The Sacred and the Sovereign

a compendium of pieces from e-IR
on religion and international relations

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Introductory notes

Özgür Taşkaya | July 2011

The study of religion has grown into an essential part of modern political studies. With that point in mind, in recent years there has been a proliferation of scholarly literature on the relationship between religion and politics. The global resurgence of religion in the political arena began in earnest in the late twentieth century and if current trends are anything to go by it seems evident that the phenomenon will maintain its growth throughout the twenty-first century.

Religion in a sense did "return from exile" resulting in a blurring of the domains of God and *Caesar*.

The resurgence of religion primarily shows itself in such debates as the failure of secularism thesis, the emergence of a post-secular society, and the rise of religious diplomacy. A deep fear, or at the very least a high suspicion, of religion's burgeoning impact on politics is still held by some. That being said, many realize the positive prospects of such a resurgence. It has been suggested by some that secularism is no longer a suitable paradigm to be applied to religion's role in public life. The fact is that religion has come to a place in society where it is no longer possible to ignore, or exclude it from political debate and scholarship. Therefore, a reconsideration and redefinition of secularism is of crucial significance.

Whether one is religious, or a secularist, one should lend an ear to Jürgen Habermas who states that: "both religious and secular mentalities must be open to a complementary learning process if we are to balance shared citizenship and cultural difference." Only then can coexistence of different worldviews be established.

The effects of religion on the international political arena cannot be underestimated, especially when we consider the fact that the biggest monotheistic religions date back many hundreds of years prior to the emergence of the modern state system in the seventeenth century. Religion has frequently shaped and reshaped state and interstate systems in various degrees. It will continue to be a valuable subject of academic debate among political scientists.

In this compendium, you will find seven articles, written by academics who tackle the subject of religion in international politics with diverse approaches. Readers will find intriguing pieces on secularism, religion and politics. This collection will hopefully provide a unique insight for those interested in secularism and the role of religion in international affairs.

Transnational Religious Actors and International Order

Jeff Haynes | January 2009

In recent years, there have been a number of challenges to international order emanating from various entities, including 'Islamic extremists' and, more generally, those 'excluded' from the benefits of globalisation; sometimes they are the same people. Among the 'excluded' can be noted various social and ethnic groups who, for whatever reasons of culture, history and geography, find themselves unable to tap into the benefits of globalisation. It is often suggested that the 'Muslim world' is the greatest victim in this regard and, as a result, Islamic extremist pathologies present themselves in their most dangerous forms.

Such concerns highlight more generally how various issues linked to religion in international relations have become widely significant for international order since the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, especially when linked to the often polarising economic and developmental impact of globalisation. This context is also informed by events following the end of the Cold War – the cessation of a four decades long battle for supremacy between competing secular ideological visions: communism and liberal democracy/capitalism – that ended with a near-global collapse in the efficacy of the former and a growing, but by no means universal, acceptance of the desirability of the latter. Two key issues in this regard are: (1) How international order has changed as a result of globalisation and the end of the Cold War, and (2) How this change can be interpreted regarding the impact of religion on international relations. This brief commentary refers to selected transnational religious actors in relation to international order.

There is renewed interest in religion and international relations, encouraged both by the fall of Soviet-style communism in the early 1990s and a decade later by the events of September 11, 2001 ('9/11'). Religion's re-emergence at this time could be observed among various cultures and religious faiths, and in different countries with various levels of economic development.

For many observers, the re-emergence of religion in international relations was unexpected, not least because it challenged conventional wisdom about the nature and long-term, historical impact on societies of secularisation, widely thought to involve both 'political development' and a more general, non-religious 'modernisation'. It did this by calling into question a core presumption in most Western social science thinking: modernisation of societies and polities invariably involves increased secularisation. During this process, religion became excluded from the public realm, becoming both marginalised and 'privatised'. Consequently, the 'return' of religion to international relations involves religious deprivatisation, with both domestic and international ramifications; often there are political impacts, with, for example Islamic extremism having pronounced effects on international order.

What is 'international order'? It can usefully be thought of as a regime with widespread acceptance of particular values and norms of behaviour, comprising various actors, rules, mechanisms and understandings. This includes the expanding corpus of international law, as well as the organisations and institutions that seek to develop and enforce it. The goal is to try to manage the co-existence and interdependence of states and important non-state actors. On the other hand, it is a truism that international order is what is created and developed in the interests of some actors only.

Opinions about the current involvement of religion in international relations and its impact on international order tend to be polarised. On the one hand, re-emergence of religion into international relations is often seen to present increased challenges to international order, especially from extremist Islamist organisations, such as al-Qaeda or Lashkar-e-Taibar, implicated in the recent atrocities in Mumbai.

A new and growing threat to international order comes from transnational religious terrorist groups, notably al-Qaeda, as emphasised in the 2005 Human Security Report:

International terrorism is the only form of political violence that appears to be getting worse. Some datasets have shown an overall decline in international terrorist incidents of all types since the early 1980s, but the most recent statistics suggest a dramatic increase in the number of high-casualty attacks since the September 11 attacks on the US in 2001. The annual death toll from international terrorist attacks is, however, only a tiny fraction of annual war death toll (my emphasis; 'Overview', Human Security Report 2005).

In sum, international religious terrorists fundamentally deny the (1) legitimacy of the secular international state system, as well as (2) foundational norms, values and institutions upon which contemporary international order is based.

On the other hand, some religious actors may help advance international order, for example the Roman Catholic Church and its widespread encouragement to authoritarian regimes to democratise, that significantly affected governments in Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s. There is also the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and its important role in helping to promote dialogue and cooperation between Muslim and Western governments. Other actors may however be viewed more ambiguously, such as states like China that, in emphasising cultural characteristics rooted in Neo-Confucianism, appear to promote a 'non-Western' perspective which potentially highlights different conceptions of international order.

Thinking of international order more generally, the issue of international conflict seems never to be far away. To focus on current international order is to note that various aspects of international conflict have significantly changed in recent years, with frequent involvement of religious, ethnic and cultural non-state actors, including, for example, Hamas (Palestine) and Hizbullah (Lebanon). Change in this regard is manifested in various ways. First, there are now fewer interstate wars – yet significant numbers of intrastate conflicts; all affect international order. The 2005 Human Security Report noted that:

• The number of armed conflicts declined by over 40% between 1992 and 2005. The deadliest conflicts (those with 1000 or more battle-deaths) fell even more dramatically – by 80%.

• The number of international crises, often precursors of war, fell by more than 70% between 1981 and 2001.

• International wars – that is, conflicts between countries – are less common now than in many previous eras; they now constitute less than 5% of all armed conflicts.

Second, there are significant numbers of serious conflicts within countries at the present time – and many involve religious, cultural and/or ethnic actors. While numbers of international wars and war-deaths have declined in recent years, some 60 armed conflicts raged around the globe in 2005; over 70 per cent were classified as communal wars, that is, conflicts significantly characterised by religious, cultural and/or ethnic factors and combatants (Human Security Report 2005).

Although the number of annual deaths from 'international terrorist attacks' is, according to the 2005 Human Security Report, only 'a tiny fraction' compared to overall war deaths in any one year, it is important to note that the number of deaths due to this source has been swiftly rising in recent years. The US State Department's annual report on global terrorism for 2005 stated that there were 11,111 attacks that caused 14,602 deaths in 2005. Those figures can be contrasted with earlier State Department reports from 2003 and 2004. In the former year, there were 208 terrorist attacks causing 625 deaths; in 2004 there were 3,168 attacks resulting in 1,907 deaths. Thus, comparing 2005 to the previous year, there was a more than seven-fold increase in those killed as a result of international terrorist attacks; most such fatalities were linked to the consequences of US-led invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), including the increases in deaths attributed to religious and sectarian extremists, especially in the later country. The significant recent increase in numbers of deaths as a result of international terrorist attacks, coupled with the fact that US personnel are often in the firing line in both Afghanistan and Iraq, has led to the present era being identified as 'the age of global terrorism'.

Religion and International Affairs: From Neglect to Over-Emphasis

Shireen T. Hunter | April 2010

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and especially after the vent of 9/11 there has been increasing talk of the determining role of religion in shaping the pattern of the behavior of states and non-state actors.

The first indication of this new found interest was the publication of Samuel Huntington's article on the coming *Clash of Civilizations* in which he argued that religion will become the most important marker of identity and the determinant of patterns of international conflicts and amities. This was followed by other books and articles with titles such as *Religion the Missing Dimension of International Politics*, *The Mighty and the Almighty* –this one by Madeleine Albright!!—just to name two. With growing interest in the subject, major universities in the US began offering courses in *Religion and International Affairs* under a variety of programs and guises, and think tanks began focusing on the topic. Interestingly, none of the books and articles and few of the courses focused on analysis of the role of religion in international affairs by examining systematically how and in what ways religion affects behavior of international actors. None asked the question, has the role of religion become as important as some claim, to the point of eclipsing the role of other determinants of state behavior. Or more fundamentally why this new found interest in religion as a force in international relations?

The end of ideologies and the paradigm vacuum

Answering the last question first, the reason for the new interest in religion has been largely due to the fact that with the collapse of the Soviet Union the era of life and death ideological conflicts came to an end. This left many feeling disoriented by the more fluid and complex character of Post-ideological international relations, thus setting them off in search of a new paradigm which could simplify and explicate this new and confusing state of affairs. Sam Huntington's clash of civilization

was a direct result of a Soviet era intellectual's effort to recreate the simplicity of Cold War paradigm.

But as Cold War paradigm never either completely determined the character of international relations nor explained its complexities and shifts, the theory of clash of civilizations has proven equally faulty, although it has possibly caused more damage than the cold War paradigm.

How religion affects international relations

Religion affects the character of international relations the same way as do other value systems and ideologies by influencing the behavior of states and increasingly non-state actors. Moreover, although mostly unrecognized, as part of states and other actors value systems religion has always played a role in determining the character of the behavior of various international actors.

In the case of state actors and, depending on the nature of their political systems, the impact of religion has been principally felt in the following ways: activities of religious groups aimed at influencing state behavior in democratic systems and; the proclivities of key political leaders. For example it has been noted that US policy during the Cold War in addition to the ideological animosity between socialism and Liberal capitalism was influenced by the fact that US society was quite religious and hence viewed the atheist communists as evil.

The importance of the religious proclivities of key leaders on state behavior needs hardly to be emphasized. It is well known that President Jimmy Carter's approach to the Middle East conflict and issues of human rights was to a great extent determined by his deep Christian faith. Similarly, President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair's policies on issues ranging from war on terror to Iraq's invasion were highly influenced by

their respective religious beliefs. However, it would be a mistake to believe that it was religious factors that were solely responsible for the decisions on these issues. Rather security concerns, economic interests and the desire to prevent any undermining of the international balance of power played much more important roles in these regards.

What the religious factor –together with other value- based arguments such as spreading democracy—did was to provide an idealistic gloss to decisions made on purely worldly reasons. In other words, religion played the same role that ideologies of various kinds have played namely to legitimize policy decisions and garner popular support for them.

In the case of some countries such as Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran which are based on different interpretations of Islam, religion is the official ideology and the basis of state legitimacy. As is the case with secular ideologies, both countries believe that the spread of their particular brand of Islam will advance their interests and increase their regional and global influence. However, what is important to point out is that religion, like secular ideologies, plays a purely instrumental role namely that of justifying and legitimizing state policies rather determining them.

The behavior of non-state actors, including those identified as religious, such as HAMAS, Hizbullah, and groups engaged in terrorism such as Al Qaeda, also are determined by a mix of religious and worldly motives. For instance, it is not merely Islam which influences HAMAS' position on the Arab-Israeli conflict but also Palestinian nationalism. To note, the question of Jerusalem is as important to secular Palestinians as HAMAS. Hizbullah also has non-religious motivations for some of its activities. For instance, according to Sheikh Nasrullah, Hizbullah's support for the Palestinian cause is partly to gain legitimacy for the Shias in an overwhelmingly Sunni Arab World.

The question which the above observations raise is thus the following: if religion is not the determining factor behind the activities of state and non-state actors, what becomes of the arguments recently raised that religion can become a factor for international cooperation and peace?   The answer to this question is that as long as other sources of conflict have not been eliminated and areas of mutually beneficial cooperation have not been identified and pursued mere exhortation that we all should heed the call of the Almighty and treat each other fairly will not succeed. If this were sufficient the world should have been at peace, fairness would have ruled human relationships and there would not have been abuses of power at least for two thousand years.

In sum, state behavior, as individual behavior, is the result of complex set of impulses and motives and cannot be explained by a single factor. Religion, in the past, had influenced the behavior of international actors without determining it, although its role often went unnoticed. This situation, notwithstanding the new found fascination with the impact of religion on international affairs, has not changed. Religion is neither the source of conflicts and disputes nor a panacea for global problems.

Politics of secularism and IR

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd | November 2008

It has been suggested that the rise of religion confronts IR theory with a theoretical challenge comparable to that of the end of the Cold War or the emergence of globalization. I agree. To understand why we need to turn to the politics of secularism. How might we think about secularisms, in the plural, as forms of political authority in contemporary international relations? What does this mean for IR theory and the resurgence of religion? What kinds of politics follow from different forms of secular commitments, traditions, habits, and beliefs?

My work brings debates from sociology of religion, philosophy, and political theory into international relations with the intention of refiguring a field that has virtually ignored questions involving how the categories of religion and politics shape international affairs. The secularist division between religion and politics is not fixed but socially and historically constructed. The failure to recognize that this is the case helps to explain why IR—both IR theory and in terms of the practices of international politics—has been unable to come to terms with secularism and religion (they go together) as forms of authority in world politics. Overcoming this problem—opening up the black box of secularism, digging into the complex negotiations that take place inside this box—allows for a better understanding of empirical puzzles in international relations involving the politics of religion such as conflict between the United States and Iran, controversy over the enlargement of the European Union to include Turkey, the rise of political Islam, and global religious resurgence.

Secularism refers to a series of social and historical traditions. These sets of practices have developed over time, and each has a history. These traditions both rely upon and help to produce particular understandings of "religion," of political Islam, of religious resurgence, of "normal" politics, and so forth. Think about the fact that we don't hear much about political Christianity, or political

Judaism—this is subsumed for the most part under "normal politics", but we do hear about political Islam. To figure out why this is the case, and what the consequences are politically, was one of the motivating puzzles of The Politics of Secularism in International Relations. The division between religion and politics embodied in various secular traditions is neither stable nor universal. Take Craig Calhoun's suggestion that we approach nationalism as a discourse within which political struggles are conducted. Secularism, adapting his formulation, "is not the solution to the puzzle [of politics and religion] but the discourse within which struggles to settle the question are most commonly waged." Secularism is an authoritative discourse, a "tradition of argumentation." It is a resource for collective mobilization and legitimation, a language in which moral and political questions are settled, legitimated and contested. It is a form of political authority, a language of politics.

Two trajectories of secularism have been influential in international politics: laicism, and what I call Judeo-Christian secularism. Laicism refers to a separationist narrative in which religion is expelled from politics, and Judeo-Christian secularism to an accommodationist narrative in which Judeo-Christian tradition is perceived as the fount and foundation of secular democracy. These varieties of secularism don't map cleanly onto one country or one individual—both appear in different modes in different times and places. They are discursive traditions, collections of practices with a history. Each defends some form of the separation of church and state, but in different ways, with different justifications and political consequences.

Let me say something about secularism and Christianity, to convey a sense of how I developed the category of Judeo-Christian secularism. One way that I posed the question in the course of developing this category was, to what extent have we inherited particular religious traditions in our

forms of secularism? Or to what extent does Christianity, or after World War II, Judeo-Christian tradition, with all of the contradictions inherent in that hyphen, animate contemporary lived practices of secularism? It took Charles Taylor 900 pages to answer this question in A Secular Age, so let me just say that I regard secularism as a series of lived traditions which are indebted to religious tradition and practice in significant ways, but the nature and significance of this debt varies according to the form of secularism and the historical context in which it is operative. We need to study varieties of secularism in particular historical, cultural, and political contexts, rather than in the abstract (on Taylor's book see my review in the June 2008 issue of Political Theory). The varieties of secularism that I write about are indebted to Christianity in interesting and complex ways, but laicism in particular is also indebted to French Enlightenment thought which is deeply anti-clerical.

The first implication from a global and comparative angle of thinking about secularism in these terms is that it becomes clear that there are many traditions or varieties of secularism (Turkish Kemalism, French laïcité, American "Judeo-Christian" secularism). Each represents a contingent yet powerful political settlement of the relation between religion and politics. Secularisms, then, are constantly evolving, never fixed in stone. They are produced and renegotiated through laws, practices, customs, traditions, and social relations, including international relations. Yet forms of secularism become so entrenched that they claim to be and are often seen as exempt from this process of production. This is a powerful move. Secularization may be understood as the social and historical processes through which a particular settlement becomes authoritative, legitimated and embedded in and through individuals, the law, the state, and other social relations, including international relations.

A second implication for global and comparative politics is that secularism cannot be fully understood without reference to European and global history, including colonial history. This is one point at which I part ways with Taylor's rich genealogy of the secular—for me it cannot be fully understood absent this global context, for him it can. Secularisms have been created though actions and beliefs and cannot be abstracted from the historical contexts and circumstances from which they emerged. So while on the one hand French laïcité emerged out of and remain indebted to both the Enlightenment critique of religion and Judeo-Christian tradition, on the other it has been constituted through global relationships, including negative representations of Islam.

A third implication of opening up the question of the politics of secularism is that it presents an alternative to realist, liberal and constructivist accounts of international relations that work on the assumption that religion has been privatized. I challenge the assumption that after the Westphalian settlement religion was privatized and thereby rendered largely irrelevant to power politics. Modern forms of secular authority emerged out of a specifically Christian-dominated Westphalian moral order. The influence of this tradition upon the Westphalian secular settlement makes it difficult to subsume the current international order into realist and liberal frameworks that assume that religion was simply privatized. Modern forms of secularism contribute to the constitution of a particular idea and practice of state sovereignty that claims to be universal in part by defining the limits of state-centered politics with "religion" on the outside. Yet this attempt to delimit the terms and boundaries of the political and to define religion as a private counterpart to politics is a historically and culturally variable claim. Different varieties of secularism perpetuate this claim about the limits of modern politics in different ways. From this perspective, they appear not as unchanging or

obvious, as we may be inclined to perceive them, but as contingent political settlements operating below the threshold of public discourse.

A final implication for IR involves the domestic/international question. Shared interests, identities and understandings about religion and politics developed at the domestic and regional levels are influential at the systemic level. This is constructivist theorizing that makes domestic politics a central part of the story. I take up Ole Wæver's complaint that "constructivism has started out working mostly at the systemic level," and there is a need to consider the "benefits of the opposite direction." My emphasis counteracts the tendency in IR, identified by Rodney Hall, to "relegate domestic-societal interaction, sources of conflict, or societal cohesiveness to the status of epiphenomena." This is a constructivist approach to the social, cultural and religious foundations of international relations.

If I'm right about the politics of secularism, then the answer to the question often thrown about among students of religion and IR, "what is religion and how does it relate to international relations theory/practice?" misses the point. For there can be no universal definition of religion. This is as Asad argues "not only because its constituent elements are historically specific, but because that definition is itself the historical product of discursive processes." We need to go deeper. If the categories of 'religion' and 'politics' are themselves the products of complex cultural, historical and political negotiations, then how do these categories take shape and become authoritative, at what costs, and with what political consequences? To define the secular and the religious is a political decision. Religious beliefs and practice are interwoven with political authority in complex and changing ways that don't align with state boundaries or conventional secularist assumptions. IR theorists need to examine secularist assumptions about religion that are embedded in the hypotheses and

the empirical tests of IR scholarship.
I conclude with four take-away points for IR scholars:

- International relations theorists need to pay closer attention to how foundational cultural and normative categories such as the secular and religion operate politically in international affairs. Varieties of secularism are not reducible to material power or resources but play a constitutive role in creating agents that represent and respond to the world in particular ways. They also contribute to the international normative structures in which these agents interact.

- Until recently, a consensus separating a Judeo-Christian "sacred" from an allegedly universal "secular" reason has defined the terms through which the sacred and the secular are conceptualized in the field of international relations. Yet as other formulations of the sacred-secular binary make themselves heard this consensus is showing signs of strain. How these strains are addressed is critical to the future of world politics: in a pluralistic world claims to universality grounded either in the claim to have overcome all religio-cultural particularities (as in laicism) or to have located the key to successful moral and political order in a particular religio-cultural heritage (as in Judeo-Christian tradition) are both problematic.

- Secularisms developed at the domestic and regional levels are influential at the systemic level in international politics. These secularisms, reflecting shared interests, identities, and understandings about religion and politics, are part of the social and cultural foundations of international relations. They contribute to the construction of national and supranational interests and identities and play a role in international conflict and cooperation.

- The historical particularities and philosophical contingencies of various forms of secularism suggest that realist, liberal and constructivist theories of international relations, international law, and international order that consider "religion" to be a private affair need to be reconsidered.

Secularism and Religion in Modern Democracies

Brendan Sweetman | August 2010

Modern, free, democratic, pluralist societies have many virtues, but they are also increasingly encountering one significant problem, what I call "the problem of pluralism." This is the problem of how to deal with a number of different, competing, and often conflicting, worldviews or philosophies of life in the modern democratic state, especially at the institutional level, such as in schools, government agencies, political parties, parliament, and most especially at the level of law. This problem can be approached either as a theoretical problem or as a practical problem. At the theoretical level, we would consider this matter as part of our analysis and justification of the theory of the democratic, pluralist state. This involves thinking about how procedurally such a state can be established and can function as a stable political entity if it is trying to accommodate and facilitate many different approaches to and understandings of the nature of reality, the human person, and issues concerning moral values, and the meaning of life. It is also very important when considering the theoretical question to think about how the values and procedures upon which the state is founded are themselves justified without seeming to privilege one particular worldview in the state over others. But the problem of pluralism can also be approached from a more practical point of view–as a practical problem facing a particular state, or various states, in the real world right now, states that have some combination of a constitution, laws, procedures, and executive, legislative, and judicial arrangements, already in place, states which then have to grapple with problems of competing worldviews within this framework. For example, there might be three major approaches in a particular state for thinking about the allocation of healthcare resources, or how to deal with poverty, or on the issue of abortion, or stem cell research, and the state must have some procedure for making decisions about these matters.

It is not my intention to discuss or resolve the complex but fascinating problem of pluralism here,

but I do want to draw attention to a key point that is frequently overlooked in this discussion—that, in the context of modern pluralism, we must now regard secularism as one of those worldviews that plays a quite significant role in the direction and nature of the modern state. And, further, once we do this, our whole understanding of the role of religion in the modern state is transformed as well. I have argued elsewhere and want to repeat here that secularism must now be seen as a positive worldview in the modern world that takes its place alongside other traditional (religious) worldviews in shaping the issues of the day. Secularism must not be understood as simply the view that there is no God, or that religious doctrines are not true, or that religious morality should be rejected, or something along these lines. We need to focus on what secularists believe (and on what they desire politically) rather than on what they do not believe. Secularism, in very general outline, may be understood as the view that all of reality is physical in nature, consisting of some configuration of matter and energy. Secularists also usually hold that everything that exists either currently has a scientific explanation, or will have a scientific explanation in the future. This view would also hold that the universe is a random occurrence, as is the existence of life on earth, including human beings. Supporters of this approach also insist on secularist accounts of morality and politics.

Our failure to appreciate that secularism is now a major cultural player and shaper of modern society has led to many confusions in our contemporary approach to and understanding of pluralism. We often say today that we are living in a secular state, or that people are becoming more and more secular, or that secularization is sweeping the globe, and so forth. These points are all true, but are only part of the story, and no longer the most important part. For this use of the term "secular" is intended only in a negative sense. It means that the religious way of looking at things, broadly understood, is losing its influence, or that "secularization," which

is often not carefully defined but which usually means something like consumerism, materialism, technology, this-worldly, etc., is pushing issues of the spiritual and moral life aside, but only rarely do we focus on what it is that is proposed as a replacement for the religious outlook. And this is where we need to start thinking and talking in terms of secularism as a positive worldview (what secularists believe) rather than in terms of "the secular" (what secularists reject).

So when some thinkers argue that we are now a more secular society, or that we need to promote a more secular approach–that this would be a good thing for modern democratic states–what do they mean? I am suggesting that this view cannot mean that we want to promote a secularist state, and that religious views should have no place in the political sphere. This is because secularism is simply one view among many in the modern state, and why should we grant secularism a privileged position among all of the worldviews? To be more specific, why should we give preference to secularist views of morality when deciding questions concerning abortion or stem cell research over various religious views (and let us note, as others have pointed out on e-IR and elsewhere, that there are various types of secularism, just as there are various types of religion, but this does not affect my general point).

Now supporters of secularism might argue that we should in fact promote a secularist state, that a secularist state would be better in general for progress, that is, a state guided by secularist accounts of reality, the human person, morality and the good life. One might want to promote what I call a seculocracy, which means a state where the laws are based on a secularist ideology or worldview (just as we sometimes call a state based on a religious ideology a theocracy). Or in the language of the U.S. Constitution, secularists might argue for a state where their views on significant political, social, and moral questions

are established in law. One might believe and argue publicly that this is the best way forward for modern democracies. However, this position faces a major problem: while one is perfectly free to hold this position oneself, and to argue for it publicly, and even to argue that other (religious) worldviews are irrational, or that the secularist view is superior or whatever, one must recognize that in a free society many will argue just the opposite. In a free society, any type of restriction or suppression of a view before a public debate is held violates the basic principles of democracy and freedom.

As a possible way around this problem, one could instead adopt the approach that one can give good reasons for excluding religious views from politics, and so the secularist view should then dominate, or win by default. For instance, one might argue that religious beliefs are not rational, that secularist beliefs are more rational, or that religious beliefs are based on "faith," or authority, or tradition, and that secularist beliefs are not, and so secularist beliefs are rationally superior. In short, one might argue that there is something "wrong" with religious arguments, some "problem" with them that does not apply to secularist arguments. But one must be very careful if one adopts this response. I agree that when one presents arguments in the public square, especially arguments that would shape society and culture, one needs to give rational arguments. But the religious believer will argue that religion has a rational side to it, has a long tradition of reason, and that we can appeal to this rational tradition as the philosophical justification for our religious beliefs. For example, one might argue that God exists, and is the creator of life, that life is extremely valuable, that the fetus is an innocent human life, and should be protected in law. Or one might argue that God created all people equally, and so racial segregation is wrong, or that it is part of God's moral law that we are our brother's keeper, and so we should support social welfare programs, and so forth. And arguments like these would not just assert the existence of

God, but argue that it is rational to believe in God (the actual argument could be assumed in the public debate, but would be available in other venues, such as academia).

A secularist would no doubt reply that religious arguments like these are not rational, which is his right; however, he can't use this opinion to somehow restrict these religious arguments from influencing public debates. As I pointed out, he is free to believe that such arguments are not rational, but not free to restrict those who do not agree with him. One cannot restrict a belief in a free society just because one disagrees with it politically, nor even because one thinks it is irrational. I would accept that in a democratic society we should try to be as reasonable as we can, should especially try to give reasons that would persuade others, so I would agree that one should not appeal to religious texts, or authorities, or to private experiences, in public arguments, as long as secularist-type arguments that are based on similar sources are also restricted in the same way.

Sometimes one will hear the objection that an appeal to "the secular" or to "secular reason" does not necessarily mean that one is advocating secularism. The use of the term "secular reason," it might be argued, simply means that one appeals (or should appeal) to reason and evidence in one's arguments on various issues. The word "secular" means only that one is making no appeal to religion; so a thinker who argues that one should appeal only to secular reasons in politics is not covertly suggesting that secularism should be the default worldview, and so arbitrarily prejudicing the debate against religion. But again this argument is not sufficient to rule religious arguments out of public life. We need to be careful about what the phrase "secular reason" means here. If it just means "reason," then reason can be used to establish the rationality of basic religious beliefs, so the religious believer will argue (and it is irrelevant whether the secularist agrees with this or not from the point of view of a free democracy). That is to say, reason can be used to establish the rationality

of basic religious premises and conclusions. But if the phrase means "secularism," then we are back to the same problem as above. For to say that an argument that appeals to reason only can't have (in principle) a conclusion with religious content is really just to say that religious beliefs are irrational, or at least not as rational (and so not as worthy) as secularist beliefs. One might, of course, be convinced of this oneself, but this is not enough; one has to convince the religious believer too if one wants to restrict religious belief in politics, and that is why no such argument can succeed. One of the often unstated assumptions of secularism is that "secular reason" (understood as secularism) is the same thing as reason. Religious believers of course will reject this understanding of reason, and in any case this is where the debate begins in a free society, not where it ends.

What does all of this mean for separation of church and state, usually regarded as a very important principle in a democracy? The separation of church and state means that we must not make our own particular worldview, be it religious or secularist of whatever strand, the official worldview of the state. We might ask if secularists want everyone to be secularists or do Catholics want to make everyone Catholics? The general answer to this question in most worldviews is no, at least not to convert people by force; if conversion happens freely, by persuasion, well and good. But just because we don't necessarily want to convert people to our particular worldviews, this does not mean and cannot mean that we do not wish to influence the state, the culture, and especially the law, by means of some of our beliefs. All of us want to do this no matter what our worldview; it is unavoidable in any case, because somebody's (or some group's) values will be shaping our cultural, moral and legal decision-making, and, as a simple matter of logic, not all values can be accommodated. For example, if a state makes stem cell research on human embryos, or human cloning, legal, then those who think these practices are immoral and should be illegal lose out, and the values of those who support these practices become

culturally dominant. There is, in short, no such thing as a neutral public square.

So we need to be very careful about adopting the rhetoric of church/state separation simply as way of keeping religion (and so political views we don't agree with) out of public square debates. One can only insist on a separation of church and state if one means that the state will have no official religion, but we cannot invoke this separation if we mean that religious beliefs and values cannot be appealed to to influence society and culture. If this is what is meant, then secularists would be contradicting themselves every time they then go on to make an argument for cultural change based on their values. And I have already shown why one can't reply to this point by saying that in fact secularism is actually superior anyway to any religious view, because no argument along these lines can succeed in restricting religious arguments in politics in a free society. If you subscribe to democracy, and believe in a free, open society, one cannot then turn around and restrict a view from trying to gain cultural influence just because one does not agree with it. One can argue against it publicly of course—indeed, one hopes that the public exchange of ideas can serve as a kind of rational test of various beliefs and arguments–but this is not the same as denying it the opportunity to be expressed in the first place by appeal to some procedural or legal maneuver.

So overall then we need to note the following. First, once we see that secularism is a significant, influential worldview in itself, it changes our whole way of thinking about church/state issues, and more generally about the role of religion in the modern democratic state. We must now see that the key philosophical question concerns how all worldviews come into contact with the state, and not just religious ones. Two, the reasons we give for keeping religion out of the debate at the beginning—before the democratic process has been played out—are now seen as suspect in a free society, with the one provision that we should all at least strive to be as reasonable as we can, meaning

that we should try to give the best, most logical reasons, arguments and evidence to those we are trying to persuade (this also involves bringing all academic disciplines, where relevant, into the discussion). This is a real problem, however, in modern societies because of the increasing polarization between the worldviews, the attack on reason seen in areas like postmodernism, the increasing influence of epistemological and moral relativism, multiculturalism, etc., but this is a problem for every worldview. We cannot resolve this problem by forbidding worldviews we don't like to speak (nor can we resolve it by abandoning reason and justification, and allowing a free for all). Third, we must recognize that we are all trying to shape culture by means of our values and beliefs, and so we need to stop picking on members of various religious worldviews, as if they are the only ones doing this. Four, we should not appeal to church/state separation as a political tactic to silence views because we disagree with them politically. Five, we must also keep in mind the general question of how the democratic state is itself justified (is it part of one's worldview, or in place before one's worldview, and if the latter— which is the position of political philosopher John Rawls–how are the values on which it is based selected and justified?).

Lastly, the deepest question perhaps of all is how do modern democracies (now looking at the issues in the way suggested in this essay) solve or at least contain the problem of pluralism, without resorting to the suppression of some views, without producing too many disgruntled citizens, without abusing political power, and without slipping into moral and political relativism. This is one of the most difficult questions facing both twentieth first century democratic political theory, and existing democratic states.

Secularism and Respect for Religion

Tariq Modood | December 2010

One of the features of the 'cultural turn' in social studies and of identity politics is that, while many think one or both may have gone too far, it is now commonplace that the classical liberal separation of culture and politics or the positivist-materialist distinctions between social structure and culture are mistaken. Yet religion – usually considered by social scientists to be an aspect of culture – continues to be uniquely held by some to be an aspect of social life that must be kept separate from at least the state, maybe from politics in general and perhaps even from public affairs at large, including the conversations that citizens have amongst themselves about their society. This religion-politics separationist view, which is clearly normative rather than scientific, can take quite different forms, either as an idea or as practice and can be more or less restrictive, I shall call 'secularism'. While acknowledging the variety of forms it can take I want to argue that one of the most important distinctions we need to make is between moderate and radical secularism. The failure to make this distinction is not just bad theory or bad social science but can lead to prejudicial, intolerant and exclusionary politics. I am particularly concerned with the prejudice and exclusion in relation to recently settled Muslims in Britain and the rest of western Europe but the points I wish to make have much more general application.

In the following I argue firstly at an abstract level that it does not make sense to insist on absolute separation, though of course it's a possible interpretation of secularism. Secondly I maintain that radical separation does not make sense in terms of historical actuality and contemporary adjustments. Thirdly, given that secularism does not necessarily mean the absence of state-religion connections, I would like to make a case for respect for religion as one of the values that citizens and a democratic state may choose to endorse. This may be a limiting case for secularism but is I think consistent with the norms and goals of a secular polity..

Radical and Moderate Secularism

If secularism is a doctrine of separation then we need to distinguish between modes of separation. Two modes of activity are separate when they have no connection with each other (absolute separation); but activities can still be distinct from each other even though there may be points of overlap (relative separation). The person who denies politics and religion are absolutely separate can still allow for relative separation. For example, in contemporary Islam there are ideological arguments for the absolute subordination of politics to religious leaders, as say propounded by the Ayatollah Khomeni in his concept of the vilayat-i-faqih, but this is not mainstream Islam. Historically, Islam has been given a certain official status and preeminence in states in which Muslims ruled (just as Christianity or a particular Christian denomination had preeminence where Christians ruled). In these states Islam was the basis of state ceremonials and insignia, and public hostility against Islam was a punishable offence (sometimes a capital offence). Islam was the basis of jurisprudence but not positive law. The state – legislation, decrees, law enforcement, taxation, military power, foreign policy, and so on – were all regarded as the prerogative of the ruler(s), of political power, which was regarded as having its own imperatives, skills, etc., and was rarely held by saints or spiritual leaders. Moreover, rulers had a duty to protect minorities. Similarly, while there have been Christians who have believed in or practiced theocratic rule (eg. Calvin in Geneva) this is not mainstream Christianity, at least not for some centuries.

Just as it is possible to distinguish between theocracy and mainstream Islam, and theocracy and modern Christianity, so it is possible to distinguish between radical or ideological secularism, which argues for an absolute separation between state and religion, and the moderate forms that exist where secularism has become the order of the day, particularly Western Europe, with the partial exception of France. In nearly all of Western Europe there are points of symbolic, institutional, policy, and fiscal linkages between the state and aspects of Christianity. Secularism has increasingly grown in power and scope, but a historically evolved and evolving compromise with religion is the defining feature of Western European secularism, rather than the absolute separation of religion and politics. Secularism does today enjoy a hegemony in Western Europe, but it is a moderate rather than a radical, a pragmatic rather than an ideological, secularism.

Is There a Mainstream Western Secularism?

Having established at an abstract level that mutual autonomy does not require separation I would like to take further the point that while separation of religion and state/politics is a possible interpretation of secularism, it does not make sense in terms of historical actuality and contemporary adjustments. Rajeev Bhargava argues that 'in a secular state, a formal or legal union or alliance between state and religion is impermissible' and that 'for mainstream western secularism, separation means mutual exclusion' (Bhargava 2008: 88 and 103 respectively). What does he mean by 'mainstream western secularism'? His argument is that the secularism in the West has best developed in the United States and France, albeit in different ways. Americans have given primacy to religious liberty, and the French to equality of citizenship but in their differing ways they have come up with the best thinking on secularism that the West has to offer. 'These are the liberal and republican conceptions of secularism. Since these are the most dominant and defensible western versions of secularism, I shall put them together and henceforth designate them as the mainstream conception of secularism' (Bhargava 2008). He is critical of this conception of western secularism which understands secularism in terms of separation and 'mutual exclusion'; this is common ground between us and so in my terms he is a 'moderate' not a 'radical' secularist.

He has principled arguments about the nature of secularism and believes that the Indian polity today better exemplifies them than any western polity. My concern here is with his characterisation of western secularism. I believe he is mistaken in arguing that the US and France are the best that the West had got to offer; and nor are they the dominant/mainstream conceptions. His argument is based on a poor understanding of the British experience (which I know best) and of the western European experience more generally. Most of western, especially north-western Europe, where France is the exception not the rule, is best understood in more evolutionary and moderate terms than Bhargava's characterisation of western secularism. They have several important features to do with a more pragmatic politics; with a sense of history, tradition and identity; and, most importantly, there is an accommodative character which is an essential feature of some historical and contemporary secularisms in practice. It is true that some political theorists and radical secularists have a strong tendency to abstract that out when talking about models and principles of secularism. If this tendency can be countered, British and other European experience ceases to be an inferior, non-mainstream instance of secularism but becomes mainstream and politically and normatively significant, if not superior to other versions.

Accommodative or moderate secularism, no less than liberal and republican secularism, can be justified in liberal, egalitarian, democratic terms, and in relation to a conception of citizenship. Yet it has developed a historical practice in which, explicitly or implicitly, organised religion is treated as a public good. This can take not only the form of an input into a legislative forum, such as the House of Lords, on moral and welfare issues; but also to being social partners to the state in the delivery of education, health and care services; to building social capital; or to churches belonging to 'the people'. So, that even those who do not attend them, or even sign up to their doctrines, feel they have a right to use them for weddings

and funerals. All this is part of the meaning of what secularism means in most west European countries and it is quite clear that it is often lost in the models of secularism deployed by some normative theorists and public intellectuals. This is clearer today partly because of the development of our thinking in relation to the challenge of multicultural equality and the accommodation of Muslims, which highlight the limitations of the privatisation conception of liberal equality, and which sharpen the distinction between moderate/inclusive secularism and radical/ideological secularism. I have in my work expressly related the accommodative spirit of moderate secularism to the contemporary demands of multiculturalism (Modood 2007).

I would argue that it is quite possible in a country like Britain to treat the claims of all religions in accordance with multicultural equality without having to abolish the established status of the Church of England, given that it has come to be a very 'weak' form of establishment and the Church has come to play a positive ecumenical and multi-faith role. Faced with an emergent multi-faith situation or where there is a political will to incorporate previously marginalized faiths and sects and to challenge the privileged status of some religions the context-sensitive and conservationist response may be to pluralise the state-religion link rather than sever it. This indeed is what is happening across many countries in western Europe. In relation to the British case one can see it in a lot of incremental, ad hoc and experimental steps. For example, some years ago Prince Charles, the heir to the throne and to the office of Supreme Governor of the Church of England let it be known he would as a monarch prefer the title "Defender of Faith" to the historic title "Defender of the Faith". More recently, in 2004 the Queen used her Christmas television and radio broadcast – an important national occasion, especially for the older generation, on the most important Christian day of the year – to affirm the religious diversity of Britain. Her message was, in the words of Grace

Davie, '[r]eligious diversity is something which enriches society; it should be seen as a strength, not a threat; the broadcast moreover was accompanied by shots of the Queen visiting a Sikh temple and a Muslim center. It is important to put these remarks in context. The affirmation of diversity as such is not a new idea in British society; what is new is the gradual recognition that religious differences should be foregrounded in such affirmations. Paradoxically, a bastion of privilege such as the monarchy turns out to be a key and very positive opinion former in this particular debate' (Davie 2007: 232-33).

If such examples are regarded as merely symbolic then one should note how British governments have felt the need to create multi-faith consultative bodies. The Conservatives created an Inner Cities Religious Council in 1992, chaired by a junior minister, which was replaced by New Labour in 2006 with a body with a much broader remit, the Faith Communities Consultative Council. Moreover, the new Department of Communities and Local Government, which is represented in the Cabinet, has a division devoted to faith communities. This suggests that a 'weak establishment' or a reformed establishment can be one way of institutionalizing religious pluralism. I am not suggesting it is the only or best way but in certain historical and political circumstances, it may indeed be a good way: we should be wary of ruling it out by arguments that appeal to 'the dominant and defensible western versions of secularism' (Bhargava 2008: 93). Stronger still: such institutional accommodation of minority or marginal faiths run with the grain of mainstream western European historic practice.

There can be many practical reasons that state policy may support religious groups (eg., partnership in the delivery of healthcare) but in my final section I would tentatively like to suggest a reason that is not merely practical (for four other reasons, see Modood 2010)

Respect for Religion

There is an image of religion as organisations or communities around competing truths, which are mutually intolerant, which perhaps even hate each other's guts. There is some truth in that in some times and places but the opposite is more important. Let me illustrate this by reference to my late father's, a devout and pious Muslim, decision that I should attend the daily Christian non-denominational worship at my secondary school. When I told him that I could be exempted from it, like the Jewish children, if he sent in a letter requesting this, he asked what they did during this time each morning. When I told him that some read comics, some took the opportunity to catch up with homework and some even arrived late, he said I should join the assembly. He said that as Christians mainly believe what we believe I should join in fully but whenever it was said that Jesus was the Son of God, I should say to myself, 'no, he is not'. It is a view that can perhaps be expressed as it is better to be in the presence of religion than not and so the value of religion does not simply reside in one's own religion. One's own religious heritage is to be cherished and honoured but so are those of others and the closing down of any religion is a loss of some sort.

I would suggest that historically it has been a prevalent view in the Middle East and South Asia, indeed where respect for the religion of others has extended to joining in the religious celebrations of others, borrowing from others, syncretism and so on. Respect for religion does not however require syncretism and can be found amongst contemporary Muslims in the West. Reporting on a recent Gallup World Poll, Dalia Mogahed and Zsolt Nyiri write of Muslims in Paris and London that their 'expectations of respect for Islam and its symbols extends to an expectation of respect for religion in general' and add that recently 'Shahid Malik, a British Muslim MP, even complained about what he called the ''policy wonks'' who wished to strip the public sphere of all Christian

religious symbols'' (Mogahed and Niyiri 2007: 2). It is an attitude that the West (where mono-religion has been the historical norm) can certainly learn from, as I think some people of my generation realised and which is evidenced in the interest in the spiritualities of 'the East'. Respect for religion is, clearly beyond toleration but also utility for this valuing of religion and respect for the religion of others, even while not requiring participation, is based on a sense that religion is a good in itself, is a fundamental good and part of our humanity at a personal, social and civilizational level: it is an ethical good and so to be respected as a feature of human character just as we might respect truth-seeking, the cultivation of the intellect or the imagination or artistic creativity or self-discipline not just because of its utility or truth. We can think religion as a good of this sort regardless of whether one is a believer or not just as we can think music or science a good whether I am musical or scientific or not. A person, a society, a culture, a country would be poorer without it. It is part of good living and while not all can cultivate it fully, it is a good that some do and they should be honoured and supported by others.

This view is not dependent upon any kind of theism for it can be a feature of some form of ethical humanism. I think it can be justified within a philosophy of human plurality and multi-dimensionality of the kind to be found in for example R G Collingwoood's Speculum Mentis (1924) or Michael Oakeshott's Experience and its Modes (1933).

Respect for religion is, however, clearly more than respect as recognition or recognition of religious minorities, and while I am mainly concerned to argue for the latter I am open to the former, especially as I believe that respect for religion is quite common amongst religious believers (the mirror-image of Dawkins) and I worry about an intolerant secularist hegemony. There may once have been a time in Europe when a powerful, authoritarian church or churches stifled dissent,

individuality, free debate, science, pluralism and so on but that is not the present danger. European cultural, intellectual and political life – the public sphere in the fullest sense of the word – is dominated by secularism and secularist networks and organisations control most of the levers of power, and so respect for religion is made difficult and seems outlandish but may be necessary as one of the sources of counter-hegemony and a more genuine pluralism. Hence, respect for religion is compatible with and may be a requirement of a democratic political culture.

I appreciate that this may seem to be, and indeed may be a form of 'privileging' religion. For in this idea that the state may wish to show respect for religion I am going beyond not just toleration and freedom of religion but also beyond civic recognition. Nor am I simply pointing to the existence of overlaps and linkages between the state and religion. The sense of 'privilege' may not however be as strong as it may seem. After all, the autonomy of politics is the privileging of the non-religious, so this is perhaps qualifying that non-secular privileging. Moreover, it is far from an exclusive privileging. States regularly 'privilege' the nation, ethnicity, science, the arts, sport, economy and so on in relation to the centrality they give it in policy-making, the public resources devoted to it or the prestige placed upon it. So, if showing respect for religion is a privileging of religion, it is of a multiplex, multilogical sort; and it is based on the recognition that the secular is already dominant in many contemporary states.

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Beyond Secularism

J. Paul Martin　|　March 2010

Secularism has long been the language of most public servants and many scholars in the Western world, enabling both groups to work and live as though religions were irrelevant to their respective fields. This perspective has meant that religious phenomena have been ignored or reduced to other categories such as civil society, humanitarianism or as part of a definition of "civilization." Linked with this ideology were the ideas that religions were dying out or that they were negative factors responsible for social ills such as discrimination, hate speech, identity politics and even the persecution of minorities and violent conflict. The scholars and diplomats who have subscribed to these secularist principles are, like the religions they seek to sideline, not a homogeneous entity. There are many secularisms. Indeed it has been called a black box.[1] Secularism has been more of a huge, welcoming umbrella, covering all those who object to a religious presence in public politics. In doing so, secularism has defined itself, and even been defined by its religious opponents such as the present Pope, more by what it objects to, namely religion, rather than what it is or proposes.

Secularism is as heterogeneous as the panoply of religion traditions it seeks to exclude. For their part religions are each complex and evolving combinations of beliefs, moral systems, practices, loyalties, texts, cultures, institutions and histories. These combine in different ways even within each tradition, differing also by geographic location or period of history. The net result is a very large swath of ideas, institutions and activities to be excluded by the secularism of the scholars or that of the politicians. However such exclusion has always been qualified. In practice, with perhaps the temporary exceptions of certain atheist regimes, the continuing presence of religious elements in the general culture of the society in question has meant that the exclusion of religious factors from public life has always been partial. [2] For its part, secularism has functioned as an equally generic concept, selective and susceptible to vague definitions, itself a complex of ideological premises, social science axioms, political affiliations and influential scholars and political theorists, all of which bear the marks of their respective cultural and historical gestation. In fact one of the outcomes of the resurgence of Islam has been to show how Western secularism is still deeply defined by its Jewish and Christian heritage.

Today the perception of a resurgence of religion in the public sphere is raising the question of whether the traditional political ideologies of secularism are adequate. The new diplomatic words are pragmatism and problem-solving. [3] In other words, the emerging goals are to engage with and to accommodate the previously denied religious forces, to take seriously the deep and powerful political presence of religions in public life, and to focus on common interests and collaborative solutions. It is no longer a question of ignoring religion and eschewing its presence and influence. Rather it is a question of acknowledging its influence and seeking to maximize its constructive rather than divisive forces. In such a world there is little place for an ideology that wants to ignore them.

This new approach presents a challenge for the U.S. and other government policy makers who have traditionally based their policymaking on secularist premises. The initial challenge is the ability of the existing bureaucratic apparatus to assess the political, let alone the internal religious, workings of the major and minor religions at work in the world. Foreign embassies are only beginning to engage local religious leaders and to report on religious developments in their respective host countries. Even the US Government, with its extensive annual reporting on religious freedom and its diplomatic activity on behalf of its citizens who work as missionaries overseas, has limited its perspective to freedom of religion and belief, that is relations between religions and the state. It does not, for example, take a sustained interest, let alone monitor, relations among or within religions in other countries. Few embassies employ personnel with the expertise to understand the diverse beliefs, practices, loyalties, texts, cultures, institutions and histories of a country's religions and their relevance to regional and international security and peace.

Recent events, however, are forcing diplomats to monitor the elements of religion that can influence domestic and regional politics well before the point when they begin to underpin revolutionary or violent social action. In both their domestic and international affairs, governments need to be able to recognize and to respond when religious loyalties are co-opted by states or social movements, especially when they begin to convince young believers that their religious beliefs call for unquestioning support of the state or a given cause, especially if this calls for giving up one's own life. Islamic fundamentalism for example, is a concern of the US government, the Falun Gong of the Chinese, the Jehovah Witnesses of the French and Russian governments and Scientology of the German. Religious imperatives have also been a consistent and effective tactic of the Lord's Resistance Movement in Northern Uganda where the leader is portrayed as the infallible prophet of God who must be obeyed at all costs. Similar situations arise when states link their political goals to religious fidelity. Other than to reject and condemn such strategies, secularist paradigms have little to offer in these circumstances. Among the missing elements are timely social analyses that recognize changes in circumstances that make religious loyalties, beliefs, practices etc., susceptible to manipulation hostility on the part of other interests. These situations call for insightful engagement based on a more pragmatic perspective rather than a secularist ideology that defines a priori which empirical factors are relevant.

Equally excluded by many secularist ideologies is a role for the public authorities with respect to relations among the various religious agencies within their territory. Modern pluralism and religious diversity call here again for attentiveness, informed knowledge and pragmatic responses rather than simply seeking to exclude religion from the public sphere. Equally challenging in such a post-secularist world is to re-define the place of religious leaders in debates on public policy. Reciprocally religions need to find and adopt modes of operation that recognize both religious pluralism and the processes of public debate and political compromise. States and international organizations cannot stand on the sidelines, nor be merely referees. Reducing domestic tensions with religious components, such as in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, India, Iraq and Uzbekistan, requires facilitating a dialogue among the religions adapted to the very different circumstances within each state or across states where religious tensions are shared. In question is the classic dilemma: what to do politically with diversity? Left alone, diversity tends to move in the direction of tension and conflict. Moving towards dialogue, collaboration and positive interaction requires positive theoretical and pragmatic inputs on all sides. Other authors have argued that current paradigms of constitutionalism need to be re-visited on the grounds that human rights principles such a human dignity, rule of law and freedom of religion and belief are often violated when secularist principles define public institutions and policies.[4]

Finally, it is important to note that the world's major religions are also powerful international networks in their own right. They are readily mobilized to support fellow religionists in other parts of the world. Many religious groups support well-funded international relief and development agencies linked closely with home governments and the major international agencies. The presence of religious institutions is also visible at the UN, especially when debates focus on the rights women and freedom of religion and belief. Both issues remain controversial and there is little normative change on the horizon. The 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance or Discrimination based on Religion and Belief is not likely to lead to a treaty in the foreseeable

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future. This is not likely to change in a post-secularist world. On the other hand religions are not sedentary entities. They come alive from time to time, often with serious implications for their neighbors. Thus just as states need to be pro-active in working with the religions within their borders, so there need to be international institutions which focus, systematically not just occasionally, on working with and reducing tensions among the world's religions, especially those that threaten international security.

To summarize, secularism is not a viable paradigm to define the place of religion in public life. The grounds are that (a) it is intellectually pre-emptive, (b) it is defined heterogeneously, mostly by what it negates rather than what it stands for, (c) the versions with Western roots retain deep imprints from their Judaeo-Christian roots, (d) it is ill-equipped to grapple with the diversity of, and especially relations among, the world's religions, (e) it thus also ill-equipped to analyze those associated powerful political forces and political crises that verge on major threats to international security and domestic stability, and (f), equally importantly, western secularisms are not concepts acceptable to religions such as Islam and Tibetan Buddhism. The international community is thus faced with the challenge of finding new common "rules of the road" to enable diverse the world's religions to mingle peacefully in an increasingly globalized world. This calls for an approach to both freedom of religion and belief and inter-religious relations that will probably be quite different from the one espoused in the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Intolerance or Discrimination based on Religion and Belief. The thinking needs to begin sooner rather than later.

This publication raises a number of important questions that color our view of international politics. Are religion and secularism two distinct worldviews or do they reflect tendencies on a range of possible worldviews between an orientation to the "next world", the transcendent, the supernatural, and the spiritual and an opposing orientation fixed on "this world", the material and naturalism? Are religions essentially all the same or do differences matter? Is the gap "between" religious traditions and with secularism more important than the gap "within" groups? Is the conflict we see in the contemporary world caused more by disputes over the nature or existence of the divine or is it really between monists, fundamentalist believers and theocrats on one side and pluralists and the tolerant, i.e. those less religiously committed across the whole spectrum of worldviews? The consensus that emerges from the previous contributions is that both religion and secularism are not uniform but in fact both cover a variety of "sins."

History has provided evidence that religion and secularism come in different forms and that each contains a theocratic or authoritarian wing and less dogmatic positions. Certainly in my own work I have distinguished between "hard and soft" varieties of secularism or Modood's "radical and moderate secularism." Individual states of consciousness can be equated with these ideological positions and at the mass level they can create national institutions and structures that reflect the differences between the followers of Marx, Mill, or Jefferson

The mismatch between the institutional and social reality accounts for the confusion in some of the analysis presented (Martin). Most of the authors distinguish between organized religion and religiosity even if they are a bit hazy on the boundaries and consequences of religious belonging, belief and behavior. However, most of the authors have trouble with secularism and its cognates so let me offer some clarifying solutions

or a secularism glossary. Secularism (French-Laïcité, Spanish-Laicismo, Turkish-Sekülerleşme) in the political and constitutional realm is the assertion of the autonomy of public life and the institutions of the state from religion and religious authority. As an ideology it is not merely a negation of religion and clerical authority but an affirmative commitment to secular values. These include reason, empiricism, scientific method, free inquiry, skepticism, liberty, equality and human rights. When we describe and analyze the social or societal realm we need to consider secularity, the state of being secular and secularization, the process of becoming secular.

One key piece of analysis is required at the outset in order to fully appreciate or measure the level of secularization of the modern democratic state and explain how that impacts politics and international relations. This is to distinguish not only the work of the three traditional functions of government – the legislature, executive and judiciary – but also three levels in public life and political action. The first level is the state and its permanent structures and constitutional arrangements including its historic legacies and fictions such as its symbols. It needs to be considered separately from the apparatus of government and the daily administration of public services by temporary office-holders. In turn, government needs to be differentiated from the realm of political parties, campaigns and episodic elections. Of course, there are overlaps and conflations of personnel and activities but in a functioning democracy the various levels of public life are not a single playing field. This realization is crucial for a proper understanding and appreciation of the forces at play in this debate.

It is theoretically possible for a state to be religious and its population to be secularized and conversely for the state to be secular and the population largely religious. We can observe religious populations in secular states such as the U.S.A., Turkey and India and secular populations in constitutionally religious states such as Denmark or Britain. However, over

the long haul in a democracy there is a logical tendency for the superstructure and the substructure to align.   Thus in the complex world of modern western democracies, we can observe the process of secularization in nations on at least two major levels. One is the secularization of national institutions and structures, such as the organs of the state and government. The other level is the secularization of society - the secularization of human consciousness that leads to increased levels of secularity in belief, behavior and belonging among the populace. In a polity where popular sovereignty is acknowledged, change (or reform) at the institutional level happens as a result of political forces emanating from developments in society that are reflected in public opinion and attitudes.

Religion has long been considered an integrative force and mechanism of social control useful for politicians and the state (Plato, Al-Farabi, Machiavelli). Marx and Engels claimed it was an opiate to stifle social change and Durkheim saw it as a source of cohesion for collective action. There are also two research traditions regarding religiosity. One claims it has pro-social tendencies and the other claims produces prejudice and authoritarianism. Most of the authors accept the validity of these mechanisms and motivations for religion on the contemporary scene. Nevertheless they tend to follow the current academic fashion for privileging, one might say excusing, religion and faith. They also claim that secularism operates in a similar way to religion in the political realm. Is this true?

Understanding how religion or secularism relates to attitudes and behaviors is not merely an academic exercise since they have been implicated in an array of social outcomes. But the question is do they operate in isolation from other bases of social action such as social class, gender, race or nationality? Where is religion or secularism a primary catalyst for broad-based collective social action? Much of the evidence presented here as

well as the historical record generally suggests that worldview (secularist or religious) incongruence is ubiquitous.

One of the problems with some of the analysis presented is its narrowness. Domestic politics in liberal democracies – secularism's multiculturalism problem- rather than international relations concerns are the focus and the international outcomes are not presented (Sweetman, Modood). The over worked focus on Islam and Muslims is also a weakness (Haynes, Hurd, Hunter). To replace a Judeo-Christian lens with an Islamic lens in developing paradigms and theory is not progress and certainly not sufficient in a compacting world. What of East Asia, Africa and Latin America? How are religion and secularism operating in those regions? Are they buttressing loyalties to the nation state or the opposite? Are they creating non-state actors working to undermine loyalty to the nation state and create an ideologically-based order similar to the aspirations of Roman Catholicism in the 16th century, the Comintern in the early 20th century and Islamism today?

Since the balance of the argument between secularism and religion has been skewed in this compendium let me offer a few arguments in its favor. Religions are overwhelmingly traditional and particularistic by nature. Psychological research shows that high levels of religiosity are often associated with belief in magic and superstition. It is a serious problem if political actors believe in sacred texts involving preordained cataclysmic events. If these decision makers have access to weapons of mass destruction that may well result in tragedy. Secularism, by way of contrast, in both its soft and hard forms, is modern and universalistic in its outlook. It does not look back to a golden age in the past like many religions nor does it promise rewards beyond this world if its followers meet their sacred obligations. Secularism is geared to offer rational and logical argument and to valorize science. It is therefore much less culturally bound than its critics suggest and much

more amenable to offering universalistic principles and consensual values that the world system requires today.

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