

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

RELIGION, VIOLENCE & THE STATE

A DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER
BETWEEN ACTIVISTS
AND SCHOLARS

by

ABDUL RASHIED OMAR

A Dissertation submitted in
fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of

RELIGIOUS STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

September 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Introduction.....	1
Definition of Terms	
Religion.....	12
Violence.....	14
The State.....	16
Chapter 1: Post-Cold War Perspectives on Religion and Violence.....	20
Key Theoretical Concerns in Post-Cold War Literature on Religion and Violence	
1. Religious Fundamentalism.....	31
2. Clash of Civilizations.....	37
3. Religious Nationalism.....	41
4. Globalization.....	45
Chapter 2: Contending Theories of the State and Their Implications for Religion and Violence.....	50
Chapter 3: South Africa: From Pacifism to Armed Struggle.....	72
Chapter 4: Bosnia: From Ethnic Cleansing to Religious Genocide.....	98
Chapter 5: India: Naming the Guilty.....	139
Conclusion: Towards a Theory of Religion, Violence and the State.....	169
Bibliography.....	184

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with deep gratitude and affection that I acknowledge the support of my advisors, Professor David Chidester and Professor Scott Appleby. Because of their approach to the advising process, I have felt well supported during the writing of this dissertation. David has been a constant source of support and guidance. Somehow, he is able to prod, challenge and reassure all at the same time. Similarly, Scott has been an exemplary mentor and a steadying presence. He provided me with a warm and stimulating home of intellectual fellowship at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. I can never repay either of them for their generosity.

I owe each of my three interlocutors, Father Michael Lapsley, Mufti Mustafa Ceric and Swami Agnivesh, a great sense of gratitude. They graciously provided me some of their valuable time to conduct my interviews. I encroached on their busy lives and they patiently responded to my many questions. I embrace their voices but take full authorial responsibility for the manner in which they are represented here.

It is also a pleasure to thank the many people who have read and commented on various parts of this dissertation, including Cynthia Mahmood, Patrice Brodeur, Ebrahim Moosa and Peter Walshe. Fahmi Gamiieldien deserves a special word of thanks for his support in the layout and copying.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Leila, and my children who made the journey with me in the writing of this dissertation. Without Leila's love and nourishment I would surely not have been able to complete this project.

I dedicate this work to my parents, Kassiem and Latiefa Omar, who have nurtured, and continue to support their four sons in achieving their dreams.

ABSTRACT

RELIGION, VIOLENCE AND THE STATE: A DIALOGICAL ENCOUNTER BETWEEN ACTIVISTS AND SCHOLARS

by Abdul Rashied Omar

September 2005

This dissertation places the voices of three leading religious activists in juxtaposition to contemporary scholarship on religion and violence in the Western academy. It highlights a neglected issue in that body of scholarship, namely the link between systemic violence and state terror. I raise three interrelated research questions:

First, how does the post-Cold War literature on religion and violence deal with the issue of systemic institutional violence and state-sponsored terror as elucidated by Chomsky and Herman (1979), Stohl and Lopez (1984), Falk (1998) and Sluka (2000)?

Second, under what conditions and through which mechanisms are religious discourses and actors enlisted in legitimating the state's resort to violence?

Third, what kinds of theory are tangibly present in the growing field of study on religion and violence and to what extent are these theories challenging or serving the interests of state authorities?

I employ two research methods. The first is a critical textual hermeneutics applied to both primary sources on religion, violence and the state found within religious institutions, such as sermons, press articles, etc., as well as the burgeoning scholarly literature on religion and violence that has emerged since 1989. The second involves conducting a number of qualitative interviews with three renowned religious activists from diverse contexts who lived, theologized, and theorized in the midst of situations of deadly conflict. For this dissertation I have chosen Michael Lapsley of South Africa,

Mustafa Ceric of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Swami Agnivesh of India. The three case studies I have examined accentuate different aspects of the religion and violence nexus but have one key thing in common: all three point to the critical role of the state, and in particular illuminate the manner in which religion can buttress and sanctify state-sponsored violence.

Cognizant of the conditioning influence of political location in the framing of academic discourse, I contend that the dialogue that this dissertation seeks to enhance and the theoretical concerns that it seeks to illuminate are vital to the advancement of a more nuanced and polycentric (as opposed to Eurocentric) theory of religion, violence and the state.

University of Cape Town

INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding Max Weber's definition of the modern state as 'the association that claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence,' religious leaders have often refused to yield authority on the question: the state's legal monopoly of violence does not render moral its every use of violence.¹

Rationale

The dramatic turn of world events at the dawn of the twenty-first century – including the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001 – have placed religion at the center of international affairs.² These events have challenged prevailing academic orthodoxies about the relationship between religion and violence. This new context has intensified the need to examine the root causes of violence, and, in particular, the variegated ways in which religion and violence intersect in deadly conflicts. Such a re-examination, in addition to increasing the accuracy of analysis, would contribute to the development of more effective methodologies in the area of conflict transformation and sustainable peacebuilding.

The Project

In this dissertation I place the views of three prominent religious activists, Michael Lapsley of South Africa, Mustafa Ceric of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Swami Agnivesh of India, into conversation with contemporary theories of religion and violence. The three case studies I examine accentuate different aspects of the religion and violence

¹ R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 34–35.

² These events began with the collapse of the Oslo Peace process between Israelis and Palestinians in September 2000 in the face of a renewed cycle of violence in the Middle East, followed by the attacks of America a year later in September 2001, and the Bush administration's subsequent "enduring" war on terrorism, and then the Hindu-Muslim carnage in the Gujarat state of India in February and March 2003.

nexus with one common overriding theme: the critical and central role of the state. They underscore how religion buttresses and sanctifies state-sponsored violence.

The voices of these three leading religious figures, however, stand in stark contrast to the dominant view of religion and violence that had emerged since the end of the Cold War in 1990, and that were flooding the market in the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks on the United States.³ I was particularly concerned about the inadequate account of the role of the state in fomenting violence in the new theories of religion and violence. There are a few rare exceptions, such as the context specific studies of David Chidester, *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa*,⁴ and Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*.⁵ These do demonstrate the state's complicity in fomenting violence. The lessons from them have, however, been completely ignored in the comparative and theoretical studies on religion and violence. I am curious to discover why.⁶ This glaring omission of the role of the state in the burgeoning literature on religion and violence tended to reinforce the existing bias that religious violence and terrorism is the preserve of non-state actors.

This fault line is nowhere better illustrated than in the work of the American sociologist, Mark Juergensmeyer, one of the leading figures in current scholarship on

³ For an idea about the proliferation of books on religion and violence since September 11, 2001, see Charles K. Bellinger, "Religion and Violence: A Bibliography," *The Hedgehog Review* 6/1 (2004) : 111–119. For an expanded online version see http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/hedgehog_viol_bib.htm (accessed August, 2005). See also the October 2003 issue of *Spotlight on Teaching* (published by the American Academy of Religion), vol. 18, no. 4, on "Teaching about Religion and Violence." It contains a useful list of references and research projects <http://aarweb.org/publications/spotlight/2003-100CT.pdf> (accessed May, 2004).

⁴ David Chidester, *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991).

⁵ Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

⁶ During the course of my work on this dissertation two important books, which have particular relevance to the interaction between religion, violence and the state, were published: Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), and Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Doubleday, 2004). The strengths and weaknesses of both of these accounts are dealt with at various occasions in this dissertation but more specifically in the Conclusion.

religion and violence.⁷ Juergensmeyer is not being singled-out but is rather emblematic of a larger trend in the literature in which this analytical slippage occurs. In his influential work, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, Juergensmeyer adopts a similar methodology to that of my own.⁸ His study is also an ethnography that draws upon interviews with selected religious activists in the midst of deadly conflict. Where I differ from Juergensmeyer is that his analysis almost entirely focuses on the religious violence of non-state actors. In contradistinction, I provide a dialogical context to locate the matrix of religion and violence. Within this matrix the violence produced by non-state actors is not independent and delinked from the systemic violence produced by the state. Juergensmeyer's study leaves one wondering whether he considers "state-sponsored violence" to be secondary or almost normative.⁹

To be fair to Juergensmeyer, in his earlier work, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, he did contextualize religious violence, and there he argued that religious resurgence was in large measure the product of the failed relationship between the governing secular elites and the masses whose needs the state was unable to fulfill. There he showed that the masses were attracted to those political actors who provide a religious panacea to complex social dislocations engendered by the failure of secular governance. He very effectively and insightfully linked political unrest with the rise in religious resurgence.¹⁰

⁷ Mark Juergensmeyer is Director of Global and International Studies and Professor of Sociology and Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the 2004 recipient of the Silver Award of the Queen Sofia Center for the Study of Violence in Spain. He is currently recognized as one of the world's foremost experts on "religious violence." For a full biography see <http://www.global.ucsb.edu/faculty/juergensmeyer.html> (accessed August 2005).

⁸ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁹ Juergensmeyer provides a number of examples of state sponsored violence, including the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the genocidal violence perpetrated by the Hutus against the Tutsis in Rwanda. Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 11.

¹⁰ Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

However, there is a fundamental disconnect between Juergensmeyer's earlier insights on the rise of religious resurgence and his explanation for the cause of religious violence in his later work. Did Juergensmeyer make a shift in his analysis of the causes of what he calls "religious violence"?

While acknowledging in *Terror in the Mind of God* that "all of the worst incidences of genocidal killings this century have been perpetrated by public officials invoking a sort of state terrorism," he nevertheless proceeds to explain religious violence as the product of local forces having being unleashed as a result of the undercutting of state authority by the twin processes of postmodernity and globalization.¹¹ As a result, the chief focus of his study is to describe the psychological mindset of the actors that drive these local forces. This psychological mindset he contends renders non-state actors vulnerable to appropriate the violent elements of their religious texts.¹² What he omits to factor into his hermeneutical reading is that social text or context contributes equally to the violent appropriation of the sacred. Looming large in the social context is the state and its coercive ideological state apparatuses.

Juergensmeyer's widely read study ignores the dialogical nature of violence. Thus he ends up on one side of the equation and denudes the state of any agency and responsibility in the production of violence. Unwittingly his monocausal analysis buttresses state authority and obscures the role of the state in complex conjunctions of violence.

This inattention to the role of the state in contemporary scholarship on religion and violence, as demonstrated in the work of Juergensmeyer, is striking. Every scholar of modernity recognizes that not only political discourses but also ethical and sociological discourses are informed by and configured within the dominance and prerogatives of the state; it prefigures every discourse, vision and theory. S. Parvez

¹¹ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 5 and 163.

¹² During the course of working on this dissertation another study that focuses on the psychological dimensions of religious militants was published. Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: Ecco, 2003).

Manzoor usefully captures this sense of modernity. “The modern perception of reality,” Manzoor argues, “not only of the political world but also of the moral, aesthetic and intellectual dimensions of our existence, is largely through the prism of the state.”¹³

This dissertation contends that there is an urgent need in the words of some political theorists to “bring the state back in[to]” theoretical discourses on religion and violence.¹⁴ My central argument is that an understanding of the state’s role, and in particular a critical appraisal of how it obtains its legitimacy and exercises its “monopoly of violence” is crucial to a more nuanced grasp of the relationship between religion and violence.

Research Questions

In pursuit of my goals I raise three interrelated research questions:

- How does the post-Cold War literature on religion and violence deal with the issue of systemic institutional violence and state-sponsored terror as elucidated by Chomsky and Herman (1979), Stohl and Lopez (1984), McClintock (1985), George (1991), and Sluka (2000)?¹⁵
- Under what conditions and through which mechanisms are religious discourses and actors enlisted in legitimating the state’s resort to violence?
- And, last but not least, how do current theories of violence challenge or serve state interests in coercive practices?

¹³ S. Parvez Manzoor, review of *The Rise and Decline of the State*, by Martin van Creveld, *Islam* 21 (October 2000): 15–16.

¹⁴ Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). For the argument for granting the state agency in our analysis of resurgent religion see Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

¹⁵ Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, eds. *The Political Economy of Human Rights. Vol. 1, The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1979); Michael Stohl and George Lopez, eds. *The State As Terrorist: The Dynamics of Governmental Violence and Repression* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984); Michael McClintock, *The American Connection: Volume One: State Terror and Popular Resistance in El Salvador* (London: Zed Books, 1985); Noam Chomsky, *The Culture of Terrorism* (Boston: South End Press, 1988); Alexander George, ed. *Western State Terrorism* (London: Polity Press, 1991); and Jeffrey A. Sluka, ed. *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

Another way to phrase this is to ask: are Western scholarly perspectives on religion and violence (which have formed a growth industry since September 11) not artificially slanted towards state interests to the detriment of those resisting state excesses in various contexts? Are scholars and experts not radically misunderstanding the big picture of religion's intersection with violence in the post-Cold War era? More importantly, can the voices of religious activists from the periphery provide a corrective to the perspectives held by the Western scholarly community on the nexus between religion, violence and the state?

Research Methodology

I employ two research methods. The first is a critical textual hermeneutics applied to sources used and produced by religious actors on the question of religion, violence and the state. By this I mean sermons, press articles, speeches and writings of such actors, including the burgeoning scholarly literature on religion and violence that has emerged since 1990. The second method involves a number of qualitative interviews with three renowned religious activists from diverse contexts who have been or continue to live and provide theological reflections in the midst of deadly conflicts.

A number of contemporary researchers into religion and violence have integrated interlocutors into their research methodologies.¹⁶ The theoretical lens, the framing of the research questions, as well as the choice of interlocutors all have profound influences on the findings of any study. These studies as well as that of my own inevitably bear the same burden.

Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's conception of "the dialogic imagination,"¹⁷ researchers in both the social and the human sciences have recently rethought the relationship between scholars and the subjects of their studies, some in more radical

¹⁶ For examples see John Esposito, ed. *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); R. Scott Appleby, ed. *Spokesmen for the Despised: Fundamentalist Leaders of the Middle East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); and Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*.

¹⁷ Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

ways than others. As a result of this heightened sensitivity to the relational dimensions of the interlocution process, new ethnographic studies have attempted to incorporate more fully the voices and perspectives of their subjects into the ultimate representative text. One such example is the work of the cultural anthropologist, Cynthia Mahmood. She engages in such dialogical ethnography in her *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues With Sikh Militants*, an in-depth exploration of the Khalistan movement in northern India.¹⁸ Here, I attempt to retain a wider comparative perspective and therefore craft the editorial framing of this study more assertively; I embrace the voices of interlocutors in this text but nowhere relinquish my final authorial responsibility.

What do I owe the three major figures with whom I dialogue and who provide the substance for my theoretical ruminations on the intersection of religion, violence and the state? Informed consent settles the minimal covenant with my “consultants” or “research participants.” I shared the parameters of my project with each one and ensured that in their own self-definition they each identified with the label “scholar-activist,” in some form. Lapsley, Ceric and Agnivesh are not only prominent public figures, but are reflective interrogators of their own contexts. Each could see the usefulness of my project and agreed to speak “on the record” for the purposes of this comparison and exploration.

As an ethnographer, I have not sought out the foot soldiers but focused on the leaders of the movements. The everyday travails of the foot soldiers can teach us a great deal. Between the ethnographer and the lay religious activist are sometimes overlooked figures, repositories of great insight, namely, indigenous public intellectuals. My three interviewees qualify as public intellectuals or religious scholar-activists.

Theoretical Approach

Drawing on the work of the late French philosopher, Jacques Derrida, the social psychologist, Maliqalim Simone, proposed that “every society is in some way

¹⁸ Cynthia Mahmood, *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues With Sikh Militants* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).

obligated to its margins for its existence.” According to this theoretical perspective: “The margins exist partially as a space to which [society] can relegate thinking and discourses it considers dangerous and destabilizing.” Yet the “larger society must keep tabs on what transpires at the margins.” The margins has therefore of necessity to be both studied and represented by the official “magisterial” discourses as “the place of incapacity and irrationality.”¹⁹ The paradox, however, is that the more the margins has been demonized, the greater it has been challenged to refine and sharpen its critiques of the hegemonic discourse.

Recently we have noted how fresh insights from the periphery had countered the domination of the Euro-American metropolis in academia.²⁰ The same works that brought dialogical methods into the practice of ethnography also launched a vigorously anti-colonial critique of the social sciences.²¹ The critiques generated by this genre of literature prompted fruitful rethinking of the assumptions that undergird theoretical approaches in many disciplines. Voices from outside the Western academy challenge its presumptions, methodologies, and goals.

Relevant to the study of religious activism is the post-colonial challenge to the Western notion of the disengaged, objective “professional.” Edward Said, the late Palestinian critic, has strongly insisted on the nonviability of the traditional ivory-tower claim that academics can be isolated from public (read: political) life.²² As part of society, academics are not non-partisan and thus bring their biases and prejudices

¹⁹ T. Abdou Maliqalim Simone, *In Whose Image? Political Islam and Urban Practices in Sudan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 205–206.

²⁰ See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988); V.Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Samir Amin, *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World* (London: Zed Books, 1990); Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); and Anouar Majid, *Unveiling Traditions: Postcolonial Islam in a Polycentric World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

²¹ George Marcus and Michael Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

²² Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (New York: Pantheon, 1994).

to their data and documents. For instance, a recent comparative study conducted at the University of Hawaii found that state-sponsored violence, measured by the number of killings, far outweighs the violence perpetrated by non-state actors.²³ Yet, despite this compelling empirical evidence, one hears more about the terror and violence perpetrated by non-state actors than that of the state. Anthropologist, Jeffrey Sluka, provides an explanation. “Academics, media and governments,” observes Sluka, “neglect state terror in their diagnosis of violence due to their own political and ideological biases rather than empirical evidence.”²⁴ Demonstrating the complicity of the scholarly community in such distorted analysis, the historian of religion, David Chidester, reinforces this claim by stating that “academic institutions, disciplines, teaching and research are “necessarily implicated in the ceremonies of power in the network of social relations within which they operate.”²⁵

Rather than viewing my three religious public intellectuals as somehow less objective or “neutral” than Western trained experts, I have sought to bring their activist voices to bear on the theoretical debates on religion and violence. As a person with both a religious activist and secular academic background, I found myself well-positioned to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of both worlds. Having spent part of my life combating the injustices of apartheid in South Africa I could never fully disengage my intellect from the press of activism. Contemplating how to structure a research project on religion, violence and the state, I realized that I actually fell into Zygmunt Bauman’s category of an “interpreter” among different kinds of intellectual communities.²⁶ I would not “legislate” in Bauman’s words that one way of thinking about the problem was right or wrong, but would juxtapose the insights and worldviews of various kinds of players (in this case, Western scholars of religion, Anglican priests,

²³ Rudolph Rummel, *Death by Government* (New Brunswick/London: Transaction Books, 1994), 25.

²⁴ Jeffrey Sluka, “Introduction: State Terror and Anthropology,” in *Death Squad*, 1.

²⁵ David Chidester, *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), xi

²⁶ Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

Bosnian Muslim imams, and Hindu swamis) in such a way as to fruitfully further our joint effort to understand why and how religion and violence interact so frequently.

Religion and Violence: A Critique from the Margins

Non-Western religious activists criticize the literature produced in the Western academy for its parlous inattention to the human rights abuses committed by security apparatuses of modern nation-states against “dissidents.” A vivid illustration of such a criticism can be found in the historic *Kairos Document* produced by anti-apartheid Christians during the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa.²⁷ The Kairos theologians identified three distinct types of theological positions on violence: (1) state theology, which legitimates state-sponsored violence by providing divine authority to the state; (2) church theology, which ignores socio-economic and political injustices and privileges the maintenance of law and order over that of counter-violence against the oppressive structures of the state; and (3) prophetic theology, which embraces the struggle of the oppressed and exploited masses and does not offer moral equivalence or proportionality between the state-sponsored violence and the counter-violence of the resistance movement against the state. The *Kairos Document* thoroughly critiqued the first two theologies while espousing the third. Not surprisingly, the debate about whether there exists a moral equivalence between the apartheid state’s violence and that of the violence of the liberation movement became central to the deliberations of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

The Kairos document is certainly not unique and resonates with similar theological critiques issued by religious activists in many other oppressive contexts. The Jesuit priest, Ricardo Falla, has highlighted a similar critique on behalf of Mayan religious activists in Guatemala in the 1970s and 1980s. He exposes the dangers of so-called neutrality that pervade the Western social sciences. “While we need to understand the

²⁷ Kairos Theologians, *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1986).

actions of state terrorists from a theoretical point of view, this in no way precludes offering judgment that these actions are unjust or wrong.”²⁸

Accordingly, this dissertation seeks to complement the mainstream Western literature on religion and violence by illuminating the manners in which the state is implicated in the production of violence. In the Conclusion I bring forward the proposition that the “religion and violence” school of thought must be firmly and radically expanded to constitute a triad of religion, violence and the state.

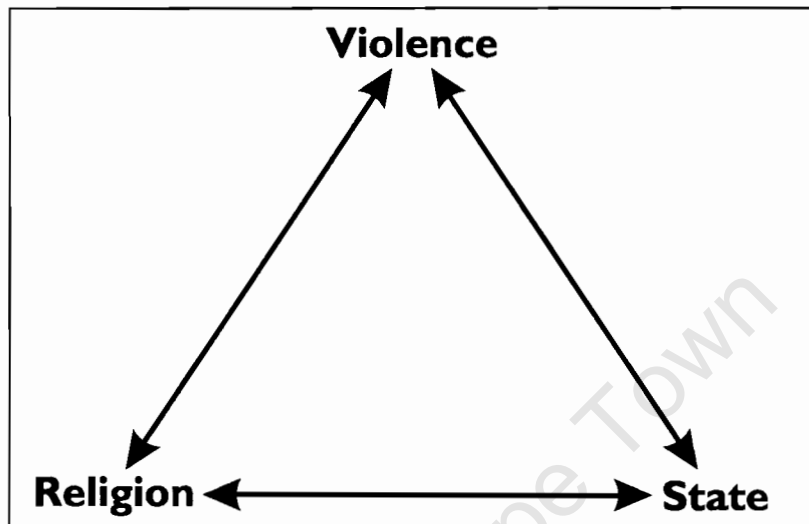


Figure 1: Religion–Violence–State Triad

Definitions of Terms

The problematic that drives this dissertation may be conceived in terms of the triangular nexus between religion, violence and the state, which then requires that we define each. However, I am also mindful of the caveat issued by the philosopher, John Rawls, who cautioned that “the merit of any definition depends on the soundness of the theory that results; by itself, a definition cannot settle any fundamental question.”²⁹

²⁸ Ricardo Falla, *Massacres in the Jungle: Ixcán, Guatemala, 1975–1982* (Boulder, CO: Cambridge University Press, 1994). A similar critique of state violence can be found in the work of the Malaysian Muslim activist, Chandra Muzaffar, “Whose Terrorism,” in *Terrorising the Truth: The Shaping of Contemporary Images of Islam and Muslims in Media, Politics and Culture*, ed. Farish A. Noor (Penang: Just World Trust, 1997). Muzaffar argues that it is the powerful that control the discourse on terrorism. He calls for a more consistent definition of terrorism that does not exclude states.

²⁹ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 130.

As is the case with almost all key terms, defining them is a perennial challenge. Since all definitions reflect the subjectivity of their producers, and provide the lenses through which they see the world, these definitions are inherently contested. A number of contending interpretations of religion, violence and the state exist in the literature. Below, I provide an overview of the range of definitions for each term as employed in the literature on religion and violence and come up with my own working definitions. Moreover, these definitions constitute an important part of my conversations with the three religious activists included in the ethnographic section of this dissertation. I explore how they define each term and conceive of their relationship. Their perspectives inform my analysis of the topography of religious and state violence.

Religion

Not surprisingly, most scholars of religion and violence have avoided defining religion, preferring instead to operate with an implicit definition.³⁰ The complex nature of religion does indeed make it extremely difficult to decide whether a conflict is religious or not. Nevertheless, I observe a trend in the current usage of this term. Those academics who have chosen to minimize the role of religion in deadly conflicts have constructed narrow definitions of religion. A useful example of this can be found in the work of Paul Mojzes. He described the Bosnian war (1992–95) as having primarily “ethnonationalist” causes rather than a religious one. In support of this contention he wrote the following: “In so far as this is a ‘religious war’ it is being fought largely by irreligious people who wear religion as a distinguishing badge but do not know what the badge stands for.”³¹

³⁰ One of the notable exceptions is that of Appleby. Drawing on the “idea of the holy” by the German theologian, Rudolph Otto (1869–1937), Appleby, in *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 8–10, maintains that “Religion is the human response to a reality perceived as sacred.” Otto’s definition of religion has however been criticized as too narrowly Christian, see David Chidester, Gordon Mitchell, A. Rashied Omar and Isabel Apawo Phiri, eds. *Religion in Public Education: Options for a New South Africa* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1994), 35.

³¹ Paul Mojzes, *Yugoslavian Inferno: Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1995), 127.

Scholars such as Mojzes work with a presumption that one can neatly separate out the complex strands of ethnicity, nationality and religion in the processes of identity formation. Such theorists skew the definition of religion by privileging the experience of one culture and assuming it to be universal. In contrast, Bruce Lincoln maintains that the analyses of such scholars rests on an impoverished and Protestant view that takes beliefs and moral injunctions to be the essence of the religious, while ignoring most other aspects, such as ethnicity, nationalism and language, to be separate from notions of religion.³² Despite anthropologist Talal Asad's reservations that "there cannot be a universal definition of religion," I agree with Lincoln who nuances Asad's caution by saying that all definitions like language is always provisional.³³ Lincoln argues for a broader definition of religion that facilitates the conjunction between religious discourse, practice, community and institutions. In other words, religion contributes to power dynamics in any given social context.

Cognizant of the challenges associated with both narrow and broad definitions of religion, I adopt in this dissertation a working definition of religion developed by Chidester, the idea that religion is "the political economy of the sacred."³⁴ In his description, religion is situated within specific material processes, social contexts, and political relations. "Religion," he contends, "is an arena of human activity marked by the concerns of the transcendent, the sacred, and the ultimate – concerns that enable people to experiment with what it means to be human."³⁵ I find Chidester's definition of religion helpful since it invites the scholar to raise crucial questions about the politics of human identity, socio-economic justice, and their mediations in relation to the state.

³² Bruce Lincoln, "Conflict," in *Critical Terms in Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago University Press, 1997). See also Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 1–3.

³³ Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 2. Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 29.

³⁴ David Chidester, "Stories, Fragments, and Monuments," in *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, eds. James Cochrane, John de Gruchy, and Stephen Martin (Cape Town: David Philip, 1999), 132–141.

³⁵ David Chidester, *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 1.

Violence

Defining violence is undoubtedly challenging because it deals with matters of life and death. Chidester correctly avers that violence is “an inherently contested term” that “is notoriously resistant to definition.”³⁶ Notwithstanding this difficulty, four distinct philosophical approaches to defining violence emerge in the literature. In its simplest form, violence is defined as direct physical or instrumental harm to persons or property.³⁷ This so-called minimalist definition raises the dilemma as to what counts as harm. In order to determine what constitutes harm, especially against persons, normative standards or the baseline measure of human wholeness and human integrity are indispensable.

In response to this critique, a broader definition was developed: violence is the violation of human rights and human dignity. This maximalist definition stresses the importance of recognizing the existence of more indirect and insidious forms of psychological and institutional violence, combined in the new concept of “structural violence.” This form of violence is less dramatic and less direct and has the effect of denying people important rights such as economic opportunity, social and political equality, human dignity and eventually human lives. One of its most ardent advocates is the Norwegian peace scholar, Johan Galtung. According to Galtung, violence can be built into the very structure of the socio-political, economic, and cultural dimensions of any society, which are embedded in its central institutions.³⁸

By not limiting violence to acts of direct physical force, not only is the scope of the concept expanded, but the inevitably normative implications of the usage of the

³⁶ In my assessment of the concept of violence, I am indebted to David Chidester and have drawn liberally from his systematic plotting of the contending philosophical approaches to the concept of violence. See David Chidester, “Comprehending Political Violence” in *Dealing with Diversity: Keywords for a New South Africa*, ed. Emile Boonzaier and John Sharp (Cape Town: David Phillip, forthcoming). See also, Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, 173–4.

³⁷ For a definition of violence as direct physical harm see, Robert B. Miller, “Violence, Force, and Coercion,” in *Violence*, ed. Jerome A. Schaffer (New York: David McKay, 1971), 25.

³⁸ Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3, reprinted in *Essays in Peace Research* (Christian Eljers, 1975), 29–46.

term are illuminated. The impossibility of devising a value free and purely descriptive concept of violence is usefully captured in the following quote from the historian of religion, Ninian Smart: “violence is not just a natural phenomenon, for it requires some idea of violation – that is, it has a normative aspect.”³⁹ In short, endeavors to define violence are inescapably conditioned by ethical considerations.

The third and fourth philosophical approaches to defining violence are based on ethical evaluations. In ethical reflections of violence the conventional approach has been to define violence as illegitimate force. From this vantage point, violence is viewed as force gone wrong. The American comparative ethicist, David Little, defined violence as “the illegitimate use of force.”⁴⁰ By illegitimate force he means extralegal use of force against the “other.” By implication, therefore, the force employed by the state, even if it resulted in direct physical harm, could not be regarded as violence since it was employed in order to enforce the law. Little’s assumptions about the inherently legitimate ends served by the “force” of the state have been questioned. Chidester argues that:

[T]he notion that violence is illegitimate by definition certainly allows for the convenient distinction between “their” violence and “our” judicious exercise of legitimate force. In the process, however, violence disappears as an independent variable for analysis. It is simply the wrong kind of force.⁴¹

Strikingly, a number of contemporary studies on religion and violence define violence narrowly as direct physical harm to persons or property and largely ignore structural violence. Moreover, Little is not the only contemporary scholar who subscribes to the concept of the “legitimacy” of state violence. The German political scientist, Thomas Scheffler, has argued for example that the solution for religious violence in Lebanon

³⁹ Ninian Smart, “Rene Girard: Violence and the Sacred,” *Religious Studies Review* 6 (1980) : 173–77.

⁴⁰ David Little, “Religious Militancy,” in *Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict*, eds. Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson with Pamela Aall (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), 79–92.

⁴¹ Chidester, “Comprehending Political Violence,” 8.

is for the state to exercise its monopoly of violence more efficiently and to co-opt and engineer its religious diversity. In so doing it can succeed in domesticating religion and harnessing its resources in the cause of reconciliation.⁴²

Recognizing the normative quality of definitional approaches to violence, as well as John Rawls' wisdom concerning the correlation between definitions and theories, it seems to me appropriate for the purpose of this dissertation which focuses on a theory of religion, violence and the state to adopt the working definition of violence developed by Robert McAfee Brown. According to Brown, violence is a denial or abuse of life, whether physical, structural, psychological or in whichever form it expresses itself.⁴³ I pay special attention to the responses of my three interlocutors as to their various ethical stances on the violence that surrounds them in the chapters that follow.

The State

The character and role of the state have intrigued and preoccupied scholars since the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1684.⁴⁴ The proliferation of new states in the wake of the dramatic collapse of the Soviet Union and the former Republic of Yugoslavia in 1989, which roughly coincided with the acceleration in the process of globalization, has led to a renewed interest among scholars in the nature of the state.⁴⁵ The theory of the sovereign territorial state can be traced to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In response to the so-called "religious wars" between Protestants and Catholics in Europe, political theorists such as Jean Bodin (1530–1596) and Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) argued that "religions, if confronted to other religions in the framework of a common political unit, turn into dangerous engines of irreconcilable civil discord and need to be domesticated by a powerful superior authority, namely the territorial state."⁴⁶

⁴² Thomas Scheffler, ed. "Introduction," in *Religion: Between Violence and Reconciliation* (Orient-Institut Beirut/ Ergon, 2002), 9.

⁴³ Robert McAfee Brown, *Religion and Violence* Second Edition (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987), 5–6.

⁴⁴ For the text of the treaty see K. Muller, ed. *Instrumenta Pacis Westphalicae* (Bern: Lang, 1966).

⁴⁵ A pre-eminent example of this renewed interest in the state is Martin Van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁴⁶ Scheffler, *Religion: Between Violence and Reconciliation*, 9.

Modern European political thinking has been largely based on this central assumption. Consequently, it advocated a clear separation of politics and religion, and linked the domestication of violence to the absolutist state that had emerged victoriously from Europe's confessional wars.

Building on this political tradition, subsequent theorists such as Max Weber (1864–1922) and Carl Schmitt (1888–1985) were unequivocal in their contentions that the state should have a monopoly on the use of violence and that its exercise of violence should be regarded as the only legitimate violence in pursuit of law and order.⁴⁷ Appleby has usefully captured the key theoretical inquiry generated by these assumptions underlying theories of the state when he avers: “Who, ultimately, is to decide which uses of violence are justified when moral and legal considerations diverge?”⁴⁸ The German philosopher, Hannah Arendt (1906–1975), has raised a related question when she asked: “What happens when a crime is legal? When criminals can enthusiastically enforce the rule of law?”⁴⁹ Appleby depicts the critical challenge that this has raised for religious leaders when he argues that the state's monopoly of violence does not render moral its every use of violence.⁵⁰ Mahmood Mamdani has recently argued that the genesis and trajectory of the modern state has been and continues to be a history of violence against two kinds of victims: the internal racial victims of state building and the external victims of imperial expansion.⁵¹ For the purposes of this dissertation I adopt Mamdani's critical reading of the nature of the state. In doing so I challenge the assumptions and critically reflect on the implications of Max Weber's definition of the state as the centralized institution monopolizing violence.

⁴⁷ Max Weber, *Sociological Writings*, ed. Wolf Heydebrand (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1994).

⁴⁸ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 34.

⁴⁹ Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (London: Allen Lane, 1970), 4.

⁵⁰ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 34.

⁵¹ Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 5–6.

Dissertation Outline

This dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters, and a conclusion. In this Introduction, I have formulated the research inquiry, clarified my theoretical approach, and provided minimal working definitions for my three key terms of religion, violence and the state. I argued that these concepts are inherently contested and that political locations as well as cultural presuppositions invariably have a strong conditioning influence in determining where scholars locate themselves in the debate.

In Chapter One, I critically examine the burgeoning post-Cold War literature on religion and violence. I argue, that notwithstanding its continued salience, Rene Girard's theory has lost its leading role in the scholarly discussions concerning the relationship between religion and violence. I identify four key theoretical concerns – fundamentalism, clash of civilizations, religious nationalism and globalization – that have played a leading role in the post-Cold War discussions on religion and violence. I draw out the implications of these new theoretical insights in helping us understand how religion is implicated in contemporary conflicts. Chapter Two surveys the dominant theories of the state and argues that notwithstanding the fact that they have minimized the significance of religion, they nevertheless do have implicit implications for religious violence.

In Chapters Three, Four and Five, I bring activist voices from three different contexts into the contemporary academic debate on religion, violence and the state. Chapter Three features an Anglican priest, Father Michael Lapsley from South Africa. Chapter Four presents the Supreme Head of the Islamic Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mufti Mustafa Ceric. Chapter Five portrays the president of Arya Samaj, Swami Agnivesh from India.

The sequencing of these interviews follows chronologically and is also informed by my own subjectivity. I begin with the chapter on South Africa because it represents part of my own story. I am very much aware that I myself write from a position both marginalized (in my nonwhite South African and Muslim origins) and privileged (in my

current location at the heart of the Western academy and within the political hegemony of the United States). Nevertheless, I seek, with the much-appreciated assistance of Father Lapsley, Mufti Ceric, and Swami Agnivesh, to present this dissertation with the aim of moving us all one step closer to a globally polycentric theory of religion, violence and the state.

In 1994, at the moment of South Africa's first democratic elections and its celebration of freedom from the tyranny of apartheid, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina began in earnest. My second interview grapples with the role of religion and the state in the Bosnian war. Shortly after I began working on this dissertation in 2002 the Gujarat riots in India erupted. This contemporaneous episode in which all three dimensions of my research focus, namely religion, violence and state, were implicated, presented itself as a third context for investigation. After I provide a rich contextual portrait of the central religious activist of each chapter, I then place their responses to the three central questions of my dissertation in dialogue with the scholarly views presented in the first two chapters.

In the Conclusion, I summarize the points of divergence between the activist and academic perspectives on religion, violence and the state and their implications for sustainable peacebuilding in the post-Cold War era. I argue that this ongoing dialogue is vital in order to develop a more nuanced and polycentric (as opposed to Eurocentric) theory of religion, violence and the state. A Eurocentric and Weberian view privileges the state and treats state violence as *sui generis* compared to all other forms of violence. By contrast, a polycentric theory of religion, violence and the state will end this privileging and introduce a dialogical relationship in what I call a triad of elements.⁵² The dialogue between theory and praxis fostered in this dissertation is offered as a contribution to the development of such a polycentric theory.

⁵² The Egyptian scholar, Samir Amin, first proposed the concept of polycentricity as an alternative to Eurocentricism. See Samir Amin, *Eurocentricism*, trans. Russel Moore (London: Zed Books, 1989).

POST-COLD WAR¹ PERSPECTIVES ON RELIGION AND VIOLENCE

We need an adequate theory of violence, particularly concerning the relationship of violence and religion.²

The complex task of determining the relationship between religion and violence has intrigued and pre-occupied scholars for a long time. One hundred years before the renowned French literary scholar and cultural theorist, Rene Girard, published his seminal work *La Violence et le Sacre* in 1972,³ the Russian scholar, Mikhail Bakunin, (1814–1876) argued that there exists an indissoluble link between religion and sacrifice, and as such: “All religions are cruel, all founded on blood; for all rest principally on the idea of sacrifice.”⁴ In contradistinction to Bakunin, whose theoretical postulation was hardly known, Girard’s theory of sacrifice and mimetic desire has shaped much of the academic discussion on religion and violence in the humanities for the past three decades. It has been especially influential in the discipline of Religious Studies and has given rise to a Girardian school.⁵

¹ I am less interested here with the end of the Cold War as either a framing moment or explanatory device for understanding the waxing and waning of violence, but more in interrogating the kind of attention this phenomenon has generated for scholars speculating on the post-Cold War world.

² James G. Williams, review of *Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics, and Violence in Sri Lanka*, by Stanley J. Tambiah, *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (September 1993): 532.

³ Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977). It was originally published in French as *La Violence et le Sacre* (Paris: Grasset, 1972).

⁴ Mikhail Bakunin, “God and the State,” in *Selected Writings*, ed. A. Lehning (New York: Grove Press, 1974), 126.

⁵ In 1990 a group of scholars founded an academic forum, “The Colloquium on Violence and Religion.” The Forum has as its primary goal “the further development, critical appraisal, and application of Girard’s theory in regards to the relationship between violence and religion.” In addition to regular international meetings the group publishes a biannual bulletin, *Bulletin of the Colloquium on Religion and Violence*. The bulletin is supported by the University of Innsbruck and features a bibliography of literature on the mimetic theory. Since 1994, an annual journal, *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* has been published. For further information on the work of this group see <http://theol.uibk.ac.at/cover/general/> (accessed January 2004).

This is striking, given the fact Girard's hypothesis about the intrinsic relationship between religion and violence was not completely novel at the time of its publication. This question had also been addressed by theorists as diverse as Georges Butaille, Walter Burkert and Jonathan Z. Smith.⁶ Nevertheless, it seems expedient to begin this review of theories on religion and violence with that of Rene Girard, and to particularly address the question as to why his theory of sacrifice and mimesis is so significant.⁷

Mark Juergensmeyer has suggested that one of the reasons for the popularity of Girard's theory is because "he supplies a straight-forward answer" to the question of why violence is so central to religion.⁸ But just how straight-forward is Girard's response to the complex question of the intersection between religion and violence? In searching for an answer to the question, Girard argues that "violence and the sacred are inseparable," and that violence is at the root of everything, including religion, culture and society.⁹ In making his case he draws upon mythic and anthropological material from "primitive" peoples and identifies a central feature of human social relations that may potentially spawn violence. In particular, he has traced violence back to what he has called "mimetic desire." According to Girard, valued objects of social interest are not desired because they are intrinsically valuable but rather because they are objects of another person's desire. In this logic of desire, conflict is derived from an imitative impulse.

Girard did not limit his mimetic theory to interpersonal relations but also extended it to interactions between groups of people. He suggested that a mimetic pattern of social

⁶ For a useful comparative discussion of these theorists, see Robert Hamerton-Kelly, *Violent Origins: Walter Burkert, Rene Girard, and Jonathan Z. Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987). See also, Georges Butaille, *Theory of Religion*, trans. R. Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1989).

⁷ The best general introduction to Rene Girard's work is, Burton Mack, "Introduction: Religion and Ritual," in *Violent Origins*, Robert Hamerton-Kelly, 1–72. For the impact of his work see James G. Williams, ed. *The Girard Reader* (New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 1996).

⁸ Mark Juergensmeyer, ed. "Editor's Introduction: Is Symbolic Violence Related to Real Violence," *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence: Special Issue on Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* 3, no. 3 (1991) : 2.

⁹ Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 10.

relations emerges most sharply when two “primitive” tribes live in close proximity to each other and share common physical and cultural traits. Such groups, Girard argued, are inevitably spurred into fierce rivalry over the control of their common resources, including symbolic resources. The fact that the other group desires the material or symbolic resource provides it with an even greater value, and results in a “mimetic desire.” Mimetic desire can thus be understood as a complex process of selective imitation that accompanied each tribe’s effort to define itself against the other.¹⁰ In this logic, conflict and violence originates in competitive symbolic imitation. This is where Girard parts ways with the renowned psychologist, Sigmund Freud (1836–1939), and where his major contribution lies.

In contrast to the mimetic rivalry postulated by Girard, Freud had suggested that the origin of violence lies in what he describes as the oedipal complex: a libidinal aggressive sexual instinct.¹¹ Notwithstanding this key difference, both Freud and Girard are fascinated with religious myths and sacrificial rites, and they both argue that these are mechanisms through which violence is channeled and thus either banished or domesticated. Religion, in their theoretical perspective, is seen as functional. However, whereas for Freud religious ritual serves as a displacement of oedipal turmoil, for Girard it serves more positively as one of the primary instruments through which otherwise threatening conflicts can be contained and rendered socially productive.¹² But how does Girard suggest that this channeling occurs?

“Only violence can put an end to violence,” Girard has maintained. Consequently the perpetual cycle of conflict and violence that is generated by the innate human tendency of mimesis, can only be broken by a violence that stands on the outside. Such a channeling or transforming of “bad” violence into “good” violence, Girard suggests,

¹⁰ For a discussion of the implications of Girard’s theory for intergroup rivalry see Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 78–80.

¹¹ For a comparison of the theories of Freud and Girard see Juergensmeyer, ed. “Editor’s Introduction: Is Symbolic Violence Related to Real Violence,” 4.

¹² For a critique of this view of religion as functional, see Bruce Lincoln, “Conflict,” 55.

occurs when a society is able to identify a scapegoat, a sacrificial victim who can serve as a surrogate for the enemy. Girard writes that: “Any community that has fallen prey to violence hurls itself blindly into looking for a scapegoat.”¹³ Scapegoating is a means of asserting the identity of the individual or group over against its rival while at the same time domesticating the violence.

Girard identifies two paths along which this channeling of mimetic violence can take place. In the first form, violence is channeled towards the marginalized or internal other:

Violence too long held in check will overflow its bounds – and woe to those who happen to be nearby. Ritual precautions are intended both to prevent this flooding and to offer protection, insofar as it is possible, to those who find themselves in the path of ritual impurity – that is, caught in the floodtide of violence.¹⁴

In the second form, violence is externalized onto perpetual war with foreign enemies:

In sum, the groups agree never to be completely at peace, so that their members may find it easier to be at peace among themselves. We see here the principle behind all “foreign” wars: aggressive tendencies that are potentially fatal to the cohesion of the group are directed from within the community to outside it.¹⁵

In both cases, the internal violence is regulated by religion so that it is channeled through ritual substitution, namely that of a scapegoat, a sacrificial victim who serves as a surrogate for the real enemy. To summarize, in terms of Girard’s theory therefore the chief function of religion is to serve as a vehicle for displacing and domesticating violence. Religion is able to perform this role through its system of myths and symbolic sacrifice.

¹³ Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 79. For a more detailed exposition of his work on “generative scapegoating,” see Rene Girard, *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986). It was originally published as *La Bouc Emissaire* (Paris: Grasset, 1985).

¹⁴ Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 26.

¹⁵ Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 57.

Girard's theory on the intrinsic relationship between religion and violence has raised considerable controversy. Some scholars, such as Mark I. Wallace, Theophus H. Smith, James G. Williams, Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly, Mark R. Anspach and Gil Bailie, have found great merit in Girard's theory.¹⁶ These scholars embrace Girard's insights and continue to develop and apply them to contemporary cases in which religion is implicated in violence.¹⁷ Bailie has been particularly expansive in proclaiming that:

I have found the interpretive range of Girard's theory to be astonishing. Whether I have tried to understand a piece of literature, an ancient myth, a historical event, or the morning newspaper, I have found Girard's insights invaluable In my view, Girard has made the most significant intellectual breakthrough of our times.¹⁸

Other scholars, such as Ninian Smart, Bruce Lawrence, David Chidester and Mark Juergensmeyer have however expressed reservations about Girard's theory. Smart has pointed out that the weakness of Girard's theory lies in the limited religious traditions on which he draws as well as the high degree of selectivity in the material he chooses to consider.¹⁹ Lawrence has made a similar criticism. In his view, Girard's theory is too narrowly based on an analysis of classical literary images. He argues that Girard's theory is "not so much wrong in its own terms as irrelevant to the modern social situation."²⁰ In this sense his critique is particularly relevant to the focus of this dissertation.

In explicating the relationship of Islam to violence in the Indonesian context, Lawrence draws on insights from the historical sociologist, Charles Tilly, and the British sociologist, Anthony Giddens, to argue that contemporary violence in which

¹⁶ All of these scholars are active in the "The Colloquium on Violence and Religion."

¹⁷ The June 18, 2002, News and Discussion Board of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion carried a collection of critical commentaries and articles on "Terrorism, Mimetic Rivalry and War," compiled by Dietmar Regensburger. For details see http://theol.uibk.ac.at/cover/war_against_terrorism.html (accessed February 2004).

¹⁸ Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), 4.

¹⁹ Ninian Smart, "Rene Girard: Violence and the Sacred," 173–177.

²⁰ Bruce Lawrence, "The Islamic Idiom of Violence: A View from Indonesia," in *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence: Special Issue on Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* 3, no.3 (1991) : 82.

religion is implicated is closely related to the implicit violence associated with the modern nation-state. According to Lawrence, both Tilly and Giddens have “underscored the inescapable context for all analyses of collective violence: ‘the mapping of the world into exclusive national states.’” Lawrence contends that it is here that the major weakness of Girard’s theory lies. Because it posits a unilinear and functional relationship between religion and violence, it obscures the socio-historical contexts within which the relationship occurs.

Adopting an alternative critique to that of Lawrence, Chidester has proposed that Girard’s theory does indeed have relevance to contemporary conflicts and the modern nation-state.²¹ According to Chidester, Girard’s relevance lies in the important position he affords the judicial system as an additional channel to that of the sacrificial system for breaking the cycle of mimetic violence in society. In Girard’s theory, a judicial system, by holding a legitimate monopoly on the means of violence in society, functions as a means of interrupting any cycle of revenge. In order to play this role, however, the judicial system must, in the same way as that of the sacrificial system, be invested with a convincing symbolism of divine sanction, legitimacy and authority. In this regard, Girard has proposed that “the judicial system appeals to a theology as a guarantee of justice.”²² The transcendent authority and aura of legitimacy of the judicial system permits it alone to claim sovereignty over life and death through its decisions on capital punishment. Based on this hermeneutical reading of the influential theory of Girard, Chidester has reached the following conclusion about its contemporary relevance:

²¹ Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, 33–42.

²² Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 23.

Only the state, through its judicial system, has that transcendent, pure power to kill persons, innocent or otherwise. The work of Rene Girard has suggested that the power and purity of state violence is essentially religious. The state's monopoly of violence is asserted as "that transcendent effectiveness of violence that is holy, legal, and legitimate." Any exercise of violence outside of the control of the state is "a violence that is unjust, illegal, and illegitimate."²³

Chidester has used Girard's theory to demonstrate how it serves to buttress the direct and structural violence spawned by the apartheid state in South Africa and delegitimated the struggle of the oppressed black majority. On the basis of Chidester's deconstruction of Girard's theory one may conclude that it has a strong state-centric bias, privileging the violence of the state as just, legal and legitimate. With such a definitive pro-state predisposition it is not difficult to fathom why Girard's theory became so popular. It fits in well with the post-Enlightenment worldview that privileges the state and posits essentialist or functionalist conceptions of religion. In the former, religion is disentangled from any social, political or historical context, and in case of the latter, it serves as a source of social integration and stability.²⁴ Notwithstanding Chidester's correct assessment of the relevance of Girard's theory on religion and violence to the question of the state, it does appear, however, that in the post-Cold War period, Girard has lost his earlier appeal.²⁵ Such a view is usefully illustrated in the work of Mark Juergensmeyer.

Building on the seminal theory of Girard, Juergensmeyer has offered the theoretical construct of "cosmic war" as a metaphor for understanding contemporary conflicts

²³ Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, 36–7.

²⁴ Bruce Lincoln has dubbed such dominant theories of religion as *Ding an sich*. See Bruce Lincoln, *Religion, Rebellion, Revolution: An Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Collection of Essays* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 266.

²⁵ Rosalind Hackett has made a counter argument. She suggests that "Girard's scapegoat thesis (1986 [1982]) has enjoyed wider applicability," in pre-and post September 11 publications." In support of her view she cites the work of Chidester 1991; Appleby 2000; and Juergensmeyer. All three of these scholars refer to the theory of Girard, but go well beyond his initial insights. For Hackett's position see Rosalind Hackett, "Carping or *Cape Diem*? The Response of Scholars to Global (Religious) Violence," annual lecture of the British Association for the Study of Religion, occasional paper, no. 26, (2003) : 1–28. Appleby, on the other hand, has argued that, "What Girard calls primitive or archaic religion is not the last word violence and the sacred." *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 79.

in which religion is implicated. By “cosmic war,” he means the enduring struggle between good and evil in which the religious activist employs symbols, myths, and rituals to declare the dominance of order over chaos in the universe. Juergensmeyer’s unique contribution lies in his analysis of the psychological mindset of the religious actors who “employ religious images of the divine struggle and place them at the service of worldly politics.”²⁶ Although Juergensmeyer agrees in many aspects with Girard, he questions both the conception of mimetic desire and the notion of sacrifice as fundamental to the religious imagination. According to Juergensmeyer “images of religious warfare are prior to both sacrifice and martyrdom in the mechanism of symbolically displacing violence, and ... the motivation behind the creation of these images of spiritual war is a basic longing for order.”²⁷ Juergensmeyer has been in the forefront of developing new theoretical perspectives, which go beyond that of Girard, to help in understanding the proliferating violence that has attended the post-Cold War era. In the following section I consider these alternative theoretical perspectives that seek to illuminate the dramatic increase in violence in the post-Cold War era. How do these emerging theories depart from the earlier more philosophical and ritual understandings of the nature of religious violence scholars such as Rene Girard? What new insights do they provide in helping us comprehend how religion is implicated in contemporary conflicts? And how do they account for the role of the state?

Locating Religion in Post-Cold War Conflicts

In many of the violent conflicts of the early 1990s – Afghanistan, Algeria, Bosnia, Chechnya, Cyprus, Kashmir, Kosovo, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Tibet, Turkey – religious symbols were employed to articulate a variety of ethnic and/or sociopolitical concerns and invariably religion became profoundly implicated

²⁶ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 145–163.

²⁷ Juergensmeyer, *Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World*, 106.

in the legitimation of violence.²⁸ In attempting to come to terms with the post-Cold War reality of the waxing and waning of localized conflicts,²⁹ and more especially in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, a number of new studies on the intersections between religion and violence have emerged.³⁰ These studies have come from a variety of disciplines, employ diverse methodological approaches and raise a number of new theoretical issues.³¹ Juergensmeyer has depicted the burgeoning interdisciplinary field of studies on religion and violence in the following manner:

Historians and political scientists have chronicled specific instances of religious conflict. Theologians and scholars of comparative religions have looked at the attempts to justify violence from a religious point of view. Psychologists and anthropologists have probed the nature of religion to see if there are aspects of it that are structurally conducive to violent acts. Ultimately, however, the issue of religious violence transcends any one disciplinary approach and requires a variety of methodological sensibilities.³²

The rest of this chapter critically examines the theoretical insights of this new group of scholars who have written about religion and violence in the past two and a half

²⁸ Scheffler, *Religion between Violence and Reconciliation*, 11. See also, Nancy Nielson, "Religion and the Global Media: Improving a Strained Relationship," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 20, no.1 (Winter/Spring 1996). According to Nancy Nielson, a large number of the forty-two armed conflicts that took place around the world in 1994 revolved around identity issues of ethnicity and religion.

²⁹ Quantitative studies of violence have indicated a definite shift in the locus of conflict since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989–1991 and the onset of the post-Cold War era. Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg of the University of Uppsala and the Stockholm Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) have produced statistical evidence, which indicates an upsurge in armed conflicts in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. In many of these new conflicts, the root cause was a clash between the state and ethnic groups living within its jurisdiction that felt aggrieved that their interests were not fairly represented. Sollenberg and Wallensteen, "Armed Conflict, 1989–1999," *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no.5, (2000) : 635–49. Ted Robert Gurr, director of the Minorities at Risk Project based at the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management, in his book, *People versus States* argues that "by the mid 1990s armed conflicts within states had abated," as states adopt policies of "pluralism" and "accommodation." This declining global trend may not represent the decrease in ethnoreligious violence but rather its invisibility, within changing, perhaps "globalizing" structures of states. Ted Robert Gurr, *Peoples versus States: Minorities at Risk in the New Century* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2000).

³⁰ See Charles K. Bellinger, *The Hedgehog Review* 6/1 (2004) : 111–119; and October 2003 issue of *Spotlight on Teaching* vol. 18, no. 4.

³¹ For a general idea of the proliferation of works on religion and violence see Christopher Candland, *The Spirit of Violence – An Interdisciplinary Bibliography of Religion and Violence* (New York: Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, 1992).

³² Candland, *The Spirit of Violence*, i.

decades, and to review their implications for sustainable peace in the post-Cold War era. I will highlight four key theoretical concerns that emerge in this growing body of literature. I begin my review with a simple binary formulation: *Is religion an independent or dependant variable in violent conflicts?*

Violence is never far from popular understandings of religion. Even conventional academic perspectives regard religion as having a predilection for violence. According to this view, religion has been and continues to be a major source of violence.³³ In direct opposition to this perspective, apologists for religion categorically deny that religion has anything to do with violence. In their view, all violence in which religion is implicated is a debasement and vile distortion of the noble, true and peaceful teachings of religion.³⁴ As with all received understandings, there are elements of truth in both of these assertions. The first one largely understates the contemporary socio-political and economic conditions under which religion is implicated in violence, and the second one ignores the fact that most religions are not pacifist traditions and allow for and legitimate the use of violence under certain conditions, the definitions of which may differ from one religious person to the other. It is here that a large measure of the problem lies. Under what conditions does religion condone the use of violence?

Many religious traditions agonize about the question of what might constitute a “just war” and the question of religious legitimation of violence becomes particularly acute in situations of deadly conflict. Two central points emerge from this that we need to bear in mind if we are to correctly appreciate the relationship between religion and violence. First, many sacred texts provide opportunities for justifying violence and thus the religious traditions they inform contain the seeds for violence. The second

³³ For an encyclopedic work explicating this idea within the Abrahamic religions see J. Harold Ellens, ed. *The Destructive Power of Religions: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vols. 1–5 (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2004). For a similar perspective on Hinduism and Buddhism see “Religion and Violence: An Inter-Religious Exploration,” *The Ecumenical Review* vol. 55, no. 2 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2003).

³⁴ For an example of this position see Asghar Ali Engineer, *Communal Riots After Independence: A Comprehensive Account* (New Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2003).

critical point is that the religious legitimization of violence does not occur in a socio-historical vacuum. Bruce Lincoln provides cogent support for such a view when he contends that most of the post-Cold War conflicts in which religious issues have played a role have occurred “in contexts where structural problems inherent to the nation-state have become manifest: specifically the potential contradiction between nation and state.”³⁵ In such situations, religious actors attempt to reconcile the gritty nature of their struggles with the precepts of their religious beliefs. This is a difficult task which according to Lincoln entails “highly selective readings of texts and tradition, along with the most ingeniously strained hermeneutics.”³⁶

The Carnegie Commission’s report on the prevention of deadly conflict produced a similar finding. The report argues that: “religious diversity does not spawn violence independently of predisposing social, economic and political conditions as well as the subjective roles of belligerent leaders.”³⁷ An increasing number of contemporary scholars have reached a similar conclusion. The former vice-chairman of the National Intelligence Council at the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Graham Fuller, writing in *Foreign Affairs*, powerfully illustrates this point when he asserts that: “If a society and its politics are violent and unhappy, its mode of religious expression is likely to be just the same.”³⁸

³⁵ Lincoln, “Conflict,” 57–8.

³⁶ Lincoln, “Conflict,” 66.

³⁷ Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997), 29.

³⁸ Graham E. Fuller, “The Future of Political Islam,” in *Foreign Affairs* March/April 2002, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), 60.

Key Theoretical Concerns in Post-Cold War Literature on Religion and Violence

1. Religious Fundamentalism³⁹

The genesis of the term “fundamentalism” lies in a 1920 edition of the North American Baptist periodical, *The Watchman Observer*.⁴⁰ Its editor, Curtis Lee Laws, described himself and a group of conservative evangelical Protestants as militants, willing to do “battle royal” to preserve the “fundamentals” of the Christian faith from the evolutionists and biblical critics infecting mainline seminaries and colleges.⁴¹ It is ironic, given the US Baptist origins of the term, that it became ubiquitous in the global print and electronic media only after the Iranian revolution in 1979, and is often employed to demonize revivalist movements within Islam.⁴² Bruce Lincoln recalls an interesting discussion with Nikki Keddie, one of the world’s foremost authorities on the politics and religion of Iran, shortly after the Shah’s downfall in 1979.⁴³ “The Iranian revolution is weird,” she observed. He agreed. In retrospect, however, Lincoln concluded that it was the inadequacy of prevailing theories in the academy that made the Iranian model of religion and revolution appear bizarre.⁴⁴

³⁹ The literature on fundamentalism is vast and uneven. Perhaps no other theoretical concept in the humanities has elicited as much debate and controversy. A useful introduction and select bibliography can be found at <http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/fund.html> (accessed August 2004).

⁴⁰ David Chidester traces the genesis of the term fundamentalism to 1909, with the publication of twelve pamphlets, financed by two executives of Union Oil, Lyman and Milton Stewart, entitled *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Truth, Patterns of Power: Religion and Politics in American Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988), 273. See David Chidester, *Patterns of Power: Religion & Politics in American Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988), 260.

⁴¹ For the conventional view on the origins of the term fundamentalism see George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); and Nancy T. Ammerman, “North American Protestant Fundamentalism,” in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1–65.

⁴² Appleby claims that “By any reckoning, Islam produces more contemporary fundamentalist movements than any other great religious tradition.” Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 104. For a critique of the application of the term to Islam see Riffat Hassan, “The Burgeoning of Islamic Fundamentalism: Towards an Understanding of the Phenomenon,” in *Fundamentalist Phenomenon: A View from Within, A Response from Without*, ed. Norman J. Cohen (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 151–171.

⁴³ Nikki Keddie is professor of Middle Eastern and Iranian history at the University of California (UCLA). She has written extensively on the Iranian Revolution. Her most recent contribution is, Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven: Princeton University Press, 2003). For a full curriculum vitae see <http://www.history.ucla.edu/keddie/> (accessed August 2005).

⁴⁴ Lincoln, *Religion, Rebellion and Revolution*, 5.

Rather than viewing the Iranian revolution as a momentous event that challenged prevailing understandings of the nature of religion, scholarly efforts fell back onto the familiar. Western academics proceeded in earnest to explicate the revolution in terms of the theoretical lens of fundamentalism. In order to do so, the Protestant pedigree of the phenomenon needed to be transcended and superceded by a comparative definition of the term fundamentalism. It was a challenge that Western scholars did not undertake reflexively. Appleby has exposed the inherent difficulties of employing the term as a comparative religious and socio-historical analytical category.⁴⁵ He points out that by applying the term fundamentalism to Muslim and Jewish activists, and I would add all other religious traditions and spiritualities, it may induce even the most careful scholars “to engage in a form of cultural imperialism, that is interpreting indigenous movements through the distorting lens of European sensibilities.” He furthermore argues that the term invariably refers to a minority and is misleading since it implies that their co-religionists are not upholding the fundamentals of their faith. This is most poignantly depicted in the Arabic equivalent of the term fundamentalism, *usuli*, which has an overwhelmingly positive connotation.⁴⁶ Raising a similar concern, the political scientist, Roxanne L. Euben, warned that: “In the context of a history of Western colonialism and imperialistic, the application of specifically Western and Christian term to the Islamic world is rightly suspect.”⁴⁷ Notwithstanding their protestations, both scholars adopted the word as a term of opprobrium.

In the period after the Iranian Revolution, three seminal studies appeared: the edited volume of Lionel Caplan (1987),⁴⁸ the book of Bruce Lawrence (1989),⁴⁹ and

⁴⁵ R. Scott Appleby, ed. *Spokesmen for the Despised*, 1–5.

⁴⁶ The closest Arabic term to that of fundamentalism is *usul*. It has the positive connotation of being anchored or rooted in the tradition by adhering to its fundamentals.

⁴⁷ Roxanne Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism: A Work of Comparative Political Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

⁴⁸ Lionel Kaplan, ed. *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987).

⁴⁹ Bruce Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989).

the encyclopedic work of Martin Marty and Scott Appleby (1991–1995).⁵⁰ All three had one thing in common: the theoretical refinement of the term fundamentalism as a comparative category. The latter two scholars in particular, spearheaded an extensive comparative study, the *Fundamentalism Project*, sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) in the early 1990s. After studying more than seventy-five religious movements within five religious traditions and across five continents, they reached a similar conclusion to that of Lawrence, namely that the *sine qua non* of fundamentalism is that it is a reaction or protest against what it perceives to be threatening aspects of secular modernity.⁵¹

To understand religious fundamentalism as simply “reactive” is however problematic for a number of reasons. First, if indeed religious fundamentalism is essentially a reaction to modernity, and modernity is a characteristic primarily of (and from) the West, then such movements should perhaps emerge more “naturally” and more widely in the West. Yet, the bulk of the empirical studies on fundamentalism deal with them as a Third World phenomenon. Hence, one may conclude that for these scholars, religious fundamentalism, insofar as it exists in the West, becomes peripheral to Western modernity, and essential (in a pejorative sense) to the East.

Second, despite this focus on the Third World, the intellectual progenitors of fundamentalism pay scant theoretical attention to “postcoloniality.” For if religious fundamentalisms are to be understood as “anti-modernist,” then the articulation of modernity with postcoloniality is critical for understanding both the genesis and appeal of such movements in the Third World.⁵²

⁵⁰ Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies, and Militance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

⁵¹ Marty and Appleby, *Fundamentalisms Observed*, 814–842. See also Lawrence, *Defenders of God*, 101.

⁵² For an elaboration of this line of argument see Shampa Biswas, “(De) Secularizing the Nation: Global Modernity and the Politics of Hindu Nationalism,” PhD Dissertation (Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1999).

To his credit, Bruce Lawrence attempted such an analysis. According to him, fundamentalism is essentially a modern twentieth-century phenomenon. It is unique in the sense that it has “no ideological precursors.” It represents a “delayed reaction to the psychological hegemony of European colonial rule.” In order to provide an empirical basis for his argument, Lawrence claims: “fundamentalism could only occur in majoritarian Muslim countries and only after they had become independent nation-states, that is, in most instances, after World War II.”⁵³ Lawrence’s chronological evidence is debatable, more especially if we consider that both of the premier movements characterized as “fundamentalist,” the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Jamaat-i-Islami in India and Pakistan, were established during the end of the colonial era and well before World War II.⁵⁴

Far more problematic, however, is the manner in which the term fundamentalism has come to be associated with violence and religious terrorism. The Dutch scholar, Gerrie Ter Haar, argues that equating fundamentalism with religious violence is not only prevalent in the media but also in academic accounts, and that after September 11, 2001, it has become synonymous with religious terrorism.⁵⁵ This conflation between fundamentalism, violence and terrorism is usefully depicted in the typology of post-Cold War religious violence offered by Appleby: “fundamentalism,” “ethnoreligious nationalism,” and “liberationism.”⁵⁶ While religion is implicated in all three of these patterns of violence, his contention is that it is in the fundamentalist pattern that religion does not have an instrumental role as an accomplice but rather has a preeminent role

⁵³ Bruce Lawrence, *Defenders of God*, 101.

⁵⁴ Both of these organizations feature prominently in the list of ten clusters of movements designated as fundamentalist in the AAAS Fundamentalism Project. Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 102. The Muslim Brotherhood was formed in Egypt in 1922. See Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, reprint edition, 1993). The Jamaat-i-Islami was founded in India in 1941. See Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama`at-I Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁵⁵ Gerrie Ter Haar and James J. Busittil, eds. *Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Visions of Peace* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 3.

⁵⁶ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 57–120.

in fomenting violence. In Appleby's typology, not all fundamentalists are violent, but their various degrees of intolerance towards others render them violence-prone. Moreover, when they do resort to violence, they view it as a sacred duty and justify this by claiming that we are not living in normal times, and that a state of emergency requires exceptional measures.⁵⁷

In the post-September 11 world, the hegemonic paradigm of interpreting religious violence and terrorism through the theoretical lens of fundamentalism has once again come under attack. Not surprisingly, the most formidable challenges to the assumptions undergirding the dominant fundamentalist paradigm have come from outside the discipline of religious studies. The Pakistani-born British political commentator, Tariq Ali, in his *Clash of Fundamentalisms*, has launched one of the first scholarly assaults on the prevailing theory of fundamentalism.⁵⁸ He engages in a twin critique of "American imperialism" (with its assumptions of cultural superiority) and what he describes as "backward looking Islamic sectarianism." He argues that both Osama bin Laden as well as George W. Bush are employing religious symbols and that their wars against each other could be characterized as a "clash of fundamentalisms." But Ali goes further. He does not denounce both in equal measure but describes US imperialism as "the mother of all fundamentalisms." He furthermore contends that the visible violence of September 11 was the response to the invisible violence that has been inflicted on countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Palestine and Chechnya. "Some of this," he claims, "has been the direct responsibility of the United States and Russia." The value of Ali's radical analysis lies in the fact that it brings into sharp focus the role of the state in the production of violence in the pre- and post-September 11 world. Such a perspective is conspicuous by its absence in the prevailing literature on fundamentalism.

⁵⁷ A similar interpretation of Appleby's view of the relationship between fundamentalism and violence can be found in Ter Haar and Busittil, eds. *Bridge or Barrier*, 4. See also R. Scott Appleby, "Religions, Human Rights and Social Change," in *Freedom to do God's Will*, eds. Gerrie Ter Haar and James J. Busittil (London: Routledge, 2003), 179–229.

⁵⁸ Tariq Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Jihads, Crusades and Modernity* (London: Verso, 2003).

The African political scientist, Mahmood Mamdani, has reached a similar conclusion to that of Tariq Ali. He argues that the terrorism of September 11 was less the consequence of a stubborn, anti-modern and dogmatic religious ideology than the result of America's Cold War strategies. Mamdani, however, reaches his conclusion by advancing a different critique to that of Tariq Ali. He questions the use of the term fundamentalism to describe political movements that employ religious rhetoric. He does not find such discourse about fundamentalism as helpful, and views it as a significant part of what he calls "culture talk." Mamdani argues his case in the following manner:

Culture Talk assumes that every culture has a tangible essence that defines it and then explains politics as a consequence of that essence. Culture Talk after 9/11, for example, qualified and explained the practice of "terrorism" as "Islamic." "Islamic terrorism" is thus offered as both description and explanation of the events of 9/11.⁵⁹

He calls for the abandonment of such "culture talk" or fundamentalist discourses, since it not only obscures the relational dimension of the two protagonists to the conflict, but also obfuscates the role of the state as well as the market (capitalism) in the production of violence. As an alternative, Mamdani puts forward a political analysis of contemporary violence in which religion is implicated. The result of his intellectual labor is provocative: he traces the roots of contemporary violence and terror to superpower politics and thus to the legacy of the Cold War.

In summary, I contend that the category of fundamentalism over-simplifies, hinders and blurs our perception of the contemporary context within which religion is implicated in violence. Scholars should rise to the challenge posed by contemporary religious revivalist movements and the critical role that religion assumes in the public arena and try to understand these developments within their own internal paradigms. In order to do this, Western scholars for example, need to critically analyze contemporary

⁵⁹ Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 17–18.

Islamic movements from the standpoint of the world of Islam and the global historical and political context. The French scholar of religion, Gilles Kepel, proposes as I do that: “To correctly interpret what [contemporary religious] movements are saying, we have to hear [them] in the context of their social praxis in a process of mutual illumination.”⁶⁰ Such an exercise will, according to Kepel, have the advantage of overturning the mental laziness and illusion of familiarity which previously prevailed, and replacing them with new meaning.

2. The Clash of Civilizations

The notion of a clash of civilizations has superceded the stale discourse on fundamentalism as *the* central theoretical perspective in the post-Cold War literature on religion and violence.⁶¹ Writing in support of such a view, Mamdani contends that the clash of civilizations thesis is in fact a more significant form of “culture talk.” He furthermore suggests that there are in fact two versions of this theory.⁶²

The first, and less widely known, is that proffered by Bernard Lewis, professor of history at Princeton University. He was the first to use the celebrated expression “clash of civilizations” in a 1990 article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, “The Roots of Rage.”⁶³ Lewis’s original formulation of the clash of civilizations thesis was far more limited in its scope and more nuanced than the expansive notion which developed later. Mamdani argues that it is Lewis’s version of an internal clash between so-called Muslim fundamentalists and moderates that is currently embraced by the Bush administration in its war on terrorism. It was also the inspiration for the title of Mamdani’s book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*. Lewis’s formulation however went largely unnoticed until it

⁶⁰ Gilles Kepel, *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, trans. Alan Braley (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 3–12.

⁶¹ There is an extensive literature debating the “clash of civilizations” thesis. One of the best critical sources on the topic is Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells, eds. *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

⁶² Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 20–27.

⁶³ Bernard Lewis, “The Roots of Rage,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 266, no.3 (September 1990): 47–60.

was picked up by the Harvard international relations expert, Samuel P. Huntington.⁶⁴ The reason why the idea of a clash of civilizations became popular with Huntington is simply because it found a more receptive context and audience in the post-Cold War period.

“Religions,” Huntington argued in an article first published in *Foreign Affairs* in the summer of 1993, “even more than ethnicity is at the root of the fault lines, clashes and even the future wars between the civilizations of the modern world.”⁶⁵ He furthermore argued that a belief in universal human rights and a sharply restricted public role for religion has “little resonance” in nonwestern cultures. In particular, he predicted an almost inevitable “clash of civilizations” between the “West and Islam or Confucianism,” with potentially adverse implications for the so-called West. Simply put, Huntington forecasted that religion and in particular Islam would be the chief source of deadly conflict and violence in the post-Cold War era.

Huntington’s views elicited vitriolic counter responses from many quarters, both within and outside the academy.⁶⁶ Notwithstanding the widespread criticism which Huntington’s views have elicited, his thesis continues to be influential in the literature on religion and violence. The September 11 attacks and the subsequent US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have led to a new wave of enthusiasm for Huntington’s claim that there is a clash of civilizations between Islam and the West.⁶⁷ The clash of civilizations thesis has, however, not only influenced those scholars and policy makers who were

⁶⁴ Mamdani argues that Lewis’s original formulation of the “clash of civilizations” thesis was far more limited in its scope and more nuanced than the expansive notion developed by Huntington. He believes that it is Lewis’s version of an internal clash that is embraced by the Bush administration in its war on terrorism. It was also the inspiration for the title of Mamdani’s book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 22.

⁶⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” *Foreign Affairs* 72, 3 (1993) : 22–25. Huntington subsequently went on to develop this thesis further in, Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the Modern World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

⁶⁶ Among the most incisive responses are, Roy P. Mottahedeh, “The Clash of Civilizations: an Islamicist’s Critique,” *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 2.2, (1996) : 1–26, and Edward W. Said, “The Clash of Definitions: On Samuel Huntington,” in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), 569–90.

⁶⁷ Ter Haar and Busittil eds., *Bridge or Barrier*, 4.

already predisposed to such a view, but it has been raised by several journalists and scholars, writing at different levels of theoretical sophistication and from opposing political positions. Moreover, it has stealthily worked its way into the perspectives of thoughtful scholars of religion and violence in subtle ways. One such scholar is David Little. In a seminal essay published in *Managing Global Chaos* (1996), Little provides the following argument in support of Huntington's thesis:

... one can point to governments in countries like Iran and Sudan and to Islamic movements throughout the Middle East and elsewhere, which readily resorts to the language of culture confrontation. In many of these places a spirit of 'fundamentalism,' prevails, and it often includes support for violence against manifestations of sacrilege and oppression seen to be imposed upon Muslim people by the West and its sympathizers.⁶⁸

Little embraces Huntington's usage of the categories "civilization" and "culture" with more caution than Huntington but concurs with him that religious militancy has replaced the ideological zeal of the Cold War.

Yet another scholar of religion and violence whose views resonate with that of Huntington's clash of civilizations thesis, albeit with considerable more nuance, is Mark Juergensmeyer. In fact, the title of his book, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, is in itself revealing. It clearly implies that religion has replaced ideological zeal as the major source of deadly conflict in the post-Cold War period. In fact, in the preface to the paperback edition (1994), Juergensmeyer acknowledges that his argument, which sees "religious nationalism as a significant and potentially destructive force in world politics," is similar to that of Huntington.⁶⁹ Juergensmeyer envisions the possibility of a new Cold War, which like the old Cold War would be "global in its scope, binary in its opposition, occasionally violent, and essentially a difference of ideologies." This opposition is between what he describes

⁶⁸ Little, "Religious Militancy," 79.

⁶⁹ Juergensmeyer, *New Cold War*, xiv.

as “religion in its various forms and the European and American model of secular nationalism.” In a telling phrase that discloses Juergensmeyer’s bias, he contends that it is “the West (now aligned with the secular leaders of the Soviet Union) (that) confronts (this) opposition.” By the end of his book, the nature of this opposition that “the West” confronts is clear:

[O]ne can foresee the emergence of a united religious bloc stretching from Central and South Asia through the Middle East to Africa. With the arsenal of nuclear weapons at its disposal and fueled by American fear of Islam, it might well replace the old Soviet Union as a united global enemy of the secular West.⁷⁰

Like Huntington, Juergensmeyer privileges the West, but unlike Huntington’s more definitive prediction and call for security preparedness in the face of such a threat to the West, Juergensmeyer leaves the question open and calls for increased empathy and understanding to forestall the possibility of a new Cold War along religious lines. Despite these obvious differences, there is a disconcerting tendency among contemporary scholarship on religion and violence that finds in the rise of religious militancy a new source of global, binary conflict that will cohere around the threat of Islam. The positive reception that the clash of civilizations has received has contributed to the theoretical bias that focuses almost exclusively on violence perpetrated by faith based non-state actors, even though many authors of such works recognize that in quantitative terms most violence in the world, including religious violence, occurs at the behest of, or in active complicity with the state. I suggest that this unfortunate gap between reality in the world and the academic description of it comes in part because of the historical trajectory of political theory in the West which privileges the state.

⁷⁰ Juergensmeyer, *New Cold War*, 201.

3. Religious Nationalism

The theoretical notion of religious nationalism gained international currency with the work of two scholars, Mark Juergensmeyer and Peter van der Veer. In 1993 Juergensmeyer published *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, and in 1994 van der Veer published *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*.⁷¹ Both scholars employed religious nationalism as an alternative to the ubiquitous term fundamentalism but offered different definitions and reasons for their preference.

Religious nationalists, according to Juergensmeyer, are those religious activists who “fuse their religious perspective with a broad prescription for their nation’s political and social destiny.”⁷² Religious nationalism in his perspective is a fusion between religious and political ideologies. Juergensmeyer does acknowledge that there may be religious activists who may not have any overt socio-political agenda and may be fixed exclusively on religious matters. According to him, these may rightly be called fundamentalists, but they are largely marginal.

Peter van der Veer on the other hand is not merely concerned with the overtly political nature of religious nationalism but defines it as a fundamentally modernist movement. In this sense, he is challenging the portrayal of these movements as “antimodernist.” He believes that such a characterization obscures the profound manner in which indigenous religious discourses articulates with and are transformed by colonizing discourses from the West. For van der Veer therefore, religious identities are not “primordial attachments” inculcated by tradition as their protagonists would want us to believe but products of changing identities shaped by historical circumstances. In this respect they are imagined religious communities, akin to Benedict Anderson’s conceptualization of “the nation as an imagined community.”⁷³

⁷¹ Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁷² Juergensmeyer, *New Cold War*, 6–8.

⁷³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

At around the same time that Juergensmeyer and van der Veer published their books, a collaborative research project intended to further refine the theoretical perspective of religious nationalism was launched. By the early 1990s, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) had identified the nationalist context as the most appropriate context within which to analyze the growing number of conflicts within which religion was implicated. It consequently set up a research group under the leadership of David Little to explore the theoretical question of religious nationalism as a source of intolerance and violence.⁷⁴ After examining the nature of the proliferating post-Cold War conflicts in which religion was implicated, Little wrote the following:

Religious nationalism is a fact of contemporary international life. Whether the issue is building, restructuring or maintaining a nation, the process is, all over the world, deeply infused with religion. How else are we to understand Northern Ireland, Israel, Lebanon, the Sudan, Sri Lanka, or Iran? Or, more immediately, how else are we to understand former Eastern European satellites like Poland or Bulgaria, or the so-called “Soviet Nationalities,” such as the Ukraine, Lithuania, or Azerbaijan and Armenia? Nor, for that matter, are the developed countries altogether exempt from the effects of religious nationalism. The influence of the Moral Majority and related movements on American public life during the 1980s left no doubt about that.⁷⁵

On the basis of its research findings, the USIP working group concluded that religious nationalism was a potent form of what it described as an “illiberal form” of nationalism – under which the requirements of non-discrimination are systematically disregarded – and that it contributed directly to “antagonism, hostility, and instability, especially in multiethnic, multireligious societies.”⁷⁶ It provided the policies of the Chinese

⁷⁴ This was the way David Little described the genesis of the USIP research group at an interreligious conference I attended in Macedonia, 10–14 May, 2002. For further information on the United States Institute of Peace Project in Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance see <http://www.usip.org/religionpeace/previous.html#rni> (accessed August 2005).

⁷⁵ David Little, “Religious Nationalism and Human Rights,” in *Peacemaking: Moral and Policy Challenges for a New World*, eds. Gerard F. Powers, Drew Christiansen, SJ, and Robert Hennemeyer (Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1994), 84–95.

⁷⁶ This USIP research group resulted in three publications: *Ukraine: The Legacy of Intolerance* (Washington DC: USIP Press, 1991); *Sri Lanka: The Invention of Enmity* (Washington DC: USIP Press, 1994); *Sino-Tibetan Co-existence: Creating Space for Tibetan Self-Direction* (Washington DC: USIP Conference Report, 1994).

government toward Tibetans, or the treatment by the Sudanese government of citizens not in sympathy with its objectives, and the Sri Lankan policies favoring the Sinhala majority over the Tamil minority, as manifest examples of such illiberal forms of nationalism.⁷⁷

Based on an analysis of its research it is evident that the USIPs theoretical conception of religious nationalism was founded on a number of common assumptions that are fundamental to the hegemonic post-Enlightenment paradigms that pervade the Western academy. These assumptions are currently being hotly contested. Chief among these is the normative justification of liberal nationalism as a fundamental good which is more likely to obtain tolerance and peace than nationalisms based on ethno-religious sentiments. But does the historical record and empirical evidence bear out these assumptions? Has the human experiment with liberal nationalism brought about a reduction in violence? And, more importantly, is an inclusive nationalism that does not differentiate between insiders and outsiders possible at all?

A number of scholars have answered in the negative and have questioned the efficacy of the assumptions undergirding the theory of liberal nationalism. One such scholar is Mahmood Mamdani. He has argued that the political sensibility undergirding modernity, of which liberal nationalism is a key component, “is not horrified by pervasive violence,” as is evidenced by the two world wars and the horrendous century of violence we have just witnessed. On the contrary, liberal nationalism distinguishes between two kinds of violence. Violence which is regarded as essential to human “progress” is endorsed and that which is designated as senseless violence is proscribed. In terms of this paradigm, “ethno-religious” is bad violence since it is perceived to be a product of a pre-modern mindset. However, violence inspired by a liberal nationalist sentiment – what we have come to recognize as the civic religion of nationalism, is

⁷⁷ David Little, “Studying ‘Religious Human Rights’: Methodological Foundations,” in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective*, eds. John Witte, Jr. and Johan van Der Vyver (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1996).

endorsed as good. According to Mamdani, the genesis of the modern nation-state can be located in such “good” violence.⁷⁸ And one might add that many nation-states are the outcomes of such “progressive” violence.

Putting a fine point on the matter, David Chidester has questioned whether citizenship based on nationalism has ever successfully resolved the tension between generalized politico-legal rights and distinctive social, cultural and religious identities. He suggests that contemporary conflicts may be read more benignly as manifestations of a disjuncture between the community of rights and responsibilities and the community of affective loyalty. In support of his argument, he cites S. James Anaya who has observed that conventional Western liberal definitions of citizenship:

acknowledges the rights of the individual on the one hand, and the sovereignty of the total social collective on the other, but it is not alive to the rich variety of intermediate or alternative associational groupings actually found in human cultures, nor is it prepared to ascribe to such groups any rights not reducible either to liberties of the citizens or to the prerogatives of the state.⁷⁹

In terms of Chidester’s reading, contemporary cultural and religious reassertions should be read not merely as a matter of belonging to a particular cultural or religious group, but also as struggles for “reclaiming identity, space, and rights.”

Elsewhere, Chidester has argued that the distinction between liberal nationalism and religious nationalism is in itself a fallacy, since nationalism itself could be conceived of as a species of religion. In support of his argument, Chidester cites the historian, Carlton Hayes, who has observed that through the construction of nationalism the state strives to mold each citizen by “tutoring him in a national catechism, teaching him by pious schooling and precept the beauties of national holiness, fitting him for a life of service ... to the state.” Moreover, Chidester recalls that:

⁷⁸ Mamdani, *Good Muslim Bad Muslim*, 3–16.

⁷⁹ David Chidester, *Global Citizenship, Cultural Citizenship and World Religions in Religion Education* (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2002).

Nationalism and nationalist ideologies have mobilized the most powerful religious energies in the modern world. American religious nationalism has provided a powerful source of legitimation for political order in American society and the sense of a sacred national mission in the world.⁸⁰

Chidester supports the growing movement advocating a new form of global citizenship that relates to, and stands in dialectical tension with local, cultural citizenship. He suggests that global citizenship represents a radical departure from conventional constructions of national citizenship that have inevitably marked out a terrain of insiders and outsiders, identifying the non-citizens, the other, the enemy.⁸¹

4. Globalization

Much has been written about how the current forces of globalization have affected indigenous cultures and local economies, and spawned new forms of transnational movements and identities.⁸² Yet remarkably little attention has been given to globalization's impact on global conflict.⁸³ The critical question of the extent to which globalization is a source of violence has not been taken up seriously in the literature on religion and violence. I focus on two important contributions that illuminate the contribution of globalization to conflict. The first employs a Marxian political economy perspective and the second uses an analysis of globalization and conflict derived from sociology of religion. The provocative thesis proposed by two neo-Marxist scholars, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, argues that the current stage of capitalism should not be viewed through the lens of imperialism, but rather as empire.⁸⁴ Their central thesis is that "sovereignty has taken on a new form, composed of a series of national

⁸⁰ Chidester, *Patterns of Power*, 94.

⁸¹ Chidester, *Global Citizenship*, 20

⁸² For a useful summary of these writings and their significance for religious violence see Hackett, *Carping or Carpe Diem*, 2–5.

⁸³ One of the notable exceptions is that of Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism Are Reshaping the World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996). I deal with this perspective in greater depth in Chapter Two.

⁸⁴ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

and supernational organisms united under a single logic of rule.” This new global form of sovereignty is what they call “Empire” and it has important consequences for our understanding of the nature of post-Cold War violence.⁸⁵

Hardt and Negri argue that consonant with the current phase of capitalism wherein the global market is all pervasive and omnipresent, there is no longer an “outside” or “other” to sovereign power, since the “Empire” establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries. “It is a decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open expanding frontiers.⁸⁶ According to them under the “Pax neo-Empire,” a global concert under the direction of a single conductor, is given the necessary force to conduct when necessary, “just wars” at the borders against barbarians and internally against the rebellious.” Peace, as experienced by those who oppose the neo-empire, has become “the miserable condition of survival, the extreme urgency of escaping death. In the neo-empire era, “every imperial war is a civil war, a police action – from Los Angeles and Granada to Mogadishu and Sarajevo.”⁸⁷

It is ironic that the controversial thesis of Hardt and Negri was published a few months before the September 11 attacks, which ignited a global war similar to that described by them. Sadly, their profound insights have been ignored and scorned by mainstream scholars. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, a scholar of political Islam has proposed that there is a direct connection between globalization and proliferating violence associated with Islam.

The French expert on political Islam, Olivier Roy, has offered an intriguing proposition. He argued that bin Laden and al-Qaeda do not represent continuity with mainstream Islamic resurgence movements. On the contrary they represent a break with important Islamic movements (Hezbollah, Iran, Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic

⁸⁵ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 188.

⁸⁶ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, xii.

⁸⁷ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 188

Salvation Front [ISF], and the banned Turkish Refah). This, Roy contends, “is evident from the fact that such groups condemn the attacks of September 11,” and tend to distance themselves from bin-Laden and al-Qaeda. Roy thus distinguishes between what he describes as neofundamentalists and traditional fundamentalists. For Roy, neofundamentalist Islam is “born-again Islam” and strictly a product of globalization and thus not surprisingly located in the diaspora. In support of this contention he has suggested that:

The current violence is not so much an import from the Middle East (where bin Laden’s networks are passive) as it is a product of Westernization, immigration, globalization and the society of the spectacle, with its disaster films and video games.⁸⁸

The natural questions which arise are why and how is this violence associated with Islam specifically arising in the West?

In his latest book, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, Roy has attempted to develop his thesis further and to provide answers to these significant questions.⁸⁹ One of the answers Roy ventures is that the violence of al-Qaeda is politically, not religiously, inspired. After all, “al Qaeda did not target St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, but the World Trade Center and the Pentagon,” symbols of modern imperialism. Roy also argues that the spread of an extremist form of Islam in the West is “a consequence of and [a] reaction to sociological changes” wrought by globalization. He believes that the new global context has led to a de-linking of Islam from any specific culture. But it has come at a price, because such an Islam is “by definition an Islam oblivious to its own history.”⁹⁰ As a result, “the quest for a pure Islam [has] entail[ed] also an impoverishment of its content,” and a growing individualization

⁸⁸ Oliver Roy, “Bin Laden: An Apocalyptic Sect Severed from Political Islam,” *East European Constitutional Review* 10, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 108–14.

⁸⁹ Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

⁹⁰ Roy, *Globalized Islam*, 120.

of religious practices. These complex processes have prompted a new generation of Muslims living in the West to create a new community that transcends strict geography. Roy contends that the quest to build a universal religious identity has had the ironic consequence of a “secularization” of Islam in the name of fundamentalism. This transformation has had particularly radical consequences for the Muslims of Europe, setting them apart from their counterparts in the Middle East. Curiously, although Roy traces the transformation of Islamist parties in Muslim-majority Middle Eastern countries to political rather than sociological conditions, he attributes the rise of extremist Islam in the Muslim diaspora in the West only to sociological causes devoid of political ones. The latter would no doubt have brought the role of the state clearly into focus. A dimension that is undeveloped in Roy’s study. While the veracity of Roy’s claims remains undemonstrated, this is an important research area that requires greater attention.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have surveyed the burgeoning literature on religion and violence that has emerged since the end of the Cold War. I have established that notwithstanding critiques of irrelevancy, Rene Girard’s theory of mimesis and sacrifice continues to enjoy an ongoing attraction in contemporary scholarly accounts of the relationship between religion and violence. In particular, I have employed the critical hermeneutical reading of Girardian theory by David Chidester to argue that Girard’s theory – especially the important position it affords the judicial system as an additional channel to that of the sacrificial system for breaking the cycle of mimetic violence in society – invariably serves to buttress the direct and structural violence spawned by the nation-state. The manner in which the apartheid South African state’s judiciary endorsed the direct and structural violence of its policies of racial oppression and deligitimated the armed resistance of disenfranchised blacks is a clear case in point.

Despite its continued salience, Girard's theory has lost its dominant role in the debates concerning the intersection between religion and violence. Building on the seminal theory of Girard, scholars such as Mark Juergensmeyer have been in the forefront of developing new theoretical perspectives, to help in the understanding of the proliferating violence that has attended the post-Cold War era. I identified four key theoretical concerns – fundamentalism, clash of civilizations, religious nationalism and globalization – that have played a leading role in the post-Cold War discussions on religion and violence. I concluded that whilst departing from the earlier more philosophically based theories of Rene Girard, these theories are still by and large Eurocentric in orientation.

I have demonstrated that these new discourses on religion and violence largely ignore the direct and structural violence perpetrated by the state. Whereas the dominant theory of fundamentalism holds that the sources of conflict and violence are located in the antimodernist ideology found within a variety of religious movements, the clash of civilizations thesis reduces it to Islam. I concurred with the critiques of Tariq Ali and Mahmood Mamdani that if we are to correctly appreciate the complex intersections between religion and violence, we need to go beyond such culture talk and locate the religious legitimization of violence within concrete socio-political contexts in which the pervasive power and monopoly of violence of the nation-state is crucial. In my view, the theoretical perspective of globalization, if taken up seriously by scholars in the sub-field of religion and violence, will provide a way out of the current statist bias and may procure a radically different diagnosis of the sources of violence in the post-Cold War era. Finally, the insightful call for a global citizenship by David Chidester represents a radical departure from conventional constructions of national citizenship that have invariably been the source of exclusion and violence in the last century.

In the following chapter, I examine contemporary theories of the state and focus on the extent to which they take up the critical issues raised here.

CONTENDING THEORIES OF THE STATE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR RELIGION AND VIOLENCE

In fact, none of us could understand the world we live in or make intelligent decisions without theories. Indeed, all students and practitioners of international politics rely on theories to comprehend their surroundings. Some are aware of it and some are not, some admit it and some do not; but there is no escaping the fact that we could not make sense of the complex world around us without simplifying theories.¹

Writing in the wake of what he describes as “The greatest assault on the United States since the end of the cold war, perhaps since its founding,” political scientist, Daniel Philpott, lamented the fact that the dominant theories of the state have not sufficiently addressed the relationship between religion and politics.² To support his case Philpott conducted a survey of four of the leading international relations journals over the period 1980–1999 and found that only six out of a total of around 1 600 articles featured religion as a significant element in international politics.³ He concluded that: “[J]ournals and university presses in the field treat religion in scant proportion to its expanding space in newspaper headlines over the past decade.”⁴

It is instructive to note that the strong resistance of theorists of the state to taking religion into account as a significant variable in domestic and international conflicts

¹ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), 8–9.

² Daniel Philpott, “The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Politics,” *World Politics* 55 (October 2002) : 66–95.

³ Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 9. The journals Philpott surveyed are *International Organization*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *World Politics*, and *International Security*.

⁴ Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty*, 6. One of the few notable exceptions to this general trend is the provocative clash of civilizations thesis proffered by Samuel P. Huntington.

now takes place against an empirical reality – namely, the worldwide resurgence of religion – that can hardly be overlooked anymore.⁵ More striking is the fact that this stubborn resistance by theorists of the state to take religion seriously happens at a time when, as Scott Appleby argues, “increasingly in the social sciences the relationship between ‘the secular’ and ‘the religious’ is viewed to be more intimate, overlapping, and mutually transformative than previously understood.”⁶ As a direct consequence of this paradigmatic shift in the social sciences, a growing literature has begun to address the manner in which religion is implicated in deadly conflict. Most of these works have come, however, from the so-called “softer” disciplines such as religious studies, history, anthropology and sociology.⁷ Perhaps as a result, this proliferating body of literature has been largely inattentive to the implications of nation-states competing for power at the domestic and international levels, including the violence and human rights abuses committed by nation-states and their security apparatuses against “dissidents.”⁸ This omission in the literature tended to reinforce the existing bias that religious violence is the preserve of non-state actors.

⁵ The rising influence of the Christian Right in the United States, the growth of Evangelical and Pentecostal movements in Latin America with various ties to political interests in the US, the powerful role of the pro-settler religious movement, the Gush Emonim in balancing power in the Israeli Knesset, the plethora of Islamist movements in the Middle East, North Africa and parts of South-East Asia advocating the idea of an Islamic theocratic state, the increasing influence of the Orthodox Church in post communist Russia and Eastern Europe, the control by Hindu nationalism of the Indian state, the politicization of Buddhism in the Sinhalese politics of Sri Lanka as well as Myanmar, are the most prominent examples in a much longer list. For a useful introduction to this new challenge to theories of the state see *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Summer 2003).

⁶ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 4. For the reasons as to why religion has been neglected in analysis of international politics see, Jonathan Fox, “Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations” in *International Studies Association* 3 Issue 3 (2001) : 53–73. The sociologist, Peter Berger, has acknowledged the inadequacy of the popular secularization theory that argued that modernity necessarily leads to the irrelevancy of religion to the public arena. See Peter Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington D.C.: Eerdmans, 1999).

⁷ For scholarship that asserts the growing role of religion in domestic and international conflict, see, David Little, “Religious Militancy” *Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict*, ed. Chester A. Crocker & Fen Osler Hampson with Pamela Aall (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996); Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War*; R. Scott Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*; Peter L. Berger, *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington D.C.: Eerdmans, 1999).

⁸ A notable exception is Marc Ellis, *Unholy Alliance* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1997).

This chapter seeks to probe this apparent inattentiveness to the role of the religion in contemporary scholarship on the state. How does the state conceive of its role? Through what mechanisms does the state enlist religion in pursuing its national interests and legitimating its monopoly on violence? Moreover, what are the consequences of this for our understanding of the relationship between the state, religion and violence? In order for us to address these critical questions, it is necessary to locate them within the context of the dominant contemporary theories of the state.

Transcending “The Great Divide” in Scholarship on the State

Within the academic study of the state, a convention exists of distinguishing between the role of the state at the domestic and international levels. This dichotomy has been adopted by theorists of the state and has been referred to as “the great divide.” Others, like Rob Walker, have described it as the “inside” and “outside” phenomenon.⁹ Some scholars, such as Helen Miller and Stephen Gill, have questioned the validity of such a rigid distinction and separation between these two roles of the state. I concur with them in this regard.¹⁰ While I accept the utility of the divide as a heuristic device, I contend that in our globalizing world the domestic and international roles of the state are far more intimate, overlapping and mutually transformative than previously understood. Moreover, contemporary religious resurgence movements have developed impressive transnational networks, and their relationship to violence can best be understood within this global context. Susanne Rudolph has recently drawn our attention to the powerful manner in which global religious movements have inserted themselves into the communities that constitute transnational civil society. According to Rudolph,

⁹ R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹⁰ Helen Miller, “The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations,” in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. David A. Baldwin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 145; Stephen Gill, “Gramsci and Global Politics: Towards a Post-Hegemonic Research Agenda,” in *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, ed. Stephen Gill (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1.

the space that these transnational communities occupy is a “liminal and crosscutting arena” that “is neither within the state nor an aspect of the international state system that animates it.”¹¹

Accordingly, in the next section of this chapter I provide a map of contemporary theories of the state and explore their implications for religion and violence. I am aware that these theories, as is the case with most post-Enlightenment social theories, have been consciously developed without reference to religion, but they nevertheless have clear implications for violence and as such have a relevance for our appreciation of the nature of “religious violence.”

The Realist Theory of the State

The realist theory has been the most prominent and controversial of all the past and present theories of the state. Despite the sharp critiques of the realist theory, it continues to be the most dominant theoretical position on the role of the state. In fact, the literature on the state has been dominated by the realist paradigm for the past seven centuries.¹²

Realism is a rich tradition that incorporates not one but several distinct theories. All of these realist theories, however, share certain key underlying assumptions. At its most basic level, the realist school operates under three central assumptions. First, sovereign states are the principal actors on the international scene. Second, states are rational actors that seek to advance their national material interests (e.g., territorial security or expansion, military and economic power, and national defense). Third, the external international environment is an anarchic and threatening one that compels states to compete for power among them and to strive for hegemony. This competition for hegemony sometimes necessitates engaging in violence by going to war. This

¹¹ Susanne Hoeber, Rudolph and James Piscatori, eds. *Transnational Religion and Fading States* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 1–2.

¹² Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 369.

realist policy on violence is based on the proposition of the nineteenth-century military strategist Carl von Clausewitz, who argued that war is the continuation of politics by other means.¹³ In short, therefore, realism is an approach to the study and practice of international politics that sanctifies the role of the state and makes a broad assumption that national interests and the pursuit of power motivate all nation-states.

Offensive Realism

A provocative contemporary exponent of the realist school is John J. Mearsheimer, a political scientist at the University of Chicago. In *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (2001), he challenges the key assumption of defensive realism and argues that: “[T]he great powers seek to maximize their share of world power” because “having dominant power is the best means to ensure one’s own survival.” The central tenet of what Mearsheimer calls “offensive realism” is that each state seeks to ensure its survival by maximizing its share of world power. Mearsheimer furthermore holds that offensive realism is the only theory that adequately accounts for how states actually behave. “The sad fact is that international politics has always been a ruthless and dangerous business,” he contends.¹⁴

Taking issue with defensive realists, Mearsheimer believes that *status quo* powers are rarely found in world politics, because the international system creates powerful incentives for states to look for opportunities to gain power at the expense of rivals, and to take advantage of those situations when the benefits outweigh the costs. According to him, a state’s ultimate goal is to be the hegemon in the system. Applying his theory to world history, Mearsheimer shows how the diplomatic and military history of the last two centuries supports his ideas. Employing a purely realist interpretation of the Cold War, based on the view that there are no “good states” or

¹³ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976).

¹⁴ Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 136.

“bad states,” he concludes that realism allows for no meaningful distinction between the motives behind American and Soviet behavior during that conflict. Offensive realism is a controversial idea, but it is difficult to ignore given contemporary realities. Mearsheimer is critical of the “war on terrorism” including the American war against Iraq.¹⁵ He argues that these efforts are distracting the US from containing its chief rival for hegemonic dominance, the People’s Republic of China.¹⁶

Realism and Religion: Are There Possible Connections?

Conventional wisdom would make us believe that “religious realism” is an oxymoron. This position reflects an ignorance of the actual historical experience of religious traditions, which have taken various attitudes toward “worldly power,” including a stance that might be called “religious realpolitik.” Indeed, we can develop a typology of religious attitudes toward political power and social transformation, one important component of which corresponds roughly to the realist theories of the state. Under certain conditions, religions or religious movements adopt what Almond, Sivan and Appleby have termed a “world conqueror” approach to political power.¹⁷ One of the defining features of religious movements in the “world conquering” mode is that they seek to control state power and aggrandize the hegemony of the state in order to bring the laws of their countries in conformity to what they believe to be divine laws. In the case of Iranian Shi’ism, it was the Islamic law (*shari’ah*). Another earlier example is the pro-Buddhist legislation that accompanied the electoral victory of the Sinhala Maha Sabha leader, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in 1957.

Religious movements in the “world conquering” mode who have managed to capture state power have proven to be willing to use the “monopoly of violence” of

¹⁵ For an interview with Mearsheimer on his views on the war on terror see <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people2/Mearsheimer/mearsheimer-con5.html> (accessed March 2005).

¹⁶ For an intriguing debate on current US policy towards China between Mearsheimer and Zbigniew Brzezinski see “The Clash of Titans,” in *Foreign Policy* (January/February 2005).

¹⁷ Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan, and R. Scott Appleby, “Examining the Cases,” in *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 445.

the state to its maximum in pursuit of their goals. The cruel effects of this monopoly are demonstrated in the harsh penalties that Iran's Islamic government imposes on its subjects who are judged to be in breach of the law. Moreover, the fact that Sri Lanka's civil war is one of the most violent can be attributed in some measure to the strong legitimation for repressing the Tamil resistance the regime has received from Sinhala Buddhist quarters.

These are not the only countries whose policies are shaped by religious considerations and have employed religious resources in legitimating their resort to violence. Religion has an important surreptitious role in avowedly secular states. This should not surprise us since religious symbols are extremely useful in as far as they advance the cause of the national interests of the state. Bruce Lincoln provides cogent support for such a view when he avers that the state "acknowledged limitations on its ability to legitimate its own violence as on the many occasions when it relied on docile religious institutions to obligingly consecrate its wars."¹⁸

The South African theologian, Bishop Peter Storey, has recently provided a provocative example of such subtly religious complicity in the legitimation of state violence. In a pastoral letter to his American friends after the terrorist attacks of September 11, Storey contended that by inviting President George W. Bush to address the interreligious service held at National Cathedral in Washington D.C., the religious community had subtly given its approval to the United States' war on Afghanistan. The following extract usefully captures the thrust of his argument.

Sadly, at the invitation-only service at the National Cathedral, the Church did not help him, nor further the Gospel. It was sad to see the Church (and other religious traditions) laid so supinely at the disposal of Caesar and his chaplains. It is one thing for the Church to invite the leaders of the land to come like any others, to pray, to seek God's healing and the guidance of God's word. It is theologically an entirely different matter to provide a pulpit to the head of state, enabling him to

¹⁸ Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 64.

use a house of worship to rally the nation for war, exactly contradicting some of the Scriptures that were read. When uniforms and flags crowd God's house, it is hard for God's word to be heard. A British TV reporter said afterward: "This morning, in quick succession, President Bush got approval for his war, first from Congress, then from the religious leaders." Did it occur to anyone just how much this action resembled the use made of mosque pulpits by the political leaders of some extreme Muslim fundamentalist states?¹⁹

The fact that most if not all of the major religious institutions officially supported the United States war on Afghanistan as a "just war" lends further credence to Storey's position. It is not coincidental that Storey was a prominent anti-apartheid religious leader and has first hand experience of the subtle manner in which religion was co-opted in support of the apartheid regime's violence it used in order to enforce its discriminatory policies. This example is, however, not unique and we could find many similar cases in the contemporary world.

The Liberal Theory of the State

The second dominant theory of the state is liberalism. Many of the most vociferous intellectual debates raging in academic and political circles take place between protagonists from the liberal and realist schools. Liberals draw inspiration from the ideas of Enlightenment theorists such as John Locke (1632–1704) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804).²⁰ The liberal school has been far more enchanted with the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and therefore tends to emphasize reason as a way of making the world a better place. As a direct consequence of this, liberal theories are far more optimistic about the possibilities for peace than realism. For this reason, the latter sometimes label the former school as "utopian" or "idealist."²¹

¹⁹ Bishop Peter Storey wrote a letter to his friends in the US following the September 11 attacks. For details see http://www.witherspoonsociety.org/letter_from_south_africa.htm (accessed February 2003).

²⁰ Micheal W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 19.

²¹ See for example, Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 15.

A cluster of theories that share three key assumptions about the nature and role of the state constitute liberalism.²² First, liberals consider states to be pre-eminent actors on the international scene. Second, they assume that domestic factors also have a profound impact on the behavior of the state. Based on this assumption, liberal theorists, unlike realists, espouse normative positions with respect to the internal domestic political arrangements of the state. They distinguish between “good” states and “bad” states and believe that good states respond positively to domestic demands. For example, liberals would contend that democracies are inherently preferable to autocratic dictatorships. Liberals hold that the way toward peace is to populate the world with good states. Third, liberals assume, unlike realists, that calculations about power and pursuit of hegemony are not primary to the agendas of good states. Economic as well as other kinds of political calculations are far more important to the agendas of states. The precise form of these calculations may vary from one liberal theory to another. In sum, liberals contend that the key characteristics of a “good” state are securing individual freedoms and democratic social practices, economic interdependence and effective international institutions. Political scientists, Bruce Russett and John Oneal, have usefully depicted these key dimensions of liberalism in the phrase “triangulating peace.”²³ Liberals are sometimes accused of being “crusading” in their zealotry to promote these values all over the world.

Among the various theories found under the canopy of liberalism, three have emerged as leading ones. The liberal economic theory of peace contends that greater levels of economic exchange between states makes them more prosperous and interdependent and therefore less likely to fight with each other. Some of the leading liberal theorists who have espoused this position include Kant, Adam Smith (1723–1790) and Joseph Schumpeter (1883–1950). They argued that free trade within the

²² For the most comprehensive account of liberalism, see, Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*.

²³ Bruce Russett and John R. Oneal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001).

domestic as well as the international market is the best guarantor for peace. At the international level, the argument goes that trade generates economic advantages for all parties and the anticipation that war will lead to a loss of the benefits of trade acts as a deterrent to political leaders from initiating militarized conflict. At the domestic level, liberal theorists argue that the culture of prosperity generated by free trade enables the emergence of an influential middle class who have a vested interest in maintaining the peace in order to ensure their continued enrichment. This liberal theory is also referred to as commercial pacifism.

The award-winning journalist, Thomas Friedman, has applied the liberal theory of economic interdependence to analyze contemporary conflicts in the context of a globalizing world. He argues in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* that a new system of globalization has now replaced the Cold War system, and it now shapes virtually everyone's domestic politics and international relations. According to Friedman, we can only understand globalization, when we understand that the sharp lines which once separated politics, religion, economics, technology and national security, are now disappearing. It is unrealistic to refer to one dimension of a conflict without reference to the others. This is a significant perspective that I develop in my analysis in this dissertation. I furthermore argue that the political conduct of the state and particularly the exercise of its monopoly of violence have implications for religion and vice versa.²⁴

Friedman's choice of title for his book, in its reference to both the burgeoning global interdependent economic relations (the Lexus) and specific national aspirations and cultural and religious identities (the olive tree), echoes Benjamin Barber's *Jihad vs. McWorld* (1996). Like Barber, Friedman argues that, "globalization enriches the consumer in us, but it can also shrink the citizen and the space for individual cultural and political expression."²⁵ Finding the proper balance between the Lexus and the

²⁴ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: First Anchor Books Edition, 2000).

²⁵ Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, 45.

olive tree, according to Friedman, is the great drama of the globalization era. The animating spirit of his book, however, is one of embracing globalization and economic interdependence as a positive force rather than a negative one. It is this central postulate that places him firmly within the liberal school. It is also here that Friedman comes into conflict with Barber. In the latter's view, the economic and other facets of globalization are leading us towards a more violent future unless its powerful negative aspects can be resisted. As I have demonstrated in Chapter One, this perspective has been largely ignored in the mainstream literature on religion and violence, with the notable exception of Olivier Roy.

The Democratic Peace Theory

One of the leading contemporary liberal theories is the so-called democratic peace theory. According to this theory, it is postulated that liberal democracies are less prone to resorting to international as well as domestic violence than other regime types. There is a huge and growing literature supporting this theory and it is espoused by some of the leading contemporary political scientists such as Michael W. Doyle, Bruce M. Russett and Rudolph J. Rummel.²⁶ The latter is one of the earliest advocates of the democratic peace theory and holds the most comprehensive position on it.²⁷ Rummel identifies three forms of violence: war and international violence; civil violence, i.e. violence perpetrated by non-state actors against each other or the state; and what he calls democide, i.e. state violence against its subjects. According to Rummel, the latter form of violence, mass murder and genocides perpetrated by states against their own

²⁶ For overviews and representative examples on the democratic peace theory, see, Bruce Russett et. al., *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Michael E. Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Stephen E. Miller, eds. *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996); R.J. Rummel, *Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Nonviolence* (Brunswick, NY: Transaction Publishers, 1997); Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (December 1986) : 1151–69.

²⁷ John M. Owen depicts the democratic theory as "stillborn" with Rummel's finding that liberal democracies do not fight wars against each other, R.J. Rummel, *Understanding Conflict and War* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1974). It was only in the mid 1980s and 1990s that the theory was greeted with great enthusiasm.

people, “has been the worst scourge of all.” This is exemplified by the Holocaust and genocides perpetrated in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Burundi. “It has killed in our century not only millions or tens of millions, but possibly hundreds of millions,” but tragically its “generality has been ignored or unknown”²⁸ Rummel boldly claims that democracy is a panacea for all three forms of violence.

There is solution to each and the solution to each case is the same. It is to foster democratic freedom and to democratize coercive power and force. That is, mass killing and mass murder carried out by government is a result of indiscriminate, irresponsible Power at the center. Or in terms of the title of this book, *Power Kills*.²⁹

For liberals, the implications of the democratic peace theory are unequivocal. Going back at least to Immanuel Kant’s *Perpetual Peace*, published in 1795, liberals have contended that the more representative government decisions are, the more states are restrained by the public will from making war. Consequently, spreading democratic rule all over the globe will ameliorate collective violence and ultimately promote peace on earth. The major obstacles to democratic freedom, according to liberals, are non-western cultures and religions. Russell represents this view crudely when he argues, “while nonviolence may be a central principle, some peoples may prefer an authoritarian and state religion like Islam to democratic freedom, even if it means more violence.”³⁰

It is important to note that there is a growing literature that challenges the assumptions on which the liberal democratic theory stands. The assumption, for example, that a monolithic Islam is incompatible with democracy has been refuted in a number of studies. The historian of religion, Abdulaziz Sachedina, in his book, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism*, has usefully demonstrated that Islamic sources are malleable and may be understood as compatible with democratic pluralism,

²⁸ Rummel, *Power Kills*, 2.

²⁹ Rummel, *Power Kills*, 3.

³⁰ Rummel, *Power Kills*, 9.

religious tolerance, and respect for human rights.³¹ More significantly, however, some scholars such as Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey have argued that democracy is not a fixed ahistorical concept as presented in liberal accounts, but it is a highly contested concept that can only be fully appreciated in relation to other social institutions and processes. They have located the debate about the veracity of the democratic peace thesis within the historical processes of globalization rather than in the static statist paradigm of liberals and have concluded, “[I]nstead of assuming that liberalism is a force for peace, analysis must attend to the ways in which it promotes the use of force.”³²

Finally, a number of liberals maintain that strengthening international institutions such as the United Nations may enhance the prospects for cooperation among states and thus contribute significantly to the reduction of deadly conflict. Kant, for example, argued that by instituting reliable international laws, collective security, and transnational “hospitality,” a state of peace could be created. Liberal theorists claim that these international rules for state behavior can be jointly negotiated by states and can act as a constraint for states resorting to resolving disputes through violent means.

The Socialist Theory of the State

Socialists have been among the most vociferous critics of the modern state. They draw inspiration for their critiques of the liberal bourgeois state from the materialist conception of history as articulated by Karl Marx (1818–1883), Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) and Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924). Historical materialism, according to Marx, has three principal elements: (1) the conditioning force of history is the means of production which evolves from primitive communism, to feudalism through capitalism, ultimately culminating in communism; (2) the contradiction between the interests of

³¹ Abdulaziz Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

³² Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, “The Imperial Peace: Democracy, Force and Globalization,” *European Journal of International Relations* 5 (4) (1999) : 423.

the proletariat and the bourgeoisie which produces a class struggle (particularly under the capitalist mode of production); (3) and this class conflict inevitably leads to the revolutionary transformation of the liberal bourgeois state and the establishment in its place of the dictatorship of the proletariat that will herald the onset of a transition to a classless society.³³

The key underlying assumption of socialist theory is that economic conditions are the chief driving forces behind the behavior and policies of states. The upshot is that these exploitative economic relations need to be transformed through revolutionary struggle by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Marx believed that this struggle requires that the exploited working class inflict what he called “necessary violence” on those who are unjustly violent, even when that unjust “violence” was indirect through structural exploitation.³⁴ In the Marxian perspective, therefore, death caused by the persistence of social inequality is morally equivalent to direct physical violence. Marx may therefore be considered a forerunner of a wider definition of violence, that of structural violence. It may be expedient at this stage to highlight the fact that Marx considered religion to be the opium of the people, comparing it to a strong sedative that prevented the proletariat from rising in violent rebellion against their bourgeois oppressors.³⁵

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the East European communist regimes in 1991, socialist theories have been in retreat. Many in the West agreed with George Bush’s assessment that communism had died in 1991.³⁶ Perhaps this death certification was premature. Neo-Socialists have since focused their attention on the role of civil society and the negative impact of globalization on Second and Third World economies. In my view, the Marxist position places both “the state” and “religion” on the same

³³ Karl Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton., 1978).

³⁴ For a useful discussion of this see, John Harris, “The Marxian Conception of Violence,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 3, no. 4 (1974).

³⁵ Karl Marx, “Contribution to the Critique of Hegels’ Philosophy of Law,” in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke* (Berlin: Dietz, 1969), 378.

³⁶ Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 485.

axis as ultimately repressive of human freedom. It is but a small step from this stance to recognition that the state's use of force against its population may also be entangled with religious ideology.

The Resuscitation of Gramsci's Neo-Marxist Theory of Civil Society

Already by the late 1960s and early 1970s, some neo-Marxists, influenced by the Italian socialist, Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), had shifted their attention away from the state to “civil society.” By the late 1980s and early 1990s, Gramsci's theory of civil society became very popular among socialists. He defined civil society over against political society. Civil society is made of private institutions and organizations, trade unions, the media, educational institutions, civic bodies and organizations, youth and women's organizations and environmental groups. Gramsci argued that real power and change lies with the hegemonic forces, those groups who hold power within civil society. Democratic regimes, he contends, rule by manufacturing consent within civil society. Hence, progressive forces need to launch counter hegemonic projects within civil society in order to counter-balance the pervasive influence of the state. The guarantee for a sound democracy and ensuring that the state is responsive to the needs and demands of the people is the establishment of a strong and independent civil society. A combination of independent civil society and state-community projects can go a long way in resolving many of our current problems.

Although Gramsci did not have religious institutions in mind, they are in many settings among the most powerful sectors of civil society. By acting as an equal partner with other sectors of the broader civil society, religious institutions can play an important role in counter-balancing social forces and placing ethical constraints on the state's exercise of its monopoly of violence.

A group of young Islamic intellectuals, who have defined themselves as the “Cairo School,” have taken the Gramscian critique of the state even further. They have argued that Gramsci's model of civil society is not a paradigmatic shift in the

socialist theory of the state, but only widens the existing paradigm in which the state remains powerful and not the society. According to the Cairo School, the idea of civil society does not mean a shift of interest from state to society. It rather focuses on the relationship between state and society, and ultimately describes an effective strategy for unseating those existing forces that have control of the state. Gramsci's model, they contend, does not strengthen the society and weaken the state, as it should.³⁷

There has been a corresponding interest among scholars to track the growing relocation of religion's public expression to the arena of civil society. One such example is the work of the historian, Emmanuel Sivan, on the Islamic resurgence movements in the Middle East and North Africa.³⁸ He has confirmed that the non-governmental realm of civil society has indeed been the arena in which Islamic resurgence movements have made significant progress in the 1980s. He has, however, concluded that paradoxically this did not eliminate the problem of religious violence. For example, he points to the greater use of vigilante-style actions by Islamists in purifying civil society of vices by burning cinemas and video clubs which promote licentious films. The explanation according to Sivan is understandable. In contradistinction to the position of the Cairo School, he believes that "reconquering civil society" is a strategy (in the Gramscian sense) employed by Islamic radicals. They aspire to use this powerful platform to seize power and "establish 'a contemporary state' (*hukuma 'asriyya*), one which is in tune with the twentieth century with regard to means and modalities, though not to values."³⁹

The optimism displayed by Sivan and others with regard to the prospects of civil society's revitalization has been challenged by the political scientist, Ali R.

³⁷ For a discussion of the Cairo School, see Abdul Rashied Omar, *Tolerance, Civil Society and Renaissance: A South African Muslim Perspective* (Cape Town: Claremont Main Road Mosque, 2002).

³⁸ Emmanuel Sivan, "The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back," *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 2 (May–June 1990): 353–65.

³⁹ Sivan, "The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back," 359.

Abootalebi.⁴⁰ The latter has argued that Sivan's hypothesis was premised on a false assumption that the immense power of states in the Middle East were eroding as a direct consequence of the impact of the Iranian revolution and the declining oil prices, leading to the empowerment of civil societies infused by Islamic resurgence movements. Abootalebi contends that such propositions are based on a lack of attention to the highly patrimonial socio-economic structures of these societies. Such analysis furthermore underestimates the resourcefulness of the modern state to strike back. The state does not merely respond to social pressure but can and often does act autonomously to influence the nature of its social setting. Two studies of so-called "state Islamization" support my contention here. The first study, by social psychologist, T. Abdou Maliqalim Simone (1994),⁴¹ examines the symbiotic relationship between the Islamic Movement in the Sudan and the military regime of Omar Al-Bashir, and the second, by political scientist, Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr (2001),⁴² illuminates the ingenious manner in which the secular regimes of Pakistan and Malaysia adopted Islamist postures, not so much as a defensive strategy but rather as an important facet of their drive to strengthen hegemony over civil society. I hasten to add that studying the autonomous actions of states does not in and of itself imply either a reification of the state or an overestimation of its efficacy. Rather, it seeks to balance the existing bias in the dominant theoretical paradigms in the literature on religion and violence which tends not to highlight states as potentially autonomous actors *vis-à-vis* religious resurgence.

The Constructivist Theory of the State

Coming in the wake of the end of the Cold War and drawing on a variety of social theories – critical theory, postmodernism, feminism and the like – a small group of

⁴⁰ Ali R. Abootalebi, "Civil Society, Democracy, and the Middle East," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 2, no. 3 (September 1998).

⁴¹ T. Abdou Maliqalim Simone, *In Whose Image? Political Islam and Urban Practices in Sudan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁴² Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

scholars have revived a marginalized theory of the state known in the literature as constructivism. The term was first employed by political scientist, Nicholas Onuf, in 1989.⁴³ This theory of the state is also referred to as social constructivism because of its claim that identities are socially constructed. There are at least three main streams of constructivist theory: a modernist, a postmodernist and a feminist stream.

Some of this new school's most articulate progenitors are contemporary scholars Nicholas Onuf, Friedrich Kratochwil and Alexander Wendt. The latter, in *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999), lays out the two key assumptions of constructivism.⁴⁴ First, constructivists assume that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than by material forces. Second, they hold "that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature."⁴⁵ Based on these two fundamental tenets, constructivists claim that the manner in which states relate to their subjects, and to each other, is not determined by material structures, but rather by the way in which different identity groups think and talk about politics. Since identities and interests are constructed and not given, resulting from social interaction, consequently they are subject to change in the political and public process. This perspective is usefully captured in Wendt's famous phrase that "anarchy is what states make of it."⁴⁶

According to constructivists, therefore, it is discourse and its corresponding influence on social and interstate relations that drives politics. By replacing and changing the dominant discourse of distrust and hostility with that of trust and benign intentions between groups and states, the way would be opened for a new era of cooperation and more amiable inter-group relations. Constructivists argue that the end of the Cold War

⁴³ Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia, SC.: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).

⁴⁴ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁴⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 1.

⁴⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory*, 22.

provides a useful context within which such a transformed discourse can take effect. Because of this optimistic stance constructivists are sometimes dismissed as being too idealistic.

Not surprisingly, because of its focus on group identity and its assertion that the cultural environment has a profound impact on the domestic and international behavior of states, political scientists who have begun to take the question of religion in global politics seriously have seen the constructivist approach as providing a viable theoretical entry point. Philpott, for example, has bemoaned the fact that constructivists who assert the malleability and plurality of state identities would seem to create the most room for religious purposes, yet they rarely give attention to it. One scholar, Muqtedar Khan, is attempting to explore the constructivist theoretical approach to deconstruct “jihadism,” and is advancing constructivist pathways to Islam and peacebuilding.⁴⁷ He is a student of Nicholas Onuf and a Muslim “public intellectual.” He argues that, notwithstanding the fact that a conservative realist view of order is dominating political thinking in the post-September 11 world, constructivist theory has much to offer in terms of understanding the manner in which this new cultural environment is reconstructing Muslim identities under duress in countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁴⁸ Scholars of religion and identity conflicts might do well in following the pioneering lead of Khan by embracing the constructivist political theory in their search for coming to terms with the proliferating impact of religion on domestic and global politics.

⁴⁷ He defines the word jihadism as the ideology of those Islamic militants for whom the military jihad is the first and last option for precipitating socio-political change. See Muqtedar Khan, “Deconstructing Jihadism: In Quest of a Theology of Global Peace” (Unpublished Manuscript).

⁴⁸ Muqtedar Khan, “Pakistan: Reconstructing Identity Under Duress” paper delivered for In Multiple Voices: Challenges and Opportunities for Islamic Peacebuilding After September 11, University of Notre Dame, April 12–13, 2002.

Religion, Violence and the State: Towards Understanding the Nexus

Do these various theories of the state outlined above hold implications for religion? As we have seen, the dominant contemporary theories of the state deny or minimize the significance of all cultural factors, including religion, as playing a significant role in the shaping of the state's policies.⁴⁹ The fact that there is hardly anything written in response to this question is a strong indicator of the powerful influence of conventional secular paradigms.⁵⁰ Even more distressing, however, is the fact that the material that has emerged in the post-Cold War period, to ostensibly fill this gap in the theory of the state, has not inserted culture, creatively. On the contrary, as I have illustrated in Chapter One, scholars such as Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington have reduced the problem of violence to culture and more especially, Islam. The consequence of such ideologically driven theoretical perspectives has been to discredit the project of taking culture and religion on board in our theorizing of the state. This is well represented in the critique of Mahmood Mamdani. The challenge remains as to how to insert culture and religion into our theories of the state without distorting its variegated conjunctions with other significant variables.

Notwithstanding this, I argue that in contradistinction to the professed positions of contemporary theories of the state, they do have tacit implications for religion, and the latter does indeed influence domestic and international politics in diverse ways. In outlining the theories of the state, I have demonstrated that contrary to conventional wisdom, they do have implicit implications for religion arising from within their formulations? Ironically, diverse religious movements have been employing these

⁴⁹ As I have shown above, the marginal constructivist theory shows the greatest potential for according religion a place in its theorizing of the state. In this instance, however, religion has not yet featured in any significant manner.

⁵⁰ In contradistinction to the view of Jonathan Fox that religion is an overlooked element in international politics, I contend that religion is consciously ignored. See, Jonathan Fox, "Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations," *Journal of International Studies* 3 no. 3 (2001).

same theories to formulate strategic actions in their relationship to the state. I have argued that Islam is not the only religion that exerts a significant influence on the policies of contemporary states. Neither are religious influences on the state confined to the undeveloped countries of the so-called Third World that have not sufficiently modernized their societies as some would have us believe.⁵¹ Rather, religion has an important tacit role even in the most secular of states, which often goes unobserved. Paradoxically, the religionization of politics and the state tends to occur within the most modernized sectors and nations of the world. The United States, which celebrates its place at the pinnacle of modernity, is currently witnessing the unprecedented resurgence of the New Christian Right in its national politics. The uncritical manner in which religious institutions are embracing the Bush administration's "war on terrorism" is a clear case in point. Bishop Storey's pastoral letter written days after the September 11 attacks had warned about this impending danger. Sadly, however, at the time of Storey's intervention the writing was on the wall. The co-optation of mainstream Christianity in the imperialist policies of the American state was already at an advance stage. The events of September 11 only served to further solidify and deepen this unholy alliance between religion and state in the American context.

In the following chapters, I investigate the manner in which all of these theoretical perspectives and analogous religious modes of relating to the state that we have considered are represented in three different national settings. In particular, I illuminate the manner in which religion has buttressed and sanctified state-sponsored violence. Recognizing the limitation of an academic paradigm that itself has emerged from a historical experience in which religion-state separation was foundational, I move here to the ethnographic tool of dialogue with individuals beyond the academic community as a means of broadening our horizons as we reach to understand the grounded realities of religion, violence and the state.

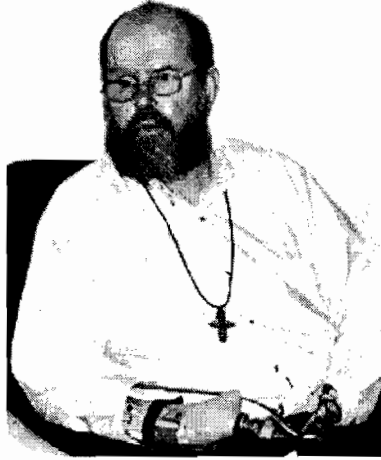
⁵¹ For an example of an exclusive focus on the politicization of religion in the third world see Jeff Haynes, *Religion in the Third World Politics* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993).

Despite a dominating emphasis on “realism,” our theories have become very far removed from the reality that much of the world knows. In the interests of a liberatory realism, I move in the following chapters to conversations with Father Michael Lapsley of South Africa, Mufti Mustafa Ceric of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Swami Agnivesh of India. The work of the concluding chapter will be to reflexively examine whether these forays into interlocution with persons who live at the nexus of religion and violence can help us to reflect upon, revise, expand, or renew the political theories of the state and more specifically the exercise of its monopoly of violence that we have thus far considered.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER THREE

SOUTH AFRICA: FROM PACIFISM TO ARMED STRUGGLE¹



Interlocutor I
Father Michael Lapsley

My first sight of Michael leaves me somewhat relieved. His face is burnt, but bone structures seem in place even though an eye is gone. He knows me – can be touched on top of one arm and kissed on one spot on forehead. Everywhere else burnt, broken, tender.²

The quotation comes from the diary of Irene Bick. She is describing her initial encounter with her brother, Michael Lapsley, an Anglican (Episcopalian) priest, after he had been savagely injured by a powerful letter bomb in Zimbabwe on April 28, 1990.³ Ironically, the bomb that exploded in Father Lapsley's hands was inserted into

¹ This chapter is based largely on two personal interviews conducted with Michael Lapsley at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, on May 12 and May 13, 2003, respectively. The interviews were supplemented by the transcript of the evidence given by Michael Lapsley to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (10 June, 1996) and his biography, Michael Worsnip, *Michael Lapsley Priest and Partisan: A South African Journey* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1996).

² Extract from Irene Bick's diary as quoted in Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 19–20.

³ Bick came from the United Kingdom to help care for Lapsley while he was in hospital in Zimbabwe. During this time she kept a copious diary of the sheer trauma of caring for Lapsley. Worsnip was privileged to be given access to the diary and quotes from it extensively in his biography.

a religious magazine. By opening it, he detonated the parcel bomb, postmarked from the Republic of South Africa.⁴

One year later, when Lapsley was released from hospital, he had lost both of his hands and one eye, had shattered his eardrums and suffered serious burns to his body. Despite the fears of many who saw Lapsley in the immediate aftermath of his tragic ordeal, and although he had lost some of his hearing, he was still able to hear and he could see through his surviving eye. One of the very few things Lapsley is incapable of doing with his clipper-type hook hands he now wears is removing his false eye in order to wash it. In many of the sermons preached after his bombing Lapsley would conclude with the following words: “I stand before you in a small way, as a sign of what apartheid has done. Of the physical brokenness that it has caused. We are all in a sense disabled people.”⁵

On July 17, 1997, seven years after the bombing, South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) informed Lapsley that three members of the Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB), one of the apartheid death squads instituted and financed by the South African Defense Force (SADF), were responsible for the letter bomb attack that had maimed him for life.⁶ The announcement came as no surprise.

⁴ Sending letter bombs to anti-apartheid activists was one of the infamous methods of extra-judicial killings employed by South Africa’s security forces to eliminate anti-apartheid activists. The most well-known of these letter bomb killings is that of Ruth First, a prominent white member of the ANC who had gone into exile and was killed in Mozambique in 1982. She was also the former wife of Joe Slovo, who became the first Minister of Housing of democratic South Africa in 1994. Two apartheid security agents, Craig Williamson and Roger Raven, acknowledged responsibility for this letter bomb killing and were given amnesty by South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. For a detailed account of the career of Craig Williamson and apartheid death squads see, Terry Bell with Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza, *Unfinished Business, South Africa, Apartheid, and Truth* (New York: Verso, 2003).

⁵ Michael Lapsley, “South Africa, the End and the Beginning are Near,” sermon preached at the Canaan Baptist Church of Christ on 116th Street, Harlem, New York, December 5, 1993.

⁶ “Forgiveness is a Package,” *Cape Times*, July 17, 1997. In response to this news article, Lapsley wrote a public letter in which he confirmed that the TRC had informed him that three members of the CCB, Mr. Joe Vester, Mr. Wouter Basson and Mr. Abraham “Slang” van Zyl had been subpoenaed under section 29 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act to provide in camera evidence on the letter bomb attack on him. While Lapsley’s letter congratulated the TRC for discovering those they believed were responsible he declared that, “While I did always want to know who was responsible, it is another burden to come to terms with the reality of three actual human beings who are supposed to have tried to kill me.”

Thousands of South Africans suffered similar fates or worse, were killed if they dared to challenge the institutional and structural violence of the apartheid state.⁷ It was precisely this violent reality of South Africa under apartheid rule that transformed not only the physical being but also the theology of violence of Father Lapsley.

In this chapter, I explore the dramatic shift in the understanding of the relationship between religion, violence and the state that occurred on the part of an Anglican priest, Father Michael Lapsley, as a consequence of his encounter with apartheid. In particular, I seek to bring Lapsley's lived experience of violence into dialogue with some of the principal theoretical perspectives on religion and violence currently being debated within the academy. The key hermeneutical questions that I pursue are: What were the compelling conditions that motivated a committed pacifist priest to abandon his principled position on pacifism and begin legitimating revolutionary violence? And, more importantly, to what extent does the prevailing theories on religion and violence help us illuminate the dehumanizing effects of structural and institutional state violence as illustrated in the lived experience of Lapsley?

A Christian Commitment to Pacifism

Alan Michael Lapsley was born in Hastings, New Zealand on June 2, 1949.⁸ A year earlier the white Afrikaner Nationalist Party had come to power in South Africa under an electoral system that excluded the indigenous black majority and began implementing

⁷ South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission found that the Civil Cooperation Bureau was a creation of the South African Defense Force and an integral part of South Africa's counter-insurgency system which, in the course of its operations, perpetrated gross violations of human rights, including killings, against both South Africans and non-South Africans." See *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, Volume Two* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1999), 134–144.

⁸ According to Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 33, Lapsley's parents were very devout Christians and baptized the fifth of their seven children Alan Michael.

the racially discriminatory system of “apartheid.”⁹ According to Lapsley’s account of his early life, by the time he was eleven or twelve years old he had decided to become a pacifist. He professes that:

My decision had been influenced both by my understanding of Christianity as well as by my sister, who was a committed pacifist. I came to the conclusion that pacifism was not only a tactic but a principled position. I believed that war and the use of arms were always wrong and that pacifism worked in any and every situation. I also believed that my understanding of Christianity on the question of violence was the only one.¹⁰

Lapsley’s commitment to nonviolence was so fervent that he believed his own father had been wrong to fight in the Second World War. “As an adolescent I believed that it had been incorrect and improper for my father as a Christian to have fought against Hitler’s Nazi regime.”¹¹

Paradoxically, at around the same time that Lapsley was committing himself to Christian pacifism, the South African anti-apartheid movement, led by the African National Congress (ANC), was consciously moving from a fifty-year-old policy of pacifist resistance to that of armed struggle. To underscore the significance of this transition, the Nobel Peace Laureate, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, reminds us that,

⁹ The Afrikaans word “apartheid” literally means separateness. In 1948, playing on white Afrikaner fears of a “black peril,” the National Party came to power on the slogan of apartheid. This at first meant to most of those who embraced it, little more than increased coordination and extension of the laws of segregation already in existence. However, what started out as a slogan was quickly transformed into a racist theory of separateness and white supremacy and developed into a systematic program of social engineering. The new Afrikaner Nationalist Party regime began to institutionalize racial segregation in 1950 by passing two laws that constituted the cornerstone on which the policy of apartheid was laid. The new Population Registration Act No. 30 required all South Africans to be identified and registered from birth as belonging to one of four legally distinct racial groups: white, Asiatic (Indian), colored (“mixed” ancestry) and Native (later Bantu or black African). A concomitant law passed at the same time, the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 forced South Africans to reside in four separate residential areas corresponding to their population classification. In 1996 at the outset of its work, South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission declared apartheid “as a system of enforced racial discrimination and separation, a crime against humanity.” See *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report of South Africa, Volume One*, Appendix: A Crime Against Humanity (Oxford: Macmillan), 94–102. For a comprehensive account of the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism, see, Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003).

¹⁰ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003. See also, Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 35.

¹¹ Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 35.

“The commitment of the ANC to nonviolence for the first fifty years of its existence was rewarded when its President General Chief Albert Luthuli was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.”¹² The indiscriminate killing by the police of sixty-nine unarmed protesters (the great majority were shot in the back) against the pass laws in Sharpeville on March 21, 1960, led to the ANC abandoning its long-standing passive resistance campaigns against the racist apartheid system.¹³ In the wake of this massacre, the two major tendencies in the anti-apartheid struggle, the ANC and the Pan African Congress (PAC), were banned by the South African regime. Both organizations subsequently established armed wings and started engaging in acts of violence aimed at dislodging the apartheid regime and replacing it with a non-racial democratic government.¹⁴

As was the case with the ANC's fifty year long nonviolent struggle, Lapsley's pacifist stance was also challenged. From the very beginning he had to confront the fact that his father was a Second World War veteran. At the age of thirteen he had to deal with a second more tangible challenge to his pacifist commitment. The New Zealand school system required all high school students to do military drills and the only exemption was for religious objectors, such as Jehovah's Witnesses. In order to be exempted from the school cadets you needed to provide the school with a letter from your parents requesting such exemption from the school headmaster. Lapsley knew that his father, a proud war veteran, would never have consented to writing it. He thus decided to fight this battle on his own. Lapsley eventually won the case and was excused from doing military drills at school. “It is interesting,” Lapsley reflects, “that I was willing to take on and challenge the school establishment in a very dramatic way

¹² Desmond Tutu, “Freedom Fighters or Terrorists,” in *Theology & Violence: The South African Debate*, ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 73.

¹³ For a more detailed analysis of the events and impact of the Sharpeville killings on Black politics in South Africa, see Gail M. Gerhardt, *Black Power in South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) and Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1983).

¹⁴ The TRC confirms that it was only “following the banning of the ANC in 1960, that the organization established an armed wing, *Umkhonto weSizwe* (Spear of the Nation) popularly known as MK.” See *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report of South Africa, Volume Two* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1999), 326.

and won, but I never had the courage and was unable to inform my peers about my principled pacifist position, the real reason for my refusal to do drills.” He therefore continued to pretend to his schoolmates that he was indeed doing army drill.¹⁵ The decisive challenge to Lapsley’s pacifism was to come from his experience living in apartheid South Africa.

Lapsley’s first contact with South Africa came at the age of thirteen when he read the book, *Naught for your Comfort*, written by an Anglican priest, Trevor Huddleston.¹⁶ The author had described the inhumane, discriminatory and violent consequences of the apartheid policy on people of color and the young Lapsley was horrified by what he had read. After reading the book, he says that:

I was angered by what white people were doing to black people. I understood Christianity to be about love and justice for all, whereas apartheid seemed like death and misery for the majority of people in South Africa. What worried me was the claim by the perpetrators of apartheid that they were Christians.¹⁷

Huddleston’s book had left “an indelible impression” on Lapsley. Years later, he was to repeatedly recall the devastating impact that Huddleston’s book had on his consciousness of what it meant to be a Christian. The two were to meet several times later on. According to Michael Worsnip, “Both Huddleston’s book as well as the man have had a tremendous influence on [Lapsley]. In moments of crisis, it has often been Huddleston’s advice that Michael Lapsley sought out.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003.

¹⁶ Trevor Huddleston, *Naught for your Comfort* (London: Collins, 1956). Huddleston was, like Lapsley, an Anglican priest who had come to South Africa from abroad. Huddleston came from Britain to minister to black people in the province of Transvaal between 1943 and 1955. During this time he witnessed the violent consequences of the beginning phases of the apartheid policies. *Naught for your Comfort* exposes the brutality of apartheid, particularly the dehumanizing effects of the Group Areas Act in Sophiatown. The book achieved wide acclamation although Huddleston was eventually recalled by his religious community to England in 1955. He subsequently became the president of the influential Anti-Apartheid Movement based in that country. For a more detailed account of his life see, Robin Denniston, *Trevor Huddleston: A Life* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999).

¹⁷ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003.

¹⁸ Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 33.

In the introduction to Lapsley's biography, Huddleston asserts that Lapsley's theology is "shaped and formed by action and experience, not by reading books."¹⁹ Huddleston's claim is correct, although his assertion of the primacy of activism reflects his own bias rather than Lapsley's predisposition. Lapsley always found great inspiration in reading great books such as the biographies of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Latin American theologian, Dom Helder Camara.²⁰

Huddleston's book was to be Lapsley's first encounter, albeit at a cerebral level, with some of the violent realities of apartheid. Arguably, Huddleston's courageous stance against racial oppression and economic exploitation in apartheid South Africa and his remarkable witness to the best teachings within Christianity may have inspired the young Lapsley to opt for the priesthood.

At the age of seventeen, Lapsley traveled to Australia to join an Anglican religious order, the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM), and trained to become a priest.²¹ At this point he decided to give up his first name Alan and adopted his second name Michael as his religious name.²² During the course of his theological formation, Lapsley was able to reflect on his pacifist commitment. He studied the Gospels more intensely and was particularly inspired by the textual exegesis of Christian nonviolence and the pacifist struggle of the American civil rights activist, Martin Luther King, Jr.²³ Shortly after obtaining his Licentiate of Theology from the Australian College of Theology, his religious community, the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM), transferred him to South Africa.²⁴

¹⁹ Trevor Huddleston, "Foreword," in Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 5.

²⁰ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003.

²¹ It is interesting to note that Trevor Huddleston also joined an Anglican Religious Order, the Community of the Resurrection (CR).

²² Transcript of the evidence given by Fr. Michael Lapsley to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 10 June, 1996.

²³ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003.

²⁴ Transcript of the evidence given by Fr. Michael Lapsley to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 10 June, 1996. See Institute for Healing of Memories Archived Materials <http://www.healingofmemories.co.za/articles/TCR%20transcript%20of%20evidence%20to%20the%20HR%20Violation%20Committee,%20June%201996.htm> (accessed June 2004).

A Foreign Priest Discovers a South African “Struggle” Calling

Father Michael Lapsley (SSM) arrived in South Africa in 1973 at the age of twenty-four as a committed pacifist.²⁵ He took great pride in his pacifism and was acutely aware that his stance was an unusual one for an Anglican priest. “[T]here have been few wars in history which we Anglicans have been unprepared to bless,” he would often sarcastically remark.²⁶

Shortly after his move to South Africa, Lapsley enrolled as a student at the University of Natal in Durban. At the same time he also took up positions as Anglican chaplain to students of two black campuses and one white campus. Almost instinctively, Lapsley began preaching his message of nonviolence to the university students under his pastoral care. He used every opportunity to convince students as well as other South Africans with whom he came into contact about what he passionately believed was the only truly Christian response to the oppressive apartheid system, namely that of nonviolence.²⁷ He firmly believed that the problem of apartheid could be resolved if only whites and blacks were willing to sit down and talk to each other. In one of his university speeches Lapsley argued his case as follows:

South Africa’s groups of people either don’t communicate at all, except at gun point, or they talk right past each other. We are bit like disembodied spirits who go to embrace and pass through each other and both experience intense frustration.²⁸

From his unique vantage point as a student chaplain, Lapsley was able to come to meet students from all racial backgrounds and he quickly began to understand the brutal nature of racial oppression and the structural violence of apartheid. He soon discovered to his chagrin that no matter what he personally believed or said about the

²⁵ According to his testimony to the TRC, Lapsley claims that “... throughout the time I was in South Africa, I was a convinced Pacifist.”

²⁶ See also, Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 36.

²⁷ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003.

²⁸ Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 36.

un-Christian nature of racial oppression, he was still classified under the apartheid legislation as a white person and as such enjoyed all the privileges that it brought. Lapsley excruciatingly describes his experience as follows:

On arrival in South Africa, my humanness was removed and I became a white man. There was nothing I could do to escape from my whiteness. It defined every aspect of my own existence – the suburb I lived in; the beach where I could swim; the entrance to the post office that I could use; the toilet I could enter and so on *ad infinitum*. I could say verbally that I was opposed to apartheid, that I believed all people were equal. It made no difference what I said. I was white and had all the advantages of being white. Whiteness became to me like leprosy. I couldn't escape from it. It wouldn't wash off. It may sound naïve, but I did not understand until I lived in South Africa that the system divided everyone into oppressed or oppressors and that structurally speaking, I myself had become an oppressor.²⁹

Notwithstanding this experience, Lapsley continued to use every opportunity he had to preach what he believed to be the Christian gospel of nonviolence. He traveled to a number of campuses all over the country preaching against the injustices of apartheid. In one address entitled, “Violence and Nonviolence and the Christian,” Lapsley invoked the words of the noted peace activist and Archbishop of Brazil, Dom Helder Camara (d.1999), as representing his own views on the question of nonviolence:

My personal vocation is that of a pilgrim of peace, following the example of Paul VI. Personally, I would prefer a thousand times to be killed rather than to kill. This personal position is based on the gospel ... We Christian's are on the side of nonviolence, which is by no means a choice of weakness or passivity. Nonviolence means believing more passionately in the force of truth, justice and love, than in the force of wars, murder and hatred.³⁰

Lapsley soon found his rigid pacifist positions and views about the nonviolent resolution of the problem of apartheid challenged. Gradually, the oppressive apartheid context

²⁹ Michael Lapsley, “The Struggle is my Life,” 1987, 1.

³⁰ Michael Lapsley, “Violence, Nonviolence, and the Christian,” 1976. See also Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 39.

began to break down the walls of his carefully constructed gospel of nonviolence. He discovered within himself a kind of schizophrenia. Ministering as he was to black as well as white students, he found that when he preached to black students that as Christians it was wrong for them to achieve their goals of equal rights through the use of violence, he was commended by the apartheid authorities. However, when he preached the same message of nonviolence to white students, telling them that as Christians they should not use the force of arms to prevent their fellow citizens [non-Whites] from achieving equal rights, he discovered that he was violating a section of the South African Defense Act.

From the apartheid state's point of view preaching pacifism to Blacks was highly acceptable, but by preaching the same message to White students, which meant calling on them to refuse to join the military and use violence methods to defend apartheid, I was engaging in an illegal activity. There was a particular section of the Defense Act that made it illegal and an act of terrorism to call upon young white South Africans not to join the military and to engage in officially sanctioned violence in defense of the apartheid state.³¹

In reflecting upon this dilemma, Lapsley began to discover that a curious language was being employed. The violence employed by the apartheid state against the people in pursuit of its racist and discriminatory policies was called "law and order," whilst the violence of the people in defense of themselves was called "terrorism."³²

This was but one of the many challenges to his views on nonviolence elicited by Lapsley's encounter with apartheid. The student uprising of June 16, 1976, however, was to mark a "turning point" in Lapsley's South African ministry. As a result of the imposition of Afrikaans as the only medium of instruction in South African schools, black students in Soweto, one of the biggest townships outside Johannesburg, decided to organize a protest march. Once again the South African police responded to the

³¹ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003.

³² Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003.

peaceful protest with violence. Official figures claim that by the end of the day 23 students had been killed.

In response to the police killings in Soweto, student uprisings erupted in other townships all across South Africa. During the next few months, the entire country became engulfed in violence. By August 1976 the Minister of Justice had imposed a ban on all public meetings under the Riotous Assemblies Act. By the end of the year the death toll had arisen to over a thousand people, mainly school children.³³ The countrywide uprising was being led by students and it was almost inevitable that Lapsley would be deeply affected by the events.

How Does a Committed Pacifist Respond to a Violent Situation like Soweto 1976?

Although not directly affected, Lapsley was traumatized by the violence of 1976. More and more, he recalls, he began to associate the policies of the apartheid regime with that of the Nazi's in Germany.³⁴ He continued to preach hope and nonviolence in the midst of the aggravating and precarious reality facing South Africa in September 1976. But he also started to speak out more forcefully against the violence of the apartheid state. In one address, titled "Hope after Soweto," Lapsley laid the blame for the violence squarely at the feet of the apartheid government:

For several months, key black leaders spoke of the rising resentment against the use of Afrikaans by the school children of Soweto ... No one listened ... And then it happened. The first child was shot by a police bullet. For days it all just happened. The kill ratio was something like a hundred to one – one hundred black people to one white person. Your pigmentation makes your life one hundred times more valuable than someone else with their unchosen darker complexion.³⁵

³³ For a detailed account of the 1976 Soweto uprisings, see John Kane Berman, *Soweto: Black Revolt White Reaction* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978).

³⁴ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003.

³⁵ Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 44.

As was the case with all outspoken critics of the apartheid state, the regime quickly began to feel threatened by Lapsley's popularity among Black students. Fortuitously, for the state, Lapsley's South African visa was to expire by the end of September 1976 and the apartheid state refused to re-new his visa status. He was thus forced to leave South Africa.³⁶

The day before his departure date of September 30, 1976, Lapsley issued a long press statement protesting his expulsion.³⁷ Once again he affirmed his pacifist commitment. "I have always advocated a nonviolent position as an expression of my total commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ," his statement read. By this time, however, Lapsley's South African experience had completely transformed his own perspective about the structural and institutional violence of the apartheid state. He had now come to the conclusion that: "All violence is not the same. The violence of a rapist is not the same as the counter-violence of the person being raped."³⁸ His press release unequivocally reflected his new position:

It appears that the government only approves criticism of the violence of the black people. However, the violence of the black people is only a response to the structural and institutional violence of the apartheid system, which robs every black person of human dignity and at the same time incarcerates whites in bondage to guilt, fear and anxiety.³⁹

Needless to say, Lapsley was very disappointed about his fate. His South African experience had unexpectedly been cut short. It was however this period of his life more than anything else that was to transform his perspectives on violence. In reflecting on his life Lapsley repeatedly referred to this period of his life as being the most critical:

³⁶ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003. In this regard Lapsley's South African trajectory as a white priest coming from the outside and being forced to leave by the authorities resonates with that of Trevor Huddleston.

³⁷ For the full text of Michael Lapsley's press statement, see Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 47.

³⁸ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003.

³⁹ Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 47.

“... the years 1973–76, spent as a university Chaplain in South Africa, transformed me more radically than any other experience.”⁴⁰ In the brief period of time that Lapsley lived in South Africa he had become so attached to the country and invested in the struggle of its people for racial equality that it was almost natural that he decided to join the thousands of anti-apartheid activists who had been forced into exile in the neighboring states. Lapsley found a new home in nearby Lesotho.

The physical move to Lesotho was however to lead to a more significant shift in theological conviction and a change in Lapsley’s stance on nonviolence. It is significant to note however that according to his testimony before the TRC, Lapsley claims that: “throughout the time that I was in South Africa, I was a convinced pacifist.”⁴¹ This principled stance on nonviolence was however to change when he landed in Lesotho. As we have seen, the cracks had already begun during his traumatic experience of the 1976 Soweto student uprising.

Living in Exile

Shortly after his arrival in Lesotho, Lapsley took up the position as Anglican chaplain of the National University of Lesotho (NUL). In addition to this responsibility, he was also placed in charge of the Anglican seminary, which was based in the middle of the campus. These new posts suited Lapsley ideally. It enabled him to continue his ministry to students, and to be at the center of the training and formation of new priests. But more importantly, it enabled Lapsley to minister and provide support to the many anti-apartheid activists who had been forced to flee South Africa for fear of persecution. Lapsley happily made his new home available for anti-apartheid activists, from a variety of different political persuasions. Serious political debates took place almost every time people met at his house. According to his biographer, Michael

⁴⁰ Michael Lapsley, “Christians and the Armed Struggle,” *Sechaba* 3 (July 1980).

⁴¹ Transcript of the evidence given by Fr. Michael Lapsley to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa – 10 June, 1996.

Worsnip, some of those who visited his home were hard core members of the ANC's armed wing, *Umkhonto We Sizwe*.⁴²

Lapsley was fully aware of the dangerous role he was playing in opening up his house as a place of refuge for anti-apartheid activists. He however did not mind it a bit since in his view they had been unjustly persecuted, and this was his small contribution to the struggle for freedom in South Africa.⁴³ It was not surprising therefore that shortly after his arrival in Lesotho, Lapsley decided to formally join the banned ANC. "Not having been born in South Africa," this was his way "of taking citizenship" in the non-racial and democratic South Africa he and his new compatriots were fighting to bring about.⁴⁴

Lapsley's decision to become a formal, card carrying member of the ANC, an organization that had decided to take up arms against the apartheid regime, severely compromised his principled position on pacifism. He was however fully conscious of the implications of his move and was quite comfortable with it. In fact, shortly after his membership of the ANC was made public, Lapsley was challenged in an interview by a journalist to explain whether this meant that he would be prepared not only to verbally justify the ANC's armed struggle but to actually engage in "violent struggle," to which he responded:

The day I became a member of the ANC it meant that I had commitments to both the kind of society that the ANC is committed to, but also to accept the command of the organization and its methods of achieving justice. So I accept the full implications of being a member of the ANC and the methodology of armed struggle in order to achieve those aims. So the answer is yes.⁴⁵

Not surprisingly, Lapsley's overt support for the armed struggle of the ANC became a major problem for the Anglican Church. In fact the straw that broke the camel's back

⁴² Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 64.

⁴³ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12, 2003.

⁴⁴ Transcript of the evidence given by Fr. Michael Lapsley to the TRC – 10 June, 1996.

⁴⁵ Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 106–7.

came in 1979, three years after Lapsley's arrival in Lesotho. Lapsley decided together with another priest, John Osmers, to publicly oppose the decision by the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA) to withhold paying membership fees to the World Council of Churches (WCC) because of what it claimed to be the WCC's financial support through its Program to Combat Racism of the "terrorism" of the ANC.⁴⁶ In an "Open Letter" to the Anglican Archbishop of Southern Africa, Bill Burnett, and the Bishops of the Province, Lapsley and Osmers wrote:

The Anglican Church continues to license priests to serve as paid officers of the South African Defense Force, who are thereby bound by all the discipline and regulations of this army. When a Christian comes to the conclusion that the liberation movement is the only remaining vehicle for achieving basic human rights in the land of his/her birth, s/he finds that priests of the Anglican Church are in the uniform of the oppressor's army.⁴⁷

The letter was fierce in its tone and the Anglican Church had been exposed for its lack of so called political neutrality that had been at the center of its policy position on the anti-apartheid struggle. Lapsley however went even further. He, together with Osmers, was able to get a motion passed at the Lesotho Diocesan Synod of 1979 in support of the WCC's Program to Combat Racism. They also organized for a collection to be taken and sent to the Special Fund as a contribution from the Diocese of Lesotho. As a result of this protest action, as well as his overt support for the ANC, Lapsley's standing within the Church became more and more problematic.⁴⁸ He was now in open defiance of the formal policy positions taken by the Church Synod and its hierarchy.

⁴⁶ Like Lapsley, Father John Osmers was also the victim of a parcel bomb attack together with five other ANC members in Lesotho on July 6, 1987. As a result of the attack, Osmers lost his hand and part of his groin. See, *TRC Report Volume Two*, 102.

⁴⁷ Michael Lapsley and John Osmers, 'An Open letter to the Archbishop and Bishops of the CPSA Re: The World Council of Churches Program to Combat Racism Special Fund'. For the full text of the letter see Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 51–53.

⁴⁸ For a detailed history of the controversy surrounding the WCC's financial support for the anti-apartheid movement through its Program to Combat Racism, see Pauline Webb, ed. *A Long Struggle: The Involvement of the World Council of Churches in South Africa* (Geneva: WCC Publication, 1994).

In December 1982, while Lapsley was on holiday in New Zealand, the South African Defense Force launched a major pre-emptive attack on so-called “terrorist” bases in the capital city of Lesotho, Maseru.⁴⁹ A number of targets were hit, including the home of Chris Hani, then deputy commander of the ANC’s military wing, *Umkhonto We Sizwe*. Hani was not hit, since he had moved two weeks previously, but many other ANC cadres were killed, including at least a dozen Basotho nationals who were caught in the crossfire.⁵⁰ In the face of the devastation a number of ANC activists were forced to flee Lesotho. The raid was not only meant to kill, but to terrorize the entire nation.⁵¹

In the wake of the destruction, the Senate of the Anglican Church of Lesotho decided to advise Lapsley, on holiday in New Zealand, not to return to his post in Lesotho. The advising letter from the Bishop however did not reach Lapsley in time and he arrived back in Lesotho in January 1983, just more than a month after the attack. After a lengthy battle in which Lapsley refused to accept the Church’s request for him to leave, he went to Britain to consult with the director of his religious order the SSM, Father Edmund Wheat. In consultation with Fr. Wheat, Lapsley decided to enroll at the University of Zimbabwe to do a Masters degree.⁵²

Lapsley arrived in Zimbabwe in August 1985. In addition to pursuing his studies, he assumed the position as rector of the parish of St Michael’s in Mbare Township outside of Harare. The parish soon flourished and Lapsley’s pastoral role naturally grew to encompass the thousands of ANC activists that had sought exile in Zimbabwe. Soon after completing his Masters degree at the University of Zimbabwe,

⁴⁹ The TRC Report has devoted an entire chapter of its second volume to its investigations and findings concerning the human rights violations and the intermittent cross-border interventions by the SADF into six Southern African states, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique. See *TRC Report, Volume Two*, 42–164.

⁵⁰ The influential ANC leader, Chris Hani, was eventually assassinated a year prior to the first non-racial democratic elections on April 10, 1994, outside his home in Johannesburg. For a useful introduction to the life and struggle of Martin Tembisile Hani known by his MK *nom de guerre* as “Chris” see *Chris Hani: Rebel Lives* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, forthcoming).

⁵¹ The TRC found that “Mr. Chris Hani was targeted for elimination by South African security forces and that they were responsible for several attempts to kill him in Lesotho in the early 1980’s.” See *TRC Report, Volume Two*, 105.

⁵² Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 54–83.

Lapsley published his thesis, “Neutrality or Cooption.”⁵³ The book is an historical study of church-state relations after the Rhodesia government of Ian Smith’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1964. In his book Lapsley argued that the so-called neutrality of the Anglican Church was a façade and that in reality the Church had been completely co-opted by the white racist ideology of the Smith regime. Lapsley’s main thesis is aptly captured in a foreword written to the book by the then President of Zimbabwe, Canaan Banana:

Neutrality at best means deafening silence and indifference and at worst, smiling at and admiring the status quo. I refuse to accept that Jesus assumed the role of honored guest in the theater of human slaughter and misery. He intervenes in human affairs and challenged the principalities and powers that denied God’s children their right to life and to fundamental human liberties.⁵⁴

Lapsley’s book did not receive an enthusiastic welcome among the hierarchy within the Anglican Church. What made matters worse was that Lapsley transposed the lessons he learnt from his study of the “covert” religious legitimization of violence by the Anglican Church in Rhodesia to the role of the Church in the struggle against apartheid. After all, during his time in Lesotho, Lapsley had already challenged the Church’s withholding of its fees to the WCC because of its financial support for the anti-apartheid movement. Moreover, Lapsley was particularly critical of the Anglican Church’s continued granting of licenses to priests to serve as paid officers of the South African Defense Force. In so doing, in Lapsley’s view, the Anglican Church was blessing the violence of the apartheid state while at the same time condemning the WCC for its support of the ANC and its armed struggle for justice. In relation to the South African context, therefore, Lapsley had come to the conclusion that the Church was hiding behind a claim of being apolitical while in fact: “the Church, in attempting to be neutral, was in reality co-opted for the designs of the apartheid state.”⁵⁵

⁵³ Michael Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option* (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1986).

⁵⁴ Canaan S. Banana, “Foreword,” in Lapsley, *Neutrality or Co-option*, 6–8.

⁵⁵ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003.

Lapsley recognized that the Anglican Church did sometimes offer a critique of the state, where it failed however was to analyze the primary sources of violence. This position, he argued, stands in stark contrast to the pacifism of his hero, Dom Helder Camara, who analyzed the real sources of violence and unequivocally condemned them.⁵⁶

For its part, the Anglican Church continued to use Lapsley's formal membership of the ANC as the major bone of contention in their relationship. He recalls that: "I was under the severest attack from Church officials for my support for the ANC. In fact, when pressed the Church with great reluctance acknowledged that I was a priest." Lapsley's relationship with the Church hierarchy remained contentious and was ironically only healed by his unfortunate suffering.⁵⁷

On April 28, 1990, almost three months after the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC and the PAC in February 1990, Lapsley was blown up by a parcel bomb that had been sent by members of the CCB, one of the apartheid death squads instituted and financed by the South African Defense Force (SADF). After spending a month in a Zimbabwean hospital and six months in two hospitals in New Zealand recovering from his injuries sustained during the bomb blast, Lapsley returned to his beloved country of adoption, South Africa, in February 1992. After working as a pastoral counselor at the Trauma Center for Victims of Violence and Torture in Cape Town, Lapsley founded an Institute of the Healing of Memories to continue the reconciliation work initiated by the TRC.

Lapsley's South African journey underscores the key thesis of this dissertation, namely that of accentuating the insidious manner in which religion can legitimate systemic state violence. Lapsley's sojourn raises two interrelated issues: first, the complicity of religion in the apartheid crime against humanity; and second, the

⁵⁶ Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 13, 2003.

⁵⁷ For a deeper insight into the contentious relationship between Father Michael Lapsley and the Anglican Church, see Worsnip, *Priest and Partisan*, 54–102.

paradoxical position of the South African religious hierarchy on violence. On the one hand, churches provided licenses to priests to serve in the apartheid state's defense force, while, on the other hand, they accused the World Council of Churches of legitimating revolutionary violence by providing financial support to the anti-apartheid movement through its Program to Combat Racism. What, then, is the veracity of Lapsley's witness? More significantly, how are the critical issues evinced by his lived experience represented in the dominant literature on religion and violence? How have the theoretical insights gained from the international debate been applied to explicate the varied ways in which religion was implicated in the violence of apartheid? And, what possibilities does the South African case demonstrate for fresh theoretical insights on the nexus between religion and violence? Do the broken eyes and ears of Michael Lapsley give us a useful perspective on these questions?

Religion and Violence under Apartheid: A Theoretical Assessment

I have found a conspicuous neglect of the South African case in the deluge of literature on religion and violence that has flooded the market since the end of the Cold War.⁵⁸ For example, the only bibliography of religion and violence, compiled by Christopher Candland, lists just over a dozen entries.⁵⁹ Furthermore, Candland's choice of bibliographical subheadings is intriguing. He has case studies captions such as "Religious Violence in Nigeria and the Sudan," "Religion in the Conflict in Northern Ireland" and "Violence and Religious Nationalism in South Asia." To categorize the South African situation, he chooses the curious title of "Afrikaner Violence and Liberation Theology in Southern Africa."⁶⁰ The general impression one is left with after consulting Candland's bibliography is that religion was not implicated in the

⁵⁸ For an idea of the proliferation of materials on religion and violence in the last few years consult the bibliography to this dissertation.

⁵⁹ See Christopher Candland, *The Spirit of Violence: An Interdisciplinary Bibliography of Religion and Violence*, Occasional Papers of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, no. 6 (1992) : 71–73.

⁶⁰ For this categorization, see "Contents" in Candland, *The Spirit of Violence*, 1992.

violence of apartheid, and that its roots lay elsewhere in Afrikaner nationalism, and if indeed religion was involved in legitimating violence at all, it was doing so in support of the liberation movement. This one-sided perspective appears to be pervasive in the scholarship and thinking about religion and violence under apartheid.

The most prominent of the scant catalogue on religion and violence in South Africa is an edited volume, *Violence and Theology*, by one of the most prolific scholars in the field, Charles Villa-Vicencio.⁶¹ He collected nineteen articles in which some of the most influential anti-apartheid theologians in South Africa, including Desmond Tutu, debated the theological roots of mainstream Christianity's legitimation of state violence and its consequent disinclination to legitimate revolutionary violence in the struggle against apartheid.⁶² Most of the authors argue that the time for debating whether or not the Church should be supporting the revolutionary violence in South Africa is over, and that by the mid-1980s the conditions in apartheid South Africa were ripe for the application of the just-war criteria set forth by the classical theologians such as Augustine of Hippo (350–430), Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274), Martin Luther (1483–1546) and John Calvin (1509–1564). This theological position is usefully depicted by Albert Nolan and Mary Armour: “The criteria of the just-war being present is not really at issue, in that ample evidence exists as regards the existence of a manifest longstanding tyranny”⁶³ It is instructive to note that Lapsley had reached a similar conclusion almost a decade earlier when he joined the ANC in Lesotho in 1976.

Theology and Violence, perhaps more than any other book, powerfully captures the sharp critique of anti-apartheid theologians on the mainstream Christianity's duplicitous position on the question of religion and violence. Consequently, the authors

⁶¹ Charles Villa-Vicencio has been one of the most productive scholars in analyzing the debate about the role of Christianity in relation to apartheid. For some of his work see Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Trapped in Apartheid: Socio-Theological History of the English Speaking Churches* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988).

⁶² Charles Villa-Vicencio, ed. *Theology and Violence: The South African Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988).

⁶³ Villa-Vicencio, *Theology and Violence*, 209.

raise some of the most interesting theoretical questions about the debate on religion and violence in the Western academy. The fundamental criticism of many of the contributors is that the dominant tradition of the Church has tended to bless the state's use of violence, while condemning violent revolution against the ruling authorities. Villa-Vicencio usefully captures this critique when he argues that:

Suffice it to say that held captive to the dominant forces of what has come to be known as 'Western Christian civilization', the Christian religion has come to be an important part of the ideological framework that has supported the existence of successive regimes in different parts of the world who affirm the dominant values of the West. And the inclination of the church to legitimate the use of violence by these regimes, while opposing revolutionary violence to overthrow such regimes, is a natural consequence of this ideological captivity.⁶⁴

The rich essays contained in Villa-Vicencio's edited volume are by far the most widely cited of the materials on religion and violence in South Africa.⁶⁵ Surprisingly, however, I could only locate two book reviews of it.⁶⁶ Moreover, I have not found any strong evidence in the post-Cold War literature on religion and violence embracing the rich theoretical propositions made by the wide-array of anti-apartheid scholars and activists in the book. Perhaps the reason for its neglect in the academy is its theological bias. For while this anthology includes some compelling arguments in support of revolutionary violence, and does raise some interesting theoretical questions, especially about the historical predisposition of the powerful elites for the religious legitimization of state violence, as its title suggests and the contents confirm, it is essentially a theological inquiry. The only two works that place the South African case within the context of the theoretical debate on religion and violence are, *Shots in the Streets* by David Chidester,⁶⁷ and *The Ambivalence of the Sacred* by Scott Appleby.

⁶⁴ Villa-Vicencio, *Theology and Violence*, 2.

⁶⁵ See for example: Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 318n41, 45 & 48.

⁶⁶ See *The Christian Century* 107 (February 28, 1999) and *Thought* 66 (1991).

⁶⁷ David Chidester, *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991).

Chidester's contribution is the only volume that deals exclusively with religion and violence in South Africa. More importantly, he is the only scholar that has applied the theoretical insights gained from the international debate to explicate the diverse ways in which religion was implicated in the violence of apartheid. Unlike most historians of religion, Chidester does not avoid the difficult challenge of defining violence. He confronts it head on and not surprisingly chooses to start his analysis not with a single definition of violence but with four: direct physical harm, the violation of humanity, illegitimate force or legitimate liberation.⁶⁸ He identifies three types of religious violence in South Africa as the focus of his study: ritual killing, dehumanization through torture and the spiritual politics of the armed struggle against apartheid.⁶⁹ Utilizing insights gleaned from the theory of Rene Girard on sacrifice and scapegoating, he successfully demonstrates through the detailed analysis of two notorious cases of public violence – the execution of eight black pedestrians in the capital city of Pretoria by a white supremacist, Barend Strydom, and the public killing of a black community counselor by a gang of black township residents – that they both followed a religious logic of sacrificial killing and ritual elimination.⁷⁰

Chidester's pioneering attempt to theorize violence and religion in South Africa has however made little impact on the broader debate within the Western academy.⁷¹ For example, in *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, one of the only instances I have found of a significant treatment of the South African case in the theoretical literature on religion and violence, Chidester's volume is not cited. Nevertheless, Appleby's work deals with the South African case both within the broader theological as well as the theoretical debate on the religious legitimation of violence. He argues tangentially

⁶⁸ Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, x–xii and 173n3. For a later elaboration of his views on the contested definitions of violence see Chidester, "Comprehending Political Violence."

⁶⁹ Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, 33–37.

⁷⁰ Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, 1–21.

⁷¹ One reviewer has suggested that the reason why Chidester's contribution has not made a wider impact is because of its "de- and reconstructionist" style. See Pierre L. van den Berghe, *Contemporary Sociology* 21, no. 3 : 324–25.

that during the apartheid era the DRC, as well as some charismatic and evangelical churches, deliberately chose not to challenge the oppressive apartheid system and that under “conditions of systemic, state-supported violence this was an unacceptable option” and essentially meant “support for the status quo by default.” Appleby employs the *Kairos Document* in making the case that both state theology and church theology were implicated in legitimating apartheid. In church theology, Appleby, synthesizing the Kairos position, avers that “violence becomes part of the state propaganda. It refers to the actions of those who seek to overthrow unjust structures, but not to the violence of the structures, nor to the violence of the State in maintaining such structures.”⁷²

Demonstrating religious complicity with apartheid violence is however not Appleby’s major thesis. On the contrary, he invokes the South African case as a plausible Christian argument for legitimating revolutionary violence in resisting and even overturning the apartheid state. Appleby carefully analyses the theological positions on religion and violence in the context of apartheid of some of the most prominent South African anti-apartheid clerics, including, Alan Boesak, Frank Chikane and Buti Tlhagale. The following quote from Desmond Tutu usefully captures the duplicity black Christians saw in the “mainstream tradition” on violence: “Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who plotted to murder Hitler, came to be regarded as a modern-day martyr and saint. But when it comes to the matter of black liberation the West and most of the Church suddenly begins to show pacifist tendencies.”⁷³

Curiously, however, Appleby does not invoke the South African case as a model of any of his three typological patterns of religious violence, which he enumerates as fundamentalism, ethno-religious nationalism or liberationism.⁷⁴ However, one anthropologist who studies comparative religions, Richard T. Antoun, has made the case for one or other strand within the Afrikaner Reformed Church to be considered as

⁷² Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 37–39.

⁷³ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 28.

⁷⁴ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 57–120.

typically fundamentalist.⁷⁵ Antoun uses the Afrikaner reading of the Bible as a concrete example of what he calls “traditioning,” one of the key features of a fundamentalist movement. In my view, the DRCs legitimization of apartheid would have made a useful example of ethno-religious nationalism. More pertinently, however, is Appleby’s cogent synthesis of the moral arguments marshaled by the anti-apartheid churches in making a credible case to legitimate counter-violence against the apartheid state. This in my perspective may be an appropriate example of the liberationist prototype and could be used to strengthen this unexplored dimension of Appleby’s typology.⁷⁶

Regrettably, Appleby’s important reference to the South African case has not been recognized in any of the plethora of reviews of his book. Neither has this been taken up by any of the unprecedented number of books on religion and violence that have been written since its publication in 2000. Perhaps, this may in part be due to the fact that his analysis of the South African case is tucked away in the middle of chapter one in which he is elaborating elements of a theory of religion and violence rather than analyzed substantively on its own merits. Appleby’s case is not unique but shares the same plight as Chidester’s study – the palpable neglect of the apartheid case in the proliferating religion and violence literature.

The question of why this is so gets to the heart of the critique that this dissertation advances. I suggest three possible reasons for this neglect. The first might be that many scholars are not convinced that religion was implicated in apartheid violence. The second centers on the hypothesis of South African exceptionalism: the notion that the apartheid case is so unique that it does not correspond to other contexts in which religion has been implicated in violence.

⁷⁵ Richard T. Antoun, *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic and Jewish Movement* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

⁷⁶ Appleby allocates two full chapters to considering fundamentalism and ethno-religious nationalism. In contradistinction, he discusses liberationism in three pages. See, Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 34–40.

But the third, most compelling argument is that which is powerfully brought to the fore by the critique of the anti-apartheid theologians, namely that “the Christian religion has come to be an important part of the ideological framework that has supported successive regimes at different parts of the world who affirm the dominant values of the West. And the inclination of the Church to legitimate the use of violence by these regimes is a natural consequence of this ideological captivity.” Transposing this critique to the Western academy, one may make a comparable proposal: *Is the palpable neglect of the South African case a reflection of the pro-state bias in the dominant literature on religion and violence?*

Based on the account of Lapsley’s encounter with the violence of apartheid that I have sketched above, the answer is an unequivocal, yes. Lapsley found the weight of an idiosyncratically-defined Christian state bearing down upon him in his encounter with the violence of apartheid, as his life story and his own words in dialogue attest. In the hegemonic theoretical perspective, religious violence is defined as that which is perpetrated by non-state actors. The South African case – and Lapsley’s experience, in which religious violence came through the state and not through non-state actors – does not sit well with this standpoint. It is therefore not surprising that the case of apartheid, which is a clear instance of systemic state violence legitimated by religion, is overlooked.

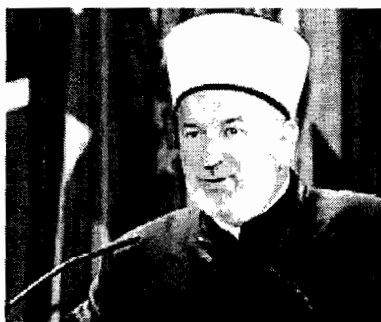
In conclusion, I contend that the lived experience of Lapsley provides a compelling critique of the existing theories on religion and violence. It exposes their deficiencies and reminds us about the devastating yet sinister nature of systemic state violence. Lapsley’s disabled body, yet flourishing life and remarkable contribution to the healing of memories in the non-racial and democratic South Africa, stands as both a reminder of the destructiveness of the abuse of state’s monopoly of violence and as a beacon of hope pointing us in the direction that future research on religion and violence should take. For, unless the religious dimension of systemic and state-sponsored violence is uncovered and its cycle broken, the possibilities for peace will continue to elude us.

In the next chapter, I explore how the lessons that might have been learned from the South African experience have eluded theorists in their attempts to account for the religious dimensions of the violence which engulfed the Balkans in the mid-1990s, ironically at the same time that South Africa was being liberated from apartheid.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER FOUR

BOSNIA: FROM ETHNIC CLEANSING TO RELIGIOUS GENOCIDE¹



Interlocutor II
Shaikh Mustafa Cerić

... the evidence in Bosnia leads to conclusions that are as unavoidable as they are unpalatable. Genocide has occurred. It has occurred with the acquiescence of Western governments, in violation of the United Nations Charter and the Geneva Convention on Genocide of 1948. It has been motivated and justified in large part by religious nationalism, fueled financially and militarily from Serbia and Croatia, and grounded in religious symbols. And the primary victims have been Bosnian Muslims, selected for destruction because of their religion.²

At the outset of my interview with Mustafa Cerić, the Supreme Head (*reis-ul-ulema*)³ of the Islamic community in Bosnia-Herzegovina (hereafter referred to as Bosnia), he

¹ This chapter is based largely on two personal interviews conducted with Mustafa Cerić. The first one took place at his office in Sarajevo, Bosnia on May 15, 2002. The second was undertaken almost a year later at a conference at the University of Southern California on May 6, 2003. The interviews were supplemented by Cerić's published speeches, press statements, a copy of his most recent curriculum vitae, and a commemorative book on the opening of the Islamic Cultural Centre in Chicago, October 15, 1988, *The Center, The People and The Mission: A Commemorative Book for the Grand Opening of the Islamic Cultural Center* (Chicago: Islamic Cultural Center, 1988). The information obtained from the curriculum vitae will henceforth be referenced as *Cerić Resume*. The book from the Chicago Islamic Center will hereafter be referred to as *Commemorative Book*.

² Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed*, xiii. Sells has written extensively on the role of religion in the violence in Bosnia. In addition to numerous journal articles on the subject he hosts a Web site on his homepage focusing exclusively on the war and justice in Bosnia. For details see <http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/home.html> (accessed March 2004).

³ This Arabic phrase refers to the official offices of the supreme head of the Muslim religious leaders in Bosnia and is commonly transliterated in the literature as *reis-ul-ulema*. For the purposes of this dissertation I have chosen to stick to this general usage.

enthusiastically invoked these words from *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* by Michael A. Sells. During the interview, Ceric frequently cited Sells' work and deemed it to be "a seminal text not only for understanding the precise role of religion in violence in Bosnia, but also instructive about the nature of contemporary scholarship on religious violence in general."⁴ "Many academic accounts of the conflict in Bosnia," he insisted, "were scandalous in denying or downplaying the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and to a lesser extent the Croatian Catholic Church in legitimating the genocidal war against Muslims in Bosnia."⁵

Why, I asked, were Western scholars guilty of such a bias in their assessment of the role of religion in the Bosnian conflict? Mustafa Ceric's answer was revealing. "They are unabashed apologists for Christianity," he retorted. "If the same acts of barbarism had been perpetrated by individuals and groups in any way connected to Islam," he continued, "these same scholars would have abandoned their sophisticated analysis of holding together all of the complex factors giving rise to violence, and they would have simply reduced it to an essentialized and reified Islam."⁶ Earlier, in a lecture at a conference convened at the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies in 1999, Ceric made a similar point in this way:

Saddam Husain is a Muslim as much as Hitler was a Christian; and Karadzic is a Christian as much as Uthama bin Laden is a Muslim. However, Hitler is not a Christian fascist. He is just one of the worst fascists in history. Karadzic is not a Christian war criminal. He is just one of the worst criminals in ex-Yugoslavia. On the other side, Saddam is not just one of the worst statesmen in history. He is the Muslim dictator proper. And Utham[a] bin Ladin is not just one of the voluntary world warriors. He is the Islamic terrorist par excellence.⁷

⁴ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 12, 2002. Apparently, this is also Bill Clinton's favorite book on the Balkans and during his tenure at the White House he passed it on to his colleagues and staff as required reading. See Al Kamen, "The Book on Kosovo," *Washington Post Magazine*, July 1999, WO2, <http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/6935.html> (accessed May 2005).

⁵ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

⁶ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

⁷ Mustafa Ceric, *Islam and the West* (Sarajevo: Biblioteka Posebna Izdanja, br.65). Published speech delivered at the Wilton Park conference with the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies 22–25 November, 1999. This is a common refrain by Ceric and appears in a number of his speeches and interviews.

Ceric is not surprised by this bias in Western scholarship on Islam. Holding a doctorate from the University of Chicago, he can appreciate the subtle manner in which political location and hegemonic ideologies can unduly influence scholarly endeavors.⁸ Moreover, after his negative experience of the role Serbian intellectuals played in motivating and justifying the elimination of Muslims in the former Yugoslavia, he is understandably sensitive to partiality in scholarship.⁹

Ceric contends that the Serbian anti-Muslim discourse is part of a larger global discourse, “a logical consequence of the dominant stereotype in the West that sees Islam as a hideous, bloodthirsty, intolerant, and aggressive cult.”¹⁰ In support of this contention, he cites the work of Stephen Swartz and Bruce Lawrence. The former argues that “Muhammad has an evil reputation among Westerners that sets him apart from Moses and Jesus.”¹¹ The latter observes that the stereotype that Islam is inherently violent and that Muslims are prone to violence, “amounts to a slur.”¹² Ceric strongly believes that:

... this violent image of Islam is etched in Western perceptions of Islam. It is the same consciousness that has contributed in no small measure to the ethnic cleansing campaign against Bosnian Muslims and is currently conditioning academic analyses of the war such that the Christian perpetrators of the violence are obscured by the so called objectivist strategy of assigning equal blame to all parties to the conflict.¹³

⁸ Ceric resume, 1. Ceric’s doctoral dissertation was entitled *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (d.333/944)*.

⁹ For an in depth case study of the manner in which Serbian intellectuals, writers, poets, and professors constructed negative stereotypes of Bosnian Muslims as aliens, see, Norman Cigar, “The Nationalist Serbian Intellectuals and Islam: Defining and Eliminating a Muslim Community,” in *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, eds. Emran Qureshi and Michael Sells (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 314–351.

¹⁰ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

¹¹ Stephen Swartz, *The Two Faces of Islam* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 2. Ceric makes this argument in, Mustafa Ceric, “Judaism, Christianity, Islam: Hope or Fear of Our Times,” in *Beyond Violence: Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. James L. Heft, S.M. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 46–47.

¹² Bruce Lawrence, *Islam Beyond Violence: Shattering The Myth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 4. Qureshi and Sells argue that: “Once Islam is defined as inherently violent and intolerant, modern conflicts involving Muslims can be reduced to a single cause.” Qureshi and Sells, *New Crusades*, 5.

¹³ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 6, 2003.

These are strong views coming from one of the leading Muslim religious figures in Bosnia and indeed in Europe.¹⁴ Ceric's views are, however, not idiosyncratic. This denial of the religious motivation behind violence perpetrated by Christians and Jews while affirming the Islamic sanction behind violence perpetrated by Muslims is now one of the serious breaches of communication between religious communities. Many Muslim leaders and laypersons repeatedly and publicly announce this double standard.¹⁵ Ceric refers to this phenomenon as "Islamophobia,"¹⁶ a term coined in the mid-1990s to express the range and depth of antipathy towards Islam and Muslims found particularly in Western Europe and the United States since the end of the Cold War, especially after the attacks of September 11, 2001.¹⁷ Islamophobia was the subject of a special United Nations meeting in December 7, 2004.¹⁸

But how accurate is Ceric's judgment? To what extent does such a bias really exist in the scholarship on religiously motivated violence in the Western academy?

¹⁴ Ceric serves as a senior member of the European Council of Religious Leaders (UCRL). It is a participating body of the World Conference of Religions for Peace. For details see <http://www.wcrp.be/programme%20d'action.htm> (accessed April 2004).

¹⁵ For a similar argument see *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*: 11/6/02, "Unfair to direct blame at Islam." In the article Duke University Islamic expert, Ebrahim Moosa, argues that, "a trend is emerging. When Jeffrey Dahmer, David Berkowitz or Adolf Hitler killed people, they were held accountable as individuals. But if Mohammed Atta or John Allen Muhammad kill, suddenly all of Islam is culpable."

¹⁶ This has been a persistent refrain by Ceric. During an acceptance speech to his joint winning of the 2003 UNESCO peace prize, Ceric warned of the growing threat of Islamophobia in Europe and around the world. See http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-478/_nr-90/_p-1/i.html?PHPSESSID=9cd1b25a8bedb466c25e163002f0e45c (accessed April 2004).

¹⁷ The term became popularized after the Runnymede Trust, an independent research and social policy agency in Britain established a Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia in 1996. The Commission's report *Islamophobia: A Challenge for us all*, was published in 1997 and noted the vulnerability of Muslims to physical violence, harassment and misrepresentation in the media in the United Kingdom. The Runnymede report was followed by a wider European investigation instituted by the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) following the attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. The EUMC report which came out in 2002 made a similar finding that "Islamic communities and other vulnerable groups become targets of increasing hostility since September 11." For a summary see Christopher Allen and Jorgen Nielsen, eds. *Islamophobia in the EU After 11 September: Summary Report* (Vienna: European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2002). It is also available at the EUMC's website <http://eumc.eu.int> (accessed June 2005). For a strategic response to Islamophobia see Barry Van Driel, ed. *Confronting Islamophobia in Educational Practice* (Trent Books, 2004).

¹⁸ For details of UN seminar on "Confronting Islamophobia: Education for Tolerance and Understanding" see http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2004/webArticles/112204_Conference.asp (accessed April 2005).

And what, in fact, was the role of religion in the violence in the Bosnia genocide? Why were Christian symbols, so widely employed to justify the atrocities against Muslims and why were their places of worship one of the primary targets of the destruction? How best can the violence be characterized: as ethnic cleansing or genocide? And, last but not least, what was the role of the state in the conflict in Bosnia?

If truth is embedded in reality on the ground, then the social scientist is compelled to search for answers in the particulars of human lives. After sketching a portrait of the life of Mustafa Cerić, I will use him as the exemplar to address some of these difficult questions. The main caveat that undergirds this exploration is awareness that human experiences are inevitably subjective and that our recollections of them are at best “studied ambiguity.”¹⁹ At various points during the course of this chapter, I test Cerić’s observations against the theoretical perspectives of some of the most influential scholars that have written on the role of religion, violence and the state in the Bosnian war of 1992–1995.

An “Indigenous” European Muslim

The moment I reached the quaint building with its characteristic and distinct Ottoman style architecture of pencil minarets, I had no doubt that the man I was about to interview was an important figure. The building was clearly marked to indicate that it housed the offices of the Grand Mufti (also known as the *reis-ul-ulema*) of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Shaikh Mustafa Cerić. The place was a hub of activity. Several expensive cars lined the driveway with their chauffeurs waiting in attendance. I later discovered that just prior to my interview with Cerić, he had met with the ambassadors of several Muslim countries. As a consequence my interview was delayed for nearly an hour.

¹⁹ For a useful discussion of the role of “studied ambiguity” in the biographical process see R. Scott Appleby, “Introduction,” in *Spokesmen for the Despised: Fundamentalist Leaders of the Middle East*, ed. R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 1–15.

During this time, however, Ceric's personal secretary for International and Interreligious relations, Ifet Mustafic,²⁰ invited me into a beautifully decorated waiting room. Upon entering it my eyes fell on the single photograph that adorned the walls. It was a striking picture of the first elected president of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic (1925–2003),²¹ dressed in his white pilgrimage garb.²² From the prominent display of the photograph it was obvious that Ceric held him in high esteem.²³ Cognizant that his adversaries, including the Muslim critics, Muhammad Filipovic and A. Zulfikarpasic,²⁴ and some scholars, such as Lenard Cohen, have suggested that Izetbegovic was a "conservative Islamic fundamentalist."²⁵ He they charged had played a role in raising Serb and Croatian fears about the intentions of Bosnian Muslims to create an Islamic State. My curiosity was stirred and I could feel my adrenalin pumping as I mulled over my questions. What did Ceric make of this allegation against Izetbegovic? And what were his personal views on the issue of the religious legitimacy and viability of an Islamic State of Bosnia. The waiting period had proved to be rewarding and it was

²⁰ Ifet Mustafic is a senior imam in the offices of the *reis-ul-ulema* and often acts as Ceric's special representative delivering prepared speeches or statements on his behalf whenever he is incapacitated.

²¹ In 1989 Izetbegovic founded the Muslim dominated Party of Democratic Action (*Stranka Demokratske Akcije*, or SDA) and became its first chairman. On November 18, 1990, he became the first democratically elected president of the Yugoslavian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. For a personal account of his life see Alija Izetbegovic, *Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical Notes* (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation, 2002). See also, Neil Clark, "A Warrior Who Achieved Nothing," *New Statesman*, October 27, 2003.

²² During the annual Muslim pilgrimage all the male pilgrims don only two white sheets to cover them. It symbolizes the equality of humankind.

²³ My initial impressions were confirmed when in May 2003 Ceric was asked by Izetbegovic, who was suffering from ailing health, to represent him at the University of Southern California conference *Beyond Violence*. During the same occasion Ceric received on behalf of Izetbegovic the Omar Ibn Al Khattab Distinguished Pathfinders Award for his contribution to "visionary leadership and magnificently distinguished service to Bosnia, Islam and the World." For details see Mustafa Ceric, "Judaism, Christianity, Islam: Hope or Fear of Our Times," in *Beyond Violence*, 46–47.

²⁴ D.A. Dyker and I. Vejvoda claim that these two Bosnian Muslims represented the secular Bosnian national trend and had denounced the SDAs increasing religious orientation. They were expelled from the party and proceeded to create the Muslim (sic) Bosnian Organization. D.A. Dyker and I. Vejvoda, *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth* (London and New York: Longman, 1996), 96. For more discussion of the Muslim critics of pro-Islamist politics of Alija Izetbegovic see Mitja Velikonja, *Religious Separation and Political Intolerance in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, trans. Rang'ichi Ng'inja (Texas A & M University Press, 2003), 333–334.

²⁵ Lenard J. Cohen, "Bosnia's 'Tribal Gods': The Role of Religion in Nationalist Politics," in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1998), 45–46.

made even more so when his secretary, Ifet Mustafic, provided me with a copy of the Grand Mufti's most recent *curriculum vitae*.²⁶

Mustafa Cerić has a distinctively European appearance and sports a grey beard. During the interview he was wearing a traditional white turbaned *tarboosh* headgear²⁷ and a long flowing dark blue robe. He began the interview autobiographically:

I was born on February 5, 1952 in Gracanica, a part of the Bosnian city of Visoko, located on the Bosna River, a few miles northwest of Sarajevo. I view myself as an indigenous European Muslim, a descendant of the southern Slavs who had embraced Islam following the Turkish conquest of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the fifteenth century.²⁸

It immediately became obvious to me that Cerić is extremely proud of his Bosnian ancestry and heritage. He claimed that “being a native of Bosnia is one of my greatest assets.”²⁹ His pride in his Bosnian ancestry can perhaps in part be attributed to the widespread belief among Muslims that they were offspring of the indigenous Bosnian Bogomils who had converted to Islam in the late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries.³⁰ The Balkans historian, John Fine, has however refuted the Bogomil thesis and has put forward an alternative argument claiming that “the patterns of conversion to Islam were far more complex, and moreover Bosnian identities have historically not remained

²⁶ This chapter was greatly enhanced by the rich personal details contained in Mustafa Cerić's resume which I was fortunate to gain access to.

²⁷ The white turbaned *tarboosh* hat is reserved for Muslim religious leaders in Turkey and some parts of the Middle East like Egypt and Syria. For the historical significance of the Turko-Egyptian *tarboosh* see <http://www.egy.com/historica/96-10-26.shtml> (accessed March 2005).

²⁸ For useful introductions to the early history of Islam in Bosnia see Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); H.T. Norris, *Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society Between Europe and the Arab World* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1993); Mark Pinson, ed. *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1993); and Francine Friedman, *The Bosnian Muslims: The Denial of a Nation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996). A more detailed socio-historical analysis see Vatro Murvar, *Nation and Religion in Central Europe and the Western Balkans-The Muslims in Bosna, Hercegovina and Sandzak: A Sociological Analysis* (Brookfield, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

²⁹ Mustafa Cerić, interview with author, May 6, 2003.

³⁰ According to Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 277, Cerić is one of the foremost advocates of what he describes as “the Bosniak religio-national mythology” that portends that “all Bosniaks were inevitable Muslims and the oldest population in the country.”

static but were fluid and changing.”³¹ The Bogomil myth seems to have been used by Muslim nationalists during the war to counteract Serbian depictions of them as “the alien other,” Turks or even as pseudo-Arabs.³² As the war proceeded and their position became more and more precarious the Bogomil theory gained even more symbolic significance as the Bosnian Muslim leadership increasingly began to equate national affiliation with religious affiliation in response to ideological trends which were far more advanced in the Serb and Croat communities.³³ Such a view is supported by Velikonja, who writes that:

Just as national affiliation was equated with religious affiliation in the case of the Serbs and Croats, advocates of the Bosniak religio-national integration mythology believed all Bosniaks were inevitably Muslims and the oldest population of the country.³⁴

Ceric is a popular yet distinct voice for Islam in the world. He is conscious of this and frequently reminds his audiences of his European roots. “I am here as a Muslim of European origin,” he proudly told his audience at a conference on *Beyond Violence* convened by the University of Southern California in 2003.³⁵ In doing so, he is consciously challenging the contemporary framing of Islam as “alien” – Arab, Asian or African – and Bosnian Muslims as foreign to Europe. The construction of Bosnian Muslims as an alien intrusion in Europe was a conscious part of the agenda of Serb

³¹ For the revisionist view of the Bogomil thesis see John V.A. Fine, Jr., *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation: A Study of the Bosnian Church and its Place in State and Society from the 13th to the 15th Centuries* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, 1975).

³² Sells has described in some detail how Slavic Muslims were “turkified” by a theory of race betrayal advocated in the popular Serbian book, Petar 11 Petrovic Njegos, *The Mountain Wreath*, trans. James W. Willis (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1930). According to Njegos, “to ‘turkify’ was not simply to adopt the religion and mores of a Turk, but to transform oneself into a Turk.” Sells argues that this depiction together with the claim that Bosnian Muslims were Christ killers created the pretext for “ethnic cleansing.” Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 40–50.

³³ For a useful discussion of the manner in which Orthodox Christianity was equated with Serbian nationalism and Catholicism with Croat nationalism see, Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 58–80.

³⁴ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 277.

³⁵ For Ceric’s paper and conference proceedings see: “Judaism, Christianity, Islam: Hope or Fear of Our Times,” *Beyond Violence*, 46–47.

intellectuals in the pre-war period.³⁶ The Serbian writer, Dragos Kalajic, has for example alleged that Bosnian Muslims were only “an unconscious and spontaneous expression of pseudo-Arab culture” and the consequence of a “genetic predetermination and predisposition.” He furthermore claimed that he was able to clearly see in Bosnian Muslims the influence of “a special gene of the Ottoman soldiery.”³⁷ Qureshi and Sells have usefully demonstrated the pervasiveness of this definition of Muslim as non-European. They describe the European Union’s chief Balkan’s negotiator’s, David Owen, account of his bewildering response at his first meeting with Bosnian President Izetbegovic: “There was no outward and visible signs that he was a Muslim. He, his son and his daughter dressed and acted as Europeans.”³⁸

At the 1999 Oxford conference, Ceric addressed this issue more directly when he lamented the fact that “[Islam] is tolerated, but not accepted as an equal representative of the overall European spiritual heritage.” He went on to criticize the caricature of Islam and the West as being particularly unhelpful in understanding the problems and prospects of Muslims living in the West.³⁹ Making sure he was understood correctly, Ceric defined Western Muslims not merely as immigrants, but as “... the indigenous Muslims of the West, those who are historically Europeans and those who are born Europeans.”⁴⁰ There is no doubt that his passion for championing the notion of a European Muslim identity is rooted in the deadly experiences of the Bosnian war. “I see the harrowing experiences of enduring ethnic cleansing that my co-religionists have suffered during the 1990s as a monumental lesson of history where they had

³⁶ Norman Cigar has argued that the demonization of Bosnian Muslims by Serb intellectuals and clergy contributed to the policy of genocide against them. See “The Nationalist Serbian Intellectuals and Islam: Defining and Eliminating a Muslim Community,” *The New Crusades*, 314–351.

³⁷ Cigar has drawn a direct parallel between such racist depictions of Bosnian Muslims by Serbian intellectuals to that of Nazi racial depictions of Jews as non-Aryans

³⁸ For the original account see David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995), 39.

³⁹ Here Ceric is referring to the negative effects of the “clash of civilizations” thesis. For a useful analysis of the symbiotic relationship between the Serbian anti-Muslim discourses and the Huntington thesis see: “Introduction: Constructing the Enemy,” *The New Crusades*, 1–47.

⁴⁰ Ceric, *Islam and the West*, 20.

to learn in one day what some Muslim communities might never learn in centuries,” he informs me.⁴¹ He furthermore contends that European Muslims, notwithstanding their challenges, have something unique to contribute towards both the healing of the relationship between Muslims and the “West,” as well as towards the transformation of contemporary expressions of Islam itself.⁴²

Bridging Theology and Activism

Ceric grew up having no ambitions of becoming a religious scholar, but he soon found himself drawn towards Islamic religious education. He completed his comprehensive schooling at a local grammar school in Velika Cajno, Visoko, after which he enrolled at the famous, Gazi Husrevbegova Madrasa, an Islamic theological seminary in Sarajevo.⁴³ He speaks passionately about this institution of higher Islamic learning that had been established as early as 1531. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was the largest institution of learning in Bosnia. During the war that raged in Bosnia, as was the case with almost all Muslim institutions, much of the facilities and equipment of this historic European center of traditional Islamic learning was destroyed.⁴⁴

In 1974, after graduating with distinction, Ceric secured a scholarship to pursue higher Islamic studies at the citadel of Islamic learning in Egypt, Al-Azhar University.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 22, 2002. Ceric’s view resonates with that of the Swiss Muslim intellectual, Tariq Ramadan. This is the major thesis of Ramadan’s latest book: Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁴² This is a persistent theme in the speeches delivered by Ceric across Europe and North America. An internet search on the topic “Ceric European Muslim” produces 847 items. The most prominent of these carries the following headline; “Grand Mufti of Bosnia tells European Muslims to declare unequivocal commitment to EU constitution.” <http://www.islamicforumeurope.com/live/ife.php?doc=articleitem&itemId=217> (accessed May 2005).

⁴³ *Ceric Resume*, 2.

⁴⁴ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 22, 2002.

⁴⁵ *Ceric Resume*, 2. For a brief history of the prestigious al-Azhar Islamic University see Mahmud al-Ayun, *Al-Azhar: A Short Historical Survey* (Cairo: Al-Azhar Press, 1949). According to Ahmed Abu Taleb, an Egyptian Ambassador to Bosnia, “The Bosnian people have a deep reverence for Al-Azhar and that it is one of their most cherished hopes to send their children to this internationally respected Islamic university. Indeed, many members of government and religious officials are also al-Azhar graduates.” Galal Nassar, “Man with a Mission,” *Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line*, 10–16 December 1998, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/407/in5.htm> (accessed May 2005).

In Cairo, he was able to continue his Islamic studies and further refine his knowledge and gain fluency in the Arabic language. Four years later he received his certification as an *'alim* (Islamic scholar) specializing in Arabic language and literature.⁴⁶ With his newfound knowledge and specialization Ceric returned to his native Bosnia, where he got married and was appointed as an *imam* at one of the local mosques.⁴⁷

On May 4, 1980, shortly after Ceric's return to Bosnia, Josip Broz Tito, the founding president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, died. Ironically, Tito's communist regime had procured some unexpected advantages for Bosnian Muslims. It was also under Tito's rule in 1969, as part of his political balancing between the various ethno-religious groups in Yugoslavia, that the two million Muslims living in Bosnia were officially recognized as an independent Yugoslav national group.⁴⁸ This promotion gave Bosnian Muslims "a status commensurate to that of the long-established Serb and Croat nations."⁴⁹ Its practical effect was that after years of uncertain ethnic affiliation, Bosnians were allowed to register as "ethnic" Muslims in the official census. Muslims thus joined the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Montenegrins as one of the constituent peoples of Yugoslavia. Ceric regards this as a positive development in the contemporary history of Bosnia and prefers to describe the designation Bosnian Muslim which ensued as a result of this as a "*sui generis* identity."⁵⁰ His view is consistent with his role as one of the foremost Muslim leaders advocating a Bosnian identity that coheres around the Islamic religion. Velikonja has powerfully captured Ceric's ethno-religious partiality in his own voice in the following quote: "... without Islam, Islamic civilization and Islamic culture, we [Bosnians] are nothing."⁵¹

⁴⁶ *Ceric Resume*, 1.

⁴⁷ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 22, 2002.

⁴⁸ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 22, 2002.

⁴⁹ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 66.

⁵⁰ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 22, 2002.

⁵¹ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 332 fn. 137.

Such a controversial project did not proceed without repercussions. In contradistinction to Ceric's positive embrace of a Bosnian Muslim ethno-religious identity, Gerard F. Powers has pointed out that:

Bosnian Muslims are the only Muslims in the world officially designated as a national as well as religious group, yet, of the three main religious bodies in the Balkans, Bosnian Muslims have the least sense of national identity.⁵²

Powers contends that the designation of Bosnian Muslims had the strong support of Muslim clerics, since this link between religion and ethnicity, provided them with strategic leverage as communal leaders of their people. This analysis may to some extent explain Ceric's convenient embrace of the category Bosnian Muslims as a "natural" ethno-religious identity. Understandably, the acceptance of such an identity emerged within a socio-political context in which Bosnians, who were also adherents of the Islamic religion, found themselves pressurized to adopt one or other ethnic affiliation, even though they may have felt more comfortable embracing a pan-Yugoslavian identity.

More controversially, however, some scholars, such as Francine Friedman, have argued that as a result of their new recognition Bosnian Muslims prospered more than other religious groups during the Tito era.⁵³ Writing in support of such a view, Zachary Irwin has noted that more mosques were built than either Orthodox or Catholic churches during this period, even though Christians outnumbered Muslims.⁵⁴ This raises the critical question as to what extent Tito's strategy of using religion in his social engineering of diversity may have contributed to perceptions that he was

⁵² Gerard F. Powers, "Religion, Conflict and Prospects for Peace in Bosnia, Croatia, and Yugoslavia," in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes (Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1998), 231.

⁵³ Francine Friedman, "The Bosnian Muslim National Question," in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Pres, 1998), 4.

⁵⁴ Zachary T. Irwin, "The Fate of Islam in the Balkans: A Comparison of Four State Policies," in *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and Eastern European Politics*, ed. Pedro Ramet (Durham: Duke University Press, 1984), 217. See also Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 66.

partial to Muslims. This in turn may have caused pent up animosity that coalesced with other factors, such as a depressed economy, to produce a fertile environment for the spreading of the anti-Muslim propaganda by Serbian nationalist demagogues during the post-Tito crisis period. Writing in support of this analysis, Mary Kaldor, argues that the Tito regime's policies did not mitigate ethnicity; on the contrary they "institutionalized ethnic difference."⁵⁵ Such an argument, I hasten to add, does not excuse or rationalize the atrocities committed against Muslims, but place them within a historical context.

Ceric vehemently denies such a connection. He claims that such logic only serves to justify and legitimate the "genocidal campaign perpetrated by Serbs and Croats against Muslims."⁵⁶ Notwithstanding this criticism, it is clear that Tito's designation of Bosnian Muslims as a separate national group in 1969 was an integral part of his social engineering of the diverse ethno-religious population of Yugoslavia. It was designed to cut off Muslims from their Croatian Catholic and Serbian Orthodox compatriots in order to allow the Tito regime to contain the powerful influence of the latter groups. The unintentional outcome of this policy was that Muslim religious leaders, such as Ceric, benefited from it. More troubling, the policy may have contributed to creating an atmosphere of mistrust that was subsequently to be exploited by pro-nationalist Serbs in their ethnic cleansing campaign.⁵⁷

Ceric's return to Yugoslavia as a graduate of the prestigious Al-Azhar University greatly enhanced his position in the immediate aftermath of the post-Tito era. His homecoming from Cairo however was short lived. After serving the Bosnian Muslim community as imam for less than a year, he received a job offer to lead one of the

⁵⁵ Mary Kaldor, *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 35.

⁵⁶ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

⁵⁷ Bob de Graaff supports this view. See Bob de Graaff, "The Wars in the Former Yugoslavia in the 1990s: Bringing the State Back in," in *Rethinking the Nature of War*, eds. Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom (London and New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 161.

largest Bosnian Islamic centers in the United States.⁵⁸ His ambitions led him to accept the position as imam of the Islamic Cultural Center in Northbrook, Chicago, and he relocated to America in May 1981.⁵⁹ He spent five years in the position as an imam in Chicago, during which time he rapidly improved his proficiency in the English language. The Islamic Center's Commemorative Book describes his feat as follows: "He came to Chicago with no English; and in less than a year's time, he was able to deliver enlightening sermons in English."⁶⁰ As soon as he had a working knowledge of the English language, Ceric enrolled as a doctoral candidate in Islamic theology at the University of Chicago. There he came under the mentorship of the Islamic scholar, Fazlur Rahman (1911–1988), who is widely regarded as one of the major Western Muslim thinkers in the second-half of the twentieth century, in terms of both classical Islam and Western philosophical and theological discourse.⁶¹ Rahman's high standards of Islamic scholarship resonated with the maturing Ceric, who learned from his mentor that the mediocrity of Islamic scholarship was symptomatic of "the crisis of identity the Ummah (global Muslim community) faced."⁶²

In June 1987, Ceric completed his doctorate in Islamic studies. His dissertation dealt with Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (850–944), the founder of one of the most famous schools of Islamic theology.⁶³ After receiving his doctorate and successfully serving the Muslim community of Chicago, he returned to his native Bosnia to teach at the Faculty of Islamic Theology in Sarajevo. In a tribute to his sterling leadership, the Chicago Islamic Cultural Center (ICC) movingly described his return to Bosnia in

⁵⁸ According to Ceric, Dr Ahmed Smailovich, the then president of the Islamic Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina, appointed him as imam to the Islamic Cultural Center of Chicago. See Mustafa Ceric, *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (d.333/944)* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1995), p. iii.

⁵⁹ *Commemorative Book*, 9.

⁶⁰ *Commemorative Book*, 11.

⁶¹ See Ebrahim Moosa, ed. "Introduction," in *Revival and Reform in Islam: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism* by Fazlur Rahman (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999).

⁶² Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

⁶³ Ceric's doctoral dissertation was subsequently published as *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam*.

the following manner: “Nostalgia, love of family and Islamic Culture directed Imam Mustafa back to his native county ... He left his mark with the community of the ICC.”⁶⁴

In ways that Ceric could not have anticipated, the years of his absence from 1981 to 1986, were to plunge his country, the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia, into a deep economic and political crisis. His return to Yugoslavia in 1987 coincided with the aggressive struggle for power by the Serb strongman and nationalist leader, Slobadan Milosevic. The latter had ascended to the leadership of the newly formed Serbian League of Communists in September, and later president of Serbia. The post-Tito Yugoslav crisis had deepened during Ceric’s residency in America, and Milosevic was unscrupulously using the growing national tensions, economic crisis and social instabilities in support of his hegemonic Serbian nationalist agenda. Unable to maintain a centralized, Serb-dominated Federation of Yugoslavia, Milosevic began agitating for an “ethnically pure” Greater Serbia that would incorporate most of the 30 percent of Serbs living outside of Serbia. His demagoguery and skillful political machinations gained widespread support among both the intellectual as well as religious classes of Serbia. The Episcopal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church for example came out in full support of Milosevic’s maxim that “all Serbs must live in one country.”⁶⁵

Ceric took up a position as imam of a newly established mosque in Zagreb.⁶⁶ In his new position as a leader of the Bosnian Muslim community of Zagreb he soon discovered that Islamophobia was rapidly spreading all over the country fanned by the Milosevic campaign for a Greater Serbia. The Zagreb mosque was the third largest in Europe and its massive size generated considerable criticism from the Croat dominated city authorities. Such criticism was ironic since both Croats and Serbs were active in the establishment of new churches all over the country. Moreover, at the same time that

⁶⁴ The Islamic Cultural Center, *The Center, The People and The Mission. A Commemorative Book for the Grand Opening of the Islamic Cultural Center* (Chicago: Islamic Cultural Center, 1988).

⁶⁵ For a useful discussion of Milosevic’s rise to power see Velikova, *Religious Separation*, 277.

⁶⁶ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

the controversy was raging over the size of the Zagreb mosque, the Serbian Orthodox Church was rebuilding one of the largest Byzantine cathedrals in the world.⁶⁷

An Islamic State of Bosnia: Myth or Reality?

More disconcerting, however, was the fact that the spread of Islamophobia was having a profound effect on the nature of Bosnian Islam. Some of Ceric's closest colleagues had fallen under the influence of the Bosnian Muslim intellectual and activist, Alija Izetbegovic. In 1946, as a student, the latter had been sentenced to six years imprisonment for opposing Tito's banning of the Young Muslim Association of which he was a member. In 1970 he authored a controversial document *The Islamic Declaration*, (A Programme for the Islamicisation of Moslems and Moslem peoples),⁶⁸ which some, like Cohen, interpreted as a blueprint for an Islamic state in Bosnia once Muslims became a majority. Others, including Sells, Cigar, Norman and Lawrence, have interpreted it as a benign attempt to link Islamic principles with a pluralistic notion of the modern state. Lawrence has been particularly generous in his assessment of Izetbegovic's thought. He claims that:

[I]n Bosnia, and elsewhere, Izetbegovic seeks a pluralist polity where Islam becomes not the middle preemptive religion but the pragmatic middle way, a *modus vivendi* between remnants of the formerly Communist East and the emerging European Union, with its global allies.⁶⁹

Mirroring this academic debate was a far more vituperative debate raging within Yugoslavian society as to whether in fact Izetbegovic's *Islamic Declaration* did indeed advocate for an Islamic state. Cohen has suggested that in the inflamed atmosphere of the early 1990s, the *Islamic Declaration* was resurrected by nationalist Serb and

⁶⁷ For a detailed discussion of the objection to the new Zagreb mosque see Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 81–82.

⁶⁸ Alija Izetbegovic, *The Islamic Declaration* (Sarajevo: Biblioteka Posebna Izdanja, 1991).

⁶⁹ Lawrence, *Shattering the Myth*, 8.

Croats “as proof of a latent Islamic fundamentalism.”⁷⁰ The Serbian military leader, Radvan Karadzic, for example, during many of his fiery speeches accused Izetbegovic of wanting to be the first Muslim leader to establish an Islamic state in Europe.⁷¹ Ironically, however, as Cohen correctly avers, most of Izetbegovic’s adversaries formed their opinions without ever having read his *Declaration*. But the notion of the threat of an Islamic state in Europe was not only used to drum up support for the projects of a Greater Serbia locally, but it was also gaining currency in the rest of Europe and North America. According to Cigar, the Serbian Bishop of Herzegovina, Atanasije, while on a visit to the US and Canada right at the beginning of the war in 1992, warned that the sympathy that was being generated by Muslims worldwide for the plight of their Bosnian co-religionists was a sinister attempt to use the conflict to advance the cause of an Islamic state and thus gain a foothold in Europe.⁷²

How did Ceric interpret Izetbegovic’s stance on the question of an Islamic state? Velikonja records an interview with Ceric in which he reports him as saying that he “also thinks that his [Izetbegovic’s] ‘eternal dream’ was the creation of the Muslim state in Bosnia.” At the 2003 conference in California, however, Ceric denied that Izetbegovic had any such totalitarian agenda but rather portrayed him as “a strong advocate of fair and balanced democracy, free thought and speech.”⁷³ During my interview with Ceric at the same conference, I asked him about this discrepancy. He was clearly annoyed by the question and became animated during his reply: “These are all malicious propaganda against Alija reminiscent of the trumped up charges brought against him by the Communist regime and the Serbian fascists,” he retorted. He went on to claim that “the slanderous campaign against Izetbegovic in the eighties was for

⁷⁰ Cohen, “Bosnia’s ‘Tribal Gods,’ 45–46.

⁷¹ Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of “Ethnic Cleansing”* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 35.

⁷² Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*.

⁷³ For Ceric’s paper and conference proceedings see James L. Heft, ed. *Beyond Violence: Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 46–47.

him the first clear sign of the ominous anti-Muslim genocidal campaign that was to visit his native land.”⁷⁴ Notwithstanding his protestations, Ceric himself appears to hold on to the ideal of an Islamic state. What distinguishes him from hard line Islamists is that they would demand an Islamic state as an absolute, and would pursue it by force if necessary. Ceric, by contrast, is more pragmatic in his aspirations as I will demonstrate in the following summation of his position on the relationship between Islam and the state.⁷⁵

In responding to the question Ceric provides a fairly traditionalist interpretation.⁷⁶ He understands Islam as categorizing countries or states into one of the three: *dar al-Islam* (the abode of peace), *dar al-harb* (the abode of war) or *dar as-sulh* (the abode of reconciliation). In the first category, Islam must be implemented to the furthest extent. He believes that Islam can never be implemented perfectly, but in *dar al-Islam* the government ought to try its utmost in making it a reality: “Islam is an ideal that people in nation-states in this category must strive for.”⁷⁷ In a *dar al-harb* state, non-Muslims form the majority of the population and Islam is not recognized by the legislature. Ceric believes that in such a state Islam cannot be implemented to any degree. He applies this category to most Western states. In the third, intermediate category, *dar as-sulh*, the situation is such that Islam or the *shari’ah* can be implemented at least partially. Ceric believes that post-war Bosnia is in this category. Accordingly, as the head of the Bosnian Muslims, he advises them “to try their best to put Islamic legislation into practice, while at the same time being realistic and not to expect the *shari’ah* to be implemented completely.”⁷⁸ In a revealing statement, Ceric informs

⁷⁴ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 6, 2003.

⁷⁵ This summary of Ceric’s views on the relationship between Islam and the state comprised a major part of my second interview with him in California May 6, 2003. He provided a similar perspective in a conversation he had with British journalist, Nadeem Azam during a visit to Britain in 2003. For a full account of the interview see “A Conversation with Dr Mustafa Ceric,” <http://www.angelfire.com/hi/nazam/Aceric.html> (accessed April 2005).

⁷⁶ This is a useful illustration of the way in which Ceric very often vacillates between traditional and modern categories, making it extremely difficult to see coherency in this Islamic theology.

⁷⁷ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 6, 2003.

⁷⁸ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 6, 2003.

me that “implementing the *shari’ah* completely is what my ideal is, off course, but it will not happen just like that.”⁷⁹ Not unsurprisingly, he did however not spell out exactly he meant by the technical term *shari’ah* and how exactly he envisioned its implementation could happen in Bosnia.⁸⁰

It is not clear to what extent Izetbegovic shared Ceric’s perspective on the relationship between Islam and the state. What is not in doubt, however, is that on his return to Bosnia from the United States in 1987 Ceric rapidly came under the sway of the powerful influence of Izetbegovic. Moreover, during the war years, they combined to represent the twin intellectual and religious sides of the leadership of the Bosnian Muslim community. He freely acknowledged to me that he shared much of Izetbegovic’s thought and described him as one of the contemporary world’s greatest Muslim thinkers.⁸¹ Ceric also readily admits that “I am not able to present to you fully what Alija Izetbegovic really is in the richness of his Islamic morality and in the greatness of his political thought.”⁸² It does appear though that there were radically competing interpretations about Izetbegovic’s position on the relationship between Islam and the state, and that these views were powerfully conditioned by the inflamed passions of the war years. I would give the last word on this subject to Izetbegovic himself. In an interview in April 1991, before the war began, he unequivocally clarified his position when he publicly declared that: “no one here has any intention

⁷⁹ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 6, 2003.

⁸⁰ Contemporary Muslim scholars such as Muhammad Abu Zahra, Mahmud Shaltut, Muhammad al Ghunaimi, Louay M. Safi, Khalid Abou El-Fadl and Tariq Ramadan have criticized the classical doctrine of *jihad* as being seriously flawed since it violates some of the essential Islamic principles on the Islamic ethics of war. Safi objecting to the classical doctrine has argued that: “Evidently, the classical doctrine of war and peace has not been predicated on a comprehensive theory. The doctrine describes the factual conditions that historically prevailed between the Islamic state, during the ‘Abassid and Byzantium era, and thus, renders rules which respond to specific historical needs.” For a useful discussion of various interpretations of this verse see Louay M. Safi, *Peace and the Limits of War: Transcending Classical Conception of Jihad* (Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2001), 8–15.

⁸¹ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 6, 2003. Ceric made a similar observation at the USC conference in May, 2003. For Ceric’s paper and conference proceedings see Heft, *Beyond Violence*, 46–47.

⁸² Heft, *Beyond Violence*, 46.

of creating an Islamic Bosnia” and he advocated “a secular state.”⁸³ This statement did not convince his adversaries, however, and he continued to be haunted by this question. His frustration with this never-ending saga was clearly illustrated during the height of the war when he was yet again asked by a Serbian journalist to clarify his position. Izetbegovic responded:

From the first day that I entered on the political scene up to now, I have repeated like a parrot, not only repeated but acted accordingly: “We want to set up a secular republic here in Bosnia-Herzegovina.” No Islamic or Muslim republic is possible in Bosnia-Herzegovina ... We were offered a [reduced] Muslim republic. I could have gotten that easily had I prolonged the negotiations in Split [with Milosevic and Tudjman] instead of breaking them off ... But I knew very well that that would not be an acceptable solution for Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁸⁴

Man on the Move

The growing economic crisis, sectarian political leadership and media wars that ensued following the demise of Tito in 1980 had led to a deterioration of national relations within the Yugoslav Federation. The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 intensified the anxiety and exacerbated the tension in the social and political life of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In this volatile context, aggrieved parties, taking their cue from trends across Eastern Europe, were increasingly looking towards the option of an autonomous state as the only viable venue for exercising political self-determination and securing their rights. These radical separatist positions were reflected in the political parties that were emerging to contest Yugoslavia’s first democratic elections in 1990. It was against this backdrop that Ceric, largely due to his scholarly credentials as a doctoral student of Fazlur Raman, was offered a teaching post at the newly established

⁸³ Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, 178.

⁸⁴ For this quote and a discussion of the call by the Muslim leaders for a pluralistic secular society – not an Islamic State – with the continued inclusion of the Serbian and Croatian communities see Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, 178–179.

International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) in Kuala Lumpur.⁸⁵ Ceric acknowledges that taking this post was a difficult decision because of the crisis in his country, but his own ambitious spirit prevailed and it took him to yet another part of the world, Malaysia. In 1992, after only three years of teaching in the Faculty of Islamic Theology, he obtained the status of full professorship.⁸⁶ However, in that same year his blossoming teaching career would be cut short by the outbreak of full-scale war in his native Bosnia. Shortly after the outbreak of full hostilities in the spring of 1992, Ceric says that “events in my country intercepted my work at ISTAC, and I decided to give up my prestigious teaching position in Malaysia and return to Bosnia, to lead my people in their fight for survival.”⁸⁷

Ceric returned to Bosnia after the onset of full-scale war. He immediately joined his old friend, Izetbegovic, in providing leadership to the beleaguered Bosnian Muslims. The latter had been elected president of an independent Bosnia on April, 6, 1992. The same day Bosnia achieved its formal independence and was internationally recognized, the war broke out when Serb paramilitary groups under the leadership of Radovan Karadzic began shelling the capital city, Sarajevo. The critical precipice to full-scale war was crossed when the former Yugoslav People’s Army, which considered itself to be the “last link” between the Yugoslav nations, abandoned its role as a peacekeeping force and began openly siding with the illegal Serbian paramilitaries. Because of the superior military power of the Serbian forces, they were able to lay siege to Sarajevo and rapidly assume control of over half the newly created country. The direct consequence of the war was the fleeing of tens of thousands of Bosnian

⁸⁵ Ceric describes the circumstances of the job offer in the preface to the publication of his book as follows: “In 1990 the Islamic Symposium of the Zagreb mosque in Croatia invited Prof. Dr Sayed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas to attend the Third symposium on Ethics in Islam. This was a good opportunity for me to know Professor al-Attas and his unique program at the International Islamic Institute of Islamic Thought and Culture. As a result, in the following year 1991 I accepted the invitation of Professor to come to ISTAC to teach Islamic Theology.” *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam*, iii.

⁸⁶ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

⁸⁷ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

Muslims who were consciously being targeted. It is against this backdrop that Ceric returned to provide spiritual and moral support to his fellow country men, women and children by defending their existence.

On his return to Bosnia, Ceric found that the Muslim religious leadership was deeply divided in their responses to the Serb aggression. Broadly speaking there were two major positions. The first, argued that the Muslim religious leadership should provide full support to President Izetbegovic in the “legitimate” defense of their homeland. The second, concurred that religious legitimation of defensive warfare was necessary, but nevertheless preferred to place the emphasis on the safeguarding of human lives rather than that of the defense of Bosnia as a homeland. The latter position was articulated by the first democratically appointed grand mufti of Yugoslavia, Yacub Selimovsky. He did not embrace the idea of Bosnian independence but preferred to remain within the Yugoslav Federation. His pro-Yugoslav course collided with the popular Bosnian Muslim desire for autonomy.⁸⁸ Given the fact that Selimovsky had opposed the partitioning of Bosnia, it was not at all surprising that he became highly unpopular during the war period. Ceric, believes that “he [Selimovsky] was naïve in his belief that a unified Yugoslavia was still a possibility.” Moreover, he claims that “his position was increasingly being discredited as the war crimes against Bosnian Muslims multiplied.”⁸⁹ As a consequence, the alternative position became more and more popular as resentment against Selimovsky began to build up. It seems likely with the rabid ethnocentrism that was in vogue at the time that the fact that Selimovsky was a Muslim from Macedonia may not have helped his cause.

On April 28, 1993, one year after the onset of full-scale hostilities in Bosnia, Selimovsky was controversially stripped of his position as grand mufti and Ceric assumed the role. Velikonja takes up the story thus:

⁸⁸ Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 88.

⁸⁹ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

There was a change in the leadership of the Bosnian Islamic Community during the war. On April 28, 1993, Mustafa Cerić replaced the moderate Selimovski as reis-ul-ulema. Cerić had been the imam of the Zaghreb mosque and was a known critic Serb and Croat policies toward and within Bosnia-Herzegovina. Selimovski who was outside the country refused to recognize the changes claiming that that he had been appointed in 1990 with an eight year mandate.⁹⁰

Cerić denies the charge that his appointment was irregular and professes: “I was legitimately elected and had the support of most of the other imams.”⁹¹ According to my own investigations, it appears that Cerić was able to accede to the position for at least two reasons. First, he was Bosnian as opposed to Selimovski who was Macedonian of Albanian descent. Given the heightened sensitivity to ethno-nationalism this was a big issue. Second, it was widely accepted that Selimovski was far more reconciliatory than Cerić and in the tense war atmosphere the latter’s hardline stance may have resonated more with the Bosnian Muslim clergy and masses. Such a view is supported by the more belligerent role that Cerić assumed in his new position as supreme head of the Islamic community of Bosnia.

Religious Leadership in the Midst of Genocide

The early 1990s was undoubtedly the most difficult time in the history of the Bosnian Muslim community. At this time of intense crisis and immense suffering, the newly appointed grand mufti was deeply challenged to provide spiritual leadership to his people. As important as he considered his preeminent spiritual role, the demands of the war inevitably tested his moral sensibilities and social skills. From all accounts it

⁹⁰ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 281.

⁹¹ Mustafa Cerić, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

appears that Mustafa Ceric rose to the occasion, albeit controversially at times.⁹² During the height of the war he continued to lead the weekly Friday congregational prayers and the almost daily funeral services of the fatalities of the war. He also began to speak out more forcefully against Serb and Croat policies toward and within Bosnia. Signaling his more assertive stance he cancelled his participation in an interreligious meeting claiming that the Serbian Orthodox Church had refused to condemn Serbia war crimes.⁹³ Ceric claims that his growing “hard-line” strategy was a direct consequence of the war and was designed to provide self-assurance to his beleaguered congregation.⁹⁴ His uncompromising positions appear to have worked for him since his people developed a deep respect for his resolute leadership. A British journalist has pertinently described his leadership role at this critical time: “[D]uring the war with the Serbs and Croats, he represented the defiance, dignity, and God-consciousness of the Bosnian ulema who lead their people in the face of international apathy and acquiescence.”⁹⁵

But leadership during a time of war is not only murky but also perilous. On January 8, 1993, Dr Hakija Turajlic, the deputy prime minister of Bosnia, was assassinated by Serb forces. Turajlic had been escorted to Sarajevo in a vehicle belonging to the United Nations Blue Helmets. The UN convoy was stopped at a Serb army checkpoint and ordered to open up the armored vehicle. The French peacekeepers who were on duty at the time complied and they were made to watch as a Serb soldier shot the unarmed

⁹² This ambiguity in Ceric’s role during the war is most clearly reflected in the following extract from an address delivered by Ceric to the Bosnian army at a seminar in January 1994: “...in this Bosnia, Allah the Almighty from one man and one woman created different peoples and different tribes, so that they might help and understand each other. Thus there is a land called Bosnia in which live different people, and that is the law enacted by Allah the Almighty. This is a time when Allah commands us not to be concerned for Christians and Jews, but for the lives of Muslims, to care for their honor. In Bosnia there will yet be the scent of different roses.” Marko Attila Hoare, *How Bosnia Armed* (London: Saqi Books, 2004), 106.

⁹³ Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 169. Perica claims that during the war Ceric condemned interreligious marriages as blasphemous and complained about what he saw as excessively Christian content on state television.

⁹⁴ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

⁹⁵ Nadeem Azam, “A Conversation with Mustafa Ceric,” <http://www.angelfire.com/hi/nazam/Aceric.html> (accessed April 2005).

Turajlic dead at point blank range.⁹⁶ The assassination of the deputy prime minister of Bosnia underscored a typical pattern employed by the Serb militia in the Bosnian war. Serbian paramilitary groups had hit lists of prominent people, community and religious leaders, intellectuals, politicians and businessmen. These individuals were set apart from the rest of the people and especially targeted for execution. A number of observers have written in support of this contention. Laura Silber and Alan Little, for example, suggest that the assassinations of Bosnian leaders were far from random but targeted and “a conscious elimination of an articulate opposition and of political moderation”⁹⁷ The television journalist, Michael Nicholson, refers to this process of targeted killings as “elitocide.”⁹⁸ Bosnians were also fully aware of this key component of the “ethnic cleansing” campaign of the Serbs. The Bosnian Mayor of Tuzla preferred to call it “intellectual cleansing.”⁹⁹

As a direct consequence of the targeted nature of the Serbian campaign of “elitocide,” Muslim religious leaders were rendered particularly vulnerable. They were forced to take extraordinary measures to protect themselves. According to the testimony of Ibrahim Halilovic, the chief imam of Banja Luka, as soon as the war had started in earnest he and his colleagues “stopped wearing their religious robes and turbans in public for fear that they would be attacked in the street.”¹⁰⁰ Velikonja has noted that “the first targets of Serb aggression in Bosnia-Herzegovina were Muslim

⁹⁶ This incident is described in, David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 150–151. Rieff dedicates his book to the slain deputy prime minister of Bosnia, Dr Hakija Turajlic. The same episode is referred to by Sells who points out that the same French peacekeepers were subsequently decorated for heroism despite having had acted against their UN orders by complying to the request of the Serb soldiers to open up the armored vehicle and standing aside while Turajlic was being gunned down. Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 133.

⁹⁷ Laura Silber and Alan Little, *Yugoslavia: The Death of a Nation* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 270.

⁹⁸ For a definition and analysis of the phenomenon of elitocide as part of ethnic cleansing in the Bosnian war, see Dennis Gratz, “Elitocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1992-1995.” Ph.D. diss., University of Hamburg, 2005, http://www.ifsh.de/zeus/htm_english/pro_lauf.htm (accessed May 2005).

⁹⁹ Mary Kaldor, *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 52.

¹⁰⁰ Ibrahim Halilovic, “Mufti of Banja Luka,” <http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/heroes/halilovic.html> (accessed May 2005).

clergymen; fifty-four had been killed by mid-June 1992.”¹⁰¹ Supporting this contention, the president of the Bosnian clergy, Halil Mehtic, claims that 107 (10.7 percent) of the Bosnian Muslim religious leaders were killed, including seventy-seven active imams. Another two hundred imams were interned in Serbian and Croatian camps as prisoners.¹⁰² Cigar suggests that the imams were targeted “in the quest to demoralize the Muslim population.”¹⁰³ Since these imams were in charge of mosques, and these were prime targets, it rendered them even more at risk.

In this context, it was not surprising that Ceric himself soon became a key target for elimination. He was a known critic of both Serbian as well as Croatian nationalists.¹⁰⁴ His movements were restricted and wherever he went he had to be accompanied by security personnel. “Life was difficult,” he says, “and we survived only by the grace of God.”¹⁰⁵ Ceric was however not particularly keen on speaking about his own suffering. He quickly went on to describe the plight of the other imams and mosques under his care. In one instance he noted:

... one of our imams and his entire congregation was hauled out of the mosque where they were praying and taken to a nearby soccer stadium. He was tortured in front of his congregation, ordered to make the sign of a cross, had beer forced down his throat and then was summarily executed.¹⁰⁶

From Ethic Cleansing to Religious Genocide: Making the Case

Ceric is convinced that the targeting of imams and the destruction of mosques was intentional. He recalls that in Banja Luka all sixteen mosques and the entire Muslim

¹⁰¹ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 254.

¹⁰² Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 254.

¹⁰³ Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, 59.

¹⁰⁴ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 281.

¹⁰⁵ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹⁰⁶ Cigar records a similar incident and he provides the place where this occurred as Bratunac. Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, 59.

population were expelled. “This could not have happened by accident; it could not have been some sort of coincidence; it could only have happened with the knowledge, the planning, and the organization of the government in Banja Luka at the time,” he avers.¹⁰⁷ But why did he think that mosques were singled out as prime targets by Serbian and Croatian extremists? His response was unequivocal:

In the Bosnian war, I learned that genocide involves more than killing people. Ethnic cleansing was undertaken to eliminate the Muslim presence in Bosnia, our history as well as the living population. The plan was to kill a culture as well as a people. This is why religious structures, monuments, shrines cemeteries and historic architecture of all kinds were targeted for destruction.¹⁰⁸

For Ceric the twofold targeting of both Bosnian Muslims as well as the symbols of their religious faith characterizes what he provocatively refers to as “the flip sides of the coinage of genocide that we were made to forfeit.”¹⁰⁹ To shore up his charge of religious genocide, Ceric shares two of his worst memories of the war. The first took place on November 9, 1993, six months after he had assumed his position as grand mufti. In what has become a symbol of the destructiveness of the Bosnian war he describes his distress when he first received the news that Croat militia forces had destroyed the five centuries old Mostar Bridge, which ran across the Neretva River in the province of Herzegovina.¹¹⁰ “I was torn between double emotions,” Ceric recalls. With great difficulty the relatively articulate and verbose Ceric settles on the following: “It is impossible to capture my emotions exactly but I guess I can best describe it as both devastation and sobering.”¹¹¹ Ceric’s anguish and ambivalence is best echoed in an analogous account provided by the Croatian theologian, Miroslav Volf:

¹⁰⁷ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹⁰⁸ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹⁰⁹ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹¹⁰ In recognition of the great symbolic significance of the destruction of the Mostar Bridge, Sells has entitled his book, *The Bridge Betrayed*.

¹¹¹ This is the only time during my two interviews with Ceric that he struggled to find the right words to describe his emotions.

I was stunned and deeply pained when I heard it had been destroyed by Croatian forces. I caught myself thinking, I am more troubled by the destruction of a bridge than by the death and deportation of so many people in the region. But of course the bridge is the people because the bridge symbolized a peace between peoples that has vanished.¹¹²

Volf and Ceric concur that the destruction of Mostar Bridge was one of their worst memories of the war. Unlike Ceric however, Volf does not view the destruction of the bridge as evidence in support of the charge of genocide.¹¹³

Ceric acknowledges that it is extremely difficult to single out any specific incidents as the worst acts of barbarism that he witnessed during the war. “The atrocities I recall are best known to the outside world but it represents the tip of the iceberg for Bosnians,” he informs me. In addition to the destruction of the Mostar Bridge, he singles out the “atrocities perpetrated by Serb militias in the UN safe haven of Srebrenica in the summer of 1995,” as a second illustration to bolster his charge of genocide. Srebrenica, an enclave in eastern Bosnia, perched on the Drina River, was reportedly home to some 40,000 Muslims (half of them displaced from elsewhere). On April 16, 1993, Srebrenica was declared a “safe haven” by a UN Security Council Resolution 819 after thousands of refugees had fled to the area. For more than two years the refugees lived in fear and hunger as the Serb forces continuously blocked UN humanitarian aid convoys from reaching the besieged enclave. On July 11, 1995, as the war was winding down Srebrenica was overrun by Bosnian Serb forces. What is alleged to have happened thereafter still casts a shadow over Bosnia and the Balkans and has become widely known as the “worst civilian massacre in Europe since World War II.”¹¹⁴ Ceric provided the following personal account of the Srebrenica events:

¹¹² Miroslav Volf, “The Bridge Betrayed: Book Review,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 67, no.1 (1999) : 250.

¹¹³ I deal with Volf’s criticism of Sells’ claim of religious genocide in the last section of this chapter.

¹¹⁴ This description of the events of Srebrenica is widely found in journalistic and scholarly accounts. For a justification of the portrayal see David Rohde, *Endgame: The Betrayal and Fall of Srebrenica. Europe’s Worst Massacre since World War II* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997). Srebrenica also features prominently at the trials of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in the Hague. See <http://www.un.org/icty/> (accessed April 2005).

After overrunning the UN peacekeepers the Bosnian Serb forces deliberately set about murdering all the men and boys as young as twelve years old. After murdering their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons they set about torturing and raping the women. The end result was that close to 8,000 Muslims were killed and thousands more maimed for life.¹¹⁵

Ceric contends that the events of Srebrenica vindicate his claim that the atrocities in Bosnia were more than ethnic cleansing but in fact genocide. His charge of genocide, which he frequently repeats, resonates with the view of most if not all Bosnian Muslims. The allegation has also been supported by a number of nongovernmental human rights organizations, notably Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.¹¹⁶ More significantly, however, in August 2001, the International Criminal Court for Yugoslavia (ICTY),¹¹⁷ an official UN sanctioned body, handed down its first conviction for genocide against Radislav Krstic, a Bosnian Serb general. He was found guilty of genocide for killing up to 8,000 Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995. The summary of the verdict maintained that Bosnian Serb forces deliberately set about murdering all the men of Srebrenica: “the result was inevitable – the destruction of the Bosnian Muslim people in Srebrenica ... What was ethnic cleansing became genocide.”¹¹⁸ It is significant that the ICTY has also indicted the former Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, with 66 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of

¹¹⁵ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹¹⁶ For Human Rights Watch support for the charge of genocide see “Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity: Topical Digests of the Case Law of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia,” <http://hrw.org/reports/2004/ij/> (accessed April 2005). For Amnesty International’s endorsement of the verdict of genocide in Bosnia see <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news/press/12889.shtml> (accessed April 2005).

¹¹⁷ The ICTY was established by Resolution 827 of the UN Security Council which was passed on May 25, 1993. It has jurisdiction over certain types of crime committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991: grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, violations of the laws or customs of war, genocide and crime against humanity. It can try only individuals, not organizations or governments. The maximum sentence it can impose is life imprisonment. For a useful introduction to the genesis and functions of the ICTY see Pierre Hazan, Thomas Snyder and M. Cherif Bassiouni, eds. *Justice in a Time of War: The True Story Behind the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia* (Texas A&M University Press, 2004).

¹¹⁸ See official website of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. <http://www.un.org/icty/krstic/TrialC1/judgement/index.htm> (accessed May 2005).

the Geneva Conventions, and violations of the laws and customs of war. The crimes are alleged to have occurred in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, between 1991 and 1999, including the atrocities in Vukovar and Srebrenica, affecting hundreds of thousands of persons. Milosevic is accused of crimes, such as widespread killing, detention of civilians, torture, and extermination of detainees through starvation, providing contaminated water, requiring forced labor, providing inadequate medical care, and constant physical and psychological assault. Other charges include deportation or forcible transfer of civilians, and destruction of their homes, as well as the destruction of cultural and historical institutions and monuments. Milosevic's trial continues and a verdict against him will even further strengthen the case for genocide.¹¹⁹

Notwithstanding this strong body of evidence, scholarly opinion has however been deeply divided on the question of whether genocide has indeed occurred in Bosnia. A vociferous and often vitriolic debate continues. On the one hand there are those scholars who view the conflict as a civil war between competing nationalisms (Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian, etc.). They represent a wide range of intellectual orientations and generally deny the validity of the charge of genocide.¹²⁰ For example, a few leftwing revisionists, such as Diana Johnston, Edward Herman and Michael Parenti, contend that the breakup of Yugoslavia was primarily caused by foreign intervention.¹²¹ They refer in particular to the role of US policy in seeking hegemony and imperialism. On the other hand, a number of scholars have argued in support of the charge of genocide. Foremost among these are Roy Gutman,¹²² Norman Cigar¹²³

¹¹⁹ For a useful summary of the trial of Milosevic see Human Rights Watch website, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/08/26/serbia9273.htm> (accessed May 2005).

¹²⁰ Some have denied that genocide has occurred in Bosnia. See for example Charles Krauthammer, "Drawing the Line at Genocide," *Washington Post*, 11 December 1992 and George Kenny as quoted in, David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1995).

¹²¹ For a useful review of those scholars who deny the charge of genocide in Bosnia see, Marko Attilio Hoare, "The Left Revisionists," *Journal of Genocide Research* (December 2003). <http://www.glypx.com/BalkanWitness/hoare.htm> (accessed June 2005).

¹²² Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide* (New York: Macmillan, 1993). Gutman's first hand account of the horrors of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia he provided as a Newsday foreign correspondent was the first to make the claim of genocide. He won the 1993 Pulitzer award for his book.

¹²³ Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*.

and Michael Sells. The latter invokes the Geneva Convention on Genocide adopted by the United Nations in 1948 that defines genocide as acts committed “to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such.”¹²⁴ For him the fact that Bosnian Muslims, their religious leaders, places of worship, cultural and historical artifacts were singled out for attack is clear evidence that what was going on in Bosnia was “religious genocide.” According to Sells, “the Serb army has targeted for destruction the major libraries, manuscript collections, museums, and other cultural institutions in Sarajevo, Mostar, and other besieged cities.”¹²⁵ He furthermore points out that between them the Serb and Croat militias destroyed more than 1 400 mosques.¹²⁶ Velikonja estimates about two fifths of all of the mosques in Bosnia were destroyed. Some of them were masterworks of sixteenth century European architecture, such as the beautiful Aladza in Foca and Ferhadija in Banja Luka.¹²⁷ In some cases, the mosques were dynamited by Serb militias throughout the regions they controlled. In Banja Luka, for example, they destroyed all of the sixteen mosques that dotted the landscape of this vibrant Muslim-populated city. A similar plight was visited on all of the mosques in Zvornik and every mosque in the Republic Srpska.¹²⁸ In some instances, churches were built on the ruins of the mosques, as a symbol of victory “engraved in stone.”¹²⁹ As already noted, the charge of genocide has been challenged by a number of scholars representing a wide spectrum of theoretical and ideological orientations. Sells, however, links his contention of genocide directly to religion. This represents a double indictment.

¹²⁴ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 24–28.

¹²⁵ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 3.

¹²⁶ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 25.

¹²⁷ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 261.

¹²⁸ Mujko Erovic, *Why Are One Thousand and One Hundred Bosnian Mosques Destroyed* (Palm Bay, FL: Bosnia Justice, 1996).

¹²⁹ Velikonja provides a disturbing rationale for this when he says: “As has been the case throughout history, the conquerors’ religious symbols were built over the ruins of the sanctuaries of the vanquished. Territory must be symbolically appropriated and the sign of victory “engraved in stone.” Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 261.

The carefully orchestrated and targeted nature of the atrocities convinced Sells, as well as Ceric, that there was state complicity in the genocide against Muslims.¹³⁰ Ceric believes that “state involvement in the massacres were both internal as well as external.”¹³¹ “It was at this point that I became convinced that the violence directed against Muslims, their culture and institutions that was taking place was part of a planned and organized campaign by the Milosovic regime in Belgrade,” he avers.¹³² He argues that there was strong collusion between the Serbian government which was headed by Milosovic and local level administrations within Bosnia in which Bosnian Serbs were dominant.

Ceric’s assertion of state complicity has been buttressed by a growing body of scholarship. A number of scholars, including James Ron, Adam Jones and Bob de Graaff, have argued in support of Ceric’s view of state complicity in the atrocities committed against Bosnian Muslims. They all contend that the state should be brought centrally into the analysis of the Bosnian war, since both the Bosnian Serb as well as the Bosnian Croat paramilitary units were not only linked with, but also found their roots in the security apparatuses of the emerging states of Serbia and Croatia. In support of their contention, they point out the widely known fact that the presidents of Serbia and Croatia, Slobadan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman respectively, met in Karadordevo in March 1991 to discuss plans for partitioning Bosnia. Their meeting was followed by further meetings in February 1992 in Austria and May 1992 in Karadzic in which the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and the Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban played prominent roles.¹³³ The agenda of these meetings was to carve up Bosnia in pursuit of a greater Serbia and greater Croatia. Illuminating the precise nature of this agenda,

¹³⁰ See official website of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. <http://www.un.org/icty/krstic/TrialC1/judgement/index.htm> (accessed May 2005).

¹³¹ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹³² Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 23, 2002.

¹³³ Velikonja, *Religious Separation*, 236. See also, Xavier Bougarel, “Bosnia and Herzegovina: State and Communism,” in *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth*, eds. David A. Dyker and Ivan Vejvoda (Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1997), 104.

De Graaff contends that “[T]he separate political projects of the warring factions in Yugoslavia were in fact nation-building exercises, which were mutually exclusive and went against the preferences of the main mediating and intervening powers.”¹³⁴ The challenge facing the Milosevic and Tudjman regimes was how to accomplish their state-building ambitions within the framework of international norms that prohibited them from taking military actions beyond their official borders. Ron contends that: “[T]hese limitations prompted Serbian officials to enter into a subcontracting relationship with semiprivate groups in Bosnia and Serbia proper, which were able to use violence without directly incriminating the Belgrade regime.”¹³⁵ Taking a much similar view, De Graaff, referring to the notorious paramilitary leaders that terrorized the Bosnian Muslims, suggests that:

[T]here could have been no Arkan, Seselj or Captain Dragon without the connivance, support and exhortation of the authorities in Belgrade. The paramilitary groups were organized by the so-called *vojna linija* (military line) within the Serbian Ministry of Interior, consisting of close relations of Milosevic who guided these operations from within the State Security Service.¹³⁶

The state-complicity thesis has received greater credence as the evidence in the trials of Milosevic and his henchmen has surfaced at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague. For example, according to witness C-48 at the Hague Tribunal, when Milosevic was informed that his paramilitary leader, Arkan, was fully under the control of his State Security Service, he replied by saying: “Very well. Very well. You just keep him under control. We need people like this now but no-one should think that they are more powerful than the state.”¹³⁷

¹³⁴ De Graaff, “Wars in the Former Yugoslavia,” 166.

¹³⁵ James Ron, “Territoriality and Plausible Deniability: Serbian Paramilitaries in the Bosnian War,” in *Death Squads in Global Perspective*, eds. Bruce B. Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 287.

¹³⁶ De Graaff, “Wars in the Former Yugoslavia,” 164.

¹³⁷ Chris Stephen and Emir Suljagic, “Milosevic Linked Directly to War Crimes,” *Tribunal Update*, no. 310 (2 May 2003).

The thesis of state complicity raises two critical questions. The first relates to why the role of the state in the violence in Bosnia was neglected by scholars, policy analysts and journalists, and the second concerns the precise role of religion *vis-à-vis* the state. Regarding the former question, Adam provides us with a cogent response when he states that this palpable neglect is not unique to the Bosnian case. He usefully illustrates how the same deficiency is reflected in mainstream analysis of what he describes as parainstitutional violence in Latin America. He attributes it largely to two key factors. First, state actors usually try their best to conceal their actions in order to exonerate themselves. Ironically, in the context of broader international norms and a rising scrutiny of the human rights records of states by international nongovernmental agencies, Adam suggests that the incentive for states to employ covert violence increases. Second, state-centric security bias is pervasive in contemporary scholarship and policy analyses.¹³⁸ The last section of this chapter attempts to respond to this latter point in greater detail, with special attention to the role of religion in the relation to state complicity in the ethnic cleansing campaigns against Muslims. It also seeks to evaluate the bold claims made by Ceric at the outset of this interview, namely, that of the bias in Western scholarship in understating the role of religion in the Bosnian conflict.

The Role of Religion in the Bosnian War: An Assessment of the Literature

On reading *The Bridge Betrayed*, it is not surprising that Ceric would have felt so passionate about it. Sell's book is precisely about the preeminent role of Eastern Orthodox Christianity and to a lesser extent Catholicism in legitimating what he calls "religious genocide" in Bosnia. He makes a strong case for what Ceric believes continues to be denied or under-represented in most of the literature on the war in

¹³⁸ Adam Jones, "Parainstitutional Violence in Latin America," *Latin American Politics & Society* 46.4 (2004) : 127–148.

Bosnia: “that it was religiously motivated and religiously justified.” In support of his central thesis, Sells argues that what was going on:

... was religious genocide in several senses: the people destroyed were chosen on the basis of their religious identity; those carrying out the killings acted with the blessings and support of Christian church leaders; the violence was grounded in a religious mythology that characterized the targeted people as race traitors and the extermination of them as a sacred act; and the perpetrators of the violence were protected by the policy makers of a Western world that is culturally dominated by Christianity.¹³⁹

Sells was fully aware that his “religious genocide thesis” was provocative in challenging the conventional wisdom. In fact, this seems to have been one of the key purposes of the book. Perhaps this may to some extent explain why Sells largely disregards the violent actions of Bosnian Muslims. At several places, he laments the “silence of self-identified Christian leaders in many parts of the world in the face of the Bosnian genocide.” But to what extent does this bias actually exist?

In a review of Sells’ book, Miroslav Volf takes issue with Sells’ interpretation of the role of religion in the Bosnian genocide. He argues that the “primary motivation for the war was not religion but rather political, economic and cultural.” In support of his argument that religion was a marginal factor, he says: “Unlike Sells, I do not think that Serbian war lords when they claim to be ‘fighting for our faith, the Serbian Orthodox Church,’ are offering either the primary motivation or primary justification for their actions.” “Religious rhetoric,” he goes on to argue, “is only one of the many rhetorics employed, and a subordinate one at that.”¹⁴⁰ A similar position is taken by another Croatian historian of religion, Paul Mojzes, who has written extensively on the role of religion in the Balkans conflict. He also acknowledges the liberal use that was made of religious symbols and myths, as well as the complicity of high profile

¹³⁹ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 89.

¹⁴⁰ Miroslav Volf, “The Bridge Betrayed-Book Review,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 67, no. 1 (March 1999) : 250.

religious leaders in supporting the atrocities, but he nonetheless concludes that the war is primarily “ethnonationalist” not religious.¹⁴¹

Even more disconcerting is the complete lack of attention given to the Bosnian conflict in the account of religious terror in Mark Juergensmeyer’s acclaimed book, *Terror in the Mind of God*. His global survey of religious violence in the contemporary period singularly neglects the Bosnian case. Among his impressive list of eighty-five interviews and correspondents listed at the back of his book, there is not a single individual from the Balkans. Moreover, Juergensmeyer mentions Bosnia only twice. Interestingly, from the point of view of this dissertation, the first time he refers to it is in the context of “state terrorism” and the second time he feels the need to do so is to argue that: “During the height of the conflict in Bosnia in the mid-1990s, for instance, mosques stayed open and the symphony orchestra of Sarajevo kept to its concert schedule, performing to mixed audiences (sic).”¹⁴² Despite multiple reviews of the book not a single one has noted this gross omission.

Highlighting this inconsistency in scholarship on the role of religion in the Bosnian conflict, Appleby argues that “some Western analysts, following the lead of the apologists for religion on the scene, downplayed the religious dimension of the war and argued that political, economic, and cultural factors were far more prominent in causing and sustaining it as if “culture” were a category somehow independent of religion.”¹⁴³ Appleby goes on to argue that by “exculpating the religious leaders on the grounds that they were protecting their respective religious and cultural communities,” the “religion did not do it camp” inadvertently undermined their own claims.¹⁴⁴

In attempting to correct this apparent contradiction in Western scholarship on the role of religion in legitimating the violence in Bosnia, Appleby proceeds to develop

¹⁴¹ Paul Mojzes, *Yugoslavian Inferno: Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans* (New York: Continuum, 1994), 147.

¹⁴² Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 241.

¹⁴³ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 67.

¹⁴⁴ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 68.

a sophisticated analysis of what he calls “ethnoreligious” violence “because it is virtually impossible to disaggregate the precise roles of religion and ethnicity.”¹⁴⁵ He furthermore argues that “for many people, *religion is intrinsically a part of the sense of ethnicity*” and that religion more often than not does not breakdown ethnic barriers; on the contrary it frequently fortifies them.¹⁴⁶ Drawing on the twin themes of mimesis and the scapegoat advanced by Rene Girard, Appleby’s analysis of the Bosnian conflict lends credence to Ceric’s claim that it is sameness leading to mimetic rivalry rather than difference that lies at the heart of the conflict. In support of his thesis he argues that:

The Serbs and Croats, twinned tribes mutually scornful and yet imitative of each other, each desiring its own sacred nation with expanded ‘purified’ borders, found a handy scapegoat in the Muslims of Bosnia. Late comers to the ways of ethnoreligious nationalism, the Bosnian Muslims fell prey to the genocide legitimating propaganda by which Christian extremists deemed them ‘race traitors’ and ‘apostates.’¹⁴⁷

Appleby’s account of the role of religion in the Bosnian war is a helpful and nuanced analysis. Ironically, however, where he falls short is in the subordinate position he has given to ethnoreligious violence within his broader typology of post-Cold War religious violence. He has given violence a less important role in the ethnoreligious type as opposed to what he defines as “fundamentalist violence.” For Appleby, in the case of the former, religion is an accomplice to violence, as contrasted to the latter, wherein religion has a preeminent role unencumbered by “ethnic” and “nationalist” considerations. While to his credit Appleby does argue that not all fundamentalists are violent, the objection raised by Ceric is still valid, albeit at a more sophisticated level.

¹⁴⁵ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 61.

¹⁴⁶ Appleby provides the examples of Bosnia which included “Bosnian Serbs,” “Bosnian Croats,” and “Bosnian Muslims. In each case, it was religion wed to ethnicity that distinguished each “ethnic” group from the other; as well as Sri Lanka, where the Sinhala majority “invoked Buddhism as a basis for legitimating Sinhala cultural and political preeminence in Sri Lanka.”

¹⁴⁷ Appleby, *Ambivalence of the Sacred*, 79.

The argument is a finely grained one, but one which still leaves the question open as to why it is that when Christians are complicit in legitimating violence, as was the case in the Balkans, the role of religion has an inferior role as opposed to its role in contexts where Muslims are implicated, as for example in the cases of Lebanon or the Sudan, both of which Appleby depicts as fundamentalist types of violence. Recent events in both of these countries have aptly demonstrated that the conflicts cannot be reduced to religion. The March 2005 assassination of the former Lebanese prime minister, Rafiq al-Hariri, sparked off widespread protests in that country, supported equally by Muslims as well as Christians. Moreover, the ongoing brutal campaigns by the Arab dominated northern Sudanese regime to put down a rebellion by black tribes in the Darfur region of western Sudan has shown that the conflict in that country has, in addition to the religious dimension, also strong racial and ethnic overtones. How else is one to explain the fact that the Arab northern as well as its Darfur adversaries are both predominantly Muslim?

Conclusion

There is still a vigorous debate concerning the causes and nature of the Bosnian war. This dissertation highlights the perspective of one prominent religious actor, Mustafa Cerić. He has experienced the deadly conflict at first hand and holds strong and passionate views about it. He is adamant that the Bosnian war can be characterized as “ethnic cleansing” and indeed as “genocide.” Furthermore, he is convinced that the Belgrade regime under the leadership of Slobodan Milošević, and the newly established Croatian state under the leadership of Franjo Tuđman were directly implicated in generating the atrocities perpetrated against Bosnian Muslims. He laments the fact that his view of the war is underrepresented in the literature.

This chapter has illustrated that Cerić’s critique is misplaced. His activist perspective does find clear resonance with the conclusions of some of the most influential scholars who have written on the Bosnian war, such as Gutman, Cigar,

Norman, Mestrovic, De Graaff and Sells. All these scholars agree that the Bosnian war can adequately be characterized as ethnic cleansing and genocide and that it would not have been possible without the active involvement of the state. More significantly, this perspective has been buttressed by a judgment handed down at the ICTY in The Hague.

Of course, there have been other scholars, such as Diana Johnston, Edward Herman and Michael Parenti, who have denied the plausibility of genocide. This, however, cannot be considered to be part of a sinister plot against Islam or Bosnian Muslims as Ceric would have it. On the contrary, the aforementioned scholars consider themselves to be part of the left, and on many other issues they have been extremely critical of Western policies towards Muslims. It would be more appropriate to attribute this divergence of scholarly opinion as an essential part of the nature of the academy. It is characterized by robust debate and is not immune to political conditioning.

Ceric's critique may be more appropriate in describing international policy on the Balkans during the war. All the major international institutions, including the UN and the European Union, failed to fully appreciate the role of state authorities in the conflict. Underscoring such a critique, De Graaff maintains that "the centrality of the state was often overlooked in the West; because state actors in former Yugoslavia tried to hide that they were behind the violence, as well as how they aimed at creating new states."¹⁴⁸ I would add that hegemonic paradigms, which privilege the state, have also contributed to obscuring the insidious role of the state.

But what about Ceric's claim of the deliberate downplaying of the role of religion in the Bosnian war by Western scholars? Most scholars are in agreement that disentangling the religious from the ethnic and these in turn from the socio-economic and political factors is a difficult challenge. This is made all the more difficult by the fact that, as Sells notes: "The human capacity for acknowledging religiously based

¹⁴⁸ De Graaff, "Wars in the Former Yugoslavia," 162.

evil is particularly tenuous.”¹⁴⁹ Ceric fully endorses Sells’ sentiments but would hasten to nuance them by proposing that “in the world in which we live this capacity is even more tenuous when it is evil-motivated and legitimated by bad interpretations of Christianity as is vividly illustrated in the academic assessments of the role of religion in the Bosnian conflict.”¹⁵⁰ This chapter has illustrated that Ceric’s controversial view on this issue may not be completely misplaced. The apologetic counter-arguments over Sells’s claim of religious genocide vividly illustrate this reality. A few scholars have begun to note this. John Kelsay, for example, argues that scholarly debates on religion and violence in the Western academy have placed “Islam in the dock.”¹⁵¹ Taking a corollary position, Marc Ellis argues that mainstream scholars and theologians “seek to isolate this [Christian and Jewish] violence as an aberration and then retreat to the pretense of innocence.”¹⁵² Roy P. Mottahedeh makes a similar argument more bluntly: “I believe that we in the West would have awakened to the plight of the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina much sooner if they had not been Muslims.”¹⁵³

Mustafa Ceric’s voice, more strident than the restrained tone of Father Lapsley, and more polemic than those of the scholars whose conversation I interpolated here, offers us an on-the-ground perspective on the religion-violence-state matrix in Bosnia. In South Africa, Christianity provided the religious idiom of both the apartheid state and many of its resisters. In Bosnia, one can fairly say that Orthodox Christianity played at least some role in the framing of state violence against the primarily Muslim population. Not surprisingly, given the hegemonic academic paradigm presented here and the cultural bias surrounding it, the Western world hears more about alleged

¹⁴⁹ Sells, *Bridge Betrayed*, 145.

¹⁵⁰ Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

¹⁵¹ John Kelsay, “Bosnia and the Muslim Critique of Modernity,” in *Religion and Justice in the War on Bosnia*, ed. G. Scott Davis (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), 5.

¹⁵² Marc H. Ellis, *Unholy Alliance: Religion and Atrocity in Our Time* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publications, 1997), xi–xvii.

¹⁵³ Roy P. Mottahedeh, “Foreword,” in *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, ed. Mark Pinson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

Bosnian Muslim attempts to establish an Islamic state “in the heart of Europe” than the unambiguous Serbian project of establishing a Christian Orthodox state of Greater Serbia and the similarly overt Croat goal of building a Catholic Greater Croatia.

We turn now to India, complicating the picture further by looking at a discourse yet more alien to the Western academy – that of Hinduism.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER FIVE

INDIA: NAMING THE GUILTY¹



Interlocutor III
Swami Agnivesh

Indian government officials have acknowledged that since February 27, 2002, more than 850 people have been killed in communal violence in the state of Gujarat, most of them Muslims. ... The attacks on Muslims are part of a concerted campaign of Hindu nationalist organizations to promote and exploit communal tensions to further the BJP's political rule – a movement that is supported at the local level by militant groups that operate with impunity and under the patronage of the state.²

The above comes from a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report on the communal violence that engulfed the Western Indian state of Gujarat in February and March of 2002.³ Its

¹ This chapter is based on three personal interviews conducted with Swami Agnivesh at his office in Delhi, India, on February 22, 23 and 24, 2005. The interviews were supplemented by the collection of his most important writings and speeches, Swami Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action: New Agenda for Humanity* (Delhi: Hope India Publications, Second Edition, 2003), as well as unpublished documents provided by Swami Agnivesh.

² Human Rights Watch, “*We Have No Orders To Save You*”: *State Participation and Complicity in Communal Violence in Gujarat* (New York: Human Rights Watch Report, vol. 14, no. 3(C), April 30, 2002), 4, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/India/> (accessed February 2005).

³ In the Indian context, the pervasive term “communal” refers to the politicization of religious differences, more commonly associated with tensions and conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. For a useful survey of the history of the usage of the term see K.N. Pannikar, *The Concerned Indian's Guide to Communalism* (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2003). It is widely accepted that the worst communal violence occurred between February 27 and March 2, 2002. Paul Brass argues after this “there was a hiatus that was followed by ‘a new round of violence’ that lasted until mid-June.” Paul Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 387.

conclusion states that: “State officials of Gujarat, India, were directly involved in the killings of hundreds of Muslims since February 27 and are now engineering a massive cover-up of the state’s role in the violence.” Earlier, this claim had been independently confirmed by India’s National Human Rights Commission (NHCR).⁴ Not surprisingly, however, the charge of state complicity in the violence was highly controversial and contested.⁵

There have been very few Hindu leaders who have been willing to support the charge that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of the state of Gujarat⁶ and its supporting Hindu religious network, the *Sang Parivar*,⁷ were complicit in the violence directed against Muslims in 2002.⁸ Most Hindu leaders preferred to attribute the violence to “spontaneous reactions” from a Muslim mob, whom they believed were responsible for the setting on fire of Coach S-6 of the Sabarmati Express train that immolated fifty-eight Hindu *kar sevaks* (volunteer religious workers) in the town of Godhra on February 27.⁹ This version of the events had been widely disseminated by

⁴ The complicity of the state in the Gujarat violence was first claimed on April 3, 2002 in a preliminary report released by India’s National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), <http://nhrc.nic.in/Gujarat.htm#no3/002E> (accessed February 2005).

⁵ For an example of critiques of the Human Rights Report, see Arvin Bahl, “Politics By Other Means: An Analysis of Human Rights Watch Report on Gujarat,” in *Gujarat After Godhra: Real Violence, Selective Outrage*, eds. Ramesh N. Rao and Koenraad Elst (New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications Pvt Ltd, 2003), 172–200. A slightly revised version of this critique was published by the South Asia Analysis Group, Paper no. 891, 12.01.2004, <http://www.saag.org/papers9/paper891.html> (accessed February 2005).

⁶ The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; Indian People’s Party) was founded in 1980. It emerged as the largest party in a coalition Indian government in 1999 and remained in power until May 3, 2004. The BJP has also been in control of a number of Indian states, including Gujarat where it currently still remains in power.

⁷ This network includes: the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bajrang Dal and the umbrella organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Corps, RSS), all of whom collectively form the *Sang Parivar* (or “family” of Hindu nationalist groups). For an in depth study of the BJPs emergence and relationship to Hindu Nationalism, see Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1996).

⁸ In an interview with Yoginder Sikand in October 2004, the University of Baroda Professor of Physics, Dr Juzar Bandukwala, claimed that “Muslims in Gujarat feel despondent because so few Hindus have had the courage to speak out against the atrocities and killings.” In fact Bandukwala claims that “many Hindu religious leaders actually encouraged the rioters. In some cases, Hindu religious leaders were involved in distributing trishuls [the trident shaped weapon associated with the god Shiva] to Hindus.” See Juzar Bandukwala and Yoginder Sikand, “Speaking from Gujarat,” in *Countercurrents*, 6 October, 2004, <http://www.countercurrents.org/gujarat-sikand061004.htm> (accessed February 2005).

⁹ The Hindu volunteers were returning home from a trip to Ayodhya, where they had gone to press anew for the construction of a temple on the site of the Babri mosque which had been forcibly razed in 1992.

BJP leaders who promptly blamed the Pakistani intelligence services for orchestrating the horrific killings in order to foment communalism and thereby destabilize India.¹⁰

One of the few Hindu religious leaders at the forefront of confirming the view that the BJP-controlled government of the State of Gujarat was complicit in the violence directed against Muslims is Swami Agnivesh, the president of Arya Samaj, an international Hindu revivalist movement.¹¹ In April 2002, literally days after the initial wave of violence had subsided, Agnivesh led a multi-religious pilgrimage of compassion, constituted of seventy-two eminent religious and social leaders, to offer succor to the thousands of victims of the violence in their refugee camps.¹² The group spent five days in the affected areas of Gujarat listening to the harrowing stories of the victims. Agnivesh was so moved by what he had witnessed that he decided to write a series of articles for the popular press describing the plight of the refugees. In one of these press statements he summarized the findings and conclusions of his mission of peace and compassion to Gujarat:

It is beyond any doubt that the state government failed to protect the Muslim community in Gujarat from the fury of the rioters. The confidence of the people, particularly that of minority communities, in the state dispensation is all but gone. We found desperation at its fever-pitch in the refugee camps, and we are deeply worried about its long-term consequences for the integrity and unity of India.¹³

¹⁰ The accusation that the Godhra train deaths was a “pre-meditated terrorist” attack against Hindus was first made by officials from the state of Gujarat as well as the central government of India. See: *Human Rights Report*, Vol. 14, No. 3 – April 2002, 4. For an in-depth analysis of the manner in which this version of the Godhra events was contrived by the BJP leaders and widely disseminated by the vernacular media, see Siddharth Varadarajan, “Chronicle of a Tragedy Foretold,” in *Gujarat: The Making of a Tragedy* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002), 1–41.

¹¹ For a first-hand account on the Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875, see Lajpat Rai, *History of the Arya Samaj*, South Asia Books, 1993, <http://hrw.org/press/2002/04/gujarat.htm> (accessed February 2005).

¹² The HRW (2002) report claims that there were two hundred thousand internally displaced people living in refugee camps as a result of the violence.

¹³ “Swami Agnivesh on the Riots,” in *Hinduism Today*, http://www.hinduismtoday.com/archives/2002/7-9/30-31_indiariot.shtml (accessed February 2005).

The articles, which were coauthored with a close colleague and Christian priest, the Reverend Valson Thampu,¹⁴ were subsequently collated and published under the title, *Harvest of Hatred: Gujarat Under Siege*. The book was one of the earliest accounts of the 2002 Gujarat violence.¹⁵ It not only unequivocally endorsed the view of state complicity but went even further than the human rights reports by asserting that the Gujarat violence “could go down in history as an instance of state-permitted terrorism, a great deal worse than ‘cross-border terrorism’ as it turns innocent citizens into enemies and refugees in their own homeland.”¹⁶ These are strong views coming from an influential Hindu religious leader.

In this chapter, I evaluate how widespread the judgment is that the Gujarat state was complicit in the violence that engulfed it in 2002. More importantly, I explore what implications this verdict has for existing theories on religion, violence and the state. I am also curious to understand how Hindu nationalists succeeded in using the infrastructure of one of the world’s largest and most celebrated secular democracies, the Indian state,¹⁷ to commit atrocities against their Muslim compatriots. I seek to answer these questions through interviews with Swami Agnivesh. In the final section, I compare and contrast Agnivesh’s activist perspective with that of the sparse scholarly literature on the communal violence that erupted in Gujarat in 2002. In the course of placing his views within a broader perspective, I will also be drawing on the vast body of literature that seeks to illuminate the relationship between religion and politics within the Indian context.

¹⁴ Valson Thampu is an ordained minister of the Church of North India and is a co-founder together with Swami Agnivesh of the Foundation for Global Spirituality. They have worked together in numerous joint interreligious projects and frequently publish press articles together.

¹⁵ In my own research I have not been able to locate any volume dealing with the Gujarat violence of 2002 published earlier than the one co-written by Agnivesh & Thampu. My research finding is supported by Ramesh N. Rao and Koenraad Elst who wrote: “The first one out of the gate was the book by Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Valson Thampu,” in, Swami Agnivesh and Rev. Valson Thampu, *Gujarat After Godhra: Real Violence, Selective Outrage* (New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2002).

¹⁶ Swami Agnivesh and Reverend Valson Thampu, eds. *Harvest of Hate: Gujarat Under Siege* (Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2002), 12.

¹⁷ For an interesting perspective on the great significance of post-Independent India’s democracy experiment see Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997).

The Firebrand Swami of Many Facets

In late February 2005, exactly three years after one of the worst cases of communal violence in Gujarat, and indeed, in what some claim to be the worst in post-independence India,¹⁸ I set out to engage Swami Agnivesh in a conversation on the nexus of religion, violence and the state. My choice of interlocutor was deliberate. Agnivesh is a seasoned religious activist who believes that his ideas are not “manufactured in an ivory tower” but are rather profoundly shaped by his “active engagement with the burning issues of our times.”¹⁹ My chief concern was to discover how similar or different his activist understanding of the role of religion in deadly conflict was to that of the dominant perspectives pervading the Western academy.

I begin my dialogical encounter by providing a portrait of Swami Agnivesh, focusing particularly on his nonviolent struggles against communal violence. Throughout the course of the biographical sketch, I will raise key theoretical issues that impinge on the larger question of the relationship between religion, violence and the state. The Sanskrit words *agni* means fire and *vesh* means to cover or wrap around. These are the two words that form the religious nomenclature of one of India’s most articulate Hindu religious leaders, Swami Agnivesh.²⁰ A *Financial Times* reporter has fittingly translated his adopted name as “fire of the mind.” He sees himself as a burning brand of religious rationality.²¹ “He is a karma yogi, who has only one cosmic vision

¹⁸ A number of scholars have proposed that the Gujarat violence was one of the worst cases India has seen since independence. Among these is Ashgar Ali Engineer who claims that: “The Gujarat carnage is unprecedented in the history of communal violence in Post-Independence India.” Ashgar Ali Engineer, *The Gujarat Carnage* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2003), 1. Another example is a signature campaign letter by Teesta Setalvad of the NGO Citizens for Justice and Peace which includes this passage: “the Gujarat case ... is perhaps the most inhuman, horrendous and un-Constitutional acts in the history of post-Independence India.” www.sabrang.com (accessed in April, 2005).

¹⁹ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 23, 2005. Agnivesh contends that: “Such writings as we indulge in happen as byproducts of our active engagement with the burning issues of our times.” In Agnivesh and Thampu, *Harvest of Hate*, xi.

²⁰ Swami is an honorific title given to Hindu religious leaders. Agnivesh prefers to translate it literally as “religious teacher.”

²¹ Arthur Bonner, “The Fiery Swami: Introduction.” Unpublished document provided by Swami Agnivesh on February 23, 2005.

– a just world order.” This is the verdict of V.R. Krishna Iyer, a former judge of the Supreme Court of India.²²

Fittingly, Agnivesh’s humble office is situated in central Delhi, on Jantar Mantar Road, the site from where all social justice protests to the Indian parliament begin.²³ He himself has over the course of his long career as an activist led numerous protest marches both against the central government in Delhi and in other parts of India. Coincidentally, on my way to his office to conduct my first interview with him, I ran into one such demonstration. On the third day, there were two other protests taking place. The one that perked my interest was that of a large group of Christians who had gathered to march on the Indian parliament in protest against the alleged killing of two pastors and half a dozen attacks on church targets in recent weeks.²⁴ According to press reports, the recent wave of violence had begun on January 30, 2005, when Hindu activists forced their way into a large gathering of Christian worshippers in India’s Uttar Pradesh (UP) state. The Hindu activists had reportedly charged that the Christian prayer rally was aimed at conversion and that Christians were luring Hindus with gifts of land, money, food and clothes. In his response to the growing tension, the secretary general of the National Council of Churches in India, Bishop D.K. Sahu, ominously warned that the unprovoked attacks signaled “a new cycle of violence” and the secretary general of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India, Bishop Percival Fernandez, alleged that “the recent wave of violence against Christians in India is part of a plan led by fundamentalist groups.”²⁵

My encounter with this demonstration was a stark reminder of the relevance and timely nature of my research topic. But more importantly, it brought home to me

²² Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, “Foreword,” *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action: New Agenda for Humanity* (Delhi: Hope India Publications, Second Edition, 2003), 8.

²³ The Jantar Mantar legal protest venue is located about one mile away from the Indian parliament offices.

²⁴ For details on the march, see “Indian Christians Plan Demonstration in Response to Escalating Violence,” in *The Christian Post*, <http://www.christianpost.com/article/missions/1410/section/indian.christians.plan.demonstration.in.response.to.escalating.violence/1.htm> (accessed February 2005).

²⁵ *The Christian Post*.

in a dramatic manner one of the major sources of religious conflict in contemporary India, namely that of the organized Hindu opposition to Christian proselytization. The widespread violence directed against Christians in India, a direct result of these Hindu protests against religious conversion, is documented in the Human Rights Watch Report (1999), *Politics by Other Means: Attacks Against Christians in India*.²⁶ The McGill-based historian of religion, Arvind Sharma, contends that “most modern Hindus are opposed to the idea of conversion, from one religion to another per se.” He further argues that “the Hindu view of religious freedom is not based on the freedom to proselytize, but the right to retain one’s religion and not be subject to proselytization.”²⁷ Agnivesh is himself vocal on this issue and confirms Sharma’s contention that “It is the prevalent view of most Hindu thinkers, including Mahatma Gandhi, who was known for his religious tolerance, that a true pluralist person seeking dialogue would demand that Christianity and Islam liquidate their missionary apparatus.”²⁸

We meet in his ramshackle office located in a large room at the rear of an old-colonial mansion. Agnivesh has an engaging presence. He is about five feet ten and has an unwrinkled face that defies his age of 65 years. He is dressed in his trademark saffron robes and tightly bound turban.²⁹ In his soft-spoken tone, he begins the interview by informing me smilingly, “I have been squatting in this office for the past twenty-three years.”³⁰ During the interview, I can hear the protest slogans of the crowds that have gathered in the street outside. We are intermittently interrupted by the ringing of his cellular phone and people visiting his office to consult him on one or other social justice concern. He is in demand both locally and internationally.

²⁶ For the full report online see <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/indiachr/>.

²⁷ <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/indiachr/>.

²⁸ Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action*, 30.

²⁹ According to Agnivesh, “the color saffron is symbolic of sanyasi (asceticism) and is also an integral part of our Indian identity, being one of the colors of our national flag.” In “Use of ‘saffronization’ hurts sanyasis, says Agnivesh.” <http://in.rediff.com/news/2004/jun/14swami.htm> (accessed February 2005).

³⁰ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

The first day, Agnivesh is anxious about an important international press announcement. The Japanese Niwano Peace Committee, on which he serves as vice-president, is about to announce their 2005 peace award winner. From his body gestures it is clear that Agnivesh is excited with their choice. The reason is apparent from the following extract of his press statement:

The widely acclaimed Dr Hans Kung is a great dissenter in the world of religions. Though close to the Pope in the Vatican, he questioned the doctrine of infallibility. As a result, the Vatican withdrew Dr Kung's ecclesiastical teaching permission in 1979. Undaunted, Dr Hans Kung continued his quest for truth and world peace and rose to great heights. Today he is one of the tallest among the world's religious leaders.³¹

It is not difficult to fathom why he was thrilled about the choice. He sees himself in the same mould as Kung, a religious dissenter against what he describes as “religious orthodoxy.” His radical critique of organized religion is illustrated in his understanding of the concept of the “heretical imperative,” first coined by the American sociologist, Peter Berger.³² According to Agnivesh, “[the] heretical imperative implies the duty to be heretical in the face of established and deeply-entrenched dogmas that no longer square up with the truth of human experience.”³³ He takes this responsibility literally and rejects “all forms of superstitions, polytheism, idol-worship and an understanding of karma that justifies the caste system.”³⁴

The second day, Agnivesh is far more relaxed and speaks keenly about his life-journey, starting with his date of birth, 21 September 1939, and birth name, Vepa Shyam Rao, within what he refers to as “an orthodox Hindu family.” His Telugu-speaking grandfather was the Diwan (chief minister) of a princely state called Shakti, now in Chattisgarh. He depicts his family as being steeped in Brahmin rituals of

³¹ Press statement shown to me by Agnivesh on February 23, 2005.

³² Berger uses the word “heretical” in the sense of “optional” rather than “deviant.” See Peter Berger, *The Heretical Imperative* (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979).

³³ Swami Agnivesh, “A Case for Pro-Active Spirituality,” unpublished paper provided on February 23, 2005.

³⁴ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 23, 2005.

worshipping gods and goddesses and holding many “superstitious” beliefs. The family were strict vegetarians, one of the few practices that resonates with his current reformed Hinduism. “We were not allowed to question any of these beliefs,” he often laments about his childhood religiosity.³⁵

Agnivesh’s birth coincided with the resignation of the Indian National Congress from its position of power in the colonial administration in protest against the rejection by the British of their proposal to transfer political power to them in return for their support for the war effort against Nazi Germany. In addition to the debilitating effects of their engagement in the war effort, this resignation plunged the colonial administration into a crisis. It was to be the beginning of the end of British rule in India. Indeed, the Oxford University historian, Judith Brown, has recently argued that this resignation was in fact the turning point that led to the British withdrawal from India.³⁶

In 1943, at the height of World War II, Agnivesh’s father died. He was four years old at the time and his mother decided to move with her five children to live with her father in Shakti, a Sanskrit word meaning divine female power. “Shakti produced Agni,” Justice Iyer poetically wrote in a foreword to a book written by Agnivesh.³⁷ Indeed, his village upbringing was critical to his spiritual and social formation. Agnivesh recalled three formative experiences in particular.

The first was the harmonious relationship that existed between Hindus and Muslims in his village. He described in detail his close relationship with a Muslim boy. “My best friend used to be a Muslim by the name of Abdullatif, and during the Muslim festival of Muharram my grandfather would invite the religious procession into our home to receive its blessings.”³⁸ At this point in the interview, I suddenly

³⁵ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

³⁶ Judith Brown, “Gandhi’s Non-Violence: The Political Dilemma of a Religious Vision,” paper delivered at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, April 25, 2003. See also her earlier work, Judith Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

³⁷ Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action*, 7. See the foreword by Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer.

³⁸ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

became acutely aware of my own subjectivity as a Muslim. I wondered to what extent the context of our respective religious identities was exerting undue influence on the interview process.³⁹ Agnivesh believes that this story from his early childhood was illustrative of the generally cordial relations that existed between Hindus and Muslims in colonial India.

All this was about to change with the splitting up of the sacred land of “Mother India.”⁴⁰ He was eight years old at the time and remembers how bewildering it was “to see the map of India suddenly split into two parts. It was traumatic.”⁴¹ The impact of this partition was the second formative experience in his early life. Agnivesh contends that the creation of the Muslim state of Pakistan in 1947 was and continues to be one of the major causes of tensions between Hindus and Muslims.⁴² He is not alone in this hypothesis; a number of scholars and religious leaders have made a similar claim.⁴³ The years 1946–1948 spanning the partition of colonial India into two separate and mutually antagonistic states of India and Pakistan witnessed one of the most violent periods in South Asian history and has continued to haunt its historical trajectory ever

³⁹ According to Arthur Bonner, Agnivesh is acutely aware of the fact that the Arya Samaj has a somewhat “anti-Muslim reputation.” He contends that: “In order to demonstrate his dislike of bigotry, in this case against Muslims, he welcomes any opportunity to join liberal, reform-minded Muslims in seminars and demonstrations.” See “The Fiery Swami,” unpublished document provided by Agnivesh on, February 23, 2005.

⁴⁰ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005. At this point in the interview Agnivesh uses the Hindu word for Mother India “Bharati Hind.”

⁴¹ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

⁴² India achieved its formal independence from the British crown at midnight on August 15, 1947. Pakistan became a sovereign state a day earlier on the 14. Gyanendra Pandey has written an interesting account of how this “moment of rupture” has been selectively remembered in the service of nationalist myth-making in South Asia. His key argument is that local forms of community are established by the way in which violent events are remembered and written about. Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁴³ There is an extensive and intricate body of literature on the negative impact of the partition on post-independence Hindu-Muslim relations. Two of the most prominent are that of Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), and Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices From the Partition of India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000). Two prominent contemporary Indian Muslim leaders I have interviewed believe that the creation of the state of Pakistan was a grave mistake and has severely strained Hindu-Muslim relations – Dr Asghar Ali Engineer, interview with author, February 6, 2002, and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

since. It is estimated that anywhere between 200 000 (the contemporary British figure) to two million (a later Indian estimate) people were killed as a result of the communal rioting that broke out between Hindus and Muslims during the partition. Close to twelve million more people were compelled to uproot their families and all their belongings to move between the two states. The Indian writer, Urvashi Butalia, movingly describes how only after she had worked on a film about the partition and began collecting stories from its survivors did it dawn on her just how ever-present the horrific violence and convulsions that accompanied it were in the lives of the populations of these two countries.⁴⁴

The third formative experience in the early life of Agnivesh was the assassination of Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948); he was then nine years old. The partition killings moved this great Indian apostle of nonviolence so much that he went to Noakhali in the province of Bengal and vowed to fast to death against the violence. His fast was brought to an end when hundreds of repentant Indian leaders and foot soldiers came to deposit their weapons at his side. Paradoxically, Gandhi did not die as a result of his fasting against the violence but was consumed by the carnage itself; on 31 January, 1948, at the age of 79, he was shot and killed by Nuthuram Godse, who was active in the Hindu nationalist movement, the Rashtriya Svayamsevek Sangh (RSS). According to subsequent court evidence, his purpose in killing Gandhi was “to punish him for his appeasing attitude toward Muslims – in particular for acquiescing in Britain’s partition of India into the separate nations of India and Pakistan.”⁴⁵

Agnivesh vividly remembers taking part in a procession to the nearby river in prayer and mourning following the assassination of Gandhi.⁴⁶ He believes that the fact that even a small remote village like Shakti was moved to commemorate Gandhi’s

⁴⁴ Butalia went on to write an award winning book describing not the political events surrounding the Partition but the moving stories of how ordinary people found the wherewithal to survive this harrowing experience. Urvashi Butalia, *Other Side of Silence*, 2000.

⁴⁵ Ashish Nandy, *At the Edge of Psychology: Essays in Politics and Culture* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), 78, <http://ngodse.tripod.com/> (accessed February 2005).

⁴⁶ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 23, 2005.

life is a clear indication of his popularity. He often cites the influence Gandhi had on his own life. I would argue that he consciously moulds his life in the image of this great Indian leader. Most certainly, his many peace marches intended to highlight unjust practices and structural violence in India are modeled along the pacifist resistant campaigns of Gandhi. In an instructive quote with which he begins part one of his book *Agnivesh* writes, “Even if we forget the Mahatma’s ideals we should never forget who killed the Mahatma.”⁴⁷

Like Gandhi, Agnivesh represents the tolerant and nonviolent (*ahimsa*) face of Hinduism, struggling against a less acknowledged violent (*himsa*) interpretation of Hinduism. Elaborating on this theme, the Hindu scholar, Anantanand Rambachan, has argued that the violent campaigns which several Hindu organizations have spearheaded in recent years has “reminded us that while Gandhi championed the ethic of *ahimsa*, there are certain ancient traditions within Hinduism which sanction violence under certain conditions and that *ahimsa* and *himsa* (violence) have coexisted uneasily in Hinduism for centuries.”⁴⁸ The relationship between violence and nonviolence within Hinduism is a complex one that I will address in the last section of this chapter.

After completing his schooling in Shakti, Agnivesh left the village to live with his older sister. He enrolled at the University of Calcutta and completed joint degrees in business management and law. Fortuitously, on the day of his graduation he was offered a post to teach at the prestigious St Xavier Catholic College in Calcutta.⁴⁹ From 1963 to 1968 he taught business management and for awhile also practiced law on a part-time basis. This experience impressed on him the dedication and simple lifestyle of the Catholic missionaries and teachers who were running the college. “What was it that motivated these people to leave their prosperous country in Europe and live here in squalor to work for a cause?” he used to ask himself. He concluded that they must

⁴⁷ Agnivesh and Thampu, *Harvest of Hate*, 1.

⁴⁸ Anantanand Rambachan, “The Co-Existence of Violence and Non-Violence in Hinduism,” *Current Dialogue* 39 (June 2002).

⁴⁹ Arthur Bonner describes this college as an “exclusive” school.

have been motivated by “something higher.”⁵⁰ It was this same higher motivation that was to shortly change his life forever.

It was during his residence in Calcutta that he first encountered the teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and his movement, the Arya Samaj.⁵¹ He found the rational and reformist approach of the Arya Samaj very attractive and began questioning all of the beliefs and rituals associated with what he pejoratively refers to as “orthodox Hinduism.” He passionately recalls his transformative encounter with the Arya Samaj:

Born into an orthodox South Indian Brahmana family, I was steeped in all the Brahmanical rituals, including untouchability, caste system, idol worship, superstitions and irrational mythology. Then came the encounter with Arya Samaj. I got inspired by great rebel against orthodoxy-Swami Dayanand. He and his life and mission exerted a great liberative impact on my mind. Arya Samaj and the writings of Dayanand inculcated in me the spirit of Doubt, Debate and Dissent.⁵²

He views the Arya Samaj not so much as an institutionalized religious movement but rather “as a revolt against orthodoxy and Brahmanism.”⁵³ His life-changing event came in 1968 at the age of 28: he had decided to relinquish his teaching post in Calcutta, becoming a full time worker for the Arya Samaj in Delhi. Two years later he was initiated into the movement as a “*sanyasi*,” renouncing worldly possessions, taking on saffron robes and celibacy, and becoming in the process, Swami Agnivesh.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ “Interview: Swami Agnivesh” in *Hinduism Today*, March/April 2001, http://www.hinduismtoday.com/archives/2001/3-4/14_swami_agnivesh.shtml (accessed March 2005).

⁵¹ Agnivesh first encountered the ideas of Swami Dayanand and his movement the Arya Samaj in 1988 at the age of seventeen. Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

⁵² Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005. See also, John S. Augustine, ed. “Religious Fundamentalism: An Indian Perspective” in *Religious Fundamentalism: An Asian Perspective* (Bangalore, 1993).

⁵³ Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action*, 80.

⁵⁴ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

In the long tradition of the Arya Samaj, his spiritual life was not unusual but it certainly did not resonate with that of the Swami's from most other Hindu groups.⁵⁵ For while he had renounced worldly possessions, this did not preclude his social engagement with the world. On the same date that he became a "sanyasi," the newly named Agnivesh and his close colleague, Swami Andrivesh, co-founded a political party, the Arya Sabha.⁵⁶ The aim of the party was to work for a political order founded on Arya Samaj principles. The principles were spelt out in a book published in 1974, *Vaidik Samajvad* (Vedic Socialism).⁵⁷ The book rejected the lopsided materialism of both capitalism and communism in favor of what the Arya Sabha constitution calls "social spirituality."

In 1975, shortly after the launching of their party, the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of Emergency, cracking down on opposition parties. Agnivesh and some of his colleagues were arrested and were sent to jail for 14 months. However, after the 1977 elections which swept Indira Gandhi from office, Agnivesh was released from prison and elected to the Haryana state legislative assembly. He served in this position from 1977–1982, briefly occupying the post of Minister of Education in his first year in office. He rapidly became disillusioned with the constricted space he had within the government to leverage social change on issues of social justice. Lamenting about his brief life as an elected politician he says: "I had great hope that through an organized political forum, utilizing the state machinery, I would be able to bring about radical changes in society. I could see very soon the degeneration that has set into our organized politics."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ According to the Indian political scientist, Anupma Arya, "[T]he Arya Samaj, which had been started as a socio-religious movement by Swami Dayanand, always played an important role in the politics of India at the national and regional levels." Anupma Arya, *Religion and Politics in India: A Study of the Role of the Arya Samaj* (New Delhi: K.K. Publications, 2001).

⁵⁶ Arya, *Religion and Politics in India*, 9 fn 42.

⁵⁷ Swami Agnivesh, *Maharshi Dayanand Ka Vaidic Samajvad*. Delhi, 1974.

⁵⁸ Ajay Ghosh, "Swami Agnivesh: Priest, politician and perpetrator of social justice," *Kaumudi USA – Spotlight*, <http://www.kaumudiusa/kusa/html/spotlightarch3.stm> (accessed April 2005).

This may be a useful point at which to address the key theoretical concern that this part of Swami Agnivesh's biography raises for our study, namely that of the relationship between religion and politics. Agnivesh is himself acutely aware of the critical importance of this question. For example, in the preface to *Harvest of Hate*, he says that this is precisely why he decided to published the book, since "[T]he issues that underlie the convulsions in Gujarat will survive; for they pertain to the very essence of religion and politics."⁵⁹ He no doubt holds strong views on the subject. On his official website, he is introduced as "both a spiritual leader as well as a political and social activist." Moreover, it claims that "it is his mission to bring spiritual values in politics and social responsibility in religions."⁶⁰

Notwithstanding his controversial position on the relationship between religion and politics, Agnivesh firmly believes in the concept of a secular state.⁶¹ He is, however, vehemently opposed to religion being relegated to the private sphere and warns against the inherent dangers in such a position. "The split between politics and religion," he contends, "has exiled reforming and redemptive values from public life and turned politics into a domain of corruption."⁶² According to Agnivesh, the role of religion in relationship to politics should be that of "infusing it with the core spiritual values which are contained in all religions."⁶³ This is how he conceives of his own role in relationship to politics and the state.

Agnivesh is not unique in this respect. Gandhi subscribed to a similar view. During a critical phase of the nationalist struggle in India (1919–1947), he used a religious idiom to enlist the support of the masses for what he described as *swaraj* (self rule).⁶⁴ According to the political philosopher, Fred Dallmayr, by *swaraj* Gandhi

⁵⁹ Agnivesh and Thampu, *Harvest of Hate*, xv.

⁶⁰ www.Agnivesh.com (accessed April 2005).

⁶¹ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

⁶² Swami Agnivesh, "Religion and Secularism," in *Hindustan Times*, 18 September, 2000.

⁶³ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

⁶⁴ For an original understanding of Gandhi's use of the concept *swaraj* see Anthony J. Perel, ed. *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

meant much more than simply removing the British from Indian soil. For Gandhi, *swaraj* was a moral process through which “Indians (or anyone else) could learn how to exercise the power of self-control and learn the true meaning of freedom.”⁶⁵ This further reinforced the hold of religion in Indian politics.⁶⁶ As we have argued in Chapter Two, notwithstanding these examples, the dominant theories of the state have not sufficiently addressed its relationship with religion.

The decision to abandon formal politics and to dedicate himself more fully to struggles for social justice issues within civil society was to prove yet another turning point in the life of Swami Agnivesh. Justice Iyer describes this important shift poetically:

He was also a minister in Haryana for some time but how could this anti-establishment rebel remain in office when his soul is at peace only when he struggles, for causes of human justice are in his blood and bones.⁶⁷

By the time Agnivesh decided to abandon formal politics he had already identified an issue which was to become his life-long passion, namely, spearheading the movement towards the liberation of bonded and child labor. Agnivesh holds that “slavery persists in our age and one of the forms within which it does is that of bonded labor.” He regards it as a clear instance of structural violence. In support of this contention, he argues that “the key element of coercion involved in bonded labor practices inevitably promotes a culture of violence and as such should be seen as no less reprehensible than that of direct physical violence.”⁶⁸ Armed with such an emphatic perspective, Agnivesh began to vocally denounce bonded labor and in 1981 he founded the *Bandhua Mukti Morcha* (the Bonded Labour Liberation Front or BLLF). He is currently still its chairperson

⁶⁵ Fred Dallmayr, “What is Swaraj? Lessons from Gandhi,” in *Gandhi, Freedom, and Self-Rule*, ed. Anthony J. Perel (New York and Oxford: Lexington Books, 2000), 57.

⁶⁶ Arya, *Religion and Politics in India*, 3.

⁶⁷ Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action*, 7.

⁶⁸ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 24, 2005.

after three decades of the struggle for the liberation of bonded and child laborers; he claims that as a direct result of the BLLFs campaigns close to 1 760 000 bonded and child laborers have been freed in India.⁶⁹ Notwithstanding the successes of his movement, Agnivesh puts the number of adult bonded laborers remaining in India today at 300 million and child laborers at 65 million.

Extending his work at the international level, Agnivesh has also thrice been elected as chairperson of the United Nations Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. His efforts to combat bonded and child labor has been recognized: in 1990 he was awarded the Anti-Slavery International award in London and in 1994 he was honored in Berne, Switzerland, with the Freedom and Human Rights Award.⁷⁰

More recently, in addition to his over twenty year old struggle against bonded labor and child labor, Agnivesh has also been at the forefront of numerous campaigns against other forms of direct and structural violence in India, especially his campaigns against communal and interreligious violence. As already noted, in many of his campaigns for social justice, Agnivesh has been consciously adopting the nonviolent methods of Gandhi. In 1987 he embarked on a campaign highlighting the issue of violence against women. He adopted the Gandhian strategy of peacefully marching against the idea and practice of “*sati*” (self-immolation by young widows on their husband’s funeral pyres, supposedly in accordance with high-caste Hindu tradition.) At the time, India and indeed the whole of the South Asian subcontinent had been reverberating about the case of a young educated widow, Roop Kanwar from Rajasthan, who had immolated herself at the funeral pyre of her deceased husband. Notwithstanding the fact that the practice had been outlawed by the Prevention of Sati Act that same year, the Shankaracharya (Hindu religious head) of Puri, Swami Niranjan Dev Tirth, issued a statement claiming that “*sati* is upheld by the religious scripture and women should either commit *sati* after their husband’s death or lead the life of a *bramacharini*.” To

⁶⁹ www.swamiagnivesh.com (accessed April 2005).

⁷⁰ www.swamiagnivesh.com (accessed April 2005).

protest the cruelty of what he called “the un-Hindu nature” of the *sati* ritual, Agnivesh organized an 18 day *padhyatra* (march on foot) from Delhi to Deorala in Rajasthan. Ironically, while the Shankaracharya of Puri was allowed the freedom to call for a public debate to challenge Agnivesh’s view of the “un-Hindu nature” of *sati*, the latter’s march was stopped by the police. Agnivesh was briefly imprisoned and thus prevented from publicly debating the question of whether *sati* was sanctified by Hindu scriptures. The anti-*sati* protest march however received widespread and sympathetic coverage in the media. It captured the imagination of large numbers of people in India and opened up a fresh debate about the religious sanctification and the Indian’s state’s impotence to act against it. In the end, even the pro-*sati* organizations acknowledged the positive impact of this peaceful Gandhian tactic adopted by Agnivesh.⁷¹

One year later in 1988, Agnivesh decided to take on another issue of structural violence that was dominant in Indian society, namely the oppressive caste-based system which some Hindus believe forms an essential part of their religious social order. Agnivesh condemned what he described as “birth-based inequality in the name of the caste system as a powerful example of the pervasiveness of structural violence in Indian society.”⁷² In support of his case he invokes the following example:

Every single-day in India girls born to Dalit (also known in English as untouchables) families are raped by boys from high caste families. These boys are individually held responsible for their crimes. But what about their parents, the adults, who advocate this discriminatory and humiliating caste-based in the name of Hinduism? Are they not also complicit in nurturing a culture of violence within which these boys are reared?⁷³

But what is the relationship between the caste system and Hinduism, and how is it configured? Ramabachan provides a cogent response:

⁷¹ For an in depth coverage of the anti-sati campaign see: “Shankaracharya, A Threat to Hindu Religion.” in *The Sunday Observer*, 10 April, 1988. Reprinted as Appendix 1, in Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action*.

⁷² Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 23, 2005.

⁷³ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 23, 2005.

Ancient Hindu society was structured by the integration of two socio-religious systems referred to respectively as the *varna* or caste system and the *ashrama* or stages of life system. Whatever might have been its complex historical origins, the caste system developed into a hierarchical social order consisting of four main groups. At the apex of the hierarchy were the *brahmins* (priests and teachers). Following the *brahmims* were the *kshatriyas* (warriors and political rulers), the *vaishyas* (merchants and farmers) and the *shudras* (laborers) who were expected to serve the first three groups. The system became more complicated by its subdivision into thousands of sub-castes (*jatis*). Those who, for one reason or another, did not belong to one of the four castes were regarded as outcastes or untouchables and denied the rights and privileges accorded to the upper castes.⁷⁴

The caste system also had implications for religious practice. Because dalits were considered ritually impure they were not permitted to approach teachers of the Vedas for religious instruction nor enter temples.⁷⁵ In direct opposition to this practice of religious exclusion, Agnivesh led a march of hundreds of dalits towards the temple town of Nathdwara in Rajasthan. Once again he was arrested before the march could reach its destination, but yet again the action had a substantial impact on public opinion. In a press report after his release, Agnivesh claimed “Our success lies in the fact that we have forced people to take sides on this issue and sowed the seeds for further questioning of obscurantist customs.”⁷⁶

By the 1990s however, the justice struggles of Agnivesh expanded to include what he regards as one of the most destructive challenges facing India, namely, that of *Hindutva* (a Hindu polity).⁷⁷ In a hard-hitting article entitled “Terrorists in saffron,” published in *The Indian Express*, Agnivesh depicts *Hindutva* not only as pseudo-

⁷⁴ Anantanand Ramabachan “The Boy Who Did Not Know His Father,” unpublished manuscript to be published in 2005 by the Interreligious Office of the World Council of Churches, Geneva.

⁷⁵ For a moving first hand account of the life of a dalit see Kancha Ilaiah, *Why I am not a Hindu: A Sudra Critique of Hindutva Philosophy, Culture and Political Economy* (Calcutta, 1996).

⁷⁶ Asma Jahangir, “Introduction: Swami: The Activist,” in Swami Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action: New Agenda for Humanity* (Delhi: Hope India Publications, Second Edition, 2003), 19.

⁷⁷ The pivotal figure in the construction of the concept of *Hindutva* was V.D. Savarkar. For an in depth look at the idea and the emergence of a movement embracing it see Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990's* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

Hinduism, but as the internal enemy of Hinduism itself. “It derives its inspiration not from Ram, Shiva or Krishna, but from Hitler and Mussolini,” he protests. It is this unequivocal position that led a *Financial Times* journalist to argue that the *Sang Parivar* and more particularly the BJP, “feels the gentle lash of Swami Agnivesh’s tongue much more keenly than criticism from any secular or minority opponent.”⁷⁸

As early as 1989, Agnivesh has been warning his compatriots about the impending dangers that the ideology of *Hindutva* holds for the unity and prosperity of India. In that year, during a multi-religious march from Delhi to Meerat to protest against the communal violence that had claimed the lives of 45 Muslim youths, he made an insightful observation: “The biggest problem facing India today is the Ramajanamabhoomi – Babri Masjid issue.” He was referring to the *Sang Parivar* demand that the Babri mosque should be demolished since according to them it had been erected on the birth place of the Hindu deity, Lord Ram. Two years later, Agnivesh’s prediction was confirmed when on the morning of December 6, 1992, more than 200,000 Hindus descended on the city of Ayodhya and tore down and destroyed the Babri mosque. The incident sparked off one of the bloodiest outbreaks of communal violence in India since independence. Thousands of Indian citizens were brutally killed, the majority of them Muslims.⁷⁹ Since then the issue was taken to the Indian Supreme court for adjudication. The *Sang Parivar* has however ignored and scoffed at these legal proceedings and has continued to vigorously campaign for the “rebuilding” of the temple in Ayodhya. The issue has become a powerful rallying point for Hindu nationalists and has at the same time fuelled communal tensions. The reverberation of this issue is still felt in Indian society and continues to bedevil the politics of the Indian state. Agnivesh’s astute reading of the situation had been proven

⁷⁸ Edward Luce, “FT Weekend Magazine – Lunch with the FT: Courteous Rejection,” *Financial Times*, July 10, 2004.

⁷⁹ For a useful account of the events leading up to the destruction of the Babri mosque see Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

correct and in the past decade and a half he has been expending much of his energies in promoting interreligious healing and harmony.

A decade later in 1999, Agnivesh's worst fears were realized: the BJP for the very first time emerged as the largest party in a coalition Indian government. Concerned about what this would mean for the escalating religious extremism and obscurantism, Agnivesh launched a multi-religious forum called Religions for Social Justice together with the Rev. Valson Thampu. One of the inauguratory campaigns of this forum was to lead a peace march of 55 religious leaders to the place where an Australian Christian missionary and his two sons had been burned to death, while they slept, by Hindu fanatics.⁸⁰

Three years later in 2002 it was to be the same forum that organized the interreligious solidarity mission to the refugees of the violence in Gujarat in 2002 and subsequently published a book recounting their findings. The strong suspicion of the BJP government's complicity in the Gujarat violence of 2002 and the local and international outcry that it elicited have all served to discredit it. In May 2004, three years after the Gujarat violence, the BJP was voted out of office. According to many analysts, their defeat was directly related to the outrage on the part of the Indian masses over the party's apparent complicity in the Gujarat violence. While many were celebrating the BJP's defeat in the elections, Agnivesh sounded a far more sober note. In a press interview shortly after the elections, he warned that this should not be interpreted to mean that they were defeated. He warned that:

They [Hindu nationalists] will continue to poison the minds of the young with their hatred and sectarianism. We must be alert to the dangers that lurk around the corner. If the BJP comes back, it will come back with a vengeance. I fear it will.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Swami Agnivesh, "Multi-Religious Pilgrimage: Paradigm Shift in Religious Cooperation," in *The Times of India*, 2 April 1999. See also, Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action*, 172–5.

⁸¹ Edward Luce, "FT Weekend Magazine – Lunch with FT: Courteous Rejection," *Financial Times*, July 10, 2004, <http://www.swamiagnivesh.com/ftlunch.htm> (accessed March 2005).

It was not all surprising, therefore, to hear Agnivesh proclaim that he was not taken aback by the brutal communal violence which engulfed Gujarat in 2002. “[T]he Gujarat riots were waiting to happen,” he avers, “because the state apparatus had been hijacked by the *Sang Parivar* and the BJP.” Even more striking, however is the fact that Agnivesh believes that:

... very likely the Gujarat massacres would have happened even without the madness of Godhra. I would go to the extent of saying that even Godhra was stage managed by Narendra Modi’s government. I have been receiving such warnings for the past three years. The truth is coming out bit by bit and it is really frightening.⁸²

But is Swami Agnivesh’s strong and unequivocal claims that the BJP controlled government of the state of Gujarat was complicit in the violence directed against Muslims the idiosyncratic rantings of an ideologically driven activist or do they find any support within the growing scholarly accounts of the violence that engulfed Gujarat in 2002? How does Agnivesh’s activist perspective of the causes of religious violence in India square up to that of the scholarly literature on the subject? And more importantly, what are the implications of a verdict of state-sponsored violence for the dominant theories of religion and violence? It is to these questions that I turn my attention in the last section of this chapter.

Gujarat: A Harvest of Hate?⁸³

It is to be expected that opinions about a sensitive topic such as the causes of an outbreak of violence between members of two different religious groups will invariably differ radically. One of the most striking aspects of the case of the Gujarat violence of 2002, however, is the almost unanimity of the judgment. More than 60 national and

⁸² Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 25, 2005. See also Agnivesh and Thampu, *Harvest of Hate*, xii.

⁸³ This quote forms part of Agnivesh’s book and is very suggestive of his overall thesis that the Gujarat massacres were not spontaneous but the outcome of a well orchestrated plan that has been in the making for some time.

international agencies who investigated the 2002 Gujarat violence have all concluded that officials of the Gujarat state were complicit.⁸⁴ Scholarly opinions have been no less consensual. Paul Brass,⁸⁵ Ashutosh Varshney,⁸⁶ Peter van der Veer,⁸⁷ Upendra Bax⁸⁸ and Ashgar Ali Engineer⁸⁹ are all agreed that the violence was not a spontaneous reaction but was in fact orchestrated by groups closely aligned to the *Sang Parivar* and the BJP government. Two of these scholars, in particular Brass and Varshney, who hold opposing theoretical perspectives, have both felt confident enough to declare the communal violence of Gujarat 2002 as a “pogrom.” In the case of Varshney, this is particularly revealing since he has never used this strong label to depict any of the violent incidences that has perennially broken out in post-independence India, including the anti-Sikh violence that broke out in Delhi after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. In fact, he has been at the forefront of arguing the case against the verdicts of scholars such as Brass that the anti-Sikh violence of 1984 was a pogrom.⁹⁰ This time though, albeit cautiously, Varshney says, “Unless later research disconfirms

⁸⁴ For some of these see Syeeda Hameeda, Ruth Manorama, Malini Ghose, Sheba George, Farah Naqvi, and Mari Thekaekara, *How has the Gujarat massacre Affected Minority? The Survivors Speak. Fact-finding by a Women's Panel* (Ahmedabad: Citizens Initiative, April 16, 2002); Kamal Mitri Shenoy, S.P. Shukla, K.S. Subramanian and Achin Vanaik, *Gujarat Carnage* (An Independent Fact-Finding Mission, 2002); *Maaro! Kaapo! Baalo! : State, Society, and Communalism in Gujarat*, New Delhi: People's Union for Democratic Rights, <http://www.onlinevolunteers.org/Gujarat/reports/pudr/> (accessed February 2005).

⁸⁵ Paul Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 2003).

⁸⁶ Understanding Gujarat Violence in Contemporary Conflicts, <http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/gujarat/varshney/> (accessed December 2004).

⁸⁷ “Tradition and Violence in South Asia,” keynote address delivered at the second conference of the Kroc Institute's Program in Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, University of Notre Dame, April 11–12, 2003. For a report on the conference see: peace colloquy, Issue No. 4, Fall 2003, 18–19. The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame.

⁸⁸ Upendra Bax, “The Second Gujarat Catastrophe,” in *Fascism in India: Faces, Fangs and Facts*, ed. Chaitanya Krishna (Delhi: Manak Publications, 2003), 58–96.

⁸⁹ Engineer, *The Gujarat Carnage*.

⁹⁰ Varshney says that: “It is sometimes suggested that the anti-Sikh violence in Delhi, after the assassination of Indira Gandhi on October 30, 1984, was the first pogrom of independent India. This argument is not plausible. Understanding Gujarat Violence in Contemporary Conflicts, <http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/gujarat/varshney/> (accessed December 2004).

the proposition, the existing press reports give us every reason to conclude that the riots in Gujarat were the first full-blooded pogrom in independent India.”⁹¹

Notwithstanding his bold position, Varshney has been careful to nuance it by arguing that the existing evidence suggested that at least in March if not in April 2003 the culpability of the state lay “in not attempting to stop the killings, but to condone them.” He suggested that the contention that the government officially encouraged anti-Muslim violence cannot be conclusively proved on the basis of existing evidence. He did, however, leave the door open for such a proposition to be proven by later research.

In contradistinction, Brass has taken a much bolder position and has invoked the Gujarat 2002 case as clear evidence in support of his major thesis that most if not all of the communal violence in contemporary India is not spontaneous riots but rather consciously orchestrated or in his words “produced by institutionalized riot systems.” He goes even further by cynically suggesting that “Condemning and bemoaning riots and casualties have become part of India’s modern culture as much as the riots themselves.” One is tempted to ask: Could this be the case with the Gujarat riots of 2002?

Three years after the tragedy, the condemnation and calls for justice for the victims have not dissipated but become even stronger. In January 2005, Amnesty International released their investigative report on the 2002 communal violence in Gujarat:

... in relation to the violence in Gujarat in 2002, India has not fulfilled its obligations to protect fundamental rights guaranteed in its constitution and in international treaties to which it is a party. Reports received from human rights groups in India indicate that the Government of Gujarat may have been complicit in at least part of the abuses perpetrated in Gujarat in 2002. There is evidence of connivance of authorities in the preparation and execution of some of the attacks and also in the way the right to legal redress of women victims of sexual violence has been frustrated at every level. Furthermore, the Gujarat state has failed to meet their international obligations to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against humanity.⁹²

⁹¹ I have not seen any subsequent writings by Varshney that would contradict his initial judgment that it was a pogrom.

⁹² Amnesty International, *India Justice, the victim – Gujarat state fails to protect women from violence*, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engasa200012005> (accessed February 2005).

Like all the investigative reports, the Amnesty International report makes shocking reading. It concludes that the violence in Gujarat was not merely a failure of law and order, but was rather deliberately planned with the active knowledge and involvement of key government and police officials.

In March 2005, a campaign was launched in the United States by the Coalition Against Genocide to prevent the Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi from entering the country to speak at the Annual Convention and Trade Show convened by the Asian American Hotel Owner's Association (AAHOA) in Florida on March 24–26, 2005.⁹³ On the same visit, Mr Modi was also scheduled to speak at Madison Square Garden in New York on March 20. In their memorandum calling on the US State Department to withdraw Modi's visa, the Coalition claimed that:

- Narendra Modi is in violation of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1968, and other international laws.
- The Modi government in Gujarat is responsible for the deaths of thousands of its citizens, organized violence, large-scale displacement of minority populations, and continuing denial of justice.
- There are currently two civil suits filed against him for crimes against humanity and genocide.
- A climate of terror permeates civil society in Gujarat even today.⁹⁴

To the astonishment of many observers, the Coalition's demand was upheld and Modi's US visa was revoked. In a statement justifying the visa withdrawal, the US embassy in India said that the visa had been revoked under "Section 604 of the International Religious Freedom Act which makes any foreign official who has engaged in particularly severe violations of religious freedom inadmissible to the US."⁹⁵ In response to his visa withdrawal, Modi claimed that it was the Gujarat government's stand against religious

⁹³ This coalition represents a spectrum of organizations and individuals in the United States and Canada that have come together in response to the Gujarat genocide to demand accountability and justice.

⁹⁴ Coalition Against Genocide, "Genocide in Gujarat: The Sang Parivar, Narendra Modi, and the Government of Gujarat, March 2, 2004, www.coalitionagainstgenocide.org (accessed April 2005).

⁹⁵ Statement by David C. Mulford, US Ambassador to India, 21 March 2005, <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/wwwhipr032105.html> (accessed April 2005).

conversions in the state that was the main reason for him being denied a visa to the United States. “They (Americans) think that by providing monetary benefits, they can conduct (religious) conversions in the state. But that person (Modi) did not allow it to happen and so was denied a visa,” he said in a press statement afterwards.⁹⁶ Through this statement, Modi was of course cynically trying to exploit and manipulate one of the apparent sources of religious conflict in contemporary India, namely, that of the Hindu opposition to Christian proselytization. This is a contentious question. Earlier on in this chapter, I argued that it was one of the major sources of religious conflict in contemporary India. Modi obviously knows this and shrewdly invokes it as the reason for his visa revocation. This is a useful example of the manner in which a highly placed politician appeals to religious grievances in order to advance his political agenda and interests.

After a comprehensive survey of the welter of investigative reports, proliferating scholarly opinions and active human rights campaigns, one may safely conclude that they confirm the charge made by Swami Agnivesh that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of the state of Gujarat and its supporting Hindu religious network, the *Sang Parivar*, were complicit in the violence directed against Muslims in 2002. What implications does this clear-cut case of state-sponsored violence hold for theories of religion and violence?

It is instructive to note that three years later there are very few scholarly treatises within the Western academy focusing on the Gujarat case.⁹⁷ In fact, most of them are edited volumes that have been published in India. There appears to be a palpable neglect of empirical evidence that clearly implicates the state. I propose that one of the reasons why instances such as that of Gujarat are subliminally ignored is because it does not

⁹⁶ “Anti-Conversion Stand Led US Visa Denial: Modi,” *The Times of India*, Wednesday April 13, 2005, India <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1081402.cms>.

⁹⁷ I have not been able to come across a single volume written exclusively on the communal violence of Gujarat 2002. Brass, *Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence*, 386–392, has contributed a few pages to it in the conclusion of his latest book.

fit into what I would describe as the pro-statist paradigms within which much of the current research on religion and violence operates. The unfortunate result is that such hegemonic discourse reduces religious violence to the activities of non-state actors. The state is often absent or occupies a very small role in contemporary accounts on religious violence. Applying this to the case of India, the dominant discourse defines the Kashmir and Sikh activists seeking self-determination as being terrorists par excellence, while the role of the Indian state in spawning religious violence only becomes visible in extreme cases such as that of the former Taliban regime of Afghanistan.

It is here that there appears to be a major dissonance in the perspectives of scholars and activists: the latter are more attuned to recognizing the awesome power of the state in fomenting violence. Swami Agnivesh, for example, argues that the modern nation state has been wrapped by “a certain aura of legitimacy.”⁹⁸ This he claims is the reason why people initially found it hard to believe that the Gujarat state was implicated in the brutal killings of Muslims in 2002. Agnivesh contends that the chief lesson from the Gujarat tragedy is the following: “What is far more dangerous and reprehensible in the contemporary age is the potential of the state itself becoming an instrument of genocide or carnage.” The reasons for this, he claims, are twofold: “First, the real actor is faceless and second, state-sponsored genocide is legitimized and camouflaged by the fact that government has come to power through democratic means and has the support of the constitution.”⁹⁹ He provides Hitler and the Nazi regime as a clear example of this: “Hitler came to power through democratic means and used his position to exterminate the Jews.” He further argues that:

⁹⁸ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 25, 2005.

⁹⁹ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 25, 2005.

One of the chief reasons why Hitler was able to get away with his policy of genocide against the Jews was that it took a long time for people to realize what was happening. When it was happening many people did not realize it, because they were deluded by the fact that it was a democratically elected government. The case of the BJP led government of Narendra Modi and his Gujarat pogrom is very similar. I have been warning people about it for a long time, but no one cared to listen.¹⁰⁰

Agnivesh believes that religious activists, as well as other civil society activists, should be vigilant, constantly monitoring the state so as to counterbalance this tendency for the exercise of its awesome coercive powers. This is precisely how he conceives of his own role in relationship to politics and the state. His constructive example of the role of religion in the public sphere is however not unique. There are numerous other examples which need to be lifted up so that the reality of religion in public life is reckoned within a more positive manner in the academic literature. But what about the key theoretical question of the ever-present potential of the state becoming an instrument of carnage and genocide. When will this be taken seriously by scholars of religion and violence?

It is encouraging to note that recently a few scholars have in fact been trying to incorporate the destructive potential of the state into their theorizing of the question of violence. In particular, these scholars have been drawing on the theories of the biopolitical state first formulated by the French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1926–1984), and later taken up slightly differently by the Italian scholar, Giorgio Agamben. Foucault’s critique of the theory of sovereignty and his historical investigations into the emergence and practices of biopower throughout history, both in discourse and in society, are the point of departure for Agamben’s reflections on “bare life.”¹⁰¹ Agamben’s work is important for its reflection on biopolitics, for he theorizes post-sovereign power and is concerned with those invested by its operations. His work

¹⁰⁰ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 25, 2005.

¹⁰¹ Giorgio Agamben, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage, Reprint Edition, 1995).

is concerned with the notion of sovereignty and human rights within the modernist paradigm of biopolitical rule, the political/judicial and social realm. Agamben systematically attempts throughout his works to undermine the theory of sovereignty and unveil the political rationality operating behind its rhetoric in the present. One of the main innovative notions in his work is that of *homo sacer* and bare life: naked life means the life that can be killed but not sacrificed of the *homo sacer* (living dead).

One of the Indian scholars associated with the Subaltern Studies project, Angana P. Chatterjee, has already begun to apply some of these novel insights into his analysis of Hindu nationalism and communal violence in India.¹⁰² In a recent edited volume, anthropologist Veena Das, has for example, raised the vexing question of how the biopolitical state, which is invested with the responsibility of preserving and managing bare life, can also allow and even cause the death of significant parts of the population.¹⁰³ “We are living in an era in which the state is more in the business of producing killable bodies than that of managing life,” she contends.¹⁰⁴ In support of her contention, she cites the mass killings and plundering of Muslims in the Gujarat state of India in February and March 2002 as an instructive example.

These new theoretical perspectives are more in line with activist views such as those of Swami Agnivesh and do provide us with some hope for the emergence of a more balanced picture of religion and violence that fully integrates the important role of the state. It is disconcerting to note, however, that these scholarly endeavors, especially by that of the Subaltern school, are not considered as part of mainstream scholarship in the Western academy. Their novel and challenging theoretical insights

¹⁰² “The Biopolitics of Hindu Nationalism” *Cultural Dynamics* 16, no. 2–3 (2004): 319–372.

¹⁰³ Veena Das, Deborah Poole and Richard M. Leverthall, eds. *Anthropology in the Margins of the State* (School of American Research Press, 2004).

¹⁰⁴ Veena Das, “Women and the Contested State: Religion, Violence and Agency in South Asia.” Keynote address delivered at the second conference of the Kroc Institute’s Program in Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, University of Notre Dame, April 11–12, 2003. For a report on the conference see *Peace Colloquy*, Issue No. 4, Fall 2003, 18–19. The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame.

are currently marginalized in the mainstream disciplines of the social sciences. They are conspicuously absent from the growing sub-discipline of religion and violence.

In conclusion, I have illustrated in this chapter, through a detailed sketch of the daily struggles for social justice of the Hindu religious leader, Swami Agnivesh, the critical importance of holding onto a broader definition of violence that does not exclude systemic and structural violence, such as bonded and child labor, *sati*, communal and state-sponsored violence. Agnivesh's life epitomizes a great endeavor to go beyond superficial analyses of the causes of religious violence. He exposes and struggles to eradicate the deeper structural causes of violence which are often not so apparent but far more insidious. Moreover, his activist perspective on the tragic communal violence that visited the Gujarat state of India in February and March 2002 has highlighted the complicit role played by the state. As I have shown, his verdict has been widely confirmed in numerous investigative reports by human rights organizations.

The tragic lesson from Gujarat confirmed what Agnivesh had long warned about. The aura that surrounds the awesome power of the modern nation-state has further buttressed the inherent tendency of the state for committing excesses in the execution of its legitimate coercive force. This, Agnivesh contends, needs to be challenged.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately, this perspective on the state has not yet been taken seriously enough by theorists of religion and violence in the Western academy. Such a theoretical focus is however evident in the research work of the Subaltern Studies project and more especially that of the work of Veena Das.

The focus on Gujarat in this chapter concludes my three case studies and represents a third instance of how the modern nation-state is deeply implicated in the production of violence, and how organized religion instead of counter-balancing it, only too often serves to further legitimize it. In the final chapter I summarize my major findings.

¹⁰⁵ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 25, 2005.

CONCLUSION

TOWARDS A THEORY OF RELIGION, VIOLENCE AND THE STATE

Both the varieties of insights produced through different analytic approaches as well as the variety of empirical relations between violence and religion should warn against seeking a single general theory.¹

A survey of the scholarly writing on religion and violence over the past decade and a half led me to conclude that it was *inadequate* in accounting for systemic violence in that it tended to ignore state-sponsored terror. This is evident in the new theoretical perspectives on religion and violence that had emerged since the end of the Cold War in 1990, and that were flooding the market in the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks on the United States. I have described this omission of the role of the state as a *fault line* in the prevailing academic orthodoxies in the sub-field on religion and violence.

Emblematic of this *analytical slippage* is the widely acclaimed book, *Terror in the Mind of God* by Mark Juergensmeyer. This sociologist of religion has established himself as one of the premier scholars in the sub-field of religion and violence and his book became a best-seller after the September 11 attacks, not least because he prophetically placed a photo of Osama bin Laden on the front cover. The book is now in its third revised edition.² In my view, there is a fundamental disconnect between Juergensmeyer's earlier insights on the rise of religious resurgence and his explanation for the cause of religious violence in his later work. In his earlier work, Juergensmeyer devoted significant attention to the problem of state excess and the quality of legitimate

¹ John R. Hall, "Religion and Violence: Social Processes in Comparative Perspective," in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2003), 379.

² Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* Third Edition Revised and Updated (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

resistance in many sub-state movements.³ Yet, in what could be regarded as his *magnum opus*, *Terror in the Mind of God*, Juergensmeyer does not deal with two of the three cases featured in this dissertation – cases in which state-sponsored religious violence is obvious. There is a conspicuous neglect of the South African and Bosnian cases in Juergensmeyer’s popular book. I contend that these omissions are symptomatic of a larger trend in prevailing scholarship on religion and violence.

In my description of the victim of state-sponsored violence, Christian religious activist, Michael Lapsley, I pointed out that his disabled body stands as both a reminder of the destructiveness of the state’s monopoly of violence and a compelling critique of the conventional theories on religion and violence. Inattentiveness to the lessons of the South African case exposes the deficiencies of theories on religion and violence and reminds us about the conditioning effect of power on scholarly analysis of the causes of violence. Transposing this critique to Juergensmeyer, it is revealing that there is a conspicuous neglect of any reference to the South African case in his more than a quarter-century-long career in and wide-ranging research on religious violence.⁴

Even more disconcerting is the almost complete lack of attention given to the Bosnian war by Juergensmeyer in *Terror in the Mind of God*. His global survey of religious violence in the post-Cold War period astonishingly neglects the Bosnian case. I have noted that among his list of eighty-five interviews listed at the back of his book, there is not a single voice from the Balkans. Interestingly, from the point of view of this dissertation, Juergensmeyer does mention Bosnia twice. The first time he refers to it is in the context of “state terrorism” and the second time he feels the need to do so is to argue that: “During the height of the conflict in Bosnia in the mid-1990s, for instance, mosques stayed open and the symphony orchestra of Sarajevo kept to its concert schedule, performing to mixed audiences (sic).”⁵ I have also observed with

³ See Juergensmeyer, *New Cold War*.

⁴ Juergensmeyer has written widely on religion and violence but I have not found any references to the South African case in any of his work.

⁵ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 241.

concern that despite multiple reviews of *Terror in the Mind of God* not a single one has noted this gross omission of Bosnia.⁶ Given the hegemonic academic paradigm in the Western academy, and the cultural bias surrounding it, I find this oversight hardly surprising.

Yet more intriguing is the manner in which Juergensmeyer chooses to deal with the conflict in India.⁷ He approaches India through an examination of Sikh activism, engaging in dialogue with Simranjit Singh Mann, a political leader known for his radical separatist views. Juergensmeyer's methodology is similar to my own in that it is based on interlocution with selected religious activists in the midst of conflict. Strangely, however, Juergensmeyer highlights those aspects of Mann's career that could contribute to the portrait of "Sikh terrorism" as usually painted, even though Mann has spent his life as an elected member of parliament rather than an underground guerilla fighter. (When I interviewed him personally, Mann objected to Juergensmeyer's depiction of him as a terrorist in this manner.)⁸ Mann has faced a number of charges in India and has served many years in detention, but is in fact battling the abuses of the Indian state through the political system, not through the barrel of the gun, as Indian courts have always decided. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other human rights organizations have accused the Indian state in Punjab of abuses as egregious as those previously described for Gujarat. Yet Juergensmeyer describes Mann and his followers, not in terms of political resistance to state violence, but in terms of violent separatism.

The message in *Terror in the Mind of God* is clear if unstated: the paradigm stands. The state is a neutral or an unmarked category, while the activists are the religiously-motivated purveyors of violence.

⁶ *Terror in the Mind of God* is probably one of most widely reviewed books in the vast literature on religion and violence. In terms of numbers of reviews it is matched only by Rene Girard's, *Violence and the Sacred*.

⁷ Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 245.

⁸ Simranjit Singh Mann, interview with author, April 24, 2005.

In the Introduction to this dissertation, I identified at least two possible explanations for this bias occurring in the prevailing theoretical perspectives on religion and violence. First, I attributed it to the widely held assumption derived from the state-centric Weberian paradigm claiming that state violence is “legitimate.” From this vantage point, state violence by definition was viewed as force gone wrong. By implication, therefore, the force employed by the state, even if it results in direct physical harm, cannot be regarded as violence, since it is employed in order to enforce the law. Such definitions that privilege the state’s use of violence inevitably have the double effect of delegitimizing the use of violence by non-state actors under any and all circumstances and obscuring the excesses committed by the state in the exercise of its power. In my critique of the prevailing definitions of violence, I illustrated how this assumption is reflected in the fourfold typology of violence developed by David Little, another leading scholar on religion and violence.⁹

Second, I pointed to the conditioning influence of political location in the framing of academic discourse. I concurred with David Chidester that academic institutions, disciplines, teaching and research are necessarily implicated in the ceremonies of power in the network of social relations within which they operate.¹⁰ Putting a fine point on the matter, Mahmood Mamdani calls to our attention the fact that two of the leading figures in the “clash of civilizations” thesis, Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington, have both served as political advisors to the United States policy establishment dating back from the end of the Vietnam War.¹¹ The overall effect of this ideologically charged discourse, as Cynthia Mahmood correctly avers, has led to the world to be shamefully misled by hearing more about religious terrorism than about state terror.¹²

⁹ In 2000, David Little became the first T.J. Dermot Dunphy Professor of Religion, Ethnicity, and International Conflict at Harvard University’s Divinity School. For his curriculum vitae see <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/faculty/little.html> (accessed August 2005).

¹⁰ David Chidester, *Savage Systems*, x.

¹¹ Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 20–21.

¹² Mahmood, “Trials by Fire,” 70–90.

The three case studies – Michael Lapsley of South Africa, Mustafa Cerić of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Swami Agnivesh – accentuate different aspects of the religion and violence nexus. However, they have one key thing in common: all three point to the critical role of the state. In particular, all three illuminate the manner in which religion can buttress and sanctify state-sponsored violence.

Father Michael Lapsley’s story of his encounter with both the structural as well as direct physical dimensions of the violence of apartheid stands as a reminder of the destructiveness that can ensue when a state abuses its monopoly of violence and co-opts religion in pursuit of an oppressive ideology. The case of apartheid South Africa provides a particularly compelling critique of the existing theories on religion and violence. It exposes their paucity and underscores the importance of broadening the existing bias in academic definitions of violence to include that of systemic state violence. The fact that David Chidester’s endeavor to apply the theoretical insights gained from the apartheid case to the international discourse on religion and violence has been completely disregarded in the broader debate within the Western academy is instructive in this regard.

The case of the state of Gujarat in India provides further empirical support for the view that state-sponsored violence is one of *the* most important sources of contemporary violence. The tragic lesson from the anti-Muslim pogrom that took place in Gujarat in 2002 confirmed what Swami Agnivesh had long warned about.¹³ The aura that surrounds the awesome power of the modern nation-state has further reinforced the inherent tendency of the state for committing excesses in the execution of its “legitimate” coercive force. Unfortunately, this perspective on the state has not yet been taken seriously enough by theorists of religion and violence in the Western academy. Such a theoretical focus is, however, evident in the research work of the anthropologist, Veena Das. She has argued that: “We are living in an era in which the

¹³ Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 25, 2005.

state is more in the business of producing killable bodies than that of managing life.” Her theoretical perspective is more consonant with activist views such as those of Swami Agnivesh. It is disconcerting to note, however, that such novel and challenging theoretical insights, though engaged by many of the mainstream social and human sciences, are currently marginalized in the proliferating sub-discipline on religion and violence.

The Bosnian case illustrates the difficulty of disentangling the religious from the ethnic and these in turn from the socio-economic and political factors in situations of deadly conflicts. I have observed a reticence on the part of Western scholars to acknowledging Christian complicity with the state in the spawning of violence. Leading scholars on religion in the Balkans such as Miroslav Volf and Paul Mojzes have been more comfortable to attribute such violence to primarily ethnic causes. The Bosnian case provides a strong example of a denial of the complicity of religion. I have been compelled to ask if the denial of the religious dimensions of the Bosnian war is a reflection of a Christian bias in the dominant literature on religion and violence. Mufti Mustafa Cerić has provided a provocative explanation as to why this may be the case. He contends that: “In the world in which we live the capacity for acknowledging religious complicity in violence is even more tenuous when the violence is motivated and legitimated by appeals to Christianity.”¹⁴ Michael Sells holds the same view as Cerić. Is this perhaps one of the reasons why Sells’ seminal study on religious genocide in Bosnia has been largely ignored in the comparative and theoretical studies on religion and violence?

The conclusion that these three cases lead us to is inescapable: the modern nation-state must be brought centrally into our theorizing of religion and violence.

One of the rare scholars who have begun to do this is Bruce Lincoln. He argues that most of the post-Cold War conflicts in which religious issues have played a role

¹⁴ Mustafa Cerić, interview with author, May 15, 2002.

have occurred “in contexts where structural problems inherent to the nation-state have become manifest: specifically the potential contradiction between nation and state.¹⁵ In such situations, according to Lincoln, religious actors attempt to reconcile the gritty nature of their struggles with the precepts of their religious beliefs. In trying to come to terms with this reality, Lincoln has developed a fourfold typology of religion and conflict in relation to the modern nation-state. The typology helps us to place the three case studies we have explored in a broader theoretical framework: a structure that takes seriously the role of the state.

The first of these ideal types is described by Lincoln as the religious reconstruction of the state. In this instance, the population is relatively homogeneous in terms of religious affiliation. If the state, as is often the case, consciously chooses to define itself as *de jure* secular – that is nonreligious – some members of the host faith community may feel offended, believing that their overwhelming numbers deserves to be reflected more directly in the identity and value-system represented by the state. The aggrieved fraction may launch a campaign against the secularity of the state agitating for greater recognition of their faith and values in national affairs. Socio-economic and political grievances often provide the structural backdrop for the escalation of the conflict between the secular state and its religious adversary. The trajectory of the conflict may vary, but the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran reveals the extent of their potential. Other examples of religious conflicts in the world today that fit this pattern are Afghanistan, Algeria and the Jewish Orthodox activists in Israel. None of the cases examined in this dissertation, however, corresponds to this ideal type.

A second ideal type of conflict identified by Lincoln is that of the construction of a religious hegemony. This pattern occurs when the nation-state’s religious population is less homogeneous though one religious community holds a relative majority. In such a scenario, the state’s active neutrality *vis-à-vis* its diverse religious traditions

¹⁵ Lincoln, “Conflict,” 57–8. See also, Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 62–76.

is sometimes perceived by the majority to be pandering to religious minorities and working to its detriment. This perception may spur influential sections of the country's religious leadership to challenge the state by exposing its supposed bias against the faith of the majority. Here again structural problems inherent to the state provide the ideal setting for such conflicts to escalate. The best example provided by Lincoln is that of the campaigns of the *Hindutva* movement in India. In terms of official statistics Hindus represent the largest religious group in India. One of the main grievances of the groups linked to the *Sang Parivar* is that the secularity of the post-colonial Indian state has led to Muslims and other religious minorities obtaining unfair preferences and advantages. The chief objective of their political arm, the BJP, is to capture state power so that this may be corrected and India may become a Hindu polity. This ideal type corresponds well with the findings of this dissertation and thus provides a useful theoretical analysis and larger framework within which to view the Indian case.¹⁶

A third ideal type identified by Lincoln is that of schism along religious lines. In this scenario the religious demography is similar to that of the aggrieved religious majority pattern, but in this instance the state apparatus and policies are dominated by the religious majority, leading to a situation of active discrimination of its religious minorities. In such a case the state may not officially be recognized as religious, and may even identify itself as secular even though in reality its public life is laced with the symbols and values of its religious majority. Lincoln provides the Protestant domination of Northern Ireland as an example of this ideal type. None of the cases explored in this dissertation corresponds to this conflict type.

The fourth and final conflict type is that of devolution. In this situation according to Lincoln "a modern nation-state deconstructs in decidedly postmodern fashion."¹⁷ During this period, religious groups that were part of the old order may take advantage of the state's weakness to assert their own religious identity. Should such a group even

¹⁶ Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 67.

¹⁷ Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 70–73.

temporarily be able to capture state power it may seek to exploit the fluid and uncertain reality by annihilating the other religious groups. An example he provides of such a scenario playing itself out was that of Bosnia in the 1990s. My analysis of the Bosnian war clearly supports this scenario.

Lincoln's fourfold typology of religion and conflict provides a useful theoretical model within which to analyze religious violence in the context of the state. At least two of my cases, India and Bosnia, fit well into his framework. The limitation of the typology is that it does not however cover the South Africa case. In this instance, a religious minority was able to control state power by force and impose its ideology on the nation. Such a scenario is rare but should not be ruled out. A closer examination of conflicts around the world in which there is no clear cut religious majority may provide a comparable scenario.

A far more important nuance that needs to be made to Lincoln's typology is that sometimes states may officially proclaim themselves to be secular but may unwittingly be promoting the symbols and values of one segment of its religious demography. Often this is the case if that religious group is also the majority. In such cases, religious minorities are able to detect and perceive a religious bias in the functioning of the state far more easily. A few observers have pointed out that the grievances of the Moro Muslims against the secular government of the Philippines are a case in point. Notwithstanding the state's supposed secularity, Moro Muslims perceive that they are being discriminated against and some scholars concur that the state is biased in favor of its Catholic majority. This more subtle scenario is absent from Lincoln's typology. Notwithstanding this minor weakness, Lincoln's typology does provide a very useful set of categories with which to describe the relationships among religion, violence and the state. I welcome Lincoln's typology, which fruitfully includes the state, but find it inadequate as a theoretical framework because it is too narrowly constructed.

Another scholar who has theorized the role of the state in the production of violence in which religion is implicated is Mahmood Mamdani. In his recent book,

Good Muslim, Bad Muslim, he provides us with an unequivocal theoretical perspective on the role of the nation-state as *the* major source and purveyor of violence and terrorism. Mamdani has usefully demonstrated how the genesis and trajectory of the modern state is rooted in violence and exclusion both internally as well as externally.¹⁸ In particular, he has traced the roots of contemporary terrorism in the policies of the United States during the Cold War period. In support of his position, he has recalled an American television image from 1985. On the White House lawn, President Ronald Reagan introduced, with great fanfare, a group of Afghan mujahideen to the media in the following words: “These gentlemen are the moral equivalents of America’s founding fathers.”¹⁹ These same gentlemen went on to become the founding fathers of the brutal Taliban regime and their cohorts, the Arab Afghans, became the foundation of al-Qaeda.

Mamdani’s theoretical insights are indeed profound. They help us enhance the accuracy of analysis and contribute to the development of more effective methodologies in the area of conflict transformation and sustainable peacebuilding.

I would like to isolate two of them which are particularly relevant to this dissertation. The first is that in order to apprehend contemporary violence, he says we need to understand the historical relationship between state-sponsored terror and non-state terrorism. According to Mamdani there is a clear and discernible historical dynamic between the two: “During the Cold War, state terror has been parent to non-state terror, and given rise to non-state terrorism, it has then proceeded to mimic it – as, for instance in the “War against Terrorism.”²⁰ In short, Mamdani’s analysis leads to the conclusion that the post-Enlightenment experiment of the nation-state has not brought about a reduction in violence. On the contrary, as the empirical evidence suggests,

¹⁸ Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 1–16.

¹⁹ Mamdani attributes this recollection to an article written in *Dawn*, by the Pakistani political thinker, Eqbal Ahmad. Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 119.

²⁰ Mamdani made these remarks during an interview on his book with *Asia Source* (July 27, 2005), see http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/mamadni.cfm (accessed August 2005).

we have since witnessed a level and quality of violence far more than we have ever recorded in human history.

The second theoretical insight is derived from the following statement by Mamdani: “So long as we continue to live our lives within the institutions crafted in the colonial period, our lives will continue to be shaped by the colonial legacy even a thousand years from now.” He challenges all of us, not only post-colonial scholars, to think outside of the colonial box and beyond the nation-state. I think his advice is even more relevant to former colonial empire states. Mamdani does not believe, nor do I, that we are destined or condemned to live within the parameters of the nation-state forever. But how do we proceed with such a daunting project of thinking and embracing humanity beyond the confines of the nation-state?

I believe a useful starting point is to support the call by David Chidester to look outside the box of the state by placing global, transnational citizenship in relation to (or in dialectical tension with) local, cultural citizenship. This would be a global form of citizenship that does not mark out a terrain of insiders and outsiders and that does not identify the non-citizens as the other or the enemy.²¹ For such a project of global citizenship to be successful, however, it needs to be nurtured and supported by social movements and institutions, including the religious ones. But what support can such a movement for global citizenship expect to garner from the powerful religious establishments?

Mamdani is not particularly helpful in providing a response to this question. In his endeavor to provide a corrective to the prevailing culture talk which reduces all violence emanating from Muslim quarters to Islamic theology, Mamdani unwittingly inscribes a denial of religious agency in his political analysis. In some sense, it perpetuates a certain strand of Marxism that views religion as false consciousness unlike a Gramscian interpretation that saw religious discourse as productive. For instance, Mamdani denies Islamist ideologues any agency when he suggests that by

²¹ Chidester, *Global Citizenship*, 20.

their involvement with the US in the Afghan war they were transformed into political movements. Does Mamdani subscribe to some doctrinaire definition of a political movement? Why can Islamist groups not be both: religious and political movements? Or, to put it differently, why can they not be religious movements in the non-Protestant sense where one can be unapologetically political as well as religious? Perhaps they are political movements that acquire their primary inspiration from religious ideology.

Mamdani concedes that Islamic thinkers emerge in a dialogical relationship to their peculiar historical contexts and intellectual milieu. But beyond that gesture he goes on to charge that the Islamist ideologues, such as Abul Ala Mawdudi and Sayyed Qutb, were merely purveyors of extremist intellectual tendencies within Islam. To further assert, as he does, that these groups did not launch formal movements until the onset of the Afghan war in the late eighties is a gross misreading of history and a denial of full agency to these religious actors unless we disagree on definitional and chronological grounds only.

I contend, contrary to Mamdani, that religious actors do have a powerful agency in the production of violence and exclusion. Of course, there are no firewalls between religion and other social phenomenon and religious actors do not commit atrocities in isolation of their contexts and intellectual milieus. However, as sociologist of religion, John R. Hall, correctly avers “religion is more than symbolic currency, more than epiphenomenon, more than merely a venue of violence; it becomes a vehicle for the expression of deeply and widely held social aspirations – of nationalism, anticolonialism, or civilization struggle.”²² In short, in order for religion to contribute towards the project for a global citizenship its connection to violence needs to be mitigated.

Is this not a utopian goal? Scott Appleby does not believe it to be unrealistic. He has characterized religion as the ambivalence of the sacred: a source of violence but

²² Hall, “Religion and Violence: Social Processes in Comparative Perspective,” 379.

also a transformative resource in moving toward peace. Both Appleby and Chidester suggest that education may hold the key to nurturing a more egalitarian ethos of religion. But their educational strategies are different. Appleby calls for greater efforts in transforming the religious education and formation of future religious leaders. Chidester, on the other hand, supports the process of teaching and learning *about* religious diversity for future generations. I believe that the daunting task for a nurturing a global citizenship requires both.

At the outset of my research for this dissertation I believed that by infusing the existing theory of religion and violence with the critiques of religious activists, who lived at the nexus of religion and violence, the state's role in the violence would be illuminated, thereby making it possible to construct a single, sufficiently nuanced and polycentric (as opposed to Eurocentric) theory of religion, violence and the state. During the course of my interlocution with religious activists from three different settings, however, my hypothesis has been transformed. As a result of what I have learnt through my interviews, I have been moved to take a new position. Instead of aiming for a single overarching and all comprehensive *theory* to add to the religion and violence literature, I now propose a new *framework* for the analysis of situations of religious violence.

I choose a framework rather than a typology in order to accommodate the range of circumstances with which we are confronted empirically when we observe religion and violence. Through reviewing the religion and violence literature, I note the primarily *dyadic* quality of most scholars' analyses. The frame of discourse moves from the pole of religion to the pole of violence, remaining mute regarding the role of the governing state. Yet, as my interlocutors point out with their lives and their words, it is very often the violence – and even the religious violence – of the state that is a primary actor in contemporary situations where violent conflict takes place. I propose, therefore, that a frame of analysis that is *triadic* rather than dyadic should be foundational to the field of religion and violence – and the state.

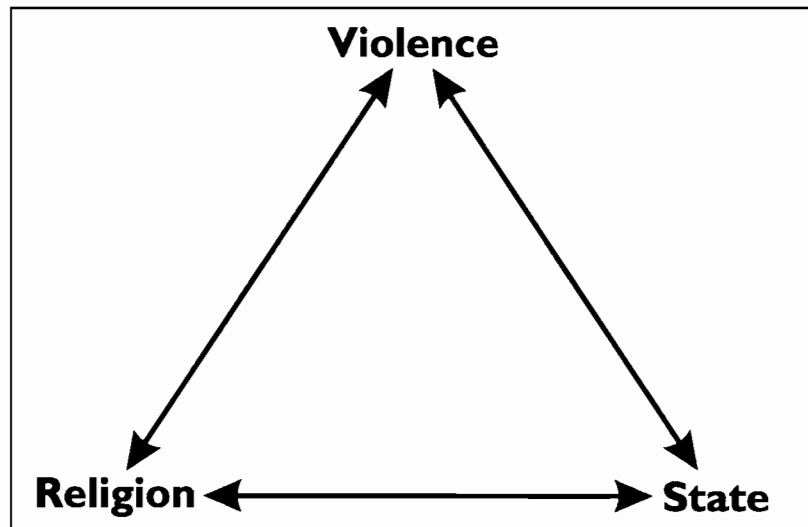


Figure 1: Religion–Violence–State Triad

Of course, not every case in which religion and violence are implicated contains the factor of the state. Nor does every case in which the state confronts violence insurgency contain a religious element. The religious and non-religious variables in conflict are configured differently in disparate contexts. In the frame of analysis I propose, it may well be that one of the elements may be null in any given case. The point is, however, that in today's world it has become empirically clear – as illustrated in the three cases of this dissertation – that one must *start* with the assumption of a threefold rather than twofold framework. That is the essential contribution of this dissertation.

Some pioneering scholars, such as Olivier Roy, have written about the new, global, transnational or planetary level now reached by some collectivities (such as, perhaps, al-Qaeda).²³ This is a fascinating area for exploration as we move into radically new ways of living and being in the twenty-first century. Yet, I suggest, again on empirical evidence, that the mid-range level of the state is being left out of the literature, which seems to oddly skip from absorption with sub-state actors to a new burgeoning interest in the transnational and the global. The dialogue between theory and praxis fostered

²³ Roy, *Globalized Islam*.

in this dissertation is offered as a corrective to this gap. I argue that such a dialogue is vital in order to develop a more nuanced and polycentric theory of religion, violence and the state. A Eurocentric and Weberian view, as I have demonstrated, privileges the state and treats state violence as *sui generis* compared to all other forms of violence. By contrast a polycentric theory of religion, violence and the state will end this privileging and introduce a dialogical relationship in what I call a triad of elements.

Perhaps we have celebrated the death of the state too soon. Certainly those who have suffered the state's excesses, such as Michael Lapsley with his impaired hearing and artificial limbs, or those survivors of the genocide in Bosnian who continue to suffer indignities during the trial of former Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, in The Hague, or those who continue to suffer excesses of arbitrary detention at the behest of the Indian state, such as Simranjit Singh Mann,²⁴ would not doubt that the state continues to live, flourish and kill.

Conventional theories of religion and violence regards such killing by the state as normative and therefore tolerable. It is the purpose of the triadic framework of analysis proposed in this dissertation to unmask and challenge state sponsored killing.

²⁴ Simranjit Singh Mann was arrested on June 5, 2005 (during the writing of this dissertation) on charges of "sedition" and "disrupting communal harmony" because he gave a speech on human and civil rights for Sikhs in India. For further information see <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2005/20050615/main2.htm> (accessed August 2005).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abootalebi, Ali R. "Civil Society, Democracy, and the Middle East." *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 2, no. 3 (September 1998).
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Vintage, Reprint Edition, 1995.
- Agnivesh, Swami. "Multi-Religious Pilgrimage: Paradigm Shift in Religious Cooperation." *The Times of India*, 2 April 1999.
- Agnivesh, Swami. "Religion and Secularism.," *Hindustan Times*, 18 September, 2000.
- Agnivesh, Swami and Rev. Valson Thampu. *Gujarat After Godhra: Real Violence, Selective Outrage*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2002.
- Agnivesh, Swami and Reverend Valson Thampu, eds. *Harvest of Hate: Gujarat Under Siege*. Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2002.
- Agnivesh, Swami. *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action: New Agenda for Humanity*. Delhi: Hope India Publications, Second Edition, 2003.
- Agnivesh, Swami. "A Case for Pro-Active Spirituality." Unpublished paper provided on February 23, 2005.
- Al-Ayun, Mahmud. *Al-Azhar: A Short Historical Survey*. Cairo: Al-Azhar Press, 1949.
- Ali, Tariq. *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Jihads, Crusades and Modernity*. London: Verso, 2003.
- Allen, Christopher and Jorgen Nielsen, eds. *Islamophobia in the EU After 11 September: Summary Report*. Vienna: European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2002.
- Almond, Gabriel A., Emmanuel Sivan and R. Scott Appleby. "Examining the Cases." In *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Ammerman, Nancy T. "North American Protestant Fundamentalism." In *Fundamentalisms Observed*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Amnesty International. *India Justice, the victim – Gujarat state fails to protect women from violence*, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engasa200012005> (accessed February 2005).
- Amin, Samir. *Eurocentricism*. Translated by Russel Moore. London: Zed Books, 1989.
- Amin, Samir. *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World*. London: Zed Books, 1990.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.
- Antoun, Richard T. *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic and Jewish Movement*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.
- Appleby, R. Scott, ed. *Spokesmen for the Despised: Fundamentalist Leaders of the Middle East*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Appleby, R. Scott. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000.
- Appleby, R. Scott. "Religions, Human Rights and Social Change." In *Freedom to do God's Will*, eds. Gerrie Ter Haar and James J. Busittil. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. London: Allen Lane, 1970.
- Arya, Anupma. *Religion and Politics in India: A Study of the Role of the Arya Samaj*. New Delhi: K.K. Publications, 2001.
- Asad, Talal. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
- Augustine, John S., ed. "Religious Fundamentalism: An Indian Perspective." In *Religious Fundamentalism: An Asian Perspective*. Bangalore, 1993.
- Azam, Nadeem. "A Conversation with Mustafa Ceric," <http://www.angelfire.com/hi/nazam/Aceric.html> (accessed April 2005).

- Bahl, Arvin. "Politics By Other Means: An Analysis of Human Rights Watch Report on Gujarat." In *Gujarat After Godhra: Real Violence, Selective Outrage*, eds. Ramesh N. Rao and Koenraad Elst. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications Pvt Ltd, 2003.
- Baillie, Gil. *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads*. New York: Crossroad, 1995.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Translated by Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983.
- Bakunin, Mikhail. "God and the State." In *Selected Writings*, ed. A. Lehning. New York: Grove Press, 1974.
- Bandukwala, Juzar and Yoginder Sikand. "Speaking from Gujarat," in *Countercurrents*, 6 October, 2004, <http://www.countercurrents.org/gujarat-sikand061004.htm> (accessed February 2005).
- Barber, Benjamin. *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism Are Reshaping the World*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1996.
- Barkawi, Tarak and Mark Laffey. "The Imperial Peace: Democracy, Force and Globalization." *European Journal of International Relations* 5 (4) (1999).
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.
- Bax, Upendra. "The Second Gujarat Catastrophe." In *Fascism in India: Faces, Fangs and Facts*, ed. Chaitanya Krishna. Delhi: Manak Publications, 2003.
- Bell, Terry with Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza. *Unfinished Business, South Africa, Apartheid, and Truth*. New York: Verso, 2003.
- Bellinger, Charles K. "Religion and Violence: A Bibliography." *The Hedgehog Review* 6/1 (2004)
- Berger, Peter. *The Heretical Imperative*. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979.
- Berger, Peter. *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington D.C.: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Berman, John Kane. *Soweto: Black Revolt White Reaction*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978.
- Biswas, Shampa. "(De) Secularizing the Nation: Global Modernity and the Politics of Hindu Nationalism." PhD Dissertation. Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1999.
- Brass, Paul. *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*. Seattle: Washington University Press, 2003.
- Bonner, Arthur. "The Fiery Swami: Introduction." Unpublished document provided by Swami Agnivesh on February 23, 2005.
- Bougarel, Xavier. "Bosnia and Herzegovina: State and Communism." In *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth*, eds. David A. Dyker and Ivan Vejvoda. Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1997.
- Brown, Judith. *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Brown, Judith. "Gandhi's Non-Violence: The Political Dilemma of a Religious Vision." Paper delivered at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, April 25, 2003.
- Brown, Michael E., Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Stephen E. Miller, eds. *Debating the Democratic Peace*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.
- Brown, Robert McAfee. *Religion and Violence* Second Edition. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987.
- Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices From the Partition of India*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Butaille, Georges. *Theory of Religion*. Translated by R. Hurley. New York: Zone Books, 1989.
- Candland, Christopher. *The Spirit of Violence: An Interdisciplinary Bibliography of Religion and Violence*, Occasional Papers of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, no. 6 (1992).
- Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. *Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997.

- Ceric, Mustafa. *Islam and the West*. Sarajevo: Biblioteka Posebna Izdanja, br.65.
- Ceric, Mustafa. *Roots of Synthetic Theology in Islam: A Study of the Theology of Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (d.333/944)*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1995.
- Ceric, Mustafa. "Judaism, Christianity, Islam: Hope or Fear of Our Times." In *Beyond Violence: Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. James L. Heft, S.M. New York: Fordham University Press, 2004.
- Chidester, David. *Patterns of Power: Religion & Politics in American Culture*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988.
- Chidester, David. *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1991.
- Chidester, David, Gordon Mitchell, A. Rashied Omar and Isabel Apawo Phiri, eds. *Religion in Public Education: Options for a New South Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1994.
- Chidester, David. *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996.
- Chidester, David. "Stories, Fragments, and Monuments." In *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, eds. James Cochrane, John de Gruchy and Stephen Martin. Cape Town: David Philip, 1999.
- Chidester, David. *Global Citizenship, Cultural Citizenship and World Religions in Religion Education*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2002.
- Chidester, David. *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Chidester, David. "Comprehending Political Violence." In *Dealing with Diversity: Keywords for a New South Africa*, eds. Emile Boonzaier and John Sharp. Cape Town: David Phillip, forthcoming.
- Chomsky, Noam and Edward S. Herman, eds. *The Political Economy of Human Rights. Vol. 1, The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism*. Montreal: Black Rose, 1979.
- Chomsky, Noam. *The Culture of Terrorism*. Boston: South End Press, 1988.
- Cigar, Norman. *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of "Ethnic Cleansing"*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995.
- Cigar, Norman. "The Nationalist Serbian Intellectuals and Islam: Defining and Eliminating a Muslim Community." In *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, eds. Emran Qureshi and Michael Sells. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Clark, Neil. "A Warrior Who Achieved Nothing." *New Statesman*, October 27, 2003.
- Clifford, James. *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Cohen, Lenard J. "Bosnia's 'Tribal Gods': The Role of Religion in Nationalist Politics." In *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1998.
- Confronting Islamophobia: Education for Tolerance and Understanding, http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2004/webArticles/112204_Conference.asp (accessed April 2005).
- Dallmayr, Fred. "What is Swaraj? Lessons from Gandhi." In *Gandhi, Freedom, and Self-Rule*, ed. Anthony J. Perel. New York and Oxford: Lexington Books, 2000.
- Das, Veena. "Women and the Contested State: Religion, Violence and Agency in South Asia." Keynote address delivered at the second conference of the Kroc Institute's Program in Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, University of Notre Dame, April 11–12, 2003.
- Das, Veena, Deborah Poole and Richard M. Leverthall. eds. *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*. School of American Research Press, 2004.
- De Graaff, Bob. "The Wars in the Former Yugoslavia in the 1990s: Bringing the State Back in." In *Rethinking the Nature of War*, eds. Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom. London and New York: Frank Cass, 2005.
- Denniston, Robin. *Trevor Huddleston: A Life*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.
- Doyle, Michael. "Liberalism and World Politics." *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (December 1986).

- Doyle, Micheal W. *Ways of War and Peace*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.
- Dyker, D.A. and I. Vejvoda. *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth*. London and New York: Longman, 1996.
- Ellens, J. Harold, ed. *The Destructive Power of Religions: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vols. 1–5. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2004.
- Ellis, Marc H. *Unholy Alliance: Religion and Atrocity in Our Time*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publications, 1997.
- Engineer, Asghar Ali. *Communal Riots After Independence: A Comprehensive Account*. New Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2003.
- Engineer, Ashgar Ali. *The Gujarat Carnage*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2003.
- Erovic, Mujko. *Why Are One Thousand and One Hundred Bosnian Mosques Destroyed*. Palm Bay, FL: Bosnia Justice, 1996.
- Esposito, John, ed. *Voices of Resurgent Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Euben, Roxanne. *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism: A Work of Comparative Political Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Evans, Peter B. Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Falla, Ricardo. *Massacres in the Jungle: Ixcan, Guatamala, 1975–1982*. Boulder, CO: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Fine, John V.A. Jr. *The Bosnian Church: A New Interpretation: A Study of the Bosnian Church and its Place in State and Society from the 13th to the 15th Centuries*. Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, 1975.
- Fox, Jonathan. "Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations." *Journal of International Studies* 3 no. 3 (2001).
- Friedman, Francine. *The Bosnian Muslims: The Denial of a Nation*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1996.
- Friedman, Francine. "The Bosnian Muslim National Question." In *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes. Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Pres, 1998.
- Friedman, Thomas. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. New York: First Anchor Books Edition, 2000.
- Fuller, Graham E. "The Future of Political Islam." In *Foreign Affairs* March/April 2002. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002.
- Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3.
- George, Alexander, ed. *Western State Terrorism*. London: Polity Press, 1991.
- Gerhardt, Gail M. *Black Power in South Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- Ghosh, Ajay. "Swami Agnivesh: Priest, politician and perpetuator of social justice." *Kaumudi USA – Spotlight*, <http://www.kaumudiusa/kusa/html/spotlight-arch3.stm> (accessed April 2005).
- Giliomee, Hermann. *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003.
- Gill, Stephen. "Gramsci and Global Politics: Towards a Post-Hegemonic Research Agenda." In *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, ed. Stephen Gill. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Girard, Rene. *Violence and the Sacred*. Translated by Patrick Gregory. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977.
- Girard, Rene. *The Scapegoat*. Translated by Yvonne Freccero. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.
- Gratz, Dennis. "Eliticide in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1992-1995." PhD dissertation. University of Hamburg, 2005, http://www.ifsh.de/zeus/htm_english/pro_lauf.htm (accessed May 2005).
- Gutman, Roy. *A Witness to Genocide*. New York: Macmillan, 1993.
- Gurr, Ted Robert. *Peoples versus States: Minorities at Risk in the New Century*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2000.

- Hackett, Rosalind. "Carping or *Cape Diem*? The Response of Scholars to Global (Religious) Violence." Annual lecture of the British Association for the Study of Religion, occasional paper, no. 26, (2003).
- Halilovic, Ibrahim. "Mufti of Banja Luka," <http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/heroes/halilovic.html> (accessed May 2005).
- Hall, John R. "Religion and Violence: Social Processes in Comparative Perspective." In *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2003.
- Hamerton-Kelly, Robert. *Violent Origins: Walter Burkert, Rene Girard, and Jonathan Z. Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987.
- Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Harris, John. "The Marxian Conception of Violence." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 3, no. 4 (1974).
- Hassan, Riffat. "The Burgeoning of Islamic Fundamentalism: Towards an Understanding of the Phenomenon." In *Fundamentalist Phenomenon: A View from Within, A Response from Without*, ed. Norman J. Cohen. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990.
- Haynes, Jeff. *Religion in the Third World Politics*. Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993.
- Hazan, Pierre, Thomas Snyder and M. Cherif Bassiouni, eds. *Justice in a Time of War: The True Story Behind the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia*. Texas A&M University Press, 2004.
- Heft, James L., ed. *Beyond Violence: Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2004.
- Hoerber, Susanne, Rudolph and James Piscatori, eds. *Transnational Religion and Fading States*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.
- Hoare, Marko Attilio. "The Left Revisionists." *Journal of Genocide Research* (December 2003), <http://www.glypx.com/BalkanWitness/hoare.htm> (accessed June 2005).
- Hoare, Marko Attilio. *How Bosnia Armed*. London: Saqi Books, 2004.
- Huddleston, Trevor. *Naught for your Comfort*. London: Collins, 1956.
- Human Rights Watch. "We Have No Orders To Save You:" *State Participation and Complicity in Communal Violence in Gujarat*. New York: Human Rights Watch Report, vol. 14, no. 3(C), April 30, 2002, 4, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/India/> (accessed February 2005).
- Huntington, Samuel P. "The Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs* 72, 3 (1993).
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the Modern World*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- Ilaiah, Kancha. *Why I am not a Hindu: A Sudra Critique of Hindutva Philosophy, Culture and Political Economy*. Calcutta, 1996.
- International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, <http://www.un.org/icty/krstic/TrialCI/judgement/index.htm> (accessed May 2005).
- Irwin, Zachary T. "The Fate of Islam in the Balkans: A Comparison of Four State Policies." In *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and Eastern European Politics*, ed. Pedro Ramet. Durham: Duke University Press, 1984.
- Islamic Cultural Centre in Chicago. *The Center, The People and The Mission: A Commemorative Book for the Grand Opening of the Islamic Cultural Center*. Chicago: Islamic Cultural Center, 1988.
- Iyer, Justice V.R. Krishna. "Foreword." *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action: New Agenda for Humanity*. Delhi: Hope India Publications, Second Edition, 2003.
- Izetbegovic, Alija. *The Islamic Declaration*. Sarajevo: Biblioteka Posebna Izdanja, 1991.
- Izetbegovic, Alija. *Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical Notes*. Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation, 2002.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe. *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990's*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

- Jaffrelot, Christophe. *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*. London: C. Hurst & Co., 1996.
- Jahangir, Asma. "Introduction: Swami: The Activist." In Swami Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action: New Agenda for Humanity*. Delhi: Hope India Publications, Second Edition, 2003.
- Jalal, Ayesha. *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Jones, Adam. "Parainstitutional Violence in Latin America." *Latin American Politics & Society* 46.4 (2004).
- Juergensmeyer, Mark, ed. "Editor's Introduction: Is Symbolic Violence Related to Real Violence." *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence: Special Issue on Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* 3, no. 3 (1991).
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* Third Edition Revised and Updated. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Kairos Theologians. *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Kaldor, Mary. *New & Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Kamen, Al. "The Book on Kosovo." *Washington Post Magazine*, July 1999, WO2, <http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/6935.html> (accessed May 2005).
- Kaplan, Lionel, ed. *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987.
- Keddie, Nikki. *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*. New Haven: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Kelsay, John. "Bosnia and the Muslim Critique of Modernity." In *Religion and Justice in the War on Bosnia*, ed. G. Scott Davis. New York and London: Routledge, 1996.
- Kepel, Gilles. *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*. Translated by Alan Braley. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- Khan, Muqtedar. "Deconstructing Jihadism: In Quest of a Theology of Global Peace." (Unpublished Manuscript).
- Khan, Muqtedar. "Pakistan: Reconstructing Identity Under Duress." Paper delivered for In Multiple Voices: Challenges and Opportunities for Islamic Peacebuilding After September 11, University of Notre Dame, April 12–13, 2002.
- Khilnani, Sunil. *The Idea of India*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1997.
- Krauthammer, Charles. "Drawing the Line at Genocide." *Washington Post*, 11 December 1992.
- Lapsley, Michael. "Violence, Nonviolence, and the Christian." 1976.
- Lapsley, Michael. "Christians and the Armed Struggle." *Sechaba* 3 (July 1980).
- Lapsley, Michael. *Neutrality or Co-option*. Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1986.
- Lapsley, Michael. "South Africa, the End and the Beginning are Near." Sermon preached at the Canaan Baptist Church of Christ on 116th Street, Harlem, New York, December 5, 1993.
- Lawrence, Bruce. *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989.
- Lawrence, Bruce. "The Islamic Idiom of Violence: A View from Indonesia." In *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence: Special Issue on Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* 3, no.3 (1991).
- Lawrence, Bruce. *Islam Beyond Violence: Shattering The Myth*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

- Lewis, Bernard. "The Roots of Rage." *The Atlantic Monthly* 266, no.3 (September 1990).
- Lincoln, Bruce. *Religion, Rebellion, Revolution: An Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Collection of Essays*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985.
- Lincoln, Bruce. "Conflict." In *Critical Terms in Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor. Chicago: University Press, 1997.
- Lincoln, Bruce. *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Little, David. "Religious Nationalism and Human Rights." In *Peacemaking: Moral and Policy Challenges for a New World*, eds. Gerard F. Powers, Drew Christiansen, SJ and Robert Hennemeyer. Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1994.
- Little, David. "Studying 'Religious Human Rights': Methodological Foundations." In *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective*, eds. John Witte, Jr. and Johan van Der Vyver. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1996.
- Little, David. "Religious Militancy." In *Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict*, eds. Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson with Pamela Aall. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996.
- Lodge, Tom. *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*. Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1983.
- Luce, Edward. "FT Weekend Magazine – Lunch with FT: Courteous Rejection." *Financial Times*, July 10, 2004, <http://www.swamiagnivesh.com/ftlunch.htm> (accessed March 2005).
- Mahmood, Cynthia. *Fighting for Faith and Nation: Dialogues With Sikh Militants*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.
- Majid, Anouar. *Unveiling Traditions: Postcolonial Islam in a Polycentric World*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Malcolm, Noel. *Bosnia: A Short History*. New York: New York University Press, 1994.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. *Citizen and Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror*. New York: Doubleday, 2004.
- Manzoor, S. Parvez. Review of *The Rise and Decline of the State*, by Martin van Creveld. *Islam* 21 (October 2000).
- Marcus, George and Michael Fischer. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Marsden, George M. *Fundamentalism and American Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms Observed*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms and Society: Reclaiming the Sciences, the Family, and Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Politics, Economies, and Militance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Marty, Martin E. and R. Scott Appleby, eds. *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Marx, Karl. "Contribution to the Critique of Hegels' Philosophy of Law." In *Werke*. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Berlin: Dietz, 1969.
- Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker. New York: Norton., 1978.
- McClintock, Michael. *The American Connection: Volume One: State Terror and Popular Resistance in El Salvador*. London: Zed Books, 1985.
- Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.

- Miller, Helen. "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations." In *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. David A. Baldwin. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.
- Miller, Robert B. "Violence, Force, and Coercion." In *Violence*, ed. Jerome A. Schaffer. New York: David McKay, 1971.
- Mitchell, Richard P. *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, reprint edition, 1993.
- Mojzes, Paul. *Yugoslavian Inferno: Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1995.
- Moosa, Ebrahim, ed. "Introduction." In *Revival and Reform in Islam: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism* by Fazlur Rahman. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.
- Mottahedeh, Roy P. "Foreword." In *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia*, ed. Mark Pinson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Mottahedeh, Roy P. "The Clash of Civilizations: an Islamicist's Critique." *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 2.2, (1996).
- Mudimbe, V.Y. *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- Mulford, David C. US Ambassador to India, 21 March 2005, <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/wwwhipr032105.html> (accessed April 2005).
- Muller, K. ed. *Instrumenta Pacis Westphalicae*. Bern: Lang, 1966.
- Murvar, Vatro. *Nation and Religion in Central Europe and the Western Balkans-The Muslims in Bosna, Hercegovina and Sandzak: A Sociological Analysis*. Brookfield, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.
- Muzaffar, Chandra. "Whose Terrorism." In *Terrorising the Truth: The Shaping of Contemporary Images of Islam and Muslims in Media, Politics and Culture*, ed. Farish A. Noor. Penang: Just World Trust, 1997.
- Nandy, Ashish. *At the Edge of Psychology: Essays in Politics and Culture*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980, 78, <http://ngodse.tripod.com/> (accessed February 2005).
- Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-I Islami of Pakistan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Nassar, Galal. "Man with a Mission." *Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line*, 10–16 December 1998, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1998/407/in5.htm> (accessed May 2005).
- Nielson, Nancy. "Religion and the Global Media: Improving a Strained Relationship." *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 20, no.1 (Winter/Spring 1996).
- Njegos, Petar 11 Petrovic. *The Mountain Wreath*. Translated by James W. Willis. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1930.
- Norris, H.T. *Islam in the Balkans: Religion and Society Between Europe and the Arab World*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1993.
- Omar, Abdul Rashied. *Tolerance, Civil Society and Renaissance: A South African Muslim Perspective*. Cape Town: Claremont Main Road Mosque, 2002.
- Onuf, Nicholas. *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*. Columbia, SC.: University of South Carolina Press, 1989.
- Owen, David. *Balkan Odyssey*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1995.
- Pandey, Gyanendra. *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Pannikar, K.N. *The Concerned Indian's Guide to Communalism*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2003.

- Perel, Anthony J., ed. *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Perica, Vjekoslav. *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Philpott, Daniel. *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Philpott, Daniel. "The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Politics." *World Politics* 55 (October 2002).
- Pinson, Mark, ed. *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their Historic Development from the Middle Ages to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1993.
- Powers, Gerard F. "Religion, Conflict and Prospects for Peace in Bosnia, Croatia, and Yugoslavia." In *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes. Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1998.
- Qureshi, Emran and Michael A. Sells, eds. *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
- Rai, Lajpat. *History of the Arya Samaj*, South Asia Books, 1993, <http://hrw.org/press/2002/04/gujarat.htm> (accessed February 2005).
- Ramadan, Tariq. *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rambachan, Anantanand. "The Co-Existence of Violence and Non-Violence in Hinduism." *Current Dialogue* 39 (June 2002).
- Ramabachan Anantanand. "The Boy Who Did Not Know His Father." Unpublished manuscript to be published in 2005 by the Interreligious Office of the World Council of Churches, Geneva.
- Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Regensburger, Dietmar, comp. "Terrorism, Mimetic Rivalry and War," http://theol.uibk.ac.at/cover/war_against_terrorism.html (accessed February 2004).
- Rieff, David. *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.
- Rohde, David. *Endgame: The Betrayal and Fall of Srebrenica. Europe's Worst Massacre since World War II*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997.
- Ron, James. "Territoriality and Plausible Deniability: Serbian Paramilitaries in the Bosnian War." In *Death Squads in Global Perspective*, eds. Bruce B. Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- Roy, Oliver. "Bin Laden: An Apocalyptic Sect Severed from Political Islam." *East European Constitutional Review* 10, no. 4 (Fall 2001).
- Roy, Olivier. *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Rummel, Rudolph. *Death by Government*. New Brunswick/London: Transaction Books, 1994.
- Rummel, R.J. *Understanding Conflict and War*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1974.
- Rummel, R.J. *Power Kills: Democracy as a Method of Nonviolence*. Brunswick, NY: Transaction Publishers, 1997.
- Russett, Bruce et. al. *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Russett, Bruce and John R. Oneal. *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.
- Sachedina, Abdulaziz. *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Safi, Louay M. *Peace and the Limits of War: Transcending Classical Conception of Jihad*. Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2001.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Said, Edward. *Representations of the Intellectual*. New York: Pantheon, 1994.

- Said, Edward W. "The Clash of Definitions: On Samuel Huntington." In *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Scheffler, Thomas ed. "Introduction." In *Religion: Between Violence and Reconciliation*. Orient-Institut Beirut/ Ergon, 2002.
- Sells, Michael A. *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Sells, Michael A. Web site on his homepage focusing exclusively on the war and justice in Bosnia, <http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/home.html> (accessed March 2004).
- Silber, Laura and Alan Little. *Yugoslavia: The Death of a Nation*. New York: Penguin Books, 1995.
- Simone, T. Abdou Maliqalim. *In Whose Image? Political Islam and Urban Practices in Sudan*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Sivan, Emmanuel. "The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back." *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 2 (May–June 1990).
- Sluka, Jeffrey A., ed. *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.
- Smart, Ninian. "Rene Girard: Violence and the Sacred." *Religious Studies Review* 6 (1980).
- Sollenberg and Wallenstein. "Armed Conflict, 1989–1999." *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no.5, (2000).
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*. New York: Routledge, 1988.
- Stephen, Chris and Emir Suljagic. "Milosevic Linked Directly to War Crimes." *Tribunal Update*, no. 310 (2 May 2003).
- Stern, Jessica. *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill*. New York: Ecco, 2003.
- Stewart, Lyman and Milton. *The Fundamentals: A Testimony of Truth. Patterns of Power: Religion and Politics in American Culture*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1988.
- Stohl, Michael and George Lopez, eds. *The State As Terrorist: The Dynamics of Governmental Violence and Repression*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984.
- Storey, Peter. Letter to his friends in the US following the September 11 attacks, http://www.witherspoonsociety.org/letter_from_south_africa.htm (accessed February 2003).
- Swartz, Stephen. *The Two Faces of Islam*. New York: Doubleday, 2002.
- Ter Haar, Gerrie and James J. Busittil, eds. *Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Visions of Peace*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- The Colloquium on Violence and Religion, <http://theol.uibk.ac.at/cover/general/> (accessed January 2004).
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report of South Africa, Volume One & Two*. Oxford: Macmillan, 1999.
- Tutu, Desmond. "Freedom Fighters or Terrorists." In *Theology & Violence: The South African Debate*, ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987.
- United States Institute of Peace. Project in Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance, <http://www.usip.org/religionpeace/previous.html#rmi> (accessed August 2005).
- Van Creveld, Martin. *The Rise and Decline of the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Van den Berghe, Pierre L. *Contemporary Sociology* 21, no. 3.
- Van der Veer, Peter. *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Van der Veer, Peter. "Tradition and Violence in South Asia." Keynote address delivered at the second conference of the Kroc Institute's Program in Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding, University of Notre Dame, April 11–12, 2003.
- Van Driel, Barry, ed. *Confronting Islamophobia in Educational Practice*. Trent Books, 2004.

- Varadarajan, Siddharth. "Chronicle of a Tragedy Foretold." In *Gujarat: The Making of a Tragedy*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002.
- Varshney, Ashutosh. *Understanding Gujarat Violence in Contemporary Conflicts*, <http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/gujarat/varshney/> (accessed December 2004).
- Velikonja, Mitja. *Religious Separation and Political Intolerance in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Translated by Rang'ichi Ng'inja. Texas A & M University Press, 2003.
- Villa-Vicencio, Charles. *Trapped in Apartheid: Socio-Theological History of the English Speaking Churches*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Villa-Vicencio, Charles, ed. *Theology and Violence: The South African Debate*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988.
- Volf, Miroslav. "The Bridge Betrayed-Book Review." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 67, no. 1 (March 1999).
- Von Clausewitz, Carl. *On War*. Translated and edited by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Walker, R.B.J. *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Webb, Pauline, ed. *A Long Struggle: The Involvement of the World Council of Churches in South Africa*. Geneva: WCC Publication, 1994.
- Weber, Max. *Sociological Writings*, ed. Wolf Heydebrand. London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1994.
- Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Williams, James G. Review of *Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics, and Violence in Sri Lanka*, by Stanley J. Tambiah. *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (September 1993).
- Williams, James G., ed. *The Girard Reader*. New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 1996.
- Worsnip, Michael. *Michael Lapsley Priest and Partisan: A South African Journey*. Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1996.

Interviews:

- Swami Agnivesh, interview with author, February 22, 23 and 24, 2005.
- Mustafa Ceric, interview with author, May 15, 2002 and May 6, 2003.
- Dr Asghar Ali Engineer, interview with author, February 6, 2002.
- Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, interview with author, February 24, 2005.
- Michael Lapsley, interview with author, May 12 and May 13, 2003.
- Simranjit Singh Mann, interview with author, April 24, 2005.