

Religion's Comeback

- Since the 1970s, there was steady rise in religion's influence (rise in the number of people that self identify themselves as religious)
 - From private to public
 - From passive to active
 - From local to global
- Religion is more powerful across space and religions
- 1979 as signature event - Islamic Revolution in Iran (huge event)
- Across every continent and across all religions
- 1992 in India, many Hindus burned down a mosque in India - this gathering of Hindus (in religious and nationalist fervor) was because this mosque was allegedly built on the birthplace of the Hindu god 'Ram'
- Ex: Buddhism - very private religion. But think about the impact of the religion becoming more a public religion. Think about the Dalai Lama and his impact on politics today
- Religion has entered the political debates (especially in Europe) - should women be allowed to wear a burkha, are mosques allowed to build minarets, etc

Characteristics of Religious Resurgence

- 5 main characteristics started in the 1970s and still going on today
- Private to public
- Crisis of secular ideologies
- Quest for freedom
- Collusion with Forces of Modernity
- From Local to Global

Private to Public

- Collusion of state power and religion had dismal consequences
 - Religion was the main cause of most of the horrific wars (inquisition, etc). Catholic church has vehemently opposed the ideas that came from the French revolution. This was the attempt of religion to hold back forces to lessen strength of religion. Religion was opposed to nationalism, and democracy etc. There was a long list of religious offences. This inspired a back-lash among people. Which can be seen in a number of ways: Marxist-Maoist movements in South America (Che and Mao). They were opposed to clericalism and targeted religions because they felt that religion was the cultural support systems in South America. In colonialism, religion was implicated and got a back-lash. As a result of this back-lash over centuries in the west there was a growing distinction of public and private
- West responded with private/public distinction of religion
 - Separation of church and state. This separation did not really apply to most of the world, it was limited to western states. Even today you can see a slow trend that erodes this distinction over time (ex: US presidential race, candidates have to show their devotion of god). You can see religion in the way people dress, the food they eat, gender relations. In most parts of the world, there is no distinction. Religion is very much a public issue. In most places where there has been a resurgence of religion in society and politics, religion has evolved away from the private and has taken a more public stance
- But vast majority of people in the world express religion publicly
 - More religious actors are trying to insert themselves in politics (Shas in Israel). Religious actors have actively tried to affect law, policies, and institutions. Have even tried to change regimes in the name of religion. Growth in *public* engagement in religion
- Where religion is resurgent, public religious engagement is apparent

Crisis of Secular Ideologies

- Religious resurgence a result of:
 - Economic crisis (Islamic Revolution in Iran against Shah's economic policy)
 - Impact of decolonization (many dictatorships rose up from this)
 - Crisis of nationalism (Nasser the hero of Arab nationalism, and then there was the 1967 defeat and this dream faded and never really recovered)
 - Collapse of communism (in former Soviet countries you see a rise in religion as something to fill the void left by fall of communism)

Quest for Freedom

- Quest of societies for control over its own societies from the state
- There was harsh state control in the past (Turkey under Attaturk with a drastic secularization; Iran almost overnight became an extreme secular state). These changes involved heavy handed state control over religion. Nazism, China and Bulgaria, etc. tried to completely eradicate an entire religion.
- Quest of religious communities to break from the confines of secular rule

- Spirituality: is used in a wider sense, referring to a search for meaning and an interpretation of life which can be separate from religion
- Public and private religion
 - Public: not about the individual and their relationship with god, but its about the individual and their relationship with the group. Community element.
 - Private: can experience things by themselves.
- 5 Dimensions of religion (Stark) [this is not that important]
 - Belief
 - Religious practice - a ritual (communion, circumcision)
 - Experience - if people have a feeling of divine presence
 - Knowledge - when religious people are supposed to have knowledge of certain texts
 - Consequences - how religion affects the ever day life of individuals

Religion vs. Nationalism

- Similarities
 - Both prescribe common political destiny and absolute loyalty
 - Both can be seen as ideologies. Large systems of ideas that prescribe a common political destiny and absolute loyalty. The both demand absolute loyalty.
- Differences
 - Religion relates to a transcendent reality
 - Religion is an attempt to provide a world view to the individual that provides an explanation for the origin and meaning of life and what happens in the after life. Nationalism is more about the here and now.
 - Religion offers answers to more universal questions
 - Not just questions of society and nationalism
 - Religion is more inclusive
 - Nationalism is about distinctions between one nation and another. There are boundaries between religions but most religions are inclusive. If you really want to, you can become a member of a religion. There are clear boundaries between nations so if you are German you can not become Italian.

Contending definitions of religion

- Intellectual definitions
 - Focus: belief about a particular object
 - The most essential thing about religion is the belief of a particular object, such as God. Those who believe this stipulate this. This says a lot about a religion but the problem with those who only use this type of definition is that they leave out other important aspects such as religions practices. Some religions don't necessarily believe in God, so would you exclude them from this definition? Not effective definitions. This is substantive
- Affective definitions
 - Focus: faith, emotions accompanying faith
 - This one and the intellectual definitions are similar because both of them describe religion from a perspective that focus on the features of the religion rather than the functions are. This is substantive. Weakness: is that you underestimate the important role that is played in many religious roles, doctrines, and creeds. You leave out these things and communities which is important
- Functional definitions
 - Focus: functions provided by religion
 - Define it by what the religion provides. What are its roles. Providing meaning, systems of beliefs that provide meaning and identity. People struggle with the meaning of life. It empowers people and provides them with courage. Weakness: there are some functions that apply to some religions more than others.

Do we need a definition of religion?

- Clearly, no single type of definition suffices
- Some scholars believe definitions of religion are superfluous. Why?
 - Religions do not posses common defining features
 - A Western superimposition
 - A divisive concept

Towards a 'family resemblance' approach

- Wittgenstein: some concepts have no single, essential defining feature
- Religion as a complex concept
 - No single essential defining feature
 - It shares a number of features that together exhibit 'family resemblances'
- He uses the word 'game' as an example. How do you define it? There are some concepts that are fluid and broad and don't have one essential feature.
- Religion is a concept that doesn't have one essential feature, but has a few important features. Not every religion has the same features. But not all of these features have to be present. This is how we are going to define religion.

A 'family resemblance' definition of religion

- *Scopes was found guilty and fined \$100, but the verdict was overturned on a technicality. The trial served its purpose of drawing intense national publicity, as national reporters flocked to Dayton to cover the big-name lawyers who had agreed to represent each side. **William Jennings Bryan**, three-time presidential candidate for the Democrats, argued for the prosecution, while **Clarence Darrow**, the famed defense attorney, spoke for Scopes. **The trial set modernists, who said evolution was consistent with religion, against fundamentalists who said the word of God as revealed in the Bible took priority over all human knowledge.** The case was thus seen as both a theological contest and a trial on the veracity of modern science regarding the creation-evolution controversy*
- 1925: Scopes on trial for teaching evolution
 - Surrounded a school teacher who was on trial for breaking the state law that forbade anyone from teaching in schools anything against the bible such as creation. He taught the idea of evolution which was against the law.
 - Darrow was one of the foremost trial lawyers in the US - he fought for Scopes.
 - Bryan was fundamentalist and was running for democratic president. Part of his running for the democratic party, he went for some more progressive social policies but at heart he was still a fundamentalist. He was not a pre-millennialist
- Prosecutor Bryan was humiliated by the defense
 - Darrow humiliated Bryan in the trial by making Bryan admit that he cannot rationally support the stories of the bible. He made him try to prove that the stories of the bible are true. Bryan was forced to confront a number of anomalies from the bible
- Scopes/Darrow lost the battle but won the war
 - Lost the trial because most of the jury were fundamentalists but the damage to the fundamentalist movements was already done
- 1930s: fundamentalists also lost argument against prohibition
 - Fundamentalists wanted to ban alcohol in the US and were successful (in the short run). They suggested that banning alcohol would bring pure and devout life to the people of the US. But in the end prohibition just created organized crime and the law was taken away after a few years
- 1950s: small number of fundamentalists that were still politically active. League of America. Christian Anti-Communist Brigade.
- Protestant fundamentalism still exists today and are found mainly the South of the US, they are untouched communities.

Understanding fundamentalism

- A problematic concept
 - Associated with extremism and violence
 - Term is applied selectively on anyone who is enthusiastic about their religion. Anyone who is committed to their religion is negatively associated with being an extremist
 - 'made a mess of' that a minority type of 'fundamentals' of religion
 - Seems to suggest that a small group in each religion are the 'true believers' [check this out]
 - Term glosses over differences among these movements
 - Different movements have different traits and cant use a generalized concept in a sweeping way. They are not all the same.

A broad conceptualization of fundamentalism (appleby)

- Fundamentalism entails:
 - Religious enthusiasts
 - Can be considered religious enthusiasts without being violent. Not every fundamentalist is violent
 - Self-styled 'true believers'
 - They are the one who understand religion correctly and everyone else is wrong
 - Attempt to halt erosion of religion
 - Fortify borders of religious community
 - Safeguard traditional roles and shield themselves from the forces of change
 - Create viable alternatives to secular structures and processes
- Violence is not necessarily a part of this definition
 - From the above characteristics you can see that violence is not necessary to be fundamentalist
- But: fundamentalism can lead to violence
- Fundamentalists want to promote orthodox identity. Promoting a religious identity vis a vis a secular identity is not against the ideals of a modern democratic society [I don't know what the previous means]
- Religion reacts to modernity
- Sayyid Qutb - hugely important figure in the 20th century. Most important thinker who has had a large impact on radical muslims. He was a member of the muslim brotherhood in egypt. He created a more radical militant spin off of the muslim brotherhood. [watch a clip]
 - Jahiliya - refers to the chaotic society that was prevalent in pre-islamic arabia. When qutb returned to egypt he said that egypt was the modern jahiliya. It was moderately but true islamic govt.

Features of fundamentalism

- may 1980: arab mayors – in retaliation for killing yeshiva students. Wanted to maim them not kill them to send a message
- july 1983: attack vs. Islamic college, hebron. Killed three students and wounded 33
- plan to attack five buses full of Arabs were thwarted – the Israeli authorities stepped in and arrested many members, thwarting their plans.

Origins of Islamist Militancy

Islamism

- Definition: political activism
- An attempt to reconcile Islamic tradition with modernity; but there are different conceptions of the problem and solution
- Not all Islamism is violent and anti-Western
- Backbone of Islamic activism is jamaat (voluntary associations, parties, and movements)
- Most activism is not terrorism, but da'wa (the call to Islam – preaching)
- Use the tools of modernity but are actually against modernity; want to preserve Islamic values
- In understanding the different streams of Islamic activism, the starting point is to distinguish between Shiite and Sunni Islamism. The concept of "political Islam" first appeared in the wake of the 1979 Iranian revolution, with Shiite activism then viewed as the most worrying threat. In fact, however, because Shiism is the minority variant of Islam and because Shiites typically are minorities in the states in which they find themselves, the most widespread and natural form of Shiite activism has been communal - defending the interests of the Shiite community in relation to other populations and to the state itself. For this reason, and also because of the leading political role played by scholars and religious authorities, Shiite Islamism has remained unified to a remarkable degree and has not fragmented into conflicting forms of activism as has Sunni Islamism.

The rise of Islamism

- 1950s and 60s revenue crisis that inflicted most Arab and Islamic regimes
- Until then there had been an 'unwritten law' that the regimes would provide society with social services like education, health care, etc. and society would not complain about drawbacks in human and civil rights. b/c of the revenue crisis, the regimes were not able to keep up their part of the bargain. Islamic ops came in and blamed the non-pious regimes, and they provided the people with the services that they were lacking from the regimes. This led to the Islamist groups becoming stronger and more popular
- Sayyid Quth was an important figure in the anti-rationalist struggle in Egypt
- The fall of communism created a vacuum that Islamism could now fill

Sunni Islam

- Sunni is the majority
- Islamism is Islamic activism writ large
- Attempt to reconcile Islamic tradition with modernity
- But: different conceptions of the problem and solution
- Not all Islamism is violent
- Not all is anti-Western
- Backbone: jamaat (voluntary associations) that do da'wa (preaching)
- Islamism
 - Political
 - Missionary
 - Jihadi
- Backbone of Islamic activism is jamaat. Most Islamist activity in the world takes place through Islamic associations, parties, and movements
- Most activism is not terrorism, but actually da'wa – the call to Islam (preaching). Non-violent spread of Islam
- Political Islamism – seen in the Muslim Brotherhood or the Justice and Development Party in Turkey
- Islamism is an attempt to reconcile the tradition of Islam with modernity. Islamism is a response to the challenges and perceived threats of modernity
- Islamism denotes an attempt to preserve Islamic values in the face of modernity
- Like other fundamentalist movements, islamists use the tools of modernity. They employ the tools of modernity even though they are against it

Political Islamism

- Purpose: attain political power at national level
- Predicament: Muslim misgovernment and social injustice

- Only a few of these were high ranking officials
- Final report issued in 1998
- Many victims had a problem with the amnesties because they wanted people to be punished for their actions
- The new govt agreed to grant amnesty for past crimes on a case by case basis. It didn't matter how high the individual in govt, if that person came and gave a full confession they would be granted amnesty
- What do the victims get out of it?
 - Closure by having their stories be publicly known
 - Are vindicated by having the regime admit and acknowledge the crimes
 - For some victims this wasn't enough and tried to prevent the TRC from being established
- The mandate of the TRC was actually not to judge whether the apartheid regime was just or legal, but it was to investigate actions that were illegal under apartheid's own laws

Reconciliation in S. Africa's TRC

- 'reconciliation' permeated TRC
- Christian theology of rehabilitation stressed by Tutu
- Focus on forgiveness
- Mixed reactions
 - For some victims, just sharing what had happened to them was enough and liberating. Were able to forgive
 - For others, they were not able to forgive. About 2/3 of Africans said that the revelations of the TRC made them angrier and less forgiving than before

Perspectives on reconciliation

- R. Scott Appleby
 - Lasting peace requires struggle for reconciliation
 - Justice and human rights are key to the process of reconciliation
 - In order to achieve lasting peace there has to be continuous struggle for reconciliation between the parties; this is opposed to just an end to warfare
 - The people who are best situated to achieve reconciliation between the parties are religious actors/communities. They must be prominent in the reconciliation efforts
 - One element that is fundamental in reconciliation is the notion of justice. Justice unites every religion
 - There will be no peace where there is no justice, where human beings don't have the basic human rights
- Marc Gopin
 - Leaders play crucial role
 - Symbolic steps taken by these leaders can go a long way
 - Even small gestures matter
 - Empathy, humility
 - Importance of convincing an audience of one's own community
 - Has an optimistic tone. He identifies more inter-faith dialogues. The Catholic Church's acknowledgement of the past injustices done to Jews was a huge step towards acceptance/justice
 - Religious leaders should stress empathy, non-violence, the sanctity of human life, self-reflection, repentance, etc. during the reconciliation process
 - Methods of peace making should not only focus on elites, but should cross a broad spectrum of religious leaders. In the process of religious conflict management, one of the greatest obstacles on both sides are the fundamentalists on each side. They will need to show the fundamentalists the humanity of the enemy – this would be a step in the right direction
 - People need to be able to 'save face' on what they did. Need to __
- Appleby, there is a growing consensus (even amongst realists) that building a lasting peace requires different methods. There needs to be a growing involvement in religious activism

Religious Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

Religious Peacebuilding

- The range of activities performed by religious actors and institutions for the purpose of resolving and transforming deadly conflict
- Goal: Build social relations and political institutions characterized by tolerance and nonviolence
- Efforts on the ground and away from conflict zone

PB entails conflict transformation

Components of peacebuilding

- Conflict transformation
 - Conflict management

- **How did the church get involved?** At the beginning, FRELIMO suppressed the churches and appropriated their assets. Still, the church gained a reputation for becoming an independent voice in the conflict, because it was the main institution providing moral support.
- By the 1980's, the relations between FRELIMO and the church improved. The conditions of poverty and suffering became so horrendous which lead FRELIMO to reconsider its policies. It now looked for relief from any organization that could help. The Community of Sant'Edigio offered help in bringing the two warring sides back together.
- **A bit about the community:** CSE was involved with local churches since 1976. It became personally familiar with community leaders and missionaries in the region.
- It established a link to RENAMO in 1982, when it was involved in negotiations to release a number of prisoners captured by RENAMO. This was the starting point of longer lasting ties with the rebels. By establishing themselves as 'honest brokers', they gained the trust of RENAMO.
- In 1985, CSE arranged a meeting between FRELIMO and Pope John Paul II, thus also becoming involved with FRELIMO.
- CSE became involved in collecting for relief support for the civilians in Mozambique and it spread information about the war among European countries. With the help of the Italian government, it could deploy food and humanitarian aid in Mozambique.
- When Mozambique's president died in 1986, he was replaced by President Chissano, who recognized that there was no military solution to the conflict, and who officially requested Western aid contingent on reforms (political, economic, social sectors). The state also started to elicit support from the religious community, giving them back their property and granting more religious freedoms.
- In 1987, CSE arranges a visit of the Pope to Mozambique.
- Peace talks are initiated in 1989 between RENAMO and church leaders in Kenya. Only in July 1990, direct talks between FRELIMO and RENAMO begin. After 10 rounds of peace talks in the headquarters of CSE, peace accords are signed in October 1992.

The CSE

- The Community of Sant'Egidio was founded in Rome in 1968 by a group of Roman high school students led by Andrea Riccardi.. Their activities include setting up refuges for the old, hospices for AIDS patients, and printing a handbook titled "Where to Eat, Sleep, and Wash in Rome" as it is to the homeless. The lay Catholic Community of Sant'Egidio is among global leaders on HIV/AIDS, running programs across Africa, pushing scientific research inter alia on mother child transmission, and advocating passionately that everyone deserves the best care.
- The charitable effort of Sant'Egidio also led it to be a well-regarded mediator of peace negotiations. In the late 1980s, the Community came to the realization that their humanitarian efforts in Mozambique, then torn by the Mozambican Civil War, could not succeed without peace. In 1990, the Community was accepted by the ruling FRELIMO and rebel Mozambican National Resistance as a mediator, playing a key role in the Rome General Peace Accords signed in 1992. They continue peace initiatives in Algeria (notably the 1995 Sant'Egidio Platform), the Balkans, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and other areas, in the belief that war is the "mother of every poverty".
- Its approach is based on withholding judgment and building friendship with all sides, following the commandment to love everyone, even your enemy. They are looking at all people as sinners, but this judgment is for God to make, not for humans.

The Mennonites

- Pioneers of faith-based conflict transformation
- Main organization: Mennonite Central Committee (effective in Nicaragua, Somalia, Northern Ireland)
- Their heritage draws back on the Anabaptist movement in the Protestant Church
- Committed to complete non-violence, even in self-defense → literal interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount
- Used to live withdrawn from the community because they said that this is the only way to protect themselves from the sinning society.
- The atrocities committed in WWI and WWII made them change their passive stance (whereas, for example the Amish who come from the same tradition, still live in a withdrawn, passive way).
- 1978: Mennonite Conciliation Service established, which trained professional mediators.
- Mid 1980's: Many leaders moved to conflict zones all over the world.
- The mediating movement is centered around John Paul Lederach.