

Religion and IR Section Sponsored Panels and Roundtables, ISA 2023

Session Number	Title	Date	Abstract
WA71	Same Blame Game? Retaliatory Violence and Diversionary Identity Conflict	Wednesday Mar 15, 2023 8:15 AM	Conflict scholars have long argued that mass violence against minority groups is often instigated by ruling elites facing political threats. Much less well understood are the conditions under which majority publics will participate in or support such out-group violence, particularly when physical threats posed by out-groups are not readily apparent. The papers on this panel approach this puzzle from multiple angles, employing diverse qualitative and quantitative strategies. While conspiracy theories and perceived marginalization of majority group interests increase readiness to engage in violence against out-groups, these violent acts also contribute to policing of in-group solidarity, raising the cost of defection. Politically-threatened elites and control-seeking insurgents therefore frequently prioritize ideologically-salient targets for violence over direct targeting of opponents, seeking to demoralize and demobilize internal and external opposition forces.
WB56	Is a Post-Secular Age Post-Liberal?	Wednesday Mar 15, 2023 10:30 AM	Recent scholarship on religion in the social sciences and humanities has powerfully questioned and critiqued the hegemonic status of secular modes of thought and practices (Asad). Many of these voices represent a move beyond the secular as emancipatory. For instance, Habermasian as well as political theological perspectives on the post-secular often portray religious ethics and actors as foundational for challenging the excesses of neo-liberal economics or promoting new forms of reconciliation and justice in a globalized world. The crisis of secularism appears entangled with that of the liberal international order. It is in this context that we are also seeing the resurgence of illiberal religious forces, including multiple forms of fundamentalism and terrorism; far-right, nationalist, and populist movements which draw on exclusionary religious identities; culture wars and narratives of civilizational clashes; and the turn particular forms of religious geopolitics. Rather than rescuing liberalism, as Habermas intended, this panel asks whether a post-secular age is likely to be – for better or worse – a post-liberal one too?
WD46	GIRS “Situation Room” – How Cultures, Religions, Civilizations and their Narratives Influence Major World Crises	Wednesday Mar 15, 2023 4:00 PM	GIRS “situation room” – How cultures, religions, civilizations and their narratives influence major world crises - It has been claimed that the mainstream IR studies failed to satisfactorily explain, much less predict, the end of the Cold War and the contours of the post-Cold War world –now in the process of unforeseen dramatical changes. In this “post-secular” global era (Habermas), there is more than ever the need for intellectual situation rooms to provide policy makers and experts not with simply with one worldview posing as universal but with the different narratives unfolding during any given crisis. The participants of this roundtable will provide diverse perspectives on the ongoing crises (e.g. by the Ukraine- Russia war, global food, health and energy crises, etc) to see whether we have again missed something in our assessments. Speakers include experts on Islam and on the effect of world religions on IR in the post-secular world. The RT includes a Chinese, Russian, Latin American and European scholars, an expert on North Korea and its juche, a theologian of the Russian Orthodox church. GIRS intends to take seriously the diversity of perspectives, and the analysis of the current crises will be its test.

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WD68	Quantitative Approaches to Religion in International	Wednesday Mar 15, 2023 4:00 PM	This is the second of two linked panels exploring quantitative approaches to religion and international studies. This panel focuses on studies using survey-based studies. The studies cover a wide array of topics including the roles of multiple religious factors such as religiosity, theological traditionalism,, and membership in ethnoreligious groups influence attitudes toward military action by the United States, the influence of religious leaders on attitudes toward inter-religious peace among respondents in Sierra Leone and Togo, why religious and ethnic minorities in the United States are blamed for the violent actions of their homelands, the influences on support for religious vs. secular-based protests in the United States, and an examination of the political and sociological consequences of maintaining a religious monopoly in Turkey.
TA40	The Ritual Moment in International Relations	Thursday Mar 16, 2023 8:15 AM	This panel probes ritual as a thinking tool for the study of various international phenomena from peace and deterrence to the international discourse on genocide. If ritual is the basic social act, as Roy Rappaport maintains, what can we see and sense with it when trying to make sense of world politics? What is to be gained for the modern endeavour of International Relations (IR) by taking ritualization seriously – regardless of rituals’ perceived belonging to the pre-modern world and hence alleged irrelevance in the contemporary societies? The abundance of various taboos, stigmas and sacrifices, ritualized expulsion, banishment, purification and mitigation in international political discourse and practice being regularly called upon in the name of national unity, security, and/or public health should attune us to think through the place and function of world politics. Conceptually, the panel explores a grammar of rituals, juxtaposing ritual action to alternative theories of action in world politics. Epistemologically, we reflect on the value of ritual sensibility for seeing, hearing and sensing world politics differently. The panel investigates the emerging ritual moment in IR theory in conversation with the practice, affective and corporeal turns in IR, ontological security studies and poststructuralist scholarship.
TC14	Religion & IR 2023 Distinguished Scholar Award Panel Honoring Ron Hassner	Thursday Mar 16, 2023 1:45 PM	The Distinguished Scholar roundtable will celebrate the prominent scholar selected by the current Religion and IR Section’s (REL) Distinguished Scholar Committee (DS) for 2023. The honoree is Professor Ron Hassner.
FC67	Progress in the study of religion and IR: the view from the trenches	Friday Mar 17, 2023 1:45 PM	Research into religion and international relations has flourished since the sub-field first realized it was woefully unprepared to understand this crucial aspect of world politics roughly two decades ago. A burst of theoretical and conceptual work created a foundation for a new generation of scholars to delve into diverse areas of international relations where religion should be taken seriously. This wave of interest has raised a new set of questions about the extent of progress in this research agenda, the integration of this research into the mainstream of international relations, and even the nature of religion itself. In order to address these issues, this roundtable brings together a group of scholars from the generation advised and mentored by the initial pioneers in this research program, and now actively expanding its horizons. The roundtable includes experts on conflict, foreign policy, humanitarianism, international law, and peace, as well as a perspective from comparative politics. Each participant will discuss progress in their area, current challenges, and next steps for the research program.

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Session Number	Title	Date	Abstract
FD37	Islamic Extremism Tracking Past to Present	Friday Mar 17, 2023 4:00 PM	Islamic extremism across time became a religious ideology adapting to political formations of the 20th and 21st centuries. As a political and religious ideology, it sustained and adapted through extraordinary difficulties in the past in the Global South, being still present and formidable till today. Through an ideology-centric approach intersecting with the communities and localities, this panel examines how radical Islam changed at places of contestation and sustained beyond time and place, or in some cases failed. The papers on this panel, by looking at different manifestations of Islamic Extremism locally and globally, will demonstrate how the ideology adapted and faced contestations of time and space. Further, this paper expands beyond the usual research on Salafi- Jihadism, to include other schools of Islam, such as Shiism. This panel further combines a multitude of methodologies including media studies, ethnographic fieldwork, archival work, religious studies, and legal studies, to showcase the research across disciplines of international relations, history, cultural studies, and political science. This combination of methodologies and disciplines first showcases 'what' extraordinary difficulties it faced in the past and present and second 'how' radical Islam as a religious and political ideology sustained or failed through the obstacles of times and space.
FD29	Quantitative Approaches to Religion in International Studies 1: Database-based Studies	Friday Mar 17, 2023 4:00 PM	This is the first of two linked panels exploring quantitative approaches to religion and international studies. This panel focuses on studies using databases which include events-based and demographic data using countries and groups as the unit of analysis. The studies cover a wide array of topics including the role of identity and intersectionality in conflict behavior by Islamists, the link between Madrassas and terrorism, how past conflict influences discrimination against religious minorities, the link between self-determination and religious freedom among indigenous minorities, and the relationship between political secularism and violence.
SA44	International Relations of Islam: Ethics of Peace and Conflict	Saturday Mar 18, 2023 8:15 AM	The roundtable will explore the ethical underpinnings of Islam's just war theory and their evolution in response to the emergence of the modern states system. Among the themes we will address are: alternative schools of Islamic IR thought, Islam's approach toward the question of national security, peace as a foundational value in Islamic statecraft, and war ethics from Islam's ethical perspective.

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SB08	Colonialisms and Queer Politics: Sexualities, Genders and Unsettling Colonialities	Saturday Mar 18, 2023 10:30 AM	This panel presents research generated from a collective project involving comparative analysis of empires and contemporary colonialities in relation to sexualities and genders beyond heterosexual norms, in the book <i>Colonialisms and Queer Politics: Sexualities, Genders and Unsettling Colonialities</i> , co-edited by Sonia Corrêa, Gustavo Gomes da Costa Santos and Matthew Waites (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2023). The project offers comparative analysis of empires associated with Eurocentrism - Portuguese, Spanish, British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Ottoman, German, Russian, Italian and United States - and of their legacies. The panel comprises three papers on specific empires - British, Spanish and United States - followed by two papers with comparative analysis: one offering historical comparison, and a final paper offering analysis of contemporary legacies for present regulation and for global queer politics. The analytical framework involves engaging the dialogue of global historical sociology with postcolonial and decolonial perspectives. Key differences between empires relate to relationships between racialisation, gender and sexuality, especially regarding reproduction; Protestant, Catholic and Islamic religions; languages; different scientific sexologies; and differences in legal regulation and criminalisation. Differences in present legacies similarly include how religions have been assimilated; variable legal criminalisation; and forms of transnational LGBTI organizing.
SB70	Politics of Religion and Religion of Politics in Turkey	Saturday Mar 18, 2023 10:30 AM	
SB60	Beyond Belief: provocative ways belief provokes social action	Saturday Mar 18, 2023 10:30 AM	Social action is often prompted by deeply held beliefs, often elevated to the level of religion. They include not only religion (whether authentic or imagined) but also such concepts of philosophies of non-violence. This panel explores how belief acts in various contexts to provoke social action, whether grounded in actual liturgical beliefs or ones informed by political influences.
SC67	Global Authoritarianism and Religion	Saturday Mar 18, 2023 1:45 PM	In an era of global crises and democratic decline, this diverse panel examines the entanglement between authoritarianism and religion. Our first pair of papers examines how religious groups can shape authoritarian durability. Timothy Longman analyzes clergy support for political elites in Africa, while Alexis Lerner contrasts historical cases of Jewish minorities to demonstrate how regimes' limited tolerance of religious minorities can strengthen autocrats' survival. The next two papers reverse the directional arrow to examine political actors' cultivation of religious identity within authoritarian structures. Lisel Hintz adds a media perspective by treating cooking shows as a didactic platform of nation-building, analyzing the rise of "performed piety" in Turkish cooking shows as part of the ruling party's populist authoritarian cultivation of the model citizen. Jeremy Menchik interrogates the place of missionaries in empire, suggesting that missionaries function as part of the ideological apparatus fostering social change and facilitating the persistence of historical and continued imperialism. Finally, moving from durability and consolidation to regime change, Alexandre Pelletier studies how legacies of authoritarian repression shape Islamic networks' ability to protect pluralism during democratization. Together, the panel charts the central role of religion in the history and contemporary moment of global authoritarianism.

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SD68	Formations of the theologico-political	Saturday Mar 18, 2023 4:00 PM	<p>In order to challenge prevalent narratives downplaying the presence of religion on the international stage, International Relations discussions over the past twenty years have flagged the extent to which religious actors shape and reshape the international realm (Petito and Hatzopolous 2003; Fox and Sandler 2004; Thomas 2005; Hurd 2008). Recent explorations of the political theology of the international (Molloy 2017; JIRD 2019; Paipais 2020; Bain 2020) go a step further by deliberately shifting the focus away from religion as a socio-political object of study towards the manner in which secular international political thought is itself shot through with theological motifs. This panel extends the political theological line of enquiry out of a recognition that the International Relations political theological conversation has thus far largely unfolded at the level of the history of ideas. It does so by way of the notion of “formations”, which brings to light how the theologico-political problematic manifests itself not only at the level of belief, but also at the level of being and acting in the world. Socio-political practices and habitudes of communities, of political agents, and indeed even of the scholar represent formations of the theologico-political on the global stage.</p>