

PALGRAVE STUDIES IN RELIGION,
POLITICS, AND POLICY

Series Editors: T. Jelen and M. Rozell

palgrave▶pivot

**GLOBAL
RELIGIONS AND
INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

A Diplomatic Perspective

Pasquale Ferrara





Global Religions and International Relations

Palgrave Studies in Religion, Politics, and Policy

Series Editors: **Ted G. Jelen** and **Mark J. Rozell**

Titles include:

Pasquale Ferrara

GLOBAL RELIGIONS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

A Diplomatic Perspective

palgrave▶pivot

▶

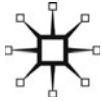
Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective

Pasquale Ferrara

*Secretary General, European University Institute,
Florence*

Diplomat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

palgrave
macmillan



GLOBAL RELIGIONS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Copyright © Pasquale Ferrara, 2014.

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2014 978-1-137-40719-1

All rights reserved.

First published in 2014 by

PALGRAVE MACMILLAN®

in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC,

175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world, this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN: 978-1-137-40082-6 PDF

ISBN: 978-1-349-48812-4

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available from the Library of Congress.

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British

First edition: 2014

Library.

www.palgrave.com/pivot

DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826

Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Series Editors' Introduction	x
Introduction	1
A diplomatic journey	2
A methodological overview	5
Integrating religion in international relations?	10
Religions and violence: myths and reality	14
The role of religions in conflict prevention and resolution	18
Non-state transnational religious actors	19
Book structure	19
Part I A Theoretical Overview	
1 Religion and World Politics	25
Religions and inter-state relations	27
Religions and internationalism	28
Religions and transnationalism	31
Religions and globalism	36
2 Religions and Global Governance	41
Polity	42
Politics	44
Policy	45
Secularization and governance	48

Part II Issues and Applications

3	Islam between National and International Politics	53
	Geopolitics and identity	54
	Political transitions in the Arab–Islamic world	61
	Politics and religion in Pakistan: international and transnational dimensions	64
	The international context	74
	The analytical context: transnational religions	77
	Religions and “soft power”	79
	Transnational Islam: Pakistan as a case-study	81
4	The Catholic Church and the Global Shift of Power	92
	Interpreting globalization. Between Augustine and Thomas Aquinas	93
	The Church and the “New World”	95
5	Religious Freedom in the International Practice	104
	Reciprocity?	105
	Reporting on religious freedom: credibility and legitimacy	108
	Standards, actors, legitimacy and policy	108
	Current practices	109
	Italian foreign policy and religious freedom	111
	A case study: the Italian “Observatory on Religious Freedom”	116
	Index	121

Acknowledgments

This is a short book with a long list of debts. I owe my colleague and friend Ambassador Giampiero Massolo, who was Secretary General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the time of writing, a word of gratitude for having given me the confidence and space of initiative I needed to start a new project on Religions and International Relations as Head of the Policy Planning Unit in the Foreign Ministry. His successor, Ambassador Michele Valensise, has been equally supportive during my period of leave at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence.

I am grateful to all the academics and researchers who encouraged me to teach and write on international relations and to share my reflections on the role of religions in international affairs, particularly Sebastiano Maffettone, Leonardo Morlino, Sergio Fabbrini at LUISS in Rome, Luciano Bardi, Fabio Petito, Luca Ozzano, Scott Thomas and Alexander Stummvoll. The stimulating academic atmosphere of the European University Institute, and particularly the line of research on religion and politics at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, has provided me with the constant motivation to refining and deepening the analysis on this topic. I want to thank Olivier Roy, Pasquale Annicchino and Gregorio Bettiza for inviting me to important seminars and for engaging in enriching discussions on that subject.

Without the understanding of Josep Borrell, Marise Cremona and Joseph Weiler, presidents of the EUI in different periods, I would have been unable to reconcile

my managerial duties as Secretary General of that institution with my academic interests.

The late Ambassador Boris Biancheri, as President of the Institute for the Studies on International Politics in Milan, was always supportive, and I learned a lot from his gentle and reflexive approach to international relations and diplomacy. Late Ambassador Silvio Fagiolo taught me how a “reflexive diplomat” can intellectually capitalize on his/her wandering all around the globe.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the “Sophia” University Institute for providing me with the theoretical and communitarian background to expand my academic experience and pursue my teaching and researching projects. The creative and intellectually fruitful atmosphere in the Department of Political Studies led by Antonio Maria Baggio, with Daniela Ropelato as one of the most distinguished professors, was a perfect venue for coalescing my thoughts and preliminary intuitions. In particular, the friendship and support of Piero Coda has been—and still are—invaluable.

My wife Silvana, who has studied astrophysics, lived with me on several places of this very planet. At the same time that she was investigating the cosmic mysteries, she has produced three bright stars of her own: our sons Marco, Claudio and Paolo. Without her patience and tenderness this book would have remained just a hypothetical project.

I am also particularly grateful to Marco for his decisive help in translating parts of the manuscript.

Credits

This book builds on previous articles and papers, written in Italian or in English. However, all the following these texts have been revised from their original versions—some of them substantially—to fit the structure and the concept of this book:

- ▶ “Islam and the West. Between Geopolitics and Identity”, in *The Catholic Church and the International Policy of the Holy See*, ed. Franco Imoda and Roberto Papini (Milano: Nagard, 2008);
- ▶ “Religione e relazioni internazionali: un inquadramento metodologico per una diplomazia consapevole”, *Quaderni di Relazioni Internazionali*, n. 12 (2010);
- ▶ “Obama e la Moschea”, *L'interprete internazionale*, 3 September 2010;

- ▶ “Religioni e governance globale”, in *Religioni tra pace e guerra. Il sacro nelle relazioni internazionali del XXI secolo*, ed. Valter Coralluzzo e Luca Ozzano (Torino: UTET Università, 2012), 97–105;
- ▶ “Politica e religione in Pakistan dal 1970 al 1990. La dimensione internazionale e transnazionale”, in *Religione e Libertà in Pakistan: dal 1970 al 1990*, ed. Shahid Mobeen (Roma: Editrice APES, 2012), 153–187;
- ▶ “Vaticano. Oltre i confini dell’Europa: multipolarismo vs. universalismo”, *ISPI Online*, 28 February 2013;
- ▶ “Da Benedetto a Francesco: il Vaticano e la nuova ‘translatio imperii’”, *Aspenia*, n. 60 (2013), 30–39;
- ▶ “Religion and Democracy: International, Transnational and Global Issues”, *European Political Science*, n. 12 (2013), 163–170;
- ▶ “Reporting on Religious Freedom: The ‘Governmental’ Approach and the Issue of Legitimacy”, in *Freedom of Religion or Belief in Foreign Policy. Which One?*, ed. Pasquale Annicchino (Florence: EUI Press, 2013), 64–70.

I want to thank the publishers for having granted the permission to reproduce and translate—at least partially—the texts mentioned above.

Series Editors' Introduction

A generation ago, many social scientists regarded religion as an anachronism, whose social, economic and political importance would inevitably wane and disappear in the face of the inexorable forces of modernity. Of course, nothing of the sort has occurred; indeed, the public role of religion is resurgent in US domestic politics, in other nations, and in the international arena. Today, religion is widely acknowledged to be a key variable in candidate nominations, platforms and elections; it is recognized as a major influence on domestic and foreign policies. National religious movements as diverse as the Christian Right in the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan are important factors in the internal politics of particular nations. Moreover, such transnational religious actors as Al-Qaeda, Falun Gong and the Vatican have had important effects on the politics and policies of nations around the world.

Palgrave Studies in Religion, Politics, and Policy serves a growing niche in the discipline of political science. This subfield has proliferated rapidly during the past two decades, and has generated an enormous amount of scholarly studies and journalistic coverage. Five years ago, the journal *Politics and Religion* was created; in addition, works relating to religion and politics have been the subject of many articles in more general academic journals. The number of books and monographs on religion and politics has increased tremendously. In the past, many social scientists dismissed religion as a key variable in politics and government.

This series casts a broad net over the subfield, providing opportunities for scholars at all levels to publish their works with Palgrave Macmillan. The series publishes monographs in all subfields of political science, including American politics, public policy, public law, comparative politics, international relations and political theory.

The principal focus of the series is the public role of religion. "Religion" is construed broadly to include public opinion, religious institutions and the legal frameworks under which religious politics are practiced. The "dependent variable" in which we are interested is *politics*, defined broadly to include analyses of the public sources and consequences of religious belief and behavior. These would include matters of public policy, as well as variations in the practice of political life. We welcome a diverse range of methodological perspectives, provided that the approaches taken are intellectually rigorous.


The series does not deal with works of theology, in that arguments about the validity or utility of religious beliefs are not a part of the series' focus. Similarly, the authors of works about the private or personal consequences of religious belief and behavior, such as personal happiness, mental health, or family dysfunction, should seek other outlets for their writings. Although historical perspectives can often illuminate our understanding of modern political phenomena, our focus in the Religion, Politics, and Policy series is on the relationship between the sacred and the political in contemporary societies.

Ted G. Jelen and Mark J. Rozell

palgrave▶pivot

www.palgrave.com/pivot

Introduction



Abstract: *Religions are gaining growing attention in international circles as a key element to take into account for a better understanding of world events. It is widely recognized today that religions have multiple influences on international relations, including their ability to confer legitimacy, to influence the world-views of leaders and their constituents, the tendency of religious conflicts to spill over borders, and through transnational phenomena and issues which overlap with religion, including human rights and terrorism. The role of religions is also increasingly important in promoting forms of organized and institutionalized international cooperation, with specific reference to cooperative activity between states that reflects the rules, laws, norms, or practices of international society.*

Keywords: agape in international relations; diplomacy and religions; identity and universality

Ferrara, Pasquale. *Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826.0004.

A diplomatic journey

This book tries to answer some of the questions I kept asking myself during my years abroad as an Italian diplomat. At least on eight occasions I had to face the fact that religious factors were among the most influential elements of the international issues I was dealing with.

In Chile, in the middle of the transition to democracy at the end of the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet Ugarte at the beginning of the 1990s, the Catholic Church was still playing an important role as a 'transnational actor'. In the previous years, with the creation of the 'Vicaría de la solidaridad'—an institution devised to offer free legal assistance to thousands of persons prosecuted or hit directly and indirectly by the repression of the regime—the Catholic Church had established its role as an informal agency, with excellent international connections, to protect individual rights and fundamental freedom. At the same time, the famous appearance of John Paul II on the balcony of the Palacio de la Moneda with Pinochet himself in 1987 had ignited a wave of criticism from several internal and international actors. Previously (1979–1984), the Vatican successfully managed to work as a mediator (with the active participation of Cardinal Antonio Samoré) in the dispute of the Beagle Channel between Chile and Argentina.

When I was serving as Consul of Italy in Athens (1992–1996) I witnessed with some dismay the Orthodox Church strongly backing the Greek government in the rather surrealistic popular outrage regarding the name of the 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM'. The Greek politicians, with the wide support of the public opinion (a demonstration of more than one million people took place in Athens on 10 December 1992), claimed that the only land historically entitled to be called Macedonia was the northern Greek region already bearing such a name. The issue was soon transformed into an identity, cultural, and religious matter with a high level of intractability. Moreover, the Greek Government had to face, in a different domain, the strong criticism of the European institutions over identity cards, since at that time they included an explicit reference to the religious creed. The European Parliament passed two Resolutions on this matter on 21 January 1993 and 22 April 1993,¹ demanding the abolition of any mention, even optional, of religion on the Greek identity cards. In this case, too, the issue was taken on by the Orthodox Church as an attack to the religious historical identity of the Greek people. In addition, the Catholic Bishop of Athens

constantly complained—every time I met him for institutional reasons—that according to the Greek rules he was considered as a Minister of a ‘Foreign Creed’, despite the fact that he was Greek himself and proud of his Greek national heritage.

In Brussels in 2002, during the Constitutional Convention, I provided assistance to the Italian Delegation, exactly when an heated debate was raging over the ‘Preamble’ of the draft European Constitution (subsequently called ‘Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe’) and in particular over the inclusion of a mention to the ‘Christian roots’ of Europe. The Catholic Church, and the Vatican in particular, were strongly lobbying in favor of that inclusion, whereas many secular political, cultural and social organizations vigorously opposed any reference to Christianity (as long as it was the only religious tradition mentioned there), criticizing such an attempt as divisive, discriminatory and at least selective and incomplete.

In Washington I saw the building-up of the case for a US military intervention in Iraq unfolding in late 2002 and beginning of 2003. Left aside all the political and strategic considerations, I was puzzled by the instrumental use of religious categories in the American political debate, well beyond the messianic vision of George W. Bush and the anti-Islamic agenda of the powerful neo-conservative members of the Administration, with Paul Wolfowitz among its most influential representatives. Not only in cultural terms, but also from the point of view of the analysis of international politics, the narrative had shifted, after the tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, from the Communist/Free World polarity to the Islam/West opposition, giving some debatable and perhaps ungrounded credit to the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ theory elaborated by Samuel Huntington.²

Back to Rome in 2006, as spokesperson of the Minister of Foreign Affairs³ I was involved in several conflict-resolutions initiatives, not always successful. The intractable cases of opening talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan (incidentally, an attempt now officially sponsored by the US) and of the failed inter-Palestinian reconciliation after the mistakes made by the international community following the Palestinian parliamentary election of January 2006 (won by Hamas) were not among the most rewarding efforts.

On the other hand, in the case of Israeli–Lebanon war (12 July–14 August 2006) Italy managed to host an international conference (26 July 2006) on the cease-fire that—if not conclusive—at least contributed

to the subsequent end of hostilities and the diplomatic convergence that lead to the deployment of the international peacekeeping mission UNIFIL II in southern Lebanon. The crucial role of Hezbollah, a Shia political movement represented in the parliament and legally participating in the government, but with a powerful militia and an arsenal of its own, was and still remains today one of the independent variables determining the stability in the region.

Moreover, during the stalemate in Lebanon presidential election, I was part of a composite delegation (so-called troika: Bernard Kouchner, French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs; Massimo D'Alema, Italian Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs; Miguel Angel Moratinos, Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs) that visited Beirut on 20 October 2007. The Delegation met all the relevant political groups and factions active on the tense and fragmented Lebanese political landscape in order to find an agreement on a suitable name for the presidential post (a Maronite, according the 1943 Constitution and 1989 Taif agreement—or 'National Reconciliation Accord'). Subsequently, separate missions of the members of the 'troika' took place to continue the dialogue; I participated in the visit paid by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs to Beirut on 17 November 2007. On both occasions, key interlocutors were political players with a clear and explicit religious background: namely, Sunni and Shia Muslims, Druzes, Maronite Catholics, including Hezbollah representatives and the Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir. The political process lasted longer than expected and only on 25 May 2008 Michel Suleiman—a Maronite Catholic and former Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces—was able to sworn in as president.⁴

As Head of the policy planning unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2009–2011) I soon discovered that in the country that hosts the Vatican the study of religion as an element of international relations was not considered an integral part of the training and culture of the diplomatic service. The French Quai d'Orsay led by Bernard Kouchner created in 2009 a "*Pôle religions*" with the goals of structuring the analysis of religious issues in the international arena, with a special emphasis on causes of conflicts and reconciliation.

In the US too there has been an increasing interest in religion and foreign policy. An Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom is by now a traditional institution; the State Department created in 2013 a new "Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives", conceived

as a “portal for engagement with religious leaders and organizations around the world”⁵ Basing its operations on the *U.S. Strategy on Religious Leader and Faith Community Engagement*, the Office “guarantees that engagement with faith-based communities is a priority for Department bureaus and for posts abroad, and helps equip our foreign and civil service officers with the skills necessary to engage faith-communities effectively and respectfully”.⁶

As for my modest achievement, not having enough resources (and political leverage) inside the Farnesina (the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), notwithstanding I managed to launch a series of small initiatives on religions and international relations, creating a stable partnership with the Province of Trento and the Italian Milan-based think-tank ISPI (‘Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale’).

In my position as Head of the Policy Planning Unit, I was involved in several meetings following the outbreak of the ‘Arab Spring’ in December 2010. We produced some reflection papers stressing that all traditional actors (including Islamists) were caught by surprise, and only subsequently tried to ‘hijack’ the revolts (essentially non-confessional and social rather than religiously motivated). We also launched an exercise involving intellectuals and the major Italian Christian-Democrat Associations and Foundations in order to understand if there was willingness and opportunity to engage with political Islam in the Mediterranean to share the idea that commitment to religious values can be articulated with political and social pluralism. Unfortunately this initiative did not reach the planning stage, due to the lack of coordination and funding.

I suspect that my professional close encounters with religions did not come to an end, and for that reason I decided to keep track of them by initiating a reflexive exercise that represents a blend of theoretical outlook and empirical experience. I hope that the thoughts, facts, and considerations included in this book would be of some help to those sharing the same interest—for professional or academic reasons—for religions in world politics.

A methodological overview

The religious phenomenon is a subject of growing interest for analysts of international politics. Nowadays, comprehending this topic is considered

a key element to unlock a wider and deeper understanding of global events. This is a relatively new development, as both the academic discipline of international relations and diplomatic practice have oftentimes excluded religion from the parameters considered pivotal for the study and understanding of world politics. The 'return' of religion (or, more precisely, of religions) has been viewed by analysts, academics, and diplomats alike as one of the facets of a 'post-secular' age, with far-reaching implications, which go well beyond the limited confines of internal political systems. This observation however should not be viewed as an unpredicted implication of the 'domestic analogy' theory, confirming its validity in the cultural, rather than political, sphere. However, the controversial domestic analogy perspective does not deliver an accurate conceptualization of the ongoing 'contamination' of international politics with religious categories.

It could be observed that religions as such have never been absent from the realm of international relations and world politics; rather, they have been mostly ignored in the study of international relations (and in its theorizations) and given a secondary status in the conduct of diplomatic affairs (except for a handful of cases, such as that of Italy in the second half of the twentieth century).⁷ What can be observed however is that the previously rigid compartmentalization between world politics and religions has weakened to the point that currently there is growing 'epistemological permeability' of academics vis-à-vis the religious phenomenon.⁸

However, the international dimension of the re-birth of religions has not been adequately explored, especially vis-à-vis its defining traits, as analyses have often focused either on the consequences of new forms of religious radicalism on the relations between 'civilizations' (thus viewing the phenomenon under anthropologic and sociological lenses) or on potential drivers, generally conducive to religions, for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In the first approach religious narratives are viewed as potential causes of conflict, whereas in the second approach the very same narratives, interpreted differently, are seen as capable of producing a renewed mutual comprehension of the universal aspiration of every identity to find a 'suitable' role within a wider context.

In light of this and of the current context of the ongoing global transformation and power shifts, a discussion regarding the role of religions within the systemic analysis of international relation is therefore warranted.

According to José Casanova, religions have assumed a new global dimension since the 1980s.⁹ Several important processes have led to the resurgence of religion in the public arena and in political discourse (though it could be argued that it had never disappeared in the first place), both internally and internationally:

- ▶ the Islamic Revolution in Iran;
- ▶ the development of the Solidarity movement in Poland;
- ▶ the role of Catholicism in the ‘Sandinista’ revolution and in other political and religious upheavals (such as ‘Liberation Theology’) that have stormed across Latin America;
- ▶ the awakening of Protestant fundamentalism (the ‘evangelical right’) as a potent force operating within the political arena in the United States.¹⁰

In addition to these phenomena the following factors should also be taken in consideration:

- ▶ the fall of the Berlin Wall with the collapse of communist regimes, with the public reappearance, in Eastern Europe, of the Orthodox Church;
- ▶ the terrorist attacks occurred on 11 September 2001 (on the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC);
- ▶ the military operations launched by the US in Afghanistan and Iraq with the consequent reaction of the Arab–Islamic world;
- ▶ the threat of transnational terrorism posed by Al Qaeda, which is cloaked in a pseudo-religious rhetoric;
- ▶ new Islamist movements in many the Arab countries, and in particular the role of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Ennahda in Tunisia;
- ▶ the rise of Hindu nationalism in the Indian subcontinent;
- ▶ the role of the national-religious movement in the Israeli colonization of Palestinian territories;
- ▶ the role of Hezbollah in Lebanese politics and institutions;
- ▶ the role of Hamas in the ‘government’ of the Gaza Strip;
- ▶ the confrontation/clash raging across the Middle East and the Persian Gulf between Sunnis and Shiites (Arabs vs. Persians?);
- ▶ the long-lasting government of the Islamic-inspired party ‘Justice and Development’ in Turkey and the decline of the strongly secularist ‘Kemalist’ policies.

In general, these phenomena pose a theoretical and practical challenge to the paradigm of secularization.¹¹ Such a paradigm argues that religion is an inherently regressive phenomenon, destined to succumb to modernity.¹² A watered-down version of this argument is that of assuming that the religious phenomenon is subjected to the dynamics of privatization, de-politicization, differentiation and specialization; that is, to become one of the many aspects of the private life of individuals, losing most or all of its impact on the public and political life.¹³

It has to be clarified that there are at least three different concepts of secularization. The first could be characterized as *differentiation* of secular activities from religious norms and institutions; the second consists of a steady and sizeable decline of religious beliefs and practices (*practical atheism*); the third could be termed as *privatization*, in the sense that religion becomes more and more marginalized within a private sphere.¹⁴

Especially after 11 September 2001, a rich debate on this issue has sprung up, which goes beyond the usual 'clash of civilizations' pattern. Reflection on this topic, however, is affected by three constraints: firstly, the tendency to include the religions within the scope of cultural phenomena in a broad sense; secondly, the inclination to 'compress' the question of identity, limiting it within the confines of the religious phenomenon; finally, the temptation to take the shortcut of establishing an *overlap* between the notion of civilization and that of a geo-political area in which a particular religion is professed by the majority of the population.

However, even if we set these major problems aside for now, it has to be said that though many seem to agree on the fact that religions also have effects on international relations, the judgment on such influence (and on its positive or negative 'sign') is not always clear or unambiguous. On the negative side, the belief that religious conflicts tend to extend beyond national borders and become difficult-to-solve transnational phenomena could be mentioned. On the other hand, among the positive aspects of this complex equation one could count the increasingly important role played by religion in the promotion of organized and institutionalized forms of international cooperation, which also help enhance the legitimacy of the rules and practices of international society.

One way to avoid becoming embroiled in a complex web of interpretations (which tend to be either too apologetic or too dismissive) regarding the role of religion in international relations consists in placing the religions themselves, from an internationalist standpoint, among the

structural factors rather than among the *cultural* ones. If world religions are to be truly taken seriously in the analysis of international relations, this will imply considering them as primary elements within the international system (though with no claim of exclusivity or centrality), rather than as mere (epi)phenomena only capable of exercising a derivative or secondary influence on the global order.

In this perspective, religions would imply, hypothetically, a similar strategic value to the issue of nuclear non-proliferation or to the issues relating to international trade. The theory of international relations has reached levels of sophisticated conceptualization regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the liberalization of world trade, but has long appeared poorly equipped (or unwilling) in understanding the religious phenomenon as *one of* (though by no means the only or the main) the *influencing factors* of global order (or disorder).

The global order, in this context, is to be understood—according to Esposito and Watson¹⁵—in terms of the relevance of religious ideas (values, norms and beliefs) to society and contemporary politics—no matter in what circumstances and in what latitudes—together with the activities and interventions of authorities, leaders, institutions, organizations and religious movements. The order discussed here is currently the *dominant* order with respect to human activity both in spatial terms (across the globe) and at this moment in time (the contemporary age). However, religions do not merely accept the existing order, but rather are *primarily* interested in what this order *should* be and what it *should* stand for in terms of justice and inclusion. Religions therefore tend to operate in the space that lies between the appropriate ‘use’ of the existing order (the *status quo*) and, more frequently, the tendency to aim toward a dissimilar (normative) order.¹⁶

An organic study of the religious phenomenon in its internationalist interpretation, with *policy* implications which could also be used by the international relations practitioners (primarily diplomats), should unfold on three interconnected levels: the analysis of the evolution of international relations in light of the resurgence of religions (*epistemological level*); the examination of the role of religion as an instrument of preventive diplomacy (*pragmatic level*); finally, the study of the international effects of high-level meetings of religious leaders (such as the one held in Rome in cooperation with the Italian Episcopal Conference on the occasion of the Italian Chairmanship of the G8 in 2009, or like the ‘Prayer for Peace’ held in Assisi in 1986) aimed at verifying whether these can

play a positive role in the promotion of a climate that is more conducive to mutual understanding and capable of fostering a structural dialogue between the main religious and cultural areas of the planet, strengthening the convergence on issues of a global nature (*symbolic level*).

Integrating religion in international relations?

The global re-birth of religions represents one of the key aspects of the process, currently ongoing across the globe, of identity re-definition; such a process involves individuals, communities, institutions and social structures in general. Within the fold of such cultural and religious identities mass mobilization movements are borne and crises are generated; this in turn brings about the need to develop new frameworks of analysis in order to help ‘decipher’ such challenges. In particular, the discipline of international relations and diplomatic practice can no longer ignore the virtues and the behaviors of a large number of faith-based communities spread around the world. This raises a fundamental question: is this new religious dynamicity a problem or a potential asset in the field of international relations?

There are, no doubt, several problems inherent to the development of a potential relationship between religions and international politics. Religions have in some instances taken the place of ideologies, not because they are necessarily ideological, but rather due to the need to fill an identity gap. For instance, the phrase ‘Judeo-Christian civilization’, in its political sense, has been used to refer to Europe and the West in general only after the end of the Cold War; this is due to the fact that the instruments of identity development were markedly different during the bipolar era compared to those existing today, since they were focusing much more on political and ideological aspects (free world vs. collectivism).

A further potential threat is represented by religious fundamentalism and its relationship with institutions. So-called *strong religion*,¹⁷ as fundamentalists understand them, gain a disproportionate centrality when they operate within the fold of ‘weak’ or ‘fragile’ states, that is when existing internal political and institutional frameworks are frail. On the other hand, ‘strong religions’ (such as the ‘fundamentalist’ streaks of Protestantism present in the United States) can and do live more or less harmoniously with strong institutions. Such a conclusion appears to invalidate the

commonplace belief that democratic thrusts in semi-authoritarian states in which radical religious groups are present lead inevitably to forms of regressive, 'state-based' fundamentalism. An effective strategy to combat radicalism is that of gradually reinforcing internal governance; this development however is oftentimes hamstrung by illiberal political regimes. In this sense, it should be reminded that there is a substantial difference between *strong* political institutions and *oppressive* ones.

Fundamentalisms share several common traits: a reaction to the perceived marginalization of religion, a selective approach towards modernity and tradition, a Manichean view of morality, a pretense of absolutism and infallibility of sacred texts and institutions alike (at least those perceived to be at the fulcrum of tradition, or more precisely to the aspects of tradition that have been picked out and revisited), forms of millenarianism and messianism, a well-defined boundary between those inside the group and the 'others', a sense of belonging driven by choice/affinity to the group's value system, an authoritarian internal organization and a charismatic leadership.¹⁸ A further element which oftentimes characterizes fundamentalist groups is the logic of opposition towards the 'enemy', which Carl Schmitt defined a constituent element of politics.¹⁹

However, the link between religion and identity can also take on different aspects. Large world religions in particular are chiefly responsible for the ongoing creation of a sense of global 'collective identity'. This represents a substantial paradigm shift compared to the mentioned 'clash of civilizations' model already mentioned above. Religions are becoming primary drivers in the forging of transnational collective identities; as long as such identities remain open, they are not in contrast with the values of religious freedom and religious plurality. A reasonable middle ground between the extremes represented by the Tower of Babel and Cosmopolis must be found, a point in which universal values and individual identities can coexist.

What is particularly striking in reading religious texts and histories is, on the one hand, the *inclusive* rather than exclusive values that these assign to religions, and on the other hand, the focus on the practical, almost political consequences derived from this universal vision of the human condition (summarized in the Gospel's "*ut unum sint*", "that they may be one"²⁰), which can produce significant effects in terms of operational decisions.

According to Richard Falk, a unifying characteristic of the religious phenomenon exists, namely in the concept that we are all a 'single human

family', from which an *ethos* of pan-human solidarity can be derived. This concept is strengthened by the notion of unity and linkage of all creation inherent in religious thought and which assigns a special value to human dignity and to personal responsibility.²¹

This is by no means an obvious conclusion if we consider the characteristics of the current 'post-secular' age, rife with faiths preoccupied with ring-fencing themselves, which are at times violent and often closed within themselves and self-referential. Indeed, nowadays many religious movements tend to cling to two elements that are often conflict with each other: *identity* (the return to the roots, to the foundation myths) and *universality* (the grand objective of a 'pan-human' civilization and a transnational world community).²²

The backdrop for these identity-driven dynamics is the current global arena, which is characterized by the emergence of a structural crisis of international relations and by growing manifestations of cultural pluralism. Addressing these trends will require formulating a new, more adequate theory of international order. Such a theory should provide a model for a novel international society, both multicultural and globalized. Furthermore, it should provide the theoretical tools necessary to accurately gauge the growing role of religions on the international stage. Naturally, recognizing such a potential entails overturning current perspectives, which often view world civilizations (and their respective religions) as being destined to an inevitable clash.

The thesis which views religions as an intrinsic cause of conflict branches into two schools of thought on this issue: on the one hand, there is the "primordialist-essentialist" view, which considers religion itself (and the ethno-cultural strife it creates) as an inherent source of conflict; on the other, we have the "modernist-instrumentalist" view, for whom religions are merely a malleable tool, adaptable to the needs of political power, in particular vis-à-vis consensus-building and mass mobilization. In the latter case, religions are also seen as reinforcing the ongoing securitization processes that characterize contemporary politics.²³

The "Alliance of Civilizations" initiative, launched in 2005 by the UN,²⁴ views diversity of cultures and civilizations as a fundamental trait of human society and as a useful driver for progress, given that by their very nature different societies tend to interact with each other. Religions are doubtlessly, though not exclusively, a fundamental defining element of world civilizations; these however are not monolithic entities with no internal heterogeneity and, crucially, are not impervious to change

brought about by the passage of time. From this point of view, it could be argued that nowadays religions, in spite of the significant dogmatic baggage they may carry, actually represent one of the most dynamic (and sometimes decisive) factors that facilitate change and mobility within large civilizations. For instance, practicing dialogue both *within* and *between* religions enables them to underscore commonalities, such as the principles of justice and compassion, tying them with the larger theme of needing to find a way to coexist harmoniously.²⁵

It is important however to not underestimate the risk of exaggerating the role of religions on the international stage, excessively emphasizing the influence of normative approaches, which attempt to bridge the gap between so-called non-negotiable issues and cultural pluralism, or assigning unreasonable political expectations to the role played by religious leaders. Furthermore, focusing on fundamental religious principles may come at the detriment of more complex analyses of structural phenomena, such as political violence, armed conflicts and of the vast asymmetries both in terms of resources and of capacities which currently exist at a global level.

Eric O. Hanson proposes a conceptual framework in which four distinct spheres of activity are analyzed: political, economic, military, and communication (in his formula, “political plus EMC”). The four areas share points of contact and intersection, with different possible combinations (Hanson describes 15 independent or overlapping points).²⁶ The spheres exist at a local, national, and international level, showing how all policies can be at the same time both global and local. Religions exist within this complex structure, thus the nature, quality, and efficacy of their activities and initiatives cannot be understood or explained without knowing the grid of relevant interactions existing between different spheres of activities and the levels on which these are deployed.²⁷ The tendency of global religions is that of permeating the entire spatial dimension of what is considered political, thus ‘interfering’ in multiple spheres. For instance, campaigns for disarmament initially are usually bottom-up movements, sometimes spearheaded by local religious communities; only later do they invest the national and international spheres (usually through *lobbying* and, if given the possibility, *voice* actions, oftentimes within international organizations). At the same time, such movements normally invest heavily on communication, especially through *social networks*; if they require adjustments in industrial production, as is the case of movements opposed to the commerce of armaments, they also

invest the economic sphere. Of course, such campaigns directly target the military sphere of international politics, hoping to enact real change in it (though treaties, moratoriums, etc.). This analysis could just as easily be applied to the activities of any international initiative spearheaded by NGOs; the differences reside in the nature and scale of international networks (churches, movements, activated on a global level) that are mobilized by religions and in the focus, which in the case of religions is often less targeted compared to that of single-issue NGOs.

Religions and violence: myths and reality

Religious phenomena, from the seventeenth century onwards, have been regularly linked to the radicalization of political violence within highly polarized societies, in which divisions escalate to the point of civil war or of identity-based conflicts. How valid is this representation of religion as a cause or catalyst of political and social conflicts? Do religions start, stress, or stop violent conflicts? Truth be told, the interpretations of the role of religions in violent social contexts vary significantly depending on the analytical perspective used. From a sociological point of view, religions become ‘explosive’ when they are used to forge identity. Religions do not wage war against each other because of differing theological interpretations or because of unbridgeable doctrinal disagreements which cyclically re-emerge, but rather because they become strong symbolic tools within the *politics of identity*.²⁸ Religious-based identity formation however is merely one of the possible outcomes of such policies, tied to the pseudo-anthropologic and pseudo-cultural concept of ethnicity (which becomes dominant or hegemonic) and the correlated idea of *ethnic solidarity*.²⁹ Therefore, religions wage war against each other or participate in ethnic conflicts only when they become policies of identity themselves, offering their powerful symbolic repertoire to social and political actors, which use it to talk about strictly earthly matters: in particular, of threatened identities and of the enemies posing the threat.³⁰ However, the supposed link between religion and violence has deeper roots, and can be traced back to what William Cavanaugh termed the “myth of religious violence”:³¹ it consists in the view of religion as a trans-historic and trans-cultural element of the human condition, distinctly separate from the “secular” elements of society such as politics or the economy; in this view, religion has a worrisome tendency to promote conflict. In reality,

religions (plural) too have a history, made of different phases and periods, and as all elements of organized social life they can be expressed violently. This however does not indicate a *structural* inclination to violence.

Moreover, violence is tied to a broad array of motivations and ideologies, such as the need to affirm the beneficial function of the ‘invisible hand’ of the market or to the role of individual nations (such as that of the US, viewed by some as a ‘universal liberator’). In short, history shows that violence can be born out of both religion and secularist/individualistic ideologies. Violence can be associated with disparate creeds and ideologies, such as Islamism, Marxism, Capitalism, Christianity, Nationalism, Confucianism, Americanism, Liberalism, Shintoism and Hinduism.³²

An “ambivalence of the sacred”,³³ as described by Scott Appleby, doubtlessly exists: religions tend to stir among the faithful a *mélange* of feelings of solidarity and compassion which sometimes coexist with episodes of violence and intolerance. However, there is also an ‘ambivalence of the secular’, which is just as real and worrisome. Furthermore, could it not be argued that, alongside the troubling metaphor of the ‘holy war’, the opposing concept of ‘holy peace’ could exist, that is a peace engendered by the very ‘radical’ religious principles that are hypothesized to catalyze conflicts?³⁴

Two paths in this sense appear particularly significant and promising.

The first is linked to the idea of *forgiveness* as a shortcut to peace.³⁵ It is important to point out that this approach is not based solely on moral, ethical, or religious considerations, but rather aims to achieve a realistic and strategic status in an era characterized by intractable, identity-based conflicts. The strategy of forgiveness has the double advantage of facilitating profound and authentic social change, of seeding a renewed sense of mutual responsibility and of engendering the development of new foundational pacts.³⁶

The second path suggested by Petito and Hatzopoulos implies a more radical strategy, namely the substitution of the realist myth of power with the relational concept of *agape*. Far from being a consolatory notion or a heroic yet innocent virtue, *agape* is a practice that implies a substantial degree of violence, as it requires the separation from the organic totality represented by the law, espousing the pragmatic dimensions of liberation and of mutual connection.³⁷ Fundamentally, *agape* is an act of resistance and transcendence: it is both the refusal to accept the existing social order and the desire to transcend the apparatus of norms which underpin it, in the hope of creating an alternative community.³⁸ *Agape*

is not a moral prescription or a normative indication, and it is quite dissimilar to notions of humanitarian love or irenic pacifism. *Agape* implies overturning the *status quo*, and as such can be defined as being radically and inherently revolutionary. The difference with ‘material’ revolutions is that *agape* only produces ‘symbolic’ violence, which however is not less effective than the order created out of the disorder of asymmetries, of hegemony and of structural injustice.³⁹

As a consequence, viewing international relations from an *agapic* perspective is not a ‘peaceful’ operation. It implies, to begin with, breaking the epistemological cage that prevents transposing the inter-individual ethical order to the inter-communitarian domain (an implicit prohibition both in the empiric-realist and liberal-institutionalist international relations theory).

For instance, the unusual exhortation to “love the other’s country like your own”⁴⁰ represents both a theoretical and pragmatic challenge. Even considering this invitation outside the Christian “comprehensive vision”—applying Rawls’ categories—which constitutes its normative background, it is clear that under the apparent simplism of a mostly ethical formulation lay a considerable set of discontinuities and new perspectives.

First, replacing the paradigm of the *agape* to those of power, interest, and identity in the interpretative and normative approach to international relations represents a radical change in the usual analytical framework.

Second, the relevance of multiple ‘others’ homelands is implicitly recognized as diverse identities standing side by side on an equal foot.

Third, it is assumed that the persons already experience a strong sense of belonging and consider themselves ‘rooted’ in their own homeland as their default reference to a political community.

Lastly, the formula underlines a ‘continuity’ among the different dimensions of human relations, establishing a structural and ethical equivalence between inter-personal and inter-communitarian relationships. The expression “love the other’s country like your own” represents a middle ground between a personal ethical stand and the political dimension; it creates a ‘public space’ that connects the two spheres without being identified with or absorbed by none of them. It implies abandoning an ‘exclusive’ concept of patriotism without diluting it in an indefinite cosmopolitan perspective.

It is interesting to note how this alternative *agapic* narrative is more and more embedded in several approaches to the analysis of international relations, both in theory and in practice.

According to Catherine Lu⁴¹ it is possible to conceptualize international relations in terms of political friendship among peoples. Although it seems inevitable that international conflicts arise, particularly when it comes to the distribution of goods and burdens, in a situation of political friendship among peoples they can be solved in a global context of norms and institutions based on reciprocal recognition and on power sharing within the bodies of global governance rather than on the hegemony of a state or group of states. It is exactly the reiteration of cooperative behavioral patterns as a distinctive feature of multilateralism (understood as a permanent ‘peace conference’) that allows to articulate in a unitary context the growing international pluralism and establishing new forms of structured joint actions among peoples based on mutual care and justice that go beyond the cosmopolitan perspective. To this respect, it is worth mentioning that the motivation of the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the European Union in 2013 explicitly refers to the EU as a form of ‘fraternity between nations’ envisaged by Alfred Nobel.⁴²

The perceived link of religions to forms of sectarian and anomic violence is a trans-historic mystification, closely linked with the development of new forms of secular domination. The process of creation and consolidation of the nation-state in Europe is a case in point: the passage from the Medieval Era to the Modern Age was a long and complex process which at no point entailed a passage from a period of violence to a period of perpetual peace, even though religions lost most of their influence on public life. What in fact happened was the “migration of the sacred” from international churches to the nation-state; in this sense, the separation between church and state can be viewed as a process of appropriation of the sacred by national (and nationalist) policies. The nation-state demands the monopoly on patriotism and is unwilling to share it with other actors: the worship of the state, as will be clearly shown during the First World War, is the only faith that can legitimately demand the sacrifice of members of its flock (the citizens).⁴³ Killing in the name of the state becomes legitimate, according to the ancient motto *dulce et decorum est/pro patria mori*.⁴⁴ Stated less poetically, it has become ethical to “kill for the telephone company”.⁴⁵

In foreign policy, the myth of religious violence is used today to construct and maintain an image of a non-Western ‘other’ and to justify, from time to time, the use of violence against this entity. The motivation for this is not linked to the specific confessions of other peoples, but rather to the *public* dimension which they assign to religion. It is true that

a public formulation of religion sometimes espouses intolerance and the negation of pluralism. However, to justify an aggressive foreign policy, it is sufficient to state that there is an ongoing confrontation with societies characterized by a political framework that is described as being inherently violent and irrational, and that therefore there can be no margins for constructive dialogue: war described as being the only possible answer.

The role of religions in conflict prevention and resolution

Unlike what caricatured simplifications, functional only for the perseverance of a strictly Western hegemonic order would lead to believe that religions can play an important role within *multi-track diplomacy*.⁴⁶ In this sense, it is necessary to focus on the possibility of applying the modern 'ethics of virtue' to the practical world of international diplomacy. In moments of conflict and strife, the leaders of the world's large religions can provide the necessary 'social capital', in terms of networks and mutual trust building efforts, which are essential to the development of a "sustainable peace".⁴⁷ The peace-building process, understood in a non-procedural manner and sensitive to the importance of non-material aspects of peace, does not start and end with the launch of a peacekeeping operation. In this phase religions can play the limited but still crucial function of conflict de-escalation.⁴⁸ Peace-building is, in principle, a response to the collapse of the social fabric and the political and institutional framework, as well as to the cultural struggles which may lie at the base of the conflict. Religions therefore can provide specific expertise in terms of conflict transformation.⁴⁹ In particular, mutual recognition and reconciliation, at both a national and transnational level, represent processes often engendered by religious communities and leaders, which can help develop a common ground for a deeper pluralism, namely a stable, constructive, and non-confrontational form a rooted cosmopolitanism; this cosmopolitanism is not stateless, but rather firmly embedded local sociocultural milieu.⁵⁰

To fully grasp the potential role of religion in situations where peace has to be 'rebuilt', it is necessary to re-define the very idea of peace in order to include within its fold notions of justice and reconciliation. This process of semantic enrichment of the term 'peace' is at the core of bottom-up initiatives aimed at achieving conflict prevention and resolution, or post-conflict reconstruction; these have oftentimes attained

better results compared to top-down methods, which focus excessively on procedures and on solely liberal judicial principles.

Equally relevant is the role of religions in denouncing the dangers of militarism and the intrinsic immorality of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), particularly nuclear weapons. The position of world religions, and in particular that of the Catholic Church, has evolved considerably on this issue, to the point of a full rejection of these weapons and of the ambivalence the Church had previously expressed towards the practice of strategic deterrence during the Cold War.⁵¹

Non-state transnational religious actors

The role of transnational actors within the fold of modern international relations has been studied and analyzed in depth. This however is not the case for religious organizations and leaders. The general reference framework vis-à-vis this issue should be the gradual emergence of a 'transnational society', both plural and complex. In analyzing these phenomena, it is important to point out that the central actors of international relations theory, namely 'Westphalian' sovereign states, are no longer the sole relevant structures capable of facilitating international order, stability, and peace. Given the growing variance of international actors, the role and potential of global 'epistemic communities',⁵² which strive to improve global governance and transnational cooperation should not be underestimated. According to this view, religions should no longer be seen as being potential threats to mutual dialogue and understanding between civilizations; rather, they should be understood as the fulcrum of a pluralistic and culturally diverse transnational civil society. Special attention should also be dedicated to symbolic meaning attached to global religious phenomena and on their impact on global public opinion; these can help build and consolidate novel and broader forms of solidarity, cooperation, and international mobilization vis-à-vis new global challenges and threats.

Book structure

The book is divided in two main parts. In the first part (this Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2) I try to outline the basic elements of a theoretical-pragmatic approach to religions in light of the international relations

theory and diplomatic practice, with specific reference to *polity*, *politics*, and *policies* of the global governance.

In the second part I deal with more concrete issues that are just fragments—although essential ones—of a complex phenomenology of religions in international affairs. In that section my attempt is to understand how religions interact with international actors and how they conceptualize political institutions and changes in the international political space. Chapter 3 offers a reading of the political transitions in the Arab–Islamic world—the so-called Arab Springs—and tries to trace the path of political Islam in the recent history of Pakistan, using the epistemological framework of ‘transnational Islam.’ In Chapter 4 my task is to understand the connection between the deep transformations that are occurring in the world-wide diffusion and distribution of the Catholic faith with a religious critique of globalization and the shift of power affecting regional and global international relations. Chapter 5 is an assessment of the current politics of reporting on religious freedom and tries to uncover the shortcomings of those practices when conducted solely at national and “bilateral” level.

Notes

- 1 European Parliament, *Religious Freedom in Greece and the Compulsory Declaration of Religion on the Greek Identity Card* (Resolution n. B3-0061/93, 21 January 2003); *The Compulsory Mention of Religion on Greek Identity Cards* (Resolution n. B3-0574/93, 22 April 2003).
- 2 Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).
- 3 At that time the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs was Massimo D’Alema, an experienced politician with a strong interest on the Mediterranean and the Middle East.
- 4 I had the chance to be present to the Inauguration, accompanying the new Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini, after a new Government was formed as a consequence of the Italian Parliamentary elections held on 13–14 April 2008.
- 5 State Department, *Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives*, available at <http://www.state.gov/s/fbci/> (15 October 2013).
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Joseph Bryan Hehir, “Why Religion? Why Now?” In *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs*, ed. Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan, and Monica Duffy Toft (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

- 8 Timothy Samuel Shah, “Religion and World Affairs: Blurring the Boundaries”, in *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs*, 1.
- 9 José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 3.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Luca Ozzano, *Fondamentalismo e democrazia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009), 12 [translation by the Author].
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid. See also Thomas Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society* (New York: Macmillan, 1967); Niklas Luhmann, *A Systems Theory of Religion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 81–104.
- 14 José Casanova, *Public Religions*, 211.
- 15 John L. Esposito and Michael Watson (ed.), *Religion and Global Order* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000).
- 16 Ibid., 2–3.
- 17 G. A. Almond, R. Scott, and E. Sivan, *Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- 18 Enzo Pace and Renzo Guolo, *I fondamentalismi* [translated by the Author] (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2002).
- 19 Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007 [1932]).
- 20 Gospel of John (17:21).
- 21 Richard Falk, ‘A Worldwide Religious Resurgence in an Era of Globalization and Apocalyptic Terrorism’, in *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*, ed. Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 196.
- 22 The philosophies that view *fraternization* between peoples as a structural alternative to the *globalization* of markets are of particular interest here. This is certainly a utopic and universalistic vision (present in many world religions, such as Buddhism), which however also possesses a pragmatic dimension. Within the Catholic world, one of the most powerful voices which spoke in favor of inclusion and universalism was Chiara Lubich, for whom the only way out of a divided and rudderless world, made of different peoples, all fiercely isolationist and self-contemplating, all deeply unsatisfied, all intent on holding on to their spoils and treasures, even if these could be used to quell the hunger of those less fortunate, was to destroy existing barriers through a “torrent of spiritual and material goods” and to create “a new global order” (Chiara Lubich, *Speech*, Fiera di Primiero 22 August 1959, in Chiara Lubich, *La dottrina spirituale* [Milano: Mondadori, 2001], 278 [translation by the Author]).
- 23 Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, *Religion in International Relations*, 7.
- 24 The “United Nations Alliance of Civilizations” (<http://www.unaoc.org/>) is a joint Turkish–Spanish initiative; see also Ali Balcı and Nebi Miş, “Turkey’s

- Role in the Alliance of Civilizations: A New Perspective in Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Turkish Studies*, n. 3 (2008), 387–406; Ramazan Kılınc, “Turkey and the Alliance of Civilizations: Norm Adoption as a Survival Strategy”, *Inside Turkey*, n. 3 (2009); Isaías Barreñada, “Alliance of Civilizations, Spanish Public Diplomacy and Cosmopolitan Proposal”, *Mediterranean Politics*, n. 1 (2006); Máximo Cajal, “The Alliance of Civilizations: A Spanish view”, *Inside Turkey*, n. 3 (2009), 45–55.
- 25 Toh Swee-Hin (S.H. Toh), “Dialogue among and within Faiths: Weaving a Culture of Peace”, in *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Politics*, ed. Michális S. Michael and Fabio Petito (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 81.
- 26 Eric O. Hanson, *Religion and Politics in the International System Today* (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Enzo Pace, *Perché le religioni scendono in guerra?* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2008), X [translation by the Author].
- 29 Ibid., XII.
- 30 Ibid., X.
- 31 William T. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- 32 Ibid., 16.
- 33 R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 2000).
- 34 Marc Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- 35 William Bole, Drew Christiansen, S. J., and Robert T. Hennemeyer, *Forgiveness in International Politics* (Washington: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004); see also Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).
- 36 Donald W. Shriver Jr., *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- 37 Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute* (London; New York: Verso, 2001).
- 38 Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, *Religion in International Relations*, 16–19.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Chiara Lubich, *Speech*, Fiera di Primiero 1959 [translation by the Author].
- 41 Catherine Lu, “Political Friendship among Peoples”, *Journal of International Political Theory*, Vol. 5, n. 1 (2009), 41–58.
- 42 *The Nobel Peace Prize 2012 to the European Union (EU)*—Press Release. Nobelprize.org, Nobel Media AB 2013 (5 October).
- 43 Silvio Ferrari, “Tra geo-diritti e teo-diritti. Riflessioni sulle religioni come centri transnazionali d’identità”, *Quaderni di diritto e politica ecclesiastica*, n. 1 (2007), 3–14 [translation by the Author].

- 44 William T. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence*, 8–14.
- 45 William T. Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy. God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011).
- 46 Scott Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2005), 173–196. The author poses the interesting question: “Soulcraft as statecraft? Diplomacy, conflict resolution and peace building”, referring to two version of “religious” diplomacy: the conventional one, which assigns a stronger role compared to the past to religious affiliations and identities in order to achieve the resolution of political and social issues that have reached a critical state and could constitute a threat to peace; the other version is more “transformative”, aiming to achieve an authentic reconciliations, on the basis of the common and shared “transit” of the human species on this planet.
- 47 David R. Smoch (ed.), *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2002); see also John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).
- 48 Andreas Hasenclever and Volker Rittberger, “Does Religion Make a Difference?” In *Religion in International Relations*, ed. Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos, 107–145.
- 49 Scott Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion*, 192–195.
- 50 Ibid., 248.
- 51 Paolo Foradori, “The Moral Dimension of ‘Global Zero.’ The Evaluation of the Catholic Church’s Nuclear Ethics in a Changing World” (Trento [2013], paper submitted for publication).
- 52 Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion*, 108.

Part I

A Theoretical Overview



1

Religion and World Politics

Abstract: *Despite the monumental bibliography on religions and international relations, there is a good deal of confusion and theoretical uncertainty.*

One way of contributing to the cause of clarity is by trying to be more accurate about the various characterizations of the connection between religions and world politics. In this domain we distinguish at least the following dimensions:

- ▶ *religions and inter-state relations;*
- ▶ *religions and internationalism;*
- ▶ *religions and transnationalism;*
- ▶ *religions and globalism.*

I refer to those dimensions through my own interpretation on their defining arguments. Inter-state relations focus on foreign policy; internationalism focuses on the legitimacy of international bodies and international democracy; transnationalism focuses on collective identity; finally, globalism focuses on the agenda of world politics.

Keywords: collective identities; “deterritorialization” of religions; “imagined communities”

Ferrara, Pasquale. *Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826.0005.

There was a time when, in the international relations of theory and practice, religion was considered almost irrelevant or, worse, dangerous. Privatized in the internal forum, religion was also supposed to be banned in world politics. Religion was instinctively conceived, even in the framework of international relations (as a result of the tragic “religion wars”—a rather misleading definition, as we have seen above—that have haunted the European and Mediterranean history), as a source of conflicts and not as a political resource for peaceful coexistence.

Moreover, for a long time religion has been considered as an epiphenomenon, in accordance with the realist approach to international relations. Classical realists typically insist that only material forces (such as economic development, military strength, geopolitical factors) have a “real” influence on the structure of international relations: they are “causal variables”.

Ironically, prominent thinkers of international relations, who had made a matter of principle opposing Marxist theory in its “Soviet” incarnation in international relations, seemed to embrace one central assumption of historical materialism: culture, ideas and religion are thought to be “superstructures” emanating from the social-economic structure.

That time is over. Today, we can talk of an “industry” of religion and international relations (and even International Political Theology¹). Post-secularism has made its way into the post-modern world.

One might even get the impression of having fallen to the opposite extreme. Since the publication of the works of Gilles Kepel² and José Casanova³ many candles have burned in the theoretical aisles of the huge cathedral of internationalized and even globalized religions. In traditional international relations theory, we were haunted by the ignorance of the Holy; whereas a recent outlook provided by Olivier Roy⁴ is all about Holy Ignorance.

Despite the monumental bibliography on the subject, however, there is a good deal of confusion and theoretical uncertainty. One central question is very seldom clarified; is it religion that went international or rather the international relations theory and practice that became more sensitive to religions?

Now, it is not my intention to initiate a new extra “meta-debate”. What I’ll try to do is to offer some fragmented and preliminary reflections that can in principle combine the need for more theoretical clarity with some possible policy implications. One way of contributing to the cause of clarity is by trying to be more accurate about the various characterizations of the connection between religions and world politics.

In my opinion, it is this particular relation—between *religions* and *world politics*—that best describes the new role of religious factors in the international arena. I will make the case that there is a role for religions to play in the international realm that goes beyond pure “Westphalian” and state-centered categories, without characterizing religions as mere “global faith-based NGOs”. Religions have a say in world politics but they cannot be portrayed reductively as lobbies or constituencies. They operate in a public sphere, which doesn’t overlap completely with the international political sphere.

Another important marker that I propose is the alternative between an “ontological” approach to religion as a general “category of the spirit” and concrete religions as a vast phenomenology of human religious needs. It is the plural form, “religions”, that is relevant for world politics.

Within this larger scheme we can then distinguish at least the following dimensions:

- ▶ religions and inter-state relations;
- ▶ religions and internationalism;
- ▶ religions and transnationalism; and
- ▶ religions and globalism.

I will refer to those dimensions through my own interpretation on their defining arguments. Inter-state relations focus on foreign policy; internationalism focuses on the legitimacy of international bodies and international democracy; transnationalism focuses on collective identity; finally, globalism focuses on the agenda of world politics (see Table 1.1).

Religions and inter-state relations

Religion from the inter-state point of view is religion *inside a box*. It is a way of combining religion and nationalism. It is a matter of *governments*

TABLE 1.1 *Religions beyond borders: type of relations and area of influence*

Type of relations	Area of influence
Religions and inter-state relations	Foreign policy
Religions and internationalism	International democracy
Religions and transnationalism	World collective identity
Religions and globalism	Global policies

rather than *peoples*. It can take very different forms with very different outcomes: two heterogeneous cases are, for instance, the Islamic revolution in Iran and the Russian Orthodox Church after the fall of the Berlin Wall (and to a certain extent even before).

Political Islamism is often articulated as a national political factor. Strictly speaking, the idea of a growing relevance of political Islamism should be dealt with more as a matter of *comparative politics* than a specific subject of *international analysis*.

If we adopt the perspective of the level of analysis in international relation theory, religion and inter-state relations is a subject that Kenneth Waltz⁵ will perhaps include in his “second image”, that is, the motivations of state behavior in the international arena. As such, religion could be considered relevant as one fundamental driver of foreign policy rather than genuine international politics.

I will make the case that there is a role for religions to play in the international realm that goes beyond pure “Westphalian” and state-centered categories. I maintain that only *internationalism*, *transnationalism* and *globalism* are the relevant dimensions for an international relations theory and practice that would grasp at the appropriate level of analysis the role and the place of religions in world politics.

Religions and internationalism

As far as internationalism is concerned, what is interesting is the relation between religions and the concept (and practice) of *international democracy*. There are many ways to conceptualize in political terms the relatively new notion of “international democracy”.

The one I will refer to here has to do with procedures and decision-making mechanisms of the “international community”, understood as a web of international organizations both of inter-governmental nature and supra-national character. In this version, international democracy refers to the principle of inclusion and to fair and politically justified rights and “votes” of governments in international bodies.

In dealing with that notion of international democracy, I am basically concerned with some foundational aspects of the international system, and particularly the debate on the legitimacy of the international order. Legitimacy is the result of many elements, including the composition of the political bodies considered, their deliberative patterns and, last but

not least, the very outcome of the decision-making process. In several discussions regarding the legitimacy of the new bodies of the global governance, like the G20, what seems to create consensus is the obvious statement that those international *fora*, in order to be legitimate, must first and foremost demonstrate their usefulness. That is, they must be perceived not as perfectly representative, but as reasonably functional and effective. Other elements of legitimacy are considered complementary and optional.

However, legitimacy is more than a satisfactory outcome. As Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler point out,

there is very little in the international relations literature that directly addresses the role of religious legitimacy in international relations.⁶

It goes without saying that religious legitimacy in international relations should be understood in a radically different meaning *vis-à-vis* the tradition of the metaphysical foundation and justification of power in the internal order. Indeed, the notion of religious legitimacy in the international system is unrelated to the theoretical reflection on the source and the nature of power.

According to Fox and Sandler,

there are three reasons to believe that religious legitimacy should be influential in international relations. First, normative factors are having an increasing influence on international relations. Second, the growing literature on instrumentalism demonstrates that other cultural factors such as nationalism and ethnicity have provided legitimacy for political activities. Third, identity is clearly an influence on international politics and religion is an influence on identity.⁷

I consider relevant to my argument two out of the three factors of religious legitimation listed by Fox and Sandler: first, the *normative function* of religions *vis-à-vis* global governance; second, their potential to forge and strengthen *collective identities*. In the next paragraphs I will concentrate first on some aspects of the normative power of religions in the context of global governance.

Some interesting suggestions regarding legitimacy in the international system come from the approach known as “intercultural construction of global democracy”, which is based on the assumption that the prevailing frameworks of global governance lack democratic legitimacy on the grounds of Western cultural domination. The aim of conceptualizing global democracy requires an inter-regional, inter-cultural

and inter-disciplinary epistemological dialogue. The main aim of this approach is to counter the ideational inequalities that arise when certain ways of knowing the world are arbitrarily subordinated and sometimes also forcibly repressed and to explore how cultural unilateralism in global governance can be replaced with a “positive inter-culturality”.⁸

Therefore, there are many possibilities for religions to forge pragmatic, pro-active and creative ways of combining justice, community and dialogue in international relations. In general, it can be said that religious legitimacy in the international system is related to the *inclusiveness* and efficacy of international bodies.

Among the many aspects of the inclusiveness, religious diversity should be taken into account as a way of strengthening the legitimacy of these informal bodies. For instance, in the G8 there is no country with a Muslim majority; and there is no doubt that the presence in the G20 of countries like Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey constitutes an important element in the creation of a more balanced representation of one of the world’s most widespread religions.

This conclusion should not sound surprising. In the system of the United Nations, geographical representation in the main bodies is considered one way to ensure a pluralistic structure of that universal organization. In the European Union a fierce battle rages around the predominant languages in the operations of the EU institutions. These are fundamental criteria to assess the degree of cultural pluralism and diversity of international organizations, in order to strengthen their legitimacy. Why should religion be excluded from this puzzle?

However, religious diversity alone is a necessary but not sufficient condition to increase the representativeness of an international body. To this regard, it is important to note that religions play a critical role in terms of legitimization of selective formats, based of several criteria and beyond religious diversity.

Unfortunately for the supporters of selective formats, the need for more inclusion can also work against the legitimacy of *present* informal international bodies. As an example of such problematic outcome, recall the position on the formats of global governance taken by the 2010 Religious Leaders’ Summit,⁹ where the participants criticized the composition of such bodies by pointing out how “power and economic dominance are the basis for inclusion in a G8 and G20” and denouncing, although in a footnote of the document, the fact that not represented in these summits are 172 [*now* 173] members of the United Nations where

proposals to address structural causes of poverty and ecological devastation are currently under discussion.

At the same time, I must state my deep skepticism on the initiatives taken so far to organize a sort of “parallel” or complementary structure of global governance based on religions and religious leaders. The case in point here is “The World Council of Religious Leaders”, which is an independent body proposed on the occasion of the Millennium World Peace Summit at the United Nations. The launching of the World Council took place in Bangkok on 12–14 June 2002, when even a complex and formal Charter was adopted, including composition, sub-committees, voting system, regional, national and global organizational levels.¹⁰

Religions and transnationalism

Another understanding of international democracy is less state-centered and more focused on participation of individuals and groups to the decision-making process of international organizations and to their ability to influence political choices and programs at the international level.

This second version could be better defined as transnational democracy.

The debate on the obsolescence of the features of the “Westphalian state” and on the creation of political conditions for a cosmopolitan citizenship (a contemporary version of the Kantian “perpetual peace”) is very relevant but it would take me off road. To be brief, I totally share the analysis of David Held and Anthony Mc Grew when they affirm that

the contemporary world order is best understood as a highly complex, interconnected and contested order in which the interstate system is increasingly embedded within an evolving system of multilayered regional and global governance. There are multiple, overlapping political processes at work at the present historical conjuncture.¹¹

This perspective is more problematic than the global democracy shortcomings, and has been defined by the authors as the domain of a “cosmopolitan social democracy” nurtured by some of the most important values of social democracy—such as the rule of law, political equality, democratic politics, social justice, social solidarity and economic effectiveness—and at the same time applying those principles to the new “global constellation” of economics and politics.¹²

From the standpoint of the study of international theory and diplomatic practice, one field of research could be exploring a possible constructive role of the process of “deculturation” of religions which has been analyzed by Olivier Roy or “deterritorialization” of religions if we wish to adopt Casanova’s terminology.

Roy¹³ writes that the major religious movements of our times are in a process of “inculturation”. Religions, according to Roy, are *reformatting* themselves as global faiths rather than expressions of a national culture, since today’s religious revival is first and foremost marked by the uncoupling of culture and religion, whatever the religion may be.¹⁴

This is a dramatic paradigm change vis-à-vis the opposite trend toward “inculturation” that in Christianity used to refer to the adaptation of the way Church teachings are presented to non-Christian cultures, and to the influence of those cultures in the evolution of these teachings. In this interpretation, religions are no longer confused with other elements deemed constitutive of identity; on the contrary, they represent a way to “escape” from a framed cultural environment and so avoiding to fall into the “identity trap”.

This process raises also concerns, since the success of all forms of neo-fundamentalism can be explained by the fact that, paradoxically, it vindicates the loss of cultural identity and allows a “pure” religion to be conceptualized independently of all its cultural variations and influences.¹⁵ This is an accurate description of globalization: in Roy’s vision, it means uprooting from given societies in an attempt to develop systems of thought that are no longer linked to a given culture, systems of thought or practices, behavior, taste, and modes of consumption.¹⁶

For Casanova, global religions are progressively incorporating features that can be described as forms of generalization of the Islamic notion of *ummah*: as transnational imagined religious communities that present fundamental challenges both to international relations theories which are still functioning within the premises of a Westphalian international system and to secular cosmopolitan theories of globalization.¹⁷

However, he also points out that religions are affected by the same latent schizophrenia that hits other territorial, political or symbolic aggregations, that is, the contextual presence, in the same narrative, of the attachment to the “roots” and the ambition of a projection on the global scene. Particularism, even localism on the one side, and cosmopolitanism and universalism, on the other side, not only coexist but very often progress together.

Actually—writes Casanova—one finds practically everywhere similar tensions between the protectionist impulse to claim religious monopoly over national and civilizational territories and the ecumenical impulse to present one's own particular religion as the response to the universal needs of global humanity.¹⁸

Religions are becoming more and more deterritorialized and decentered, as it is happening for the Pentecostalism, that Casanova considers “the first truly global religion” and is the more visible manifestation of an “emerging global denominationalism”.¹⁹ In Casanova's view, it high time to admit that there are “multiple modernities”;²⁰ among which the one based on Western rationality is only one version and does not necessarily represent a universal process of human development.

So, on the one side, religions rightly underline the need to protect cultural and spiritual identities; on the other side, initiatives and *fora* like the Alliance of Civilization and Religions for Peace help in creating the awareness of a shared identity, a collective identity that can be crucial if we really want to see a concrete implementation of the idea of global common goods, like protection of the environment and availability of food and water for all the inhabitants of the planet.

If religions “go global” without “strings attached”, this phenomenon could be conceptualized also as a way for religions to go beyond the shortcomings and contradictions of globalization, if globalization is to be understood (according to Fukuyama's interpretation²¹) as a process of worldwide diffusion of one dominant culture.

This process would give religions the chance to propose themselves in terms of interpretations of the world with the ambition to embody some level of universalism, that is, some critical vision of the reality which can be an alternative way of interpreting the global era.

From the standpoint of international theory, one field of research could be exploring a possible constructive role—if there is any—of those processes leading to the uncoupling between religions and their original backgrounds. In other words, we should consider the possibility that the process of deconstructing the territorial and culture-specific frame of religions might obviously imply the destruction of some identities, but also the assembling of new elements capable of creating more comprehensive and more inclusive structures of meaning.

To some extent, religions are the “new transnational nations”.²² Nowadays the vast domain of “rights” (like the fundamental human rights) seems disconnected from a specific territorial dimension. To

be sure, there are still “geo-rights” (as for citizenship) linked to a space delimited by a boundary and related to an operational definition of identity understood in juridical and political terms. However, deterritorialization—perhaps the most prominent feature of globalization—did not manage to suppress the aspiration to a rely upon an identity bond, that in different social context takes the form of a “theo-right”—a right with a religious root. In the age of globalization—according to Ferrari—one’s own home country is less and less linked to a specific territory and more and more to a sense of belonging. “Theo-rights” are related to these new forms on transnational identity. The narrative of rights inside the world religions offers this alternative. From the one side they refer to somebody or something capable of producing meaning and offering an interpretation of reality which would value human behavior; from the other side, rules prescribing pilgrimages, holy days, celebrations and fast times for the community as a whole build and mark in everyday life a heartwarming sense of belonging and an incitation to action far more motivating than the cold market forces embedded in any “spatial” right. However, the transnational dimension doesn’t make irrelevant the need to keep a “spatial” linkage with a territorial reference point; the extraordinary operation performed by world religions is that of combining the presence of a strong “center” with the absence of boundaries.

In fact, “theo-rights” are located in a mental space in which one can go beyond his/her territorial origin without repudiating it. This double movement has become evident through the symbolic and universal role played by “Holy Cities” like Jerusalem, Rome and Mecca. However, one may inquire what kind of rights are secured by world religions as “transnational nations”. From the one side they are rooted in a tradition and a shared history, provide a narrative with which it is possible to identify, show a direction for one’s own life and generate solidarity among the members of a community, strengthen the faith in a common destiny, and perform integrative functions once delivered by the nation-state; from the other side, religions are not caught within borders, cross the state lines, move and migrate, all things that a Westphalian state cannot do.²³

However, religions would not have a truly inclusive role on a world scale if they limited themselves (as it happens) to strengthen transnational bonds among follower losing sight or aggregation much wider of their faithful.

When Benedict Anderson wrote about “imagined communities” he made it clear that a nation as a product of cultural imagination should

not be confused with the notion of invention. An imagined community is not an imaginary community. What counts for the “imagination” is the scale of the social and political body which goes well beyond the possibility of a direct experience of the subject. As Anderson put it, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined.²⁴

Anderson described the “imagined communities” as a result of the fragmentation of the medieval universalism, and as the process of secularization and individualization of an ethnic-cultural-religious complex into the new frame of the nation. He argued that any nationalism is a cultural artifact of a particular kind. A cultural product that by the end of the eighteenth century was reproduced in different regional contexts.

As Anderson wrote, the creation of these artifacts was the spontaneous distillation on a complex “crossing” of discrete historical forces, but that, once created, they became “modular”, capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations.²⁵

What we might be experiencing today is a sort of reverse process, in which religions try to rebuild their universal claims for peace and unity without necessarily destroying the nations, but by extending the scale of the “imagined community” beyond the scale of the traditional boundaries of the state. Another interesting perspective is provided by the constructivist approach to international relations, especially as far as the implications of the notion of “collective identity” are concerned. According to Alexander Wendt, the possibilities for collective action in international relations cannot be explained in full without assuming that interaction at the systemic level changes state identities and interests. For Wendt,

the key structures in the states system are intersubjective, rather than material and state identities and interests are in important part constructed by these social structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics.²⁶

This implies that identities should not be defined in “substantive” terms, as given and invariable, since they are mostly relational. The progressive development of an increasing number of “collective identities”—respecting the individual original cultural features—among diverse socio-political contexts is therefore one of the most important process in

international politics. In this sense we could also read the multiplication of regional organizations and aggregations, among countries belonging to the same continent or region of the world.

The biggest challenge today is composing a wider collective and dialogical identity, at global level, that would not destroy the existing network of belonging; on the contrary, such composite identity would be the cornerstone of a shared pluralist identity. Religious movements of different kind and origin are pursuing the project of a “collective identity” exceptionally rich and open to others.

Having said that, what is the role of religions in those processes of identity shaping and reshaping? If we follow Wendt’s reasoning, what is true for states is also true for transnational and non-state actors. What seems by now a common understanding is that in the contemporary world, more than the internationalization of traditional state powers, we are witnessing the transformation of the very notion of power in terms of its dissemination and fragmentation (what Foucault would define as the “microphysics of power”²⁷), its nature (“soft power”, “smart power”), and its agents (non-state actors, transnational organizations).

It became a commonsense to consider globalization as the antithesis of universalism (as it happens in the “Huntington vs. Fukuyama” discourse), but the interplay between the two categories is more complex and nuanced than a mere opposition. This is particularly true when we try to understand how religions adapt, or on the contrary resist to globalizing forces.²⁸

Religions and globalism

From the point of view of world politics, rather than from the perspective of International Relations as a discipline, religions are understood mainly as a phenomenology, not an ontology. To borrow the language of one of the most debated issues of the failed European Constitution, if the “roots” of a civilization matter, no less important are the fruits of such a metaphoric “tree”. In the realm of world politics, religions are important in terms of *doing* (functionalist approach), without implying an irrelevance of their *being* (*substantialist approach*).²⁹ Indeed, *reflexive pragmatism* is the distinctive feature of global religions.

In the diplomatic circles that are becoming more and more attentive to the subject of religions in world politics one can often hear the firm

statement that “we don’t do religion, we don’t do theology, we do international politics”. Now this might sound—and perhaps it is—simplistic to a political scientist, who knows how difficult it is to work with independent variables.

After all, the result of such an attitude is the aprioristic assumption that religion is something that we find in nature, and the only thing we can do with it is to study its effects. However, there must be a middle ground in which one needs to know a few important things—to follow the famous Waltzean epistemological recommendation—about what a religion is in order to better understand the consequences and implications for world politics.³⁰

What I propose here is a simple categorization of religious narratives along the conceptual *continuum* of inclusion/exclusion. How a religion sees the vast and diverse world of peoples and nations in terms of cooperation or competition, connection or confrontation is relevant for international relations theory and diplomatic practice. Through the prism of inclusion and exclusion it is possible to conceptualize the important function of religions both as “clients” and “vectors” of transnationalism.

In many religious traditions we can find the same basic idea of “universal community”, or “human family”, whose “working method”—so to speak—should be constituted by the implementation of the Golden Rule on a world scale: if not in its positive form (“One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself”) at least in its negative version (also known as the Silver Rule: “One should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated”). This idea has been dismissed for a long time as a commendable ethical aspiration, irrelevant for the international order and uninfluential in terms of the adoption of policies that reflect asymmetries of power and interests. On the contrary, I think that the universal approach of religions, as an alternative to ideological globalism, could give some more concrete and democratic meaning to the vague and somewhat oligarchic idea of global governance.

For instance, I consider very useful the gathering of representatives of the world’s religions and spiritual traditions on the occasion of major political summits like the G8/G20. In those cases, religions can influence the agenda of international bodies through supporting or advocating for specific “inclusive” policies on political and moral grounds.

To this respect, a promising framework allowing religions dealing with global issues in a structured way is Religions for Peace, a large international coalition of representatives from the world’s great religions

dedicated to promoting peace. The network's purpose is to create multireligious partnerships aimed at transforming violent conflict, promoting just and harmonious societies, advancing human development and protecting the earth.³¹ This organization has a clear self-conscience notion of the potential impact of religious mobilization to help solve critical issues.

The method for common action developed by Religions for Peace is unique, practical and open to continuous creativity. It assists religious communities to correlate, or work out a connection, between their capacities for action and specific challenges, such as violent threats to peace. The method, while simple, is powerful. When applied, it discloses large, often hidden or underutilized capacities for action that lie within the reach of religious communities. Importantly, it also identifies the unique advantages of multireligious cooperation and what kinds of capacity building are needed for effective multireligious action. Concretely, the method assists Religions for Peace to analyze specific problems, such as violent conflict; make an inventory of religious assets and the added values of cooperation; match these with needed problem-solving roles and identify areas of capacity building essential for common action.³²

Similarly, the World Council of Churches (WCC), that brings together 349 Christian churches, is one of the broadest and most inclusive among the many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement. The WCC created a program called *Public witness: addressing power, affirming peace* through which it aims at challenging “the economic, social, political and cultural powers” in order to offer “a prophetic witness for justice, peace and security”.³³

Religions based on the paradigm of inclusiveness may play an important role for strengthening “globalization from below” and offer an alternative vision vis-à-vis the Westphalian tradition, which normally associates the “administration of solidarity” mostly to the capacities of sovereign territorial states.

Besides, religions—and, in this respect, Christianity in particular—should feel totally alienated from globalization. In fact—as Žižek reminds us—globalization could be assimilated to the pagan idea of cosmic order, commanding also social order. Ancient Christianity, and in a different manner also Buddhism, convey the idea that any individual can potentially have access to the universal (to the Absolute), and such circumstance is subversive also from an economic, social and political perspective.³⁴

Although with different accents, this *agapic*³⁵ and revolutionary character at the same time of religions (perhaps all religions) *vis-à-vis* the restrictions of social control—contrary to the Marxian belief that religions are the “opium of the peoples”, which was true maybe for a limited historical period—represents an underlying current making its way in the most critical stages of history and human journey in the world.

Notes

- 1 Vendulka Kubálková, “Towards an International Political Theology”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 29, n. 3 (2000), 675–704.
- 2 Gilles Kepel, *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World* (Oxford : Polity, 1993).
- 3 José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- 4 Olivier Roy, *Holy Ignorance: When Religion and Culture Part Ways* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
- 5 Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).
- 6 Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, *Bringing Religions into International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 36.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 8 University of Warwick—Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, *Intercultural Constructions of Global Democracy* (<http://www.buildingglobaldemocracy.org/content/intercultural-constructions-global-democracy>) (14 October 2013).
- 9 2010 Interfaith Partnership—2010 Religious Leaders’ Summit, *A Time for Inspired Leadership and Action* (<http://www.faithchallengeg8.com/pdfs/2010%20Interfaith%20Statement%20-%20English.pdf>) (10 October 2013).
- 10 The World Council of Religious Leaders (<http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.com/>) (8 October 2013).
- 11 David Held and Anthony McGrew, *Globalization/Anti-Globalization* (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 2002), 130.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 131.
- 13 Olivier Roy, *Holy Ignorance*.
- 14 Olivier Roy, “Islam in Europe”, in *Conditions of European Solidarity*, vol. II: *Religion in the New Europe*, ed. Michalski Krzysztof (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 131.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 132.

- 16 Ibid.
- 17 José Casanova, “Rethinking Public Religions”, in *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs*, ed. Shah Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred C. Stepan, and Monica Duffy Toft (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 33.
- 18 José Casanova “Public Religions Revisited”, in *Religion: Beyond the Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 101–119.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 The concept was first introduced by S. N. Eisenstadt, “Multiple Modernities”, *Daedalus*, Winter 2000, 1–29.
- 21 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).
- 22 Silvio Ferrari, “Tra geo-diritti e teo-diritti. Riflessioni sulle religioni come centri transnazionali d’identità”, *Quaderni di diritto e politica ecclesiastica*, n. 1 (2007), 10 [translation by the Author].
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London; New York: Verso, 1991), 6.
- 25 Ibid., 4.
- 26 Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State”, *American Political Science Review*, n. 88 (1994), 385.
- 27 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1979), 26.
- 28 Renato Ortiz, “Notes on Religion and Globalization”, *Nepantla: Views from the South*, Vol. 4, n. 3 (2003), 423–448.
- 29 Mona Kanwal Sheikh, “How Does Religion Matter? Pathways to Religion in International Relations”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 38, n. 2 (2012), 365–392 (371).
- 30 Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).
- 31 Religions for Peace: <http://www.rfp.org> (14 October 2013).
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 World Council of Churches: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/public-witness> (13 October 2013).
- 34 Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute* (London; New York: Verso, 2001).
- 35 See Introduction of this book.

2

Religions and Global Governance

Abstract: *What I intend to do is to propose an examination of religions and religious beliefs in the framework of the global governance. The relation between religions and global governance can be analyzed through the conceptual scheme of polity (defining the “boundaries” of a political system, its institutional features, its legal framework and the issues related to legitimacy), politics (the political “discourse” in terms of competition among ideologies, parties and political groups) and policy (concrete political options regarding public goods, their appropriation and distribution or redistribution). This framework can be applied, at least in flexible and not strictly “technical” terms, to analyze the direct or indirect influence of religious ideas concerning international order (polity), justification of political options (politics) and content of the global agenda (policies).*

Keywords: religions and global common goods; World Authority

Ferrara, Pasquale. *Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826.0006.

In conceptualizing the relation between religions and global governance there is a need to clarify at the outset that this topic is not related to actions and initiatives that can be categorized only as inter-faith dialogue, faith-based diplomacy and inter-religious meetings. These events and initiatives are certainly relevant, but belong to a different category, insofar as they are articulated in an ethical, theological or more generically in the social and cultural domains.

As far as world matters are concerned, it is rather about the way religions conceptualize the world order, how they construct the meaning of such structures in terms of legitimacy, and how they intend to participate in the agenda-setting process that takes place in the bodies of global governance.

More generally, the relation between religions and global governance can be analyzed through the conceptual scheme of *polity* (defining the “boundaries” of a political system, its institutional features, its legal framework and the issues related to legitimacy), *politics* (the political “discourse” in terms of competition among ideologies, parties and political groups) and *policy* (concrete political options regarding public goods, their appropriation and distribution or redistribution). This framework can be applied, at least in flexible and not strictly “technical” terms, to analyze the direct or indirect influence of religious ideas concerning international order (*polity*), justification of political options (*politics*) and content of the global agenda (*policies*).

Polity

As for the structure of international governance, it is interesting to compare a least two approaches that adopt different perspectives.

The first one is that outlined in the encyclical letter “*Caritas in veritate*”¹ of former Pope Benedict XVI, where it is envisaged in a new way the perspective of a world Authority, in continuity with a long Catholic tradition. The main concept is the notion of “family of nations” that is not a sort of congress of like-minded government, but a political structure that, in the words of Benedict XVI, “can acquire real teeth”²

The first principle for the political legitimacy of such an Authority is its full empowerment to deal with global issues: there is urgent need of a true world political authority—says the former Pope—in order to manage the global economy, to revive economies hit by the crisis; to

avoid any deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would result; to bring about integral and timely disarmament, food security and peace; to guarantee the protection of the environment and to regulate migration.³

A second principle has to do with the established juridical nature of that body: such an authority would need to be regulated by law.⁴ Moreover, it should be an Authority crafted according the respects of the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity: no centralization of powers would be justified if the political goods of a community could be achieved through local actions.

The general mandate of such an Authority would be to establish the common good and to make a commitment to securing authentic integral human development.⁵ Furthermore, such an authority—goes on the encyclical—would need to be universally recognized and to be vested with the effective power to ensure security for all, regard for justice and respect for rights.⁶

There is a generic statement about the need to ensure compliance with the decision of the World Authority from all parties. However, there is also a realistic reference to the risk for international law to be conditioned by the balance of power among the strongest nations.⁷

Intentionally, more open-ended is the Buddhist idea of global governance, since it rests less on organizational solution than on the method of “dialogue”. Indeed, there is no “Buddhist system”, no set of rules, that will insure the implementation of a global ethics. One Buddhist perspective prefers a bottom-up approach in building global governance, and urges to engage with “non-dialogic” elements of the different cultural traditions.

In order for a new vision of world order to emerge—we read in a Buddhist paper—it is essential that we stop thinking in the old paradigms and unquestioningly move along the old continuums.⁸ Structure, in the Buddhist outlook, is considered useful only if it is composed by people ready to engage in constructive dialogue. It will accomplish nothing to bring the people’s voice to a deliberation if it serves to amplify a cacophony of sectarian hate.⁹

Buddhists proposes a shared vision of a “worldwide civil society” *imagined* as a human global neighborhood, and characterized by the civility of its discourse. Buddhist theory advocates what has been termed the “cognitive” approach to international relations. Under this theory of international relations, differences and conflicts between nations exist, but are solved eventually by continued interaction and sharing of ideas.¹⁰

But there are also references to the enlargement of the current bodies of global governance. In a paper of the Soka Gakkai, a worldwide spread Buddhist movement, the support for an expansion of the current summit system in order to include the participation of such countries as China and India to form a “summit of responsible countries” which should promote the wider sharing of global responsibilities is clearly stated.¹¹

To some extent, such a perspective seems to resonate with the two complementary dimensions of *dharma*, which are *Buddha-dharma* (Buddhism as a religion) and *Raja-dharma* (the morality of the king and of the public institutions).¹²

Politics

In an important report on religions and the American foreign policy¹³ two factors—among other—are considered crucial for the present and future situation of international relations:

- ▶ Changes in religious identity at global level have a sizeable impact on local and national politics.
- ▶ Religions have fruitfully utilized the process of globalization, but at the same time they have been transformed by it; as a result, in many cases they have become forces opposing and resisting to globalization itself.

What matters most is the contextuality in the process of deprivatization of religions and globalization; religions “resurrected” in the global arena exactly when global political issues arose in the world agenda.¹⁴

In general, under conditions of globalization religions will tend to assume public roles whenever their identity as universal transsocial religions is reinforced by their actual situation as transnational religious regimes.¹⁵

Present processes of globalizations, understood as affirmation of both a global humankind and a global society system, imply the relativization of one’s own personal identity in connection with a shared global identity; the relativization of the sense of belonging to a specific national society in connection to the global transnational society; and the relativization of the single national society in relation to the system of world society.¹⁶

World religions provide original interpretations of social ethics, to be included in the social structure of the new governance, if it is meant to be truly representative and legitimate. The deprivatization of religion also

works in this direction, as shown by the insistence of traditional religions on the principle of “common good” as opposed to the aggregation of interests proposed by the modern liberal-individualist political theory.

There has also been an attempt to conceptualize a more comprehensive Buddhist paradigm of international relations through the lens of the theory of “Codependent Origination”, “a non-state-centric theory” that actively posits an inter-dependent and environmentally sustainable, non-violent world that prioritizes human and environmental security above short-term national or corporate interests.¹⁷

Policy

In several areas of global governance world religions have articulated concrete proposals and outlined practical political choices. However, not all instances of those policies are presented in terms of precise options and actions; sometimes they take the form of cost-opportunity alternatives, like in the case of military spending. Moreover, the political discourse is often rooted in an anthropological and communitarian comprehensive vision which represents the foundational justification of policy choices. In this section I will deal with two specific issues addressed by global religions that are relevant for global governance: global public goods and human security.

Religions and “global public goods”

As far as the concept of “global public goods” (GPG) is concerned, such definition usually refers to the following criteria: global public goods are those goods whose benefits, or costs, are a matter of concern for the whole humanity in geographic terms, whose effects have strong inter-generational implications and whose supply requires strong cooperation among states. In addition to principles like the one of non-exclusiveness (the good must be available for all) and non-competition (the use of one unit of good by one person must not undermine the others’ right to use it), GPG must also fulfill other criteria such as:

- ▶ geographical standard (GPG should ideally include all countries);
- ▶ socio-economic standard (GPG should regard all social groups);
- ▶ inter-generational standard (GPG should be available to future generations).

Examples of “final” global public goods are: multidimensional welfare (“capacity” approach; i.e. health and education); an economic order which is open and inclusive (“freedom from necessity”); peace; climatic stability; financial stability; biodiversity and control of infectious diseases.

“Intermediate” global public goods are means of international cooperation, such as: FAO; Kyoto protocols; WHO; Millennium Development Goals; “Global standards”.¹⁸ Beyond these technical definitions, there are interesting examples of compelling conceptualizations of what really constitute not only a “global public good”, but also a “global *common* good” stemming from religious perspectives. The most philosophical one comes from the works of Raimon Panikkar and can be summarized as the “cosmotheandric” vision of the reality.¹⁹

For Panikkar, knowledge and experience cannot be divided into three realms—the divine, the natural and the human—but all the components combine harmoniously and give us—so to speak—a complete outlook of the universe. This inter-relation among the different aspects of life and moral beliefs presents a consistent case for the respect and preservation of the environment, since damaging one element of the triadic structure would imply destroying the quality of the human presence in the world and the possibility of a comprehensive epistemological appraisal of it.

A vision more in tune with rational Western culture is the work of Teilhard de Chardin, who writes of the unfolding design of the cosmos toward an Omega Point in the future: he proposes the theory known as “orthogenesis”, that is the idea that evolution occurs in a directional, goal-driven way. Generating unnecessary distress and even chaos in this movement would have unforeseeable consequences for the evolution itself.²⁰

In much more practical terms, the final document of the 2010 Religious Leaders’ Summit urges the world leaders to address the immediate needs of the most vulnerable while simultaneously making structural changes to close the growing gap between rich and poor; to prioritize long-term environmental sustainability and halt climate change, while addressing its impacts on the poor; to invest in peace and remove factors that feed cycles of violent conflict and costly militarism.²¹

Religions and human security

From an ethical-hermeneutical point of view, an important area on convergence of the different religious outlook of the policies of global

governance could be found in the wide domain of what has been called “human security”.

Generally speaking, the expression “human security” must be understood as complementary to the traditional concept of “security”, which is mainly focused on defense and protection (of people, borders, resources, territories, and urban settlements). The concept of human security includes questions and problems that cannot be handled by using the traditional “(hard) security tools”. It implies the ideas of “opportunity” and “capacity”.

This means to make sure that all individual and communities enjoy some reasonable level of protection against threats not only to their existence but also to their connections and values. Human security is the horizontal and holistic dimension of security: state-centered security and security understood in a Hobbesian way, in terms of preservation of life, are both essential but are only parts of the overall picture. Religions could contribute in shaping a concept of security which is wider than the traditional one. For instance, in international relations we hear a lot about *security communities* understood as alliance of states, but much less about *communitarian security*, that is an idea of security based on the commonality of personal and social conditions, based on an alliance of individual and open communities well beyond the traditional national borders.

The United Nations Development Program in its 1994 *Human Development Report* lists four fundamental characteristics of human security:

- 1 Human security is a universal concern that is relevant to people everywhere, in rich nations and poor.
- 2 The components of human security are inter-dependent. When the security of people is endangered anywhere in the world, all nations are likely to get involved.
- 3 Human security is easier to ensure through early prevention than later intervention.
- 4 Human security is people-centered. It is concerned with people who live and breathe in a society, how freely they exercise their many choices, how much access they have to market and social opportunities, and whether they live in conflict or in peace.²²

So, it is quite clear that in this context “security” is not meant in the state-centric/military common understanding of the term, but rather as related to the person and her social sphere.

One variation of the notion of human security is the broader concept of shared security. As we read in the final call of the IV Summit of Religious Leaders on the occasion of the G8,²³ held in Rome on 16–17 June 2009, the term “security” is used in a new way. The word “shared” is added to draw attention to a fundamental moral conviction: the wellbeing of each is related to the wellbeing of others and to our environment. Shared security focuses on the fundamental inter-relatedness of all persons and the environment. It includes a comprehensive respect for the inter-connectedness and dignity of all life and acknowledges the fundamental fact that we all live in one world.

Moreover, shared security is concerned with the full continuum of human relations from relationship amongst individuals to the ways that people are organized in nations and states. It follows that the security of one actor in international relations must not be detrimental to another.²⁴

Secularization and governance

To summarize, my thesis is that it would be a mistake to underestimate the influence of the visions and proposals concerning global governance based on religious attitudes.

The reason rests first of all on an *epistemological* level, on the fact that in the current reformulation of both the *policies* and *polity* of global governance the quest for legitimacy is too important to dismiss in advance of any plausible field of investigation.

But there is also a more practical or *phenomenological* reason to consider attentively the relation between religion and global governance, and it is goal-driven. The literature on secularism shows that there are at least five meanings of secularization, if we consider it a process with different but not necessarily sequential phases:

- ▶ *constitutional secularization* (the end of the special role granted to a specific religion);
- ▶ *policy secularization* (the assumption by the state of public functions previously ensured by religions);
- ▶ *institutional secularization* (the loss of influence of religion in the political system through the activities of religion-oriented political parties and pressure groups);

- ▶ *agenda secularization* (issues, needs and problems considered relevant in the political process no longer have a specifically religious character);
- ▶ *ideological secularization* (the evaluation and assessment of the structure and legitimacy of the political system and of the policies adopted and implemented are no longer rooted in religious beliefs.²⁵)

Table 2.1 shows a possible correspondence between global governance and the related three macro-areas of *polity*, *politics* and *policy*.

Scott Thomas argues that religious ideas or beliefs can be categorized as *worldviews*, *principled beliefs* and *causal beliefs*. World religions provide worldviews with the ambition to embody both cultural symbolism and scientific rationality. Religious ideas can also be considered as principled beliefs, since they are in many cases part of larger traditions that allow for a pluralistic debate on the elements of what is virtue and what constitutes a good life. Finally, religious ideas can also be conceptualized as casual beliefs when they play a role in influencing choices and strategies of the political actors based on wider conceptions of the common good that could be ultimately seen as the slow sedimentation of convictions originally disseminated by religious creeds.²⁶

A recent, accurate appraisal of this subject suggests that religions, from the point of view of the international relations, could be understood in three ways:

- ▶ religions as beliefs communities;
- ▶ religions as powers; and
- ▶ religions as speech-acts.²⁷

We can also depict this process in terms of direct or indirect influence of religious ideas regarding the global order and global policies. The

TABLE 2.1 *Secularization and global governance*

Macro-area	Type of internal secularization	Issues of global governance
Polity	Constitutional secularization	World order (international system, international regimes)
	Institutional secularization	Formats of global governance
Politics	Ideological secularization	Legitimation of global governance
Policy	Policy secularization	Functions of global governance
	Agenda secularization	Policies of global governance

challenge for world religions in relation to global governance is to transform the universal and somewhat abstract claims for a just and legitimate world order into causal beliefs for global decision-makers. Such an influence should be exerted, however, more through the channels of “voice” available in the public space than through a direct political involvement.

Notes

- 1 Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, Encyclical Letter (Vatican City: 29 June 2009).
- 2 Ibid., n. 67.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 C. R. Young, Eric Hauber, Mary Worthington, and Gerry Hall, *The Buddhist Perspective of the Soka Gakkai*, available at <http://www.g-e-a.org/docs/Young.pdf> (13 October 2013).
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Sheng-yen, “Applied Idealism: A Buddhist Perspective on the Necessity of Government”, *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 20, n. 2 (1998).
- 11 Daisaku Ikeda, *Humanizing Religion, Creating Peace*, 2008 Peace Proposal, available at <http://www.sgi.org/assets/pdf/peace2008.pdf> (13 October 2013), 2.
- 12 Peter Friedlander, “Buddhism and Politics”, in *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*, ed. Jeffrey Haynes (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 11.
- 13 *Engaging Religious Communities Abroad: A New Imperative for U.S. Foreign Policy—Report of the Task Force on Religion and the Making of U.S. Foreign Policy*, R. Scott Appleby and Richard Cizik, Coauthors; Thomas Wright, Project Director (Chicago: Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2010).
- 14 Peter L. Berger (ed.), *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religions and World Politics* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999).
- 15 José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 225.
- 16 Cf. Roland Robertson, “The Sacred and the World System”, in *The Sacred in a Secular Age*, ed. Philip Hammond (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
- 17 Maggie Grey, “The Bhavachakra or Wheel of Life Mandala as a Buddhist Paradigm for International Relations”, *The Culture Mandala*, Vol. 7, n. 2 (2006).

- 18 Inge Kaul, Isabelle Grunberg, and Marc Stern, *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- 19 Cf. Raimon Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience: Emerging Religious Consciousness* (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 1993).
- 20 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1975).
- 21 Interfaith Leaders in the G8 Nations, “A Time for Inspired Leadership and Action”, World Religions Summit, Winnipeg, Manitoba (Canada), 23 June 2010, <http://www.faithchallengeg8.com/pdfs/2010%20Interfaith%20Statement%20-%20English.pdf> (14 October 2013).
- 22 United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report* (1994) (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1994/chapters/>) (13 October 2013).
- 23 IV Summit of Religious Leaders on the Occasion of the G8, *Final Call*, Rome, 16–17 June 2009, <http://www.faithchallengeg8.com/pdfs/ItalyStatementEN.pdf>
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Jeff Haynes, *Religion in Global Politics* (Harlow: Longman, 1998), 3; George Moyser, “Politics and Religion in the Modern World: An Overview”, in *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*, ed. George Moyser (London: Routledge, 1991), 1–27.
- 26 Scott Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2005), 107–108.
- 27 Mona Kanwal Sheikh, “How Does Religion Matter? Pathways to Religion in International Relations”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 38, n. 2 (2012), 375.

Part II

Issues and Applications



3

Islam between National and International Politics

Abstracts: *When it comes to religions and cultures, we need to be very careful and critical towards the language that dominates the political debate in our societies. The truth is that in the present world, all civilization should be considered as “hyphenated”. As for the identities, we should bear in mind that they are in themselves a product of our different affiliations and links. This truism obviously applies also to religions; however, fundamentalism denies the complexity of our societies.*

Identity and pluralism are two defining challenges facing political Islam. Transnationalism and local political processes affects transitions to democracy in Arab countries in different ways and may produce high instability—like in Pakistan—when democracy is formally achieved but not consolidated in the political culture.

Keywords: Arab Spring; complex identities; cultures and meta-geography; Pakistan and transnational Islam

Ferrara, Pasquale. *Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826.0007.

Geopolitics and identity

When it comes to religions and cultures, we need to be very careful and critical toward the language that dominates the political and cultural debate in our society.

On the one hand, we use the word “West”, which is, strictly speaking, a geographical denomination, as a set of ideas, cultural features, institutional arrangements and economic organization that we tend to consider in a rather unitary way.

On the other, we improperly use the word “Islam”, which is a term with a strong religious and cultural connotation, as a geopolitical definition of an important area of the world. Here the terminology is crucial. Not only do we set side-by-side two definitions that in principle are not comparable, but also we assume that each term implies a unified and homologue portion of the world.

Of course, this is not the case. Let start from the West. For four years—between 2002 and 2006—I served as a diplomat at the Italian Embassy in Washington. The impression that I had from my American experience is that the idea of a monolithic Western world is simplistic. I found that this thesis had been formulated—in a much more authoritative way—by Jürgen Habermas.¹ However, theory is one thing, while putting it into practice is another. I personally realized that there are deep differences between the European and the American culture. To mention some of them, I would point to the skepticism of the American public toward the *big society*, that is, the intervention of the administrative and political power in economic life. In the eyes of many Americans, the welfare state in Europe, which represents one central element of the so-called “European model” (which incidentally is now in deep crisis), is a manifestation of the “socialist” turn of the Old Continent. Another point is death penalty, which has been banned in Europe and that, on the contrary, continues to be administrated in many states in the US. My point here is that even the West, in its different articulations, is a very plural and diverse world.

The same considerations apply to “Islam”. We know perfectly well that the declinations of the Islam are very different, and that there are important distinctions according to the history of the countries considered and to the specific brand of the Islamic faith. For example, it would be very odd to club in the same category, from the point of view of the political systems, countries such as Egypt and Iran, Saudi Arabia and

Turkey, Pakistan and Albania. Not to mention many Western countries with important and sometimes historical presence of Muslims, such as France, Germany and the United States.

Another possible source of confusion is the overlapping and somewhat interchangeable reference to the “Islamic” and to the “Arab” world.

In an extraordinary document approved in 2007 by the European Parliament (*Reforms in the Arab World: What Strategy Should the European Union Adopt?*²) we can find many interesting considerations. First of all, the document acknowledges that “the notion of Arab identity, understood as a unifying factor, is perceived and claimed to be a shared characteristic by the peoples and states of a vast geographical area stretching from the Maghreb, via the Mashreq and the Middle East, to the Persian Gulf”.

There is a consciousness of a “plural” Arab identity that

manifests itself in varying forms in different real-life situations, be they political (in monarchies, Arab republics or within the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority), religious (among Sunni—including Wahhabi Alawite, Druze and Shiite Muslims and Christians of various denominations) or social (in large cities, rural or mountainous areas, and among nomadic peoples).

Nevertheless, it “displays a number of common, transnational parameters”³ So, I think that we need to be more accurate in referring to broad and indefinite categories. Before or at least alongside with the “war on terror”, perhaps we need to fight an equally compelling “war on error”. Or, to put it differently, we must avoid any “collateral language” in our political narrative, because sometimes what we hear is what we see.⁴

Edward W. Said, in an article published in October 2001, wrote about “The Clash of Ignorance”⁵ and made the case against the use of “unedifying labels like Islam and the West” because “they mislead and confuse the mind, which is trying to make sense of a disorderly reality”. “Primitive passions and sophisticated know-how converge to create a fortified boundary not only between “West” and “Islam” but also between past and present, us and them, to say nothing of the very concepts of identity and nationality about which there is unending disagreement and debate.”⁶

This attitude

speaks to how much simpler it is to make bellicose statements for the purpose of mobilizing collective passions than to reflect, examine, sort out what it is we are dealing with in reality, the interconnectedness of innumerable lives, “ours” as well as “theirs”. These are tense times—goes on Said—but it

is better to think in terms of powerful and powerless communities, the secular politics of reason and ignorance, and universal principles of justice and injustice, than to wander off in search of vast abstractions that may give momentary satisfaction but little self-knowledge or informed analysis.⁷

Despite Samuel Huntington's intellectually compelling narrative, I think that even identifying the "borders" between cultures and civilizations is an impossible task, well before coming to a conclusion on whether and how much conflictive is their interaction. A case in point is Turkey and the debate on the accession of that country to the European Union. Again, in this peculiar debate there is always a certain amount of ambiguity between identity and geography. As Massimo Cacciari, an Italian thinker, notes in his book about the *Geo-philosophy of Europe*, in the beginning Europe is defined as absolute distinction toward Asia, but at the same time this distinction doesn't imply the negation of any connection. According to Cacciari, "inquiring about the difference means inquiring about identity, and to be stunned by the difference leads to the 'memory' of unity".⁸

Those who are against the admission of Turkey in the EU claim that there is a wide cultural difference toward Europe. My personal experience of the European Union (1999–2002, as a political counselor at the Italian Permanent Representation in Brussels) teaches me a different story. For instance, there are very few points in common between the Greek and the Swedish society, and still both countries are active members of the European Union. As Pierre Erny puts it, there is a Europe of plains and a Europe of mountains; a Europe of wine, of beer, of cider; a Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Europe; a Roman, Celtic, German and Slav Europe; a hot and cold Europe.⁹

As for Italy, I would say that from a cultural point of view we share at least the same points of contact with many countries of the Southern shore of the Mediterranean as with our European partners on the shore of the Baltic (sometimes referred to as the "Mediterranean of the North",¹⁰ despite the weather). My point is that, in the case of Turkey, the approach cannot be rooted into cultural difference; it is, rather, a problem of political choice.

Neither is it possible to use geography as an objective criterion of identification. All maps are conceptual; the idea of the world "as it is", with its boundaries, is actually a human construction. If you consider geography an objective science, think again. For instance, according to two American scholars, Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, even the concept of continents is open to interpretation. In fact, geographical distinctions

are actually an exercise of “meta-geography”.¹¹ This is particularly true today if we consider the Western/Islamic world dichotomy that dominates the political discourse of the international relations today.

As for concept of the “West”, there have been several geographical versions. The portion of the earth denoted by the term “West” varies tremendously from author to author and from context to context. In one extreme incarnation, the West included only England. Then, we find the standard minimal West, which is essentially Britain, France, the Low Countries and Switzerland; the historical West of medieval Christendom (circa 1250); the West of the Cold War Atlantic alliance; the global West of modernization (see, for instance, Arnold Toynbee’s cartography showing the entire globe as under Western hegemony in one form or another).¹² It is a *shifting* and *moving* border, which is a structural and logic contradiction.

Other approaches combine identity and geography, like in Huntington’s theory.¹³ The trouble with this theory is less with the epistemological merit of the concept of “civilization” than with the fact that here separation and even conflict prevails on interaction and interconnection. On the one hand, it inflates the reciprocal “sense of siege”; on the other hand, it is articulated in strategic terms.

Now, if we want to be fair, there is a clear link also between the European identity and the Islamic civilization, since the latter has been for centuries an important player in Europe. The problem is that today we need an evolution from a negative approach, which has been historically shaped in the form of the Enemy, to the acknowledgment of a mutual contribution. In more than 1,500 years, there have been different stages of cultural and religious division of the European continent and of the Mediterranean region. Each stage implies a different definition of the identity of the other.

Richard Bulliet makes an interesting and rather provocative proposal. In his book *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization*,¹⁴ he argues that modern European and Muslim history are deeply intertwined and that one cannot be understood in isolation from the other, thereby launching a profound challenge to teachers, historians and policy-makers. Islam and Christianity have tremendous common roots and history—nearly as much as Christianity and Judaism do, which is why we usually speak of a “Judeo-Christian Civilization”.

Bulliet envisions—with some anticipation—a future where Islamic countries will have active democracies (and the process has already

started in the Mediterranean, not without shortcomings and contradictions). He also challenges the popular view that Islam has an inherent separation of church and state problem, since Christians have had similar issues in the past. Many of the problems in the Middle East can be solved through liberalization and widening the political spectrum. Like the West, the Islamic world must combine the need for inclusion and pluralism with a predominant religious identity. By examining our common traditions, both the Islamic and Christian worlds can expand and grow.

As we can read in the above-mentioned Resolution of the European Parliament, one important element is the awareness that any outside attempt to impose reforms, without the partner countries having a sufficient stake in the processes and means employed to achieve them, “is bound to fail”. The European Union, in defining its position on reforms in the Arab world, must take account of cultural, historical and political differences, whilst at the same time respecting the will of Arab peoples without proposing that they copy European models. Change, in order to be legitimate, must be supported by the peoples concerned, and fostering the development of civil society and respect for fundamental rights “must not be confused with the choice of regime nor with the procedures for choosing leaders—argues the report”.

Bearing these caveats in mind, the report goes on stressing the need “to give more encouragement in the Arab world to the movement for the reform of the rule of law by legal means”. The report voices hope for “greater commitment on the part of Arab countries to religious freedom, or the right of individuals and communities to freely profess their beliefs and practice their faith”.

So, the idea is that we can do many things together, and this is not restricted to the field of the fight against terrorism, which has dominated the agenda of the world since 9/11. On the relations with the Arab World, the report says that

while it is important that the Euro–Arab relationship include consideration of the need to combat terrorism, it is vital for the effectiveness and substance of that relationship that the fight against terrorism does not overshadow or hold back a host of other topics of common interest, such as economic and social development, employment, sustainable development, proper public administration, the fight against corruption, the development and consolidation of a strong and genuine civil society as the promoter of advances in terms of the democratic system and of tolerance, the fight for gender equality,

conservation of the global cultural heritage, inter-cultural dialogue, good governance, free and fair media, political participation and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, freedom of conscience including religious freedom, freedom of expression and association, the rejection of torture and the abolition of the death penalty, and the rejection of intolerance and fundamentalism, with a view to creating a genuine area of shared peace and prosperity.¹⁵

So, we should emphasize the need for cooperation in a broad range of urgent issues, rather than contemplating or even opposing respective identities.

The truth is that in the present world, all civilization should be considered as “hyphenated”. Our societies are becoming more and more complex. As for the identities, we should bear in mind that they are in themselves a product of our different affiliations and links. Confining our identity, on a personal or a national level with only one of this network of affiliations, links, connections, affections, elective membership, would result in a terrible loss of potentiality and would limit our possibilities of realizing our goals. To this regard, I would like to mention Samuel Huntington—this time in a more constructive framework. He rightly points out that there are many sources of identity:¹⁶

- ▶ Ascriptive, such as age, ancestry, gender, kin (blood relatives), ethnicity;
- ▶ Cultural, such as language, nationality, religion, civilization;
- ▶ Territorial, such as neighborhood, village, town, city, province, state, country, geographical area, continent, hemisphere;
- ▶ Political, such as faction, interest group, movement, party, ideology;
- ▶ Economic, such as occupation, industry, economic sector, labor union, class;
- ▶ Social, such as friends, club, team, colleagues, status.

Now, the aim of any fundamentalism is exactly the attempt to confine the identity to only one exclusive type of affiliation, the religious one. Identity cannot grow by reduction; it only grows by interaction. I personally share the opinion that that we should abandon a “holistic” view of cultures. The interpretation of cultures as hermetic, sealed, internally self-consistent wholes is untenable. We must defuse both in the West and in the Islamic World “the fundamentalist dream of purity and of a world without moral ambivalence and compromise. The negotiation of complex cultural dialogues in a global civilization is now our lot.”¹⁷

Following the reasoning of an intellectual like Amin Maalouf,¹⁸ we must realize that more and more we become “hedge individuals”, that is, persons living across and inside different cultures, languages, social and political systems. If we consider ourselves and our civilizations in these terms, we will be more aware of the need for finding a common ground, for thinking outside the box. This by no means implies that we renounce our identities; rather, it means that our identity lies more in our common future than in our divided past. Michael Walzer wrote a book a decade ago proposing a distinction between “thick” and a “thin” morality.¹⁹ With that Walzer refers to the fact that we can share a “core morality, differently elaborated in different cultures”. This common set of principles is “thin” because it identifies some basic, strong values, not because it is relativist or without substance. Rather, it is a form of minimalism that concentrates on what we cannot live without. This minimalism as common ground stems from the necessary character of any human society: universal because it is human, particular because it is a society.

Minimalism—in Walzer’s view—is less the product of persuasion than of mutual recognition among the protagonists of different fully developed moral cultures. It consists of principles and rules that are reiterated in different times and places, and that are perceived to be similar even though they are expressed in different idioms and reflect different histories and versions of the world.²⁰

What are those “principles and rules” that make a political system both viable and comparable among them? The three basic principles that, in the West, represent the very core of political modernity are those of freedom, equality and solidarity, which is the political version of “fraternity”. It is interesting that the former French President Nicolas Sarkozy stressed (alas! only in theory) the importance of fostering “une république fraternelle”, a fraternal republic. Now, we can say that this idea of fraternity represents a core morality, a thin but essential common segment of our societies, a sort of invisible or implicit but nonetheless fundamental link that ties our community together. This perception of common belonging should perhaps be expanded across borders and cultures. That task would imply, as political thinker John Rawls put it, that our societies at least “honor a reasonably just Law for the Society of Peoples”.²¹ If this is true, the task would be to make this principle universal and inclusive. We can have our own particular versions of freedom and equality inside our societies; but we do need to have a shared and

open-minded version of what it means to live, with all our differences and complex identities, in the same world in a spirit of fraternity. To this aim, mutual recognition is the first, indispensable step.

Political transitions in the Arab–Islamic world

A test case (which so far has produced ambivalent results) for this mutual legitimation is the structural change in the relationship between Europe and the Arab–Islamic world that occurred as a result of the “Arab spring”, namely the political and social upheavals that took place in several nations in North Africa and the Middle East since 2010. In all complex political processes, and especially in the case of sociopolitical transitions, there are actors which pursue the sole objective of “derailment”. In other words, there are political, social and economic forces which “bet” on the failure of the process rather than on its potential positive outcomes. During the “Arab Spring”, many of these “prophets of doom” were Western, but there have been—and there still are—local “spoilers”. For instance, the 2012 murder of US Ambassador Stevens in Benghazi, who, it should be pointed out, could certainly be said to have been a man of dialogue,²² was an attempt to jeopardize the democratic consolidation of Libya. However, it is of paramount importance to remain vigilant and to avoid falling in the spoiler’s “trap”: religions, as such, should not be viewed as causal factors in extremist behavior. In other words, the religious sentiments of entire populations should not be confused with the political agenda of few fringe elements. This is especially true for Islam, which oftentimes falls prey to “Islamists”; these are more interested in gaining and maintaining power rather than spreading the word of the Prophet.²³ However, this is also true for the “Christian” West, when the proponents of religions as normative instruments for social order and closed identity-building use tragedies which affect all of humanity to affirm that no dialogue is possible, that certain religions and cultures are “superior” and that the only possible international course of action is isolation or the forced exportation of democracy. Most likely, this was the intent of the authors of movies and cartoons,²⁴ which caused protests and widespread outrage across the Muslim world. These planned provocations hoped to produce a chain reaction which would lead to the conclusion that no “spring” is possible in the Arab world.

The European strategy toward these areas should be based on a greater degree of realism: contrary to what is believed, it is not “realistic” to view entire societies as being completely brainwashed by the logic of militant and aggressive Islamism. It was inevitable (and obvious) that the events in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East (the “revolts” or “revolutions” which began in 2010) would have led to the expansion of the sphere of political participation, with the entrance on the political scene of new players; the emergence or consolidation of religiously inspired political movements (which had sometimes been banned in the past) was also perfectly predictable. Rather than demonizing the process, there should be a recognition of the fact that without the full integration of political Islam, the sustainability of the ongoing transitions could be put in jeopardy. In countries such as Tunisia and Egypt, the political dialogue needed to bring about greater stability and sustainability is tied to an old European and Latin American idea. In many countries of the Old Continent—for example in Italy, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and to some extent also in France—and of Latin America—such as Chile—functioning formulas for the political engagement of citizens with visions of the world marked by religious motivations have been developed. The historical experience of European religiously inspired political movements has been characterized by a presence of such movements within the political systems that took into account the principles of secularism; these operated in the context of democratic and representative institutions, with the full acceptance of constitutional principles and respect for political and cultural pluralism. If a “Christian democracy” (which helps organize the political commitment of believers) is possible, why allow a few violent and reactionary Islamists to convince the world that there can never be an “Islamic democracy”? Incidentally, Muslim proponents of the clash of civilizations would have us believe this supposed incompatibility.

Regarding the issue of “compatibility” between Islam and democracy, it is important to point out that about 300 million Muslims have lived in democratic political systems during the first decade of the twentieth century (such as Albania, Indonesia, Senegal and Turkey, all Muslim-majority nations). If we add the 178 million Muslim Indians (a Hindu-majority nation), the total number of Muslims living in democratic regimes is close to 500 million.²⁵

Instead of falling into the “incompatibility” trap, it might be useful, in light of the current phase of structural changes in region, to establish a

Mediterranean dialogue between “Western” organizations and scholars and stakeholders in the Arab–Islamic world, in order to share analyses and proposals aimed at underscoring the opportunities of the “Muslim democracy” framework detailed above (while not hiding the potential issues). Turkey should also be included in this framework, as the nation is experimenting with possible political formulations of Islamic principles in the context of democratic conditionality necessary to comply with the required parameters for potential entry in the European Union. Finally, this topic should be further pursued at an interfaith and interreligious level. Some preliminary points should be set in light of possible future political dialogue on this matter:

- ▶ The perspective should be forward looking and not cling to the past;
- ▶ There should be no connection to the overarching “political formula” (creating specifically and exclusive “Christian” or “Muslim” political parties);
- ▶ The point of view should not be religious; rather, it should take into account relevant political frameworks and actors;
- ▶ The dialogue should not be focused on an individual nation, targeting the relationship between the Southern Mediterranean and the Euro-Atlantic world as a whole;
- ▶ It should take into account the current “post-secular” dimension, both in terms of the public role of religion and of the religious motivations for political action;
- ▶ It requires an insight into the secular state and institutions in light of both the European experience and of the new movements which have appeared on the scene in the Arab–Islamic world (from this point of view, the models developed for this purpose should be as comprehensive as possible, and should be placed on a *continuum* of possible iterative variations of Islam and politics, going from radicalism, such as the Iranian pseudo-hierocracy to Indonesian pluralism, passing through the Pakistani “canon” and the Turkish pragmatic arrangement);
- ▶ It should involve a serious and well-grounded comparative analysis of the different movements in order to identify possible ideological and operational overlaps.

A separate issue concerns the possible degree of conditionality in establishing a dialogue with movements inspired by Islam which

decide to enter the political arena. Essential conditions include the following:

- ▶ The condemnation of all forms of political violence;
- ▶ The acceptance of democratic values (especially pluralism and equality, particularly vis-à-vis gender issues).

Other principles could be added to the list above, tied in particular to the need to adopt an ethical and judicial framework based on individual liberties, not tied exclusively to the actions of the communities.

Politics and religion in Pakistan: international and transnational dimensions

A very complex case, in terms of the mutual influence between politics and religion, is represented by Pakistan and the historical role of Islam within the country and beyond its border. However, analyzing this specific case requires a rigorous analytical framework in order to avoid excessive simplifications or epistemological shortcuts.

A triadic relationship

The relationship between politics and religion within internal political systems is generally analyzed on the basis of a bipolar framework, with insufficient attention devoted to external influences or constraints at play.

A better perception of the numerous relevant variables can be obtained by linking this bipolar relationship with the international (or, better yet, transnational) dimension. This makes it possible to shed light on political options, events and short- and long-term effects of the relationship between politics and religion. It also allows a broadening of the field of study, enabling an understanding of the phenomenon which goes beyond the traditional categories of the modern Westphalian state.

That being said, this section will attempt to examine a few essential traits of the relationship between religion and the political system in Pakistan in the last decades of the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first, with a special attention to the external religious and political environment. In other words, it will be an attempt to assess how world politics might have influenced and conditioned the above-mentioned relationship, and, vice-versa (albeit a far more limited

fashion), how they international domain may have been influenced by the complex interplay of religion and politics in Pakistan.

The thesis is that the transnational transformation of the relationship between politics and religion in Pakistan (which began in the 1980s and which is still relevant to this day) was influenced both by the universal doctrine of Islam and by the (regional) “exportation” of the internal dynamics of the relationship.

A long, defining conflict occurred in Pakistan between two versions of Islam: one nationalized and state-based (sometimes even militarized), the other founded on the “political” doctrines of the religion, with the ambition of replacing the functions on a global level which had been a prerogative of decolonization and of national liberation movements. The latter seems to have emerged as victorious, having irreversibly confounded the opposing camp.

A “genetic” unease

Since its hurried independence in 1947, Pakistan has suffered from an acute, almost “genetic” feeling of insecurity, made worse by a recurring identity crisis. The result of these factors has been a state founded upon national security doctrines, within which the army has played a predictably major role, also in terms of defining national interests in an anti-Indian sense (for instance, by launching and developing a risky nuclear program and by attempting to install “friendly” governments in Afghanistan, with little regard of the political costs involved in these reckless operations).

The prevalence of security-based strategic interests has come at the detriment of other fundamental aspects of statal structures, such as democratic consolidation, the development of strong political institutions and an economic system capable of producing prosperity and equal opportunity.²⁶

There have been two foundational relationships of the Pakistani political system, one between the military and civil society and the other between Islam and the state.²⁷ During the course of its history, Pakistan has had to endure four military coups, each claiming to hold the definitive answer to the ongoing issue of religion and politics, and in particular regarding the possibility of developing democracy within an Islamic state, combining Muslim identity with parliamentary or presidential democracy.²⁸

The security propensity of the Pakistani military élites is at least partially derived from the nation’s colonial history. In particular, the balance

of power in the region has been defined by a series of strategic shortcuts, which brought the British Empire to support local semi-feudal potentates, thus favoring political stability over the quality of governance. Pakistan inherited the security-state mentality, defined in terms as a “vice-regal tradition” or “a permanent state of martial law”.²⁹

Further genetic peculiarities of the Pakistani state can be inferred from the nation’s independence and foundation. First, the emancipation from India, justified on an ethnic and religious basis, did not immediately lead to identity-based policies centered on a “us vs. them” dynamics. On the contrary, the nation’s founding father, Jinnah, strongly emphasized secularism and tolerance. Second, the creation of the Pakistani nation-state, which was after all an attempt to resolve the growing tensions within the Indian subcontinent and to develop a homogeneous political and cultural framework, did not impede the development of similar tensions within the newly founded nation, especially in problematic areas such as Baluchistan and the north-western territories. During the colonial era, these two areas represented the outermost regions of British India, and to this day (albeit for entirely different reasons compared to the colonial era) they are areas in which the effective exercise of Pakistani sovereignty is problematic. Third, the development of Islam as a fundamental element of the Pakistani nation did not transform the country into a reference point for Islamic communities on a regional and global level; to the contrary, this development proved to be detrimental to the consolation of democratic institutions. In other words, Pakistan failed to reach the objective of becoming the fulcrum of democratic Islam, diverging considerably from the virtuous path undertaken, for instance, by Turkey’s ‘Justice and development’ party.

To make matters worse, Islamic communities in the areas which proved to be the hardest to manage, such as those along the porous pseudo-border with Afghanistan known as the “Durand line”, became recipients of massive financial and infrastructural contributions (given particularly to madrasahs) from a large cluster of transnational Islamic charities (often based in Saudi Arabia).

The “Islamic Leviathan”

The secular Pakistani state entered a profound crisis toward the end of 1960s. Furthermore, it became increasingly evident that such a crisis was due to long-term structural cleavages rather than short-term

sustainability issues, as the Pakistani state reached the limits of its power, its capacities and its social control capabilities.

The Pakistani political system viewed Islam as a factor of national (even nationalist) cohesion at a time (the 1970s and 1980s) of systemic crisis of the state. Within such a context, the goal of Islamization “from above” can be said to have been the result of a strategic decision, namely that of providing new authority to state, of enhancing the legitimacy of institutions and of confounding the political opposition, often expressed through forms of radicalized Islam.

The fall of Ayub Khan’s regime, which came after a decade of authoritarian rule and growing social tensions and which emerged following a rapid industrialization, paved the way to pressing demands to put an end to secularism and to rediscover the “sociopolitical” aspects of Islam.

The forced consolidation of the state, which had experienced numerous setbacks following independence, was put into serious question by growing waves of delegitimization, facilitated by the “closed” nature of the post-colonial regime; in just a few years, this jeopardized the very notion of the modern state, which had after all been “imported” from outside.

The transitional regime of general Yahya Khan, which lasted until 1971, had to manage two fundamental, almost existential crises. The first one involved the foundational political pact at the core of the nation, with the first general election in the history of the nation held in 1970; the second crisis threatened the very territorial cohesion of Pakistan, bringing about the independence of eastern Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh. Within this context, dominated by a dual crisis, the governing élites attempted to forge a new relationship with Islam, which they now viewed as an ally in the struggle to re-establish national cohesion rather than an obstacle to the consolidation of modern and effective sovereign powers. However, the faith in the centripetal potential of Islam was obviously misplaced in the case of the secessionist Bangladeshi nationalism, as this force did not manage to affirm intra-Islamic solidarity above territorial interests and in spite of the desire to leave a union that had proved to be ineffective from the very beginning. The failure of the forceful “integration” attempts enacted by Yahya Khan brought about the rise of the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who sought popular support through a populist political agenda. Thanks to a very basic political program (*kapra, roti, makan*—clothes, bread, a roof), Bhutto managed to combine Islam with a socialist rhetoric, proclaiming a sort of Islamic

socialism based upon the “egalitarianism of the Prophet” (*musawat-i Muhammadi*). Quite opposite from the models of forced top-down modernization brought forth by Ayub Khan was Bhutto attempts to stimulate processes of profound social transformation through mass mobilization, using a (albeit limited and disconnected) bottom-up approach.³⁰ In spite of the pseudo-socialist rhetoric, the PPP however never really took off as a mass mobilization movement, remaining tied to local notables and never taking advantage of the momentary discredit of the army in order to construct solid and durable forms of popular participation.

The adoption of authoritarian methods and the attempts to gain the support of the oligarchy and the army represented a historic missed opportunity in terms of political-institutional consolidation and socio-economic reconstruction. The ambition of the PPP to “reinvent” the state, seeking popular support from Islamic groups and movements, proved to be a mere illusion which only brought about a further deterioration of the state and its credibility in the eyes of the populace. Even Bhutto’s political-economic agenda, namely the nationalization of industry and an agrarian reform, was handled clumsily and was guided by self-interests, giving rise to a new “oligarchic” bureaucracy with a proprietary conception of the state.

Zia-ul-Haq’s 1977 coup opened a new chapter in the relationship between the state and Islam. Zia directly attempted to impose an ideological Islamization of Pakistani society, which opened a series of cleavages that torment the country and the region to this day. These include the exponential growth of religiously motivated political affiliation, the proliferation of “radical” madrasahs and the spread of troubling culture of sectarian violence.

General Zia never hid the fact that he considered himself to be on a “divine mission”, to bring “Islamic order” in Pakistan. This conviction however did not stop the general from establishing a preferential relationship with the US, managing to obtain, for instance, substantial military aid (in particular, Pakistan received 40 F-16 fighters) and a certain degree of implicit “tolerance” on the matter of the nuclear arms program.

Numerous policy elements contributed to the progressive transnationalization of Islam in Pakistan. For instance, during his regime, Zia favored a sort of “Islamization of knowledge”, creating the International Islamic University of Islamabad which, in its original intentions, was tasked with demonstrating that an educational system based on

Islamic values is not incompatible with modern, specialized, technical knowledge. However, the transnational turning point in this field came about with the adoption of policies that favored Islamic learning centers (madrasahs). Traditionally, such schools had remained outside the control of the state and put under the supervision of the *ulemas*, which could count on generous financial support of Saudi Arabia and from remittances of Pakistani emigrants in the Persian Gulf. The Afghan War (fought against the Soviets) helped increase the number of madrasahs, which eventually became recruitment centers for fighters in the Afghan guerilla.

On his part, Zia provided generous sources of financing to Islamic learning centers and allowed political parties to found madrasahs. From 1980 onwards, these centers could also count on the financial support of the *zakat* collected by the government: for instance, in 1984, these were assigned 9.4 percent of available funds, which were distributed among 2.273 madrasahs and covering 111.050 students.³¹

After the death of Zia in an airplane crash in August 1988, Benazir Bhutto, head of the PPP and daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, became Prime Minister, making Pakistan the first Muslim-majority nation with a woman as head of government. However, Bhutto had to face a series of systemic challenges, such as ethnic conflicts, growing economic problems and lack of parliamentary support.

After the end of Zia's rule, the forces that had opposed the Islamization of the nation attempted to bring about an ideological redefinition of the state and of its aims.

The political alliance that supported Islamization policies pursued by Zia was still solidly in place, causing a polarization of the nation in pro-Zia (represented by the army, Islamist factions and the private sector) and anti-Zia camps (namely the PPP and its allies, constituted principally by the wealthy landowning elite and ethnic representation parties). The Muslim League, under the guidance of Nawaz Sharif, represented the fulcrum of the pro-Zia coalition, while Bhutto's PPP led the anti-Zia efforts. The ensuing extreme polarization and factional division produced the regression of the nation in terms of both economic growth and governability (with corruption becoming endemic). Furthermore, in this new democratic phase, the ongoing dialogue between Islam and the state was progressively transformed in an overt opposition, and the reference points of Pakistani Islam became increasingly transnational in nature, at the detriment of national identification.

Through phases which differed in terms of relevance and efficacy, between 1970 and 1990 Pakistan experienced a progressive and tormented process of “desecularization”, at both a political and societal level; this occurred in open contrast with the strongly secular post-colonial framework which characterized the birth of the nation. In this phase, desecularization was a process produced “from above”, through political power, in order to achieve social and institutional stability. Subsequently, desecularization altered its polarity, becoming a process propelled “from below”, namely from civil society actors and popular (often radical) religious movements.³²

In instances in which the forces opposing secularization acquire high levels of political influence, especially through political-institutional mechanisms, a “desecularizing regime” can be said to exist. Such a regime is founded upon normative and political/ideological parameters, which in turn become the distribution networks through which desecularization is conducted, spread and sustained. Such parameters include the following elements:

- ▶ The breadth of the pursued desecularization, which may involve only a few cultural and institutional fields or which may seek the religious transformation of all of society;
- ▶ The institutional mechanisms (both formal and informal), which assign power and authority to secular and religious actors, which define the limits of civil and religious liberties for these actors; the enforcement of such mechanisms is also important, as well as the ideologies underpinning them.³³

In particular, the regime of Zia-ul-Haq can be viewed as propagating forms of desecularization “from above” (case in point, the introduction in the criminal code of sections 295B and 295C regarding blasphemy³⁴); this strategy however seemed to work against the intentions of the political-institutional establishment, as it also favored a desecularization “from below”, oftentimes opposed to the regime and with transnational contours. The inclusion of the religious dimension within the Pakistani political system occurred according to mechanisms which are reconducible in part to the theory of the “Islamic Leviathan”.³⁵

The thesis in question originates from the notion that the relationship between religion and state formation has not been adequately explored by social sciences. This is partly due to the belief, which is very common among academics and analysts,³⁶ that the social changes of the

contemporary area, engendered by the current economic paradigm, have produced a “privatization” of faith, giving birth to profound and irreversible secularization processes. The result of such processes, in light of this interpretation, undermined the influence of the sense of religious cohesion in the process of state formation (especially in post-colonial contexts). While this belief may be questionable in the case of Western Europe, it seems wholly unrealistic vis-à-vis the processes of state formation in the Muslim world. The post-colonial Muslim states certainly took on many of the aspects of the modern Western state, attempting to emulate it not only from a political-institutional standpoint but also in ideological terms (with the end goal being liberal democracy, enacting a rigid separation between politics and religion). This implicit “Kemalism”, present within numerous state-formation processes in Muslim-majority societies, replaced religion as the main instrument of national cohesion, introducing a form of nationalist “republicanism”. However, this process of forced religious privatization, with faith removed from the public sphere, produced a profound rejection of the secular state, facilitating the development of anti-system oppositions and transforming religion as an instrument of identity reclamation and formation (and also, potentially, of exclusion). It was the marginalization of religion that produced a reaction which was at times revolutionary, as events which occurred in Iran in 1979 can attest.

These stability exigencies helped convince post-colonial élites in Muslim-majority states to utilize anew the symbolism, the rhetoric of the powerful identity-building mechanisms of religion in order to reinforce the apparatus of state and to obtain political-institutional stability.³⁷

This short-term strategy, implemented by nationalist political élites, did not produce the desired results: starting from 1970, it became increasingly difficult to undertake political decisions which were perceived as being even partly misaligned from the social and religious program of Islam. As it became evident that the “ad-hoc” use of Islam was unsustainable and politically perilous, the issue therefore became how to directly face the question of the role (and the compatibility) of Islam within a pluralist state.

According to Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, it is possible to identify three models of interaction between the state and Islam, each with differing outcomes in terms of how the state is viewed, of societal development and of the “mediatory” role of Islam. The three above-mentioned models are “rejectionist secularism”, “opportunist Islamization” and “thoroughgoing Islamization”.³⁸

Examples of the first model include Algeria after the 1992 coup and Turkey after the 1997 “post-modern” coup. At the time of the events, these states chose to “bunker down” in defense of secular ideology, producing the exclusion of all significant Islamic presence within the public sphere and the political process. These events represent a recasting of an entirely secular vision of the state developed in the 1950s and 1960s, which utilizes coercion to affirm a centralized state which views the development and influence of Islam in national politics and society as being detrimental to its core interests.

The “opportunistic Islamization” model is founded upon a superficial accommodation of state structures and policies to Islam, without however altering the governing and foundational dynamics of the political system. While this approach may appear Machiavellian, the proponents of this model ultimately fail to obtain the sought “colonization” of Islam by the state, and also do not achieve the ultimate goal of mobilizing and nationalizing the masses³⁹ through the use of Islamic rhetoric. It represents more of a tactic than a strategy, and sooner or later it backfires: the return to professing a “local” culture and ideology based on these tenets produced a short-term political-institutional stabilization during post-colonial transitions, but it does not produce any sort of deep stabilization of (which is obtained through genuine faith-building and consensus-accruing mechanisms) and popular support for the state. Examples of such attempts include Jordan from 1950 onwards, and, in part, Indonesia during the 1990s. In such instances, the temporary *rapprochement* between religious and political leaders managed to achieve limited governance and stability objectives, but it was not based on the idea that Islam might play a fundamental role in strengthening or expanding state power and legitimation. In historical instances such as Egypt from 1971 onwards and Turkey between 1980 and 1997, the state has attempted to weaken the Islamist field through a “divide and conquer” policy and by coopting part of the radical forces operating within the respective states. In almost the totality of these cases, the end goal was to achieve, through indirect and “sly” means, a control of the religious sphere in order to enhance the security of the state.

The third model, thoroughgoing Islamization, can be applied to the strategies deployed by Malaysia and by Pakistan between 1970 and 1990. Within these nations, political leaders went beyond the mere tactical and limited use of Islamist forces to resolve political crises; rather, they opted to anchor the state to the cultural tenets and values of Islam in order to

reinforce the legitimacy of state institutions and to enhance their capacity to enact social changes.

As mentioned, in this case the prospect of Islamization aims to consolidate the existing political-institutional framework. By taking into account Islamic priorities and values, and incorporating them within the existing statal architecture, national elites aim to use to their advantage the fundamentalist forces present within their nations. Even though such processes may be viewed by liberal democracies as regressive, they are, after all, merely an attempt to render the fundamentalist forces (which often profess radical change) more docile and obedient toward the existing political-institutional framework.

Through the latter mechanism, national political élites have attempted to “nationalize” Islam; Islamist forces on the other hand have viewed these processes from the opposite perspective, hoping to bring about an Islamization of the state. Due to this fundamental disagreement, the process of thoroughgoing Islamization has often failed or at any rate has had to vastly scale back its ambitions. Furthermore, this process has not taken into account the international and transnational component of Islam, which has “immunized” it against nationalist rhetoric based upon the ever-weakening ideology of the modern state.

While the Pakistani nation was founded upon an overt secularism and a form of neutral pluralism (even though the pivotal role of Islam in identity-creation was always recognized), during the complex decades between 1980 and 1990 a tendency to overcome the privatization of Islam developed, with the implicit objective of bringing about an Islamization of the public sphere and of addressing the extremist tendencies in order to defuse the opposition to the internal order.⁴⁰ As observed by José Casanova,⁴¹ there is a dual explanation to the deprivatization of religion:

There are, on the one hand, utilitarian secularist explanations which reduce the phenomenon either to an instrumental mobilization of available religious resources for non-religious purposes or to an instrumental adaptation of religious institutions to the new secular environment. There are, on the other hand, secular-humanist explanations which tend to interpret religious mobilization as fundamentalist antimodernist reactions of hierocratic institutions unwilling to give up their privileges or as the reactionary mobilization of traditionalist groups resisting modernization.⁴²

Both these interpretations can shed some light on the complex relationship existing between politics and religion in Pakistan, though neither of the two can be said to be fully convincing.

The Islamic recasting of the state was the product of a rational choice: Islamic values had to be internalized, not only to combat the fundamentalist threat to the existing political-institutional framework, but also to enhance the legitimacy of the central authorities and to expand the sphere of influence of the nation.⁴³

Islam therefore takes on, within the context of the formation of the “Islamic Leviathan”, the role of a supplementary national ideology, which is a paradoxical outcome, as fundamentalist Islam typically attempts to undermine the state and secular institutions in general. In the case of Pakistan, this also meant further undermining the sense of national belonging, which was already made weak by a multinational and multicultural populace that was never fully absorbed within the existing frameworks of political representation. In this regard, the attitude of the *ulema* toward the nation-state has always been one of profound skepticism, if not of overt opposition.

For these reasons, the attempt to integrate Islam within the framework of the nation-state was only partly successful, due to both the institutional weakness of the latter and to the “revolutionary” tendencies of former. The *Leviathan* proved to be a weak and clumsy beast, and its implosion enabled the emergence of an Islam which was both hostile to integration and sectarian, and which would create more than a headache to liberal democracies worldwide.

In the long term, the universalist tendencies within political Islam took hold and became a potent tool of deconstruction of democratic institutionalism. The Islamic “resource” which was tapped by élites in countries such as Pakistan and Malaysia and was also used by “Kemalist” post-colonial forces as a tool aimed at facilitating national cohesion ultimately proved to be uncontrollable. These processes began in the 1970s, at which time the first signs of an awakening of the Muslim world had already become apparent. The effects of this awakening would last decades and its consequences would be felt even at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The international context

The Islamist drift, with its tragic repercussions in Afghanistan, brought to its knees by the Taliban regime, must therefore be analyzed in connection

with the regional scenario as well as with the exogenous interests (both military and strategic) of the two superpowers during the Cold War.

The first 25 years of Pakistan as an independent state were marred by a disastrous political leadership. The élite which controlled political power in the nation managed to alienate not only ethnic and religious minorities, but also the ethnic majority, causing riots in eastern Pakistan, a hard-to-swallow military defeat dealt by India and a secession of what amounted to half the country (with the independence of Bangladesh). In the following 40 years, this very élite, composed for the most part by the military and allied with the US, fueled and incentivized Islamic extremism. This was a conscious decision undertaken in light of US policies, which provided enormous amounts of money and resources to those opposing Soviet expansionism, including Islamic extremists in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia.⁴⁴

This complex scenario is further compounded by a series of amplifying factors, namely Western hesitation and changes in tactics vis-à-vis a nation considered strategic to the continental geostrategic “game”.

For instance, when in 1977 General Zia rose to power through a military coup, Pakistan became a pariah in the eyes of Western nations, which held a “Euro-Atlantic” vision regarding the spread of democracy. However, when, in 1979, the USSR invaded Afghanistan, General Zia was immediately rehabilitated and viewed as one of the pivotal allies of the US and their quest to contain Soviet expansionism in Asia, so much so that his regime lasted 11 years.

Pakistan thus became the organizing hub of “Islamic resistance” against the Soviet Union. In particular, this enabled the creation of thousands of Mujaheddin bases in its tribal areas, facilitating strikes in Afghan territory. The ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) supplied these forces with money and arms, which it had in turn obtained principally from the US and Saudi Arabia, as well as from the UK, from China, from Persian Gulf nations, from Egypt and even from Israel.⁴⁵

General Zia, possibly aware that the involvement of Pakistan in the Afghan quagmire might have produced serious repercussions to the security and stability of his nation, initially resisted the anti-Soviet proposal brought forth by President Carter (who offered 400 million dollars in military aid); subsequently, he cynically accepted a 3.2 billion dollar package (supplied over the course of six years) offered by President Reagan. Thus Pakistan, considered up to that moment as a sclerotic and

repressive dictatorial regime, became a “frontline state” in the battle for freedom and democracy.⁴⁶

Between 1982 and 1990 the CIA, in collaboration with the powerful Pakistani and Saudi intelligence services, financed the training, the transportation and the arming of about 45,000 Islamists, hailing from 43 nations, in Pakistani madrasahs, with the goal of checking Soviet expansion in Afghanistan. It has been pointed out that this amounted to a sort of global *jihad*, launched by General Zia and President Reagan, which planted the seeds from which Al-Qaeda would later stem and which transformed Pakistan in a global hub for violent Islamic extremism for the following two decades.⁴⁷

As further proof of the distant origins of the contemporary issues at hand (in the case of Pakistan these origins are to be found in the decades between 1970 and 1990) it has to be pointed out that Pashtun tribes have long favored a porous 1,500-mile Pakistan–Afghan frontier as well, seeing it as their own mountainous Pakhtunistan quasi-state. Now they have joined forces with the Taliban, feeding poorly trained fighters from Pakistan’s madrasahs into Afghanistan, where they use familiar anti-Soviet tactics to attack NATO forces and recapture key border areas for weapons and drug trafficking.⁴⁸

Another puzzling aspect is the fact that while Moscow and Washington challenged each other in *hard power* fields, namely in the military, nuclear and strategic sectors (including the economic one), they somehow failed to notice a pervasive and unsettling form of *soft power* which was growing in the shadow of the Cold War: Islamic integralism, the very ideology which would bring about the tragic events of 11 September. The fact that while the two superpowers challenged each other according to what might be defined as a neo-imperial logic, Islamic integralism prospered in a non-state, transnational and even post-modern context makes the matter all the more paradoxical.

Furthermore, notwithstanding the awkward strategic relationship with the US and Western pressures on the Afghan front, geopolitical and security considerations have led Pakistan to progressively shift the focus of its priorities in Central Asia. As stated by Parag Khanna:

in the geopolitical marketplace, Pakistan will forge alliances with any available partner—anything to avoid becoming strategically useless, and it has set the standard for manipulating the United States while making few concessions in return.... All the while, Pakistan has become a more reliable client of China, demonstrating far greater loyalty to their “All Weather Friendship” than to America.⁴⁹

The analytical context: transnational religions

The progressive transnationalization of political Islam should be analyzed within the wider paradigm of the transnationalization of religions in general.⁵⁰

The political discourse concerning modernity, which focuses on the theory and practice of the nation-state, is a relatively recent affair; religions on the other hand have a trans-historic, universal dimension (though the universal connotations taken on by the notion of the nation-state, both within and without the Euro-Atlantic sphere, should not be underestimated).⁵¹

Only recently however has the role of religion been studied in light of the new international connectedness and of the current generation of “universal” identities.⁵² In general, these studies have stemmed from the analysis of “diasporic” religions, which are to a certain degree connected to the intensification of international mobility (which in turn is due to numerous factors and motivations).

The issue is not a new one, as the transnational dimension of ideas is not merely an analytical instrument (used, for instance in the constructivist approach): crucially, this dimension has been at the fulcrum of the “ideological trench warfare” commonly known as the Cold War, helping define political affiliations on the basis of doctrinal categories (collectivism, Marxism–Leninism, capitalist liberalism).

It is peculiar therefore that the above-mentioned analytical matrix is not utilized and adapted to a greater degree in order to study the relationship between politics and religion. If it is used at all, it is only to underscore the pathological aspects of this influence, such as religiously motivated terrorism and its global ramifications; less evident elements on the other hand are often overlooked, such as the contribution of religion to transnational collective identities which challenge the national dimension, or the somewhat successful attempts to “nationalize” religions.

Naturally, transnationalization is a phenomenon which does not only concern Islamic movements: it has also influenced Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity in various ways. Such religious contexts can be classified as “expansionist religions”,⁵³ even though these may have well-rooted territorial origins. In any case, transnational and international religions historically have not been reliable allies of nation-states: to the contrary, it could be argued that these have acted (and are acting) to check the consolidation of state power.⁵⁴ However, the latent tension existing between transnational and national religions no longer operates in terms

of polarization or of mutually exclusive alternatives in cases in which religions, either genetically or through historical evolution, progress as expressions of a transnational society and culture.

On this matter, it is certainly true that religions, deprived of their historical and cultural characteristics, and therefore taken out of their element, risk becoming prey of dangerous external influences.⁵⁵ However, it is also true that the “liberation” of religions from the chains of sovereign and territorial state policies can constitute an element of inclusion rather than of exclusion, favoring the creation of broad and peaceful collective identities. The transnationalization of religions is certainly tied to the role of new information technologies in the context of globalization, but its origins are older and broader.

Within the context of Christianity, it can be said that transnational phenomena are partly reconducible (at least within the Catholic Church) to a centralized and hierarchic institutional architecture, which creates strong pastoral and identity-based connection. Peggy Levitt⁵⁶ identifies three types of modes through which transnationalization phenomena manifest themselves. The first mode consists in an *extended transnational religious organization*: in this case the religious institution can count on a global network with a strong capacity to influence the public sphere through a centrally managed system. Religious institutions articulate a vision of community which goes beyond territorial barriers and within which a transnational civil society founded on religious motivations plays a central role. Believers feel part of a universal institution capable of protecting and empowering them and of giving them voice.

A second mode of transnationalization, which is exemplified in the spread of US-borne protestant Churches in Latin America, is the *negotiated transnational religious organization*. In this case, though strong connections with the “motherland” remain, the relevant institutions are much less hierarchic and centralized. The relationship in this case is flexible, does not depend on predetermined rules and is in constant evolution. There is no single leadership or established administrative hierarchy. Transnational connections, for instance regarding financial rules and ritual standards, are a matter of ongoing negotiation and thus can vary considerably over time.

The third mode of transnationalization of religions, which includes, for instance, Hindu religious movements abroad, is that of *recreated transnational transnational religious organizations*. It is a situation in which, for instance, migrants originating from India and residing in the US have had

to recreate from scratch the religious groups and affiliations that existed at home. The leadership in this case is decentralized and consensual, and even the cultural and religious references remain strongly transnational.

However, as Levitt points out, a transnational system of organization does not generate on its own transnational identities and practices. Though the activities of transnational organizations may well span across state borders, this fact on its own does not represent a sufficiently strong foundation for the creation of a universal and transnational political identity.

Second, transnational religious activities are a relevant component of the processes driving globalization; they cannot therefore be studied independently of other factors, without, that is, taking into account the wider social, political, cultural and economic context. What could be said however is that globalization encourages the development of transnational religious connections, creating the necessary conditions for the deployment.

Naturally, transnational religion does not manifest itself in the institutional arena alone. According to Levitt,

We need to understand its forms and consequences by examining the ways in which believers use symbols and ideas to imagine and locate themselves within a religious landscape that may be superimposed on to, run parallel to, or obviate the need for one defined by national boundaries. We need to understand how religious beliefs shape notions of rights and responsibilities and the ways in which individuals decide how and where they should be acted upon. We need to consider organized, individualized, and internalized expressions of transnational religion to understand the role of religion as a catalyst for transnational livelihoods and the ways in which transnational actors reshape religious life.⁵⁷

Therefore, the study of transnational religions should not limit itself to the examination of organized expressions of faith; rather, it should also take into account the alternative areas in which religious ideas and symbols can have an influence, analyzing the ways in which these “sacred landscapes” interact with political and civil spheres.⁵⁸

Religions and “soft power”

Transnational political-religious actors strongly influence the international order (in both positive and negative ways), often acting within

national contexts which are becoming progressively “globalized”. The behavior of such actors on the transnational plane is characterized by an inherent, irreconcilable, dualism: they tend to favor either cooperation or conflict.

On the one hand, the development of transnational religions can favor the creation of global religious identities, which in turn can facilitate and intensify interfaith dialogue. This implies a wider effort on the part of religions regarding certain crucial issues, such as development, conflict resolution and “transnational” justice.

On the other hand, the ongoing globalization of faiths can produce a strong interfaith competition among the members of different denominations and creeds, to say nothing of the dramatic instances of international terrorism justified by allegedly religious motivations.

From an analytical standpoint, one of the least studied dimensions of the relationship between faith and politics, from an international standpoint, relates to a particular (almost “metaphysical”) conception of “soft power”.

The transnational interactions among religious actors (both personal and in terms of an exchange of ideas and practices) can imply the deployment of forms of soft power.⁵⁹ However, this particular form of soft power, which stems from transnational religious institutions, is markedly different from the original concept developed by Joseph Nye.⁶⁰

Specifically, Nye tied soft power to actions or influences exercised by a state to achieve a given objective or set of objectives. Over time, it has been shown that even non-state actors, such as religious movements and institutions, might plausibly deploy forms of soft power. For instance, Wahhabism is one of the defining elements of the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia. This appears to be an obvious consideration, but it takes on a political significance when tied to Saudi efforts aimed at financially supporting the construction and the maintenance of mosques and madrasahs around the globe, from Indonesia to France. Since the 1970s, Saudi Arabia has helped construct around 1500 mosques and 2000 Islamic culture centers globally, at an estimated cost of around 70 billion dollars.⁶¹ Such policies have a direct effect, for instance, on the assessment of the relationship between politics and religion in nations like Pakistan, which from the 1970s onwards became one of the principal beneficiaries of Saudi support for religious institutions. The international policy decisions founded upon religious motivations can therefore also affect the behavior and outlook of internal actors within a given political system.

Whatever their objectives may be, transnational actors aim to exercise and enhance their influence through the creation and strengthening of networks which transcend national borders. In such instances, the use of soft power is oftentimes the only available course of action, as such actors normally (except for a handful of very specific cases) do not dispose of hard power tools.

Transnational religious soft power can take on potentially destabilizing traits even under “peaceful” conditions; the Iranian temptation to use Shia minorities present throughout the Middle East to further its ambition to become a regional power is a case in point.

The relationship between the state and Islam in Pakistan therefore falls within the complex issues inherent to the evolution of the political-institutional framework of post-colonial political units and to the ongoing transnationalization of religions.

Transnational Islam: Pakistan as a case-study

In the last few years, the interest of political analysts toward the transnational dimension of Islam has spiked.

Such transnational dynamics developed following a structural change in the relationship between Islam and the modern state, which occurred following the onset of decolonization. In particular, this process reached a point of no return during the 1980s in Pakistan.

However, transnationalization cannot be reduced to a mere sociology of migrations, as has often been the case in Western interpretations of the versions of Islam which immigrants “exported”; it should be viewed instead, and more accurately, as the advent of a *global Islam*, capable of transcending ethnic and national divisions and of enabling an “individualization” of religious practices, with important cosmopolitan consequences. It is a perspective which has not received sufficient attention, also because it goes well beyond the current paradigms, which focus on the spread of radical Islam (a worrying trend, no doubt), and because it boldly connects the political discourse regarding cosmopolitanism with that of religious practice.⁶²

In the specific case of the transnationalization of political perspectives in Pakistan between 1970 and 1990, the diasporas played only a minor role; rather, this phenomenon was caused by a variation of Islam’s ideological articulations vis-à-vis both political power and, especially, the modern state.

In this sense, it is particularly interesting to connect Muslim nationalism to Islamic universalism in order to verify, in the case of Pakistan, where the breaking point between the consolidation of national structures and the perspective of a transnational Islam may lie.

This discontinuity is to be found between the end of the “state-based” Islamization, perpetrated by General Zia between 1977 and 1989 and supported by several political organizations such as the *Jamaat-i-Islami* party, and the advent, in the mid-1980s, of a progressive “clericalization” and “shariatization” of Pakistani politics (with the *Jamiat-ul Ulema-e-Islam* playing at a particularly strong role in this sense), which caused profound ideological and foreign policy repercussions.⁶³

Such a transition marks the passage from a purely internal relationship between Islam and the state to the development of a transnational religion and a radicalization and Islamization of the political discourse, which became unglued from national identity-building considerations. The transnationalization of the perspectives of political Islam (sometimes founded upon unrealistic hegemonic objectives and regional dominance ambitions) constitutes the basis of the contradictions that have produced, in terms of foreign policy, Islamabad’s complex relations with both Washington and Beijing, to say nothing of the traditional and structural frictions with India and Afghanistan.

In order to develop a correct perception of the global relevance of transnational Islam, as well as of its relative weight and influence in Pakistan (one of the most populous Muslim-majority nations), it is useful to refer to a few key demographic indicators. There are about 1.6 billion Muslims in the world,⁶⁴ constituting about 23 percent of global population. While the majority of Muslims are to be found in the Asian and Pacific regions, only about a quarter of the people residing in such areas is of Islamic faith (24% of the population, to be precise). On the other hand, in the Middle East and North Africa the vast majority of people are of Muslim faith (93%), even though such regions contain a mere 20 percent of the overall Muslim population.

The 10 nations in which Muslims can be said to constitute the vast numeric majority represent two-thirds of the total number of people of Islamic faith. The highest percentages (relative to overall global Muslim populations) are to be found in Indonesia (13%), India (11%), Pakistan (11%), Bangladesh (8%), Nigeria (5%), Egypt (5%), Iran (5%), Turkey (5%), Algeria (2%) and Morocco (2%). In addition, Muslims constitute the majority of population in 49 nations; about three-quarters (73%)

of Muslims live in these countries. Then there are several nations in which people of Islamic faith are a sizeable minority: although Muslims constitute a minority in India (14% of population), this community still represents one of the largest Muslim populations worldwide; in absolute terms, more Muslims live in China than in Syria, and Russia is home to more Muslims than Jordan and Libya combined.

Pakistan, after Indonesia and India (with respectively 209 and 176 million followers), is home to one of the most populous Muslim communities in the world (with 167 million followers). While the vast majority of Pakistani Muslims are Sunni, the fact that between 17 and 26 million Shias reside in the nation (accounting for 10% to 15% of Pakistani national, depending on the estimates) should not be overlooked.⁶⁵ The demographic and religious “weight” of Pakistan is therefore extremely relevant in Central Asia. Within this area, three nations (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) account for 30 percent of the overall Muslim global population. From a Pakistani perspective, other key regional actors include Afghanistan (home to 28 million Muslims), as well as Uzbekistan (26 million Muslims) and China (22 million Muslims).

It is therefore natural for transnational Islamic movements, leaving aside the pathological extremes of terrorism, to exercise a significant influence in the international field, both directly through a communal, interstate narrative and indirectly through the international impact of internal political regimes, systems and actors which oftentimes correspond to international political fault lines (Hamas in Gaza; Hezbollah in Lebanon).⁶⁶

Moreover, it would be a mistake to underestimate the motivations behind political Islam, which could be described in general sense as theological and ascribing to a different worldview. The propulsive force of Islam in this sense pushes in the direction of the *ummah*, a community of faithful which transcends national identities (at least those understood in the political-institutional sense). The term *ummah* encloses the entire universe of faithful, all working in unison and collaboration, as well as those who support such faithful.⁶⁷ In this sense, one of pillars of the Constitution of Medina is the communal, solidarity-driven religion which connotated early Islam.⁶⁸ According to a number of politological interpretations, intra-*ummah* solidarity could be considered as one of the main contributions of Islam within the political sphere, also because the Koran views all believers as brothers. The Constitution of Medina also affirms that believers form a single community, distinct from that of non-Muslims.⁶⁹ It is the tension between the *ummah* and the territorial

national state, produced by the universalist transcendence and the exclusivist immanence of Westphalian political units, which facilitates the interpretation of the dramatic paths that political Islam has undertaken. Within this analytical interpretation, the current diatribes regarding the both expansionist connotations of the concept of “Caliphate” and the national (almost nationalist) dimension of the Islamic revolutions (Iran is a case in point) can also be assessed. As affirmed by Casanova

religion always transcends any privatistic, autistic reality, serving to integrate the individual into an intersubjective, public and communal “world”. Simultaneously, however, religion always transcends any particular community cult, serving to free the individual from any particular “world” and to integrate that same individual into a transsocial, cosmic reality.⁷⁰

In more concrete terms, an array of studies on the incidence of transnational Islamic movements in South and South-East Asia has been conducted.⁷¹ In order to better comprehend the phenomenon, a distinction must be made between groups that are structurally transnational and groups which are driven to become transnational following a series of objective processes (such as globalization, migrations, etc.). Furthermore, such transnational actors, which go beyond the typical stereotypes, which emphasize the incidence of international terror networks (perpetrating the odious “bombs and blood” stereotype), include a wide range of movements and groups, with a high degree of pluralism and heterogeneity and multiple identities which fuse local sociopolitical loyalties with global issues.

Within the context of South and South-East Asia, Islamic transnational actors can be grouped into the following categories:

- ▶ The *Sufi* Brotherhood, which are movements that although present themselves as apolitical, in several instances, particularly in Pakistan, have taken on militant and sectarian aspects;
- ▶ The pietistic movements (such as *Tablighi Jamaat*), which are groups which focus mainly on spiritual issues and on personal purification and which use nonviolent means to extend their ranks;
- ▶ The Islamist ideologies with ample popular support (these include the Muslim Brotherhood and *Jamaat-i-Islami*);
- ▶ Radical political movements, which include groups, such as *Hizbut Tahrir*, that do not generally condone the use of violence, even though they aim to re-establish the Caliphate;
- ▶ Militant groups and networks (such as *Jemaah Islamiyah*), which do not necessarily favor the transnational dimension, preferring to

control the local political agenda and fearing the intervention of external actors, which they view as detrimental to their capacity to maintain popular consensus.⁷²

More in general, the political movements in question can be further distinguished by taking into account the dominant elements and salient characters of their transnational perspectives. The following cases may be specified:

- ▶ A transnational global orientation is foundational to the movement;
- ▶ A transnational regional orientation is foundational to the movement;
- ▶ A transnational religious perspective is derived from the communities of Muslim migrants;
- ▶ A transnational political and ideological perspective is foundational to the movement, while the transnational activism is derived from other factors.⁷³

Numerous vectors facilitate the transnationalization of Islam across a wide range of movements globally; these include exchanges and contacts between academics and intellectuals, migrations of people seeking employment, new media, ritual obligations (such as the *hajj* and other pilgrimages), the intrinsic transnationalization of daily life, charities, and youth and student groups.

In any case, a correct comprehension of the salient dynamics of transnational Islam requires the “localization” and “humanization” of the diversities that characterize the groups and movements working on the field.

Locally, one of the principal aspects of transnational Islam is the tendency to challenge the effects of globalization and to struggle to gain more space within the public sphere (even at the detriment of other Muslim groups). Furthermore, transnational Islam cannot always be reduced to motivations regarding the spread of the Muslim religion or to mere religious aspects (even though these may well have political implications).

In reference to the Pakistan case, undoubtedly the country has become in time one of the main hubs of transnational Islam. The numerous organized manifestations of this trend can be grouped, according to one system of classification,⁷⁴ into three main categories:

- ▶ Issues relating to security and ideological questions, which have caused, from the 1970s onwards, a mobilization of the apex military and intelligence figures of the nation regarding flashpoints such as

Kashmir and Afghanistan, also producing pan-Islamic ambitions vis-à-vis critical situations in post-Soviet Central Asia, Iran and the Chinese Xinjiang province;

- ▶ Islamic religious activism, aimed at reinforcing a regional and global network of spiritual affiliation. Particularly strong actors in this context include the *Deobandi* and *Balelwi* groups, the already mentioned *Tablighi* and *Jamaat-i-Islami*, the *Ahl-i Hadith* and the various *Ahmadi* denominations;
- ▶ Specifically Pakistani activism, guided by the limited agendas of local groups (which however cannot be dismissed as being merely “localistic”), which combine pan-Islamic ambitions with national (or sub-national, or even local) Pakistani identity, often operating through educational or cultural organizations, such as Islamic universities.

The relationship between the political and theological aspects of transnational Islam is both multidimensional and complex. This is due to the fact that transnational Islamic movements are often guided by considerations that could be defined as being broadly geopolitical. In particular, the case of Pakistan, in which the power dimension is often interpreted at a national level, shows that the contradictions emerging between the transnational perspective and national political motivations are still without solution.⁷⁵ On the social level, the issue of divided loyalties, deriving from feeling part of a global Muslim community and at the same time being citizens of a particular state (moreover, in the case of Pakistan, national identity-building has been a long and complex process which is not fully completed) is particularly problematic.

In Pakistan more than in other geopolitical contexts, the difficulty in creating a synthesis between sovereignty and national identity and the issues which characterize the current *global Muslimscape* has generated tensions which do not merely tear across Pakistani society, but which have also oftentimes compromised the credibility of the nation's foreign policy, especially with respect to its continuity and trustworthiness.

Notes

- 1 Jürgen Habermas, *The Divided West* (Cambridge: Polity 2006).
- 2 European Parliament, *Reforms in the Arab World: What Strategy Should the European Union Adopt?* Resolution, n. 2006/2172(INI), 10 May 2007.

- 3 Ibid.
- 4 John Collins and Ross Glover (ed.), *Collateral Language: A User's Guide to America's New War* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).
- 5 Edward W. Said, "The Clash of Ignorance", *The Nation*, 4 October 2001, 11–13.
- 6 Ibid., 12.
- 7 Ibid., 13.
- 8 Massimo Cacciari, *Geo-filosofia dell'Europa* (Milano: Adelphi, 1994) [translated by the Author].
- 9 Pierre Erny, "La notion d'aire culturelle en ethnologie", in *Frontières visibles et invisibles. L'Europe des régions et des aires culturelles* (Strasbourg: Conseil de l'Europe, Euroethno, 1990), 41–47; quoted in Florence Pizzorni, "Notre Matrice Europe, chacun en a sa part, et tous l'ont tuote entière", in *Les frontières de l'Europe*, ed. Elie Barnavi, Paul Goossens (Bruxelles: De Boeck, 2001) [translated by the Author].
- 10 Isn't it surprising that Italy has been admitted to the Arctic Council? The press release of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs explains the reasons: "The news that Italy had been admitted to the Arctic Council with Observer status was received with great satisfaction and gratitude to the Council members and the Swedish Presidency that championed the move. Recognizing both our country's longtime participation in research and studies on the Arctic, as well as the interest of Italian firms in research applied to benefit the region, the Council's decision now encourages Italy to further increase its commitment toward the Arctic, intensifying concrete support to the local populations" (*Italy Admitted as Observer to Arctic Council*, Rome 15 May 2013: http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Comunicati/2013/05/20130515_consiglio_artico.htm) (13 October 2013).
- 11 Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
- 12 Arnold Toynbee, *The World and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).
- 13 Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).
- 14 Richard Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
- 15 European Parliament Resolution, *Reforms in the Arab World*.
- 16 Samuel Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenge to America's National Identity* (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 27.
- 17 Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2002), 186.
- 18 Amin Maalouf, *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003).

- 19 Michael Walzer, *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).
- 20 *Ibid.*, 17.
- 21 John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 83.
- 22 On 11 September 2012, Chris Stevens, US Ambassador to Libya, was killed during a terrorist attack carried out by the Ansar al Sharia militias against the US Consulate in Benghazi. The attack came as a response to the execution, carried out by American forces, of Abu al-Libi, the second in command for Al-Qaeda in Libya. The pretext for the attack was the (extremely limited) distribution of a film titled *Innocence of Muslims*, which was considered offensive and irreverent towards Prophet Muhammed, or even blasphemous, causing protests in numerous Islamic nations (particularly Libya and Egypt).
- 23 On this matter, the dangers arising from the “inflexibility”—that is, the virtual irreversibility—of legislative measures aimed at imposing Islamizing norms should be taken into account: a historical lesson comes from Pakistan and its turbulent history regarding the relationship between politics and religion (Husain Haqqani, “Islamists and Democracy: Cautions from Pakistan”, *Journal of Democracy*, 2 (2013), 5–14.
- 24 The reference here is to the film titled *Innocence of Muslims*, (see note 22). In September 2012, French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo published a series of offensive cartoons, also causing protests and demonstrations. Previously, caricatures of Prophet Mohammed published on 30 September 2005 by the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* (and republished by conservative Norwegian newspaper *Dagen Magazinet*), had already caused a series of violent protests in Muslim nations.
- 25 Alfred Stepan and Juan J. Linz, “Democratization Theory and the ‘Arab Spring’”, *Journal of Democracy*, n. 2 (2013), 15–30
- 26 Anatol Lieven, *Pakistan: A Hard Country* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011).
- 27 Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Viking 2008), 33.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 34.
- 30 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power* (New York: Oxford University Press 2001), 76. The following parts of this section are heavily indebted to Nasr’s important work.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 142.
- 32 Vyacheslav Karpov, “Desecularization: A Conceptual Framework”, *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 52, n. 2 (2010), 23.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 24.

- 34 Gulshan Barkat, “Pakistan: stato e religione in un Paese islamico”, *Aggiornamenti sociali*, n. 5 (2011), 356–361.
- 35 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan*.
- 36 See note 11.
- 37 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan*, 20.
- 38 Ibid., 21.
- 39 George Lachmann Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1974).
- 40 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan*, 25.
- 41 José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 215.
- 42 Ibid., 386.
- 43 Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan*, 25.
- 44 Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos*, 33.
- 45 Shibil Siddiqi, *Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations: History and Geopolitics in a Regional and International Context: Implications for Canadian Foreign Policy* (Report for the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, 2008, 23). (http://gordonfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/images/siddiqi_executive%20summary.pdf) (15 October 2013).
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos*, 39.
- 48 Parag Khanna, *The Second World. Empires and Influence in the New Global Order* (New York: Random House 2008), 163–164.
- 49 Ibid., 112.
- 50 James Piscatori, “Religious Transnationalism and Global Order, with Particular Consideration of Islam”, in *Religion and Global Order*, ed. John L. Esposito and Michael Watson (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 66–99; Jeffrey Haynes, *Religion, Politics and International Relations. Selected Essays* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), in particular, chap. 12 “Transnational Religious Actors and International Politics” (173–188); chap. 13 “Transnational Religious Actors and International Order” (189–210); Giorgio Shani, “Transnational Religious Actors and International Relations”, in *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics*, ed. Jeffrey Haynes, 308–321.
- 51 Peter Van der Veer, “Transnational Religion”, paper presented to the conference on “Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives”, Princeton University, 30 June–1 July 2001 (available at the following address <http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/working%20papers/WPTC-01-18%20Van%20der%20Veer.pdf>) (15 October 2013); See also, by the same author, “Transnational Religion: Hindu and Muslim Movements”, *Global Networks*, Vol. 2, n. 2 (2002), 95–109.

- 52 Peggy Levitt, “Between God, Ethnicity, and Country: An Approach to the Study of Transnational Religions”, paper presented at Workshop on “Transnational Migration: Comparative Perspectives”, 30 June–1 July 2001, Princeton University (available at the following address: <http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/working%20papers/Levitt.pdf>) (15 October 2013)
- 53 Mark Juergensmeyer, “Thinking Globally About Religion”, in *Global Religions. An Introduction*, ed. Mark Juergensmeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 7.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 55 Olivier Roy, *Holy Ignorance: When Religion and Culture Part Ways* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
- 56 Peggy Levitt, “Between God, Ethnicity, and Country”.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 19.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 24.
- 59 Jeffrey Haynes, *Transnational Religious Actors and Soft Power* (Aldershot: Ashgate 2012).
- 60 Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).
- 61 Jeffrey Haynes, *An Introduction to International Relations and Religion* (Edinburgh Gate, Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2007), 350.
- 62 Peter Van der Veer, “Transnational Religion”.
- 63 Farzana Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 108.
- 64 Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, *The Global Religious Landscape. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World’s Major Religious Groups as of 2010* (Washington: Pew Research Center, 2012), (http://www.pewforum.org/uploadedFiles/Topics/Religious_Affiliation/globalReligion-full.pdf) (13 October 2013).
- 65 Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, *Mapping the Global Muslim Population. A Report on Size and Distribution of the World’s Muslim Population* (Washington: Pew Research Center, 2009) (<http://www.pewforum.org/files/2009/10/Muslimpopulation.pdf>) (13 October 2013).
- 66 Jeffrey Haynes, “Transnational Religious Actors and Soft Power”, paper presented at the annual meeting *Theory vs. Policy? Connecting Scholars and Practitioners* (New Orleans, 17 February 2010).
- 67 Massimo Campanini, *Islam e politica* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003), 47 [translated by the Author].
- 68 *Ibid.*, 46.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 46–47.
- 70 José Casanova, *Public Religions*, 216.
- 71 National Bureau of Asian Research, *Transnational Islam in South and Southeast Asia: Movements, Networks, and Conflict Dynamics* (Singapore: NBR-RSIS

Discussion Workshop Report, 2008) (available at the following address: http://www.nbr.org/Downloads/pdfs/PSA/Trans_Confo8.pdf) (13 October 2013).

72 Ibid.

73 Dietrich Reetz, “Migrants, Mujahidin, Madrassa Students: The Diversity of Transnational Islam in Pakistan”, in National Bureau of Asian Research *Transnational Islam in South and Southeast Asia: Movements, Networks, and Conflict Dynamics*, Project Report, 2009, http://www.zmo.de/muslime_in_europa/downloads/Trans_PR_Apro9.pdf) (13 October 2013).

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

4

The Catholic Church and the Global Shift of Power

Abstracts: *In the international relations surfaces again the old dialectical opposition between “Regna” (Kingdoms) and “Imperium” (Empire), between national and sub-national political identities and world and transnational political collective identities.*

The truth of the matter is that in the restructuring of the global balance the traditional dichotomy of center-periphery is blurring. This is true for the international economy and for world politics, but it is also valid for the Catholic Church, challenged with the extra-European distribution of the Catholics and their presence in critical areas of the globe (as it happens in Middle East). The Church will have to deal with a deep geopolitical and “geo-ecclesial” reconfiguration.

Keywords: Christianity and globalization; fraternity and peace; Vatican and the BRICS

Ferrara, Pasquale. *Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826.0008.

Interpreting globalization. Between Augustine and Thomas Aquinas

Oftentimes, interpretations of modern and contemporary issues must be grounded in the major schools of thought of the past in order for these to truly comprehend (and not merely comment on) events. For instance—and these are major simplifications of the prophetic verve of John Paul II and of the “complex” reasoning of Benedict XVI—it could be argued that Pope Ratzinger espoused a sort of political Augustinism, centered on an internationalist and ethical realism and on the transcendence of the “City of God” compared to the City of Man (Christians, in this interpretation, rather than Cosmopolitan are “Uranopolitans”, citizens of the celestial city), whereas John Paul II drew inspiration from a Thomist universalism, which looked at the social doctrines of the Church as a foundation for a model of global governance.¹

For Ratzinger, the idea of peace is more or less aligned to Augustine’s concept of *tranquillitatis ordinis*: in the words of Norberto Bobbio, it is a form of “finalistic” pacifism.² John Paul II on the other hand had chosen the road of institutional pacifism to achieve the “pacification” of the new “Empire” (represented by the US and by globalization) within all three Thomist dimensions of peace: *intra-gentes*, *inter-gentes* and *supra-gentes*. On this matter, in his proposal for perpetual peace (1795), Kant criticized the separation between *ius civitatis*, *ius gentium* and *ius cosmopolitanum*, arguing that these three concepts had to once again be framed in relation with each other in order to facilitate a structural, long-lasting peace.

John Paul II also focused on the *practice* of international relations, and particularly on the issues of peace and of rendering globalization more “humane”, in order to mitigate its destabilizing effects on the social, economic and political/international spheres. Benedict XVI on the other hand seemed to prefer an approach that, beyond “operational” considerations, aimed to alter the *logic* of international relations, placing a strong emphasis on rationality, cooperation and reasonableness. In light of this core goal, the international strategy of Benedict XVI, which focused mainly on Europe and the West (including its American, African and Oceanian emanations—with the partial exception of the Middle East, which remains an area of priority for the Vatican), becomes easily explainable.

Having said this, it would however be wholly inappropriate to apply the “quantitative theory of foreign policy”³ (an expression coined in order

to describe president Obama's political activism in the field of foreign affairs at the beginning of his first term, which seemed to combine a "big agenda" with a "soft approach") to the "foreign policy" of the Holy See. In the case of the Vatican, this method would entail the futile exercise of counting the number of miles traveled and countries visited by the Popes. Comparing the "maps" of the travels of Benedict XVI and John Paul II (who was Pope for a much longer time) is politically meaningless, as these quantitative scales completely ignore the qualitative dimension: this dimension lies not so much in the different nature of the visits, but rather in the different visions of what Catholic influence in the world should entail. What the quantitative theory ignores is that, besides movements in space, there are "movements" in terms of intellectual and cultural references points: spotting these trends can often help decipher events much more than counting inter-continental flights ever will.

It could be said that while John Paul II focused on *acts* of peace (such as the unification of Europe, debt forgiveness for poorer nations, or the denunciation of the Iraq War), Benedict XVI considered *states* of peace as pivotal. To Ratzinger, peace went well beyond the effective use of existing international institutions.

In the case of John Paul II, it is still possible to speak of *diplomacy* (though of a profoundly ethical nature, transcending its tactical, short-term connotations); for Benedict the XVI the term *anthropology* (intended as a rediscovery of the rationality and spirituality of the human being) would be more correct. For instance, in his Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict affirms that

The Christian revelation of the unity of the human race presupposes a metaphysical interpretation of the "humanum" in which rationality is an essential element.⁴

Continuing the comparison, it could be said that John Paul II focused on the pastoral of international relations, while Benedict XVI was principally concerned with the theology of international relations. These are not abstract considerations: for instance, within the domain of international relations, the ancient dialectic between "Regna" and "Imperium" (that is, the struggle between national and sub-national political identities and a wider, global and transnational identity) is re-emerging, which reflects this division.

These two approaches (inherited respectively from the internationalist elaborations of Patristic thought and Scholasticism) to the international

political agenda of the Catholic Church will have to face the growing international multipolarism, which places a strong premium on national sovereignty (as can be seen in the cases of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and which is producing an ever-increasing tension with multilateralism, especially in light of their competing views regarding potential reforms of the global governance architecture.

The Church and the “New World”

In his first improvised speech from the Vatican Balcony, Pope Francis introduced himself as the Bishop of Rome, hailing from the “the end of the world”, in an apparent contrast with the “centrality” of the Eternal City. This depiction however is not entirely accurate: for example, it could be argued that Argentina today is a G20 member and is among one of the most dynamic economies of Latin America. From this point of view, it is destined to play and increasingly larger role at least at a regional level, in direct competition/cooperation with Brazil. In the current phase of global power shifts, the dichotomy between center and periphery is becoming meaningless. This is true mainly for international economics and world politics, but, in light the current distribution of Catholics worldwide and increasing number of global flashpoints, the Catholic Church also must face a geopolitical (or “geo-ecclesial”) reconfiguration. In the last 50 years, the Church has never been as global as today. The decline of religious affiliation in Europe has been counterbalanced by the persistent influence of Catholicism outside the Old World, from the Americas, to Africa and Asia (though it has had to face the growing challenge of protestant proselytizing). In 2012, the global number of Catholics has reached 1.96 billion, with an increase in 15 million faithful (1.3%).⁵

The Catholic Church relies on 5,104 Bishops worldwide, spread around the world in Dioceses which differ greatly in terms of size, and on 412,236 priests (the number increased by 1,643 units compared to 2009) which work in churches, parishes and missions around the globe.⁶

The numbers indicate the increasing relative “weight” of non-European Catholics within the “map” of the Church. Catholics account for 17.5 percent of global population, but they are 28.5 percent of the population in Latin American and the 23.8 percent of the population of Europe. In Brazil alone there are more than 133.6 million baptized Catholics. Besides

Brazil and outside of Italy, three other nations report the number of Catholics as higher than 50 million: Mexico, the US and the Philippines.⁷ Countries like Argentina and Colombia boast over 25 million Catholics (in line with France, Spain and Germany). However, the dynamism and the organizational structure of Catholics hailing from the Americas are far superior to that of Catholic communities present in the Old World. In this sense, the Catholic world is more Americo-European rather than Euro-American, also because Catholic communities in the Americas account for 47.5 percent of the overall Church population.⁸ Well-established communities can also be found in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Angola and Zaire.⁹

This global configuration has only recently been mirrored by a restructuring of the governance structure in Rome. The “geographic” renovation of the Curia has proceeded slowly and has lacked continuity, even though this trend has been continuously encouraged since the papacy of Paul VI (in particular, on this matter he promulgated the 1967 Apostolic Constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae*, which was written in the same spirit of openness which characterized the Vatican II Ecumenical Council). Besides a reorganized internal governing structure of the Vatican, Paul VI also wanted a more international Curia. Further progress on this issue was made with John Paul II and Benedict XVI. The Polish Pope further reformed the Curia with the 1988 *Pastor Bonus* Apostolic Constitution, underscoring how it should be able to “administer all nations”, calling for less centralization and more collegiality and hoping that in time it would become less “Rome-centric”.

The central Vatican administrative structure is doubtlessly an indicator of the degree of “internationalization” of the Church, but of course the composition of the College of Cardinals is far more relevant. As of November 2013, of the 109 Cardinal-Electors (those under 80, which enter the Conclave) there were 57 Europeans, 14 from North America, 15 from Latin America, 11 from Africa, 11 from Asia and 1 from Oceania. There were 28 Italians, making the Italian Church the most represented one in the College.¹⁰

The large number of European cardinals certainly denotes a degree of historical path dependency, but it is no longer in line with the extra-European development of the Church. Benedict XVI was aware of this distortion, and in October 2012 he gave a clear signal in favor of a more equitable geographical representation within the College of Cardinals, selecting six Cardinals hailing from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and

the Americas, and preferring not to nominate any Italians (potential candidates included the Archbishop of Turin, the Patriarch of Venice, members of the Curia and heads of the Pontifical Councils).

The issue however is not about mere geographic representation. Rather, what is at stake is the power of agenda setting within the Catholic Church in a world that is undergoing rapid transformations. Catholicism in particular has spread in developing areas, that is to say in places that on the one hand have benefited from globalization, but which on the other question its “Western” nature as well as the global economic governance structure which underlies it.

In the 1960s, the term “inculturation” was often used to describe the need for the missionary Church in Africa to take on, within certain limits, local cultural traditions. Nowadays, the challenges are exponentially greater: a de-Westernization of Catholicism is necessary in order to regain the old universalist spirit. In a certain sense, what is required is the practical application of the words of Apostle Paul: “there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free.”¹¹

These considerations imply a self-interpretation of the Catholic Church as a *transnational actor* rather than as a mere hub for the theoretical elaboration of international issues.¹² The twofold nature, both territorial (which however is rather limited) and symbolic of the governance structure of the Catholic Church (that is to say both of the Vatican State and of the Holy See as an internationally recognized entity) should not be a major impediment to recasting of the “center” of Catholicism in structurally (not merely functionally) transnational terms. One possible way to interpret such a configuration would be of pointing out that, somewhat paradoxically, even though there is a “center”, there are no “peripheries”: the issue of collegiality and representation is therefore of pivotal importance.

Not everyone agrees with this viewpoint, both within and outside the Vatican, principally because it clashes with the Euro-centric narrative of a “Judeo-Christian” religion, with elements of ancient Greek and Roman cultural contamination. Europe remains to this day a central preoccupation of the “Roman” Catholic Church, as can be surmised from the preoccupations induced by the failure of policymakers to include mentions to the Christian roots of the continent in the Preamble of the scuttled Treaty establishing a European Constitution and by the creation, inspired by Benedict XVI himself, of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the

New Evangelization (under the guidance of Italian Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella). The goal of this new body of the Curia is to facilitate a re-evangelization of the West (and of Europe in particular), and represents a positive development in understanding the current de-Christianization trends, which are not due to a supposed “invasion” of Islamic immigrants nor to a systematic secularization process, but rather are caused by the onset of new generations of people who are “indifferent” toward the Church (and that are therefore not non-believers in a strict sense).

Under the guidance of Benedict XVI, the Catholic Church has placed a strong focus on the issue of “moral relativism”, viewing it as a malady spreading across Europe and the West. History will tell whether this struggle against relativism will be won or lost; what is clear is that Ratzinger’s political universe was shaken by relativism, engendering profound reflections, akin, in their “foundational” character, to those of Augustine in the wake of the sacking of Rome by Alaric I in 410 AD. This, however, is not the crucial issue. The central problem in the post-global world is not relativism, intended as the peaceful coexistence of different ethical systems and societal models (the “fact of pluralism”, and in particular, Rawls’ “reasonable pluralism”, which enables the coexistence of differing comprehensive views of the world¹³), rather, it is the absolutism of certain particularisms!

While Benedict XVI focused on Western and European relativism elsewhere new religious and political fault lines emerged, characterized by fundamentalism, that is to say by “strong religions” combined with aggressive ideologies. In a curious coincidence with historical political trends, this implies that engaging the BRICS should also represent a priority for the Vatican: in China, with the hope of normalizing relations and dampening the “absolutism” of the Communist Party; in India, to alleviate the difficult conditions of Christians against forms of Hindu intolerance and fundamentalism and to compete against its assertive polytheism; in Brazil, not only due to the size of the Catholic population but also to confront the competition of missionary Pentecostalism; in Latin America in general, to challenge the encroachment of fundamentalist Christian cults; in Russia, both to ameliorate relations with the Orthodox world and the Moscow Patriarchy and check the spread of anti-Catholic prejudice; in Africa (not just South Africa), to continue on the road of inculturation and to face the threat of violent Islamic radicalism, which sometimes escalates to forms of overt anti-Christian terrorism.

One grave drawback of the Westernization of Catholicism, both in terms of governance and of the papal agenda, could stem from the perception of an improper identification of Christianity with the West. In this sense, the Church should regain its *Catholic* vocation, separating itself from the ideological and hegemonic structure produced by Western-style globalization (this process of separation was started during the papacy of John Paul II and continued, albeit in different forms, by way of the “social” doctrines of Benedict XVI) and placing an emphasis on a truly universal and inclusive message.

The “new evangelization” pioneered during the papacy of Benedict XVI should also take into account, in a more deliberate and organized fashion, the current structure of international relations. Indications that the Church has realized this abound. For instance, the judgment on globalization is quite severe. During his 6 January 2008 Epiphany homily, the Pope stated that

what the prophet [Isaiah] said is also true today in many senses: “thick darkness [covers] the peoples” and our history. Indeed, it cannot be said that “globalization” is synonymous with “world order”—it is quite the opposite. Conflicts for economic supremacy and hoarding resources of energy, water and raw materials hinder the work of all who are striving at every level to build a just and supportive world. There is a need for greater hope, which will make it possible to prefer the common good of all to the luxury of the few and the poverty of the many.¹⁴

That being said, two further issues which could be defined, broadly speaking, as “geopolitical” remain open for the Vatican: the role of the Church in the Arab–Islamic world and in the vast Asian continent.

Benedict XVI did not have time to visit the latter, immense, chessboard; even though he did send a message to Chinese Catholics, Asia did not appear to constitute a priority for Ratzinger. Truth be told, the minorities of Catholics present in the Asian continent tend to be concentrated in a handful of states, and only the Philippines may be considered a truly Catholic nation. However, Asia is the incubator of new “imperial centers”, both economic and demographic, such as India and China; in the future, it will be of paramount importance to establish comprehensive relationships (that should go beyond mere peaceful coexistence) based on a mutual engagement vis-à-vis salient global issues. The pastoral style of Pope Francis should not induce in error: he will navigate the “geopolitics of the spirit”¹⁵ with ease and decisiveness.

The other open front is that of Islam. Though the Regensburg¹⁶ incident may have been, as it has recently been said, a *felix culpa*,¹⁷ in the sense that it enhanced the strategic importance of Islam–Catholic dialogue during Pope Benedict’s papacy, it is also true that since then political Islam, especially after the “Arab revolutions”, has posed new challenges that go beyond political/diplomatic considerations or the usual issue of religious freedom and “protection” of Christian minorities, especially in the Middle East. In this sense, possibility of a deeper, comprehensive understanding should be explored in order to respond to the apparent “flattening of the world”, caused by political and economic liberal-thought and practice.

It is in this perspective that the initiative know as “A Common Word” should be interpreted. It was launched by 138 Muslim intellectuals, muftis and leaders, hailing from 43 nations and representing all Islamic confessions and schools of thought (including Sunnis and Shias, together!); they wrote to the Pope and other Christian leaders in order to encourage a structured dialogue between Christians and Muslims, with the goal of promoting world peace, through a “Catholic-Muslim Forum”.¹⁸

In their letter, the Muslim intellectuals underscored the fact that Muslims and Christians together represent over half of the global population, and that

without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians.¹⁹

On his part, in 2008, Benedict XVI stated, somewhat cautiously, that he considered inter-faith dialogue as necessary to achieve collaboration on issues of mutual interest, such as the dignity of human beings, the search for the common good, and the achievement of peace and development; however, for such dialogue to be productive, it would have to avoid “relativism and syncretism”, nurturing a “sincere respect for others” in a “spirit of reconciliation and fraternity”.²⁰

Aside from these two fundamental geopolitical aspects, it is reasonable to believe that the international perspective of the papacy of Francis will be aligned with the ongoing reconfiguration of global equilibriums. The mission of Pope Francis falls within this complex scenario, composed of multiple priorities and challenges; he is tasked with guiding the Church in a world that is partly post-secular, but which, crucially, is also post-European.

In particular, the vision of an inclusive multilateralism, equipped with effective, common and shared institutions, spelled out in the *Caritas in Veritate* Encyclical—which aligns itself with previous papal documents, such as the John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris* Encyclical (the 50th anniversary of which occurred at the time of this writing: 1963–2013)—will have to face the profound ongoing changes in the map of global centers of power and hegemony (due to the so-called global shifts of power), which could be defined as a new *translatio imperii*.

In this context, the strong stance taken by Pope Francis against the war—especially in the Syrian crisis—should be read as an alternative narrative of global complexity rather than be liquidated as the traditional and ineffective attitude of a “disarmed prophet”.

With Pope Francis the Catholic Church seem to have taken a decisive turn toward a more articulated *critique* of globalism, proposing a radically different appraisal of world politics in terms of “pragmatic universalism”. The choice made by Pope Francis for the theme of his first World Peace Day (celebrated on 1 January 2014) “Fraternity, the foundation and pathway to peace” is quite telling regarding the direction of the new Pontificate, and also in terms of international relations. Instead of the current “globalization of indifference”, Pope Francis proposes the alternative of a “globalization of fraternity”. This statement should not be regarded as merely declamatory and utopian. On the contrary,

Fraternity should leave its mark on every aspect of life, including the economy, finance, civil society, politics, research, development, public and cultural institutions. ... In the face of the many tragedies that afflict the family of nations—poverty, hunger, underdevelopment, conflicts, migrations, pollution, inequalities, injustice, organized crime and fundamentalisms—fraternity is the foundation and the pathway to peace.²¹

It is crucial to understand, in this context, that this particular perspective of fraternity is articulated, in some way, as alternative to “charity” and even solidarity seen in terms of philanthropic activities. Fraternity represents a radical change of the political discourse of mere assistance toward a more structural and demanding attitude with potentially huge political consequences:

The poor and needy are not uncommonly regarded as a “burden,” as an obstacle to development. At most, they are considered as recipients of aid or compassionate assistance. They are not seen as brothers and sisters called to share the gifts of creation, the goods of progress and culture, to sit at the

same table of the fullness of life, to be protagonists of integral and inclusive development.²²

In the view of Pope Francis fraternity is not a simple formula, it is rather a way to humanize the face of the world.

Notes

- 1 In a speech at the “Angelicum” Pontifical Athenaeum (given on 17 November 1979), John Paul II publicly praised the spirit of openness and universalism present in the philosophy of St. Thomas.
- 2 Norberto Bobbio, *Il problema della guerra e le vie della pace* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1984).
- 3 “The Quantity Theory of Foreign Policy”, *The Economist*, 9 September 2009.
- 4 Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, Encyclical Letter (Vatican City, 29 June 2009), n. 55.
- 5 Data elaborated on the basis of the 2012 *Annuario Pontificio* and the *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae*. As different methodologies are used, the data on the number of Catholics worldwide does not fully coincide with the data released by the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life.
- 6 *Annuario Pontificio* 2012 and *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* 2012.
- 7 Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Global Christianity*, December 2011 (data revised in February 2013), <http://www.pewforum.org/Christian/Global-Christianity-exec.asp>
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Brigitte Dumortier, *Atlas des Religions* (Paris: Autrement, 2002).
- 10 Data available from the Press Office of the Holy See, updated on 24 September 2013. See http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/cardinali_statistiche/cardinali_statistiche_continenti_en.html
- 11 Epistle of Paul to the Colossians 3:11.
- 12 Luca Ozzano, “Gli attori religiosi transnazionali e il caso del Vaticano”, in *Religioni tra pace e guerra. Il sacro nelle relazioni internazionali del XXI secolo*, ed. Valter Coralluzzo and Luca Ozzano (Novara: UTET-De Agostini, 2012), 85–95. See also Michael Walsh, “Catholicism and International Relations: Papal Interventionism”, in *Religion and Global Order*, ed. John L. Esposito and Michael Watson, 100–118.
- 13 John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
- 14 The text of the homily can be found at the following address: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20080106_epifania_en.html (13 October 2013).

- 15 Cf. Andrea Riccardi, “La politica estera di papa Francesco. Le sorprese della diplomazia tranquilla”, *Corriere della sera*, 13 May 2013.
- 16 The controversy stemmed from the Pope’s citation of a quote by Manuel II Paleologus. In particular, Benedict XVI stated: “In the seventh conversation (διάλεξις—controversy) edited by Professor Khoury, the emperor touches on the theme of the holy war ... He addresses his interlocutor with a startling brusqueness, a brusqueness that we find unacceptable, on the central question about the relationship between religion and violence in general, saying: “Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.” The emperor, after having expressed himself so forcefully, goes on to explain in detail the reasons why spreading the faith through violence is something unreasonable. Violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul. “God”, he says, “is not pleased by blood—and not acting reasonably (σὺν λόγῳ) is contrary to God’s nature. Faith is born of the soul, not the body. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and to reason properly, without violence and threats ... To convince a reasonable soul, one does not need a strong arm, or weapons of any kind, or any other means of threatening a person with death ...”. Speech by Benedict XVI at Regensburg University, 12 September 2006. Text available at the following address: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg_en.html (13 October 2013).
- Subsequently, the Pope explained why he included the following quote: “Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached”. He stated that that he simply wanted to stigmatize the use of violence for proselytization purposes and promote inter-faith dialogue.
- 17 It is the opinion of Francesco Zannini, Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the Pontifical Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies in Rome.
- 18 The same letter was sent to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and other Orthodox Patriarchs, to the head of the Anglican Church and to the leaders of the principal Protestant Churches and communities.
- 19 The text of the letter can be found at the following address: <http://www.acommonword.com/the-acw-document/> (13 October 2013).
- 20 Benedict XVI, Address to the Diplomatic Corps, 7 January 2008. The text of the speech can be found at the following address: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2008/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080107_diplomatic-corps_en.html (13 October 2013).
- 21 *World Day of Peace 2014*, Vatican Press Release, 31 July 2013.
- 22 Ibid.

5

Religious Freedom in the International Practice

Abstracts: *In the general context of a growing attention devoted to religion in world politics, religious freedom is becoming increasingly relevant. A plethora of “reports” on religious freedom are released regularly by governments, international institutions, special rapporteurs and religious bodies.*

In general, there are four major issues related to reporting on religious freedom: the definition of standards, the nature of the actors involved (both as observers and observed), legitimacy, and the policy consequences (changes in bilateral and multilateral relations, “reciprocity”, sanctions and travel advice).

Legitimacy is the crucial test that most reporting activities on religious freedom fail to pass. In particular, “national” or “confessional” reports are strongly contested, whereas reporting initiatives performed by international organizations receive broader acceptance.

Keywords: credibility and legitimacy; Italian foreign policy and religious freedom; religious freedom

Ferrara, Pasquale. *Global Religions and International Relations: A Diplomatic Perspective*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. DOI: 10.1057/9781137400826.0008.

Reciprocity?

In a particularly entertaining episode of his “Daily Show” on the TV channel “Comedy Central”, Jon Stewart teased those politicians and commentators who were against the construction of a “Mosque” (rather, the refurbishment of an existing “Islamic cultural center”) in the heart of Manhattan, two blocks from Ground Zero.¹ The opponents suggested to move the Mosque half-mile away, several blocks away, five blocks away, ten blocks away, outside a 15-blocks radius, 20 blocks away, in the “Upper West Side” (possible in Woody Allen’s house ...).

If we consider the issue from a purely cultural and social perspective, this debate sounded really paradoxical in a metropolis that comfortably hosts dozens of ethnic community centers and religious places. In that rather surreal climate, the position taken by President Barack Obama in favor of the Islamic Center in Manhattan has to be read as a strong appeal to the fundamental values of the American political tradition, that reserves a special place for the freedom of religion in sharp contrast with many other countries in the world.

Speaking to representatives of the Muslim community in America, toward the end of the celebration of Ramadan, Obama said that

Our Founders understood that the best way to honor the place of faith in the lives of our people was to protect their freedom to practice religion.... As a citizen, and as President, I believe that Muslims have the same right to practice their religion as everyone else in this country. And that includes the right to build a place of worship and a community center on private property in Lower Manhattan, in accordance with local laws and ordinances. This is America. And our commitment to religious freedom must be unshakeable. The principle that people of all faiths are welcome in this country and that they will not be treated differently by their government is essential to who we are. The writ of the Founders must endure.²

With the growing attention devoted toward religion in world politics, freedom of religion is a crucial issue that should be addressed setting aside parochial interests and biased opinions. Indeed, one might assume that this should be a matter of consensus rather than conflict, since religious freedom is a manifestation, in the spiritual domain, of the universal value of human rights, one of the field in which the international community apparently is more engaged through its bodies with a potential global outreach (for instance, the United Nations

Human Rights Council). As such, freedom of religion should be regarded as an inalienable right, with an international status similar to the right to life; it should not be the object of bias, restrictions or intrusions. So far so good. However, in conceptualizing the freedom of religion (rather, the freedom of worship since freedom of religion as a matter of conscience—the “internal forum”—cannot be repressed) several “relativistic” distinctions and conditioning elements have been introduced, making it difficult to present it as a truly fundamental right.

For instance, one argument has been made that the freedom of religion cannot be conceptualized, in its practical implication, without taking into account the “real” state of the international affairs; as a consequence, it should be subject to gradualism, based on considerations related to identity, security and reciprocity. In practice, freedom of worship would be conditional and not absolute, and would be “regulated” or granted according to the social and cultural context in which it should be practiced.

On this point there is a need to take a clear stance. It is understandable that freedom of religion is to be enjoyed in accordance with the “law of the land” regarding “hard” public security, decency, and respect of other fundamental rights. However, making the freedom of worship dependent on reciprocity goes too far: if it is not permitted to build Churches or Synagogues in Saudi Arabia—as some arguments maintain—then we should not allow the construction of Mosques in our countries. That position implies not only the denial of freedom of religion as an absolute right, but also affects the credibility of fundamental human rights as an expression of the universal conscience of mankind. Moreover, it means making religion subject to politics and interests; it deprives religion of its fundamental structure, based on unselfishness and generosity.

A possible variation of this restrictive attitude is the idea that the protection of religious freedom should reflect, in one way or another, the internal political structure and dynamics of a given country, as this can be equated with “foreign policy” of a Church or a religious community. In this case, one defends just the religion to which he/she belongs, but toward other religions (considered “others” religions) there is indifference or, worse, a latent hostility. This attitude has nothing to do with religion, being the result of a political calculation and being substantially cynical. Basically, freedom of religion conceived as contingent and

functional to other (political) purposes is neither freedom nor right; ironically, this indefensible position is often taken by the self-proclaimed followers of freedom as civil religion.³

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in its Declaration on Religious Freedom (entitled “*Dignitatis Humanae*”) declares that

the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits. The council further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself. This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed and thus it is to become a civil right.⁴

Therefore, at least in the Catholic perspective, it doesn't seem possible to conceptualize religious freedom as a “conditional” right.

More in general, discrimination on the basis of religion represents a matter of growing concern particularly in Europe. The Commissioner for Human Rights at the Council of Europe recently declared that

Governments should stop targeting Muslims through legislation or policy, and instead enshrine the ground of religion or belief as a prohibited ground of discrimination in all realms. They should also empower independent equality bodies or ombudsmen to review complaints, provide legal assistance and representation in court, provide policy advice, and conduct research on discrimination against Muslims and other religious groups. In parallel, governments should combat popular prejudice and intolerance against Muslims.... It is time to accept Muslims as an integral part of European societies, entitled to equality and dignity. Prejudice, discrimination and violence only hinder integration. We need our own “European Spring” to overcome old and emerging forms of racism and intolerance.⁵

The political and institutional transitions that are taking place in several Arab–Islamic countries opened up a new “front” in the ongoing debate on religious freedom, since the Christian communities living in that part of the world fear that the formation of new governments with a strong Islamist component might threaten their freedom of worship. Those concerns are not ungrounded; however, they should not be taken as a possible legitimization of the status quo, especially where it has been

characterized by authoritarianism and repression. The former French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alain Juppé, wrote that

the best protection for Eastern Christians and the true guarantee of their survival in the region is the establishment of democracy and the rule of law in Arab countries. That's why we urge the Christians of the Middle East not to be taken in by the manipulative measures implemented by authoritarian regimes alienated from their own people. ... In Syria and across the Middle East, it is in Eastern Christians' interest to embrace changes that are both ineluctable and positive. It is by resolutely engaging in building a new region that they will protect their future.⁶

Reporting on religious freedom: credibility and legitimacy

In terms of international practices, more than on a theoretical ground, religious freedom is becoming increasingly relevant. Governments are being held more and more accountable, especially with regard to the treatment of religious minorities, and international organizations are more reactive today than in the recent past to the obstacles and restrictions that limit the enjoyment of this fundamental freedom. If religious freedom clearly constitutes a new defining field for the advancement of human rights in relation to state behavior, it is also becoming, with increasing saliency, an issue that challenges the traditional diplomatic manner of implementing inter-state diplomacy.

In particular, a plethora of “reports” on religious freedom are released regularly by governments, international institutions, special rapporteurs and religious bodies. In several cases, such reporting activity is realized via documents specifically and exclusively addressing religious freedom; more often, religious freedom is included in the monitoring of human rights regulations and practices at the international level. In this latter case, religious freedom is not the only and exclusive subject of the monitoring activity and it represents a sub-set of a broader reporting activity regarding human rights in general.

Standards, actors, legitimacy and policy

In general, there are four major issues related to reporting on religious freedom: the definition of *standards*, the nature of the *actors* involved

(both as *observers* and *observed*), *legitimacy*, and the policy *consequences* (changes in bilateral and multilateral relations, “reciprocity”, sanctions, travel advice).

The definition of *standards* is not an easy task. Some standards can be set against the general “codex” of human rights; other standards have a more limited focus, and relate to the respect of freedom of religion from the point of view of one specific faith. In the reporting activity on freedom of religion, the most common standard should be the principle of equality (the same set of basic rights granted to any religious organization operating in a given *state*); in practice, what often seems to be implemented, especially in reporting activities performed by national governments or religious non-governmental organizations, is what we could call the “principle of proportionality”, meaning the evaluation of the distinct place and impact of the different religions and religious institutions in a *given* society.

As far as the “observers” are involved, it is not always easy to identify them with a *specialized institution*; more often, one rather finds a set of *institutionalized practices* of monitoring religious freedom. Such practices, “institutionalized” through reiteration and internal or external legitimacy, are performed by different agencies (governments, international organizations, private or non-governmental organizations).

Legitimacy is the crucial test that most reporting activities on religious freedom fail to pass. In particular, “national” or “confessional” reports are strongly contested, whereas reporting initiatives performed by international organizations receive broader acceptance. Governmental reports are often rejected by the states considered non-compliant on the grounds that the monitoring activity at the source of the criticism is unilateral, incomplete, or somewhat biased. Moreover, governmental reports on religious freedom feed a more fundamental questioning of the credibility of the observers, especially in cases where there are records of intolerance in the territory of the country responsible for the “international” reporting activity.

Current practices

As far as state-based monitoring is concerned, the most famous case is that of the US Commission on Religious Freedom. Under section 102 (b) of the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) of 1998 the State

Department Office of International Religious Freedom and its global network of Embassies have an obligation to produce an annual report on religious freedom throughout the world. The results lead to a classification of states under scrutiny. According to the categories currently used, a government may have “generally respected” the right of religious freedom or may have engaged in or tolerated “particularly severe violations” of religious freedoms (in which case it falls within the category of “countries of particular concern”). From its side, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (an inter-governmental organization⁷), through its “Observatory”, compiles a yearly report on Islamophobia,⁸ covering issues such as “Incidents Related to Mosques”, “Qur’an Burning” in the US, and, more generally, “manifestations of Islamophobia” in the USA and Europe. However, the report includes mentions of “constructive developments with regard to combating Islamophobia” and a direct reference to the international human rights “codex”.

With regard to the engagement of private organizations and NGOs, in the “Christian” camp many agencies are active in reporting activities: for instance, “Aid to the Church in Need” (ACN)⁹ regularly publishes a Report on Religious Freedom¹⁰ and a specialized survey on the situation of Christians in the Middle East.

In the field of Hebraism, the Anti-Defamation League¹¹ publishes an Annual Report, the purpose of which is “combating anti-Semitism, hatred and bigotry”. The mission statement of the ADL includes the following passages, which link the monitoring activity even to law enforcement initiatives:

We monitor and expose online hate and anti-Semitism to make everyone aware of hidden threats. We keep government out of religion and religion out of government—and religion flourishes. Our partnerships with law enforcement help us protect against violent extremists. . . . We help combat global terror by connecting American and Israeli law enforcement.¹²

In general, it can be said that legitimacy is far more accepted as a natural attribute when it comes to the monitoring activities performed by international organizations. At the international level, a UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief¹³ has been appointed by the UN Human Rights Council. His/her mandate is to identify existing or emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right of freedom of religion or belief and present recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles.¹⁴

The working method of the Special Rapporteur relies fundamentally on the cooperation of state governments, which are also his/her main interlocutors for addressing cases of violations of the right to religious freedom. In practice, the Special Rapporteur transmits appeals and letters of allegation to states with regard to cases that represent infringements of or impediments to the exercise of the right of religion and belief; he/she also undertakes fact-finding country visits and submits annual reports to the Human Rights Council and to the General Assembly.

In the EU Report on Human Rights⁴⁵ prepared by the EEAS, one paragraph of the section “Thematic Issues” is devoted to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief. However, the topic is present in several EU Parliament Resolutions, in EU Council “Conclusions” and in important speeches delivered by prominent EU institutional leaders. More recently, the EU Council started adopting specific “Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief” (Council of the European Union, *EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief*, Luxembourg, 24 June 2013).

In terms of policy consequences, it seems that reports originating from governmental monitoring activities are more effective. However, such a result comes at the expenses of legitimacy; one may argue that there is a clear trade-off between the wide acceptance of a report on religious freedom and the policy implications built on its conclusions. This is due, however, more to the limited supra-national powers of the international institution concerned than to the “credibility” of the report itself. In a way, “national” or inter-governmental reports are “documents with teeth”, whereas international reports are “documents with trust”.

Italian foreign policy and religious freedom

Traditionally the Italian foreign policy after World War II, during the Christian-Democrat led governments, has not articulated in an explicit manner the issue of religious freedom as a leading topic of international relations. This does not mean, however, that Italian foreign policy ignored the issue; rather, religious freedom was “embedded” in the Italian approach to North Africa and the Middle East as one of the many aspects of the Italian “projection” in the Mediterranean. In this domain, Italian foreign policy was more the expression of complex domestic dynamics than the result of the influence of the Cold War.

At any rate, there was a mediated rather than a direct approach to religious freedom. The issue was considered a political one, to be dealt with through the traditional channels of foreign policy, rather than a subject relevant to the framework of the increasing “globalization” and sometimes “multilateralization” of human rights. Rather than a matter of principle, it was a question of political realism, prudent foreign policy and responsible attitude. Religious freedom was not seen as a normative question, but rather as the result of pragmatic and subtle initiatives in the bilateral relations of Italy with Middle Eastern countries. A very different model was followed in the Italian foreign policy with the Eastern European countries in the Warsaw Pact bloc, where the issue was considered intractable, at least until the election of Pope John Paul II.

In Africa, religious freedom often took the form of protecting Catholic Missionaries and their initiatives. This approach was implemented rather forcefully under the Christian Democratic governments, in particular during the era of Andreotti (who was Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Foreign Affairs several times from the early 1970s until the early 1990s).

The former Italian Ambassador Sergio Romano writes that several prudent, however proactive, positions taken by Andreotti in the Mediterranean and Middle East were not at all the result of an Italian “grand design” in the region. Andreotti, like most of his prominent predecessors in the Christian-Democrat party, was not a nationalist. A soft and slightly neutralist foreign policy perhaps seemed to Andreotti—according to Romano—the most suited attitude if the goal was to defend in the region, in the long run, the permanent interest of the Catholic Church. A direct clash between Arab nationalism and Western democracies would have damaged the interests of the Christian Arabs, the Church’s institutions and the more or less peaceful coexistence of catholic organizations in the Islamic regimes. In the reading of Ambassador Romano, it was this, after all, that was Andreotti’s main foreign policy concern during his long political mandate.¹⁶

With the end of the Cold War, religious freedom surfaced in a different way as a specific subject of foreign policy. However, within the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, religions were not seen as part of the fundamental challenges of international relations until recent times. The Catholic religion was long considered an asset for the Italian foreign policy, since the country was inevitably regarded abroad as the

host of the Vatican and home for the Holy Father. The presence of old and strong Catholic “minorities” in the Middle East and North Africa, in particular, was seen as an important tool for strengthening the role of the country in the region.

A fundamental change occurred after 9/11 and the launching of the so-called global war on terror during the first presidential term of George W. Bush. The political turn to the right taken by the Italian politics with the Premiership of Silvio Berlusconi seemed to encourage a sort of neo-conservative interpretation of religion as a problem rather than as a part of the solution, with a special emphasis on radical Islam and its more violent and intolerant expressions. However, this particular approach regarding the place of religion in foreign policy was never endorsed, as such, by the Italian diplomatic service, which maintained a more realistic and concerned attitude based on the pursuit of the fundamental interests of the country in the area. The assertive tone on religious freedom often used by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini, was, consequently, a combination of an internal and legitimate ideological agenda, a genuine concern for the respect of a fundamental human right and an issue related to the role of Italy in the region. In this context, the narrative on religious freedom was fundamentally based upon the concept of “protecting” Christian minorities, although officially the rationale was the advancement of religious freedom as a universal value. The issue of protection was also viewed with some concern by reflexive actors in the Vatican, since it seemed to give some foundation to the accusation that the Christians in the Middle East were acting as “foreigners”, despite the fact that they had been living on the land for centuries and well before the birth of Islam.

Samir Khalil Samir, a Lebanese Jesuit, stresses the circumstance that Christians in the Middle East cannot be considered an “ethnic minority”.

“That will be absurd”—protests Samir—“we were here before Islam, we did not come from abroad. Therefore we do not ask for any ‘protection’ whatsoever: we are first class citizens in the countries where we live and we demand to be recognized as such. On the other hand, we are a dynamic minority, since thanks to our specificity we bring something different inside our own countries. It has been exactly our bridging role that paved the way for affirming also in the Middle East the notion of human rights, gender equality, freedom of belief. All that implies for has to be aware of our role; a mission most needed especially in these times.”¹⁷

Similar concepts were expressed by Pierbattista Pizzaballa, responsible of the Franciscan mission in the Holy Land (“Custodia Terrae Sanctae”) in a 2011 interview dealing with the situation of the Christians in the Middle East after the “Arab Spring”:

Christians in the Middle East are Arabs and request that their rights as fully recognized by the law.... They are native and authentic citizens, faithful to their homelands and loyal to their national duties.¹⁸

It is interesting how the “Custos” see the political development in the Mediterranean as not necessarily a danger for the Christians, but rather as an opportunity to participate in the process of political and institutional change.¹⁹ In political terms, the emphasis on religious freedom (seen through the lens of “reciprocity”) ran the risk of being counterproductive and self-defeating, insofar as there were parties in the coalition of the center-right (such as *Lega Nord*) that showed forms of intolerance against Muslims and their religious practices, especially when the construction of Mosques on Italian soil was at stake. In particular, the argument of “reciprocity” (freedom of religion for the Christians in the Middle East in exchange of freedom of religion for the Muslim minorities in Europe and Italy) undermined the universality of the claim in favor of freedom of religion as a fundamental right (and, as such, not subject, by definition, to conditionality and preconditions).

In this context, the role played by professional diplomats was crucial in keeping the issue of religious freedom on track as a new field of the Italian foreign policy, without yielding to a faith-based diplomatic approach. The role of the Directorate for Political and Security Affairs was relevant and diplomats contributed in an intelligent manner to the aim of crafting an Italian approach to the topic in the broader framework of global human rights advocacy. Several initiatives were also taken in international fora (such as the United Nations), in cooperation with relevant partners (for instance, Spain, Jordan and Indonesia). A good opportunity was provided by the creation, in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of a special unit (“Pôle Religions”) in charge of religious issues.²⁰ I was leading, at that time, the Policy Planning Unit of the *Farnesina*. Having considered the merits of the French initiative, we decided, in turn, with the support of the leadership of the Ministry to launch in 2009 a new domain of policy-oriented research, the general goal of which was to analyze the role of religions in international relations. It was in this broader context that the issue of religious freedom

was to be addressed by Italian (professional) diplomacy, leaving the more vocal advocacy of “protection” of Christians in the Middle East to politicians. The Policy Planning Unit organizes, together with the Milan-based Italian think tank ISPI and the Province of Trento, an annual seminar on “Religions and International Relations” held in October, and invites activists, policymakers, academics and diplomats.²¹ Other events were created in cooperation with “Religions for Peace” and the European University Institute in Florence, which hosted a conference on religious freedom cosponsored by the Italian and Spanish Foreign Ministries, with the participation of the ministers of both countries (Franco Frattini and Trinidad Jiménez).²² An international workshop on “Promoting Religious Freedom and Peaceful Coexistence” was organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ISPI in Rome on 11 February 2013;²³ interestingly, in the middle of the morning session the breaking news of the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI disrupted the works by driving the attention of the participants to such an historical event.

Those initiatives ran in parallel with more symbolic actions sponsored by the Minister of Foreign Affairs himself.²⁴ For instance, Foreign Minister Franco Frattini received on 26 January 2011 the “Italy for Asia Bibi: freedom, justice and human rights” Committee, an informal grouping of associations that has sprung up to defend Asia Bibi, the Christian Pakistani woman condemned to death for blasphemy and to the release of whom Minister Frattini was strongly committed. After the cruel assassination of the Pakistani Minister Shahbaz Bhatti, a huge banner with Bhatti’s image and name was placed outside of the Italian Foreign Ministry in March 2011 to commemorate the man and to affirm the commitment of Italian diplomacy to the defense of religious freedom in the world. Frattini was also active at the European level in the attempt to make freedom of religion a more explicit objective in the EU advocacy for human rights.

The momentum that Frattini helped create eventually led (during the term of Frattini’s successor Giulio Terzi di Sant’Agata) to the approval (as mentioned above) on 24 June 2013 of the EU Guidelines for the Protection and Promotion of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). These guidelines are designed to serve as a toolkit to guide the political action of the European External Action Service, although they are not formally legally binding.²⁵

For his part, Minister Terzi was very vocal in condemning the series of “hate-driven attacks” against Christians at worship in Nigeria.²⁶ On

27 September 2012 Minister Terzi, together with the Jordanian foreign minister Nasser Judeh, co-chaired an international conference “on civil society and human rights education as a tool for disseminating religious tolerance”, in the margins of the UN General Assembly. The event aimed “to foster religious tolerance and the defense of freedom of religion and beliefs (FoRB) and religious minorities”.²⁷ Fifteen foreign ministers and high-level delegates participated, including the High Commissioner for Human rights, Mr. Pillay, along with 39 civil society delegations.

A case study: the Italian “Observatory on Religious Freedom”

A more structural approach to the freedom of religion in terms of reporting activities has been recently attempted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the creation of an “Observatory on Religious Freedom”.²⁸ According to the official statement released on the day of the presentation of the initiative,

following the lead of the United States, Canada and other countries, Italy too has set up an Observatory on Religious Freedom to monitor and combat violations of religious freedom around the world, beginning with the areas at risk where religious minorities are being persecuted.²⁹

The Observatory was established by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the City of Rome and is run by a coordinator, the sociologist Massimo Introvigne, and four other members: two diplomats specialized in the field of Human Rights and two representatives from NGOs. Minister Terzi and Mayor Alemanno signed a *Protocol of Understanding* at the Foreign Ministry on 10 January 2012 to establish the Observatory.³⁰

The Observatory—according to the official mission statement—was conceived in 2011 after the wave of attacks against Christian communities in the Middle East. Its aim was to create—together with our Representation to the Holy See—a body dedicated to intensifying the efforts of Italy and the international community in protecting religious minorities.³¹

The rationale provided for the establishment of the Observatory is the following:

The promotion of religious freedom in all its forms, and the protection of religious minorities throughout the world, are a priority of Italy’s foreign

policy and its ethical dimension. This key strand of our country's international activities has recently gained an even higher profile in the wake of the horrific episodes of violence against Christian communities in the African continent.... The world looks to our capital city as a beacon of dialogue and tolerance among religious faiths; as the seat of Christianity's greatest basilica and the biggest mosque in Europe; and as the home of the world's oldest Jewish community.³²

However, the mission of the Observatory needs to be further clarified. The new body is expected to collect, check and release information on violations of religious freedom in the world, but no precise indication thus far exists regarding the possible compilation of an official and public report based on input received by the Italian diplomatic network. Moreover, no direct policy consequences seem to be attached to the violation of religious freedoms, other than those possibly taken through diplomatic channels and at EU or UN level. Apparently, according to a recent statement by the coordinator, Massimo Introvigne, the role of Italy should be that of "coalition building" in order to intervene "sometimes in public, sometimes discretely" in cases where the freedom of religion is threatened.³³ Interestingly, the Observatory appears to be an informal body operating both at local (city of Rome) and international (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) levels. Its functions are articulated both in terms of "city multiculturalism" and religious freedom as a subject of foreign policy.

As for the composition of the Observatory, some fundamental issues need to be addressed. The presence of professional diplomats on the board makes it very different, for instance, from the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, since the latter is composed of independent commissioners appointed by Congress and by the president. Diplomats should deal with religion as a fundamental matter in international relations and for the advancement of human rights; they should not be directly involved, however, in reporting activities sponsored by their governments rather than those backed by international organizations, since it is almost impossible to separate such activities from a national foreign policy agenda based both on values *and* interests.

Notes

- 1 Jon Stewart, Daily Show, on the TV Channel "Comedy Central"; episodes on the "Ground Zero Mosque" (7 July 2010 and 10 August 2010).

- 2 President Obama Celebrates Ramadan at White House Iftar Dinner, 13 August 2010, 'The White House Blog' (5 October 2013).
- 3 Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America", *Daedalus*, Vol. 134, n. 4 (2005), 40–55.
- 4 Second Ecumenical Vatican Council, *Dignitatis Humanae* (Declaration on Religious Freedom) Rome, 7 December 1965.
- 5 Council of Europe, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Press release—CommDH034(2012), Strasbourg, 24 July 2012.
- 6 Alain Juppé, "France Will Remain by the Side of the Arab World's Embattled Minority", *Foreign Policy*, 28 February 2012.
- 7 See Organization of the Islamic Conference website <http://www.oic-oci.org> (13 October 2013).
- 8 See report at the web address <http://www.oic-oci.org/uploads/file/islamphobia/reports/english/islamphobia-report-2012.pdf>.
- 9 Aid to the Church in Need, International website www.acn-intl.org (13 October 2013).
- 10 Aid to the Church in Need, *Christian and the Struggle for Religious Freedom*, 2012, http://www.acnuk.org/data/files/ACN_Christians_and_the_Struggle_for_Religious_Freedom.pdf (13 October 2013).
- 11 Anti-Defamation League website: <http://www.adl.org/about-adl/> (13 October 2013).
- 12 "From Problem to Solution, ADF Annual Report 2011" (http://archive.adl.org/annual_report/Annual_Report_2011.pdf) (13 October 2013).
- 13 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomReligion/Pages/FreedomReligionIndex.aspx>.
- 14 According to the Human Rights Council Resolution n.6/37, the Special Rapporteur must fulfill, among other duties, the following general goals: "(a) To promote the adoption of measures at the national, regional and international levels to ensure the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of religion or belief; (b) To identify existing and emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and present recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles; (c) To continue her/his efforts to examine incidents and governmental actions that are incompatible with the provisions of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief and to recommend remedial measures as appropriate; (d) To continue to apply a gender perspective, inter alia, through the identification of gender-specific abuses, in the reporting process, including in information collection and in recommendations".
- 15 See 2011 edition: http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/docs/2011_hr_report_en.pdf.
- 16 Sergio Romano, *Guida alla politica estera italiana* (Milano: Rizzoli 2002 [1993]), 224 [translated by the Author].

- 17 Samir Khalil Samir, Interview, *Avvenire*, 3 October 2010 [translated by the Author].
- 18 Pierbattista Pizzaballa, “Remarks” at the CIPMO Conference on *Ethnic and Religious Minorities in the Mediterranean*, Turin 4–5 April 2011 [translated by the Author].
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Joseph Maïla, *Pourquoi un pôle “Religions” au Quai d’Orsay* (<http://www.delegfrance-conseil-europe.org/spip.php?article431>).
- 21 The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI) and the Autonomous Province of Trento in 2009 launched a project of an yearly event to be held in Trento with the aim to discuss these issues by gathering scholars and experts of religions and international relations, but also movements and associations particularly active both in conceptualizing and implementing intercultural and interreligious dialogue. In 2009, the first edition “Religions and International relations. Challenges and opportunities” was aimed at giving an objective and informed appraisal of the role of religion in international relations involving professionals and experts in the International Relations field. The 2010 edition “Religions and International Relations. Religion and Global Governance” was focused on the relationship between religions and global public goods (namely environment, health, stability) and on the relationship between religions and human security. The 2011 edition “Religions and International Relations. The Euro-Mediterranean Region: Religions and New Perspectives for Dialogue” analyzed the Arab Spring impact on religion with the objective of analyzing the events that had taken place in North African and Arab Countries through the epistemological lens of the “post-secular” political discourse, investigating the similarities and differences of those phenomena with the Euro-Atlantic experience of post-secularism. The goal of the meeting was to create an opportunity of an original dialogue between scholars and experts of both shores of the Mediterranean, in view of a possible cooperation with the new political actors and experienced players in the domain of religion and politics. The 2012 edition “Religions and International Relations. Muslim Democracy as Christian Democracy?” explored the analogy between Muslim democracy and Christian democracy, whose use in public discourse has increased in recent years especially in the aftermath of the Arab revolts with reference to the democratic streams of political Islam. This workshop showed that on the knowledge base generated by this comparative intuition a more empathetic dialogue between these two major religiously-inspired political traditions can emerge and become be a privileged cultural–political framework for dialogue between Europe and the Muslim world. The 2013 edition of the Seminar dealt with “State-Religions Arrangements in a Post-Western World: A Cross-Cultural Dialogue on

- Freedom of Religion” (cf. Silvio Ferrari and Fabio Petito, “Background” and “Concept”, Trento Seminar on *Religions and International Relations*, 2013).
- 22 See article by Franco Frattini and Trinidad Jiménez in the Italian newspaper *Avvenire*, 18 June 2011 (http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Interviste/2011/06/20110620_liberta_religiosa.htm).
 - 23 Silvio Ferrari and Fabio Petito, *Promoting Religious Freedom and Peace through Cross-Cultural Dialogue*—Report based on the International Workshop with academia, think tank and media representatives held on 11 February 2013 at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, http://www.ispionline.it/it/documents/report_religioni_febb_2013.pdf (17 October 2013).
 - 24 Pasquale Annicchino, “La tutela e la promozione del diritto di libertà religiosa nelle recenti iniziative di politica estera italiana” (forthcoming).
 - 25 Pasquale Annicchino, “Recent Developments Concerning the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief in Italian Foreign Policy”, *Review of Faith and International Affairs*, Vol. 11, n. 3 (2013), 61–68, 62.
 - 26 See press release http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Comunicati/2012/10/20121029_attentatoNigeria.htm
 - 27 See press release http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2012/09/20120928_AssembleaGeneraleOnu.htm
 - 28 Pasquale Annicchino, “Recent Developments Concerning the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief in Italian Foreign Policy”, 63.
 - 29 http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2012/06/20120622_Roma.htm (13 October 2013).
 - 30 Pasquale Annicchino, “Recent Developments Concerning the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief in Italian Foreign Policy”, Appendix.
 - 31 http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/AreaGiornalisti/NoteStampa/2012/07/20120717_NotaServizioNigeria.htm (13 October 2013).
 - 32 Ibid.
 - 33 http://www.esteri.it/MAE/IT/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Approfondimenti/2012/06/20120622_Roma.htm (13 October 2013).

Index

- 11 September 2001, 3, 8, 58,
76, 113
2010 Religious Leaders'
Summit, 30, 39, 46
- Afghanistan, 3, 7, 65, 66, 74, 75,
76, 82, 83, 86, 88, 89
- Africa, 61, 82, 95, 96, 97, 98, 111,
112, 113
agape, 1, 15, 16
Ahl-i Hadith, 86
- Aid to the Church in Need,
110, 118
- Al Qaeda, 76
- Albania, 55, 62
- Algeria, 72, 82
- Alliance of Civilizations, 12,
21, 33
- Almond, Gabriel Abraham, 21
- Ambassador-at-Large for
International Religious
Freedom, 4
- Americanism, 15
- Anderson, Benedict, 34, 40
- Andreotti, Giulio, 112
- Annicchino, Pasquale, 119, 120
- Anti-Defamation League, 110,
118
- anti-Semitism, 110
- Appleby, Scott, 15, 22, 50
- Aquinas, Thomas, 93
- Arab Spring, 5, 20, 53, 61, 88,
114, 119
- Asia Bibi (Noreen Aasiya), 115
- Augustine, 93, 98
- Balci, Ali, 21
Balelwi, 86
- Bangladesh, 67, 75, 82, 83
- Barkat, Gulshan, 89
- Barnavi, Elie, 87
- Beagle, Channel, 2
- Beirut, 4
- Bellah, Robert N., 117
- Benedict XVI, 42, 50, 93, 94,
96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 103,
115
- Benhabib, Seyla, 87
- Berger, Peter L., 50
- Berlin Wall, 7, 28
- Berlusconi, Silvio, 113
- Bhatti, Shahbaz, 115
- Bhutto, Benazir, 69
- blasphemy, 70, 115
- Bobbio, Norberto, 93, 102
- Bole, William, 22
- Brazil, 95, 98
Buddha-dharma, 44
- Buddhism, 21, 38, 44, 50, 77
- Bulliet, Richard, 57, 87
- Bush, George W., 3, 113
- Buttho, Zulfiqar Ali, 67
- Cacciari, Massimo, 56, 87
- Cajal, Máximo, 22
- Caliphate, 84
- Campanini, Massimo, 90
- capitalism, 15

- Caritas in Veritate*, 42, 50, 94, 101, 102
 Carter, Jimmy, 75
 Casanova, José, 7, 21, 26, 32, 33, 39, 40, 50, 73, 84, 89, 90
 Catholic Church, 2, 3, 19, 20, 23, 78, 92, 95, 97, 98, 101, 112
 Catholicism. *See* Catholic Church
 Catholic-Muslim Forum, 100
 Cavanaugh, William, 14
 Chile, 2, 62
 China, 44, 75, 76, 83, 95, 98, 99
 christian democracy, 62, 112, 119
 Christianity, 3, 15, 32, 38, 39, 57, 77, 78, 92, 99, 102, 117
 Christians Arabs, 112
 Christiansen, Drew, 22
 CIA, 76
 City of God, 93; *see* *Augustine*
 Cizik, Richard, 50
 clash of civilizations, 3, 8, 11, 20, 62, 87
 codependent origination, 45
 Cold War, 10, 19, 57, 75, 76, 77, 111, 112
 collective identity, 11, 25, 27, 29, 33, 35, 36, 78
 Collins, John, 87
communitarian security, 47
comparative politics, 28
 comprehensive vision, 16, 45
 Confucianism, 15
 Constitutional Convention. *See* European Constitution
 cosmopolitan perspective, 16, 17
 cosmotheandric vision. *See* Panikkar, Raimon
 Council of Europe, 107, 118
 cultural pluralism, 12, 13, 30, 62
 Curia, 96, 97, 98

 D'Alema, Massimo, 4
 decolonization, 65, 81
 democratic legitimacy, 29
 deprivatization of religion, 44, 73
Deobandi, 86
 de-westernization of Catholicism, 97
dharma, 44
 differentiation. *See* Secularization

Dignitatis Humanae, 107, 117
 domestic analogy, 6
 Druzes, 4
 Durand line, 66

 Egypt, 7, 54, 62, 72, 75, 82, 88
 Eisenstadt, Shmuel Noah, 40
 empiric-realist international relations theory, 16
 Ennahda, 7
 epistemic communities, 19
 Erny, Pierre, 56, 87
 Esposito, John L., 9, 21, 89, 102
ethnic solidarity, 14
 EU Report on Human Rights, 111
 European Constitution, 3, 36, 97
 European Parliament, 2, 20, 55, 58, 86, 87
 European Union, 17, 22, 30, 55, 56, 58, 63, 115
 European University Institute, 115
 evangelical right, 7
 expansionist religions, 77
extended transnational religious organization, 78

 faith-based diplomacy, 42
 Falk, Richard, 11, 21
 FAO, 46
 Farnesina. *See* Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Ferrari, Silvio, 22, 40, 119
 Foradori, Paolo, 23
 foreign policy, 17, 27, 28, 44, 80, 82, 86, 93, 102, 104, 106, 111, 112, 113, 115, 117
 forgiveness, 15, 94
 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – FYROM, 2
 Foucault, Michel, 40
 Fox, Jonathan, 29, 39
 Fukuyama, Francis, 33, 36, 40
 Francis (Pope), 95, 99, 100, 101, 102
 Frattini, Franco, 20, 113, 115, 119
 fraternity, 17, 60, 92, 100, 101, 102
 free world vs. collectivism, 10

- freedom of religion*, 20
 Friedlander, Peter, 50
 functionalist approach, 36
- G8, 9, 30, 37, 48, 51
 G20, 29, 30, 37, 95
 Gaza Strip, 7
 geo-ecclesial reconfiguration, 95
 global common good, 46
 global governance, 17, 19, 29, 30, 31, 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 93, 95
global Islam, 81
global Muslimscape, 86
 global order, 9, 21, 49, 89, 102
 global policies, 27
 global public goods, 45, 46, 119
 global shift of power, 20, 92
 globalization, 20, 21, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, 40, 44, 78, 79, 80, 84, 85, 92, 93, 97, 99, 101, 112
 Glover, Ross, 87
 golden rule, 37
 Goossens, Paul, 87
 Gopin, Marc, 22
 Ground Zero, 105, 117
 Guolo, Renzo, 21
- Habermas, Jürgen, 54, 86
 Hall, Gerry, 50
 Hamas, 3, 7, 83
 Hanson, Eric O., 13
hard power, 76, 81
 Hatzopoulos, Pavlos, 21, 22, 23
 Hauber, Eric, 50
 Haynes, Jeffrey, 50, 51, 89, 90
 Hehir, Joseph Bryan, 20
 Held, David, 31, 39
 Hennemeyer, Robert T., 22
 Hezbollah, 4, 7, 83
 high-level meetings of religious leaders, 9
 Hinduism, 15, 77
Hizbut Tahrir, 84
 Holy See. *See* Vatican
 human family, 12, 37
- human security, 45, 47, 48, 119
 Huntington, Samuel, 3, 20, 36, 56, 57, 59, 87
- identity-based conflicts, 14, 15
 Ikeda, Daisaku, 50
imagined communities, 25, 34
inclusiveness, 30, 38
 inculturation, 32, 97, 98
 India, 44, 66, 75, 78, 82, 83, 95, 98, 99
 Indonesia, 30, 62, 72, 80, 82, 83, 115
 intercultural construction of global democracy, 29
international analysis, 28
 international community, 3, 28, 105, 116
 international democracy, 27, 28, 31
 International Political Theology, 26, 39
 Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan), 75
 Introvigne, Massimo, 116, 117
 Iran, 7, 28, 54, 64, 71, 82, 84, 86
 Iraq, 3, 7, 94
 Islam, 3, 5, 20, 39, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 77, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 100, 113, 119
 Islamic democracy, 62
 Islamic Leviathan, 66, 70, 74, 88, 89
 Islamic revolution, 7, 28, 84
 Islamism, 15, 28, 62
 Islamophobia, 110
 ISPI, 5, 115, 118
 Israel, 55, 75
 Israeli-Lebanon war, 3
 Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, vii, 5, 87, 112, 115, 116, 118, 119
- Jemaah Islamiyah*, 84
Jamaat-i-Islami, 82, 84, 86
Jamiat-ul Ulema-e-Islam, 82
 Jerusalem, 34
Jihad, 76
 Jiménez, Trinidad, 115, 119
 Jordan, 72, 83, 115
 Judeo-Christian civilization, 10
 Juergensmeyer, Mark, 90

- Justice and Development Party
(Turkey), 7, 66
- Kant, Immanuel, 93
- Kantian 'perpetual peace', 31
- Karpov, Vyacheslav, 88
- Kaul, Inge, 51
- Kemalism, 71
- Kemalist policies. *See* Turkey
- Kepel, Gilles, 26, 39
- Kılınç, Ramazan, 22
- kill for the telephone company. See*
Cavanaugh, William
- Khalil, Samir, 113, 118
- Khan, Ayub, 67, 68
- Khan, Yahya, 67
- Khanna, Parag, 89
- Kouchner, Bernard, 4
- Kubálková, Vendulka, 39
- Kyoto protocols, 46
- Lebanon, 3, 4, 83
- Lega Nord*, 115
- legitimacy, 28, 109
- Levitt, Peggy, 78, 79, 90
- Lewis, Martin W., 56, 87
- liberal-institutionalist international
relations theory, 16
- liberalism, 15, 102
- Liberation Theology, 7
- Libya, 61, 83, 88
- Lieven, Anatol, 88
- love the other's country like your own*, 16
- Lu, Catherine, 17, 22
- Lubich, Chiara, 21, 22
- Luckmann, Thomas, 21
- Luhmann, Niklas, 21
- Maalouf, Amin, 60, 87
- Macedonia. *See* Former Democratic
Republic of Macedonia – FYROM
- madrasahs, 66, 68, 69, 76, 80
- Maïla, Joseph, 118
- Malaysia, 72, 74
- Maronite Catholics, 4
- marxism, 15, 77
- McGrew, Anthony, 31, 39
- Mecca, 34
- Mediterranean, 5, 20, 22, 26, 56, 57, 58,
62, 63, 111, 112, 114, 118, 119
- Michael, Michális S., 22
- Middle East, 7, 20, 22, 55, 58, 61, 62, 81,
82, 93, 96, 100, 108, 110, 111, 112,
113, 114, 115, 116
- migration of the sacred. *See*
Cavanaugh, William
- Millennium Development Goals, 46
- Millennium World Peace Summit, 31
- Miș, Nebi, 21
- modernist-instrumentalist view, 12
- Moratinos, Miguel Angel, 4
- Morocco, 82
- Mosque, 105, 117
- Mosse, George, 89
- Mujaheddin, 75
- multilateralism, 17, 95, 101
- multitrack diplomacy*, 18
- musawat-i Muhammadi*, 68
- Muslim Brotherhood, 7, 84
- Muslims, 4, 55, 62, 82, 83, 88, 100, 105,
107, 115
- myth of religious violence, 14, 17, 22, 23
- Nasr Seyyed, Vali Reza 71, 88, 89
- national liberation movements, 65
- National Reconciliation Accord
(Lebanon), 4
- nationalism, 15
- negotiated transnational religious
organization*, 78
- new evangelization, 99
- NGOs, 14, 27, 110, 116
- Nigeria, 82, 115
- Nobel Peace Prize, 17
- non-negotiable issues, 13
- Nye, Joseph, 80
- Obama, Barack, 94, 105, 117
- Observatory on Religious Freedom
(Italy), 116
- Office of Faith-Based Community
Initiatives, 4, 20

- Omega Point, 46; *see* Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre
- opportunist Islamization, 71, 72
- Organization of the Islamic Conference, 110, 118
- Orthodox Church, 2, 28
- orthogenesis. *See* Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre
- Ortiz, Renato, 40
- Ozzano, Luca, 21, 102
- Pace, Enzo, 21, 22
- Pacem in Terris*
John XXIII, 101
- Pakistan, 20, 53, 55, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91
- Pakistan People's Party, 67
- Palestinian parliamentary election, 3
- Panikkar, Raimon, 46, 51
- pastoral* of international relations, 94
- patriotism, 16, 17
- Paul II, John, 2, 93, 94, 96, 99, 102, 112
- peace-building, 18
- Persian Gulf, 7, 55, 69, 75
- Petito, Fabio, 21, 22, 23, 119
- Pillay, Navi, 116
- Pinochet, Ugarte Augusto, 2
- Piscatori, James, 89
- Pizzaballa, Pierbattista, 114, 118
- Pizzorni, Florence, 87
- Poland, 7
- pôle religions*, 4, 115
- political friendship among peoples, 17
- politics of identity*, 14
- post-secular age, 6, 12
- Prayer for Peace
Assisi 1986, 9
- primordialist-essentialist view, 12
- privatization of religion, 8, 71, 73
- Protestant fundamentalism, 7
- Quai d'Orsay, 4
- Raja-dharma*, 44
- Rashid, Ahmed, 88, 89
- Ratzinger, Joseph. *See* Benedict XVI
- Rawls, John, 16, 60, 88, 98, 102
- Reagan, Ronald, 75, 76
- rebirth of religions. *See* resurgence of religions
- reciprocity, 105
- recreated transnational transnational religious organizations*, 78
- Reetz, Dietrich, 91
- Regensburg speech. *See* Benedict XVI
- rejectionist secularism, 71
- religion wars, 26
- religions and globalism, 27
- religions and internationalism, 27, 28
- religions and inter-state relations, 27
- religions and transnationalism, 27, 31
- Religions for Peace, 33, 37, 38, 40, 115
- religious freedom, 11, 20, 58, 59, 100, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118
- religious minorities, 75, 108, 116, 118
- religious radicalism, 6
- resurgence of religions, 7, 9, 23, 51
- Riccardi, Andrea, 103
- Romano, Sergio, 112, 118
- Roy, Olivier, 26, 32, 39, 90
- Russia, 83, 95, 98
- Said, Edward W., 55, 87
- Samoré, Antonio (cardinal), 2
- Sandler, Shmuel, 29, 39
- Sarkozy, Nicholas, 60
- Saudi Arabia, 30, 54, 66, 69, 75, 80, 106
- Schmitt, Carl, 11, 21
- Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 107
- secularization, 8, 35, 48, 49, 70, 71, 98
- security communities*, 47
- Senegal, 62
- Sfeir, Nasrallah Boutros, 4
- Shah, Timothy Samuel, 20, 21
- Shaikh, Farzana, 90
- Shani, Giorgio, 89

- Sharif, Nawaz, 69
 Sheikh, Mona Kanwal, 40, 51
 Sheng-yen, 50
 Shiites, 7
 Shintoism, 15
 Siddiqi, Shibil, 89
 Silver Rule, 37
 social capital, 18
social networks, 13
 soft power, 36, 76, 79, 80, 81
 Soka Gakkai, 44, 50
 solidarity movement. *See* Poland
 South Africa, 95, 98
 state-based fundamentalism, 11
 Stepan, Alfred, 20, 88
 Stern, Marc, 51
 Stevens, Chris, 61, 88
 Stewart, Jon, 105, 117
strong religions, 10
 substantialist approach, 36
Sufi Brotherhood, 84
 Suleiman, Michel, 4
 Sunnis, 7
 sustainable peace, 18
 Syria, 83, 101, 108
- Tablighi Jamaat*, 84, 86
 Taif agreement. *See* National
 Reconciliation Accord (Lebanon)
 Talibans. *See* Afghanistan
 Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre 46, 51
 Terzi di Sant'Agata, Giulio, 115, 116
 theology of international relations, 94
 theo-rights, 34
 thick and a thin morality. *See* Walzer,
 Michael
 Thomas, Scott, 23, 49, 51
 thoroughgoing Islamization, 71, 72, 73
 Toft, Monica Duffy, 20
translatio imperii, 101
 transnational actors, 2, 19, 79, 81,
 84, 97
 transnational collective identities
 religions as, 11, 77
 transnational identity, 34
 transnational nations, 33, 34
 transnational religions, 77, 78, 79, 80
 transnational world community, 12
 Treaty establishing a Constitution
 for Europe. *See* European
 Constitution
 Tunisia, 7, 62
 Turkey, 7, 21, 30, 55, 56, 62, 63, 66,
 72, 82
 Twin Towers, 7
- ummah*, 32, 83
 UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of
 religion or belief, 110
 UNIFIL II. *See* Israeli-Lebanon war
 United Nations Development Program,
 47, 51
 United Nations Human Rights
 Council, 106
 US Commission on Religious
 Freedom, 109
*US Strategy on Religious Leader and
 Faith Community Engagement*, 5
 USSR, 75
ut unum sint, 11
- Van der Veer, Peter, 89, 90
 Vatican, 2, 3, 4, 50, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97,
 98, 99, 103, 113
 Vicaría de la solidaridad, 2
 de Vries, Hent, 40
- Waltz, Kenneth, 28, 39, 40
 Walzer, Michael, 60, 88
 war on terror, 55, 113
 Watson, Michael, 21, 89, 102
 weapons of mass destruction, 19
 Wendt, Alexander, 35, 40
 Westphalian state, 19, 31, 34, 64
 Wigen, Karen E., 56, 87
 Wolfowitz, Paul, 3
 World Authority, 41, 42, 43
 World Council of Churches, 38, 40
 World Council of Religious Leaders,
 31, 39

- world politics, 5, 6, 19, 25, 26, 27, 28, 36,
37, 64, 95, 101, 105
- world religions, 9, 11, 19, 21, 34, 45, 50
- Worthington, Mary, 50
- Wright, Thomas, 50
- Young, C.R., 50
- Zannini, Francesco, 103
- Zia-ul-Haq, Muhammad, 68, 70
- Žižek, Slavoj, 22, 40