

# Religions and Development Research Programme

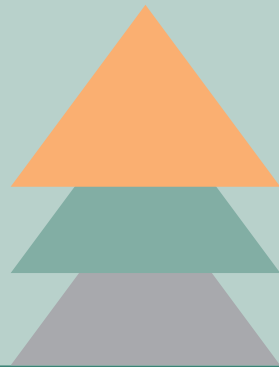
## Political Science, Religion and Development: A Literature Review

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Working Paper 7 - 2007

**RaD**

# Religions and Development

## Research Programme

The Religions and Development Research Programme Consortium is an international research partnership that is exploring the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction. The programme is comprised of a series of comparative research projects that are addressing the following questions:

- How do religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organisations?
- How do religious values and beliefs and religious organisations influence the relationships between states and societies?
- In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals?

The research aims to provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals. We believe that our role as researchers is not to make judgements about the truth or desirability of particular values or beliefs, nor is it to urge a greater or lesser role for religion in achieving development objectives. Instead, our aim is to produce systematic and reliable knowledge and better understanding of the social world.

The research focuses on four countries (India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania), enabling the research team to study most of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and African traditional belief systems. The research projects will compare two or more of the focus countries, regions within the countries, different religious traditions and selected development activities and policies.

The consortium consists of six research partner organisations, each of which is working with other researchers in the four focus countries:

- University of Birmingham, UK: International Development Department, Department of Theology and Religion, Centre for West African Studies, Centre for the Study of Global Ethics.
- University of Bath, UK: Centre for Development Studies.
- Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan.
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan.

In addition to the research partners, links have been forged with non-academic and non-government bodies, including Islamic Relief.

# Religions and Development Working Paper 7

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# 1 Introduction

This review provides an overview of important literature on the relationship between religion, politics and development, from the point of view of the political science academic literature. It is here that 'Political science' is understood in the broadest possible sense – in other words, as 'the study of political life' (Leftwich, 2004, p. viii). However, we do specifically exclude two sub-disciplines of political science: international relations and political theory/philosophy (both sometimes treated as separate disciplines). We exclude political theory because many of the relevant themes in that discipline have been taken up in other work under way on the conceptual starting points for the research programme. We also omit international relations because we do not consider international relations as a school of thought, with its contemporary focus on issues of security, to closely reflect the specific aims of this research programme.

There has, in recent years, been a vigorous interest in political science in examining the relationship between politics and religion. There are many reasons for this, some of which will be discussed in section 2. Surprisingly, perhaps, very little of the current output is focused on developing countries. The majority of recent published work is on the relationship between religion and politics in the United States or in countries/areas in which the US has a key strategic interest (e.g. with respect to terrorism in the Middle East). However, there is some effort in development studies to move beyond that focus, and the review reflects this.

It is important to note early on, however, that this is a recent process and a solid body of work does not yet exist. The *International Political Science Abstracts* (IPSA) was examined from 1990 to 2005 with special reference to religion and development but also to country publications specific to India, Pakistan, Tanzania and Nigeria. In addition, some attention was paid to entries under religious traditions. In general, there were very few entries under 'religion' in the 1990s. There has been a noticeable increase since the late 1990s, but these relate primarily to conflict or causes of conflict. Some fall under the heading of religion and nationalism, or more recently, security issues associated with particular religious groups and traditions. However, there were very few references to religion and development. One exception that contained several articles is a special issue of *SAIS Review* (1998), which included articles by Myotte, Nasr and Marosctica.

Because the explicitly relevant literature in political science is so scant, we have chosen to pull out threads from within other areas in the discipline. For this purpose, we have provided an overview of literature on democratisation, good governance, human rights, social capital, conflict and drivers of change (sections 3-7). This provides us with a more balanced review and greater scope for understanding and locating gaps in the available literature, although it is very much a preliminary review.

It should also be noted here that some religious organisations have long recognised the need to understand the link between religion and politics in developing countries. As this is a review of the academic political science literature, their contribution to this debate is not covered here. However, it is anticipated that this important contribution will emerge in some of the projects themselves.



## 2 Political science, modernity and secularism

The starting point for any meaningful understanding of the political science literature on the role of religion in public life is secularism. Of all the disciplines, political science (with perhaps the exception of economics) is the most secular in its outlook. Secularism is here understood with reference to two perspectives. Firstly, it refers to the emergence of an 'ideal' secular state, typically as in the USA, characterised by the creation of a 'wall of separation' between 'church' and state. The exact form this separation has taken has varied considerably in different states, resulting in varieties of state secularism (e.g. USA, France and India, see Smith, 1963). Secondly, secularism is associated with the broader process of the secularisation of society, in which the influence of religion and religious institutions gradually declines. The two aspects, of course, are not unrelated, and in developing societies (e.g. India) the establishment of a secular state was often seen as the agent for the eventual secularisation of society.

That secularism features so prominently in the political science literature is perhaps to be expected, given that much of the subject matter concerns the modern nation-state that emerged in reaction to religious systems/empires. The post-Westphalian order (1648) established the norms of the contemporary international relations system. It was underpinned by four major assumptions: that political sovereignty lay with the state and that states were the key actors in the IR system; that states would not interfere in the religious affairs of other states; that states increasingly refrained from promoting the welfare of the church; and that, as the functions of the modern state increased, the temporal functions of religious bodies declined. This was the essence of the 'Westphalian synthesis'. As Philpott (2002, p. 76) has recently noted, "the relationship between spiritual and temporal authority known as the Westphalian synthesis remains robust to this day. *The norms of authority entailed in each strand amount to a political theology, a doctrine of religion's role in society*" (emphasis added).

This framework and the assumptions underpinning the Westphalian synthesis were implicit in approaches to the politics of developing societies after 1945. From modernisation theory to politics of order, from dependency theory to politics of class, the understanding of Third World politics was framed mainly within the assumptions of politics of the 'West' (Randall and Theobald, 1985). Few at the time questioned the utility of secularism; for most emerging post-colonial leaders, secularism was a *sine qua non* of development and democracy (Nehru, 1982).

The rise of the modern European nation-state was accompanied not only by secularisation in broader society but also the rise of secular ideologies – liberalism, socialism, Marxism, nationalism and, indeed, fascism - that were globalised via imperial rule and, subsequently after 1945, the Cold War. These ideologies further consolidated the appeal of secularism among Third World nationalists, for whom it was an essential component of nation and state-building. For some, like Nehru, the appeal of secularism arose out of practical experience of building a nationalist movement bedevilled by religious differences and conflict (Chandra, 1984).

Needless to say that with few exceptions secularism became the operative constitutional norm for new states in the developing world after 1945. Efforts at nation and state-building in mainly pre-literate and agrarian societies were undertaken by western-educated elites, with the aim of emulating the social and political transformation of the West. The relative success of these endeavours, however, was very much contingent upon the durability of pre- and post-colonial political institutions developed by the nationalist elites. Although post-colonial states in Africa and Asia shared many of the legacies of colonialism – problems of legitimacy, fragility, the “lack of organic unity or shared values between state and society” (Clapham, 1985, p, 42) and neo-patrimonialism – there was little uniformity in the process of state-building, which was influenced very much by the nature of the nationalist movement and, above all, the leadership of the political party/ies that had secured independence.

By the 1980s, the secular state in the developing world was in retreat. Even its most successful example, India, was faced with the challenge of *Hindutva* (the Hindu Right). To be sure, it would be incorrect to suggest that the post-1945 state in developing countries waged an unrelenting struggle against non-secular forms of political identity. Sometimes these were co-opted or remoulded (e.g. Indonesia); sometimes secularism became synonymous with majoritarianism (see Singh, 2004). In the construction of political legitimacy, moreover, appeals to cultural values, traditional forms of authority and indigenous values were common, if at times somewhat symbolic. The issue of values within the political science literature has been most frequently addressed with reference to legitimacy or the nature of political authority. Yet even when such authority and values were clearly based on pre-modern social formations, such as caste, tribes, patrons and clients, or institutions, or articulated an obvious dissonance with modern values, political scientists were keen to highlight the *modernity of tradition* (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1967). While this emphasis appeared to concede that the project of modernity (and the related project of political secularism) in the developing world might well rest on

unstable foundations, the conclusion most generally drawn was that the state in developing countries was following the teleology of the modern nation-state (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1967).

The modern state system has greatly influenced how scholars see religion and has led to the predominant belief in what we have come to know as the 'separation of church and state'. The idea that the 'state' and the 'church' exist as discrete entities and that these entities interact on a number of levels is both a western and a Christian concept, and one that is not easily transferable to other contexts, despite the contrary assumption implicit in the overwhelming majority of political science texts. As Haynes (2005, p. 246) points out,

“In comparative political analysis the issue of the relationship between religion and politics is usually seen in the context of state-church interaction...thinking of state-church relations we may assume a single relationship between two clearly distinct, unitary and solidly but separately institutionalised entities. In this model, there is implicitly *one* state and *one* church, and both entities' jurisdictional boundaries are clearly delineated, with both state and church relatively autonomous actors, but with the former enjoying predominance.”

Haynes goes on to explain why this context is so problematic throughout the developing world, with the exception of Latin America, where the Catholic Church is predominant. In Hinduism, for example, there is no 'church', *per se*, as understood in the West; likewise in Buddhism, which is sometimes seen as a religion and sometimes a philosophy, even by adherents, the *sangha*, which translates roughly as 'assembly', can be either the monastic community or an assembly of lay people, but this is still not the same as a 'church' in the Christian sense. In Africa, even in countries that have a Christian majority, there is rarely the sort of dominance of 'church' or 'creed' seen in Latin America. Islam is also problematic: although non-Muslims may not be able to see them, the differences between Islamic and Christian conceptions of 'church' and 'state' are substantial. According to Haynes (2005, p. 247), “In the Muslim tradition, mosque is not church. The closest Islamic approximation to 'state' – *dawla* – means, conceptually, either a ruler's dynasty or his administration. Only with the specific stipulation of *church* as the general concept for *moral community*, *priest* for the *custodians of the sacred law*, and *state* for *political community* can such concepts be used in Muslim contexts.”

It should be clear by now that one needs to exercise a great deal of caution when trying to apply the political science literature to the context of developing countries. These epistemological ‘blind spots’ must be taken on board if we are to move beyond applying models that are inappropriate in different contexts in order to understand the relationships between politics, religions and development. However, the authors would like to stress that this does not mean adding new inappropriate assumptions, such as seeing indelible links between religion and politics that assume away any tensions between the two. Actors in developing countries – including explicitly religious actors, such as ‘priests’ (or their equivalent), or religious organisations – can and do act *politically* without those actions having any relationship with their religious roles. We simply urge researchers to seek to understand the complexity within given contexts.

## 2.1 The return of religion in political science

The political study of developing societies has undergone a profound change since the 1980s. The rise of the ‘Washington consensus’ and structural adjustment policies based on neo-liberal economics has focused attention on ‘downsizing’ the state as the motor for development. Alongside these policy changes ‘from above’ has been the rise of the ‘good governance agenda’ with its emphasis on democratisation, accountability, participation, the promotion of civil society and attacks on political corruption. A particularly notable feature of this agenda has been the promotion of ‘rights’ and ‘entitlements’, with a stress on inclusion and the need to address gender issues in public policy. These pressures have emerged ‘from above’ but in many cases have also been present ‘from below’.

While the state in developing societies has had to deal with these pressures at times when its capacity to deliver economic development has declined, it has also had to contend with the ‘return of religion’ to the public sphere. There is now an established body of literature that deals with this subject (Casanova, 1994; Haynes, 1998; Kepel, 1994). Here we highlight the ways in which this literature is relevant to the study of developing societies.

The return of religion to public life in the ‘East’ and ‘South’ (as well as the West) has been a gradual process. The Iranian revolution (1979) is often seen as the turning point but even before this there had been simmering conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere between secularists and religious groups. In the Middle East, in particular, the opponents of secularism sometimes saw it not as the pre-requisite of democracy but as legitimising dictatorship (Roy, 2004). For example, the banning of the Front

Islamique de Salut in Algeria or the Welfare Party in Turkey in the 1990s undercut the religious 'neutrality' of the secular state which all too frequently had come to be associated with dictatorships such as those of Shah Palavi in Iran, Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Ben Ali in Tunisia.

Second, in the 1980s, in some states, the gradual process of economic liberalisation – often in response to decades of socialist planning or structural adjustment policies – began to unravel the political coalition of social classes and parties that had supported secularism as a state ideology. Indeed, some of these parties and social classes, in anticipation of the need to mobilise other groups, turned to religion and religious issues as the new legitimising ideology (Corbridge and Harriss, 2000). This clearly was the case in India with the Congress under Mrs Gandhi in the early 1980s and later Rajiv Gandhi, though other examples can also be cited (Nasr, 1998). This argument is familiar in the socialist critique of the decline of secularism in the developing world, though it is often difficult to establish a direct casual relationship between economic liberalisation and the rise of religious parties and groups seeking greater representation and voice in the public sphere.

Third, the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the 'new world order' led to the collapse of the USSR, the formation of new states, a Gulf War (1991) and major ethnic and religious conflicts, such as those in the former Yugoslavia. These developments were, of course, the backdrop to Huntington's (1997) thesis of the *Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, which predicated a future of conflicts between civilisations with different religious identities at their core. Huntington's controversial thesis was given some justification with the emergence of overtly anti-western regimes in Iran, Afghanistan and Sudan, though initially much of the thrust of Islamic militancy was targeted at domestic regimes rather than a global revolution. However, the rise of ideological religious (trans)nationalism, for example Al-Qaeda in the late 1990s, has given this development the dimension of a global struggle that has been reinforced subsequently by the 'war on terror'.

Fourth, for some the 'return of religion' is also linked to the broader processes of globalisation (Jurgensmeyer, 2000; Kepel, 2003). Globalisation is a much contested concept, and for many it is simply identified with the processes of economic liberalisation noted above. However, there are similarities in the responses to the new social conditions across faith traditions. In particular, the rise of violent religious movements that seek to resist change or transform the existing social and political order is seen as a response to the 'loss of control in their followers' lives' (Williams, 2002). Much

Muslim resentment against the West, it is often claimed, is rooted in the “far-reaching and corrosive encroachment of modernisation, westernisation and globalisation” (Hurrell, 2002, p.197). Globalisation is seen both as further hastening the secularisation of the world and as a new species of what Karl Polyani (2001) called a ‘great transformation’; and the religious responses to it are indicative of “society fighting back against the ravages of the unregulated free market” (Williams, 2002, p. 4). Interestingly, this response is not confined to developing societies but also has resonance in the North: for example, in British inner-cities (Furbey et al., 2005).

In many parts of the developing – and, indeed, developed – world we are now witnessing the emergence of anti-secular critiques and movements that do not simply question the secularisation thesis as process but also go beyond it. They typically employ a Huntington-styled civilisation language and the post-modern turn to suggest that secularism and the secular state are either an aberration from the civilisational development of history, or the ‘gift’ of Protestant Christianity, and are, therefore, inherently incompatible with other world religious traditions and civilisational states (Madan, 1987). This kind of outlook is also seen in contemporary political Islam, but it overlooks the less ideologically based critiques from other traditions and critical theorists. Below we highlight the debate on anti-secularism in India conducted by the country’s leading intellectuals.

In the 1980s and 1990s, as communal violence in India reached a peak, with the state as a hapless actor, India’s leading public intellectuals, like Partha Chatterjee, T.N. Madan and Ashis Nandy, issued in their various publications what amounted to an ‘anti-secular manifesto’. This manifesto openly repudiated the Nehruvian heritage and called for new thinking on *how* religious diversity is politically managed. While many things divide the anti-secularists, they share two common characteristics: most are neo-Gandhians and, far more importantly, they occupy leading positions in the charmed circles of postcolonial theory. For reasons of brevity and clarity we focus on the writings of Nandy.

For Nandy, religious communalism and state secularism are not “sworn enemies but the disowned doubles of each other” (Nandy, 1999a, p. 401), whose mother, he claims, is modernity. Whereas state secularism in India was the solution of a westernised elite to the perceived problems of managing religious diversity, and worked reasonably well in a largely rural society, the spread of modernisation has given rise to ‘religion as an ideology’; that is, simplified, ready made formulas to advance national or political interests. ‘Religion as an ideology’, moreover, has assumed a pernicious potency because

of the privatisation of 'religion as faith'. The most obvious example of religion as an ideology is *Hindutva* (the ideology of the Hindu Right) – which, with its desire to create a homogenous Hindu State, Nandy regards as a perversion of classical European nationalism, the genealogy of which can be traced to the misguided quest by some Indian elites for a modern nation-state and a strong national identity. In short, *Hindutva* aims to re-brand Hinduism as an ideology for a modern, resurgent India, and if successful, notes Nandy wryly, might end up destroying traditional Hinduism in India and leaving “Nepal as the world’s largest Hindu country” (1999a, p. 402).

The rise of *Hindutva*, insists Nandy, cannot be countered by a secular state. What is needed instead, he writes, is a “new approach to religious tolerance in a democratic polity based on India’s indigenous traditions” (1999a, p. 402). There is, above all, a need to rediscover religion as a ‘way of life’ that, according to Nandy, is “definitionally non-monolithic and operationally plural” (1999b, p.322). It is not modern India, asserts Nandy, which has tolerated Judaism for two thousand years, Christianity from the time before it went to Europe and Zoroastrianism for over twelve hundred years. It was traditional India that showed such tolerance (1999b, p. 336).

Rather than keeping faith with the good intentions of secularised elites, Nandy calls for a more serious venture that would, in his words, “explore the philosophy, the symbolism and the theology of tolerance in ...everyday Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism [and] Sikhism” (1999b, p.326). This plea for inter-religious encounters is coupled with a call for them to be given public recognition. Public space, Nandy notes, must be

“provided for a continuous dialogue among religious traditions and between the religious and the secular, so that in the ultimate analysis, each of the major faiths in the region includes within it an in-house version of other faiths, both as internal criticism and as a reminder of the diversity of theories of transcendence” (1999b, p. 338).

In sum, he ties the language of deliberative democracy firmly to the Gandhian notion of an inter-religious ethic. In Nandy’s judgement, such a union offers the most attractive possibility for *Hindutva* to die a hasty, if somewhat unnatural, death.

Nandy’s call for a new politics of tolerance based on inter-faith encounters, a recognition of the diversity of theories of transcendence, a dialogue between secularist and religious traditions and the



need to distinguish between faith as an ideology and faith 'as a way of life' has been interpreted by his critics either as a uniquely Indian response that recasts the traditional assumed 'tolerance' of Hinduism (van der Veer, 1994), or as a misguided attempt to reintroduce religion into the public discourse that does not have any appeal to the discriminated against and disadvantaged groups, such as the lower and outcastes, whose forms of identity politics are actuated by their desire to overcome historical disadvantage (Brass, 1999). While there is no doubt that Nandy's outlook is very much influenced by the Indian experience, it is important to recognise some of the key aspects of his argument which call for a more reflective attitude towards the secular state and the need to better integrate interfaith dialogue and new forms of discursive constitutionalism into both institution building and the outlook of social actors.

North American political theorists, such as William Connolly and Michael Sandel, make similar points. Connolly, for example, writes "refashioning secularism might help to temper or disperse religious intolerance while honouring the desire of a variety of believers and nonbelievers to represent their faiths in public life. It might, thereby, help to render public life more pluralistic in shape" (Connolly, 1999, p. 5). Warning about the dangers inherent in the 'minimalist liberalism' that demands a separation of church and state and, thus, a separation of politics from personal morality, Sandel (1996, p. 322-23) explains:

"A politics that brackets morality and religion too completely soon generates its own disenchantment. Where political discourse lacks moral resonance, the yearning for a public life of larger meaning finds undesirable expression. Groups like the Moral Majority [in the US] seek to clothe the naked public square with narrow, intolerant moralisms. Fundamentalists rush in where liberals fear to tread. The disenchantment also assumes more secular forms. Absent a political agenda that addresses the moral dimension of public questions, attention becomes riveted on the private vices of public officials. Political discourse becomes increasingly preoccupied with the scandalous, the sensational, and the confessional as purveyed by tabloids, talk shows, and eventually the mainstream media as well. It cannot be said that the public philosophy of contemporary liberalism is wholly responsible for these tendencies. But its vision of political discourse is too spare to contain the moral energies of democratic life. It creates a moral void that opens the way for intolerance and other misguided moralisms."

Sandel here is writing 'in search of a public philosophy' for Americans, but the same warnings can apply to democracies in developing countries, searching for a political discourse that speaks to citizens in both their public and their private roles, in a way that unites, rather than divides.



### 3 Democratisation

One of the consistent themes in the literature on the role of religion in developing societies is the contribution of religious organisations to democratisation (Huntington, 1991a). Democratisation is, of course, a multi-faceted process requiring both the building of democracy and its ‘consolidation’ and embedding over time (Burnell, 2003; Linz and Stepan, 1996). Historically religious organisations in the developing world have contributed significantly to both post-colonial and what Huntington called the ‘second wave’ of democratisation, with those in some states like India supporting the local and nationalist struggles. In the 1960s and 1970s, Latin America witnessed the rise of Liberation Theology as the ‘popular’ Church’s response to the demands of the poor and marginalised groups, initially against the teaching of the ‘institutional’ Roman Catholic Church. The resistance offered by religious organisations to military rule was, *inter alia*, a major contributory factor to the transition to democratic rule in most Latin American countries in the 1970s and 1980s.

In Africa also religious organisations played an important role in the nationalist struggle (Gifford, n.d.) and have also been at the forefront of Africa’s own ‘second wave’ of democratisation since the 1990s. This is not to imply that re-democratisation has been universal: in some states demand for reform has been stifled (Zimbabwe and Swaziland); elsewhere “armed rebellions engineered the overthrow of repressive regimes with the hope of representative government to come (Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia), [and in others]... state collapse saw the central institutions disintegrate under the weight of communal violence and civil war (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo-Brazzaville) and fall victim to the predation of rival warlords (Chad, Somalia)” (Southall, 2003, p. 143). In contrast, the moderating influence of the churches was a contributing factor to the peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa, which also pioneered the truth and reconciliation commission as a means of post-conflict and post-apartheid nation-building (Constantin and Coulon, 1997).

In the literature on democratisation there is no doubt that religion and religious organisations serve a dual function: while they can be a mode of legitimising the status quo, they can also be the source of change, resistance and social transformation by acting as social critics of oppressive regimes, or directly as agents of political socialisation and participation through the promotion of social justice, education and civil rights (Nyot Yoh, 2005). What mode their roles take, however, is very much determined by the given state context – the influence of external factors, state-religion relationships, the appeal of religious and faith traditions among the poor and marginalised groups and, indeed, where

relevant, the depth of the 'crisis of the state' itself (e.g. Nigeria). Of these, perhaps the most critical variable is state-religion relationships and the degree of religious/faith diversity (Candland, 2000).

## 4 Good governance

The literature on good governance is both vast and resolutely multi-disciplinary. The literature on public management (Shah et al, 2007) has already captured much of this, and we would instead like to highlight here three areas in which political science takes particular interest: corruption, the rule of law and human rights.

### 4.1 Corruption

There is a meagre literature on the relationship between religion and corruption and much of what has been published has emerged since 2001. As with much of the general corruption literature, this work tends to be economics-led and is generally lacking in theoretical explanation and historical or cultural context. Indeed, there seems to be an intentional shying-away from more qualitative approaches, as evidenced by an opening caveat to the paper by Paldam (2001, p.384): “the relations between economic development, culture, religion and corruption are surely complex, involving ‘grand historical dynamics’ far exceeding the possibilities of ‘normal’ empirical research. It might be foolhardy even to try such a pedestrian approach.” Instead, he argues that in his work “a piece of the grand pattern can be isolated and submitted to the standard ‘hard’ tools of analysis” (2001, p. 384).

Paldam’s paper is a good place to start. In his work, he uses religion as a proxy for ‘culture’ in order to analyse the impact of culture on corruption (2001, p. 383).<sup>1</sup> He is also interested in what he calls the ‘Weber link’. His data set includes religions that are ‘statistically useable’, in that they are both large in some countries and broadly distributed across countries.<sup>2</sup> This means, for example, that ‘tribal’ religions are amalgamated together, in order to become ‘useable’ data. He thus classifies religions in the following manner:

- A. Monotheistic religions originating in the Middle East (Judaism, Christianity and Islam);
- B. Polytheistic religions originating in the Indian Subcontinent (Hinduism and Buddhism);
- C. Systems of belief originating in the Far East (Confucianism, Shintoism and Buddhism);
- D. Tribal religions and atheists (2001, p. 393).<sup>3</sup>

Because Christianity is so widespread and so divided, in terms of denominations and sects, he then makes the following distinctions within Christianity (2001, p. 394):

## A. Pre-Reform Christians

- a. Old Christians (Eastern and Orthodox)
- b. Catholics

## B. Reform Christians

- a. Protestants
- b. Anglicans.<sup>4</sup>

Islam is not similarly divided, for example between Sunni and Shia sects, because the data are not available.

His results show first that differences in levels of perceived corruption are mainly explained by differences in wealth (per capita GDP) and standards of economic management (inflation). He goes on to conclude that, taking into account levels of economic development, Christian majority countries (which he terms 'Christians') are somewhat less corrupt than non-Christian majority countries and that Reform Christian majority countries are less corrupt than Pre-Reform Christian majority countries. Muslim majority countries are found to be similarly corrupt to Pre-Reform Christian majority countries, although the exclusion of Muslim oil countries from the Gulf region makes any conclusions here difficult to support. Countries in which tribal religions are in a majority are said to be less corrupt than others and, indeed, he asserts that there seems to be a sharp increase in corruption following the change from a majority practising tribal religions to a majority adhering to another religion (generally speaking, Islam or Catholicism) (2001, p. 402-408).<sup>5</sup> Further, he asserts that countries with more religious diversity are less corrupt than countries with less.

Paldam suggests that his evidence demonstrates the validity of the 'Weber link'. As he explains,

"One of the key purposes of the Reformation (almost 500 years ago) was precisely to fight the corruption (broadly defined) of the Catholic Church. Historians have pointed to other – more complex – reasons as well, but the moral stand against corruption was surely important. It is thus arguable that reverse causality entered into the Reformation process. It was the more 'moralist' countries, which chose the various 'Reformist' denominations, while those more 'tolerant' remained with their old denominations...it is amazing that such a large gap in 'ethics' still remains" (2001, p. 404).

Paldam's work, in many ways, demonstrates the worst excesses of empirical models used on their own to try to explain complex socio-cultural phenomena. His arbitrary classification system owes more to his worry about 'useable data' than to any understanding of the nature of various religions. His statistical findings are often insignificant and, without any context or theoretical explanation, even those findings that are significant are weak. Indeed, it seems as though he 'throws in' a few heavy-weight names (Weber, Rousseau, Hobbes), perhaps to lend his findings credibility.

Beets (2007) provides another empirical examination of the link between religion and corruption that builds on Paldam's work, using the following datasets: *Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (TI-CPI) (2003)*, *Britannica Book of the Year (2003)*, *Religious Freedom in the World (2000)* and the *Pew Global Attitudes Project (2002)*. 'Dominant' religions are compared, which he defines as those with an affiliation that exceeds 50% of a nation's citizens. These are broken down into: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, other dominant, non-religious and no dominant. However, as noted with Paldam's work, using such a simplistic classification system is very problematic in the developing country context. Using this method, Beets classifies Ghana and Nigeria, for example, as Muslim countries, although there is only a slight Muslim majority in both cases, according to his data. Anyone familiar with Ghana and Nigeria will quickly tell you that there are strong regional differences, with both countries having a largely Muslim north and a largely Christian south. The CPI is a national level perceptions survey and does not differentiate between north and south in these countries, so there is no way to tell, using these data, if the predominantly Muslim part of Ghana, for example, is more or less corrupt than the predominantly Christian part of Ghana. The data also does not come to terms with the continuing impact of traditional religions on Muslims and Christians in both countries, which makes it particularly difficult to make cross-national comparisons.

When Beets compared countries against the CPI, going from most to least corrupt, he found that the most corrupt countries were those with no dominant religion, followed by Muslim and Hindu majority countries, then Buddhist and Christian majority countries and, finally, Jewish majority countries. It should be noted, although Beets does not do this, that with only one country (Israel), the finding that Judaism is the least corrupt religion is hardly statistically significant and should be disregarded.

The study then goes on to look at levels of economic development, religious freedom and religiosity (i.e. the degree to which religion is important), and it is here that the study becomes particularly interesting, representing a significant advance on Paldam. After compiling the data on all of the above, and comparing them with the findings on corruption, he concludes:

“...when countries are grouped according to the religion that is dominant in each country, those religion groups differ significantly with regard to perceived corruption, the importance of religion to citizens, religious freedom, and GDP per capita. Predominantly Christian countries, for example, which comprise 48% of all countries included in the CPI, have a moderate level of perceived corruption, are moderate in their assessed importance of religion, have a relatively high degree of religious freedom, and have a relatively large GDP per capita. Predominantly Muslim countries, conversely, which comprise 26% of the countries included in the CPI, have a high level of perceived corruption, assess religion as very important, have relatively little religious freedom, and have a relatively small GDP per capita.” (Beets, 2007, p. 80).

He is quick to argue that ‘care should be exercised’ in interpreting these findings, acknowledging that they may have more to do with levels of wealth – which mean that there are fewer incentives to be corrupt and more money with which to fund anti-corruption strategies in richer countries - than the actual religion, and also that there are exceptions to the rule.

However, the most interesting finding seems to be that relating corruption to religiosity. As he explains, “since world religions consistently condemn theft and dishonesty, one might expect that, if citizens consider religion important, they would be less likely to engage in corruption. The results of this study, however, provide evidence to the contrary” (Beets, 2007, p. 81). He provides one possible explanation: in poorer countries, the few are the perpetrators while the many are the victims, and these “victims may seek solace through their religion” (Beets, 2007, p. 81).

We would like to add another possible explanation, drawing further on the political science literature: in countries that are predominantly Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Muslim, religion may encourage qualities such as loyalty and a tendency towards acceptance of authority, both of which might support corruption. Indeed, this has been reported to be the case in Italy, where loyalty and trustworthiness have been called “the virtues...of the corrupt” (Warren, 2001, p. 10; see also, Warren, 2004; Della Porta and Vannucci, 1999). La Porta et al. (1997, p. 337) report that the loyalty (and subsequent lack of

trust in ‘outsiders’) that is characteristic of hierarchical, organised religions, defined in their work as Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Muslim, strongly correlates to “less efficient judiciaries, greater corruption, lower-quality bureaucracies, higher rates of tax evasion, lower rates of participation in civic activities and professional associations, a lower level of importance of large firms in the economy, inferior infrastructures, and higher inflation”. Certainly there is a great deal of scope here for further research.

## 4.2 Rule of law

Once again, there is very little we have been able to find in the political science literature on the relationship between religion and the rule of law. North and Gwin (2004) provide a study of note, which uses the World Bank’s Governance Research Indicators Country Snapshot (GRICS) data set (2003), the CIA’s World Factbook (2003) and Barrett et al.’s (2001) classification of state religion to examine whether or not the dominant religion in a country has an impact on levels of adherence to the rule of law and levels of corruption. Their findings suggest that countries whose largest religious groups are Protestant or Hindu have a higher rule of law and lower corruption, even when controlling for level of development (although Hindus did rank lower than Protestants in terms of corruption). Those countries whose largest religious groups were Orthodox Christian, Independent Christian<sup>6</sup> and Islam ranked lowest for the rule of law, while Orthodox Christian and Independent Christian were highest for corruption (North and Gwin, 2004, p. 15-16).

The authors accept that their findings require deeper analysis, including exploring theoretical reasons for the findings and the different historical contexts. For example, most of the largely Orthodox countries are former communist countries, and it could very well be that the reason for lower rule of law and higher corruption is related to communism (or its demise), not Orthodox Christianity. As with Paldam, Barrett et al.’s religion classification divides Christianity into sub-groupings but does not do so for Islam, for example. Merging some Christian denominations (such as Protestant and Independent) and disaggregating Islam might also influence the results. They plan to develop a better measure of cultural heritage, because many countries changed from one dominant state religion to another between 1900 and 2000. They ask: “are relatively newly-converted African nations as affected by Christian religious traditions as the countries that have been Christian for centuries? Evidence presented...suggests that the effects of various religious groups are very different depending on

whether we use religious status in 1900 or 2000, with Africa being the most likely source of variation” (North and Gwin, 2004, p. 17).

### 4.3 Human rights

According to Keown, “...concern for human rights is a postreligious phenomenon which has more to do with secular ideologies and power-politics than religion” (1995, p. 4). Human rights tend to be seen as modern and secular in essence, although contemporary religions may be interpreted to support them. This could go some way to explaining why political science has little to say about how religious traditions and groups interpret human rights or contribute to the discourse and more to say about how they protect or violate human rights themselves. That religious groups do contribute to the discourse is, however, obvious. One has only to look at the work, for example, of the Parliament of the World’s Religions, and its 1993 *Declaration Towards a Global Ethic* more specifically. This declaration, in which human rights are addressed, has formed a key part of the Parliament’s work since 1993 (Küng and Kuschel, 1993).

Some religious experts advance that the two main world religions, Christianity and Islam, have had severe reservations on human rights issues. Schwartlander (1994, p.10) asserts that Christian churches failed to recognise human rights for a long time until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the Catholic Church, in particular, the issue of human rights began to surface only when Pope John XXIII’s ‘*Parcem in terries*’ eventually began to acknowledge “the ethical concerns of human rights. . . counting them among the signs of our time” (Schwartlander, 1994, p.13). This subsequently paved the way for the Catholic Church’s declaration of religious freedom - *Dignitatis humane* - by the second Vatican Council in 1965.

Like Christianity, Islamic attempts to embrace human rights principles did not emerge until the 1970s and 1980s, when the *Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights* was issued by the Islamic Council of Europe and presented to UNESCO in 1981. Despite its universal title, this declaration was not universally binding and did not reflect the position of all Muslims, as it was prepared by a non-governmental organisation. In 1990, the Organization of Islamic Conference issued the *Declaration on Human Rights in Islam*, which has also failed to be embraced by all Muslims (Schwartlander, 1994). In recent years, different Muslim scholars have adopted varied approaches to HR, thereby providing varying positions on the concept.



While there is now a substantial body of literature looking at the relationship between all religious traditions and human rights (e.g. for Hinduism see Sharma 2004; for Confucianism see Bauer and Bell, 1999; Bell, 2000), our aim in this section is to give an overview of some of the key themes that emerge. In order to do this we will provide a review of some of the literature on the Catholic Church, Islam and Buddhism. Space and time constraints preclude a more comprehensive review.

### **4.3.1 Catholicism and human rights**

Catholicism has often been accused of being on the ‘wrong side’ of the human rights agenda. As recently as the middle of the nineteenth century, Pope Pius IX denied “that every man is free to embrace and profess the religion he shall believe true, guided by the light of reason” (cited in CC-EW, 1998). Even leaving aside centuries past (the Crusades, the Inquisition, the pre-Reformation period, the French Revolution, etc.), the Catholic Church has been accused of remaining silent during the genocide of the Second World War, actively contributing to the genocide in Rwanda and preventing women from accessing safe and reliable birth control.

According to Schwartlander (1994), much, although not all of Christianity, particularly the Catholic Church, was dominated by extreme conservatism throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As such, Catholic thinking about social and political questions was often anti-liberal, due to the loss of the papal states to Italian unification, the legacy of the French Revolution and the rise of a hostile socialism, which exacerbated the Church’s contempt for modernity. This resentment of modernity continued until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the Catholic Church gradually began to embrace the concept of human rights. Despite this, Zalanga (2004) argues that there are still tensions between the Catholic Church’s conception of human rights and secular conceptions of rights. This is because the Church’s foundational theory of rights not only stresses the limits and responsibilities of freedom, but also insists on understanding rights within the larger context of human dignity and the development of the human person, which presents challenges to secular and non-foundational theories of human rights.

Following the Second World War, the Catholic Church embraced human rights, with, for example, Pope John XXIII’s *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope Paul VI’s *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965) and *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), and Pope John Paul II’s *Centesimus Annus* (1991), each setting out a number of human rights recognised by the Church (Zalanga, 2004). The *Dignitatis Humanae* was particularly significant, as it conferred religious freedom on people, overturning the long-established position that the Church

and state should be united, as well as signifying an end to centuries of opposition to modernity. Indeed, John Paul II once said, “I am the evangelizer of democracy; I am the evangelizer of the Gospel. To the Gospel message, of course, belong all the problems of human rights, and if democracy means human rights, it also belongs to the message of the Church” (cited in Huntington, 1991a, p. 83-4).

Despite granting religious freedom, Zalanga (2004) argues that *Dignitatis* failed to establish whether the Church had fully surrendered to a modern understanding of human rights or not, while Weigel (1996) argues that the Church’s new position was intended to allow it to effectively engage and challenge modernity as an internal critic rather than an external one.

Following Vatican II, a congress of bishops held between 1962 and 1965 resulted in the most significant change to the Church in recent times, as a result of which the Church opened up ecclesiastically, liturgically and ethically, highlighting the importance of social justice and social action within the Catholic faith. According to Zalanga, this was a significant period, as the Church officially “embraced rights language and even more critically, move[d] to establish a more thoroughgoing rapprochement with the liberal tradition” (Zalanga, 2004, p. 18). It became the leading voice in human rights movements, to the extent that John Paul II addressed the UN on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1979. While the Catholic Church has evolved to embrace human rights, some other branches of Christianity have either failed to adopt the contemporary concept of rights or “have embraced modernity so fully as to render themselves culturally and politically unable to critique it” (Calo, 2004, p. 22).

Schwartlander (1994) posits that, while the Catholic Church has gradually institutionalised human rights, there are still conflictual tensions between the Catholic and secular conceptions of human rights. Zalanga (2004) opines that examples of these conflicts are manifest in the areas of family, gender, population control and abortion, as evidenced in the UN 1995 Conference on Women, which witnessed a clash between the Church and secular traditions of rights in these fundamental areas.

In essence, the church has created a distinctive Catholic human rights tradition. Despite its adoption of a modern human rights framework, it interprets this framework within its view of Christian truth, and emphasises that human rights must be rooted in a religious worldview. Hence, the Catholic Church’s conception of human rights increasingly embodies a counter-narrative to the secular human rights

tradition, which Zalanga predicts will persist, especially in light of increasing divergence of opinion on religio-cultural issues.

Although there are still several areas of controversy with respect to which the Catholic Church is said to undermine human rights, including reproductive rights and homosexuality, for example, it has also been a real agent for change in the developing world. Philpott (2004, p. 39-41) sets this out in a very clear manner, and we have attempted to simplify his analysis further in Table 1.

These examples help illustrate positive ways in which the Catholic Church has contributed both to democratisation and support for human rights, not only in these specific countries, but also in many other countries in the Third World.

### **4.3.2 Islam and human rights**

Contrasting schools of thought have been unearthed in this review of Islam and human rights. While some authors claim that Islam provides fundamental human rights for all of humanity (Mawdudi, 1976, p. 4-10), others claim that the *Quran*,<sup>8</sup> *Hadith*<sup>9</sup> and *Sunna*<sup>10</sup> do not contain discussions directly linked to human rights (Price, 1999, p.160). Some also claim that “Islam promotes submissive and fatalistic attitudes in individuals and despotic behaviours in rulers... [its] ‘essential’ core... is immune to transformation by historical forces, and Muslims’ efforts to create lasting states fail to change the basic antistate, antimodern Islamic dogma” (Monshipouri, 1998, p.64).

From the first school of thought, Al-Hageel (2001, p.117), for instance, argues that Islam has bestowed a special status on humanity, based on the Islamic view of humans as dignified beings. Irrespective of origin, race, gender, colour and social status, humanity is considered to be endowed with special powers and faculties, in order to be representatives of God on earth. Al-Hageel further argues that Islam has the “precedence in calling for human rights, their protection, and conception of the individual, society, and the state as the guardians of human rights in the sense that human rights are essentially religious duties” (Al-Hageel, 2001, p. 117). Others, such as Mawdudi (1976), argue that human rights in Islam are enshrined in the Quran and Sunna. These rights are considered to be granted by God, and include the right to life, safety, respect for chastity of women, a basic standard of life, freedom, justice and equality of all human beings. In a document titled *Human Rights in Islam*,

**Table 1: The role of the Catholic Church in supporting human rights in developing countries since the 1970s**

Country	Catholic Church's role in supporting human rights
Brazil	Clerics mobilised opponents of the regime (late 1960s-1970s)
Chile	Created advocacy groups to oppose General Pinochet (post-1973)
Guatemala	Spoke out against human rights violations (late 1970s)
El Salvador	Archbishop Óscar Romero assassinated for speaking out for the rights of the poor (1980)
Mexico	Challenged electoral fraud (1980s)
Peru	Helped solidarity among the poor to strengthen their resistance to the Shining Path terrorist movement (1980s)
Philippines	Led non-violent 'people power' protest of 2 million people that led to the ousting of President Marcos (1986)
South Korea	Cardinal Kim Su-hwan led Catholic students in non-violent protest against President Park Chung Hee (1970s-1980s)
Malawi	Bishops' pastoral letter 'Living Our Faith' (1992), criticising President Banda, helped to end his rule <sup>1</sup>
Kenya, Zambia, Ghana	Led popular opposition movements for democratisation and human rights

Wafi (1977) also argues that Islam makes provision for the five most important aspects of secular human rights - religious liberty, liberty of opinion, expression, work, culture and civil liberty. On religious liberty, for instance, Wafi argues that the Quran, in many verses, explicitly forbids compulsion in religion and in verse 125, Chapter 16, it declares that everyone is free to embrace or reject Islam. In the *Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights* of 1981, twenty three provisions are made, among which are: the right to life, freedom, equality, justice, protection against power and torture, freedom of speech, thought, belief, religion, association, education and privacy (Islamic Council of Europe, 1981).

Despite these provisions, authors such as Schwartlander (1994, p.33) argue that these Islamic declarations of human rights are "disappointing in that they do not openly focus on the main conflicts between the Sharia and human rights." Schwartlander argues that in the 1981 Islamic declaration, for

instance, the right to life, freedom, religious liberty and equality are amalgamated with the Sharia, thereby making the provisions ambiguous and subject to different interpretations by fundamentalists and liberal Muslims.

Within the second school of thought, Price (1999, p.160) argues that, while the 'amorphous' nature of the Quran means that it can be interpreted in different ways with respect to human rights issues, the Sharia is 'troublesome', especially in the areas of rights for women and non-Muslims. He argues, for instance, that Verse 13 Chapter 44 of the Quran calls for mutual understanding and cooperation between people and states, and that the worth of a person is based on his or her moral conduct towards others. Much as this supports respect for individual rights, Price argues that it becomes ambiguous when the same verse mentions that this is particularly 'true of those in the sight of God'. Hence, to Price, it is the moral principles and respect for the individual in Islam that give rise to the popular acclamation that Islam presented the first call for human rights 1,400 years ago. However, he asserts that the development of Islamic law and tradition, over time, has facilitated repression and restriction of the rights of individuals.

Similarly, An-Na'im (1996, p. 337-358) argues that Islam as a religion makes certain provisions for human rights. However, the grounding of human rights in the Sharia, which is premised on interpretations of the Quran and the Sunna of Prophet Mohammad, has made the application of universal human rights in Islam problematic. He further argues that western conceptions of human rights, which include gender equality, and freedom of belief and conscience, including dissent, are not particularly consistent with the Sharia, at least not with respect to modern notions of gender equality and religious freedom. As he explains, "...when judged by modern standards of human rights, the Shari'a scheme is objectionable not only because of its limitations on freedom of belief for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, but also in view of its very conception of civil and political rights on the basis of a religious classification of people" (An-Nai'm, 1996, p.352-3). He gives the example of apostacy, regarded as a capital crime, which, he argues, not only violates the fundamental right of a Muslim to convert to another religion, "but can and has [also] been used to punish Muslims who express unorthodox views which are deemed to be repudiation of belief in Islam" (An-Na'im 1996, p.353). Indeed, in an earlier publication, An-Na'im (1995, p. 240) notes that most Islamic societies have resisted universal human rights, not least because the concept is perceived as "a Western conspiracy to undermine the integrity and independence of Islamic societies. The best defence these societies

have against this neo-colonial attack... is a strong and uncompromising assertion of a distinctive Islamic identity and culture as a vital force".<sup>11</sup>

### **4.3.3 Buddhism and human rights**

According to Traer (1995), human rights cannot be discussed in Buddhism without tracing it to India, the birthplace of the religion. As early as 1956, a Buddhist convert, B. R. Ambedkar, highly successful in converting four million people to Buddhism, asserted that his philosophy was 'enshrined' in liberty, equality and fraternity, with its roots in religion. While Aiken Roshi (1988) argues that the teachings of Buddha himself were egalitarian and democratic, Traer (1995, p. 1) argues that "Buddha transformed attitudes of respect and obedience in Hindu notion of *Dharma* into a universal morality" to protect the weak. By admitting lower castes and women into the monastic *Sangha*, Buddha attempted to curb inequality.

Keown looks to see if one can find either explicit or implicit reference to human rights in the doctrine of classical Buddhism. He first explains that any discussion of 'rights' and Buddhism must reference *Dharma*, the idea that each individual has a 'duty' according to who they are (e.g. wife, husband, king). "Dharma determines what is right and just in all contexts and from all perspectives" (1995, p. 12). He explains that some have found an implicit language of rights in *Dharma*, in that everyone is said to have reciprocal obligations and duties towards each other, but Keown finds this argument lacking. Rights are about entitlements, not duties, and this cannot, he asserts, be found within the doctrine of *Dharma*.<sup>12</sup>

He goes on to evaluate the work of Perera (1991) on Buddhism and rights, quoting Perera as saying: "Buddhism posits, as Jean Jacques Rousseau did much later, that the essence of human dignity lies on the assumption of man's [sic] responsibility for his own governance" (Perera, 1991, p. 28, cited in Keown, 1995, p. 15). Keown is not convinced by this argument, suggesting that "it is unlikely that Buddhism would wish to link dignity quite so closely to politics" (Keown, 1995, p. 15). However, he does feel that Perera finds the key to whether or not Buddhism can be understood from a human rights perspective. This is because human rights "facilitate the advancement of human beings towards the Buddhist goal" (Perera, 1991, p. 24, cited in Keown, 1995, p. 22). Humans are all capable of unlimited goodness, and basic human rights provide us with the dignity we need in order to possess

the 'Buddha-nature' (Keown, 1995, p. 22). Thus, he argues, human rights can be understood from a Buddhist perspective.

In examining the relationship between human rights and ethical traditions in Buddhism, particularly Theravada Buddhism, Caney (2000, p.51-76) argues that "Buddhist teachings are, at the very least, compatible with human rights and often converge on human rights." This argument, he explains, is based on three crucial considerations: firstly, the five precepts in the Buddhist moral code that proscribe murder, theft, adultery, alcohol consumption and lying; and secondly, the ten duties of a ruler, enjoining him/her to show generosity, adhere to the five precepts above, serve the interests of his subjects, show kindness, be honest, practise non-violence and act as a peace maker, desist from leading an extravagant lifestyle, desist from holding grudges/hatred, be tolerant and act according to the wishes of his subjects. Though the underlying reasons for these ten duties may not necessarily be the same as the reasons behind western conceptions of human rights, they converge at the same point, prescribing the same 'conduct'. Finally, Buddhist texts that enjoin rulers to "meet the economic needs of their subjects" also suggest an overlap with modern, secular human rights (Caney, 2000, p.67). This final text, calling on leaders to ensure the economic fulfilment of their subjects, according to Caney, "calls for political authorities to distribute resources to the needy and, furthermore, ... does so by drawing on a credible line of reasoning (poverty causes crime). It thus derives a conclusion [similar to] the welfare-state policies endorsed by egalitarian liberals" (Caney, 2000, p.67). He concludes, among other things, that though the underlying justification for Buddhist conceptions of well-being may differ from western justifications, they both seem to aspire to the same goal, hence "provid[ing] a credible case for human rights" in Buddhism (Caney, 2000, p. 69).

Similarly, Rajavaramuni (1982) asserts that Buddhism recognises equal rights for all, as all of humanity is subject to the same law of nature, that is people are subject to birth, old age and death. Rajavaramuni stresses that a human being is the best of trainable beings and has the capacity for self-perfection, through which freedom and happiness can be realized. Perfection can only be attained if humanity is able to develop physically, morally, psycho-spiritually and intellectually. This represents the law of *Dharma* in Buddhism, which articulates that every individual should be allowed to develop to his/her fullest potential towards perfection, implying a right to self-development. Despite this, there are still widespread reservations among some Buddhists with associating the idea of *Dharma* with a modern conception of human rights. For instance, Abe (1986, p. 202) argues that "the exact equivalent



of the phrase 'human rights' in the Western sense cannot be found anywhere in Buddhist literature", as the western concept of human rights applies only to human beings, while Buddhism applies rights to both humans and non-humans. Buddhism accords equal rights to all living beings, including animals, plants and humans. Similarly, Inada (1995, p. 58) argues that, for Buddhists, human rights are secondary to the wider issue of human nature, in that the Buddhist regards human nature as the fundamental context from which issues such as human rights are not only understood, but are valued. Inada (1995, p. 58) further argues that the concept of human rights itself "is in harmony with the extended experiential nature of things. And thus, where the Westerner is much more at home in treating legal matters detached from human nature as such and quite confident in forging ahead to establish human rights with a distinct emphasis on certain 'rights', the Buddhist is much more reserved but open and seeks to understand the implications of human behavior, based on the fundamental nature of human beings, before turning his or her attention to the so called 'rights' of individuals". Moreover, rights ought to be grounded in an ecological perspective of nature and humanity, thus rights should be given to other forms of life and not just to humans.

Despite the conceptual difficulties of justifying human rights as central to the Buddhist faith, it is clear that some Buddhists understand human rights in terms of their centrality to the concept of *Dharma*. Other Buddhist scholars associate human rights with a religious commitment to the 'Three Refuges', in that "Buddhists find human rights language expressive of their religious commitment to the Three Refuges: the Buddha, the *Dharma*, and the *Sangha*" (Traer, 1995, p. 1). For instance, Thurman (cited in Traer, 1995, p. 4) argues that the foundation for a Buddhist social philosophy can be found in several texts. He outlines the five basic principles of Buddhist politics, as revealed in the stone-carved edicts of Emperor Ashoka (3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E.), as: "(a) individualistic transcendentalism, (b) nonviolent pacifism, (c) religious pluralism with an educational emphasis, (d) compassionate welfare paternalism, and (e) reliance on a powerful central authority to affirm the rights of individuals over claims of intermediate groups".

In addition to these, Buddhists such as Kariyawasam (1987, p.1), former President of the World Fellowship of Buddhist Women, strongly support human rights. Kariyawasam claims that "Buddhism is an all pervading philosophy and a religion, strongly motivated by human rights or rights of everything that exists, man, woman, animal and the environment they live in." Finally, Aung San Suu Kyi, the well known Burmese activist, famously said, "It is a puzzlement to the Burmese how concepts which



recognise the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of human beings, which accept that all men are endowed with reason and conscience and which recommend a spirit of brotherhood, can be inimical to indigenous values” (Suu Kyi, 1995, p. xiii).

From the above literature on religions and human rights,<sup>13</sup> it should be pointed out that a major theme that runs across the major faith traditions reviewed is that the debate is polarised on whether or not human rights are intrinsic aspects of these religions. The debate over whether these religions, particularly certain branches of Christianity and Islam, grant certain rights, such as those related to homosexuality, reproductive health and gender, is particularly controversial. Much of the literature is ‘theoretical’ in the sense that it tells us how the traditions might be interpreted to support human rights. In practice, through looking at the activities of religious groups and faith-based organisations, we can gauge the actual impact of human rights based interpretations of religious traditions. We might expect not only that religious groups and FBOs are involved in human rights work of various sorts but also that many FBOs are not engaged in activities that are congruent with human rights.

## 5 Social capital

Although Robert Putnam was not the first person to write about social capital (see, for example, Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Dewey 1969-72; 1976-83; 1984-91; Farr, 2004), he has certainly been the most influential, with respect to both academics and policy-makers. Drawing on earlier work by Coleman, Putnam describes social capital as referring to “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993, p. 167). His seminal study of associational life in Italy found a direct correlation between vibrancy in associational life, economic growth, good governance and effective, responsive government. He has since gone on to develop his theory of social capital, applied predominantly to the American context (see, for example, Putnam, 2000). His work has been taken on by many donors and policy-makers, who have poured a great deal of money into strengthening civic life, generally by directly funding civil society groups.

Putnam’s earlier work in Italy actually found a negative correlation between civic-mindedness and religiosity, and he does not have many good things to say about Catholicism, especially in the Italian South. According to Putnam (1993, p. 107), “Organised religion, at least in Catholic Italy, is an alternative to the civic community, not a part of it...religious sentiments and civic engagement seem to be mutually incompatible...Church-goers express greater contentment with life and with the existing political regime than other Italians. They seem more concerned about the city of God than the city of man.” In this, he condemns the Church’s emphasis on hierarchy, obedience and “acceptance of one’s station in life” (1993, p. 107). It should be noted here that Putnam himself contrasts his findings in Italy and those of others in Latin America, where a distinction should be drawn between the ‘institutional Church’ and the ‘popular Church’ (1993, p. 244; see also Levine, 1981).

Putnam’s work draws a clear distinction between organisations that are horizontal, in which obligations between members are mutual, and those that are hierarchical, in which obligations go upwards. He finds that this distinction often correlates with civic-mindedness. In the poorer South, membership in the hierarchical Catholic Church often precludes membership in non-religious horizontal organisations. He suggests that “private piety stands in for public purpose” (1993, p. 115). This is in stark contrast to Northern Italy, where associational life tends to be more horizontal (e.g. voluntary associations, co-operatives, sports clubs). He argues that “membership in hierarchically ordered organizations (like the Mafia or the institutional Catholic Church) should be negatively associated with good government; in Italy, at least, the most devout church-goers are the least civic-minded” (1993, p. 175-76).

This is in stark contrast to his later findings in the USA, where he found participation in a religious community to be “arguably the single most important repository of social capital in America” (Putnam, 2000, p. 66). Indeed,

“Churches provide an important incubator for civic skills, civic norms, community interests, and civic recruitment. Religiously active men and women learn to give speeches, run meetings, manage disagreements, and bear administrative responsibility. They also befriend others who are in turn likely to recruit them into other forms of community activity. In part for these reasons, churchgoers are substantially more likely to be involved in secular organizations, to vote and participate politically in other ways, and to have deeper informal social connections” (Putnam, 2000, p. 66).

It would of course be both interesting and important for our purposes if Putnam were to have offered an explanation for the very different role he gives religiosity in the USA and Italy; this perhaps suggests an important line of enquiry for future research.

Putnam’s thesis has been applied to community-building in developed democracies, with one project in the UK examining the question whether the social capital inhering in faith communities in the inner-city ‘connects’ or ‘divides’ (Furbey et al., 2006). Focussing on a number of faith communities, the project adopts a common distinction between three types of social capital and aims to identify their presence in inner-city faith communities: *bonding*, “based on enduring, multi-faceted relationships between similar people with strong mutual commitments such as among friends, family and other close-knit groups”; *bridging*, “formed from the connections between people who have less in common, but may have overlapping interests, for example, between neighbours, colleagues, or between different groups within a community”; and *linking*, “derived from the links between people or organisations beyond peer boundaries, cutting across status and similarity and enabling people to exert influence and research resources outside their normal circles” (Furbey et al., 2006, p.7). These types of social capital are then explored in detail in interviews with members of mosques, gurdwaras, temples and churches.

Putnam’s work may be influential but it is not without its critics. He has been accused by almost as many authors as those who applaud his work of poor history, under-theorising, romanticising and poor methodology. His work is not nearly as popular in Italy, for example, as it is in the USA or UK, and some have accused it of supporting the cause of anti-Southern groups, such as the Northern League

(see Tarrow, 1996, p. 389). Examples of highly respected critics include Levi (1996), Tarrow (1996) and Warren (2004), among others. What these criticisms have in common is a belief that Putnam's 'romanticisation' of civic life does not allow him to see (and thus research or evaluate) how social capital can actually undermine processes of democratisation. It is also suggested that he ignores the role that the state plays in enabling more positive civic association to take place. Some also argue that his argument that social capital leads to more effective government is tautologous, on the grounds that he defines social capital in such a way that it necessarily has this effect.

Warren looks specifically at how social capital can actually uphold systems of patronage, corruption and conflict. He refers to a study by Rubio on the Antioquia region of Colombia, whose people "have been outstanding for their great capacity for work; their family values; their vocation for business, a certain degree of Puritanism, strict moral codes and ethics; their austerity and ability to save", all of which have been said to have led to their early economic development, in comparison to the rest of the country (Rubio, cited in Warren, 2004, p. 7). Despite all of this, Rubio explains that this is where the Medellín cartel originated and where the highest rates of violence in the country occur. Key to the cartel's success is its ability to foster relationships of trust (Warren, 2004, p. 7). Warren argues that the answer to whether or not social capital is 'good' or 'bad' can be found not in the nature of the associations (i.e. horizontal or hierarchical) but in the nature of the democratic state itself. If "people are empowered to pressure, bargain, and persuade", then it is more likely that 'good' social capital exists (2004, p. 13). The policy implication of this argument is not that associations should be strengthened but that the capacity of the democratic state to empower people should be increased.

Thus Levi explains how governments are influential in supporting cultures of 'trust'. Indeed "Governments provide more than the backdrop for facilitating trust among citizens; governments also influence civic behaviour to the extent they elicit trust or distrust towards themselves" (1996, p. 51). Tarrow considers a weakness of Putnam's work to be his neglect of "the effect of the pattern of state building on indigenous civic capacity" (1996, p. 394). As Tarrow points out, time and time again following unification, the (Northern) Italian state has interfered with Southern associational life, which must have had a significant impact on its vibrancy.

The importance of these critics is that they all acknowledge a great deal of value in Putnam's work and in the social capital literature more generally. However, they see the concept as needing to be divorced from overly romantic and unrealistic portraits of civic life and situated firmly in wider discourses on democratisation, state-building and political culture. It is likely that much value can be derived from further examination of the social capital literature, which spans most (if not all) social science disciplines.<sup>14</sup>

## 6 Ethnicity, religion and conflict

Within the broad category of 'democratisation', it is appropriate to recognise the relevance of the literature on ethnic conflict regulation and peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. The last decade has seen an exponential growth in publications on the political management of protracted ethnic conflicts (e.g. McGarry and O'Leary, 1993). Conflict resolution is often accompanied by suggestions of appropriate 'political and constitutional engineering' – power-sharing, federalism, decentralisation, electoral systems etc. (Latto, 2002). In some of the literature, there is an effort to identify the optimal 'level' of the nation-state and, when this level is not realised or is surpassed, recognition of the need for 'resizing' and 'reshaping' the state (O'Leary et al., 2001). Most recently, political engineering efforts have been applied in the post-conflict contexts of both Afghanistan and Iraq, where challenging questions have been raised about geographical/linguistic boundaries and the need to balance individual and collective rights (O'Leary, 2003).

In the literature on ethnic conflict, especially in developing societies, religion and religious organisations are conventionally seen as 'part of the problem' rather than as 'part of the solution'. All too often ethnic and regional conflicts are given a 'religious' construction, though it would be unfair to underplay the role of religious ideologies in conflict in Africa and Asia, where most of the recorded conflicts have occurred (Fox, 2001). Yet at the same time, in the emerging post-conflict reconstruction literature (for example on post-apartheid South Africa, former Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland, CIS, and communal riots in India), there is an increasing recognition that faith communities and FBOs can, and do, play a crucial part in peace-building (Appleby, 2000). The 'tool kits' of peace-building range from the micro-methods of dialogue and engagement, to restoring civil life after 'riots', innovations such as 'Truth Commissions' and more grandiose projects such as the 'dialogues between civilisations' (UN). While these contributions are no doubt significant, they remain difficult to measure, are sometimes seen as auxiliary and supportive, and are not always common to different religious and faith traditions (for example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was seen as a specifically *Christian* response). Clearly, more detailed research is required in this area, with a special focus on country case-studies and localities where there is a significant emerging literature on communal conflicts and their aftermath (Varshney, 2002).

Related to ethnic conflict management, though no lesser part of the broad debate on democratisation, is the issue of cultural diversity and the role of religion in public life. The most useful starting point for this is the discussion launched by the *Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's*

*Diverse World* (UNDP, 2004). Its main argument is that “accommodating people’s growing demands for their inclusion in society, for respect of their ethnicity, religion, and language, takes more than democracy and equitable growth. Also needed are multicultural policies that *recognize differences*, champion diversity and promote cultural freedoms, so that all people can choose to speak their language, *practice their religion*, and participate in shaping their culture—so that all people can choose to be who they are” (UNDP, 2004, cover). Indeed, multiculturalism as a public policy is seen as a tool for promoting the recognition of *difference* that is seen as essential to both the development process and democratisation and state-building.

While the multiculturalism of the UNDP report is *essentially secular* (it is a mode of inclusion for excluded minorities and groups) and does not echo the debate in the West about ‘deep multiculturalism’ as needed when there is a ‘clash of values’ or ‘clash of civilisations’, its emphasis on religious discrimination and the need for policies of accommodation (e.g. Muslim personal law in India), suggest a benefit in shifting the emphases in the contemporary credo of nation-building towards pluralism, diversity and religious inclusion. In anticipating this debate, it is reasonable to assume that the promotion of what Tiryakian calls ‘ideological multiculturalism’ (Tiryakian, 2003), with its potential for radical transformation of public space through dialogue and debate, will be seen as the natural extension of this interest in multiculturalism. Given this likely outcome, a reflection is needed on the debate about multiculturalism in the ‘West’, and the best case example in the ‘East’ – India.

The Indian debate highlighted above and the preceding discussion of secularism can be better understood in terms of three overarching approaches to the subject of religious conflict in the contemporary world. Hasenclever and Ritteberger (2000), drawing on research on ethnic conflict, summarise three main approaches to the analysis of the influence of faiths on political conflict: primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism.

According to Hasenclever and Ritteberger, primordialist analysis, characterised by the works of Huntington (1991a, 1991b), Kepel (1994), Seul (1999), Tibi (1999) and others, argues that “the embeddedness of nations in civilisations will be the most important determinant of world politics in the twenty-first century. The pivotal characteristic of each civilisation, in turn, is the religion or cosmology on which it is based” (2000, p. 643). In the post- Cold War era, conflicts, it is asserted, will emerge both between civilisations and within them, especially in multi-religious societies such as Nigeria,

Bosnia, Indonesia or Sudan. The 'return of civilisations', it is argued, is likely to lead to the cultural realignment (and perhaps resizing and reshaping) of states and wars of religion rather than conflicts of interest.

For instrumentalists, the relationship between religion and conflict is not primordial but at best a spurious correlation that in most cases "is the result of growing economic, social and political inequalities in and between nations" (Hasenclever and Rittberger, 2000, p. 645). Such a correlation occurs in "times of economic decay, social disintegration and state collapse. Desperate people subject to poverty, marginalisation, or physical threats turn to their religious traditions in search of an alternative political order that satisfies their needs for welfare, recognition and security. In this context, religious communities operate primarily as refuges of solidarity, sources of cultural reaffirmation, and safe havens" (2000, p. 645). Political elites are more likely to make use of existing religious cleavages in such conditions, though this form of mobilisation is restricted to states and has little credence beyond state boundaries. Indeed, even when such mobilisations do occur, they are contingent upon factors other than the power-consciousness of elites. Instrumentalism remains the dominant approach to religious-based conflicts and is particularly attractive to the secularist biases of the discipline of political science.

Third, Hasenclever and Rittberger highlight the need to recognise an intermediate position between primordialism and instrumentalism, represented by the constructivist approach. As they note, "constructivists regard social conflicts as embedded in cognitive structures such as ideology, nationalism, ethnicity, religion. These structures, which consist of 'shared understandings, expectations and social knowledge', provide social actors with value laden conceptions of the self and others and consequently affect their strategic choices" (2000, p. 647-8). While constructivists agree that political elites play a crucial role in religious conflicts, they also insist that "religious traditions are inter-subjective structures that have a life of their own. They depend on social practices and discourses...[which] are inseparable from the reasons and self-understanding that agents bring to their actions" (2000, p. 649). For constructivists, religion acts as an "intervening variable i.e. as a causal factor intervening between a given conflict and the choices of conflict behaviour" (2000, p. 649). Thus, 'holy text' can be used to legitimise and delegitimise religious violence, and the promotion of dialogue and deconstruction of religious discourses is seen as the preferred strategy in violent conflict situations.



Hasenclever and Rittberger further highlight strategies of religious conflict de-escalation. Again they identify three approaches – deterrence and suppression; socio-economic development; and democratisation and dialogue. Deterrence and suppression is identified with national elites in countries like Algeria, Egypt, Iraq and Syria, but the authors regard these approaches as having not only limited value but also the potential for serious consequences within mixed and multi-religious states. Socio-economic development, it is suggested, can act to undercut religious conflicts as, for example, in the Middle East during the oil boom of the 1970s. The third option is far more problematic, they argue, because the prevalent concept of democracy is based on the western state model and the process of democratisation itself presupposes a *viable state* to be democratised. In fact, in many developing countries the state is unable to exercise relative autonomy because “it itself is part of the current crisis” (2000, p. 665). In these situations, religious organisations often aspire to be counter-states, with their extensive networks and ‘parallel societies’. Finally, it is suggested, religious dialogue as a strategy needs to be taken seriously. There are sufficient examples to highlight the importance of dialogue in peace-building, but these efforts need to be strengthened if violence is to be delegitimised and trust-building take place (2000, p. 670).

## 7 ‘Drivers of Change’, politics and religion

The role of religion and FBOs in public life has also been addressed in the DFID-sponsored literature on Drivers of Change (DoC) (e.g. Gifford, n.d; Heymans and Pycroft, n.d.; Nadvi and Robinson, 2004; Sarch, 2003). This output is especially relevant in its analysis of Nigeria and Pakistan, though it also has useful commentary on Bangladesh. With reference to Nigeria and Pakistan, in particular, there are obvious comparative contrasts – the long periods of military government, chronic poor governance, corruption and structural distortions created by oil (Nigeria) and the institutionalised economy of the military (Pakistan). In both countries, there is general recognition that institutional elements are overwhelmingly pitted against change and pro-poor policies, compromising the three-fold drivers of change – structural, institutional and agents. In fact, in both countries, the DoC analysis concludes that prospects for pro-poor change are limited. Writing on Pakistan, Nadvi and Robinson (2004) summarise that:

“The main finding of this study is a *pessimistic one* in that the potential drivers of change in Pakistan are limited in number and scope. There is little prospect of sustained pro-poor change from structural or institutional factors in the short to medium term, while there are few sources of agency with the commitment and power to stimulate an enduring change process” (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004, p. iii).

Similarly, of Nigeria Heymans and Paycroft (n.d., p. i) write:

“In Nigeria, the DoC analysis indicates that, although transition to civilian governance has been a significant improvement on military rule, it has not achieved the progress towards pro-poor change initially anticipated. Rigidities within Nigeria’s institutional framework that operate as structural constraints fundamentally hamper the room for change.”

In both countries, there is recognition that religion and FBOs have the potential to play both negative and positive roles in overcoming these institutional barriers. Writing of Nigeria, Heymans and Paycroft (n.d., p. 21-22) observe:

“Faith-based organisations are both contentious and influential in a country where 50 per cent of the population would describe themselves as Muslim, 45 per cent Christian and 5 per cent as ‘traditional believers’. In concrete terms, faith-based organisations provide certain services and safety nets, often affecting poor people. Religion has also become a mechanism to overcome exclusion from established patronage networks, protest against them, or create new patronage systems. It has also enhanced polarisation in Nigeria. The collapse of the formal state has created a vacuum increasingly occupied by Islam in the North and evangelical Christian churches in the South, creating opportunity for political elites to exploit religious differences and exacerbate conflict.

Moreover, religious value systems have powerful impact on life and politics in Nigeria. At a general level and analogous to the state, many churches are hierarchical and patrimonial, with little accountability.

Moreover, there have been significant expressions of religious intolerance...The introduction of the [Shari'a] criminal code came about as politicians in the north felt they had lost out in the wake of the 1999 power shift to the South and the election of a Pentecostal Christian as President."

Yet, despite this pessimistic analysis, DoC studies of Nigeria and Pakistan suggest that FBOs can play a *positive* role in two possible contexts. First, the recognition that agent-driven change is likely to be limited unless there is institutional reform has shifted the emphasis to issue-based reform that is likely to have systemic consequences. In this context, it is suggested, FBOs have a crucial role to play not only as components of civil society but perhaps more importantly as potential drivers and facilitators of coalition-building for issue-based reform. Certainly, the extensive resources commanded by FBOs and their networks could be utilised to support reform measures that have the potential to unleash systemic reform and undercut institutional barriers that act as structural constraints. "The strategic challenge", Heymans and Pycroft note, "is to identify such key systemic issues, around which coalitions in support of reform can be mobilised" (n.d., p. 40). A number of such issues are identified in the case of Nigeria, including: 1) democracy and accountability, with the need to strengthen electoral reform and accountability, by increasing support for such measures within the National Assembly; enlisting the aid of the media, think tanks and civil society networks; and constitutional reform, and 2) the need to tackle issues of service delivery in the context of public sector reform, sector development issues and building the capacity of private and civil society providers (n.d., p. 47-51).

The second area where DoC studies suggest that there might be potential for influencing pro-poor change is in engaging with Islamic groups and parties that have increasingly come to represent radical groups, often by mobilising the urban and unemployed youth. In the case of northern Nigeria, Sarch (2004) acknowledges that it is difficult to assess at this stage whether or not radical Islam is a driver of change or a mere route to political power. According to her, its ability to serve the interests of the poor remains open to question. Nevertheless, she suggests, there are "Islamic institutions that have potential to bring about pro-poor change" (Sarch, 2004, p. 14). Focusing her work on Jigwa State, she

identified a number of areas where such change might be possible. These include the potential of the *Zakat* (charity enjoined upon Muslims) system, reforming public service values based on Islamic values, focusing on service delivery for the poor by engaging in local government reforms, and providing educational support that might lead to an interest in poverty reduction among Muslim youth. “The analysis of Islam’s role in changing Nigeria”, she concludes, “does not point to blockages that can be removed swiftly to catalyse change. The analysis does, however, suggest entry points, i.e. agents with the capacity to influence change, and the processes through which these agents may achieve pro-poor change” (Sarch, 2004, p. 18).

Similarly, in the case of Pakistan, the rise of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA, or United Action Front) has created a concern as to whether it represents a driver for pro-poor change or a parliamentary turn to religious fundamentalism. “The MMA leadership is keen to demonstrate that it adheres to good governance norms and provides services that are developmentally orientated in office (in NWFP), while at the same time [it is] pursuing its religious and cultural agenda” (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004, p. 19). On the one hand, the MMA government in the North West Frontier Province is keen to seek development aid (from, for example, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank) and “may seek to refocus the language of development aid to fit its own cultural agenda” (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004, p. 48). On the other hand, its exclusion of secular parties from the development agenda in the province suggests that its primary objective is to consolidate its political support for the next election cycle (2007), when it can seek the fulfilment of its social and political agenda through the parliament – “a strategy akin to the Jamaat-e-Islami’s historical thinking on social change” (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004, p. 49). Although this may well be the case, the rise of the MMA suggests that long-term growth and poverty reduction will require “the building of a broader constituency for pro-poor development agenda in the political parties and civil society” (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004, p. 29). Equally, this agenda cannot be realised without a framework of debate and constructive dialogue that includes traditionalists, modernists, secularists and the religious parties like the MMA (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004, p. 30-1). As in Nigeria, it is suggested that the strategic options for change in Pakistan are long-term and need to focus on supporting a coalition for pro-poor development in which civil society and FBOs play an active part.

## 8 Conclusion

This review has highlighted some of the key areas covered by the political science literature on religion and development. It has drawn attention to the 'return of religion' in the public sphere and the challenges this has created for the post-colonial state, especially with reference to projects of nation- and state-building. The precise nature of these challenges, however, is very country-specific and requires an in-depth understanding of post-colonial history as well an awareness of the comparative developments identified.

There is clearly a need for more detailed analyses. Among the issues for further investigation are:

1. The extent to which religion(s) were included/excluded in post-colonial constitution making and, in particular, where state secularism was established as the operative norm, the model and practice of secularism and its subsequent impact on religion and religious identities.
2. The engagement of religious organisations in the broader processes of democratisation, through more detailed assessment of their involvement in the implementation of the 'good governance' agenda, human rights discourses, and ethnic conflict regulation and peace-building.
3. An understanding of specific faith traditions and their outlooks towards governance.
4. A critical assessment of religious-based organisations and their ability to deliver pro-poor change through detailed evaluation of examples, keeping in mind the need to address concerns of equality, gender and social, ethnic and religious inclusion.
5. A rethinking of the role of religion in contemporary governance in developing societies by using a multicultural frame of reference as the point of departure for accommodating the concerns of both faith traditions and secularists. Here the UNDP's *Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World* provides a useful starting point for the discussion.

In this review we have not directly addressed the extensive literature on multiculturalism and religious and cultural diversity in developed democracies (see, for example, Barry, 2001; Kelly, 2002; Kymlicka, 1995; Madood, 2005; Parekh, 2000; Rex and Singh, 2004; Tully, 1995). There are clearly interesting and potentially rewarding comparisons and contrasts between the debates in this body of work and the

anti-secularist critiques emerging from the South and East in the work of scholars such as Nandy. However, these debates need to be further specified and historicised.

As noted above, output from faith-based communities and organisations themselves has not been included in this review, but this is an important subject for research.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This is quite common practice, particularly in institutional economics, which is a field of study requiring 'hard data' to explain what is regarded as the rather ephemeral notion of 'culture'. Looking at scholars such as Denzau and North (1994, p. 22, cited in De Jong et al., 2006, p. 116), who write that "institutions are the 'tangible' consequences of culture", De Jong et al. argue that this practice can be traced back at least as far as Weber, who "argued that culture, through religion, may very well affect economic variables in his Protestant Ethics thesis" (De Jong et al., 2006 p. 116-17). See also Noland (2003, p. 14) for a similar critique of his fellow economists for failing to distinguish between religion and culture.
- <sup>2</sup> His data set includes the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (TI-CPI); economic indicators - the real GDP per capita and the inflation rate; Gastil's Freedom in the World index; and the Herfindahl index for religious diversity in the particular country, based on Barrett's (1982) classification system.
- <sup>3</sup> Paldam does not in any way explain why he has put adherents of tribal religions and atheists in the same category, other than, we assume, the fact that they are both 'residual'. There seems to be no other logical reason and this does not lend the findings credibility.
- <sup>4</sup> Once again, we are not at all convinced by the separation of Anglicans from other 'Reform Christians'. He explains that the "data allows Anglicans to be separately analysed" (2001, p. 394), presumably because the Anglican Church is widespread across many countries, particularly in the Commonwealth, but this seems, once again, to be rather poor logic.
- <sup>5</sup> Paldam maintains that this supports Rousseau's claim about the 'original state', as opposed to that of Hobbes. This seems to be a misinterpretation of Rousseau, who did not see his claims as claims about historical evolution.
- <sup>6</sup> North and Gwin (2004, p. 10) use Barrett et al.'s definition of 'Independent Christians' as "those who are separated from, uninterested in, and independent of historical denominational Christianity". The countries in this category are Swaziland, the United States, South Africa and Zimbabwe.
- <sup>7</sup> See also Englund (2000).
- <sup>8</sup> The Quran is believed by Muslims to be a message from Allah (God) to all humanity. Muslims believe it was transmitted from Allah through the Angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad. The Quranic message was given to the Prophet in pieces over a period spanning approximately 23 years (610 CE to 622 CE) (University of Southern California, 2006).
- <sup>9</sup> Hadith is defined as "the utterance, action or indirect approval (of an act) by Prophet Muhammed] Rasulullah" (Council of Muslim Theologians, 2003).
- <sup>10</sup> The word Sunna literally means 'a well trodden path'. It is used to "denote the normal behaviour of the Muslim community, putatively derived from the teaching and conduct, and from the exemplary teaching of his immediate followers, since the latter was seen as an index of the former" (Rahman, 1987:309).
- <sup>11</sup> For further reading, see An-Na'im 2001, 2005.
- <sup>12</sup> This understanding of *Dharma* within Buddhism is also found within the Hindu tradition. In addition to meaning 'duty', the *Dharma* also refers to the Buddha's teachings (i.e. the 'triple gem' or 'three refuges' of Buddhism, which consist of the Buddha, the *Dhamma/Dharma* (Pali/Sanskrit) and the *Sangha* (monastic community)).
- <sup>13</sup> There is also a section on religion and human rights in the 'Religious Studies and Development' literature review (Tomalin 2007a).
- <sup>14</sup> See the Sociology, Religion and Development literature review (Tomalin, 2007b).

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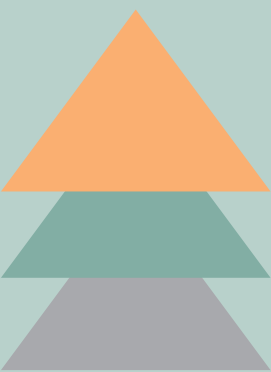
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