

The role of religion in international relations



In this book, it is informed that how vital is religion in international relations. The resurgence of religion seen as the driving force behind the clash of civilizations. According to Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito, religion remains as a threat to international relations' own existence. In other words, politics with reference of religion became a threat to security, order and civility.

PART I

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY AND RELIGION

Resurgence of religion and cultural pluralism in international relations challenged the Western culture of modernity and the institutions of international society. This resurgence is part of the larger crisis of modernity. It reflects a deeper and more widespread disillusionment with a "modernity" that reduces the world to what can be perceived and controlled through reason, science, technology and bureaucratic rationality, and leaves out considerations of the religious, the spiritual, or the sacred. And also, the global resurgence of religion is the failure of the modernizing, secular state to produce both democracy and development in the Third World. Moreover, the global resurgence of religion can be seen as a revolt against the West in developing countries.[1]

People always want to belong to different faith communities or to none. Now, there is a growing evidence in international relations to what different kind of religious perspectives may have offer to the world. The rejection of the study of religion is more stronger in international relations than in most other social sciences.

The common ethical principles among the main world religions on war, peace, the just war, pacifism, human rights and peace building are identified by the scholars in international relations, Christian Ethics, and Religious Studies. These social ethics are also examined by various nongovernmental organizations such as the World Conference on Religion and Peace (Amman, Jordan, 1999) and the Parliament of the World's Religions.[2]

Deep pluralism focuses the approach called " virtue-ethics". It focuses on virtues, practises and community rather than the individual or or a cosmopolitan community of humankind as a whole. The necessary distinction between theology(faith) and reason and leded this question, which is superior " faith or reason? A virtue-ethics approach shows how humanitarian practises can help to build up communities in their faith as well as empower them as part of development. It maybe the case that two should go together if there is to be lasting political stability, democracy and development.[3]

Theological and religious thinking causes debates about the role of the culture on the international politics. The presumed unity of ethics and politics mostly disappered along with it . The concequences of extinction , and the changes in theoretical perspective entailed other political models or view points . A community is not merely an artificial set of arrangemets between people. An it certainly cannot be a moral community. Humans create the state out of their own self interest means that the state can exist only so long as it appeals to people's sinful needs rather than to any capacity for

virtue that he denies most possess in any case. And also people obey law because it is in their self interest to do so, not because they believe it is the morally correct thing to do so. For him does not consider political activity to be natural to people nor does he believe that people engage in politics for any reason except promoting their own self interest. The article analyzes several specific theological views on multiculturalism in world politics, including religious pluralism, apologetics and syncretism.[4] Each of these perspectives challenge the exclusivist views of religion.

Theological pluralism has many similarities with liberalism, yet analyses more deeply and ultimately challenge liberalism's Enlightenment presuppositions. On the other hand, apologetics is a dialogical processes which are designed to overcome the problems associated with alterity apologetics is a dialogical processes which are designed to overcome the problems associated with alterity. Syncretist religious ethics points to the contingency and multiplicity of identity. Taking these approaches seriously may well resonate with the aspects of the English School.[5]

It shouldn't be ignored that traditional preoccupation with the problem of power in assessing the value of theological ethics. Stressing power similarities and differences, and differences including whether religious practices reinforce or challenge dominant economic and political structures of power is a contribution to the study of religion.

PART II

WAR, SECURITY, AND RELIGION

Often the political resurgence of religious communities is accompanied by violent clashes in and between nations among others. We can give as examples; the bloody conflicts in Algeria, Bosnia, East Timor, Kashmir, Nigeria, Palestine and Sri Lanka. Primordialists argue that differences in religious traditions should be viewed the most important variable to explain violent interactions in and between nations. The resurgence of religion represents a big challenge to the existing status quo. Primordialists argue that differences in religious traditions should be viewed the most important variable to explain violent interactions in and between nations.

[6]Instrumentalists think that conflicts may be aggravated by divergent religious creeds but they insist that they are rarely if ever caused by them. According to them, the correlation between violent clashes and resurgence of religion is not surprising but it is necessary.[7]By contrast, moderate constructivists argue that acts of violence requires legitimization and religion and religious leaders provide such legitimization.[8]

There are three theoretical perspectives on the impact of faith on political conflict: primordialism, instrumentalism, and moderate constructivism. In this view, cultural similarities and dissimilarities produce converging and diverging state interests. Most religious conflicts in international politics are asymmetric. States which have similar religious traditions and cosmologies will want to form alliances against whom they share little cultural and religious ideas. Violence will be largely confined to interactions that take place between civilizations.

Under the conditions of scarcity and value pluralism, conflicts among groups are a universal feature of social life. They can not be avoided but must be

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taken as a result of human nature.[9]The sources of conflicts are usually very complex. Religious factors sometimes play a subordinate role as a source of conflicts.

There is four determinants of elites' strategic choices. The first one is; the degree of mobilization depends on the nature of conflict. The second one is; the degree of mobilization depends on the self-sacrificing attitudes of the group's members. The more committed the more to invest time and resources, the more practicable will be. The other determinant is; the degree of mobilization depends on the relationship between the conflict parties. And lastly, the degree of societal support depends on the public justification for the use of violence.

Also there is two conditions for a successful implementation of the dialogue strategy. First, there is a dilemma between the different religious communities. Before they resist against the violence, they have to be sure about the other communities do the same. If this does not happen, peace would become the stupid according to conservative scholars. Secondly, all great religious communities are more or less entangled in violent political clashes.

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Since the end of the Cold War, conflicts and wars are less because of political or ideological systems. And also they are not much caused by economic motives or territorial and because of gaining power. The motivations of conflicts are increasingly related to culture and identity. Or in other words,
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conflicts cause by ethnic or clash of civilizations. The resurgence of religion represents a big challenge to the existing status quo. And also they are not much caused by economic motives or territorial and because of gaining power.

Most religious conflicts in international politics are asymmetric. Often secular states are attacked by religious groups. A threat from a religious group known for using terrorist methods. And this situation generally seen as a direct threat to sovereignty of the state.

A religious attack on a secular state can be seen as one of the three main ways in which religion can be addressed within the realm of security politics[10]:

A religious group is considered to be a threat to the survival of the state.

Faith is seen as threatened by whoever or whatever nonreligious actor or process (the state, technology, industrialism, modernism, etc.).

Faith is seen as threatened by another religious discourse or actor.

Especially securitization on behalf of secularization against fundamentalism justifies many violations of democracy and civil liberties around the world. From a secular platform, religion as such can be depicted as a threat to political culture. On this issue international relations theory is not neutral observer as it pretends to be. It is implicated by its own secularist self perception.[11]

PART III

POLITICIZING RELIGION: TOWARD A NEW GLOBAL ETHOS?

Inclusivism strives for a religious identity that exceeds the locus of the sovereign state and the time frame of the present; it alternatively rests on a future fulfillment. Inclusivist religion can help to diminish the obstacles to a needed and desirable reconciliation of science, reason and spirituality.

[12] Religion can bring clarity and charity to debates about a range of grievances regarding past abuses.

Humane global governance can only occur as the outcome of human struggle and to past efforts to overcome colonialism, slavery.

The cultural division between East and West was historically neat and rigid. Between Christian and Islamic spirituality we can see familiar themes, but also a kind of sea change. In the Islamic context, intellectual spirituality is not a compact movement and it subscribes to a unified doctrine.

Desecularization becomes a very important dimension of the intellectual and historical context. In this context, religion becomes an increasingly important factor in transnational and international relations. Because of the significance of religion in political arena, the Islamic resurgence in twentieth century viewed as the rise of "political Islam". As a consequence, while the resurgence involves many dimensions, its political impacts received more attention. Political Islam has many types of movements. There have been movements advocating internal legal reform, the transformation of social institutions through legislation as well as social persuasion, revolutionary change of the political regime or political system. The resurgence of political Islam represents a big challenge to the existing status quo. And also it

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means that it is a challenge to political systems institutions and their moral and intellectual foundations.[13]

The context of international relations has been experiencing significant transformations. Many older slogans, paradigms and ideologies that had shaped conceptual frameworks have been discredited or replaced. The collapse of Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War encouraged many to look for and identify new global threats, new enemies and conflicts. For some, political Islam became the next threat and global terrorism. But the realities of Muslim politics reflect a more complex and dynamic reality.

The resurgence of religion and ethnicity has been global. Relations between Islam and the West show a process of conflict and change. Islamic jihads and Western clash of civilizations face new realities. Islamically inspired schools, medical clinics, hospitals, social services and financial institutions increased. Islamic parties demonstrated their ability to participate within the system and provide a political alternative to the regimes. Islamic activists served in cabinets became prime ministers and presidents.[14]The terrorism of 11 September highlighted the importance of the struggle within the Muslim world between the violent jihadist vision and the visions of pluralism and dialogue.[15]