One intriguing question that emerges from the observations above, and for which any answer can only be speculative, is how these new trends will affect the relationship between the state and religion. As was suggested at the beginning of this essay, the embrace of religion by an authoritarian state can have some very dangerous consequences for the resilience of that state and the religious organizations that accept this endorsement. Once the state appears illegitimate because of social inequities, corruption, and authoritarian rule, opponents to that regime are likely to challenge official religious associations closely related to the state as well. When such a regime relies on religious symbols to articulate its claims of legitimacy, political opposition often responds with appeals of its own to the symbolic power of religion. The CCP seemed to have understood that possibility when it clamped down on the *Falun Gong* in 1999. Then, however, state reliance on religion was not as open as today. CCP leaders now find themselves at a very delicate juncture. They must decide whether to marshal the enthusiasm of the many religious believers in China to help establish a 'harmonious society', with all the risks this entails for the empowerment of religion in an independent and unpredictable political direction, or to maintain a control that will only alienate a significant proportion of the population.

In retrospect, the idea that China would avoid the influence of religion in its politics is strange. The religious realities of the United States, Japan, and Taiwan remind us that the modern condition does not necessarily lead to religious decline. Indeed, Chinese Buddhist organizations originating from Taiwan and Hong Kong have thrived under the global capitalist economy.⁵⁹ Although Chinese society appears to have embraced the condition of late modernity, too many people remain discontent with their current mode of governance, the state of their environment, or more plainly, their living conditions. In this case, the influence of religion is more complex. It can offer solace from mundane life and can act (to paraphrase Marx) as an opiate to soothe or numb consciousness or (to borrow from Stark and Bainbridge) as an amphetamine that triggers extreme combative reactions against the existing social, political, and religious order.⁶⁰ Chinese history amply demonstrates that both are possible. Yet the potential for religious extremism and violence remains limited, because there is an understanding that such violence could all too easily be turned against religious believers themselves.

Except for a minority of religious organizations, the available evidence invalidates the hypothesis that state regulation of religious affairs provides a context for the emergence of radical religiosity. In all likelihood, there are many other factors—economic conditions, social cleavages, and inequities, etc.—which cannot be discussed here due to lack of space, and which could explain why this relationship does not exist in China. Yet, the fact remains that a majority of religious institutions in China, whether they are legal or not, neither use violence nor deploy a discourse that promotes the use of violence. In the rare instances where this happens, it is at the symbolic level and in a very subtle form. In fact, the CCP has been successful in co-opting most religious organizations and in finding religious leaders who acquiesce to that control because they ultimately believe that this serves their institutional interests. For religious leaders and adherents who join clandestine organizations, there is an understanding that using violence would only help their adversaries by inadvertently giving the state's repressive apparatus legitimate arguments to clamp down on their activities. In sum, Chinese religious institutions are quietist, and, in a context of ontological optimism where most people believe in the continued progress of their economic conditions, religious

institutions do not represent a form of resistance to the dominant social and political order. They appear, on the contrary, to be supportive of the existing situation, because they benefit themselves from economic growth and China's integration into the global economy. ■

Notes

¹ See, for example, Thomas Ferenczi, ed., *Religion et Politique: Une Liaison Dangereuse?* (Bruxelles: Editions Complexes, 2003); Christian Smith, *Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social Movement Activism* (London: Routledge, 1996); and Gilles Kepel, *La Revanche de Dieu: Chrétiens, Juifs et Musulmans à la Reconquête du Monde* (Paris: Seuil, 2003 [1991]).

² Jean-Pierre Bastian, Françoise Champion, and Kathy Rousselet, eds., *La Globalisation du Religieux* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).

³ Jacques Gernet, *Le Monde Chinois* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1972 [2003]).

⁴ David Ownby, 'Chinese Millenarian Traditions: The Formative Age,' *American Historical Review* 104:5 (December 1999), 1513-30.

⁵ An alternative name for the *Tianshidao* movement was the Five Pecks of Rice (*Wudoumidao*), because its leaders required alms of five bushels of rice from their followers. David Yu and Genevieve Fortin, trans. *History of Chinese Taoism*, Volume 1 (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000).

⁶ Gernet, *Le Monde Chinois*; Howard S. Levy, 'Yellow Turban Religion and Rebellion at the End of the Han,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 76:4 (1956), 214-27.

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Tracing the Links between Hindu Nationalism and the Indian Diaspora

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From February to March 2002, the state of Gujarat in India witnessed perhaps the worst massacre of Muslims in its history. The pogrom—orchestrated and funded by the Hindu Right—left around two thousand dead and thousands destitute. It is not a coincidence that a paper that seeks to trace links between transnational Indians and the Hindu Right in India should begin with a ‘local’ event. As a Gujarat victim’s relative told the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, nine out of ten dollars spent on financing the massacre in Gujarat came from the US and Europe.¹ This statement may be difficult to prove, given the secrecy involved in the Hindu Right’s fund-gathering abroad. Yet several scholars and activists mention the millions of dollars that feed the Hindu Right in India.²

What is the Hindu Right and how is it linked to ‘saffron’ dollars? In a few words, the Hindu Right refers to the complex of Hindu nationalist organizations usually called the *Sangh Parivar* (Family of Organizations). The Sangh Parivar is driven by the Hindu nationalist philosophy, *Hindutva*, which is predicated on the idea that the Indian state, social formation, and civil society should be reorganized along exclusively Hindu precepts. The founding organization of the Sangh Parivar—the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS, National Volunteer Corps)—adopted a saffron flag in 1926. This color has since been symbolically associated with the larger Hindutva movement.³

Hindu nationalism has been present on the Indian socio-political stage for much of the twentieth century. However, its fortunes have risen with the diminishing of the centrist Congress Party’s dominance in national politics and the consequent rise of identity-based formations from the 1980s.⁴ Resurgent Hindu nationalism, which asserts the need for non-Hindus to demonstrate unconditional obeisance to the strong Hindu nation, resulted in highly organized violence against Muslim and Christian minorities in India from the 1990s onwards.⁵

The Hindutva agenda of ‘one nation, one culture, one people’ is increasingly seen to be sustained by funds and support from the large

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Indian diaspora. Saffron dollars apparently feed the Hindu Right's covertly political 'development' activities such as the bringing of indigenous Adivasi 'tribal' groups into the 'national mainstream' (read Hindutva worldview).⁶ They also fund the Right's overtly political causes such as the *Ramjanmabhoomi Movement*. This movement aspires to build a temple on the site of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, as it believes that this was the birthplace of the mythological Lord Rama. A big step was taken toward the fulfilment of this aim in 1992 when Sangh cadres destroyed the Babri mosque in the wake of a worldwide effort to build a Rama temple in its place.⁷

More recently, saffron dollars have been in the news in the context of the Gujarat massacre. In its report, 'The Foreign Exchange of Hate,' the Campaign to Stop Funding Hate (CSFH) indicts the US-based charity India Development and Relief Fund (IDRF) for being a conduit of funds for Hindutva organizations in Gujarat that were directly involved in the anti-Muslim violence of 2002.⁸ Awaaz-South Asia Watch makes similar allegations against the Sangh-affiliated charity Sewa International in the United Kingdom (UK).⁹

This essay explores the saffron dollars and pounds that allegedly fund hatred in India. However, it does not attempt merely to substantiate the latter claim. Rather, in tracing links between the Indian diaspora and the Hindu Right, the paper takes a structural view in considering what the institutional basis of the Hindutva diaspora relationship is in the diaspora; what attracts diasporic Indians to the Hindu Right's agenda; and how the Hindutva diaspora relationship is manifested in India.

These questions lead firstly to a survey of various Hindu Right organizations that have promoted Hindutva to diasporic Indians from the 1960s. The objective is to show that like India, the Hindu Right takes protean forms abroad.¹⁰ The paper looks at why the Hindu Right has been able to make inroads into the diasporic life-world. Surely diasporic Indians do not fund hate—either directly or through ostensibly developmental or charitable channels—without the build-up of a Hindu Right presence. It is thus suggested that the Hindu Right exploits marginalization in multicultural societies, fears about losing one's Indian-ness through a Western onslaught, and other such locally situated needs and spaces in order to carve a niche for itself in the diaspora. Against this background, finally, the paper investigates the Hindu Right's developmental and political activities in India that have benefited from diasporic largesse. It concludes with the assertion that the Hindu Right diaspora relationship

is not a one-way flow. Its success has become possible due to increasingly sophisticated, strategic Hindutva organization abroad and a presence in the diaspora that goes beyond saffron remittances to India.

A brief discussion of sources and terminology is important before taking up the main discussion. This work is not based on primary research. It is an attempt to critically summarize the writings of various scholars and activists on the subject of Hindutva and the diaspora and to bring together material on Hindu Right organizations available from media reports, Hindutva propaganda documents and the Internet. Some of these sources provide scarce raw information. Consequently, as will be made clear in the course of this paper, some inferences that are drawn may be more in the form of hypothesis than fact. Yet even these conjectures will be considered due to the gravity of this topic. Given the cloud of fundamentalism that loomed over the country both in the 1990s and especially in 2002, and which has still not necessarily receded even after the defeat of the Sangh-supported *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP, or Indian People's Party) at the hands of a Congress-led coalition in the national elections of 2004, it is crucial to research and write about the issues that this paper raises. Also, while the Hindu Right has a presence in around 150 countries—including the US, the UK, Canada, Fiji, Trinidad, Indonesia, Uganda, and Kenya—space constraints have limited the essay to material from the US and UK.

Regarding terminology, as a working definition, Non-Resident Indian (NRI) citizens and Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) are considered members of the Indian diaspora. 'Diaspora' here does not indicate forced displacement and scattering across countries, such as in relation to Jews. More recently, diaspora has been conceptualized to imply voluntary or forced migration from one home location, possibly at different times and for various reasons, to at least two countries.¹¹ Globalization might have encouraged ongoing resource exchanges, regular travel, and communication within and between Indians in the diaspora and those in India, placing the Indian diaspora in the category of a 'transnational community' with links beyond the boundaries of one or two nations. However, the term 'Indian diaspora' is used here not only because not all diasporic Indians have developed conditions of transnationality, but also because this essay contends that the Hindu Right is attempting to forge a transnational Hindu community-identity *within* the Indian diaspora.

Hindutva ideology, formally propounded by Vinayak Savarkar in 1923, inspired Keshav Hedgewar to form the RSS in 1924. The militant, centralized, and authoritarian RSS is the foundational core of the vast majority of organizations allied to Hindutva in India. It advocates building a united Hindu people to serve the Hindu nation. In the mid-twentieth century, the RSS created several offshoot organizations like the women's wing, *Rashtriya Sevika Samiti* (1936), the *Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad* (ABVP, or All India Students Federation, 1948), and the *Jana Sangh* (1951)—the political-parliamentary arm of the Hindu Right and precursor of the current BJP (1980). A crucial offshoot—the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP, World Hindu Council, 1964)—was formed as a cultural and political mobilization wing to unite the numerous Hindu sects and to expand the Hindu fold.¹²

Hindutva in the diaspora is almost as widespread as in India, going well beyond a few charities collecting money for the Hindutva cause. According to the CSFH, each organization within the core of the Sangh Parivar, like the BJP, the VHP, and *Seva Vibhag* (the charitable service wing), has a sister organization in the US.¹³ Thus, the *Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh* (HSS) approximates the RSS with the Friends of India Society (FISI) functioning as its public arm; the Overseas Friends of the BJP (OFBJP) runs the affairs of the BJP in the US; the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America* (VHPA) does the same for the VHP, and the IDRF looks after the *Seva Vibhag's* activities, channelling its collections to hundreds of Hindutva 'development' organizations in India.

The UK also hosts the HSS, FISI, VHP, OFBJP, and Sewa International. In addition, the Hindu Right boasts subsidiary or front establishments that do not generally admit links with core Hindutva organizations. For example, Federation of Hindu Associations, USA (the FHA) distinguishes itself from hard line organizations like the HSS. Other forms of diasporic Hindutva include the Association of Grandparents' of Hindu Immigrants, the American Hindu Anti-Defamation Coalition, the Hindu University of America (which conducts Hindu training), Mandir—the Hindu Temples Reference Center (which brings temple organizations into one network), and so on. The UK has the National Hindu Students' Forum (NHSF), *Rashtriya Sevika Samiti*, Hindu Human Rights, and *Rashtriya Singh*

Sangat (Hindutva's Sikh offshoot) among others. The protean forms of 'Yankee' and 'Brit' Hindutva allow the Hindu Right to 'target separately but catch all,' that is, to reach out to the multitude of Indians in the US and UK and to attract a few into Hindu Right organizations and more into the general worldview.

Having mapped the many organizational forms of Yankee and Brit Hindutva, this essay now turns to what Hindutva *does* in the diaspora. Hindutva takes a religio-cultural shape in the US and UK, distinct from its politically aggressive form in India. Through organizations like VHPA it provides diasporic Indians cultural information packages—kits of information like Hindu names for children, selections from Hindu texts and answers to frequently asked questions about Hinduism.¹⁴ Diasporic Hindutva builds temples, organizes Hindu fairs, conferences, and educative camps. This is a workable strategy in countries that would disapprove of open allegiance to another land.

Most notably, transnational Hindutva operates through the Internet. Sites like the Global Hindu Electronic Network (GHEN, www.hindunet.org) and Hindu Unity (www.hinduunity.org) disseminate literature, while offering cultural fixes to the diasporic constituency. Thus Hindu Unity and GHEN, through web links to the 'non-political' IDRF, urge transnational Hindus to donate resources to a motherland under siege from Islamic and Christian forces, while also offering them their daily dose of E-Darshan (a glimpse of the Gods) and Digi-prayers.¹⁵ The Internet links organizations espousing different degrees and varieties of Hindutva. Virulent Hindutva websites provide links to the soft Hindutva espousing the BJP's and its affiliates' websites. Hindutva also uses the Internet as a battleground against opposing forces such as secularism and web versions of radical Islam.¹⁶

A key strategy has been massive gatherings of core and subsidiary Hindutva organizations, which bring together different sects, extending even to Buddhist, Jain, and Sikh groups. One such mega-meeting was the *Virat Hindu Sammelan* (Great Hindu Assembly) held at Milton Keynes, UK, in 1989. Events such as these enable the Sangh to illustrate its *Ekata Mantra* (Commitment to Unity) and even attempt to forge this Hindu oneness. The Sammelan, involving three hundred UK Hindu organizations and fifty thousand attendees, was packaged as a show of Hindu culture with popular songs and screenings from the epic *Ramayana*. Woven into this packaging was a political agenda. The Sammelan symbolically celebrated the centenary of RSS founder Hedgewar. It also provided a

major international platform for demanding a Ramjanmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya.¹⁷ A similarly politico-cultural, solidarity-affirming event in the US was Global Vision 2000, held in Washington, DC in 1993. Thus, a centralized leadership, umbrella Internet portals like GHEN and major Hindutva events hold together the labyrinth of diasporic Hindu Right organizations.

The institutional organization and strategies of diasporic Hindutva are facilitated by a committed human resource base. Core Hindutva organizations were established in the US and UK soon after their parent organizations in India. VHPA, for example, started functioning in 1969, four years after the passing of the 1965 Immigration Act that allowed Indians to work and settle in the United States. VHP (UK) was established in 1972. The more protean forms of diasporic Hindutva started appearing in the mid-1980s. For instance, HSC was set up in 1990 and OFBJP-USA in 1991. In the US, the Hindu Right's low-key activities were supported initially by a few technical-professional ideologues who had been involved in Hindutva activities in India before they left to study or work. The bulk of support came from petty-bourgeois merchants, conveniently located in Indian shopping districts. They helped erect temples, took crucial positions on the boards of religious organizations and began projecting a homogenized Hindu culture. However, while the petty bourgeois formed a committed base, Hindutva organizations roped in Indian-American professionals to constitute a prestigious, well-connected membership. Mathew and Prashad identify the spread of Hindutva's influence in the diaspora from the late 1980s with rising BJP fortunes and the success of the Ramjanmabhoomi movement in India.¹⁸

Hindutva's Engagement with Diasporic 'Spaces'

Hindutva has a significant presence in the diaspora with numerous organizations, strategies, and supporters. The spaces and factors that may underlie its entrenchment in diasporic life-worlds have been researched by Mukta, Prashad, and Sarhadi-Raj, among others.¹⁹ While more research may be needed before a clearer picture emerges, the fact that diasporic Hindutva is a large and growing phenomenon makes it worthwhile to put forth their hypotheses.

In 2000, the BJP government established the Ministry of External Affairs High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora. It characterized the

twenty million strong diaspora as being ‘very special to India,’ making ‘spectacular’ progress in occupational terms while maintaining ‘cultural, emotional, and spiritual links’ with the country.²⁰ One may wonder at the veracity of the sentiment, but it does reflect the Indian state’s desire to highlight and/or encourage the diaspora’s connection with India. The *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* (Non-Resident Indian Day), organized by the Government of India in January 2003 (and taking place every year since then) to create awareness of a Global Indian Family,²¹ is another indicator of ongoing attempts to build a transnational Indian community.

Attempts to construct a global Indian family through renewed and vigorous contacts with the diaspora are not limited to BJP-led governments. Indeed, both of India’s pan-national parties—the BJP and Congress—have enthusiastically celebrated the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* when in power in Delhi. At the same time, it can be ventured that the BJP, given its position within the Hindu Right, has added incentive to woo the (Hindu) Indian diaspora in a globalizing world. Take the contemporary Hindu nationalist translation of concepts from the past as an example. An interesting adaptation is *karmabhoomi* (land of work/actions) and *matrabhoomi* (motherland).²² In an age of migratory movements, the idea of a single Hindu nation is dated. Its place has been taken by what may be seen as a Hindutva dual identity. Diasporic Hindus are encouraged to stay in their lands of work and duty but to consider Hindu India their motherland. Apart from nurturing an abstract sense of transnational solidarity, this strategy also seems to have been designed to cultivate diasporic feelings of guilt at having abandoned the homeland and is aimed to encourage compensatory largesse.

There are 1,645,510 Asian Indians in the US. They tend to be highly educated and are the second largest per capita earners in the country with a median annual income of \$70,708.²³ Indians (numbering 900,000) are the largest minority group in Britain.²⁴ While US-Indians are predominantly techno-professionals with some petty-bourgeois merchants, motel owners, and so on, the Hindu Right’s UK constituency is more diverse, comprising bourgeois professionals and businessmen, petty bourgeois traders, and members of the working class. Both these are important groups—directly, because they are numerous and well off, and crucially, because they are an influential group back home.

Diasporic Indians act as imagined and/or real role models for many in India. This is especially true for the Hindu Right’s mainly upper caste, a middle- and upper-class constituency that tends to look up to those

among them who have made it to greener pastures.²⁵ The Hindu Right is keen to garner the diaspora's support abroad and to wear such support as a badge of legitimacy in India. Added to the attractiveness of numbers, wealth, and perceived or real influence of the diaspora, could be the Hindu Right's unwillingness to let a large group of people slip out of the Hindu fold and be attracted, perhaps, by Christianity, Islam, or even secularism.

Recognizing an important transnational constituency, the Hindu Right has been able to exploit discernible spaces in diasporic life-worlds to establish its presence abroad. One such attribute comes from multiculturalism. For Prashad, experiences as ethnic minorities in multicultural US and UK societies have contributed to the development of an explicit Hindutva identity among several groups.²⁶ Shallow forms of multiculturalism entail religious, ethnic, and racial minorities being accepted as the 'other,' and tolerated from a distance. Moreover, liberal rhetoric celebrating multiculturalism assumes religious identity as part of ethnic identity. It accepts difference within ethnic groups but reifies specific religio-ethnic identities. Thus, the Blair government's partnering with faith organizations of all hues in education and welfare may have proven its multicultural credentials. In the process, it also commissioned VHP (UK) to produce the Hindu guide for schools, *Explaining Hindu dharma: A guide for teachers*.²⁷ Essentializing multiculturalism helps legitimize a Hindutva that portrays itself as the representative of all Hindu-Indians.

Sarhadi-Raj's ethnographic fieldwork among young British Hindus shows them being constantly questioned on the quaintness of their religious rituals and being made answerable as representatives of a culture and country by their teachers and peers. To mask their shame about poor and dirty India, they turn to the glories of ancient Indian culture and civilization, provided in packaged form by Hindutva agencies. Added to this are issues of identity and belonging which emerge from questions like 'where are you *originally* from?,' which make British-born diasporic Indians feel excluded in a country they could consider their own.²⁸

Hindutva also seeks to exploit the diasporic familial space. First generation migrant parents often see their children losing touch with their language, culture, and religion due to an overbearing Westernization. HSC, NHSF, VHP (UK), and VHPA activists draw upon fears of drugs and pre-marital sex, encouraging elders to send youths to cultural and religious education camps organized by the Hindu Right

and to draw sustenance themselves from Hindutva. By extolling an a-temporal Hindu-Indian culture at the expense of an equally a-temporal Western culture, they further distance diasporic Indians from US and UK society. Importantly, exploiting familial spaces allows Hindutva to fulfil its catch-them-young strategy, important for moulding British and American Hindus out of Indian-Americans and British-Indians.

Finally, the Hindu Right may be able to exploit spaces created by the Islamophobia prevalent in the world, especially post-9/11. For instance, a National Hindu Students Forum (UK) pamphlet entitled 'Beware!' warns Hindu students that 'Islamic terrorists are operating in British universities,' 'jihad (Holy War) is being waged,' and that attempts are being made to convert them.²⁹ Added to this is Searle-Chatterjee's hypothesis that the Hindu Right today has a widening space to tap a generally unarticulated desire among many diasporic Hindus to be differentiated from stigmatized and often low-income Muslims.³⁰

Apart from the hitherto mentioned spaces that allow the Hindu Right's agenda to play out in diasporic life-worlds, one could mention diasporic guilt. Guilt at deserting the motherland for a comfortable life abroad makes migrants from poor countries enter the domain of long-distance nationalism. Some may directly support militant organizations like the Bajrang Dal by sending money or weapons. Many more relieve guilt via the chequebook—chiefly by remitting to relatives and to a lesser extent by donating to organizations like IDRF and Sewa International that claim to support grassroots non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in India. Most donors are unaware of the latter organizations' Hindutva links. Diasporic guilt, alleviated by charitable donations to inadequately explored beneficiaries, thus creates a space for the Hindu Right to channel these resources into its controversial activities.

Where Does the Money Go? Hindutva and 'Development'

The Hindu Right runs welfare and development programs in the diaspora. The main Parivar organizations in the UK, for instance, have voluntary sector status. The idea of service is important to these bodies. However, their welfare provision is strategic, based on Hindu values, with different foundations from services premised on universal conceptions of rights. Thus, Hindu values would provide support for the elderly, but would also stipulate family unity and *sangathan* (the strategic organization of Hindu

society) as an overriding principle in, say, violence against women.³¹ While the Hindu Right runs several well-funded welfare projects in London, the Midlands, and northern England, the bulk of its resources finds its way to India.

Securing funds from Indians abroad is not a recent concept for the Hindu Right. The VHP's global strategy, enunciated in 1966, was to open associations 'outside Bharat (India) having similar aims.' The VHP's board was authorized to 'collect funds ... from Hindus residing outside Bharat.'³² Today, the VHPA and VHP (UK) offer Hindu migrants an easy task—donate to Indian Hindus in need. Between 1990 and 1992, the VHPA collected \$385,462. By 1993, its declared income had reached \$1,057,147. The IDRF, which is allied to the VHPA, raised \$3.2 million between 1994 and 2000.³³ This particular organization can only be going from strength to strength, given that more recently in 2005, its collections for charity totalled \$2.5 million.³⁴

Gauging the Parivar's financial strength is difficult, since it is secretive about its resources. Allegedly, funds accrue to it from various foreign sources. First, the charities IDRF and Sewa International legally channel funds to Sangh-affiliated development organizations in India. Second, diasporic funds enter India as unaccounted *hawala* money.³⁵ Third, BJP and other Parivar functionaries carry hard cash when they travel to India from the US, UK, and other countries with a strong diasporic presence.³⁶

Money from 'transnational Hindus' is put to two uses within India. It funds the Sangh's controversial welfare and development works in the country. It may also get channelled into political programs like the violence against Muslims in Gujarat in 2002, as alleged by the Gujarati victim's relative quoted in the introduction to this paper. In relation to the first point, the Hindu Right offers help to the most socially and monetarily marginalized, including orphans, indigenous Adivasi tribals, and residents of remote areas of the country that may be overlooked by the development programs of the state.

The VHPA's Support-A-Child sponsorship program, launched in 1985 and managed from Delaware, offers hostel facilities and school scholarships to orphans in India.³⁷ Much diasporic funding goes to *Vanvasi Kalyan Kendras* (literally, Forest Dwellers' Welfare Centers) and other RSS-style educational institutions. The IDRF, which funds several *Vanvasi Kalyan Kendras*, describes on its website that the *Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram* (All-India Forest Dwellers Organization) operates

ten thousand projects comprising dispensaries, dormitories, schools, and adult education in 32,250 tribal villages throughout India.³⁸ It is worth noting that Vanvasi dorms and schools are reminiscent of RSS camps. For instance, photographs from the Vanavasi Vikas Kendra in Boorgampahad, Andhra Pradesh, show young boys in RSS-style khaki shorts conducting exercises with a saffron flag in the background.³⁹ Clearly, the charities of the Hindu Right use welfare and development activities to propagate the Hindu nationalist ideology and way of life among vulnerable groups.

The IDRF funds several groups in North-Eastern India, since the area features strong missionary Christian activity. For instance, it supports *Arun Jyoti*, in Arunachal Pradesh, which works to 'nourish traditional culture' (that is, Hindutva and *not* Adivasi/local culture). In Bhopal, it funds *Sewa Bharati*, part of a country-wide network of RSS-supported Sewa or service organizations that protect the poor from subversion and integrate them into the Hindu 'mainstream.' 'Subversion'—the IDRF and RSS websites make clear—is often the 'menace of Christian missionaries' and/or 'Muslim fanaticism.'⁴⁰

The table below gives an idea of how much welfare and development-funding from organizations like IDRF goes to Sangh organizations. The CSFH report (2002) found that from 1994 to 2000, 83 per cent of IDRF beneficiary organizations were Sangh-affiliated. Only two per cent of its beneficiaries were secular.

The break-up by ideology of the organizations directly funded by the IDRF:

Amounts Distributed Based on Ideology

Ideology	Total Money (\$)	Percentage
Sangh	2,684,915	82.4
Religious	264,660	8.1
Secular	70,620	2.2
Unknown	239,785	7.4
Total	3,259,980	100.0

Source: CSFH, Figure 5, p.87

One could argue that a portion of the funds channelled to Sangh organizations may be used for development activities not related to Hindutva agendas. Here too CSFH evidence proves the contrary. IDRF

funding that did not go directly into Vanvasi development or orphan education but went into activities like 'relief,' for instance after the Gujarat earthquake in 2001, was disbursed through Sewa Bharati and deliberately excluded non-Hindus.⁴¹ A valid question that may then be raised at this point is: Are the few million dollars that the Hindu Right spends on welfare and development every year significant? What is the \$3.2 million that the IDRF raised between 1994 and 2000 compared to the \$5.1 billion that India attracted in foreign investment in 1996 alone?⁴² It is crucial to remember in this context that the Hindu Right's money for charity enters an under-funded sector of Indian society and is thus able to lever enormous power over subaltern populations.⁴³

Having probed organizations like the IDRF, which channel money from the Indian diaspora to 'a-political' welfare and development, this paper turns to that part of diasporic funding which may enter the country for charitable purposes but is channelled directly into Hindutva's overtly political projects. *Outlook* magazine investigated how money collected abroad reaches the VHP in India for causes like the Ramjanmabhoomi movement. It was clear that money could not be sent directly from a UK-Indian's bank account to the Ayodhya Trust. A VHP (UK) general secretary told *Outlook* that if it wanted to contribute to the movement, its money could not go officially because the VHP is not permitted by India's Home Ministry to accept foreign funds. The solution, also provided by the VHP (UK) functionary, was that *Outlook's* money could instead be routed through VHP affiliates which would accept foreign funds under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act.⁴⁴ These affiliates, including *Bharat Kalyan Pratishthan* (Indian Development Organization), which regularly accepted money from the diaspora meant for the temple, would re-route it to the VHP once it reached India.⁴⁵

Interestingly, the Hindu Right does not accept foreign funding in its *swadeshi* (economic nationalist fervour). At the same time, it is not averse to accepting funds from non-Indians so long as an NRI, or an NGO run by an NRI, channels these funds to India.⁴⁶ Thus, the Hindu Right receives funds from Western capital. Diasporic Indians working in companies such as Cisco Systems and Hewlett-Packard contribute to the IDRF. Their employers double their donations, through corporate, philanthropic matching gift programs. In 1999, for instance, Cisco matched the \$70,000 given by its employees to the IDRF, placing it among the top five Cisco donors.⁴⁷ Given this evidence, the claim made in the introduction to this paper that nine out of ten dollars spent on

fanning the communal frenzy in Gujarat came from America or Europe seems, perhaps, less far fetched.

In the preceding paragraphs, an analytical distinction has been made between the Hindu Right's politicized development programs and their openly political activities. It has also been suggested that there can be instances when funding for development assists the Right's aggressive political programs like the Ayodhya movement. This same funding can also be channelled to the Sangh Parivar's so-called 'softer face'—the BJP. An example of this link comes from contemporary Gujarati politics. For re-election in the State Assembly elections on December 12, 2002, the VHP's network of ten thousand local bodies (that is, samitis covering nearly half of Gujarat's 18,000 villages) helped the BJP.⁴⁸ Built over the past fifteen years, these bodies use 'social work' in the form of health centers, orphanages, and educational programs to attract rural and tribal populations, which are then expected to vote for the BJP. As this essay has tried to show, behind the VHP's social work and the BJP's election hopes may lie resources from the Indian diaspora.

Conclusion

This essay began with the claim that millions of diasporic dollars and pounds feed the Hindutva project in India. It has been shown that while saffron dollars do link the Indian diaspora with Hindutva, there is more to the relationship than a uni-directional flow of funds from a generally well off diaspora to the constituency that the Hindu Right seeks to tap (namely, indigenous tribals, orphans, and the like).

Hindutva has a protean presence in the diaspora. Its activities abroad have approximated its fortunes in India and have also developed a life of their own. Thus the Hindu Right has evolved strategic organizations and practices ranging from the provision of spiritual fixes on the Internet to Hindu cultural and language camps for diasporic children. This strategy of course caters to the diverse needs and spaces in multicultural yet marginalized diasporic life-worlds that cannot associate with the nationalist and overtly political aspects of the movement.

Its new transnational affiliations are integral to the success of the rapidly shifting Hindu Right whose core activities in India have become quite aggressive, while being complemented by more inclusive practices

enacted for limited and situated interests abroad. Hindutva abroad and Hindutva in India reinforce but do not limit each other. Finally, the ultimate object of Hindu *sangathan* (that is, the consolidation and strengthening of Hindu society) unites the Hindutva web transnationally.

A resurgent Hindutva uses 'a-political' lures of contributing to the improvement of the *matrabhoomi* to attract support and funding from its transnational constituency. It then deploys diasporic dollars and pounds for welfare and development purposes in India. The strength and legitimacy that accrues from this foreign funding is used to bring 'misled' people into the Hindu mainstream and to launch highly political programs like the Gujarat pogrom and the Ramjanmabhoomi movement.

There is undoubtedly a link between the developmental and overtly political programs of the Hindu Right and the money and support that it receives from diasporic Indians. At the same time, campaigning to stop certain channels of diasporic funding, as several UK and US-based networks of South Asian activists have done quite effectively, is not going to be enough to check the Hindutva project. The Hindutva net runs wide and deep in India and among the diaspora. Beginning to understand the enormity of this highly strategic transnational web is only an initial step in what will have to be a huge effort toward maintaining secularism in India. This essay, by putting together various emerging understandings of the links between the Indian diaspora and the forces of Hindutva, hopes to have contributed to this step. ■

Notes

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¹⁷ Chetan Bhatt, 'Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah: Hindutva Movements in the UK,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23:3 (2000): 559-593.

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¹⁹ Parita Mukta 'The Public Face of Hindu Nationalism,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23:3 (2000); Prashad, 'Of Yankee Hindutva'; and Dhooleka Sarhadi Raj, "'Who the Hell Do You Think You Are?' Promoting Religious Identity Among Young Hindus in Britain,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23:3 (2000): 535-558.

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The Politics of Transnational Ties: A Response to Nikita Sud

PABLO BOSE

In her essay, 'Tracing the Links Between Hindu Nationalism and the Indian Diaspora,' Nikita Sud addresses an important and disturbing facet of contemporary Indian politics and culture, namely the mutually constitutive relationship between certain segments of the overseas Indian communities and the growing forces of *Hindutva* fascism within India itself.¹ Sud's argument is compelling and urgent—we must seriously investigate why some diasporic Indians are drawn to support the Hindu Right, and equally, we must see what effects this developing relationship has on politics and culture in contemporary India. To this end, Sud provides us with an excellent overview of the political economy of *Hindutva* and the organizations that comprise the *Sangh Parivar*. In particular, she highlights the ways in which an intricate web of transnational connections has been formed through linkages between bodies within India that are associated with *Hindutva* and parallel groups within the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK). She also illustrates the pervasive nature of these linkages by showing how they are systematically embedded among a range of social, cultural, and ostensibly 'developmental' activities, rather than simply being overt expressions of political and economic support. Sud argues that one of the greatest dangers of such connections is how they help to undermine the secular nature of the post-colonial Indian state. She points to examples such as the anti-Muslim pogroms in the state of Gujarat in 2002 and the so-called 'Hinduization' initiatives directed at indigenous and marginalized communities—both, in her view, supported through diasporic channels—as evidence of the severity of the situation. At the same time, Sud asks us to consider just what it is that might make the *Hindutva* agenda popular and palatable within the diaspora. Her answer is that these links have been forged primarily through the Hindu Right's exploitation of the systemic racism, social exclusion, alienation, and marginalization experienced by diasporic groups within the multicultural societies of the US and the UK.

The case that Sud has laid forth is a convincing one, and I find myself in general agreement with it. Nevertheless, I would like to briefly develop and expand on a few of the key themes that she has raised in her essay. In particular, I wish to examine more closely both

Pablo Bose, 'The Politics of Transnational Ties: A Response to Nikita Sud,' *STAIR* 3:2 (2008): 66-73.

the Indian context and the 'diasporic homeworlds' within which she locates her discussion. There are three main issues that I would like to take up. The first concerns the evolving relationship between secularism, nationalism, and communalism in India. The second has to do with the historical and contemporary role of diasporas vis-à-vis development in the subcontinent. The final and perhaps most important point deals with the reification of the Indian diaspora as a monolithic entity. What does such a reading mean in terms of struggles over identity, state action, and even progressive interventions?

Let us start with the first issue, that of secularism in India. Sud argues in powerful and evocative language that 'saffron dollars and pounds have helped undermine India's secular fabric.' While certainly pointing to a serious problem, might such a characterization be too straightforward and deterministic? It is undeniable that the Hindutva agenda within India has been lent material and ideological support by some elements of the Indian diaspora. Yet it is difficult to gauge in precise terms the direct correlation—Sud quotes anecdotal evidence to suggest that ninety percent of the funding for the 2002 Gujarat pogroms came from the US and Europe. As she herself admits, such a claim is impossible to verify. An examination of popular media representations, on the other hand, might show a clearer link. A plethora of *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP) functionaries in the UK and the US appeared on television programs, for example, to defend the actions (and inactions) of the Gujarat state government during the anti-Muslim riots. This in itself is enough to condemn the linkages between subcontinental and overseas Hindutva. But a greater danger exists in a linear reading of the attack on secularism in India. To begin with, some argue that the very notion of the post-colonial Indian state being an essentially secular one is a fiction, as much a product of nationalist rhetoric as was Nehruvian socialism.² Providing weight to this argument are the communal tensions that continue to simmer beneath the surface of many communities in India and that occasionally surface with tragic and violent consequences even in such putatively cosmopolitan cities as Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata. Another illustration of the secular myth could be found in the willingness of erstwhile secularist champions such as the Congress Party to exploit religious difference in places like Punjab and Kashmir, and to launch its own anti-Sikh pogroms in Delhi following Indira Gandhi's assassination, long before the political ascendancy of the Indian People's Party (BJP).³ One might also look at the continued significance of caste in contemporary Indian life—even within those religious communities for whom it has never been an 'official' part. In this sense, while important, monitoring and potentially curbing diasporic support for the Hindu Right is only

one part of any defense of secularism as an ideal in India. The reality is that Hindutva as an ideology has been deeply absorbed by Indian culture, including many of the institutions long counted among the pillars of the secular state, such as the judiciary, the civil service, and the army. As Sud shows in her description of the *Sangh Parivar*, the organizations of the Hindu Right take many forms, including political parties, voluntary organizations, and student groups. The Hindutva 'family' extends into trade unions, business councils, women's organizations, farmers' associations, sports clubs, and educational institutes—in short into the everyday Indian life.⁴ It is precisely the deep penetration of Hindutva into the very structure of the Indian nation that many progressive intellectuals within India have lamented.⁵ From a Gramscian point of view, what the proponents of Hindutva have waged successfully over the past century has been a war of position, a struggle to achieve long-term hegemonic superiority by influencing education, media, and mass organizations. These efforts have, of course, not been universally successful; one need only look at continued anti-Brahmin sentiments in South India, the political infighting between the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS) and the BJP following the latter's 2004 electoral defeat, and the lack of traction for a Hindu Right agenda in West Bengal and Kerala, to remember that Hindutva is neither a monolithic nor an omnipotent narrative. It is important therefore not to over-emphasize the role that the Indian diaspora plays in Hindutva in India, and it is also important to consider closely the local contexts of Indian politics and communalism in the efforts to defend a secular ideal.

This brings me to my second point, which emphasizes the need to situate the actions of the Hindu Right within the broader global environment of development and diasporas. As Sud points out, this has been a strategy pursued not only with respect to the Indian diaspora and the BJP, but by the latter's successors as well. At 2007's *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*, for example, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh invited Non-Resident Indians (NRI) and Persons of Indian Origin (PRO) 'to reach out and invest in a New India.'⁶ His statement continues a long tradition of Indian governments drawing on overseas émigrés and migrant workers to help sustain the domestic economy. It is also part of an international trend whereby numerous national and regional governments, as well as development agencies and international financial institutions, have identified diasporas as integral components to future developmental visions.⁷ There is, of course, also a long history of long-distance nationalism and attempts by émigrés from many regions to redraw the political and ideological terrain of former or putative homelands. In the South Asian subcontinent, this has included everything from the

anti-colonial militancy of the Ghadar Party⁸ to secessionist movements such as those in Punjab, Kashmir, and Sri Lanka. In this sense, it is important to point out that what the proponents of Hindutva are doing in mobilizing segments of the diaspora is neither unique nor innovative; instead, they are utilizing powerful extant traditions in order to further their own agenda. Like many of their historical antecedents, much of the Hindu Right's work is subsumed dangerously under the amorphous rubric of 'development,' at the same time that the development industry has begun to fetishize the possibilities of diasporic capital. It is therefore of the utmost importance to ask, as has the US-based diasporic non-governmental organization, Association for India's Development, 'What kinds of development in India are the Indians in the US (and other countries) making possible?'⁹ It is not only in the direct funding of Hindutva organizations and activities that we see a problematic role for diasporic capital. Money from overseas Indians, which has long come into the country as formal and informal remittances for families and smaller communities, is increasingly being drawn toward other sectors, notably, the construction industry, joint business ventures, and capital markets. Even large-scale public infrastructure projects, such as dams, highways, and bridges, have begun to seek financing through bond issues and similar instruments to tap the resources of wealthy diasporas.¹⁰ The potentially inequitable impact of these interventions has become a much debated issue within India of late. And given the deeply embedded nature of Hindutva organizations, it is difficult to disentangle their relationship with diasporic capital as it operates within India.¹¹

This brings us to the final point of how we conceptualize and understand the diaspora itself. One of Sud's main objectives in her essay is to question what it is that makes Hindutva so popular to certain segments of the Indian diaspora. Her contention is that the Hindu Right has effectively exploited the feelings of alienation and social disarticulation that have been a major part of the immigrant experience within multicultural societies. Against this systemic marginalization, celebrations of heritage and tradition can sometimes act as a bulwark, reinforcing a sense of cultural pride and group identity, and providing alternative public spaces and solidarities. On the other hand, 'enacting ethnicity' can also lead to significant tensions within immigrant communities, as evidenced by the inter-generational conflict and domestic violence that has often afflicted such groups.¹² Nevertheless, it is apparent that a wide range of what Sud calls 'religio-cultural' events have helped sections of the Indian diaspora to identify with the Hindutva agenda. This is apparent not only in the educational and community-building initiatives organized by the VHP and similar groups, but in the

broader narratives about India that have emerged from the subcontinent over the past fifty years. Cultural products with mass appeal—such as the so-called All-India films, Bollywood cinema, and *Amar Chitra Katha*, the popular children's comic books about Indian history and culture—have wielded a significant influence in shaping attitudes within parts of the overseas Indian community.¹³ At the same time, an orientalized notion of a syncretic, transcendental, and dharmic identity steeped in mysticism and Hindu virtue has helped to promulgate the idea of the (Hindu) Indian as the 'model' immigrant most suited for adaptability within a multicultural society. It is also perhaps unsurprising that the more right-wing elements of the Hindutva agenda would be embraced by segments of the Indian diaspora; as several critics have pointed out, there is often a strong tendency toward political conservatism among new immigrants within multicultural societies.¹⁴ Some critics even suggest that South Asian immigrants within the US have, through their representation as a 'model-minority,' been used within American racial politics to point out the supposed shortcomings of other minority groups.¹⁵

At the same time, it is important to remember that 'the Indian diaspora' is not a single, monolithic, and undifferentiated entity. As Sud herself points out, 'not all diasporic Indians have developed conditions of transnationality.' This reality may be difficult to acknowledge in the face of the dominant representations of affluent, educated, professionalized, and successful 'global' Indians. *India Today*, for example—an English-language news magazine with considerable circulation both within India and its overseas communities—makes it quite clear who they consider the Indian diaspora to be:

Last year, *India Today*, which shares a sense of adventure with these intrepid Indians, saluted their achievements in a special 'Global Indian' issue. This year, we celebrate the second generation, or overseas-born Indians (OBSS), who may not call India their home but who are nevertheless more than the sum of the fragments of their parents' lives. Born in the two great migrations of the 1960s and 1980s to largely educated professionals, these navigators of the New and Old Worlds are slowly rising to great prominence in their homelands, often in areas their parents would not have dreamed possible.¹⁶

Such a reckoning leaves many out of the picture: descendents of indentured servants in the Caribbean and of traders in Africa, Sikh émigrés who established themselves as farmers and foresters in turn of the century North America, or the many millions who today live and work abroad as artisans, construction workers, taxi drivers, domestic labour, janitors, and in many other 'non-professional' occupations in

North America, Europe, and especially the Gulf states—in other words, all those others who have been part of the successive waves of Indian emigration. These people have not disappeared, as any review of census data will show, but in terms of the myth of the idealized ‘global Indian’, they may as well not exist. It seems that it is only the roughly three million diasporic Indians living in the US and UK who count, even though nearly as many are located in the Persian Gulf while close to six million NRIs/PIOs live in the three countries of Myanmar, Malaysia, and South Africa alone.¹⁷

Ironically, Sud to some extent reproduces the tendency to focus on the US and UK when discussing the Indian diaspora. This is in part due to the constraints of space in her essay and because she is tracing specific linkages between Hindutva organizations in India and abroad. Yet it behoves us to ask how the narratives of a Hindu-based Indian identity function within other instances of the diaspora beyond the UK and US. Sud suggests that the Hindu Right is actively engaged in creating a transnational identity based on its agenda within the Indian diaspora. It would be interesting to examine just how successful this attempt has been across a range of diverse sites and contexts. In some cases, the clash between projected, imagined, and lived identities has been stark.¹⁸ While Sud is certainly correct that diasporic Indians and NRIs have recently been much feted as aspirational models, the recent downturn in the economy of the US and the simultaneous strength of Indian business and industry has led to a subtle shift in public discourse on what being a ‘global Indian’ might mean. The mainstream media in India today are full of stories of NRI husbands abandoning or cheating on Indian wives, of Gulf workers and Malaysian Indians being mistreated overseas, and of young professionals choosing to stay in India rather than migrate abroad. Thus, the sense of what it means to be a ‘global Indian’ is also not static.

In the end, we must, as Sud argues, take seriously the links between Hindutva in India and in the diaspora, while at the same time being careful and thorough in examining the broader contexts in which such struggles are located. To this end it is crucial that we critically interrogate the constructions of, and challenges to, group identity that have emerged as key battlegrounds in the fight against Hindu fascism both locally and abroad. ■

¹ My thanks to Nikita Sud for an excellent and thought-provoking article that engendered much in the way of reactions, and to Leah Burns for helpful comments in preparing this response.

² T. N. Madan, *Modern Myths, Locked Minds: Secularism and Fundamentalism in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997).

³ Robin Jeffrey, *What's Happening to India? Punjab, Ethnic Conflict, Mrs. Gandhi's Death and Test for Federalism*, 2nd Edition (London: MacMillan, 1994).

⁴ Indeed, the battles in India over education, especially the teaching of Indian history and so-called Vedic maths have been among the fiercest in the struggle with *Hindutva*.

⁵ Tapan Basu, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993).

⁶ ExpressIndia.com. 'Invest in New India: PM to Diaspora,' January 7, 2007, <http://www.expressindia.com/news/fullstory.php?newsid=79253> (accessed December 14, 2007).

⁷ A. B. Atkinson, ed., *New Sources of Development Finance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); S.M. Maimbo and D. Ratha, eds., *Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2005).

⁸ North American based revolutionaries in the early twentieth century.

⁹ Association for India's development, 'AID Projects: Rights and Social Justice, Your Voice Counts,' <http://www.aidindia.org/hq/misc/vcounts/voice—counts.shtml> (accessed January 10, 2004).

¹⁰ S. Raghu, 'Gujarat Plans to Raise 5,000 cr viz Bonds,' *Economic Times of India*, December 6, 2000.

¹¹ An example of this would be the controversial Narmada Valley Development Projects in central and western India, whose completion has become a key objective for successive BJP governments at both the state and federal levels. Similarly, in 1998 the BJP-led central government offered a highly successful 'Resurgent India Bond' which raised \$4.23 billion from overseas Indians following international sanctions imposed against India due to its nuclear weapons testing in the late 1990s (Interview with General Manager, State Bank of India NRI Branch and International Banking, March 8, 2004). Both dams and bombs are, in this scenario, an important part of the aggressive strength embodied in the nation envisioned by *Hindutva*. For more see A. Roy, *Power Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Southend Press, 2001).

¹² Rahila Gupta, ed., *From Homebreakers to Jailbreakers: Southall Black Sisters* (London: Zed Books, 2004).

¹³ Sumita Chakravarty, *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993); Sailaja Krishnamurti, 'Constructing "The Glorious Heritage of India": Popular Culture and Nationalist Ideology in Indian Biographical Comics,'

in *Culture and the State: Nationalisms*, eds., James Gifford and Gabrielle Zezulka-Mailloux, (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2007), 112-125.

¹⁴ Daniel Hiebert and David Ley, 'Characteristics of Immigrant Transnationalism in Vancouver,' Working Paper Series No. 03-15 (Vancouver: Vancouver Center of Excellence, Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, 2003).

¹⁵ Vijay Prashad, *The Karma of Brown Folk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

¹⁶ *India Today* (International edition) 'The OBIS: A Generation of Overseas-Born Indians that Dares to Dream,' Special Issue (January 19, 2004): 3.

¹⁷ High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, *Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora* (Delhi: Government of India, 2002).

¹⁸ In Australia, for example, Indo-Fijians fleeing political instability found themselves in a culture clash with more recent immigrants from India whose 'Indian-ness' they questioned. For the Indo-Fijians, the flesh-and-blood Indians they encountered bore little resemblance to the mythologized subjects they had seen through popular culture and media representations. For more, see Manas Ray, 'Bollywood Down Under: Fiji Indian Cultural History and Popular Assertion' in *Floating Lives: The Media and Asian Diasporas*, ed. Stuart Cunningham and John Sinclair (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

Appropriation and Redemption in Contemporary Western Discourses on Islam in Europe

LUCA MAVELLI

The aim of this paper is to sketch a line of interpretation of certain political-philosophical discourses on 'Islam in Europe' through the interrelated concepts of *appropriation* and *redemption*. Muslim presence in Europe is generally perceived as 'problematic.' A specific vocabulary, including terms like 'liberal dilemma,' 'defense of freedom,' 'Muslim exceptionalism', and 'specification of acceptable boundaries,'¹ characterizes an academic production which has been particularly stimulated by the emergence of 'crises'² (the 'Rushdie Affair,' *l'affaire du foulard*, the French ban on headscarves in schools, and the publication of the 'Danish cartoons,' just to mention those that have hit the front pages of newspapers worldwide).³ Albeit in different ways, this scholarship has displayed a certain agreement on the existence of a distinctive European tradition of liberal-secular humanism and on the idea that cultural and religious pluralism should be assessed against the necessity of preserving this tradition. The scope of this essay is to articulate a reflection on the assumptions (and ensuing implications) of this interpretive framework and thus contribute to fill a gap in the burgeoning and variegated literature on Islam in Europe.

This literature, in fact, has been mostly concerned with the question of the transformation of Islam within European settings, namely whether, to what extent, and how European Muslims are undergoing—or *should* undergo—a process of individualization, secularization, and dislocation of traditional religious authority. Such a focus has had the effect of leaving the variable 'Europe' in the relation 'Islam in Europe' relatively under-problematized and of framing the issue almost exclusively in terms of Muslim 'integration into consolidated models of European secularity,' as if such models represented an unsurpassed example of pluralism and neutrality.⁴ The aim of this paper is to shift the attention from Islam to Europe through an exploration of how the vindication of a distinctive European tradition of liberal-secular humanism is wielded to perpetuate dimensions of self-understanding and projection of differences, which nourish and reproduce the idea of a rift between Islam and Europe.

The argument is that this dynamic is postulated upon an ontological essentialism of the kind expounded by Michel Foucault in his famous essay 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.'⁵ In this essay, Foucault lays the foundations of his critical distinction between 'genealogy' and 'traditional history' and warns against the attempts of the latter 'to capture the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities, and their carefully protected identities.' He maintains that this search 'assumes the existence of immobile forms that precede the external world of accident and succession ... [it] is directed to "that which was already there,"' the image of primordial truth fully adequate to its nature and it necessitates the removal of every mask to ultimately disclose an original identity.⁶ In our case the 'immobile forms' are 'the West' and 'Islam,' which, as Armando Salvatore points out, tend to be conceived as two enclosed, self-sustaining, and mutually exclusive *kulturreligionen*.⁷ These forms are the primary units of a debate strongly characterized by the problem of contending values, the latter being an expression of 'an original identity.' This essentializing ontology, Foucault contends, conceals a need for origins, a quest for reassurance about one's own tradition, and a desire for a coherent and unitary identity. It expresses the necessity of dispelling the threatening idea that what one imagines as a clear and meaningful line of descent may just be the 'unstable assemblage of faults, fissures, and heterogeneous layers.'⁸ Within this perspective, 'to essentialize' does not simply mean to construct interpretive frames of references that stabilize, congeal, and deform the Other. Indeed, to essentialize becomes a function of the self in which the will to knowledge cannot be separated from the will to master, which in turn is not independent from the will to define one's own subjectivity. Thus, following Foucault, the essentializing process can be defined as a cognitive mechanism in which the Other is purposefully constructed on the basis of subjective concerns.⁹

The construction of Islam on the basis of European concerns is only one dimension of a more complex reality which sees sections of Muslims (living in Europe) performing a similar construction of 'Europe' from the perspective of an Islamic ideal-type or, even more interestingly, identifying with the 'essentialized'—and often stigmatizing—image of Western/European origin. However, an inquiry into this interplay of 'imbalanced essentialisms,'¹⁰ although crucial for an understanding of the phenomenon of 'Islam in Europe,' cannot be pursued within the narrow 'European' focus of this paper, concerned as it is with exploring how some contemporary Western academic discourses on Islam conceal a specific Western and European will to identity and distinction. In these

discourses, it is argued, essentializing assumptions are enacted through the two interrelated discourses of appropriation and redemption.

Appropriation addresses the need for origins and continuity by framing liberal-secularism as a unique Western achievement. This claim is made either by invoking the Christian roots of liberal-secular arrangements, or by referring to Europe's historical and philosophical tradition and the role it has had in the process of emancipation from religious obscurantism. In this latter case, the modernizing character of liberal-secularism suggests the idea of a system that can be disentangled from a specific Christian trajectory (thus made post-Christian) in order to deliver equality, freedom, and dignity to those who have not been educated in this tradition. This is the discourse of redemption—it encompasses and transcends the discourse of appropriation by vindicating the possibility, if not the necessity, of spreading the liberating and dignifying properties of Western liberal-secularism to Islam.

In the next two sections I will analyze how discourses of appropriation and redemption are deployed by some prominent intellectuals debating Islam in Europe. The inquiry will be mostly devoted to unravelling the assumptions, implications, and limitations of their interpretive frameworks, sparing for the conclusion some proposals for alternative modes of interpretation. The narrow focus of the investigation, based on a discussion of a limited selection of academic-intellectual discourses, warns against generalizations. The relevance of the positions analyzed does not rest on their alleged hegemony at an academic or societal level. In order to make this case, in fact, it would be necessary to analyze how intellectual discourses are appropriated, transformed, reinterpreted, and disseminated at the level of social agency¹¹—a task beyond the scope of this paper.

Rather, drawing on Armando Salvatore, this paper takes academic-intellectual perspectives on Islam in Europe to be relevant in themselves, because they represent a *legitimizing discourse* of those less theoretically refined, 'sub-intellectual' societal discourses and practices which cast Muslims as the Other of Europe.¹² The legitimizing strength of the intellectuals, 'the stratum represented by the legitimate holders of the keys to sound knowledge and politics,'¹³ rests on their capacity to create a self-sustaining discursive space from which they can disappear by virtue of the intellectual function they perform, i.e. *theoria*—'the contemplation that enable[s] the philosopher to distinguish the eternal truth of the cosmos from the uncertainty and the fluidity of quotidian life.'¹⁵ By considering the academic-intellectual as a legitimizing discourse of 'sub-intellectual' societal discourses and practices, this paper ultimately focuses and elaborates on a very specific dimension of the conditions of existence of

Appropriation

An interesting articulation of the discourse of appropriation is offered by the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor. According to Taylor, the question of whether Muslims can effectively separate religious belief and political commitments bears directly on the role and form that secularism should take in modern Western societies.¹⁶ Secularism, Taylor maintains, has its roots in Christianity, in the theological ‘requirement of distance, of non-coincidence between the Church and the world.’¹⁷ This principle has been further developed following the wars of religion when the necessity of overcoming Christian sectarianism became paramount. The original idea of an ethic of peaceful coexistence based on elements common to all Christian doctrines (‘common ground strategy’) was quickly superseded by that of an ‘independent ethic.’¹⁸ The latter, which aimed at transcending confessional allegiances altogether, was based on an appeal to human nature and universalizable principles and had its most notable exponent in Grotius. The idea of an independent ethic was not synonymous with atheism. It demanded, however, that principles not be justified in religious terms.¹⁹ Such a secular independent ethic has been crucial in favoring the transition from traditional hierarchical societies, based on intermediate structures of mediation, to the direct-access society of modern nation-states, because it has enabled the transfer of loyalties from the intermediate structures of the family, class, or religious confession to the nation-state.²⁰

These achievements notwithstanding, Taylor considers the form of secularism grounded in an independent ethic to be no longer capable of guaranteeing neutrality in Western societies. The polarization of believers and non-believers and, above all, the growing presence of non-Christians, most notably Muslims, have increasingly changed the meaning of the independent ethic, which has become synonymous with atheism. This of course dissatisfies Christian believers, but it is particularly problematic for Muslims, for whom secularism is an alien tradition.²¹ However, this argument should not automatically suggest the irreconcilability of Islam and secularism. On the contrary, Taylor argues, a modern form of secularism is required more and more to avoid the marginalization of Muslims in contemporary Western societies. This mode of secularism cannot be based on an independent ethic, nor can

it rest on a common ground strategy given the fundamental diversity of the traditions involved (Christianity and Islam). Taylor envisages the solution in a secularism of 'overlapping consensus' in which the possibility of agreement on some political principles does not demand a parallel consensus on the underlying intuitions of values. Even this perspective needs some refinement in the face of today's diversity. In Taylor's interpretation, Rawls maintains that principles can be agreed to without sharing foundations, but also believes that what can be shared is the rationale for these principles—'a doctrine of political constructivism, reasonable mutual expectations, and just terms of cooperation.'²² For Taylor, this is 'asking too much.'²³ In today's diverse societies the best we can aim for is agreement on some general principles, not on foundations, and most likely not on common frameworks.

This brief summary of Taylor's perspective on secularism offers an interesting illustration of how the logics of appropriation contribute to shape his views on the Muslim presence in the West. The idea that secularism is a unique Western achievement is expressed in the identification of a single point of origin, Christian theology, and a single line of development, the wars of religion. These elements are sufficient for Taylor to conclude that secularism is alien to Islam and from that to infer the radical diversity of the two traditions which demands an 'overlapping consensus' where neither foundation nor common frameworks can be shared but only some general political principles.

This argument is constructed upon an objectionable premise, namely the idea that secularism is uniquely Western because the differentiation of religious and secular spheres is an element of Christian theology. However, the fact that the term secularism has its 'original etymological-historical meaning ... within medieval Christendom' does not make the underlying process an exclusive feature of Christianity.²⁴ In fact, although the Qur'an refers to some sort of indivisibility of religion and politics in more than forty passages, historical evidence shows that the two realms started to develop distinct spheres of experience not long after the death of the Prophet.²⁵ Ira Lapidus articulates a detailed analysis of how the claim of the rulers of the Umayyad dynasty (661-750) to exercise political control over aspects of religious life was met with protests and triggered the growing awareness that an autonomous sphere for religious activity and organization was required in order to preserve its sacred, transcendent character.²⁶ This awareness can be observed at an institutional level just three centuries after the birth of Islam. As Lapidus explains,

[F]rom the middle of the tenth century effective control of the Arab-Muslim empire had passed into the hands of generals, administrators, governors, and local provincial lords; the Caliphs had lost all effective political power. Governments in Islamic lands were henceforth secular regimes—Sultanates—in theory authorized by the Caliphs, but actually legitimized by the need for public order. Henceforth, Muslim states were fully differentiated political bodies without any intrinsic religious character, though they were officially loyal to Islam and committed to its defense.²⁷

Philip Hitti suggests that the defense of Islam by Muslim states was not dissimilar to the defense of the Christian faith by European emperors.²⁸ Yet, Tamara Sonn highlights the difference between medieval Christendom and Islam in the tolerance granted to religious minorities and in the level of support that religious authority lent to authoritarian and oppressive regimes.²⁹ The millet system (self rule for minority groups) of the Ottoman Empire, although considered by some as not living up to modern liberal standards,³⁰ encompassed a dimension of religious tolerance which was unknown to a Europe scourged by the sectarianism of different Christian confessions. This element, together with the fact that, unlike in Christianity, ‘religious authorities were not affiliated with coercive power for the most part,’ probably made the separation between religion and politics a less important institutional, philosophical, and ethical concern.³¹

This argument needs to be considered in relation to the specific sense that secularism acquired in Europe during the Enlightenment, namely freedom *from* belief. This meaning is not at all universal, not even in the West, as can be seen in the United States where secularism’s primary meaning is freedom *of* belief.³² These significations are related to the different histories of the two continents, with Europe crucially engaged in emancipating itself from the coercive and oppressive power of the Church. If one accepts Taylor’s argument that a secular independent ethic has been crucial for the transition from traditional hierarchical societies to modern nation-states, one cannot help but notice how Western secular nation-states—and not religious Islamic institutions—became the primary source of oppression of Muslim societies through the process of colonization; how, in other words, if secularism represented for Europe the shifting of violence from religious wars into national and colonial wars,³³ it represented for Muslims a symbol of oppression due to its identification with Western nation-states.

Yet, to infer from this a general Muslim antipathy toward secularism—for instance, toward a secular independent ethic, as Taylor asserts³⁴—would be unwarranted. Several studies on Muslim communities in Europe converge around the idea that Muslims are displaying a tendency toward

the individualization or privatization of religious belief,³⁵ one of the three dimensions of secularization according to the framework of José Casanova (the other two being the decline of religious beliefs and practices, and the differentiation of the religious and secular spheres).³⁶ Interestingly, Taylor defines secularism only according to the latter dimension, which seems to lead to dynamics of individualization/privatization, hence the secular independent ethic of modern nation-states built on Christian roots. Following Taylor's logic one may then expect a tendency to 'secularize' among Muslims living in Europe, and this is indeed a key feature that seems to emerge from the literature on Western European Islam. But Taylor does not seem to take into account this possibility. For him, Muslims belong to a different religious tradition which not only prevents them from undertaking processes of individualization, but also constructs them almost exclusively as religious subjects.

These brief socio-historical snapshots have no aim other than showing how the meaning, evolution, and reception of secularism are dependent on a variety of historical, social, and political circumstances which cannot be reduced to theological arguments. Hence, in a Foucauldian fashion, one might say that there is no historical necessity in Christian theology that has caused the regime of knowledge known as 'secularism' to gain widespread acceptance in Europe,³⁷ but only a succession of historical contingencies that need to be analyzed, dissected, and carefully reconstructed if one wants to understand the implications of this regime for Muslims.³⁸

Following the theoretical framework sketched in the introduction it can be suggested that Taylor's reliance on the classic Orientalist assumption which frames Islam as a cluster of absences³⁹—thus making secularism an exclusive Western appropriation—should not be misread as an interpretive fallacy but as a will to identity and distinction. This will encompasses Taylor's desire to preserve a Christian tradition in a liberal-secular environment and is moderated by his renowned sensibility for the recognition of cultural diversity.⁴⁰ Accordingly, Taylor's reliance on an understanding of religion as an analytically identifiable category, characterized by an autonomous essence, is not fortuitous.⁴¹ It allows him to satisfy 'the liberal demand in our time that [religion] be kept quite separate from politics, law, and science—spaces in which varieties of power and reason articulate our distinctively modern life,' and at the same time, to claim an unchanged vitality and importance for Christianity (and Islam).⁴² Yet, his concern for recognition of different cultures leads him to endorse a lighter version of Rawls' paradigm as a way to overcome differences. The final effect is controversial as the very sources of (alleged) contention—Christianity and Islam—are

removed from the debate in the public sphere. This is certainly coherent with Taylor's understanding of these two traditions as transhistorical entities, but pays almost no attention to how European countries have achieved agreements on the role of religion in political life (with still harsh confrontations, and thus in a constant dynamic of renegotiation of the respective spheres of influence).⁴³ These agreements, Alfred Stepan remarks, were the result of

long public arguments and negotiations in which religion was the dominant item on the political agenda. Thus [for instance] in the Netherlands [at the beginning of the 20th century] ... religious conflicts [among Catholics, Calvinists, and liberal-secularists] were eventually taken off the political agenda of majority decision-making by a democratic—but not liberal or secular—consociational agreement that allocated funds, spaces, and mutual vetoes to religious communities with competing comprehensive doctrines. Achieving such an agreement normally requires debate within the major religious communities. And proponents of the democratic bargain are often able to win over their fellow believers only by employing arguments that are not conceptually free-standing but deeply embedded in their own religious community's comprehensive doctrine.⁴⁴

Taylor's endorsement of Rawls is thus controversial in that it denies Muslims living in the West the possibility to engage in that process of democratic confrontation and conflictual negotiations that has allowed Europe in its very recent past (and not just in the times of the wars of religion) to overcome the conflicts arising between Christian confessions and Christian and secular components. This position may be consistent with Taylor's view, which deems secularism to be an exclusively Western feature, thus making the process of a democratic confrontation impossible if 'Islamic' arguments are to be brought into it. The problem with this perspective is that it suggests a fictionalized and depoliticized image of how different Christian confessions would have overcome their disagreements in more recent times—that is, by virtue of the adoption of an independent ethic, favored by a transfer of loyalties toward the nation-state. This account glosses over the fragmentation which has characterized the Christian world. For instance, as Casanova points out, discourses on Catholicism, which characterized Anglo-Protestant societies in the United States from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, bear a certain resemblance to contemporary discourses on Islam as an illiberal and antimodern religion.⁴⁵ Similarly, one might argue that some strands of the discourse which juxtapose Europe's unitary Christian character against Islam are relatively recent and crucially linked to the project of European integration and the attempt to promote a specific European identity.⁴⁶

Taylor's desire to preserve an original identity for Christianity, and thus for Islam, together with an aspiration for a political system which may accommodate different traditions, leads him to endorse what we may label a 'multiculturalism of necessity.' In this account, culture is the inescapable context of subjectivity but also of government. As culture cannot be transcended, Taylor suggests, liberal-secularism, being an offspring of Western Christianity, must undergo a profound and necessary transformation if it is to make room for Muslims. What happens, though, if we assume that the cultural context may be transcended?

Redemption

Redemption occurs when liberal-secular arrangements, understood as an organic outgrowth of Western Christianity, are deemed to have acquired primacy over the cultural-religious dimension that generated them. This perspective subscribes to a polarized transition from a pre-modern to a modern status whereby the *subject* of a cultural-religious system (for this very reason subject to the practices that govern her life) becomes a liberated agent capable of assessing, questioning, and eventually opposing such a system of rules. In the discourse of redemption, the individual is thus redeemed from her state of submission to the inherited, hence not consciously embraced, cobweb of cultural-religious prescriptions. Redemption, however, does not rest on a complete rejection of tradition. The primacy of liberal-secular norms over the Christian cultural-religious system from which they originated means that the former has domesticated and privatized the latter (it has become post-Christian), thus making it compatible with the dictates of reason and modern rationality. The unique feature of the discourse of redemption is that it makes possible the preservation of an organic link with tradition and at the same time allows its transcendence. The discourse of redemption subsumes the particularistic discourse of appropriation as it satisfies the Foucauldian need for origins and continuity, but also contains a universal discourse of liberation from the obscurantist aspects of tradition.

In the discourse of redemption, the strength of liberal-secularism does not simply rest on its bearing a universal validity by virtue of being 'the sole political doctrine that can harbor culture and religion without being conquered by them.'⁴⁷ The strength of liberal-secularism as part of a universal discourse of redemption relies on the alleged fairness of its demands—it does not ask for a rejection of tradition, but only that it be contained within the discipline of liberal-secular norms—and on the

moral authority of its proponent, the post-Christian West. The latter, in fact, does not couch its appeal in abstract universal principles, but refers to its concrete experience in the lengthy process of emancipation from the grip of cultural-religious oppression. By overlooking the possibility that this experience of religious oppression might not have been shared (not, at least, in the same way) by other traditions such as Islam, the discourse of redemption asserts the moral authority of the post-Christian Western redeemer as universal. The post-Christian West has redeemed itself by gaining ascendancy over its *kulturreligion* through the adoption of liberal-secular norms and, as such, it can now redeem Muslims who are still subjected to it.

This perspective requires the construction of the subject of redemption as lacking agency as someone ‘whom culture has’ as opposed to a self-image of mastery and control of one’s own tradition.⁴⁸ What type of social imaginary does this perspective enact? A vivid representation is offered by Mahmood Mamdani, for whom the rhetoric of the ‘war on terror,’ with its claims for the need to distinguish ‘good Muslims’ from ‘bad Muslims,’ rests on an implicit understanding of Muslims as unable to make culture, hence only capable of conforming to it. Muslim culture, Mamdani observes,

seems to have no history, no politics and no debates. It seems to have petrified in a lifeless custom. Even more, [Muslims] seem incapable of transforming their culture, the way they seem incapable of growing their own food. *The implication is that their salvation lies, as always, in philanthropy, in being saved from the outside.*⁴⁹

In order to bring salvation, the post-Christian West endows itself with the possibility of inflicting suffering by inscribing it in a discourse of redemption enacted in the name of a doctrine, liberal-secularism, which as the ultimate redemptive truth, promises deliverance from oppression.⁵⁰ Although evidence of this argument is usually provided in relation to the ‘war on terror,’ strains of redemptive discourse in which suffering is alluded to and endowed with redemptive properties can be found in several arguments on Muslims in the West. Thus Brian Barry, in discussing the ‘Rushdie Affair,’ states that

few people have ever been converted to or from a religion by a process of “examining beliefs critically.” Religious fanaticism is whipped up by non-rational means, and the only way in which it is ever likely to be counteracted is by making people ashamed of it. If Christianity has in the past fifty years finally become compatible with civility (at least in most of Western Europe), that is the long-term consequence of an assault on its pretensions that got under way seriously in the eighteenth century. Gibbon employed the stiletto, while Voltaire resorted to the rapier. But in both cases the core of their deflationary strategy

was mocking, ridiculing, and lampooning. Voltaire, however, lived openly at Ferney and died in old age of natural causes, even though religious zealots would have had no difficulty in assassinating him. The fate of Rushdie, forced to live in hiding with a price on his head, unfortunately suggests that the Islamic equivalent of Voltaire may still be some time off.⁵¹

Barry vindicates the duty of liberal-secularism to redeem Islam by taking as a model the higher moral ground of Western Europe, which has domesticated Christianity, making it 'compatible with civility.' Muslim redemption, however, cannot be achieved by reasoned discussion, as the irrationality of the pre-moderns makes any attempt at argumentation worthless. Hence the 'mocking, ridiculing, and lampooning' of Islam by Rushdie should be welcomed for its redemptive properties (and therefore should also be employed against Muslims who protested the publication of the *Satanic Verses*). In this framework, the question as to whether the *Satanic Verses* may have been offensive for Muslims to the point of causing suffering becomes irrelevant because Muslims have already been framed as moved by passionate, pre-modern, non-rational feelings. In such a scenario, suffering loses its original violence because it is self-inflicted. If Muslims had a rational, privatized, and liberal-secular relationship with their religion, they would not be suffering.

The discourse of redemption converts suffering into non-rational emotionality by virtue of its depoliticizing strength. As Wendy Brown points out, depoliticizing 'involves removing a political phenomenon from comprehension of its historical emergence and from the recognition of the powers that produce and contour it,' with the effect that 'an ontological naturalness or essentialism almost inevitably takes up in our understanding or explanations.'⁵² The crucial implication of this essentialism/depoliticization is that 'the field of political battle and political transformation is replaced with an agenda of behavioral, attitudinal and emotional practices.'⁵³ Hence, the protests of Muslims are not instances of an effective anguish. They are the convulsions, the spasms of pre-modern manipulation or false consciousness from which the discourse of redemption promises to deliver them. Thus Brendan O'Leary, in a recent debate on the Danish Cartoons published in *International Migration*,⁵⁴ states that he feels sorry for the ordinary Muslims who were manipulated by the Danish Islamists, but the very fact that that they were manipulated leads him to question whether people were truly offended.⁵⁵

For O'Leary, 'one should be vigorous in protecting liberalism and secularism in their established heartland,' hence 'no liberal principle should be sold now that might be regretted later.'⁵⁶ This line of thought

is shared by another participant in the debate, Randall Hansen, who, echoing Barry, vindicates the right to mock and ridicule religion, arguing that Muslims 'have to decide whether they wish to live in a liberal democratic society,'⁵⁷ and concludes that, in the face of increasing immigration, liberal-secularism, a 'unique product of the West,' should be strengthened rather than questioned.⁵⁸ In Hansen's view, the ultimate redemptive truth of Western liberal-secularism can dispense its liberating properties as long as it remains untouched, which means not only that Muslims do not have the chance to negotiate the terms of their integration,⁵⁹ but more importantly that they have no contribution to offer to Europe's democratic development.

This line of argument, which casts Muslims as the ultimate Other of European liberal-secular modernity, rests on a liberal-secular reductionism which, by equating 'freedom to rights, and ... equality to equal standing before the law, ... eliminates from view many sources of subordination, marginalization, and inequality that organize liberal democratic societies and fashion their subjects.'⁶⁰ This reductionism can assume a legalistic form. Thus, for instance, O'Leary states that 'to publish mockery of Muhammad in an outlet not noted for its Muslim consumers was well within the newspaper's rights (and indeed public manners) both under Danish law and under the European Convention. Liberal rights also permit public relations stunts.'⁶¹ Yet liberal reductionism can also emerge as a comparative argument. A well-known case is that of British historian David Irving who, in the days of the row over the Danish cartoons, was on trial (and later sentenced to a jail term) in Austria on charges of Holocaust denial. This event has led some commentators to raise the question of whether Europe was using double standards by forbidding the freedom of expression of those who deny the Holocaust and allowing the free speech of those who offend and ridicule the Prophet. A very telling reply to this argument has come from French philosopher André Glucksmann who, in an article entitled 'Separating Truth and Belief,' has recalled how 'the distinction between fact and belief is at the heart of Western thought.'⁶² This distinction, he claims, should not be questioned, because it is through the very recognition of the cruelty of the past, specifically the 'Nazi abominations,' that Europe has been capable of progress toward democracy. Mixing facts and interpretation (religious beliefs), hence putting on the same level those who deny the Holocaust and those who poke fun at Islam, risks heralding us into either fanaticism or nihilism.⁶³

The thread that links these arguments, from Barry to Glucksmann, is only formally Islam in the European setting. Even a cursory look shows how the discussion revolves around the self-understanding of Europe, in

a will to identity and distinction. Liberal-secular Europe becomes the redeemer; it has suffered under the sway of religion but has ultimately succeeded in democratizing Christianity, making of it a source of moral value. It has overcome the horrors of the Second World War by keeping alive its memory with a system of knowledge which distinguishes between facts and beliefs. It has developed a system of legal protection beyond that of individual states. As a counterpoint, Muslims are those to be redeemed. They fall victim to their uncontrolled passions; they are subject to manipulation, unable to distinguish between facts and beliefs.

The discourse of redemption makes liberal-secular Europe an inescapable yardstick for every analysis of Islam in Europe. The effect is that Islam becomes a projection of Europe, incapable of an autonomous life, unable to express an original identity and impossible to evaluate without reference to the European standard. This dynamic can be observed also in 'sympathetic' analysis of a more socio-anthropological character. In the previous section, I mentioned that several scholars consider the 'individualization of religious beliefs as the major development in Europe's Muslim communities.'⁶⁴ A strong proponent of this argument is Jocelyne Cesari who contends that the arrival of Muslims in the pluralistic context of Europe is leading to the emergence of the 'Muslim individual,' thus engendering a transformation which has not yet reached Muslim countries.⁶⁵ Hence, she suggests, the 'social adaptation process of Muslim minority groups has placed Islam within the three interrelated paradigms of secularization, individualization, and privatization, which have until recently been distinctive characteristics of Western societies.'⁶⁶ The sociological analysis may be well-grounded, but one cannot help but notice how, even in this case, Muslims are being redeemed by embracing features which are deemed exclusively Western, most notably the process of subjectivity formation which, in a classic Orientalist formulation, is deemed an exclusive prerogative of Western Christianity.⁶⁷ As in the previous examples, Europe is once again taken as the normative yardstick, the measure of every civilizing process.⁶⁸ From this perspective, the divide between Europe and Islam is transformed into a divide between 'Muslim beliefs and practices in Europe and those in the migrants' countries of origin.'⁶⁹ The discourse of redemption redraws the circle of otherness and reiterates the distinction between 'good Muslims' and 'bad Muslims,' leaving a glimpse of hope for those who, having ventured to Europe, will not resist its civilizing strength, allowing the individual to emerge and soar over the suffocating 'bad Islam.'

This paper has examined the discourses of appropriation and redemption as categories that may account for some contemporary Western/European attitudes toward Islam in Europe. What has emerged from this brief analysis is how certain intellectual-academic inquiries into Islam in the West/Europe may conceal a Western/European will to identity and distinction. In a Foucauldian reading this tendency would express a demand for ontological reassurance about one's own being, tradition, and identity, hence the will to stabilize, by means of appropriation and redemption, the purity, originality, and continuity of liberal-secular forms as generated by a Christian, now post-Christian, Europe. As we have observed, both appropriation and redemption rest on an essentializing ontology—the former grounded in a notion of communal differences, the latter based on the depoliticization of differences. Despite this similarity and despite the fact that the discourse of redemption tends to subsume that of appropriation, the two discourses have very different implications for the way they conceptualize Islam and the relationship between non-Muslims and Muslims.

In the discourse of appropriation, the Muslim subject is simply unknown. The only information available is that s/he is non-secular and non-Christian, but these features, which mark the identity of the Western subject, are not a reason, at least not in Taylor's approach, to claim that Muslims should adjust to non-Muslims without reciprocity.⁷⁰ Taylor looks for mediation, for a mutually respectful accommodation which may do justice to the differences at stake. The result is a painful 'multiculturalism of necessity,' which raises doubts as to how it could ever work. Why should an overlapping consensus be sought if the differences are as radical as Taylor claims? On what grounds could one justify a form of civic coexistence between perspectives that can never meet? Why should we live together? The problem with Taylor's account is that it establishes radical diversities as ontological units of analysis and then tries to mediate between them. As the brief analysis developed in this article exposes, the employment of a universal understanding of secularism as an exclusive feature of Christian Europe overlooks how similar practices may have been experienced in the 'Muslim world'—a world whose history, philosophy, and social processes have not developed in uncontaminated isolation from those of 'the West' (and vice-versa).

This argument does not simply suggest the presence of similarities and mutual influences between the two worlds but points to the existence and consolidation of what Salvatore identifies as a specific space of

transnational communication between 'the West' and 'Islam.'⁷¹ This space has been mostly filled with Orientalist assumptions which, at least from Max Weber onwards, have been endowed with a social-scientific status.⁷² When proponents of a discourse of redemption reduce events like the 'Rushdie affair' or the 'Danish cartoons' to a question of freedom of expression versus the legal protection of a minority (and maybe conclude with the call for a Muslim Enlightenment), they are not simply essentializing Muslims in a typical Orientalist fashion or restating their will to identity and distinction as Westerners and Europeans. What they are doing is dehistoricizing and depoliticizing the event under scrutiny by not considering at all the possibility that their judgment and their perspectives on such controversies, rather than being the pure outcome of liberated rational minds, may reflect a deeply rooted tradition of Orientalism, which continues to survive unabated in the historical and political space of transnational communication between 'the West' and 'Islam.'

One does not have to share the Foucauldian assumption of pervasiveness of discourse to entertain this argument. As aptly argued by Norbert Elias, the Cartesian presumption of a knowledge contained by a totally independent individual, a knowledge that is reinvented from scratch with every newborn, is part of the myth of emancipation of modernity.⁷³ Our knowledge is already part of a stream of knowledge which provides epistemological frameworks. This does not mean that we lack the capacity to challenge deep-seated assumptions. However, what is required for this enterprise is 'detachment.'⁷⁴ Contrary to what conventional wisdom may suggest, the traditional problem of social science—the fact that the agent of investigation is also the object of investigation—has not improved with time. On the contrary, while human beings have acquired increasing control over natural events and are thus able to experience greater detachment in the exploration of natural phenomena, the very same empowerment of human beings has lead to greater uncertainty in the social world and in the capacity to understand and control human-made tragedies such as wars, violence, ethnic cleansing, and terrorism.⁷⁵ According to Elias, the level of involvement in social science has increased, and increasing involvement has led to a shortening of the time perspective. A concern for the present makes us unable to discern that what we experience today is the result of long-term processes, and the need for reassurance about our identity makes us unable to break with conventional chains of interpretation. The discourse of redemption can thus be considered an illustration of this Eliasian intuition. In a self-deceptive reversal and communal projection, Muslims become the 'involved,' those who succumb to uncontrolled

passions, whereas the Western liberal-secular observer is the 'detached,' intent on skimming the good from the bad in the interest of a more civilized society.

Elias's argument confronts us with the possibility that challenging the discourses of appropriation and redemption may demand detachment. This means considering the possibility that assumptions of moral superiority may be linked to higher power ratios,⁷⁶ that there may be no self-contained and self-sufficient line of historical development, that the discourse of uncontaminated origins may just be a myth, and that the rules which a system has produced may be best understood as a common heritage and as such, they can be seized, replaced, and exposed in their conflictual meaning by those considered to be Other.⁷⁷ Challenging the discourses of appropriation and redemption may indeed require a considerable effort as it demands coming to terms with the very emotionality, or the 'involvement,' that the discourse of modernity has striven to portray as a remnant of the past. ■

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Notes

¹ These terms are taken from a debate on the Danish cartoons controversy published in 2006 in *International Migration*. See Tariq Modood, Randan Hansell, Erik Bleich, Brendan O'Leary, and Joseph Carens, 'The Danish Cartoon Affair: Free Speech, Racism, Islamism, and Integration,' *International Migration* 44:5 (2006): 3-62. Some of the arguments presented in this debate will be discussed later in the paper.

² On the preference of applied political philosophy to focus on 'hard cases' and the related hermeneutical implications see Adrian Favell, 'Multicultureel Burgerschap in Theorie en Pratiijk: Empirische Analyzes in de Toegepaste Politieke Filosofie', *Krisis: Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 72 (1998):67-85. (Translated as 'Multicultural Citizenship in Theory and Practice: Empirical Case Studies in Applied Political Philosophy.' English language version available at <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/favell/KRISIS.htm>); see also Adrian Favell and Tariq Modood, 'The Philosophy of Multiculturalism: The Theory and Practice of Normative Political Theory', in *Contemporary Political Thought: A Reader and Guide*, ed. Alan Finlayson, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003).

³ According to Will Kymlicka, the 'Rushdie Affair,' 'perhaps more than any other single event ... led people in the West to think carefully about the nature of "multiculturalism," and the extent to which the claims of minority cultures can or should be accommodated within a liberal-democratic regime.' Will Kymlicka, *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 19.

⁴ Armando Salvatore, 'Power and Authority within European Secularity: From the Enlightenment Critique of Religion to the Contemporary Presence of Islam,' *The Muslim World* 96:5 (2006): 543-61, 556.

⁵ Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,' in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Michel Foucault and Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁷ Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity* (Reading, England: Ithaca, 1997), 71.

⁸ Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,' 82.

⁹ Salvatore, *Discourse of Modernity*, 72.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xix.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?' in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Michel Foucault and Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

¹⁵ Talal Asad, 'Responses,' in *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and his Interlocutors*, ed. David Scott and Charles Hirschkind (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 216.

¹⁶ Charles Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition,' in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Charles Taylor and Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 62.

¹⁷ Charles Taylor, 'Modes of Secularism,' in *Secularism and its Critics*, ed. Rajeev Bhargava (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 32; See also Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition,' 62.

¹⁸ Taylor, 'Modes of Secularism,' 33.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 38-48.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

²² *Ibid.*, 51.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ José Casanova, 'Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective,' *The Hedgehog Review* 8:1-2 (2006): 7-22, 8.

- ²⁵ Dale F. Eickelman and James P. Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 46.
- ²⁶ Ira M. Lapidus, 'The Separation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6:4 (1975): 363-85.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 364.
- ²⁸ Cited in Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, 47.
- ²⁹ Tamara Sonn, 'Islam and Modernity: Are They Compatible?' in *Modernisation, Democracy, and Islam*, ed. Shireen Hunter and Huma Malik (London: Praeger, 2005).
- ³⁰ Will Kymlicka, 'Two Modes of Pluralism and Tolerance,' in *Toleration*, ed. David Heyd (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
- ³¹ Tariq Ramadan cited in Sonn, *Islam and Modernity*, 77.
- ³² Grace Davie, 'Believing Without Belonging: Just How Secular is Europe?' (Interview at the Pew Forum's Biannual Faith Angle Conference on Religion, Politics, and Public Life, Key West, Fla., December 5, 2005, <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=97>); see also Grace Davie, *Europe: The Exceptional Case. Parameters of Faith in the Modern World* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2002).
- ³³ Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 7.
- ³⁴ Taylor, 'Modes of Secularism,' 37.
- ³⁵ See the review essay by Frank Peter, 'Individualization and Religious Authority in Western European Islam,' *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 17:1 (2006): 105-18.
- ³⁶ Casanova, 'Rethinking Secularization,' 7.
- ³⁷ On the notion of secularism as a regime of knowledge see José Casanova, 'Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration,' in *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, ed. Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- ³⁸ And thus, for instance, among these historical 'contingencies,' the role of colonialism in blurring the importance of a conceptualization of the West and Islam as independent historical trajectories should not be overlooked.
- ³⁹ Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism* (London: Routledge, 1994), 23.
- ⁴⁰ See Charles Taylor, 'The Rushdie Controversy,' *Public Culture* 2:1 (1989): 118-22; see also Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition.'
- ⁴¹ Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 28.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ Alfred Stepan, 'Religion, Democracy, and the "Twin Tolerations,"' *Journal of Democracy* 11:4 (2000): 37-57, 45.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

- ⁴⁵ José Casanova, 'Catholic and Muslim Politics in Comparative Perspective,' *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* 1:2 (2005): 89-108.
- ⁴⁶ Luca Mavelli, 'Islam and European Integration: Re-enforcing or Overcoming the Divide?' (Paper presented at the conference 'Religion and Politics in the Construction of the EU,' London, June 16, 2007; see also Casanova, 'Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration.'
- ⁴⁷ Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 23.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 166.
- ⁴⁹ Mahmood Mamdani, 'Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism,' *American Anthropologist* 104:3 (2002): 766-75, 767 (emphasis added).
- ⁵⁰ Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 59.
- ⁵¹ Brian M. Barry, *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), 31-32.
- ⁵² Brown, 15.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 16.
- ⁵⁴ Modood et al., 'The Danish Cartoon Affair,' 3-62.
- ⁵⁵ Brendan O'Leary, 'Liberalism, Multiculturalism, Danish Cartoons, Islamist Fraud, and the Rights of the Ungodly,' *International Migration* 44:5 (2006): 22-33.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.
- ⁵⁷ Randall Hansen, 'The Danish Cartoon Controversy: A Defense of Liberal Freedom,' *International Migration* 44:5 (2006): 7-16.
- ⁵⁸ Randall Hansen, 'Free Speech, Liberalism, and Integration: A Reply to Bleich and Carens,' *International Migration* 44:5 (2006): 42-51.
- ⁵⁹ Erik Bleich, 'On Democratic Integration and Free Speech: Response to Tariq Modood and Randall Hansen,' *International Migration* 44:5 (2006): 17-22.
- ⁶⁰ Brown, *Regulating Aversion*, 16-17.
- ⁶¹ O'Leary, 'Liberalism, Multiculturalism, Danish Cartoons, Islamist Fraud, and the Rights of the Ungodly,' 25.
- ⁶² André Glucksmann, 'Separating Truth and Belief,' *Le Monde*, March 3, 2006 (English version available online, <http://www.signandsight.com/features/640.html>).
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁴ Peter, 'Individualization and Religious Authority,' 105.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁷ Salvatore, *Discourse of Modernity*, 73.

⁶⁸ My argument here bears some similarities to that of Armando Salvatore. He argues that 'the widely shared fear of essentialising the "other" among scholars of Islam has led to a tendency pre-emptively to normalize it, pointing out that Muslims are capable of integration into European societies, if only exposed to the normal mechanisms of social solidarity and discipline that are essential to European society or, in other words, as long as they are not exposed to extra-European forms of militancy or the rejection of democratic values. This approach also shows that the fear of essentialising Islam produces an essentialisation of Europe's socio-political "normality"'. Armando Salvatore, 'Making Public Space: Opportunities and Limits of Collective Action Among Muslims in Europe,' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30:5 (2004): 1013-31, 1022. However, whereas for Salvatore the assumption of European 'normality' comes from the fear of essentializing Islam, in my account it is the original assumption of European normality which drives European attitudes toward Islam. A 'positive' attitude based on the claim that Muslims are Europeanizing and a 'negative' attitude which stigmatize Muslims for not being European enough (not liberal and secular enough) are only variations of the same logic which reifies the moral and normative centrality of Europe.

⁶⁹ Peter, 'Individualization and Religious Authority,' 70.

⁷⁰ Discourses of appropriation which discount the element of reciprocity can be found in Larry Siedentop, *Democracy in Europe* (London: Penguin Books, 2001); David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); and Michael Walzer, 'Comment—The Politics of Recognition,' in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Charles Taylor and Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁷¹ Salvatore, *Discourse of Modernity*, 67-79.

⁷² Ibid., 97-112. This space, to be sure, has also been filled with 'Occidental' assumptions, with Islam and the West engaged in 'opposing essentialisms in an imbalanced game.' (Salvatore, *Discourse of Modernity*, 67). There are, however, important differences to be made. Oriental Occidentalism cannot be considered a mirror image of Western Orientalism because, due to power asymmetry ('the material power that Europe had acquired and exercised upon Arab Muslim territories since the beginning of the [19th] century'), 'the Orient' did not have the same capacity for elevating Occidentalism to the level of systemic and standardized intellectual practice (Salvatore, *Discourse of Modernity*, 75). A compelling question that follows—although beyond the scope of this essay—is whether Occidentalism should be considered an endogenous development of Islamic societies or a derivative reaction to Western Orientalism. For a very interesting discussion see Salvatore, *Discourse of Modernity*, 75 ff.

⁷³ Norbert Elias, *Involvement and Detachment* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Norbert Elias, 'A Theoretical Essay on Established and Outsider Relations,' in *The Established and the Outsiders*, 2nd Ed. (London: Sage, 1994).

⁷⁷ Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.'

AN INTERVIEW WITH TARIQ RAMADAN

Tariq Ramadan, currently a Senior Research Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford, is a prominent scholar and public intellectual whom *Time* magazine has called 'the leading Islamic thinker among Europe's second- and third- generation Muslim immigrants.' In December 2007, he spoke with *STAIR* editor Naysan Rafati about religion, conflict, and dialogue.

STAIR: Why is religion the focal point of so many conflicts in the world? Is this trend likely to increase or decrease over time?

Tariq Ramadan (TR): I don't think that we can just say it is coming from religion. I think that there are two different dimensions. The first dimension is that in this global world, with new geostrategic realities in the Middle East, in these regions or areas you always had conflicts that were connected with religion, but we can't reduce it to only a religious dimension. The Iraq War did not have a religious dimension at first, even though it has become a religious internal conflict between Sunni and Shi'a, so I think that we have to be very cautious not to religionize every single conflict.

The second dimension is that in our world today, there is something that is a kind of revival of the religious reference. Within our society, people are losing the old milestones and references, and they are coming back to religion. Even in our European societies, Western societies, the most important group coming back to religion is not the poorest in our societies—it is the students. So there is a revival of religious awareness, which sometimes in certain situations could be connected to conflict. But once again, we have to deconstruct this perception that everything is religious or everything is cultural.

We are much more religious in the public sphere today, in the public debate everywhere. George Bush is referring to religion, speaking about inspiration, revelation, and dreams, as is Tony Blair. On the other side, you have people claiming that they are resisting Western domination in the name of their religion. So once again, there are different layers, different levels, but not all the same reality.

Q: *You've spoken about the need to anchor religious principles in cultural reality—this idea of a European Islam as distinct from an Asian Islam or an African Islam. Yet culture itself is not static, particularly in a period of globalization. How do these dynamics impact the processes of interpretation?*

TR: What I am saying is that there is no religion without culture, and there is no culture without religion. But, it would be wrong to try to reduce religion to culture or to try to make everything that is cultural, religious. So, there are two mistakes here that we have to avoid making. The first is to try to have something which is a pure religion without cultural dress or something that is a neutral culture without religious reference. This is not happening everywhere, but we cannot say that these are the same. Why? Because there are some religious principles and we have to extract from them the way people are reading the scriptural sources within their culture, and there are things that are transcultural so they will be the same everywhere. The creed, what in Arabic we call the *'aqida*, is beyond the cultural expression, because in the legal methodology, you can do but what is written. Wherever you are, you do what is written. So, you pray as the Prophet was praying, etc. There is something which is key here, a set of principles and practices that are not moving and will be the same wherever you live. So as a European Muslim, I will be practicing exactly the same as someone else—it's Islam.

Now, the cultural dress will be specific, because the principle of a universal religion is not uniformity, it's inclusiveness as to the cultural diversity. For me, the only way that we can understand a universal dimension in our religion is to be able to deal with the diversity of the cultures and not to be uniform. That is why I say 'no' to the Salafis who are trying to say that the only true—literally *salafi*—Islamic culture is the Arab culture, and the response to the uniformity of global culture or the perceived dominant culture, the Western culture, is a uniform Arab Islamic, or Islamic Arab culture. The answer to global uniformity is universal diversity.

Q: *On this idea of transculturalism and universal values—do you agree with people who argue for the universality of human rights?*

TR: I think that there are universal rights and values and principles. But, I don't buy this idea that we have to sit down and say, 'We have universal values, what are your values?' and try to find a common agreement. I

think it is deeper than that. I think that there are universal values, but we need to come to them with more humility, respect, and consistency. We should accept that what we have in our universe of reference could take a different form in another universe of reference. We have shared universal values, but the roots, the paths, the ways are different. I'm not undermining the principle of universal values, but I am calling for humility and respect—respect to the people who are coming from another root and who are coming to the same shared values, universal values. So when it comes, for example, to human rights, I have no problem with, say, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but I may come to these texts from another root than the West.

There's also a certain mindset, which is what Ghandi was referring to when he got the first draft of the human rights declaration and said, 'My mother told me and taught me that with every single right you have a duty.' This is something which is really important to the mindset of another civilization, culture, religion. Yes, there are rights, but there are responsibilities, and we want to stress another dimension. So, you can come to the same universal values but within a framework which is quite different, saying, 'What about our responsibilities?' We are coming to our responsibilities in the West because of the ecological catastrophe; if we continue like this we understand that we are destroying the world. This is what the French philosopher Michel Serres was saying about the natural contracts, that there is a third part now in the relationship between human beings. For me, the point here is that I accept this as a principle, I accept this as the starting point of our discussion among civilizations, cultures, and societies, but I really think that we have to accept the fact that people are coming to this from different roots and from different universes of reference. They can meet somewhere on an equal footing, building something that has to do with the human rights declaration or the charters or the principle of dignity, for example.

Q: How do you define the separation of church and state? Is this possible? Is it desirable?

TR: I think that before asking this question that way, let us be clear on what we are saying. You may find Muslims who will avoid your question by saying, 'What are you talking about? In Islam there is no church, so how do you want to separate church and state when there is no church because there is no hierarchy or priests or church?' I think

that the very important point for me is that that we have to distinguish between two universes here. There is something that has to do with the *umma*, imposed from on high, and there is something that has to do with negotiation, which is discussed in a bottom-up process. One has to do with faith and the other with rationality.

So when we are talking about this, we are in fact talking about something that is quite clear. It's a question of authority first, and power, and there is something from on high which comes from a revelation of my faith and which I accept. So this is the universal—what we call religion and what is understood in Christianity as the church on high, hierarchy, etc.—something which is imposed from on high and not negotiated. On the other hand, when we speak about the state, we speak about the space for negotiation between the people, the democratic process. For me, these two dimensions are not desirable. There is no way but to go toward this, and by saying this, I'm not speaking against the Islamic tradition. I think that from the very beginning, it was quite clear that we have two different fields: one where you do what is written in the texts and you obey, if you are a believer, everything which has to do with your faith and your practice, and another field where everything is disputable, open to discussion, and we have to try to find our way. Here we face what is called in Arabic the *mu'amalat*, the social affairs.

So the core for me is not to come with a concept which is perceived by the Muslims as coming from colonization, the colonization period, coming from the West, which is the concept of secularism. Secularism has a positive connotation in the West and a very negative connotation in the Islamic countries. The point is not to waste time with concepts. It is to discuss what we mean by these concepts—what do we want? Do we want the birth of a civil society, democratization, and the involvement of people? This is what I want, and I would say this is not at odds with the very original, old Islamic legal tradition. For me, this is not only good, it's imperative. This distinction is imperative.

Having said this, and this is the last part of my answer, I think it's also important to ask ourselves what the relationship is when we decide we are living in a society where the state and the church are completely separated and distinguished. How do we respect something that has to do with ethics in the world where religion is not present? Ethics not only derive from religions, but also come from rational morality, for example. A secular space, a space with no religion at all, which is the way we want people to negotiate under the name of rules and the rule

of law, should not be disconnected from an ethical input. What does it mean in the end? Political involvement without ethics, economy without ethics—these are important points. We should be able to open a space for negotiation not only on performance and progress but also on ethics, negotiated ethics and applied ethics. That is still missing today. So this is why from a Muslim background I would say yes, there is a distinction. I want to see and to try to find a way to make a distinction between faith and rationality, private sphere and public sphere, but I want in the public sphere something that has to do with ethics. I need to distinguish without divorcing the two spheres, and this is the challenge for the future. Even the Western countries have exactly the same challenge; it's not an Islamic concern, it's really deep in our world today, how to reconcile our political involvement, our economic involvement, anything which has to do with our behavior, with a kind of ethical awareness.

Q: On economic issues, for example, how do you approach the capitalist order, the international monetary system, by bringing in an ethical component to conduct?

TR: I'm quite critical toward the dominant economic system. But, I don't think that what we have now coming from the Islamic majority countries is right, or even from people living in the West saying, 'We have an Islamic economy.' I don't think there is an Islamic economy, but there is an Islamic *ethics* in economics. There is a Christian ethics in economics. We are dealing with a dominant system with interests, with speculation, so we have to weigh this and say, 'Ok, this is the market,' and accept it. I'm not going to accept this because it's killing one hundred thousand people per day, this order. We need to try to find a way to get more ethics into economics. So when you have transnational corporations that are coming and are trying to integrate ethics into their business dealings, that's fine. It's the beginning. Yet we need more than that. We need to have it at the local level as well as at the global level.

But I really think that we cannot continue to be blind by saying, 'Oh, we are dealing with democracy in the political arena' while that arena is driven by forces that have nothing to do with the democratic process. It's not democratic, but it's very powerful when you have the weapons industry, when you have people that have nothing to do with our democratic processes but can decide for us. You can have millions in the street in London saying 'no' to a war, but there are pressures coming

from elsewhere that are more powerful than millions of people, and such actors have millions of pounds.

This is the reality of it. Once again, I think what is really important here is not to come up with an Islamic alternative, because we don't. But we have principles, very strong principles, and you have to work with them and use some references to rationally try implementing them with something that has to do with applied ethics.

Q: How important is education in promoting integration and knowledge of 'the other', in terms of state policies, for example?

TR: Once again it's imperative. You cannot go forward without education. The people are speaking about tolerance, but I think it's not enough. I met people who are just tolerating me, but in fact, they ignore me. It's indifference—they don't care. This is not the way forward. In our society if you tolerate me in times of peace, I may become your enemy in times of crisis, because you don't know me. This is why I don't label this state of affairs as peaceful coexistence. I don't want this. I want a positive, proactive coexistence, meaning that first, you reach out from your intellectual ghetto, you try to understand others and understand where they come from. You are building something which is a relationship based on knowledge and then respect. Respect for me is tolerance plus knowledge. It's something that is an added value here, the added value of knowledge with respect, because you can't have respect for someone if you ignore him. This mutual knowledge is essential; it is the future of the pluralistic society.

Some people are saying multiculturalism has failed, what we need now is interculturalism. I think that at the beginning what we meant by multiculturalism was interculturalism. It means, in fact, social policies, it means educational policies—how do you integrate this inclusive dimension of the other in the building of the common sense of belonging in our society? This is why I am saying that we need to teach a common history of memories. A common history of memories, accepting for example, that in Britain we don't only have one memory, we have memories. You have memories from Pakistan, from Turkey, now from Poland, and these memories should be integrated into our common history because this is the way you build a sense of belonging out of knowledge.

Q: Is the notion of an inter-faith dialogue practically viable? What are its opportunities and limits? What are its benefits to religious communities?

TR: I've always thought, and I still think, that this is something which is unavoidable. We need to have this kind of inter-faith dialogue. But as I've previously written, there are conditions, and there are also things that we have to avoid. I have been involved in inter-faith dialogue for the past twenty years, and it's as if I was a member of a club with people meeting in every single capital around the world, knowing each other and some of them are not even connected or are not still connected to their communities. They come and they don't need inter-faith dialogue because they know the other, they know the same people, so it's useless.

So there are conditions. The condition is not to create something which is a new circle of specialists in inter-faith dialogue, knowing each other and building something which is very utopian—that's going nowhere. First, and this is really important, is to have people involved in inter-faith dialogue who themselves are involved within their respective communities. Translation of what is happening in the common space is something which is important when you come back to your respective space.

Second is to be able in this space of inter-faith dialogue to build trust and to ask all the questions we want to ask. Because to avoid the questions, to avoid the sensitive issues is not going to work. It's far from reality where people are dealing with sensitive issues every day.

The third one, which is also important, is not to try to read the texts of the other on behalf of the other. Yes, you can read the texts and ask them for their interpretation but you cannot take the texts and just create or build your own interpretations. I think that this is very dangerous, and we had some Muslims doing this. My stand for example on Ahmad Deedat in South Africa and others taking the Bible and saying, 'Look, this is what is in your book and it's ridiculous.' You can't do that. Likewise, we cannot do this with the Qur'an, which is a very difficult book to read. So I think that there are conditions for this: connections with the communities, being able to ask the tough questions out of trust, and not to read the text on behalf of the other.

The last thing that is important is self-criticism. Yes, Islam is great, but not all Muslims are great. So this capacity to come back to your own universe of reference and say, 'Ok, this is what I believe in and some of the Muslims are betraying this.' We are talking about terrorism and

there is quite a consensus among the Muslim scholars that this should be condemned, but it's not only this. It's more specific. When it comes, for example, to racism, Islam is against racism but many Muslims are racist. Even in our communities in the West, you see Pakistani people who don't speak to Turkish people, they don't speak to Arabs. That's the reality. And this is not acceptable. So there is discrimination and women's rights and all these things are really important and you have to be quite critical here. But a constructive dialogue has to be self-critical, asking the questions and coming to a very high standard of dialogue and debate and then translating these to our communities. If we're not doing that, what is the point?

Q: But what is the central motivation behind an inter-faith dialogue? Is it to promote understanding and tolerance, or is it more a feeling of putting together a common religious platform to contrast with secular society?

TR: I think that the intentions are not always the same for people. Some clearly want something that has to do with a new religious alliance against the secular society. This is not my point, but I saw a book by a Christian professor, and he said we are together in the house and around us are secular forces, and we have to resist together. He was speaking about a sort of religious alliance. This is not what I am doing. You can come together to share something which is an ethical awareness. This is why, for example, I have been advocating for the last ten years that we need to have the secular, even the atheist, in our society. They are representing somebody. It's an inter-faith dialogue, it's where values are produced. But values are also produced with people who are atheistic, who are agnostic, and they are living with us. So if we are serious about sharing views on the religious and the philosophical ground, it can not only be with Jews, Christians, and Muslims. I think that's wrong. We need to open up all this to be able to make it clear that this is not the new religious alliance; rather, it's where we are nurturing and producing something that has to do with values and ethics. This is the way I see it. I can't say that all the people involved in inter-faith dialogue understand it that way because for them it's sometimes a new alliance.

The second thing, and it could also be referring to other intentions and understandings, is to nurture something that has to do with mutual knowledge. I have been at the grassroots level with so many Christian priests, and they speak about poverty and love. By knowing them they

pushed me to know myself better. For example, the centrality of the notion of love in Islam was not something which was quite clear for me after all the literature that I got when I was young, because it's not a central concept. We have it, but we don't put a stress on it and the Christians, much more than us, are connected to this. Muslims are coming, speaking about rules, about justice, but today not enough about love. So inter-faith dialogue is also this—the other could be a mirror through which you come back to yourself, and this is something which is important, this mutual knowledge.

Many times the perception I have about people being so resistant, so reluctant to enter with the Muslims is very often that they are scared. Why? Because their perception is, 'These guys know who they are and we don't.' An Italian journalist said to a friend of mine, 'You know the problem with Tariq Ramadan? You know why we have all these problems with him? Because he knows everything about us while we know nothing about him.' Ignorance nurtures fears, and fears nurture ghettos, and ghettos are the starting points of fractures within our societies. ■

**Victor Roudometof, Alexander Agadjanian, and
Jerry Pankhurst, eds. *Eastern Orthodoxy in a Global
Age: Tradition Faces the Twenty-first Century*.**

Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2005. 304 pp. £39.00 (hbk).
ISBN 0759105367.

LUCIAN N. LEUSTEAN (Aston University)

Global integration has brought new challenges to religion—some religions are open to transnational relations while others tend to close themselves from any threat posed by outside influences. In this context, Victor Roudometof *et al*'s edited book addresses the overlooked religious dynamics of Eastern Orthodoxy in the twenty-first century. Eastern Orthodoxy, the third largest Christian denomination, is the dominant religion from Eastern Europe to Russia with communities in the Middle East and Africa, and active diasporas in Western Europe, Asia, America, and Australia. The transnational dimension of Orthodoxy has a direct impact on the current evolution of church-state relations, especially in the context of European Union enlargement and the religious re-configuration of countries outside the European continent.

Bringing together essays written by scholars from Eastern Europe and the United States, the edited volume analyzes the ways in which Orthodoxy has been addressing political and social transformation since the fall of communism. The book is divided into two main sections. The first part focuses on the position of Orthodoxy toward societal transformations in the main autocephalous Orthodox Churches in Eastern Europe, namely Russia, Serbia, Greece, Romania, and Ukraine. Analysis of the trajectories of these Churches, based on indigenous literature, offers previously unexplored examples of the adaptation of Orthodoxy to post-communism. The second part of the book provides a comparative study of Orthodoxy and the concept of transnationality, focusing especially on Eastern Orthodoxy in the United States. By placing the discussion outside Eastern Europe, the authors suggest that second and subsequent generations of Orthodox immigrants generate a different understanding of Orthodoxy which transcends ethnic boundaries and which, in the long term, will establish a single Orthodox Church in North America.

The main contribution of this book is to 'rediscover' Eastern Orthodoxy as a major religion in the international arena and to situate it within the broader discussion of globalization. In particular, the essays by Makrides, Agadjanian, and Roudometof are among the most innovative in recent years on the challenges posed by modernity for this religious confession. In a thought-provoking chapter, Makrides tackles the relationship between Orthodoxy, rationalization, and modernization. He argues that although for some scholars Orthodoxy is a traditional religion resistant to modern transformation, Orthodox Churches have proved adaptable to new political challenges. In the last centuries these Churches opposed modernity because their leaders equated modern values with Westernization and the loss of national identity. After offering a theoretical approach to 'the dialectic of religion and globality,' Agadjanian and Roudometof provide a provocative analysis of the limits of Orthodoxy within the process of globalization. In their opinion, the political evolution of the state and the experience of Churches under communism play major roles in positioning Orthodoxy in contemporary society.

Research on Orthodoxy and globalization could be expanded to include the positions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, and the Cypriot Orthodox Church. Analysis of the latter Church in particular could offer insights into this field, as tumultuous church-state relations and political conflict in the last century have not prevented Cyprus from acquiring the highest GDP per capita among all Orthodox countries. The dominant literature on Orthodoxy to date has made a direct causal connection between the economic underdevelopment of Eastern Europe and the incompatibility between Orthodox values and the West. By presenting the adaptability of Orthodox Churches to societal transformations, this book links Orthodoxy to the general trend of religious revival after the fall of communism. Thus, Eastern Orthodoxy is not the exception, but part of the broader religious dynamics of the period. The book makes a welcome contribution to the study of Eastern Orthodoxy and opens the door for further discussions in the field. ■

Patrick Harries. *Butterflies and Barbarians: Swiss Missionaries and Systems of Knowledge in South-East Africa.*

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Oxford: James Currey, 2007. 352 pp. £56.99 (hbk).
ISBN 9780852559833.

TERENCE RANGER (St Antony's College, University of Oxford)

Colonialism in most of Africa seems to dwindle as the years pass. The old teaching divisions of African history into pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial seems less and less appropriate. Africa was 'pre' colonial for millennia; many African nations have been 'post' colonial for longer than they were colonized. Established colonial rule in many parts of Africa is limited to forty or fifty years. One way of approaching this problem is to make use of the concept of 'the long nineteenth century,' a period of great instability everywhere in Africa. Slavery, human and animal epidemics, violence, and war ravaged the continent and came to their climax in the first World War. Only once that was over did it become possible to speak of functioning colonial political systems.

Yet clearly there had been increasing external influence and even dominance in Africa for many decades before that. Some historians have concentrated on economic penetration and exploitation. But increasingly, others have focussed on cultural and ideological transformation—the creation of 'the state of colonialism' which preceded 'the colonial state.' And it is here that the great upsurge of work on nineteenth and early twentieth century Protestant Mission fits in. The old idea of missionaries as colonial mercenaries has become impossible to maintain. They had a different agenda and operated to a different timetable from formal colonialism. It is more and more their cultural and ideological work which has attracted the attention of historians.

This can be assessed very differently. An influential body of work sees Protestant missionaries as possessing unanswerable cultural initiative from the beginning. A mere handful of missionaries, operating beyond colonial frontiers among well-armed chiefdoms are seen as ideological masters, setting the terms of a 'long conversation' between Africa and the West. Other scholars have seen missionaries as part of the crisis of the long nineteenth century. Yet others have seen Protestant Christianity, once its ideas and forms were in African hands, as contributing powerfully to the solution of this crisis. But all these historians agree on the importance of missionary classification—of African languages

and customs, of animals and birds and insects and rocks. Through classification, missionaries created new groupings and identities and offered new ways of understanding human relationships with nature and environment.

Patrick Harries' book is a brilliant exploration of these themes. He takes a very unusual case. His missionaries were Swiss, and Switzerland neither had nor wanted to possess colonies. They were fascinated by African culture, though Switzerland had no black inhabitants. If they had chosen a colonialism within which to operate, it certainly would not have been Portuguese colonialism. Yet, the Swiss missionaries made more impact on African societies than any other as well as impressing their home society deeply with the significance of mission.

Offering a fascinating history of nineteenth century Switzerland, Harries shows us why—Swiss evangelical missionaries saw Africa as a present tense of Switzerland's past. The peasants of the Alpine valleys had been sunk in ignorance and superstition and divided into innumerable ethnic and language groups. They had been rescued by enlightened Protestantism and transformed through modernizing evangelical education. The churchmen were the dominant intellectuals of Switzerland—the scientists and ethnographers. As one said, the fathers created the church and their sons created the mission. The Swiss mission in south-east Africa was doing essentially the same work of rescue and enlightenment; the missionaries' international fame as experts on language and nature was a source of national pride in Switzerland. Harries shows in detail how missionary scholarly work on Africa helped shape Switzerland. He also shows that there was no such thing as a fixed missionary ideology. As scientists and as political beings the evangelicals were engaged in constant debate both in Europe and in Africa. His book is a sophisticated intellectual history and a triumphant contribution to the study of European cultural impact on Africa. ■

Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero, eds. *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*.

London: Routledge, 2005. 212 pp. £24.99 (pbk).

ISBN 041535515X.

BETSY COOPER (St John's College, University of Oxford)

In 1998, Canadian political philosopher Will Kymlicka proclaimed the arrival of a consensus around multiculturalism. The state should 'protect and promote the national cultures and languages ... within its borders.'¹ The wholesale reversal of this consensus shortly thereafter was thus all the more shocking. European states today deplore the negative implications of multiculturalism and have overturned many previously won cultural rights. *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship* is an informative and original effort to contextualize this turnaround within broader European-Muslim relations. This compilation of national case studies argues against Kymlicka and associates for a specifically European theory of multiculturalism—one which acknowledges the particular challenges a large and growing Muslim population poses to existing notions of multiculturalism, immigrant integration, and secularism.

The book, comprising case studies in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom as well as three comparative (more theoretical) chapters proceeds in two parts. The case studies describe claims made by Muslim populations in the name of religious equality, such as the right to wear headscarves, build mosques, and evaluate the (largely negative) nature of state and public reactions to such claims. This evidence then translates into three key points: European anxiety about the failure of integrating Muslims into their societies is largely unfounded; multiculturalism does not present a challenge to the variety of moderate secularism practiced in these democracies; and the form of multiculturalism best suited to reducing tensions in Europe would combine this moderate secularism with a greater respect for Muslim difference and a pragmatic case-by-case approach to problem-solving. These arguments employ a revisionist interpretation of secularism. Neutrality in public spaces is not required; states are secular insofar as religion is not imposed on citizens and access to rights is not limited by religious affiliation.²

Given the broad applicability of these key concepts and arguments to other Western states (including Australia and to a lesser degree the United States and Canada), it is unclear why the volume emphasizes its Europe-specific approach. As the authors themselves acknowledge,

Northern European attitudes toward multiculturalism may be closer to those in America than to their Southern European neighbors,³ and styles of secularism vary widely across all developed nations.⁴ One suspects that the most important difference between Europe and the rest of the world is its high concentration of, and historical relationship with, Muslim immigrants, though this point is relegated to a footnote.⁵

The volume is touted as refuting the North American school of multiculturalism theory, yet confusingly its conclusions roughly parallel the 'Kymlicka consensus' that states should protect the rights of diverse cultures. Thus it seems that the authors' key argument actually applies more generally than they acknowledge. The theoretical arguments made here are best viewed as a reformulation of existing political philosophy to acknowledge the effects of Muslim settlement. The 'logic of Muslim claims-making' has exposed the inconsistencies of secularism not only in European, but increasingly, in other developed countries.⁶

The book's conclusions were reached through an inductive approach; the case studies were produced first and theoretical implications derived thereafter. This strategy has produced concrete findings and an interesting selection of chapters (though the Netherlands is a curious omission). Further, the Muslim-specific focus has resulted in the release of much needed historical detail, including newly translated materials from Germany and Denmark and an exploration of the little known effects of Muslims on Southern Europe.

On the other hand, induction seems to have impeded the editors' ability to unify the case studies. Theoretical arguments introduced in one chapter, such as the role of 'moral panic' in German policy-making,⁷ are not tied into others, and varying definitions of concepts arise (including a take on multiculturalism specific to the Belgian chapter). Further, several contributions focused on particular examples without context, leading the reader to wonder whether these are typical occurrences or one-off extremes. These difficulties were likely exacerbated by the fact that several of the chapters were modified reprints previously published elsewhere.

The book's focus on normative political theory, while important in its own right, generally comes at the expense of explicit policy recommendations. For example, while chapters regularly cited the negative effects of recent terrorist attacks on policy-making and attitudes, the book provides no direction as to how a better balance between security interests and the rights of religious groups might be struck. Even so, the wealth of little-known information, theoretical insights, and thought-provoking historical commentary provided here will be more than ample fodder for the many tough policy debates surrounding Muslim integration and multiculturalism inevitably to follow. ■

¹ Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 39; article reprinted from *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 1 (1998).

² Bhikhu Parekh, 'Europe, Liberalism and the "Muslim question",' in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 190.

³ Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero, 'European Challenges to Multicultural Citizenship: Muslims, Secularism and Beyond,' in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 7.

⁴ Tariq Modood and Riva Kastoryano, 'Secularism and the Accommodation of Muslims in Europe,' in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 166

⁵ Parekh, 'Europe, Liberalism and the "Muslim question",' 201.

⁶ Modood, Triandafyllidou, and Zapata-Barrero, 'European Challenges to Multicultural Citizenship,' in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

⁷ Werner Schiffauer, 'Enemies Within the Gates: The Debate About the Citizenship of Muslims in Germany,' in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricard Zapata-Barrero (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 94.

Iain S. Maclean, ed. *Reconciliation, Nations and Churches in Latin America*.

Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. 277 pp. £50.00 (hbk).

ISBN 0754650308.

STEPHEN J.C. ANDES (St Antony's College, University of Oxford)

Iain Maclean's edited volume analyzes the results of Latin America's recent Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC). Through ten essays, written by historians, theologians, and political scientists, we learn that the role of churches, religious people, and Christian theology in the TRCs have produced mixed results. The need for TRCs to promote national reconciliation is clear however. The essays in this book vividly describe a dark, dreary historical legacy produced by decades of military rule in Argentina and Chile, bloody civil wars in El Salvador and Guatemala, and a reign of terror in Peru. Maclean's introductory chapter quantifies the losses: 9,000 'disappeared' in Argentina from 1976-1983; 2,920 documented cases of human rights violations under the regime of Augusto Pinochet; 75,000 deaths during El Salvador's 12 years of civil war; 200,000 dead or 'disappeared' in Guatemala's conflict from 1954-1996; 69,000 killed and 6,000 'disappeared' after guerilla violence in Peru provoked government reprisals from then President Alberto Fujimori.

The book's contributors explain that these desolate situations changed as the military regimes, civil wars, and national security states gave way to democratization. TRCs were a compromise between those that demanded justice for victims of human rights violations and offenders that required impunity. Prosecuting offenders, however, remained untenable as the military still held powerful political positions (General Pinochet was elected senator for life in 1998). TRCs, therefore, provided amnesty for members of the military if they fully disclosed their crimes. The TRCs became a starting point for the new governments in Latin America, beginning the long process toward national reconciliation.

The first section details the historical processes involved in the TRCs. Mario Aguilar's chapter on the Chilean commission reveals that processes of truth and reconciliation are only as strong as the political compromises that create them. As Aguilar shows, Chile's first attempt to hold open talks about human rights violations between members of the military, lawyers, and academics, known as the 'Mesa de Diálogo,' ultimately failed by allowing amnesty for offenders while the truth about thousands of 'disappeared' remained hidden. David Tombs' study of the TRCs in El Salvador and Guatemala explains that reconciliation depends on dealing with 'unspeakable violence.' Tombs discusses how

cases of rape, though tremendously common in both countries, were included only in the Guatemalan report. Despite TRC shortcomings in documenting all human rights violations, essays by Margaret Eletta Guider and Brett Greider point out important contributions made by Latin American clergy and members of the Pan-Maya movement in fighting all types of violence.

This anthology ably connects the historical processes of the TRCs to theological reflection. Liberation theologian José Comblin presents opportunities for creating a theology of reconciliation but suggests that 'inasmuch as the term reconciliation designates a theological reality and a political reality, any theology of reconciliation exposes itself to the danger of reductionism.' But, as Margaret R. Pfeil develops in her essay, the potential exists to use Christian theology to dismantle structures of violence through processes of conversion and social transformation.

So what hope might there be for the future? Michael Battle and Charles Villa-Vicencio tackle this question in comparative perspective, evaluating the Latin American situation through the lens of the well-known South African TRC. Both scholars view problems in simply exporting the South African model. Battle explains that while the *ubuntu* theology of community and interdependence preached by Desmond Tutu was vital to the South African TRC, transportation of this model would be difficult. Villa-Vicencio, on the other hand, shows that although the South African TRC led to significant incidents of healing and reconciliation, much remains to be done. Concluding on a theoretical note, Nelson Maldonado-Torres posits that hope for the future is dependent on continued decolonization in Latin America from five centuries of racism, exclusion from world markets and a modern paradigm of war. Maldonado-Torres' assessment presents a helpful post-colonial critique of modernity's underside in Latin America, while cautioning that the search for truth and reconciliation may require new foundations.

The book's generous bibliography will introduce the uninitiated into Latin America's national processes of reconciliation as well as providing assistance to scholars studying TRCs in comparative perspective. Though plagued with typos, editorial oversights, and quite expensively priced, Professor Maclean and his contributors have produced an important source of reflection for a variety of disciplines. As recent news of the Chilean Supreme Court's decision to arrest and extradite Alberto Fujimori to Peru shows, truth and reconciliation in Latin America still remains in process. ■

Notes

¹ Iain S. Maclean, ed., *Reconciliation, Nations and Churches in Latin America* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 7, 11, 14, 17, 23.

² *Ibid.*, 137.

Michael Burleigh. *Sacred Causes: The Clash of Religion and Politics, from the Great War to the War on Terror.*

New York: HarperCollins, 2007. 576 pp. £13.44 (hbk).
ISBN 9780060580957.

PAUL S. ROWE (Trinity Western University)

Historian Michael Burleigh has followed up his earlier work *Earthly Powers* with this text on the clash of religion and politics in the twentieth century up until the last few years. His subject is the interaction of religious forces with the major political developments of the last century, but as a scholar of the Nazi period his emphasis remains the Second World War and the totalitarian political systems of mid-century Europe.

Burleigh begins with the end of the Great War, sketching out the growth of British civil religion amid the war remembrances and cenotaphs. He quickly moves to continental Europe where the totalitarian regime of Soviet Russia and the fascist states of Italy, Germany, and Spain sought alternately to co-opt popular religion or to replace it with nationalistic rituals of their own creation. He tells this history with reference to the philosophic and religious cults of the time, unveiling a new perspective on the way radical nationalists competed with religious hucksters of the 1920s. While Burleigh always grants sympathetic coverage to the churches within the totalitarian regimes, he rightly points out where ordinary Christians were culpable in tolerating or supporting tyranny.

Burleigh's work is billed as an overview of religion and politics, but there is a clear preference for covering the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Central and Eastern Europe throughout the century. Indeed, European Protestants tend to get confined to the sidelines of his analysis and are given short shrift for their participation in such important causes as opposition to Hitler and the incubation of popular resistance under Communist regimes. Grudging credit is given to the German Confessing Church for refusing the Nazi takeover while the author swipes that '[i]t is worth noting that there was no Catholic equivalent of the Nazi-Protestant German Christian movement.'

It is less than surprising, then, that Burleigh's knowledge of the Roman Catholic Church's personalities and movements in this period is significant and detailed. His book spends an inordinate amount of energy seeking to defend the Church against recent charges of anti-Semitism and compromise with the Nazi authorities. His explanation of the work of the Church and the wartime popes Pius XI and Pius XII against their many detractors is generally convincing. His explanation of the relations between the Vatican and the various Nazi allies in Eastern

Europe covers a poorly understood period that forms the foundation for later clashes with the Communist regimes of the Cold War.

In comparison with his masterful coverage of the wartime and early post-war period, the later chapters covering the 1960s, the conflict in Northern Ireland, the downfall of communism, and the recent war on terror seem an underdeveloped epilogue. Burleigh's coverage of societal changes in the 1950s and 1960s meanders somewhat pointlessly, and he peppers his commentary on this period with anachronistic editorial references to more contemporary developments. His coverage of the Troubles in Northern Ireland goes over the essentials but does not contribute a great deal to understanding the peculiar relation of religion to that conflict in any new ways. By contrast, the overview of the Roman Catholic Church's role in overthrowing communism in Poland once again displays Burleigh's key strengths and motivation as he lauds Catholic leaders of the 1950s who 'alone had spoken out for freedom and human rights during the most intense phase of Polish Stalinism.'² But the concluding chapter outlining recent developments in polarizing European relations between a reinvigorated search for Christian identity and an alienated Muslim community muses without clearly setting out a pattern or model for understanding it. What is more, Burleigh's clear preference for the hierarchical Roman Catholic tradition for its ease of documentation and description is demonstrated by his relatively less detailed understanding of Islam.

The topic of Burleigh's work is important as is the need to put our present assessments of religion and politics into historical perspective. He has addressed it with admirable historical detail, and his understanding of the resilience of religion under totalitarianism is especially salutary. Occasionally, his prose is a little tedious and verbose; periodic forays into sarcastic editorial comments about liberal and leftist revisionism bring an unwelcome sourness to the text. Nonetheless, his contentions against secularist revisionism, praising organized religion for 'theories of resistance to tyrants' and providing 'charity to the needy for several centuries' are refreshing.³ In spite of all the ways that moderns might bemoan the way religion complicates the politics of the modern world, they should also join Burleigh in appreciating the ways it enriches public life. ■

Notes

¹ Michael Burleigh, *Sacred Causes: The Clash of Religion and Politics from the Great War to the War on Terror* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 176.

² *Ibid.*, 341.

³ *Ibid.*, 475.



The Politics of Nuclear Technology in the Twenty-first Century Call for Papers

Abstracts due April 30, 2008

Papers due August 31, 2008

With the end of the Cold War, the threat of global nuclear conflict appeared to fade. Since then, however, the number of states which possess nuclear weapons, or are suspected of pursuing them, has increased. Among the security challenges posed by this proliferation, the risk of terrorist groups acquiring such weapons remains a potential scenario. At the same time, the use of nuclear power as part of strategies for economic development and managing climate change has received much greater attention. These new challenges, which sometimes feature conflicting priorities, call into question the roles and capabilities of existing political institutions and agreements, both domestically and internationally. The ongoing struggle over Iran's nuclear programme is but one pertinent example. In light of these problems, the *St Antony's International Review (STAIR)* invites academics, young researchers and policy experts to submit abstracts of papers that explore one or more of the following topics related to the politics of nuclear technology in the early twenty-first century.

International Organizations and Multilateral Cooperation

Some have claimed that the very utility of major international organizations, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, has been obviated by changes in the post-Cold War political and security environment. How can these institutions adapt to the changing circumstances? Might new frameworks for multilateral cooperation, such as the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program, point the way toward effective solutions in other difficult multilateral negotiations?

Nuclear Power and Sustainable Development

The spread of nuclear technology is not only of concern to the developed world; much of the world's uranium deposits are located in the developing world, and these countries are often suggested as locations for waste disposal. How do these issues shape economic development strategies in developing countries? How can spent fuel and nuclear waste

be disposed of while maintaining sufficient standards for environmental protection? Does the extraction of uranium or disposal of nuclear waste exploit developing countries? Can nuclear power be a useful tool in the fight against climate change, or are the risks too great?

Nuclear Strategy

The new nuclear age challenges traditional understandings of the concept of deterrence and its role in strategy. Is the long-standing 'nuclear taboo' at risk of being shattered by the development of 'tactical' nuclear weapons for battlefield use? Will the new nuclear age witness the first use of such weapons? What implications will this have for deterrence strategy and nuclear proliferation?

Transnational Groups and Non-State Actors

What role do transnational actors play in the new nuclear age? The potential for terrorist groups to acquire nuclear materials has introduced new uncertainties and challenges into security studies. What role have non-state actors played in advocacy for, or opposition to, nuclear technology and weapons? Will development organizations support the expanded use of nuclear energy?

National Identity and Nuclear Technology

Debates within countries over the desirability of acquiring and using nuclear technology and weapons are often linked to questions of national identity. These concerns can involve party politics, constitutionality, issues of historical memory, and competing definitions of the national interest. How do these issues affect policy decisions? For example, what is the role of nationalism in the new nuclear age?

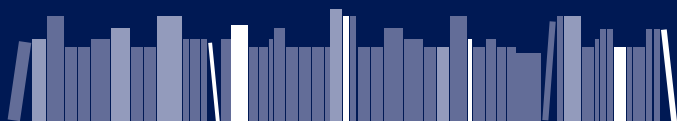
In conjunction with this general call for papers, *STAIR* also seeks to publish book reviews of works that adhere to the advertised theme of the issue.

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