

## EDITORS' FORWARD

It was ten years ago that the *Journal of International Affairs* examined religion's role in the post-Cold War period. At the time, new theories—such as the “end of history” and a “clash of civilizations”—influenced and divided much of the thinking as scholars struggled to define this new moment in the international relations system. In that Summer 1996 issue, many of our contributors argued that the Cold War had obscured the deeper, cultural roots of numerous global conflicts and found religion to play a central role in many of them.

Why revisit the subject of religion one decade later? First, the attacks of September 11 and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have warranted renewed scrutiny of religion's relevance in international affairs. We have also witnessed a rise in political participation from religious groups throughout the world and, consequently, the challenge to encourage toleration and cooperation between secular entities (whether it be states or political parties) and those that represent religious constituencies. The increasing geopolitical influence of religious states also demands international affairs scholars to revisit this ever-evolving subject.

According to Scott M. Thomas, a contributor to this new issue, “We live in a world that is not supposed to exist.” The rise of the modern state system saw the role of rationality take center stage in political and economic organization. Accordingly, explanations referring to forces outside the earthly realm were increasingly rejected. Science was to displace the historical primacy of religion. Secularization theory—described in the early 20th century by theorists such as Max Weber—predicted the decline in the importance of religion as societies modernized. Yet, religion's importance continues unabated in our world.

Religion's emphasis on faith distinguishes it from the practicality that characterizes traditional instruments of statecraft. The indelibility of religious identity has fuelled many conflicts, which threaten the stability prescribed by the modern nation-state. Thus, with a world view firmly planted in Western rationalism, scholars of international

affairs have traditionally regarded religion with suspicion, viewing it primarily through the prism of security. This perspective, however, limits our understanding of religion's complex interactions with states and non-state actors; it ignores the ubiquity of religion in shaping everyday realities for a significant portion of the world's population. Drawing upon the work of a diverse set of scholars, "Religion & Statecraft" endeavors to widen the scope of examination beyond the issue of security, exploring salient themes such as religion's role in democratization, reconciliation, and development.

Broadening the analysis of religion's role in international affairs requires a philosophical examination of toleration—an examination conducted by Michael Blake in the capstone essay. In this piece, the author provides a philosophical framework for the toleration of theocracies by liberal states. He offers a conception of tolerance that seeks to combine a belief in the moral importance of equality with a willingness to speak, listen and understand.

Scott Thomas addresses general trends in the role of religion in international affairs over the past century. He refutes the argument that secularization causes a decline in religion and argues instead that there has been a resurgence and restructuring of religion. Thomas explains that religion is taking on new forms, roles and functions in domestic and world politics as a result of modernization and globalization.

Jonathan Fox's survey of 175 states between 2000 and 2002 finds that religious discrimination was present in the majority of states and that mean levels of such discrimination rose during this timeframe. His extensive quantitative analysis adds new dimensions to the exploration of the role of religion in international affairs.

In situations of conflict, religion plays a significant role in establishing peace in the present and dealing with the past. Sheherazade Jafari highlights the importance of local religious leaders' participation in the peace-building process. She argues that these religious peacemakers are an underutilized resource in U.S. foreign policy. Daniel Philpott, in his essay, focuses on the role of religion and reconciliation in the process of transitional justice. He explores the meaning of reconciliation from a religious perspective and how it differs from the approach of a liberal human rights tradition, concluding that religious voices often impact the institutions and policies through which political orders deal with the past.

Church-state relations in developing countries are surveyed through two pieces on Russia and Brazil, respectively. John Anderson examines the intersection of the spiritual with the political in the context of the Putin presidency. The article assesses the relationship shared by Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church in four critical areas: liberalization and Westernization, pluralism, security, and religious education. Rudolf von Sinner examines the role of religion in promoting democratization in Brazil, looking at the specific contributions of three churches—the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, and the Assemblies of God.

J. Paul Martin, Jason Chau, and Shruti Patel consider the issue of religion and development. The piece discusses the nature of social capital provided by religion and its implications for poverty alleviation. The authors analyze the benefits and pitfalls of religious agencies' increasing involvement in the field of development.

The war in Iraq has underscored the inextricable association of religion with issues of peace and security in international affairs scholarship. Ron E. Hassner's essay grapples with the difficulties of combat in sacred spaces in Iraq. His research demonstrates the benefits of understanding and applying principles of Islamic just war theory in order to prevent a popular backlash amongst local Muslim populations during combat in mosques or other sacred spaces. While Hassner's analysis is limited to the war in Iraq, particularly during counter-insurgency operations, the lessons it draws can be applied to the more universal context of combat within sacred space. Elizabeth Ann Mayer's article deconstructs the Iraqi constitutional project as conceived by the United States. Mayer contrasts U.S. constitutional recommendations against a backdrop of the deteriorating security situation in Iraq. In doing so, she argues that constitutional prescriptions are incapable of diminishing cleavages engendered by deep-seated religious rivalry—constitutional architecture alone cannot secure a liberal democratic order and control the pressures that religion exerts upon the state.

Alfred C. Stepan and Mirjam Künkler interview Amien Rais, who led and inspired the reform movement that forced the resignation of President Suharto in 1998 and ushered in an era of constitutional reform and democratization in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, Indonesia. Through sharing his personal experience as chairman of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly during four rounds of constitutional revisions between 1999 and 2004, Rais demonstrates the compatibility of Islam and democracy.

The *Journal* also provides a photo essay of Buddhist monks in Myanmar. Their spiritual and institutional legitimacy among the Burmese people earned them popular and international support in their recent protests against the military regime. These photographs demonstrate the spiritual and political power of the Saffron Revolution.

In contrast to certain expectations, religion remains a dominant force in international affairs and its influence encompasses issues of peace and security, reconciliation and justice, and democratization. Scott Thomas concludes that, "Religion can and does console people in poor communities but it can also empower them. It can help them transform their lives and their communities, which in turn transforms international relations." As the editors, we hope that this issue of the *Journal*—by bringing together a range of authors with a breadth of perspectives and expertise—helps enliven and enrich the debate about religion's role in statecraft.

—*The Editors*