

LIKE SHIPS PASSING IN THE DAY:  
THE INTERFACE BETWEEN  
RELIGION AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE  
PROGRAMMES, PUBLICATIONS AND CURRICULA  
OF CANADIAN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

By  
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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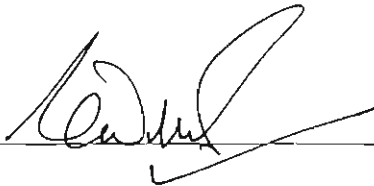
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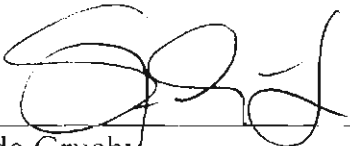
ECONOMIC & DEVELOPMENT - RELIGIOUS ASPECTS  
INTERCULTURAL AND RACIAL RELATIONS IN  
DEVELOPING ECONOMIES  
CHRISTIANITY + CULTURE - CHANGES  
ACCULTURATION - CHANGES  
UNIVERSITIES + COLLEGES - TEACHING  
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EDUCATION - TEACHING - CURRICULUM

## DECLARATION

I, Owen Willis, hereby declare that this thesis, unless specified in the text, is my original work. I also declare that I have not submitted this research project for any other purpose at any other Institution or University.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owen Willis  \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 1/8/05

As supervisor, I agree to the submission of this thesis

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr S. M. de Gruchy  \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 1-8-05

## ABSTRACT

*Although matters of faith, religion and spirituality are central to the lives of millions of people in the global South, and many faith based organizations are actively involved in development, few northern academics in the field of international development make explicit reference to religion's role in development, and, if they do, the subject is often subsumed under another category, such as culture. This study seeks to shed light on the interface between religion and international development in Canadian academic institutions: to what extent is the influence -- for good or ill -- of religion on development acknowledged in their programmes, publications, and curricula? This is accomplished by means of an analysis of references to religion in the Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS) and Canadian Development Reports, as well as in the course offerings of International Development Studies (IDS) departments at Canadian universities. Findings show that only about 1% of article titles and 2% per cent of abstracts mention the subject of religion in its broadest definition over the twenty five year history of the CJDS. Of 2,684 IDS courses offered (including courses cross-listed with Religious Studies departments), some 3% mention religion in their titles, and 8% in course descriptions. However, upon closer examination, only a handful of courses directly analyze the relationship between religion and development. Findings from this research are further interrogated in surveys and interviews with key informants, in order to uncover some of the reasons for what is perceived to be a lacuna in IDS teaching and research. Various recommendations are advanced: positivistic biases in academia need to be acknowledged, more research should be devoted towards an area currently understudied, and northern academics must be challenged to consider the religious reality of southern life, for, in Robert Chambers' words, "Whose reality counts?" Clearly the religious dimension of global life needs to be afforded a sharper focus in the programmes, publications and curricula of IDS departments at Canadian academic institutions.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people, too numerous to mention here, deserve thanks for their patience and encouragement during the writing of this thesis.

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Without Tina, who supported, encouraged, and inspired me every step of the way, this project would not have been completed. She deserves any recognition every bit as much as I do.

Special thanks go to Dr Steve de Gruchy, who has combined great intellect with kindness in guiding me along the academic path. This thesis is much stronger as a result of his incisive comments.

Thank you too to Saint Frances of Lombardy Lane for assisting with proof-reading the manuscript.

And I will be magnanimous in "victory" to "Dr" David Willis, my "competitor" along the way!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
COMMON ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	x
1 SECULAR NORTH AND RELIGIOUS SOUTH	1
1.1 “Ships Passing in the Night”	2
1.2 A North-South Survey	7
1.3 Research Questions	11
1.4 Methodology	15
1.5 Limitations	21
1.6 Chapter Outline	24
1.7 Conclusion	27
2 THE RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE: SOURCES AND RESOURCES	28
2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings	29
2.2 Faith Communities and Faith Based Organizations	32
2.3 Journals and Volumes	35
2.4 Special Journal and Magazine Issues	40
2.5 Resurgent Religion	43
2.6 Regional Literatures	47
2.7 Environment, Gender, Culture	49
2.8 Institutions and Initiatives	52
2.9 Reports	57
2.10 Conferences	61
2.11 International Development Agencies	63
2.12 Conclusion	66
3. DEVELOPMENT AND RELIGION: A BRIEF HISTORY	68
3.1 Definitions	68
3.2 “In the Beginning...”	73

3.3 The Age of Enlightenment	75
3.4 The Sociologists	78
3.5 Colonialism	87
3.6 Modernization	89
3.7 Secularization	92
3.8 Dependency and its Discontents	95
3.9 Towards More Expansive Definitions of Development	98
3.10 Berger's Reformulations of the World	109
3.11 Signals of Rapprochement	113
3.12 Religion and Development in Theory and Practice	115
3.12.1 Language	117
3.12.2 Reductionism	119
3.12.3 A Spiritual or Religious Dimension	121
3.13 Conclusion	125
4 THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	127
4.1 Development and Religion	128
4.2 Institutionally and Individually, Directly and Indirectly, Historically and Currently	129
4.3 The Relationship between Religion and Economic Development	134
4.4 Judaism and Development	139
4.5 Christianity and Development	141
4.5.1 Christianity, Politics and Development in Latin America	141
4.5.2 "For Commerce and Christianity"	150
4.5.3 "Between Politics and Prayer"	154
4.5.4 Contemporary Christianity in Africa	158
4.6 Islam and Development	160
4.7 Buddhism and Development	167
4.8 Hinduism and Development	178
4.9 Other Religions and Development	185
4.10 Organizations of Faith: FBOs and RNGOs	190
4.11 Religion, Politics and Conflict	199
4.12 Fundamentalisms	207
4.13 The Search for Meaning	214
4.14 Conclusion	216
5 WORLDVIEWS AND COSMOLOGIES	217
5.1 Nonrelational and Unintentional Power	217

5.2 Worldviews and Cosmologies	219
5.2.1 Old and New Gods	227
5.2.2 Healing Spirits and Silenced Voices	230
5.2.3 Sacred Places and Pastoralist Cosmology	235
5.2.4 Time and Death	240
5.2.5 Social Egalitarianism, Bovine Mystique and Social Capital	242
5.2.6 Muti, Mutilations and Masks	248
5.2.7 Atoms and Molecules; Gods and Spirits	251
5.3 Conclusion	254

6 RELIGION IN THE <i>CANADIAN JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES</i> AND <u>CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTS</u>	257
6.1 The <i>CJDS</i> Study	258
6.1.1 Methodology	265
6.2 Articles Referring to Religion in Titles and Abstracts	268
6.3 Related Articles	279
6.4 <i>CJDS</i> Conclusions	298
6.5 <u>Canadian Development Reports</u>	299
6.6 Conclusion	305

7 AN ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES	307
7.1 List of Universities	307
7.2 Methodological Notes	310
7.3 Anglophone Universities	313
7.3.1 University of Alberta, Augustana Faculty	313
7.3.2 Carleton University	315
7.3.3 Dalhousie University	320
7.3.4 Huron University College	328
7.3.5 McGill University	330
7.3.6 Menno Simons College	334
7.3.7 Queen's University	338
7.3.8 St Francis Xavier University	341
7.3.9 St Mary's University	344
7.3.10 Trent University	346
7.3.11 Trinity Western University	350
7.3.12 University College of Cape Breton	354



7.3.13 University College of the Fraser Valley	355
7.3.14 University of Calgary	357
7.3.15 University of Guelph	359
7.3.16 University of New Brunswick	361
7.3.17 University of Northern British Columbia	363
7.3.18 University of Ottawa	365
7.3.19 University of Saskatchewan	367
7.3.20 University of Toronto	372
7.3.21 University of Windsor	377
7.3.22 Wilfrid Laurier University	379
7.3.23 York University	383
7.4 Francophone Universities	391
7.4.1 L'Université de Montréal	391
7.4.2 Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)	394
7.4.3 L'Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO)	395
7.4.4 Université Laval	396
7.5 Statistics	398
7.5.1 Anglophone Universities	398
7.5.2 Francophone Universities	401
7.5.3 Combined Total	402
7.6 Interpretation	402
7.6.1 Culture and Religion	406
7.6.2 Religion and Development	409
7.6.3 "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada	415
7.7 Conclusion	419
8 AGAINST THE GRAIN AND IN THE GAPS	420
8.1 Surveys	421
8.1.1 Methodology and Findings	421
8.1.2 Survey Comments	436
8.2 Interviews	440
8.2.1 Interview Comments and Reflections	442
8.2.2 An Interview with Juan Tellez	491
8.3 Conclusion	495
9 LIKE SHIPS PASSING IN THE DAY	497
9.1 Structure and Summary	497

9.2 Recommendations	502
9.3 Conclusion: Ships Passing in the Day	506
APPENDIX 1: Dalhousie/ MUST Survey	508
APPENDIX 2: Results of Dalhousie/ MUST Survey	509
APPENDIX 3: Survey of IDS Departments	510
APPENDIX 4: IDS Department Survey Distribution	513
APPENDIX 5: Interviews	514
BIBLIOGRAPHY	518

## COMMON ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS\*

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AJWS	American Jewish World Service
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
ANC	African National Congress
ATR	African traditional religion
AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CASID	Canadian Association for the Study of International Development
CCODP	Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
CCUPIDS	Canadian Consortium of University Programs in International Development Studies
CDR	Canadian Development Report
CEJI	Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CJDS	Canadian Journal of Development Studies
CLWR	Canadian Lutheran World Relief
CBO	Community Based Organization
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSWR	Center for the Study of World Religions
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EOTC	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GNH	Gross National Happiness
HDR	Human Development Report
HIR	Harvard International Review
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	International Development Studies
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MUST	Mbarara University of Science and Technology
NGK	Dutch Reformed Church
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSI	The North-South Institute
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PFI	Private Foreign Investment

PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RNGO	Religious Non-Governmental Organization
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policy/ Programmes
SGI	Soka Gakkai International
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SRD	Science, Religion and Development
SSM	Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WCC	World Council of Churches
WDR	World Development Report
WFDD	World Faiths Development Dialogue
WHO	World Health Organization
WJR	World Jewish Relief
WV	World Vision

\* Canadian universities not included.

The Eagle soars in the summit of Heaven.  
The Hunter with his dogs pursues his circuit.  
O perpetual revolution of configured stars.  
O perpetual recurrence of determined seasons.  
O world of spring and autumn, birth and dying!  
The endless cycle of idea and action,  
Endless invention, endless experiment,  
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness;  
Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;  
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.  
All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance,  
All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,  
But nearness to death no nearer to God.  
Where is the Life we have lost in living?  
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?  
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?  
The cycles of Heaven in twenty centuries  
Bring us farther from God and nearer to the Dust.

-- T. S. Eliot, "Choruses from 'The Rock'"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> T. S. Eliot, "Choruses from 'The Rock'", Collected Poems, 1909-1935, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1936), 179.

## CHAPTER ONE

### SECULAR NORTH AND RELIGIOUS SOUTH

Although matters of faith, religion and spirituality<sup>1</sup> are central to the lives of millions of people in the global South,<sup>2</sup> and many faith based organizations (FBOs) are actively involved in development, few northern academics in the field of international development make explicit reference to religion's role in development, and, if they do, the subject is often subsumed under another category, such as culture. In Kurt Alan Ver Beek's words, spirituality is "a development taboo,"<sup>3</sup> yet, paradoxically, according to Gilbert Rist, development may be "the new religion of the West."<sup>4</sup>

The general aim of this study is to shed light on the interface between religion and international development in Canadian academic literature and institutions. To what extent do Canadian universities acknowledge the influence -- for good or ill -- of religion on development in their programmes, publications, and curricula? The area of International Development Studies has seen remarkable growth in Canada in recent years.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The terms, "faith," "religion" and "spirituality" are used throughout the thesis in their broadest popular sense. The term "religion" will, unless noted otherwise, be used to include "faith" and "spirituality" as well. A discussion of definitions is presented in Chapter Three.

<sup>2</sup> The terms "North" and "South" are generally used to refer to the developed and developing worlds, respectively. The "West" is also used, on occasion, for the North or industrialized world, but the somewhat outdated term "Third World" is avoided. In using terms such as "North" and "South," it is recognized that "Norths" (wealthy and educated élites) exist in the South, as much as "Souths" (pockets of poverty) exist in the North.

<sup>3</sup> Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo," *Development in Practice*, 10, no. 1 (2000), 31-43.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert Rist, "Development as the New Religion of the West," *Quid Pro Quo*, 1, no. 2 (1990).

<sup>5</sup> Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) and the North-South Institute (NSI), "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada, Ottawa, 2003. For a further discussion, please see 7.6.3.

Interdisciplinary in nature, programmes focus primarily on development in the South,<sup>6</sup> with particular emphasis on the challenge of poverty.

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the thesis. by situating it in the wider debate, stating the research problem, setting out the research questions, detailing the methodology, acknowledging the limitations and providing an overview of the chapters of the thesis.

## 1.1 Ships Passing in the Night

For some years, researchers sensitive to religious issues and impacts have claimed that a distinct lacuna -- a blind spot perhaps of considerable proportions -- exists in the way that academics and other professionals involved in the world of development regard religion's role in development. As Katherine Marshall suggests:

The role of religious institutions, leaders, and programs in the development process is one of the more significant 'blind spots' in past development practice. These institutions, ideas, and perspectives have been too little understood, and their potential role in the complex kaleidoscope of development insufficiently explored. In many parts of the development business and in many religious programs and institutions, dialogue has resembled ships passing in the night.<sup>7</sup>

This "blind spot" may have translated into significant gaps in the pedagogical focus of academic programmes and in the research interests of university professors. Referring to "spirituality" rather than "religion," Ver Beek declares that: "the subject is conspicuously

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<sup>6</sup> Increasingly, a realization has arisen that Canada itself faces development issues, especially among the First Nations, but overwhelmingly the focus of IDS programmes is international, hence, *International Development Studies*.

<sup>7</sup> Katherine Marshall, "Development and Religion. A Different Lens on Development Debates." *Peabody Journal of Education*, 76, no. 3 (2001), 339-375. <[http://www.wfdd.org.uk/articles\\_talks/marshall.pdf](http://www.wfdd.org.uk/articles_talks/marshall.pdf)> (3/12/04).

under-represented in the development discourse.” adding that: “The result of this silence is a failure to explore and understand an integral aspect of how Southern people understand the world, make decisions, and take action.”<sup>8</sup>

Writing in a Special Issue of the journal *Development*, focusing on “Religion and Development,” Wendy Harcourt notes that: “The development community’s broad commitment to social justice and social transformation to achieve a better world has traditionally excluded a belief in God, deities or spirituality, of any religious form, be it organized, community-based or individually held... Religion in this equation is ignored.”<sup>9</sup>

Father William Ryan, one of the few Canadian academics and priests who has straddled the divide between religion and international development in Canada, bemoans this ignorance, recognizing an obstinate research problematic in acknowledging religion’s place in development. Commenting on the reaction to his publication, Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue, he states: “The major objections to it have come from Western researchers who fear that if cultural and religious values form part of the development paradigm, it will jeopardize some human advances stemming from the Enlightenment.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality”, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Wendy Harcourt, “Editorial: Clearing the Path for Collective Compassion”, Special Issue: “Religion and Development”, *Development*, 46, no. 4, (2003), 3.

<sup>10</sup> William Ryan, “Our Way of Proceeding”, in Sharon Harper (Ed.), The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2000), 239.



Ironically, the exposure -- or lack of it -- that the subject of religion receives in the Canadian literature on development seems in no way to correspond to the amount of funds generated by Canadian religious organizations, most notably World Vision. In spite of the claim that: "Religious communities are, without question, the largest and best-organized civil institutions in the world today,"<sup>11</sup> much of the work done by FBOs or religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs) is underemphasized, confirming "...a long-standing trend in the social and political science literature to overlook the role of religious actors in the public sphere."<sup>12</sup>

As the twentieth century ended, the public square, at least in Canada, was considered to be thoroughly secular. The seemingly irresistible forces of modernization had fuelled the assumption in northern academia that religion would inevitably give way to secularization. Surely the days of religion were numbered. Within the academy, the theory of secularization -- "the only theory which was able to attain a truly paradigmatic status within the modern social sciences"<sup>13</sup> -- was accepted almost as an article of faith.

For many observers in the West, religion was increasingly considered a relic of the superstitious past and the curse of a backward world. However, global events, from the Islamic Revolution in Iran to the rise of the Religious Right in the United States, gave cause to question the assumptions underlying the supposed certitudes of secularization.

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<sup>11</sup> World Conference on Religion and Peace, <[http://www.wcrp.org/RforP/MISSION\\_CONTENT.html](http://www.wcrp.org/RforP/MISSION_CONTENT.html)> (13/1/05).

<sup>12</sup> Julia Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations: An Exploratory Analysis", International Society for Third-Sector Research and the Johns Hopkins University, (2003), 2-3.

<sup>13</sup> Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), 17.

Then the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, underlined in sharp relief the realization that religion could no longer be discounted in geopolitical analysis. “Rarely in modern times has religion’s role in international affairs been discussed with the sense of urgency that it is today... Now, the world is as rife with uncertainty and insecurity as ever, and religion has again emerged as a potentially decisive influence on the course of human history.”<sup>14</sup> Religion, having been relegated, at least in the West, to the status of an epiphenomenon and consigned to the private realm, has resurfaced in the public square, demanding a public response.

In light of this changed geo-political landscape, Philip Jenkins foresees that: “the twenty-first century will almost certainly be regarded by future historians as a century in which religion replaced ideology as the prime animating and destructive force in human affairs,”<sup>15</sup> and argues, in the context of the growth of Christianity in the South, that: “understanding the religion in its non-Western context is a prime necessity for anyone seeking to understand the emerging world.”<sup>16</sup> Certainly, the “emerging world” is the primary focus of International Development Studies (IDS) programmes across Canada. Therefore, any lack in understanding such an important aspect of life for many people in the global South represents a lacuna of considerable proportions.

Ironically, in the search for understanding and pursuit of enlightenment, the northern University portrays itself as one of the few places where academic freedom allows

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<sup>14</sup> Special Issue: “Beyond Beliefs”, *Harvard International Review*, 25, no. 4 (2004).  
<<http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/index.htm?id=1187>> (31/12/04).

<sup>15</sup> Philip Jenkins, “The Next Christianity”, *The Atlantic Monthly*, (October, 2002), 54.

<sup>16</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 215.

spirited debate on controversial subjects: “The university does not set itself up as an arbiter of truth, but as an arena within which contrary theories can be examined and can collide in open debate.”<sup>17</sup> Yet in seeming to avoid debate on one of the most sensitive of subjects, it may be asked if the academy is in fact demonstrating an ideology, consistent with Karen Armstrong’s observation: “There is also a form of secular fundamentalism, which opposes all forms of faith as belligerently as religious fundamentalists attack secularism”<sup>18</sup> Religion has the capacity to raise the emotional temperature in even an academic debate, as is evidenced by the comment of one anonymous professor in a university review process: “I’d rather have a department of pornography than a department of religion at this university.”<sup>19</sup> But is religion in fact as absent as it seems, or are some very religious views hidden behind the secularist veneer?

The lack of religious focus in academic enquiry may disguise the intrinsically religious nature of the development initiative itself, described by Gilbert Rist as “the new religion of the West.”<sup>20</sup> Karl Marx recognized the tension, expressed also in his personal struggle for daily survival, between academic theory and actual practice: “The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.”<sup>21</sup> Colin Leys echoes Marx’s dictum: “...for all its shortcomings the great merit of development theory has always consisted in being committed to the idea that we can and should try to change

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<sup>17</sup> David Ellerman, “Should Development Agencies Have Official Views”, in Deborah Eade, (Ed.), *Development Methods and Approaches: Critical Reflections*, (Oxford: Oxfam, 2003), 28.

<sup>18</sup> Karen Armstrong, “Resisting Modernity: The Backlash Against Secularism”, *Harvard International Review*, 25, no. 4 (2004), < <http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/?id=1189&page=15> > (23/1/05).

<sup>19</sup> Paul Bowlby with Tom Faulkner, *Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada: A State-of-the-Art Review*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001), 17.

<sup>20</sup> Rist, “Development as the New Religion of the West”.

<sup>21</sup> Karl Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach”, in David McLellan (Ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 158.

the world, not just contemplate it...<sup>22</sup> Arguably, IDS programmes in Canada attract the “brightest, most idealistic and socially committed”<sup>23</sup> students – young people who are becoming aware of the injustice and inequity in the world and who wish to change it. In an earlier age, such altruistic young people might have gone to seminary and come out as missionaries, while today as development practitioners, their mission is to make a difference in the world.

A postscript: David Aikman in a review of the book, Strong Religion: the Rise of Fundamentalisms Around the World, in *Foreign Affairs*, offers an incisive critique of the authors’ assumptions:

What sort of people have been supposing that our world was ever postreligious? Berger wryly proposes that the faculty dining hall at the average U.S. college might be a more interesting topic for the sociology of religion than the Islamic schools of Qum. Perhaps one should merely recall what an anonymous New York lawyer said on learning of the emergence of the Moral Majority in the 1980s: “Millions of people out there believe what nobody believes anymore.”<sup>24</sup>

## 1.2 A North-South Survey

A further paradox can be expressed in a generalization: the South – the targets or recipients of development – seems overwhelmingly religious, while the North – the purveyors of and practitioners of development – appears thoroughly secular. As in all

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<sup>22</sup> Colin Leys, The Rise and Fall of Development Theory, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 196.

<sup>23</sup> “‘White Paper’ on International Development Studies in Canada”, (Ottawa: CASID/ NSI, 2003), 15.

<sup>24</sup> David Aikman, “The Great Revival: Understanding Religious ‘Fundamentalism’.” *Foreign Affairs*, 82, no. 4 (2003). <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030701fareviewessay15416/david-aikman/the-great-revival-understanding-religious-fundamentalism.html>> (23/1/05).

generalizations, exceptions can be easily identified. for neither southern nor northern populations are homogenous: secular, liberal and materialistic elites exist in the South as do religious, conservative and marginalized communities in the North. But while religion may be a private and personal matter in the North, it is a more open and obvious subject in the South. An empirical exercise provides a window into understanding the research problem and sheds light on the difference in worldviews between a more secular North and a more religious South.

A survey was administered to two essentially similar sample groups of development students at Dalhousie University (Dal) in Canada and also at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) in Uganda. The survey sought to gauge the religious beliefs and background of a group of northern (Canadian) students and a group of southern (Ugandan) students. Designed and administered at Dalhousie University by the Dalhousie Campus Crusade for Christ Society,<sup>25</sup> the survey was entitled: "45 Second Spiritual Survey." The exercise was completed in a few minutes during class time. Students filled in a small quarter page sheet (see Appendix 1). A total of 162 replies from IDS undergraduates was received from 99 students in the core second (introductory) year class, and 63 in the core third (upper) year class at Dalhousie. At Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), the survey was used by permission and distributed by faculty members. Responses from 142 students of Development Studies from Mbarara (MUST) were divided into 39 first year Bachelor of Development Studies (BDS) students, 53 second year BDS, 23 third year BDS, 17 post-graduate DS diploma, 6 MA

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<sup>25</sup> Results used here by permission.

students, 4 undisclosed. The difference in such variables as age, educational level and gender balance is not considered critical to the results of this survey.<sup>26</sup>

The responses clearly demonstrated the differences in worldviews between the Dalhousie and MUST students. The question: “Do you believe in God?” elicited significant divergence in opinion. Where less than half (43%) acknowledged belief and more than half (57%) rejected or struggled with belief at Dalhousie, only 3 students (2%) expressed doubts at MUST, and none responded categorically in the negative, leaving a massive 98% response declaring belief in God.<sup>27</sup> Full results are reproduced in Appendix 2.

Differences in opinion become pronounced when graphically represented, as in the two figures below, with respect to questions regarding belief in God and whether religion generally exerted a positive or negative influence on development:

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<sup>26</sup> The sample groups were different in terms of age (older at MUST), development experience (more at MUST), and gender (more males at MUST), but, most importantly, for the purposes of comparison, in terms of nationality and ethnic background.

<sup>27</sup> It should also be noted that this sample of educated students from Uganda does not necessarily represent a cross section of the intended beneficiaries of development: the poor, who would not have access to tertiary education.

Figure 1.1 Survey Question 2: Do you believe in God?

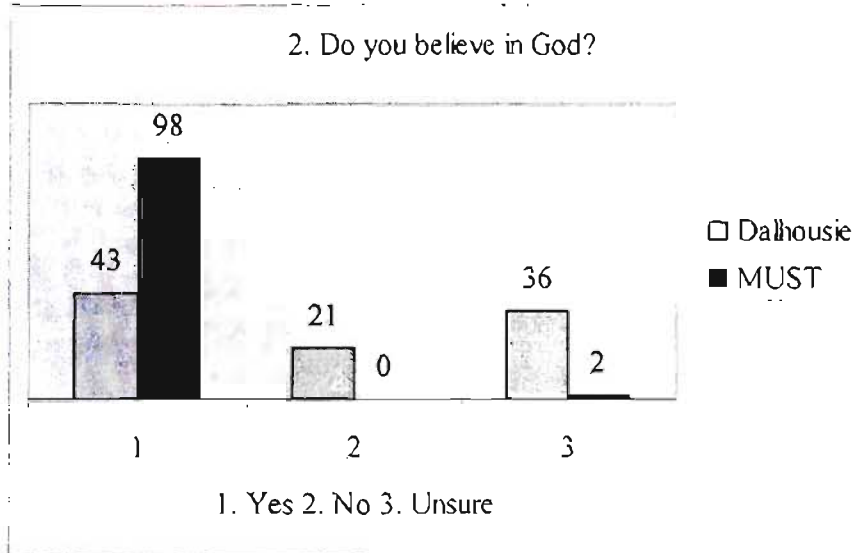
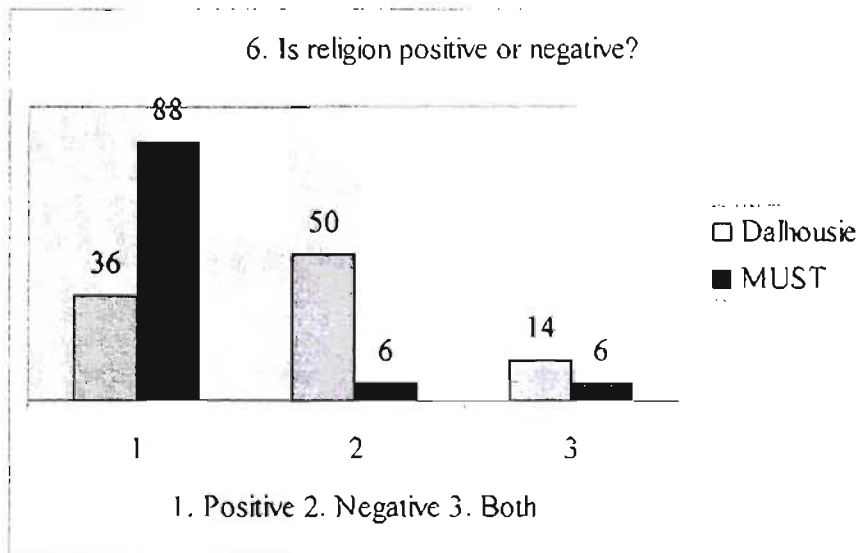


Figure 1.2 Survey Question 6: Is religion generally a positive or negative influence on "development"?



This simple survey clearly highlights a basic difference at the level of mindset, and dramatically underscores the gap between religious inclination and acceptance in the

more secular North and more religious South. The survey demonstrates that the MUST students exhibited a greater belief in God, came from a more religious background and viewed Christianity in a more positive light than their Dalhousie counterparts. These results clearly support the impression that the South (Uganda) is more religiously inclined than the North (Canada), and provide a backdrop for the study that follows.

### 1.3 Research Questions

Given this kind of glaring anomaly, and the implications it has for development studies, this thesis seeks to explore the interface between religion and international development in the programmes, publications and curricula of Canadian academic institutions. It asks the question: To what extent is religion acknowledged in the Canadian academic community as a significant factor in the success or failure of development policies, projects and interventions? Central to this enquiry is the location of religion in Canadian development literature and in academic programming across Canada.

Preliminary indications have suggested that the relationship between religion and development has been underemphasized, and the role of religion in the development enterprise has been undervalued by academicians. This study, therefore, aims to discover if this is so, if indeed a “blind-spot” does exist in this area, and what might be the reasons for the neglect of religion in IDS literature and programmes?



As the study progressed, and it became increasingly obvious that the area of religion and development represented a distinct research and pedagogical lacuna in IDS literature and programmes, the research enquiry began to coalesce around a set of questions, which formed the basis not only of a survey sent out to IDS and related faculty across Canada but also a set of semi-structured interviews with key informants in the field.

Many of these questions, reproduced below in bullet form, raise subsidiary questions, which are interrelated and further embellish and interrogate the complex interrelationship between religion and development. The Canadian context is assumed throughout.

- **Is the role of religion covered sufficiently in IDS courses?**

What attention have development scholars paid to the religious dimension of people's lives? Are religion, spirituality and faith considered to be integral elements in the lives of the targets of the development process? Why is the religious dimension of life, so pervasive in the global South, not recognized as a more prominent aspect of southern life, with significant development implications? Does a "blind spot" or "taboo" exist in the academy with regard to religion's potential role -- for good or ill -- in development? Does the apparent absence of religion in IDS teaching and research reflect the lack of precedent and dearth of models for addressing the religious dimension of development?

- **Is religion relevant to the study of IDS?**

Is religion considered a significant variable in the success or failure of development projects? What part should it play in IDS teaching? Can a space be found for religion in the expanding the "development and..." syndrome? Should religion, like gender or the

environment, become an integral part of development policy and planning? Can faith perspectives help to redefine development itself?

- **Do trends towards pluralism make religious awareness important?**

In a society which prides itself in its multicultural sensitivity, is there a willingness to recognize that religion may occupy a more central, if not fundamental, place in the life of “the other”?

- **Do trends towards secularization make studying religion unnecessary?**

Are IDS scholars aware of trends that have fuelled the rise of pluralism and the decline of secularization around the world? How well informed are researchers with regard to global religious trends? Are IDS professors familiar with the revisionist debates that have surrounded the supposed desecularization and resacralization of the world? Are fundamentalist (anti-modernist and anti-secularist) sentiments an impediment to development?

- **Has religion generally been a positive or negative influence on development?**

Is tradition still seen as an obstacle to development, as it was in the formative days of the modernization paradigm, espoused in the writings of W.W. Rostow and other conservative scholars? Can the lofty principles of the great religions be transformed into development practice? From a developmental standpoint, is religion “the opium of the peoples” of the South? Is religion essentially conservative and fundamentally anti-developmental? Is religion innately divisive?

- **Is religion too sensitive a subject for IDS study/teaching?**

Might religion prove a potential source of conflict, discomfort and embarrassment if introduced into the classroom? Does religion prompt an emotional response? Is religion

too subjective a subject to quantify? Are enough faculty members sufficiently qualified to teach in the area of IDS and religion? Does political and academic correctness influence teaching? Are too many academic risks involved in allowing religious debate in the classroom? Are teachers afraid of being perceived as promoting religious views in the classroom? Are professors afraid of imposing or appearing to impose outsiders' perspectives on sensitive subjects? Is this reaction a particularly Canadian proclivity? Might the contested legacy of missions in the colonial context explain a reticence to engage in depth with the subject of religion and development?

- **Is religion assumed under the term “culture” in IDS teaching?**

Should religion be divorced from its cultural locus, and be treated as an independent category for analysis? Might it also be included under such categories as tradition or society?

- **Does a scientific/materialistic bias exist in the academy?**

Does a positivistic philosophy, which privileges empirical analysis, allow any space for enquiry into less quantifiable areas, such as religious belief?

- **Does a form of “secular fundamentalism” exist in the academy?**

Can an anti-religious bias be detected in the basically “secular” academic community? Is development seen primarily as an economic, technocratic or scientific intervention, with little space for religion? Does the reductionist approach of the academy preclude an attention to a more holistic focus, which might allow for the introduction of spirituality, faith and religion into the discourse? Are western ideas of secularism projected on to Third World communities, and assumed in development planning and interventions? Is

western development as neutral as it purports to be? Can religion benefit from the same sense of tolerance that is afforded many other potentially sensitive subjects?

- **Is religion a private and personal matter?**

Does this topic reflect the persistent dualism pervasive in the western academy? Can an accommodation be reached between the private space for religion in the West, and its more public face in the South? Does the western development perspective dichotomize the sacred and profane?

- **Is development “the new religion of the West”?**

Has development become the primary “missionary” endeavour of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Is the language of development profoundly religious in nature? Does secular development provoke a religious “memory”? Is development fundamentally a western initiative? Does western development lack a spiritual component? Are western ideas of secularism projected on to Third World communities, and assumed in development planning and interventions? Is it only the West that is allowed to posit universals?

- **Is the study of religion assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11?**

Particularly after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, is there evidence that the analysis of religion is assuming a greater significance in development thinking? Is there evidence among development scholars of a greater acceptance of religion as a “legitimate” area for research and funding?

## 1.4 Methodology

The research relied heavily, though not exclusively, on content analysis of the text of the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)* and Canadian Development Reports

(CDR), as well as course outlines from IDS departments at Canadian universities. Beyond these lines of research, surveys and interviews with key informants were intended to fill in the gaps by analyzing and interpreting the quantitative data uncovered. The thesis is essentially reliant on a theoretical approach which is analytical, in the philosophical sense.

The research design allowed for an examination of the topic of religion and development from the perspective of Canadian academia. Since the content analysis confirmed a noticeable “blind spot” in the interface between religion and development, and also reinforced the perception that the subject is examined from a western and secular point of view, the study was very attentive to the need to represent the intended beneficiaries of development and be sensitive to their belief systems and worldviews. This approach echoes the post-development critique, and is augmented with insights from Foucauldian, contextual and post-modern perspectives.

At all times, the natural religiosity of southerners, an essential dimension often sidelined by northern “experts,” was considered as a motivating influence in the study. Thus, the thesis is sensitively responsive to a post-modern approach -- in the sense of “letting silenced voices speak”<sup>28</sup> -- as well as being theologically appreciative of the aims and goals of contextual theology, with its vital concern for the poor. In privileging the perspective of the destitute and disadvantaged, attention must be paid to the factor of religion, so central in many of the lives of the economically poorest, those perceived most

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<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Marianne H. Marchand and Jane L. Parpart (Eds.). Feminism/Postmodernism/Development., (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

in need of developmental interventions. Such approaches would acknowledge the importance of listening to voices that are often discounted summarily in northern bastions of power,<sup>29</sup> especially in academia, where a concentration on religion may often be seen as primitive and uninformed, superstitious and ignorant.

The nature of power, enshrined in and reinforced by narrative, is an area that Foucault and others of the deconstructionist school have dissected to good effect. Attention to the dynamics of power in language/ knowledge, might well be applied to the hegemony of the sometimes impenetrable academic discourse, replete with convoluted jargon and confusing acronyms, of the northern development establishment.<sup>30</sup>

The thesis resonates in sympathy with the questions, if not the answers, that post-development poses. Pieterse's critique of post-development: "There is no positive programme; there is critique but no construction."<sup>31</sup> is acknowledged and accepted. But some of the questions post-development asks are penetrating indeed, and some of the answers provided by faith perspectives may well be transformative.

The study combined quantitative and qualitative analysis. Content and narrative analysis of documentary material, so central to this project, as well as semi-structured interviews, formed the heart of the research methodology. The study of the *CJDS* and university course material, which generated essentially quantitative data, also required the analysis

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<sup>29</sup> See Jonathan Crush (Ed.), Power of Development, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>30</sup> See Jane L. Parpart, "Deconstructing the Development 'Expert': Gender, Development and the 'Vulnerable Groups' ", in Marchand and Parpart, Feminism/Postmodernism/Development, 221- 243.

<sup>31</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "After Post-Development", *Third World Quarterly*, 21, no. 2 (2000), 111.

of narrative, thus calling for a qualitative approach, as did the other main methodological tool, interviews. To confine the research within manageable limits, the study was specifically rooted in a Canadian context, but did not confine itself solely to Christianity.

Content analysis was relied upon heavily in the early stages of the investigation. It was determined that the foundation for the study would involve a thorough survey of the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, in order to shed light on how the *CJDS* dealt historically with the subject of religion and development. An initial study had revealed, in accordance with Ver Beek's findings, that only a few articles obviously discuss religious issues in the context of development.

The study sought to understand present perceptions of the place of religion in development, while recognizing that a historical overview is essential to provide perspective. Therefore, the *CJDS*, Canada's premier development journal, was seen as an excellent vehicle and entry point for gaining this historical perspective in the twenty five years since its inception in 1980. Shifts in emphasis since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 – an area that is pursued in the survey and interviews – have accompanied a heightened interest in Islam and have translated into an elevated awareness of religion in the geo-political context. Thus, the contextual component to the research brought the past into dialogue with the present realities of the context.

Another authoritative and respected source was the Canadian Development Reports, which since 1996 have provided a valuable insight into Canadian research avenues and interests.

With the initial content analysis of the *CJDS* and the CDRs completed, the prevalence and prominence of the issue of religion in IDS courses in Canadian universities was evaluated. This examination sought to answer such questions as: How many courses are offered on religion and development? How frequently do references to religion appear in IDS course descriptions? How is the topic covered in the core IDS classes? While initial research focused on printed copies of university calendars, it soon became apparent that a more accurate assessment would be achieved by accessing the online versions, which proved much more up-to-date than the printed editions. While this line of enquiry simplified some of the more onerous elements of the research, it also in some cases, as a result of poor web design and inefficient links, complicated and frustrated the analysis of thousands of course descriptions.

Investigating official positions via available information in the public domain was considered to be a prerequisite prior to considering unofficial, and perhaps more forthcoming, perspectives in the survey and interview process. Considerable sensitivity was required in this process, especially in probing underlying explanations for the avoidance of the subject of religion and development in the academic community. It was always apparent that the subject of religion, in many of its manifestations, was a subject that invited not just a rational, but an emotional, response.



Great care was exercised in the narrative analysis of both the *CJDS/CDRs* and university course descriptions, with alert sensitivity afforded to nuances, which might help construct a perspective, as Gerald West encourages, “against the grain and in the gaps.”<sup>32</sup> To assist in this objective a survey, which was intentionally designed to reflect broader opinion than that associated with typical positivistic enquiry, was developed, in order to shed light on some of the more sensitive, subjective and controversial areas underlying the enquiry. Responses to questions provided valuable direction for further investigation in the interview process. The survey was, therefore, considered a weak research instrument, in the sense of producing quantitative data, though in its ability to evoke, even provoke, a response, it was considered more successful at the qualitative level. However, findings, which may open a window into general perceptions and intuitive opinions, need to be examined with care.

Interviews were considered invaluable as far as testing preliminary hypotheses regarding the perceived omission of religion from the study of international development at the university level. A wide selection of key informants was relied upon to fill in the gaps and tease out underlying issues that informed and determined opinion on the subject. Beneath the surface, issues of knowledge and power, particularly “unintentional and nonrelational”<sup>33</sup> forms of power, proved fascinating. Wherever possible, these interviews were conducted in person, though some were, of necessity, conducted by telephone. Many were conducted in the vicinity of Halifax, one of the main university cities in

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<sup>32</sup> Quoted in “Research Proposal Writing for Masters and PhD,” School of Theology, University of Natal, (November 2002), 9.

<sup>33</sup> See Germond, “Theology, Development and Power” in *JTSA* 110 (July 2001), 21.

Canada, and focused on the two largest universities, Dalhousie and St Mary's, both with major undergraduate and graduate IDS programmes. The remainder of the interviews were conducted by telephone – some of the interviewees being volunteers from the survey, while others were drawn from organizations involved in development in Canada, and involved to a greater or lesser extent with academia, such as IDRC, CIDA and World Vision, Canada's largest private development NGO.

## 1.5 Limitations

The theme of religion and development is necessarily vast, and, in attempting to call attention to the interface between religion and development, many areas will necessarily escape attention.

Some opinion questioned the use of the term "religion" rather than "spirituality" as lead term in the research. The notion was considered, but rejected. The idea of spirituality suggests, at least in the North, an individualistic approach, which does not reflect the reality of religious worldviews and religious systems in much of the global South, where spirituality may be viewed as an imprecise "new age" indulgence, with scant resonance in communities of faith in the developing world. As the World Faiths Development Dialogue explains: "From a faith perspective, it is not possible to understand humanity merely by focusing on the individual. Indeed, the Buddhist understanding of the origin of suffering lies in the delusion of perceiving oneself as an isolated independent being,

existing in a world of isolated independent things.”<sup>34</sup> The danger of conflating the terms, “religion” and “spirituality,” is also acknowledged – as Swami Agnivesh declares: “We need to be wary of the widespread tendency to equate religion with spirituality. whereas they are, often, contrary to each other.”<sup>35</sup>

Definitions of both development and religion are discussed in the context of the relationship between the two areas in Chapter Three. Both definitions are contested and have been the subject of protracted debate in their respective disciplines. Culture also is a challenging concept, often defined as: “A system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning.”<sup>36</sup> Religion’s place in culture is open to maximalist and minimalist interpretations.<sup>37</sup>

While Francophone statistics have been included in the analysis of the *CJDS* and Canadian IDS programmes (see Chapters Six and Seven), no interviews were conducted in French and no surveys were distributed in Francophone universities. It is hard therefore to deduce whether the Francophone influence might produce significantly variant findings.

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<sup>34</sup> World Faiths Development Dialogue, “A Different Perspective on Poverty and Development”, Comment on the World Development Report 2000, (June 1999), 20.

<sup>35</sup> Swami Agnivesh, “A Spiritual Vision for the Dialogue of Religions”, *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 35.

<sup>36</sup> From Franz Boas, The Mind of Primitive Man, (New York: Macmillan, 1911).

<sup>37</sup> See Chapter Four, “On the Relation of Religion and Culture”, in Bruce Lincoln, Holy Terrors: Thinking About Religion After September 11<sup>th</sup>, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002).

Within the University, the interdisciplinary nature of International Development Studies is a complicating and limiting factor. With few faculty members directly appointed to IDS, and cross appointments being the rule rather than the exception, understanding official IDS positions was not without challenge. While related disciplines have been considered wherever possible in the analysis, expanding the research to thoroughly encompass such areas as Religious Studies, Comparative Religion, Anthropology, Political Science, Economics and Women's Studies was not feasible. In any further study in this area it would clearly be important to investigate courses in Religious Studies and Comparative Religion, which overlap with areas covered in Development Studies, yet may, for whatever reason, not be cross-listed.

While a global focus was attempted, certain biases are acknowledged: greater familiarity with Western approaches to development, deeper knowledge of Christianity as a religion and a more intimate knowledge of Africa rather than Asia or Latin America.

One limitation inherent to the study involves its locus: the Canadian development scene. With development being intrinsically linked to an ongoing dynamic between North and South, future studies would need to include a broader focus on the overarching research question to allow space for a southern perspective. Far beyond the scope of the present study, a view from the South and southern academics, more sensitive perhaps to religion's potential in the development initiative, might add dramatically to the debate and present an appreciably different viewpoint.

A caveat is necessary at this point. While southern voices might be able to furnish an alternative perspective altogether, most of the development specialists in academia in the South have been trained in the North, and are hardly representative of their original societies. Combined with the fact that the bulk of development literature originates and circulates in the North, this calls into question to what degree the academic elites in the South, as well as in the North, reflect opinion beyond the halls of academia.

Beyond many of the technicalities, the relationship between religion and the academy has traditionally been ambivalent and sensitive. The surveys of IDS faculties and interviews with key informants sought to confront some of these sensitivities, and although plumbing the depths beneath the surface was attempted in the interviews, researching religious belief can prove a special challenge and an extraordinary limitation. A sense existed that many of the opinions expressed were somehow guarded.

## 1.6 Chapter Outline

Following the introduction to the general debate and outline of the specific study in this initial chapter, Chapter Two situates the debate within the development literature. Sources and resources are explored, in order to demonstrate that, in spite of the voluminous output in the area of development over the past decades, the literature is comparatively silent about the role of religion and faith based organizations in the international development project. Sources and resources are organized according to various sections, reflecting the place of theory, praxis, institutions and contemporary

trends in an extensive survey of the locus of religion in the field of international development.

Chapter Three brings the two subject areas of the thesis together in an analysis of the historical trends in the disciplines of International Development Studies and the Sociology of Religion. The divorce between Religion and Science is examined, in the context of the Enlightenment and the formative influence of the great sociologists, to demonstrate how it has affected the western view of the world, informed by a predominantly secular Academy. The chapter also traces the broad trends that have defined development – from the modernization and dependency paradigms, towards approaches that may be broadly described under the umbrella of human development. It concludes by recognizing that some space may exist for a cautious rapprochement between the areas of religion and development.

The next chapter, by means of a broad survey of the major faiths, demonstrates that religious institutions and organizations, far from being peripheral influences, have historically played an important part in the development initiative, and presently demand serious attention in any analysis of development in the global South. Chapter Five examines how religion shapes worldviews and cosmologies which, in turn, may have significant impacts on development outcomes. These two chapters emphasize that religion, spirituality and faith have the potential to influence development both positively and negatively and should not be disconnected from any study of international development.

The interface between religion and development in Canada's primary academic journal of international development, the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)* and principal development report, the Canadian Development Report, is explored in Chapter Six. An exhaustive examination of titles and abstracts during the past twenty five year history of the *CJDS*, reveals that the role of religion in development receives very little attention, as it does in the seven Canadian Development Reports published thus far. In the next chapter, the titles and descriptions of IDS university courses across Canada are examined in order to determine to what extent religion, and also culture, are incorporated into development teaching in Canadian universities. Results proved consistent with the findings in the study of the *CJDS*, reinforcing conclusions that religion remains peripheral in development literature and pedagogy in Canada.

Chapter Eight incorporates results from a survey distributed to IDS departments across Canada, and examines findings from a set of interviews with key informants. These interviews provide space for the interpretation of conclusions, which reinforce the assertion that Canadian universities do not sufficiently acknowledge the influence -- for good or ill -- of religion on development in their programmes, publications, and curricula. This finding is reiterated in the final chapter as the thesis is summarized, recommendations are advanced and conclusions are proffered.

## 1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to achieve two purposes. First, it has provided an insight into the debate that informs this thesis, highlighting the fact that the influence of religion in the global South is discounted by northern academics and marginalized in development discourse. Second, the chapter has outlined the architecture of the thesis, with attention being focused on the research questions, methodology, limitations, and chapter outline. Chapter Two will provide a review of the sources and resources that inform the literature surrounding the subject of religion and development.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE: SOURCES AND RESOURCES

The veritable mountain of development literature remains comparatively silent about the role of religion and faith based organizations in the international development project. The centrality of religion and spirituality in the lives of millions of people in the global South is scarcely acknowledged, and the implications -- both for good or ill -- for development interventions are seldom addressed. Little development literature focuses directly on the relationship between religion and international development, preferring instead to consign religion to a peripheral association. Traditionally excluded from the mainstream discourse, religion is not generally viewed as a factor in development. In this second chapter, the trends and themes that surround this disconnect between religion and development are outlined in a selective literature survey, which seeks to identify the major sources and resources where religion and development intersect.

The structure of this chapter seeks to exhibit, in a deliberately asymmetrical rather than systematic style, the interface between religion and development in various areas of enquiry. The sources and resources informing the literature on development are organized according to the following sub-sections: theoretical underpinnings; faith communities and faith based organizations, journals and volumes; special journal and magazine issues; resurgent religion; regional literatures; the environment, gender and culture; institutions and initiatives; reports; conferences and international development agencies. In this way,

it is hoped that a broad perspective regarding the location of religion in the development discourse can be gained.

## 2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings

Religion is conspicuous only by its absence in the modernization and dependency literature that dominated development discourse in the decades following the Second World War. If religion was mentioned at all, it was viewed in a negative rather than positive light, being identified as one of the determining factors in traditional life that held back progress to modernity.

The dramatic growth of the western economies in the decades which followed the preceding decades of depression and war, led to growing faith in the modernization paradigm. W. W. Rostow proved formative in influencing such a perspective. Writing in The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto published in 1960,<sup>38</sup> Rostow argued that tradition, and therefore religion, was one of the prime limiting factors to be overturned before take-off to full development and mass consumerism could be achieved in undeveloped societies. Economic determinism, so evident in the focus of modernization theorists, left little room for religion in the mainstream literature.

But theorists, especially those from Latin America, argued that the obstacles to development were external to the underdeveloped countries, and identified the capitalist world system as the problem, suggesting that the same structural processes that resulted

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<sup>38</sup> W. W. Rostow, The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

in development in the core countries of the North consigned peripheral countries in the South to underdevelopment, reinforcing “the development of underdevelopment.”<sup>39</sup> But dependency theorists, or *dependentistas*, looked with envy at the end result – economic growth, if not the means – capital accumulation in cores and peripheries. Like modernization theory, dependency theory, with its Marxist underpinnings, left little place for religion.

As the problems of this Third World persisted, and even intensified, it became increasingly evident that more attention to the human costs of development were necessary, stimulating a direction in development thinking that may broadly be termed “human development.” While such approaches, spearheaded particularly in the UNDP’s Human Development Reports of the 1990s, paid more attention to cultural concerns, religion still continued to receive little direct focus.

However, the “spiritual” dimension in development was not been without occasional mention in the development debate, especially at United Nations conferences. The Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 declared that “religion, spirituality and belief play a central role in the lives of millions of women and men.”<sup>40</sup> References to “spiritual development” in Agenda 21 (UN Conference on Environment and Development, 1992), “spiritual vision” (UN Conference on Human Settlements, 1996), and “spiritual needs”

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<sup>39</sup> See, for example, André Gunder Frank, “The Development of Underdevelopment,” in Ronald H. Chilcote, (Ed.), Imperialism: Theoretical Directions (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 239-242.

<sup>40</sup> Julia Berger, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations: An Exploratory Analysis”, International Society for Third-Sector Research and the Johns Hopkins University, (2003), 2.

(UN World Summit for Social Development, 1995) reinforced the theme.<sup>41</sup> Such noble and all-embracing sentiments have not always been translated into practice, much less research. Furthermore, the overall topic of religion is not often broken down into its constituent and specific impacts in areas such as health, agriculture, livelihoods, gender, the environment and community building.

Opponents of mainstream development have framed their arguments around development alternatives or alternatives to development -- their more radical positions being variously described as "anti-development", "beyond development" or "post-development."<sup>42</sup> But while much of the post-development critique has promoted a qualitatively different form of development, little space has been reserved for religious alternatives, in spite of spiritual undercurrents that can be identified not far from the surface in much of the post-development discourse.

Referring to a "spiritual dimension"<sup>43</sup> in development, Majid Rahnema, of the post-development school, speculates that: "A reason for people's indifference to the dominant development ideology, and hence its failure, could well be the latter's utter insensitivity to this crucial dimension."<sup>44</sup> At times, Rahnema uses language, which would be familiar

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<sup>41</sup> Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations", 2. Although the term "spiritual" is often included in the WHO's definition of health, the definition according to the 1948 Constitution and the current website does not include it, defining health as: "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

<sup>42</sup> See Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "After Post-development", *Third World Quarterly*, 21, no. 2 (2000), 175.

<sup>43</sup> Majid Rahnema, "Poverty", in Wolfgang Sachs (Ed.), *The Development Dictionary*, (London: Zed, 1992), 171.

<sup>44</sup> Rahnema, "Poverty", 171.

to the religious, to describe an ideal “world of true love and compassion,”<sup>45</sup> and to appeal to “‘good people’ everywhere to think and work together.”<sup>46</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse provides an incisive critique of the post-development position by suggesting that: “Post-development arrives at development agnosticism by a different route but shares the abdication of development with neoliberalism.”<sup>47</sup>

## 2.2 Faith Communities and Faith Based Organizations

As a result of the exclusion of the subject from mainstream discourse, the onus devolved to the faith communities to emphasize the spiritual dimension in development. Over the years, faith communities have produced a wide array of formal and informal publications on their positions with respect to the development venture.

The most direct Catholic positions regarding development were contained in the papal encyclicals: Paul VI’s *Populorum Progressio* and John Paul II’s *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*. Calls from the faith communities for a spiritual dimension to be included in a less economic and more holistic definition of development, as in Pope Paul VI’s *Populorum Progressio*, which reflected the pioneering theorizing of Father Louis Lebert, have often fallen on deaf ears: “We for ourselves, in our encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, have stressed the duty of resolutely and intelligently fostering the growth of

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<sup>45</sup> Majid Rahnema, “Towards Post-Development: Searching for Signposts, a New Language and New Paradigms,” in M. Rahnema with V. Bawtree (Eds.), *The Post-Development Reader*, (London & New Jersey: Zed, 1997), 393.

<sup>46</sup> Rahnema, “Towards Post-Development”, 391.

<sup>47</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, “After Post-development”, *Third World Quarterly*, 21, no. 2 (2000), 175-191. Accessed on Proquest (28/10/04).

economic, cultural, social and spiritual well-being amongst peoples, especially those of the so-called Third World."<sup>11</sup> The prevalent neoliberal model of development finds little space for and may often be contributing to excluding many from the fruits of development. The accompanying commodification of life has been seen as compromising the dignity of human beings.

Another important aspect of holistic development that is often ignored by non-Christian players is the spiritual dimension. In view of the critical place that spiritual factors hold in people's lives, it is important that organizations recognize that investment in spiritual transformation is part of national development...It is time for spiritual issues to be included on the development agenda, and for donors to engage spiritual specialists in the same way they have done for gender, environment, and AIDS specialists.<sup>12</sup>

In Canada, three volumes of theologically inspired readings have emanated from the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative surrounding the global *Jubilee 2000* initiative: A New Beginning: A Call for Jubilee; Jubilee, Wealth and the Market; Sacred Earth, Sacred Community: Jubilee, Ecology and Aboriginal Peoples.<sup>13</sup>

The World Council of Churches (WCC), based in Geneva, is composed of some 340 member churches around the world, and maintains close links with church-related development agencies and social movements.<sup>14</sup> Not without controversy at times,

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<sup>11</sup> Paul VI quoted in Molefe Tsele, "The Role of the Christian Faith in Development," in Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Chris Sugden, Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa, (Washington DC: The World Bank and Penguin Books International, 2001), 203.

<sup>12</sup> Makonen Getu, "Poverty Alleviation and the Role of Microcredit in Africa", In Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Chris Sugden, Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa, (Washington DC: The World Bank and Penguin Books International, 2001), 176.

<sup>13</sup> Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative, A New Beginning: a Call for Jubilee, Toronto: CEJI (1998); Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative Jubilee, Wealth and the Market, Toronto: CEJI (1999); Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative Sacred Earth, Sacred Community: Jubilee, Ecology and Aboriginal Peoples, Toronto: CEJI (2000).

<sup>14</sup> For details, see World Council of Churches, Who Are We?  
< <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/who/index-e.html> > (12/7/05).

particularly regarding its political stances, the ecumenical body is responsible for a vast output of material around development themes. At its Vancouver Assembly in 1983, the WCC advanced a theme of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, which has subsequently devolved into a Justice, Peace and Creation (JPC) programme team, with a mandate to

To analyze and reflect on justice, peace and creation *in their interrelatedness*, to promote values and practices that make for a culture of *peace*, and to work towards a culture of *solidarity* with young people, women, Indigenous Peoples and racially and ethnically oppressed people.<sup>52</sup>

This arm of the WCC has often found itself in the vanguard of some of the most pressing developmental issues of the day, and, with observer status at the United Nations, the WCC has been actively engaged in many UN conferences.

Many of the development projects around the world are either directly or indirectly connected with faith based organizations. In Canada, the leading development agency in terms of private donations received, not to mention public visibility, is World Vision. Yet, little is written directly about the role that such faith based organizations play in development.

Julia Berger, in her paper, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations: An Exploratory Analysis,” claims that religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs) involved in development have been “largely ignored”<sup>53</sup> and laments the “dearth of analytical or

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<sup>52</sup> World Council of Churches, Justice, Peace and Creation, <<http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/jpc/index-e.html>> (12/7/05).

<sup>53</sup> Berger, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations”, 2.

comparative literature on this subject."<sup>54</sup> She contends that her paper represents "the first systematic attempt at an analysis of religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs) Largely ignored as an organizational field, RNGOs constitute a new breed of religious actors shaping global policy."<sup>55</sup> She notes that the emphasis on religion within these organizations varies widely.<sup>56</sup>

Websites from the main faith institutions and FBOs often provide a rich, current and globally linked source of information on faith engagement in the area of development.<sup>57</sup>

## 2.3 Journals and Volumes

In comparison with the vast output of development literature of an economic and political nature, and the literature articulating faith based positions on development, mainstream publications concentrating on the impact of religion on development policy and practice are limited.

In an influential article in *World Development*, published in 1980, Denis Goulet characterized development experts, blinded to the religious dimension in southern lives,

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<sup>54</sup> Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations", 10.

<sup>55</sup> Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations", 1.

<sup>56</sup> Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations", 13.

<sup>57</sup> Such sites are too numerous to catalogue here, and many are footnoted in the text of this Thesis – one of the more interesting high traffic North American sites is that of the Sojourners ministry at [www.sojo.net](http://www.sojo.net).



as “one-eyed giants.”<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, Goulet traces his use of the phrase, “one-eyed giants” to Africa:

I drew from an image in an African poem which asserts that the white man came to colonial Africa as a one-eyed giant. He was a giant in technical and military strength, but he lacked the eye of wisdom, an understanding of the total web of life, of the relationship of individuals to the larger cosmos.<sup>59</sup>

In a subsequent volume, Development Ethics: A Guide to Theory and Practice,<sup>60</sup> which has proved similarly and exceptionally influential, he laments the exclusion of the ethical and traditional dimensions of life in the rush for economic and technocratic progress.

With the language of development dominated by economism, Des Gasper suggests that: “Development ethics is part of the subsequent attempt to consciously interrogate, assess, and, where justified, reform this perspective and its institutional embodiments, nationally and globally.”<sup>61</sup>

Noteworthy initiatives have come out of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada. Following an initial work by Father William Ryan, Culture, Spirituality, and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue,<sup>62</sup> a subsequent volume brought together four in-depth perspectives on science, religion and development from the perspectives of four faiths: Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Baha’i in The Lab, The

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<sup>58</sup> Goulet, “Development Experts”, 481, and Development Ethics: A Guide to Theory and Practice, (London: Zed, 1995), 205.

<sup>59</sup> Mike Gismondi, “Denis Goulet: A New Ethics of Development”, Interview on Aurora Online. <<http://aurora.icaap.org/archive/goulet.html>> (12/7/05)

<sup>60</sup> Denis Goulet, Development Ethics: A Guide to Theory and Practice, London: Zed, 1995.

<sup>61</sup> Des Gasper, The Ethics of Development: From Economism to Human Development, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 229.

<sup>62</sup> William Ryan, Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue, (Ottawa: IDRC, 1995).

Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersections of Science, Religion and Development.<sup>63</sup>

A recent article by Katherine Marshall, "Development and Religion. A Different Lens on Development Debates," well sums up much of the prevailing thought with regard to religion and development. She bemoans the paucity of literature on the subject, and consistently appeals for further research, commenting:

It is indeed remarkable how weak the information systems about faith-based work in development are, and research and analysis are patchy. Efforts to enhance information systems to capture experience and writing, and to undertake more research about work and impact deserve high priority.<sup>64</sup>

Marshall has combined with Lucy Keogh to redress the balance in a 2004 World Bank volume, entitled Mind, Heart, and Soul in the Fight Against Poverty.<sup>65</sup> The authors bring together a series of case studies from around the world to demonstrate the greater involvement of the World Bank in partnerships with faith communities: "The book's central purpose is to demonstrate the richness of these partnerships."<sup>66</sup> As World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, notes in his Foreword: "Yet these efforts are too little known and the lessons, good and bad, have engendered too little reflection."<sup>67</sup>

Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi and Chris Sugden have edited a compilation of papers with an African focus, exploring various development issues of concern to both faith

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<sup>63</sup> Sharon Harper (Ed.), *The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development*, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2000).

<sup>64</sup> Marshall, "Development and Religion", 14.

<sup>65</sup> Katherine Marshall and Lucy Keogh, 2004. Mind, Heart and Soul: the Fight Against Poverty. (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2004).

<sup>66</sup> Marshall and Keogh, Mind, Heart and Soul. 9.

<sup>67</sup> Marshall and Keogh, Mind, Heart and Soul . xii.

communities and the World Bank, in Faith in Development: Partnership between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa.<sup>68</sup> One document published within this volume that systematically synthesizes the respective positions of the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa and the World Bank is the communique resulting from a conference in March, 2000, in Nairobi, Kenya, entitled “Common Ground and Common Concerns: Communique of the CAPA-World Bank Conference.”<sup>69</sup>

Wendy Tyndale has also sought to “bridge the chasm” between religion and development, in the article, “Faith and Economics in ‘Development’: A Bridge Across the Chasm?” in the journal, *Development in Practice*.<sup>70</sup> Both Marshall and Tyndale have been prominent, from secular (World Bank) and religious (Christian Aid) agency respectively, in their collaboration on the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), an initiative arising out of the conversation between the then World Bank President, James Wolfensohn, and the then Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey. The WFDD itself has produced some insightful papers and publications on the subject of faith and development, most notably Cultures, Spirituality and Development.<sup>71</sup>

Another article originally published in *Development in Practice*, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo,” by Kurt Alan Ver Beek, examines how three leading journals (*World Development*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Journal of Developing Areas*) and

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<sup>68</sup> Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, Chris Sugden (Eds), *Faith in Development: Partnership between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa*. (Oxford: Regnum Books/World Bank, 2001).

<sup>69</sup> “Common Ground and Common Concerns: Communique of the CAPA-World Bank Conference” in Belshaw et al, Faith in Development, 7-16.

<sup>70</sup> Wendy Tyndale, “Faith and Economics in ‘Development’: A Bridge Across the Chasm?” *Development in Practice*, 10, no.1 (2000).

<sup>71</sup> World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), Cultures, Spirituality and Development (Oxford: WFDD, 2001).

three influential organizations (USAID, CARE, CRS) in the field of development treat the subject of spirituality and development. He also uses a case study of the Lenca, indigenous Indians living in Honduras, to assert that “a powerful connection exists between spirituality and development.”<sup>72</sup> Ver Beek speculates as to why the topic of spirituality is avoided and sees his own research as “a starting point for further research and discussion.”<sup>73</sup>

Both Ver Beek and Tyndale’s articles have been reproduced in a book entitled, Culture and Development,<sup>74</sup> edited by Deborah Eade, who suggests in her Preface that culture is not “an optional extra in development,” which is “itself a cultural construct.”<sup>75</sup> While not directly focusing on religion, this collection of articles published by Oxfam, in association with the WFDD, places religious belief firmly in the realm of culture, which has tended historically to be considered to belong to the private sphere rather than the public arena.

A valuable article with respect to cross-cultural research in this area appears in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*.<sup>76</sup> Nalini Tarakeshwar, Jeffrey Stanton and Kenneth Pargament note: “the limited degree to which religion has appeared as an explicit element in published cross-cultural research,”<sup>77</sup> and argue that religion should be integrated into such research for four reasons: religion is salient across cultures; religion

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<sup>72</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality”, 35.

<sup>73</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality”, 39.

<sup>74</sup> Deborah Eade (Ed.), Development and Culture, (Oxford: Oxfam, 2002).

<sup>75</sup> Eade, Development and Culture, xii.

<sup>76</sup> Nalini Tarakeshwar, Jeffrey Stanton and Kenneth I. Pargament, “Religion: An Overlooked Dimension in Cross-Cultural Psychology,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34, no. 4, (2003), 377-394.

<sup>77</sup> Tarakeshwar et al, “Religion: An Overlooked Dimension”, 377.

is a significant predictor of health and other variables; religion is predictive of important cross-cultural dimensions; culture also shapes religious beliefs and practices. They propose a five-fold framework of religion, which includes ideological, ritualistic, experiential, intellectual and social dimensions.

In their edited volume, The Religion Factor: An Introduction to How Religion Matters, William Scott Green and Jacob Neusner discuss a survey undertaken in seven national newspapers in America for a month in 1995. The comprehensive classification of references to religion revealed that “religion was everywhere and nowhere. Religion was mentioned nearly two and a half times more often than it was the focus of a story on its own. The news media assume that religion is an essential part of the background of the news, and stories refer to religion frequently. But the media have trouble telling religion’s story.”<sup>78</sup> The media’s dilemma might be related to that of academia. While religion is accepted as a major factor in the life of the developing world, little in-depth analysis is available, beyond the often obligatory, but superficial, scratch on the surface.

## 2.4 Special Journal and Magazine Issues

Historically, few journals have concentrated on bringing together the areas of religion and development. One exception is a Special Issue of *World Development* in 1980, which focused on “Religious Values and Development.”<sup>79</sup> The issue examined the religious

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<sup>78</sup> William Scott Green, and Jacob Neusner (Eds.), The Religion Factor: An Introduction to How Religion Matters, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), xix.

<sup>79</sup> Special Issue: “Religious Values and Development”, *World Development*, 8, no. 7/8 (1980).

values and factors which impacted upon development, while exploring various case studies of Buddhist, Christian and Islamic approaches to economic development. In 2003, *Development* published a Special Issue on the subject of "Religion and Development." In an Editorial, Wendy Harcourt notes that any "belief in God, deities or spirituality, of any religious form, be it organized, community-based or individually held,"<sup>80</sup> is excluded by the development community. Religion is simply ignored in the development equation, yet from the articles published in the Special Issue she declares that "religious belief, faith and hope cannot be marginalized so easily."<sup>81</sup> The issue flags the paradox, prejudice and contradictions that surround the subject. *Gender and Development*<sup>82</sup> and the *Journal of Urban History*<sup>83</sup> also published special issues on religion.

The *Harvard International Review* devoted its Winter 2004 edition, entitled "Beyond Beliefs,"<sup>84</sup> to the role of religion in international affairs, arguing that "religion has again emerged as a potentially decisive influence on the course of human history."<sup>85</sup> Noting that "contemporary international analyses are usually grounded in the language of one or another analytical paradigm emphasizing, for example, economic incentives, technological change, or political interests,"<sup>86</sup> the *HIR* appeals for religion to be incorporated within the debate.

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<sup>80</sup> Harcourt, "Clearing the Path", 3.

<sup>81</sup> Harcourt, "Clearing the Path", 3.

<sup>82</sup> *Gender and Development*, 7, no. 1 (1999).

<sup>83</sup> *Journal of Urban History*, Special Issue, "Religion and the City". 28 (2002).

<sup>84</sup> Special Issue: "Beyond Beliefs", *Harvard International Review*,  
<<http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/index.html?id=1187>> (31/12/04).

<sup>85</sup> <<http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/index.html?id=1187>> (31/12/04).

<sup>86</sup> <<http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/index.html?id=1187>> (31/12/04).

More popularly, in August 2004, the *New Internationalist* prepared a special issue entitled, "In the Name of God: The Uses and Abuses of Religion."<sup>87</sup> Contributors covered a wide variety of subjects that surveyed the gamut of religion's effects in the modern world, predominantly negative ones. although, with an eye on development implications, Vanessa Baird does claim that "faith is most robust in countries where there is great social inequality and poor state provision,"<sup>88</sup> and acknowledges that: "For many disadvantaged people religious organizations provide a lifeline in a harsh and uncaring world."<sup>89</sup>

The *Atlantic Monthly* has given prominence to a number of articles on the resurgence of religion – so much so that the one writer concluded that the *Atlantic Monthly* "seems to have discovered religion."<sup>90</sup> Toby Lester, in "Oh, Gods!"<sup>91</sup> details the explosion of new religious movements around the world and laments that "contemporary theories of social and political behavior tend to be almost willfully blind to the constantly evolving role of religion as a force in global affairs."<sup>92</sup> Noting that religion didn't fade away in the last century in line with academic predictions, Lester explains that "new religions are springing up everywhere" and "old ones are mutating with Darwinian restlessness."<sup>93</sup> One of the reasons for the unexpected growth that Lester identifies is that the new Christianity of today, as indeed the old Christianity of the first century, works by filling a

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<sup>87</sup> Special Issue: "In the Name of God: The Uses and Abuses of Religion". *New Internationalist*, 370 (August, 2004).

<sup>88</sup> Vanessa Baird, "In the Name of GOD." *New Internationalist*, 370 (August 2004), 11.

<sup>89</sup> Baird, "In the Name of GOD", 11.

<sup>90</sup> Michael K Young, 2003, "A New Religious Holiday?" Meridian Magazine. <<http://www.meridianmagazine.com/ideas/030718holiday.html>> (13/12/04).

<sup>91</sup> Toby Lester, "Oh, Gods!" *The Atlantic Monthly*, 289, no. 2 (2002). Accessed on Proquest 13/12/04.

<sup>92</sup> Lester, "Oh Gods!"

<sup>93</sup> Lester, "Oh Gods!"

need: “these early forms of new Christianity are spreading in much of the postcolonial world in large part because they provide community and foster relationships that help people deal with challenging new social and political realities.”<sup>94</sup> This subject is also taken up by Philip Jenkins (October, 2002) in “The Next Christianity.”<sup>95</sup> a condensation of his book of similar title. In an essay that debunks the theory of secularization, David Brooks in “Kicking the Secularist Habit.”<sup>96</sup> declares that: “Secularism is not the future; it is yesterday’s incorrect vision of the future.”<sup>97</sup> He suggests, along with sociologist Peter Berger, that “the phenomenon that really needs explaining is the habits of the American professoriate: religious groups should be sending out researchers to try to understand why there are pockets of people in the world who do not feel the constant presence of God in their lives...”<sup>98</sup> His conclusion? “Understanding this world means beating the secularist prejudices out of our minds every day.”<sup>99</sup>

## 2.5 Resurgent Religion

It may be argued that religion plays a significant role in development -- individually and institutionally, directly and indirectly -- and that faith communities provide a very important, and perhaps in some communities the most important, community building institution in society. The church, mosque or temple is often the glue that binds some communities together. On the other hand, religion may also be the cause of conflict and a

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<sup>94</sup> Lester, “Oh Gods!” .

<sup>95</sup> Philip Jenkins. “The Next Christianity,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, (October, 2002), 53-68.

<sup>96</sup> David Brooks. “Kicking the Secularist Habit,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, 291, no. 2 (2003), 26-27.

<sup>97</sup> Brooks, “Kicking the Secularist Habit”, 26.

<sup>98</sup> Brooks, “Kicking the Secularist Habit”, 26.

<sup>99</sup> Brooks, “Kicking the Secularist Habit”, 27.



significant underlying reason for the failure of development initiatives. Unfortunately, religion is a double-edged sword. For all its potential good, religion has often been used to consolidate positions of power that may lead to violence, bloodshed or even war.

Speaking to the UN General Assembly in November, 2001, Kofi Annan declared:

We face two possible futures: a mutually destructive clash between so-called civilizations, based on the exaggeration of religious and cultural differences; or a global community, respecting diversity and rooted in universal values. The latter must be our choice.<sup>100</sup>

Clearly, religion has acquired a sharper profile in the geopolitical landscape, a fact Jeffrey Haynes confirms: “Those who neglect religion in analyses of contemporary and comparative politics are likely to miss a highly dynamic feature of the global scene.”<sup>101</sup>

While much of Peter Berger’s prodigious output properly fits within the Sociology of Religion literature, much recent attention revolves around arguments surrounding secularization theory, and in particular, Berger’s recantation on the subject. He warns that: “Those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril.”<sup>102</sup>

Alistair McGrath advances the argument that the appeal of atheism has faded in the postmodern world in The Twilight of Atheism: The Rise and Fall of Disbelief in the

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<sup>100</sup>Christian Aid, Christian Aid Annual Report 2004, <[http://www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutca/annualreport2004/pages\\_1-3.pdf](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutca/annualreport2004/pages_1-3.pdf)> (10/11/04).

<sup>101</sup> Jeff Haynes, “Conclusion”, in Jeff Haynes (Ed.), Religion, Globalization and Political Culture in the Third World, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 255.

<sup>102</sup> Peter Berger (Ed.), The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 18.

Modern World.<sup>103</sup> Quoting a wartime speech by Winston Churchill at Harvard University declaring that “The empires of the future will be empires of the mind,”<sup>104</sup> he suggests that of all the “-isms” that have dominated the modern or postmodern world, the greatest such “empire of the mind” is atheism. The French Revolution in 1789 marked the end of the old order and gave space for new secular and atheistic alternatives, which eventually became as oppressive as their forbears and found symbolic discredit with the fall of the Berlin Wall, 200 years later, in 1989. He argues that the ebb tide of atheism, reached perhaps in 1960 when half the world was, at least nominally, atheist, has now turned around in a resurgent tide of renewed spirituality.

A valuable source as far as the vibrancy of Christianity in the global South is concerned, is Philip Jenkins, whose book, The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity,<sup>105</sup> counters much prevailing opinion in suggesting that: “it is precisely religious changes that are the most significant, and even the most revolutionary, in the contemporary world. Before too long, the turn-of-the-millennium neglect of religious factors may come to be seen as comically myopic, on a par with a review of the eighteenth century that managed to miss the French revolution.”<sup>106</sup> Jenkins refers on a number of occasions to Samuel Huntington’s controversial “Clash of Civilizations” thesis,<sup>107</sup> which is not shy to name religion as a vital actor in the global political tinderbox and describes the fault lines between faiths and civilizations. Much of the

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<sup>103</sup> Alistair McGrath, The Twilight of Atheism: The Rise and Fall of Disbelief in the Modern World, (New York: Doubleday, 2004).

<sup>104</sup> Sir Winston’s Churchill, Speech at Harvard University, September 6th, 1943.

<sup>105</sup> Philip Jenkins, The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>106</sup> Jenkins, The Next Christendom, 1.

<sup>107</sup> Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs*, 73, no. 3 (1993) 22-49.

criticism of Huntington's argument has concentrated on the geopolitical implications of his thesis, but may have failed to satisfactorily address the resurgent role of religion in the modern world.

Scott Thomas suggests that "the postmodern world of the global society will be a postsecular one as well."<sup>108</sup> He identifies the resurgence of religion as not so much an aberration in an otherwise secular and modern world, but as a constituent of a "revolt against the West."<sup>109</sup> Such an emphasis raises questions as to the Westernization implicit in the development imperative, and the Western dominance of development discourse.

Jeffrey Haynes does not neglect the religious dimension in his analyses of religion and politics in the context of the Third World in various works including Religion in Third World Politics.<sup>110</sup> Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson bring together various contributions in their edited volume, Religion: the Missing Dimension in Statecraft, in which Edward Luttwak suggests that an "astonishingly persistent Enlightenment prejudice"<sup>111</sup> has prevented recognition that religion is the "Missing Dimension" in the analysis of contemporary foreign affairs:

One is therefore confronted with a learned repugnance to contend *intellectually* with all that is religion or belongs to it – a complex inhibition compounded out of the peculiar embarrassment that many feel when faced by explicit manifestations of serious religious sentiment; out of mistaken Enlightenment prediction that the progress of knowledge and influence of religion were mutually exclusive, making the latter a waning force; and sometimes out of a wilful cynicism that illegitimately claims the virtue of realism.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Scott Thomas, "The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Changing Character of International Politics", in Max Stackhouse, (General Ed.) God and Globalization: Theological Ethics and the Spheres of Life, Volume 3: Christ and the Dominions of Civilization, (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2002), 112.

<sup>109</sup> Hedley Bull, quoted in Thomas, "The Global Resurgence", 114.

<sup>110</sup> Jeffrey Haynes, Religion in Third World Politics, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993).

<sup>111</sup> Edward Luttwak, "The Missing Dimension", in Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Eds.), Religion: The Missing Dimension in Statecraft, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>112</sup> Luttwak, "The Missing Dimension", 10.

Barry Rubin, in the same volume, concurs: "To neglect religious institutions and thinking would be to render incomprehensible some of the key issues and crises in the world today."<sup>113</sup>

## 2.6 Regional Literatures

Various areas of the world attract a literature of their own. In Latin America, the rich body of work on liberation theology bears directly on development issues. Paulo Freire's conscientization approach, expressed in Pedagogy of the Oppressed,<sup>114</sup> has been influential well beyond the continent. David Martin has chronicled the "startling and unanticipated development" in Latin America: the explosion of evangelical Protestantism.<sup>115</sup> In Asia, a growing literature focusing on socially engaged Buddhism, includes recent offerings such as George D. Bond's, Buddhism at Work: Community Development, Social Empowerment and the Sarvodaya Movement,<sup>116</sup> and Stuart Chandler's, Establishing a Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Barry Rubin "Religion and International Affairs," in Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Eds.), Religion: The Missing Dimension in Statecraft, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 33.

<sup>114</sup> Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

<sup>115</sup> David Martin, Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 293.

<sup>116</sup> George D. Bond, Buddhism at Work: Community Development, Social Empowerment and the Sarvodaya Movement, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2004).

<sup>117</sup> Stuart Chandler, Establishing a Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004).

The contrasting worldviews and cosmologies of the West and Africa are addressed in Robin Horton's Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion and Science.<sup>118</sup> and in Benjamin Ray's African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community.<sup>119</sup> The writings of John Mbiti throw much light on the essentially religious nature of daily life in Africa: "...for Africans, the whole of existence is a religious phenomenon; man is a deeply religious being living in a religious universe."<sup>120</sup> The western academy may assume an atheistic neutrality, but, as Mbiti avers, "in traditional life there are no atheists."<sup>121</sup> This dimension of life appears in the fabric of Ben Okri's popular novels, such as in his trilogy The Famished Road.<sup>122</sup> which integrates the world of the flesh and the world of the spirit. Much of Ben Okri's literary work is informed by echoes of another world: "a fifth dimension, a world of spirits, the interpenetration of the worlds of the living and the dead."<sup>123</sup> Okri opens a window into a vision of development, which goes far beyond the usual one-dimensional view.

In a volume that focuses on a specific country -- in this case, Liberia -- Stephen Ellis considers the effects of the invisible spirit world on events during the Liberian civil war:

Most studies have, in the conventional Western idiom, considered these processes of change in terms of economic and political development. Many Liberians, including the leading figures in the war, seem to believe rather that the specific political and economic arrangements made by human beings are subject to the will of God or other denizens of an invisible world.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup>Robin Horton, Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion and Science, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>119</sup> Benjamin Ray, African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1976).

<sup>120</sup> John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), (Oxford: Heinemann, 1989) 15.

<sup>121</sup> Mbiti, African Religions, 29.

<sup>122</sup> Ben Okri, The Famished Road, (London: Vintage, 1992).

<sup>123</sup> Ben Okri, A Way of Being Free, (London, Phoenix, 1997), 99.

<sup>124</sup> Stephen Ellis, The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War, (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 279.

Another case study -- of the Anglican Church in Kenya -- by Galia Sabar.<sup>125</sup> provides a comprehensive look at the significant impact of the Anglican Church on politics and development in the decades following independence.

The theme of religion and politics is intertwined in many books on Islam, which recognize the impossibility of unravelling the two areas as in the dualistic West, such as Bassam Tibi's, Islam Between Culture and Politics.<sup>126</sup> and in Seyyed Hossein Nasr's meditative analysis of Islam for the Westerner, The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity.<sup>127</sup> In the United States following the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the subject of religion's place in the world may have become more prominent in publishing, where the "cacophony"<sup>128</sup> surrounding Islam has reached unprecedented proportions.

## 2.7 Environment, Gender, Culture

A growing literature exists on the relationship between religion and the environment. Herman Daly pioneered much work on a more eco-friendly approach to economics in Beyond Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development.<sup>129</sup> More recently, the journal, *Daedalus*, devoted a special issue to the subject: "Religion and Ecology: Can the

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<sup>125</sup> Galia Sabar, Church, State and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition, 1963-1993. (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2002).

<sup>126</sup> Bassam Tibi, Islam Between Culture and Politics, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.

<sup>127</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity, New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002.

<sup>128</sup> Nasr, The Heart of Islam, xiii.

<sup>129</sup> Herman E. Daly, Beyond Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).

Climate Change?”<sup>130</sup> while the Worldwatch Institute’s report, State of the World 2003, included a chapter entitled, “Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World,”<sup>131</sup> in which Gary Gardner outlines how science replaced religion as “the authoritative source for some of humanity’s grandest questions.” but notes that “science, largely restrained by ethics (whether from religion or anywhere else), helped to deliver the most violent and most environmentally damaging century in human history.”<sup>132</sup> A World Bank publication, Faith in Conservation: New Approaches to Religions and the Environment,<sup>133</sup> traces the ecological positions of eleven major religions, and explores the possibilities for partnership between religious and environmental movements. A comprehensive website that brings together religion and the environment, termed “the largest international multireligious project of its kind.”<sup>134</sup> is maintained by the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Harvard University. For a general resource, amongst many, on religion, the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School proves valuable.<sup>135</sup>

Gender and religion is another area in the development equation with a growing literature. Cassandra Balchin points out that religion often appears as yet another factor that impacts both positively and negatively upon the development of women, and cautions: “But academic enquiry has not studied its ontological basis and precise nature

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<sup>130</sup> *Daedalus*, Special Issue, “Religion and Ecology: Can the Climate Change?” 130, no. 4, (2001).

<sup>131</sup> Worldwatch Institute, State of the World 2003, (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2003).

<sup>132</sup> Gary Gardner, “Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World”, in Worldwatch Institute, State of the World 2003, 153.

<sup>133</sup> Martin Palmer with Victoria Finlay, Faith in Conservation: New Approaches to Religions and the Environment, (Washington: World Bank, 2003).

<sup>134</sup> Forum on Religion and Ecology, <<http://www.environment.harvard.edu/religion/>> (25/1/05).

<sup>135</sup> Harvard Divinity School, Center for the Study of World Religions, <<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/about/>> (25/1/05).

to the same extent, for example, as gender, class, sexuality and age.”<sup>136</sup> Often gender is included in a wider cultural discussion.

The subject of religion itself is often subsumed under the heading of culture. Pioneering work by Clifford Geertz,<sup>137</sup> not to mention earlier seminal contributions by Max Weber<sup>138</sup> and Emile Durkheim,<sup>139</sup> and more recent insights from Thierry Verhelst<sup>140</sup> and Vincent Tucker,<sup>141</sup> provide valuable perspectives in this area. More recently, greater attention has been paid to social capital, most notably Robert Putnam’s work,<sup>142</sup> and indigenous knowledge (IK) literature, one volume of particular importance being The Cultural Dimension of Development: Indigenous Knowledge Systems.<sup>143</sup> Amy Sherman provides an overview of the “culture-and-development” school from Max Weber on, and proffers some less than politically correct conclusions in her provocative book, The Soul of Development: Biblical Christianity and Economic Transformation in Guatemala.<sup>144</sup> Her critique of traditional religion and appraisal of the evangelical explosion in Guatemala is squarely situated within an economic framework, and also raises questions as to the

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<sup>136</sup> Cassandra Balchin, “With her Feet on the Ground: Women, Religion and Development in Muslim Communities”, *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 46.

<sup>137</sup> Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>138</sup> Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, (New York: Scribner’s, 1958); Max Weber, The Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism, (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958).

<sup>139</sup> Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Translated by Joseph Ward Swain, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915).

<sup>140</sup> Thierry G. Verhelst, No Life Without Roots: Culture and Development”, translated by Bob Cumming (London and New Jersey: Zed, 1990).

<sup>141</sup> Vincent Tucker (Ed.), Cultural Perspectives on Development, (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997).

<sup>142</sup> Robert D. Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

<sup>143</sup> Michael Warren, L. Jan Slikkerveer and David Brokensha (Eds.), The Cultural Dimension of Development: Indigenous Knowledge Systems, London: Intermediate Technology, 1995.

<sup>144</sup> Amy Sherman, The Soul of Development: Biblical Christianity and Economic Transformation in Guatemala, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).



implications for development interventions of “health and wealth” interpretations of the gospel.

## 2.8 Institutions and Initiatives

A greater appreciation of the role of religion and the faith communities in development is evidenced in some examples of increased interaction between religious and secular institutions. Beyond the conventional organizations in the various faiths, such as the World Council of Churches or the World Jewish Congress, responsible for development issues amongst more general concerns, some interfaith initiatives with specific reference to religion and development are important to mention.

One such initiative that brings the areas of religion and development together is the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD). In 1998, the President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, came together to promote dialogue and increase cooperation on issues around poverty and development. Such an initiative did not come without criticism on either side – the World Bank has not always been viewed favourably by the Church, and the Board of the Bank voted down the initial proposal for dialogue by 24 votes to none.<sup>145</sup> Wolfensohn asserts: “This is a powerful idea – to tap the strength of religions as development actors.”<sup>146</sup> This

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<sup>145</sup> Wendy Tyndale, “Idealism and Practicality: The Role of Religion in Development”, *Development*, 46: 4 (2003), 25.

<sup>146</sup> World Bank “Faith and Development”.

<<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/ORGANIZATION/PRESIDENTEXT>

rapprochement brought together for the first time the world faiths and the World Bank, both intimately involved in development and yet fitting the description of “ships passing in the night,” coined by Katherine Marshall, who was herself instrumental in the WFDD/World Bank dialogue. The increasing emphasis in Bank policy on civil society and good governance contributed to a greater appreciation of the role of faith institutions and it was recognized that a partnership could be mutually beneficial:

On the one hand the development institutions have a great deal of technical expertise and analytic skills to offer. Their financial resources are infinitely more extensive than those of the religious communities and they have access to other powerful institutions. On the other hand, people from the religious communities come with intuition and knowledge gained from their focus on people as spiritual as well as material beings and from their practical experience with the poor.<sup>147</sup>

According to a web page, entitled “Faith and Development,” the World Bank has defined its relationships with the faith communities in three key areas: building partnerships, elaborating holistic visions of development and emphasizing praxis rather than dialogue.<sup>148</sup>

WFDD also recognized that, in spite of similar aspirations, little cooperation historically existed between the different faiths themselves. The WFDD has been active in producing publications, informing policy documents, organizing workshops, researching case studies and encouraging input into World Development Reports. This eagerness by the

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ERNAL/0,,contentMDK:20091872~menuPK:232057~pagePK:139877~piPK:199692~theSitePK:227585\_0.html?> (18/1/05).

<sup>147</sup> World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), <<http://www.wfdd.org.uk/aboutus.html>> (20/12/04).

<sup>148</sup> World Bank, “Faith and Development.”

World Bank to include faith communities in the development dialogue has resulted in more substantive involvement for them in the PRSP process in many countries.<sup>149</sup>

Although many critics of the World Bank would have a hard job digesting some of its posturing, even they must acknowledge a change in that rhetoric, expressed in these personal comments from its President, James Wolfensohn, in a keynote address to the Conference on Ethics and Spiritual Values in 1995:

Development is not just a matter of looking at increases in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. In Africa I saw successful development in villages ... These people, living on next to nothing, feel a sense of progress that is more than economic. It encompasses recognition of roots and their spiritual and cultural values, which we [the World Bank] need to nurture and encourage. These values are what we should be developing.... The [World Bank's] central mission is to meld economic assistance with spiritual, ethical and moral development... It is not easy to explain to most people why I would leave a successful business practice to come and try to make the world a better place... I came [here] because of a background that had, I believe, within my own Jewish religion some sense of ethical, spiritual and moral values that I have attempted to live by and that guide me.<sup>150</sup>

Such comments reflect a greater willingness to allow the spiritual into the previously iconoclastic space of development and reflect an ongoing transformation in the goals of the organization to transform itself from a lending bank to a knowledge bank. However, as is evidenced by the widespread opposition to the Bank and its policies, deep skepticism remains as to the Bank's motives for "getting religion." With the World Bank in transition, following the nomination of Paul Wolfowitz as James Wolfensohn's

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<sup>149</sup> Successors to the heavily criticized Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of the previous decades, the PRSP process allowed for broader participation in the development of country-specific poverty reduction strategies. This has allowed greater participation by Civil Society actors, faith groups included, but the process has not been without criticism, opponents suggesting that much of the impetus remains top-down and externally determined.

<sup>150</sup> Quoted by Gregory Baum, "Solidarity with the Poor," in Sharon Harper (Ed.), The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2000), 74-5.

successor as President, the future direction of the Bank's dialogue with religion remains to be seen.

In Canada, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) has been involved in an innovative and integrative project regarding the intersection of religion, science and development. Following an initial investigation in 1994 into the relationship between religion and international development by Father William Ryan, published in Culture, Spirituality, and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue, IDRC sought to expand the enquiry further to include the interrelation between science, religion, and development (SRD). Vice President, Pierre Beemans, outlines the challenge that IDRC faced: "This was a new and contentious area for an organization like ours, which has been accustomed to thinking of religion and spirituality as private matters with no place in our professional lives or in a public domain like that of international development."<sup>151</sup> Initially the SRD project brought together four experts from the Hindu, Christian, Muslim and Baha'i faiths on the subject. Their discussions have resulted in a volume entitled, The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development.<sup>152</sup>

From both Beeman's "Foreword" -- "This book is intended to launch that wider stage of inquiry."<sup>153</sup> -- and Ryan's "Afterword" -- "Our ultimate hope is that this dialogue will

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<sup>151</sup> Pierre Beemans, "Foreword" in Harper, The Lab, viii.

<sup>152</sup> William Ryan, Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue. (Ottawa: IDRC, 1995).

<sup>153</sup> Beemans, "Foreword", viii.

engender a creative, new consciousness<sup>154</sup> -- it is clear that those involved in the SRD project hoped that a scaling up of the dialogue might result in the future. However, it seems that the impetus has diffused and that this brave experiment in “unconventional research”<sup>155</sup> has stalled, in spite of the general acceptance that religion was involved to a greater or lesser extent in the events south of the Canadian border on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

*Jubilee 2000*, which looked back to precedents in Old Testament Israel for debt relief and cancellation, not only brought to the world’s attention the power of a combined ecclesiastical response to a development problem, but also built bridges between the religious and secular communities. A more recent initiative, the *Micah Challenge*, which brings together more than 270 Christian evangelical relief, development and justice ministries throughout the world,<sup>156</sup> has yet to capture global attention in the same way. Using the same scripture in Micah in its mission statement, one of the most prominent ecumenical coalitions in Canada focusing on development issues is *Kairos*, which “unites Canadian churches and religious organizations in a faithful ecumenical response to the call to ‘do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.’”<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Ryan, “Our Way of Proceeding” in Harper, *The Lab*, 244.

<sup>155</sup> Ryan, “Our Way”, 244.

<sup>156</sup> *Micah Challenge*, <<http://www.micahchallenge.com/overview/>> (4/3/05).

<sup>157</sup> *Kairos*, <<http://www.kairoscanada.org/e/who/mission.asp>> (4/3/05).

## 2.9 Reports

On a global scale, the World Bank generated a consultation, "Voices of the Poor," in preparation for the World Development Report 2000/1, entitled Attacking Poverty.<sup>158</sup> The results of this mammoth exercise, which were disseminated in three volumes, collected "the voices of more than 60,000 poor women and men from 60 countries, in an unprecedented effort to understand poverty from the perspective of the poor themselves."<sup>159</sup> The results of the massive consultation resulted in six major conclusions. The first of these emphasized that the poor view wellbeing holistically:

Poverty is much more than income alone. For the poor, the good life or wellbeing is multidimensional with both material and psychological dimensions. Wellbeing is peace of mind; it is good health; it is belonging to a community; it is safety; it is freedom of choice and action; it is a dependable livelihood and a steady source of income; it is food.<sup>160</sup>

Poor people's definitions of well-being are holistic, often more holistic than those of the western development professionals there to help. "The Voices of the Poor consultation showed that poor people placed their greatest trust in churches and faith groups,"<sup>161</sup> as evidenced in the final conclusion which recognized that, the "local holy man"<sup>162</sup> assumed great importance amongst the local networks and institutions. Such conclusions might not be strange to those familiar with the effect of faith communities in the developing world. "If there is any social group that lives, understands, and identifies with the poor in Africa,

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<sup>158</sup> World Bank, World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>159</sup> World Bank, "Voices of the Poor" <<http://www.worldbank.org/wbp/voices/overview.htm>> (2/1/05)

<sup>160</sup> World Bank, "Voices of the Poor", <http://www1.worldbank.org/prem/poverty/voices/listen-findings.htm> (13/1/05).

<sup>161</sup> Richard Bonney and Asaf Hussein. "Faith Communities and the Development Agenda." Report by the Centre for the History of Religious and Political Pluralism. (University of Leicester, 2001).

<sup>162</sup> World Bank, "Voices of the Poor". <http://www1.worldbank.org/prem/poverty/voices/listen-findings.htm> (13/1/05)

it is the Church... When the church talks of the poor, it is talking of its own members,<sup>163</sup> leading the [author] to suggest: “if you want to know where the poor are, ask where the Church is.”<sup>164</sup>

In conclusion, three reports require mention. The first, Religion and Public Policy at the UN, provides a fascinating insight into the interface between religion and public policy at the UN. Produced by Religion Counts, “an internationally recognized group of scholars and experts organized to provide religious perspectives in the development of international public policy,”<sup>165</sup> the Report seeks to uncover the various religious dynamics at work at the UN in order to construct a “map” of religion at the organization.<sup>166</sup> Acknowledging the potential volatility of the mixture of religion and politics, the authors admit: “we were frankly amazed to discover that this report would be the first comprehensive analysis of the subject.”<sup>167</sup> They note that religion has raised its head at many UN Conferences, most notably the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo.<sup>168</sup> The authors quote Secretary General, Kofi Annan, who declared in a 1998 speech that “the politics of nations can never ignore the transcendent, spiritual dimension of the human experience.”<sup>169</sup> In conclusion, the authors

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<sup>163</sup> Tsele, “The Role of the Christian Faith in Development”, 213.

<sup>164</sup> Vinay Samuel, “The World Bank and the Churches: Reflections at the Outset of a New Partnership”, in Belshaw et al, Faith in Development, 238.

<sup>165</sup> Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy at the UN”.  
<<http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/pubs/Religion%20Counts.pdf>> (2/1/05).

<sup>166</sup> Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy”, 6.

<sup>167</sup> Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy”, 5.

<sup>168</sup> Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy”, 5.

<sup>169</sup> Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy”, 25.

appeal that: “the voices of religion, discordant and divided as they may be, must be included in the discussions or the resulting consensus will be insufficient.”<sup>170</sup>

The United Nations Development Programme’s 2004 Human Development Report entitled, “Cultural Liberty in Today’s Diverse World,” is rare in bringing culture, and particularly religion, to the foreground of analysis and provides evidence that religion is being treated more seriously as a serious subject of academic enquiry. The Report concedes that without human security, often affected by race, religion and ethnicity, no sustainable development is possible. It also acknowledges the impact of religion in poor people’s lives -- a fact that has long been obvious to the careful observer of the marginalized “who more often than not are members of religious or ethnic minorities or migrants.”<sup>171</sup>

UNDP Administrator Mark Mulloch Brown’s Foreword begins:

At a time when the notion of a global “clash of cultures” is resonating so powerfully – and worryingly – around the world, finding answers to the old questions of how best to manage and mitigate conflict over language, religion, culture and ethnicity has taken on renewed importance. For development practitioners this is not an abstract question.<sup>172</sup>

The Report is critical of the accepted trend of deemphasizing cultural diversity in the often elusive quest for national unity, urging “an alternative approach,” which openly

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<sup>170</sup> Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy”, 50.

<sup>171</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 2004. “Cultural Liberty in Today’s Diverse World”. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), v.

<sup>172</sup> UNDP, HDR 2004, v.



focuses on race, religion and ethnicity. Such an approach would encourage religious minorities to celebrate their religious heritage “without fear of ridicule.”<sup>173</sup>

Reflecting an ongoing broadening of the definition of development itself, the Report states that: “Human development requires more than health, education, a decent standard of living and political freedom. People’s cultural identities must be recognized and accommodated...”<sup>174</sup> Recognizing that religion is one of the prime constituents of that identity, the Report highlights: “the profound importance of religion to people’s identities.”<sup>175</sup> In bringing such matters to the forefront of development attention, the HDR 2004 can be considered ground-breaking indeed.

Finally, the Global Civil Society Report 2004/5 also includes a focus on religion, as it pleads for a more holistic understanding of southern life:

There is no way we can understand the logic, strategies and dynamics of civil society anywhere in the Third World unless we bring the transcendental dimension back into our analysis. Religious devotion is a fundamental motive for many social movements in the South, from Latin America to Africa and South Asia.<sup>176</sup>

Such reports suggest a greater openness to include religion in global analysis.

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<sup>173</sup> UNDP, HDR 2004, 4.

<sup>174</sup> UNDP, HDR 2004, 6.

<sup>175</sup> UNDP, HDR 2004, 8.

<sup>176</sup> Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius and Mary Kaldor (Eds.). Global Civil Society 2004/5, (London: Sage, 2004), 45.

## 2.10 Conferences

Various conferences have brought religion into focus, perhaps the most publicized being the “Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders,” when, in August 2000, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, over 1,000 religious leaders from all regions of the world came together in New York. In spite of the controversy occasioned by the decision not to invite the Dalai Lama to participate, the delegates explored moves towards greater collaboration and integration within the UN system, and signed “A Global Commitment to Peace” with respect to peacemaking and development issues. Critics suggested that the unprecedented assembly was long on symbolism and short on substance: “Rich in color and pageantry, long on good intentions but often falling short of a clear purpose and outcome, the Millennium World Peace Summit provided a revealing glimpse of religious groups... sometimes at their best and sometimes at their worst.”<sup>177</sup> A women’s initiative originating in the Millennium World Peace Summit, the Global Peace Initiative of Women, brings together religious, business and government leaders from all over the world to mobilize the perspectives of women on global problems and to “bring spiritual and economic resources together to aid in the reduction of poverty and the social stresses that lead to conflict.”<sup>178</sup>

Two conferences within a month of each other in the summer of 2004 spoke to the role of religion in the world. The Parliament of the World’s Religions brought together in Barcelona 8,000 members of diverse religious communities to discuss pressing

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<sup>177</sup> *Christian Century*, “Summit Shows Religions at Best and Worst - Millennium World Peace Summit”, , September 13th, 2000 <[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1058/is\\_25\\_117/ai\\_65702737](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1058/is_25_117/ai_65702737)> (5/3/05).

<sup>178</sup> Global Peace Initiative of Women, <<http://www.gpiw.org/about.html>> (5/3/05).

development issues facing the global community.<sup>179</sup> The mission of the Parliament, which meets on average every five years, is “to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities and foster their engagement with the world and its other guiding institutions in order to achieve a peaceful, just, and sustainable world.”<sup>180</sup> On a smaller scale, Canada's Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs holds an influential annual conference around a public policy theme. The title of the 2004 Couchiching Conference reflected the resurgence of religion in public debate: “God is back... with a vengeance: Religion, pluralism and the secular state.” One of the speakers, Katherine Marshall, appealed to attendees to open their “eyes and ears, to see and understand more clearly the complex ways in which the worlds of faith and development intersect and can engage together.”<sup>181</sup>

Since 2001, the Fez Colloquium, held each year in the ancient city of that name in Morocco, in concert with the Fez World Festival of Sacred Music, explores the role of spirituality in globalization around the theme of “Giving Soul to Globalization.” With an emphasis in bringing a spiritual dimension to bear in the debates over globalization, and constructing a bridge of the spirit between the antagonistic world views expressed at both the World Economic Forum and the World Social Forum, the Fez Colloquium is inspired by “a global vision of a multicultural world, where different cultures and perspectives all

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<sup>179</sup> The Parliament of the World's Religions was instrumental at its meeting in Chicago in 1993 in advancing a “Declaration Toward a Global Ethic.” See Hans Kung and K-J Kuschel, (Eds.), A Global Ethic: the Declaration of the Parliament of World Religions, (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1993). This work has also been continued by UNESCO's Universal Ethics Project. See Yersu Kim, “Philosophy and the Prospects for a Universal Ethic”, in Max Stackhouse, (General Ed.) God and Globalization: Theological Ethics and the Spheres of Life, Volume 2, The Spirit and the Modern Authorities. (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2001).

<sup>180</sup> Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions. < <http://www.cpwr.org/who/who.htm>. > (2/1/05).

<sup>181</sup> Katherine Marshall, “The Causes of Religious Revival: Emergence of a Faith and Development Dialogue and the Challenges of Fundamentalism and Terrorism for Development Institutions”, Couchiching Conference, Orilla, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

find a place, and by a conviction that real dialogue requires new and different approaches.”<sup>182</sup>

A recent conference, in June 2005, brought together delegates from all over the world to Antigonish, Nova Scotia for the Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness, entitled: “Rethinking Development: Local Pathways to Global Wellbeing.”<sup>183</sup> Spiritual and religious themes were never far from the surface, as the examples of Bhutan and other alternative development strategies were showcased.

## 2.11 International Development Agencies

The involvement of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in this area goes back to 1992, when the NGO division involved Christian NGOs in a discussion to resolve various tensions and misunderstandings between the parties and to set out “some basic principles, understandings and affirmations”<sup>184</sup> with regard to their respective roles in relief and development activity. The “Churches and Development Dialogue” resulted in an initial conference in June 1993, followed by a second conference in October 1994, leading to a document a year later entitled “Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations.”

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<sup>182</sup> Katherine Marshall, “The Fez Colloquium: ‘Giving Soul to Globalization’”, in Marshall and Keogh, *Mind, Heart and Soul*, 49.

<sup>183</sup> Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness, “Rethinking Development: Local Pathways to Global Wellbeing”, St Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, 20-24/6/05 <<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/conference/conference.shtml>> (23/6/05)

<sup>184</sup> Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), “Christian NGOs and CIDA: Guiding Principles, Understandings and Affirmations”, Working Paper (Ottawa: CIDA, 1995), 1.

Recognizing that “faith based institutions organizations and institutions are often major components of civil society in the South,”<sup>148</sup> this document acknowledged that religious organizations have “an important role to play in the development process.”<sup>149</sup>

Furthermore, “CIDA also recognizes that there is a spiritual dimension to the development process”<sup>150</sup> and suggests that: “Efforts to create a rigid separation between religion and developmental processes are often inappropriate, and may be counter-developmental.”<sup>151</sup> The document also admits that development often involves belief change, which may originate from not just religious but secular agencies:

All development agencies bring particular beliefs and values to the development process which they promote explicitly or implicitly, such as beliefs and values related to the role of women, protection of the environment, respect for human rights, democratic participation in decision making, the role of the market, or institutional development. These beliefs may often challenge or undermine existing belief systems and cultural values.<sup>152</sup>

While CIDA is actively involved with many faith based groups in development programming and provision, little direct focus on the area of religion and development appears to have taken place in the intervening years, beyond an informal network looking at the issue of culture, belief and development, and the 1995 document still appears to guide the relationship between the parties.

The British Department for International Development (DFID) has recently given greater emphasis to the role of religious belief and practice in development by opening up an expanded dialogue with the faith communities. Faith groups have been identified by

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<sup>148</sup> CIDA, “Christian NGOs and CIDA” 2.

<sup>149</sup> CIDA, “Christian NGOs and CIDA”, 2.

<sup>150</sup> CIDA, “Christian NGOs and CIDA”, 3.

<sup>151</sup> CIDA, “Christian NGOs and CIDA”, 3.

<sup>152</sup> CIDA, “Christian NGOs and CIDA”. 5.

DFID as one of the priority areas in its strategy of building support for development and raising public awareness and understanding of international development issues.<sup>190</sup> In 2001, the Department commissioned a report by two University of Leicester professors, Richard Bonney and Asaf Hussein, on the subject of "Faith Communities and the Development Agenda"<sup>191</sup> The goal of such investigation was to augment and expand ongoing cooperation, through the Partnership Programme Agreement (PPA), with the likes of traditional partners Christian Aid and Cafod.<sup>192</sup> DFID intends to include more faith based organizations in its Strategic Grant Agreements (SGAs), which encourage new partnerships with organizations whose primary focus is not international development.<sup>193</sup>

The report by Bonney and Hussein served to provide a comprehensive picture "for the first time"<sup>194</sup> of the awareness of eight<sup>195</sup> U.K. faith communities' knowledge of development goals and their perspectives with regard to development, as well as a snapshot of some of their initiatives in this area. They acknowledge that a number of British NGOs are "drawn from, or closely related to, the separate faith communities,"<sup>196</sup> and report "a high degree of motivation within the separate faith traditions towards addressing poverty."<sup>197</sup> They encourage an interfaith response towards the development

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<sup>190</sup> See DFID, "Building Support for Development: Raising public awareness and understanding of international development issues," Strategy Paper, April 1999 and DFID, Departmental Report 2000.

<sup>191</sup> Richard Bonney and Asaf Hussain, "Faith Communities and the Development Agenda." Report by the Centre for the History of Religious and Political Pluralism, University of Leicester, (2001), <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/faithdevcomagenda.pdf>>. (16/12/04).

<sup>192</sup> DFID, <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/intheuk/ppas/christianaid-ppa.asp>> (17/12/04).

<sup>193</sup> DFID, <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/intheuk/faith.asp>> (17/12/04).

<sup>194</sup> Bonney and Hussain, "Faith, Communities and The Development Agenda", 7.

<sup>195</sup> The Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh faith communities.

<sup>196</sup> Bonney and Hussain, 28.

<sup>197</sup> Bonney and Hussain, 4.

agenda, and recommend the establishment of a new intermediary body between DFID and the faith communities.<sup>198</sup>

In a recent (2004) competition to generate research regarding poverty eradication, DFID chose “Faiths in Development” as one of the research themes: “DFID is looking for innovative, strategic research themes which will help to shape future development policy and practice.”<sup>199</sup> In the preamble to the rules of the competition for new Research Programme Consortia (RPCs), DFID acknowledges:

While DFID does not have a corporate view on the role of faiths and beliefs, there is growing interest among DFID departments for a more systematic understanding of the role that faiths play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>200</sup>

Such developments reflect a greater appreciation of the potential role of religion as a contributor and partner in development policy and practice.

## 2.12 Conclusion

References to religion are not prominent in the development literature, and certainly do not reflect the place that religion, faith and spirituality hold in individual lives and communities in the South. Comparatively few sources focus directly on how religious sensitivity affects development – either positively or negatively. This chapter has sought

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<sup>198</sup> Bonney and Hussain, 5.

<sup>199</sup> DFID, “Procurement”, <<http://www2.dfid.gov.uk/procurement/eoirresearchprogconsort271004.asp>> (17/12/04).

<sup>200</sup> DFID, “Research Programme Consortia”.

<<http://www2.dfid.gov.uk/procurement/researchprogconsortia-bq.pdf>> (28/1/05), 14.

to identify the major sources where the intersection between religion and development is explored and developed.

This chapter has been structured around a series of headings, which reflect various areas connected with the broad themes of theory, praxis, institutions and contemporary trends within the development discourse: theoretical underpinnings; faith communities and FBOs; journals and volumes; special journal and magazine issues; resurgent religion; regional literatures; environment, gender and culture; institutions and initiatives; reports; conferences and, finally, international development agencies.

While it is clear from this survey that religion has edged more into the public eye, especially since the events of 9/11, to seriously expect religion to assume a more central position in the development discourse or to play an enhanced role in development planning may be premature.

As well as considering various definitions, the next chapter brings together the two disciplines that inform this Thesis -- those of International Development Studies and the Sociology of Religion -- in order to investigate how these two areas of academic enquiry have intersected historically.



## CHAPTER THREE

### DEVELOPMENT and RELIGION: A BRIEF HISTORY

Originating in a discussion surrounding the respective definitions of religion and development, this chapter moves on to explore their historical interconnection and subsequent separation, and concludes by positing that the two subjects, initially inseparable, broke up only to edge towards a cautious, although largely unrecognized, rapprochement. Stated metaphorically, religion and development may have been characterized originally as ships commencing their maiden voyages together under the same flag and towards the same horizon, only to part company in the passage of time to become “ships passing in the night”<sup>1</sup> and, latterly, with some modification of compass, to find themselves within sight again, if not within earshot, as ships passing in the day.

#### 3.1 Definitions

Defining both development and religion is challenging. “What is development?” is as complex, contested and convoluted a question as “What is religion?” Some of the contrasting definitions of development are presented first, followed by an overview of some of the definitions of religion on offer.

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<sup>1</sup> Marshall, “Development and Religion”.

The opening line of M.P. Cowen and R.W. Shenton's, Doctrines of Development:  
 "Development seems to defy definition, although not for a want of definitions on offer."<sup>2</sup>  
 is echoed by Jan Knippers Black, who conceives development as a "user-friendly term,  
 having virtually as many potential meanings as potential users."<sup>3</sup> Ronald Chilcote simply  
 suggests that: "The study of development is 'overdeveloped'"<sup>4</sup> while Gustavo Esteva  
 claims that: "Development occupies the centre of an incredibly powerful semantic  
 constellation...At the same time, very few words are as feeble, as fragile and incapable of  
 giving substance and meaning to thought and behaviour as this one."<sup>5</sup> Attempting a  
 careful synthesis of many of the opinions on offer, Jan Nederveen Pieterse declares: "We  
 can probably define development as the organized intervention in collective affairs  
 according to a standard of improvement."<sup>6</sup> For Robert Chambers development is simply  
 "good change."<sup>7</sup> Allen and Thomas attempt a triple-layered text-book explanation of  
 development: as a vision, as a historical process of social change and as deliberate efforts  
 aimed at improvement.<sup>8</sup>

While any definition of development is plagued by imprecision, as may be seen in the  
 brief introduction above, the debate over a definition of religion, while more  
 academically developed, may be even more elusive. A conclusive definition of religion is

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<sup>2</sup> M. P. Cowen and R.W. Shenton, Doctrines of Development (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Jan Knippers Black, Development in Theory and Practice: Bridging the Gap, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ronald Chilcote, Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 286.

<sup>5</sup> Gustavo Esteva, "Development", in Wolfgang Sachs (Ed.), The Development Dictionary, (London: Zed, 1992), 8.

<sup>6</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Development Theory: Deconstructions/Reconstructions, (London: Sage, 2001), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Chambers in Tim Allen and Alan Thomas (Eds.) Poverty and Development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 23.

<sup>8</sup> Alan Thomas in Allen and Thomas, Poverty and Development, 29.

notoriously difficult, and, as in the case of development, is not required for the sake of this thesis, which assumes a broad and popular definition based on popular perceptions of matters of faith, spirituality and religion. Religion has been defined in many ways, but as Casanova states, "there is no consensus, perhaps there never will be, as to what counts as religion."<sup>9</sup>

Emile Durkheim conceived of religion in community: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden -- beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them."<sup>10</sup>

Max Weber in the The Sociology of Religion simply avoids the issue: "To define 'religion,' to say what it is, is not possible at the start of a presentation such as this. Definition can be attempted, if at all, only at the conclusion of the study."<sup>11</sup>

Peter Berger is less reserved: "Religion is the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established"<sup>12</sup> and, therefore, represents: "the audacious attempt to conceive of the entire universe as being humanly significant."<sup>13</sup> Berger eloquently explains the resilience of religion:

Every human society is, in the last resort, men banded together in the face of death. The power of religion depends, in the last resort, upon the credibility of the

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<sup>9</sup> Casanova, Public Religions, 26.

<sup>10</sup> Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Translated by Joseph Ward Swain, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915), 62.

<sup>11</sup> Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 1.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion, (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 25.

<sup>13</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 28.

banners it puts in the hands of men as they stand before death, or more accurately, as they walk, inevitably, toward it.<sup>14</sup>

Berger himself, in an appendix in The Sacred Canopy, provides a summary of definitions on offer, but cautions that: "Definitions cannot, by their very nature, be either 'true' or 'false,' only more useful or less so. For this reason it makes relatively little sense to argue over definitions."<sup>15</sup>

From the perspective of social anthropology, Clifford Geertz provides an influential definition of religion as: "a system of symbols which act to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing those conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic."<sup>16</sup> This definition, which had assumed almost hegemonic status in the field, has recently fallen out of favour in certain quarters, where critiques suggest that Geertz's definition is shaped by his own background, which privileged individual rather than communal formulations of religion.<sup>17</sup> Talal Asad argues that any definition must not be separated conceptually from the domain of power: "There cannot be a universal definition of religion, not only because its constituent elements and relationships are historically specific, but because that definition is itself the historical product of discursive practices."<sup>18</sup>

Thomas O'Dea brings together various basic functions of religion for society and the individual in the following textbook definition:

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<sup>14</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 51.

<sup>15</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 175.

<sup>16</sup> Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures. (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 90.

<sup>17</sup> See Talal Asad, Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

<sup>18</sup> Asad, Genealogies of Religion, 29.

Religion identifies the individual with his group, supports him in uncertainty, consoles him in disappointment, attaches him to society's goals, enhances his morale, and provides him with elements of identity. It acts to reinforce the unity and stability of society by supporting social control, enhancing established values and goals, and providing the means for overcoming guilt and alienation. It may also perform a prophetic role and prove itself an unsettling or even subversive influence in any particular society. The contributions of religion to society may be either positive or negative -- religion may support society's continued existence, or religion may play a part in undermining society.<sup>19</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis, "religion" is considered in its broadest sense, as popularly perceived, including but not necessarily limited to the following concepts and characteristics: belief in God, gods, souls, spirits or the supernatural; worship expressed in spiritual disciplines and ritual acts; sacred texts and moral codes that inform life; a system of beliefs and practices by which its followers seek, individually and in community, to understand and communicate the meaning of life; a system of symbols which function religiously and assist in the formulation of worldviews and cosmologies; a distinction between the sacred and profane; personal faith and notions of spirituality; the major faiths and systems of traditional religion -- their officials, organizations and institutions.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, who ponders The Meaning and End of Religion in a volume published in 1962, suggests that: "The two most fundamental questions confronting twentieth-century man, the one social, the other personal, both involve religion: how to turn our nascent world society into a world community, on a group level; and on a personal level, how to find meaning in modern life."<sup>20</sup> Thus, religion and development come together in the quest for global communion and human fulfillment.

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<sup>19</sup> Thomas F. O'Dea, The Sociology of Religion, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 16.

<sup>20</sup> Wilfred Cantwell Smith, The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind, (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 8.

From the above, it becomes clear that no definitional certitudes are arrived at in respect of either religion or development. But while a precise definition of either term is not of prime concern for this thesis, identifying the historical trajectories and exploring the trends in the disciplines of International Development and the Sociology of Religion is crucial in order to gain some understanding of the interrelation between the two subject areas. Rather than surveying the two disciplines independently, an attempt is made to weave together the story of how religion and development came to be isolated from one another in the remainder of the chapter, in the context of the overarching debate between Religion and Science.

### 3.2 “In the Beginning...”

“In the beginning...” While religion has been around from time immemorial, development is often viewed as of much more recent derivation and, from an academic standpoint, as a comparative newcomer on the pedagogical scene. In fact, the origins of the concept of “development” are often traced back to a specific time and place: Harry Truman’s Inaugural Address before Congress on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1949. The American President proclaimed:

We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. The old imperialism -- exploitation for foreign profit -- has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> In Esteva, “Development”, 7.

Development, therefore, arose at a time when many countries were beginning the enormous task of reconstruction following the devastating effects of the Second World War. Technically, the term had been used earlier in the decade when it had been heard in discussions surrounding the foundation of the global institutions, which would later play such seminal roles in global development. But it was Truman who popularized the term, in a manner that some, like Gustavo Esteva, have found condescending:

“Underdevelopment began, then, on January 20, 1949. On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped.”<sup>22</sup>

Post-war American dollars, which allowed the Marshall Plan to reconstruct Europe and led the assault for capitalist development in the Cold War, sought to fulfill Truman’s mandate. But the idea of development had ancient antecedents. It might well be argued that development has been around for as long as there have been humans. Biblical literature portrays ancient Israel as a “developed” society and an example to the surrounding nations. Classical literature tells of developed empires building walls to keep the “barbarians” at bay, in parallel to all the colonialisms of history.

Thus, for centuries, at least in the West, the notion of human progress, which might loosely be termed as development, has been integral to the human project and interrelated with the human purpose. The gods, of whatever description, wished to see human advancement, and often that advancement -- or progress, or development -- was viewed as evidence of divine favour, and believed to be holistic, even holy, in nature.

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<sup>22</sup> Esteva, “Development”, 7.

Development, if not in this life then in the next,<sup>23</sup> was often assumed as religion's reward for obedience. The primacy of religion was inclusive of development, but not separate from it. "Traditional worlds were religious places."<sup>24</sup> And those religious worlds were responsible for defining the boundaries of science, or knowledge.

### 3.3 The Age of Enlightenment

This religious view of the world remained essentially intact until the Middle Ages, for Science, yet to declare its independence from Religion, had not been upgraded from science to Science. While the Reformation shook the foundations of Christendom and prepared the way for the Enlightenment,<sup>25</sup> it was the latter phenomenon that fundamentally changed the place of religion in the western world. Out of the "Dark Ages" of a superstitious and a religious era dawned the Enlightenment – an intellectual movement in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Europe whose guiding principle was rationality. In Jeff Fountain's words: "The Enlightenment shifted the focus of life from heaven to earth, from God to nature, from revelation to reason, from hope in the future to life in the present, and from worship of the transcendent to obsession with the transient."<sup>26</sup> Clearly a transformative period in world history, the emphasis on scientific order laid the

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<sup>23</sup> The Old Testament clearly espoused divine blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (cf. Lev 26; Deut 28), and while the New Testament record does not necessarily support such a claim, institutional Christianity has often suggested that physical blessings accompany divine favour.

<sup>24</sup> Steve Bruce, *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 25.

<sup>25</sup> "Individualism threatened the communal basis of religious belief and behaviour, while rationality removed many of the purposes of religion and rendered many of its beliefs implausible" (Bruce, *Religion*, 230) Bruce is right in noting the budding of individualism and rationality with the Reformation, which waits, in the opinion of this author, for the Enlightenment to come to full flower.

<sup>26</sup> Jeff Fountain, *Post-Modernity – A Global Weather Change?*  
<<http://www.hfe.org/old/resource/articles/postmod.htm>> (28/12/04).



foundations for economic progress, new ideological systems and original political organizations, even Revolutions in France and America. Most profoundly, it announced the divorce between religion and science.

The massive loss of life resulting from the Lisbon Earthquake of 1755 had led Voltaire to wrestle with the question of God's involvement in the world, expressed in his famous poetic lines:

Unhappy mortals! Dark and mourning earth!  
Affrighted gathering of human kind!  
Eternal lingering of useless pain!  
Come, ye philosophers, who cry, "All's well,"  
And contemplate this ruin of a world.<sup>27</sup>

New answers were required for old questions:

All peoples, trembling at the hand of God,  
Have sought the source of evil in the world.<sup>28</sup>

The old certainties and verities – expressed in the two dominating institutions of the age, the Monarchy and the Church, together with their temporal and eternal Truth claims – would be challenged by the heady freedoms of political and scientific revolutions. Following in the philosophical footsteps of the likes of Francis Bacon, David Hume and Rene Descartes, one of the giants of the Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant, describes the essence of the phenomenon in an essay in 1784:

Enlightenment is man's leaving his self-caused immaturity. Immaturity is the incapacity to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. Such immaturity is self-caused if its cause is not lack of intelligence, but by lack of determination and courage to use one's intelligence without being guided by

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<sup>27</sup> Voltaire, Poem on the Lisbon Disaster,  
<[http://oll.libertyfund.org/Texts/Voltaire0265/OnToleration/HTMLs/0029\\_Pr05\\_Lisbon.html](http://oll.libertyfund.org/Texts/Voltaire0265/OnToleration/HTMLs/0029_Pr05_Lisbon.html)> (14/1/05)

<sup>28</sup> Voltaire, Poem on the Lisbon Disaster.

another. The motto of enlightenment is therefore: *Sapere aude!* Have courage to use your own intelligence! is therefore the motto of the enlightenment.<sup>29</sup>

Kant's position left little place for God -- progress, or development, could be achieved by humans alone. Not all the figures associated with the Enlightenment were antagonistic to a divine presence in the natural universe -- Sir Isaac Newton, for one, epitomized the scientific rigour of the time. But the Age of Reason led to an irreversible change in the place of religion in society, foreshadowed by Jean Jacques Rousseau's Social Contract,<sup>30</sup> embracing a religion of man. Literature began to reflect the angst of this new age. Friedrich Nietzsche's words, placed in the mouth of a madman, in The Gay Science,<sup>31</sup> would reverberate around Europe: "God is dead... And we have killed him." while in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's classic, The Brothers Karamazov,<sup>32</sup> Ivan would express his consternation regarding the resulting anarchy once God was dead.

Beyond literature, the likes of Charles Darwin and the evolutionists would transform not just physical science but social science as well.<sup>33</sup> These radically new theories challenged ecclesiastical authority and conventional belief, and in the context of society, could be disturbing, and, without explanation, could be destabilizing. The great sociologists had been pondering such issues for a century, transforming the old ideas about God and society, as they analyzed the estrangement of Science and Religion.

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<sup>29</sup> Immanuel Kant, 1784, "What is Enlightenment?" <<http://www.skybooksusa.com/time-travel/metaphys/enlighte.htm>> (28/12/04).

<sup>30</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, translated by Wilmoore Kendall (Chicago: Regnery, 1954).

<sup>31</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974).

<sup>32</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, translated by David Magarshack (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958).

<sup>33</sup> See the work of Herbert Spencer, for example. Spencer, for a while, was hugely influential in advancing the view that evolutionary theory could explain social development as well -- that society, as a social organism, evolved to higher levels of development through a process of social Darwinism.

### 3.4 The Sociologists

The discipline of sociology, with roots in the Enlightenment, had sought new explanations for a new society. The fathers of sociology recognized that some form of religion is present in all societies, helping to make sense of the world. It was fully anticipated that this new science of sociology would replace theology as "queen of the sciences."

The vision of Henri, Comte de Saint-Simon, of a "New Christianity" proved very influential in France, and more generally Europe, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Looking to a technocratic elite of philosophers, engineers and scientists to influence society in a process of peaceful industrialization, Saint-Simon considered that a rational humanist religion would replace traditional religion. What began as a precursor to socialism increasingly came to resemble a secular religion, especially as he continued to concentrate on the poor: "The whole of society ought to strive towards the amelioration of the moral and physical existence of the poorest class: society ought to organize itself in the way best adapted for attaining this end."<sup>34</sup> Development, in its modern manifestation, was becoming recognizable. Interestingly, Cowen and Shenton place the modern origins of the use of the term, development, "amidst the throes of early industrial capitalism in Europe,"<sup>35</sup> when development sought to "ameliorate the disordered faults of progress"<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Quoted in "Claude Henri de Rouvroy, Comte de Saint-Simon", Wikipedia, <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude\\_Henri\\_de\\_Rouvroy,\\_Comte\\_de\\_Saint-Simon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Henri_de_Rouvroy,_Comte_de_Saint-Simon)> (28/12/04).

<sup>35</sup> Cowen and Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, 8.

<sup>36</sup> Cowen and Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, 7.

caused by “the negative propensities of capitalism.”<sup>37</sup> The Churches of the time, it should be noted, were often involved in this development mission.

Recognizing that the French Revolution had overthrown the *ancien regime* without replacing it with new “order and progress,” Auguste Comte, the disaffected former secretary to Saint Simon, was to take the idea of a new secular religion further still, towards a vision of a “religion of humanity.” Regarded as the founder of sociology, Auguste Comte rejected the metaphysical, and instead identified three stages (a “Three Stages Law”) in the progress of civilization: theological, metaphysical and positive. The final stage of positivism relied on the primacy of physical science. Comte became identified with positivism, the idea that all knowledge must be subject to empirical confirmation, leading to general laws of social development.

Realizing that the end of all religion was premature, he foresaw a new model which would perform a cohesive societal function emphasizing service to humanity. Modern parallels with development and its emphasis on humanitarian service are inescapable. Comte’s formulation of this “religion of humanity” to replace the old would organize social life by replacing God with humanity as object of worship, employ a secular calendar and liturgy, canonize the best of humankind -- Adam Smith and William Shakespeare were included -- as human saints, and exalt Comte himself to the position of high priest. “The object of all my labor,” Comte wrote, “has been to re-establish in society something spiritual that is capable of counter-balancing the influence of the ignoble materialism in which we are at present submerged.”<sup>38</sup> Other thinkers supported

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<sup>37</sup> Cowen and Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, 116.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in “The History Guide”, <<http://www.historyguide.org/intellec/lecture25a.html>> (28/12/04).

the theme, if not the details, of this religion of humanity, most notably John Stuart Mill in Britain, who wrote of the need to remove God from religion and elevate humanity to fill the vacancy. While Comte's new religion never expanded far beyond the theoretical realm, his positivistic promotion of the superiority of scientific knowledge and method would have profound repercussions for the academy, and further sideline the claims of traditional believers in the post-Enlightenment age. Reason, therefore, became the foundation on which the new science of sociology was constructed, and paved the way for Comte's successors: Durkheim, Marx, Freud and Weber.

The sociology of religion found its leading exponents in Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. Durkheim's answer to societal anomie was not Saint-Simon's "New Christianity" or Comte's "Religion of Humanity" but rather a secular vision of a functional societal order, inspired by society at its best. Working within the positivistic framework, Durkheim was drawn to the study of religion, recognizing it to be one of the most cohesive forces in society. Concerned that the post-Enlightenment loss of faith might destabilize society, he recognized the need for a functional replacement to maintain equilibrium in society: "We must discover the rational substitutes for these religious notions that for a long time have served as the vehicle for the most essential moral ideas."<sup>39</sup>

While religion appears frequently in his earlier works – for instance, in his formative work on suicide, where he compares the suicide rates of Catholics and Protestants – it is only in his final book, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, that he articulates a

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<sup>39</sup> Emile Durkheim, Moral Education: A Study in the Theory and Application of the Sociology of Education. Translated by E. K. Wilson and H. Schnurer. (New York: The Free Press, 1961), 9.

comprehensive theory of religion. Out of his original studies into what he considered the “most primitive” religion, the totemism of the Australian Aboriginals, Durkheim supposed he had uncovered the basic features of all religions. A distinction between sacred and profane (not necessarily a belief in the supernatural) was at the root of all religion, the sacred binding people together in a functional way in society. Durkheim went further by suggesting that religion is the collective representation of society. Thus, religion is actually society and the worship of God is the disguised worship of Society itself (society writ large). The function of religion was not only to assist social control (“Thou shalt not...”), but also to allow people in community to find common meaning and purpose.

Durkheim rejected any definition of religion in terms of the supernatural. He argued that religious rituals could inspire a feeling of transcendence and encourage a sense of dependence on a higher power. For Durkheim, this higher power was societal rather than supernatural. His essentially communal outlook regarding religion is expressed in his definition of religion: “A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden -- beliefs and practices which unite in one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them.”<sup>40</sup> Such a communal approach to religion -- “an eminently collective thing”<sup>41</sup> -- may seem out of step with a highly individualized Western society. Furthermore, Durkheim saw magic, with its focus on the individual, as divorced from religion, which was essentially communal in nature. Magic might divide rather than bind society together. Durkheim’s

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<sup>40</sup> Durkheim, The Elementary Forms, 62.

<sup>41</sup> Durkheim, The Elementary Forms, 63.

views on community and magic may seem more current and gain more natural resonance today in communities in the developing world.

Viewing religion as enduring – “there is something eternal in religion”<sup>42</sup> -- Durkheim recognized that the days of the old religions were numbered:

The great things of the past which filled our fathers with enthusiasm do not excite the same ardor in us...In a word, the old gods are growing old or already dead, and others are not yet born...There are no gospels which are immortal, but neither is there any reason for believing that humanity is incapable of inventing new ones.<sup>43</sup>

Despite substantial empirical and methodological critique, Durkheim’s approach to religion still remains very influential, and may explain the altruistic motivations inherent in many development practitioners.

Neither Karl Marx nor Sigmund Freud made religion the centre of their analyses of dialectical materialism or psychoanalysis respectively, though both were influential in the field: Marx describing religion as “the opium of the people,” and Freud declaring that it was an “illusion.”

Karl Marx took a more negative view than Durkheim of the contribution of religion to society: “But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience.”<sup>44</sup> Focusing on the alienating nature of religion, Marx argued that the system served to keep the working classes repressed as they looked for salvation in the afterlife, rather than for liberation in this worldly life. He hoped for

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<sup>42</sup> Durkheim, The Elementary Forms, 474.

<sup>43</sup> Durkheim, The Elementary Forms, 475-476.

<sup>44</sup> Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, in David McLellan (Ed.), Karl Marx: Selected Writings, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 236.

revolution as the workers came to realize their oppression: "All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind."<sup>45</sup> Religion, however, was not Marx's primary area of study. Economic determinism dominated his theories of dialectical materialism, for at the heart of society was its economic base: the mode of production. Marx determined that it was conflict in society that would enable society to develop.

One of the most easily identifiable quotes in history – "Religion is... the opium of the people"<sup>46</sup> – comes from Marx, although the use of opium as a metaphor for religion is not unique to him. In fact, its use by Heinrich Heine and Moses Hess predates Marx.<sup>47</sup> suggesting that its sentiment is rooted in a particular time when a negative impression of religion was sweeping Europe. A close examination of the famous statement allows for a more nuanced view, according to Francis Wheen: "Marx's point was rather more subtle and sympathetic."<sup>48</sup> Although Marx was obviously no sympathizer with religion, he recognizes what is essentially a dialectical relationship in religion's capacity for not only capitulation but also petition or even protest, though not revolution. Rather than being a wholesale condemnation of religion, the fuller quote may allow religion a role as a place of sanctuary and a germ of resistance:

Religious suffering is at the same time an expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the

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<sup>45</sup> Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto, in McLellan, Karl Marx: Selected Writings, 224.

<sup>46</sup> Karl Marx, "Towards A Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction", in McLellan, Karl Marx: Selected Writings, 64.

<sup>47</sup> Michael Lowy, The War of Gods: Religion and Politics in Latin America. (London and New York: Verso, 1996), 5.

<sup>48</sup> Francis Wheen, Karl Marx, (London: Fourth Estate, 2000), 57.



feeling of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless circumstances. It is the opium of the people.<sup>49</sup>

But for any revisionism implicit in the lengthier quote, Marx clearly saw religion as an oppressive force in the capitalistic system of the day:

The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusion about their condition is a demand to give up a condition that requires illusion. The criticism of religion is therefore the germ of the criticism of the valley of tears whose halo is religion.<sup>50</sup>

The insight of Cowen and Shenton that suggested that development was a response to soften the inevitable consequences of the predations of capitalism is repeated by Marx, who also saw the need for development (*Entwicklung*) to counter capitalism's excesses. Marx went further than Saint Simon, often regarded as the founder of French socialism, but in his formulation too, development was situated determinedly within the economic sphere, an identification that would doggedly stick to development.

Sigmund Freud was perhaps an even more implacable foe of religion than Marx. The father of psychoanalysis, one of the most seminal and controversial influences on modern thought, is associated with the idea that human sexuality forms the basis of human development. He emphasized that the relationship between infant and parents, particularly the mother, profoundly affects the psychological make-up of the child and later development of the adult through the unconscious mind. While Freud may be more famous in the popular imagination for his work surrounding matters of sexual repression, dream interpretation and abnormal mental conditions, his antipathy towards religion was palpable.

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<sup>49</sup> Karl Marx, "Towards a Critique" in McLellan, Karl Marx: Selected Writings, 64.

<sup>50</sup> Karl Marx, "Towards a Critique" in McLellan, Karl Marx: Selected Writings, 64.

Describing the emphasis on an afterlife not as an “opium” but as an “illusion,” Freud envisioned the idea of God as a projection of an idealized Father-figure, suggesting in The Future of an Illusion that religion represented “the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity.”<sup>51</sup> In Civilization and its Discontents he refers to religion as “so patently infantile, so foreign to reality, that to anyone with a friendly attitude to humanity it is painful to think that the majority of mortals will never be able to rise above this view of life.”<sup>52</sup>

In two other volumes concentrating primarily on religious themes, Totem and Taboo<sup>53</sup> and Moses and Monotheism,<sup>54</sup> Freud’s critique expanded, from a psychoanalytical exploration of human development, to speculate that primal events involving the primal man profoundly affected the historical development of humanity. Freud’s theories regarding religion may be more applicable to the monotheistic religions, with which he was more familiar.<sup>55</sup> But Freud’s Jewishness did not inhibit his atheism, and he never wavered in his revulsion for religion, looking forward to a time when scientific rationalization would replace religious superstition.

However, not all psychoanalysts would take such a negative view of religion. Regarded as Freud’s natural successor until he fell out with him over what he considered as sexual obsession in Freudian theory, the Swiss psychoanalyst, Carl Jung, was more open to religion in his analyses. Thomas Szasz contrasts their two approaches: “...in Jung’s view

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<sup>51</sup> Sigmund Freud, The Future of an Illusion. Translated and edited by James Strachey. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961), 43.

<sup>52</sup> Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents. Translated by Joan Riviere, (London: Hogarth Press, 1930) 22.

<sup>53</sup> Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo; Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics, translated by A. A. Brill (New York: Vintage, 1918).

<sup>54</sup> Sigmund Freud, Moses and Monotheism, translated by Katherine Jones (New York: Vintage, 1939).

<sup>55</sup> See Anthony Storr’s critique in Ereud, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

religions are indispensable spiritual supports, whereas in Freud's they are illusory crutches."<sup>56</sup> Son of a Protestant minister, and from a family steeped in the church, Jung suggested that the question of God could not be answered in the realm of psychology. While he had little time for the institutional church or conventional religious expression, his interest in spiritism<sup>57</sup> has led to Jungian thought being of influence in some theological and New Age circles.

The process of rationalization was at the centre of Weber's ideas about religion. In contrast to Durkheim, for whom religion was always a collective concern, Weber recognized the potential of individual charisma. Taking a less objective view than either Durkheim or Marx, Weber felt that religion could only be understood subjectively. Like Marx, he recognized the alienation that accompanied the impersonal tendencies of bureaucratization, but unlike Marx, he saw an "iron cage" rather than emancipation in the future. Weber felt that magic and mystery were inevitable casualties in the process of modernization, which "disenchanted" the world. He discerned a trend from the traditional to the rational, as religion gained an independence from the superstitious to an identification with the rational. Interested in religion's social effects, rather than its extrinsic roots or intrinsic truth, Weber determined to understand how religion affected socio-economic life in his famous work, The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism.<sup>58</sup> The spirit of this-worldly asceticism, central to the Protestant Ethic, persuaded its adherents to apply themselves rationally to their work, which in turn --

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<sup>56</sup> Szasz, Thomas, The Myth of Psychotherapy: Mental Healing as Religion, Rhetoric and Repression, (Garden City: Anchor/ Doubleday, 1976), 173.

<sup>57</sup> Jung's doctrinal thesis examined the world of the occult, in a case study of a young medium related to him, and throughout his life he would attract controversy in his own extraordinary relationship with "Philemon," described by some as a spirit influence.

<sup>58</sup> Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, (New York: Scribner's, 1958).

somewhat unintentionally -- produced wealth, and also -- again unintentionally-- set in motion a process of secularization. Also significant for development theorists. Weber noted how tradition exerted a stranglehold on pre-industrial societies. In seeking to understand the forces that caused people to abandon their traditional mindsets. Weber's analysis of how the Protestant Ethic was a cause, though not the only cause, of the rise of capitalism, has been hugely influential and controversial. But, ultimately, it may have been his approach to rationalization that affected the western world most profoundly, as its religious foundations were further eroded.

### 3.5 Colonialism

The world was changing, with horizons expanding and with foreign lands to claim "for commerce and Christianity."<sup>59</sup> By this time, the European powers were expanding their boundaries in the colonial scramble for foreign lands. One principle, at least officially, of that impetus was the imperial notion of trusteeship, a term which Cowen and Shenton identify as development's guiding principle. The antecedents of development can be powerfully identified in the colonial context, as bureaucrats and missionaries went out to conquer, convert, civilize and develop these new lands. In the guise of trusteeship and expanding the benefits of civilization, development was promised to the "natives" as well. Development had always found itself uneasily related to colonialism, although for some its full force only became apparent with the official end of colonialism, which came as an overwhelming flood following independence in the Gold Coast in 1957. Not

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<sup>59</sup> Tim Jeal, *Livingstone*, (London: Heinemann, 1973). 165.

everything changed, however, as Rajni Kothari contends: “Where colonialism left off, development took over,”<sup>60</sup> or, in Steve de Gruchy’s words: “the binary relationship of ‘colonizer’ and ‘colonized’ was completely replaced with that of ‘developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’.”<sup>61</sup> For some, like Ashis Nandy, this neo-colonialism represented a thinly disguised Western imperialism: “The West is everywhere, within the West and outside: in structures and minds.”<sup>62</sup> leaving Serge Latouche to declare that: “Development has been and still is the westernisation of the world”<sup>63</sup>

Economic colonization took over from political colonization in the battle for global supremacy, and in the Cold War climate of the day, it was considered vital for political prestige that the western model of development economics prevailed over the Soviet model of central planning. Both models were rooted in the Enlightenment understanding of the world, shaped by respect for science and rationality against the “opium” and “illusion” of superstition and tradition.

The age of modernization and the mega-project had dawned. And it would be easy to create a dependency, for the West had the money, the technology, the education and the expertise. Development thus became a concept fundamentally western in character, reflecting western approaches to science and religion. As Kate Manzo explains:

“Development has thus become one of those words -- like security or democracy -- which

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<sup>60</sup> Rajni Kothari, *Rethinking Development: In Search of Human Alternatives*, (Delhi: Ajanta, 1988), 143.

<sup>61</sup> Steve de Gruchy, “Like Moses, We Always Perish Outside the Promised Land: Reinhold Niebuhr and the Contribution of Theology to Development”, in Lyn Holness and Ralf K. Wustenberg (Eds.) *Theology in Dialogue: The Impact of the Arts, Humanities, and Science on Contemporary Religious Thought*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 136.

<sup>62</sup> Ashis Nandy, “Colonization of the Mind” in M. Rahnema with V. Bawtree (Eds.), *The Post-Development Reader*, (London & New Jersey: Zed, 1997), 170.

<sup>63</sup> Serge Latouche, *In the Wake of the Affluent Society: An Exploration of Post-Development*, (London: Zed, 1993), 160.

apparently requires no definition, for everyone knows, instinctively, what it is. It is what 'we' have. And just as easily, 'underdevelopment' is what 'they' have."<sup>64</sup>

In the era of unprecedented growth, which followed the troubled decades of depression and war, it was perhaps not surprising that the dominant idea of the time was growth. Prime Minister. Harold Macmillan told Britons that "You've never had it so good!"<sup>65</sup> while on the other side of the Atlantic, John F. Kennedy promised to have a man on the moon before the end of the 1960s. In Canada the internationalist Lester Pearson was appealing for increased aid so that poor countries could catch up with a West that was growing richer by the day, and seemed to have all the answers. Development became increasingly identified with modernization, and modernization's roots lay firmly in evolutionary and functional theory, reinforced by the rationalizing and secularizing tendencies that all emerged out of the Enlightenment era.

### 3.6 Modernization

This modernization project was barely distinct from the whole process of westernization, as the cultural tsunami from abroad increasingly threatened to overwhelm the traditional patterns of life and the habitual rhythms of centuries. As the theories of modernization gained a hold over development in the 1950s and 1960s, tradition and superstition, less often defined directly in terms of religion, were widely seen as obstacles to progress. The

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<sup>64</sup>Kate Manzo, "Modernist Discourse and the Crisis of Development Theory". *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 26, no. 2 (1991), 20.

<sup>65</sup> A term originally used in July 1957, and used as a slogan in the 1959 Elections..

accepted dogma declared that fatalism and conservatism led to a lack of initiative and innovation, essential to the success of development and the advance of progress.

Ironically, western missionaries, uncomfortable with a world of spirits and demons, were also often complicit in this denunciation of traditional worldviews. This consensual opposition to traditional belief systems, led to the rational nature of western life informing official development experience.

The work of W. W. Rostow proved influential in validating such a view. His seminal work, The Stages of Economic Growth, significantly subtitled, A Non-Communist Manifesto.<sup>66</sup> reinforced such reductionist tendencies. In arguing that all societies must pass sequentially through various stages towards the goal of prosperity, Rostow identified 5 stages of growth: 1) the traditional society 2) the preconditions for takeoff 3) the take-off 4) the drive to maturity and 5) the age of high mass-consumption. Later, he would modify this unabashed apology for economic growth by including another stage: 6) the search for quality. Rostow's debts to notions of functional and evolutionary progress are hard to miss.

Various assumptions were embedded in this schema: tradition was entirely negative to the modernizing process; the developing countries would follow the same path as the industrialized countries, even though they were surrounded by a different set of circumstances and a quite different international system than when the industrialized world took the great leap forward; the essential path of progression to this materialistic

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<sup>66</sup> W. W. Rostow, The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

heaven would be linear, and would not allow for multilinear alternative paths. Above all, the goal of economic growth was unquestioned, allowing success to be measured quantitatively by the nascent science of statistics. Industrialization, which would fuel the consumerism, consumption and capitalism necessary for development, was the vehicle to a modernization that could and would benefit everyone.

Science was at the root of the modernization project. This was, after all, the age of science – the Americans were promising, and actually delivered, a man on the moon by the end of the decade of the 1960s -- and the same organized precision that was being turned to such technological triumph in space could surely solve problems on earth. Development was seen as a scientific intervention, the sum total of numerous technological advancements and technical innovations. But the model gave scant attention to the lived experience of the “targets” of this development in an essentially top-down transference of technology and resources, where the benefits of progress would eventually trickle down to everyone. Development would occur when the superstitious South caught up with the modern North. The mission of modernization would be to modernize not just the way people lived, but the way they thought also. Traditional religion, an atavistic throwback to an unenlightened, pre-scientific age, had no place in the modern world.

Modernization, the precursor to the emergent phenomenon of globalization, was widely perceived to be a Western phenomenon. For many the Coca-colonization of McWorld was an economic phenomenon, but the accompanying pressures toward secularization



affected identities, and inspired resistance and criticism from those on the receiving end: “They regard secularization as a construct of Western empire, aimed at undermining the identity of non-Western peoples.”<sup>67</sup> Today, even the most inaccessible places have been affected by the shrinking of the world, and swayed, even overwhelmed at times, by Western economic and cultural incursion, as Helena Norberg-Hodge has illustrated regarding Ladakh.<sup>68</sup> Modernization, and later globalization, found it hard to escape its identification with westernization, informed by its dominant philosophy, secularization. Above all, science had replaced the old verities and become the modern arbiter of truth.

### 3.7 Secularization

This long trend towards secularization from the Enlightenment via the classic sociologists and some liberal theologians found its apogee in the 1960s, captured in the dramatic caption on the cover of TIME magazine: “Is God Dead?”<sup>69</sup> Harvey Cox in The Secular City<sup>70</sup> and across the Atlantic in Britain, John Robinson in Honest to God<sup>71</sup> were representative of a western trend towards a secular or religionless Christianity. Sociologists of religion described the privatization of faith as a seemingly irreversible process in the face of modernization, expressed in the retreat of faith from the public square. Following the original ideas of Rousseau, Robert Bellah popularized the concept

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<sup>67</sup> Gregory Baum, “Solidarity with the Poor”, 80.

<sup>68</sup> Helena Norbert-Hodge, 1992, Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh, (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1992).

<sup>69</sup> TIME magazine, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1966.

<sup>70</sup> Harvey Cox, The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective, (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

<sup>71</sup> John Robinson, Honest to God, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963).

of civil religion, in this case expressed in the beliefs, symbols, and rituals of the American nation.<sup>72</sup> But of all the sociologists of religion, perhaps the figure of Peter Berger is most closely identified at the heart of the secularization debate.

The titles of his major theoretical works indicate the direction of his sociological enquiry: Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective, The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge (together with Thomas Luckmann) and The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion. Berger's wide body of sociological work has profoundly influenced recent sociological thought. Unlike Weber he saw a religious role for the individual in society, describing a dialectic where humans were not just producers of society ("man in society") but also products of society ("society in man").

In The Precarious Vision he illustrated the tenuous and precarious hold of religion on society, and suggested that Protestantism, even more than humanism, was responsible for the secularizing trends in society: "By denuding the cosmos of its divinity and placing God totally beyond its confines, the biblical tradition prepared the way for the process we now call secularization."<sup>73</sup>

The sacred canopy, according to Berger, is a socially constructed set of beliefs that provides meaning in every society: "Religion is the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established."<sup>74</sup> Below the secure overarching frame of this "Sacred Canopy," people make sense of their world. This sacred canopy, like any forest canopy, varies --

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<sup>72</sup> Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America", *Daedalus*, 96, no. 1 (1967), 1-21.

<sup>73</sup> Peter Berger, The Precarious Vision, (Westport: Greenwood, 1961), 51.

<sup>74</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 26.

sometimes thicker, sometimes thinner -- but clearly the overall trend represents progression towards a kind of thinning of society's religious covering.

In The Sacred Canopy, Berger developed his ideas on secularization, represented poetically in his vision of: "A sky empty of angels becomes open to the intervention of the astronomer and, eventually, of the astronaut."<sup>75</sup> This trend towards secularization appeared irreversible, to the extent that Casanova could write of the theory (or more correctly, theories?):

The theory of secularization may be the only theory which was able to attain a truly paradigmatic status within the modern social sciences... Indeed, the consensus was such that not only did the theory remain uncontested but apparently it was not even necessary to test it, since everybody took it for granted.<sup>76</sup>

Many strands are woven into this secularization process, defined by Berger as: "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols."<sup>77</sup> Religion was viewed as becoming increasingly irrelevant as many societies developed. Its plausibility seemed under particular threat across the board: "Probably for the first time in history, the religious legitimations of the world have lost their plausibility not only for a few intellectuals and other marginal individuals but for the broad masses of entire societies."<sup>78</sup> Ecclesiastical functions were increasingly being taken over by secular authorities, and religious influence in the world of the arts had dissipated as in the world of the sciences. In the concluding sentence of

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<sup>75</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 112-3.

<sup>76</sup> Casanova, Public Religions, 17.

<sup>77</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 107.

<sup>78</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 124.

The Sacred Canopy, Berger felt safe to predict that secularization and pluralism would “decisively” shape the future of religion,<sup>79</sup> leading Gary Dorrien to observe: “The book gave the appearance of a requiem for Western religion.”<sup>80</sup> Modernization could dispense with religion, for this model of development -- technocratic in method, western in worldview, reductionist in nature and secularist in operation -- could bring development without religion, and so it did, or rather, tried. The divorce between religion and development, or science, was complete.

### 3.8 Dependency and its Discontents

However, as the 1960s came to an end, with secularization theories at home having reinforced modernization praxis abroad, it became impossible to avoid questions as to the cost of progress. In the headlong rush towards take-off in Rostow’s consumerist utopia, it became increasingly obvious that some people were being left behind, and some themes were being ignored. Elites may have been benefiting, but were the poor getting poorer? Women were still invisible as far as development was concerned. And what price was the planet paying for the doctrine of infinite growth? While northern nations were experiencing unprecedented growth, many southern states were being marginalized from the world system. Scholars of a more Marxist persuasion were beginning to argue that development in the metropolises was causing underdevelopment at the peripheries of the world system.

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<sup>79</sup> Berger, The Sacred Canopy, 171.

<sup>80</sup> Gary Dorrien in Linda Woodhead (Ed.), Peter Berger and the Study of Religion, (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 33.

The modernization imperative increasingly frustrated those who were left behind, giving rise to a new paradigm, dependency or *dependencia*, with a distinctly southern, and particularly, Latin American, flavour. Dependency's antecedents are clearly located within the conflict sociological theories -- with the shadow of Marx falling long across much dependency theory. Out of a reaction to modernization theories and a growing recognition of the impact of imperialism, dependency raised the question of global inequality, and in getting to the roots and causes of southern peripherality, placed the blame firmly on the West. The solution was to de-link, but for all its critiques, dependency left intact the idea of growth and failed to overturn the vision of the industrialized western state as the pinnacle of development.

But it was in the religious area where perhaps the most dramatic change was occurring. After centuries of being identified with elite oppression, the Catholic Church in Latin America was caught up in a debate over Liberation Theology, which was inspiring many Catholic priests to become involved in politics and grassroots development in order to extend "the preferential option for the poor."<sup>81</sup> This activism, perceived to have Marxian antecedents, was threatening to many entrenched interests and caused concern in Vatican circles. But, in spite of the turnaround in Catholic support, development models followed the familiar paradigms promoting economic growth. Yet growth oftentimes proved elusive.

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<sup>81</sup> The rallying cry of Liberation Theology, originating at the landmark Medellin Conference (CELAM II) in 1968.

Considering the scale of the interventions and initiatives since Harry Truman made his landmark speech, the development initiative clearly had not been an unqualified success, leading some observers to ask questions about development itself. "Crisis" became a buzzword, the overworked word of the development text. Samir Amin's comment is not atypical: "Development has broken down, its theory is in crisis, its ideology the subject of doubt."<sup>82</sup> Although some bright spots were evident, most notably the growth of the Asian tigers, development clearly had left Africa behind, as the full horror of the AIDS pandemic spread additional gloom, leading to the 1980s being dubbed, "the lost decade" of development in Africa. There was now no denying the growing consensus that development had not worked very well. Increasingly questions were asked as to why development failed to fulfill its own dreams. With the acceptance that development was more of an "illusion" than a "lodestar,"<sup>83</sup> the search for solutions and alternative approaches gathered pace. After the divorce of religion and development following the effects of the Enlightenment project, space was beginning to open up for alternate visions, and allow a greater acceptance of the other, if not a cautionary rapprochement.

From the very beginning, economics has always been one of the dominant disciplines in the essentially interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary, even pluridisciplinary, nature of International Development Studies. Therefore, it should not be surprising that development has found it hard to escape from its narrow identification with economic growth. A willingness in many quarters to acknowledge that development must shake off its narrow economic and consumerist bonds in order to see the effects on the individual

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<sup>82</sup> Samir Amin, *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*, (London and New Jersey: Zed, 1990), 1.

<sup>83</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, "Development: Lodestar or Illusion?" in *Unthinking Social Science: The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

and the environment, led to a quest for a more humane development. This trend towards what became described as “human development” encouraged those involved in development to look beyond the materialist mantras and consumerist credos of the age, described in Edward Abbey’s words: “Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell.”<sup>84</sup>

### 3.9 Towards More Expansive Dimensions of Development

With the increasing realization that both modernization and dependency were too narrowly focused and included massive blind spots, it became apparent that one of the dramatic omissions involved half the world's population: women. Up to 1970 when Ester Boserup published her landmark study, Women's Role in Economic Development,<sup>85</sup> women had been invisible in the development project. Now Boserup forced the question on mostly male practitioners: “How does your project affect women?”

From having been generally ignored (except when they contributed to the population “problem”), women found some redress in new found attention, and a place on the development map with the UN Conferences in Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995, demarcating the UN Decade for the Advancement of Women. Women now became visible in the development statistics, though few measurements could come to terms with

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<sup>84</sup> Chowdhry, Kamla. “The Future of Progress: Gandhi and Dharma”, (2000). <[http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/developmentdialogue/developmentdialogueweb.nsf/\(attachmentweb\)/85256B5900665BA485256B4E0011D5AA/\\$File/FutureofProgressGandhiandDharmaKamlaChowdhry.pdf](http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/developmentdialogue/developmentdialogueweb.nsf/(attachmentweb)/85256B5900665BA485256B4E0011D5AA/$File/FutureofProgressGandhiandDharmaKamlaChowdhry.pdf)> (5/2/05).

<sup>85</sup> Ester Boserup, Women's Role in Economic Development, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1970).

women's unpaid work in context of the family and household. But what did become clear was that, far from being peripheral actors in the development equation, women were central to development outcomes. While women had been perceived as part of the problem, they now might be seen as part of the solution. For instance, the inverse relationship between levels of education and size of family became incontrovertible: when women were educated family sizes decreased.

Feminist movements proliferated together with their acronyms,<sup>86</sup> reflecting varied positions within the feminist movement. Issues arose around the construction and representation of the "vulnerable Third World woman"<sup>87</sup> -- feminists drawing attention to the multiple identities of woman/ race/ culture/ class/ religion/ power/ sexual orientation,<sup>88</sup> or as Chandra Mohanty avers: "Beyond sisterhood there are still racism, colonialism, and imperialism!"<sup>89</sup> (It might be added that homogenizing tendencies exist in the construction and representation of Third World men/ people/ poor as well.) Jane Parpart suggests that: "the possibility that Third World women know how to act in their own interest has been largely ignored."<sup>90</sup> Such an enlightened approach might allow greater space for the religious dimension of women's lives in the South. Historically, women had been perceived as more traditional than their more educated menfolk, and

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<sup>86</sup> For example, Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD) and, with a southern orientation, DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era).

<sup>87</sup> See Jane L Parpart, "Deconstructing the Development 'Expert': Gender, Development and the 'Vulnerable Groups'", in Marianne H. Marchand and Jane L. Parpart (Eds.), Feminism/Postmodernism/Development, London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

<sup>88</sup> See bell hooks, Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics, (Toronto : Between the Lines, 1990); Marianne H. Marchand and Jane L. Parpart (Eds.), Feminism/ Postmodernism/ Development, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>89</sup> Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses", in L. Russo, A. Torres and C. T. Mohanty (Eds.) Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism, (Bloomington:: Indiana University Press, 1991), 68.

<sup>90</sup> Parpart, "Deconstructing the Development 'Expert'", 230.



tradition, influenced often by religion, was seen as an obstruction to modernization. But patriarchy was identified by feminists as the problem, and in this case too, religion was often seen as the culprit.

A question still remains today -- in spite of undoubted progress and official mainstreaming policies -- to what extent women have benefited from development interventions -- in the case of some development policies, such as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), observers have noted their disproportionately negative effects on women.<sup>91</sup>

Another area left behind in the rush to development was the environment. Modernization had encouraged the view that natural resources were unlimited, but the scale of the assault on the earth's resources led to increasing concern that the environment should not be forgotten in the development debate. The renowned entomologist, Edward O. Wilson, remarks: "The loss of the Sumatran rhinoceros may not be enough to get you out of bed in the morning, but the loss of a million species should."<sup>92</sup> The Brundtland Commission in 1987 defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>93</sup> While theoretically helpful, in practice it allowed broad subjectivity regarding supposed "needs," often encouraging a blurred demarcation between needs and wants and raising a plethora of questions regarding northern and southern needs as well as wants. Few perhaps could define what exactly was being sustained in sustainable development,

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<sup>91</sup> Giovanni Andrea Cornia (Ed.), *Adjustment with a Human Face*, Volume I: Protecting the Vulnerable and Promoting Growth, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>92</sup> Edward Helmore, "The Ant Man", *The Guardian*, 22/4/02.

<sup>93</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development, "Our Common Future", (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 43.

whether a rate of growth or a level of economic activity.<sup>94</sup> Almost two decades later, the term is still bandied about with abandon, but remains almost as enigmatic as that of development itself. Thus sustainability became the latest buzzword and remains one of the most resilient catchphrases in the development vocabulary. The Human Development Report contends that: “Development and consumption patterns that perpetuate today’s inequalities are neither sustainable nor worth sustaining.”<sup>95</sup>

With its emphasis on the interdependence of all life, the environmental movement attracted interdisciplinary interest. Ecofeminism brought together the areas of gender and the environment, with outspoken women, such as the Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai, leading the chorus for alternative worldviews. Vandana Shiva illuminates the thinking behind such paradigmatic shifts, as she describes “maldevelopment,” evidenced in the “domination of man over nature and women,”<sup>96</sup> and insists that “it is now imperative to recover the feminine principle as the basis for development.”<sup>97</sup>

The environment is one area where religion and science have found some common ground, with both theologians and ecologists recognizing that limits to growth were necessary as the earth reached carrying capacity. The gulf dividing religion and science, which stemmed from the Enlightenment, when science sought to replace religion as empirical authority, might perhaps be narrowed, as Gary Gardner intimates: “The budding rapprochement of religious and environmental groups could be of historic

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<sup>94</sup> Herman Daly, “Sustainable Development: From Concept and Theory to Operational Principles”, in K. Davis and M. Bernstam (Eds.), Resources, Environment and Population: Present Knowledge, Future Options, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 32.

<sup>95</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 39.

<sup>96</sup> Vandana Shiva, Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival, (London: Zed, 1989), 6 - 7.

<sup>97</sup> Shiva, Staying Alive, 7.

significance.<sup>98</sup> Both sides could see some relief was required for an earth stressed in the headlong pursuit of power, pleasure and profit. Gandhi had summed it up well when he declared that: "There is enough in the world for everyone's need, but not for some people's greed."<sup>99</sup>

With the greater assimilation of gender and the environment into development discourse a growing realization emerged that the machinery of modernization was steamrolling over cultures, and that perhaps not everybody wished to become western or to see development just in economic terms. The Dag Hammarskjold Report on Development and International Cooperation, published in 1975, may have been ahead of its time in suggesting that development involved "the whole man and woman -- and not just the growth of things":

Development is a whole; it is an integral, value-loaded, cultural process: it encompasses the natural environment, social relations, education, production, consumption and well-being. The plurality of roads to development answers to the specificity of cultural or natural situations; no universal formula exists. Development is endogenous; it springs from the heart of each society...<sup>100</sup>

Ignored in the early drive for modernization, culture could no longer be regarded as it once was as "an optional extra in development,"<sup>101</sup> but rather as an integral part, in Pope Paul VI's words, of "understanding the liturgy of everyday living."<sup>102</sup> But, as in other development rhetoric, the reality may be more nuanced. Deborah Eade writes in

#### Development and Culture:

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<sup>98</sup> Gardner, "Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World", 152.

<sup>99</sup> As quoted by Shiva, Staying Alive, 6.

<sup>100</sup> Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, "What Now: Another Development", The 1975 Dag Hammarskjold Report on Development and International Cooperation, < <http://www.dhf.uu.se/whatnext/Whatnow.html> > (7/3/05), 7.

<sup>101</sup> Deborah Eade, "Preface", in Eade (Ed.), Development and Culture, (London: Oxfam, 2002), xii.

<sup>102</sup> Paul VI, Populorum Progressio, Article VIII, Papal Encyclical (1967).

“Local” or “traditional” cultures are even now seen as a brake on development, while the international development agencies and their national counterparts regard themselves as culturally neutral – if not superior. It might indeed be argued that the whole aid industry rests on the assumption that greater economic power implies superior wisdom and hence confers the moral duty, not merely the right, to intervene in the lives of those who are less fortunate.<sup>103</sup>

Part of the problem is the wide gap between the culture of the development agents and that of the development beneficiaries. If culture is oftentimes hard to grasp, then religion – often hidden in a cultural cloak and one of the most important of its constituent parts – is harder still to fathom. In the North, many development practitioners regard religion as a private and personal matter – a position quite foreign in the communal societies of the South. Sidelined in the North, religion often permeates life in the South.

With this realization that development must include such previously overlooked considerations as gender, the environment and culture, it became apparent that the old and resilient paradigm of economic development was giving way to broader definitions. Jan Nederveen Pieterse summed up these trends in the crisis, or turning point, that development faced in the mid 1990s: “Development thinking is at a crossroads, torn between conventional development-as-growth and human and social development.”<sup>104</sup>

In 1990, the UNDP’s flagship publication, the Human Development Report, became hugely influential in bringing the human dimension to the fore in development activity. Its definition proved arresting: “Human development is a process of enlarging people’s

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<sup>103</sup> Eade, *Development and Culture*, ix.

<sup>104</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, “Going Global: Futures of Capitalism”, *Development and Change*, 28 (1997), 377.

choices.”<sup>105</sup> Human development became evidence of a paradigmatic shift in the field of development. though, like sustainable development, it remained in danger of becoming little more than a rhetorical cliché. Drawing on a rich line of philosophical thought,<sup>106</sup> human development proclaimed that “people are the means and the end of development.”<sup>107</sup>

The conversation broadened further as other areas were included in the development debate. How could there be development without health? Continuing violence and inhumanity across the African continent raised the question: How could development occur amidst insecurity? And could development occur without democracy? The modern doyen of economists and Nobel Laureate, Amartya Sen, focused on capability and capacity, and suggested that freedom was essential to development: “Development is indeed a momentous engagement with freedom’s possibilities.”<sup>108</sup> He introduces his volume, Development as Freedom, by suggesting that:

Development can be seen, it is argued here, as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. Focusing on human freedoms contrasts with the narrower views of development, such as identifying development with the growth of gross national product, or with the rise in personal incomes, or with industrialization, or with technological advance, or with social modernization.<sup>109</sup>

This broader vision of development, born out of his work on capabilities,<sup>110</sup> influenced a paradigmatic shift towards the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), propounded in

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<sup>105</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 1990 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

<sup>106</sup> The HDRs regularly quoted Aristotle and the Greek philosophers.

<sup>107</sup> World Bank, World Development Report 1996, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 110.

<sup>108</sup> Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom, (New York: Anchor, 1999), 298.

<sup>109</sup> Sen, Development as Freedom, 3.

<sup>110</sup> Along with Martha Nussbaum, who has tended to use the plural form “capabilities approach” rather than Sen’s “capability approach.” See Martha Nussbaum, Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

particular by the UNDP<sup>111</sup> and the British Department for International Development (DFID).<sup>112</sup>

Growing disillusionment with the failure of narrow project-based interventions to address the interconnected realities of local people's lives, led to a move towards a more holistic approach, which recognized that people's lived lives are multidimensional in practice, and acknowledged that even the poorest communities possessed assets and agency. An important principle fundamental to the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is that such an analysis must begin with an assessment of strengths, rather than weaknesses, within a community. As schematically defined by DFID in their "asset pentagon,"<sup>113</sup> a community's assets consist of various kinds of capital: human, social, natural, physical and financial. The approach of the SLF, therefore, is based on community asset mapping across the broad spectrum of community capital, with results being assessed according to the livelihood priorities that people themselves – the intended beneficiaries of development -- consider important. While such an approach offers great scope for incorporating the religious dimension of people's lives into the analysis, in practice, this aspect -- sometimes the glue that sustains poorer local communities -- is often understated.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> UNDP, Sustainable Livelihoods Documents, <<http://www.undp.org/sl/Documents/documents.htm>> (15/7/05).

<sup>112</sup> Livelihoods Connect, <<http://www.livelihoods.org/>> (15/7/05).

<sup>113</sup> Department for International Development, Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets, [http://www.livelihoods.org/info/guidance\\_sheets\\_pdfs/section2.pdf](http://www.livelihoods.org/info/guidance_sheets_pdfs/section2.pdf)> (15/7/05).

<sup>114</sup> Culture receives some, albeit limited, attention within the Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets from DFID -- in Section 2.4.2, the phrase "culture is not an area for direct donor activity" is contained within parentheses. No substantial focus beyond occasional references appears to religion -- perhaps the most salient notice occurs in Section 4: 11: "*Social Relations*: the way in which aspects such as gender, ethnicity, culture, history, religion and kinship affect the livelihoods of different groups within a community or neighbourhood." Department for International Development, Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets. <[livelihoods@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:livelihoods@dfid.gov.uk)> (25/7/05).

All these conversations acknowledged that development move away from its narrow identification with growth and become more multidimensional in scope. Many NGOs incorporated participation into their methodological strategy, even if debate existed as to whether this was more manifest in theory than in practice. But the definition of human development has continued to put the needs of people at the forefront of development policy and practice: “Human development is first and foremost about allowing people to lead the kind of life they choose – and providing them with the tools and opportunities to make those choices.”<sup>115</sup>

In the decades since the heyday of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, some critics would suggest that the neoliberal current, which in turn influenced the controversial structural adjustment policies (SAPs) of the International Financial Institutions, has reversed many of these trends to human development. An emphasis on the “magic of the market” and the rise of multinational companies may have resulted in an increasing commodification of life, leading to the revitalization of the old modernization paradigm in a free market guise – the War on Terror having replaced the Cold War and Islamic fundamentalists having usurped communists as the sworn enemies of Western-style progress. As the rich have grown richer, the cry of dissent from the anti-globalization movement, which burst to prominence in Seattle in 1999, has escalated. Some have asked if the North has reached a point of overdevelopment, leading to calls for an alternative development. Wolfgang Sachs, in his controversial Development Dictionary, has warned that: “Indeed, it is not the failure of development which has to be feared, but its

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<sup>115</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 2004 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), v.

success.”<sup>116</sup> Others of the post-development school, in language bordering on the spiritual, have called into question the whole concept of development itself. Majid Rahnema counseling that: “intervention should be considered as an act bordering on the *sacred*.”<sup>117</sup> The language of post-developmentalism would not be unfamiliar to the religious.

While notable developmental gains could be identified in various parts of the world, particularly in Asia, and specifically in India and China, it became obvious that Africa’s development was sputtering, even retrogressing. As a result, increasing focus turned to the continent, culminating in worldwide attention to the issue of African poverty at the Live8 Concerts and the Gleneagles G8 Summit in July, 2005. Many initiatives over the years have searched for the keys to kick start African development -- in recent years most notably the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)<sup>118</sup> and the Commission for Africa,<sup>119</sup> under the chairmanship of Tony Blair.

Critics may see the latest initiative to “make poverty history,”<sup>120</sup> spearheaded popularly by Bono and Sir Bob Geldof, as yet another reflection of western thinking regarding Africa. This latest manifestation of “the self-righteously civilizing mission of the past two centuries” is described by John Lonsdale as “a construction that infantilises not only Africans, unable to fend for themselves, but us too, like babies demanding the instant

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<sup>116</sup> Wolfgang Sachs, *The Development Dictionary*, London: Zed, 1992), 3.

<sup>117</sup> Majid Rahnema, “Towards Post-Development: Searching for Signposts, a New Language and New Paradigms,” in M. Rahnema with V. Bawtree (Eds.), *The Post-Development Reader*, (London & New Jersey: Zed, 1998), 396.

<sup>118</sup> The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) <<http://www.nepad.org/>> (12/7/05).

<sup>119</sup> The Commission for Africa, “Our Common Future”, < <http://www.commissionforafrica.org/>> (12/7/05).

<sup>120</sup> See “Make Poverty History”, < <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/>> (12/7/05).



gratification of self-importance.”<sup>121</sup> The growing chorus calling for “African Solutions to African Problems” recalls the spirit of Julius Nyerere’s adage and admonition: “responsibility for the development of the South lies in the South, and in the hands of the peoples of the South.”<sup>122</sup> Earlier, within the framework of the Arusha Declaration of 1967, Nyerere had attempted to articulate for Tanzania a distinctly African model of development – *ujamaa* socialism – with its emphasis on self-reliance.<sup>123</sup> While the manner of its implementation was controversial and its outputs were unimpressive, few would deny that this model of development was more attentive to an African worldview than many of its successors, as various initiatives sought to free Africa from its developmental deficiencies. Perhaps the most promising of these initiatives was NEPAD. Critics suggest that, like many of its predecessors, NEPAD was heavily influenced by western rather than local African thinking. Steve de Gruchy laments that “so much creative thinking about development... has gone on in Africa over the past 40 years, yet this is rendered invisible by NEPAD,” and looks forward to the time when the people of Africa become “the subjects of our own story, rather than the objects of the story of the North.”<sup>124</sup>

These geopolitical changes in the world also required new conceptual approaches. While secularization and modernization had seemed to go together perfectly a few decades earlier in developmental wisdom, the changed geopolitical landscape asked questions that

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<sup>121</sup> Quoted by Madeleine Bunting, “Humiliated Once More.” *The Guardian Weekly* (8-14/7/05), 6.

<sup>122</sup> Independent Commission of the South on Development Issues, *The Challenge to the South: The Report of the South Commission*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) vii.

<sup>123</sup> See Chapter 8, “Self-Reliance: The Communal Past as a Model for the Future.” in Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, translated by Patrick Camiller (London & New York: Zed, 2002), 123-139.

<sup>124</sup> Steve de Gruchy, “Some Preliminary Theological Reflections on NEPAD”, Address to ESSET Seminar: Durban, July 8, 2002.

both paradigms seemed inadequate to answer. While Berger's earlier contentions regarding secularization seemed to unravel in the changed geopolitical climate, his ideas on pluralism seemed much more valid.

### 3.10 Berger's Reformulations of the World

In illuminating trends towards pluralism in the new global multicultural environment, fuelled by the surge in the global transport and communication revolutions. Berger realized that religious affections could no longer be assumed or enforced, but rather faiths would need to compete for followers in a religious free market, where shopping for a satisfying faith would parallel the rise of consumerism in economic areas of life. Describing pluralism as "the breakdown of taken-for-granted traditions and the opening up of multiple options for beliefs, values, and lifestyles."<sup>125</sup> he recognized that this expansion of freedom would come at a price, undermining previous certainties and encouraging competition for a religious worldview. Bruce describes the process:

In the religious life of the Western world, the big change -- from serial dogmatism to promiscuous liberalism -- comes around the start of this century when the degree of social and cultural pluralism forces the denominational attitude to become common. Each major religious organization revised its self-perception from claiming an exclusive relationship with the divinity to supposing that it represented simply one of the many roads to God.<sup>126</sup>

This differentiation and fragmentation in American religious belief might be characterized as a "patchwork quilt."<sup>127</sup> Pluralism seems to have irrevocably changed the

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<sup>125</sup> Peter Berger, "Introduction: The Cultural Dynamics of Globalization", in Peter Berger and Samuel Huntington, *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 16.

<sup>126</sup> Bruce, *Religion*, 232.

religious landscape, at least in the Western world. leading Bruce to sound a lament: “The orchestras and mass bands with their thunderous symphonies have gone.”<sup>128</sup>

But while the opinions of Berger and others on pluralism have proved accurate, their ideas about secularization have appeared to rest on much less stable ground. As early as 1974, Berger was speculating “In the last few years I have come to believe that many observers of the religious scene (I among them) have over-estimated both the degree and irreversibility of secularization.”<sup>129</sup> Liberation Theology -- “the eruption of the poor in history”<sup>130</sup> -- challenged old ways of doing theology and practicing religion across an entire continent, while an upsurge of religion in the 1980s – the Iranian Revolution, Solidarity in Poland, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the rise of the Religious Right in the United States, for examples – could not be ignored: “During the entire decade of the 1980s it was hard to find any serious political conflict anywhere in the world that did not show behind it the not-so-hidden hand of religion”<sup>131</sup> Unexpectedly, the politicization of religion and religionization of politics had reemerged as a fact of global life.<sup>132</sup> Even in the United States of America, the “Religious Right,” in reaction to the prevailing currents of secular liberalism, was gaining a new lease on life, which would become even more manifest during George W. Bush’s presidency.

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<sup>127</sup> Andrew Kohut, John C. Green, Scott Keeter, and Robert C. Toth, The Diminishing Divide: Religion’s Changing Role in American Politics, (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 10.

<sup>128</sup> Bruce, Religion, 234.

<sup>129</sup> Peter Berger, “Religion in a Revolutionary Society” (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1974) in Woodhead, Peter Berger, 16.

<sup>130</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, (London: SCM, 1974).

<sup>131</sup> Casanova, Public Religions, 3.

<sup>132</sup> Roland Robertson, “Globalization, Politics, and Religion” in Beckford, James A. and Thomas Luckmann (Eds.) The Changing Face of Religion, (London: Sage, 1989), 10.

The secularization debate, once seemingly over but now reopened in the transformed political climate, became enlivened, leading Berger to a famous recantation. Writing in The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics. Berger states unequivocally: “My point is that the assumption that we live in a secularised world is false. The world today, with some exceptions... is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever.”<sup>133</sup> His reversal was nothing short of remarkable. Berger warned: “Those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril.”<sup>134</sup> Few Americans doubted him when the dramatic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, brought religion, albeit an alien and for many an “evil” one, into the living rooms of every American. Berger’s conclusions should not be surprising to the observer of such massive expressions of religiosity as the annual Haj pilgrimage or the Kumbh Mela, which occurs every twelve years in northern India and brings together the largest gathering of human beings in a single place on the planet.

The debate over secularization continues. Many aspects of the process may still be valid, even as a desecularization or resacralization of the world becomes apparent: “The core of the theory of secularization, the thesis of the differentiation and emancipation of the secular spheres from religious institutions and norms, remains valid.”<sup>135</sup> Casanova continues by suggesting that what is occurring is rather a “deprivatization” of religion in the contemporary sphere, as “religious traditions throughout the world are refusing to accept the marginal and privatised role which theories of modernity as well as theories of

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<sup>133</sup> Peter Berger. (Ed.), The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 2.

<sup>134</sup> Berger, The Desecularization of the World, 18.

<sup>135</sup> Casanova, Public Religions, 6.

secularisation had reserved for them.”<sup>136</sup> Scholars, such as Bryan Wilson and Steve Bruce, suggest that the process of secularization is still at work and that rejection of the theory was unnecessarily premature: “But the majority of sociologists of religion will not listen, for they have abandoned the paradigm with the same uncritical haste with which they previously embraced it.”<sup>137</sup> And Berger, in particular, remains intransigent:

I think what I and most other sociologists of religion wrote in the 1960s about secularization was a mistake. Our underlying argument was that secularization and modernity go hand in hand. With more modernization comes more secularization. It wasn't a crazy theory. There was some evidence for it. But I think it's basically wrong. Most of the world today is certainly not secular. It's very religious.<sup>138</sup>

Bruce has termed Berger's *volte-face* as “The Curious Case of the Unnecessary Recantation,”<sup>139</sup> but in spite of Bruce's challenge, Berger contends that the defenders of the old secularization theory are simply “wrong.”<sup>140</sup> Europe, a far remove now from Hillaire Belloc's cry: “Europe is the Faith,” proves the exception not the rule (though Berger acknowledges Grace Davie's contribution to “a more nuanced understanding of Eurosecularity.”)<sup>141</sup> But whether an increase in prosperity necessarily leads to a decrease in religion in the global South, previously accepted as a related phenomenon, may be less certain.

Beyond his interests in the secularization or the desecularization of the world, Berger has shown direct interest in larger questions affecting the global South. Rather than

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<sup>136</sup> Casanova, *Public Religions*, 5.

<sup>137</sup> Casanova, *Public Religions*, 11.

<sup>138</sup> Peter L. Berger, “Epistemological Modesty: An Interview with Peter Berger”, *The Christian Century*, (October 29, 1997), 972-978)

<<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=240>> (28/1/05).

<sup>139</sup> Steve Bruce “The Curious Case of the Unnecessary Recantation.” in Woodhead, *Peter Berger*.

<sup>140</sup> Peter Berger, “Postscript” in Woodhead, *Peter Berger*, 194.

<sup>141</sup> Berger “Postscript”, commenting on Grace Davie. “Europe: The Exception That Proves the Rule?” in Berger, *The Desecularization of the World*, 195.

approaching the subject from within academic leftist orthodoxy or out of sympathy for the radical trends expressed in Liberation Theology, his more recent writings might even be described as neo-conservative in supporting more traditional capitalism and the free market. His cooperation with the likes of Samuel Huntington has reinforced such a view.<sup>142</sup> But as early as 1974, he presciently looked ahead to a very contemporary problem: “We must seek solutions to our problems that accept *neither* hunger *nor* terror.”<sup>143</sup> In the continuing pursuit of solutions to both hunger and terror, academic thinking has been influenced by various factors, not least its innate westernization.

### 3.11 Signals of Rapprochement

Part of the development problematique is the wide gap along the continuum between westernized/ localized cultural viewpoints and the reductionistic/ holistic approaches of the agents and those of the intended beneficiaries of development. If culture is oftentimes hard to grasp, then religion – often hidden in a cultural cloak and one of the most important of its constituent parts – is harder still to fathom. In the North, many development practitioners regard religion, as a result of reductionist and secularist pressures, to be a private and personal matter – a position quite foreign in the communal societies of the South. Sidelined in the North, religion often saturates life in the South.

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<sup>142</sup> Peter Berger and Samuel Huntington, Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>143</sup> Peter Berger, Pyramids of Sacrifice: Political Ethics and Social Change, (New York: Basic Books, 1974), xii.

Cultural understanding adds an extra dimension to an understanding of poverty and related issues. Can poverty even be understood outside of a cultural context? As Vandana Shiva notes:

Culturally perceived poverty may not be real material poverty: subsistence economies which serve basic needs through self-provisioning are not poor in the sense of being deprived. Yet the ideology of development declares them so because they don't participate overwhelmingly in the market economy, and do not consume commodities provided for and distributed through the market.<sup>144</sup>

Noting that some “underdeveloped” cultural groups display richer traditions than their “developed” northern counterparts, the Human Development Report 2004 brings culture firmly to the foreground of the development debate: “The overarching message of this Report is to highlight the vast potential of building a more peaceful, prosperous world by bringing issues of culture to the mainstream of development thinking and practice.”<sup>145</sup>

Closely allied to the cultural component of development is an area that often explores the worldviews and cosmologies of traditional religions: that of Indigenous Knowledge (IK). IK was long regarded as an eclectic area of enquiry, an exclusive domain of cultural anthropologists, who had little to offer to the practical acumen of the development experts. How could IK -- the very knowledge that had caused the backwardness of ignorant peasants in the first place -- do anything but obstruct the flow of technological solutions from western temples of science? Chambers and Richards suggest that reality on the ground has changed little<sup>146</sup> in spite of lip service to a grassroots knowledge revolution:

...the great majority of development professionals undervalue IK and the capacities of local, especially rural, people. For this majority of professionals,

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<sup>144</sup> Vandana Shiva, Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development, (London: Zed, 1988), 10.

<sup>145</sup> Mark Mulloch Brown in HDR 2004, vi.

<sup>146</sup> Chambers and Richards, “Preface” in The Cultural Dimension of Development, xiii.

‘they’ and ‘what they do not know’ are still the problem; and ‘we’ and ‘what we know’ are still the solution.<sup>147</sup>

The area of IK, therefore, often affords a window into ancient religious practices, that are often opposed by mainstream development agents (whether states or NGOs), local élites and ecclesiastical authorities alike, but, if nothing else, illustrate the gap in thought processes between urban/ scientific North and rural/ traditional South.

While western development makes a clear distinction between the outer and inner spheres of life, the external and internal worlds, no such bifurcation exists in many of the societies experiencing or awaiting “development.” External interventions are often far removed from inner concerns, underlining the gap -- not just of a geographical nature -- between the subjects and objects of development. While the ivory towers of academia might be a world away from the mud huts of Africa, the gap in thought processes might be greater still. Thus, the division between science and religion does not afford the western development expert a simple window into southern life, but greater awareness of the area of IK offers hope of a more sympathetic appreciation of traditional religious systems.

### 3.12 Religion and Development in Theory and Practice

As this chapter has shown, huge tension exists between northern and southern approaches to development, illustrated by their widely divergent worldviews. Peter Walker describes

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<sup>147</sup> Chambers and Richards, “Preface”, xiii.



this unrealized division and unspoken tension between the subjects and objects of development, cautioning:

In conclusion, we have to acknowledge that those of us involved in relief and development are essentially outsiders to the process we wish to affect. We must recognize that the vulnerable and the victims know far more about the localised processes that are affecting them than we do. Therefore, we must approach our work with a sense of humility and an openness to learn from those with whom we are trying to work.<sup>148</sup>

That humility and openness has often proved elusive. Pierre Beemans provides an ongoing critique of the development enterprise and its evangelists: "Most, if not all, development agencies are inspired by a scientific, technological, economic and positivistic worldview; perhaps, we have been unable to listen to what people outside our agencies and worldview have been saying."<sup>149</sup> Stated more directly, it might be suggested that the average development practitioner remains ignorant -- or may not wish to be bothered by -- the prevailing worldviews of much of humanity, an area as far removed as any other from his/her technical expertise.

Clearly much of development, as understood from an academic perspective, still remains heavily Western influenced. Western worldviews accept the fact that religion is private and personal, a reflection of a generally more individualistic approach to life, where economic imperatives and technocratic interventions drive much of development. While Western approaches to development are considered essentially value-free and may be considered by their exponents as neutral to religion, much of the world is decidedly not ambivalent to religion, which often defines and permeates life in the South.

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<sup>148</sup> Peter Walker in D. Michael Warren, L. Jan Slikkerveer, and David Brokensha (Eds.), The Cultural Dimension of Development: Indigenous Knowledge Systems, (London: Intermediate Technology, 1995) 154.

<sup>149</sup> Beemans, "Foreword", vii.

As Baharuddin acknowledges, the scientific and technological worldviews that inform development: “are largely products of one civilization’s worldview and historical experience”<sup>150</sup> According to Rajni Kothari, western universalism differs from non-western universalisms only by virtue of its secular character.<sup>151</sup> Kothari thus raises the question of whether development should more accurately be described by the addition of an adjective: western. This western, and academic, approach is illustrated by a brief examination of its constituent parts: its use of language and of a reductionist method, and its debate regarding the place of a spiritual or religious dimension in development.

### 3.12.1 Language

Language, as the deconstructionists have pointed out, also plays an important role in the exercise of power. The deconstructionist school, so influential in the postmodern climate, has taken reductionism to its apogee, and, in surrounding it with impenetrable jargon, has ensured its survival within the western knowledge factory, or university.

The language of development itself – whether academic in the university or technical in the NGO community -- has proved especially challenging for people with little or no command of English or another language of development. Project language, awash with jargon and replete with a whole raft of incomprehensible acronyms, has clearly privileged the educated westerner and marginalized the objects of development. Even if understood, the interpretation of language may demonstrate the gap between northern and southern

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<sup>150</sup> Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 105.

<sup>151</sup> Rajni Kothari, Rethinking Development: In Search of Human Alternatives, (Delhi: Ajanta, 1990), 192.

mindsets: "As an example, one might consider the effects of terms such as 'materialism' or 'atheism', which in some countries at once discredit their proponents but in others function as essential passwords for acceptability."<sup>152</sup> This "epistemological ethnocentrism"<sup>153</sup> also means that any language of the spirit, so familiar to the targets of development, often remains an enigma to the development expert. Jonathan Crush contends that: "the production of Western knowledge is inseparable from the exercise of Western power."<sup>154</sup>

Language has played an even bigger role in the privileging of the idea of development itself, as Arturo Escobar suggests: "Development has been the primary mechanism through which the Third World has been imagined and imagined itself, thus marginalizing or precluding other ways of seeing or doing."<sup>155</sup> His challenge might allow a greater space for the "spiritual dimension" in development that Arbab<sup>156</sup> calls for:

The crisis in the regimes of representation of the Third World thus calls for new theories and research strategies; the crisis is a real conjunctural moment in the reconstruction between truth and reality, between words and things, one that demands new practices of seeing, knowing and being.<sup>157</sup>

But to see things differently requires humility, itself a religious term, and a recognition that the hegemonic western worldview, or its reductionist method, may not attract universal respect.

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<sup>152</sup> Fleck quoted in Arbab, "Promoting a Discourse", 191.

<sup>153</sup> Valentin Mudimbe quoted in Jonathan Crush (Ed.), 1995. *Power of Development*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 108.

<sup>154</sup> Crush, *Power of Development*, 3.

<sup>155</sup> Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 212.

<sup>156</sup> Arbab, "Introduction", 3.

<sup>157</sup> Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 223.

### 3.12.2 Reductionism

In much of the academic development community, religion has been regarded as either an irrelevant aberration or a dated superstition, occupying the status of an epiphenomenon, obsolete in the Enlightenment Era and redundant in an Age of Science. As the academy's epistemological approach grew increasingly reductionistic in nature, the holistic nature of traditional life may have often escaped the notice of technocratic research: "This reductionist approach to knowledge leads most development specialists to become one-eyed giants: scientists lacking wisdom. They analyze, prescribe and act *as if* man could live by bread alone, *as if* human destiny could be stripped to its material dimensions alone"<sup>158</sup> But the prevailing consensus has regarded the fatalistic fetters of religion as, at best, a brake on development, and at most, a barrier to it, as Gunnar Myrdal avers:

Religion should be studied for what it really is among the people: a ritualized and stratified complex of highly emotional beliefs and valuations that give the sanction to sacredness, taboo, and immutability to inherited institutional arrangements, modes of living and attitudes. Understood in this realistic and comprehensive sense, religion usually acts as a tremendous force for social inertia.<sup>159</sup>

Thus, in the early decades of the development mandate, tradition and superstition, interstices of religion, were regarded as the cause of much of the backwardness so readily observable in the "Third World." Some revision of that position has accompanied a greater acknowledgement of the failures of development as well as an accompanying appreciation for cultural sensitivity.

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<sup>158</sup> Goulet, "Development Experts", 481.

<sup>159</sup> Gunnar Myrdal, quoted in Arbab, "Promoting a Discourse", 165.

Jon Roberts and James Turner describe the process of secularization in the western academy in The Sacred and The Secular University. Although the triumph of “methodological naturalism” was neither “sudden nor universal,”<sup>160</sup> the authors do not minimize the consequences: “The effect of detaching scientific discussion from theological discourse was profound... Nonbelief (though not unbelief) became science’s reigning methodological principle.”<sup>161</sup>

This trend to reductionism in the academy was accelerated by its emphasis on science, with its apparent conflict with religion.<sup>162</sup> In revisiting the origins of fundamentalism, Karen Armstrong returns to an understanding of the Greek terms, *mythos* and *logos*.<sup>163</sup> The separation of these two areas in the western world, may not have been appreciated in the rest of the world where both may still be seen as complementary tools of explanation, where *mythos* signifies the stories, often from a religious source, that underpin the cosmos, while *logos* represents the rational forces. From the perspective of science, that explains the physical world. *Mythos* looks back to understand, *logos* looks forward to progress; *mythos* seeks an eternal “unreality.” *logos* scrutinizes an external reality; *mythos* enlightens the inner soul, *logos* examines the outer world. In ancient times, both have historically been complementary -- essential in the task of coming to an understanding of the world. However, at least in the West, as a consequence of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason, increasingly *mythos* was categorized as superstitious, and therefore false, leaving *logos* as open to empirical proof, the only path

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<sup>160</sup> Jon H. Roberts and James Turner, The Sacred and The Secular University, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 29.

<sup>161</sup> Roberts and Turner, The Sacred and The Secular University, 31.

<sup>162</sup> Interestingly, Alistair McGrath contends, in The Twilight of Atheism, that physical scientists are less hostile to religion than social scientists.

<sup>163</sup> Karen Armstrong, The Battle for God, (New York: Ballantine, 2000), xv.

to truth. Those threatened by the loss of *mythos* -- the religious fundamentals of their world -- came to see the predominance of *logos* as being the cause of an ungodly slide in standards, values and morals. This downward spiral of secularization might lead to fear and alienation, eventually provoking a reaction such as fundamentalism. Armstrong sums up: "This battle for God was an attempt to fill the void at the heart of a society based on scientific rationalism."<sup>164</sup> She may not be alone in questioning whether: "humanity needs at least two languages, that of science and that of religion, which together enable it to penetrate its mysteries?"<sup>165</sup> Merging the inner and outer pathways to knowledge provides a framework for a model of holistic development, where ensuring the dignity of human beings is as important as understanding the working of things.

### 3.12.3 A Spiritual or Religious Dimension?

Economics has always been one of the dominant disciplines in the essentially interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary, even pluridisciplinary, nature of International Development Studies. Therefore, it should not be surprising that development has found it hard to escape from its identification with economic growth, though times may be changing, as more holistic definitions are accepted. Pieterse details the result of this evolution towards more holistic and participatory approaches: "Actual development thinking and action is about finding a balance or accommodation between different actors, perspectives, interests, and dimensions within specific historical, political and

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<sup>164</sup> Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, 370.

<sup>165</sup> Arbab, "Promoting a Discourse", 187.

ecological settings, and thus requires a holistic approach.”<sup>166</sup> The influence of postmodernism can be identified in the evolution of these trends toward disillusionment with meta-narrative and grand theory, allowing space for the inclusion of previously silenced voices. Part of this ongoing trend recognizes that science does not possess the last word and that materialism does not answer existential questions of meaning. However, it may be asked whether a space yet exists for a religious voice within the development debate, in spite of calls for its inclusion. as Farzam Arbab notes: “Without doubt, the proposition that a purely materialistic approach to development must be abandoned enjoys substantial support. What is not clear is how development theory and practice are to acquire a spiritual perspective.”<sup>167</sup>

Arbab’s use of the term “spiritual” may be significant. for while development clearly now allows for more inclusivity than it once did, a space may not yet exist for ready acceptance of that other term, “religion”:

To incorporate the subject of religion into development discourse is no easy matter. It is true that the field has been reasonably open to new ideas, but it has shown extraordinary reluctance to abandon its fundamentally materialistic mindset. With painful slowness, people’s participation, their culture, and their values have become accepted as legitimate matters to be addressed; even the mention of spirituality is now beginning to enjoy a certain acceptance. A thousand objections are raised, however, the moment the word *religion* is introduced.<sup>168</sup>

The influence of religion, however, has been of particular relevance in understanding current global trends. Trends towards secularization, previously considered inevitable, are

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<sup>166</sup> Pieterse, Development Theory, 158.

<sup>167</sup> Farzam Arbab, “Introduction”, 3.

<sup>168</sup> Farzam Arbab, “Promoting a Discourse on Science, Religion, and Development,” in Sharon Harper (Ed.), The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2000), 165.

now being questioned, as a global resurgence of religion -- not just spirituality -- becomes apparent in a post 9/11 world. In this changed geopolitical climate, religion has made an unexpected comeback.

The negative aspects of religion have often been the focus of such enquiry, with some commentators discerning, and fearing, a reversal of some of the gains of the Enlightenment. Following the terrorist attacks on the United States, George Monbiot declared: "The pre-Enlightenment has just been beaten by the post-Enlightenment."<sup>169</sup> This fear of the negative propensities of religion may explain its failure to impact development discourse more significantly. Martha Nussbaum's attitude to religion is instructive:

In recent work she discusses religious and spiritual aspirations in detail and with sympathy, acknowledging the goods they can bring. However, she excludes religion from the conception of basic humanity, since many people manage well without it and some are damaged by it. It is better seen as one possible expression of some more general capabilities; and as subject to principled limits to its exercise, limits set by consistency and humanity.<sup>170</sup>

Historically the two areas of religion and development have not often been combined in academic research. However, if the subject is disregarded in the western academy, rather than being open to balanced critique and rational investigation, it may be allowing space for fundamentalisms to flourish, and not just in the Islamic world. Yet again, Berger's

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<sup>169</sup> George Monbiot, "The End of the Enlightenment", *The Guardian*, 18/12/01.

<<http://www.monbiot.com/archives/2001/12/18/the-end-of-the-enlightenment/>> (18/1/05). This sentiment was much in evidence in media reflection following the re-election victory of George W. Bush in 2004.

<sup>170</sup> Gasper, *The Ethics of Development*, 183.



cautionary words come to mind: “Those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril.”<sup>171</sup>

But had religion migrated as far as the western academics may have thought? It could be argued that the apparent abdication of, or eviction from, the public square by religion is more apparent than real. The contention of Gilbert Rist, following Durkheim, that religion has merely migrated elsewhere and resurfaced in another form, may be more plausible. Rist identifies development as “part of our modern religion,”<sup>172</sup> suggesting that modern societies have made the idea of progress, so central to the Enlightenment project, “into a holy truth symbolizing their practices as a whole and conferring on them an obligatory force. If people are made to believe, it is so that they can be made to do something.”<sup>173</sup>

Much of the activity and language of development is related to a religious memory. “Angels of mercy” descend on the “hells” of our world to “save” those in peril. Natural disasters may be likened to Old Testament famines or apocalyptic plagues,<sup>174</sup> justice and debt forgiveness are biblical themes, and even the World Bank’s frequent use of the term “mission” is reminiscent of one of the most evangelistic of terms. While religion may not appear on the academic radar screen, clearly some kind of latent religious impulse is

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<sup>171</sup> Berger, *The Desecularization of the World*, 18.

<sup>172</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, 21.

<sup>173</sup> Rist, *The History of Development*, 214.

<sup>174</sup> Most notably, the opening words of the BBC’s Michael Buerk in the BBC television report, which alerted the world to the Ethiopian Famine in 1984: “Dawn, and as the sun breaks, through the piercing chill of night on the plain outside Korem, it lights up a biblical famine, now in the twentieth century.”

present in the humanitarian service of many a development practitioner, hence, Rist's provocative claim that development has become "the new religion of the West."<sup>175</sup>

### 3.13 Conclusion

The broad trends surrounding the historical interrelation between religion and development have been explored in this chapter, with a view to illuminating the connection, subsequent separation, and tentative, if inconclusive, rapprochement between the two disciplines. The ships, once indistinguishable, then passers in the night, as the Enlightenment replaced the idea of God with the idea of progress, have reappeared in the day, admittedly at a far distance.

In broader explanatory summary, development appears in the literature as a contested term, ambiguous, woefully inadequate at times in terms of explanation, but with few, if any, substitutes on the developmental horizon. Trends in development over the last half century have underscored a disaffection with the development-as-growth paradigm, expressed in the modernization imperative, which identified tradition as an obstacle to progress and allowed little place for religion, towards a human development, which afforded a space for other dimensions of development, beyond the singular obsession with economic growth. These trends toward a more holistic development have allowed greater space for the inclusion of culture, although little direct attention has yet been paid to the impact and influence of religion on development.

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<sup>175</sup> Rist, "Development as the New Religion of the West".

The next chapter suggests that religion is still alive and well in the development undertaking, and while not always emphasized in academia, remains a potent force nonetheless. By means of a broad investigatory sweep, the chapter illustrates how religion has been involved directly and indirectly, individually and institutionally, instrumentally and antagonistically, both historically and currently in development. In spite of its marginalization in the development discourse, religion is without question a significant player in development.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As the previous chapter has demonstrated, the areas of religion and development have not often been associated in academic research. This chapter provides a snapshot, albeit from a wide-angle perspective, of the influence of religion in development. It cannot provide an exhaustive account, but rather offers a selective view of some of the ways that religion and development are intertwined. Consistently the great faiths have explained religion in terms of the totality of life, and provided instruction on how best to live. The chapter seeks to demonstrate that religion in its various forms and incarnations provides a sweeping sub-theme in the development text. Religion and development come together to form an active intersection in the contemporary world.

After situating the broad multidimensional influence of the faith communities, the debated question concerning the relationship between religion and economic development is investigated. The core of the chapter considers at some length the relationship of the global faiths to development, before acknowledging the place of conflict in the enduring search of humankind for meaning.

## 4.1 Development and Religion

Development and religion are linked in an uneasy tension between the physical and spiritual, this world and the next, expressed in the quip attributed to Oliver Wendell Holmes: “Some people are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good.” Yet it has become obvious that religion can affect development in a multiplicity of ways – for good or ill.

Tim Allen and Alan Thomas distinguish three main interpretations of development: development as 1) a vision of development, 2) a historical process of developmental change and 3) interventions in the sense of development programmes and projects.<sup>1</sup> This text-book explanation of development affords space for faith communities to bring a religious dimension to the development table. As far as vision is concerned, the faith communities may see development as an earthly type of the ultimate vision of Heaven, Paradise or Nirvana. The Church has also been involved in many great social transformations – slavery historically, and, more recently, in the push towards debt forgiveness in the *Jubilee 2000* initiative. Finally, the faith communities are often directly involved in practical development work.

Much of the religious interest in development stems, at least in the Western world, from a Judeo-Christian perspective, which consigns analysis of the rich inputs of other religions, including the Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist faiths, to a peripheral position. Closer scrutiny

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<sup>1</sup> Tim Allen and Alan Thomas, Poverty and Development into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 29.

of the more spiritually inclusive approaches of these “eastern” traditions raises an interesting question: is it only “western” development that finds no space for a spiritual dimension? While it may be generally acknowledged that the historical western definition of development as economic growth may need minor or major modification, a more comprehensive redefinition to include a spiritual dimension is not often considered: “Thus, redefinition of the content and goals of development is itself part of the task of defining the role of faith in development.”<sup>2</sup> Wendy Tyndale points to the common idealism that underlies the great faiths:

The “Golden Rule” is to be found in some form in all the religions and spiritual traditions of the world. It points us to an understanding of “development” which requires nothing short of a new world order in which generosity and caring are essential values, the community becomes more important than the individual and people relate to each other on the basis of cooperation rather than competition.<sup>3</sup>

This idealism translates into action in a multiplicity of ways, which the rest of the chapter seeks to illustrate.

## 4.2 Institutionally and Individually, Directly and Indirectly, Historically and Currently

Religion has the potential to play a development role institutionally and individually, directly and indirectly, historically and currently. A brief summary of these six areas, which provide a compartmentalized schema only in theory, precedes more detailed analyses of the positions of the major faiths with regard to development: their theological

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<sup>2</sup> Molefe Tsele, “The Role of the Christian Faith in Development” in Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Chris Sugden, *Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa*, (Washington DC: The World Bank and Penguin Books International, 2001), 209.

<sup>3</sup> Wendy Tyndale, “Idealism and Practicality: The Role of Religion in Development”, *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 22-23.

positions, their historical involvement in the development imperative and a focus on some of their development initiatives.

Institutionally, in spite of contrasting approaches, different doctrines and contested worldviews, the major religions subscribe to an overarching commitment to serve humanity. A development theme can be read out of, or read into, the core teachings of all the major religions. The notion of ending suffering is woven into the warp and woof of all Buddhism. *Zakat* is the third of the five pillars of Islam. Loving one's neighbour, particularly the poor, is crucial to Christianity. Almsgiving is inextricably identified with the great Asian traditions. While a dualistic distinction between physical and spiritual may be prevalent in Christianity, all of life is interconnected for the Hindus, while Islamic thought sees no division between church and state. In Judaism the concept of *tikkun olam* – the repair of the world – is paramount. Huston Smith suggests that the world's religions contain “the winnowed wisdom of the human race.”<sup>4</sup> But in spite of a surfeit of wisdom and all the preaching of peace, conflict between religious people is a fact of life and the clash of civilizations has often been the recurring theme of history.

Institutions are made up of individuals who hold a multiplicity of beliefs, some of which may have developmental effects -- for good or ill -- in their lives and that of their communities. Beliefs about condoms, for example, may be significant in terms of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The restrictions of Ramadan may limit economic output, yet participation in religious festivals may stimulate the local economy. On an individual level and inspired by belief, some work habits, such as perseverance or punctuality, and some character traits, such as sobriety or generosity, may make a positive impact on

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<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Religion Counts, “Religion and Public Policy at the UN”, 50.

community development. General perceptions may suggest that religion has historically been linked with patriarchal tendencies, disempowering women.

Direct interventions, beyond the faith communities' traditional strengths in the health and education sectors, are diverse and multifaceted -- from microcredit schemes to homes for street children, from bee-keeping projects to literacy training. Faith based organizations are involved, directly or in partnership, in relief and humanitarian interventions and long-term development initiatives. Increasingly, northern NGOs see their development role in terms of advocacy, an area where faith communities often have the ability to mobilize vast populations of believers in a common cause. The *Jubilee 2000* campaign, originating out of a coalition of churches, helped to mobilize and sensitize the general public towards a greater awareness of development issues, particularly the debt burdens of developing countries. Some religious festivities may have significant economic impacts on local communities.

Indirectly, it has long been recognized that religion may be either a significant catalyst or a substantial impediment in the process of development. Contested debates revolve around Weberian ideas that link religion and economic development, most notably evidenced in the debate over a cultural explanation for the exponential growth of the Asian "Tigers." Worldviews and cosmologies, born of religious memories, may have a profound influence especially on traditional peoples, to whom supernatural explanation may make more sense than technical rationalization in the drive to development.



Religious concepts may also be important in transforming the very definitions of development.

Historically, the Christian Church has been entangled in the civilizing process. Exactly how complicit or compliant the Church may have been in the colonial imperative may be disputed, but many of the effects of its interventions -- particularly in the health and education sectors -- are undisputed. To try to understand the history and development of modern Latin America would be impossible without an understanding of the Catholic, and more recently Protestant, Church. In other parts of the world it would prove impossible to extricate Islam from the history of Europe, the Middle East or South East Asia, while some attribute the East Asian economic miracle to cultural explanations, informed by Confucian roots. Religion, in its relation with the powers that be, has been a locus of repression but also of resistance, an incitement to war but also an inspiration for peace.

Currently, "God is back -- with a vengeance."<sup>5</sup> For many observers, the influence of religion in the world seemed to be withering away in a trend described as secularization -- or the privatization of religion. But in the closing decades of the Twentieth Century a dramatic resurgence of religion on the world stage was witnessed -- had it ever gone away? -- exploding into Western consciousness in the events of 9/11. Few would deny that religion is an important force in contemporary global life, and that faith based groups constitute influential transnational actors. In many parts of the world, the Church, the Mosque or the Temple may be the most important community-building and cross-cutting

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<sup>5</sup> The theme of the Couchiching Conference, 2004 (see 2.10).

institutions in society, forming an integral, though often underemphasized, part of Civil Society. Religion is intertwined with politics, whether in the rise of the “Religious Right” in the United States or of Hindu nationalism in India. Clearly, in such cases, religion is just one of many variables in the geo-political landscape that affects development. In addition, the institutional resources of the faith communities can be considerable in terms of physical and human resources. Gary Gardner suggests that religious institutions own up to seven percent of the habitable area of the world, and that over eighty percent of the global population claim religious affiliation.<sup>6</sup>

A case study of Ethiopia is used to loosely illustrate this schema. It is acknowledged that to neatly sub-divide religious motivation and action into its constituent parts is problematic, for belief can influence the warp and woof of all of life. Also churches, like housewives, are often overlooked in the calculation of national accounts or in the estimation of developmental targets.

Institutionally, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) has a centuries old tradition of providing food and sustenance for the poor. Individually, many men have devoted their lives over the years to the monastic life of the Church, while the farmer and teacher, traditionally at the centre of community life, have fashioned their lives in accordance with church doctrine. Directly, the large number of fast and festival days on the Church calendar have been seen as a limiting factor on productive labour, as have funerals in an age of AIDS. Indirectly, the EOTC has been accused of holding back

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<sup>6</sup> In Gardner, “Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World”, 156-158, quoting statistics from the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) and David Barrett and Todd Johnson, *World Christian Trends, A.D. 30 – A.D. 2200*, respectively.

gender opportunities, but, more positively, the Church has been at the forefront of educational initiatives within the country for centuries. Historically, Christianity is unique in Ethiopia, not being a colonial imposition as elsewhere in Africa. The Church has consequently occupied a distinctive place in Ethiopian society: “In more ways than one, the Ethiopian church could be aptly described as the very fount and origin of the Ethiopian civilization.”<sup>7</sup> More recently, Ethiopia has become a byword for development assistance. Critics might suggest that the Church’s long influence has not made a significant impact on development, but whatever the verdict, religion and the Church have been central to the life of Ethiopia throughout the centuries:

Pastoral care and social service are long-standing traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The church has not only taught religion and morals, but it has also contributed to literacy, craft and skills. The networks of traditional church schools have provided the only forums of education in the country’s remotest areas and villages for years. Traditionally, each church has served as the nucleus of the socio-economic development and religious life of the surrounding community, as well as the central pivot for the educational system.<sup>8</sup>

The case study demonstrates that the relation between religion and development is multifaceted and multileveled.

### 4.3 The Relationship between Religion and Economic Development

Before considering the contribution of the various faiths to development, a brief excursion into the question of whether religious belief influences economic development is explored. The notion that religious beliefs might affect development potential for good

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<sup>7</sup> Kessis Kefyalew Merahi, *Peace and Reconciliation*. (Addis Ababa: Self published, 2003), 46-47.

<sup>8</sup> Merahi, *Peace and Reconciliation*, 46-47.

or ill has been around a long time, and remains resilient for many individuals in many societies. Most of the great empires and civilizations, in a more religious age, have interpreted progress, advancement or development in terms of divinely sanctioned human labour or humanly implored divine favour.

Max Weber remains the most celebrated exponent of the idea that a relationship exists between religious belief and economic development. In his famous book, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber brings religion into the forefront of analysis: “The magical and religious forces, and the ethical ideas of duty based upon them, have in the past always been among the most important formative influences on conduct.”<sup>9</sup> In looking at Europe, he notes that the most economically advanced members of society -- the owners of capital -- were “overwhelmingly Protestant.”<sup>10</sup> But he also recognizes the resulting paradox: the Protestant ethic works to its own demise as its very success encourages secularization. The causal relationship between religion and economic development is much disputed, and Weber himself admits that the phenomenon he identifies may not be “a cause of the economic conditions, but to a certain extent appears to be a result of them.”<sup>11</sup> Weber concludes his book by cautioning that he is not aiming “to substitute for a one-sided materialistic an equally one-sided spiritualistic causal interpretation of culture and of history.”<sup>12</sup> Whatever the resultant debates, Weber succeeded in bringing religion into the debate over economic development. Others may focus not so much on a causal link between Protestantism and Capitalism, but rather on

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<sup>9</sup> Weber, The Protestant Ethic, 27.

<sup>10</sup> Weber, The Protestant Ethic, 35. Interestingly, in his later writings, Marx had acknowledged, well before Weber, the relationship between Protestantism and capitalism (Lowy, The War of Gods, 7).

<sup>11</sup> Weber, The Protestant Ethic, 35-6.

<sup>12</sup> Weber, The Protestant Ethic, 183.

the capacity of religion to reform attitudes and institutions – for instance, Shmuel Eisenstadt has advanced the concept of the “transformative potential” of religion.<sup>13</sup>

But the debate as to whether religion affects economic development still continues, with some notable studies appearing in recent years. Cynthia Morris and Irma Adelman reversed earlier opinions (from 1966) of a positive relationship between religion and socio-economic development to conclude that “complex historical influences associated with the early spread of commercial and industrial capitalism”<sup>14</sup> were rather responsible. Robin Grier, in a cross-national study of 63 former French, Spanish and British colonies,<sup>15</sup> suggests, along Weberian lines, that Protestantism positively affects economic growth. Similar overall results are revealed in a paper by Luigi Guiso, Paola Sapienza and Luigi Zingales,<sup>16</sup> although they also note the proclivity of religions towards intolerance and note that religion encourages more conservative views towards women. Robert Barro and Rachel McCleary contend that research has “paid little attention to religion and other measures of culture as determinants of economic growth.”<sup>17</sup> In a comprehensive study of 59 countries over almost two decades, Barro and McCleary suggest that religious beliefs stimulate economic growth: “There is some indication that the stick represented by the fear of hell is more potent for growth than the carrot from the

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<sup>13</sup> Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, The Protestant Ethic and Modernization: A Comparative View, (New York: Basic Books, 1968).

<sup>14</sup> Cynthia Morris and Irma Adelman, “The Religious Factor in Economic Development”, in *World Development*, Special Issue, “Religious Issues and Development”, 8, no. 7/8 (1980), 491-501.

<sup>15</sup> Robin Grier, “The Effect of Religion on Economic Development: A Cross National Study of Sixty-three Former Colonies”, *Kyklos*, 50, no. 1 (1997).

<sup>16</sup> Luigi Guiso, Paola Sapienza and Luigi Zingales, “People’s Opium? Religion and Economic Attitudes”, NBER Working Paper No. w9237 (2002).

<sup>17</sup> Robert Barro and Rachel McCleary: “Religion and Economic Growth”, <[http://post.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/barro/papers/Religion\\_and\\_Economic\\_Growth.pdf](http://post.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/barro/papers/Religion_and_Economic_Growth.pdf)> (17/1/05).

prospect of heaven.”<sup>18</sup> However, somewhat paradoxically, Barro and McCleary suggest that higher church attendance, without a corresponding increase in the intensity of belief and praxis, “depresses growth because it signifies a larger use of resources by the religion sector.”<sup>19</sup> Therefore a chain is constructed: church attendance affects religious beliefs which influence individual traits, such as honesty, work ethic, thrift and openness to strangers, which, in turn, lead to growth.<sup>20</sup> A paradox also exists with regard to the Church’s ambivalent, or even contradictory, approach towards materialism. The Church has not always translated its preaching against materialism into action in its own practice.

In a paper entitled, “Religion and Economic Development: An Idea Whose Time has *Gone*,” Stephen Sanderson and Joleen Loucks contend that: “There is no logical reason to link religion to economic development in the first place, and no real evidence of any actual linkage,”<sup>21</sup> preferring to see a “cultural package,” influenced more by material conditions, as overall determinant.<sup>22</sup> But the argument still persists, and has received attention beyond Protestantism, particularly in the Asian context, where the Confucian work ethic has often been considered as a significant contributory factor to the rapid development of East Asia. Robert Bellah has identified a similar process at work in Japan, a “functional analogue” to the Protestant ethic in Europe.<sup>23</sup> In opposition to Weber, who considered that Buddhism inhibited economic development as a result of its

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<sup>18</sup> Barro and McCleary, “Religion and Economic Growth”, 37

<sup>19</sup> Barro and McCleary, “Religion and Economic Growth”, 38.

<sup>20</sup> Barro and McCleary, “Religion and Economic Growth”, 24.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Sanderson and Joleen Loucks, “Religion and Economic Development: An Idea Whose Time has *Gone*.”

< <http://www.chss.iup.edu/sociology/Faculty/Sanderson%20Articles/Relig-&-Econ-Devel-ESS2004.htm>> (17/1/05)

<sup>22</sup> Sanderson and Loucks, “Religion and Economic Development”.

<sup>23</sup> Robert N. Bellah, Tokugawa Religion: The Values of Pre-Industrial Japan, (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1957).

“other-worldly” orientation, Randall Collins identifies Buddhism as a historical stimulant to Japanese Capitalism in “An Asian Route to Capitalism: Religious Economy and the Origins of Self-transforming Growth in Japan.”<sup>24</sup>

Looking further afield it may be argued that religio-cultural factors have had an effect on developments in the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent. The question as to whether Islam or other structural factors have retarded development in the Arab world has been hotly contested, but more conclusively, in the Indian case, the effects of the inflexible caste system have clearly had deleterious development implications. It may be argued that the caste system has inhibited capacity building and also generated monopolistic distortions in the economy.<sup>25</sup>

Clearly the relationship between religion and economic development is complex. Whilst religion appears to be a significant determinant on economic growth, difficulties with regard to statistical measurement, methodological strategy and emotional sensitivity further complicate analysis.

A more conclusive picture of the relationship between the world religions and international development is provided in a selective overview of the positions and practices of the various faiths with respect to development.

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<sup>24</sup> Randall Collins, “An Asian Route to Capitalism: Religious Economy and the Origins of Self-transforming Growth in Japan”, *American Sociological Review*, 62 (1997), 843-865.

<sup>25</sup> Ian Steuart, “An Investigation into the Relationship between Religion and Economic Development,” (1999). <<http://www.wits.ac.za/economics/Journal/religion.htm> > (28/8/04), quoting Dehejia, R.H. and Dehejia, V.H. (1993). “Religion and Economic Activity in India: An Historical Perspective”, in *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 52, no. 2 (1993).

## 4.4 Judaism and Development

Deep in the Pentateuch, blessings and curses -- of an economic, social, political and personal nature -- are directly attributed to the relationship of the Israelites with God, and constitute an underlying premise of the Old Testament. This concern with everyday life was expressed twenty centuries ago by Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah in the Mishnah: "Without bread, there is no Torah. Without Torah, there is no bread."<sup>26</sup> This concern with both the physical and spiritual aspects of life mirrors much Old Testament teaching and promotes a vision of holistic development.

The Hebrew scriptures also call attention to the marginalized in society, expressed in concern for "the alien, the fatherless and the widow."<sup>27</sup> Provisions in Leviticus<sup>28</sup> for resource redistribution leading to restored social equilibrium every 50 years during the Jubilee have captured the modern imagination in the *Jubilee 2000* movement for debt forgiveness. The Hebrew prophets railed against the injustices of their day, and dreamed of a new world of prosperity and peace: "the prospect of a promised land has inspired, sustained, and supported this chosen people throughout their history."<sup>29</sup>

Social justice, therefore, becomes a priority in Jewish development goals. Bernardo Kliksberg quotes the Babylonian Talmud, which considered *tzedakah*, or righteous deeds,

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<sup>26</sup> Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, quoted in the Mishnah, "Sayings of the Fathers", 3:17.

<sup>27</sup> Deuteronomy 24: 19-21.

<sup>28</sup> Leviticus 25.

<sup>29</sup> Rene Laurentin, Liberation, Development and Salvation, (New York: Orbis, 1972), 93.



to be “as important as all of the other commandments combined.”<sup>30</sup> Doing *tzedakah* also becomes part of the Jewish obligation to participate in *tikkun olam* - helping to repair the world.<sup>31</sup> The concept of *tikkun olam* – “the repair of the world” – becomes the overarching theme in the Jewish approach to international development.

Organizations such as World Jewish Relief (WJR) in Britain and American Jewish World Service (AJWS) in the United States become vehicles for Jewish relief and development interventions. The AJWS stresses the fact that it is “a Jewish response to the needs of communities throughout the globe, regardless of race, religion or nationality.”<sup>32</sup> But in historical practice much attention has been directed towards Jewish needs, especially in the years of restoration and recovery following the Holocaust. Even today, a focus on Jewish needs may vary depending on fluctuating contemporary need and circumstances in the worldwide Jewish diaspora, as in the Jewish Community Development Fund (JCDF) programme, which concentrates on Jewish renewal in Russia and Ukraine:

Our work is driven by recognition of the need for creative and diverse approaches to rebuilding Jewish life through the revival of Jewish education, culture and religion, and the need to support the movement towards a civil society in these countries.<sup>33</sup>

In such cases, ethno-national development may take precedence over international development.

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<sup>30</sup> Bernardo Kliksberg, “Facing the Inequities of Development: Some Lessons from Judaism and Christianity”, *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 60.

<sup>31</sup> “American Jewish World Service”, <[http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section\\_id=2&sub\\_section\\_id=1](http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section_id=2&sub_section_id=1)> (17/12/04).

<sup>32</sup> “American Jewish World Service”, <[http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section\\_id=2&sub\\_section\\_id=1](http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section_id=2&sub_section_id=1)> (17/12/04).

<sup>33</sup> “American Jewish World Service”, <[http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section\\_id=2&sub\\_section\\_id=5](http://www.ajws.org/index.cfm?section_id=2&sub_section_id=5)> (17/12/04).

## 4.5 Christianity and Development

While the New Testament spiritualized the blessings and curses of the Old Testament nation of Israel, it did, in the teachings of Jesus Christ, express a radical solidarity with and obligation to the poor, expressed in the Nazareth manifesto:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.<sup>34</sup>

But this concern for the materially and spiritually poor, reflected in the communitarian practice of the early Church, was not always matched in institutional action, as the Catholic Church became subject to hierarchical abuse, leading to the reformulation of the ecclesiastical landscape at the Reformation. Over the years, debates reverberated over the balance between the Church's commission to evangelization (soul care) against its obligations to development (social care), leading Rene Laurentin to suggest that authentic Christianity is an expression of both concerns in the development of "all men and the whole man."<sup>35</sup> But it was in the imperial mission that evangelization and civilization became most confused.

### 4.5.1 Christianity, Politics and Development in Latin America

As the colonial imperative advanced to the farthest reaches of the globe, the cross accompanied the sword in the search for new worlds to conquer and evangelize.

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<sup>34</sup> Luke 4: 18-19.

<sup>35</sup> Laurentin, *Liberation, Development and Salvation*, 127.

Christianity and Colonization had been linked inextricably from the beginning in the pursuit of Civilization, to the extent that trying to disentangle the religious and secular strands in the fabric of imperial enterprise proves impossible.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus wrote in his diary:

Your Highnesses, as good Christian and Catholic princes, devout and propagators of the Christian faith, as well as enemies of the sect of Mahomet and of all idolatries and heresies, conceived the plan of sending me, Christopher Columbus, to this country and the Indies...to convert these regions to our holy faith.<sup>36</sup>

The landfall of Columbus on San Salvador was to resound across a continent and influence the development and exploitation of South America to this day. "Cross and sword arrived together, and the church offered divine sanction for colonial society. The colonial church was a highly conservative force, which stood firmly on the side of the powerful."<sup>37</sup> It might also be noticed, in passing, that the Catholic Church might be recognized as the world's first truly global institution: "By about 1600 the Catholic Church had become the first religious body -- indeed, the first institution of any sort -- to operate on a global scale."<sup>38</sup>

With Spain and Portugal as the principal beneficiaries of development in Latin America, the expansion of the European empire came at the expense of its indigenous peoples. The Church was inextricably implicated in politics: "Religion and politics have depended on and influenced one another since the origins of what we know as Latin America."<sup>39</sup> A

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<sup>36</sup> McKennie Goodpasture (Ed.), Cross and Sword: an Eyewitness History of Christianity in Latin America, (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1989), 7.

<sup>37</sup> David Tombs, Latin American Liberation Theology, (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), 25.

<sup>38</sup> Philip Jenkins, "The Next Christianity," *The Atlantic Monthly*, (October, 2002), 55.

<sup>39</sup> Daniel Levine, "Religion and Politics, Politics and Religion: An Introduction", in Daniel Levine (Ed.), Churches and Politics in Latin America, (London: Sage, 1979), 16.

theological reaction was to set in centuries later in the form of Liberation Theology.

which combined religion, development and politics in a radical new direction:

Latin American liberation theology must be understood against the history of greed and violence, suffering and oppression, and death and destruction that have characterized Latin America for five centuries since the arrival of Christianity.<sup>40</sup>

Pastoral voices of protest – most notably Bartolome de Las Casas, the sixteenth century Spanish missionary and Bishop of Chiapas who condemned colonial oppression in the Americas -- had been in the minority throughout the centuries. It was not until the Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM II) in Medellin in 1968 that opposition to the system began to coalesce in a powerful movement. With Vatican II having breathed fresh possibilities into the Catholic Church, and Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* having critiqued the injustices of the international economic order, hopes were high for a social and theological revolution in Latin America. In a continent of conspicuous injustice, the conclusion that development had failed was palpable. The effects of centuries of colonial exploitation and oppression, often with the collusion of the Church, had consigned Latin America to the periphery of the world system and the efforts of the dependency (*dependencia*) theorists, though critical in theory, were impotent in practice. The figure of Christ may have been “a familiar part of the landscape in Latin America,”<sup>41</sup> but for too long the Catholic Church had been regarded as “an uncritical chaplain”<sup>42</sup> to those in power. Meeting again in Puebla in 1979 at CELAM III

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<sup>40</sup> Tombs, *Latin American Liberation Theology*, 3.

<sup>41</sup> Phillip Berryman, *Liberation Theology: Essential Facts about the Revolutionary Movement in Latin America -- and Beyond*, (New York : Pantheon Books, 1987), 53.

<sup>42</sup> Tombs, *Latin American Liberation Theology*, 25.

the Bishops, although careful not to use the words Liberation Theology in the final document,<sup>43</sup> reaffirmed the principles of Medellin: “We affirm the need for a conversion on the part of the whole Church to a preferential option for the poor, an option aimed at their integral liberation.”<sup>44</sup>

Gustavo Gutierrez had sought to articulate the spirit of Medellin in his ground-breaking work, originally published in Spanish in 1971, A Theology of Liberation.<sup>45</sup> “The theology of liberation offers us not so much a new theme for reflection as a *new way* to do theology.”<sup>46</sup> In identifying the poor as the starting point for all theology, Gutierrez and the other Liberation Theologians addressed development from a heretofore unprecedented aspect. They found their inspiration in the liberating context of biblical events, most notably the Exodus, their prophetic witness in the condemnation of structural sin, and their pastoral purpose in the “preferential option for the poor.” Gutierrez saw this revolutionary theology informing “*the very meaning of Christianity*,”<sup>47</sup> and quotes Henri Bouillard in affirming that: “A theology which is not up-to-date is a false theology.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Leonardo Boff states that “Enormous pressure was brought to bear on the synodal fathers not to use that term”, in Boff, When Theology Listens to the Poor, translated by Robert R. Barr (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988) 29. The Polish Pope, John Paul II, had problems with any movement perceived to have affinity with Marxist dogma.

<sup>44</sup> Berryman, Liberation Theology, 44.

<sup>45</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation, Translated by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1973).

<sup>46</sup> Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, xi.

<sup>48</sup> Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, 13.

Reacting against the materialistic nature of Western development, their alternative development model -- based on liberation rather than development (*desarrollismo*)<sup>49</sup> -- encouraged locally based initiatives and privileged grassroots approaches in solidarity with the poor so that Leonardo Boff could exclaim: "The Church is beginning to be born at the grassroots."<sup>50</sup> Allied to Paulo Friere's conscientization approach to education – the "pedagogy of the oppressed"<sup>51</sup> – the path of liberation served to break down the established relations of power and encouraged the marginalized to be active agents in their own liberation. The shift of a substantial sector of lay members and clergy in the Latin American Church from the side of the oppressor to that of the oppressed, was a shift, according to Michael Lowy, of "world historical"<sup>52</sup> importance. Clearly this new theological movement was deeply rooted in a development context, but it was also highly political, as Fidel Castro recognized when he observed that: "the theologians are becoming Communists and the Communists are becoming theologians."<sup>53</sup> The Brazilian, Dom Camara, known as the "Red Bishop," famously quipped: "When I feed the poor, I'm called a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, I'm called a communist."<sup>54</sup> Liberation Theology found a home in the base communities (CEBs) and also in the ivory towers of academia, but proved less attractive to a Polish Pope as well as the general population, leading to questions about its long-term future:

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<sup>49</sup> "It is our opinion that the term *development* does not well express these profound aspirations, *Liberation*, on the other hand seems to express them better." (Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, x).

<sup>50</sup> L. Boff, *EcclesioGenesis: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church*. Translated by R. Barr, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1986), 23.

<sup>51</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

<sup>52</sup> Lowy, *The War of Gods*, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Wellington Nyangoni, "The Impact of Religion on Politics in Contemporary Africa," in Richard Rubinstein (Ed.), *Spirit Matters: The Worldwide Impact of Religion on Contemporary Politics*, (New York: Paragon House, 1987), 217.

<sup>54</sup> "'Red Bishop' Dies at 90" Catholic News Service. In *Into The Fields (Fall, 1999)*, 4. <<http://www.cccm.ca/mt/archives/1999Fall.pdf>> (20/1/05).

It is impossible to tell the future, but it seems that liberation theology has had its time as a theological movement. John Paul's successor may be more sympathetic, but the generation of theologians who brought so much to the movement in its early days have grown old and not been replaced.<sup>55</sup>

But whatever the arguments over the success or failure of Liberation Theology, and its apparent demise, one thing is clear: Liberation Theology allowed popular religion a powerful presence in the public square in Latin America, and awakened possibilities elsewhere in the developing world. Ironically, its main threat would not come from the politicians it spoke power to, but from the "Evangelical Explosion" which emphasized personal rather than political power. In the words of the popular maxim: "The Catholic Church chose the poor, but the poor chose the Pentecostals"<sup>56</sup> Liberation theology may have paid the price for appearing more attuned to the evils of SAPs than to the charisms of the Spirit, more excited by the earthly economy than a heavenly home.

Various described as the Pentecostal Wave or the Evangelical Explosion, the Third Wave or the Third Reformation, the Protestant surge into South America has made significant inroads into traditional Catholic territory. Describing the phenomenon as "one of the greatest social movements of our time," the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation focused on Bolivia in a series of two radio documentaries entitled, "The New Reformation."<sup>57</sup> Peter Berger has described the movement as: "one of the most extraordinary developments in the world today."<sup>58</sup> David Martin comments:

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<sup>55</sup> Tombs, Latin American Liberation Theology, 295.

<sup>56</sup> Various attributed. Tombs (Latin American Liberation Theology, 289) quotes *The New York Times* (4 July 1993), while Jenkins attributes the quote to Andrew Chestnut (The Next Christendom, 156).

<sup>57</sup> CBC Radio, "Tapestry: Bolivia – The New Reformation". (30/11/03).

<sup>58</sup> Peter Berger in Martin, Tongues of Fire, vii.

Clearly this startling and unexpected development in Latin America, now spreading to the Eastern Pacific rim and Africa, is part of much wider global changes. The first of these is a world-wide growth of religious conservatism in Judaism, and in Islam, as well as in Christianity. A balance once supposed to be tipping automatically towards liberalism is now tipping the other way.<sup>59</sup>

While David Martin provides a comprehensive overview of the rise of Protestantism, mainly in Latin America, Amy Sherman provides a detailed insight into this phenomenon, as remarkable as Liberation Theology itself, in her book, The Soul of Development: Biblical Christianity and Economic Transformation in Guatemala. She suggests that: "Simply put, the *really* significant religious story in Latin America...in terms of numbers at least, is not liberation theology but the Evangelical explosion."<sup>60</sup> Critics may be less charitable in pejoratively describing its disciples as preaching the "health and wealth" gospel. When seen in terms of health and wealth, the potential development impact of this movement becomes obvious.

Sherman's main concern is to investigate the connection between the evangelical explosion and economic development:

The principal question animating this book is whether this "Pentecostal wave" of Protestant revival will have any socioeconomic effects of the sort produced by the earlier waves. I argue in the pages that follow that it is likely that it will; indeed, it already has.<sup>61</sup>

Arguing strongly that "...religious worldview is, in fact, correlated with development prospects and with improved economic performance."<sup>62</sup> she credits the evangelical

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<sup>59</sup> Martin, Tongues of Fire, 293.

<sup>60</sup> Amy Sherman, The Soul of Development: Biblical Christianity and Economic Transformation in Guatemala, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 132.

<sup>61</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 14.



explosion with inspiring behavioural as well as attitudinal changes. Personal transformation, mainly as a result of “the beneficial effects of male sobriety,”<sup>63</sup> is identified as promoting stronger families and better work habits, which in turn stimulate economic and community development.

She asserts unequivocally that the traditional religion of Guatemala inhibits the development process, and that conversion to a new worldview allows initiative, in the spirit of capitalism, to breach the bonds of fatalism: “As more and more people come to adopt the new worldview, the stifling grip of the traditional worldview can be loosed, making possible an economic takeoff.”<sup>64</sup> Such language is reminiscent of Walter Rostow and the notion of modernization theorists that tradition holds back progress. Cultural tradition is viewed as an enemy of (western?) development, in spite of its inherent qualities: “While there is much that is rich, beautiful, and laudable in traditional Mayan culture, it also includes beliefs, values, and habits that hinder human development.”<sup>65</sup>

In claiming that “some religious worldviews are more likely to facilitate development than others,”<sup>66</sup> Sherman echoes Weber’s famous thesis regarding the Protestant work ethic and the spirit of capitalism. The worldly success that derives from the asceticism that Weber observes can lead followers to identify with the implicit message contained within the “health and wealth” gospel. As Sherman notes: “accumulation began to be highly respected as a sign of divine favour upon the elect.”<sup>67</sup> She also acknowledges a

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<sup>63</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 12.

<sup>64</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 165.

<sup>65</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 69.

<sup>66</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 17.

<sup>67</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 166.

Weberite conclusion that Protestantism contains the seeds of destruction within its own success. Recognizing that increased prosperity leads in turn to increased secularization, Sherman ends her book with the sentence: “The challenge for them in future generations may be to resist other ‘patterns of this world’ – namely, those of a secularised materialism springing from increased prosperity.”<sup>68</sup>

While Sherman’s conclusions can be contested -- has she overly conflated Protestantism and westernization? -- there is little question that religion plays a significant part in the daily life of Guatemala, and should be included in any analysis of the development of the country:

Religious conviction, to sum up, is powerful and should not be dismissed. It affects how people think and behave. It provides the eyeglasses through which some people see and interpret the world. In this sense, religion is the “root” or “heart” of what we call culture – that complex of beliefs, values, attitudes, customs and social institutions.<sup>69</sup>

She seeks to reopen the cultural debate: “Ironically, at just the time that historical evidence for the importance of cultural explanations for development success is overwhelming, evaluative discourse about different cultures and worldviews is anathematised.”<sup>70</sup> However, in privileging cultural causation, she may be blinded to her identification with the western, neoliberal model of development rather than alternative visions of more human and holistic development.

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<sup>68</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 170.

<sup>69</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 6.

<sup>70</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 37.

What has happened is clearly a “re-formation” of the social landscape of South America, for, as Martin points out: “The evangelical believer is one who has symbolically repudiated what previously held him in place, vertically and horizontally.”<sup>71</sup> He agrees with Mortimer Arias that the Protestant seed came to South America with its own “flowerpot” which contained:

...the world view, the ethos and the ideology of the prospering and the expanding capitalistic countries, the image of democracy, progress, education, freedom, and material development. And it was the flowerpot, not the seed itself, that the liberal politicians, the members of the Masonic lodges, and the young Latin American elite were looking at.<sup>72</sup>

What of the future? Virginia Garrard-Burnett suggests that the “centrifugal and divisive” nature of the phenomenon may, in Pentecostal terminology, become a “consuming fire” that either “forges and purifies” or “burns and destroys.”<sup>73</sup> McKennie Goodpasture notes that the early Church leaders brought to the New World the strengths and weaknesses of their churches in the Old World<sup>74</sup> – the same may be true today in the remarkable events surrounding the evangelical explosion.

#### 4.5.2 “For Commerce and Christianity”

Africa, unlike Latin America, was witnessing the ongoing struggle between Christianity and Islam, both vying for the soul of the continent, a balance that would tilt in favour of Christianity as the mainly Christian colonizing powers came to dominate the “dark” continent. As in South America, the civilizing and commercial missions of the colonial

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<sup>71</sup> Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 285.

<sup>72</sup> Mortimer Arias, in Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 230.

<sup>73</sup> Virginia Garrard-Burnett, “Conclusion: Is This Latin America’s Reformation?” in Garrard-Burnett and Stoll, *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 208.

<sup>74</sup> Goodpasture, *Cross and Sword*, 293.

powers and the commission of Christ were often indistinguishable, as evidenced, in David Livingstone's famous rallying cry: "For commerce and Christianity."<sup>75</sup> It might be instructive to note the order in the dyad. As in South America, the material lust for power and profit was often confused with the spiritual tussle for souls and salvation.

The duplicity of the colonial mission is illustrated in the African aphorism: "When the missionaries came to Africa, we had the land and they had the Bible. Then they said, 'Let us pray,' and asked us to close our eyes. By the time the prayer was over, they now had the land and we had the Bible." Few accounts note Desmond Tutu's addendum: "And we got the better deal!"<sup>76</sup> Expansionist imperialism was justified in terms of the doctrine of "trusteeship," the "easy belief that within the providence of history Africa had now to be conquered for its own good."<sup>77</sup> Some were less sanguine about imperial motives. Writing from Uganda in 1889, A.M. Mackay of Uganda concluded: "In former years the universal aim was to steal the African from Africa. Today the determination of Europe is to steal Africa from the African."<sup>78</sup>

In terms of development, mission schools and hospitals proliferated, and Christianity became linked with the provision of such services. Adrian Hastings illuminates how closely Christianity became identified with the education process: "In many languages, east and west, the word for reading became one and the same as the word for being a Christian. Thus in Luganda, 'asoma' means 'he or she is reading', but it means no less

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<sup>75</sup> Tim Jeal, *Livingstone*, 165.

<sup>76</sup> Gerald West, "The Bible and the Poor: a New Way of Doing Theology," in Christopher Rowland, (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 132.

<sup>77</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 413.

<sup>78</sup> Hastings, *The Church in Africa*, 432.

'he is praying', 'he is a Christian', 'he goes to church'."<sup>79</sup> Ventures into the health and education fields were undertaken to complement the evangelization process, though sometimes results were unintended and unexpected. As Ranger points out: "Very little developed as the missionaries planned or hoped or feared."<sup>80</sup> The educational services were welcomed by local Africans, but would also be turned to national, rather than colonial, advantage. So much so, that most of the early local intelligentsia and Independence leaders were mission educated – the Kenyattas and the Kaundas, the Bandas and Nkrumahs, and later even Nelson Mandela.

As the cash economy developed, the missionaries were clearly a contributory factor in stimulating economic growth, as new commodities, such as textile products, were encouraged in accordance with denominational custom. Whilst missionaries may be seen as the earliest development agents in Africa, their position of primacy in the field of development weakened as the colonial states began to assume more responsibility in the provision of social services. Africans often saw little difference between the missionary or settler – as the Kikuyu in Kenya avowed: "There is no difference between missionary and settler."<sup>81</sup> The place of the missionaries, hardly a uniform group, within white society was more ambiguous: "In some areas missionaries were undoubtedly regarded as belonging to the class of 'Europeans', but in other areas this was not the case – they were honorary 'non-Europeans'."<sup>82</sup> John and Jean Comaroff well illustrate the complex and

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<sup>79</sup> Hastings, *The Church in Africa*, 457.

<sup>80</sup> Terence Ranger, "Protestant Missions in Africa: The Dialectic of Conversion in the American Methodist Episcopal Church in Eastern Zimbabwe, 1900-1950". in Blakely, Thomas D. and Walter E. A. van Beek, Dennis L. Thompson (Eds.) *Religion in Africa: Experience and Expression*, (London: James Currey, 1994), 275.

<sup>81</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 40.

<sup>82</sup> Hastings, *The Church in Africa*, 20.

convoluted relationship that developed in southern Africa between missionaries and converts, changing both parties in the process.<sup>83</sup> To complicate matters further, the cry “Africa for the Africans!” would resound not only outside, but also within the Church where: “the emergence of an African Christianity was a dialectical process, an interaction between missionary and African consciousness.”<sup>84</sup> The complex relationship between Colonization, Civilization, Commerce and Christianity could, on occasion, leave the latter “damned as the fourth wheel of the white man’s chariot.”<sup>85</sup>

Thus, as Teresa Hinga points out, the impact of Christ and the imprint of Christianity were confused in colonial and ecclesiastical experience, but always wrapped up in an external development enterprise:

It could be said, then, that these two images of Christ, that of Christ the conqueror who seemed to legitimize the subjugation of whole races, and Christ the liberator, glimpses of whom could sometimes be seen in some of the charity work that missionaries were doing for Africans, found expression in missionary praxis.<sup>86</sup>

It would be hard for the Church to shake its connection with colonialism, as Wellington Nyangoni acknowledges:

While recognizing the important contributions that Christianity in Africa has made to the establishment of Western educational systems and social and health institutions; the development of agricultural, technological, and architectural programs; and the support for humanitarian causes, including antislavery activities and decolonisation; the Christian church as an institution was nevertheless linked to colonialism.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> John and Jean Comaroff, Of Revelation and Revolution, Volume 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

<sup>84</sup> Ranger, “Protestant Missions”, 275.

<sup>85</sup> Hastings, The Church in Africa, 549.

<sup>86</sup> Teresa M. Hinga, “Jesus Christ and the Liberation of Women in Africa,” in Ursula King (Ed.) Feminist Theology from the Third World: A Reader, (London: SPCK, 1994), 265.

<sup>87</sup> Nyangoni, “The Impact of Religion on Politics”, 214 .

By the twentieth century, the church had arguably become the biggest development agency on the continent, a position, some might argue, it has maintained. As Goran Hyden maintains: “The church is the strongest NGO in African society.”<sup>88</sup> Hastings is more cautious, talking of the post-independence Church:

What power they have is now more locally based and they have in many cases grown in popular credibility as much as governments have declined in that commodity...The main churches in the meantime have continued to provide the one recognizable alternative structure: they may offer a more objective network of information and assessment, a still useful range of services – particularly rural hospitals – and some possibility of advancement and of contact with the world beyond.<sup>89</sup>

Christian development organizations find themselves today in a crowded field, and, with increasing emphasis on technical capacity, may find themselves less confident in a professional field. However, as Molefe Tsele contends, the Church should not abdicate its developmental mission: “This is a plea for the churches to save development from its captivity by professionals.”<sup>90</sup>

### 4.5.3 “Between Politics and Prayer”

The political role of the Church, now more clearly disentangled from its Colonial identification, came into sharper relief in the post-independence era, where it has functioned on many occasions as the de facto opposition in a single party state. The

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<sup>88</sup> Goran Hyden, The African Crisis and the Role of the Church, Occasional Paper 87-4, (Providence RI: Brown University, 1987), 10.

<sup>89</sup> Adrian Hastings, A History of African Christianity 1950-1975, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 263.

<sup>90</sup> Molefe Tsele, “The Role of the Christian Faith in Development”, in Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Chris Sugden, Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa, (Washington DC: The World Bank and Penguin Books International, 2001), 211.

example of Kenya, as chronicled by Galia Sabar, in Church, State and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition, 1963-1993, is both instructive and representative.<sup>91</sup>

As many Western visitors have noted, Kenya is a nation where religion is a pervasive influence in life. She notes that “There is little, if any, separation in Kenya between religion and the fabric of everyday life, between spiritual and material, God and politics.”<sup>92</sup> Sabar’s research sought to understand how and why the Anglican Church, the Church of the Province of Kenya (CPK) “captured an ever increasing space in people’s daily lives and in their hearts and minds.”<sup>93</sup> Her answer acknowledges the developmental and political dimension of the activities of a Church, in Hasting’s words, “Between Politics and Prayer”<sup>94</sup>:

My claim is that, in combination with the spiritual authority that is the province of all churches, the wide net of social, educational, health-related and economic activities that the Anglican Church steadily developed from its earliest days in the region gradually made it an integral part of society, an instrument of its transformation and a power the government had to reckon with.<sup>95</sup>

She identifies various stages in the evolution of the Church’s involvement in national political life: from “meditative ambiguity” in the mid 1960s through “critical solidarity” in the 1970s to “active opposition” in the late 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>96</sup> But her main argument sheds light on how the Church built up its power base as a result of developmental activities, especially, though not limited to, the health and education sectors. By 1993 she calculates that over 200 Church organizations and associations were

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<sup>91</sup> Galia Sabar, Church, State and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition, 1963-1993, (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2002).

<sup>92</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 3.

<sup>93</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 3.

<sup>94</sup> See Chapter 5 of Hastings, A History of African Christianity 1950-1975.

<sup>95</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 4.



involved in a wide gamut of developmental activities, and she estimates that around 70% of the Kenyan population were directly affected by such programmes in the three decades following independence in 1963.<sup>97</sup> In spite of the often complex and contradictory emotions and tensions arising from the Church's roots in the colonial imperative, Sabar argues its developmental initiatives gradually made the Church essential to both colonial powers and local people, allowing the church to assume a prominent role in the life of the independent nation:

...by the end of the colonial period, the combination of the Church's spiritual authority, extensive infrastructure and variegated social services gave the Church both a reach and a degree of power unmatched by any other civil society organization.<sup>98</sup>

During the Kenyatta and Moi eras, she details how the Church became an indispensable partner in the overarching national goal of development. As corruption became an invasive cancer in the life of the body politic, the Church increasingly was seen as an "instrument of physical and psychological survival under Moi."<sup>99</sup>

Sabar also reflects on the Church's approach to development. Beyond its traditional roles in education and health (HIV/AIDS somewhat belatedly becoming a major area of focus), the Church's development initiatives expanded into widely diverse areas depending on local needs, from bee-keeping to citrus farming, from street children to kitchen gardening. Often at the cutting edge of development thinking, the Church deliberated

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<sup>97</sup> Sabar, *Church, State and Society*, 11.

<sup>98</sup> Sabar, *Church, State and Society*, 16.

<sup>99</sup> Sabar, *Church, State and Society*, 18.

more and more on defining a theology of development.<sup>100</sup> The Church's development efforts were participatory in nature and relied upon a bottom-up approach, utilizing hundreds of Church development committees, which instigated thousands of small-scale development projects throughout the country. As national problems continued to escalate as Kenya slid towards the category of failing state, the Church increasingly viewed its mandate in terms of advocacy. As it vocally confronted abuses of power, it was propelled into the political limelight, where it assumed the role of unofficial opposition in a one party state. Together with the Presbyterian and Catholic Churches, the CPK occupied the space vacated by serious opposition in the wake of the political disruptions of the early eighties and the establishment of a one party state.

In a nation of dramatic socioeconomic divisions, Sabar recognizes that the Church was one of the few institutions in which rich and poor could come together.<sup>101</sup> In fact, the Church may often have been one of the few formal social organizations in which the majority of poorer Kenyans participated.<sup>102</sup>

While acknowledging the part that many NGOs and civil society groups played in national development, Sabar suggests that the contribution of the CPK was "unique"<sup>103</sup> as many Kenyans increasingly found the Church an inextricable part of "the warp and woof of their daily lives"<sup>104</sup> and a refuge from the domineering nature of repressive rule.

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<sup>100</sup> See A Report of the CPK Consultation on the Theology and Philosophy of Development, May 1983, in Sabar, Church, State and Society.

<sup>101</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 287.

<sup>102</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 284.

<sup>103</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 290.

<sup>104</sup> Sabar, Church, State and Society, 287.

Kenya, therefore, provides a notable example of the invaluable role that churches often played in contributing to national development goals, and, beyond that, to political maturity as well. The Kenyan example was not atypical in an era of single party rule and failed states. Adrian Hastings concludes that: "Black Africa today is totally inconceivable apart from the presence of Christianity."<sup>105</sup>

#### 4.5.4 Contemporary Christianity in Africa

"Undoubtedly, Livingstone's greatest sorrow would have been that Africa never became a Christian continent."<sup>106</sup> Tim Jeal's summation of Livingstone's legacy might need to be revised today in light of current religious trends within Africa, where the Church, now long divorced from its colonial upbringing, is not just surviving, but expanding. A number of reasons may explain this phenomenon, though two require emphasis in the context of development: believing and belonging.

As many of the old bonds of community have been severed or weakened across Africa in the intensifying concentrations of urbanization and the overwhelming wave of marginalization, the Church's original appeal in terms of believing and belonging has been accentuated.

While sociologists attempt to explain religious trends in societal terms, Jenkins contends that the reasons behind the burgeoning increase of believers must be found in less

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<sup>105</sup> Adrian Hastings, "Christianity in Africa", in Ursula King (Ed.), Turning Points in Religious Studies: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Parrinder, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 208.

<sup>106</sup> Jeal, Livingstone, 384.

material explanations: “People join or convert because they acquire beliefs about the supernatural realm and its relationship to the visible world.”<sup>107</sup> One area that has resonated markedly with the converts of the new denominations is the increased emphasis on the reality of spiritual forces and their effects in the everyday world: “Unlike in modern Europe or North America, Christian preachers did not have to convince Third World audiences of the reality of the supernatural, of spirits and spiritual powers.”<sup>108</sup> The Bible’s worldview, replete with such supernatural manifestations, may be closer to that of the religious south than that of the secular north.<sup>109</sup>

As is immediately apparent in the pervasive poverty of the African slum, feeding the body, and not just the soul, is also essential for survival. The Church has often filled the role, abdicated by many hard pressed states, of providing desperately needed social services and fostering a sense of community. In a neoliberal age, which often creates poverty along the path to plenty (as famously articulated by General Emilio Garrastazu-Medici, the former President of Brazil: “The economy is going well but the people are doing badly”)<sup>110</sup> the Church can function as the ultimate support group. Jenkins suggests: “The most successful new denominations target their message very directly at the have-

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<sup>107</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 77.

<sup>108</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 122.

<sup>109</sup> Jonathan Freedland notes that northerners may also hanker after magical explanations, in a discussion of the *Da Vinci Code*:

It is that even grown-ups want to believe in magic. The 21<sup>st</sup> century may be replete with technology that can do everything and science that can explain everything, but human beings seem to crave the mysterious and miraculous, the forever out-of-reach... The world of 2004 is a fearful place. Is it any wonder we yearn to soar away – as if by magic?”

[Jonathan Freedland, “A Code for Dark Times”, *Guardian Weekly*, (13-19/8/04), 6.]

Other examples abound in the world of literature (for example, *The Lord of the Rings*) and film (for example, *Star Wars*).

<sup>110</sup> Quoted in Goulet, *Development Ethics*, 181.

nots, or rather, the have-nothings.”<sup>111</sup> and concludes: “Rich pickings await any religious groups who can meet these needs of these new urbanites, anyone who can at once feed the body and nourish the soul.”<sup>112</sup> Community, so vital in the context of Africa, thrives as congregations are converted into families and urban denominations replace rural villages. As the African saying goes “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.”<sup>113</sup>

But the prospect of expanded opportunity and upward mobility in this life are also offered by the new “health and wealth” variants, and therefore appeal, in their attention to ever-present material concerns, in a developmental context. The power of religion, therefore, may be the only power that the poor have access to, and may be the only guarantor of the future, in this life as well as the next: “Those who were formerly powerless have found in religion a means of altering their situation and even reversing their status in both symbolic and social terms.”<sup>114</sup> Therefore, whether in an African slum or in a Latin American *favela*, the most vibrant organization may well be the local church.

## 4.6 Islam and Development

The feeling may be widespread that development has bypassed the Arab world: “Some have tried to fault Islamic civilization for not following the same trajectory of development that took place in Europe and have asked, ‘What went wrong?’ in reference

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<sup>111</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 92.

<sup>112</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 94.

<sup>113</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 132.

<sup>114</sup> Jules-Rosette Bennetta, “The Sacred in African New Religions”, in James Beckford and Thomas Luckmann (Eds.), *The Changing Face of Religion*, (London: Sage, 1989), 150.

to the Islamic world?"<sup>115</sup> Bernard Lewis, for instance, poses the question in the title of a recent volume What Went Wrong?<sup>116</sup> Nasr, however, would prefer to turn the question around and ask what has gone wrong in the western world, where modern civilization has led to the "the loss of the meaning of life, the dehumanization of humanity, the breakup of the social fabric, the unprecedented destruction of nature and many other consequences."<sup>117</sup> In a statement that might be echoed by believers in other faiths, Nasr concludes: "From the Islamic point of view, the value of a society before the eyes of God lies in its virtuous quality, its moral excellence, and not in power or wealth."<sup>118</sup> Thus Nasr underlines the powerful critique, common to all religions, of development-as-growth.

Many of the Islamic countries are regarded as mired in underdevelopment, in spite of access in certain cases to vast wealth, a situation that perhaps should not be surprising since development has been primarily defined in western terms and influenced by western worldviews. Western development, viewed as the only legitimate model, allows little space for alternative, and especially faith based, paradigms:

In the Western hemisphere, Eurocentrists conceive of development as a transfer of their societal systems to the non-Western world. In response to this attitude that implies an alleged superiority, non-Westerners move to the opposite extreme in viewing development in the context of their particular ethno-cultural authenticity threatened from the outside...For their part, Muslim fundamentalists envisage development as a means of restoring the dissolved divine Muslim order of Medina.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity, (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002), 310.

<sup>116</sup> Bernard Lewis, What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East, (New York: Harper Collins, 2002).

<sup>117</sup> Nasr, The Heart of Islam, 310-311.

<sup>118</sup> Nasr, The Heart of Islam, 199.

<sup>119</sup> Bassam Tibi, Islam Between Culture and Politics, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 96-97.

Certainly, western reductionist approaches have often been unable to grasp the inclusiveness of Islam, influenced by the fundamental concept of *tauhid*, the essential “oneness of Allah.” The secularization that pervades Western academic thought finds little correspondence in Islamic societies: “In Islam the term *secular* actually does not exist, as knowledge is always understood as the unity of both the worldly and religious.”<sup>120</sup> Religion, therefore, is a part of all life:

In the Islamic perspective, religion is not seen as a part of life or a special kind of activity along with art, thought, commerce, social discourse, politics, and the like. Rather, it is the matrix and worldview within which these and all other human activities, efforts, creations, and thoughts take place or should take place.<sup>121</sup>

Nasr explains that sacred and secular cannot be divorced in an Islamic universe ordered around Islam as a belief system as well as a socio-political system:

According to Islam, religion is not only a matter of private conscience, although it certainly includes this dimension, but it also is concerned with the public domain, with humans’ social, economic, and even political lives. There is no division between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Caesar in the Islamic perspective.<sup>122</sup>

The dualistic Western system, which separates between sacred and secular, finds no parallel in Islam, which encompasses all of life. Sayeb Kotb claims that: “Islam has one universal theory which covers the universe and life and humanity, a theory in which are integrated all the different questions; in this Islam sums up all its beliefs, its laws and statutes, and its modes of worship and of work.”<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Azizan Bahruddin, “Rediscovering the Resources of Religion.” in Sharon Harper (Ed.), The Lab, The Temple and The Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2000), 115, footnote 7.

<sup>121</sup> Nasr in Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 127.

<sup>122</sup> Nasr in Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 127.

<sup>123</sup> Sayed Kotb, Social Justice in Islam, (New York: Octagon, 1970), 17.

In explaining some Islamic terms, Azizan Baharuddin draws development implications. Community (*ummah*) is one of the overarching concepts in all of Islam. The very idea of *shariah* – the way of life informed by the code of law outlined in the Qu’ran and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed – has developmental implications. Submission to *Shariah*, which allows no space for separation of church and state, brings harmony: “cosmos as opposed to chaos, justice as opposed to injustice.”<sup>124</sup> The giving of *zakat*, alms for the poor, traditionally calculated at 2.5% of accumulated wealth, can be seen as “not merely charity but a means to ensure justice”<sup>125</sup> in society. *Zakat* also generates substantial funds for development purposes. Islam, which has much to say about economics and the market, also condemns the excesses of greed and the hoarding of wealth in the search for a just and equitable world. It might be suggested that Islam offers an alternative development model: “Muslim scholars argue that the Islamic economic system is uniquely designed to minimize if not eliminate built-in contradictions and inequities as those characteristic of both capitalist and communist economic systems.”<sup>126</sup> Spiritual salvation, as in other faiths, is the ultimate aim, but “in this Earthly life, salvation is development.”<sup>127</sup>

However, Islam is often regarded, at least in the West, as an obstacle to development. Baharuddin sums up a prevailing view often held in development circles: “the common stereotypical view among non-Muslims that Islam is a fatalistic religion with an

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<sup>124</sup> Nasr in Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 129.

<sup>125</sup> Nasr in Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 127.

<sup>126</sup> Ragab, Ibrahim, “Islam and Development” in *World Development*, Special Issue, “Religious Issues and Development”, 8, no. 7/8 (1980), 520.

<sup>127</sup> Nasr in Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 134.



antidevelopment posture or, at best, with little to say on the subject of development”<sup>128</sup>

Ibrahim Ragab notes that this opposition stems from either an argument that Islamic beliefs and behavioural patterns adversely affect development prospects (most obviously customs around Ramadan or practices around usury) or that Islamic beliefs have been corrupted in transmission (patriarchal gender views being an often argued case in point).

Ragab prefers to argue:

that the backward conditions prevailing in Islamic countries today can be better explained in terms of truncated institutional development, which resulted from foreign domination over the fates of people whose religion is as concerned with social, political and economic institutions as it is with personal acts of worship.<sup>129</sup>

Any detour into history provides an alternative profile of a faith and a region of the world: “Islam is a world religion, and it also forms the basis of a world civilization which was once very powerful.”<sup>130</sup> In any discussion of Islam, it is hard to escape the glories of the Islamic past. Were the questions of development to have been examined in centuries past, Islamic development may well have been seen as the universal model for emulation. The debate about “What went wrong?” ignores a historical perspective when “Islam had it right and Christianity got it wrong.”<sup>131</sup>

Perhaps the patriarchal approaches, so stereotypical in Islamic societies, attract the most opprobrium from many western development theorists and practitioners, who view Islam as repressive and patriarchal with regard to women. Such patriarchal interpretations of

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<sup>128</sup> Nasr in Baharuddin, “Rediscovering the Resources”, 120.

<sup>129</sup> Ibrahim Ragab, “Islam and Development” in *World Development*, Special Issue, “Religious Issues and Development”, 8, no. 7/8 (1980), 516.

<sup>130</sup> Tibi, *Islam Between Culture and Politics*, 1.

<sup>131</sup> Jack Goody, “Religion and Development: Some Comparative Considerations”, *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 64.

the Qu'ran have been disputed by many scholars -- see, for example, Asma Barlas' "egalitarian and antipatriarchal" reading of Islam in Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qu'ran.<sup>132</sup> Barlas looks to Abdolkarim Soroush's eloquent avowal that the: "stunning beauty of the truth... lies beyond the veil of habits."<sup>133</sup>

Yvonne Haddad notes that "The United Nations definition of modernity and progress, especially where it pertains to women, has tended to emphasize that maintenance of tradition is a central problem of underdevelopment."<sup>134</sup> However, while tradition may be the problem, the answer may not be the "modernity" espoused in the developed world. Often Western models of gender relations are not -- from an Islamic perspective -- seen as liberating, but rather symbols of another oppression leading to the moral degeneracy and community disintegration ascribed to western societies. Haddad gives voice to an alternative Islamic view of gender relations:

Muslims increasingly challenge the assumption that the Western experience is the only legitimate analytical framework for assessing the role of women, or that the Western family must serve as the universal model. Many have decided that Western values are to be avoided at any cost. Can the West, they ask, allow for other cultures and traditions to posit universals?<sup>135</sup>

While increased gender opportunity, perceived as such a central tenet in development thinking, may be a necessary prerequisite for future development in the Islamic world, such gender realignment may need to be guided by Muslim, rather than Western, ideals

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<sup>132</sup> Asma Barlas, Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qu'ran. (Austin: University of Texas, 2002).

<sup>133</sup> Quoted in Asma Barlas, "The Qu'ran, Sexual Equality, and Feminism", University of Toronto, <[http://www.ithaca.edu/faculty/abarlas/talks/20040112\\_UToronto.pdf](http://www.ithaca.edu/faculty/abarlas/talks/20040112_UToronto.pdf)> (10/3/05).

<sup>134</sup> Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, "Islam and Gender: Dilemmas in the Changing Arab World", in Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck and John Esposito, (Eds.), Islam, Gender, and Social Change. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 21.

<sup>135</sup> Haddad, "Islam and Gender", 23.

of freedom. Again, religious influence stands to play a significant role in defining development, and redefined gender roles may be reworked within a religious framework rather than outside it.

Many Muslim NGOs, such as Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid, work in the development field, inspired by the Qu'ranic text: "Whoever saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind."<sup>136</sup> In addition to normal fundraising strategies common to western agencies, Muslims rely on giving the obligatory *zakat* and the voluntary *sadaqah* to aid the poor. In addition, the use of *waqf*, akin to the western concept of a charitable trust or endowment, allows an investment, whether in cash or in kind, to bring a return in accordance with *shari'ah* law for development use by the charity.

One of the most prominent Islamic organizations involved in development is the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), which sees itself as "a modern vehicle for traditional philanthropy"<sup>137</sup> for the second largest of the Muslim Shiite communities. Since 1967 the AKF, under the direction of its spiritual leader, the Aga Khan, has been involved in promoting "creative solutions to problems that impede social development,"<sup>138</sup> primarily in poorer areas of Asia and East Africa, the latter area historically home to a strong Ismaili community. The AKF's focus areas of Health, Education, Rural Development and Civil Society, are supplemented by the cross-cutting issues of Human Resource Development, Community Participation, Gender and Development and the Environment. In 2003, the Aga Khan Foundation "funded over 140 projects in 16 countries with a

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<sup>136</sup> Qur'an 5: 32. Interestingly, this saying also appears in the Talmud (Talmud Ierushalmi, Sanhedrin, 4:22a).

<sup>137</sup> "Aga Khan Foundation", <<http://www.akdn.org/agency/akf.html>> (17/12/04).

<sup>138</sup> "Aga Khan Foundation", <http://www.akdn.org/agency/akf.html>> (17/12/04).

budget of US\$139 million<sup>139</sup> and, by its own admission, holds substantial property investments in the health and education sectors in the developing world. Its development vision is informed by its understanding of the social conscience and vision of Islam:

At the heart of Islam's social vision is the ethic of care of the weak and restraint in their sway by the rich and powerful. The pious are the socially conscious who recognise in their wealth, whether personal talent or material resources, an element of trust for the indigent and deprived. But while those at the margin of existence have a moral right to society's compassion, the Muslim ethic discourages a culture of dependency since it undermines a person's dignity, the preservation of which is emphatically urged in the Quran. From the time of the Prophet, therefore, the emphasis in the charitable impulse has been to help the needy to help themselves.

This spark of divinity, which bestows individuality and true nobility on the human soul, also bonds individuals in a common humanity. Humankind, says the Quran, has been created from a single soul, as male and female, communities and nations, so that people may know one another. It invites people of all faiths, men and women, to strive for goodness.<sup>140</sup>

Certainly, in the areas in which it is active, The Aga Khan Foundation is a significant player in development.

## 4.7 Buddhism and Development

At the heart of the Buddha's awakening was the realization, expressed in the First Noble Truth that life is suffering, or dis-ease, *dukkha*. Today, such a conclusion might be reached quite rapidly by even a cursory reading of the World Development Report or the Human Development Report. The second of the Four Noble Truths identifies the cause of suffering: craving or desire. Materialism would seem to be antithetical to Buddhism, which has on occasion been represented as an escape from this world -- an "other-

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<sup>139</sup> "Aga Khan Foundation", <http://www.akdn.org/agency/akf.html#intro> (17/12/04).

<sup>140</sup> "Aga Khan Foundation", <[http://www.akdn.org/imamat/imamat\\_akdn.html](http://www.akdn.org/imamat/imamat_akdn.html)> (17/12/04).

worldly” religion, according to Weber. Yet Simon James suggests that the antidote to craving, which is seen as inseparable from ignorance, lies in increasing one’s awareness of the world: “the aim of Buddhism was from the beginning decidedly practical: the religion provides a set of practical guidelines for leading a life free from suffering, a happier, more fulfilling life.”<sup>141</sup>

David Loy explains that both poverty and wealth involve *dukkha*, therefore, “there is no such thing as a ‘poverty problem’ that can be understood separately from a ‘wealth problem.’”<sup>142</sup> Buddhism suggests that the delusions of the rich contribute to the predicament of the poor, and must be addressed in any comprehensive solution to the human problem, which at its roots, is not material: “All societies are confronted with the same basic tragedy of life, which for Buddhism is not primarily poverty, but illness, old age and death.”<sup>143</sup> Therefore the conventional western approach to ending poverty by stimulating growth is “grasping the snake by the wrong end.”<sup>144</sup>

Giving and compassion are central to Buddhism. According to Peter Harvey, “The primary ethical activity which a Buddhist learns to develop is giving, *dana*, which forms a basis for further moral and spiritual development.”<sup>145</sup> Giving is also the first of the *bhodhisattva* “perfections”, another of which is compassion: “As time went by, compassion (*karuna*) was to become an increasingly highly regarded virtue in Buddhism,

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<sup>141</sup> Simon P. James, 2004, *Zen Buddhism and Environmental Ethics*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 7.

<sup>142</sup> David Loy, “The Poverty of Development: Buddhist Reflections”, *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 10.

<sup>143</sup> Loy, “The Poverty of Development”, 12.

<sup>144</sup> Loy, “The Poverty of Development”, 9.

<sup>145</sup> Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History, and Practices*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), 198.

for it is the motivating quality of the bodhisattva.”<sup>146</sup> The Dalai Lama, in accordance with the positive and negative formulations of the Golden Rule, has stated that: “all the teachings of the Buddha contained in both the Hinayana and Mahayana can be summarized in two ethical imperatives: ‘You must help others. If not, you should not harm others.’”<sup>147</sup> Buddhism therefore appears development-friendly. One debate is how much is directed externally in service towards society or in the context of the monastic *Sangha*, which depends on the laity for providing the essentials of life. In this respect, the situation within Buddhism parallels that in other religions, which Harvey explains in the context of Thailand:

The involvement of monks in development work is not without its critics. Those who support greater social activism on the part of the *Sangha* argue that, through it, the monks can ‘re-assert their traditional role’ as community leaders in a changing world, and thus retain respect. Opponents are those of a more cautious and traditional outlook, particularly among the laity. They argue that, if monks become too involved in the affairs of secular society, then they will compromise their unique exemplary role of being spiritual specialists, this being to the detriment of society.<sup>148</sup>

It is beyond the scope of the present study to detail the various schools of Buddhist belief. Suffice it though to say that within the three main traditions -- Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana -- a multiplicity of schools exist with different emphases. Theravada (The Teachings of the Elders) is the original and remains the most conservative of the traditions, based on an essentially meditative practice, and is found primarily today in Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. The more liberal Mahayana (The Great Vehicle) tradition may be viewed as a broad umbrella body encompassing many different schools, some

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<sup>146</sup> John Snelling, *The Buddhist Handbook: The Complete Guide to Buddhist Schools, Teaching, Practice, and History*, (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1998), 70.

<sup>147</sup> Quoted in Steven C. Rockefeller, “Buddhism, Global Ethics, and the Earth Charter”, in Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryuken Williams (Eds.), *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*, (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, 1997), 316.

<sup>148</sup> Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 288.

more well-known in the West than others: for example, the Tantra, Pure Land, Nichiren and Ch'an or Zen schools. Devotees consider themselves more outward looking than those in the Theravada tradition, which in consequence they consider as the "the lesser vehicle" (Hinayana). Believing the search for personal self-enlightenment to be inherently selfish, "the Mahayana certainly accorded altruistic action a central role on the spiritual path, and indeed made compassion a pre-eminent virtue."<sup>149</sup> Finally, the Vajrayana tradition, which became established in Tibet in the seventh century, is better known in the West as Tibetan Buddhism.

In its emphasis on the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things, Buddhism can speak to a number of development issues, in particular the intersection between economics and the environment. From a development standpoint, much has been made of Buddhist economics or "Green Buddhism." Hidden within E. F. Schumacher's well-known book, Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered, is a less well known chapter, entitled "Buddhist Economics,"<sup>150</sup> in which Schumacher sketches an alternative economic model:

For the modern economist this is very difficult to understand. He is used to measuring the "standard of living" by the amount of annual consumption, assuming all the time that a man who consumes more is "better off" than a man who consumes less. A Buddhist economist would consider this approach excessively irrational: since consumption is merely a means to human well-being, the aim should be to obtain the maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> James, Zen Buddhism, 8.

<sup>150</sup> E.F. Schumacher, "Buddhist Economics" in Schumacher, Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered, (London: Blond and Briggs, 1973).

<<http://www.smallisbeautiful.org/buddhisteconomics.html>> (16/12/04).

<sup>151</sup> Schumacher. "Buddhist Economics".

The current neoliberal impetus that champions the forces of the market, in effect valuing profits ahead of people, would be considered as “a surrender to the forces of evil.”<sup>152</sup>

According to Schumacher, Buddhist economics is based on simplicity and non-violence, and involves finding “the Middle Way between materialist heedlessness and traditionalist immobility.”<sup>153</sup> In this way, “Right Livelihood” – the fifth step in the Noble Eightfold Path -- is achieved.

But seldom has the case for an alternative way -- “another way is possible”<sup>154</sup> -- been presented with such emotion as in Helena Norbert-Hodge’s elegiac paean to a vanishing world, Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh. She raises questions about western development and its impact on ancient cultures, based on religion: “Everything in Ladakh reflects its religious heritage.”<sup>155</sup> In his preface the Dalai Lama outlines the dilemmas of development, caught between the internal and external forces that Norbert-Hodge portrays:

No matter how attractive a traditional rural society may seem, its people cannot be denied the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of modern development... Amongst the people of traditional societies such as Ladakh’s there is often an inner development, a sense of warm-heartedness and contentment, that we all would do well to emulate.<sup>156</sup>

Norbert-Hodge illustrates this dilemma in the figures of the Lama and engineer. The former understands a worldview that recognizes the unity of all life, while the latter is part of a scientific reductionism that emphasizes separation. Fragmentation is the price of

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<sup>152</sup> Schumacher, “Buddhist Economics”.

<sup>153</sup> Schumacher, “Buddhist Economics”.

<sup>154</sup> Helena Norbert-Hodge, Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh, (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1992), 182.

<sup>155</sup> Norbert-Hodge, Ancient Futures, 72.

<sup>156</sup> Norbert-Hodge, Ancient Futures, x.



progress: "We forget that the price for never-ending economic growth and material prosperity has been spiritual and social impoverishment, psychological insecurity, and the loss of cultural vitality."<sup>157</sup> Norbert-Hodge raises piercing questions about Western development models, which, in their greed for material progress, take little note of "inner" development. The world of development, for Norbert-Hodge, must include the world of the spirit.

A greater emphasis on socially engaged or humanistic Buddhism is emerging in the influence and activities of such organizations as Sarvodaya, Soka Gakkai, Foguang, and Tzu Chi, all of which will be described briefly below. A general perspective might suggest that Buddhism affords less attention to poverty as a structural problem -- "there is less recognition of an unequal distribution of the world's wealth and resources than in some other faith traditions,"<sup>158</sup> but perhaps a greater acknowledgement of education's lasting effects on poverty reduction.

Motivated purportedly by the not atypical censure of a Catholic missionary who exclaimed: "You Buddhists are a passive group and ignore the needs of others,"<sup>159</sup> Master Chen Yen embraced a form of Buddhism in which compassion was transformed into action. In 1966 in the impoverished town of Hualien, Taiwan, a group of housewives promised Master Chen Yen a few cents a day from their grocery money to provide relief and assistance to the poor. From humble beginnings, the Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation has grown to include hundreds of thousands of members and over four

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<sup>157</sup> Norbert-Hodge, *Ancient Futures*, 181.

<sup>158</sup> Bonney and Hussain, "Faith Communities", <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/faithdevcomagenda.pdf>> (16/12/04).

<sup>159</sup> "About Tzu Chi", <<http://www.tzuchi.org/global/about/founder/master.html>> (9/12/04).

million supporters around the world.<sup>160</sup> Eight fields of compassion in action are defined as: “charity, medicine, education, culture, international relief, bone marrow donation, environmental protection and community volunteerism.”<sup>161</sup>

As standards of living improved in Taiwan, with the country’s dramatic transformation from rural agricultural to urban industrialized society, emphases shifted within the movement. As domestic needs decreased and resources increased, Tzu Chi looked beyond its island home to the world, with a special concentration on international relief work in disaster areas. At home, under the mandate of aiding the poor and educating the rich, more emphasis has been placed on the spiritual aspects of counseling and care: “Material assistance has been elevated to spiritual fulfillment.”<sup>162</sup>

Also originating also from Taiwan, just one year after the Tzu Chi Foundation, Foguangshan, or Buddha’s Light International Association, may be less obviously developmental in character, but no less global in emphasis. According to its founder, Master Hsing Yun:

I have dedicated my whole life to promoting Humanistic Buddhism, emphasizing the role of culture and education in influencing society, and with a mind that transcends the mundane world, I have tried to create new ideas to modernize Buddhism.<sup>163</sup>

From its mountaintop monastic sanctuary of Foguangshan (Buddha’s Light Mountain”), the “Foguang phenomenon,”<sup>164</sup> as it has been termed, has expanded to include “over 200

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<sup>160</sup> “About Tzu Chi”, <<http://www.tzuchi.org/global/about/index.html>> (9/12/04).

<sup>161</sup> “Tzu Chi Services”, <<http://www.tzuchi.org/global/services/index.html>> (9/12/04).

<sup>162</sup> “About Tzu Chi”, <<http://www.tzuchi.org/global/about/missions/charity/index.html#tagstay>> (9/12/04).

<sup>163</sup> Tzu Jung (Ed.), *Special Issue of Fo Guang Shan Heavenly Sounds of Buddhist Music*, (Rosemead, Ca.: Buddha’s Light International Association, 2002), 4.

<sup>164</sup> Chandler, *Establishing a Pure Land*, 1.

branch temples throughout the world carrying out the goals of propagating Humanistic Buddhism and establishing a Pure Land on earth.”<sup>165</sup> Stuart Chandler considers its impact:

It could be argued that Master Xingyun has in many respects secularized Buddhist practice by giving a more this-worldly interpretation of the dharma and by breaking down the boundaries between monastery and general society...The important point is that any attempt to employ the sacred/secular distinction in a dualistic fashion proves unsatisfactory. The sacred and the secular are polar opposites on a continuum of mutual interpenetration, one gradually transforming into the other.<sup>166</sup>

Another Buddhist organization, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), which emphasizes peace, culture and education as its core constituencies, has a much more explicit connection to development than Foguang. Beginning life in the Japan of the 1930s as Soka Kyoiku Gakkai, or “Society for Value-creating Education”<sup>167</sup> the Society concentrated on education, particularly educational reform. Following World War II, its president, Josei Toda, who had been imprisoned as a “thought criminal” for his anti-war stance, redirected the vision of the organization from its educational roots to the betterment of society as a whole, allowing a greater integration with Buddhism. Rebranded in 1975 to reflect increasing international membership as Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the organization today counts over 12 million members in 190 countries around the world.<sup>168</sup> Soka Gakkai (Society for the Creation of Value) embraces

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<sup>165</sup> “Fo Guang Shan” <<http://fgs.org.tw/english>> (9/12/04).

<sup>166</sup> Chandler, *Establishing a Pure Land*, 5.

<sup>167</sup> “Soka Gakkai International”, <<http://www.sgi.org/english/SGI/history.htm>> (9/12/04).

<sup>168</sup> “Soka Gakkai International”, <<http://www.sgi.org/english/SGI/sgi.htm>> (9/12/04).

the “fundamental aim and mission of contributing to peace, culture and education based on the philosophy and ideals of the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin.”<sup>169</sup>

The development orientation of Soka Gakkai is evident, with its activities focused around six areas: peace awareness, humanitarian relief, environmental awareness, human rights awareness, education and literacy, and cultural exchange.<sup>170</sup> For example, a recent issue of the *SGI Quarterly*, the organization’s flagship publication, focuses on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, with eight articles exploring various aspects of this theme.<sup>171</sup> Previous issues have featured contributions from such high profile personalities in the development world as Gro Harlem Brundtland and Amartya Sen. In the opinion of Bryan Wilson and Karen Dobbelaere, “Soka Gakkai perhaps far outstrips other contemporary new movements – in its promotion of concern for world peace, ecological issues, refugee relief, and educational and cultural programmes.”<sup>172</sup>

Perhaps the “model” Buddhist development organization is Sarvodaya Shramadana in Sri Lanka. Western stereotypes have often typed Buddhism as a “world denying” or “other worldly” religion, but the vision of Sarvodaya, as articulated by its founder Dr A. T. Ayiraratne, suggested that Buddhism could speak to the problems of the real world: “Believing that Buddhist principles should be applied to social problems, Sarvodaya articulated a vision of a new social order founded on Buddhist values but inclusive of all people.”<sup>173</sup> Sarvodaya – “the awakening of all” – allied with Shramadana – “the sharing

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<sup>169</sup> “Soka Gakkai International”, <<http://www.sgi.org/english/SGI/charter.htm>> (9/12/04).

<sup>170</sup> “Soka Gakkai International”. <<http://www.sgi.org/english/SGI/sgi.htm>> (9/12/04).

<sup>171</sup> *SGI Quarterly*, (October 2004). Available online at <<http://www.sgi.org/english/Features/current.htm>> (9/12/04).

<sup>172</sup> Bryan Wilson and Karen Dobbelaere, *A Time to Chant: The Soka Gakkai Buddhists in Britain*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 222-223.

of labor or energy” – communicates a development message which seeks a new society through the awakening of everyone through sharing.

Describing this version of “socially engaged Buddhism,”<sup>174</sup> George Bond traces its origins to both Gandhi and Buddha:

From its Buddhist heritage Sarvodaya adopted the view that suffering represents the basic human predicament; from its Gandhian heritage it adopted the view that suffering has social and structural causes that must be addressed if liberation is to be achieved.<sup>175</sup>

In contrast to Western capitalistic models which depend on the creation of desire -- in Ariyatne’s words: “You can organize greed and call it development”<sup>176</sup> -- Sarvodaya’s vision of a “No-poverty, no-affluence society”<sup>177</sup> is based on the movement’s aim “to eliminate both desire and suffering.”<sup>178</sup>

In the early decades, following its founding in 1958, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (SSM) focused exclusively on rural village development, where “shramadana camps” brought together people to work on various development projects. Growth was rapid. Beginning in a single village, Sarvodaya has seen exponential growth to include over 15,000 villages to date.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> George D. Bond, Buddhism at Work: Community Development, Social Empowerment and the Sarvodaya Movement, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2004), 2.

<sup>174</sup> Bond, Buddhism at Work, 1.

<sup>175</sup> Bond, Buddhism at Work, 2.

<sup>176</sup> Bond, Buddhism at Work, 5.

<sup>177</sup> Bond, Buddhism at Work, 3.

<sup>178</sup> Bond, Buddhism at Work, 5.

<sup>179</sup> Sarvodaya, < <http://www.sarvodaya.org/blog/tsunami-to-deshodava/about-sarvodaya/>> (2/2/05).

As civil war took a mounting toll over the past decades in Sri Lanka. Sarvodaya directed its attention increasingly on peace-making initiatives, thus propelling it onto the national stage. The organization's website claims:

We believe that Sarvodaya's mass mobilisation for peace was a primary factor in shifting the consciousness of people leading to the ceasefire between the Government and the LTTE in 2002. With the new space created for development, reconstruction, peace and reconciliation, Sarvodaya took maximum advantage and accelerated its peace and development activities towards bringing about a lasting peace.<sup>180</sup>

Clearly Sarvodaya is a successful example of a faith based development organization.<sup>181</sup>

During its almost 50 year existence, Sarvodaya has expanded its horizons from the village to the nation, from small camp to large NGO. Relationships with the government have moved along a continuum from the cooperative to the critical. In its calls for or "national awakening," the movement has committed itself to the establishment of a Sarvodaya social order. But the ultimate goal beyond *deshodaya* is *vishvodaya* or world awakening. Bond sums up Sarvodaya's main achievement:

Perhaps the most important theme that Sarvodaya can contribute to the global dialogue, however, is its emphasis on a development based on spirituality and a spiritual consciousness. Although Sarvodaya has sought a balanced development that integrates social, economic, political and spiritual elements, the key to its system is the spiritual element.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Sarvodaya, <<http://www.sarvodaya.org>> (9/12/04).

<sup>181</sup> Sarvodaya's website outlines the movement's "Five Stage Development Model":

1. Introduce and encourage functional leadership and community spirit through Shramadana camps.
2. Form functional groups and training programs according to the needs of individuals---- Mothers, Youth, Elders, Children.
3. Groups prioritize needs, discuss and launch projects. Economic and employment opportunities increase.
4. Income generating activities help to bring a more self-financing community as the social programs continue.
5. Self-financing continues and surplus is shared with other communities.

Sarvodaya, <<http://www.sarvodaya.org>> (9/12/04).

<sup>182</sup> Bond, *Buddhism at Work*, p. 118.

Bond foresees the organization evolving from its roots in basic development to become “a clearinghouse for information on matters such as appropriate technology, community health, and peace.”<sup>183</sup> In the wake of the recent tsunami devastation in Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya has again been prominent in relief and humanitarian work.

## 4.8 Hinduism and Development

Not to be mistaken for Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka. Swadhyaya in India is another developmental success story,<sup>184</sup> centred primarily in the West coast states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. With devotees numbered in the millions and its impact extending to thousands of villages, the Swadhyaya Movement, termed the “silent revolution”<sup>185</sup> because of its aversion to publicity and proselytization, represents an alternative approach to development.

R. K. Srivastava notes that the conventional western economic model of development has never had any spiritual dimension, yet:

In India, the spiritual dimension is of major significance, even in the most impoverished environments, if not especially in such environments -- whether or not it is to be labelled by outsiders as pure superstition.<sup>186</sup>

The Swadhyaya Movement has been built around such considerations. The impetus for the foundation of Swadhyaya came from the participation of Pandurang Shastri Athavale

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<sup>183</sup> Bond, Buddhism at Work, 116.

<sup>184</sup> Gilbert Rist speaks favourably of Swadhyaya, describing it as a social movement “not without importance.” in The History of Development, 244.

<sup>185</sup> Ramashray Roy, “Swadhyaya: Values and Message,” in Ponna Wignaraja (Ed.), New Social Movements in the South: Empowering the People, (London and New Jersey: Zed, 1993), 183.

<sup>186</sup> “Challenges to Learning from the Swadhyaya Movement”, in R K Srivastava (Ed.) Vital Connections, (Inside-Outside Corporation, 1997), <<http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs/swadhya.php#intro>> (21/1/05).

in a conference in Hiroshima in 1954. Challenged as to whether any community was actually practicing the Gita, Athavale decided to turn words into action, and the Swadhyaya movement was born.<sup>187</sup> While the movement echoes the guiding philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, Swadhyaya must be understood within a broad Hindu spiritual tradition that does not fit traditional Hindu patterns of organization. Focusing on a practical rather than theoretical approach to life, Swadhyaya, meaning “study of the self,” recognizes that individual transformation inevitably leads to social change: “For Swadhyayees, *bhakti* is a means not only of self-transformation but also of community-building.”<sup>188</sup> Thus self-transformation, or self-development, could translate into community transformation and community development. According to Ramashray Roy, the objective of Swadhyaya is “to transform people so that they are able to forge an abiding sense of brotherhood among the children of God and, through this, improve their earthly existence and ennoble their spiritual outlook.”<sup>189</sup> Activities of Swadhyaya are based on a range of innovative economic and social interventions in order to revitalize communities and regenerate village life, with a special focus on tribals and marginalized groups.<sup>190</sup> Essentially relational in nature, Swadhyaya cannot be classified according to conventional models of missionary activity.

Swadhyaya is based on the principle of mobilizing volunteer group involvement in order to maximize outcomes in a limited time. This alternative approach, which puts a high premium on the dignity of communal labour and service, affords the opportunity for a

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<sup>187</sup> N. K. Singh, “Silent Revolutionary”, *India Today*, 31/3/1997.  
<<http://www.hvk.org/hvk/articles/0397/0126.htm>> 14/7/05.

<sup>188</sup> Roy, “Swadhyaya: Values and Message,” 188.

<sup>189</sup> Roy, “Swadhyaya: Values and Message,” 183.

<sup>190</sup> Roy, “Swadhyaya: Values and Message,” 187.



focused intervention on a vast economy of scale. While such communal projects, which include initiatives from water conservation to tree planting and from fishing to farming, redistribute economic advantage, the real results may be seen in the social benefits of community harmony:

But more than the economics of it, the idea is to build selfless relations among the neighbouring villages, inspire the people to sublimate their egos, and extend the inclusiveness of community, cutting across deeply rooted primordial affiliations.<sup>191</sup>

Swadhyaya, therefore, deserves attention as not just an alternative, but an original, development model, which is hard to define according to conventional developmental practice:

Swadhyaya is neither a cult nor a sect: it is neither a party nor an association; it is neither messianic nor limited to a particular section of society; it is neither directed against centralising state power nor to overcoming flaws in Indian society, though such consequences may follow. Swadhyaya is both a metaphor and a movement. It is a metaphor in the sense of a vision, and a movement in terms of its orientation in social and economic spheres.<sup>192</sup>

The spiritual challenge is central, rather than peripheral, to the Swadhyaya movement. In actual practice, therefore, Swadhyaya provides one of the most interesting fusions of religion and development, and challenges the westerner with the directness of its spiritual acknowledgement. Roy attributes Swadhyaya's success to the "creative and imaginative renovation of the traditional worldview."<sup>193</sup> Questions remain as to the movement's ultimate sustainability, especially following the death of its charismatic founder in 2003.

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<sup>191</sup> "Swadhyay Parimar", <<http://www.swadhyay.org/shree.htm>> (18/12/04).

<sup>192</sup> In R. K. Srivastava, "Swadhyaya Movement: its Meaning and Message", (Paper presented to the seminar of the United Nations University, Rome, 1986). Delhi, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. <<http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs/swadhya.php#intro>> (21/1/05).

<sup>193</sup> Roy, "Swadhyaya: Values and Message," 192. He continues: "Buried deep down in the psyche of the Indian people under several layers of modern sensibilities and orientations, their traditional consciousness is resurrected and reactivated by the message of Swadhyaya." 192-193.

Up to the present time, Swadhyaya has rejected offers of external help, preferring to capitalize on the voluntarism of its devotees.

Discussing the Hindu approach to development more generally, Promilla Kapur, follows the approach of Athavale in Swadhyaya where individual *bhakti* can be transformed into social force: “I explore the approach that Hinduism takes, moving from an inward, personal development to an outward, social development.”<sup>194</sup> Celebrating “the principle of fundamental oneness” she suggests that “real development from a Hindu perspective is the development of one and all in terms of both the inner and the outer environment,”<sup>195</sup> where “religion properly understood can be applied to help solve both the mundane and the existential problems of humanity.”<sup>196</sup>

India has been criticized in the past for lagging behind in economic development, and some may have blamed the emphasis on inner development for a corresponding lack in outer development. Weber felt that the otherworldly nature of Hindu society, dominated by the ideas of *karma*, *samsara*, and *kismet*, prevented innovation and initiative in economic terms.<sup>197</sup> Whatever criticisms may have been prevalent in the past, are less so today, as Indian talent and resources contribute to a wide range of developmental progress. The networking and entrepreneurial spirit of Indians at home and abroad form a vital link in capitalist development, which, allied with a strong work ethic, have reformed, if not transformed, modern India. Critics may point to the ubiquitous caste

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<sup>194</sup> Promilla Kapur, “The Principle of Fundamental Oneness,” in Sharon Harper (Ed.), The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development, (Bloomfield: Kumarian, 2000), 8.

<sup>195</sup> Kapur, “The Principles of Fundamental Oneness”, 18-19

<sup>196</sup> Kapur, “The Principles of Fundamental Oneness”, 18.

<sup>197</sup> Max Weber, The Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism, Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958).

system as not only an obstacle to development, but also as evidence of the inability of religion to realize the “fundamental oneness” of which Kapur speaks.<sup>198</sup>

One figure looms large in any discussion of Indian development: Mahatma Gandhi. Preaching that India should follow its own path -- *Sarvodaya*, or the “welfare of all” as defined by him, Gandhi practiced a simple lifestyle and based his development views on decentralized economic planning where village industries became multiple driving engines of a participatory and bottom up development, in contrast to the capitalistic industrial paradigm of the West:

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the west. The economic imperialism of a single tiny Island Kingdom is today keeping the world in chains. ... Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse of mankind. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit.<sup>199</sup>

Gandhi’s “moral economics”<sup>200</sup> have been seen as an alternative development model to the capital-intensive, industrial paradigm of the West, and the now discredited centralized communist model, which both stress economic growth at the expense of less material benefits. The simplicity of the spinning wheel, or *charkha*, became the symbol of his movement, leading Gandhi to comment: “I see God in every thread I draw on the spinning wheel.”<sup>201</sup> In his appeal to: “Live simply so that others may simply live,”<sup>202</sup> Gandhi viewed the greed of the affluent as the fundamental cause of poverty.

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<sup>198</sup> Kapur, “The Principles of Fundamental Oneness.”

<sup>199</sup> T.N. Khoshoo, quoted in Kapur, “The Principles of Fundamental Oneness”, 40.

<sup>200</sup> Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, (new edition, translated by Patrick Camiller), (London: Zed, 2002), 124.

<sup>201</sup> Kamla Chowdhry, “Development: Spirituality and Sustainability”, Lecture at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (1999). <[http://www.ignca.nic.in/nl\\_01207.htm](http://www.ignca.nic.in/nl_01207.htm)> (21/1/05).

<sup>202</sup> Quoted in Satish Kumar, “Development and Religion: Cultivating a Sense of the Sacred”. *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 17.

But the question nagged as to whether Gandhi's approach could be scaled up sufficiently to achieve development on the vast scale that India demanded. With Gandhi's passing, Nehru saw developmental salvation in terms of catching up with the West via the very industrialization that Gandhi railed against.

While India has seen vast development gains resulting from its technocratic approach to industrialization and modernization, many alternative voices from the sub-continent still provide innovative thinking. Environmental activists, such as Vandana Shiva, have achieved worldwide recognition, and some of the grassroots movements for social change, such as the Chipko Movement, have caught the imagination. As Rahnama notes: "Most contemporary grassroots movements have a strong spiritual dimension."<sup>203</sup>

Veer Bhadra Mishra, a Hindu priest and a professor of hydraulic engineering, is intimately involved in the campaign to clean up the River Ganges, a sacred river regarded as a goddess. His words have been widely quoted: "Life is like a stream, one bank is the Vedas, and the other bank is the contemporary world, which includes science and technology. If both banks are not firm, the water will scatter. If both banks are firm, the water will run its course."<sup>204</sup>

His words sum up an idea that is central to Hinduism: "...the total unity of the two distinctive expressions of reality – the material and the spiritual."<sup>205</sup> For Hindus, "the natural world is saturated in divinity,"<sup>206</sup> not so much in a polytheistic universe, as in a

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<sup>203</sup> Rahnama, "Poverty", 171.

<sup>204</sup> Chowdhry, "Development: Spirituality and Sustainability":

<sup>205</sup> Kapur, "The Principles of Fundamental Oneness", 46.

<sup>206</sup> Alexander Stille, "River of Life, River of Death", *Science & Spirit*.

< [http://www.science-spirit.org/articles/article/detail.cfm?article\\_id=363](http://www.science-spirit.org/articles/article/detail.cfm?article_id=363) > (23/1/05)

universe brimming with multiple manifestations of one God. Kamla Chowdhry outlines the implications for a development paradigm:

Slowly but increasingly the development economists and development agencies are recognising that development is a process that encompasses both the spiritual and the material aspects of life; that personal transformation goes hand in hand with social change, that values of communities must be woven in the fabric of development, especially in the Third World countries where poverty eradication is an important goal. The more we study the major problems of our time, the more we come to realise that they cannot be understood in isolation. The spiritual, cultural, social and economic problems are interdependent and interconnected. The new development paradigm must therefore be holistic and consistent with the spiritual traditions of the people.<sup>207</sup>

Hinduism suggests that a fusion of western and eastern approaches to development might result in a promising holistic paradigm of development.

Hinduism, unlike Judaism, Christianity and Islam, has no common scripture or creed, allowing for great diversity in interpretation and expression. At various times throughout its history, Hinduism, informed by belief in "one divine reality that manifests itself in many forms,"<sup>208</sup> has displayed a great tolerance towards other religions, eschewing conquest as a form of evangelization. Although freedom of religion is enshrined in the Indian constitution, the recent rise of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has led to concern that state neutrality: "sometimes seems to hang by a hair. Once again, religion in politics can be valuable as well as inevitable, but a religious state is a prize whose gaudy wrapping hides a ticking bomb."<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Chowdhry, "Development: Spirituality and Sustainability".

<sup>208</sup> Harold Coward, *Pluralism in the World Religions*, (Oxford: Oneworld, 200), 124.

<sup>209</sup> N. J. Demerath III, *Crossing the Gods: World Religions and Worldly Politics*, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 127.

One organization with roots in the Hindu philosophical worldview, though officially independent from the religion, is the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization, which “offers an education in human, moral and spiritual values.”<sup>210</sup> This organization, which draws a preponderance of female devotees, finds many of its teachings in alignment with development thinking, to the extent that it has cultivated a close relationship with the United Nations.

#### 4.9 Other Religions and Development

The great faiths are not alone in their attention to development issues. Historically and currently, many other strands of belief have incorporated the developmental aspect into their teachings and practice. A few are briefly considered here – Confucianism with its ancient influence and Falun Gong with its current attraction in China. Sikhism and Jainism with roots in India, and two recent manifestations of faith, which have sought to emphasize their connections with development: the Baha’i faith and the Unification Church.

Today, the Mahayana Buddhist tradition extends into much of East Asia. Originally considered too otherworldly to be attractive to the practical Chinese, who for centuries had been guided by the principles of Confucius and Lao-Tse, Buddhism spread from India to China in the early centuries of the Common Era. There it encountered Taoism, known for its idealization of a simple life tied to nature, and Confucianism, which to the

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<sup>210</sup> Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, < <http://www.bkwsu.com/about/> > (25/1/05).

western mind has sometimes been more closely related to a philosophy than a religion. As Judith Berling points out, separating the Confucian from the Chinese way proves difficult: "Confucianism was part of the Chinese social fabric and way of life; to Confucians, everyday life was the arena of religion."<sup>211</sup> Outside of the dualistic nature of Western interpretation, Eastern approaches may not lend themselves to any simple delineation between sacred and profane, in turn confusing Western definitions and approaches to religion and development. In recent years, arguments about Confucian values have played a prominent part in the debate over cultural factors contributing to the East Asian miracle.

David Martin has noted that the Evangelical Protestantism he chronicles in Latin America is part of more widespread global change. He notes the explosion of Protestantism as far afield as South Korea, but suggests that there is "little evidence of economic advance specifically associated with them"<sup>212</sup> but rather credits the Confucian work ethic for Korean progress: "Commentators seem mostly agreed that a population imbued with the Confucian work ethic needs no further inducements to industry from Protestantism. They are, so to say, Protestants *naturaliter*."<sup>213</sup>

One religious movement in China that has attracted considerable attention in recent years is the controversial Falun Dafa, or, as better known in the West, Falun Gong, after its practices. Falun Dafa traces its roots to ancient Chinese practices while mobilizing

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<sup>211</sup> Judith A. Berling, "Confucianism," *Focus on Asian Studies*, II, no. 1(1982), 5.  
<<http://www.askasia.org/frclasrm/readings/r000004.htm>> (16/12/04).

<sup>212</sup> Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 229.

<sup>213</sup> Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, 230.

modern communication technology to good effect. While it would be hard to see Falun Dafa as a development organization in the conventional Western sense, by its own definitions it would probably see its activities as developmental:

Falun Dafa is a practice that has brought better health and inner peace to millions around the world. We call it a cultivation practice: "cultivation" refers to the improvement of one's heart and mind through the careful study of universal principles based on truthfulness, benevolence, and forbearance; "practice" means doing exercises and meditation to energize the body.<sup>214</sup>

Previously much more secretive in nature until popularized by Li Hongzhi in 1992, Falun Gong rose to global prominence following a crackdown by the Chinese authorities. Banned in 1999, many Falun Gong practitioners have been persecuted, arrested and imprisoned.

Sikhism, centred in the Punjab, was founded by Guru Nanak some 500 years ago. While some religions may be considered as "other-worldly," Sikhism might be considered a "this-worldly" religion – emphasizing action over ritual and living in active community rather than in ascetic retreat. Social equality is important, and generosity towards the less fortunate is emphasized, expressed in the Sikh tradition of *Langar* (a free kitchen) in every *Gurdwara* (temple), which is available to all, regardless of caste, colour or creed. Central to Sikhism is a concern for a fairer world, and in Britain, where Sikhs make up a sizeable minority, the Network of Sikh Organizations (NSO), which includes the main relief and humanitarian arm, Khalsa Aid, has cooperated with the Department of International Development (DFID) in cooperative educational ventures.

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<sup>214</sup> "Falun Dafa", <<http://www.falundafa.org/eng/index.htm>> (13/12/04).



An ancient religious system originating in India. Jainism is guided by the three jewels of right belief, right knowledge and right action. Central to Jainism is the principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence, expressed towards human beings, animals and even plants. With this emphasis on harmlessness and the renunciation of material needs, Jains are encouraged to leave a light footprint on earth. Thus, Jainism clearly has developmental resonance.

In contrast to many of the religions of antiquity, the Baha'i faith appears young and reflects contemporary concerns around its central theme that "humanity is one single race and that the day has come for its unification in one global society."<sup>215</sup> This statement accords with the sentiment of founder, Bahá'u'lláh: "To be a Bahá'í simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood."<sup>216</sup> Such a perspective has encouraged a sophisticated approach among Baha'is to international development, and the organization has supported and developed significant links to the United Nations organization. Development, therefore, is probably more central to Baha'is than to most members in other religions. Religion is therefore, according to the Baha'i Scriptures: "the source of illumination, the cause of development and the animating impulse of all human advancement."<sup>217</sup>

Sometimes it becomes hard to clearly define "religious" organizations. One eclectic and eccentric example is Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, or, to give the organization its full title, The Unification Church: The Holy Spirit Association for the

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<sup>215</sup> The Baha'i World, <<http://www.bahai.org/section2.html>> (17/12/04).

<sup>216</sup> Quoted on BBC website, "Religion and Ethics: Baha'i", <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/bahai/intro.shtml>> (24/1/05).

<sup>217</sup> Abdu'l-Baha, "Promulgation of Universal Peace", (Wilmette, IL: BPT, 1982), 363.

Unification of World Christianity. More derogatively known as “the Moonies,” the Unification Church defines itself as a religious movement, but is also involved in the political, business, social and cultural spheres. With massive resources, the Unification Church possesses much global influence and many of the messages of the organization focus on developmental messages, particularly the push for global peace, a favourite subject for Rev Moon. The following comments, to mark the founding of Moon’s Federation for World Peace in 1991, are typical:

The era for peace is approaching. Even the opportunity for the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is closer. The twenty-first century shall be a hopeful and glorious century. To make this happen, the Federation for World Peace will provide the ideal and philosophy to educate the world’s population. The Federation will assist spiritually, mentally, and financially in the development of needy nations. The Federation will set a high moral standard and take up a dynamic role in building a world of peace.<sup>218</sup>

On the main webpage of the Unification Church, two areas focus on “Projects” (38 listed from Bridgeport University to *The Washington Times*) and “Global Outcomes.”

Developmental messages are widespread, but “development” is more likely to refer to the development of real estate or business enterprise, rather than international development as conventionally understood. The Unification Church might dispute such evaluation, and point to such initiatives as the uniting of NGOs into the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) in the cause of development:

World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) is an international membership organization uniting non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide in the cause of advancing peace and well-being and providing the mechanism and support needed for NGOs to connect, partner, share, inspire, and multiply their contributions to solve humanity’s basic problems.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> The Unification Church, < <http://www.unification.org/ucbook/Mspks/1991/910828.html> > (8/12/04).

<sup>219</sup> Wango, < <http://www.wango.org/> > (25/1/05).

Influential certainly, the Unification Church illustrates how religion can serve to blur the boundaries between religious and civil life, while pursuing a new world theocratic order.

#### 4.10 Organizations of Faith: FBOs and RNGOs

Globally, faith based organizations (FBOs) and religious non-governmental organizations (RNGOs) are major players in the world of development. It would be very difficult to exclude a faith based dimension from global relief and development initiatives. The World Conference on Religion and Peace stresses the positive contributions that RNGOs can make in development interventions:

Religious communities are, without question, the largest and best-organized civil institutions in the world today, claiming the allegiance of billions of believers and bridging the divides of race, class and nationality. They are uniquely equipped to meet the challenges of our time: resolving conflicts, caring for the sick and needy, promoting peaceful co-existence among all peoples.<sup>220</sup>

The Church, Mosque or Temple, essential components of Civil Society, are arguably some of the most important community-building institutions, and remain some of the few really cross-cutting institutions in society as far as community development is concerned.

In a recent (April, 2005) international conference in Oslo, exploring the role of RNGOs in the development process, their impact was recognized historically – “religious NGOs and their development activities predate the global associational revolution of the recent past two decades” – as well as more recently – “Currently religious NGOs... are becoming important not only within development discourse and practice, but also as

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<sup>220</sup> World Conference on Religion and Peace, 2001. in Julia Berger, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations”, 2.

policy instruments and actors in a period where religious faith and sentiment is at the centre of public policy and discourse.”<sup>221</sup> But, in spite of their past and present profile, it was acknowledged that “the roles of religious NGOs... remain underspecified, under-researched and generally neglected by mainstream NGOs and civil society research. In the process understanding religious NGOs, and their implications for understanding broader theoretical, organisational and policy issues is untapped.”<sup>222</sup>

Julia Berger outlines the advantages that religious organizations may have over their secular counterparts. Their long-standing presence within society gives them access to “extensive social and resource networks”<sup>223</sup> and already “existing infrastructures.”<sup>224</sup> She points out that often these faith-based organizations are more attuned to the cultural sensitivities of the local people and can appeal on a level of morality to their development targets, with whom relationships of trust have been built up over many years: “the Church has been with communities and will remain with them long after a particular development agency’s policy has changed or it has left the scene entirely.”<sup>225</sup>

Missionaries may live at a closer level to the lives of local people, speak the local language, share similar family values, and be more of a part of the fabric of the community than their cousins in the development fraternity. Crucially, they are often involved at the most important times of local lives, and are present at rites of passage,

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<sup>221</sup> NGOs and Civil Society Research Network Conference 2005. <<http://www.svf.uib.no/sfu/ngo/conference2005/background.htm>> (4/3/05).

<sup>222</sup> NGOs and Civil Society Research Network Conference 2005. <<http://www.svf.uib.no/sfu/ngo/conference2005/background.htm>> (4/3/05).

<sup>223</sup> J. Berger, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations”, 5.

<sup>224</sup> J. Berger, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations”, 18.

<sup>225</sup> Molefe Tsele, “The Role of the Christian Faith in Development”, in Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Chris Sugden, Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa, (Washington DC: The World Bank and Penguin Books International, 2001), 212.

such as marriages and funerals, which bring together the physical and spiritual facets of life. The transient and technical assignments of development practitioners stand out in contrast: “When nonchurch development workers arrive, poor communities are suspicious of their motives, and cannot count on them becoming a permanent feature of their communities.”<sup>226</sup> In addition, where expatriates are involved, priests and ministers may be the only foreigners in tangible solidarity with the disaffected and marginalized. The established presence of the community of faith within local society may prove a great benefit in development practice as often “religious networks and infrastructures are more stable than local or national governments.”<sup>227</sup> Echoing Christ’s statement that “the poor you will always have with you,”<sup>228</sup> Molefe Tsele suggests that the Church has a unique relationship with the poor: “When the Church talks of the poor, it is talking of its own members.”<sup>229</sup>

The Church often retains a credibility and, with its extensive domestic and foreign connections, remains a powerful force. World Vision’s Patrick Patterson provides an example of the Church’s often unique intermediary position:

When World Vision learned that a group of 62,000 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo was cut off and in desperate need of food and medical supplies, they made two trips up the Congo River through rebel-held territory to reach the stranded community. The story is not so much about courage, although it was certainly a brave thing to do, as it is about trust. The UN negotiated with

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<sup>226</sup> Tsele, “The Role of the Christian Faith in Development”, 213.

<sup>227</sup> J. Berger, “Religious Non-Governmental Organizations”, 5.

<sup>228</sup> Matthew 26:11.

<sup>229</sup> Tsele, “The Role of The Christian Faith”, 213.

the rebels for the convoy to pass unharmed; World Vision was the first relief agency the rebels had allowed into the area in two years.<sup>230</sup>

Expected to serve as the conscience of society, the Church may also hold officials accountable to ethical standards and counter a widespread culture of corruption. In this way, the Church may function with an influence in the South that it has largely lost in the North, where its civic functions are largely ceremonial. The Church may be the only institution in some countries that finds itself able to speak truth to power, on occasion at mortal cost.

Berger's concluding comments clearly recognize the potential of RNGOs to be a significant force for transformational development:

Through their connections to extensive networks of believers – representing a wealth of social, financial, cultural and spiritual capital – RNGOs embody the means through which to reach and mobilize significant portions of the world's population. RNGOs represent a unique concern with the spiritual and moral capacities of those they seek to serve – capacities at the root of man's ability to transform his condition and that of those around him.<sup>231</sup>

However, the role of RNGOs within the field of development is not without its difficulties, and although Berger does acknowledge some accountability problems,<sup>232</sup> -- a particularly significant factor where right-wing or terrorist-linked groups may be involved -- she fails to address issues of antagonism or animosity resulting from religious division. Such divisions may be centuries old. As Jenkins comments: "In an ideal world, Christians and Muslims, Catholics and Pentecostals would be engaged in a friendly

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<sup>230</sup> Peter Patterson, "Chair's Message", < <http://www.worldvision.ca/home/about-us/annual-reports/chairs-message/>> (22/1/05).

<sup>231</sup> J. Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations", 20.

<sup>232</sup> J. Berger, "Religious Non-Governmental Organizations", 20.

rivalry as to who could best help the poor, without thought of who was gaining the greatest numbers and influence. This is, however, not an ideal world."<sup>233</sup> The line between humanitarian and proselytizing impulses is exceedingly fine at times, and the distribution of relief supplies or development may be affected by sectarian loyalties. In the wake of the Gujarat earthquake in 2001, accusations of sectarian partiality surfaced, with reports circulating of food donated by Christian charities being relabeled and survivors being "required to declare loyalty to Hindu causes before receiving food."<sup>234</sup> In such situations, religion is undoubtedly a factor in the lives of recipients and local relief workers, even if it may escape the attention of expatriate staff. Religion may therefore reinforce and exacerbate divisions within society.

Debates exist as to the sometimes contradictory position of the Church with regard to gender issues: "Although a majority of church members are women, the relationship between the Church and women is contradictory."<sup>235</sup> Other issues surface as well, most notably methods of fund-raising, which may be questionable, particularly in the construction of demeaning representations of "the other," in the form of harrowing images sometimes referred to as "starvation pornography." And in some areas the Church, yet another institutional behemoth, has become linked with the abuses that result from the concentration of power and resources.

Many NGOs have found their origins within the faith traditions:

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<sup>233</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 212.

<sup>234</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 184.

<sup>235</sup> Agnes Aboum, "Women's Issues in Health and Education", in Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Chris Sugden, *Faith in Development: Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa*, (Washington DC: The World Bank and Penguin Books International, 2001), 125.

The first NGOs were established during and just after World War II to respond to the devastation of war. Most of these organizations, such as CRS and Church World Service (CWS), were rooted in religious tradition and structure. Immediately after the war, secular organizations, such as CARE, emerged to assist in the provision of relief to European victims."<sup>236</sup>

One of the biggest Christian charities to emerge after the war was World Vision.

Established in 1950 as the vision of one man, Bob Pierce, an American missionary moved by the suffering he witnessed in Asia, World Vision has grown from humble beginnings to become one of the major players in the world of development: "Working on six continents, World Vision is one of the largest Christian relief and development organisations in the world."<sup>237</sup> As a US Ambassador is reported to have remarked: "You've got more people in Mozambique than the US government has in all of Africa!"<sup>238</sup> Pierce's original fund-raising strategy to assist children orphaned by the Korean War was based on child sponsorship – a marketing policy resilient over the years and effective, if controversial, to the present day. Expanding from its Asian roots into Africa and Latin America, World Vision broadened out its development responses to embrace more community based development projects and emergency relief operations around the world.

The statistics are impressive. In 2003, World Vision:

- Served 100 million people
- Worked in 99 nations
- Directly benefited 2.2 million children through child sponsorship
- Raised \$1.25 billion (US) in cash and goods for its work
- Employed 20,000 staff members.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Paula Hoy, *Players and Issues in International Aid*, (West Hartford: Kumarian, 1998), 97.

<sup>237</sup> World Vision International, <[http://www.wvi.org/wvi/about\\_us/who\\_we\\_are.htm](http://www.wvi.org/wvi/about_us/who_we_are.htm)> (3/12/04).

<sup>238</sup> Tim Stafford, "The Colossus of Care", *Christianity Today*, 49, no. 3 (2005), 51.

<sup>239</sup> World Vision, *World Vision International Annual Review 2003*, <<http://www.wvi.org/wvi/pdf/2003%20Annual%20Review.pdf>> (19/12/04), 16.



World Vision is unabashedly Christian. As a result of a participatory exercise throughout its worldwide staff, World Vision formulated its vision in the following words:

Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness;  
Our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so.<sup>240</sup>

The organization's Mission Statement reads:

World Vision is an international partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.<sup>241</sup>

The first of World Vision's six core values is "We are Christian". Working in many non-Christian areas of the world, World Vision is committed to help "those in need, regardless of race, gender, ethnic background or religious belief."<sup>242</sup> However, World Vision staff are also committed to "maintain our Christian identity while being sensitive to the diverse contexts in which we express that identity."<sup>243</sup> Ministry objectives include a commitment to do its work "by life, word, and sign that encourages people to respond to the Gospel."<sup>244</sup> Therefore, World Vision is unapologetic about its Christian core and unashamed about its Christian imperative.

In Canada, World Vision finds its position as "Canada's largest private relief and development agency."<sup>245</sup> 434,502 Canadian donors provide close to 86% of World Vision Canada's revenue (65% in cash, 21% in goods), with 14% coming from Canadian government sources.<sup>246</sup> In 2003, total revenues reached \$232,821,000<sup>247</sup> and the number

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<sup>240</sup> WVIAR 2003, <<http://www.wvi.org/wvi/pdf/2003%20Annual%20Review.pdf>> (19/12/04), 16.

<sup>241</sup> WVIAR 2003, <<http://www.wvi.org/wvi/pdf/2003%20Annual%20Review.pdf>> (19/12/04), 16.

<sup>242</sup> WVIAR 2003, <http://www.wvi.org/wvi/pdf/2003%20Annual%20Review.pdf>, (19/12/04), 14.

<sup>243</sup> WVIAR 2003, <http://www.wvi.org/wvi/pdf/2003%20Annual%20Review.pdf> (19/12/04), 16.

<sup>244</sup> WVIAR 2003, <http://www.wvi.org/wvi/pdf/2003%20Annual%20Review.pdf> (19/12/04), 16.

<sup>245</sup> <http://www.worldvision.ca/home/about-us/history/>

<sup>246</sup> World Vision Canada < <http://www.worldvision.ca/home/about-us/annual-reports/chairs-message/> > (3/12/04)

of children sponsored by Canadians rose to 314,565.<sup>248</sup> Altogether, World Vision Canada asserts that it affects the lives of 5,400,000 people.<sup>249</sup> By any definition, World Vision is a major player in development in Canada. It is therefore surprising that World Vision Canada attracts such little attention from the academic community in Canada: not one of the titles and abstracts examined in the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)* mentions World Vision, and no reference occurs to the organization in any of the course descriptions in IDS programmes across Canada.<sup>250</sup> The omission of the biggest private development agency in Canada raises penetrating questions.

In Britain, two faith based organizations, Christian Aid and Cafod, make up two of the “big five” development NGOs, along with Oxfam, Save the Children and Action Aid. Christian Aid is closely associated with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, formerly the British Council of Churches, while Cafod, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, is linked with Caritas Internationalis, the worldwide network of Catholic relief and development organizations.

In the financial year 2003/04, Christian Aid’s income surpassed 60 million pounds for the first time. Christian Aid Week, in the spring of the year, has become the biggest fundraising week in the UK and Ireland.<sup>251</sup> “Supported and sustained by the churches and

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<sup>247</sup> WVC, < <http://www.worldvision.ca/home/media/WVC03ENGLISHFinancials.pdf> > (3/12/04).

<sup>248</sup> WVC < <http://www.worldvision.ca/home/about-us/annual-reports/chairs-message/> > (3/12/04).

<sup>249</sup> WVC <<http://www.worldvision.ca/home/about-us/annual-reports/our-work/development/>> (3/12/04).

<sup>250</sup> See Chapters Six and Seven.

<sup>251</sup> Christian Aid, *Christian Aid Annual Report 2003/4*, <<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutca/annualreport2004/>> (3/12/04), 28.

driven by the Gospel,”<sup>252</sup> Christian Aid recognizes its Christian imperative in its name and in its essential belief, expressed in the statement: “We believe in life before death.”<sup>253</sup>

Religion remains “a powerful force for generosity,”<sup>254</sup> and many religions specify percentile targets -- for example, a tithe in Judaism. *zakat* in Islam -- for institutional giving. In America, religion accounts for a share of 62% of giving, according to Indiana University’s Centre on Philanthropy Panel Study (COPPS).<sup>255</sup> The study found that every income group gives more to religious causes than to non-religious, and that, in terms of general philanthropic tendencies, religious people are more generous overall.

As a result of George W. Bush’s Faith-Based Initiative in the United States, attention has been focused on the role of religious organizations in providing social services. President Bush has often argued that faith based initiatives are more effective than bureaucratic government interventions:

Social scientists are increasingly documenting the power of faith-based groups to fortify families and communities and to conquer our toughest social problems. America must stop trying to eliminate poverty, crime and addiction with one hand tied behind its back.

The government can do many things, but it cannot put hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives. This is done by churches, synagogues, mosques and charities that warm the cold of life — a quiet river of goodness and kindness that cuts through stone. The Administration is committed to a concerted effort to identify and remove needless barriers that thwart the heroic work of faith-based groups.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Christian Aid, < <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/aboutca/who/who.htm> > (3/12/04).

<sup>253</sup> Christian Aid, < <http://www.christianaid.org.uk> > (3/12/04).

<sup>254</sup> *The Economist*, “Doing Well and Being Good”, Special Report: Philanthropy (29/7/04), 58.

<sup>255</sup> *The Economist*, “Doing Well and Being Good”, 58.

<sup>256</sup> The White House, < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/faithbased.htm> > (3/12/04).

The Bush policy of “rallying America’s armies of compassion”<sup>257</sup> allows faith based organizations greater access to federal funds for social programmes, but still prevents policies which include direct proselytization, which leads some religious authorities to question whether the advantages of the programme are more perceived than real. *The Economist* opines that: “compassionate conservatism has been inadequately financed, not supported by any real political commitment and representative of a huge gap between the president’s rhetoric and practice.”<sup>258</sup> Whatever the debate as to the effectiveness of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, there is no doubt that in the America of George W. Bush, the religious dimension of public life has enjoyed an enhanced profile.

#### 4.11 Religion, Politics and Conflict

Martin Buber declared that: “religion begins in awe and ends in politics.”<sup>259</sup> In many parts of the world, from Poland to Peru, in church, mosque and temple, institutions of faith have functioned in Socrates’ role – as one of the few, and sometimes the only, voice of opposition to an oppressive state:

For if you kill me you will not easily find a successor to me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of gadfly, attached to the state by God; and the state is a great and noble horse who is rather sluggish owing to his very size, and requires to be stirred into life. I am that gadfly which God has attached to the state, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> The White House, < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/faithbased.html> > (3/12/04).

<sup>258</sup> *The Economist*, “Compassion Fatigue?” (19/2/05), 31.

<sup>259</sup> Quoted in Ted Reeve (Ed.), *God and the Market: Steps Towards a Moral Economy*, (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 2000), 201.

<sup>260</sup> Plato, *The Apology*, Part V.

Traditionally, the building of faith -- be it church, mosque or temple -- has been the ultimate place of sanctuary. As Karen Armstrong points out in the context of the rise of fundamentalist Islam, "Western governments have inadvertently fuelled the rise of this extremism by supporting undemocratic governments that discourage opposition. Increasingly, the only place where people can voice their discontent has been the mosque."<sup>261</sup>

In South Africa, the influence of religion has been plain for all to see: "Religious beliefs, movements, and leaders played a central role in the development of apartheid and subsequent attempts to sustain it."<sup>262</sup> They also played a significant role in opposing and eventually bringing down the apartheid system. The Church, therefore, cannot be isolated as "both an agent and a site of the struggle."<sup>263</sup> John de Gruchy identifies three main groups within the greater Christian community: the settler churches which "generally reinforced white political, social and economic hegemony," a black Christianity which found political expression in black liberation movements, and a "growing black proletariat" whose political expressions were somewhat ambiguous.<sup>264</sup>

Many of the original leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) came out of the churches and most, including Nelson Mandela, had been mission educated. Some of the

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<sup>261</sup> Karen Armstrong, "Resisting Modernity", < <http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/?id=1189&page=15> > (23/1/05).

<sup>262</sup> Douglas Johnston, "The Churches and Apartheid in South Africa", in Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (Eds.), *Religion: The Missing Dimension in Statecraft*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 184.

<sup>263</sup> John W. de Gruchy, with Steve de Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, (London: SCM Press, 2004), 185.

<sup>264</sup> John de Gruchy, "Political Landmarks and the Response of Churches in South Africa, 1936-1994", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 118 (March 2004), 4-5.

leaders of the ANC, like Z.K. Matthews and Chief Albert Luthuli were themselves “committed Christians,” as was Robert Sobukwe, who led the break away Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).<sup>265</sup> On the other side, D.F. Malan, a Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) minister who became Prime Minister in 1948, saw God’s hand in the Afrikaner ascendancy: “Indeed, the history of the Afrikaner reveals a will and a determination which makes one feel that Afrikanerdom is not the work of men but the creation of God.”<sup>266</sup> The NGK was the religion of power – the National Party at prayer. According to W. A. de Klerk, “Afrikaner politics was slowly but fatally being theologized.”<sup>267</sup> As the liberation struggle heated up, following Sharpeville and later Soweto, the increasing isolation of the NGK became apparent, as “the ecumenical church in South Africa, together with the trade unions, assumed the leadership of the struggle.”<sup>268</sup>

Following his release from prison, Mandela called on the churches in South Africa to act as “a midwife to the birth of our democracy.”<sup>269</sup> This they did, leaving John de Gruchy to reflect on the remarkable election and governmental transition of 1994: “Many hardened secular observers labeled it a miracle and some may have even pondered on the power of prayer.”<sup>270</sup> In the years following that “veritable mountaintop transfigurational experience,”<sup>271</sup> the towering influence of Archbishop Desmond Tutu in the Truth and

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<sup>265</sup> John de Gruchy, “Political Landmarks”, 8, 10.

<sup>266</sup> Quoted in John de Gruchy, *The Church Struggle*, 30.

<sup>267</sup> Quoted in John de Gruchy, *The Church Struggle*, 33.

<sup>268</sup> John de Gruchy, “Political Landmarks”, 23.

<sup>269</sup> Quoted in John de Gruchy, “Political Landmarks”, 25.

<sup>270</sup> John de Gruchy, “Political Landmarks”. 26.

<sup>271</sup> Desmond Tutu, “Dark Days: Episcopal Ministry in Times of Repression, 1976-1996”, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 118 (March 2004), 27.

Reconciliation Committee has underlined the crucial contribution of the Church to societal healing.

To the North, from deep within the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a correspondent for the *The Economist* provides an up-to-date opinion of the Church's contribution in a troubled land:

After five years of civil war and centuries of neglect, many Congolese reason they must be due a better life in the next world. The Church offers hope. It is also one of the few institutions in Congo that still functions roughly as it should. The state has mostly rotted away, and much of what is left is predatory. In much of the country, the only schools are church schools, the only clinics are staffed by nuns, and the people who speak up the loudest for the poor and pistol-whipped are the priests.<sup>272</sup>

Institutions of faith can therefore in some countries represent one of the few functioning institutions to act as an instrumental force for change or provide a refuge for the marginalized. But they can also reinforce the status quo, when identified too closely with the powers that be. The Church has had its episodes of infamy too, most notably during the Rwandan genocide when churches were transformed into charnel houses.<sup>273</sup>

While the mainline churches often acknowledge their socio-political role, many fundamentalist churches claim to be politically neutral. But this supposed neutrality is challenged by critics: "Yet, paradoxically, this ostensibly non-political concentration on

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<sup>272</sup> *The Economist*, "Four Rebels and a Funeral: Why the Church is Congo's Most Respected Institution", (17/7/04), 49.

<sup>273</sup> For a discussion on the failures of the Church in Rwanda during the Genocide, see "Afterthoughts" in Meg Guillebaud, *Rwanda: The Land God Forgot? Revival, Genocide and Hope*, (Mill Hill: Monarch, 2002).

evangelism becomes very political indeed”<sup>274</sup> African Presidents, such as Moi and Doe, have hidden behind prominent evangelists in their attempts to justify their power, and avoid the swell of criticism from the mainline churches.

The connection between religion and politics has gone further still. On December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1991, Zambia officially declared itself a Christian nation. Many critics suggest that the declaration has become largely meaningless in terms of the usual litany of abuses that have historically afflicted political and national life.<sup>275</sup> Clearly religion is increasingly playing an open role in the affairs of many African polities, as is evidenced in an example emanating from the general elections in Ghana in December 2004. BBC correspondent, Kweku Sakyi-Addo, reports that “This is the only election I know where voters held hands and prayed before they started voting.”<sup>276</sup> Referring to the physical act of voting, he suggests that: “The ritual is almost spiritual, giving a deep sense of empowerment,”<sup>277</sup> thus underlining Buber’s observation regarding the link between politics and religion.

Faith communities have historically been involved in the area of peace-building. Lucy Keogh and Katherine Marshall describe faith based peace building and conflict resolution initiatives, from Colombia to Cambodia, from Uganda to the Philippines.<sup>278</sup> Amongst other examples, they focus on the activities of the Community of Sant’Egidio, a Roman

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<sup>274</sup> Paul Gifford, “Christian Fundamentalism, State and Politics in Black Africa,” in David Westerlund (Ed.), *Questioning the Secular State: the Worldwide Resurgence of Religion in Politics*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 199.

<sup>275</sup> Anthony Kunda, “Eight Years After Zambia Became Christian Nation, The Title is Not Convincing”, *Christianity Today*, (17/1/2000), <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/103/24.0.htm>> (21/1/05).

<sup>276</sup> Kweku Sakyi-Addo, “Ghana Election Day: The Long Wait”, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4083453.stm>> (9/12/04).

<sup>277</sup> Kweku Sakyi-Addo, “Ghana Election Diary: Polling Day”, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4076447.stm>> (9/12/04).

<sup>278</sup> Keogh and Marshall, *Mind, Heart, and Soul*.



Catholic volunteer organization that works for peace and development around the world. In the words of the movement's founder, Andrea Riccardi, "War is the mother of all poverty."<sup>279</sup> Keogh and Marshall highlight, among other examples, the vital role that Sant'Egidio played as mediator in the resolution of the Mozambican civil war, thus illustrating the role that faith based organizations, with their particular resources of trust, neutrality and credibility, can bring to the peace building process.

But for all the stories of religion fostering harmony and peace, there are matching accounts emphasizing more negative tendencies, expressed by priest and professor, Father Sief Donders: "We should realize that there is good religion, bad religion and very bad religion."<sup>280</sup> Historically, the record of history reveals that religion has also surrounded the roots of much strife. The long history of "crusades," "holy wars" and "jihads" across the centuries has underlined the interconnection between religion and conflict. Over two millennia ago, Lucretius wrote: "religion can incite us to so much evil."<sup>281</sup> Centuries later, Voltaire declared that "the differences between religions constituted the single most important cause of strife in the world."<sup>282</sup> In recent years the list is long where religion has played a greater or lesser role in conflict situations: the Middle East, Ireland, Bosnia, Chechnya, Sudan, Indonesia, to name but some of the more visible scenes of civil and religious strife. Increasingly, the uprising in Iraq is being seen in terms of a religious divide between Sunni and Shia. Religion's darker side is inescapable:

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<sup>279</sup> Quoted in Keogh and Marshall, "The Community of Sant'Egidio", in *Mind, Heart, and Soul*, 257.

<sup>280</sup> Quoted in Anne Hope and Sally Timmel, "A Kenyan Experience for Faith-Based Transformative Action," *Development*, 46, no. 4 (2003), 93.

<sup>281</sup> Quoted in David Martin, *Does Christianity Cause War?* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 4.

<sup>282</sup> Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance and Other Writings*, Translated and edited by Simon Harvey, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), ix.

Within the histories of religious traditions – from biblical wars to crusading ventures and great acts of martyrdom – violence has lurked as a shadowy presence. It has colored religion’s darker, more mysterious symbols. Images of death have never been far from the heart of religion’s power to stir the imagination.<sup>283</sup>

Such images reached their apogee in the visual overkill surrounding the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. On the same date in 1893, Vivekananda addressed the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in words that seem strangely familiar in the more recent context: “Sectarianism, bigotry and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it time and again with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair.”<sup>284</sup>

Samuel Huntington has breathed new life into the debate over the relationship between religion and conflict with the publication in 1993 of his influential article, “The Clash of Civilizations?”<sup>285</sup> Huntington argued that a “clash of civilizations” was replacing former Cold War rivalries as the central phenomenon of global politics: “It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural.”<sup>286</sup> He continues: “What ultimately counts for people is not political ideology or economic interest. Faith and family, blood and belief, are what people identify with and what they will fight and die for.”<sup>287</sup> And yet as Akeel Bilgrami

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<sup>283</sup> Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: the Global Rise of Religious Violence*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 6.

<sup>284</sup> Quoted in Oliver McTernan, *Violence in God’s Name*, (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2003), 45.

<sup>285</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs*, 73, no. 3, (1993), 22-49.

<sup>286</sup> Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” 22.

<sup>287</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “If Not Civilizations, What? Samuel Huntington Responds to His Critics”, *Foreign Affairs*, 72, no. 5 (1993) 194. Not all agree with Huntington’s assertion, though. Amilcar Cabral,

points out, it may be more accurate to locate the clash “within” civilizations, as soft and hard line positions are debated and defended.<sup>288</sup> Edward Said bemoans the Occidental proclivity to simplify the “many Islams.”<sup>289</sup>

Clearly religion has the power to inflame conflict, which, in turn, may lead to devastating developmental outcomes, but whether religion can be directly blamed for many of the conflicts that are all too easily described as such, is more open to question. In answer to his own question: “Does Christianity Cause War?” David Martin responds in his concluding sentence: “The case falls.”<sup>290</sup> But following the events of 9/11, the debate has been reignited with a burgeoning literature resulting in such titles as Jessica Stern’s Terror in the Name of God,<sup>291</sup> and Mark Juergensmeyer’s Terror in the Mind of God.<sup>292</sup> Bruce Lincoln, in Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11, argues: “At present it is easy to overvalue the role of religion within sociopolitical revolutionary upheavals... just as in the past it was easy to dismiss the role as relatively unimportant, or to ignore it altogether.”<sup>293</sup> Writing in Violence in God’s Name, Oliver McTernan notes that people, reacting to media reports that link religion and violence, “either exaggerate religion’s role, denouncing it as the root cause of all conflict, or they deny that ‘real’

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the revolutionary leader of Guinea-Bissau, stated: “People do not fight for ideals or for notions inside men’s heads. The people fight and accept sacrifices demanded by the struggle to obtain material advantages so as to be able to live in peace and in better conditions, in order to see their lives progress and to guarantee their children’s future.” Quoted in Goulet, Development Ethics, 191.

<sup>288</sup> Akeel Bilgrami, “The Clash Within Civilizations,” Daedalus, (Summer 2003), 88-93.

<sup>289</sup> Edward Said, “Impossible Histories: Why the Many Islams Cannot be Simplified,” Harper’s, (July 2002).

<sup>290</sup> David Martin, David, Does Christianity Cause War? (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 220.

<sup>291</sup> Jessica Stern, Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill, (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

<sup>292</sup> Juergensmeyer, Terror in the Mind of God.

<sup>293</sup> Lincoln, Holy Terrors, 91.

religion could be responsible in any way for indiscriminate violence."<sup>294</sup> He cautions against ignoring "the ambivalence towards violence that is to be found in each faith tradition."<sup>295</sup> Quite where religion fits as actor or factor in the "clash of civilizations" and in the "war on terror" is clearly a subject of debate, awaiting more conclusive academic conclusions. For, as Queen Noor of Jordan declares: "It is one thing to be willing to die for one's beliefs, but quite another to be willing to kill for them."<sup>296</sup>

## 4.12 Fundamentalisms

For many, religion -- in particular that brand of religion known as "fundamentalism" -- has become identified as the purveyor of unmitigated evil. Talking of the revival of religion in the 1980s, Casanova explains:

Throughout the decade religion showed its Janus face, as the carrier not only of exclusive, particularist, and primordial identities but also of inclusive, universalist, and transcending ones. The religious revival signalled simultaneously the rise of fundamentalism and of its role in the resistance of the oppressed and the rise of the "powerless."<sup>297</sup>

Karen Armstrong, in The Battle for God, suggests: "One of the most startling developments of the late twentieth century has been the emergence within every major religious tradition of a militant piety popularly known as 'fundamentalism.'"<sup>298</sup>

The urgency to explain fundamentalism in the light of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, has become akin to a growth industry within contemporary religious studies. Yet,

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<sup>294</sup> McTernan, Violence in God's Name, 20.

<sup>295</sup> McTernan, Violence in God's Name, 76.

<sup>296</sup> *The Globalist*, "Queen Noor on Clashing Civilizations",

<<http://www.theglobalist.com/DBWeb/printStoryId.aspx?StoryId=445>> (26/3/05).

<sup>297</sup> Casanova, Public Religions, 4.

<sup>298</sup> Armstrong, The Battle for God, xi.

as Berger maintains, “in one sense, there is nothing to explain here. Strongly felt religion has always been around; what needs explanation is its absence rather than its presence.”<sup>299</sup> Any explanation of fundamentalism is fraught with complexity and defies certain analysis as it, in turn, promotes and reinforces certitudes. Now attached to Islam in Western popular imagination, the roots of fundamentalism can be traced to trends within American Protestantism early in the last century. Countering what was perceived as a watering down of the “fundamentals” of the faith, a literalist interpretation of scripture defined all praxis.

Fundamentalisms have been increasingly recognized in diverse religions. But fundamentalism is not “monolithic in all its manifestations... Each ‘fundamentalism’ is a law unto itself and has its own dynamic.”<sup>300</sup> It is also evident that fundamentalisms occur across the religious spectrum.

Some of the key characteristics central to these fundamentalisms include an impassioned devotion to a religious cause; the acceptance of a literal interpretation of sacred writings, which serve as a blueprint for all areas of life; a nostalgia for the past, requiring a fight for integrity in the present in reaction to a perceived threat, often arising from secularization and modernization; a withdrawal from the secular mainstream world to create a sectarian counterculture, leading to a stark differentiation between “us” and “them”; and a sacred mission to resacralize the world, sometimes involving force.

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<sup>299</sup> Berger *The Desecularization of the World*, 11-12. Aitken’s comments in *Foreign Affairs* (see Chapter One) appear to be influenced by Berger’s challenge: “Modern secularity is a much more puzzling phenomenon than all these religious explosions – if you will, the University of Chicago is a more interesting topic for the sociology of religion than the Islamic schools of Qom.”

<sup>300</sup> Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, xii.

Charles Wilber and Kenneth Jameson recognize: “Much of the interest in secularization was a reaction to the abuses which had been committed in the name of religion.”<sup>301</sup> In turn, much of the resurgence of religious interest, and especially of fundamentalism, may be seen in reaction to the abuses of secularization. Alistair McGrath also traces a similar trend in the rise of atheism following the abuses of ecclesiastical power leading up to the French Revolution and in its subsequent demise in the wake of the collapse of the atheistic totalitarian systems of the twentieth century.<sup>302</sup>

Richard Antoun argues that fundamentalism is “an orientation toward the modern world: a selective activist rebellion against that world and the resulting reduction of the divine presence in it.”<sup>303</sup> Martin Marty and Scott Appleby in their massive multi-volume work on fundamentalisms argue, in Armstrong’s words, that fundamentalisms are “embattled forms of spirituality, which have emerged as a response to a perceived crisis.”<sup>304</sup> That crisis is often interconnected with the process of modernization, which was considered to lead inevitably to secularization. But regardless of recent debate regarding the basis of the secularization thesis, it is clear that fundamentalism is locked in a kind of symbiotic relationship with modernity.

Marty and Appleby explain that fundamentalisms, in distinction to traditionalisms or conservatisms, perceive themselves to be fighting *back* against the ungodly forces of

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<sup>301</sup> Charles K. Wilber and Kenneth P. Jameson, “Religious Values and Social Limits to Development”, in *World Development*, Special Issue, “Religious Issues and Development”, 8, no. 7/8 (1980), 513 -521.

<sup>302</sup> McGrath, *The Twilight of Atheism*.

<sup>303</sup> Richard T. Antoun, *Understanding Fundamentalism: Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Movements*, Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2001), 160.

<sup>304</sup> Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, xiii.

secularism, fighting *for* their vision of the world, fighting *with* selective fundamentals, fighting *against* generalized or specific enemies, and fighting *under* God.<sup>305</sup> Such struggles “elicit great passion.”<sup>306</sup>

For some, the freedom accompanying modernization is perceived as a terrifying threat to all they hold dear. As modernizing and globalizing tendencies spiral in pace and scope, the revitalization of religious thought and practice has intensified. It has also resulted in a greater cleavage between those holding oppositional positions *within* religions -- between those holding more liberal, relative and modernist positions and those professing radical, orthodox and fanatical views. Berger appeals for “epistemological modesty” in avoiding the propagation of fanatical certitudes and exclusivist truth claims: “Modernity, for fully understandable reasons, undermines all the old certainties; uncertainty is a condition that many people find very hard to bear; therefore, any movement (not only a religious one) that promises to provide or to renew certainty has a ready market.”<sup>307</sup>

In relating the issue of fundamentalism to terrorism, Stern In Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill, traces terrorist grievances to five areas: alienation, humiliation, demographics, history, and territory. Her research has many implications for development scholars and practitioners. In many parts of the world, secularization and modernization are firmly identified as a Western phenomenon. These alarming trends are perceived as emanating from a compromised and promiscuous West, eliciting a response that emphasizes the supremacy of an Islamic system that avoids such excesses in a

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<sup>305</sup> Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Eds.), Fundamentalisms Observed, The Fundamentalism Project, Volume I, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), ix-x.

<sup>306</sup> Marty and Appleby, Fundamentalisms Observed, x.

<sup>307</sup> Berger, The Desecularization of the World, 7.

holistic unity of thought and purpose. John Esposito has described this assault on Muslim identity and values as “westoxification,” and articulated the Muslim view that Islam can provide a valid alternative to the “resultant process of secular, ‘valueless’ social change”<sup>308</sup> that accompanies the spread of modernization or westernization. Real and perceived humiliation in the Arab world has fuelled fundamentalist aspirations: “Part of the mission of jihad is thus to restore Muslims’ pride in the face of a humiliating New World Order.”<sup>309</sup>

The impact of development may also be associated at the level of the provision of basic services for the poor. Many commentators have noted that *madrassahs* (religious schools) in many parts of the Islamic world are providing educational and social services that the poor could not otherwise afford. Stern notes that even Al-Qaeda may be involved in development: “Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Al-Qaeda provided an important social-welfare function. It was simultaneously a recipient of ‘charitable funds’ and a provider of humanitarian relief, a kind of terrorist United Way.”<sup>310</sup> Vastly influential in Lebanon, Hezbollah, “the Party of God,” often regarded in the West as a terrorist organization, not only has political and military wings, but also a social wing that functions in a humanitarian and developmental capacity.

Religion’s exact place in development can be contested and confused within development theory and practice, and demands further research. Stark and Bainbridge have

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<sup>308</sup> John Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (Third Edition). New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 13.

<sup>309</sup> Stern, *Terror in the Name of God*, 264.

<sup>310</sup> Stern, *Terror in the Name of God*, 250.



popularized the conception that religion acts as a compensator.<sup>311</sup> making up for reverses and adversities in life and thus fulfilling the most basic of human needs: “Hence, so long as life is nasty, brutish and short... we will be in the market for religion.”<sup>312</sup>

Development, therefore, is viewed by some in the West as an antidote to Islamic fundamentalism, without a full appreciation of the fact that development may be considered by its targets as a western-inspired and God-forsaking imposition. Berger’s warning again comes to mind: “Those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at their peril.”<sup>313</sup>

The complex relationship between fundamentalist aspirations, socio-economic deprivation and terrorism is still too little understood. The subject becomes particularly difficult for Western academics to grasp, often schooled as they are in secular institutions, and where such devotional fervour may be quite foreign to their daily lives. The interrelationship between terrorism, religion and development remains an important area for further study. Gilbert Rist describes fanaticism as: “...the consequence of indoctrination so strong and despair so deep that life, one’s own or that of others, loses all importance.”<sup>314</sup> while Esposito, in describing the dislocation that follows in the wake of rapid urbanization, asserts that: “Many, swept along in a sea of alienation and marginalization, found an anchor in religion.”<sup>315</sup> Religion, therefore, becomes central to

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<sup>311</sup> Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>312</sup> Bruce, Religion, 188.

<sup>313</sup> Berger, The Desecularization of the World, 18

<sup>314</sup> Gilbert Rist, “Preface” in The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith, (London and New York: Zed, 2001), ix.

<sup>315</sup> Esposito, The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality? 14.

any understanding of the subject, and while certitudes may often be hard to come by,

Armstrong and Stern dispense some wisdom. Armstrong calls for compassion:

If fundamentalists must evolve a more compassionate assessment of their enemies in order to be true to their religious traditions, secularists must also be more faithful to the benevolence, tolerance, and respect for humanity which characterizes modern culture at its best, and address themselves more empathetically to the fears, anxieties, and needs which so many of their fundamentalist neighbors experience but which no society can safely ignore.<sup>316</sup>

Writing as an American, Stern appeals for what is often lacking, a spiritually informed response:

What is so deeply painful about terrorism is that our enemies, whom we see as evil, view themselves as saints and martyrs. As such, religious terrorism is more than a threat to national security. It is psychological and spiritual warfare, requiring a psychologically and spiritually informed response.<sup>317</sup>

While concerns about fundamentalism are often applied to Islam and the world of the Middle East, Jenkins cautions that fundamentalist tendencies are readily apparent in African Christianity, which he declares is radically different from the old familiar version of Christianity.<sup>318</sup> The liberal North would find itself starkly contrasted against a fundamentalist South, and rather than finding common ground, might even define itself against this expression of faith.<sup>319</sup> Documenting the unprecedented growth of the “next Christendom” at the turn of the millennium, Philip Jenkins predicts that: “... perhaps the great political unknown of the new century, the most powerful international wild card, will be that mysterious non-Western ideology called Christianity.”<sup>320</sup> Lamin Sanneh concurs: “An extraordinary new world of Christianity is now unfolding before our eyes.

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<sup>316</sup> Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, 371.

<sup>317</sup> Stern, *Terror in the Name of God*, xxvii.

<sup>318</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 214.

<sup>319</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 162.

<sup>320</sup> Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 161.

It is an unprecedented world, something that will change the face of Christianity."<sup>321</sup> At the same time he notes that "the cultural captivity of Christianity in the West is nearly complete."<sup>322</sup>

#### 4.13 The Search for Meaning

All religions address the search for meaning. As Goulet suggests, this may be the most essential need of all: "Accordingly, having a meaningful existence may well be the most basic of all human needs."<sup>323</sup> Geertz also acknowledges that: "the concept of meaning, in all its varieties, is the dominant philosophical concept of our time."<sup>324</sup> Religion and spirituality encompass the attempt of human beings to make sense of their world: "the audacious attempt to conceive of the entire universe as being humanly significant."<sup>325</sup>

Increasingly studies, like the World Values Survey,<sup>326</sup> have shown that increases, beyond a level of basic income, do not produce happiness. While their constitution subscribes to "the pursuit of happiness," Americans, in spite of a doubling of income in real terms, are no happier than they were in 1957.<sup>327</sup> The Worldwatch Institute's annual report for 2004 is entitled: "Richer, Fatter, and Not Much Happier."<sup>328</sup> Such studies reinforce the

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<sup>321</sup> Jonathan J. Bonk, "The Defender of the Good News: Questioning Lamin Sanneh", *Christianity Today*, October, 2003, <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/010/35.112.html>> (9/3/05).

<sup>322</sup> Bonk, "The Defender of the Good News."

<sup>323</sup> Denis Goulet, "Strategies for Meeting Human Needs", in M.E. Jegan and C. K. Wilber (Eds.) *Growth with Equity*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 49.

<sup>324</sup> S. Langer in Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System", 89.

<sup>325</sup> Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 28.

<sup>326</sup> World Values Survey, <<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>> (2/2/05)

<sup>327</sup> Michael Bond, "The Pursuit of Happiness", *New Scientist*, 180, no. 2415 (2003), 40-43.

<sup>328</sup> Worldwatch Institute, State of the World 2004. "Richer, Fatter, and Not Much Happier". <<http://www.worldwatch.org/pubs/sow/2004/>> (2/2/05).

(official) positions of all the faiths with regard to excessive materialism and conspicuous consumption. In a 1993 article entitled “The Yawning Vacuum: A World Without Alternatives,” Rajni Kothari bemoaned “a basic crisis of vision, a decline of engagement with utopias.”<sup>329</sup> But this existential crisis may give rise to a spiritual/religious yearning. Part of the reason for this resurgence of religion around the world may be explained by Armstrong: “Human beings cannot endure emptiness and desolation; they will fill the vacuum by creating a new focus of meaning.”<sup>330</sup> That focus may incline towards faith or fundamentalism, pleasure or materialism, but at some level the quest for meaning is “inherently religious in nature.”<sup>331</sup>

Ken Wiwa, a Canadian commentator of Nigerian origin, writing in *The Globe and Mail*, notes an apparent paradox: along with the multiplication of its churches and the ubiquity of its religion, the problems of Africa seem to multiply. Yet, for all his criticism, as an African, he acutely feels his roots:

Still, even a recalcitrant and cynical sinner like me has a spiritual streak. And lying awake on the edge of daybreak, I am reminded of the spiritual streak that runs through my family from the great-grandfather who brought Christianity to my village in Nigeria – and of the moral compass we all need in our lives.<sup>332</sup>

Wiwa concludes that: “maybe the only thing that will save us in the end is religion.

Because religion speaks to something that all the logic in the world cannot: the hunger of the soul for spiritual guidance.”<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Rajni Kothari, “The Yawning Vacuum: A World Without Alternatives”, *Alternatives*, 18 (1993), 136.

<sup>330</sup> Armstrong, *A History of God*, 399.

<sup>331</sup> Arbab, “Promoting a Discourse”, 178.

<sup>332</sup> Ken Wiwa, “Religion Got Us Into These Messes. Can it Get Us Out?” *The Globe and Mail*, (28/8/04), A13.

<sup>333</sup> Wiwa, “Religion”, A13.

## 4.14 Conclusion

The main purpose of this Chapter, which has presented an overview of the approaches of the great faiths with regard to development, has been to demonstrate that religion, far from being a peripheral influence, has played an important part in the development initiative, and demands serious attention in any analysis of development. Clearly religion is one of the many dynamics that influence development, but perhaps represents a more significant variable than has often been recognized. It will be appreciated from the expansive overview in this chapter that the South is still, in Peter Berger's words, "furiously religious"<sup>334</sup> and that religion plays a more direct role in personal and communal life than it does generally in the North. Any study that purports to seriously examine developmental implications and interventions in the South, must take such an essential aspect of life into careful consideration. The following Chapter looks at the nonrelational and unintentional influence of religion, evidenced in the resilience of religiously informed worldviews and cosmologies.

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<sup>334</sup> Berger, *The Desecularization of the World*, 296.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WORLDVIEWS AND COSMOLOGIES

As discussed in the previous chapter, the faith institutions and their initiatives throughout the developing world do have an impact on development. All of the major faiths speak to development through their scriptures, practices and agencies, but the indirect, often unconscious, effects of religion on worldviews are less recognized. This chapter seeks to shed light on how religion shapes worldviews which, in turn, may have a significant impact on development.

Chapter Five provides a survey of how worldviews and cosmologies have the potential to affect developmental outcomes. Beginning with a constructive framework for understanding the “nonrelational and unintentional” aspects of power, the chapter discusses traditional and indigenous systems of religion, illuminating matters as diverse as healing spirits and sacred places, the bovine mystique and masking societies. In this way northern and southern approaches to developmental interventions are contrasted.

#### 5.1 Nonrelational and Unintentional Power

In an insightful article about the fundamental composition of religious power, Paul Germond suggests that religion can be understood as a significant, but largely

unconscious. influence on development. Much of current development thinking accepts that power is essential to an understanding of development practice:

Development practice is enabled and constrained by the context of power in which it operates, the complex of intersecting socio-spatial networks of economic, political, military and ideological power. To fully understand development practice in any given context, the networks of power that constitute that very context must be rigorously apprehended. If development practice is to have any effective agency, if it is to be powerful in itself, it has to come to terms with the power configurations that shape its potentials.<sup>1</sup>

Germond outlines four dimensions and manifestations of power. The first two uses of power -- where A may compel B to act, or A may prevent B from acting -- are plainly coercive. Results may also be achieved more voluntarily, along Gramscian lines, by manipulative strategies.<sup>2</sup> Religion has historically used the first three relational and intentional forms of power, in both a coercive and persuasive fashion. Building on the Foucauldian concept that knowledge is power, Germond suggests that power is inescapable and ubiquitous, and also operates at an unconscious level:

Foucault's discussion of power/knowledge leads directly to the development of the term *reflexive knowledge*. By reflexive knowledge I mean knowledge as a reflex, knowledge that one acts on spontaneously, unconsciously, uncritically and automatically.<sup>3</sup>

According to Germond, this fourth dimension of power is nonrelationally and unintentionally experienced. This invisible form of power affects peoples' subjectivities in unconscious ways, and one of the unseen powers that constructs such powerful worldviews is culture and religion:

These individuals and communities have identities constituted in powerful ways by reflexive knowledges and unintentional and nonrelational forms of power. They are incarcerated in these identities as much as the development practitioners

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Germond, "Theology, Development and Power: Religious Power and Development Practice", *JTSA*, 110 (July 2001), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Germond, "Theology, Development and Power", 23-24.

<sup>3</sup> Germond, "Theology, Development and Power", 26.

are incarcerated by their reflexive knowledges. The failure to recognise the power of reflexive knowledges to construct identity, most importantly through culture and religion, has led to many spectacular failures in development.<sup>4</sup>

Development, therefore, is affected by a dimension of power that may not be obvious in the conventional practice of development. This nonrelational and unintentional power permits a significant space for the introduction into development thinking and practice of worldviews and mindsets, “spontaneously, unconsciously, uncritically and automatically” influenced by culture and religion. Germond argues that these factors are indirectly involved in development, whether appreciated as such or not. Nonrelational and unintentional power is therefore the least visible form of power, yet the most pervasive, affecting worldviews and influencing actions. Religion, therefore, may have a direct relational and intentional affect on development or remain an indirect influence, as a nonrelational and unintentional power.

Historically, the influence of traditional worldviews and cosmologies on development may have been understated by both academicians and clerics alike. Both may have been uncomfortable in assigning a greater role to such academically unquantifiable and ecclesiastically heretical impulses. Germond, therefore, opens a window to reveal a greater appreciation of religion’s indirect role in development.

## 5.2 Worldviews and Cosmologies

Richard Critchfield makes a profound comment about rural life in the traditional world: “To live in villages, even temporarily, is to suspend one’s disbelief in the supernatural;

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<sup>4</sup> Germond, “Theology, Development and Power”, 30.



indeed, seemingly supernatural occurrences are part of everyday life.”<sup>5</sup> This candid comment illustrates the vast gulf between the rational and relational underpinnings of northern and southern worldviews. Richard Nisbett, in The Geography of Thought, argues that worldviews and patterns of thought are not universalistic, but differ markedly, particularly between East and West. He urges readers: “to consider the possibility that another valid approach to thinking about the world exists and that it can serve as a mirror with which to examine and critique their own beliefs and habits of mind.”<sup>6</sup>

Referring to a period of English history in the early 1600s before the Civil War, the economic historian, R.H. Tawney, felt that the dismissal of religion:

...is one more example of the apparently ineradicable propensity to suppose that a mentality alien to our own cannot really have existed, and, as a consequence when confronted by so surprising a monstrosity, to explain it away by translating it into terms intelligible to our more enlightened selves. The world, unfortunately, is not so made.<sup>7</sup>

It may be argued that the world is “not so made” today. In highlighting a historical divide, Tawney might well have been referring to a contemporary geographical divide, which allows northerners to sideline the impact of religion in the lives of millions, even billions, of southerners. In short, worldviews not only matter, but worldviews also differ.

For the purposes of this thesis, a worldview is simply defined as the composite set of beliefs, values and convictions that influence how a person views the world. Expressed more technically, Michel Foucault’s concept of *episteme* would suggest: “In any given

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Critchfield, Villages, (Garden City: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1981), 252.

<sup>6</sup> Richard E. Nisbett, The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently...and Why, (New York: The Free Press, 2003), xx-xxi.

<sup>7</sup> Charles K. Wilber and Kenneth P. Jameson, “Religious Values and Social Limits to Development”, in World Development, Special Issue, “Religious Issues and Development”, 8, no. 7/8 (1980), 469.

culture and at any given moment, there is only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in theory or silently invested in a practice.”<sup>8</sup> More popularly, Ben Okri describes the unconscious, almost subconscious, nature of worldviews and their relation to spirituality: “And it never occurred to us that those stories actually contained a unique worldview. It’s very much like the river that runs through your backyard. It’s always there. It never occurs to you to take a photograph or to seek its mythology. It’s just there; it runs in your veins, it runs in your spirit.”<sup>9</sup> Or, as D.E. Capps explains, “The religious is not elusive because it lurks behind ordinary phenomena but because it is woven into the phenomena.”<sup>10</sup>

Based upon its derivation from two Greek words *cosmos* and *logos*, cosmology refers to the study of the universe that produces a cosmovision, which encompasses not only the physical but also the metaphysical order of the universe, and the place and relationship of human and divine within that cosmos.

In Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion and Science, Robin Horton provides a comprehensive analysis of the patterns of thought generated by contrasting worldviews and cosmologies:

Both in traditional African cosmologies and in European cosmos before Descartes, the modern distinction between “mind” and “matter” does not appear. Although everything in the universe is underpinned by spiritual forces, what

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<sup>8</sup> Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of Human Sciences, (New York: Vintage, 1973), 168.

<sup>9</sup> Emeagwali, “Talking with Ben Okri”, <<http://emeagwali.com/nigeria/biography/ben-okri-19jul92.html>> (25/1/05).

<sup>10</sup> D. E. Capps, quoted in Tarekeshawar et al. “Religion: An Overlooked Dimension”. 379.

moderns would call “mental activities” and “material things” are both part of a single reality, neither material or immaterial.<sup>11</sup>

Worldviews and cosmologies, seldom considered in development interventions, may hold abiding power in the lives of individuals and communities in much of the developing world. In fact, such traditional belief systems were often considered an impediment to progress by early development experts, who promulgated the belief that strategies to effect modernization would break the stultifying power of lifestyles limited by religion and tradition. But while it was widely assumed that modernization would render superstition impotent, it has become ever more apparent that traditional worldviews possess a stubborn resilience. Referring to the traditional religions of Africa specifically, Keith Ferdinando contends that: “Despite the widespread disappearance of much of the physical, tangible expression of those religions, the worldview which they embodied continues to be pervasive and powerful among vast numbers of people.”<sup>12</sup> Such a realization has led to greater attention being paid to cross-cultural understanding in development studies. As this thesis suggests, what is not acknowledged so freely is the role that religion plays in shaping culture.

As a result of her investigations in Guatemala, Amy Sherman came to the conclusion that religion was at the heart of culture:

Religious conviction, to sum up, is powerful and should not be dismissed. It affects how people think and behave. It provides the eyeglasses through which some people see and interpret the world. In this sense, religion is the “root” or

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<sup>11</sup> Robin Horton, *Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West: Essays on Magic, Religion and Science*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 227.

<sup>12</sup> Keith Ferdinando, *The Triumph of Christ in African Perspective: A Study of Demonology and Redemption in the African Context*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999), 131.

“heart” of what we call culture – that complex of beliefs, values, attitudes, customs and social institutions.<sup>13</sup>

Sherman seeks to reopen the cultural debate: “Ironically, at just the time that historical evidence for the importance of cultural explanations for development success is overwhelming, evaluative discourse about different cultures and worldviews is anathematised.”<sup>14</sup> However, in privileging cultural causation, she may be blinded to her identification with the western, neo-liberal model of development rather than alternative visions of more human and holistic development.

Whereas religion plays an increasingly minimal role in the construction of many northerners’ worldviews,<sup>15</sup> it may still remain a very potent force in the conceptual alignment of the southerner. To properly appreciate the “targets” of development interventions, it is necessary for the developmental practitioner, schooled in Western thought processes, to recognize that often the rural villager or urban slum dweller exists in another explanatory universe altogether. A great gap, therefore, can exist between western mindsets, which privilege empirical investigation while exploring the physical world, and traditional worldviews, which seek relational explanations while embracing a metaphysical cosmos.

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<sup>13</sup> Sherman, *The Soul of Development*, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Sherman, *The Soul of Development*, 37.

<sup>15</sup> It should be pointed out that the religious impetus of the northerner may have migrated from formal religious articulation into a more secularized form, expressed in humanitarian and development service. Note Durkheim’s assertion that every society has need of some kind of religion (Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms*), and Rist’s contention that development is “the new religion of the West.” (Rist, “Development as the New Religion.”) For a further discussion, please see Section 3.12.3.

Clifford Geertz sheds light on the dilemma of the expatriate, who may find the conceptual underpinnings of an exotic world quite inexplicable: "What in a place like Morocco prevents us from grasping what people are up to is not ignorance as to how cognition works...as a lack of familiarity with the imaginative universe within which their acts are signs."<sup>16</sup> After continued fieldwork, Geertz began to understand the people and their social setting: "The more I manage to follow what the Moroccans are up to, the more logical, and the more singular they seem."<sup>17</sup>

Cosmologies make sense of the world, and restore its cosmological balance. Nothing happens in the world without a reason. Everything can and must be explained. Natural disasters, unexpected diseases, failed crops and physical handicaps have a cause, which can be identified with appropriate help from a person trained to bridge the physical and metaphysical worlds. Spirit forces maintain an essential equilibrium, which is not beyond the realm of human placation and imprecation. Usually the lack of cosmological balance can be traced to a person or persons who overstep the bounds of social morality -- jealousy being at the root of many such transgressions.<sup>18</sup> And so, as in Igbo custom, the gods become "the policemen of society."<sup>19</sup>

While the expatriate may consider him/herself to be neutral in matters of religion (although, in actual fact, it may be argued that no one is neutral with regard to

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<sup>16</sup> Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 13.

<sup>17</sup> Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 14.

<sup>18</sup> The aspect of jealousy is a particularly interesting one in light of race relations: since most Europeans are unlikely to envy Africans, they are therefore excluded from the source of witchcraft. See Heidi Holland, African Magic: Traditional Ideas that Heal a Continent, (London: Viking, 2001), 11.

<sup>19</sup> Holland, African Magic, 196.

worldviews) some understanding of the spiritual landscapes with which to make sense of the other's world becomes necessary. In condemning "witchcraft" without appreciating its role in upsetting the cosmological balance of the world, the development expert may place him/herself in opposition to powerful forces within the community. To suggest that an outbreak of disease results from lack of hygiene, or poor crops result from soil exhaustion, may seem simplistic indeed to the intended beneficiary of development.

The expatriate may also divorce the unfamiliar world of magic and witchdoctors, spirits and demons from the moral foundations on which such seemingly extraordinary behaviours are based. Cosmological balance demands an explanation, which when explored through the eyes of the participants may be more logical than at first surmised. The difficulty for the Westerner is accepting the possibility that any alternative to his/her worldview may be valid. Benjamin Ray explains how such worldviews give meaning:

It is important to see how African myth-history as a whole gives meaning to the world: how the sacred and true events of the past serve to represent the world as it ultimately is, and how these same events may serve as ritual archetypes for the renewal of the natural and human order.<sup>20</sup>

The Westerner may seek to engage the African in debate as to the effectiveness of witchcraft from an empirical standpoint. But the question of witchcraft is not so much its efficacy as its persistence in popular belief, as is evident in the remarkable story of how the Xhosa people came close to extinction in 1857 as a result of killing their own cattle.<sup>21</sup> Many of the rituals associated with African traditional religion are regarded with suspicion by those unfamiliar with them. A case in point is the ritual of shaking the bones

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<sup>20</sup> Ray, *African Religions*, 24.

<sup>21</sup> See Holland, *African Magic*, Chapter 5, "Visions of National Suicide," 68-85.

by a traditional healer: "Symbolically, he has shaken up society in his divining bag and is now re-creating and reordering that society."<sup>22</sup> Understanding the symbolism of the ritual may reassure the skeptical observer. But there are other areas which are less logical to the Western mind.

Separating fact from fiction in stories of shadowy underworld figures, such as the *wachawi* of Zanzibar or "night dancers" in Uganda, who appear in the dead of night with the power to metamorphose into animals or even raise the dead, may illustrate that the struggle between good and evil is often played out in a different way than it is in the West. But the persistence of belief should not be underestimated, in spite of official government policies condemning all manifestations of witchcraft as inimical to modern development practice.

The Westerner may debate whether such incidents of witchcraft (*muti*) are merely suspicion -- like Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, or walking under a ladder, or a black cat -- or something deeper: during the Africa Cup of Nations soccer tournament in Tunisia, much attention was focused on the *muti*-making capacities of various teams, which had a "witch-doctor" on their staff. The novels of Ben Okri have served to breathe life into this world in between. One of the reviewers on the back cover of The Famished Road suggests: "When I finished the book and went outside, it was as if all the trees of South London had angels sitting in them."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 89.

<sup>23</sup> Ben Okri, *The Famished Road*, (London: Vintage, 1992).

### 5.2.1 Old and New Gods

Africa, a place where the spirit of the ancestors is never far removed, has basked in a rich religious history:

Long before the religion of the crescent or the religion of the cross arrived on the African continent, Africa was at worship, its sons and daughters were at prayer... Indeed, many African belief systems still include the so-called animistic tendencies, which blur the distinction between Man and nature, between the living and the dead, between the divine and the human, between the natural and the supernatural.<sup>24</sup>

John Mbiti's study of African Religions and Philosophy illustrates that religion is the warp and woof of the rich tapestry of African life. Claiming that African peoples "find or attribute religious meaning to the whole of existence."<sup>25</sup> Mbiti builds his thesis around the point that: "...for Africans, the whole of existence is a religious phenomenon; man is a deeply religious being living in a religious universe."<sup>26</sup> Heidi Holland agrees with his conclusion that "in traditional life there are no atheists."<sup>27</sup> in reflecting:

Because traditional beliefs permeate every aspect of African life, there is little distinction between secular and sacred, material and spiritual. Where you meet the African, there you will find his religion: in a field harvesting maize; at a funeral ceremony; in the market place. Far from being confined to a church or mosque once a week on Friday or Sunday, the traditional African's religion embraces his whole environment; his entire time on earth and beyond.<sup>28</sup>

In spite of their origins on another continent, both Christianity and Islam found fertile ground in the rich spiritual soil of Africa. Christianity became established in Alexandria and Axum from its very earliest days, but with the Islamic invasion of Egypt in 642 a new religious dynamic entered Africa, which would resound to the ebb and flow of the

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<sup>24</sup> Ali Mazrui, The Africans: A Triple Heritage, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1986), 135.

<sup>25</sup> John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), (Oxford: Heinemann, 1989), 73.

<sup>26</sup> Mbiti, African Religions, 15.

<sup>27</sup> Mbiti, African Religions, 29.

<sup>28</sup> Holland, African Magic, xiv.



contrasting fortunes of the two great imported faiths and come to culmination in the colonial struggle for the continent. That legacy would leave three religious systems competing for the soul of Africa, torn by the pressures of its old and new gods. Mbiti concludes with an observation that may surprise those who take a superficial view of the missionary penetration of Africa and glibly suggest that Christianity and Islam replaced African traditional religion:

But a careful scrutiny of the religious situations shows clearly that in their encounter with traditional religions, Christianity and Islam have made only an astonishingly shallow penetration in converting the whole man of Africa, with all its historical-cultural roots, social dimensions, self-consciousness and expectations.<sup>29</sup>

Mbiti's observations may also apply to South America, where a thin overlay of Catholicism was often deposited on the animist traditions of the continent.

Kwame Anthony Appiah also acknowledges a world often invisible to the purview of the Western development worker, locked into a one-dimensional worldview and oblivious to a fact accepted by multiple millions of people in the global South: "It is the invisible which makes the visible world possible."<sup>30</sup> In detailing the historical encounter between local and colonial, Appiah shows how the ways of the African, whose natural religiosity was daily expressed "in medicine, in farming, in spirit possession, in dreams, in 'witchcraft, oracles and magic'"<sup>31</sup> could be fundamentally misunderstood. Even as Christianity or Islam provided a more civilized overlay for such primitive tendencies,

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<sup>29</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions*, 257.

<sup>30</sup> World Faiths Development Dialogue, "A Different Perspective on Poverty and Development", Comment on the *World Development Report 2000*, (June 1999).

<sup>31</sup> Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 24.

Appiah concludes that: “Most Africans, now, whether converted to Islam or Christianity or not, still share the beliefs of their ancestors in an ontology of invisible beings.”<sup>32</sup>

African Traditional Religion (ATR) has been resilient throughout the centuries. Hastings notes that the history of Christianity in Africa has often been told by missionaries within a European cultural framework. But, as he points out, this was not the perspective from which Africans viewed the process: “The principal context was their own traditional, but not unchanging, thought-world. The fate of Christianity depended upon its ability to be reread in terms and with implications for the most part unimagined by its propagators.”<sup>33</sup>

John and Jean Comaroff have described, in the case of the initial encounter between missionaries and the southern Tswana, the manner in which Christianity was absorbed and refashioned by local agency.<sup>34</sup> Walter van Beek and Thomas Blakely describe how Africans have resolved the external challenge, by “defining the other – opponent or partner – in such a way as to change both the other and oneself, transcending the opposition *ego/alter* with the notion of relation, a creative synthesis that is at the heart of both African religious experience and its expression.”<sup>35</sup> Thus the relational nature of African thought has often blunted the initial intent of European penetration.

The worldviews and cosmologies of the local people often escaped the notice of the colonial authorities. Religious sensibilities played their part in fuelling nationalist sentiments in the struggle for independence, and, on occasion, religious ceremony

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<sup>32</sup> Appiah, *In My Father's House*, 134.

<sup>33</sup> Hastings, *The Church in Africa*, 306.

<sup>34</sup> Comaroffs, *Of Revelation and Revolution*.

<sup>35</sup> Walter van Beek and Thomas Blakely, “Introduction”, “Protestant Missions in Africa: The Dialectic of Conversion in the American Methodist Episcopal Church in Eastern Zimbabwe, 1900-1950”, in Blakely, Thomas D. and Walter E. A. van Beek, Dennis L. Thompson (Eds.) *Religion in Africa: Experience and Expression*, (London: James Currey, 1994), 19.

provided a cover for sedition and acted as a vehicle for resistance in an area which was foreign to the colonists.<sup>36</sup> In Kenya, Mugo's prophecy about an "iron snake," which would threaten the traditional equilibrium, was widely interpreted to represent the colonial railway which opened up East Africa. Later, oathing practices would play a significant part in the Mau Mau rebellion against colonial rule. In Tanzania, the Maji-Maji rebellion, led by Kinjikitile, organized resistance against the colonial power fuelled by the belief that magic water (*maji*) would protect them from German bullets. In Ghana, both colonial authorities and missionaries failed to understand the depth of traditions surrounding the Golden Stool -- the spirit of the Ashanti nation. Colonial insensitivity to the significance of the stool even precipitated the War of the Golden Stool at the turn of the century, which led to the downfall of the Ashanti people. Thus, religious symbols might function as ciphers in local resistance.

### 5.2.2 Healing Spirits and Silenced Voices

Oftentimes development is so framed by Western perceptions, values and worldviews that a parable might be a good starting point for those involved in the development enterprise: "There is a familiar tale of a peasant who is stopped by a traveler in a large car and asked the way to the capital. 'Well,' she replies, after pondering the matter a while, 'If I were you, I wouldn't start from here.'<sup>37</sup> Appiah also recounts another story, with profound implications for health interventions:

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<sup>36</sup> See James C. Scott, Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990). The role of religion as a site of resistance is well illustrated in the slave societies in the southern United States between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.

<sup>37</sup> Appiah, In My Father's House, 26.

There is a story – probably apocryphal – of some missionaries in northern Nigeria who were worried about the level of infant mortality due to stomach infections transmitted in drinking water. They explained to “converts” at the mission that the deaths were due to tiny animals in the water, and that these animals would be killed if they only boiled the water before giving it to the children. Talk of invisible animals produced only a tolerant skepticism: the babies went on dying. Finally a visiting anthropologist suggested a remedy. There were, he said, evil spirits in the water; boil the water and you could see them going away, bubbling out to escape the heat. This time the message worked.<sup>38</sup>

A sensitive appreciation of such mindsets might have proved valuable in the complex interactions in Anne Fadiman’s cautionary tale about cross-cultural sensitivity, The Spirit Catches You And You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, And The Collision Of Two Cultures, in which the clash between traditional cosmologies and modern worldviews, is sensitively explored.

Set far from Africa in central California, Fadiman’s story involves members of a sizeable Hmong community, refugees from the Laotian war in the 1970s, holding to their traditional ways and resisting assimilation into mainstream American culture. Lia Lee is diagnosed with epilepsy by her American doctors, but her parents see the illness differently. They believe that a *quag dab peg* (the spirit catches you and you fall down) entered into Lia’s soul, after her sister had slammed the front door of their home, but they were also aware that those possessed by the spirit might also become host to a *txiv neeb* (healing spirit).

On one side are Lia’s devoted parents, who do not follow prescriptions, resort to animal sacrifices, and grow herbal remedies in the parking lot. They do all they can, bound by the uncompromising tradition, rituals and beliefs of their ancestors. On the other side are

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<sup>38</sup> Appiah, In My Fathers House, 134-135.

a group of dedicated doctors, who expend countless hours doing all they can for a perplexing case, within the bounds of state-of-the-art Western medical practice.

Tragically, the two worlds simply do not meet.

Lia Lee's medical chart grew to more than 400,000 words: "Every one of those words reflected its author's intelligence, training, and good intentions, but not a single one dealt with the Lees' perception of their daughter's illness."<sup>39</sup> In researching the case, Fadiman accessed the admission records, which noted under religion: "None."<sup>40</sup>

Lessons abound from the example. One of the most salient perhaps revolves around the recognition of the effect of culture on actions, as one of the medical personnel acknowledges: "If you can't see that your own culture has its own set of interests, emotions, and biases, how can you expect to deal successfully with someone else's culture."<sup>41</sup> The doctors who treated Lia, neither recognized the cultural distinctives of the Hmong, nor did they realize that they brought their own worldviews to the case. Their culture-neutrality turned out to be a false positive.

Such an account calls into question the assumption that globalization will reduce the world to cultural homogenization and produce a global monoculture. Roland Robertson's contention that globalization involves "the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism"<sup>42</sup> is probably more accurate. Integral to the "particularization" is the resurgence of religion, "a source of collective identity

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<sup>39</sup> Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), 259.

<sup>40</sup> Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You*, 276.

<sup>41</sup> Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You*, 261.

<sup>42</sup> Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, (London: Sage, 1992), 102.

declarations.”<sup>43</sup> most dramatically expressed in a multiplicity of fundamentalisms. But while some manifestations of religious belief are being strengthened in reaction to the threat of globalization, to what extent the process of globalization itself lessens adherence to patterns of traditional religion is a complex subject, lending itself to anecdote and intuition rather than objective and empirical analysis. According to Robertson, grand narratives are not dying in Latin America or Asia, but being reinforced in a reaction to “the precarious state of the grand narrative in the West.”<sup>44</sup> While the phenomenon of globalization is rearranging global space and time, values and worldviews, it may also, somewhat paradoxically, be emphasizing the importance of listening to voices that are often summarily discounted in northern bastions of power, especially in academia, where any concentration on religion may be seen as ignorant and uninformed. In the context of the Zande people of central Africa, anthropologist E.E.Evans-Pritchard explains how a Zande is enmeshed in his/her own worldview “because it is the only world he knows. The web is not an external structure in which he is enclosed. It is the texture of his thought and he cannot think that his thought is wrong.”<sup>45</sup> Evans-Pritchard’s comments about the Zande might equally apply in the previous example to the Hmong – or to the Americans.

Health is a particularly important dimension, where traditional worldviews may intrude into the modern medical world. Sickness for many traditional peoples is evidence of a basic imbalance in the cosmos. And while a modern medical system may treat the effects, the causes of the fundamental imbalance that produces sickness in the first place may

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<sup>43</sup> Roland Robertson, “Globalisation, Modernization, and Post Modernization: The Ambiguous Position of Religion” in Roland Robertson and William Garrett, Religion and World Order. (New York: Paragon House, 1991), 289.

<sup>44</sup> Robertson, “Globalization, Modernization and Post Modernization”, 289.

<sup>45</sup> In Horton, Patterns of Thought, 222.

remain untouched. Traditional medicine, personally focused and community based, relies on restoring relationships that may extend far beyond the physical symptoms. This may explain why many Africans seek healing from both medical doctors and traditional healers.

In Zambia, the relationship between traditional and modern approaches to healing was brought into sharp relief by the case of Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo, who, to the chagrin of the hierarchy in Rome, gained great popularity by espousing a more traditional approach to healing “based on Africa’s belief in what he called ‘the world in between’ – a spirit world located between the kingdom of God and the realm of humankind; a world which included ancestral and other protective spirits but was also the abode of evil spirits.”<sup>46</sup> Some perceived his approach to be not just more traditional, but also more biblical. Attention to such a “world in between” has increasingly constituted a part of the success of the new charismatic churches in Africa.

In considering the subject of health and healing, Horton suggests that perhaps the gap between modern and traditional is not so great as first supposed. once some conceptual adjustment is made. While the western doctor may be familiar with treating observable symptoms, the traditional doctor may see “something else in this sickness”<sup>47</sup> -- an invisible conjunction of social and spiritual forces, quite beyond the empirical realm. Horton advises: “As for trying to find out what the main kinds of stress-producing disturbances are in a particular traditional society, the modern doctor can probably do no

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<sup>46</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 121.

<sup>47</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought*, 209.

better than start by taking note of the diagnosis produced by a traditional religious healer working in such a society.”<sup>48</sup> But it is in the mental health area, in particular, where the two worlds may come unexpectedly together and where Horton suggests that: “there are striking resemblances between psychoanalytic ideas about the individual mind as a congeries of warring entities, and West African ideas about the body as a meeting place of multiple souls.”<sup>49</sup> In traditional life, the cause of sickness must not be overlooked.

### 5.2.3 Sacred Places and Pastoralist Cosmology

In his classic anthropological study of the Yanomamo in the borderlands of Venezuela and Brazil, Napoleon Chagnon speaks to the cosmovisions of many indigenous peoples: “The comparative simplicity of Yanomamo material culture contrasts sharply with the richness and ingenuity of their beliefs about the cosmos, the soul, the mythical world, and the plants and animals around them.”<sup>50</sup> As Chagnon details, their material simplicity can contrast with the metaphysical profundity of their lives, evidenced within their customs and situated within the tropical forest.

Many indigenous peoples have respected the earth as sacred, in contrast to what they view as the often exploitative Western approach, justified on historical occasion by the scriptural injunction in Genesis to “subdue” and “have dominion” over the earth.<sup>51</sup> The idea that land may be owned, rather than held in communal trust, may be quite foreign to many indigenous peoples, who rely on a different cosmological taxonomy: “The

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<sup>48</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought* 204.

<sup>49</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought*, 205.

<sup>50</sup> Napoleon Chagnon, *Yanomamo*, Fifth Edition, (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1997), 99.

<sup>51</sup> Genesis 1: 28 (KJV).



individual is connected to the group, the group to nature, and nature is the domain of the spiritual.”<sup>52</sup>

The conservation approaches of indigenous people are often deeply interconnected with their religious worldviews. The Batwa, for example, lived in harmony with wildlife in the forests of Central Africa for centuries, until they were forced from their forest homes to make space for national parks in the twentieth century.<sup>53</sup> The Batwa, though, are not alone in expressing a deep respect for the natural world around them, informed by a holistic worldview that stressed the interdependence of humans, animals and nature, as acknowledged in a report, commissioned by the World Conservation Union, the World Commission on Protected Areas and the World Wildlife Fund For Nature:

Indigenous and other traditional peoples have long associations with nature and a deep understanding of it. Often they have made significant contributions to the maintenance of many of the earth’s most fragile ecosystems, through their traditional sustainable resource use practices and culture-based respect for nature.<sup>54</sup>

This respect for nature derives from a connected relationship, rather than a detached rationalization, which has characterized some scientific approaches to the environment. In recent decades, alternative approaches have appeared in the West with greater resonance with traditional perspectives, such as the concept of Mother Earth. Popularized by James Lovelock, the Gaia hypothesis, named after the Greek goddess of the Earth, propounds the idea that the Earth is, in a sense, alive, functioning as a “biological

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<sup>52</sup> Ladislaus M. Semali and Joe L. Kincheloe, “Introduction”, in Semali and Kincheloe, 1999, What is Indigenous Knowledge? Voices From the Academy, 42.

<sup>53</sup> Kalimba Zephyrin, “Case Study I: Rwanda,” in J. Nelson and L. Hossack (Eds.), Principles to Practice: Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas in Africa, (Moreton-in-Marsh: Forest Peoples Programme, 2003).

<sup>54</sup> IUCN/ WCPA/ WWF, “Principles and Guidelines on Protected Areas and Indigenous/Traditional Peoples, 2000, in Nelson and Hossack, Principles to Practice, 21.

organism.”<sup>55</sup> While Lovelock’s theory has been popularly influential, yet scientifically controversial. Stephen Jay Gould speaks for many northern environmentalists: “We cannot win this battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature as well – for we will not fight to save what we do not love.”<sup>56</sup>

As interest has focused on the environment in the western world, the ecological question has increasingly engaged the major faiths. Some religions lend themselves naturally to environmental interpretation. For instance, Hinduism, sometimes considered to be a religion which acknowledges multiple gods, may be more accurately conceived as supporting a belief in that singular force, which may be expressed in multiple forms, such as by the Goddesses, Dhanalakshmi in rice or Ganga in the sacred river of India.

Speaking as an Islamicist, Seyyed Hossein Nasr reflects a view of the environment that transcends the distinctive boundaries of the faiths: “There is no alternative but to change our whole worldview. We cannot continue to entertain a worldview based on the severance of the relationship between humanity and the Divine, and hence between humanity and nature as a spiritual reality.”<sup>57</sup>

Traditional religions have identified the divine, if not deities, in the various physical manifestations of the biosphere. Forests in many parts of the world have long been sacred places. Wangari Maathai, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for her

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<sup>55</sup> Lawrence E. Joseph, “James Lovelock, Gaia’s Grand Old Man”, *Salon.com*, <<http://dir.salon.com/people/feature/2000/08/17/lovelock/index.html>> (27/3/05).

<sup>56</sup> Quoted in Gardner, “Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World”, 174-175.

<sup>57</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “The Spiritual and Religious Dimensions of the Environmental Crisis”, *The Ecologist*, 30, no. 1 (2000), 19.

conservation work in Kenya through her Green Belt Movement, points out the value of the ancient fig tree, sacred to many of the East African tribes:

There are some huge trees, wild fig trees, where I grew up, these huge fig trees were never cut, because they were used as religious sites by our people. ... When I was a child my mother would tell me to not collect any twigs even from those fig trees. That tree is never cut and even the dry twigs are never burned... Everywhere where I had seen any of those huge trees there would be a spring... So were these trees part of the catchment system, were these trees part of the water system, was it therefore a mistake to cut these huge trees and instead plant coffee trees and tea bushes? Did we perhaps dig our own graves by cutting the beautiful trees, which our ancestors had for some reason protected and made them untouchable so that they would not be destroyed?<sup>58</sup>

Maathai contrasts the wisdom of the ancestors with the desire for progress and development, achieved in Kenya's case through the agricultural exports of coffee and tea, which have come to comprise the country's primary economic resources.

Agriculture itself, with its emphasis on times and seasons, has often revolved around a sacred calendar, with planting and harvesting proceeding in conjunction with rituals and festivals.<sup>59</sup> But the breakdown of community has also affected farming communities around the world – witness the rise in Indian suicides in the wake of the Green Revolution. Agricultural efficiency and maximum production, so essential to development interventions, may not always have been the prime motivating principle for subsistence farmers, as Haverkort, van't Hooft and Hiemstra found out by experience in Ghana: “However, we gradually realised again that it is not the maximum yield or commercial value of the crop that is necessarily the most important motivation for

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<sup>58</sup> Quoted by Terisa Turner and Leigh Brownhill, “African Jubilee: Mau Mau Resurgence and the Fight for Fertility in Kenya, 1986 – 2002”, *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, XXII, Special Issue, (2001), 1081-2.

<sup>59</sup> The resilience of the Farmer's Almanac in northern farming communities also speaks to this interconnection with nature.

farmers.”<sup>60</sup> The modernization of agricultural techniques, most notably the introduction of genetically modified foods and “terminator” seeds, has led to increased tensions between some development agencies and traditional communities.<sup>61</sup>

Such conflict is not limited to the developing world. One of the most outspoken North American opponents of modern agribusiness and corporate capitalism is Wendell Berry. In a prodigious output of poetry, prose and philosophy, Berry has been an advocate of local and sustainable rather than global and total economies. He bemoans the loss of a rural culture in an industrial world, based upon competition rather than cooperation, and advances a society which rewards generosity rather than greed, fosters community rather than profit, and promotes sufficiency rather than surplus. He argues that “Without prosperous local economies, the people have no power and the land no voice.”<sup>62</sup>

But not all local communities are necessarily perceived to be eco-friendly. Hadley Jenner counters the widely held view espoused by Garrett Hardin in “The Tragedy of the Commons,”<sup>63</sup> that freedom in the pastoral commons brings ruin to all. Jenner recognizes the essentially cooperative nature of pastoralist life, seeing covenantal relationships as being the key to harmony in such a marginal environment: “Right relationships permeate the whole of life among family, clan, people, between peoples, with the environment, and

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<sup>60</sup> Bertus Haverkort, Katrien van't Hoof and Wim Hiemstra (Eds.), *Ancient Roots, New Shoots: Endogenous Development in Practice*, (London: Zed, 2003), 140.

<sup>61</sup> Steve de Gruchy has drawn attention to the similarity between the colonial imperative of controlling “natives” and that of controlling nature. See, for example, “Biotechnology as ‘Cultural Invasion’: Theological Reflections on Food Sovereignty and Community Building in Africa”, Work in Progress.

<sup>62</sup> Wendell Berry, “Global Problems, Local Solutions”, *Resurgence*, Issue 206, <<http://www.resurgence.org/resurgence/issues/berry206.htm>>, (10/7/05).

<sup>63</sup> Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons”, *Science*, 162, no. 3859 (1968), 1243-1248.

throughout with God.”<sup>64</sup> While acknowledging that such a cosmology is far removed from mainstream experience, he appeals for a greater understanding of the cooperative potential of what, for many pastoralists, is a unifying cosmological system: “Pastoralist cosmology offers a broad conceptual framework within which all these current issues can be addressed in the interest of peace and development work in the area.”<sup>65</sup>

#### 5.2.4 Time and Death

Attitudes to time and record keeping may also frustrate the development practitioner, accustomed to precision in all statistical accounting and scientific methodology. Many a European has at one time or another been confused and bemused regarding the African approach to time, expressed in the common proverb: “The European is ruled by his watch; the African rules his watch.” Or, as Mbiti puts it, “Man is not a slave of time; instead, he ‘makes’ as much time as he wants.”<sup>66</sup> Contrary to the Western perception that Africans are undeveloped in temporal responsiveness, he draws a distinction between the different conceptions of time (*sasa* and *zamani* time) in traditional African society, which allow for a greater emphasis on events rather than the minutiae of temporal reckoning. However, his exposition regarding the undeveloped sense of the future tense, leads to questions as to whether this handicapped Africa in the colonial era and still affects Africa’s potential in the global economy today. Such insights may tie in with Ali

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<sup>64</sup> Hadley H Jenner, “Pastoralist Cosmology as Foundation for Sustainable Peace and Development”, <<http://www.mcc.org/respub/occasional/26cosmology.html>> (28/8/04).

<sup>65</sup> Jenner, “Pastoralist Cosmology”.

<sup>66</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions*, 19.

Mazrui's climatic thesis, which suggests that the absence of an African winter severely hampered the planning process that proved essential to programmed modern life.<sup>67</sup>

Mbiti's insights into differences may also be played out in development practice, as the contrast between African and Western thought processes are played out in a religious context. He highlights an African emphasis on the concrete rather than the abstract, the practical rather than the theoretical, the utilitarian rather than the aesthetic, the communal rather than the individual, and the relationship rather than the crime. When such differences in worldview and mindset are carried over into development practice, much misunderstanding can occur without a sensitive appreciation for "the other's" strengths and capabilities. But in an era of results based management, log frame analysis, sophisticated planning processes and rigorous accounting practices, it is easy to see how a positivistic western approach, which has long privileged the written rather than the oral record, should dominate development practice. Oral tradition may have allowed more space for a discussion of the metaphysical origins of life and the implications for everyday life.

Many development practitioners are unaware of the pull that the dead, or more correctly according to Mbiti, the "living dead," exert on society.<sup>68</sup> In a western society that, according to Ben Okri, "has forgotten death,"<sup>69</sup> ancestors may be regarded as an atavistic throwback to an ignorant past. However, as Mbiti avers, the ancestors occupy an exalted

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<sup>67</sup> Mazrui, Chapter 11: "In Search of Self-Reliance: Capitalism Without Winter". *The Africans*, 213-237.

<sup>68</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions*, 32.

<sup>69</sup> Ben Okri, *A Way of Being Free*, (London: Phoenix, 1997), 131.

position in African society, being “the cement which holds the social order together.”<sup>70</sup>

The “living dead” therefore must remain involved in the matters of this earth until all the generation that holds them in memory has died out. This explains, in terms of development interventions, such as in the construction of dams, why resettlement schemes often so grievously offend local sensibilities, cutting off, as they do, the nexus of connection with the ancestors.

The Westerner’s peripatetic lifestyle, and lack of permanent roots in ancestral place, stands in stark contrast, and may lead to perplexity amongst the intended beneficiaries of development. It also underlines, as in the recent tsunami disaster in Asia, the importance for religio-cultural purposes of a proper burial. In a long-standing land dispute in Kenya, the Masai claim that they are prevented from attending to their religious ceremonies, because their “sacred sites ... are now within electric fences” and they are unable “to visit the graves of our great fathers.”<sup>71</sup> Funeral rites, therefore, more conspicuous often than in the richer societies of the West, assume major significance, not just in terms of the life of the spiritual world, but also in terms of the life of the community, society and economy.

### 5.2.5 Social Egalitarianism and Bovine Mystique

The rampant individuality of the Westerner, which allows and even encourages an individual to rise above their social milieu and physical locus, stands in contrast to the African’s identification with his/her social and historical environment. Conformity, even

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<sup>70</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 185.

<sup>71</sup> Jeevan Vasagar, “Give Us Back Our Land, Say Masai”. *The Guardian Weekly*, (13-19 August, 2004), 29.

at the expense of efficiency, counts for much more than in the individualistic West. Increasingly, as globalizing tendencies exert pressure on traditional societies, the tension of balancing individual identity with collective responsibility becomes intensified. Historically, the community has defined the individual, rather than the individual the community, giving voice to a fundamental credo in a collective society: "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am."<sup>72</sup> In such circumstances, it is perhaps ironic that the Western development practitioner should increasingly preach participation as the key to developmental progress.

Prosperity and material acquisition, often evidence of success in an achievement-oriented western context, may be evidence of quite the opposite in a traditional society, where inequality may indicate witchcraft. Holland maintains:

...witchcraft will continue to exert its influence on Africa's development for many years to come because of the view that the more you have, the more likely you are to attract a witch's envy. This is the antithesis of the western parental gospel: achieve scholastically, compete relentlessly and shine individually.<sup>73</sup>

The guiding principle within the community becomes social egalitarianism, with an overriding goal of social equality, or, in preference to individual advancement, even shared inequality. Such ideals are illustrated in the Bemba proverb: "Finding a beehive full of honey means good luck; finding two beehives is very good luck; finding three is

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<sup>72</sup> Mbiti, *African Religions*, 282.

<sup>73</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 21-22.



witchcraft.”<sup>74</sup> Similarly, in a Batwan saying, the need for saving beyond immediate needs is considered unnecessary: “when a Twa gets satisfied, he burns a granary.”<sup>75</sup>

In many African societies, cows are held in high esteem. The bond between human beings and animals, informed by pastoralist cosmovisions, becomes central to life in many pastoral cultures. Fulani and Tuareg delegates to the World Herders Council in Burkina Faso in 1998 defined pastoralists as “people who have a social relationship with livestock.”<sup>76</sup> According to Ilse Kohler-Rollefson and Hanwant Singh Rathore, “Religion is a major factor in shaping this bond.”<sup>77</sup> They suggest that the “intimate relationship between livestock, human identity and world view” must be considered in livestock development projects.<sup>78</sup>

In an engaging case from the highlands of Lesotho, James Ferguson illustrates the perception that cattle are often regarded as household possessions, not commodities for sale, in Africa. The main thrust of Ferguson’s insightful book, The Anti-politics Machine: “Development,” Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho, chronicles how a rangeland development project at Thaba-Tseka allowed an unexpected and unintended opening for political and military intervention. He convincingly demonstrates that “planned interventions may produce unintended outcomes.”<sup>79</sup> and notes that “the project was setup to provide technical solutions to ‘problems’ which were not technical in

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<sup>74</sup> Holland, African Magic, 100.

<sup>75</sup> From personal experience.

<sup>76</sup> Ilse Kohler-Rollefson and Hanwant Singh Rathore, “Building on Pastoralists’ Cosmovisions”, *COMPAS Newsletter* (July 2000), 19.

<sup>77</sup> Kohler-Rollefson and Rathore, “Building on Pastoralists’ Cosmovisions”, 19-20.

<sup>78</sup> Kohler-Rollefson and Rathore, “Building on Pastoralists’ Cosmovisions”, 20.

<sup>79</sup> Ferguson, James, The Anti-politics Machine: “Development,” Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 20.

nature.”<sup>80</sup> The western development experts failed to understand the traditional importance of the bovine mystique within local society. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) experts, prepared for western technocratic interventions, found themselves woefully unprepared to deal with extraordinary worldviews and unfamiliar community dynamics. In seeking to set up a western approach to rangeland management, the development experts were unable to grasp the egalitarian nature of wealth: “livestock is properly a social, shared domain of wealth and not a private, selfish, or unsociable domain like cash,”<sup>81</sup> and that anti-social behaviour in such circumstances was not possible. This was expressed in Ferguson’s reflection that “a livestock auction in Lesotho is about as much fun as a funeral.”<sup>82</sup> His case study illustrates that common people have common sense, augmented by a dimension of knowledge beyond foreign development experts.

The logic of such beliefs, which seem to fly in the face of progress, may often escape the technocratic vision of the bemused development practitioner. Holland suggests that when “the pie is limited”<sup>83</sup> the success of one member of society comes at the expense of another: “The heavy penalty for wealth reflects the widespread traditional African belief that many others suffer in order for a few to accumulate riches.”<sup>84</sup> At the root of such exceptional, and therefore anti-social conduct, is jealousy -- one of the most disruptive sins in the African firmament. The egotist who promotes him/herself, and the witch who

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<sup>80</sup> Ferguson, *The Anti-politics Machine*, 87.

<sup>81</sup> Ferguson, *The Anti-politics Machine*, 175.

<sup>82</sup> Ferguson, *The Anti-politics Machine*, 182.

<sup>83</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 10.

<sup>84</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 184.

encourages such socially destructive action. must therefore be expelled as societal outcasts.

Such positions may reflect an essentialist reading of culture, which do not take sufficient account of the dynamic and fluctuating movements that are constantly refining and redefining cultural norms, especially in a globalizing world. For example, in relation to Holland's comments in the previous paragraph, it might be argued that "big men" in Africa are to be emulated rather than envied. The phenomenal global spread of Pentecostal/ Charismatic Christianity in recent years may be partly attributable to its appeal to the "health and wealth" gospel.<sup>85</sup> Care must be exercised in any homogenization of southern populations, who represent vast differentiation in cultural outlook.

But the question should, nonetheless, be asked: how have such beliefs -- primordial, actual or residual -- impacted on development practice? Holland contends that: "If it is true that belief in witchcraft has promoted mediocrity by dampening the individual's desire for material gain, it must be among the causes of inadequate economic progress in Africa."<sup>86</sup>

In the Guatemalan context, Sherman agrees with many development scholars of a more secular perspective, that traditional religion has held back development possibilities.

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<sup>85</sup> Stephen Hunt, "'Winning Ways': Globalisation and the Impact of the Health and Wealth Gospel", *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 15, no. 3 (2000), 331-347; Joel Robbins, "The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 33 (2004), 117-143.

<sup>86</sup> Holland, *African Magic*, 21-22.

“While there is much that is rich, beautiful, and laudable in traditional Mayan culture, it also includes beliefs, values, and habits that hinder human development.”<sup>87</sup> Sherman argues that the substitution of a more dynamic worldview, equated with protestant evangelical Christianity, allows development to be unfettered: “As more and more people come to adopt the new worldview, the stifling grip of the traditional worldview can be loosed, making possible an economic takeoff.”<sup>88</sup> Such an expansive worldview, based on initiative and innovation rather than a closed-system worldview, emphasizing conformity and fatalism, allows for exceptional individuals to flourish rather than be punished. Thus, according to Sherman, “religious worldviews matter. Put simply, some religious worldviews are more likely to facilitate development than others.”<sup>89</sup> Whether one agrees with Sherman’s diagnosis or not, what cannot be denied, in either case, is that religious worldviews have affected development.

One area of comparative advantage for the poor is in the area of social capital, which may be one of the few assets that the poor possess. As a consequence, development programmes are increasingly cognizant of its possibilities. Christiaan Grootaert and Thierry van Bastelaer explain its characteristics: “First, and by definition, social capital, unlike human capital, cannot be built individually. Second, unlike physical capital (but like human capital), the stock of social capital does not decrease – and can actually increase – as a result of its use.”<sup>90</sup> But the authors also caution that: “Social capital in one

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<sup>87</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 69.

<sup>88</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 165.

<sup>89</sup> Sherman, The Soul of Development, 17.

<sup>90</sup> Christiaan Grootaert and Thierry van Bastelaer (Eds.), Understanding and Measuring Social Capital: A Multidisciplinary Tool for Practitioners, (Washington: The World Bank, 2002), 7.

context can be unsocial capital in another.”<sup>91</sup> Africa also bears testimony to that statement.

### 5.2.6 Muti, Mutilations and Masks

Mbiti emphasizes that traditional African religion has “been subjected to a great deal of misinterpretation, misrepresentation and misunderstanding.”<sup>92</sup> But questions remain as to the anti-developmental messages that accompany traditional worldviews. Some issues, with resonance for instance in biblical writings, may appear less vital in Western situations. Infertility, for example, is regarded in traditional society as a singular curse: “failure to bear children is worse than committing genocide.”<sup>93</sup> Another traditional taboo regarding twins, more comprehensible when viewed in terms of the belief that the Creator gives only one soul, may seem harsh when it justifies the killing of twins: “It was a bloody operation done to the corporate group, by the corporate group, for the corporate group.”<sup>94</sup>

Ritual killings have come to public attention as a result of a high profile case that occurred in 2001 in London. The mutilated body of a young boy, named Adam by investigators, was discovered in the River Thames. Detectives linked the crime to a ritual killing, which led the investigation to Nigeria,<sup>95</sup> a country that has been under the

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<sup>91</sup> Grootaert and van Bastelaer (Eds.), Understanding and Measuring Social Capital, 18.

<sup>92</sup> Mbiti, African Religions, 10.

<sup>93</sup> Mbiti, African Religions, 107.

<sup>94</sup> Mbiti, African Religions, 114.

<sup>95</sup> BBC, “Torso Murder Inquiry Moves to Nigeria”,  
<[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/2803441.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/2803441.stm)> (27/2/03).

spotlight concerning cultic killings.<sup>96</sup> Witchcraft is perceived to be a national rather than a peripheral issue: “Nigerians feel under siege. At places of worship, at school, at places of work, and virtually everywhere, they discuss what they describe as the ravages of witchcraft and in recent times, cultism.”<sup>97</sup>

While Nigeria and West Africa have been the centre of such attention, South Africa is also regarded as involved in the flourishing *muti* trade -- killings for body parts to be used in making powerful medicine. One report claims that such crimes are common: “Gerald Labuschagne, the head of South Africa’s muti murder investigation unit, the only investigative force in the world specializing in ritual killing, believes that there are more than 300 such murders in South Africa every year.”<sup>98</sup>

Many rumours have arisen with regard to cannibalism and witchcraft in the war in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), leading the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, to include cannibalism in a series of “appalling” human rights violations in Ituri.<sup>99</sup> In a gruelling article about the horrors of rape in the conflict zones of the DRC, Stephanie Nolen notes: “For the Mai-Mai, who incorporate a great deal of witchcraft into their fighting, there is also a fetishization of sex with the very young or the very old, which is believed to bring a soldier additional power or protection from harm.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> BBC, “Nigerian Ritual Killing Arrests”, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3540306.stm>> (6/8/04).

<sup>97</sup> BBC, “Plight of Nigerian ‘wizard’ boy, by Yusuf Muhammad. BBC, Kaduna, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3100848.stm>> (6/8/04)

<sup>98</sup> *The Times*, “African Boy Mutilated for ‘Medicine’”, reprinted in *The Chronicle Herald*, Halifax, (4/8/04), A7.

<sup>99</sup> BBC, “Congolese Rebels Deny Cannibalism”, <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2656713.stm>> (7/1/05).

<sup>100</sup> Stephanie Nolen “The War on Women”. *The Globe and Mail* (27/11/04), F8.

In the long-running conflict in northern Uganda, media reports have focused on the use of spirit mediums by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Witchcraft, employed to neutralize or deflect the effects of bullets, incorporates the use of body parts: "The logic behind this was the idea of immunization, that is, making the soldiers immune by injecting the inimical."<sup>101</sup>

Any examination of the indirect influence of religion on development possibilities would be incomplete without an appreciation that religious belief may be one of the factors in conflict, civil strife and war. While some conflicts are more obviously religious in nature, in others the religious dimension may be more obscured.<sup>102</sup>

One of the most comprehensive explorations of the less detectable religious dimensions of conflict in Africa is contained in Stephen Ellis' account of the Liberian civil war in The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War. Ellis discusses the masking societies of Liberia and the role they play in manifesting the spirit world in traditional society:

Although traditional masking societies no longer play the same role in public life as they did in the old days when such societies were the mainstays of political and social order in many communities, many Liberians nowadays continue to hold a residual belief that masks can serve as expressions of the elusive nature of reality and as instruments of order, and that, behind the social conventions which masks represent, there lurk deeper forces, invisible to the naked eye.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Heike Behrend, "Is Alice Lakwena a Witch?" in Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle, (Eds.), Changing Uganda: The Dilemmas of Structural Adjustment and Revolutionary Change, (London: James Currey, 1991), 169.

<sup>102</sup> As the United States is increasingly discovering in Iraq, in terms of the Sunni-Shia divide.

<sup>103</sup> Ellis, The Mask of Anarchy, 16.

Ellis argues that the equilibrium of the social world was greatly upset by the civil war: “The great sacrilege of the war is to have exposed the secrets of the masking societies to public view, as a result of which the spirits are unable to take visible form and to operate for the benefit of Liberia.”<sup>104</sup> Noting that the perception that good and bad fortune have their origin in this invisible world, he suggests that: “The spoken word, subject to a thousand interpretations and meanings, is not regarded as the deepest level of truth, but must be sifted for clues as to the real causes of visible events.”<sup>105</sup> The Liberian civil war, therefore, clearly, affords a window into another dimension, which controls the ultimate destinies of human beings.

### 5.2.7 Atoms and Molecules; Gods and Spirits

The African proverb declares that: “When a knowledgeable old person dies, a whole library disappears.”<sup>106</sup> It is hard to determine whether such long-standing bodies of knowledge find their origins in religious tradition, and to what extent a residual religious memory may explain indigenous worldviews and cosmovisions. Sambuli Mosha argues that an inseparable link exists between intellectual and spiritual formation in indigenous knowledge and education. Using Tanzania as a case study, Mosha explains that: “indigenous peoples experience life *holistically*. Everything that is thought, said, and done is done in relationship to the *whole* of life experience.”<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, 276.

<sup>105</sup> Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, 2.

<sup>106</sup> Louise Grenier, 1998. *Working With Indigenous Knowledge: A Guide for Researchers*. (Ottawa: IDRC, 1998), 1.

<sup>107</sup> R. Sambuli Mosha, “The Inseparable Link Between Intellectual and Spiritual Formation in Indigenous Knowledge and Education: A Case Study In Tanzania.” in Ladislaus M. Semali and Joe L. Kincheloe,



Ladislaus Semali and Joe Kincheloe make a clear differentiation between the knowledge systems of North and South:

If the discourse of Western science is mechanistic, exact, hypothesis driven, and in search of laws, universal generalizations, and grand theories, the discourse of many indigenous knowledge systems is metaphysical, based on the forces that connect people to one another, and inseparable from religion.<sup>108</sup>

In Louise Grenier's handbook on Indigenous Knowledge (IK), Working With Indigenous Knowledge: A Guide for Researchers, she makes little obvious reference to religious underpinnings, even in a comprehensive bibliography, but she does include religious references in her description of IK's basic make-up: "IK is stored in peoples' memories and activities and is expressed in stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, dances, myths, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, community laws, local language and taxonomy, agricultural practices, equipment, materials, plant species and animal breeds."<sup>109</sup> She argues that while such traditional responses may often be found wanting, more modern techno-scientific approaches have also failed to solve the complex challenges of global development. In recent years, growing trends towards participation and more acceptance of indigenous approaches have allowed a more sympathetic evaluation of ancient wisdom systems:

In the past, IK was widely regarded among development professionals as an academic, if not dilettantish, concern limited largely to social anthropologists. Much of it was seen as superstition. In the dominant model of development, useful knowledge was only generated in central places – in universities, on

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What is Indigenous Knowledge? Voices From the Academy, (New York and London: Falmer Press, 1999), 209.

<sup>108</sup> Semali and Kincheloe, "Introduction", 51.

<sup>109</sup> Grenier, Working With Indigenous Knowledge, 2.

research stations, in laboratories, then to be transferred to ignorant peasants and other people.<sup>110</sup>

Marrying the two bodies of knowledge may thus not only conserve considerable time and resources but also lead the development discourse into new areas, which may initiate, in Escobar's words, "new practices of seeing, knowing and being."<sup>111</sup>

Appiah contends that suggestions by Western scholars, such as Clifford Geertz, that religion is symbolic in nature are misleading with regard to traditional systems. The contemplative nature of Western religion is not reflected in African traditional religion, where the evidence for the existence of spirits is unquestioned. At first sight a wide gulf is apparent between Western and traditional patterns of thought. But upon reexamination, perhaps some of the differences are not as obvious, and Appiah suggests that: "traditional religious theory is in certain respects more like modern science than modern religion."<sup>112</sup> Scientific inquiry, like traditional inquiry, is based on trial and error. Traditional beliefs, like modern science, function at the level of "explanation, prediction, and control."<sup>113</sup> The "personal forces" of traditional religious theory are merely replaced by the "impersonal forces" of modern scientific theory.<sup>114</sup> Holland concludes her book with the observation that the Western world is not "as distant from the African belief system, as is generally assumed."<sup>115</sup> Horton agrees, acknowledging that the vast gap – the "spectacular contrast"<sup>116</sup> initially evident -- may be bridged once thought patterns are understood. For

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<sup>110</sup> Robert Chambers and Paul Richards, "Preface". in Warren et al. The Cultural Dimension, xiii.

<sup>111</sup> Escobar, Encountering Development, 223.

<sup>112</sup> Appiah, In My Father's House, 120.

<sup>113</sup> Appiah, In My Father's House, 118.

<sup>114</sup> Appiah, In My Father's House, 121.

<sup>115</sup> Holland, African Magic, 207.

<sup>116</sup> Horton, Patterns of Thought, 3.

instance, if the Westerner substitutes “atoms and molecules for gods and spirits.”<sup>117</sup> a bridge may begin to be constructed between the two worlds. Horton argues for similarity rather than difference, if three propositions are taken into account:

1. Both types of thought enter into human social life to make up for the explanatory, predictive and practical deficiencies of everyday, common-sense reasoning. 2. Both perform this function by portraying the phenomena of the everyday world as manifestations of a hidden, underlying reality. 3. Both build up their schemas of this hidden reality by drawing analogies with various aspects of everyday experience.<sup>118</sup>

He concludes that scholars were fundamentally flawed in placing religion in the category of the “aesthetic” rather than in the “theoretical–pragmatic” where it belongs.<sup>119</sup>

Horton admits that some traditional and static approaches to knowledge prevent an engagement with modern and dynamic progress. but, along with Helena Norbert-Hodge, he shares a lament for the cost of such innovation and achievement:

I agree that we in the West have paid a heavy price for modernity in general and for the scientific outlook in particular. I share the belief that we in the West can discover something about the quality of our society before it paid this price by looking at contemporary traditional cultures.<sup>120</sup>

A more sensitive approach to traditional religious systems may point to a more holistic vision of development.

### 5.3 Conclusion

As has been demonstrated in this Chapter, worldviews and cosmologies may significantly impact development outcomes. In many cases, religion cannot be separated from

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<sup>117</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought*, 200.

<sup>118</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought*, 347-8.

<sup>119</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought*, 385.

<sup>120</sup> Horton, *Patterns of Thought*, 103.

worldviews, which exercise a profound and formative influence on mindsets in the global South and affect – for good or ill – the prospects for development. Germond sums up the implications for development of “reflexive knowledge” – that knowledge that one acts on “spontaneously, unconsciously, uncritically and automatically.”<sup>121</sup> He suggests that identity formation among the intended beneficiaries of development affects the way they see themselves and, therefore, the way they “construct their sense of agency,”<sup>122</sup> with profound development implications for the success or failure of development interventions:

These individuals and communities have identities constituted in powerful ways by reflexive knowledges and unintentional and nonrelational forms of power. They are incarcerated in these identities as much as the development practitioners are incarcerated by their reflexive knowledges. The failure to recognize the power of reflexive knowledges to construct identity, most importantly through culture and religion, has led to many spectacular failures in development.<sup>123</sup>

In this formulation, development is holistic indeed.

Chapters Four and Five complete a broad and general survey that seeks to demonstrate that religion cannot be divorced from any study of international development. As has been shown, religion, both institutionally and individually, has affected development in the past and still does today, with effects that may be obvious and direct or unconscious and indirect. Religion is certainly one of the many complex, and often unappreciated, factors that impact on development outcomes.

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<sup>121</sup> Germond, “Theology, Development and Power”, 26.

<sup>122</sup> Germond, “Theology, Development and Power”, 31.

<sup>123</sup> Germond, “Theology, Development and Power”, 30.

The next Chapter examines how Canada's foremost development journal and principal development report address the question of religion.

## CHAPTER SIX

### RELIGION IN THE *CANADIAN JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES* AND *CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTS*

The interface between religion and development in Canada's primary journal and principal report in the field of international development is explored in this chapter.

Published by the University of Ottawa and the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID), the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* (CJDS) is an

...international and interdisciplinary journal for the discussion of a wide range of development issues. It is open to all theoretical and development strategy orientations and publishes contributions from all regions and countries of the developing world.

The CJDS is particularly interested in the policy applications of innovative theory and research, and the role of such countries as Canada toward the promotion of international development and a more equitable world order. Areas of interest include: aid and trade, regional disparities and agrarian reform, development administration, educational planning and human resource development, industrialization and transfer of technology, environmental issues, human rights and democratization issues, urbanization, and women in development.<sup>1</sup>

Since its inception in 1980, Canada's primary academic journal of international development has extended to 25 volumes; 72 issues and 599 articles. The titles and abstracts of these articles were examined in order to determine the incidence of

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<sup>1</sup> "Aims and Scope", *CJDS*, XXIV, no. 3, (2003), inside front cover.

references to religion in the *CJDS* throughout its history, and grouped into 56 subject categories for comparative purposes.

## 6.1 The *CJDS* Study

Writing in *Development in Practice*, Kurt Alan Ver Beek argues that spirituality is a “development taboo,” in spite of its centrality in the lives of the intended beneficiaries of development: the poor. Part of Ver Beek’s research encompassed a content analysis of three leading development journals -- *World Development*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Journal of Developing Areas* -- over the period 1982-1998. “Given the apparently integral link between spirituality and issues central to development, it would seem reasonable that spirituality would occupy a relatively prominent place in development theory and practice.”<sup>2</sup> These expectations were not realized in practice (see Figure 6:1):

These well-respected development journals have published dozens of articles and dedicated entire issues to the study of topics such as gender, population, and the environment – areas considered essential to the construction of sound development theory and practice. However, these same journals make only rare reference to the role of spirituality or religion in development. In fact, a search over the last 15 years of articles in *World Development* and *Journal of Development Studies* shows that the rare reference to religion is limited to its role as one of several descriptive categories. In not one of these articles is the relationship between development and religion or spirituality the central theme.<sup>3</sup>

It should, however, be pointed out that the parameters of Ver Beek’s study postdate the publication of a Special Issue in 1980 on “Religious Issues and Development” in the journal, *World Development*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Special Issue, “Religious Issues and Development”, *World Development*, 8, no. 7/8 (1980).

Figure 6:1 Number of articles with references to the listed keywords, by journal.<sup>5</sup>

Journals 1982-1998	Keywords : Religion and Religious
<i>World Development</i>	5
<i>Journal of Development Studies</i>	1
<i>Journal of Developing Areas</i>	10

The present study owes much to Ver Beek's pioneering work in this area. It also pays some attention to a similar study in the field of cross-cultural psychology, which examined four major cross-cultural journals (*Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*; *Cross-Cultural Research: The Journal of Comparative Social Science*; *International Journal of Psychology*; *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*) over a period of 34 years for references to religion. Results, which indicated a variation between two and six percent in terms of mentions of the subject, confirmed the fact, as the title indicates, that religion was "An Overlooked Dimension in Cross-Cultural Psychology,"<sup>6</sup> in spite of the fact that religion is "inextricably woven into the cloth of cultural life."<sup>7</sup> In contrast to Ver Beek, who used the *First Search* bibliographic database for his study, this study was based on a direct content analysis of the *CJDS*, to allow for greater nuance in terms of classification and to clarify ambiguities in the analysis of terms. Results are summarized in Figure 6:2.

<sup>5</sup> Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo", 37.

<sup>6</sup> Nalini Tarakeshwar, Jeffrey Stanton and Kenneth I. Pargament. "Religion: An Overlooked Dimension in Cross-Cultural Psychology," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34, no. 4, (2003), 377-394.

<sup>7</sup> Tarakeshwar et al, "Religion: An Overlooked Dimension", 377.



Figure 6:2 Subject Categories of 25 Volumes. 73 issues of the Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS).

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Title</i> 609	<i>Abstract</i> 507
Economy/ Finance/ Growth	112	283
Education	48	76
Gender	47	69
Aid/Assistance	34	54
Agriculture	32	75
Environment	30	53
Globalization	29	38
SAPs	29	34
Hunger/ Food Security	25	36
Rural Development	24	46
Industry/Industrialization	23	52
Poverty	21	66
Debt	18	26
Social	18	119
Market	17	67
Politics/ -al	16	92
Community Development	15	31
Trade	15	48
Technology	14	39
Health	13	26
Democracy	11	14
State/Nation	10	41
Human Security	10	15
Human Rights	9	17
Culture	9	46
Governance/Government	8	68
Sustainable Development	6	18
Migration	6	10
Human Development	5	12
MNCs	5	13
NGOs	5	21
Civil Society	4	13
Race/Ethnicity	4	9
Ethics	4	9
Power	3	26
Indigenous	3	13
Grassroots	3	9
Family	3	12
<b>Muslim/Islam</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
Population	2	14

9/11	2	3
Corruption	1	2
<b>Christian</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Hindu</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Confucian</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Church/Mosque/Temple</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Spiritual</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Sacred/Holy</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Faith</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Belief</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>God</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Liberation Theology</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Fundamentalism</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Morality	0	3

Reflecting the pre-eminence of economics within the essentially interdisciplinary discipline of IDS, articles on economic issues clearly dominated. 112 (18.4%) out of 609 titles, and 283 (55.8%) out of 507 abstracts, made reference to economics. Gender issues were covered 47 times (7.7%) in titles and 69 times (13.6%) in abstracts. The environment was mentioned 30 times (4.9%) in titles, 53 times (10.4%) in abstracts. By contrast, references to religion occurred three times (0.5%) in titles, five times (1.0%) in abstracts. Widening the scope of religious references to include Islam, Christianity, church and fundamentalism, those figures increase to 7 (1.1%) references in titles, 10 (2%) in abstracts. No references were found in titles and abstracts to such words as: faith, belief, spiritual, sacred, holy, Hindu, Confucian, Buddhist, God, Liberation Theology. Culture, into which religion may on occasion be subsumed, rated 9 (1.5%) mentions in titles, 46 (9.1%) in abstracts.

These results are compared with Van Beek, whose subject identifiers – spirituality and religion -- are narrower than those used in this study, and also reflect a shorter period of

examination. When *CJDS* figures are added to Ver Beek's table, results prove similar, as in Figure 6:3.

*Figure 6:3 Number of articles with references to the listed keywords. by journal. with the addition of the CJDS.*

Journals	Keywords : Religion and Religious: Spirituality
<i>World Development</i>	5
<i>Journal of Development Studies</i>	1
<i>Journal of Developing Areas</i>	10
<i>Canadian Journal of Development Studies</i>	5

In the last ten years, a number of special issues of the *CJDS* have been published, such as: International Development Studies in Canada: Canadian Universities and International Development; Debt Relief for the Poorest Countries; Gender, Feminism and the Civil Commons; The Postmodern Pivot in Development; Globalization. Development and Security; The Quest for Food Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; Results Based Management: Reviews and Evaluations; Participatory Development; Financial Liberalization; Labour and Employment Under Globalization; Governance. Democracy and Human Rights; Evaluating Experiences: Doing Development with Women; Selected Papers from CASID Conferences. At this point none of these have focused on religious, or even cultural, issues, though presently a call for papers exists around the theme which might allow space for mention of the immaterial: "Development from Within? Discourse,

Theory and Practice Emerging from the Cultures of Southern Countries and Indigenous Peoples.”

Out of a total of 685 disciplinary affiliations disclosed, 198 (29%) of the authors came from departments of Economics. Thus the preponderance of articles dealing with an economic theme is matched by the disciplinary affiliations of the authors, and may help explain why the economic growth model has enjoyed such resilience in the IDS field over the years. Only two authors are identified as coming from departments of Religious Studies: John Williams from Religious Studies at Memorial University and Lorne Kenny from Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at the University of Toronto. Figure 6:4 analyzes the disciplinary composition of Referees as well as Editorial and Advisory Boards from three representative issues (Volumes X, XX and XXV) over a period of fifteen years.

*Figure 6:4 Make-up of Referees, Editorial and Advisory Boards.*

Volume X (No. 2, 1989)

Referees: 102; 29 from Economics departments, 0 from Religious Studies or similar departments.

Associate Editors: 6 members, 2 from Economics.

Advisory Board: 26 members, 12 from Economics.

Volume XX (No. 3, 1999)

Referees: 172; 44 from Economics, 1 from Biblical Science.

Editorial Board: 9 members, 0 from Economics, 1 from Mission Studies.<sup>8</sup>

Advisory Board: 19 members, 5 from Economics.

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<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that the field of religion has been represented by long-standing member of the Board, and sometime Chair: Barry Myers, from Mission Studies at St. Paul University.

Volume XXV (No. 3, 2004)

Referees:

Editorial Board: 7 members, 0 from Economics.

Advisory Board: 19 members, 5 from Economics.

Figure 6:5 comprises a list of Editors-in-Chief from the inception of the *CJDS* until the present, with their disciplinary affiliations and dates of appointment.

*Figure 6:5 CJDS Editors.*

Vol. I, No. 1.	Maxime Crener (Administration) and Ozay Mehmet (Administration)
Vol. VI, No. 1.	Roger Roberge (Geography) and Ozay Mehmet (Administration)
Vol. VI, No. 2.	Roger Roberge (Geography)
Vol. IX, No. 1.	Camilo Dagum (Economics)
Vol. XII, No. 1.	Jose Havet (Sociology)
Vol. XV, No. 1.	Henry Rempel (Economics) and Brigitte Levy (Administration)
Vol. XXI, No. 1.	Brigitte Levy (Administration)
Vol. XXIII, No. 4.	Henry Veltmeyer (Sociology)

As may be deduced from the statistics presented above, academics from Religious Studies departments have played a minimal role in the *CJDS* over the years, in spite of its interdisciplinary appeal, thus reinforcing the assertion that religion has played little part in the articulation and direction of International Development Studies in Canada.

### 6.1.1 Methodology

Outlined below are some methodological concerns that have informed this study.

Different thematic sections have existed in the *CJDS* over the years: Responses and Dialogue; Points of View and Comments; Short Articles and Notes; Markings; Reviews of Events; Reflections on Development Practices. Articles in these sections -- titled, though without abstracts -- were included in the analysis. It proved difficult at times to understand why certain articles within a section (for instance, Points of View and Comments) should not merit an abstract, considering the length of the article, which in some cases exceeded those that did have abstracts appended. Only articles -- not Summary Pieces or Book Reviews -- were included in the analysis. One overall trend became noticeable: in the earlier years of the Journal, abstracts appeared to be longer, allowing for more subjects to be mentioned.

From the outset, it became apparent that one of the many methodological challenges in this aspect of the study would involve what to include or not to include under a particular subject heading or identifier. Subjectivity as to categorization of subjects is hard to avoid, and precision as to terms is fraught with difficulty. Clearly, some categories -- economics rather than SAPs, for example -- allowed for more inclusivity than others. In the case of economics, references to finance and growth were included, but a mere mention of terms -- "foreign exchange," "price elasticities," "economies of scale," "revenue ratios," "shadow pricing," "a profit and utility maximizing partial equilibrium framework" -- was rejected. However, on a few occasions, where multiple technical

references to the science of economics were included in the abstract, then their inclusion in the identifying category of economics was assumed and marked in the tabulating record. Therefore, conclusions can only be valid in general terms. The results should be considered as indications only of subject matter, reflecting general trends. On occasion, abstracts may not reflect the subject matter or content of the article as accurately as they might, leaving the researcher at the mercy of title and abstract.

Great care was exercised in the examination of terms. In the Special Issue on “Governance, Democracy and Human Rights.”<sup>9</sup> the identifier “Islam” is evident, but rather than signifying Islam as a religion, it refers to the name of one of the Guest Editors, Nasir Islam. Without care, such a coincidental reference might be incorporated in the statistics on “Islam,” illustrating the perils of a cursory and non-discriminating word search.

A number of categories invited overlap: “states” can refer to “Indian states”, “states of mind”, “altered states” – thus, care needs to be taken with too literal an interpretation. The term “environment” may be variously understood in different circumstances: the “security environment,” the “socio-cultural environment,” or the “biological and physical environment.” The latter meaning was registered, the former two rejected. In the context of religious terms, such as “faith,” ambiguities which would change the primary meaning were anticipated, as in “bad faith” or “articles of faith.” A number of identifiers are obviously imprecise. State/nation may work well when accompanied by an indefinite noun, but can find no place when identified as a specific nation or state. “Inequality” may

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<sup>9</sup> Special Issue, “Governance, Democracy and Human Rights”, XVII (1996).

often overlap with “poverty,” but cannot be included in that category without confirmation. Power obviously can embrace different meanings in different contexts. Does “community” have to be appended to development to qualify as “community development”? Answer: yes. Should “global” and “worldwide” be included under “globalization”? Answer: no. Civil Society proved a difficult category – “society” appeared more frequently without its descriptive adjective, and in such cases lacked the specificity of the double term. It should also be borne in mind that some researchers include the church, mosque or temple in “civil society.” A number of conjoining terms, such as “socio-economic” or “market economy,” were tallied under both constituent identifiers.

But in contrast to some ambiguity in the details, noticeable trends were clear, and it would be hard to deny an overall focus on economic matters in the CJDS over the years. Careful attention was paid to themes with potentially religious subject matter and religious terms were enumerated with exactitude. In addition to “religion,” twelve other identifying categories were looked for: “Christian,” “Hindu,” “Confucian,” “Buddhist,” “Islam/ Muslim,” “Church/Mosque/Temple,” “spiritual,” “sacred/holy,” “faith,” “belief,” “Liberation Theology,” “fundamentalism.” Each identifier allows for derivatives from the root -- for instance, “Buddhist/Buddhism/Buddha” would all qualify for inclusion.

As the study progressed it became obvious that the initial selection (following a pilot) of topics for analysis might have been expanded to include some of the following more common subject areas: urbanization, conflict, employment, information/media,



administration, participation. The category of “research” was considered too broad and too close to the purpose of the Journal to be usefully enumerated. As far as omitted categories, which may have played a significant role in the study’s central analysis, one in particular became apparent: “tradition.” Although references to the topic were few and far between, “tradition” may have been one category which might have benefited from further exploration.

Sport may be a subject area comparable in some ways to that of religion. Only four articles focusing on sport appear in the *CJDS*. Sport, like religion, is seen as peripheral to the practice of development, in spite of its vast popular appeal throughout the world and increasing integration into development practice. Devotees of both religion and sport often find themselves caught up in a search for meaning. It might, however, be maintained that religion is more central to the development initiative, occupying as it does such a significant private and public dimension in the lives of so many people. Interest and participation in sport also tends to attract more male than female interest – it might be argued that religion redresses the gender balance, and even privileges the popular participation of women.

## 6.2 Articles Referring to Religion in Titles and Abstracts

Each *CJDS* article mentioning religion and its derivatives will be analyzed in turn (by order of appearance in the Journal) in order to determine how central the religious aspect is to the overall relationship between religion and development. Identifiers in titles and abstracts are mentioned first, followed by bibliographical details and then a brief

description of the article outlining the significance of the subject to the larger debate surrounding religion and development.

***Title: Islamic***

***Abstract: Islamic, Religio-, Fundamentalist***

1. Vol. IV, No. 1, 1983. **Martin Rudner, "Higher Education and the Development of Science in Islamic Countries: A Comparative Analysis,"** 62–94.

Rudner's article discusses the relationship between higher education and science within six Islamic states: Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Egypt, Iraq, and Turkey. This sample of Islamic societies varies along a continuum from the theocratic to the secular. Religion thus impacts on Rudner's analysis, which begins with this observation:

The first World Conference on Muslim Education meeting in Jeddah and Mecca in April, 1977, urged that all fields of knowledge, including the sciences, be revised and resacralised in accordance with the tenets of Islam.<sup>10</sup>

Rudner exposes the uneasy relationship between science and education in the attempt to sacralize scientific research and higher education "in a way consistent with the theology of Islam."<sup>11</sup> Concluding with a lengthy discussion of science policy, Rudner shows how "the theological basis of Islamic public doctrine rejected, as a matter of fundamental belief, the essentially agnostic rationalism current in modern scientific thought."<sup>12</sup> Highlighting the tension between religion and science, he touches on development implications: "Science thus became subject to the political stresses of public policy precisely when the frustrations of under-development were compounded by the challenge

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<sup>10</sup> Martin Rudner, "Higher Education and the Development of Science in Islamic Countries: A Comparative Analysis," *CJDS*, IV, no. 1, (1983), 63.

<sup>11</sup> Rudner, "Higher Education", 63.

<sup>12</sup> Rudner, "Higher Education", 89.

of resurgent religiosity.”<sup>13</sup> “Fundamentalist” is used to describe Islamic regimes,<sup>14</sup> though fundamentalism itself is not directly examined. This article is essentially about the development of science within the framework of higher education, rather than with the interface of science and international development per se. Of course, educational policies will, in turn, have broader development implications, but the connection made in Rudner’s article is not direct.

***Title: Religion***

***Abstract: Religion***

2. Vol. V, No. 1, 1984. John Williams, “Religion, Ethics and Development: an Analysis of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka,” 157-167.

“The purpose of this paper is to show that religion can be a significant influence on socio-economic development in the Third World.”<sup>15</sup> The opening line of John Williams’ abstract not only promises to bring the two areas of religion and development together, but also delivers a penetrating analysis of the potential interactions between the two spheres of influence in this comprehensive analysis of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka. An outgrowth from Theravada Buddhism, the Movement by 1984 had “grown into the largest non-governmental village development organization in the country.”<sup>16</sup> Williams, from the Department of Religious Studies at Memorial University in Newfoundland, concludes by counselling that: “development agencies

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<sup>13</sup> Rudner, “Higher Education”, 93-94.

<sup>14</sup> Rudner, “Higher Education”, 62.

<sup>15</sup> John Williams, “Religion, Ethics and Development: an Analysis of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka,” *CJDS*, V, no. 1 (1984), 157.

<sup>16</sup> Williams, “Religion, Ethics and Development”, 159.

would be well advised to follow the example of Sarvodaya in adapting their programmes to the religious beliefs of the people with whom they are working.”<sup>17</sup> He continues:

In stressing the role of religion in development, I do not mean to deny the necessity of economic, political, sociological and other analyses of underdevelopment and plans for its solution. Religion is but one of many factors that must be considered. But if it is not considered, development planners run the risk of having their advice ignored by the people whose benefit they intend. This is not to say that every development expert must become a specialist in religion. What is needed is a team approach, with empirical social scientists who are sympathetic to religion working together with religionists who are interested in development. Such a collaboration can only serve to benefit both the study of development and, more importantly, the subjects of development – the poor and oppressed throughout the world.<sup>18</sup>

Ver Beek’s content analysis of three development journals, described earlier in the chapter, clearly does not uncover so direct a relationship between religion and development as in this *CJDS* article: “In fact, two of these journals contain not one article during this period in which the relationship between development and religion or spirituality was the central theme.”<sup>19</sup> He wonders in an endnote whether an article on the role of magic and witchcraft in development, published in *World Development*, “might fit this category.”<sup>20</sup> By contrast, this article by John Williams is clearly more comprehensive and decisively brings both areas of religion and development together in central focus and integrative synthesis.

***Title: Islamic***  
***No abstract***

3. Vol. V, No. 2 1984, Lorne M. Kenny, “Middle East and Islamic Studies in Canada,” 275-285.

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<sup>17</sup> Williams, “Religion, Ethics and Development”, 166.

<sup>18</sup> Williams, “Religion, Ethics and Development”, 166-167.

<sup>19</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 31.

<sup>20</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 42.

Lorne Kenny's article provides a comprehensive overview of the state of Middle East and Islamic Studies in Canada, circa 1984. Religion is integral to Kenny's study: "One cannot, in fact, understand Islam as a religion without investigating its impact upon the history and culture of the peoples who embraced that religion, and their interaction with other peoples on a global scale from the seventh century A.D. to the present."<sup>21</sup>

Discussing the origins and development of Islamic Studies departments in universities across Canada, he writes about his own university, the University of Toronto:

The creation of a distinct Department of Islamic Studies recognized the fact that a great university could no longer neglect the study of the religion, history and culture of nearly a billion members of the human race, especially since Islamic civilization made significant contributions to Western civilization in such fields as mathematics, medicine, philosophy, astronomy, agriculture, art and architecture.<sup>22</sup>

He concludes by suggesting that: "Beyond this internal problem, there is a formidable task facing us. There is a massive public ignorance and indifference, even antipathy many times; to our field of study."<sup>23</sup> Such comments long pre-date September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, and its aftermath. Though he stresses the importance of understanding religion in the context of the Middle East, Kenny does not focus directly on any connection between religion and international development.

***Title: Religion***

4. Vol. VII, No. 2, 1986, Harold Coward, "The Canadian Contribution to Studies of South Asian Religions," 281-291.

Harold Coward presents a comprehensive historical survey of the study of South Asian religions in Canadian universities, an area that became well established following the

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<sup>21</sup> Lorne M. Kenny, "Middle East and Islamic Studies in Canada," *CJDS*, V, 2, (1984), 277.

<sup>22</sup> Kenny, "Middle East", 279.

<sup>23</sup> Kenny, "Middle East", 284.

pioneering, and inclusivist, work of William Cantrell Smith at McGill in the 1950s.

Coward notes (circa 1986) that “some attention is now being given to the development studies area,”<sup>24</sup> and it would be interesting to ascertain the progression of such a trend in the ensuing decades. In spite of his acknowledgement of the overlap with development studies, it would be hard to read Coward’s article as anything other than a synopsis of the state of South Asian religious studies in Canada. As might be expected, history rather than development is the focus of this article.

Coward begins with research data from Edward Moulton’s Indian Studies in Canada in the Early 1980s: A Report and Directory:<sup>25</sup>

Work in the area of religion has dominated the Canadian contribution to the academic study of South Asia. Taking India as an example twenty three per cent of all Canadian scholars doing research on India are working in the area of religious studies. The next highest area of research scholars is thirteen per cent in the disciplines of political science and sociology. The figures for teaching are even more impressive: sixty three per cent of those teaching India are specialized in religious studies, with history teaching a distant second at ten per cent. Taking all Canadians working on India into account, fully twenty-five per cent of the 243 Indianists are contributing in the area of religious studies.<sup>26</sup>

Such statistics not only illustrate the lack of interconnection between departments of religious and development studies, but also raise questions as to why, with such resources available, religious scholars do not influence development studies to a greater extent. In this case, scholars of South Asian religions (and of other global areas) might be able to contribute much in cooperative ventures with scholars in development studies.

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<sup>24</sup> Harold Coward, “The Canadian Contribution to Studies of South Asian Religions,” *CJDS*, VII, no. 2 (1986), 285.

<sup>25</sup> See also Edward Moulton, “South Asian Studies in Canada: A State of the Discipline Review,” in *CJDS*, VI, no. 1 (1985), 129-145.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted by Coward, “The Canadian Contribution”, 281.

In a similar article, again from 1986, "Research and Teaching of Japanese History in Canadian Universities," Sinh Vinh devotes a section to explore Canadian interest in the history of Christianity in Japan: "As in Britain and the United States. Christian missionaries played an important role in providing the impetus for the beginning of East Asian Studies in Canada. As an extension of this tradition, to date the Christian movements still attract a great interest from Canadian Japanologists."<sup>27</sup>

*Title: Religion-Caste*

*Abstract: Religion-Caste*

5. Vol X, no. 1, 1989. **Autar Singh Dhesi and Harbhajan Singh, "Education, Labour Market Distortions and Relative Earnings of Different Religion-Caste Categories in India (A Case Study of Delhi)," 75-89.**

This paper by Autar Singh Dhesi and Harbhajan Singh "ascertains the relative earnings differential among the male adult employees to different religion-caste (RETE) categories."<sup>28</sup> Those categories include:

Hindu Brahmins, Hindu high caste, Hindu middle caste, Hindu lower caste, Hindu scheduled caste, Sikhs, Muslims and other religions (Buddhists, Christians, Parsis and other small minority groups).<sup>29</sup>

Education is central to the analysis, and prescriptions involve eliminating educational disadvantage or equalizing employment opportunities. The religious-caste (RETE) categories, therefore, bring religion to the foreground in this analysis.

*Title: Islam*

*Abstract: Islam*

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<sup>27</sup> Sinh Vinh, "Research and Teaching of Japanese History in Canadian Universities," *CJDS*, VII, no 1 (1986), 87.

<sup>28</sup> Autar Singh Dhesi and Harbhajan Singh, "Education, Labour Market Distortions and Relative Earnings of Different Religion-Caste Categories in India (A Case Study of Delhi)," *CJDS*, X, no. 1 (1989), 75.

<sup>29</sup> Dhesi and Singh, "Education, Labour Market Distortions", 79.

6. Vol. XIII, No. 3, 1992. **Moncef Djaziri, "Independence et changement politique en Libye: l'islam et l'évolution de l'Etat (1951-1990)," 337-357.**

This article, written in French, examines the evolution and dynamics of the Libyan political system. Moncef Djaziri focuses particularly on the legitimizing role that Islam, as both a religion and cultural code, played in the Jamahiriya regime under Kadhafi. Religion is discussed, but only in so far as it impacts on the Libyan political scene. Where Islam fits in Libyan developmental policy and practice is not directly addressed in this article, beyond the recognition that Libyan society finds itself in an uncertain transition from tradition towards modernity.

*Abstract: Church*

7. Vol. XV, No. 3, 1994. **Robert Fugere, "Sharing or Diminishing our Future? A Case Study in Policy Intervention," 369-381.**

Robert Fugere, then Executive Director of the InterChurch Fund for International Development, sets out his purpose in the first sentence of his abstract:

This paper is presented as a case study around a policy interaction taking place in Canada between an important sector of civil society -- namely the church community -- and the Canadian International Development Agency, the major state development actor.<sup>30</sup>

Revolving around a case study detailing the conflictual reaction around two reports dealing with development, and particularly structural adjustment policies, Fugere speaks to the influence of churches, church coalitions and development NGOs in influencing the policies of CIDA. He suggests, in conclusion, that "we must find new ways to share our

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<sup>30</sup> Robert Fugere, "Sharing or Diminishing our Future? A Case Study in Policy Intervention", *CJDS*, XV, 3 (1994), 369.



future with mutual respect and developed capacities.”<sup>31</sup> It would have been interesting to see a follow-up article on the subject of the relationship between FBOs and CIDA in the *CJDS*.

***Abstract: Religion***

8. Vol. XXI. Special Issue, 2000. Katherine Channell, “The Social Mobilization Approach: A Participatory Model for Local Resource Mobilization,” 479-493.

Katherine Channell discusses the Social Mobilization Approach (SMA), which argues that “solidarity created by micropolitical associations such as ethnicity, religion, class, culture, and gender is a form of social capital that can be used to mobilize local resources for development.”<sup>32</sup>

She uses two case studies to illustrate the capacity of religion for mobilization: the Children and War Project (C&W) and the Village Primary Health Care Project (VPHC). In the former example, she notes that: “The mobilization of the religious community is an excellent example of the participatory potential of the SMA philosophy. No outside intervention or catalyst was necessary to encourage or provide for local participation.”<sup>33</sup> Referring to the latter case study, Channell concludes: “The direct role of religion in the implementation was the determining factor in the extensive success of the VPHC.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Fugere, “Sharing or Diminishing”, 381.

<sup>32</sup> Katherine Channell, “The Social Mobilization Approach: A Participatory Model for Local Resource Mobilization”, *CJDS*, XXI, Special Issue (2000), 479.

<sup>33</sup> Channell, “The Social Mobilization Approach”, 485.

<sup>34</sup> Channell, “The Social Mobilization Approach”, 486.

She discusses the role of social capital in development and concludes: "Ethnic, religious, class, and cultural solidarity are much more accepted in the developing world as positive social forces and resources within the community."<sup>35</sup> This article, therefore, provides an insight, specifically through the lens of social capital, into the relationship between religion and development in the developing world.

***Abstract: Religion***

9. Vol. XXIII, no. 4, 2002. Edward Opoku-Dapaah, "International Aid: A Study of Canadian Opinions," 775-798.

Edward Opoku-Dapaah compares and contrasts the official purposes of Canada's international aid program with the opinions of the Canadian public. The author suggests that attitudes in Canada are hardening against international aid as a result of the interplay of a number of "personal factors such as one's values, religion, self-interest, and economic circumstances; and the broader social and economic context of Canada."<sup>36</sup>

Opoku-Dapaah constructs a profile of survey respondents: humanitarian-compassionate, realist, self-centred and ethnocentric. The humanitarian-compassionate are in a minority, but are more likely to be religious than the other categories:

It is worth noting that within Canada as a whole, lobbying by many church organizations has been sophisticated and effective in placing development assistance on the agenda of both politicians and the wider public. Given the active participation in church activities of respondents in this group, religious virtue may explain the high degree of concern for people in developing countries.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Channell, "The Social Mobilization Approach", 491-492.

<sup>36</sup> Edward Opoku-Dapaah, "International Aid: A Study of Canadian Opinions," *CJDS*, XXIII, 4, (2002), 797.

<sup>37</sup> Opoku-Dapaah, "International Aid: A Study of Canadian Opinions", 791.

Such admissions of religious influence are not always stressed in academic analysis.

*Title: Christian*

*Abstract: Christian*

10. Vol. XXIV, No. 3, 2003. Jesse Nancarrow Clarke, “Global Movements, Global Opposition: Sexual Rights Claims and Christian Conservatism,” 347-367.

Jesse Nancarrow Clarke’s article, which won the 2002 Kari Polanyi-Levitt prize for the best original essay by a student in the area of development, focuses primarily on conservative Christian opposition to sexual minority groups worldwide. Referring to the Christian right, Clarke draws attention to “the lack of analysis of this powerful group,”<sup>38</sup> and notes:

Current signs indicate that Christian conservative movements from political parties to extremist factions are growing in many contexts. The implications of this growth are an important and vastly under-researched topic in development studies, gender and development, and the nascent queering development field.<sup>39</sup>

This article, which concentrates intently on the opposition between Christian conservatism and sexual minorities, does not address the relationship between religion and the broader, more conventional, areas of development.

The results of this survey of ten articles directly mentioning a religious term are tabulated in Figure 6:6.

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<sup>38</sup> Jesse Nancarrow Clarke, “Global Movements, Global Opposition: Sexual Rights Claims and Christian Conservatism,” *CJDS*, XXIV, no. 3 (2003), 351.

<sup>39</sup> Clarke, “Global Movements”, 363.

Figure 6:6 Summary of articles mentioning religious subjects in the CJDS.

	<i>Title</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
Religion	3	5
Islam	3	2
Christian	1	1
Church		1
Fundamentalism		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>

Overall, it can be seen that of the ten articles outlined above, referring variously to religious themes in titles and abstracts in the course of *CJDS* history, only three -- the articles by Williams, Channell, and Dhesi/Singh -- address the overall relationship between religion and development in direct, rather than tangential or peripheral, analysis. It should also be noted that the first article, by Martin Rudner, gains three mentions in the Abstract column rather than one, but this does not affect the overall total of ten articles -- out of a total of 599 articles -- that refer to a religious term in either title or abstract.

### 6.3 Related Articles

Conclusions of interest may be drawn from other articles that allow no allusion to religion in their titles or abstracts. References to religion may appear within the text, but, it should be noted, so do numerous references to other subjects, unmentioned in titles or abstracts, such as poverty, gender or the environment. A few examples are outlined below. As in the previous section, articles will be analyzed sequentially.

Vol. I, No. 1, 1980. **Michael H. Glantz, “Man, State and the Environment: An Inquiry into Whether Solutions to Desertification in The West African Sahel are Known but not Applied,”** 75-97.

Writing in the inaugural issue of the *CJDS*, Michael Glantz suggests that “solutions to desertification in the Sahel have been known for a long time but, for one reason or another (technical, economic, political, cultural), have not been successfully applied.”<sup>40</sup>

Presenting a graduated schema for determining why this is so, he identifies three levels of interaction with the problem: the first at the level of the individual, the second at that of the state, and the third at the international level. He notes that the latter two areas have received by far the most attention from the development fraternity to the detriment of the first, or individual, level. Although he does not interrogate these first level issues of “human nature and behaviour” in any detail, clearly worldviews and cosmological factors, influenced directly or indirectly by religious factors, can significantly influence the individual’s perceptions about and approaches to the care of the environment.

Vol. III, No. 2, 1982. **Pierre Pascallon, “La Dimension Culturelle du Developpement,”** 290-320.

Culture remains a vast subject which often does not encourage precision regarding the relationship between the terms: culture and religion. How much religion and spirituality is subsumed under the category of culture is uncertain. Recognizing that culture has been historically separated from development or merely seen as a dimension of development, Pierre Pascallon suggests that “development is primarily a process of economics, and that

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<sup>40</sup> Michael H. Glantz, “Man, State and the Environment: An Inquiry into Whether Solutions to Desertification in The West African Sahel are Known but not Applied,” *CJDS*, I, no. 1 (1980), 76.

culture is merely an adjunct to it.”<sup>41</sup> Beyond a reference to Luther and Calvin, detailing their contribution to the rise of Western individualism. Pascallon doesn't concentrate on the role of religion in the “cultural development model” that he advances.

Vol. V, No. 2, 1984. Gilbert Rist, “Relations Interculturelles et Pratiques du ‘Developpement’”, 233-242.

Adding a contribution in French to the debate over the failures of development. Gilbert Rist argues that development “will only regain credibility if one ceases to attribute universal value to culturally determined concepts.”<sup>42</sup> He looks at various cultural norms (growth, rationality, time, work/labour, productivity) which are culturally interpreted in different ways according to different worldviews. What he does not address in this article is the role of religion in constructing such diverse positions in the first place.

Vol. VIII, No. 2, 1987. Claude Moulin, “Education, Tourisme, Tiers Monde,” 251-260.

Locating tourism as a valuable contribution to the development process, Claude Moulin seeks to ameliorate some of the abuses inherent in the system by proposing that tourists should be educationally prepared to “acquire an inner knowledge of themselves” in order to contribute positively to the “social, cultural and spiritual”<sup>43</sup> elements of tourism.

Vol. XI No.1,1990. Sadrudin Ahmed, “Comparison of Haitian and Canadian Managers’ Job Needs and Psychological Profile,” 81 – 98.

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<sup>41</sup> Pierre Pascallon, “La Dimension Culturelle du Developpement”, *CJDS*, III, no. 2 (1982), 290.

<sup>42</sup> Gilbert Rist. “Relations Interculturelles et Pratiques du ‘Developpement’”, *CJDS*, V, no. 2 (1984), 233.

<sup>43</sup> Claude Moulin, “Education, Tourisme, Tiers Monde,” *CJDS*, VIII, no. 2 (1987), 259.

Some articles border on the cultural values argument, but do not go below the surface to unearth the roots and determinants of that culture. In this cross-cultural study, Sadrudin Ahmed considers how the motivations and value systems of Canadian and Haitian managers differ. Looking at a wide range of personal characteristics through the prism of the Rokeach value system, made up of Terminal Values (such as world of peace, inner harmony, happiness, salvation) and Instrumental Values (such as cheerful, clean, loving, polite), Ahmed concludes that the Haitians were “less competitive, independent, individualistic and materialistic than the Canadians.”<sup>44</sup> with the result that they were “less likely to be motivated by economic rewards.”<sup>45</sup> Ahmed’s arguments, which have potential development implications, are reminiscent of the cultural argument debate over the role of Confucian values in the case of the rapid development of East Asia.

**Vol. XII, No. 1, 1991. David Butz, Steven Lonergan, Barry Smit, “Why International Development Neglects Indigenous Social Reality,” 143-157.**

One article, in particular, is isolated and analyzed below at some length in order to illustrate some of the ambiguities and lacunae within the debate. David Butz, Steven Lonergan and Barry Smit provide an intriguing case study in confirmation of Katherine Marshall’s contention that religion remains “one of the more significant ‘blind spots’ in past development practice,”<sup>46</sup> and Ver Beek’s assertion that the subject of religion/spirituality is “a development taboo.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Sadrudin Ahmed, “Comparison of Haitian and Canadian Managers’ Job Needs and Psychological Profile,” *CJDS*, XI, no. 1 (1990), 81.

<sup>45</sup> Ahmed, “Comparison of Haitian and Canadian”, 93.

<sup>46</sup> Marshall, “Development and Religion”.

<sup>47</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”.

Butz et al provide an insightful analysis as to why development programmes often are inadequate and, ultimately, fail. Their abstract is reproduced at length:

Development initiatives often result in degradation, rather than improvement, in the well-being of recipient communities. In part, this is because development agents lack adequate perceptions of indigenous priorities, and fail to appreciate the holistic nature of traditional rural communities. In this paper we outline, then critique, four prominent theoretical approaches to development: modernization, dependency, intermediate technology and sustainable development. We demonstrate that these theories, theories from which initiatives derive, neglect the social reality of recipient communities.<sup>48</sup>

Their conclusions closely approximate those of Ver Beek, who, in the context of religion/spirituality, contends that the aversion of researchers and practitioners to take seriously the realities and worldviews of indigenous peoples leads to “a failure to explore and understand an integral aspect of how Southern people understand the world, make decisions, and take action.”<sup>49</sup>

Outlining why many development initiatives fail, the authors point out that development agencies and their personnel set goals in accordance with “technocratic and bureaucratic priorities,” rather than identifying with “the *consciousness* of community members.”<sup>50</sup> In working towards an improvement in the classic development goals, such as health, education and poverty alleviation, development practitioners may overlook the “less tangible aspirations” and the “desires and needs” of target populations.<sup>51</sup> Nor do they appreciate “the *holistic* nature of many traditional rural communities.”<sup>52</sup> Because this

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<sup>48</sup> David Butz, Steven Lonergan, Barry Smit, “Why International Development Neglects Indigenous Social Reality”, *CJDS*, XII, no. 1 (1991), 143.

<sup>49</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 31.

<sup>50</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 144.

<sup>51</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 145.

<sup>52</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 145.



reductionist approach “separates everything from everything”<sup>53</sup> many development interventions are seen in isolation, and interconnected problems are overlooked, with “unexpected and undesirable long term consequences”<sup>54</sup> often resulting. Butz et al appeal for “an increased acceptance of the legitimacy of indigenous knowledge, and a search for development research methodologies which successfully probe the phenomenological realities of people dwelling in potential recipient communities.”<sup>55</sup> Such an appeal foreshadowed the trend towards participatory strategies and methodologies in development praxis in the succeeding years.

In the heart of the article, the authors then critique four prominent approaches towards development -- Modernization, Dependency, Intermediate Technology and Sustainable Development -- for their neglect of local indigenous social reality. The authors conclude:

The four prominent approaches to theories of development outlined above show a lack of understanding and concern for indigenous community consciousness and of appreciation for the integration among social, political, economic and ecological aspects of community existence. They also neglect the need to assess and integrate development at a number of levels, from household to global political economic systems.<sup>56</sup>

Butz et al then prescribe “a new approach to development”:

What is needed is a new approach to development which considers the consciousness of community members, which incorporates the integrated pattern of material and non-material relations which comprise social existence *at the community level*, and which has the theoretical rigour to relate community level circumstances to sub-systemic attributes operating at higher and lower levels. This new approach to community development must come to terms theoretically with the how and why of individuals’ actions ... and must suggest efficient

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<sup>53</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 145.

<sup>54</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 145.

<sup>55</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 146.

<sup>56</sup> Butz et al, “Why International Development Neglects”, 154.

methods for discovering the specific hows and whys of particular indigenous groups.<sup>57</sup>

The authors' emphasis on community development, which in many respects was ahead of its time, is laudatory. However, this quite remarkable article, which seeks to broaden out the development debate significantly, contains a blind spot of ironic proportions. In suggesting that western technocratic intervention ignores a whole dimension of indigenous social reality, Butz et al completely avoid a mention of the role of religion or faith in the construction of that reality. On a number of occasions when the use of the words "spirituality" or "belief" would naturally have fitted in the context, the authors shun them altogether.

The "Intermediate Technology" approach of E. F. Schumacher is considered by the authors, and invites scrutiny. Schumacher criticizes the Western World for its obsession with materialist philosophy, noting that "materialism has no limiting principle."<sup>58</sup> He also critiques the Western preoccupation with economic growth in terms of size and scale, commodification and quantification: "The result, according to Schumacher, is that nothing is perceived as sacred or profane, as long as its creation or destruction can be justified by price."<sup>59</sup> Butz et al then cite a passage from Schumacher which mentions "spiritual death"<sup>60</sup> and quote his reference to Buchsbaum who refers to "the religion of economics."<sup>61</sup> The authors proceed to discuss his methodological framework which "Schumacher suggests will provide a measure of material wealth and spiritual well-being

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<sup>57</sup> Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 154.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 149.

<sup>59</sup> Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 149.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 150.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 150.

to the world's poor."<sup>62</sup> In these quotes, two references to "spiritual," one to "religion," and one to "sacred" are all attributed to Schumacher or other authors. The closest Butz et al approach to such religious terminology are in the expressions: "non-materialist"<sup>63</sup> and "non-material."<sup>64</sup> It must be wondered whether this represents a deliberate attempt on the part of the authors to avoid the use of religious terms.

The framework that Butz et al incorporate repeatedly stresses four "interrelated spheres of activity and organization: social, economic, political and ecological."<sup>65</sup> In this case, both religion and culture are presumably subsumed under the category of "social." But the question remains: why, in an article about International Development and Indigenous Social Reality, neglect to mention, let alone explore, the religious underpinnings of such a worldview?

Vol XVI, Special Issue, 1995. Habiba Zaman, "Resistance Against Seclusion: Women, Work, and Patriarchy in Bangladesh," 105-122.

In "Resistance Against Seclusion: Women, Work, and Patriarchy in Bangladesh," Habiba Zaman discusses the issues of *purdah* and patriarchy in the context of a case study in a Bangladeshi village. Describing *purdah* as "the cultural practice" of seclusion. Zaman asks the question: "To what extent does Islam – both as a religion and a culture system – contribute to male domination in Bangladesh?"<sup>66</sup> The author hardly touches on the impact

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<sup>62</sup> Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 150.

<sup>63</sup> Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 148.

<sup>64</sup> Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 154.

<sup>65</sup> Butz et al, "Why International Development Neglects", 155.

<sup>66</sup> Habiba Zaman, "Resistance Against Seclusion: Women, Work, and Patriarchy in Bangladesh," *CJDS*, XVI, Special Issue (1995), 108.

of Islam as a religious system and the answers she posits come almost exclusively from the realm of culture.

Vol. XVI, No. 3, 1995. Margot Wilson-Moore, "Ruin or Metamorphosis: Interpreting Change in the Context of Nationalizing Development Programs," 455-467.

Margot Wilson-Moore wrestles with the problem of differing northern and southern values in development programming in a case study involving the Centre for Training and Rehabilitation of Women (CTRDW) in Bangladesh.

Cultural perspectives impact development planning and implementation to a large extent and the recent emphasis on transferring the management and responsibility for programs to national staff has sometimes wrought unexpected (and surprising) changes. Programs are routinely initiated and funded by outsiders based on their understanding of the problems faced by people in other cultures. Often these "outsider" perceptions do not coincide with indigenous perceptions of the same problem.<sup>67</sup>

Wilson-Moore writes as an anthropologist, whose "perspective on change emphasizes culture as a holistic ideological construct encompassing economic, political, religious and social processes."<sup>68</sup> Debates around such issues as unwanted pregnancies clearly are informed to some extent by religious perspectives, and illustrate the often wide gulf between northern and southern interpretation of cultural norms. In a later article, Wilson-Moore focuses on another case study in Bangladesh, the Danish-Bangladeshi Leprosy Mission (DBLM), which found its roots in the influential work of Danish missionaries.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Margot Wilson-Moore, "Ruin or Metamorphosis: Interpreting Change in the Context of Nationalizing Development Programs", *CJDS*, XVI, no. 3 (1995), 455-467.

<sup>68</sup> Wilson-Moore. "Ruin or Metamorphosis", 457.

<sup>69</sup> Margot Wilson-Moore, "'Alas, I am Undone, for I am a Leprosy Patient.' Applying Anthropological Methods to Planned Change", *CJDS*, XVIII, no 3, (1997), 485-502.

Vol. XIX, No. 1, 1998. Prabir Bhattacharya, "Determinants of Fertility in Three North Indian States: Caste, Female Autonomy and Economic Development," 37-53.

Two articles referring to caste appear in Volume XIX. In analysing fertility trends in three states in northern India, Prabir Bhattacharya looks at variables which impact on women's fertility. One of these is religion, to which he devotes a section, acknowledging that while religion's effect on fertility is well known, "its impact varies from country to country and even in different areas within the same country."<sup>70</sup> He examines the impact of both Hinduism and Islam on fertility in a growing climate of secularization. His findings show that "the scheduled tribe status -- though not the scheduled caste status -- has a substantial negative effect on fertility."<sup>71</sup>

Vol. XIX, No. 2, 1998. Raghav Gaiha, "On the Persistence of Poverty in Rural India," 281-314.

In a survey of Maharashtra during a period of rapid growth, Raghav Gaiha finds that "despite some weakening over time, caste-barriers continue to perpetuate the poverty of low-caste households."<sup>72</sup> Beyond using the scheduled castes as a framework for analysis in the article, the author does not focus primarily on the origin or perpetuation of the caste system, but rather on efforts to improve the endowments of the poor.

Vol. XXII, No. 2, Special Issue, 2001. "Debt Relief for the Poorest Countries."

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<sup>70</sup> Prabir Bhattacharya, "Determinants of Fertility in Three North Indian States: Caste, Female Autonomy and Economic Development," *CJDS*, XIX, no. 1 (1998), 40.

<sup>71</sup> Bhattacharya, "Determinants of Fertility", 37.

<sup>72</sup> Raghav Gaiha, "On the Persistence of Poverty in Rural India," *CJDS*, XIX, no. 2 (1998), 281.

In the Special Issue on debt relief, five references to *Jubilee 2000* were identified. The religious dimension of organizations may not often be noted or emphasized in the development literature, as in this case with *Jubilee 2000*, an initiative of essentially Christian origin: “The NGO position is encapsulated within the *Jubilee 2000*, a coalition of NGOs. The point of departure for the Jubilee 2000 position on debt sustainability is the human development need.”<sup>73</sup> One of the Special Issue’s Editors, John Serieux, introduces the coalition by referring to “*Jubilee 2000* (and other Northern civil-society organizations).”<sup>74</sup> To be fair, later in the article, he does acknowledge a religious dimension:

The incredibility of that perspective was not lost on civil-society and religious organizations in the North, who organized campaigns through the Jubilee 2000, Eurodad, and others, to push for more significant and more immediate debt relief for the poorest countries.<sup>75</sup>

Shortly thereafter he describes the movement more fully:

It is no accident that debt reduction for poor countries only made substantial progress after civil-society organizations, through the Jubilee 2000 and other campaigns, lobbied creditor governments for substantial (if not complete) debt forgiveness for poor countries.<sup>76</sup>

From these references, it is apparent that the religious origin and dimension of the *Jubilee 2000* movement is not emphasized.

**Vol. XXIII, No. 3, Special Thematic Section, 2002. “Globalization, Development and Security: The Aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.”**

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<sup>73</sup> Befekadu Degefe, “Ethiopia’s External Debt: The Impact and the Way Forward.” *CJDS*, XXII, no. 2 (2001), 405.

<sup>74</sup> John E. Serieux, “Debt of the Poorest Countries: Anatomy of a Crisis Kept on Hold”, *CJDS*, XXII, no. 2 (2001), 306

<sup>75</sup> Serieux, “Debt of the Poorest Countries”, 332.

<sup>76</sup> Serieux, “Debt of the Poorest Countries”, 335.

A Special Thematic Section considering the aftermath of 9/11 might well have provided an opportunity for some discussion of religious fundamentalism and its impact on development and geopolitics. However, neither the Introduction by Editors Brigitte Levy and Henry Veltmeyer, nor articles by James Petras, John Saxe-Fernandez (focusing in turn upon Mexico and Latin America) and Noam Chomsky mention religion's place in the changed post-9/11 world.

Vol. XXIV, No. 3, 2003. Fahimul Quadir, "How 'Civil' is Civil Society? Authoritarian State, Partisan Civil Society, and the Struggle for Democratic Development in Bangladesh," 425-438.

Vol. XXIV, No. 3, 2003. Mohammed Hasan Reza, When Culture Trumps Ideology: Micro-Enterprise and the Empowerment of Women in Bangladesh," 439-459.

Vol. XXIV, No. 3, 2003. Aradhana Parmat, "Micro-Credit, Empowerment, and Agency: Re-Evaluating the Discourse," 461-476.

Bangladesh is the geographical context for three back-to-back articles in the same issue. Even though religious factors and forces often play significant roles in civil society, little focus on this aspect appears in Fahimul Quadir's article about civil society and democratization in Bangladesh. Apart from briefly noting the rise of *fatwas* against some of the larger NGOs, which led "the NGO sector to align itself with the secular forces and to assume a more defined ideological role,"<sup>77</sup> comparatively little attention is paid to the religious dimension of Bangladeshi life, although he does note that both Generals, Zia and Ershad, "succeeded in using religion to legitimize their regimes."<sup>78</sup> One senses that

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<sup>77</sup> Fahimul Quadir, "How 'Civil' is Civil Society? Authoritarian State, Partisan Civil Society, and the Struggle for Democratic Development in Bangladesh," *CJDS*, XXIV, no. 3 (2003), 435.

<sup>78</sup> Quadir, "How 'Civil' is Civil Society?" 430.

religion may play a more pervasive role behind the scenes than is described in this article, written from the perspective of political science.

The following two articles, again in Volume XXIV and also about Bangladesh, focus on women and empowerment as a result of their involvement in micro-credit enterprises. In the course of arguing that culture trumps ideology, Mohammed Hasan Reza recognizes “the religio-political environment that exists in Bangladesh.”<sup>79</sup> At first sight, Reza’s argument might appear to reinforce the primacy of religion in societal life, but he cautions against an uncritical acceptance of such a position:

It is attractive to regard certain cultural practices in Bangladesh as being driven by strong religious forces. There is very little evidence to support that conclusion. In the general elections of October 2001 the fundamentalist Islamic party received 5.3% of the popular vote. The overwhelming Muslim majority of the population (85%) is clearly more in tune with Islamic social and cultural teachings than with the purely religious tenets of the faith.<sup>80</sup>

Reza acknowledges the “complexity of the issues” in “the interweaving of gender, class, society, economy, and the role of religion in the cultural nexus”<sup>81</sup> but, as in the previous article, one senses an unwillingness to investigate the role of religion in cultural formation.

The third article, by Aradhana Parmar, “Micro-Credit, Empowerment, and Agency: Re-Evaluating the Discourse,”<sup>82</sup> challenges conventional wisdom that micro-credit schemes are empowering to women, concluding that: “There is now considerable reason to believe

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<sup>79</sup> Mohammed. Hasan Reza, “When Culture Trumps Ideology: Micro-Enterprise and the Empowerment of Women in Bangladesh”, *CJDS*, XXIV, no. 3 (2003), 440.

<sup>80</sup> Reza, “When Culture Trumps Ideology”, 442.

<sup>81</sup> Reza, “When Culture Trumps Ideology”, 446.

<sup>82</sup> Aradhana Parmar, “Micro-Credit, Empowerment, and Agency: Re-Evaluating the Discourse.” *CJDS*, XXIV, no. 3 (2003), 461-476.



that micro-credit programs, may, in fact, serve to exacerbate gender hierarchies and reinforce the exploitation of women.”<sup>83</sup>

Much of her analysis is based around gender or class oppression. She does acknowledge the interconnectedness of oppressions: “Furthermore, it is of critical importance to recognize that empowerment is not gender specific: it transcends gender, class, race, ethnicity, and other categories of possible oppression.”<sup>84</sup> Religion -- an obvious candidate for inclusion -- is not mentioned. “The ultimate goal should be the elimination of all exploitative structures, regardless of whether they are based on gender, class, or any other line of demarcation.” The omission of religion as a potential site of oppression may diminish her analysis significantly. Two examples may be advanced.

In critiquing neo-liberal economic reforms in the Bangladeshi context, she notes that “the values of competition and individualism, which are central to neo-liberal ideology, offer little to women in terms of encouraging the solidarity and collective spirit that is necessary to build a mass movement that can effectively confront and dismantle unjust systems and institutions.”<sup>85</sup> Does she pay any attention to the role of religion in forging whatever “solidarity” and “collective spirit” does exist?

“There is also a tendency in the discourse of empowerment to overlook the inner strength and resilience that many poor women have developed – despite their positional

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<sup>83</sup> Parmat, “Micro-Credit, Empowerment”, 475.

<sup>84</sup> Parmat, “Micro-Credit, Empowerment”, 474.

<sup>85</sup> Parmat, “Micro-Credit, Empowerment”, 469.

vulnerability as poor women in a patriarchal society.”<sup>86</sup> A more searching analysis of the sources of such inner strength might be instructive. What coping mechanisms at the personal and communal level exist? What role might belief systems play in developing and maintaining such “inner strength” and “resilience”?

This article suggests a northern/western analysis of a southern/eastern problem. But it may also indicate a lack of confidence to bring religion to the fore in the research and analysis.

All three articles reinforce the conclusion that religion plays a peripheral role in the study of development, as demonstrated by the omission of any religious dimension in the titles and abstracts. They also confirm the supposition that some precision and explanatory capacity may be lost when religion is sidelined in the analysis of developing societies.

Vol. XXV, No. 1, Special Issue, 2004. “International Development Studies in Canada”

Religion/ spirituality/ faith does not get a mention in titles or abstracts in this Special Issue, which forms the background to the “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada,<sup>87</sup> but issues are raised of some significance to the topic.

Vol XXV, No. 1, 2004. Arja Vainio-Mattila, Kris Inwood, and Aradhana Parmar, “Perspectives on International Development Studies in Canadian Universities: The Canadian Consortium of University Programs in International Development Studies (CCUPIDS),” 147-166.

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<sup>86</sup> Parmar, “Micro-Credit, Empowerment”, 465.

<sup>87</sup> Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) and the North-South Institute (NSI), “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, (Ottawa, 2003).

One of the themes that becomes clear in this Special Issue of the *CJDS* is the ability of International Development Studies to be inclusive of widely different perspectives: “It will be evident that IDS is a field of great variety and complexity encompassing perspectives so divergent as to be almost opposite at times.”<sup>88</sup> This allows for the surge of the “development and...” syndrome, explored in other articles.

Vol. XXV, No. 1, 2004. Leonora Angeles, “New Issues, New Perspectives: Implications for International Development Studies,” 61-80.

In searching for new approaches, Leonora Angeles discusses in detail the “development and...” syndrome in her article, the abstract of which is reproduced at length:

This paper examines the introduction of “new” contextual issues and analytical concepts within International Development Studies (IDS) that have shaped the current penchant for the “development and other” focus. Contextual issues (e.g., poverty, aid, health, education, HIV/AIDS, new information and communication technologies [ICTS], peacekeeping, and conflict resolution) and highly contested analytical concepts (e.g., gender, environment or sustainability, civil society, globalization, good governance, social capital, capacity building, participation, empowerment, and security) have been wedded to core development questions. The paper examines how this “development and...” focus has shaped development studies and provided the foundations for a new and invigorated generation of development theories. It analyzes how the introduction of “new” contextual issues and analytical concepts has challenged, or failed to challenge, our conceptual understanding of development issues.<sup>89</sup>

If evidence were needed that the field of religion is not seriously considered in IDS then this article by Leonora Angeles provides confirmation. Her lists of contextual issues and

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<sup>88</sup> Arja Vainio-Mattila, Kris Inwood, and Aradhana Parmar, “Perspectives on International Development Studies in Canadian Universities: The Canadian Consortium of University Programs in International Development Studies (CCUPIDS)”, *CJDS*, XXV, no. 1 (2004). 147.

<sup>89</sup> Leonora Angeles, “New Issues, New Perspectives: Implications for International Development Studies,” *CJDS*, XXV, no. 1 (2004), 61.

analytical concepts omit any mention of culture, let alone religion. In a previous article in this Special Issue, Timothy Shaw had pointed out that the unique ability of IDS to incorporate new and emerging issues into the discourse of IDS could be a distinct and unique strength.<sup>90</sup> As is obvious from this dissertation, “Development and...” has little space at this time for “Development and Religion.”

Vol. XXV, No. 1, 2004. Jorge Nef, “**International Development Studies and Ethical Dilemmas in Academia,**” 81-100.

Over the course of the history of the *CJDS*, a number of articles, eight to be precise, have introduced ethics into the development debate. These are not directly analyzed here, although a recent article by Jorge Nef is representative.

Nef suggests that the neoliberal drive towards power and profit pays insufficient attention to quality of life and human dignity issues: “Once again, by design and default, in the absence of a unified and critical paradigm, the assumptions of modernization theory, even its ethical inconsistencies and double standards, reign supreme.”<sup>91</sup> An ethical reaction to the questionable foundations of the development enterprise may encourage greater attention to what Denis Goulet termed, “development ethics,” where the “enhancement of *being* is an end for which *having* is a means for its attainment.”<sup>92</sup> Nef urges “a holistic, multi-layered, and comprehensive approach in which multiple dimensions of development – environmental, economic, social, political, and cultural – can be

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<sup>90</sup> Timothy M. Shaw, “International Development Studies in the Era of Globalization ...and Unilateralism”, *CJDS*, XXV, no. 1 (2004), 17-24.

<sup>91</sup> Jorge Nef, “International Development Studies and Ethical Dilemmas in Academia,” *CJDS*, XXV, no. 1 (2004), 96.

<sup>92</sup> Nef, “International Development Studies”, 97.

integrated and analyzed.”<sup>93</sup> Terms such as ethics and, more broadly, culture may mask appreciation of an underlying spiritual dimension in development. Nef anchors his analysis on the cultural and ethical level, without further excavating a spiritual dimension where values are often constructed, contested and refined.

Vol XXV, No. 1, 2004. Bonnie Campbell et Marie Mazalto, “Multilatéralisation et développement international: nouveaux enjeux, nouvelles pratiques,” 101-118.

In examining fundamental changes in the field of international development cooperation in Quebec, Bonnie Campbell and Marie Mazalto mention the influence of the Catholic NGO, Development and Peace (Développement et Paix), in one paragraph.

Vol. XXV, No. 2, 2004. Busha Taa, “East African Pastoralist Culture and the Problems of Development,” 311-320.

While initially advancing a culture–centric argument, similar in vocabulary and terminology to that of Butz, Lonergan and Smit, Busha Taa diverges dramatically at the conclusion of his article. Focusing on the perennial frictions and misunderstandings that exist between pastoralists and the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya, Taa spends much time explaining the cultural disconnect that impedes understanding and thwarts development. National governments, in their haste to develop, fail to grasp the complexity of traditional societies, which “relish a primordialist ideology that celebrates tradition and indigenoussness.”<sup>94</sup> Only at the conclusion of the article does Taa, having

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<sup>93</sup> Nef, “International Development Studies”, 97.

<sup>94</sup> Busha Taa, “East African Pastoralist Culture and the Problems of Development,” *CJDS*, XXV, no. 2 (2004), 313.

framed his argument within the broad parameters of culture up to this point, introduce issues of faith at the heart of the debate, in language rather foreign to the *CJDS*:

Most pastoralists have complete faith in God – a God that is unchangeable, uncorrupted, and eternal. They are conscious of being God’s creation and often manifest their godliness. The culture, customs, and reason of these people take reference from the words scripted in the Bible or the Koran rather than in state constitutions.<sup>95</sup>

Vol XXV, No. 2, 2004. Blessings Chinsinga, “Poverty and Food Security in Malawi: Some Policy Reflections on the Context of Crumbling Support Systems,” 321-342.

In contrast to Taa, Blessings Chinsinga pays little attention to the underlying basis for cultural adoption of traditional support systems in rural Malawi. Outlining a number of traditional customs around funeral and illness support, communal eating, support for the vulnerable, marriage support, and table culture, she notes how commercial relationships, exacerbated by adjustment regimes, market distortions and food insecurities, are replacing these traditional support systems. Even though she acknowledges that many of these cultural obligations are “deeply ingrained,”<sup>96</sup> she does not discuss the cultural or religious origins of many of these customs, nor does she mention the efforts of faith based communities or secular NGOs to fill the widening gap between those better off and those worse off within society.

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<sup>95</sup> Taa, “East African Pastoralist Culture”, 319.

<sup>96</sup> Blessings Chinsinga, “Poverty and Food Security in Malawi: Some Policy Reflections on the Context of Crumbling Support Systems”, *CJDS*, XXV, no. 2 (2004), 334.

## 6.4 *CJDS* Conclusions

Following an exhaustive examination of the past twenty five year history of the *CJDS*, it is clear that the role of religion in development receives very little attention, and might even be described as a non-subject -- peripheral at best, irrelevant at worst. As outlined in the text, only one article, by John Williams, focuses directly on both areas; a further two, by Katherine Channell as well as Autar Singh Dhesi and Harbhajan Singh, bring the relationship between religion and development into their analyses, while the remaining seven articles, which mention a religious term in title or abstract, are somewhat peripheral to an analysis of the two subject areas. These findings, therefore, essentially confirm those found in the former study by Ver Beek. Some surprising omissions cannot be ignored. For instance, no articles focus on the effects of Liberation Theology in the development context of Latin America, nor is there any attention to one of the major players on the Canadian development scene. World Vision.

The *CJDS* reflects the primacy of economics in the interdisciplinary nature of International Development Studies. The articles focus to a large extent on technocratic interventions, defined by measurable results, while the economics professoriate plays a prominent role on the Boards and as Referees of the *CJDS*. While the “development and...” syndrome has expanded to include a number of pioneering combinations over the 25 year history of the *CJDS*, as discussed by Leonora Angeles, “development and religion” still finds very little circulation in the literature, at least in Canada.

## 6.5 Canadian Development Reports

Together with the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, the Canadian Development Reports also reflect Canadian research and thinking on development. The annual Canadian Development Report (CDR), modeled along the lines of its more famous cousins to the South, the WDR and HDR, was launched in 1996/7. The first volume quotes Commonwealth Secretary General, Shridath Rampaul:

Today a confused global neighbourhood needs the enlightened leadership that Canada has given so often in the past through insistent urging and sustained example. It is not so much that more is demanded of Canada than of others, but that the world would be much poorer without the quality of internationalism that has been peculiarly Canada's.<sup>97</sup>

Canada's internationalism is often considered integral to its identity, and is reflected in this series of annual Reports, published by The North-South Institute in Ottawa. The Institute is considered "Canada's first independent, non-governmental and non-partisan research institute focused on international development."<sup>98</sup> The CDRs are examined in order to determine the place that religion and faith-based organizations are afforded in Canadian publications on international development.

### **Canadian Development Report 1996-97. Fairness in a Shifting World.**

Edited by Clyde Sanger and Rowena Beamish.

With the unique Canadian contribution to the company of nations, as a middle-power nation without an obvious colonial history and with a reputation for promoting peace in the world, it was perhaps not surprising that the first issue of the CDR would focus on the

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<sup>97</sup> Shridath Rampaul, "Foreword", Canadian Development Report 1996-97, (Ottawa: North-South Institute, 1997), 1.

<sup>98</sup> The North-South Institute, <[http://www.nsi-ins.ca/ensi/about\\_nsi/index.html](http://www.nsi-ins.ca/ensi/about_nsi/index.html)> (28/2/05).



motto of The North-South Institute, "Research for a Fairer World." Fairness, so quintessential a characteristic in Canadian self-perception, is at the heart of this initial Report, which focuses on various aspects of fairness in development, from trade to jobs, from population to globalization, from gender to human rights.

Acknowledging a debt to Amartya Sen, the Report declared: "We believe, first, that the expanding of human capabilities to lead fuller lives should be the fundamental economic objective. Such capabilities include basic health, education and elementary freedoms."<sup>99</sup> In a footnote, one of those freedoms listed included that of "religious belief."<sup>100</sup> The Report generated "specific recommendations to reform economic thinking and practice, and to build a more humane and solid relationship with the people in countries in the South."<sup>101</sup>

In Chapter Four, Alison Van Rooy focuses on "New Voices in Civil Society," a preview, in some respects, of the CDR 1999. Surprisingly, the religious composition of civil society was not mentioned, a remarkable omission -- in spite of a vocabulary, replete with such religious terms as "faith," "belief," "vision," and "mission" -- somewhat corrected in the subsequent Report.

### **Canadian Development Report 1998. Canadian Corporations and Social Responsibility.**

Edited by Michelle Hibler and Rowena Beamish.

This second CDR focuses squarely on the development activities of Canadian business, particularly the financial, manufacturing, mining, engineering, and management sectors,

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<sup>99</sup> Clyde Sanger, "Overview: The Glass is (More Than) Half Full", CDR 1996-7, 3.

<sup>100</sup> Sanger, CDR 1996-7, 11.

<sup>101</sup> Sanger, CDR 1996-7, 10.

with an overarching focus, as the title indicates, on corporate social responsibility in the changing global marketplace.

**Canadian Development Report 1999. Civil Society and Global Change**

Edited by Alison Van Rooy.

The CDR 1999 is advertised as focusing on “Canadian civil society organizations -- NGOs, unions, churches, and professional associations -- that are undertaking innovative work with their counterparts in the South.”<sup>102</sup> Such promotion, with its prominent mention of “churches,” tends to disappoint, as none of the nine contributing chapters concentrate in any direct manner on the contribution of churches or faith based organizations (FBOs) to development. In fact, Chapter 7, on “Gender Equality,” is strangely silent on the contentious issue of religion and gender, beyond recognizing that women’s groups have “encountered external constraints such as the negative effects of globalization and the rise of fundamentalism with the resulting backlash against feminism.”<sup>103</sup>

The Report traces the history and background of civil society organizations in Canada:

Canadian NGOs have their origins in 19<sup>th</sup> century missionary movements, and most churches still have outreach efforts for international development and relief work. Among the largest are the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP), the Mennonite Central Committee, and the United Church of Canada. Secular NGOs began to emerge following the Second World War. CARE Canada, OXFAM Canada, Save the Children, World Vision, and Foster Parents Plan were originally branches of British and American organizations, some of which developed independent programs.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> The North-South Institute, <<http://www.nsi-ins.ca/ensi/publications/cdr/>> (28/2/05).

<sup>103</sup> George Stienstra, “Working Globally for Gender Equality”, CDR 1999, (Ottawa: North-South Institute, 1997), 80.

<sup>104</sup> Ian Smillie, “International Development and Civil Society”, CDR 1999, 20.

The days of missionary proselytization are “long gone, even though morals – now called ethics – and fundamentalist sects which draw from all denominations still hold considerable sway, especially in Central America, Latin America, and Africa.”<sup>105</sup> In an example from Central America during a time of turmoil, a Canadian MP suggests that: “churches and NGOs were the most informed source of information the Government of Canada had in the region.”<sup>106</sup> At home, the Report declares that: “No one can ignore the positions and actions taken by Canada’s main churches, trade unions, or large employers’ associations.”<sup>107</sup> It also acknowledges the credibility in which churches are held in comparison with official CIDA-run development programmes: “Canadians consider other agents and media -- television, churches, NGOs, magazines and newspapers, in that order -- to be more credible.”<sup>108</sup>

The Report calculates that, as of 1996, 74,918 charities were registered in Canada, in addition to an estimated 100,000 nonprofit organizations.<sup>109</sup> “In 1996, the 17 largest NGOs raised close to 68 percent of all Canadian donations (World Vision Canada alone raised 26 percent of the total).”<sup>110</sup> Clearly, World Vision is paramount in terms of both staff and income, and a side box profiles North-South partnerships in terms of the Aga Khan Foundation and World Vision:

Today, World Vision Canada is by far the largest Canadian NGO, and – with a global income of over US\$0.5 billion – World Vision International is the biggest development NGO in the world. It has become virtually unique in its ability to

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<sup>105</sup> Georges leBel, “Defending Human Rights”, *CDR 1999*, 54.

<sup>106</sup> Alison Van Rooy, “Why Civil Society”, *CDR 1999*, 13.

<sup>107</sup> leBel, *CDR 1999*, 55.

<sup>108</sup> Alison Van Rooy, “The Art of Making Change”, *CDR 1999*, 105.

<sup>109</sup> Van Rooy, “Why Civil Society”, *CDR 1999*, 11.

<sup>110</sup> Smillie, *CDR 1999*, 23.

create a global institutional partnership, with 46 full-member World Vision entities, 29 of them in the South.<sup>111</sup>

The statistical sampling of 46 Canadian CSOs, in an appendix devoted to “Civil Society Organizations and Funding in Canada.” reveals that faith based organizations account for well over half of all revenue generated and an overwhelming percentage of employed staff. However, in spite of their scope and resources, the Report scarcely acknowledges the significant impact played by FBOs in the world of development.

Therefore, while at first sight the CDR 1999 appears to allow religious institutions and faith based organizations a significant focus in this Report, closer examination further reinforces the perception that a blind spot exists as far as extending serious credit and analysis to major fund-raisers and actors of a religious background on the Canadian development stage.<sup>112</sup>

### **Canadian Development Report 2000**

Edited by Michelle Hibler and Anne Chevalier.

Two essays form the basis of the CDR 2000. The first, by Stephen Lewis, reflects, from his own personal experience, on the strengths and weaknesses of the multilateral system, while challenging Canada to assume a leadership role in the world: “Our voice should be the voice of the developing world.”<sup>113</sup> The second contribution, by Michelle Hibler, examines actions and rhetoric in the areas of Canadian foreign policy. Jubilee 2000

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<sup>111</sup> Smillie, CDR 1999, 25.

<sup>112</sup> Interestingly, the Mennonite Central Committee, the United Church of Canada and World Vision, feature as three of eight “Contributors” (\$1,000 – \$4,999) to the CDR, while the Aga Khan Foundation Canada is listed as one of three “Supporters” (\$5,000 - \$9,999).

<sup>113</sup> Stephen Lewis, “AIDS, Conflict, Poverty: The Challenge for Canada and the UN”, Canadian Development Report 2000, (Ottawa: The North-South Institute, 2000), 9.

receives some mention, but without any acknowledgement of its faith-based composition or impetus.

### **Canadian Development Report 2001/02**

NSI President Roy Culpeper introduces the first CDR following the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001: “The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington have precipitated considerable soul-searching as to whether or not we need to deepen our understanding of the ‘root causes’ of such violence, typically based on ethnic or religious divisions, or whether the perpetrators should simply be found and brought to justice.”<sup>114</sup> Culpeper outlines an important role for a strengthened civil society: “The point is that non-government institutions, or more generally civil society, plays a crucial role in bringing about and maintaining good governance.”<sup>115</sup> The views of five guest contributors from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and Canada express a qualified optimism as they look to the future. A focus on people and projects allow for a sub-focus on civil society in the South, although religion, beyond the mention of a couple of organizations (Aga Khan Rural Support Program, Sarvodaya Shramadana) is sidelined entirely.

### **Canadian Development Report 2003. From Doha to Cancun: Development and the WTO.**

This truncated edition of the Canadian Development Report examines multilateral trade arrangements in two essays. The first, from both the perspectives of the South, looks at the Doha Development Agenda; the second, from that of the North, investigates Canadian involvement in trade. The focus is, therefore, firmly on trade.

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<sup>114</sup> Roy Culpeper, “Introduction -- Building a Fairer World”, CDR 2001/02, (Ottawa: North-South Institute, 2002), 8.

<sup>115</sup> Culpeper, CDR 2001/02, 9.

### Canadian Development Report 2004. Investing in Poor Countries: Who Benefits?

Private foreign investment (PFI) is the theme of the 2004 Canadian Development Report, which explores how PFI, in contrast and in concert with other forms of financing for development, impacts the poorest developing countries. As might be expected, little opportunity for any focus on issues other than economic is afforded.

As in all the previous reports, the CDR concludes with a plethora of statistics and indicators, with special reference to the relationship between Canada and the developing world.

Overall, the seven editions of the Canadian Development Report reflect Canadian concerns for a fairer world, particularly in the areas of economics and trade. Very little attention is paid to cultural concerns, and religion is clearly quite peripheral to the major themes.

Therefore, it can be concluded that religion is a non-subject as far as the seven Canadian Development Reports published so far are concerned.

## 6.6 Conclusion

From this expansive examination of the twenty five year history of the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* and the seven editions of the Canadian Development Report, it becomes clear that, at least from a Canadian perspective, religion remains peripheral in

the principal development publications. In the next chapter, IDS courses across Canada are examined to determine to what extent religion and development feature in the pedagogical pursuits of Canadian universities.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### AN ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

This chapter seeks to determine to what extent religion, and also culture, are mentioned in the course offerings of International Development Studies (IDS) programmes at Canadian Universities. The goal of the survey of IDS programmes was to ascertain how many references occurred to religion and culture in titles and course descriptions (abstracts) in order to gauge the prevalence and prominence of religion in development teaching, as well as to shed light on the overall relationship between religion and development. The chapter concludes with a brief overview and analysis of the recent "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

#### 7.1 List of Universities

In seeking to establish an authoritative list of those Canadian Universities with departments teaching International Development Studies, a first line of enquiry involved a visit to the website of the Canadian Consortium of University Programs in International Development Studies (CCUPIDS): [www.idsnet.org](http://www.idsnet.org). This site, described as "an online resource for Canadian practitioners, students and faculty who work in the field of

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<sup>1</sup> CASID/ACEDI and The North-South Institute, "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada, Ottawa, October, 2003.



international development”<sup>2</sup> states that “IDSNet was created to enable individuals and organizations to communicate, provide information services and enhance the delivery of international development educational programs in Canada and around the world.”<sup>3</sup> The purpose of the website is to allow “students, faculty, and development practitioners to more easily access information about development programs, projects and work opportunities.”<sup>4</sup> According to this website<sup>5</sup> (material copyrighted in the year 2000), the following sixteen universities offered programmes in International Development Studies:

Dalhousie University  
McGill University  
Menno Simons College  
Queen's University  
St. Mary's University  
Trent University  
Trinity Western University  
University College of Fraser Valley  
University of Calgary  
University of Guelph  
University of New Brunswick  
University of Toronto  
Wilfrid Laurier University  
York University  
St. Francis Xavier University  
Huron University College

Another organization devoted to the study of international development in Canada, the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) is a “national, bilingual, interdisciplinary and pluralistic association devoted to the study

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<sup>2</sup> International Development Studies Network, <<http://www.idsnet.org/index.html>> (6/9/04).

<sup>3</sup> International Development Studies Network, <<http://www.idsnet.org/about.html>> (6/9/04).

<sup>4</sup> International Development Studies Network, <<http://www.idsnet.org/faq.html>> (6/9/04).

<sup>5</sup> International Development Studies Network, <<http://www.idsnet.org/about.html>> (6/9/04).

of international development in all parts of the world.”<sup>6</sup> CASID also publishes the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)*, in collaboration with the University of Ottawa. According to its (more recent) website, the following twenty seven universities offer International Development Studies programmes in Canada.<sup>7</sup>

Augustana University College  
Dalhousie University  
Carleton University  
Huron University College  
McGill University  
Menno Simons College  
Queen's University  
Saint Francis Xavier University  
St. Mary's University  
Trent University  
Trinity Western University  
Université de Montréal  
Université du Québec à Montréal  
Université du Québec en Outaouais  
Université Laval  
University College of Cape Breton  
University College of Fraser Valley  
University of Calgary  
University of Guelph  
University of New Brunswick  
University of Northern British Columbia  
University of Ottawa  
University of Saskatchewan  
University of Toronto  
University of Windsor  
Wilfrid Laurier University  
York University

This is the same list that appears in the “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, published in 2003. This list formed the basis for this study.

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<sup>6</sup> CASID, < <http://www.casid-acedi.ca/english/links.htm>> (15/9/04).

<sup>7</sup> CASID, < <http://www.casid-acedi.ca/english/links.htm>> (15/9/04).

## 7.2 Methodological Notes

Each University programme was analyzed in a similar manner. The structure of the entries is as follows:

Line 1: the degree offered by the programme

Line 2: the date of website access

Line 3: the main web address for the University (omitted for Graduate Studies)

Line 4: the specific address of the IDS Department

Line 5: the address for the Calendar 2004/2005. On occasion, the IDS site provides the access for the Calendar listings.

After a brief introduction outlining distinctives of the programme, statistics are arranged according to the following template:

Group of courses -- core, required, optional etc. (0)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

The technical requirements for various degree specializations -- Honours, Major, Minor, Combined Majors, Interdisciplinary etc. -- are combined to avoid duplication and to provide the broadest selection of courses available. A number of prerequisites, common to general Faculty of Arts or Social Sciences requirements, are required at most universities before entrance to IDS programmes. Such general university requirements were not counted in the statistics. Likewise, required foreign language courses were not calculated, unless IDS listed (when they might include a cultural, geographical or

historical component). If necessary, commentary is included on specific courses or groups of courses. If the University had a Graduate programme, these statistics follow.

As far as which specific topics qualified for inclusion under the overarching theme of “religion,” a broad range of terms was permitted, including religion, faith, belief, spirituality and their roots, as well as direct references to religions, such as Christianity and Islam. Related terms, such as “church” or “mosque,” and obvious religious practices such as “prayer” and “fasting” were also included. Relative to “culture,” some derivative of the word was required (with the exception of the term “political culture,” which was not included) in order to avoid dispute over ambiguous or contested cultural terms and practices.

Departmental websites were the source of most of the information and quotes given in the commentary on each University. All descriptions of course offerings are taken from online Calendars, unless otherwise noted. It should be borne in mind that such online offerings are subject to sudden change, and many universities state that the web version supercedes the print edition. In all cases the web versions of the Calendar 2004/2005 have been used. Many of the departmental websites proved challenging to navigate, with outdated versions of departmental pages still available on the web adding to the confusion. Dates of access are given – since a number of unpredictable changes were noted in the course of the study, especially at the beginning of the new 2004-2005 academic year. As noted in the Calendars, not all courses listed are offered each year.

Clearly, at some universities, significant discrepancies exist between official calendars and functioning department timetables.

This study did not address in detail -- beyond immediate course listings -- the numerous Study Abroad programmes originating out of IDS departments at Canadian Universities. Almost every IDS department had at least one such programme, with cultural issues a major focus. As in many study abroad programmes, issues of religious background and orientation are not mentioned in the preparatory courses, perhaps assumed to some extent in the twin references to culture in the following course description relevant to

Augustana's programme in Mexico:

**IDS 120/220 Orientation to the Development Studies Program**

Orientation to cross-cultural living and learning, focusing on the culture in which the program is to take place. Issues such as health and safety, travel preparations, dealing with "culture shock," and the history and geography of the target region are covered.<sup>8</sup>

However, in one case -- that of the Trent programme in Ghana -- religion was acknowledged as a significant factor in the orientation process prior to departure.

**International Development 378 – Ghana seminar** Contemporary Ghana in the light of its historical background and its patterns of stratification, religion, ethnicity and gender. Processes of structural change, including economic policy, social and political movements.<sup>9</sup>

Detailed statistical analysis of each of the twenty seven IDS university programmes across Canada follows.

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<sup>8</sup> Augustana, <<http://www.augustana.ca/other/calendar/dracd/interdisciplinarystudies.html>> (1/11/04).

<sup>9</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/calendar/uc24.html>> (1/11/04).

## 7.3 ANGLOPHONE UNIVERSITIES

### 7.3.1 University of Alberta, Augustana Faculty

BA in Development Studies

Accessed 16/9/04

[www.augustana.ca](http://www.augustana.ca)

[www.augustana.ca/other/calendar/dracd/developmentstudies.html](http://www.augustana.ca/other/calendar/dracd/developmentstudies.html)

Presently in the process of merging with the University of Alberta at Edmonton, Augustana University College (AUC) at Camrose will be renamed the University of Alberta, Augustana Faculty, once formalities are completed. Augustana Faculty offers a three-year concentration in Interdisciplinary Studies in two streams of Development Studies: Canadian and International Issues, and Rural Development Exchange.

#### Stream A: Canadian and International Issues (18)

(Selections for this stream must come from three of the following disciplines: Economics, Geography, History, Interdisciplinary Studies, Political Studies, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
2	3

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	6

One of the required introductory courses provides a broad and holistic overview of the subject, including the “spiritual” aspects of development:

#### **IDS 121/221 Introduction to Development Studies**

Introduction to the political, economic, literary, cultural, gender, and spiritual aspects of development work and to various development paradigms.

Two Religious Studies courses are offered: **REL 345 Religion and Ecology; REL 348**

### **Justice Theologies of the Twentieth Century**

#### Stream B: Rural Development Exchange (5)

(n.b. 16 covered in Stream A)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	1

### Augustana: Overall Total (23)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
2	3

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	7

Augustana's roots are solidly Lutheran, evidenced in its designation as Camrose Lutheran College until 1991, when it was renamed Augustana University College – "Augustana" in direct reference to the Lutheran declaration of faith published in 1530. According to its website ("History of Augustana University College"): "Augustana provides quality university education in the context of the Christian tradition."<sup>10</sup> Historically Augustana is reported to have endeavoured to "provide an education that extended beyond the intellect to the 'heart and its affections.'"<sup>11</sup>

In light of Augustana's distinct Lutheran history, and the specific Lutheran contribution to development through Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), it is perhaps surprising that more attention is not applied to religion.

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<sup>10</sup> Augustana, <<http://www.augustana.ca/other/calendar/historyofauc.html>> (16/9/04).

<sup>11</sup> Augustana, <<http://www.augustana.ca/other/calendar/historyofauc.html>> (16/9/04).

### 7.3.2 Carleton University

BPAPM with specializations in Development Studies and International Studies

Accessed: 26/9/04

[www.carleton.ca](http://www.carleton.ca)

<http://www.carleton.ca/akcollege/development.html>

<http://www.carleton.ca/cuuc/programs/publicaffairspolicymanagement.html#bpapmspecdevstudies>

The Faculty of Public Affairs and Management at the Arthur Kroeger College of Public Affairs offers a Bachelor of Public Affairs and Policy Management (BPAPM) with specializations in Public Policy and Administration, Human Rights, Development Studies, International Studies, Communication and Information Technology Policy, Strategic Public Opinion and Policy Analysis, Social Policy. "This interdisciplinary program is structured around a core curriculum of courses in public affairs and policy management that examine the foundations of civic life and the various factors that come into play in shaping society."<sup>12</sup> Religion is one of the factors that shapes the formation of society.

Two of the specializations are investigated in this study: Development Studies and International Studies.

#### 1. The Development Studies Specialization

##### Required Courses (28)

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<sup>12</sup> Carleton, <<http://www.carleton.ca/akcollege/>> (26/9/04).



## RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	1

## CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	4

While religion may often be assumed under the term culture, the subject may be obscured in other descriptive terms, such as in the following:

**PAPM 1000 Public Affairs and Policy** The theoretical, philosophical and ethical foundations for the study of public affairs and management. Drawing from classic and contemporary texts in political philosophy and theory, students will consider issues relating to the nature of democracy, civic society and social organizations, the public, public affairs and public interest.

### Elective courses (36)

(with regional foci: Central and Eastern Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; Africa; Asia/Middle East)

## RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	3

## CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	5

### Elective courses (20)

(with thematic foci: Environment and Development: Indigenous Peoples and Development; Gender and Development; Social and Political Development Issues)

## RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

## CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	3

## 2. The International Studies Specialization

Since a great deal of course overlap occurs with the Development Studies Specialization, only additional courses are evaluated.

### Required courses (6)

## RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

## CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	1

Typical of many course descriptions, the following omits any specific reference to religion, though culture is not ignored – perhaps an example of religion being subsumed under the rubric of culture:

**PSCI 2601 International Relations: Global Politics** An introduction to theories, concepts and issues in global politics. Topics may include conflict and intervention, peace and security, international institutions, norms and ethics, human rights, gender, culture, and globalization.

### Elective courses (34)

(Including International Conflict, War and Strategic Studies, Global Political Economy, International Development, International Law and Organization, International Theory and Miscellaneous International Studies and Area Studies (North and South America, Africa, Asia, European and Russian Studies))

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

### Carleton: Overall Total (124)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>

In spite of a Department of Religion at Carleton, no Religion (RELI) courses are cross-listed. In addition to the usual offerings of a comparative nature, courses such as **RELI 2550 – Religion and Society**, **RELI 2702 - Islam in the Modern World**, **RELI 3200 - Topics in Indian Thought**, **RELI 3205 Topics in Women and Religion**, might have relevance to the specializations in Development Studies and International Studies.

## Carleton University -- Graduate

Master of Arts in International Affairs

Accessed: 26/9/04

<http://www.gs.carleton.ca/calendars/current/pam/npsia.html>

The Master of Arts in International Affairs is offered through the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA). "The NPSIA program is interdisciplinary, reflecting the philosophy that exposure to a range of disciplines is necessary to develop an understanding of our complex global environment."<sup>13</sup> NPSIA and the Common Law Section of the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa also offer a joint Master of Arts in International Affairs and Bachelor of Laws degree (M.A./LL.B.).

The programme is organized around six clusters: International Trade Policy, Global Finance, Multinationals and the State, Conflict Analysis and Conflict Resolution, Human Security and Global Governance, International Dimensions of Development, National and Sub-National Aspects of Development.

### Required Courses (6)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Other Courses (60)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

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<sup>13</sup> Carleton, <[http://www.gs.carleton.ca/calendars/current/programs/international\\_affairs.html](http://www.gs.carleton.ca/calendars/current/programs/international_affairs.html)> (26/9/04).

A wide-ranging survey course allows for the inclusion of cultural, but not religious dimensions:

**INAF 5003 National and Domestic Dimensions of Development**

Theoretical foundations and central policy issues of the domestic, economic, social, political, cultural and environmental aspects of development. Topics include theories of the developmental process, human resource development, national development strategies, sectoral issues, and governance and human rights and their interaction with the international system.

The following two examples allow for a religious dimension to be further explored:

**INAF 5605 The Ethical Dimension of International Affairs**

This course critically examines the ethical dimensions of development, global conflict, and international political economy. Subject matter includes beliefs and values, rights and obligations, and individual and state morality.

**INAF 5608 Indigenous Perspectives on Third World Development**

This course examines some of the major perspectives and theories on Third World Development which have emerged from within the Third World. Included are authors representing structural, dependency, and radical theories of development, as well as those who see development as psychological or spiritual liberation.

Carleton Graduate -- Total (66)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	2	0	1

The Carleton graduate programme exhibits very little attention to religion, a feature similar to other programmes at the graduate level. While some of the clusters -- for example, International Trade Policy, Global Finance, Multinationals and the State -- would preclude much attention to matters of a religious nature, others, such as International Dimensions of Development, could include a more holistic approach.

### 7.3.3 Dalhousie University

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed 14/9/04

[www.dal.ca](http://www.dal.ca)

<http://www.dal.ca/~intdwww/>

<http://www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/ug/INTD.htm>

The Dalhousie programme is divided between Core/ Elective IDS classes and approved classes from other units. The approved classes are analyzed in the 12 areas in which they are presented, with some of the preliminary explanatory comments included. Some discrepancies exist between courses listed in the Calendar and the Timetable (where details of instructors, venues and times are listed). As is mentioned in the Calendar:

Classes marked \* are not offered every year so please consult the current timetable, in addition to the calendars, when registering.

As for the academic year 2004/2005, 3 extra core classes are listed in the timetable, 13 more in the electives set, but 56 less amongst the approved courses. The latter figure is largely explained by courses, which are listed in the Calendar but are not offered in this academic year.

The subsequent analysis relies on data from the 2004/2005 Calendar exclusively.

#### A. 5 Core IDS Classes

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### B. 16 Elective IDS listed classes

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

## IDS Approved Classes from Other Units

### 1. Biology (5)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

### 2. Comparative Religion (8)

(n.b. 2 unlisted)

The introduction to these courses<sup>14</sup> pays unusual attention to the role of religion in development:

Understanding religion and its influences on human behaviour involves grasping both the meaning of faith in the lives of participants and the critical analysis of outside observers. It has important implications for international cultures and development questions.

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
8	8

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	3

Closer examination of these statistics is in order. These Comparative Religion courses are distinctly comparative in nature:

**COMR 2001 Judaism**  
**COMR 2002 Christianity**  
**COMR 2003 Islam**  
**COMR 2011 Hinduism**  
**COMR 2012 Chinese and Japanese Religions**  
**COMR 2013 Buddhism**  
**COMR 3004 Religion and International Development**  
**COMR 3014 Love and Death in World Religions**  
**COMR 3015 Myths, Symbols and Rites** (No description available)  
**COMR 3532 Science and the Sacred** (No description available)

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<sup>14</sup> Dalhousie. <<http://www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/ug/INTD.htm>> (14/9/04).

The course entitled “Religion and International Development” requires further analysis:

**COMR 3004 Religion and International Development** The religious traditions of First World and Third World alike affect how people respond to certain practical questions. Why should I work hard? Ought we to co-operate or compete? Is my exploitation of the natural world subject to any restrictions? Is my neighbour an enemy? What is true wealth and how should it be distributed? Do men and women have different roles to play? A detailed syllabus is available from the Department of Comparative Religion.

Arguably, this is the only course across Canada to bring Religion and International Development directly together and therefore assumes importance in this study. While the course is listed in the current Calendar, it is not being offered this year – in fact, the listed Instructor, Dr C.T. Faulkner, is no longer at Dalhousie.<sup>15</sup>

Of all the Comparative Religion courses listed in the Calendar, only two of these offered in the current IDS Department’s Timetable are being offered this year:

**COMR 2011 Hinduism**  
**COMR 2012 Chinese and Japanese Religions**

Therefore, initial impressions, which suggested a marked attention to religion in the Dalhousie programme, may have to be modified as a result of closer scrutiny and, more generally, may raise further questions as to the actual teaching of listed classes at this and other universities.

### 3. Earth Sciences (2)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

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<sup>15</sup> This sentence was written in October 2004, prior to the author being invited to teach this course as a cross-listed class, INTD 3101/COMR 3004.

#### 4. Economics (15)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

In the following course, examining the aftermath of 9/11, one might expect some mention of religion:

**ECON 3334 Economic Development - Recent Debates, Controversies and Conflicts** September 11th changed the world - or did it? Most countries contain extremes - be they defined along lines of wealth and poverty, freedoms and limitations, growth areas and lagging regions, multicultural variety and ethnic isolations.

#### 5. English, French and Spanish (11)

(n.b. 8 unlisted, 2 cross-listed with IDS classes)

These courses focus on the cultural dimension of language learning:

Language skills are obviously important for effective communication for those wishing to pursue international development studies; but through the study of languages important insights about culture and development experience are also to be gleaned.

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

#### 6. Environmental Studies (4)

(n.b. 2 cross-listed, 1 unlisted)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



## 7. History (24)

(n.b. 5 cross-listed in IDS classes)

In this area, culture might include a religious dimension:

Just as people need to know who they are and how they arrived there, groups, races, classes, states and nations need a sense of their own past as part of their culture and to guide their future development choices.

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>

The 7 references to religion in the course descriptions result from 5 courses on Africa and 2 on the Middle East.

## 8. Philosophy (1)

(n.b. 2 cross-listed in IDS classes)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

## 9. Political Science (22)

(n.b. 2 unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

## 10. Russian (6)

(n.b. 3 cross-listed in IDS classes)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

## 11. Sociology and Social Anthropology (18)

The Sociology and Social Anthropology listings are heavy on the cultural context, with religion being mentioned as an important factor:

Sociology provides a context within which students learn to think critically about their social environment. Social Anthropology aims at generalizations by comparing structures and processes in major institutions within societies (kinship, political, economic and religious) as well as between societies.

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>

In the descriptions below, the first mentions religion in some detail, but the latter two avoid the subject altogether:

**SOSA 3228 Belief Systems: Symbol, Myth and Meaning** Emphasis will be placed upon how belief systems and their symbolic representations give meaning to the universe and one's place in it. Topics may include the nature of ritual, the structure of myth, religion and symbols, religion and healing, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and how all these phenomena relate to cultural and social change.

**SOSA 3165 Peoples and Cultures of the World: Selected Area Studies** This class examines a specific geographic and/or culture area. The class begins with background material on geography and history. Its focus is on the people themselves, their social organization and political, economic, and cultural systems. How they relate to globalization and development will also be examined.

**SOSA 2400 Health and Illness Across Cultures** Every culture has its own concepts of health and nutrition, its own treatments and practices. The strengths and weaknesses of our own system grow clearer when medical anthropologists compare it with that of other societies. This class's specific topics vary from year to year but always include: native theories of the etiology of illness, transcultural versus culture-specific disease syndromes, pregnancy and childbirth in other cultures and our own; senescence and death viewed cross-culturally, the conflict between traditional medical systems and the Western physician and hospital, patients' expectations and the medical subculture, the physician as secular priest, and food and nutrition across cultures.

12. Women's Studies (0)  
(n.b. 6 cross-listed)

Again, culture comes to the fore:

It is important to recognize the implications of gender issues and to be sensitive to how these are viewed in different cultural circumstances.

Dalhousie University: Overall Total (137)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
9	19	8	32

Without the 8 Comparative Religion courses included within these figures, the figures would appear quite different:

1	11	8	29
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In contrast to a number of other IDS programmes across Canada, Dalhousie's programme, as listed in the Calendar, has a significant focus on religion.

Dalhousie University – Graduate

MA in International Development Studies

Accessed: 15/9/04

<http://www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/gr/INTD.htm>

This interdisciplinary programme draws on courses from the following disciplines:

Biology; Business Administration; Community Health & Epidemiology; Economics;

English; Environmental Studies; Health Services Administration; History; International

Development Studies; Law; Marine Affairs; Political Science; Public Administration;

Social Work; Sociology & Social Anthropology; Urban & Rural Planning; Women's Studies.

As far as applicants are concerned:

Candidates for admission to the masters degree in International Development Studies should hold an honours degree or equivalent, from a university of recognised standing, in either International Development Studies or a relevant discipline (normally, but not exclusively, business, economics, environmental studies, history, law, political science, public administration, or sociology and social anthropology) or have completed at least four senior undergraduate classes in one of these disciplines.

No mention of Comparative Religion or its equivalent is included.

### Dalhousie Graduate – Total (65)

(n.b. 22 unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Many of these courses are graduate versions of undergraduate courses, with a significant bias towards research methods. As may be seen from the figures above, no focus on culture is apparent, which may be a particularly worrying omission. If a student has studied a technical field at the undergraduate level, very little attention to the religio-cultural identity of peoples may have been covered – a lacuna which will not be corrected at a graduate level. Only the History course descriptions mention religion. Considered a factor in the historical formation of African worldviews, it may be asked why religion might not still be a significant factor in African development. In great contrast to the undergraduate course listings where Comparative Religion courses played a notable role, at least on paper, the Graduate Calendar evidences no such profile – no doubt as a

consequence of the Comparative Religion department operating only at the undergraduate level at Dalhousie.

### 7.3.4 Huron University College

BA in International and Comparative Studies

Accessed: 19/9/04

<http://www.huronuc.on.ca>

<http://www.huronuc.on.ca/internationalinitiatives/>

<http://www.huronuc.on.ca/arts&socialscience/>

Huron University College, the founding college of The University of Western Ontario, offers degrees in International and Comparative Studies, described as a “cross-disciplinary program designed to add an international and comparative dimension to undergraduate education at Huron University College.”<sup>16</sup>

#### ICS Courses (58)

(n.b. **ICS 190-199, 290-299, Selected Topics in International and Comparative Studies**, counted as 2 courses; **400-409, Seminars in ICS**, counted as one.)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>29</b>

The high incidence of mentions of culture (over a quarter of titles, a half of all descriptions) in ICS courses at Huron is swelled by a series of courses variously entitled and identically described: **Culture/Development Topics in... Pacific Studies; South Asia Studies; Africa Studies; Middle-East Studies; East Asia Studies; Eurasia Studies; Circumpolar Studies; Latin American Studies; North Atlantic Studies.**

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<sup>16</sup> Huron, <[http://www.huronuc.on.ca/internationalinitiatives/ics\\_courses.html](http://www.huronuc.on.ca/internationalinitiatives/ics_courses.html)> (19/9/04).

Reference to culture occurs 9 times in both titles and descriptions. Were these figures to be omitted, the overall figures would still reflect a heavy emphasis on culture.

The supposition that culture is a more acceptable descriptor than religion might be advanced in the following course descriptions. In these instances religion is clearly considered a component of culture.

**The Cultural Foundations of Modern Japan/China (ICS 151/ 153)**  
A survey of the artistic, philosophical, and religious factors that shape modern Japan/ China.

Other courses (7)  
(n.b. 2 courses unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Huron: Overall Total (65)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>

Now a liberal arts university institution as well as a predominantly Anglican theological college, the ICS programme at Huron exhibits little evidence of its roots as a theological college, but it does reflect an unusual attention to culture where references represent the highest percentages (26% and 49% respectively) among the Universities studied.

### 7.3.5 McGill University

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed 12/9/04

[www.mcgill.ca](http://www.mcgill.ca)

[www.mcgill.ca/ids/](http://www.mcgill.ca/ids/)

<http://www.mcgill.ca/ids/courses/>

Described as “an interdisciplinary program of study focusing on the problems of the developing countries,”<sup>17</sup> McGill’s International Development Studies (IDS) programme, like many other IDS programmes across Canada, has seen dramatic growth since its inception as a Minor in 1992 and now has the third largest enrollment in the Faculty of Arts. Allied to the IDS programme, The Centre for Developing-Area Studies (CDAS) is an interdisciplinary research centre, concentrating on “four broad programmatic clusters”:

- 1) gender and human security, 2) poverty and work, 3) globalization and inequality, and 4) alternative development.<sup>18</sup>

#### Required Courses (4)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### Complementary Courses

##### Group A (6)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	1

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
1	2

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<sup>17</sup> McGill, <<http://www.mcgill.ca/ids/>> (12/9/04).

<sup>18</sup> McGill, <<http://www.mcgill.ca/cdas/>> (12/9/04).

## Group B (120)

Group B provides a selection of courses in three areas: Development Theory and World View, Regions, and Development Policies and Practices.

### Development Theory and World View (18)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The "Development Theory and World View" selection provides particularly interesting analysis. Four Anthropological courses (only one available in the academic year 2004/2005) are complemented by 3 Islamic Studies courses (2 available) and 11 Religious Studies courses (6 available). The Islamic and Religious Studies course descriptions are reproduced below, as closer examination is instructive.

**ISLA 501 The Qu'ran, Text and History** A study of the Qur'an's teachings, structures, style, and history in the light of classical and modern scholarship. Not offered this year

**ISLA 505 Islam: Origin and Early Development.** The Qur'an, Hadith, the Shari'a and their major themes. The early development of law, theology and Sufism. The development and formation of an Islamic "orthodoxy", the development and nature of competing interpretations of Islam during the Classical Period. Topics: God, revelation, prophecy, the community and the individual and the meaning of history.

**ISLA 506 Islam: Later Developments.** How the basic elements of Islam have been understood in the course of later Islamic history up to the present day. The nature and development of Shi'ism, Sufi brotherhoods, major intellectual trends, Islam in a world of nation states, diaspora. The challenges of modernity and the contemporary world.

**RELG 204 Judaism, Christianity and Islam.** An introduction to the beliefs, practices, and religious institutions of these three world religions.



**RELG 207 The Study of World Religions 1** An introduction to the study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Primal Religions.

**RELG 252 Hinduism and Buddhism.** The interaction of Hinduism and Buddhism in India with special reference to the law of Karma, caste, women, ritual, death, yoga, and liberation. Determination of interpretative principles for understanding the religious psychology of Hindus and Buddhists.

**RELG 253 Religions of East Asia.** Harmony with nature, society, and cosmos to be explored through the religions of the Far East (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Shinto).

**RELG 254 Introduction to Sikhism.** An introduction to the historical and religious context in which the Sikh religion developed, its principal doctrines, practices and institutions and its evolution from its origins to the present, both inside and outside India.

**RELG 337 Themes in Buddhist Studies.** A focussed examination of major themes within a branch of Theravada, Mahayana or Vajrayana Buddhism. Emphasis will be placed on both the close study of primary texts (in translation) in historical context and the application of recent methods to fundamental Buddhist concepts, ritual practices and community institutions.

**RELG 354 Chinese Religions.** This course studies the Confucian classics, philosophical and religious Taoism, and Neo-Confucianism and also examines the syncretism between the Chinese religions and Indian Buddhism. Not offered this year.

**RELG 371 Ethics of Violence/Non-Violence.** Forms of violence and the reaction of religious groups are assessed both for their effectiveness and for their fidelity to their professed beliefs. Different traditions, ranging from the wholesale adoption of violent methods (e.g. the Crusades) to repudiation (e.g. Gandhi; the Peace Churches). Not offered this year

**RELG 452 East Asian Buddhism** Topic for 2000: Precept and Ritual in East Asian Buddhism and Confucianism. Not offered this year.

**RELG 454 Modern Hindu Thought** A study of the developments in religious thought with special reference to such thinkers as Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswati, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Gandhi, Tilak, Aurobindo, and Radhakrishnan. Not offered this year

**RELG 557 Asian Ethical Systems.** An examination of the ethical ideals that have evolved in Asia with reference to Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Issues to be explored include competing views of the individual's duties

to social and political institutions, the individual's right to non-conformity, the relationship between morality and metaphysics, and a comparison of moral principles in theistic and atheistic contexts. Not offered this year.

While providing a wealth of information on some of the major faiths, these 14 courses dealing with religion hardly make an explicit connection between religion and development.

### Regions (51)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>

### Development Policies and Practices (51)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>

### McGill – Overall Total (130)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>

In contrast to a number of other Canadian universities, courses from Religious Studies departments are included, but only, it should be noted, in one section: Development Theory and World View. While at first sight, the numerous references to religion may seem to bridge the gap between religion and development – such an assessment may be misleading, when the courses referring to religion are more closely examined.

### 7.3.6 Menno Simons College

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed 7/9/04

[www.uwinnipeg.ca](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca)

<http://io.uwinnipeg.ca/~msc/idsprog.htm>

<http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/current/calendar/calendarpdfs/ids.pdf>

The BA in International Development Studies -- "an interdisciplinary major that challenges students to explore the causes and consequences of processes that promote some individuals, communities and nations, and exclude others"<sup>19</sup> -- is offered by Menno Simons College (MSC) in association with The University of Winnipeg and The Canadian Mennonite University. An affiliated college of The University of Winnipeg, MSC specializes in International Development Studies and in Conflict Resolution Studies.

A religious dimension is unequivocal. According to the website, the mission of the MSC "promotes Mennonite involvement in Canadian Higher Education,"<sup>20</sup> and its philosophy of education is "rooted in the peace and service theology of the Anabaptist-Mennonite Churches."<sup>21</sup> IDS students are prepared for citizenship in an increasingly interdependent global community, and are "encouraged to envision paths toward a transformed, just world" and challenged to think "within an explicit ethical framework."<sup>22</sup>

It is therefore somewhat surprising that there is no mention of the option of a faith-based vocation in "sample careers" open to Menno Simons IDS students:

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<sup>19</sup> Menno Simons, <<http://io.uwinnipeg.ca/~msc/idsprog.htm>> (7/9/04).

<sup>20</sup> Menno Simons, <<http://io.uwinnipeg.ca/~msc/mission.htm>> (7/9/04).

<sup>21</sup> Menno Simons, <<http://io.uwinnipeg.ca/~msc/mission.htm>> (7/9/04).

<sup>22</sup> Menno Simons. <<http://io.uwinnipeg.ca/~msc/idsprog.htm>> (7/9/04).

As an interdisciplinary liberal arts degree, IDS prepares students for professional employment in civil, corporate, and governmental sectors, or for graduate study. Alone, or as a part of a double major, IDS is an excellent start for those interested in a development career either locally or internationally. Employment opportunities for graduates range from local community development facilitation to international development agency research and communication.<sup>23</sup>

### Core Classes (2)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

### Global Emphasis (10)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	1	1	4

Three descriptions in this section emphasize the “the tremendously rich and diverse cultural, social and economic experience of African/ Asian and Pacific Island/ Latin American and Caribbean (60.2183; 60.2184; 60.2185) peoples and communities.”

Religious profusion and diversity is not specifically included.

### Community Emphasis (11)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
1	1	0	5

Two courses in this section have obvious religious overtones: **60.3150 Mennonite Community and Development**, which discusses “the Mennonite tradition of holistic development,” and **60.2521 Study of Voluntary Simplicity**, with a reference to “social justice.” Two others focus on Indigenous Peoples and make reference to “primal insights, values and definitions” (**60:2160**) and “indigenous culture and worldview” (**60.2443**).

<sup>23</sup> Menno Simons, < <http://io.uwinnipeg.ca/~msc/idsprog.htm> > (7/9/04).

## IDS Area Courses

This wide-ranging selection of courses includes offerings from 17 departments.

### Global Emphasis (41)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	1	0	5

Much of a religious nature may well be masked in a course description:

**41.3125 International Relations of the Middle East** This course studies historical and political forces leading up to the present political climate of the Middle East. The course will focus on the political, economic, and social conditions which influence the conduct of politics in the Arab states and Israel, and the policies of the Great Powers in that area.

### Community Emphasis (30)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
6	7	2	6

This section includes 4 courses from Religious Studies -- **60.2402 Fundamentalisms in Global Perspective**; **47.2801 Aboriginal Spirituality I**; **47.2802 Aboriginal Spirituality II**; **47.2804 Global Perspectives on Aboriginal Societies, Spiritualities and the Environment** and 2 from Mennonite Studies -- **33.3114 Latin America and the Mennonites**; **33.3301 Mennonites and World Issues**.

Religion might have been expected to feature in this course description:

**61.2241 Conflict and Culture** The course will explore the relationship between culture and conflict, from an interdisciplinary perspective. This will include an examination of cultural differences in response to conflict, as well as the nature and origins of conflict between and among cultures, with special reference to the relationships between culture and alternatives in conflict resolution. Special attention will be given to inter-ethnic conflict in the modern world.

## Research and Language Skills Emphasis (15)

(n.b. 2 courses unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	3

## Menno Simons: Overall Total (109)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
7	10	3	23

Although religion features in the Menno Simons course offerings, overall it may appear surprising that more mention is not made of MSC's Mennonite connections and interests in the IDS course offerings. Considering the explicitly religious dimension implicit in MSC's philosophy, course descriptions are couched in largely secular terms. More connection with the Religious Studies programme at the University of Winnipeg might have been expected. The latter programme analyzes "contemporary problems in religion and culture"<sup>24</sup> focusing on the meaning and purpose of life in a global perspective, challenging the student: "If you wish to understand where the quest for meaning has taken some of the world's people, the Religious Studies program will educate you in this area."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Menno Simons, <<http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/faculty/relstudies/index.shtml>> (7/9/04).

<sup>25</sup> Menno Simons, <<http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/faculty/relstudies/index.shtml>> (7/9/04).

### 7.3.7 Queen's University

BA in Development Studies

Accessed 10/9/04

[www.queensu.ca](http://www.queensu.ca)

<http://queensu.ca/devs/>

<http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/artsci/INTS.htm>

The introductory description of the Queen's University programme in Development Studies covers much, but typically does not specifically mention religion:

Development Studies is an interdisciplinary, undergraduate programme that explores issues of relevance to developing countries and aboriginal communities. It examines the role of economic and political systems, culture, gender relations and physical environments as agents of change in countries in the South and discusses their implications for North-South relations.<sup>26</sup>

#### Development Studies Courses (DEVS) (14)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

#### Other Required Courses (20)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

#### Eligible Regional Courses (33)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

The following Women's Studies course is wide-ranging and includes the role of religion:

#### **WMNS-422 Women and Gender South of the Sahara**

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<sup>26</sup> Queen's, <<http://queensu.ca/devs/>> (10/9/04).

An interdisciplinary study of selected topics such as culture, ethnicity, health, sexuality, religion, economics, politics, African feminisms, agriculture and environment relevant to the study of women and gender in Africa south of the Sahara.

**Eligible Thematic Courses (132)**  
(n.b. 19 unlisted in the current Calendar)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>45</b>

The 132 Thematic Courses come from 10 different areas:

	RELIGION		CULTURE	
	Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
Cultural Studies	2	4	8	26
Post-colonial Literatures	0	0	0	0
Development Economics	0	0	0	0
Environment	0	0	1	2
Gender	0	0	1	2
History of Development	0	0	1	3
Political Economy	0	0	0	1
Globalization – Politics and Economics	0	0	0	0
Globalization –Society, Technology & Culture	0	0	1	4
Native Studies	1	3	1	7

The Cultural Studies component, as might be expected, is heavy with religious and cultural references. Of the 35 course offerings actually listed in the “Cultural Studies” section, 16 come from Religious Studies, though only 9 of these appear in the current Calendar. One course is of a comparative nature:

**RELS 131 World Religions/ Religious Worlds**

Introduces religion in India, China and Japan; also the movements of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Humanism.

The other eight emphasize aspects of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. None, however, of these Religious Studies courses link religion directly with development.



In the “Native Studies” section (10 courses with 2 unlisted in the Calendar), it is interesting to note the attention paid to the cultural dimension of native life, emphasizing the extent to which culture is recognized as an important factor in local native life. From course descriptions it is hard to gauge the extent to which religion may be subsumed in such discussions of culture. Closer examination of these courses reveals a focus on native issues in a North American, particularly Canadian, context. However, this attention to North American indigenous issues is not extended beyond the continent, where, arguably, culture and religion play an equally important part in local and indigenous peoples’ lives.

In the section, Globalization: Politics and Economics, one course perhaps comes as close as any to introducing moral and philosophical dimensions familiar in a religious context, but avoids any specific mention of religion:

**PHIL-202 Philosophy of Peace** Drawing from a number of sources and philosophical traditions, this course will explore the concept of peace, obstacles to peace, ideas that promote peace, the moral dimensions of peace, philosophies of nonviolence, pacifism, and attempts to envision a peaceful world.

Queen’s: Overall Total (199)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>59</b>

### 7.3.8 Saint Francis Xavier University

BA in Development Studies

Accessed: 19/9/04

[www.stfx.ca](http://www.stfx.ca)

<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/dev-studies/>

<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/dev-studies/pages/CoreCourses.html> &

<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/dev-studies/pages/Cross-ListedCourses.html>

The Development Studies Program is designed for undergraduate students who want to learn about community-based development theory and practice in the Atlantic region, other parts of Canada and abroad.<sup>27</sup>

The introductory sentence on the website of the Interdisciplinary Development Studies Program at Saint Francis Xavier University (St FX) acknowledges the legacy of its founding principles in the Antigonish Movement, a social movement founded by Rev. Moses Coady in the 1920s and grounded in community-based social and economic development.

Following in that tradition, the Coady International Institute, “world-renowned as a centre of excellence in community-based development.”<sup>28</sup> attracts students from all over the world for its diploma and certificate programmes, which “emphasize the need for a responsible social vision, just, equitable and effective institutions to achieve that vision, and the active participation of disadvantaged people in their own development.”<sup>29</sup> The Coady Lectures have at times made very explicit connections between religion and development, most notably those given in October, 2000, by Father William Ryan on

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<sup>27</sup> St Francis Xavier, <<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/dev-studies/>> (19/9/04).

<sup>28</sup> St Francis Xavier, <<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/dev-studies/>> (19/9/04).

<sup>29</sup> Coady Institute, <[http://www.stfx.ca/institutes/coadv/text/programs\\_educational.html](http://www.stfx.ca/institutes/coadv/text/programs_educational.html)> (19/9/04).

“Restoring Religion to the Global Dialogue” and “Notes on the Development of Catholic Social Teaching.”

The following, however, is an assessment of the undergraduate St FX Interdisciplinary Development Studies Program.

### Core Courses (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Cross-Listed Courses (71)

(These courses include a broad selection from Business Administration; Economics; English; History; Human Nutrition; Information Systems; Interdisciplinary Studies; Mathematics; Statistics and Computer Science; Modern Languages; Nursing; Philosophy; Political Science; Religious Studies; Sociology and Anthropology; Women's Studies.)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>

None of the 4 cross-listed Religious Studies courses (**200 Conscience and Freedom; 215**

**Sociology of Religion; 310 Religion in Modern India; 370 Islam in the Modern**

**World**) systematically directly address the broader relationship between religion and development.

On occasion, it might be wondered why the subject of religion is not more directly addressed. Religion might seem fit for natural inclusion, as in the following Anthropology courses, where one might again conjecture if the direct mention of religion is not being avoided:

**ANTH 315 Health and Medicine** Examines health and illness from a cross-cultural perspective. Areas studied include diet and nutrition; gender and

reproduction; the cultural construction of anatomy and physiology; medical pluralism and the medical system; pain and culture; cross-cultural psychiatry; health care systems in the developing world; ritual and the management of misfortune.

**ANTH 316 Rural Communities** Examines the social, economic and political dimensions of rural communities within a comparative and analytical perspective. Particular attention is given to topics such as attachment and identity, kinship relations, household economies, inheritance, gender relations, and the logic of petty commodity forms of production. The ways rural communities are integrated within regional, national and global institutional contexts are also examined.

Paradoxically in the two following Sociology course descriptions, religion is mentioned, raising other questions:

**SOCI 321 Sociology of Atlantic Canada** Treats the Atlantic provinces as a distinctive region of Canada. The three areas of investigation are: the progress of various ethnic and religious groups who settled the region; the socio-economic development of the Maritimes and Newfoundland (from pioneer settlement through industrialization); and the strategies employed in the ongoing recovery from a century of regional disparity within Canada.

Religion is thus acknowledged in the local context. If religion is seen as a formative factor in domestic Canadian development, the reluctance to see religion as a factor in the development of the developing world -- where, arguably, it plays as decisive a role -- may be queried. Perhaps the following course goes some way to redressing the balance:

**SOCI 322 The Antigonish Movement as Change and Development** Will explore both social change and economic development through the history, philosophy and practice of the Antigonish Movement as experienced at home and abroad. This movement will be used to examine political systems, labor relations, class conflict, education, cooperative strategies, religion, and ethnicity in the context of social transformation.

Clearly the historical legacy of the Antigonish Movement and the connection of the University with the Coady International Institute allows for an added dimension of faith, which may not always be reflected in the course descriptions.

## St Francis Xavier: Overall Total (76)

### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>

### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>

At the present time, St FX has no graduate programme in development studies, though this is scheduled to change in September 2005, when the Coady Institute and the Adult Education Department will offer a Master of Adult Education, Community Development Stream.

## 7.3.9 St Mary's University

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed: 13/9/04

[www.stmarys.ca](http://www.stmarys.ca)

<http://www.arts.smu.ca/ids/>

<http://www.arts.smu.ca/ids/courses.aspx>

International Development Studies at Saint Mary's University (SMU) involve both undergraduate and graduate programmes:

“Development” is a broad concept and refers to problems that range from the socio-economic impact of a new hydroelectric dam to the changes in family structure and gender roles that often occur during periods of rapid demographic and economic transition. “Development” has political, social, cultural, economic and historical dimensions. The International Development Studies Program combines theoretical insights and practical skills from both the social sciences and the humanities.

The graduate and undergraduate degree program in International Development Studies has as its primary focus an analysis of the problems experienced by southern countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia and Africa; and of the

social, cultural, economic, historical and political structures and forces that underlie and produce these problems.<sup>30</sup>

It is noticeable that religion is not mentioned, in spite of the broad parameters employed in this introduction. Core areas of study in the SMU programme include: Development Theory; Gender and Development; Rural Development; Economic Development; Environment and Development.

It should be noted that website navigation was particularly difficult in the case of SMU. Therefore, the 2004/2005 Calendar has been used as authority in a number of discrepancies existing between various web pages.

#### IDS Courses (23)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
1	1	0	1

One of these courses is cross-listed with Religious Studies:

**REL 348 Religion and Ecological Issues in the Developing World** This course will examine the religious and moral issues involved in contemporary debate around the implementation of environmental programs in the so-called developing nations. Population control, competing interests in natural resources, and the role of women's groups will be among the topics discussed. Attention will be paid to the religious voices involved.

#### Approved Courses (72)

These approved courses come from 13 different disciplines: Anthropology; Asian Studies; Economics; English; Finance and Management Science; Geography; History; Marketing; Modern Languages and Classics; Philosophy; Political Science; Religious Studies; Sociology.

RELIGION	CULTURE
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<sup>30</sup> St Mary's, <<http://www.arts.smu.ca/IDS/default.asp>> (13/9/04).

Title	Abstract
2	10

Title	Abstract
4	12

### St Mary's University: Overall Total (95)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
3	11

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
4	13

### St Mary's University – Graduate

#### Graduate Courses (30)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

No religious or cultural component is identifiable in the Graduate Programme at St Mary's.

### 7.3.10 Trent University

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed: 6/9/04

[www.trentu.ca](http://www.trentu.ca)

<http://www.trentu.ca/ids>

<http://www.trentu.ca/calendar/uc24.html>

International Development Studies at Trent is an interdisciplinary program that studies human inequality in global perspective. Taking a comparative approach, it

examines the sources and consequences of such inequality, looking at economic, cultural, political, historical, gender, environmental and social dimensions.<sup>31</sup>

Such a comprehensive range of dimensions omits any reference to the spiritual or religious dimensions of development.

IDS courses are theoretically grounded and at the same time address real world policy initiatives. Our aim is to reach a balance between theory and practice, while challenging students to rethink conventional wisdoms about international development.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of exhortations to think “outside the box,” Trent programmes do not seem to include much beyond the conventional IDS offerings, and little in the way of attention to issues of faith and religion.

Having the distinction of being the first IDS programme in Canada, Trent University appears particularly strong on internationalization. The Trent International Program (TIP) offers a focus on International Development Studies and Global Studies, with majors and emphases in Globalization: Communities and Identities and International Political Economy, and an emphasis in Travel Studies. The Global Studies course requirements are very similar in nature to those of IDS.

### IDS Courses (54)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>

Very little attention is afforded the religious dimension in these core IDS courses. For instance, in the following course about African culture and society, no direct reference is

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<sup>31</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/ids/whyids.html>> (6/9/04).

<sup>32</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/ids/options.html>> (6/9/04).



made to religion, which, it may be argued, is one of the most important aspects of African culture and society:

**International Development – Anthropology 301 – African culture and society**  
An introduction to contemporary African culture and society, focusing on culture history and indigenous institutions, the impact of colonial rule and present-day problems of development.

This imbalance, interestingly, may well be addressed on the ground in this overseas programme, offered in Ghana:

**International Development 378 – Ghana seminar** Contemporary Ghana in the light of its historical background and its patterns of stratification, religion, ethnicity and gender. Processes of structural change, including economic policy, social and political movements.

In the following two entries focussing on Latin America, no reference is made to the role of religion or Liberation Theology:

**International Development – Anthropology 304 – Latin American culture and society** Examination of ethnic and historical foundations of contemporary Latin American societies. Problems of modernization with special emphasis on peasant movements, Aboriginal groups and interethnic relations.

**International Development – Anthropology 389 – Andean economy, culture and society** An examination of the structure of agrarian production systems, role of land tenure and market relations in selected Andean societies. Impact of mining and manufacturing industry, and the role of the state in shaping economic and social development. Emergence of political and ideological movements.

However, the following course may redress this lacuna:

**International Development – Sociology 470 – Religion and social movements**  
An examination of the religious movements within the Catholic tradition generated by social upheaval in contemporary Latin America, with particular attention given to new forms of religious organization and theology, together with the revitalization of popular religion.

Support Courses (14) Offered in Administration, Anthropology, Economics, English, Geography, History, Politics, Sociology, Spanish, Women's Studies.

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Trent: Overall Total (68)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>

The few references to religion at Trent may be evidence of the lack of a Religious Studies department, with the potential for influence in the International Studies programme.

The Global Studies programme at Trent allows students to focus exclusively on Global Studies, or to concentrate on either Globalization: Communities and Identities or International Political Economy. As an excursion, statistics on the Globalization: Communities and Identities programme are included here, though not enumerated in the overall figures.<sup>33</sup> It might be suggested that one of the primary areas to investigate when considering the formation of communities and identities would be religious foundations, as faith and religion play a seminal part in defining communities, identities and worldviews in the Global South.

Globalization: Communities and Identities (60)  
(n.b 2 unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>

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<sup>33</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/calendar/uc21.html>> (6/9/04).

The paucity of references to religion is especially perplexing in this case. Without the courses below, an omission of considerable proportions would have existed:

**Sociology 347 - Religion and society** This course investigates sociological reflections upon the functions of religions in various societies, the social organization of rituals and religious practices and the phenomenology of religious experiences. Studies will be drawn from a few of the major world religions.

**Politics 428 - Government and politics in the Middle East** The course examines the main issues and actors (state and non-state) of the contemporary Middle East. It focuses on the importance of political, social, economic and ideological factors in the context of such issues as the resilience of authoritarianism, gender, the rise of civil society and the resurgence of Islamic activism.

In this last example, it is interesting to note that the actual term “religion” is not directly used, when it might seem an obvious candidate for inclusion in an analysis of the contemporary Middle East.

These statistics are not included in the overall figures.

### 7.3.11 Trinity Western University

BA in International Studies

Accessed: 13/9/04

[www.twu.ca](http://www.twu.ca)

<http://www.twu.ca/ac/20042005/Humanities/InternationalStudies.aspx>

Founded by the Evangelical Free Church almost 50 years ago, and granted membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) in 1984, Trinity Western is self-defined as a Christian University. According to Academic Vice President, Dr Dennis Jameson, “The deepest reason for a Christian university is an unrealized

dream, an unrequited passion for bringing others into a full knowledge of God, the universe, the world, and themselves.”<sup>34</sup>

For such an explicit statement of faith, it was fascinating for this researcher to consider how strongly religious issues, and specifically a Christian approach, would be incorporated into the curriculum and substance of this multidisciplinary programme in International Studies, offered by the Department of Geography, History, and Political and International Studies.

A religious vocation is clearly acknowledged as far as future employment is concerned.

The programme is designed to equip students for:

international careers in areas such as foreign service and international business; social service involving immigrants, refugees, resettlement, and overseas development; missionary service; and journalism, research and advocacy work on global issues.

#### Required Core Courses (4)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

#### Required Area Studies Courses (12)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>

Perhaps rather surprisingly for a University with acknowledged religious connections, only one Religious Studies course is required:

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<sup>34</sup> Trinity Western, <<http://www.twu.ca/academics/welcome.aspx>> (13/9/04).

**RELS 364 The Expansion of Christianity in the Two-thirds World** The expansion of Christianity in the non-Western world from the first century to the present. Attention will be given to critiquing those factors which hindered or enhanced the expansion of Christianity during specific eras.

### Track Options

#### Track I: International Affairs and Global Policy (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

#### Track II: International Development and Cultural Change (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	2	0	2

In contrast to many of the more “secular” universities, the Christian perspective of TWU comes through in the following course descriptions:

**Econ 330 Theory and Practice of Development** A study of major theories or models of economic development and evaluation of practices and approaches to economic development by studying various cases from several different countries. Theories and practices of development are examined from a Christian perspective, with consideration of the influence of the human factor.

**Econ 430 Seminar on Third World Development Issues** Issues in economic development and responses to economic disparity among people and nations will be examined. Responses to these disparities by the Church and by various agencies and institutions. Topics of current interest including leadership and the human factor in development.

#### Track III: International Political Economy (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

#### Track IV: Linguistics and TESL (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

A different perspective is also evident in this linguistics course:

**LING 319 Issues in TESOL and Missions** Teaching English as a second or foreign language as a tool for world evangelism.

#### Electives (19)

(From Anthropology, Communications, Economics, History, Linguistics, Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>

While the 4 Religious Studies courses among the electives – **RELS 285 Introduction to Missions; RELS 384 Religion, Contextualization, and Culture Change; RELS 386 Global Theologies; RELS 460 Current Trends and Issues in Missions** – are particularly directed towards theology, mission and evangelism, they do not directly explore the relationship between religion and development.

#### TWU: Overall Totals (55)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>

The correspondence of these statistics between religion and culture is remarkable, and may suggest that TWU is less concerned than its more secular counterparts about disguising references to religion in its course descriptions and content.

Certainly, more religious content is evident at TWU than other more secular universities, though, outside of the Electives, the statistics show little difference to comparable programmes. The connection between religion and development is not directly explored, little is mentioned about the Church's role in development at home or abroad and scant focus is directed towards the deep underlying religious worldviews and cosmologies that shape the possibilities of development.

If the statistics above seem unremarkable for an admittedly Christian institution, it should be borne in mind that other programmes may explore alternative dimensions of "Christian" development. For instance, the Department of Religious Studies offers an Inter-Cultural Religious Studies programme, where students can choose from one of three options: Christian Missions, Global Development or Linguistics.

### 7.3.12 University College of Cape Breton

BA in Community Studies (BACS); formerly BA in Comparative Development Studies.

Accessed 17/9/04

[www.uccb.ca](http://www.uccb.ca)

<http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/international/bacs.htm>

In spite of being listed in both the CCUPIDS and AUCC websites as home to an IDS programme, it is hard to view the current programme as comparable to other programmes in International Development Studies across Canada. The website describes the demise of the BA in Comparative Development Studies:

The Bachelor's degree in Comparative Development Studies was introduced five years ago as an option under the Community Studies program, and enables students to study the theory and practice of development, both locally and internationally, including a practical work placement which in some cases takes place overseas. Although a dozen students initially enrolled in the program, five of whom went overseas this year for four month international work placements, lack of promotion and profile on the part of UCCB resulted in lack of interest on the part of students.<sup>35</sup>

Hopes for the programme's revival are still entertained, but, according to the website, "The recent restructuring of the university resulted in the Division of Community Studies being folded into the new School of Community Studies and the CDS courses being assigned to the Sociology Department."<sup>36</sup> The resultant BA in Community Studies (BACS) degree is not recognizable as a traditional IDS degree.

Locally, the University is associated with the Community Economic Development (CED) Institute, which is involved with community economic initiatives in one of the most depressed areas of Canada.

At the graduate level, UCCB offers an MBA in Community Economic Development.

### 7.3.13 University College of the Fraser Valley

Associate of Arts in International and Development Studies

Accessed: 6/09/04

[www.ucfv.ca](http://www.ucfv.ca)

[www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003\\_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm](http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm)

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<sup>35</sup> UCCB, <<http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/international/bacs.htm>> (17/9/04).

<sup>36</sup> UCCB, <<http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/international/bacs.htm>> (17/9/04).



The University College of the Fraser Valley (UCFV) offers an Associate of Arts degree (International and Development Studies option) with a focus on Latin America.

Unusually, in outlining career possibilities associated with their program in International and Development Studies, the UCFV acknowledges church work as potential sources of employment and volunteer experience:

The program is designed to provide a sound background for students who intend to pursue careers in businesses with interests overseas, church work in the third world, teaching, journalism, community relations, translation, international development work, the travel industry, diplomacy, government, international trade and commerce, as well as for those wishing to prepare for advanced scholarly work and research.<sup>37</sup>

Part of the programme involves work experience, which “can be fulfilled in a number of ways and might include activities involving community education, non-governmental organizations, church groups involved in international issues, etc.”<sup>38</sup>

#### Courses offered (“Sample program outline”) (29)

(Recommended courses include offerings from Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Political Science, Sociology; English, Communications, Latin American Studies, History, Social, Cultural and Media Studies, Mathematics, Statistics, Computing Science)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

Considering the initial stress on Church contact and employment it may appear a little surprising that no courses exploring the religious dimension of development are offered

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<sup>37</sup> UCFV, <[http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003\\_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm](http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm)> (1/11/04).

<sup>38</sup> UCFV, <[http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003\\_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm](http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm)> (1/11/04).

and that a more obvious link does not exist to the Department of Religious Studies, which suggests that “Religion plays a significant role in the lives of many.”<sup>39</sup>

### 7.3.14 University of Calgary

B.A. in Development Studies

Accessed 10/9/04

[www.ucalgary.ca](http://www.ucalgary.ca)

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/what/Fac/CC/CCSub\\_CE.htm](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/what/Fac/CC/CCSub_CE.htm)

(Older site: <http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~destuofc/ProgramD.html>)

Under the auspices of the Faculty of Communication and Culture, the B.A. in Development Studies offers interdisciplinary courses from a wide variety of departments. Some of the links relative to the University of Calgary and Development Studies sites can be confusing. Earlier websites, such as the link accessed from the International Development Studies Network website,<sup>40</sup> which includes a course outline from 1997, contain references to Belief Systems and Religion. In the Courses section, one of the Options categories, is headed Belief Systems, and covers courses in Anthropology, Religious Studies and Sociology. Three Religious Studies courses are also offered in the Cross-Cultural Communication category.<sup>41</sup> But no cross-listing with any of the 84 courses in Religious Studies courses exists in the latest listing of courses from the Calendar of 2004/2005.

### Core Development Studies Courses (8)

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<sup>39</sup> UCFV, <[http://www.ucfv.bc.ca/calendar/2004\\_05pdfs/2Faculty\\_of\\_Arts.pdf](http://www.ucfv.bc.ca/calendar/2004_05pdfs/2Faculty_of_Arts.pdf)> (6/9/04).

<sup>40</sup> International Development Studies Network, <[www.idsnet.org/ccupids](http://www.idsnet.org/ccupids)> (10/9/04).

<sup>41</sup> Calgary, <<http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~destuofc/frame1.html>> (10/9/04).

**RELIGION**

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

**CULTURE**

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

One of these core classes, which considers the formative influence of religion in how Westerners view their world. is "required of every student registered in a Major and General program in the Faculty of Communication and Culture and should be taken as early as possible in the program."<sup>42</sup> Such an approach might be instructive relative to the developing world:

**General Studies 300 Heritage I - Perspective** Introduction to the interrelationships of disciplines, ideas and problems within contemporary life and their roots in Western European thought using primary source material in literature, philosophy and religion, science and technology, political, economic and social thought and the arts. Emphasis will be placed on understanding and critically evaluating the context of thought within which individuals raised in the Western European tradition think and view the world. Relationships to non-Western European tradition will be discussed.

**Other Required Courses (14)****RELIGION**

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**CULTURE**

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

**Options (24)**

(n.b. 2 unlisted)

**RELIGION**

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**CULTURE**

Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>

**Northern Development Concentration (4)**

(n.b. 9 repeats)

**RELIGION**

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**CULTURE**

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>42</sup> Calgary, <<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/what/courses/GNST.htm>> (10/9/04).

### Calgary: Overall Total (50)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	1	6	10

### 7.3.15 University of Guelph

BA in International Development

Accessed: 6/9/04

[www.uoguelph.ca](http://www.uoguelph.ca)

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/cids/>

[http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/c12/c12idev.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/c12/c12idev.shtml)

Collaborative International Development Studies at Guelph forms “the largest program of its kind in Canada.” Six areas of study predominate: Economics and Business Development; Women in the Development Process; Rural and Agricultural Development; Biophysical Environment and Development; Latin American Studies; Political Development and Administrative Change. The programme is divided into Core Requirements (from Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, International Development, Political Science, Rural Extension, Sociology, Women’s Studies) and Areas of Emphasis (from Biophysical Environment and Development; Economic and Business Development; Latin American Studies; Political Economy and Administrative Change; Rural and Agricultural Development: Gender and Development). Guelph does not have a Religious Studies department.

### Core Requirements (21)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>

### Areas of Emphasis (128) (n.b. 20 repeats)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
1	3	2	17

### University of Guelph: Overall Total (149)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>

### University of Guelph -- Graduate

MA and MSc in International Development  
Accessed: 7/9/04  
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/cids/graduate/index.shtml>

The Collaborative International Development Studies graduate programme at Guelph emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of study situated "in an historical, social, economic, political, cultural and geographic context."<sup>43</sup> No mention is made of a religious context, and little emphasis on culture is obvious, although students are

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<sup>43</sup> Guelph, < <http://www.uoguelph.ca/cids/graduate/research.shtml> > (7/9/04).

encouraged "to acquire a working knowledge of the language used in the country or region relevant to their research or future work."<sup>44</sup>

### CIDS Core (13)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	3

### Optional Courses (55)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	7

### University of Guelph: Graduate Total (68)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	10

## 7.3.16 University of New Brunswick

BA in International Development Studies (Fredericton)

Accessed 6/9/04

[www.unb.ca](http://www.unb.ca)

<http://www.unb.ca/calendar/undergraduate/display.cgi?tables=fredProgramsSubLevel2&id=360> (Fredericton)

<http://www.unb.ca/calendar/undergraduate/display.cgi?tables=sjProgramsSubLevel1&id=12> (Saint John)

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<sup>44</sup> Guelph, <<http://www.uoguelph.ca/cids/graduate/research.shtml>> (7/9/04).

The University of New Brunswick (UNB) comprises two main campuses, at Fredericton and Saint John, offering a BA and a minor respectively.

The International Development Studies Programme at Fredericton encompasses participating disciplines in the Faculty of Arts: Anthropology; Economics; English; French; History; Political Science; Sociology; Spanish and Latin American Cultures. UNB has no Religious Studies Programme.

The UNB website proves confusing, with a particular challenge to ascertain what is, in fact, dated material.<sup>45</sup>

## Fredericton Campus

### IDS Courses – Required (3)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	1

### IDS Courses -- Other (3)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	1

### Electives – unavailable<sup>46</sup>

In a previous web page,<sup>47</sup> dated September 19<sup>th</sup>. 2001. a Religious Studies course from St. Thomas University was cross-listed: **RELG 3553 Islamic Ethics and Spirituality.**

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<sup>45</sup> For example, UNB, <[www.unbf.ca/arts/IDS/Dev](http://www.unbf.ca/arts/IDS/Dev)> (6/9/04).

<sup>46</sup> A request to UNB for a list of electives, as per an invite on the website, met with no response.

## Saint John Campus

### Required (1)

(n.b. 1 unlisted)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

### Electives (10)

(n.b. 2 unlisted)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	1

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	3

### UNB (Fredericton and Saint John): Overall Total (17)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	1

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	5

## 7.3.17 University of Northern British Columbia

BA in International Studies

Accessed: 17/9/04

[www.unbc.ca](http://www.unbc.ca)

[www.unbc.ca/internationalstudies](http://www.unbc.ca/internationalstudies)

[https://www.unbc.ca/pls/prd/dev\\_web.course\\_finder.calendar?subject=International!Studies](https://www.unbc.ca/pls/prd/dev_web.course_finder.calendar?subject=International!Studies)

The International Studies (INTS) programme at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) gives "special attention to British Columbia's immediate international

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<sup>47</sup> UNB, <<http://www.unbf.ca/arts/IDS/Dev/courses.html>> (6/9/04).



neighbours: the Pacific Rim countries, the nations of the Circumpolar North, and the United States.”<sup>48</sup> The language requirements reflect this Northern exposure, with Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Russian and Swedish being offered as an integral part of the INTS programme.

### INTS Courses (64)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	7

The 7 references to culture in the course descriptions include four similar course offerings:

**INTS 200, 202, 203, 204 Contemporary Russia, United States, Japan, China**  
 An interdisciplinary survey of the former Soviet Union and its peoples, including an examination of major historical, social, economic, political and cultural features of the country.

### Lower and Upper Division Requirements (8) (INTS courses above excerpted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

### UNBC: Overall Total (72)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	7

The lack of references to religion may reflect the fact that no Religious Studies department exists at UNBC.

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<sup>48</sup> UNBC, <<http://www.unbc.ca/internationalstudies/>> (17/9/04).

## UNBC -- Graduate

UNBC's MA in International Studies, with streams in regional relations, international development, and global environmental policy, has particular reference to the Circumpolar North, and does not have significant focus in the more traditional development areas of Latin America, Asia and Africa.

### INTS Courses (13)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

### Other Courses (4)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

### UNBC Graduate Total (17)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

## 7.3.18 University of Ottawa

BSocSc with Honours in International Development and Globalization

Accessed 19/9/04

[www.uottawa.ca](http://www.uottawa.ca)

<http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/crs/ssocEN/DVM.htm> (English)

<http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/crs/ssocFR/DVM.htm> (French)

Promoted as “Canada's premier bilingual university / “La plus importante université bilingue.”<sup>49</sup> the University of Ottawa offers a Program of Study in International Development and Globalization/ Programme d'étude en développement international et mondialisation.

The new pluridisciplinary program in international development and globalization provides a solid background in international development, on the strength of many disciplines: political science, sociology, economics and history. All of these areas are taking a broader interest in globalization and international development.<sup>50</sup>

Course offerings are listed in English and French. The French outline is virtually identical to the English, with many courses offered in French under a different course number -- e.g. **ECO 1102** [English] – **ECO 1502** [French]. The following statistics are based on the English version.

#### Compulsory Courses (16)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

#### General Studies Courses (41)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>

<sup>49</sup> Ottawa, <<http://www.uottawa.ca/all-about/>> (19/9/04).

<sup>50</sup> Ottawa, <<http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/progl-interdevel.asp>> (19/9/04).

The most fascinating course offering was definitely **POL 4541 Politique et Religion (Politics and Religion)** which, although listed in current course offerings, could not be accessed on the online Calendar.

### University of Ottawa: Overall Total (57)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	2	8

A graduate programme at the University of Ottawa is presently being considered.

## 7.3.19 University of Saskatchewan

BA in International Studies

Accessed: 15/9/04

[www.usask.ca](http://www.usask.ca)

<http://arts.usask.ca/intnl/>

<http://www.usask.ca/calendar/arts&science/programs/programs/intnlstudies/#anchor6#anchor6>

The International Studies Programme includes streams in Development Studies.

International Cooperation and Conflict, Latin American Studies and Slavic and East

European Studies. Core departments involved include Religious Studies and

Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Political Studies, and Sociology.

### Development Studies

A wide variety of courses are offered in this stream:

The recommended courses in this stream include examinations of specific aspects

of third world development in all of the disciplines involved in the program. These include courses in the history of European expansion and colonialism, anthropology and sociology courses dealing with comparative cultural and social change, history, political studies, geography and economics courses which deal with specific regions of the third world and courses which discuss in a broad international context issues of particular importance to development (resource use, the environment, urbanization, health, gender, indigenous issues, and agriculture). Courses of particular relevance from the Departments of Native Studies, Women's and Gender Studies and Community Health and Epidemiology are also included.<sup>51</sup>

Religion is not directly mentioned, in spite of the fact that it is combined with anthropology in the Department of Religious Studies and Anthropology.

### Required Courses (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

### Recommended Courses (53)

(n.b. 8 unlisted, 5 repeats)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	5	3	13

Of the 8 courses from the Department of Religious Studies and Anthropology, only 3 mentioned aspects of faith and religion:

#### **ANTH 230.3 Introduction to Cultural Dynamics**

Examines some of the major dimensions of non-material culture including religion, magic, and constructs of space and time. It also examines processes of enculturation and culture change.

#### **ANTH 231.3 Anthropology of Health Systems: A Cross-Cultural Perspective**

Examines the medical systems of practice and belief utilized by non-Western traditional societies in contending with the universal realities of disease and

<sup>51</sup> Saskatchewan, <<http://www.usask.ca/calendar/arts&science/programs/programs/intnistudies/#anchor3.>> (15/9/04).

mental illness. The attempts to extend Western medical systems into traditional societies will also be considered.

### **ANTH 232.3 Peoples and Cultures of South Asia**

A general survey of the social, economic, political and religious institutions of the countries of South Asia from an anthropological perspective. Both the traditional cultures and the changes which are taking place are considered. Although the primary emphasis in the course is on the peoples and cultures of India, comparative materials from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and other areas of South Asia are also examined.

## International Cooperation and Conflict

This stream has a particular focus on Political Studies courses, but also includes courses in Sociology and Anthropology which include a focus on ethnic relations and conflict, acknowledged as "important elements of the stream."<sup>52</sup>

### Required Courses (4)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

### Recommended Courses (38)

(n.b. 8 unlisted)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	3

## Latin American Studies

The Guatemala Term Abroad, offered as a joint program with the University of Guelph, is a required and integral part of this stream.

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<sup>52</sup> Saskatchewan, <<http://www.usask.ca/calendar/arts&science/programs/programs/intnlstudies/#anchor4>> (15/9/04).

### Required Courses (2)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Recommended Courses (23)

(n.b. 5 unlisted)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

### Slavic and East European Studies

This area of concentration, unique to the University of Saskatchewan, focuses on Eastern Europe and also offers study in Russia or Ukraine.

### Required Courses (2)

(n.b. language courses not included)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Recommended Courses (67)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>

These statistics encourage interesting analysis. The emphasis in these courses on religion (and culture) acknowledge the role and legacy of the Christian Church in the Slavic areas.

Two courses in particular illustrate this:

**RUSS 210.3 Russian Civilization** A survey of the material, spiritual and intellectual culture of Russia.

**UKR 230.3 Pre-Soviet Ukrainian Civilization** A survey of the material, spiritual and intellectual culture in Ukraine from prehistory to the beginning of the 20th century.

Offerings also include 4 courses listed by the Department of Anthropology and Religious Studies as RELS (rather than ANTH) courses. It might be noted how orthodox Christianity has been formative in the development of Slavic culture, but attention to such a phenomenon in Eastern Europe serves to highlight the omission of such a focus in the developing world where, arguably, the great faiths have historically played decisive roles and even today influence worldviews appreciably. Thus, the contrast between Eastern Europe and the Developing World, highlighted by this concentration at the University of Saskatchewan, is acutely interesting and is reflected in two sets of contrasting statistics (note that the former group contains almost double the number of course offerings):

Development, International Cooperation and Conflict, Latin American Studies (125)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>

Slavic and East European Studies (69)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>

It must, therefore, be borne in mind that the overall totals for the University of Saskatchewan are somewhat inflated relative to religion because of the Slavic and East European Studies stream.

#### University of Saskatchewan: Overall Total (194)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>32</b>



## 7.3.20 University of Toronto

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed: 8/9/04

<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca>

<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/%7Esocsci/programs/ids.html>

[http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar04/International\\_Development\\_Studies.html](http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar04/International_Development_Studies.html)

The International Development Studies programme at the University of Toronto provides a number of options for students wishing to study international development, including a year long placement overseas -- "the only university program in Canada with a required (and full-funded) placement in a development country."<sup>53</sup>

The basic IDS programme consists of core classes, a social science stream and an environmental stream, allowing students to gain an Honours BA, with a specialization in Social Sciences, or an Honours BSc, with a specialization in Environmental Sciences.

### A. Core Program (23)

#### RELIGION

Title            Abstract

0

1

#### CULTURE

Title            Abstract

0

3

One course offering has clear reference to religion:

#### **POLB91H3 Comparative Development in Political Perspective**

This course examines the role of politics and the state in the processes of development in less developed countries. Topics include the role of the militaries and bureaucracies, the relationship between the state and the economy, and the role of religion and ethnicity in politics.

### B. Advanced Options

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<sup>53</sup> Toronto, <<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/%7Esocsci/ids/index.html>> (8/9/04).

## I. Social Science Stream (57)

(n.b. 5 unavailable, 6 repeats)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>

This stream pays considerable attention to courses exploring the religious dimensions of development:

**ANTB54H3 Peoples of the Middle East: An Introduction** An exploration of the range of cultures, languages, religions, and practices of the Middle East and North Africa, with particular focus on Islam.

**ANTC55H3 Muslim Societies** Complements ANTB54H by more closely considering selected issues in societies professing Islam, based on ethnographic case studies from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

**ANTB05H3 African Cultures and Societies I: Survey** An overview of the range and diversity of African social institutions, religious beliefs and ritual, kinship, political and economic organization, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial experience.

**ANTB20H3 Culture, Politics and Globalization** A further examination of approaches to the study of human cultural diversity. Subjects to be discussed include the study of such cultural identities as ethnicity and nationalism, globalization and the creation of a global culture, the political dimensions of culture, religion, and the anthropological study of kinship, marriage and family.

**POLC96H3 Politics and Society in the Middle East I** This course examines politics and society in the contemporary Middle East with a focus on understanding the region's resistance to economic and political liberalization. Topics covered will include the role of external actors in the creation and evolution of the Middle East state system, the nature of authoritarian methods of statecraft in both republics and monarchs, the developmental effects of oil revenues, and the prospects for both secular and Islamist social protest movements.

**HISC50H3 Africa in the Nineteenth Century** An introduction to the history of Sub-Saharan Africa, from the era of the slave trade to the colonial conquests. Throughout, the capacity of Africans to overcome major problems will be stressed. Themes include slavery and the slave trade; pre-colonial states and societies; economic and labour systems; and religious change.

**HISC51H3 Twentieth Century Africa** Modern Sub-Saharan Africa, from the colonial conquests to the post-colonial era of structural adjustment. The emphasis is on both structure and agency in a hostile world. Themes include conquest and resistance; colonial economies; gender and ethnicity; religious and political movements; development and underdevelopment, post-colonial conflicts, as well as cultural achievements.

**HISC52H3 A History of Ethiopia** Ethiopia from the fourth through the nineteenth century, with particular emphasis on the Christian Church, the monarchy, links with both the Mediterranean world and the Indian subcontinent, and the relationship of individuals to their social, economic, artistic and geographic environments.

**HISC53H3 Topics in Asian History** A topical study of the cultures, peoples and states of South and Southeast Asia. Topics may include India in the eighteenth century, Official and Missionary Orientalism, emergence and development of Indian nationalism, formation of ethnic and gender identities, Muslim revival and separatism, partition and post-partition politics and society.

**HISD52H3 East African Societies in Transition** A seminar study of East African peoples from late pre-colonial times to the 1990s, emphasizing their rapid although uneven adaptation to integration of the region into the wider world. Transitions associated with migrations, commercialization, religious change, colonial conquest, nationalism, economic development and conflict, will be investigated. Student presentations are required.

However, the inability of course descriptions to comprehensively describe course content leaves exact content open to speculation. In the following example, religious motivations, and especially the effects of Liberation Theology, may well have surfaced in actual lectures:

**POLC99H3 Latin America: The Politics of the Dispossessed** This course explores the way the poor and oppressed have organized and fought for their rights. Special attention is given to the way in which globalization has affected popular organizing, including its impact on insurgent movements such as the Zapatistas.

In the following example, some mention of the religious dimension might have been expected:

**ANTC61H3 Medical Anthropology: Illness and Healing in Cultural Perspective** Social and symbolic aspects of the body, the life-cycle, the representation and popular explanation of illness, the logic of traditional healing systems, the culture of North American illness and biomedicine, mental illness, social roots of disease, innovations in health care delivery systems.

## II. Environmental Stream (23)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

As in many course descriptions, one wonders if religion is subsumed under other categories, such as ethics:

**IDSC05H3 The Ethics of Development** Examines the theoretical foundations of ethics of development, particularly the ethics of aid and intervention. Considers the policies and practices of major international institutions, national governments, and independent NGOs. Case studies will be used to evaluate the ethical dimensions of specific projects and policies.

## C. Regional and Language Options (not assessed)

### D. Required IDS Class (1)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Extra courses required for Majors (7)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## University of Toronto: Overall Total (111)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>

In spite of the wide variety of courses on offer, no cross-listing exists with the Department and Centre for the Study of Religion (part of the Department of Humanities rather than the Department of Social Sciences), with which there would appear to be possibilities for overlap and interaction, as in the following two examples:

**RLG 228H1F Religious Ethics: The Environment** This course focuses on the interrelationship of environmental problems and issues of global justice. Views of different religious traditions on the natural world and the place of humans within it; ethical approaches of various traditions and cultures to poverty, hunger, and depletion of natural resources; obligations of humans toward "nature" and toward other humans' well-being will be considered.

**RLG 212Y1Y Anthropology of Religion** Anthropological study of the supernatural in small scale, non-literate societies. A cross-cultural examination of systems of belief and ritual. Among the topics covered are: the relationship between myth and ritual; shamanism and healing; magic, witchcraft and sorcery; divination; ancestor worship.

The University of Toronto is also offering a BA in International Studies.

## University of Toronto -- Graduate

MA/MSc in Political Economy of Development

Accessed: 8/9/04

<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/SGSCalendar/2004-2005/pol.asp>

The Specialist Program in Political Economy of Development demonstrates a heavy concentration of Political Science and Economics: "Students who enter this program must have a satisfactory background in political science and undergraduate prerequisites in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and statistics."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Toronto, <<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/SGSCalendar/2004-2005/pol.asp>> (8/9/04).

### Required course (1)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	0

In addition to the required course, students select from Economics, Political Science or Political Economy course lists. These lists proved difficult to access, as a result of weak website links.

## 7.3.21 University of Windsor

BA in International Relations and Development Studies

Accessed: 19/9/04

<http://athena.uwindsor.ca/>

<http://athena.uwindsor.ca/units/polsci/political.nsf/main/70B393A6B132A7A885256C710070008B?opendocument>

<http://athena.uwindsor.ca/units/polsci/political.nsf/main/2BAC7F1A1303572985256C7100700093?opendocument>

The multi-disciplinary International Relations and Development Studies programme draws primarily on the resources of Political Science, Economics, History, Geography, Sociology and Anthropology.

### Core Courses (22)

(n.b. -- 1 course unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	1	0	4

### International Relations Stream (31)

(n.b -- 5 unlisted, 3 repeats)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	3

### International Development Stream (11)

(n.b. 5 unlisted, 16 repeats)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
2	2	0	3

Two course offerings include direct references to religion:

**45-260: Politics, History, and Asian Religions** An introduction to Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shinto, with attention to their role in history and politics.

(A similarly structured course is not offered: **45-261: Politics, History, and Western Religions** An introduction to Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Islam, and Baha'i, with attention to their role in history and politics.)

**45-371: Religion and Politics** A study of the relationship between religion and politics, with special attention to millenarian (e.g., Nation of Islam/Black Muslims, Christian Identity) and/or fundamentalist movements (e.g., Moral Majority, Islamic Jihad).

While a direct connection is explored between Religion and Politics, no correspondent connection is analyzed between Religion and Development.

### University of Windsor: Overall Total (64)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
2	3	0	10

## University of Windsor -- Graduate

The University of Windsor offers a master's degree in Political Science with an emphasis on International Relations and Global Politics.

### 7.3.22 Wilfrid Laurier University

BA in Global Studies

Accessed: 7/9/04

<http://www.wlu.ca>

[http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwregi/2004-2005/sec\\_406.htm](http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwregi/2004-2005/sec_406.htm)

Of all the programmes examined in this study, the Global Studies programme at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) is perhaps the most fascinating. The direction of the programme is clearly evident in the "Directions Document for Global Studies," which affirms a commitment to global justice and includes religious movements as transformational agents in society:

The Global Studies Program at WLU fosters a spirit of critical thinking about global justice. We are committed to the equitable distribution of economic, cultural and political resources; the non-violent transformation of conflict; and the development of cross-cultural understanding and dialogue around the globe.

Global Studies is an emerging and vital discipline within the University. Areas of interest include the following: the relationship of the global and the local in diaspora communities; the history and meanings of globalization; the role of transnational, social, and religious movements for change; and the development and consequences of inequalities within national communities as well as across the globe.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Wilfrid Laurier. <<http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwdis/directions.shtml>> (7/9/04).



## Global Studies Courses (29)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
4	7	3	8

Of these courses, 4 are cross-listed with Religion and Culture, and, in contrast to many similar programmes, reflect a significant concentration on the religious dimension. For example:

**GS/RE372 Women's Lives and Religious Values** A study of the spiritual quests, ritual practices, social struggles and religious attitudes of women in selected cultures. Attention will be paid to the differences between men and women's religious experiences.

**GS/RE380 Religion and Social Change** A study of the relationship between religion and movements of social change, using theories drawn from sociology of religion and cultural studies. The course will draw upon cross-cultural examples in its consideration of the development of critical theologies in socio-historical contexts, the role of religion in political processes and the links between religion and different movements for self-determination.

**GS/RE319 Rites of Passage** An examination of selected rites of passage such as weddings, funerals and initiations. Special attention is given to the dramatic qualities of ritual processes.

**GS/RE321 Gandhi: Non-Violence and the Struggle for Freedom** An investigation of Gandhi's role in the emergence of the modern Indian state. An analysis of the sources and development of Gandhi's use of religious techniques such as non-violence, fasting and non-attached action, in social transformation and political struggle.

**GS325 Islam Culture and Society** This course challenges the duality between "the West" and Islam. Students investigate Islamic societies and cultures as influenced by regional, national and international geopolitics. Case studies consider the conditions under which religious texts are interpreted, and their

impact on daily life. Connections are made between colonialism, poverty, militarization and fundamentalism in Islamic societies.

Core Electives can be divided into three distinct fields: Comparative Development; Peace and Conflict; Globalization and Cultures.

**Comparative Development (39)**  
(n.b. 6 unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>

**Peace and Conflict (22)**  
(n.b. 2 unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Globalization and Cultures (76)**  
(n.b. 8 unlisted)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>26</b>

Of these courses, 13 are listed as Religious Studies (RE) courses. with the following breakdown, by reference and title:

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>

- RE100 Religions of the Americas: Indigenous, African and European**
- RE101 Religions of the Americas: Asian and Middle Eastern**
- RE212 World Religions in Cultural Perspective**
- RE213 The Religious Heritage of Islam**
- RE227 Religions and Cultures of the Middle East**
- RE246 Ritual and the Arts in South Asian Religions**
- RE250 Asian Religions: Origins and Development of Buddhism**
- RE251 Asian Religions II: China and Japan**

**RE285 Religion and Culture of the African Diaspora**  
**RE296 Work, Religion and the Cultural Systems in Asia**  
**RE344 Apocalypticism**  
**RE424 Advanced Seminar in Buddhism**  
**RE432 Modern Christianity**

In addition to these offerings from Religious Studies, 6 other courses refer to religion in their titles:

**AN322 Religion, Ritual and Magic**  
**FI238 Christian Images in Art History**  
**HI311 The Reformation**  
**PY209 Philosophy of Religion**  
**PY309 Philosophy of Mysticism**  
**SY311 Sociology of Religion**

In some of these courses – for example, **FI238 Christian Images in Art History** – the connection with international development is very tangential, although in others – for example, **AN322 Religion, Ritual and Magic** – the connection may be more substantive:

The study of private and public rituals which relate society to the supernatural; charismatic and millenarian movements; magical beliefs and the social and epistemological dimensions of witchcraft.

Thus, religion is a conspicuous influence in the area of Globalization and Cultures.

### Wilfrid Laurier University: Overall Total (179)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>24</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42</b>

These figures indicating the preponderance of religious influence are remarkable, when compared to similar IDS programmes across Canada. Religion plays a central role in a comparatively high proportion of these courses, although, it may be argued, few if any expressly explore the relationship between religion and development. On the evidence of

such statistics, it might also be argued that religion plays a more central role in the IDS programme at WLU than at any other university across Canada. The question arises as to why such an emphasis exists at WLU in comparison to other institutions across Canada. A detour into history may be instructive.

Lutheran Seminary was established in 1910 in Waterloo. Secular courses were added and in 1925 the Faculty of Arts, under the name of Waterloo College, became affiliated with the University of Western Ontario, a relationship which lasted until 1960, when the name of the institution was changed to Waterloo Lutheran University, which, in turn, led in 1973 to its present designation as Wilfrid Laurier University. A heavy Lutheran background is therefore clearly evident.

However, many of Canada's universities trace their roots to ecclesiastical origins. For instance, statistics from Menno Simons College exhibit less attention to religion, in spite of the direct and continuing Mennonite influence in development. The statistics from WLU are, therefore, all the more remarkable.

### 7.3.23 York University

BA in International Development Studies

Accessed 9/9/04

[www.yorku.ca](http://www.yorku.ca)

<http://www.arts.yorku.ca/sosc/ids/index.html>

[http://www.arts.yorku.ca/sosc/ids/pdf/2004\\_IDS\\_minicalendar.pdf](http://www.arts.yorku.ca/sosc/ids/pdf/2004_IDS_minicalendar.pdf)

The International Development Studies at York University is one of six areas --

Environmental Studies, Global Political Studies, International Business Administration,

International Development Studies, International Project Management, International Studies - Bilingual -- all falling under the International Studies programme. "International studies develop knowledge of the world through a broadly integrated analysis of how peoples separated by cultural, economic or political boundaries interact."<sup>56</sup> The following analysis only focuses on International Development Studies.

#### Core Courses (4)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	0	2

#### Extra Required Honours Courses (5)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	2	1	2

In spite of two mentions in these primarily area study courses, the subject of religion is essentially peripheral, as in the following examples. In the first, the subject of faith, belief and religion is skirted around, while in the second it is touched upon:

**AS/SOSC 2460 Contemporary Latin America** This course provides an interdisciplinary examination of the basic features of contemporary Latin America. The course begins with an historical overview of the forces and events that have shaped Latin America in the current century. Phenomena common to the region as a whole such as rural exodus, the explosive growth of the cities, the growing disparity between rich and poor and the rapidly changing role of women are explored. However, the course also focuses on the diversity of experience of Latin Americans, touching on regional differences, the development of the Amazon and its social and environmental consequences, the condition of indigenous peoples, the questions of dictatorship and democracy, revolution and

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<sup>56</sup> York, <<http://www.yorku.ca/web/futurestudents/programs/template.asp?id=454>> (9/9/04).

counter-revolution, and the various attempts to overcome inequalities and underdevelopment.

**AS/SOSC 2480 Introduction to African Studies** This core course introduces students to the study of Africa. The first part looks at the representation of Africa in the media as well as perspectives on the nature of African studies as a discipline. The second part looks at the self-directed and relatively autonomous Africa before the European encounter. Of special importance are the diverse forms of traditional pre-colonial political institutions; the patterns of belief and social relationships, such as marriage, the role of women and kinship; and the rise and decline of pre-colonial states before Africa's incorporation into the wider, European dominated world. The third part addresses the impact of the modern slave trade, the establishment of colonisation and the rise of nationalism. In the final section we look at post-colonial Africa and the major social, political and economic issues inherited and developmental strategies Africans opted for: democracy, the economic crisis, structural adjustment and gender politics. In addition, contemporary issues around HIV and AIDS as well as the new African Union, as well as the nature of contemporary African popular culture are addressed. As a second-level Foundations course, students are expected to develop a number of critical skills appropriate to this area of study.

In addition to the above requirements, students must select from courses in two of six specializations: Culture; Diaspora and Migration; Environment; Gender; Political Economy; Politics, Governance and Policy. No obvious religious dimension is evident, and no courses from the Religious Studies Department are cross-listed, in spite of the claim by that department that "Religious experience is an indispensable key to the understanding of human culture and society."<sup>57</sup>

### Area 1: Culture (20)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
2	3

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
7	17

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<sup>57</sup> York, <[http://www.arts.yorku.ca/advising/degrees/pdf/religious\\_studies\\_04.pdf](http://www.arts.yorku.ca/advising/degrees/pdf/religious_studies_04.pdf)> (9/9/04).

As might be expected, a great deal of emphasis on culture is included in this section, yet how much overlaps with religion/ spirituality/ faith is largely unanswered in the written descriptions.

It should be noted that both courses which include "Religion" in their titles -- **AS/HUMA 3425 Religion, Gender and Korean Culture; AS/HUMA 4315 Religion and Politics in Latin America and the Caribbean** -- are not being offered in 2004/2005.

The comprehensive course descriptions at York allow for greater scrutiny than at many other universities, but also confirm possible lacunae in the material being covered. The following course description, as thorough as any in Canadian University Calendars, does not mention religion, often a defining part of indigenous life:

**AS/ANTH 3420 Indigenous Minorities and Human Rights** The intention of this course is to address the following issues: how do (nation) states define majorities and minorities? How do people get classified as "indigenous" or "aboriginal"? How has globalization enhanced awareness of minority and human rights everywhere? The course will reveal the extent to which official censuses and classification of populations are contested locally: minorities are defined less by numbers than by politics and conflicts over material and symbolic resources; being indigenous is neither genealogical nor self-evident, but a product of state politics, negotiation of identities between local and transnational bodies and even individual self-selection. Some individuals adopt strategies of shifting ethnic identities according to need, interest and context, despite their ancestry. Who is indigenous in never-colonised or independent, non-settler states, such as Japan? Why do some of India's lowest castes now find it expedient to re-label themselves as "aboriginal"? – a status which they hope will attract greater world attention and resources to their cause than "untouchability" alone. We shall re-examine the continuing debates over universal values (such as human rights) versus cultural relativism, by exploring some recent ideas about "multiple or flexible citizenships", "continuously negotiated constitutions" and group versus individual rights, in evolving multicultural societies. How, for example, do native peoples balance their collective rights to ancestral lands with private business interests, and their status as individual citizens in a democratic society? How is the contemporary doctrine of human rights interpreted by different constituencies in different cultural and national environments? Finally, we shall cover the activities

of some of the global, Fourth World, human rights and NGO movements, across the world. Examples will be drawn from Canada and the rest of the world, including Latin America, South, Southeast and East Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Another example where religion, in light of its potentially seminal location in the analysis, might be included occurs in the following course description:

**AS/SOSC 3480 Culture, Democracy, and Development in Africa** This course explores the complex interplay of political, social and cultural forces at work in Africa, as communities, nations and regions attempt to overcome historic disadvantages and contemporary crises. Of particular interest is the often-ignored capacity of African culture to generate change, resist oppression by both external and internal forces, and solve the problems of development. The course's aim is thus to reunite the increasingly separate domains of African Studies as a regional field of enquiry focused on human history and society, and Development Studies as the "problem solving" field of applied research, where deep social, political and economic issues are viewed as abstract problems with technical solutions. The course reintroduces human agency into an understanding of Africa through the texts of a variety of African thinkers, past and present. The texts are informed by non-African theory as well as indigenous intellectual traditions, and this conceptual synthesis is also investigated in the course.

While course offerings include such eclectic offerings as **Studies in National Cinemas: Chinese Film; Studies in Post-Colonial Literature: Derek Walcott** the overall relationship between culture, religion and development on a broader canvas is ignored.

## Area 2: Diasporas and Migration (15)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	2	2	9

No referents to religion occur in the course titles, though two do address the subject, albeit in contrasting ways:

**AS/SOCI 3450 The Sociology of 'Race' and Racism** The course will emphasize that race is not an individual but a systemic problem, that is, how the basic institutions of capitalist system - the parliament, the church, the school, and the family are directly and



indirectly involved in producing and perpetuating the notion of race and the practice of racism.

**AK/HIST 3940 Global Migration and Diaspora Cultures** Migration and diasporic cultures examined in historical and comparative perspective, including patterns of forced displacement and migrant labour, and issues of citizenship, racism, religious and ethnic identity. Cases may include Jews, Africans, South and East Africans, Irish, Italians, and Caribbean peoples.

In a country as multicultural as Canada, perhaps a more direct approach with regard to immigrants and religious/ faith issues might be expected.

### Area 3: Environment (15)

#### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	2

#### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	8

Two course descriptions raise the persistent question as to how far religion is subsumed under the term culture, mentioned in both:

**ES/ENVS 3310 Tropical Conservation and Sustainable Development** This course is a study of the theory and practice of conservation as applied to sustainable development in tropical environments. Emphasis on the integration of ecological, cultural and institutional dimensions in conservation practice for sustainability.

**ES/ENVS 4210 World Population Issues and Problems** The course examines the trends, causes and consequences in population growth and movements across the globe. It studies the environmental impacts of rises in population, global refugee and immigration patterns and their socio-environmental consequences, and the influence of new immigrants and 'diasporas' on national identity and culture. Case studies explore existing and alternative family planning policies, the enhancement of women's status through educational, health and employment strategies, and immigration and multicultural policies in developed and developing countries.

In the former description, the addition of a spiritual viewpoint, particularly from the perspective of indigenous peoples, might have allowed for further "integration," while in

the latter the inclusion of religious viewpoints might have proved significant in population issues. Such subjects may well be covered in actual classes.

#### Area 4: Gender (17)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	2

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
4	9

The comprehensive course descriptions in York University's calendar allow for more detail, and may allow space for a mention of religion which might otherwise be omitted:

**AS/SOSC 2791 Gender and Culture in Comparative Perspective** This course has three inter-related objectives. The first is to understand the cultural ramifications of gender. The second is to locate gender issues in methodological and theoretical frameworks. The third is to explore particular empirical realms of gender manifestation as these occur in Africa, and in South and East Asia. The works explored in the African context reveal the deep gender inequalities that subvert democratic development. Such inequalities are encoded, for example, in language music, the law, customs and occupational stereotypes. The works explored in the South Asian context attest to the problematic of gender issues where women are separated from direct family influences. The readings, which address the Islamic world, look at research, which shows cultural, political and religious manifestations of women's issues in the 21st century. Finally, we learn of the striking resilience of women and the implicit hierarchies of values that shape gender in cross-cultural contexts.

**AS/ANTH 3230 Women, Culture and Society** This course explores the contribution of anthropology to the study of gender, and the contribution of feminism to anthropology. We will begin by examining early feminist theory in anthropology regarding universal gender asymmetry, the dichotomies of nature/culture and domestic/public. Drawing from recent feminist anthropological perspectives and ethnographic examples, we will further early theories in the anthropology of women. Specifically, we will assert that gender and sexuality are cultural constructions rather than natural categories; we will explore gender and sexuality in cross-cultural perspective as they intersect with culture, religion, race, class, and nation. We will also assess the implications of globalization of production and reproduction on gender in diverse socio-economic, cultural and political contexts.

But such detailed descriptions also underline more obvious areas of omission where religion may potentially play a significant role, as in the following descriptions:

**AS/SOCI 3690 Sociology of Gender** Gender refers to socially generated attitudes and behaviours, usually organized dichotomously as masculinity and femininity. This course examines the personal, social, political and economic structures within which gender is constructed. The first term examines a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives that sociologists use to understand gender. We will focus on the inter-section of gender with age, ability, race/ethnicity and economics. The second and third terms explore the ways in which gender is constructed and reconstructed in culture, institutional life and interpersonal relations. Areas to be explored include body image, cultural representation, sport, intimacy, parenting, labouring and schooling.

**AS/HIST 4765 Re-Thinking Gender in East Asian History** While the rise of women's history and feminist theory in the 1960s and 1970s fostered re-evaluations of social and cultural history in the West, such progressions have been comparatively modest in East Asia. To introduce one of the larger challenges in current East Asian historiography, this course will review the roles of women in pre-modern societies and gauge the ways in which gender roles were influenced, or not, by modernization. Historical studies of East Asian women will be analyzed in conjunction with Western feminist theory to encourage new methods of rethinking patriarchy within the East Asian context.

This course examines changes in social and family structures and gender roles in China, Korea and Japan, before and after modernization. It focuses mainly on women: their places in the family and in society, their relationships with one another and men and the evolution of ideas about gender and sexuality throughout East Asia's rich and complicated past. This seminar in no way attempts to cover the histories of China, Korea and Japan in depth. Rather, we will take points of social, political and ideological transition and examine their relations to social and familial change as well as with evolving gender roles. Our approach will be interdisciplinary and inter-regional.

#### Area 5: Political Economy (28)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

#### Area 6: Politics, Governance, and Policy (27)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>

## York: Overall Total (131)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
2	13	16	57

## York University -- Graduate

A graduate programme in International Development Studies at York University is reported to be "coming soon."<sup>58</sup>

## 7.4 FRANCOPHONE UNIVERSITIES

### 7.4.1 L'Université de Montréal

Baccalauréat en études internationales

Accessed: 31/10/04

<http://www.umontreal.ca>

[http://www.progcours.umontreal.ca/programme/index\\_fiche\\_prog/196013\\_struc.html](http://www.progcours.umontreal.ca/programme/index_fiche_prog/196013_struc.html)

The International Studies programme at the L'Université de Montréal has five "orientations": International Development; Rights; Economic Administration; History, Political Science. Course descriptions are rather brief.

#### Common Courses

#### Required

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<sup>58</sup> York, <<http://www.arts.yorku.ca/ids/graduate/index.html>> (9/9/04).

## Connaissances de base (9)

### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

## Options

## Intégration des acquis (4)

### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

## Langues (54)

(n.b. not included in the statistics)

## Méthodes quantitatives (17)

### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

## Aires culturelles et géographiques (16)

### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	2

### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
9	6

In spite of the heavy emphasis of culture in this bloc, few references to religion appear, an exception being the following course:

**ANT 3875 Aire Culturelle: Asie du Sud** Complexité culturelle et linguistique du sous-continent indien. Rapports entre langue, religion, politique, esthétique, modes de pensée, et entre les grandes civilisations sub-asiatiques et les petites traditions vernaculaires.

## International Development Orientation

## Développement International (24)

The majority of the courses have to be chosen from this bloc.

RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	1

Religion does not appear, and culture only once, in spite of opportunities, as in this description:

**GEO 2212 Dynamique territoriale et développement** Le développement et ses dimensions sociale, économique, politique et environnementale. Le développement régional, local et communautaire et ses pratiques dans le contexte de la transformation globale du système économique et social.

Droit (12)

RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

Économie-Administration (21)

RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	0

Histoire (24)

RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	1

CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	4

Science politique (43)

RELIGION

Title	Abstract
0	0

CULTURE

Title	Abstract
0	1

## L'Université de Montréal: Overall Total (170)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	3	9	12

## L'Université de Montréal – Graduate

L'Université de Montréal offers a “Maîtrise générale avec option en l'Économie du développement.” (Master's in Development Economics).

### 7.4.2 Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

Maîtrise en science politique avec une concentration en relations internationales, politique étrangère, coopération et développement  
Accessed: 29/10/04  
<http://www.uqam.ca>  
[http://www.websysinfo.uqam.ca/regis/pkg\\_wpub.affiche\\_prog\\_desc?P\\_prog=3397](http://www.websysinfo.uqam.ca/regis/pkg_wpub.affiche_prog_desc?P_prog=3397)

The University of Québec at Montreal has no undergraduate programme, but offers a Master's degree in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations, Foreign Policy, Cooperation and Development.

#### Courses (30)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	1	0	3

Beyond mentions of Zionism and Islam in **POL8271 Maghreb-Machrek**, no other references to religion were noted.

### 7.4.3 L'Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO)

Baccalauréat en sciences sociales et communication avec mineure en développement international.

Accessed 30/10/04

<http://www.uqo.ca>

<http://www.uqo.ca/doyen/prg/8541.htm>

L'Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO) / The University of Quebec in the Outaouais (UQO) offers a minor in International Development.

#### Courses (7)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

One mention of religion – in this case, Churches – occurs in these courses:

**POL1163 Systèmes politiques étrangers: Amérique latine** Présentation et comparaison des principales structures et institutions politiques que l'on retrouve en Amérique latine. Étude de leur évolution récente et de leurs rapports avec les réalités sociales, ethno-culturelles et économiques. Identification des forces socio-politiques (partis, mouvements, armées, Églises, etc.) et des idées (populisme, néo-marxisme, nationalisme, etc.) qui ont influencé ou qui influencent toujours la stabilité et le changement politiques en Amérique centrale et en Amérique du sud. L'Amérique latine dans le système international et devant la mondialisation. Relations entre divers pays latino-américains d'une part et le Canada et le Québec d'autre part.

#### Optional Courses (5)

##### RELIGION

Title	Abstract
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##### CULTURE

Title	Abstract
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0                      0    0                      2

#### UQO Overall Total (12)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	1	0	5

### 7.4.4 Université Laval

Maîtrise en relations internationales avec une concentration en développement international

Accessed: 31/10/04

<http://www.ulaval.ca>

<http://www.ulaval.ca/sg/PR/C2/540A.html>

No undergraduate programme in IDS is offered at the Université Laval, but rather a Master's degree in International Relations with a concentration in International Development. One of the goals of the concentration is to sensitize students to the multidisciplinary and intercultural nature of international development.

#### Required courses (19)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	1	1

The following course brings culture and ethics together:

**RLI-65991 Écarts culturels et relativité de l'éthique** Définir la notion de culture. Présenter les principales cultures, en particulier celles prédominantes dans les pays pauvres. Insister sur les liens entre culture et éthique pour démontrer la relativité de cette dernière. Dédurre le concept de «différences culturelles» et souligner le rôle prépondérant de celles-ci dans la plupart des crises vécues par ceux qui agissent dans un cadre international. Commencer une initiation progressive à la négociation interculturelle, tant au plan des affaires qu'au plan éthique.

Optional Courses (85)  
(n.b. 5 repeats)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	2	9

Religion was conspicuously absent in this set of courses -- one opportunity for inclusion might have presented itself in the following description:

**SOC-63137 Sociologie du développement** Recension des principales théories du développement portant sur le Tiers-Monde. Évolution historique du Tiers-Monde dans l'économie mondiale et le système interétatique. Étude des différentes dimensions des sociétés du Tiers-Monde: régimes agraires et monde rural; stratégies d'industrialisation; marché du travail (secteur formel/informel); clivages sociaux horizontaux et verticaux (classes, castes, ethnies); conflits intercommunautaires; état (bureaucraties, régimes, politiques sociales). Approche comparative des régions ou pays suivants: Afrique subsaharienne, Amérique latine, Inde, Chine, Corée du Sud.

Université Laval: Overall Total (104)

RELIGION		CULTURE	
Title	Abstract	Title	Abstract
0	0	3	10

## 7.5 STATISTICS

### 7.5.1 Anglophone Universities

#### UNDERGRADUATE TOTALS

	RELIGION				CULTURE	
	Title		Abstract		Title	Abstract
1. AUGUSTANA (23)	<b>2</b>	8.5%	<b>3</b>	13%	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b> 30.5%
2. CARLETON (124)	<b>0</b>		<b>6</b>	5%	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b> 13%
3. DALHOUSIE (137)	<b>9</b>	6.5%	<b>19</b>	14%	<b>8</b> 6%	<b>32</b> 23.5%
4. HURON (65)	<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>	1.5%	<b>17</b> 26%	<b>32</b> 49%
5. MCGILL (130)	<b>15</b>	11.5%	<b>27</b>	20.5%	<b>8</b> 6%	<b>24</b> 18.5%
6. MENNO SIMONS (109)	<b>7</b>	6.5%	<b>10</b>	9%	<b>3</b> 3%	<b>23</b> 21%
7. QUEEN'S (199)	<b>3</b>	1.5%	<b>10</b>	5%	<b>15</b> 7.5%	<b>59</b> 29.5%
8. ST FX (76)	<b>4</b>	5.5%	<b>8</b>	10.5%	<b>3</b> 4%	<b>10</b> 13%
9. ST. MARY'S (95)	<b>3</b>	3%	<b>11</b>	11.5%	<b>4</b> 4%	<b>13</b> 13.5%
10. TRENT (68)	<b>1</b>	1.5%	<b>2</b>	3%	<b>7</b> 10.5%	<b>14</b> 20.5%
11. TWU (55)	<b>6</b>	11%	<b>18</b>	33%	<b>6</b> 11%	<b>20</b> 36.5%
12. UCCB	--		--		--	--
13. UCFV (29)	<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>	3.5%	<b>1</b> 3.5%	<b>5</b> 17%
14. U of CALGARY (50)	<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>	2%	<b>6</b> 12%	<b>10</b> 20%
15. GUELPH (149)	<b>1</b>	0.5%	<b>4</b>	2.5%	<b>3</b> 2%	<b>23</b> 15.5%
16. UNB (17)	<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>	6%	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b> 9.5%
17. UNBC (72)	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>7</b> 9.5%
18. U of OTTAWA (57)	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>2</b> 3.5%	<b>8</b> 14%
19. U of SASK. (194)	<b>4</b>	2%	<b>17</b>	9%	<b>5</b> 2.5%	<b>32</b> 16.5%

20. U of TORONTO (111)	<b>1</b>	<i>1%</i>	<b>11</b>	<i>10%</i>	<b>3</b>	<i>2.5%</i>	<b>17</b>	<i>5.5%</i>
21. U of WINDSOR (64)	<b>2</b>	<i>3%</i>	<b>3</b>	<i>4.5%</i>	<b>0</b>		<b>10</b>	<i>5.5%</i>
22. W. LAURIER (166)	<b>24</b>	<i>14.5%</i>	<b>37</b>	<i>22.5%</i>	<b>17</b>	<i>10%</i>	<b>42</b>	<i>25%</i>
23. YORK (131)	<b>2</b>	<i>1.5%</i>	<b>13</b>	<i>10%</i>	<b>16</b>	<i>12%</i>	<b>57</b>	<i>43.5%</i>
<b>TOTALS (2121)</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>22%</b>

Two obvious exceptions to the general rule stand out: Wilfrid Laurier and McGill.

Without those two Universities, the totals for titles and abstracts would be significantly reduced to 45 (titles) and 139 (abstracts). With figures from Menno Simons and Trinity Western (both religiously oriented universities) as well as Dalhousie (as noted in the text, somewhat of an anomaly) also excepted, the overall statistics would appear very different, as far as the religion category: 23 (titles) and 92 (abstracts).

When differentiation is made between required and optional courses, religion assumes an even more peripheral role:

Core/ Required/ IDS Courses (547)

**9** *1.5%*      **28** *5%*      **32** *6%*      **116** *21%*

Optional/ Electives (1574)

**75** *5%*      **175** *11%*      **92** *6%*      **350** *22%*

GRADUATE TOTALS

	RELIGION			CULTURE		
	Title	Abstract		Title	Abstract	
1. CARLETON (66)	0	2	3%	0	1	1.5%
2. DALHOUSIE (65)	0	3	4.5%	0	0	
3. GUELPH (68)	0	0		0	10	15%
4. ST MARY'S (30)	0	0		0	0	
5. UNBC (17)	0	0		0	0	
6. U of TORONTO (1)	0	0		0	0	
<b>TOTALS (247)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.5%</b>

In contrast to the undergraduate programmes, the graduate statistics show a decided lack of concentration on the area of religion. As in the undergraduate figures, the subject of religion becomes increasingly peripheral, once a differentiation is made between core/required and optional/elective classes:

Core/ required (63)	0	0		0	3	4.8%
Optional/ electives (184)	0	5	2.7%	0	8	4.3%

## 7.5.2 Francophone Universities

	RELIGION Title	Abstract	CULTURE Title	Abstract
1. U de MONTREAL (170)	0	3 1.8%	9 5.3%	12 7.1%
2. UQAM (30)	0	1 3.3%	0	3 10%
3. UQO (12)	0	1 8.3%	0	5 41.7%
4. U. LAVAL (104)	0	0	3 2.9%	10 9.6%
<b>TOTALS (316)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5 1.5%</b>	<b>12 4%</b>	<b>30 9.5%</b>
 <u>UNDERGRADUATE</u>				
U de MONTREAL (170)	0	3 1.8%	9 5.3%	12 7.1%
UQO (12)	0	1 3.3%	0	5 41.7%
<b>TOTAL (182)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4 2.2%</b>	<b>9 4.9%</b>	<b>17 9.3%</b>
 <u>GRADUATE</u>				
UQAM (30)	0	1 3.3%	0	3 10%
U. LAVAL (104)	0	0	3 2.9%	10 9.6%
<b>TOTAL (134)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1 0.7%</b>	<b>3 2.2%</b>	<b>13 9.7%</b>
REQUIRED COURSES (89)	0	2 2.2%	1 1.1%	8 9%
OPTIONAL COURSES (227)	0	3 1.3%	11 4.8%	22 9.7%

It will be noticed that the references to religion and culture in these statistics for Francophone Universities are significantly less than those of their Anglophone counterparts.

### 7.5.3 Combined Total

Combining all the undergraduate and graduate statistics at both Anglophone and Francophone institutions, the overall total from 2,684 IDS course offerings comes to the following:

#### **GRAND TOTAL**

<b>ALL COURSES (2684)</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>507</b>
	<i>3.13%</i>	<i>7.94%</i>	<i>5.07%</i>	<i>18.89%</i>

## 7.6 Interpretation

What lessons can be derived from the survey and statistics presented above? The figures speak for themselves. Clearly, religion is not considered by Canadian academicians to be central to the development enterprise, and Canadian students are not being challenged to integrate thinking about the areas of religion, faith, belief and spirituality into their

development studies. The concluding sections examine some of these themes in greater detail.

The IDS programmes in Canadian universities are essentially interdisciplinary, or, as otherwise expressed, “multidisciplinary” or “pluridisciplinary.”<sup>59</sup> The majority of IDS professors are housed in other departments, and at many Universities there are no direct faculty appointments to IDS. Course offerings come from a wide-ranging spread of disciplines. Religion is mentioned in around 3% of course titles and 8% of descriptions/abstracts overall, and is by no means a major player in IDS, like the established disciplines of economics, political science, anthropology, sociology or environmental science. Religion is clearly peripheral in the context of development, and even when religion is mentioned in a course description, any direct linkage between religion and development is more tangential than direct.

Various overarching themes soon become apparent on the various departmental websites, which illustrate that international development often encourages an ethical focus and encompasses issues not unfamiliar in a religious context, such as social justice and inequality. Issues of ethics are never far from the surface, as this description from the Menno Simons Calendar indicates: “IDS Core Courses accent problem-based analysis and creative thinking within an explicit ethical framework, rooted in community.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> By nature, IDS is interdisciplinary. Therefore, the character of a programme can be masked or hidden in interminable course offerings, and it may only be through personal experience that a real insight into the thrust of a programme can be determined. The author completed an Honours and a Master’s degree in International Development Studies at Dalhousie University and scarcely remembers a mention of religion.

<sup>60</sup> Menno Simons, <<http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/current/calendar/calendarpdfs/ids.pdf>> (1/11/04).



“Social justice” is a term that appears frequently in descriptions of IDS programmes across the country, as in this extract from the University of Toronto: “The program is very interdisciplinary, and our graduates use their IDS education in many different fields relevant to development and social justice.”<sup>61</sup> This University sees “issues of poverty and social justice both national and international”<sup>62</sup> as vital to an understanding of international development. At Wilfrid Laurier, students “confront vital issues of global security, human rights, and social justice.”<sup>63</sup> The “social justice tradition” of St Francis Xavier University is expressed in courses that provide “a theoretical or philosophical basis for understanding social justice.”<sup>64</sup> “Social justice” is part of the vocabulary of IDS courses, which also allude to “moral community” or “global ethics.”

Along with social justice, issues of equality and inequality become critical to the development endeavour. The University of Guelph sees its programme in the following terms: “The International Development program provides students with an opportunity to pursue interdisciplinary and comparative studies of long-term change and international inequality.”<sup>65</sup> Trent University uses statistics illustrating global inequality to highlight the need for development studies:

Today, the 225 richest people in the world have a combined wealth that is equal to the annual income of the poorest 47 percent of the world’s population.

Why is the world so unequal? How has the emergence of a global market

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<sup>61</sup> Toronto, <<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/%7Esocsci/ids/index.html>> (26/10/04).

<sup>62</sup> Toronto, <[http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar04/International\\_Development\\_Studies.html](http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/courses/calendar04/International_Development_Studies.html)> (26/10/04).

<sup>63</sup> Wilfrid Laurier, <<http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwdis/whatGSoffers.shtml>> (1/11/04).

<sup>64</sup> St Francis Xavier, <<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/dev-studies/>> (1/11/04).

<sup>65</sup> Guelph, <[http://production.web.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/c10/c10ba-id.shtml](http://production.web.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/c10/c10ba-id.shtml)> (1/11/04).

economy influenced this inequality? How are complex global forces experienced in people's everyday lives?<sup>66</sup>

A comment from a Trent student, Geoff Cameron, focuses on the ideals underpinning the programme:

The Trent IDS program goes far beyond preparation to do humanitarian work; it exposes us to material inequality and uneven development at home and abroad and invites a wide range of explanations for economic injustice. IDS doesn't pressure its students to explain complex global problems with specialized knowledge, but with comprehensive and creative thinking that presents opportunities for action. It's always challenging, but persistently optimistic!<sup>67</sup>

A number of noble sentiments are summed up in the following depiction from Wilfrid

Laurier:

The Global Studies Program at WLU fosters a spirit of critical thinking about global justice. We are committed to the equitable distribution of economic, cultural and political resources; the non-violent transformation of conflict; and the development of cross-cultural understanding and dialogue around the globe.<sup>68</sup>

Such words as "spirit," "justice," "equitable," "transformation," "understanding,"

"dialogue" might equally be at home in an ecclesiastical setting. Making the world "a

better place for all" is a goal of this introductory class from Wilfrid Laurier University:

**GS101 Introduction to Global Studies** An interdisciplinary introduction to the contemporary world that focuses on global issues, challenges and concerns. The class considers the world as it is; the world as it came to be; and the means by which it can become a better place for all. Special attention will be given to global issues of comparative development, peace and conflict, and globalization and cultures. A required course for all Global Studies students.<sup>69</sup>

Clearly the boundary line between theory and praxis, the academic and the personal,

becomes blurred at times and is reminiscent of calls for action from development

theoreticians and practitioners from the days of Karl Marx to "change the world." In

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<sup>66</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/ids/whyids.htm>> (1/11/04).

<sup>67</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/ids/whyids.htm>> (1/11/04).

<sup>68</sup> Wilfrid Laurier, <<http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwdis/directions.shtml>> (1/11/04).

<sup>69</sup> Wilfrid Laurier, <<http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwregi/2004-2005/gsl01.htm>> (1/11/04).

emotive words from the WLU website: "But the most important resource that Global Studies graduates will offer the world is themselves, both personally and professionally."<sup>70</sup> The University of Calgary challenges its students succinctly and directly: "Do you want to make the world a better place?"<sup>71</sup>

The various websites of the IDS programmes across Canada make expansive claims as to their ability to prepare students to take their places in the world of development. To quote the Guelph website:

...students learn about the experience of developing areas in the world and improve their understanding of the issues central to global change and development. Your education here will span academic disciplines and provide you with the tools necessary to fathom and communicate in a dynamic world.<sup>72</sup>

But many of the students graduate from IDS programmes without any understanding of a dimension that is important in many areas of the world: the role of religion.

### 7.6.1 Culture and Religion

One of the most perplexing aspects of this study is the ambiguous relationship between culture and religion. How commonly are matters of faith, spirituality and religion subsumed under the single term culture? Statistics on culture have been enumerated separately and, at 5% of titles and 19% of abstracts, suggest a significant, if limited, attention to the subject area in IDS programmes. Do these assume the presence of religion as a determining factor in the construction of culture? Or do they ignore the sometimes decisive impact of religion on cultural norms?

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<sup>70</sup> Wilfrid Laurier, <<http://info.wlu.ca/~wwdis/whatGSoffers.shtml>> (1/11/04).

<sup>71</sup> Calgary, <[http://www.starthere.ucalgary.ca/default.asp?V\\_DOC\\_ID=943](http://www.starthere.ucalgary.ca/default.asp?V_DOC_ID=943)> (1/11/04).

<sup>72</sup> Guelph, <<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~cids/undergra.html>> (1/11/04).

The following excerpt from UNB Fredericton is typical of many course descriptions,

which refer to culture:

**IDS 2001 Introduction to International Development Studies** Examines the major social, economic and political characteristics of the Third World. Underdevelopment, dependency, the bases of political and economic domination of the Third World by the developed world, social stratification, the position of elites and the interaction of culture and poverty are discussed.<sup>73</sup>

Again, in an offering from Guelph, culture, but not religion, is mentioned:

The distinguishing characteristic of CIDS research, however, is its interdisciplinary character in the sense of situating the problem being studied in an historical, social, economic, political, cultural and geographic context.<sup>74</sup>

Many of the IDS websites stress the importance of cross-cultural understanding in the study of International Development. Culture, along with economic, political, environmental and social factors, becomes central to analysis. But the relationship between culture and religion is more ambiguous.

On occasion, religion is clearly included in the discussion of culture. For example, at Menno Simons, Cultural Anthropology is described as “a general introduction to the study of human culture and society in all its aspects (economic, social, political, religious, and aesthetic).”<sup>75</sup>

On other occasions any reference to religion seems to be conspicuously lacking, or is it merely assumed in the term culture, and naturally included in “economic, social, cultural

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<sup>73</sup> UNB, <<http://www.unbf.ca/arts/IDS/Dev/require.html>> (1/11/04).

<sup>74</sup> Guelph, <<http://www.uoguelph.ca/cids/graduate/research.shtml>> (1/11/04).

<sup>75</sup> Winnipeg, <[http://w1.uwinnipeg.ca/courseviewer/CourseCatalogDetail.asp?\\$a=3&\\$b=2004&\\$sa=cv](http://w1.uwinnipeg.ca/courseviewer/CourseCatalogDetail.asp?$a=3&$b=2004&$sa=cv)> (1/11/04).

and environmental perspectives”<sup>76</sup> At times, its absence appears more glaring, as in this course description from St Francis Xavier University:

**SOCI 318 First Nations** Examines how the contemporary situation of First Nations in Canada is related to historical interactions among aboriginal and non-aboriginal societies and indigenous cultural traditions. Attention will be given to the intersection of race, class and gender and the relevance of existing theoretical perspectives in explaining the experiences of First Nations.<sup>77</sup>

Religion is often considered fundamental in the formation of culture in First Nations tradition. Culture is mentioned frequently in some course descriptions, as in this example from the University of Calgary:

**Development Studies 485 International and Intercultural Communication** A seminar in cross-cultural communication at the personal, organizational, societal, and international levels. Discusses the concept of "Globalization" and its implications for communication among different cultures; analyses various theoretical perspectives underlying intercultural communication; explores issues of power, identity and influence; examines intercultural encounters in the context of specific diversified settings; and helps students develop intercultural communication competence.<sup>78</sup>

In this course description from York, African popular culture is described in some detail:

**AS/SOSC 4510 6.0 African Popular Culture** This course investigates the multiple dimensions of African popular culture through looking at forms of cultural productivity: music, film, literature, theatre, cartoons, sport, leisure, and aspects of material culture. It also explores ways in which cultural productivity is linked to various social relations, ethnic identities and the politics that have characterized nationalist and post-independence politics in Africa.<sup>79</sup>

In this example, religion begs to be included along with such apparently less significant cultural expressions as cartoons and sport. Why ignore one of the biggest factors in African popular culture? The next example from Dalhousie is similar. Why avoid

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<sup>76</sup> UNBC, <<http://www.unbc.ca/internationalstudies/>> (1/11/04).

<sup>77</sup> St Francis Xavier, <<http://www.stfx.ca/academic/sociology/Courses/Soc318.htm>> (1/11/04).

<sup>78</sup> Calgary, <<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/what/courses/DEST.htm>> (1/11/04).

<sup>79</sup> York, <<http://www.arts.yorku.ca/sosc/calendar/courseTemplate.php?id=3669>> (1/11/04).

mention of the religious aspect of health and sickness. so important in many more traditional societies?

**SOSA 2400 Health and Illness Across Cultures** Every culture has its own concepts of health and nutrition, its own treatments and practices. The strengths and weaknesses of our own system grow clearer when medical anthropologists compare it with that of other societies. This class's specific topics vary from year to year but always include: native theories of the etiology of illness, transcultural versus culture-specific disease syndromes, pregnancy and childbirth in other cultures and our own; senescence and death viewed cross-culturally, the conflict between traditional medical systems and the Western physician and hospital, patients' expectations and the medical subculture, the physician as secular priest, and food and nutrition across cultures.<sup>80</sup>

Is religion being ignored, or is it merely being sidelined or sanitized in course descriptions? In this rather typical example from Guelph, would "institutions" encompass the church?

**SPAN 3080 Spanish American Culture** A survey through selected readings, class discussion and audio-visual materials of the Spanish American countries, their histories, society, institutions and culture.<sup>81</sup>

The relationship, therefore, between religion and culture is confused and confusing.

## 7.6.2 Religion and Development

The search for a course bringing together "Religion and Development" proved elusive, with only the Dalhousie course, **INTD 3101/ COMR 3004 Religion and International Development**, coming to light. As noted in the text above, this course has recently been reactivated, after being inconsistently offered in previous years.

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<sup>80</sup> Dalhousie. <<http://www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/class.php?subj=SOSA&num=2400>> (1/11/04).

<sup>81</sup> Guelph. <[http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/c12/c12span.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/c12/c12span.shtml)> (1/11/04).

However, courses that link development with other relevant areas (the “development and...” syndrome<sup>82</sup>) were more common – the many variations on the subject of gender and development proving especially popular, as in the following examples:

Wilfrid Laurier: **SY 338, Women and Development**  
University of Calgary: **Development Studies 375 Gender and Development**  
York University: **EN/ENVS 4320 Gender and Development**  
University of Guelph: **SOC 6460/ANTH 6460 Gender and Development**  
UNBC: **INTS 308 Gender and International Studies**  
Dalhousie: **INTD 4320 Feminisms, Gender and Development; INTD 5600 Gender and Development**  
St Mary’s: **SOC 387 Women and Development; SOC 422 Gender and Development: Theory and Method; SOC 423 Gender and Development: Policy Issues**

Trent’s course description in this area brings together many of the issues, including culture, but does not include religion:

**International Development – Women’s Studies 225 – Women, gender and development** An analysis of the political, economic and cultural issues that confront women in their struggles for and against development in different localities across the globe. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks are explored and used to examine case studies of women’s experiences of work and social change in developing contexts.<sup>83</sup>

Courses that bring together the environment and development are also available:

St Mary’s: **470 Environment and Development**  
University of Toronto: **IDSB02H3 International Development Studies: Development and Environment**  
McGill: **ANTH 418 Environment and Development**

McGill also offers an Environment and Development domain of 54 credits. An

interesting variant is offered at Augustana: **REL 345 Religion and Ecology**.

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<sup>82</sup> See Leonora Angeles, “New Issues, New Perspectives: Implications for International Development Studies,” *CJDS*, XXV, no. 1 (2004), 61-80.

<sup>83</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/ids/200.html>> (1/11/04).

In analyzing the references to religion that occur in the titles and abstracts of IDS courses, one conclusion can be reached. In spite of the references to religion as tabulated, not one course was found (with the exception of the Dalhousie course discussed earlier: **INTD 3101/ COMR 3004 Religion and International Development**) that directly brings religion and development together as an integrated subject. Religion is nowhere represented as an integral factor in the development project or process.

A number of universities -- in particular, McGill, Wilfrid Laurier and Dalhousie -- cross-list Religious Studies courses along with other development offerings, but, as noted in the analysis above, these offerings tend to be comparative in nature. Although they may provide a wealth of information on aspects of the major faiths, they do not bring the two disciplines of religion and development together in substantive analysis of the impact of one upon the other in the context of development. It may be asked whether added attention has been paid to the subject after the catastrophic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. While it is hard to tell what is covered in class, only a handful of references to 9/11 appeared in the course descriptions.

In analyzing course descriptions in the calendars, one senses an effort to avoid an explicit reference to religion and a distinct sensitivity towards the word "religion," as in the following examples from Trent:

**International Development – Anthropology 407 – Politics, economy and culture** Anthropological approaches to the study of politics and the economy in non-industrial and industrial societies with an emphasis on the symbolic, ritual and social dimensions of these endeavors. The change and transformation of local



economic and political units in the context of contemporary state organization and transnational economic systems.<sup>84</sup>

**International Development – Anthropology 475 – Perspectives on ethnicity**

Examination of ethnic consciousness and identity formation through theoretical and ethnographic case studies in a variety of settings. Identity construction in relation to process of development. Articulation and comparison of ethnicity with gender, class, kinship, nationalism, and other markers of social and cultural difference.<sup>85</sup>

In the following description of a graduate course from Dalhousie, many of the broad themes of development are covered, but no explicit reference to religion is given:

**POLI 5340.03 Approaches to Development** A survey of theories of and policies about dependence, underdevelopment and peripheral social formations, particular emphasis on modernization and materialist modes of analysis, and on orthodox and radical strategies of development. Topics treated include social contradictions (e.g. class, race and ethnicity), debt, structural adjustment, (de)industrialisation, self-reliance, human development, gender, technology, civil society, informal sectors, authoritarianism and ecology.<sup>86</sup>

Religion, unlike a number of other subject areas, finds itself in a sensitive, equivocal and ambiguous relationship with international development.

Most Department websites suggest an array of possible employment opportunities for their IDS graduates. The following are typical:

**Queen's University** Development Studies teaches students to think critically about international issues. A degree in Development Studies provides the basic qualifications for work in the field of international development. NGOs and consulting businesses in Canada as well as international organizations and overseas development agencies hire graduates to manage development projects, design means to achieve development objectives and monitor results. International development specialists also examine government policy, advocate for change or promote international education.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/calendar/uc24.html>> (1/11/04).

<sup>85</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/calendar/uc24.html>> (1/11/04).

<sup>86</sup> Dalhousie, <<http://www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/class.php?subj=POLI&num=5340>> (1/11/04).

<sup>87</sup> Queen's, <<http://www.queensu.ca/devs/about.html>> (1/11/04).

**Trent University** Trent IDS graduates go on to a wide variety of careers that require and/or benefit from a deep understanding of development issues in a global context. These careers include the fields of teaching, journalism, law, local and international activism, and development work at home and abroad. We have alumni working in many parts of the world in development agencies, nongovernmental organizations, schools, universities, research organizations, government agencies, international institutions, and small businesses.<sup>88</sup>

**University of Windsor** Experience has shown that this long-established and comprehensive program provides an excellent background for careers in diplomatic services, international institutions, internationally oriented non-governmental organizations, journalism, banking, international business, teaching and law.<sup>89</sup>

**University of Ottawa** The program of international development and globalization offers students numerous career opportunities in the following fields: program officer in a government agency or non-government organization working in international development, international communications expert, international policy analyst, research specialist in peace processes, poverty, social affairs or international aid and development.<sup>90</sup>

A couple, however, acknowledge that development training can be effective in church/mission work:

**Trinity Western University** The multidisciplinary International Studies Program provides students with a broad understanding of the changing dynamics of our global society. It equips them with insights and skills for international careers in areas such as foreign service and international business; social service involving immigrants, refugees, resettlement, and overseas development; missionary service; and journalism, research and advocacy work on global issues.<sup>91</sup>

**University College of the Fraser Valley** The program is designed to provide a sound background for students who intend to pursue careers in businesses with interests overseas, church work in the third world, teaching, journalism, community relations, translation, international development work, the travel

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<sup>88</sup> Trent, <<http://www.trentu.ca/ids/alum.html>> (1/11/04).

<sup>89</sup> Windsor,

<<http://cronus.uwindsor.ca/units/polsci/political.nsf/0/e0102a2c7eda082085256c71007000a1?OpenDocument>> (26/10/04).

<sup>90</sup> Ottawa, <<http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/crs/ssocEN/DVM.htm>> (26/10/04).

<sup>91</sup> Trinity Western, <<http://www.twu.ca/ac/20042005/Humanities/InternationalStudies.aspx>> (1/11/04).

industry, diplomacy, government, international trade and commerce, as well as for those wishing to prepare for advanced scholarly work and research.<sup>92</sup>

Trinity Western and the University College of the Fraser Valley therefore acknowledge the role played by faith based organizations in development.

More interaction between International Development and Religious Studies departments would be meaningful, and is to be encouraged. On occasion, the absence of cross-listed classes from Religious Studies departments was noticeable. In some cases, no courses were cross-listed at all, in spite of the fact that the university (for instance, Carleton and the University of Toronto) had a Religious Studies department. In cases where Religious Studies departments do not exist, as at the University of Guelph, attention to religious issues in the program is more understandably absent. In some universities, departments of Development Studies and Religious Studies fall under different faculties.

For instance, in analyzing the IDS programme at UNB, particularly at Fredericton, where no courses on religious studies are offered, one wonders how beneficial more interaction with neighboring St Thomas University (STU) might prove, as apparently occurred in the past.<sup>93</sup> A selection of course offerings might illustrate how valuable the inclusion of some STU courses might prove in the UNB curriculum. Religious Studies departments concentrating on contemporary issues in the world of religion may have much to offer:

In the Department of Religious Studies, our engagement with the study of religion is rooted in our attention to "contexts." These contexts -- historical, cultural, artistic, local, global -- provide the backdrop for understanding and evaluating human religious expressions. Those expressions, individual and collective, are most often concerned with constructing, identifying, articulating, and responding

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<sup>92</sup> UCFV, <[http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003\\_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm](http://www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2003_04/Progs-Depts/Asst-Arts-IDS.htm)> (1/11/04).

<sup>93</sup> UNB, <<http://www.unbf.ca/arts/IDS/Dev/>> (1/11/04).

to meaning. Given the complexity of these contexts, our study requires approaches that are at the same time interdisciplinary and appreciative of the diversity of human cultures.<sup>94</sup>

The first level introductory class at STU provides a holistic focus, not limited to a Canadian context: “The intention of the course is to foster in students an active appreciation of the religious dimension of life and to share with them the tools to think critically about it.”<sup>95</sup>

Other course offerings may have direct relevance to global issues addressed in IDS courses:

**2203 Health, Healing, and Religions**  
**2233 Women and Religion**  
**2253 Modern Trends in the Muslim World**  
**3553 Islamic Ethics and Spirituality**  
**3573 Religion and Social Ethics**  
**3593 Moral Development**  
**3643 Christianity and Contemporary Society**

This example might raise a question as to whether Religious Studies departments might be more cognizant of the potential role of religion in development, than their development studies counterparts.

### 7.6.3 “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada

Originating from discussions at the annual Congress of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences in May 2002, six prominent Canadian scholars formed a Steering Committee which led to the publication of the “White Paper” on International

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<sup>94</sup> St Thomas, <<http://www.stthomasu.ca/academic/relg/>> (1/11/04).

<sup>95</sup> St Thomas, <<http://www.stthomasu.ca/~parkhill/1006cal.htm>> (1/11/04).

Development Studies in Canada by the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) and The North-South Institute (NSI) in October 2003.

The authors claim that “IDS is unique especially in its interdisciplinary nature and its attempt to view the world through a Southern lens.”<sup>96</sup> Noting that IDS has long left its original moorings in Economics and Politics, broadening out into areas as diverse as Anthropology and Women’s Studies, they appeal for yet further expansion and recommend that the “compartmentalized worlds of IDS be opened up to greater dialogue.”<sup>97</sup> Their vision is avowedly “value laden: it is our belief that IDS could and should play a larger role in the academy, in government policy-making and Canadian society more generally.”<sup>98</sup>

The “White Paper” makes the case “for enhancing the study of international development in Canada.”<sup>99</sup> It notes “the remarkable rise”<sup>100</sup> in IDS programmes across the nation, in the face of an unfavourable general climate of “academic retrenchment.”<sup>101</sup> This rise in interest and enrollment can be seen in the context of Canada’s commitment to internationalism, concern for humanitarianism, and desire to address “the challenges of global poverty and inequality central to the development enterprise.”<sup>102</sup> Young people are

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<sup>96</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 6.

<sup>97</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 8.

<sup>98</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 8.

<sup>99</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 5.

<sup>100</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 5.

<sup>101</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 15.

<sup>102</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 16.

seen to be attracted to IDS, partly because they identify “justice, ethics, and values” at the heart of human development.<sup>103</sup>

The authors suggest that IDS programmes attract “increasing numbers of our brightest, most idealistic and socially committed young people.”<sup>104</sup> quoting a Queen’s University source that “the young people who opt for development studies are cut from a different cloth than the average undergraduate.”<sup>105</sup> The report also notes that over 70 percent of undergraduates are female.<sup>106</sup>

The main value of the IDS programme is perceived in terms of its ability to “understand the way that the world is unfolding as we face ever more urgent challenges from climate change to human security to global epidemics.”<sup>107</sup> In light of the present study, it might be suggested that if we wish to “understand the way that the world is unfolding,” then more attention to the religious dynamics of the global South is vital. If IDS practitioners in the North really wish “to view the world through a Southern lens,”<sup>108</sup> then more consideration must be paid to an area of life which dictates and directs millions of lives in the South. In this context, the encouragement of the authors that “development students must learn to think critically and question assumptions which guide most development thought”<sup>109</sup> attains increased importance. As the authors attest: “The views and concerns

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<sup>103</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 15.

<sup>104</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 15.

<sup>105</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 17.

<sup>106</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 17.

<sup>107</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 12.

<sup>108</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 6.

<sup>109</sup> CASID-NSI, “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 26.

of the 85 per cent of the world's inhabitants who live outside of the industrialized core countries simply cannot be ignored, wished away, or trivialized."<sup>110</sup>

The Paper acknowledges the contributions of Canada's development scholars, noting that they have originated from the disciplines of:

...anthropology, economics, geography, history, international relations, political science, political economy and sociology...agriculture, business, culture, education, environmental issues, ethics, health, law, social work and women's studies, amongst others.<sup>111</sup>

In spite of the unexpected emphasis on religion in this "White Paper," no place is found for a contribution from the areas of religion or theology. However, the "White Paper" does acknowledge the potential interconnection of religion and development. Using the example of the Narmada Dam, and the belief systems of the people in the valley that fuelled their successful activism, the authors anticipate a time when:

... theology and religious studies will have finally found their way into development studies. For although IDS is itself a relative newcomer to the academy, it can, like other fields of study, be set in its ways. As one career development practitioner put it, "I could never understand why, in development, we talked about everything except religion, spirituality and morality. Those were not just non-words, they were dirty words."<sup>112</sup>

The "White Paper" introduces, though does not confront, the question of religion and development.

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<sup>110</sup> CASID-NSI, "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada, 48.

<sup>111</sup> CASID-NSI, "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada, 26.

<sup>112</sup> CASID-NSI, "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada, 21.

## 7.7 Conclusion

This chapter, by means of an examination of course titles and descriptions, has afforded a comprehensive review of IDS programmes in Canadian universities. In total, 2,684 IDS courses (including those cross-listed with Religious Studies Departments) offered at the undergraduate and graduate level at both Anglophone and Francophone universities in Canada were analyzed. Some 3% of course titles and 8% of course descriptions made reference to religion, or one of its descriptors. While such figures may indicate some degree of attention to the subject, these courses were mainly cross-listed Religious Studies courses, often focusing on foundational aspects of the great faiths. Only a handful of courses directly analyzed the intersection of religion and development, and only one course paired the two terms in its title.

Therefore, as in the previous chapter, the conclusion that religion is not a major feature on the development landscape is unmistakable. Why does religion not feature more prominently in IDS programmes? The next chapter seeks answers to that question, by means of a survey and a series of interviews with key informants.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### AGAINST THE GRAIN AND IN THE GAPS

The findings of the two previous chapters provide empirical basis for the assertion, at the heart of this enquiry, that Canadian universities do not sufficiently acknowledge the influence -- for good or ill -- of religion on development in their programmes, publications, and curricula. The possible reasons for this are complicated, and solutions must, at times, be sought "against the grain and in the gaps."<sup>113</sup>

Kurt Alan Ver Beek attempts to explain the "avoidance, in theory and practice, of a topic that powerfully shapes and is shaped by development efforts."<sup>114</sup> by positing four broad areas of explanation: "a fear of imposing foreign perspectives, a dichotomising Northern perspective, a fear of conflict or the lack of precedence or models."<sup>115</sup> He continues: "While these explanations are neither inclusive nor definitive, they provide a starting point for further research and discussion."<sup>116</sup> This study represents an attempt to pursue that dialogue. At the outset, it was anticipated that trends towards secularization and pluralism would furnish a substantial part of the answer, although, as the study progressed, it became obvious that the prospective range of explanations would be broader and more complex.

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<sup>113</sup> I am indebted to Gerald West for this expressive phrase, in "Research Proposal Writing for Masters and PhD", School of Theology, University of Natal, (November 2002), 9.

<sup>114</sup> Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo", 39.

<sup>115</sup> Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo", 40.

<sup>116</sup> Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo", 39.

To attempt to tease out some of these possible explanations, a survey was administered to faculty in IDS and related programmes across Canada, and a series of interviews with key informants was undertaken in order to fill in the gaps and pursue some of the likely explanations in greater detail. The survey is discussed in the first half of the chapter; the interviews in the second.

## 8.1 Surveys

It was realized that the survey would prove particularly challenging. Academics are time pressured (hence the need for a quick survey) yet at the same time exacting (for example, definitions of both development and religion are subject to considerable debate).

Combined with the problem of measuring a subject of emotional intensity and existential depth, it became immediately apparent that any survey would represent an imperfect instrument to establish definitive conclusions. For these reasons, the survey was viewed as merely an introduction to interviews with key informants, who might provide the opportunity for more penetrating analysis. The survey, as expected, proved controversial and elicited some positive and sympathetic, as well as negative and critical responses.

### 8.1.1 Methodology and Findings

The surveys (see Appendix 3) were anonymous and unable to be identified by any distinction. No attempt was made to profile the respondents, it being felt that in a sample of such size this might further compromise anonymity. The surveys were dispatched by

letter mail in mid January 2005, with a final tabulation of responses being completed at the end of March.

The respondents were selected on the basis of a thorough web-based search of IDS faculties in the universities studied in Chapter Seven. Dalhousie and St Mary's in Halifax were excluded on the basis of the researcher being known at both institutions, and both universities providing a significant proportion of key informants. (A break-down of the numbers sent to each university is included in Appendix 4). It should be emphasized, therefore, that this sample is essentially self-selected, with the consequence that any conclusions arising from the results should be treated with caution. Given the potentially sensitive nature of the general subject and specific questions, the survey might encourage those with strong views (on either side) to respond and thus skew responses.

188 surveys were dispatched on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005, by ordinary mail service, with an enclosed stamped addressed envelope for response. Three were returned unopened to sender by the postal service, thus making a total of 185 surveys. Of these, 69 (37%) were returned by respondents within the ten week deadline until the end of March, 43 with comments, including two uncompleted surveys, 23 with no comments. A total of 14 respondents returned a separate slip, agreeing to an interview (although only 7 phone interviews actually resulted.)

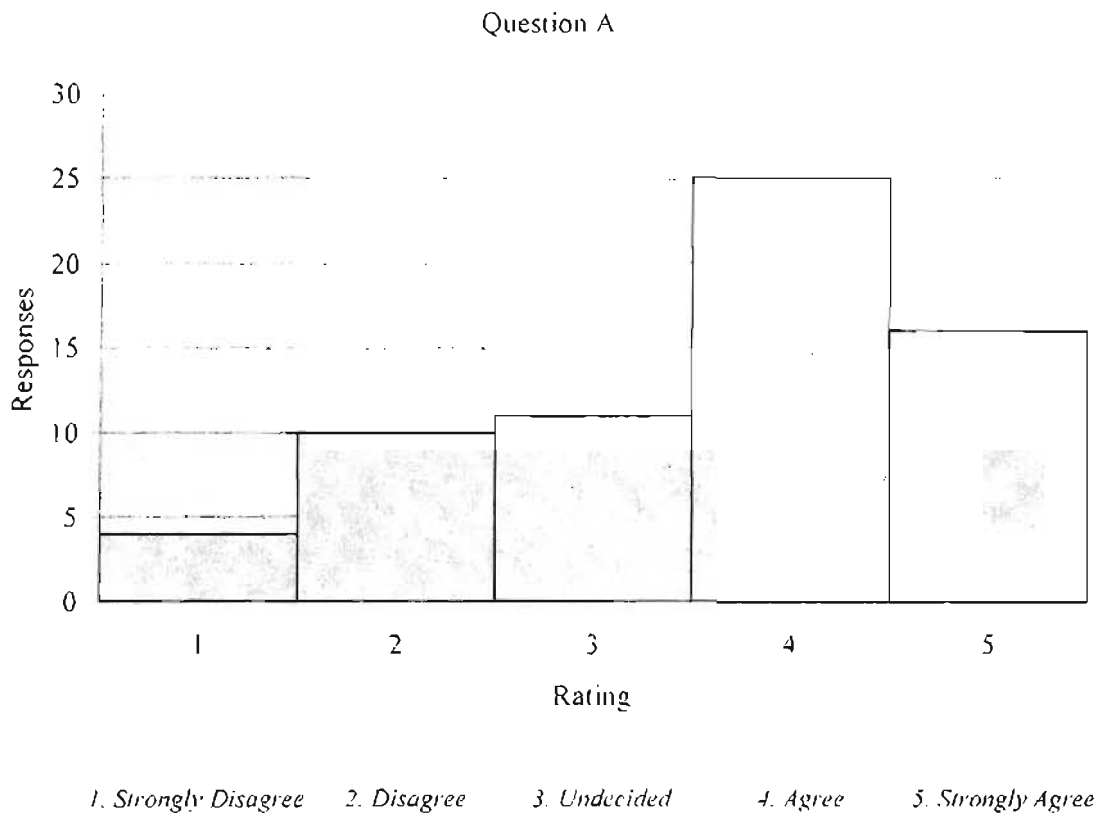
The questions in the survey reflect a broad range of possible explanations for the lacuna that prevents religious issues from attracting more extensive exposure in IDS pedagogy and research. The conceptual background to the survey questions are briefly discussed

below, together with a general summary of responses to the accompanying visual representation of results, in addition to some explanatory comments from respondents themselves:

**A. The role of religion is covered insufficiently in IDS courses**

This question merely seeks an opinion as to whether the role of religion is insufficiently analyzed in IDS course programming.

*Question A: The role of religion is covered insufficiently in IDS courses*

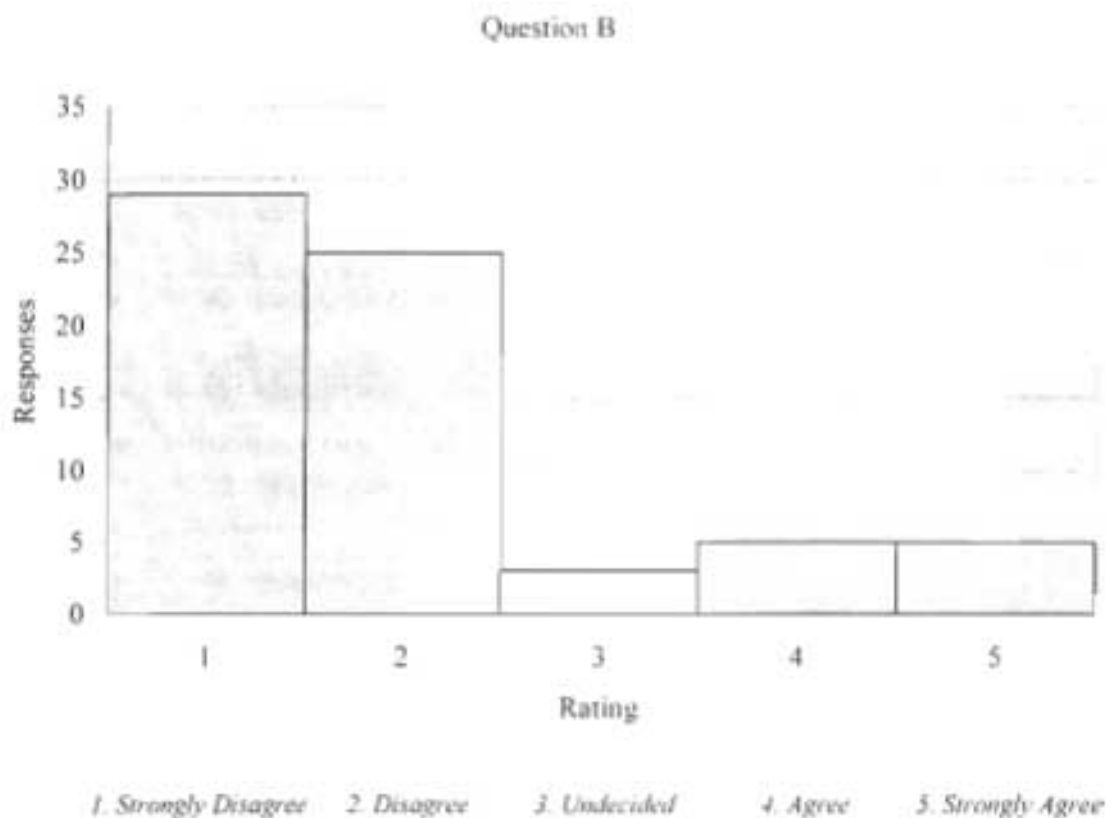


While a broad spread of responses exists across the categories, the preponderance of respondents agreed with the proposition.

## B. Religion is irrelevant to the study of IDS

In a field that has historically been dominated by the study of economics, how much space might exist for the inclusion of religion into the study of IDS? The “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada foresees a time when “theology and religious studies will have finally found their way into development studies.”<sup>117</sup>

*Question B: Religion is irrelevant to the study of IDS*



A strong response suggested that religion is relevant to the study of IDS in the minds of the respondents.

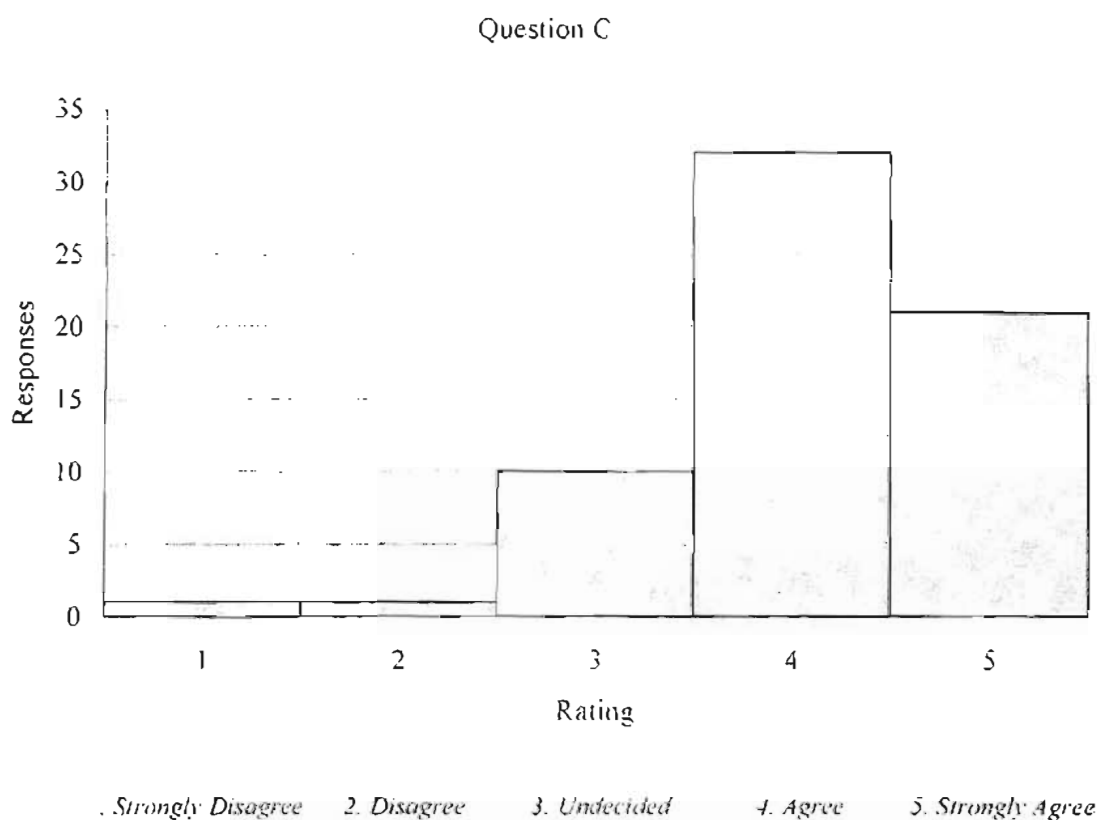
<sup>117</sup> “White Paper” on International Development Studies in Canada, 21.

### C. Trends towards pluralism make religious awareness important

The issue of pluralism is considered, in the light of Ver Beek's comment: "One possible explanation is the fear of imposing or appearing to impose an outsider's perspective."<sup>118</sup>

Consideration of "the other" may be seen as a particularly Canadian proclivity in a nation proud of its multicultural tolerance.

*Question C: Trends towards pluralism make religious awareness important*



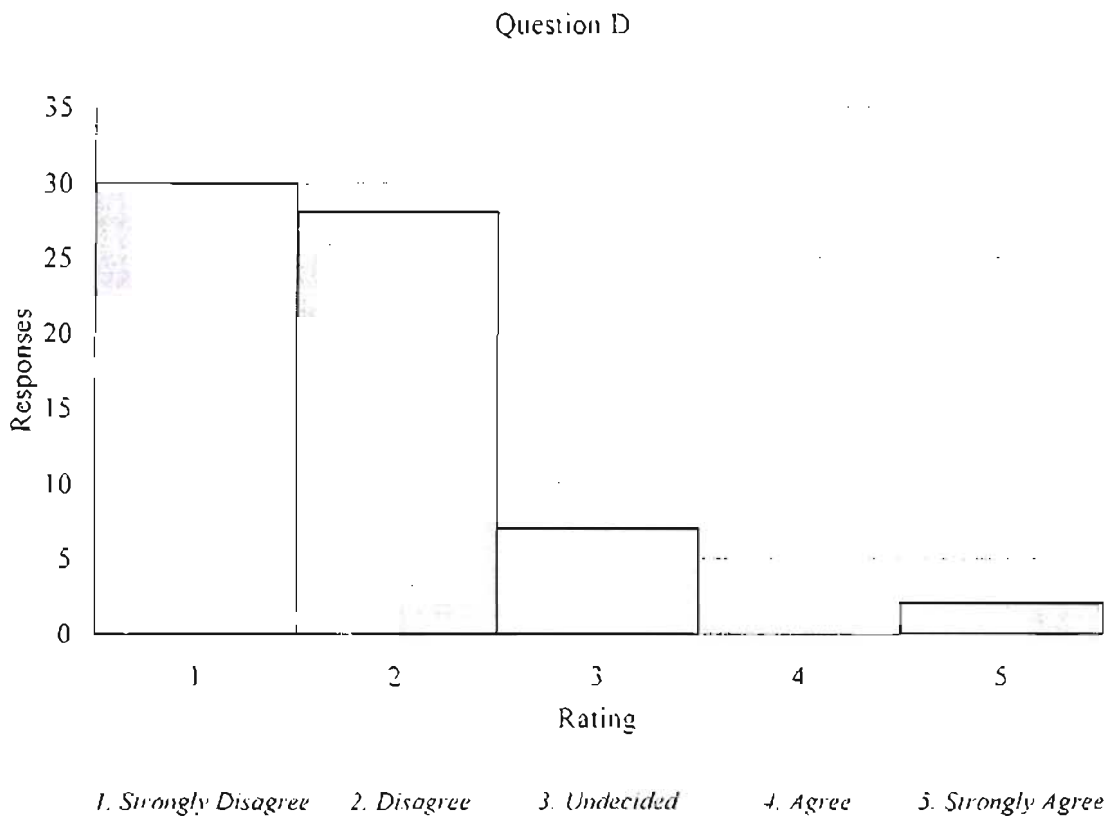
Again, a significant consensus agreed that contemporary trends in the direction of pluralism make religious awareness important.

<sup>118</sup> Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo", 39.

**D. Trends towards secularization make studying religion unnecessary**

Has revisionism surrounding the generally accepted theory of secularization reversed the opinion (perhaps widely held in earlier years in the development field) that religion, especially in its traditional manifestations, was an obstacle to development initiatives?

*Question D: Trends towards secularization make studying religion unnecessary*

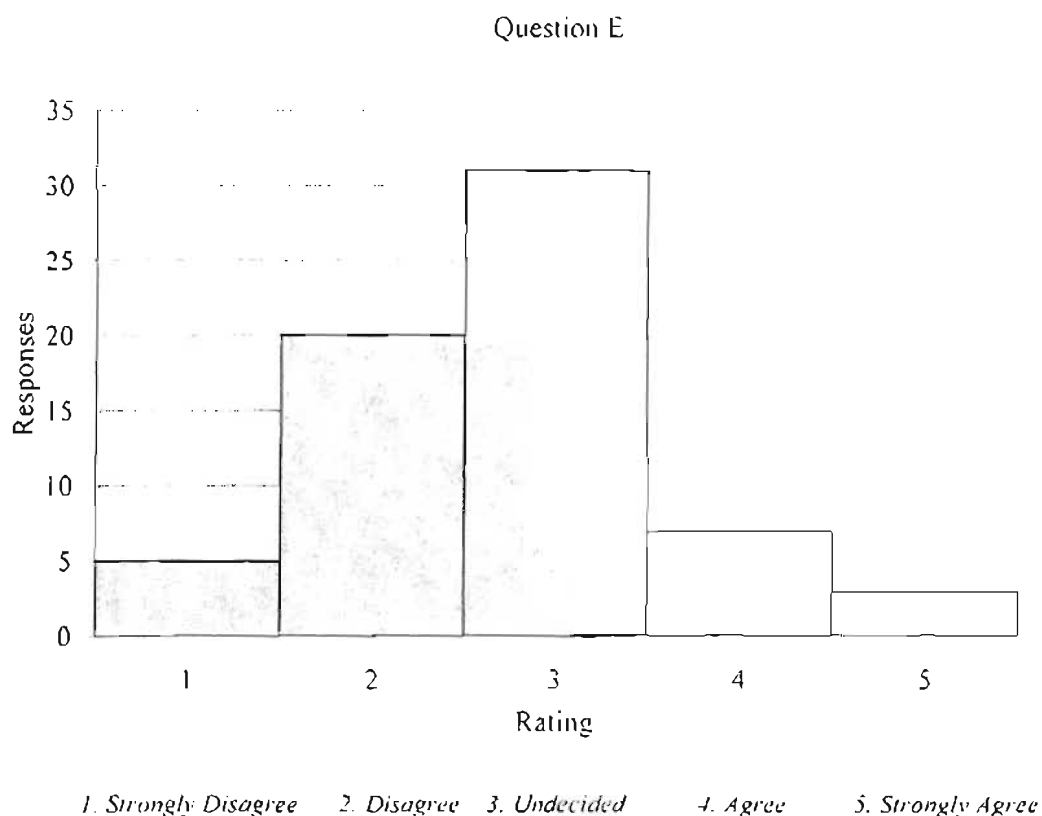


Respondents strongly discounted the idea that trends towards secularization make studying religion unnecessary.

### E. Religion has generally been a negative influence on development

This area is fraught with controversy, encompassing the troubled relationship of both religion and development with colonialism, as well as the more recent concentration on fundamentalisms.

*Question E: Religion has generally been a negative influence on development*



As expected, the middle of the spectrum attracted most responses. The largest single category of respondents declared themselves “undecided,” with the remaining responses registering disagreement with the premise, therefore suggesting, somewhat surprisingly perhaps, that religion was seen as more of a positive than negative influence on development.



## **F. Religion is too sensitive a subject for IDS study/teaching**

Ver Beek identifies the factor of “personal discomfort” as being a potential factor in the avoidance of the subject, and suggests that: “One apparently safe response is to avoid the sensitive topic.”<sup>119</sup> and continues: “In academic or practical discourse regarding gender, the environment, and ethnicity, difference of opinion and conflict are viewed not only as acceptable but as necessary and healthy; however, the taboo against discussing religious perspectives effectively removes spirituality from such a dialogue.”<sup>120</sup> This may translate into the perception that religion is not an authentic research topic, which may also affect such issues as the likelihood of funding.

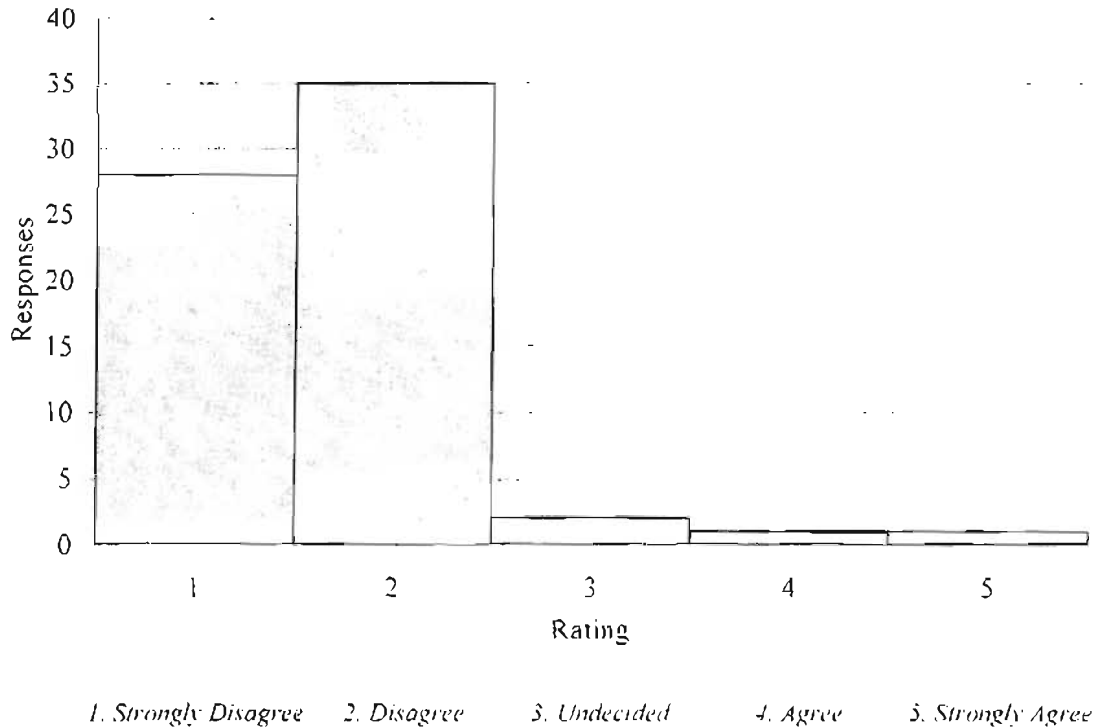
*Question F: Religion is too sensitive a subject for IDS study/teaching*

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<sup>119</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 40.

<sup>120</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 40.

### Question F

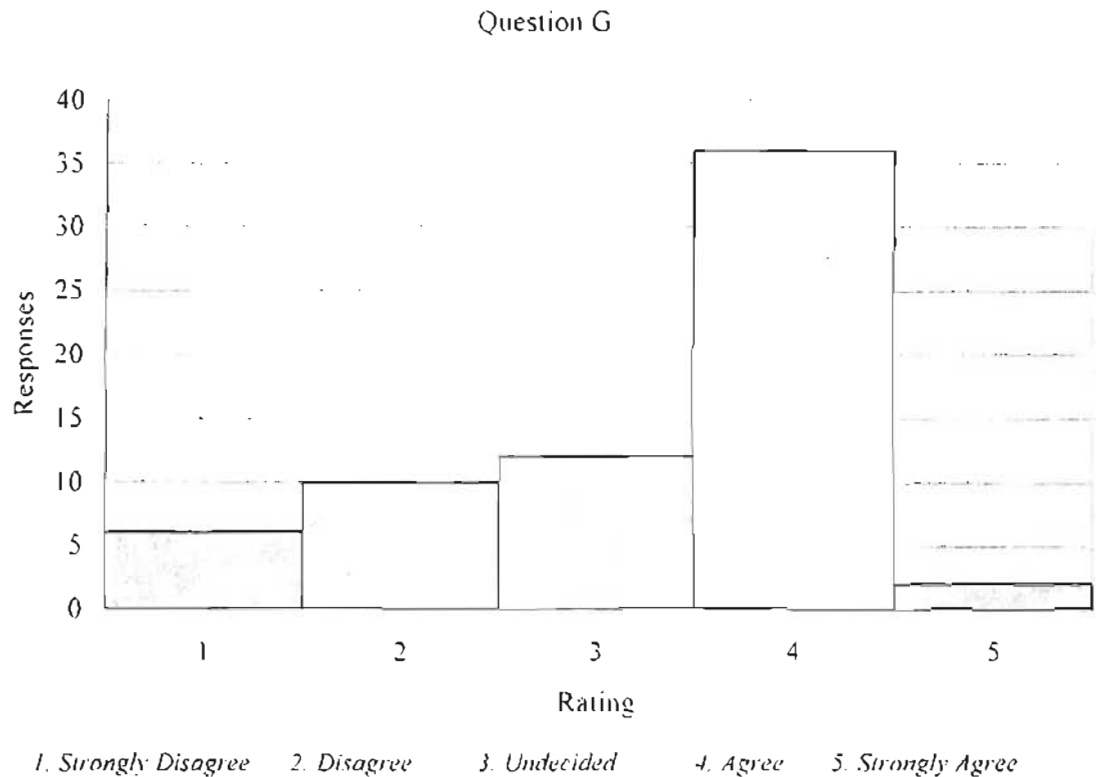


A substantial majority of survey respondents unexpectedly and counter-intuitively disagreed with the proposition that religion was too sensitive a subject for IDS study and teaching.

### **G. Religion is assumed in the term “culture” in IDS teaching**

Such a notion would be one obvious way of explaining the general lack of attention to religion in IDS teaching.

*Question G: Religion is assumed in the term "culture" in IDS teaching*



The greatest number of responses in any single category "agreed" with the proposition that religion is assumed in the term "culture" in IDS teaching.

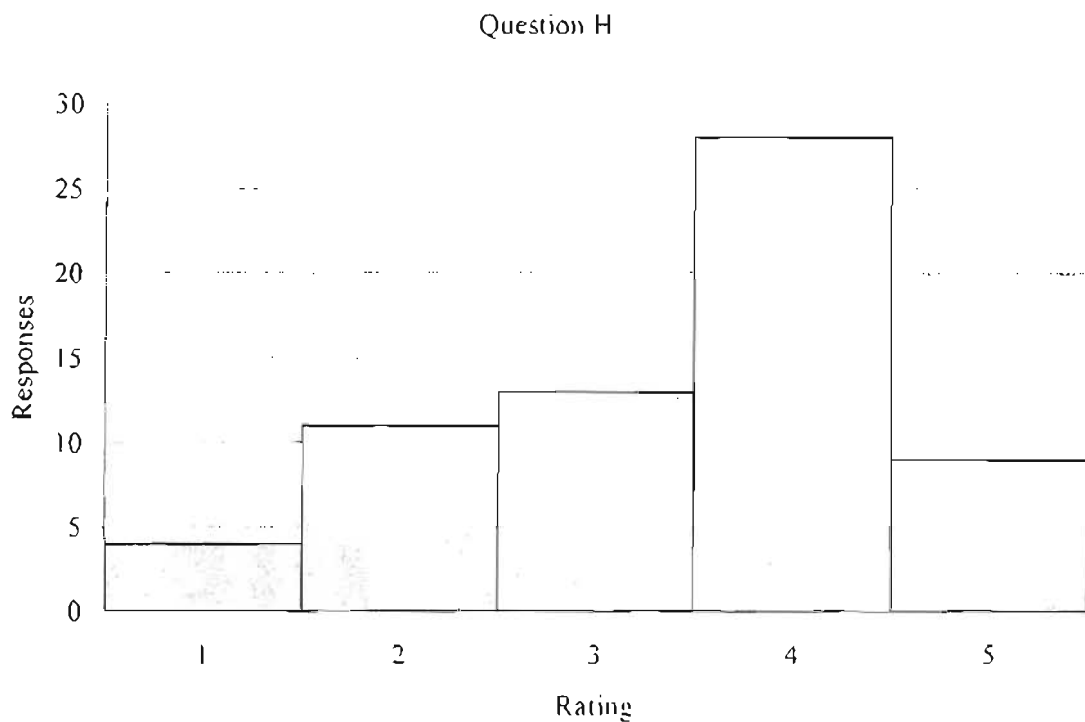
*Added comments:* "assumed, but not discussed"  
"sometimes anyway"

**H. A scientific/materialistic bias exists in the academy**

Historically, especially in the heyday of modernization, development was often seen as an economic, technocratic or scientific intervention, a position which may automatically

relegate religion to a peripheral position. This may be reflected in the adoption of a position, which “dichotomises the sacred and secular.”<sup>121</sup>

*Question H: A scientific/materialistic bias exists in the academy:*



1. Strongly Disagree    2. Disagree    3. Undecided    4. Agree    5. Strongly Agree

A significant majority of respondents “agreed” with the suggestion that a scientific or materialistic bias exists in the academy.

*Added comments:* “not in good IDS programs”

“Science and materialism are not necessarily equivalent. e.g. I consider myself a scientist but *not* a materialist in the traditional sense. There *is* a materialist bias in science, though.”

“Couldn’t answer H – too much wrapped up in some of those terms.”

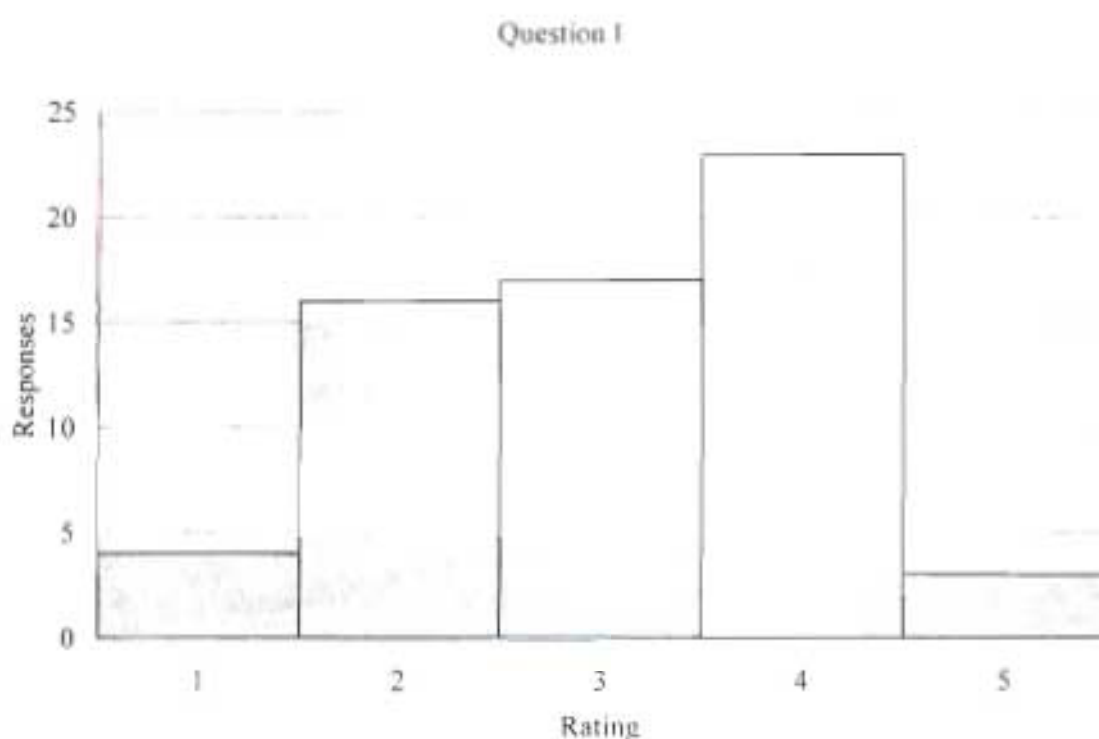
### **I. A form of “secular fundamentalism” exists in the academy**

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<sup>121</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo”, 40.

Karen Armstrong's statement may be unpopular in academic circles: "There is also a form of secular fundamentalism, which opposes all forms of faith as belligerently as religious fundamentalists attack secularism."<sup>122</sup> At a deeper level, beyond normal academic enquiry, can a certain bias or prejudice be identified? Is religion accorded the same consequence or afforded the same tolerance as other subjects within the academy?

*Question 1. A form of "secular fundamentalism" exists in the academy*



*1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Undecided 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree*

Responses fell to the centre of possible responses, with a slight majority "agreeing" with the proposition, somewhat surprising perhaps considering the lack of definition of the term "secular fundamentalism."

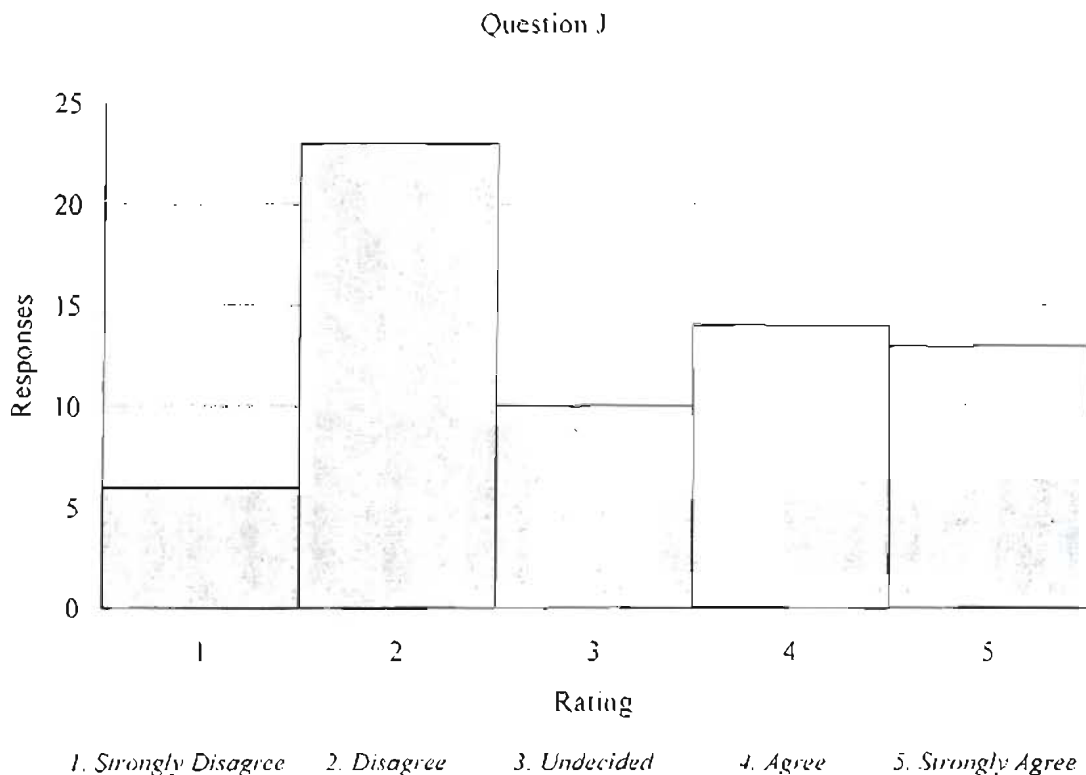
<sup>122</sup> Armstrong, "Resisting Modernity", *Harvard International Review*, < <http://hir.harvard.edu/articles/?id=1189&page=15> > (23/1/05).

*Added comments:* "I did not fully understand question I. I would be inclined to answer "2" as far as I do understand the term "secular fundamentalism."  
"If 'secular fundamentalism' refers to an individualistic liberal bias (i.e. political correctness) then I strongly agree."

### **J. Religion is a private and personal matter**

If religion is indeed a private and personal matter, then it would not be a legitimate research topic, and its exclusion from academic enquiry would be justified. However, the imprecision of the phrasing of the question tends to negate any findings.

*Question J: Religion is a private and personal matter*



As might be expected, findings were spread across a wide spectrum of opinion.

*Added comments:* "It is private and personal: it is also an important social/political reality."

“institution or faith”

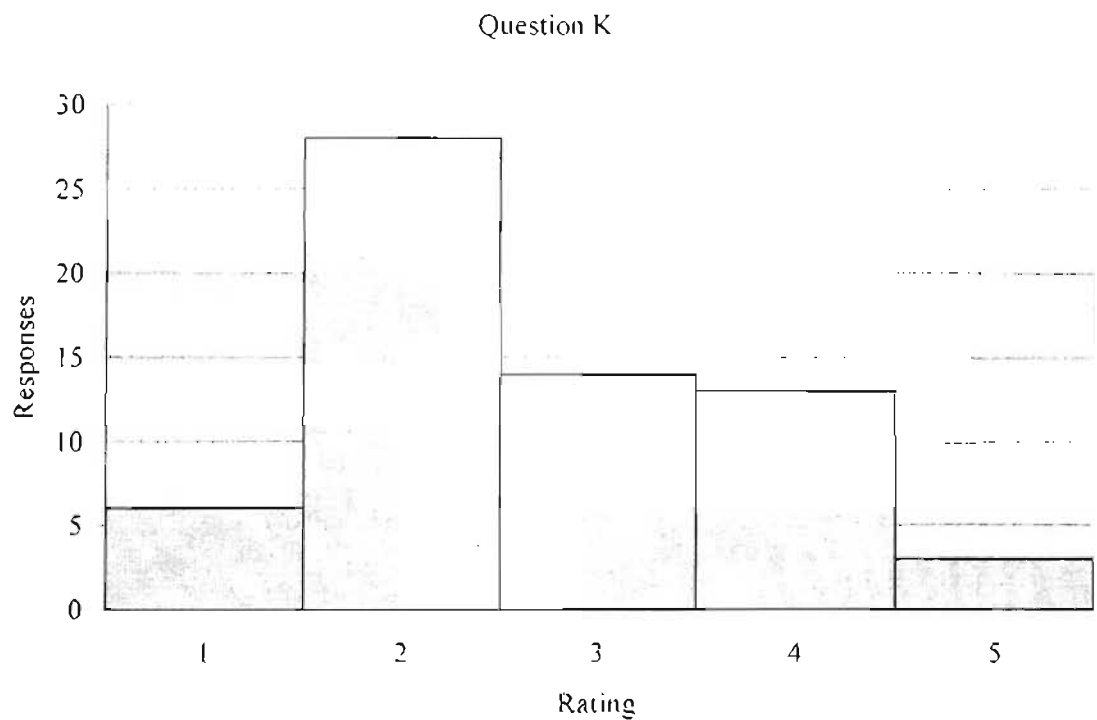
“The practice of religion is a private and personal matter.”

“Do you mean “should be” or “is viewed” by people as?”

### K. Development is “the new religion of the West”

Lacking the essential contextualization of the question, it was anticipated that this inquiry, which mentions the West for the only time in the survey, might reflect general opinion only.

*Question K: Development is “the new religion of the West”*



*1. Strongly Disagree    2. Disagree    3. Undecided    4. Agree    5. Strongly Agree*

The notion that development is “the new religion of the West” was largely discounted.

*Added comments:* “no, old religion”  
“can be”

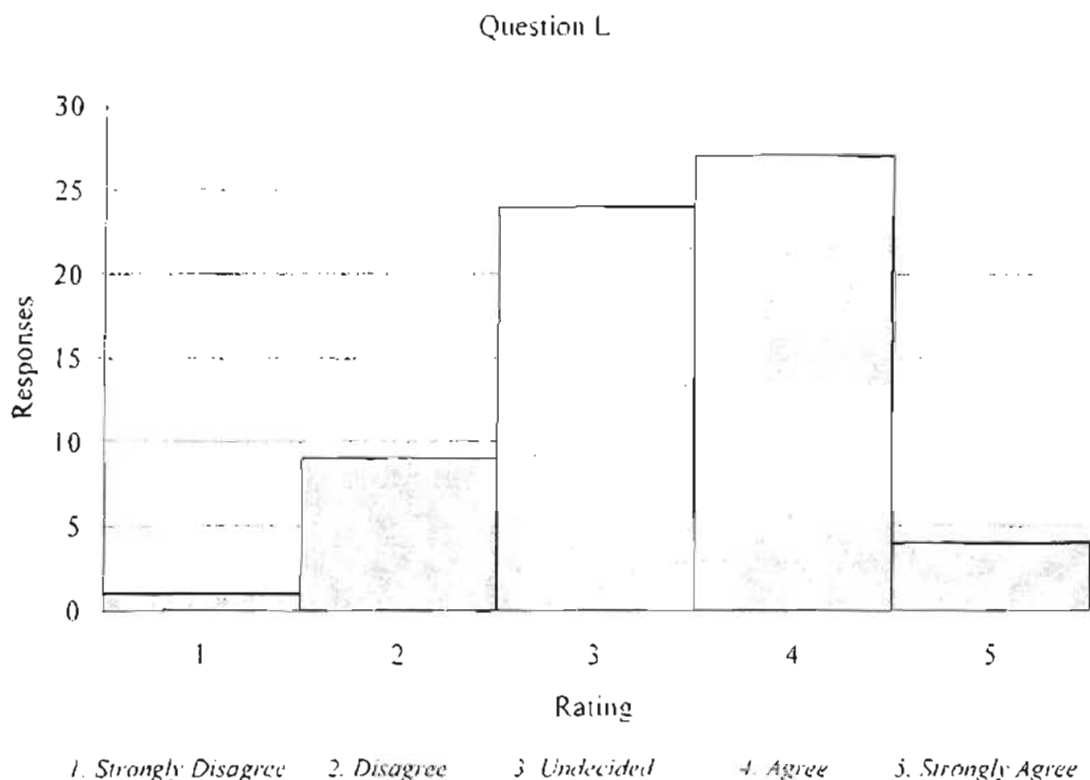
“Regarding K. globalization seems to be replacing development to some degree.”  
“development of consumerism is the “new religion of the West”  
“development i.e. economics”

#### L. Studying religion is assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11

It was hoped that this question might give a sense of emerging trends and concentrations in the post 9/11 world.

While a significant proportion of respondents remained “undecided,” more respondents fell into the category which “agreed” with the proposition that religion is assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11.

*Question L: Studying religion is assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11*





*Added comments:* “for wrong reasons”

“9/11 is an insignificant event in the greater scheme of things.”

“While there is more on Islam in most texts, and it can be good, religion is not really discussed – not systematically.”

Studying religion as an opponent of materialism is assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11.”

### 8.1.2 Survey Comments

The surveys generated significant comment. Methodological concerns are acknowledged, and any survey in the future would attempt to build on concerns expressed. It was always expected that the survey would prove a weak instrument, attempting as it did to measure more subjective responses, beyond the normal level of quantitative analysis, yet if the results are treated less as definitive expression, and more as intuitive opinion, it is considered that they have some validity in shedding light on the perceptions of some of the IDS professoriate. It was felt that the comments proved as valuable as the surveys themselves, and formed a valuable basis for informed discussion in the subsequent interviews with key informants.

Comments are reproduced below:

- Good luck interpreting the results. I expect that terms like “religion”, “scientific/materialistic bias”, “secular fundamentalism” etc. mean different things to each of your respondents, hence similar answers may mean different things.
- I’m not sure how useful this survey really is. You haven’t asked anything about the profile of your respondents, professionally or personally. And, you would be hard-pressed to find a social scientist who would deem any social/cultural phenomenon as “irrelevant”. The key is *how* religion is a part of IDS teaching and practice.
- Distinguish between spirituality and religion. In my graduate course on ID, I explicitly include and provide time and space for considering spirituality and religion as an important dimension of development. It will also be a key issue in a

special issue of the Canadian Journal of Development Studies (May '05, Issue 2) of which I am the Guest Editor.

- Spirituality is a broader, more important topic than religion, which is *one* way of seeking spirituality.
- Should distinguish between religion (organizational structure and hierarchy, dogma) and spirituality/faith which motivates, inspires individual agency and commitment.
- How do you define “religion”? How do you define studying religion? I think it may be important to differentiate “studying religion” as a sort of academic endeavour from “studying religion” as understanding a specific faith.
- Given the information (or lack of it) that you provide, I would never respond to this sort of survey. I don’t know who your research advisor is, but you’ve provided no information on whether your research has passed ethical review, how you will protect, use, publish and destroy data, how you are assuring anonymity for respondents, or any contact information for your research committee or supervisor should a respondent want to verify these matters. So you should probably re-take your research methods course before proceeding with your dissertation.
- I find I can’t answer these questions because they are the wrong questions in my view of your topic, “the relationship between religion and international development.” I don’t find them at all rigorous for a *qualitative* analysis; for a quantitative analysis the questions seem to be asking for some rather strange things. This seems to me to be more about professors’ biases as preconceived by you than about religion and development per se. And as a qualitative researcher myself, I detect your *own* bias in the way you’ve framed and phrased the questions. Is this PhD going to help ID as a field of practice and theory handle religious issues in developing societies better? As a graduate teacher I can’t help suggesting you revisit your starting premises, and your research instrument. Otherwise, I’m afraid you’re just going to confirm your own bias with the answer to these questions.
- You should be careful about the framing of your questions. I get the impression that you are “looking for” a specific result here.
- I think some of the questions are misconstrued, too vague and/or open-ended. Additionally, some of the questions are weighted (i.e have bias) too much and it becomes difficult to answer even within the range of possibilities. I think the survey needs tightening up.
- My comments are meant to apply to Religious Studies (Study of Religion) not as much to study of religious texts and what they do or do not prescribe.

- Religion *should be* a private and personal matter, as it is a terribly divisive force in the world and within many countries. It could very well be covered as one element of culture and indeed should be, as it is important, even central, to many cultures. I would prefer to see it covered in that way but covered somehow in ID teaching it must be, as its influence is everywhere in the world – and largely negative, divisive and destructive. I have tried to refer to religion within ID courses as one element of culture, but never to “teach religion.” It’s critical, as noted, but in my view largely exclusionary, characteristically a source of intolerance and hatred. This needs to be understood, as few religious traditions are innocent of these negative features.
- In some cases the concept of religion can lead to conservative attitudes that lead to underdevelopment so IDS courses have to maintain a balance.
- The responses to many questions will probably vary significantly from university to university. My university is some unique given that it is a religiously affiliated institution. Therefore, religion does continue to receive important focus here.
- It is understandable that “religion” is not dealt with to a great extent but rather that students’ own values and biases are examined.
- My role in IDS is restricted to teaching students about Canada. My opinions are affected by this bias.
- I would include religion in culture, which is a crucially important focus of IDS. I would NOT like to see development taught as a part of religion. Rather, religious institution sponsored development (projects sponsored by churches etc.) should be critically studied in IDS programs. Further, the cultural context of “beneficiary” populations, including their religious organization and beliefs, should be examined in IDS programs.
- The problem for me is to be able to separate culture and religion. Certainly culture has assumed greater importance and with it, I believe, religion.
- I don’t think this kind of survey is very meaningful. [The survey had been filled in, and then crossed out, up to Question H: “A scientific/materialistic bias exists in the academy.”]
- This is not well designed. Your questions are biased to your own point of view.
- Most of the questions do not lend themselves to this type of survey (ergo the preponderance of “3” replies.)
- Lots of loaded concepts. I think the study of religion is extremely important in IDS, especially from a scientific/materialist perspective, which you seem to

disparage as “secular fundamentalism.” You can be Catholic/Sunni and a good scientist, but there is no Catholic/Sunni science.

- While my responses may give the impression that I am anti-religious, this is not the case. I entirely understand the importance of some knowledge of comparative religion to success in international development. However, I believe that this should be acquired as part of school curricula, not at the expense of other vital components of overcrowded university curricula.
- Religion is likely to create differential opportunities or even constraints for marginalized communities.
- With the rise of Islam, the religious right in the US and the Catholic philosophy of the place of the common people in Latin America, religion has obvious importance. The secularization of some countries, especially in Europe, may make it appear that religion is of less importance, but the effects of private non-government agencies to promote self-help and self-reliance in places like Africa can't be ignored. In Haiti the role of churches is very important.
- Comparative religion exists as an area in Sociology and Anthropology of Religion also exists as an area. Students in ID take (can take) these courses. So while I agree that religion should maybe have more “space” in ID courses, students in the CIDS program at Guelph are exposed to the topic.
- I do not teach development though I do teach in the interdisciplinary program. Therefore can't answer some questions because I do not know the answer. There is a difference between not knowing and being undecided!
- I can't make a general answer so will answer with regard to my own courses.
- I teach Aboriginal Studies in the Development Studies Program at Queen's. Religion has had a significant impact on Aboriginal Peoples in Canada both in terms of undermining self determination and reestablishing cultural identity.
- Very interesting topic
- Interesting. Love to see the results.
- It was with great interest that I filled out your questionnaire
- We just added 5 new religious studies courses as cross-listed.
- This is a topic that I am very interested in. At CMU in general and my IDS courses in particular. I try to elaborate/ suggest some of the statements included above, such as development as the new religion of the West. I relate this to the post-development critique of mainstream development. I also gave a paper at last

year's CASID conference on faith-based Canadian development NGOs, CIDA funding to them, and how a more radical or genuine definition of pluralism questions the divide between "secular-neutral" development and faith.

- I will be very interested to see the outcome of your research. I hope you will seek to publish it in CJDS or elsewhere.
- I think your project is important!
- I filled out your survey with some difficulty. The issues you raise are topical and important. However, I had difficulty responding to the statements because I feel that some of the statements hide far more complexity than their responses reveal. Below are some examples and some feedback ... [omitted, because of length] ... The questions you raise are important, and need to be addressed within the frame of IDS. However, the complexities to these arguments/positions are what needs to be teased out. You might find it useful to include a selective sample (minimally) of qualitative interviews to help work through these questions.

## 8.2 Interviews

To complement and expand upon the findings of the survey, a group of thirty three key informants was interviewed in order to provide supplementary perspectives "against the grain and in the gaps,"<sup>123</sup> and to supply a qualitative dimension to augment an essentially quantitative exercise. The survey questions formed the basis for a set of semi-structured interviews with key informants in the field, who were invited to amplify the various issues addressed. As the surveys were returned, it became increasingly possible to focus in on some of the more puzzling results, particularly the question of sensitivity to the subject, which became a major area of enquiry. But, principally, an attempt was made to tease out the reasons why religion does not assume a prominent place in the IDS programmes at Canadian universities.

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<sup>123</sup> University of Natal, "Research Proposal Writing", 9.

Respondents, representing scholars and practitioners in development and related areas, were deliberately sought in order to provide a wide array of opinion. (For a full list of respondents and their professional positions, please see Appendix 5.) Some interviewees were approached without any knowledge of their religious beliefs or backgrounds, merely their status as IDS scholars of repute. Others, though, were approached in full knowledge of their interest in the area of religion and development, and their sympathy with the idea that religion should play a greater role in the development process. Twelve professors were interviewed from departments of IDS and Religious Studies at Dalhousie and St Mary's Universities in Halifax.

With the likes of Katherine Marshall, Kurt Alan Ver Beek and William Ryan as interviewees, it is felt that some of the most important voices in this area were consulted. In addition, prominent Canadian figures in the world of development included Farokh Afshar and Juan Tellez, the latter being the current President of the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID). The experience of such interviewees enabled the researcher to tap into a considerable reservoir of thought in this area. Three respondents from IDRC, CIDA and NSI provided an external view of the academy from prominent Canadian development institutions. Three interviews, conducted at the Canadian headquarters of World Vision provided a valuable perspective "from the other side." All interviewees have had personal international exposure. Although all were authorities in their areas, a number expressed reservations regarding their competence in this particular field, with a few apologizing for their supposed lack of knowledge, and even "ignorance," in this area.

The surveys included a separate slip asking for interview volunteers. Fourteen professors returned such slips, although, only seven responded to follow-up. Altogether thirty three interviews were conducted -- twenty in person and thirteen by phone. The length of the interviews varied from a maximum of one hour forty minutes to a minimum of twenty minutes. All, but one respondent, allowed the interviews to be taped, and all, but three, allowed free quotation. A wide blend of ages and experience, as well as a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds, were represented.

### 8.2.1 Interview Comments and Reflections

While commentary is loosely arranged around the structure of the Survey Questionnaire, responses transcended the boundaries of those questions.

- **The role of religion is covered insufficiently in IDS courses**

A common consensus existed amongst all key informants that the subject of religion was not covered sufficiently in IDS. This feeling was expressed by one respondent who, with an emphatic nod, confirmed Ver Beek's contention: "It's a taboo!" In the ensuing reflection, a certain defensiveness was evident in many of the comments, with first-level explanations for the lack of a focus on religious issues in IDS varying from the volume of material required to be covered at early levels in IDS to a lack of expertise in the subject, leading to calls for a good text-book on the subject. A number of professors expressed

their desire to more deliberately and systematically incorporate religion into their teaching. Nancy Hayter, in her capacity as coordinator of the Global Development Lecture Series at Dalhousie University, cannot remember any lecture in the history of the series that ever brought religion and development together in a systematic way.<sup>124</sup>

Asked for his reaction to the general congruence between the findings of this dissertation and his own,<sup>125</sup> Kurt Alan Ver Beek responded: “That’s encouraging in some ways but also disappointing in others, isn’t it?” He voiced surprise at what he termed “the very strongly held prejudices” directed towards Christianity in particular and religion in general. He also expressed frustration, in the context of his work in Honduras, at the difficulty of finding funding for Christian organizations, in solidarity with the majority in Honduran society, as opposed to the facility of funding that some organizations coming from various “extreme positions” experienced.<sup>126</sup> Dr David Black expresses a similar concern when he notes that: “We’ve failed to see and account for much of the strongest elements of civil society” and identifies the tendency of northern organizations to align themselves with secular organizational counterparts in the south which may not always represent “the most vibrant, vital and popular dimensions of civil society.” In undervaluing the religious dimension evident in southern civil society, he concludes: “I think we’ve done ourselves a disservice.”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Personal interview with Nancy Hayter, Halifax, 23/2/05.

<sup>125</sup> Ver Beek’s PhD research at Cornell University formed the basis of his article, “Spirituality: A Development Taboo.”

<sup>126</sup> Telephone interview with Kurt Alan Ver Beek, 10/3/05.

<sup>127</sup> Personal interview with David Black, Halifax, 23/3/05.



One professor recounted the experience of trying, unsuccessfully, to introduce a philosophy class that would address: “the fundamental values of religion... why are we motivated to do what we do and what is it that motivates others to do what they do... what are the religious bases for promoting social justice, those sorts of things... to find hopefully the commonalities amongst them all.” While detecting that there is renewed interest in this subject, the informant expresses concern that not enough attention is being given to this area: “I really think there’s a lot more scope and I really think we should be doing it...this is one area where a lot of catch-up needs to be done.”<sup>128</sup>

In light of recent developments, Katherine Marshall, Counselor to the World Bank President in the area of values and ethics, would today amend her published comments that dialogue between religion and development resembles “ships passing in the night,” to the metaphor of “the fellowship of the road,” while accepting that there would be less realization of the changes taking place in the halls of academia than on the ground. She expects Bank employees to have a basic “faith literacy.”<sup>129</sup>

Dr David Black identifies two historical and conceptual explanations for the historical lack of focus on religion in IDS research and teaching. Looking back to the origins of development studies in the post World War II period, he notes that “this was an era in which mission work was largely discredited, viewed as part of a colonialist and imperialist project that had oppressed and tried to transform the minds of the colonized.” The intellectual factor reflected the two poles of materialism and modernization that

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<sup>128</sup> Wherever quotations here or subsequently are unidentified, requests for anonymity or the potentially sensitive nature of the comments are the reason.

<sup>129</sup> Telephone interview with Katherine Marshall, 17/3/05.

dominated development studies in its first decades, so in both cases “religion was viewed as an obstacle to development -- whether as a form of false consciousness or cultural backwardness -- that needed to be transcended.” However, he recognizes an irony, suggesting that “if you scratched the surface of a lot of people studying development you would find a good deal of more or less religious influence in their motivations for becoming involved in development work, so there is a kind of mission impulse that has always been a part of the field.” He points out the trend in development studies since the 1990s to return to issues of identity and culture, but explains that the intellectual impetus for that has come from postmodern and post structural critiques, which, in denying exclusivist truth claims, have prevented a full embrace of religion. He notes the reaction of many academics, in the profoundly social-scientific ethos of the modern university, to the currents of religiosity sweeping the global South: “We are almost embarrassed by it, we don’t know how to deal with it and we don’t know how to engage with it.”<sup>130</sup>

Dr Kimberley Naqvi noted a certain incongruity surrounding the subject, which, on the occasions when it surfaces, is “addressed in more negative terms such as at the level of Pentecostal or Islamic fundamentalism, which isn’t adequate.” Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan, she sees potential linkages, not only with the Religious Studies department, but also with the comprehensive Native Studies programme. Aboriginal communities often find themselves revisiting their traditional religious roots at the same time as having to deal with an imposed colonial religious legacy, not to mention contemporary religious variants.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Interview, David Black.

<sup>131</sup> Telephone interview with Kimberley Naqvi, 4/2/05.

While Gerry Cameron states: “I don’t see how you can teach IDS without going into religion...I just don’t,” he recognizes that few IDS professors are willing to address the subject out of “a great lack of knowledge,” resulting from the fact that “almost all of our professors, and particularly our senior professors, came up through a secular period in the 60s, 70s and early 80s, when religion was looked down upon.” He suggests that unless students approach the subject through the avenue of Religious Studies, they may never be introduced to it.<sup>132</sup>

David Fletcher, asks the question in an age of suicide bombers: “How can people be driven so strongly by their faiths? There must be some power in that – it happens in all faiths in different ways.” Referring to the power of faith or belief, Fletcher refers to his experience as a development professional to suggest: “My experience with a broad range of people in different countries on the African continent is that they recognize the truth of there being other aspects of power.”<sup>133</sup>

Dr Caesar Apentiik also recognizes that religion is a “very powerful force,” and indicates that for many traditional societies their cosmovision is at the heart of their existence. Drawing two concentric circles, he places cosmovision at the centre, with the outer arc representing day to day life, which is impacted by political, economic and social interventions from outside. Speaking from a Ghanaian background, he also highlights a counter-trend, especially among the younger generation, propelled by the forces of

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<sup>132</sup> Personal interview with Gerry Cameron, Halifax, 24/2/05.

<sup>133</sup> Personal interview with David Fletcher, Halifax, 28/2/05.

modernization and globalization. Spirituality becomes more and more “a symbolic token” as “everybody wants material things.”<sup>134</sup>

Referring to the importance of religion in any analysis of development efficacy, Dr Dane Rowlands suggests that religion may be viewed on one level as “just another element of the cultural context in which development takes place.” but suggests that:

researchers in the North are probably not as sensitive to the issue as their counterparts would be in the South... in attempting to deal with the question in a more neutral and objective scientific, positivistic fashion, they would probably discount the extent to which it may affect how individuals or even the community as a whole would react to certain policy initiatives.

Rowlands proposes that researchers in the South would be more “sensitive to what the religious context would imply, whereas the northern researcher might attempt to take some average influence or factor it in as an one of several factors, but my guess is that they would end up discounting the importance [of religion] as a consequence.”<sup>135</sup>

Dr Jane Parpart, Lester B. Pearson Professor of International Development at Dalhousie University, considers that reluctance to acknowledge culture is at the heart of the problem:

I think it has all to do with this tendency to be nervous about other people’s culture... The development business has been dominated by people with training in economics or politics. So they’re perfectly happy to discuss economic growth and governance and institutions. The minute they get to things around culture, and, God forbid, sexuality, then they start going completely ballistic. They don’t know how to handle it.

Culture, therefore, becomes “a hot potato.” She continues: “Thank God we’ve started to move since the late 90s into a better analysis of culture ... and part of that is religion...”

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<sup>134</sup> Personal interview with Caesar Apentiik, Halifax, 23/2/05.

<sup>135</sup> Telephone interview with Dane Rowlands, 4/2/05.

And after 9/11, why anyone thinks that you can ever discuss *anything* without discussing ideology and religion to me is just ridiculous.” The power of culture is ignored:

The power of ideas, and the power of cultural practices and the deep, deep way that people feel guilty if they go against the cultural practices they were taught as a child is something that requires analysis way beyond the level of just economics and politics; it requires investigation into issues around personality, the psyche, exploring some of the literature in psychoanalysis as well as deeply contextualized historical and anthropological analysis. I think it’s the wave of the future, but people, especially men, are really uncomfortable with it and want to run away from it. They’re so much happier to be talking about political institutions and economic institutions.

She sees the return to the language of poverty as disingenuous and contends that the sub-text in such a position is that “if you solve poverty, then all the inequalities of culture, religion, gender and class will all disappear.” a position which she castigates as “absolutely naïve -- very, very naïve.”<sup>136</sup>

A number of interviewees recognized the difficulty of operationalizing religion – the historical problem of measuring matters of faith and spirituality satisfactorily. Religious sensitivities, born of the heart, may not lend themselves to positivistic interpretation. For instance, as Dr Rowlands observes, measuring nominal affiliation and actual adherence in the context of faith is fraught with difficulty, calling resulting data into question.<sup>137</sup>

This quandary is illustrated in popular form in the movie “Kinsey” detailing the life of Alfred C. Kinsey, the renowned biologist turned sociologist, who brought the study of sex into the mainstream. In some of the final frames of the movie, which is built around one of Kinsey’s controversial sex questionnaires, one of the Kinsey’s graduate students,

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<sup>136</sup> Personal interview with Jane Parpart, Halifax, 4/4/05.

<sup>137</sup> Interview, Dane Rowlands.

now collaborator and colleague, asks the inevitable question: “You’ve just told me your entire history, but there hasn’t been a single mention about love.”<sup>138</sup> Kinsey responds that love cannot fit within his ambit, as only empirical data can be accepted. Academic enquiries into the issues of the spirit suffer from a similar limitation.

Father Ryan speaking as an academic, with a doctorate in Economics from Harvard University, acknowledges that religion fits with difficulty into an academic system dominated by the question of measurement, where abstractionism and reductionism are liable to consign religion to a box and not acknowledge its pervasive influence. “Every time you put things in boxes and overdefine them, you have problems,” he asserts. He draws a parallel with theology, where theologians, in their attention to technicalities, such as the minutiae surrounding the interpretation of texts, do not “come to grips with the problems of our time.” Abstraction can also be the problem in IDS departments, where professors can be out of touch with reality. Many of the professoriate do not have much experience in the field (by practitioners’ standards), and therefore, somewhat out of touch with reality, “have to deal with the abstract.” Father Ryan suggests that “social science instruments are not nearly as powerful as we thought.” He notes the “evasive” concept of development itself, and acknowledges that people in uncertain times want “certitudes,” but warns that this can be a problem in both religion and science, which are both faiths, and may be based on unproven assumptions.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Fox Searchlight, “Kinsey.”

<sup>139</sup> Telephone interview with William Ryan, 1/4/05.

One of the informants, Susan Thomson, who has served in Rwanda as a post-genocide human rights lawyer, recounts her disillusion with the empirical limitations of her former work:

I've given up human rights work because I realized in Rwanda that the international human rights regime was so legalistic and instrumentalist, in that it couldn't capture the subjective reality of violence and suffering of trauma victims, that individuals as trauma victims can't even begin to be captured in their anxiety and their suffering because the conceptualization of violence is the thing that is so innately personal that the esoteric language of life can't simply begin to capture. We can talk about reparation and restitution and all that stuff but to what end, because the trauma is so imprinted on the individual?<sup>140</sup>

The study of religion, at some levels, is therefore inherently challenging, though on other levels, the effects of initiatives and interventions of religious institutions and RNGOs can, just like secular institutions and NGOs, be measured satisfactorily.

But there are also practical reasons why religion is not incorporated into IDS teaching. One professor remarked: "It's incredibly difficult for me – one of the reasons why I find it difficult to talk about religion and development is because that I've never been trained – I've never taken a course on religion and development so where do I even begin with the literature on the topic?" Another professor expressed a similar view: "I would feel uncomfortable as a development researcher focusing either exclusively or even extensively on the religious context, because I wouldn't feel qualified to do so."

Ann Weston, Vice-President of the North-South Institute also identified lack of expertise as one of the reasons why her Institute has not pursued an analysis of the role of religion in development. She comments: "We've definitely thought about the subject," but admits

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<sup>140</sup> Personal interview with Susan Thomson, Halifax, 27/1/05.

that it has not been tackled by the Institute in a direct way, although subjects, such as conflict resolution and human rights, currently under study, may invite some consideration of religion.<sup>141</sup>

Moral judgments that might result from a recognition that certain religious practices might be “inimical or an impediment to the development process” clearly worried some respondents: “It would be potentially very awkward for people here to explicitly address the question of religion in a development context, in part because there is a shyness about making those kinds of cross-cultural judgments.” The professor felt that his reluctance to engage religion in his analysis would not only permeate his university but “just about any other university across Canada.” Another interviewee suggested: “I would be more comfortable talking about it if I had a good text.” A balanced study, relying on empirical evidence and presenting differing schools of thought, rather than “crazy” or “hyper-religious” indoctrination, would take the pressure off this professor, who asserts: “I don’t want to lecture that religion is good or bad for development.”

Looking to the organizational development literature, Molly den Heyer suggests that we have “mental models of how we structure things,” and recognizes how difficult it is to break out of such entrenched certainties -- “how to get out of the episteme” -- in order to engage different cultural values than our own.<sup>142</sup>

Dr Rebecca Tiessen senses that development scholars are calling for more nuanced and carefully grounded research that goes beyond class or gender, to encompass other aspects

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<sup>141</sup> Telephone interview with Ann Weston , 15/4/05.

<sup>142</sup> Personal interview with Molly den Heyer, Halifax, 17/3/05.



previously neglected in the analysis. “But religion is so clearly important to understanding the dynamics of a community, to what makes a development project work or fail, so I can see it happening if people move along the trajectory of a more carefully nuanced analysis in development.” She suggests that as interest grows in the area of religion and international development, and as more courses are demanded and offered, the knock-on effect will result in students going on to graduate study, and then becoming instructors who will offer courses in that area.<sup>143</sup>

Dr Caesar Apentiik makes the suggestion that the subject, rather than being addressed in the large IDS auditorium, may be best covered in small seminar courses focusing on practical development, or at the graduate level, where a critical approach may allow for a deeper interrogation of a subject like religion.<sup>144</sup> Gerry Cameron advocates that study abroad programmes can be very helpful in challenging students to expand the horizons of their cultural and value systems: “culture shock is a challenge to your values.” Such experiential learning opportunities further reinforce the understanding that “development implies change, but you have to do it within the value system” of the local people.<sup>145</sup>

- **Religion is irrelevant to the study of IDS**

No voices opposed the view that religion was a relevant subject in the study of development. The example of South America stands out. The Latin Americanists

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<sup>143</sup> Personal interview with Rebecca Tiessen, Halifax, 17/2/05.

<sup>144</sup> Interview, Caesar Apentiik.

<sup>145</sup> Interview, Gerry Cameron.

interviewed expressed surprise at how little attention was paid by the *CJDS* to the effects of ecclesiastical influence and religious movements on development across the continent. As John Cameron points out: “when you travel in Latin America these are the kinds of conversations people are having... ‘What is the path to salvation?’ is a regular topic of conversation.”<sup>146</sup>

Cameron is emphatic about the influence of religion on Latin American development: “religion has certainly been essential; virtually nobody would talk, write or teach about the history of development in South America without talking about, writing or teaching about religion.” He identifies three stages where religious influences have fundamentally affected the developmental history of Latin America: the first representing the essentially repressive role over centuries of the Catholic Church in reinforcing elite domination; the second, the emergence of Liberation Theology following Vatican II; the third the more recent impact of evangelical Protestant churches. Most development academicians, as Cameron is quick to point out, would view religion as a political and ideological, rather than theological, influence.<sup>147</sup>

The commitment of Catholic, in particular Jesuit, priests -- often highly educated and undeniably dedicated -- was expressed in their identification with a community for, in some cases, decades. Cameron observes: “Virtually every successful community development initiative that I’ve come across in Latin America has a ‘crazy’ Jesuit priest behind it.” While highlighting the influence of religion in community development, he

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<sup>146</sup> Personal interview with John Cameron, Halifax, 22/12/04.

<sup>147</sup> Interview, John Cameron.

also notes that such influence has not been uniform, but has fluctuated from conservative to radical expression depending on the orientation of each diocese, parish or priest. Such variation thus becomes a “very important factor in terms of understanding patterns of local development.” He also recognizes that many of the most influential NGOs have developed from Catholic, and particularly Jesuit, roots.<sup>148</sup>

The recent Pentecostalist phenomenon has led to impassioned local debate as to its effects on development. Initially considered a component of US imperialism, the evangelical incursion is viewed as more closely aligned with neoliberal orthodoxy, in contrast to the Marxist tendencies implicit in Liberation Theology. Cameron suggests that the present reaction to the evangelical explosion may be more “cautious if not critical,” as a result of its practical influence in everyday life. On the one hand, the evangelical wave may be seen as a “very positive influence on gender relations at the household level in terms of men not drinking and spousal and child abuse declining,” while on the other it may serve “as an ideological influence bolstering the status quo... a perspective very much shaped by a kind of lament for the failure of Liberation Theology, an incredibly ambitious project [which] foisted on to the poorest people the huge process of transformation that required them to become revolutionaries.”<sup>149</sup>

Juan Tellez, current President of CASID, whose own early involvement with Liberation Theology led to a lifelong commitment to development, also recognizes the seminal position of the Church in respect to Latin American development and its forceful voice in

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<sup>148</sup> Interview, John Cameron.

<sup>149</sup> Interview, John Cameron.

opposition to the state.<sup>150</sup> Dr Dalton sums up: “if you don’t understand Christianity in Latin America and the history of the Catholic Church and all the other churches there, I can’t see how you can actually work effectively.” Religion is not regarded “like it is here in this part of the world as a separate category or dimension of life... it’s not that at all... their life is steeped in it.... it’s breathing and eating and doing whatever religious duties you do.”<sup>151</sup>

Similar comments could be made regarding the development contexts of Asia or Africa. Susan Thomson remarks: “civil society in many African states is driven by the national Council of Churches.” Considering Rwanda as a case study, where the Church is perceived to have failed to prevent the genocide, but where a religious worldview is hard to escape, she suggests that what lies beneath the surface may be more important to investigate: “the interesting question would be to go in and look at what they believe to be true and what they say they believe to be true.”<sup>152</sup>

Dr Peter Arthur, a Ghanaian now teaching in Canada, recalls a formative experience:

My first shock when I went to Britain was when a friend told me: “Let’s go to church” and when we went to church the pews were empty. So my question is: “Where is religion over here?” as it is a huge part of people’s lives back home in Ghana and in the South. So the question is: “Why is religion not part of development?” It should be part of development. It is part of development.

Arthur explains how religious leaders tend to have a huge impact on people’s lives in the South, and suggests that religion can be exploited for overall development purposes.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Personal interview with Juan Tellez, Halifax, 14/3/05.

<sup>151</sup> Personal interview with Anne-Marie Dalton, Halifax, 22/12/04.

<sup>152</sup> Interview, Susan Thomson.

<sup>153</sup> Personal interview with Peter Arthur, Halifax, 28/2/05.

- **Trends towards pluralism make religious awareness important**

Again, interviewees endorsed the findings of the survey. But the survey's responses, so supportive of pluralism -- as might be expected in the profoundly pluralistic ethos of Canada -- may well mask opposite effects in pedagogical praxis. In provoking a response to the common statement in a pluralistic society: "I don't want to impose my beliefs on anyone," Dr Abdul-Masih reacted, in fact, interrupted:

But you have! The language of pluralism becomes double-edged -- an excuse for not saying anything... to discuss things does not make you anti-pluralist but not to discuss it [religion] means you're not being respectful of the pluralism. It's like saying "I respect you very much, but the most important thing about you really I don't care about. I like you and would like to help you but what makes you who you really are is really [a problem] -- if I'm truly respectful then I should respect and accept what makes you who you are: your religious tradition, your worldview and your culture.

Abdul-Masih contends that the average westerner development expert is: "ignorant of the religious traditions of others and ignorant of their own, and they like their own so much and don't want to be critiqued by other religious traditions, because the first thing that's going to fall is actually their worldview of secularism and consumerism."<sup>154</sup> Ver Beek agrees: "In summary, the practitioner's scientific/materialistic bias, coupled with a 'respect' for religion which effectively sidelines the topic, results in an imposition of values just as serious as that of men over women or the wealthy over the poor."<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Personal interview with Magi Abdul-Masih, Halifax, 11/1/05.

<sup>155</sup> Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo", 40.

Therefore, as in some of the other survey questions (most notably the question regarding sensitivity), obvious responses may mask hidden realities. The conventional approbation for pluralism, which at first sight may appear favorable to a greater openness about religion, may indeed curtail an honest appraisal of religion's affects on development and allow development scholars to hide behind pluralism rather than interrogate the subject with the critical rigour it deserves.

- **Trends towards secularization make studying religion unnecessary**

Historically, it might be supposed that the perceived groundswell towards secularization in the latter half of the twentieth century could be one of the principal justifications for sidelining the study of religion in the academy. One professor considered that “development studies are still captured by modernism,” consigning religious ideas to the private realm. Dr Arthur voiced the popular perception that developing countries haven't reached the stage, already accepted in the West, where religion was largely irrelevant in life, but noted “That is not necessarily the case, because when you look at the case of the US for example, the so-called most developed country in the world, yet religion is part and parcel of their lives.”<sup>156</sup>

Whether or not such previously powerful viewpoints about secularizing trends in the West were still residual soon became apparent when, from the outset of the interviews, it became abundantly clear that respondents considered religion to be a vital factor in geopolitical understanding. The shockwaves from 9/11 in North America, plus the

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<sup>156</sup> Interview, Peter Arthur.

polarizing of religious and secular forces in the political life of the United States, together with the same-sex marriage debate in Canada, have aroused religious sensitivities in an unexpected way. The resurgent profile of religion thus underlines its importance in the study of international development.

While not typical of the respondents, the following discussion with Dr Terry Woo, Assistant Professor and Acting Chair of Comparative Religion at Dalhousie University, illuminates an alternative view of the secularization debate:

*Interviewer: Is secularization responsible for the lack of attention to religion?*

**Dr Woo:** [shaking head constantly and measuredly] I don't even know what secularization means... I simply have no idea what that means...

*Interviewer: It has been said that only western development lacks a spiritual dimension...*

**Dr Woo:** I don't know what that means either... Even economically speaking, the spiritual component may not be at the forefront but I can't see how you can be doing economics without economics being informed by some sort of spirituality. It may not be explicit. I believe that the spiritual is always there, whether you make it explicit or not, it's always there.

*Interviewer: Don't you think that is rather a radical statement for the average academic?*

**Dr Woo:** And I think this is where the definition of religion is really a hurdle. I favor Buddhism in situations like this because I think the Buddhists have it right: "What arises, falls." In other words, we all die. That informs our existence -- so it's there whether you make it explicit or not, you can overlay that with God or you can overlay that with a lot of supernaturalism. I think the tendency for the people who make religion/ spirituality explicit is that's the form it comes in very often, but it seems to me that it needn't be that. If most people are wearing a Ralph Lauren it doesn't mean that everyone is. So I suppose that if people want to object to the more explicit notions of spirituality then I think they're being tunnel visioned in some way.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Personal interview with Terry Woo, Halifax, 14/12/04.

Dr Rebecca Tiessen voices a sentiment that may be more common than it once was: “When I was a grad student I spent more time being much more critical of religion and ignoring its prevalence and relevance. I more and more recognize how in order to speak the same language you need to really address religion.”<sup>158</sup>

- **Religion has generally been a negative influence on development**

While it was anticipated that a majority of responses to this statement in the survey would fall under the category of “undecided,” the fact that more respondents felt that religion was a more positive than negative influence on development proved somewhat surprising. In the interviews, both opinions were reflected, with a summation by Dr Dalton representing the measured response of a number of interviewees: “Religion in many of its expressions has had a fairly negative effect.”<sup>159</sup> Father Ryan suggests that, in his experience, a swing towards the negative from a more positive appraisal of the religious potential in development has occurred since the events of 9/11.<sup>160</sup>

Dr Dalton points out that “religion and academia have a very ambivalent relationship to start with,” often leading to religion being seen in negative terms in the academy. In attempting to free themselves from their respective legacies, religious studies departments have moved beyond their sometime identification with theology and proselytization and development has broadened beyond its association with economic

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<sup>158</sup> Interview, Rebecca Tiessen.

<sup>159</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

<sup>160</sup> Interview, William Ryan.



determinism and Marxist materialism. She maintains that “in a lot of respects religion today has a much more humble presence in the world.”<sup>161</sup>

Suggesting that religious practice can be an obstacle to development is fraught with complication, as one respondent said: “Cultural sensitivity or political correctness prevents us from saying that religion is bad for development.” The path of least resistance may be the safest, for as far as research and pedagogy are concerned: “It’s easy to not go there...because ... *at all costs* we want to avoid saying religion and culture is backward and bad.” In this context, Ramadan was mentioned by a couple of respondents as a potentially anti-developmental practice, but neither would be prepared to discuss such an issue publicly. This reticence to address religio-cultural issues may arise from a fear of lawsuits, or out of concern for offending religious students, particularly from minority groups, or out of personal discomfort with the subject. The religious factor may deter some from a study of such societies, resulting in a certain ignorance, as reflected in one comment: “Most of Islam doesn’t have a lot to say about development, as far as I understand.”

Cultural imperialism is clearly unacceptable in Canadian academic circles, which may limit any comments that might be construed as suggesting that various practices represent impediments to development: “We don’t want to promote the idea that certain people are primitive, certain people are lazy and so on...it’s easier *not* to talk about it.” Treading the fine line between attempting to modify cultural practices (gender issues being the most obvious example) while not attacking fundamental beliefs, is fraught with developmental

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<sup>161</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

danger and academic angst. The dilemma may lead to debate over a question articulated by Stephen Brown: "Are beliefs more important than development?"<sup>162</sup>

Interviewees at World Vision advanced the position that religion can play a transformative role in development, and were concerned at their portrayal in academia, which they perceived as generally negative. Michael Weickert wondered: "Perhaps there's no perception that faith can play a *positive* role."<sup>163</sup>

The Church's role in some of the more unfortunate abuses of colonialism was highlighted by a number of respondents. Christianity's unfortunate colonial legacy might explain a residual reticence to acknowledge the latent religious dimension in the current development enterprise. Dr Abdul-Masih finds it ironic that the West, having disrupted the lives of millions in the global South in the colonial encounter, now dares to offer a solution to the problem in the guise of development: "You cut off my leg and then you give me the prosthetic, and I'm supposed to be grateful?"<sup>164</sup>

Colonialism's shadow on the development enterprise is highlighted by Dr Alison Mathie. Her story is instructive:

When I first went overseas to Nigeria when I was 21, everything that I had learnt about development was highly critical of colonialism and missionary activity -- we were *so* self-righteous -- and I think it was an inevitable reaction and a desire to disassociate ourselves from what we perceived to be the wrongs of the colonial period that we stripped ourselves of anything that smacked of western imperialism.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Personal interview with Stephen Brown, Halifax, 19/11/04.

<sup>163</sup> Personal interview with Michael Weickert, Mississauga, 30/11/04.

<sup>164</sup> Interview, Magi Abdul-Masih.

<sup>165</sup> Telephone interview with Alison Mathie, 18/3/05.

Dr Mathie suggests that this reaction against colonialism is “the major reason why it has figured so little to date” in the development debate. Ironically, she recognizes that her West African experience taught her that the very institutions of which she was critical offered “continuity when NGOs flitted in and out.” and she came to view the philosophical wisdom from established religious persuasions as “extremely impressive and to be the missing link” in the development dilemma. Currently she identifies a “renewed interest in this subject,” and she expresses concern about the “narrowness” of various fundamentalisms, including Christian fundamentalism, which she considers “extremely worrying” and “makes people ripe for oppression.” Referring to religion, she emphasizes: “I’m much more comfortable with the philosophical fundamentals than I am with the institutional expressions.”<sup>166</sup>

Dr Jane Parpart, a gender specialist, admits that she used to “talk about religion as a negative thing, as reinforcing patriarchy,” but has since come to realize that the widespread participation of women in the churches precludes an overly cynical and one-dimensional perspective, raising as it does a significant question: “Why are so many women finding that the church provides them with a platform to speak and a place to develop and practice leadership skills?” She recalls a moment of epiphany at a Gender Institute when her neat theoretical structures were challenged by a counter-paradigm advanced by some women from the South, who declared: “We don’t see ourselves in your model -- there’s no culture, there’s no religion -- many of the things that shape and form our lives and are fundamental to our lives, that both impede and assist possibilities

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<sup>166</sup> Interview, Alison Mathie.

for development, are not in your model.” As a result of that experience, she cautions that “one has to be very, very careful when analyzing gender and religion.”<sup>167</sup>

- **Religion is too sensitive a subject for IDS study/teaching**

The most surprising and counter-intuitive finding of the survey – that religion was not too sensitive a subject for IDS study and teaching – was contradicted to a large degree in the interviews, where a significant consensus coalesced around the conclusion that religion was a particularly sensitive subject in the academy, and often best avoided in practice in actual teaching. Looking back over his research of a decade ago, Father Ryan identified a private sympathy, not necessarily expressed publicly, towards the spiritual dimension in development.<sup>168</sup> Perhaps a parallel exists in the survey findings between private perceptions and public practice.

A clear need was noted earlier for more professors to be trained in the field of religion and development, a fact that may explain why respondents to the survey did not consider, in theory at least, religion too sensitive for study and teaching. Few would deny that religion is a potentially sensitive subject. In a vivid metaphor, Dr Walter Soderlund asserts: “Religion is the thousand pound orangutan sitting in the La-z-Boy in the den, and family just sits around as if he weren’t there, hoping he’s going to behave himself and that’s really it. People do not really want to open that can of worms. They are just very, very skittish.”<sup>169</sup> Another comment reflects responses more generally:

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<sup>167</sup> Interview, Jane Parpart.

<sup>168</sup> Interview, William Ryan.

<sup>169</sup> Telephone interview with Walter Soderlund, 15/2/05.

I find it very difficult to talk about religion in the classroom. I'm not comfortable initiating a discussion on it. ... I think there's this fear that I have that students are going to associate me with a religious perspective and therefore either discredit me or feel that they can align themselves with me because of it. And so I do feel that it is definitely a sensitive topic and something that I personally have avoided discussing.

In explaining the discrepancy between survey and interview responses, Dr Rebecca Tiessen perhaps speaks for others when she comments: "I don't think it *should* be too sensitive a topic," but recognizes the personal sensitivity of such a subject and the potential disconnect that may therefore result between theory and practice in this area.<sup>170</sup> Casanova suggests that the revelation of personal religious beliefs in public is perceived to be "irreverent" and in "bad taste," exposing such sensitivity in a graphic metaphor: "like the unconstrained exposure of one's private bodily parts and emotions, religious confessions outside the strictly delimited religious sphere are considered not only a degradation of one's privacy but also an infringement upon the right to privacy of others."<sup>171</sup>

Peter Berger has urged that the spotlight of study in the sociology of religion be turned on the bastions of academic secularity. "Modern secularity is a much more puzzling phenomenon than all these religious explosions – if you will, the University of Chicago is a more interesting topic for the sociology of religion than the Islamic schools of Qom."<sup>172</sup> In his "Postscript" to Linda Woodhead's edited set of essays about his legacy, Berger declares that Eurosecularity is not the norm but: "On the contrary, in a cross-cultural perspective, it is the deviant case. As such, it must be mapped and explained. I would

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<sup>170</sup> Interview, Rebecca Tiessen.

<sup>171</sup> Casanova, Public Religions in the Modern World, 64.

<sup>172</sup> Berger The Desecularization of the World, 11-12.

argue that this is the most interesting topic for the sociology of religion today. It begins with the dawning suspicion that British intellectuals are more interesting than Iranian mullahs as objects of sociological research."<sup>173</sup> Fortunately Canadian academics escape Berger's critical gaze!

However, the depth of feelings that religion arouses is, on occasion, surprising. Such comments, uttered in an academic context, as: "I'd rather have a department of pornography than a department of religion at this university,"<sup>174</sup> and, "religion, spirituality and morality... were not just non-words, they were dirty words,"<sup>175</sup> may raise questions about academic integrity.

Rowlands points to political correctness as being a determining factor and points to the fear of legal and academic sanctions were religious controversy to erupt in the classroom.<sup>176</sup> Critical comments in respect to other religions are plainly inadmissible in the Canadian university classroom, and even if a religion (particularly other than Christian) were to adopt an anti-developmental stance, it would be courageous indeed for a Canadian academic to be outspoken in that area. Criticizing a religion's development stance is academically incorrect, as one professor made clear: "You can't say that here or you'd be hauled up in front of the president."

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<sup>173</sup> "Postscript" to Linda Woodhead, (Ed.), *Peter Berger and the Study of Religion*, 194.

<sup>174</sup> Paul Bowlby with Tom Faulkner, *Religious Studies in Atlantic Canada* 17.

<sup>175</sup> CASID-NSI, "White Paper" on International Development Studies in Canada, 21.

<sup>176</sup> Interview, Dane Rowlands.

Dr Stephen Brown articulates what may be a common feeling: “Our class rooms are multicultural [and] the last thing I want to have in my classroom is a debate on Palestine – I’m happy that they can debate it amongst themselves. but I don’t want to be the one dealing with that in my classroom.” Brown rejects the temptation to tone down his comments for fear of offending: “It would be wrong to say different things to a different audience – intellectually. Therefore, it is easier to stay away from these topics, best to avoid them.”<sup>177</sup> Dr Caesar Apentiik suggests that, in light of the diversity and complexity of the subject, religion should be broached only in general, theoretical and philosophical terms.<sup>178</sup>

Many of the interviewees expressed their difficulty in coming to terms with diversity in their multicultural and multifaith classrooms, and recounted their sensitivity in such situations. One interviewee candidly described a recent experience, when talking about the anti-developmental aspects of the caste system in India, as “walking on crushed glass.” He continues: “I felt myself tippie-toeing around the subject.” One professor expressed concern for his personal safety if he brought some subjects into the debate: “There is no way you can teach Islam and development and not look at its bad ways. There is no way you can look at religion objectively unless you talk about its bad and good aspects.”

Another challenge revolved around egalitarian treatment of the faith traditions, and a couple of professors suggested that they might be harder on their own traditions than

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<sup>177</sup> Interview, Stephen Brown.

<sup>178</sup> Interview, Caesar Apentiik.

imported ones. It proved easier to focus their critique on traditions closer to home, where outspoken comments were less likely to be misinterpreted. But the desire to be culturally sensitive masks a fear of the perils of emotional explosion if strong religious feelings are not controlled.

Dr John Cameron recognizes that deeper emotions may be engaged in such debates:

.. it fits into the very real, in some cases, fear of engaging with these issues which are very politically sensitive and emotionally sensitive to a lot of people, and go beyond the realm of academic rational detachment to the core of people's belief systems – and perhaps for that reason there's an unwillingness to engage in something that is potentially very controversial and from which students might have difficulty in detaching themselves emotionally.<sup>179</sup>

But the desire to keep religious emotions in check may be matched by a fear of transgressing the bounds of political propriety. A common consensus that academic or political correctness lay at the heart of the misgivings, because “development scholars tend to be more secular” and fear being perceived to be “critical of that that which is supposed to be beyond criticism.” This was not seen as a particularly Canadian proclivity, but rather a sentiment generally shared in western academia.

Dr Rowlands concludes that political correctness is the primary explanation, but highlights a typical, even residual, fear of “the other” at the heart of western society:

So it might be a very forceful political correctness that prevents people in North America from making those kinds of comments and a natural reluctance to do so given the kind of multicultural society we live in. Everyone's a bit more sensitive about what they say because you never know who somebody else is. Religion is

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<sup>179</sup> Interview, John Cameron.



far less visible in many instances here than it might be somewhere else -- people might be Muslim but might not have outward symbols.<sup>180</sup>

Linked to concerns about sanctions is undoubtedly a certain personal unease or private discomfort around the subject. As one IDS professor conceded: "Religion is too sensitive for me personally."

Clearly the subject is an uncomfortable one for many in the North. Nancy Hayter reflects that "there are some real contradictions in religion and I think so many people have a hard time reconciling it and maybe it's easier to keep it in a box... I can't think of any other issue that we do that to so successfully, to our own detriment." Highlighting the fact that the topic of religion is off limits for many people and "not usually touched upon in a social context," she speculates that one of the reasons that religion is not afforded space in the average IDS programme is that: "We have a hard time making sense of it ourselves."<sup>181</sup>

While a couple of informants accepted the fact that sensitivity might be one explanation for the lack of the emphasis on religion in IDS study and teaching, they didn't feel intimidated by the subject themselves. Dr Peter Arthur at Dalhousie explains that, as a result of his background, where religion was "part and parcel of my life," he felt he would be comfortable presenting various perspectives on the subject.<sup>182</sup> For Gerry Cameron, who teaches the introductory level IDS course at St Mary's University, religion is definitely not too sensitive a subject to discuss in the classroom. In fact he begins his

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<sup>180</sup> Interview, Dane Rowlands.

<sup>181</sup> Interview, Nancy Hayter.

<sup>182</sup> Interview, Peter Arthur.

course by using Denis Goulet's "pedagogical triangle."<sup>183</sup> which considers diagnosis, policy and values as essential in the development imperative. While students may be familiar with diagnosis ("What is the problem?") and policy ("What's to be done?"), the question of values ("Whose values?") proves more challenging. Cameron explains that the first question he asks his students in the very first class is where do their values come from? The responses lead back inevitably to the foundational scriptures of their family faiths. Cameron stresses that it is essential for students to be aware of their own values as well as the values of those whom they wish to help in the development process. He acknowledges that these values are "very much tied to religion," and continues, echoing Berger, "You ignore religion at your own peril." He concludes: "How can you teach development without understanding values?"<sup>184</sup>

- **Religion is assumed in the term "culture" in IDS teaching**

"Assumed, but not discussed." Perhaps a side comment on one of the surveys might be as revealing a comment as any. Amongst key informants, no dissenting voices countered the notion that religion is included in the overarching term "culture." Many respondents suggested that it was easier to talk about the subject in terms of "culture" rather than "religion." However, according to some authorities, culture is itself undervalued in the development discourse, in spite of continuing acknowledgement that it is an integral factor in development. Dr Stephen Brown claims: "The taboo about religion falls in a wider silence about culture."<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Denis Goulet, *Development Ethics: A Guide to Theory and Practice*. (London: Zed, 1995), 9.

<sup>184</sup> Interview, Gerry Cameron.

<sup>185</sup> Interview, Stephen Brown.

It is widely perceived that culture is a more acceptable term in academia than religion, which begs another question: if religion is such a dominant part of culture, why not call it religion? For, as Dr Walter Soderlund expresses it, “religion and language are the major markers of cultural divides.”<sup>186</sup> David Fletcher draws a parallel between religion and language: “as practitioners in the field we have to respect other people’s beliefs and cultures, so that’s something like the language that you might try to understand but it’s not something you try to change, engage with, analyze or work with. It’s accepted that they have a faith and mine, if I have one, is not relevant to what’s going on.”<sup>187</sup>

For Gerry Cameron, the subject may best be approached through a discussion of values, rather than culture.<sup>188</sup> But clearly most professors follow Dr Naqvi’s approach if they wish to introduce religion into the classroom: “I’ll tuck it under cultural values. I don’t think it’s a good enough substitute, but it’s often as close as we can get.”<sup>189</sup> Another substitute may be the term “spirituality.” As Dr Cathy Driscoll, the pioneer behind the Centre for Spirituality and the Workplace at St Mary’s University, admits, using the term “spirituality” may be “a way of neutralizing” the less acceptable term in the northern academy, “religion.”<sup>190</sup> Talking more of the latter term, Nancy Hayter reflects: “I think if you’re establishing that it is very important to people and if we are not giving it the level of importance that people in the south are giving it, then are we asserting our own view of it rather than addressing what’s really going on?”<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Interview, Walter Soderlund.

<sup>187</sup> Interview, David Fletcher.

<sup>188</sup> Interview, Gerry Cameron.

<sup>189</sup> Interview, Kimberley Naqvi.

<sup>190</sup> Personal interview with Cathy Driscoll, Halifax, 24/2/05.

<sup>191</sup> Interview, Nancy Hayter.

- **A scientific/materialistic bias exists in the academy.**

“Academics do tend to be secular-minded.”<sup>192</sup> Dr Walter Soderlund’s statement is typical. Most informants were willing to accept that the western academy was scientific in its orientation and positivistic in its methodology. This platform, it was widely acknowledged, left limited space for religious or spiritual viewpoints, as David Fletcher explains: “There’s something about faith and belief that falls outside the social sciences and if that’s the milieu we’re working in then you put that on hold... when you come into the academic setting it doesn’t fit so you’re forced to make that separation between the spiritual life and the rest of life.”<sup>193</sup>

Dr Ver Beek contends that religion is “still an unacceptable topic” as far as development academics are concerned, to the extent that “anybody who includes faith [in their analysis] is suspect.” Referring to the area of development studies, he points out that it “has become a science and one of the foundational assumptions in that science is that it’s areligious, that there is no God.” He suggests that this “cultural backwardness” is seen as affecting potential economic progress, which, in the estimation of development practitioners, “will slow down our process of doing development, so we might as well get rid of that as soon as possible.”<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Interview, Walter Soderlund.

<sup>193</sup> Interview, David Fletcher.

<sup>194</sup> Interview, Kurt Alan Ver Beek.

One professor indicates that this scientific bent is “a function of the way the modern university has been captured by this notion that the sciences and the arts are neutral academic disciplines,” and continues: “we have been trained all the way through university, and particularly in graduate school, to keep that other stuff [the spiritual dimension of life] to ourselves in a neutral objective kind of way.” Speaking from the perspective of a Ghanaian upbringing, Dr Arthur speculates as to the source of this dualistic disconnect:

Probably they [academics] say they are secular because they tend to rationalize everything from a so-called scientific perspective and for them science and religion do not mesh. Everything has to get some kind of a rational explanation and religion is, if I may call it, irrational. It’s based on the some kind of supernaturalism, what the ordinary mind cannot explain. It goes contrary to what science and the secular world generally seek to come to terms with.<sup>195</sup>

He underlines the awkward historical reality, acknowledged by Dr Dalton, that religion and academia have historically displayed “a very ambivalent relationship.”<sup>196</sup> Differences exist as to whether the relationship is improving or deteriorating, though Chris Smart, in responding to a question about why religion remains a very sensitive subject in the academy, commented:

I think it’s less sensitive now, but I don’t think it’s much of a puzzle: I think that some fairly traditional and entrenched forces are just there – it’s an old one – summed up I think by perhaps one person who on seeing the project<sup>197</sup> in its early days felt that we were trying to negate the gains of the [Enlightenment], that we were trying to push science off its place as a very productive intellectual activity and trying to bring back in its grossest form superstition and myth and so on, and that’s still, I think, there. There are scientists, who to be scientists, have to negate and deny anything to do with the immaterial. If it’s not material and it doesn’t render itself to mathematical equations, it’s just not worth spending their time on.

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<sup>195</sup> Interview, Peter Arthur.

<sup>196</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

<sup>197</sup> The IDRC’s Science, Religion and Development (SRD) project, as described in Harper, The Lab, The Temple and The Market.

So I think that's there and it will be there for a long time, and it's a pretty standard answer to the question you've raised.<sup>198</sup>

Dr Magi Abdul-Masih proved even more outspoken, critiquing the assumptions that development is neutral in character and universal in compass. She recalls a story that her father told her while in Egypt:

When the early missionaries went to the aborigines, they told them: "You can't steal!" The aborigine would say: "Why would I steal? The tree and the fruits that are there are for everyone." So the missionary has to introduce the language of individualism and privatization before he can teach him about stealing.

So Dr Abdul-Masih submits that when religious ethics are introduced, the worldview that fits them must also be introduced. Development assumptions which purport that interventions are neutral must also be examined: "We're only putting in a water pump, only building a hospital..." But Abdul-Masih claims that such assertions are "just not true...you are introducing a whole worldview... a worldview of materialism, a worldview of consumerism."<sup>199</sup>

- **A form of "secular fundamentalism" exists in the academy**

Few respondents would be drawn into an outright endorsement of Karen Armstrong's controversial assessment that: "There is also a form of secular fundamentalism, which opposes all forms of faith as belligerently as religious fundamentalists attack secularism."<sup>200</sup> However, a number expressed some form of support for the idea that a form of "secular fundamentalism" exists in the academy. To quote Dr Abdul-Masih:

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<sup>198</sup> Telephone interview with Chris Smart, 8/2/05.

<sup>199</sup> Interview, Magi Abdul-Masih.

<sup>200</sup> Karen Armstrong, "Resisting Modernity".

“Secularism becomes a religious tradition on its own.”<sup>201</sup> Some felt that this had been more evident in the past, as expressed in one comment referring to Karen Armstrong’s quote: “I think she’s correct, but we’re already getting past it.”

The personnel at World Vision might be less convinced of a change of mood in the academy, considering the general lack of attention by academia to such a major player on the Canadian development scene, reflected in the paradoxical reality that Canada’s heavyweight aid agency is regarded as a lightweight in the halls of academia. Henriette Thompson recognized that there is a need for more dialogue with the academy, to offset what might be perceived as a bias against her organization:

And maybe this is where the academics are still operating out of modern more than postmodern thinking where ...if they were to treat Christianity the way they supposedly think that they treat other world religions, they would soon -- if they were honest with themselves -- recognize that they are in fact operating in a discriminating fashion.....<sup>202</sup>

A number of academics might admit to such guilt. Some speculated that religious organizations, such as World Vision, provided easy targets for criticism. John Cameron reflects “I suspect that part of the reason why evangelical churches are subject to more criticism is that many North American academics come from a Protestant background,” and while academics would be unwilling to criticize indigenous religion, or Hinduism or Islam, they might feel they were “on safer ground” in criticizing Christianity.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Interview, Magi Abdul-Masih.

<sup>202</sup> Personal interview with Henriette Thompson, Mississauga, 30/11/04.

<sup>203</sup> Interview, John Cameron.

Thompson, perplexed as to lack of academic credit and reference afforded World Vision, acknowledges a need “to build in more reflection in our work, and one way of doing that is to engage the academy.” One innovative solution might to invite academics to view World Vision’s work on the ground, for example, in Tanzania: “I wonder if we should do with academics what we do with celebrities: take them on trips and show them... how indivisible faith and works are in a rural Tanzanian setting.”<sup>204</sup>

Doug Blackburn acknowledges that World Vision is not necessarily seen in academic circles as “progressive” or “cutting edge,” yet, “when you’re in an African country or Latin American country you’re always seeing this cutting edge, so we have a huge gap to fill, between what we actually do in the field and the perceptions of what we do amongst Canadians, and even more so as far as the Canadian academic elite.” He suggests that a certain ignorance of World Vision is still prevalent, as well as a disapproval of the very successful fundraising model, involving sponsorship, that has worked so well for World Vision.<sup>205</sup>

Henriette Thompson situates the disconnect between academia and World Vision in “the broader tensions between academic and practitioner... one of the great divides of development.”<sup>206</sup> World Vision views itself as action oriented rather than theory driven, suggesting that its action on the ground leaves little time for the generation of literature. Explaining why he wrote a book about generosity, the President of World Vision Canada, Dave Toycen, captures the prevailing World Vision ethos: “Why am I writing a book

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<sup>204</sup> Interview, Henriette Thompson.

<sup>205</sup> Personal interview with Doug Blackburn, Mississauga, 30/11/04.

<sup>206</sup> Interview, Henriette Thompson.



about generosity? In a world of grinding poverty and humanitarian crisis, people of action are needed – people who have had enough of words... In many cases words themselves have betrayed those who suffer.”<sup>207</sup>

World Vision is unapologetic about its core Christian values – for without Christianity it would not be World Vision. Doug Blackburn reiterates: “when you’re in the field, if you’re not attuned to the religiosity of the people you’re missing a huge [aspect of] how they relate to the world around them.”<sup>208</sup>

Asked about the perception that academia is somehow prejudiced against faith based organizations, Dr David Black speaks for other respondents when he admits that “we have not studied the work that they do and the way they become a critical part in civil society nearly as carefully as we should have.” He reflects that faith based development organizations “are always amongst the most prominent first responders and also some of the most enduring actors, who stick it out through the tough times,” and concludes: “I do think we’ve missed something really, really important in the way we study the field.” we have not studied the work that they do and the way they become a critical part in civil society nearly as carefully as we should have.” He reflects that faith based development organizations “are always amongst the most prominent first responders and also some of the most enduring actors, who stick it out through the tough times,” and concludes: “[I] do think we’ve missed something really, really important in the way we study the field.” He suggests that “underlying motivations” lie at the heart of the tension between many

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<sup>207</sup> Dave Toyce, *The Power of Generosity: How to Transform Yourself and Your World*, (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2004), xiii.

<sup>208</sup> Interview, Doug Blackburn.

academics, who, while they can “acknowledge and appreciate the work that gets done.” find deeply discomforting the proselytizing and salvation dimensions of such organizations, which many of the social scientists often viscerally reject, but which are foundational to the work of many faith based organizations. He also contrasts the tension, even paradox, between the “genuine solidarity, care and equality...the solidaristic impulse” and the “more manipulative top-down exploitative dimensions,” which embody the poles evident in development work.<sup>209</sup>

David Fletcher adds a cautionary postscript about the dangers of stereotyping: “Out there in society there’s such strong stereotyping about people of faith in the South, and it’s really challenging I think to tackle that stuff because when you’re sensitive and you work to break down other stereotypes, you have to break down your own as well.”<sup>210</sup>

Ideological rigidity may exist within the academy, as Dr Parpart frankly admits:

I would say 90% of the professoriate sees their belief system, their assumptions about how the world works, as, I would call it, a religion, and they are basically more interested in defending their correctness, than in pushing themselves to any kind of new thinking. And so the majority of academics think at some point when they’re pushed as graduate students and then they cling desperately to that assumption all their careers and try to browbeat students into believing it. I reject that.<sup>211</sup>

Providing a counterpoint, Father Ryan concedes that “secular fundamentalism” is still around, but warns of a potentially greater danger: “neoliberal fundamentalism.” “This is where the problem is,” according to Father Ryan, who identifies an “ideology of

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<sup>209</sup> Interview, David Black.

<sup>210</sup> Interview, David Fletcher.

<sup>211</sup> Interview, Jane Parpart.

marketism,” where “everything is assigned a measured value.” where “nothing exists beyond matter” and where everything “can be reached by the market.”<sup>212</sup>

- **Religion is a private and personal matter**

In spite of the imprecision in the survey question, the sense that religion occupies a private space in the western academic universe was profound in the interviews. The impression that the academy is based on a fundamental dichotomy between sacred and profane, between private internalization and public expression was strong, in spite of an acceptance that religion is just as valid a subject for enquiry as any other. But the private sensitivities with regard to religion no doubt overflow into the study of religion at an institutional level. Certainly, the introduction of religion can be a complicating factor in academic life.

Dr Woo stresses the differing natures of occidental and oriental mindsets, by contrasting the respective dualistic and non-dualistic approaches to all of life.<sup>213</sup> Dr Abdul-Masih notes that gender and the environment are mainline subjects in development teaching, while religion is not, “but religion *is* their worldview... the issue of separating religion from everything else is a Western fallacy, it is not Eastern or African or Asian... [their] worldview is already a religious one.” She illustrates the impossibility in other thought-systems of separating the religious from the secular, and considers the effects of

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<sup>212</sup> Interview, William Ryan.

<sup>213</sup> Interview, Terry Woo.

separating religion from daily life to be “denigrating the religion and the worldview of the other.”<sup>214</sup>

Dr Rebecca Tiessen, a specialist on gender issues, makes an interesting comparison between gender and religion. She notes, in response to a question as to why religion is underrepresented in the development literature, the “division between private and public, that religion is a personal matter, it’s a spiritual matter that belongs in the private world.” She then draws a parallel with gender and development in an earlier time when “gender issues and women’s rights were a private matter and would not be discussed at a political level.” She considers that “religion is still in that domain. We don’t dare touch it because it’s too sacred, it’s too private when, in fact, religion is very much a public and political activity.”<sup>215</sup>

Asked to look into the future, and predict if “religion and development” might one day become as central as “gender and development” in the development debate, Tiessen responds:

Well it *should*, it makes sense that it would do that but I can see how gender was able to make that transition because there’s solidarity around gender and you don’t find solidarity around religion. Because there are more divisions I think it further reduces any potential for solidarity. How do you put something on the agenda if people aren’t fighting to put it on the agenda? Religion matters to development, but who’s making that rallying cry?<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Interview, Magi Abdul-Masih.

<sup>215</sup> Interview, Rebecca Tiessen.

<sup>216</sup> Interview, Rebecca Tiessen.

The question arises as to the capacity of southern peoples to force the agenda of the northern academy.

Katherine Marshall also draws a parallel between the acceptance of gender and religion in development discourse:

I've worked for many years on gender issues, which have had a very hard introduction in development thinking and now I've been working on issues of religion and what I find is that there is quite a parallel in that people do tend to approach these issues in a very personal and often quite emotional way, for reasons that are understandable -- they feel strongly about them, they affect them personally....and I think that the same is very much true with religion, it's quite striking that people's attitude to it does, at least in the first several layers, tend to be quite affected by their personal experience, either if it's very positive or very negative. What's hard is to get people to do what were arguing that they should do: to look at it pretty objectively, in other words, it's not about what you believe -- that has nothing to do with it, or at least that's what we'd like to say that it has nothing to do with it -- but it has to do with the trends and tendencies and how poor people deal with it.

Marshall remains cautiously optimistic about the further incorporation of religion into the development debate.<sup>217</sup>

A postscript: only seven of the respondents volunteered their religious orientation in the course of the interview, thereby maintaining the impression that, at least in Canada, religion is a private and personal matter. David Fletcher proved the most notable exception, recounting his experience in the field, where religion and spiritual practice are "so core to people's everyday lives, where this spiritual practice affects everybody in every mode of life, from the poor peasant on the farm to the Minister of Health for the State... it's very, very strong in the way people live their lives." He contrasts such a way of life with that in the North: "That's not true here in Canada.... people's spiritual life or

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<sup>217</sup> Interview, Katherine Marshall.

religious life is quite private, and within academia it's a no-go area. you don't talk about it." Admitting to a personal "spirituality," he jokes it is like "coming out of the closet," and suggests it may well prove harder than declaring one's sexual orientation.<sup>218</sup> One professor, jokingly suggesting that the lack of focus on religion in development was a consequence of the fact that "all of us are heathens," admitted in her case: "I'm an atheist."

- **Development is "the new religion of the West"**

To respond to the statement, "Development is 'the new religion of the West,'" with precision, much may be contingent upon the operational definition of religion used and an understanding of the context of the phrase. While the surveys equivocally discounted the notion that development is "the new religion of the West," the interviewees were more sympathetic to the concept, once some background was given to Rist's original phrase and some expansion of the concept proffered by the interviewer. The following comment is perhaps typical: "So I wouldn't agree that development is the new religion of the West, but I do think that there are elements of the way development is talked about, there are elements of the way that development is practiced that mirror religious norms in days gone by and today too."

Dr Apentiik concedes that the "parallels are very close," between the religious impulse to save people to enjoy good things in heaven and the vision of development that seeks to save people so they can enjoy good things on earth.<sup>219</sup> Dr Black comments regarding the

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<sup>218</sup> Interview, David Fletcher.

<sup>219</sup> Interview, Caesar Apentiik.

concept: “I think it’s fascinating -- it’s very paradoxical -- I think it’s tremendously powerful in the classroom.” He identifies an intellectual renunciation of religion, based in part on a rejection of the “pathological impact of some religious traditions,” but also cautions that students may be denying the degree to which they are products of essentially religious backgrounds.<sup>220</sup> Speaking as an historian, Jane Parpart suggests that the idea of a secular intervention in the world may go back a lot further in time, when many people, not overly religious in nature, embarked on a project in the colonial era to improve the world. She suggests that the concept is “deeply embedded in the progressivist notion of the Enlightenment.”<sup>221</sup>

Parallels between religious terminology and development praxis are apparent. Today, IDS programmes, rather than seminaries a century or more ago, may be preparing “missionaries” to serve in far-flung corners of the world. The World Bank frequently talks in terms of “mission,” while volumes, such as Cowen and Shenton’s Doctrines of Development, are not shy to use religious terminology. One respondent declared: “The World Bank are not just missionaries, they’re messianic.” Another reflected on the similarities between the utopian, and materialist, vision of Marxism and the idealistic, and communitarian, mission of The Acts of the Apostles.

Anecdotal evidence volunteered by one interviewee suggested that a disproportionate number of his department colleagues could point to parents or grandparents with missionary backgrounds. One professor noted a “humanitarian impulse that has religious

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<sup>220</sup> Interview, David Black.

<sup>221</sup> Interview, Jane Parpart.

overtones” which motivated him to become involved in the world of development. Another recognized: “Thinking back to myself and why I wanted to study development, I think there’s a desire to apply knowledge to the world ... in development you can actually imagine yourself *doing* something.” A number of faculty members recognized the desire to promote social justice as their prime motivating factor for teaching international development, a motivation they could also recognize in IDS students, eager to “change the world.”

Dr Cameron remarked that many development workers “are also explicitly secular and yet are more motivated by quasi-religious concerns than the average member of the Canadian population.”<sup>222</sup> Staff at World Vision noted and praised many “good people out there... who just give their all to this work,” although wondered what inner resources might sustain their secular counterparts in the midst of the disasters, atrocities and discouragements that often accompany development work. Dr Arthur expresses some reservations with the concept of development as the “new religion of the West,” because, as he points out: “invariably some people are in it for themselves.”<sup>223</sup>

But, as Dr Woo claims, the edifice of development is built upon a presupposition that something is wrong in the world: poverty, defined in a western sense. The Judaic notion of *tikkun olam* (the repair of the world) is somehow deceptive. The world therefore needs to be fixed – a deduction that gets to the heart of what inspires the development mandate. She suggests that young people, “brought up in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, even if

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<sup>222</sup> Interview, John Cameron.

<sup>223</sup> Interview, Peter Arthur.



they're not religious, will have a real sense of going out, doing good, making changes."<sup>224</sup>

A "residual memory" of a religious past may be stronger in the "secular" West than many people admit. One professor admitted that a "religious memory" was a fact in their development experience.

Dr Dalton makes an important distinction between the religions of the West, built on missionary zeal, and those of the East and the South. Commenting on the notion that development is the "new religion of the West," she explains: "Certainly it has tones of a Christian missionary religion – not traditional religions for which development and progress are not part of the vocabulary." She notes that the idea of building a new world is a very western idea to those for whom the world is already set and whose challenge is not so much how to change it, but rather how to fit into it. She also cautions that it is primarily a Christian idea, noting that Judaism was never a missionary religion, but rather centred on an ethnic group. Thus, the Christian construction of the Kingdom of God becomes conflated with building the secular kingdom of development.<sup>225</sup>

Dr Abdul-Masih, a fierce critic of western-style development, sees the developmental mission as profoundly western and suggests that developmentalism is "Orientalism all over again," and that in a denigration of the worldview of "the other", the western worldview is pronounced superior.<sup>226</sup> Abdul-Masih echoes the words of Deborah Eade, who maintains that "international development agencies and their national counterparts

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<sup>224</sup> Interview, Terry Woo.

<sup>225</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

<sup>226</sup> Interview, Magi Abdul-Masih.

regard themselves as culturally neutral, if not superior."<sup>227</sup> But, as Dr Apentiik notes:

"We don't interrogate our own location -- human beings are never neutral."<sup>228</sup> Dr Vander

Zaag adds: "for development to be really respectful of the cultures it's working in the

South we have to stop pretending development is a neutral kind of enterprise. It's not."<sup>229</sup>

Abdul-Masih acknowledges her debt to Edward Said, who is worth quoting at length on the subject of western perceptions of neutrality:

Above all, "we" cannot go on pretending that "we" live in a world of our own; certainly, as Americans, our government is deployed literally all over the globe—militarily, politically, economically. So why do we suppose that what we say and do is neutral, when in fact it is full of consequences for the rest of the human race? In our encounters with other cultures and religions, therefore, it would seem that the best way to proceed is not to think like governments or armies or corporations but rather to remember and act on the individual experiences that really shape our lives and those of others. To think humanistically and concretely rather than formulaically and abstractly, it is always best to read literature capable of dispelling the ideological fogs that so often obscure people from each other. Avoid the trots and the manuals, give a wide berth to security experts and formulators of the us-versus-them dogma, and, above all, look with the deepest suspicion on anyone who wants to tell you the real truth about Islam and terrorism, fundamentalism, militancy, fanaticism, etc. You'd have heard it all before, anyway, and even if you hadn't, you could predict its claims. Why not look for the expression of different kinds of human experience instead, and leave those great non-subjects to the experts, their think tanks, government departments, and policy intellectuals, who get us into one unsuccessful and wasteful war after the other?<sup>230</sup>

"The expression of different kinds of human experience," such as the religious dimension of life, is discounted in the intellectual western climate, which, far from solving the problems of the developing world have actually exacerbated them. Abdul-Masih suggests

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<sup>227</sup> Deborah Eade, "Preface", *Development and Culture*, <<http://www.developmentinpractice.org/readers/Culture/preface.htm>> (21/2/05).

<sup>228</sup> Interview, Caesar Apentiik.

<sup>229</sup> Telephone interview with Ray Vander Zaag, 9/3/05.

<sup>230</sup> Edward Said, "Impossible Histories: Why the Many Islams Cannot be Simplified.", *Harper's*, 305, no. 1826 (July 2002), 74.

that “this is the dialectic of the Enlightenment” and that any solution must involve an attempt “to uncover our own ideologies and why we’re doing development.” She is unapologetic in stating that: “Development is the missionary strategy, but consumerism and the western worldview is the religion.”<sup>231</sup> Father Ryan declares that: “Progress is the ideology.”<sup>232</sup> Gerry Cameron asserts: “Capitalism has just washed over the whole domain of development and it is closely associated with Christian values.”<sup>233</sup> For Dr Stephen Brown, development represents “a continuity of missionary work, but it’s also a continuity of colonialism.”<sup>234</sup> David Fletcher considers that:

the most productive development work happens at that interface between people of different cultures and I think when that works people see each other as individuals with different kinds of cultural baggage or academic baggage or psychological baggage that they come with, but they are able to find some kind of a meeting place and do something together cooperatively. I think the worst development is the kind that in some ways is the “religion of development,” dropping in as savior, missions etc.<sup>235</sup>

For Fletcher, cross-cultural interactions that lead to an appreciation of values provide the context for authentic development.

Dr Ver Beek does not see that the concept of “the new religion of the West” should be exclusive of an explicitly religious component, although he notes that in practice “one of the main pieces of ‘the new religion of the West’ is that it is athiestic or areligious and that is a very important part of what it means to do development.” From a Christian perspective, he suggests that models are often lacking as far as the successful integration

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<sup>231</sup> Interview, Magi Abdul-Masih.

<sup>232</sup> Interview, William Ryan.

<sup>233</sup> Interview, Gerry Cameron.

<sup>234</sup> Interview, Stephen Brown.

<sup>235</sup> Interview, David Fletcher.

of faith and development.<sup>236</sup> Also speaking from a perspective of faith, Juan Tellez is concerned if the “new religion of the West” was to become an orthodoxy, and concludes: “I would be very nervous if that were true.”<sup>237</sup>

- **Studying religion is assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11**

Few would deny that the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 in the United States have not had some impact in highlighting religion as a significant variable in the geo-political landscape. Dr Dalton’s comments may be typical when she reflects that religion is “starting to be taken more seriously and I’m sure 9/11 has a lot to say about that.”<sup>238</sup> Dr Tiessen speculates: “I wonder if 9/11 just made it easier for people to talk about religion.”<sup>239</sup> Articulating a common sentiment, Dr Dalton states that some forms of religion can exhibit “dangerous expressions. Therefore, we should know about them.”<sup>240</sup>

Dr Black notes the impact of the rise of the religious right in the United States and suggests that the influence of evangelical Christianity on American foreign policy is worrying, and provides “one really good reason to bring the subject out into the open...and to be much more transparent about the varying spiritual and cultural explanations that underpin the work of religious based organizations.”<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Interview, Kurt Alan Ver Beek.

<sup>237</sup> Personal interview with Juan Tellez, Halifax, 14/3/05.

<sup>238</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

<sup>239</sup> Interview, Rebecca Tiessen.

<sup>240</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

<sup>241</sup> Interview, David Black.

The traumatic events of 9/11 and their effect on the geo-political vision of the United States, may not be the sole reason for a change in emphasis, for clearly some change was already evident, as in the World Bank affording a greater space and profile for religion in its policies, projects and programming.

Chris Smart, the now retired Director of the Special Initiatives Program at IDRC, acknowledges that: "In the last five years there has been an inclusiveness that has allowed faith issues to be discussed" in scholastic research, noting that it takes some years for research to be picked up at the classroom level. Referring to the IDRC, Chris Smart recognizes that only a decade ago "science would have ruled and there would never been any leeway for questions of faith and spirit to enter into a discussion," but now he gives examples of several IDRC programme staff, who are actively encouraging, at the community level, research partnerships which allow space for religious involvement. Smart attributes this increasing acceptance of religion in the development equation to two main trends: 1) the fact that economics, the predominant discipline in IDS, is increasingly being challenged as an exact science and 2) the "Clash of Civilizations" thesis, which has allowed religious difference to come to the fore and has forced scholars to pay focused attention to the issue. At the same time, he suggests that scholars in the south are welcoming a more open approach with respect to religion, a subject, which in spite of its pervasiveness in the South, they had previously had to deny "in order to play the game" while attempting to access the funding requirements of northern international organizations "governed by our rules and by the rules of science."<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Interview, Chris Smart.

Smart looks back to the time when IDRC embarked on the SRD project, which finally, after some five years of research, resulted in the publication. The Lab, The Temple and the Market: Reflections at the Intersection of Science, Religion and Development. Smart reflects on the nature and risks of the project: “When we came to the project, it had been high risk and definitely not mainstream,” but by the time it came to a conclusion the subject “was no longer high risk and was moving towards the mainstream.”<sup>243</sup> Smart’s comments concur with those of Dr Dalton, who suggests that behind the scenes there may be more interest in the theme than is openly expressed, as some scholars await religion’s further acceptance as a valid topic for development enquiry. She considers the latest inclusionary initiative of DFID to be potentially significant in putting religion more firmly on the development map.<sup>244</sup>

Father Ryan notes the rising profile of religion in the ten years since he undertook a series of 188 interviews with development experts around the world, which resulted in the IDRC publication, Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue,<sup>245</sup> and led to the initiative to which Chris Smart refers. Ryan attributes this to a number of factors. Ecology has allowed a space for the subject of spirituality to be brought out into the open, as a number of environmental approaches recognize an underlying spiritual dimension. Traumatic events, such as 9/11 and even the recent tsunami, have caused people to focus more on the role of religion at times of change and uncertainty, and have also seen bridges being built between moderates in different faiths.

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<sup>243</sup> Interview, Chris Smart.

<sup>244</sup> Interview, Anne-Marie Dalton.

<sup>245</sup> William Ryan, Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue. (Ottawa: IDRC, 1995).

He suggests that the groundswell in development attention towards the alleviation of poverty finally led to the realization that the problems of poverty cannot be solved from the outside, but the poor must be “agents of change themselves.” He also identifies another trend, in the context of globalization: the migration of essentially religious people around the world.<sup>246</sup> But as far as the incorporation of religion into development thinking, Father Ryan observes that the academy often lags behind: “it is highly unlikely that the interest is incarnated in available curricula at this time. I hope I am wrong, but in most of the academe circles and government circles I move, Canadians are still not calling things by their names where religion and faith are concerned.”<sup>247</sup>

In discussing his role in the establishment of a Center for Religion and Culture in Windsor, Dr Soderlund suggests that the acceptance of religion in academia depends to a great extent on individual departments, which may approach the subject anywhere along a continuum from an outrightly negative to relatively open stance.<sup>248</sup> A recent proposal at Dalhousie University to suspend or downgrade its small Department of Comparative Religion was not supported by an IDS Department that recognized religion to be more relevant today than ever before, allowing for students to complete double majors in IDS and Comparative Religion.<sup>249</sup>

Recent evidence suggests that the topic of religion and development is assuming a greater profile in university enquiry. As mentioned in Chapter 5, a Special Issue of the *CJDS*, edited by Dr Farokh Afshar and scheduled for publication in June 2005, will explore the

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<sup>246</sup> Interview, William Ryan.

<sup>247</sup> Personal correspondence with William Ryan, 30/9/04.

<sup>248</sup> Interview, Walter Soderlund.

<sup>249</sup> Interview, Rebecca Tiessen.

theme of “Development from Within? Discourse, Theory and Practice Emerging from the Cultures of Southern Countries and Indigenous Peoples.” Dr Afshar recently gave the keynote address at the 2nd Annual Atlantic Regional Graduate Student Conference, entitled “Conceptualizing International Development for the New Millennium,” in which he appealed for spirituality to be afforded a place in the development debate.<sup>250</sup> The “InSight Conference” (the 2nd Annual Canadian National Students' Conference in International Development Studies) will bring together undergraduate students from across Canada to discuss issues of current interest in development. This year’s conference “will emphasize ‘disengagements’ in development and areas of under-emphasis in international development studies.”<sup>251</sup> Listed first as one of six theme areas around which the conference will focus is the area of “faith, religion, and spirituality.”<sup>252</sup>

## 8.2.2 An Interview with Juan Tellez

This analysis of discussions with key informants ends with an extended account of an interview,<sup>253</sup> which provides a unique perspective from both North and South on International Development Studies in Canada. Juan Tellez, currently President of the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID), provides an intriguing case study of someone with roots in the South, who has made a significant

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<sup>250</sup> Farokh Afshar, Keynote Address, 2nd Annual Atlantic Regional Graduate Student Conference, “Conceptualizing International Development for the New Millennium”, St Mary’s University, Halifax, 5/3/05.

<sup>251</sup> InSight 2005, <[insight.conference@sympatico.ca](mailto:insight.conference@sympatico.ca)> (8/3/05).

<sup>252</sup> InSight 2005, <[insight.conference@sympatico.ca](mailto:insight.conference@sympatico.ca)> (8/3/05).

<sup>253</sup> Personal interview with Juan Tellez, Halifax, 14/3/05. The interview with Juan Tellez proved to be the longest of all the interviews – special thanks to him for graciously making available so much time in his busy schedule.



impact on the Canadian development scene. Tellez, a Quechua Indian, is well known in community development circles both in Nova Scotia, where he lives, and back in his native Bolivia.

Recounting his teenage years when he was determined to serve his people, Tellez initially considered the priesthood as the obvious path to fulfilling his dream. However, his relationship with a parish priest, sympathetic to the Liberation Theology movement sweeping the continent, led him into community development work. Working with the local peasants in transforming the quinoa trade, he found development work transformational: “By doing development work at the community level, we wanted to transform the reality, we wanted to build the kingdom of God.” He recounts how they were attracted to the analytical tools of historical materialism to identify how the economy worked and how the infrastructure and structures of society needed to be changed. He became involved in movements calling for an end to military dictatorship, but, as he explains, democracy and fair trading patterns were not the ultimate goals. “We were never satisfied with what we had accomplished.” for at heart, his mission was a “matter of faith.” He repeats: “We wanted to go beyond and to build the kingdom of God and the new earth.”

He acknowledges his debt to Liberation Theology and the popular church, recognizing that “a lot of people who were involved in the popular social movements of the day were people of faith living their faith through their commitment to alleviate the oppressive

social and political structures.” Their Christianity was defined by “commitment plus faith.”

In coming to the North, he found that prominent Canadian development scholars were using a similar analytical framework to examine the structures and conditions in Latin America, but “what was lacking in their analysis was the aspect of faith and religion.” He recalls that they had a “narrow and more secular view, thinking that having faith and religion is a matter of the Middle Ages, nothing to do with contemporary existence.” He recognizes, therefore, a “shortcoming in their analysis,” which, when it does examine the role of religion, looks at the church in terms of institutions and personalities, and not in terms of the human experience. This leaves a “hole” as far as understanding the role that faith has played in a continent, where “most of the NGOs and grassroots organizations are related to the Church in one way or another.”

Considering the role of religion in the North, he suggests it still functions at the subconscious level and identifies a nostalgia for a religious dimension of life, which is “more publicly celebrated in the South than the North, where religion is part of the private sphere,” and repressed by the prevalent rational perspective on life. However, he points to exceptions, even in the North, where the deep spiritual roots of black and native communities are expressed more openly in daily life. Amongst such groups, he has included prayer and spiritual readings in his seminars on community development. Even amidst more secular groups, he recounts that listeners have not been antagonistic when he has introduced faith perspectives into the development discussion. He looks forward to a

time when some of his responsibilities will lighten and allow him to reflect on his development experiences with “eyes of faith.”

Tellez recognizes his debt to a development analysis, rooted in historical materialism, but also expresses a desire to go beyond mere intellectual engagement. He is open about his faith: “I’m not shy to talk about my faith and the underlying reasons behind what I’m doing.” He suggests that most people appreciate the introduction of a spiritual dimension, concluding: “Too bad they don’t have the courage and opportunity to express themselves.”

Contrasting the lack of contributions in the area of religion and development with the detailed and incisive analysis on gender, environment and the political economy, Tellez encourages this researcher to: “expand our horizons and extend our analysis.” appealing that a space for matters of faith can be opened in the debate, so that people can break out of their “privatized shells” and become more *human* beings. He contends that not enough scholars are paying attention to the area of this present study, which he considers to be a “very rich contribution” to the field. He ends by suggesting that the introduction of a faith dimension into the debate “can inspire and motivate and make the work of many people more meaningful.” Tellez talks much of hope and dreams, and often concludes his presentations with a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt: “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

## 8.3 Conclusion

Findings and conclusions from the surveys and interviews can be summarized as follows:

- Religion/ spirituality/ faith could be covered more thoroughly in the programmes, publications and curricula of Canadian academic institutions.
- At a time when trends demonstrate the rise of pluralism and the decline of secularization, religion is relevant to the study of IDS.
- Religion is generally assumed and included in the term “culture” in IDS teaching.
- The notion that religion is too sensitive a subject for IDS study and teaching, is accepted in theory (normatively), if not in practice (positively).
- A scientific/materialistic bias, sometimes verging on a form of “secular fundamentalism,” exists in the academy.
- A majority of respondents and interviewees consider themselves “undecided” as to whether religion is generally a more positive or negative influence on development. Clearly, religion is recognized to have historically influenced development both positively and negatively.
- The concept that development is “the new religion of the West,” despite some resonance, is generally discounted.
- The study of religion is assuming greater importance in IDS, as a more nuanced, contextualized and holistic approach to human development becomes more widely accepted.

This chapter, divided into two halves, employed two research instruments, both essentially self-selected: a survey of 185 IDS professors across Canada and 33 semi-structured interviews with authorities considered to be key informants in the subject area, in order to shed light on and expand analysis surrounding the research findings. While the interpretation of the surveys might be debatable, the interviews allowed for more nuanced

opinion and helped to clarify a number of issues at the heart of the Thesis. They also served to reinforce the primary conclusion of the empirical research of the previous two chapters, that the subject of religion in the South is not covered adequately in the IDS programmes of the northern academy. These findings lead to some recommendations and reflections being advanced in the following, and concluding, chapter.

## CHAPTER NINE:

### LIKE SHIPS PASSING IN THE DAY

This concluding chapter outlines the structure of the research, summarizes the research findings, makes recommendations and reflects on the current state of the relationship between religion and development.

#### 9.1 Structure and Summary

The paradox at the heart of this thesis is stated in the introductory sentence:

Although matters of faith, religion and spirituality are central to the lives of millions of people in the global South, and many faith based organizations (FBOs) are actively involved in development, few northern academics in the field of international development make explicit reference to religion's role in development, and, if they do, the subject is often subsumed under another category, such as culture.<sup>1</sup>

In order to shed light on that overshadowing paradox and its implications for academia in Canada, the thesis began by briefly stating the problem and situating the debate before proceeding to outline the logistical and methodological architecture of the thesis in Chapter One. Building on this initial statement of the problem, Chapter Two comprehensively surveyed the literature – illustrating the peripheral role that religion occupies in what is a prodigious literature surrounding development.

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<sup>1</sup> See page 1.

Chapter Three traced the broad trends that led to the divorce between Religion and Science. The contributions of the great sociologists shed light on this historical divide, which can be traced back at least to the Enlightenment, resulting in a bifurcation in the western world between religion and science. It might be argued that that this division is still reflected in IDS programmes, which are thoroughly secular in outlook. Recent trends within development -- moves from economic approaches towards more holistic conceptualizations and participatory methodologies -- have created space for the inclusion of culture in the debate, and led to some rapprochement between approaches based on science and religion, but the influence of religion on development possibilities remained largely unexplored.

Chapters Four and Five explained how religion is a factor in development at both the institutional and individual levels. Far from being peripheral to the development imperative, the great faiths have consistently preached service to fellow humans as part of spiritual obligation and faith communities have been intimately involved in development initiatives. Such good intentions have not always translated into positive developmental outcomes, for religions can undeniably cause division and fuel conflict. At the individual level, as detailed in Chapter Five, individuals have charted their lives in accordance with the worldviews and cosmologies that pervade, even saturate, their lives. These two chapters emphasize that religion cannot be divorced from any study of international development.

The heart of the research component of the thesis followed. Chapter Six investigated to what extent references to religion appear in Canada's foremost development journal and principal development report, and Chapter Seven provided an exhaustive overview of IDS university courses across Canada.

Preliminary indications which suggested that the relationship between religion and development had been underemphasized, and the role of religion in the development enterprise undervalued by academicians, were substantiated by the findings of this research. A study of references to religion, spirituality and faith over the twenty five year history of the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)* suggests that only ten articles (representing 1.2% of article titles and 2% per cent of abstracts) out of a total of 599 make any reference to religion in its broadest definition. Of those, only three articles directly address the relationship between religion and development, while the remaining seven remain peripheral to the analysis. The study of the *CJDS* clearly reveals the predominance of economics in the Canadian view of International Development Studies, and emphasizes the peripherality of religion in the analysis.

Similar conclusions resulted from the research outlined in Chapter Seven. Of 2,684 courses offered by Canadian IDS Departments (including courses cross-listed with Religious Studies Departments), 84 (3.13%) mention religion in their titles, and 213 (7.94%) in course descriptions. However, upon closer examination, only a handful of courses directly analyze the relationship between religion and development. While the areas of Gender and Development and the Environment and Development were relatively common, only one course paired Religion and Development in its title. The courses that



did include religious content in their titles tended to be cross-listed with Religious Studies departments, and often represented basic courses in the latter departments, focusing on various foundational aspects of the great faiths without analyzing the impact of religion upon development. The conclusion that religion is perceived to be peripheral to the development project or process was hard to escape.

Chapter Eight detailed results from a survey sent out to 185 university professors – a significant proportion of the IDS professoriate across the country. The survey attempted to uncover some preliminary explanations for the apparent reluctance of the academic community to acknowledge the place that religion occupies in the lives of so many of the intended beneficiaries of development, and its potential role – for good or ill – in development interventions. While not conclusive in many areas, the surveys disclosed a multiplicity of suggestions, leads, and opinions, which proved helpful as the basis for a series of semi-structured interviews with key informants within the field. The opinions expressed by these informants formed the heart of the chapter, reinforcing again the central paradox which overshadowed the entire thesis: why the prevalence of religion in the South is not acknowledged by IDS Departments, the supposed experts on southern life and livelihoods in the northern academy. The interviews also served to illuminate an obstinate research problematic which fails to recognize the place or potential of religion in the development imperative, and ignores the transformation of religion, at least in popular political perception, from epiphenomenon to phenomenon. Juan Tellez, the current President of the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID), appealed to this researcher to “expand our horizons and extend our analysis.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Interview, Juan Tellez, section 9.2.2.

This sentiment encapsulates the purpose of this thesis, which has attempted to shed light on the interface between religion and international development in the programmes, publications and curricula of Canadian academic institutions.

As Katherine Marshall had intimated, the role of religious actors, institutions, and programmes in the development enterprise is indeed “one of the more significant ‘blind spots’ in past development practice.”<sup>3</sup> and she is correct in suggesting that the role of religion in development – for good or ill – has been insufficiently explored. As a result of the research described herein, a clearer picture can be formed regarding religion’s place in development and pedagogy. The thesis answered the central research question: To what extent is religion acknowledged in the Canadian academic community as a significant factor in the success or failure of development policies, projects and interventions?

Overall the findings of the entire study (*CJDS* and *CDR* volumes, IDS courses, surveys, interviews) confirm that the religious dimension of life, so pervasive in the global South, is not integrated into IDS research and teaching at Canadian academic institutions in a significant way. Attention is needed to fill the significant pedagogical and research gaps with regard to religion, lest this “integral aspect of how Southern people understand the world, make decisions, and take action,”<sup>4</sup> continues to be ignored. The religious dimension of life should be recognized as a prominent aspect of southern life, especially amongst the poor, and the resulting development implications explored. Such

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<sup>3</sup> Marshall, “Development and Religion”, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Ver Beek, “Spirituality”, 31.

investigations lie beyond the remit of this present thesis, as are explorations into potential models for incorporating a religious dimension into development.

## 9.2 Recommendations

Clearly the religious dimension of global life needs to be afforded a sharper focus in the programmes, publications and curricula of IDS departments at Canadian academic institutions. It is hoped that this thesis will be a step along the way towards a greater acceptance of the inclusion of the religious dimension into development thinking, for it is vital for a secular academic North to be more aware of the role of faith in the global South, in order to advance prospects for holistic development.

A few recommendations are advanced. Positivistic biases in academia need to be acknowledged, before more space can be freed for religion to be treated seriously in academic theory and practice. It is hoped that more student and faculty research will be devoted towards an area currently understudied, and that the resulting research on the subject will lead to pedagogical concentration, which will eventually allow religion a place in the development mainstream. To this end, academics need to be pressured to be more aware of the contributions of RNGOs and FBOs in the field and to incorporate their activity more fully into academic analyses.

Academics also need to be more aware of southern realities, as Robert Chambers emphasizes. Vastly influential in the metamorphosis of development practice from northern imposition to southern participation, Chambers has appealed for a reversal of the

roles of powerful “uppers” and vulnerable “lowers” in society. His influential 1983 book, Rural Development,<sup>5</sup> includes a subtitle (with biblical connotations) that survives in a more recent (1997) volume, Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last. Although Chambers does not focus explicitly on the religious side of southern life, he does talk at length about southern ideas of values and satisfaction, which may not correspond to generally accepted northern ideas of well-being: “Unlike wealth, well-being is open to the whole range of human experience, social, mental and spiritual as well as material.”<sup>6</sup> Roles must be reversed -- and Chambers acknowledges that it is harder to put the first last than the last first – in order to allow for a greater appreciation of southern reality. Quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson: “People only see what they are prepared to see,” he argues that “what we do is more active: we create what we want to see; and the more powerful we are, the more we do this, and the more it is done for us. At the cost of their reality, and of pluralism, diversity and truth, others reflect back our reality back to us.”<sup>7</sup> Therefore, Chambers asks some penetrating questions:

Whose knowledge counts?  
Whose values?  
Whose criteria and preferences?  
Whose appraisal, analysis and planning?  
Whose action?  
Whose monitoring and evaluation?  
Whose learning?  
Whose empowerment?

Whose *reality* counts?

“Ours” or “Theirs”?<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Chambers, Rural Development: Putting the First Last. (London: Longman, 1983).

<sup>6</sup> Robert Chambers, Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last. (London: Intermediate Technology, 1997), 9-10. He also notes that “Well-being means different things in different places to different people at different times.” (178).

<sup>7</sup> Chambers, Whose Reality Counts? 100.

<sup>8</sup> Chambers, Whose Reality Counts? 101.

Chambers indirectly issues an incisive challenge to northern academics to consider the religious reality of southern life. The findings of this thesis suggest that a vast gulf still exists between academic assumption and southern reality, but it may also be surmised that the field of development studies has become more open in the last few years to exploring some of the issues of religion and spirituality at the frontiers of development.

John Rapley summarizes:

At the margins of development thought, but increasingly prevalent on the streets of the world's political and financial capitals at international gatherings, are those voices calling for a rethinking of what development has come to mean. One third-world critique has been that while it is materially wealthy, the first world is spiritually poor.<sup>9</sup>

Such critiques penetrate the paradox at the heart of all the dominant definitions of development of the past half century, and call into question whether the terms "developing" and "developed" obscure more than they reveal. Even one of the most popular definitions of development -- "a process of enlarging people's choices"<sup>10</sup> -- may find itself flawed in practical application. A developed world, awash in choice, may go contrary to Henry David Thoreau's celebrated reflection at Walden Pond: "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to let alone."<sup>11</sup> The expansion of choices and proliferation of options in western society has not noticeably increased happiness levels, as the World Values Survey demonstrates.<sup>12</sup> Poverty in terms of time may have become a characteristic of northern life.<sup>13</sup> One of the more interesting among the alternative models of development has been the experiment of the Himalayan

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<sup>9</sup> John Rapley, *Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World*, Second Edition, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 178.

<sup>10</sup> UNDP, <<http://www.undp.org.sa/HD.htm>> (6/4/05).

<sup>11</sup> Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, (New York: Classics Club/W.J. Black, 1942).

<sup>12</sup> World Values Survey, <<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>> (6/4/05).

<sup>13</sup> See Wolfgang Sachs, *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in Environment and Development*, (London and New York: Zed, 1999), 207-212.

Kingdom of Bhutan, which has eschewed the usual indicators of development as measured by GNP or GDP, and has declared instead a national development policy of Gross National Happiness (GNH).<sup>14</sup> Such alternative pathways to global wellbeing,<sup>15</sup> while hardly mainstream, may encourage a move towards a redefinition of development itself.

For too long, development has been examined in terms of material, or economic, well-being, when the vast majority of human beings seek their ontological needs higher up on Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs"<sup>16</sup>: security, love, esteem, self-actualization, or in its most recent reformulation, transcendence. Even if the quantitative problems of physical poverty are resolved, as long as such qualitative needs remain unmet, social relationships and political structures can be fragile indeed. As Pierre Beemans recognizes: "freedom from poverty will not bring about human fulfillment: that requires a different kind of liberation."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *The Economist*, "The Pursuit of Happiness", (18/1204), 55-57. See also the proceedings of the First International Seminar on Operationalization of Gross National Happiness in Karma Ura and Karma Galay, (Eds.) Gross National Happiness and Development, (Thimpu: The Centre for Bhutan Studies, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> The title of the Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness, "Rethinking Development: Local Pathways to Global Wellbeing". St Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, 20-24/6/05.

<sup>16</sup> Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, (New York: Harper, 1954).

<sup>17</sup> Pierre Beemans, "Foreword", in William Ryan, Culture, Spirituality and Economic Development: Opening a Dialogue, (Ottawa: IDRC, 1995). Available at IDRC.

<[http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-30632-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-30632-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)> (6/4/05).

### 9.3 Conclusion: Ships Passing in the Day

Katherine Marshall's proposition that dialogue between religion and development resembles "ships passing in the night."<sup>18</sup> may now perhaps be reconceptualized as "ships passing in the day." The task that remains is to guide both ships to a home port, where both crews can come to a fuller understanding of each other's mutual contributions to alleviating the scourge of poverty and advancing the potential of humanity. In T. S. Eliot's words,

The end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.<sup>19</sup>

It is to be hoped that the rich traditions of the great faiths will eventually inspire a reexamination and reformulation of development itself, to allow for a more holistic definition of poverty and wealth in a world of not only underdevelopment but also overdevelopment, thus liberating rich and poor to explore the bounds of human possibility, informed by faith and science. religion and development. M. P. Cowen and R. W. Shenton conclude their volume, Doctrines of Development, by suggesting that "the true alternative to these doctrines, that of development itself, awaits all of us."<sup>20</sup> The vision of a fully developed world, where human beings do not choose or need to live by bread alone, still inspires and yet awaits.

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<sup>18</sup> Marshall, "Development and Religion".

<sup>19</sup> T.S. Eliot, "Little Gidding" (No. 4 of Four Quartets).

<sup>20</sup> Cowen and Shenton, Doctrines of Development, 476.





Appendix 1: Dalhousie/ MUST Survey (actual size)

45 Second Spiritual Survey

Faculty/Program \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

1. How important is the spiritual in your life?  
(1 most important, 10 not important at all) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you believe in God? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Unsure \_\_\_

3. Do you have a religious background? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

4. If yes above, what background do you have?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Who do you believe Jesus is?

Just a man \_\_\_ Son of God \_\_\_

Spiritual leader \_\_\_ Prophet \_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. In your opinion, is religion generally a  
positive or negative influence on "development"??  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. In your opinion, has Christianity been generally  
positive or negative for people in "developing"  
countries \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2: Results of Dalhousie/ MUST Survey

	<u>Dalhousie</u>	<u>MUST</u>
1. How important is the spiritual in your life? (1 most important, 10 not important at all) (Dal – 162 responses ; MUST – 101 responses)	<b>Average 6.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>
2. Do you believe in God?	<b>Yes 74 (43%)</b> <b>No 35 (21%)</b> <b>Unsure 62 (36%)</b>	<b>139 (98%)</b> <b>0</b> <b>3 (2%)</b>
3. Do you have a religious background?	<b>Yes 112 (65%)</b> <b>No 59 (34%)</b> <b>Unsure 1</b>	<b>136 (97%)</b> <b>4 (3%)</b> <b>0</b>
4. <i>If yes above, what background do you have?</i>		
<i>Christianity</i>	<b>98 (55%)</b>	<b>114 (94%)</b>
<i>Islam</i>	<b>1 (0.5%)</b>	<b>5 (4%)</b>
<i>Traditional</i>	<b>0</b>	<b>2 (2%)</b>
<i>Jewish</i>	<b>10 (5.5%)</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Other</i>	<b>5 (3%)</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Undeclared</i>	<b>65 (36%)</b>	<b>0</b>
5. Who do you believe Jesus is?		
Just a man	<b>37 (24%)</b>	<b>3 (2%)</b>
Son of God	<b>51 (33%)</b>	<b>123 (88%)</b>
Spiritual leader	<b>58 (37%)</b>	<b>13 (9%)</b>
Prophet	<b>15 (10%)</b>	<b>14 (10%)</b>
Other	<b>20 (13%)</b>	<b>20 (14%)</b>
6. In your opinion, is religion generally a positive or negative influence on “development”?	<b>Positive 58 (36%)</b> <b>Negative 80 (50%)</b> <b>Both 22 (14%)</b>	<b>123 (88%)</b> <b>8 (6%)</b> <b>9 (6%)</b>
7. In your opinion, has Christianity been generally positive or negative for people in “developing” countries?	<b>Positive 44 (28%)</b> <b>Negative 96 (62%)</b> <b>Both 15 (10%)</b>	<b>112 (80%)</b> <b>16 (11%)</b> <b>12 (9%)</b>

### Appendix 3: Survey of IDS Departments

#### SURVEY of IDS DEPARTMENTS in CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

#### **TITLE:** THE INTERFACE BETWEEN RELIGION AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROGRAMMES, PUBLICATIONS AND CURRICULA OF CANADIAN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

**THE STUDY:** Although religion/ spirituality/ faith is central to the lives of millions of people in the global south, and many faith based organizations are actively involved in development, few northern academics make explicit reference to religion's role in development. In Kurt Alan Ver Beek's words, the analysis of spirituality is "a development taboo," yet, paradoxically, as Gilbert Rist avers, development may be "the new religion of the West." The general aim of this study is to shed light on how Canadian academic institutions perceive the impact of religion/ spirituality/ faith in international development initiatives.

**THE SURVEY:** A study of references to religion/ spirituality/ faith over the 25 year history of the *Canadian Journal of Development Studies (CJDS)* suggests that only about 1% of article titles and 2% per cent of abstracts mention the subject in its broadest definition. Of around 2,700 courses offered by IDS Departments across Canada (including courses cross-listed with Religious Studies Departments), some 3% mention religion in their titles, and 8% in course descriptions. However, upon closer examination, only a handful of courses directly analyze the relationship between religion and development.

The survey seeks to uncover some preliminary explanations for the apparent reluctance of the academic community to acknowledge the place that religion occupies in the lives of so many development "targets" and its potential role – for good or ill – in development interventions. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations of the study will be disseminated in the *CJDS*, or similar journal.

**DEFINITIONS:** It is understood that the term "religion" (as well as "development") may be challenging to define. For the purposes of this survey, religion/ spirituality/ faith is considered in its broadest sense.<sup>21</sup>

Please return the questionnaire in the stamped addressed envelope provided to:  
**Owen Willis, 5845 St Margaret's Bay Rd, Head of St Margaret's Bay, Nova Scotia,  
B3Z 2E3 Telephone: 902-826-1197 Fax: 902-826-7748**  
**Email [owillis@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:owillis@ns.sympatico.ca) Your participation is greatly appreciated.**  
**Thank you!**

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<sup>21</sup> Religion, sometimes used interchangeably with faith, is commonly defined as belief concerning the supernatural, sacred, or divine, and the practices and institutions associated with such belief. In its broadest sense some have defined it as the sum total of answers given to explain humankind's relationship with the universe. (Wikipedia)

**SURVEY of IDS DEPARTMENTS in CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES**  
**The INTERFACE BETWEEN RELIGION and INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**in the PROGRAMMES, PUBLICATIONS and CURRICULA**  
**of CANADIAN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS**

*Please rate the following statements according to:*

*1. Strongly Disagree    2. Disagree    3. Undecided    4. Agree    5. Strongly Agree*

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. The role of religion is covered insufficiently in IDS courses      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B. Religion is irrelevant to the study of IDS                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C. Trends towards pluralism make religious awareness important        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D. Trends towards secularization make studying religion unnecessary   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| E. Religion has generally been a negative influence on development    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F. Religion is too sensitive a subject for IDS study/teaching         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| G. Religion is assumed in the term "culture" in IDS teaching          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| H. A scientific/materialistic bias exists in the academy              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I. A form of "secular fundamentalism" exists in the academy           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| J. Religion is a private and personal matter                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| K. Development is "the new religion of the West"                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| L. Studying religion is assuming greater importance in IDS since 9/11 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments.....  
 .....  
 .....

*I would greatly value and welcome any further elaboration on any of the above topics.  
 Please add any further comments on reverse, or on separate sheet(s).*

*Would you be willing to be interviewed as part of this project? If so, please fill in the following details and return to me:*

*Name.....*

*Email.....*

*Phone.....*

*Thank you!*

#### Appendix 4: IDS Departments, Survey Distribution

Augustana Faculty	6
Carleton University	12
Huron University College	5
McGill University	9
Menno Simons College	9
Queen's University	10
St Francis Xavier University	10
Trinity Western University	2
Trent University	15
University of Calgary	9
University of Guelph	14
University of New Brunswick	6
University of Ottawa	15
University of Saskatchewan	7
University of Toronto	17
University of Northern British Columbia	5
University of Windsor	11
Wilfrid Laurier University	7
York University	16
Total	185

## Appendix 5: Interviews

### **1: Dr Stephen Brown**

Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Development Studies  
University of Ottawa.  
17/11/04

### **2: Doug Blackburn**

Manager, Global Education  
World Vision Canada  
30/11/04

### **3: Henriette Thompson**

Director, Advocacy and Education  
Public Affairs  
World Vision Canada  
30/11/04

### **4: Michael Weickert**

Program Manager  
Emergency Response & Disaster Mitigation  
International & Canadian Programs  
World Vision Canada  
Instructor at Humber College  
30/11/04

### **5: Dr Terry Woo**

Assistant Professor and Acting Chair, Department of Comparative Religion  
Dalhousie University  
14/12/04

### **6: Dr Anne-Marie Dalton**

Professor of Religious Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies  
St Mary's University  
15/12/04

### **7: Dr John Cameron**

Assistant Professor, International Development Studies  
Dalhousie University  
22/12/04

### **8: Dr Magi Abdul-Masih**

Acting Chair, Department of Religious Studies  
Saint Mary's University  
11/1/05

**9: Susan Thomson**

Doctoral fellow – Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University  
Former UN Human Rights lawyer in Rwanda  
27/1/05

**10: Dr Dane Rowlands (phone)**

Associate Director and Associate Professor  
The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs  
Carleton University  
4/2/05

**11: Dr Kimberley Naqvi (phone)**

Assistant Professor of Geography  
University of Saskatchewan  
4/2/05

**12: Chris Smart (phone)**

Former Director, Special Initiatives Project, IDRC  
8/2/05

**13: Dr Walter Soderlund (phone)**

Professor Emeritus, Department of Political Science  
University of Windsor  
15/2/05

**14: Dr Farokh Afshar (phone)**

Associate Professor of International Development Planning  
School of Environmental Design & Rural Development  
University of Guelph  
15/2/05

**15: Dr Rebecca Tiessen**

Assistant Professor, International Development Studies  
Dalhousie University  
17/2/05

**16: Nancy B. Hayter**

Assistant Director, Lester Pearson International  
Dalhousie University  
23/2/05

**17: Dr Caesar Apentiik**

Assistant Professor, International Development Studies  
Dalhousie University  
23/2/05



**18: Dr Cathy Driscoll**

Associate Professor, Sobey School of Business  
Centre for Spirituality and the Workplace  
Saint Mary's University  
24/2/05

**19: Gerry Cameron**

Assistant Professor of International Development Studies  
St Mary's University  
24/2/05

**20: Dr Peter Arthur**

Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Dalhousie University  
28/2/05

**21: David Fletcher**

Consultant  
Former Program Manager, Save the Children  
PhD candidate, Dalhousie University  
28/2/05

**22: Marcella LaFever**

Sessional Instructor, University of Calgary  
PhD Candidate, University of New Mexico  
9/3/05

**23: Dr Ray Vander Zaag**

Assistant Professor of International Development Studies  
Menno Simons College/ Canadian Mennonite University  
9/3/05

**24: Dr Kurt Alan Ver Beek**

Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Director of Honduras Program  
Calvin College  
10/3/05

**25: Juan Tellez**

President, Canadian Association for the Study of International Development  
Director, Atlantic Community Economic Development Institute  
Adjunct Professor, International Development Studies  
St Mary's University.  
14/3/05

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**26: Katherine Marshall (phone)**

Director and Counselor to the President  
Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics  
World Bank, Washington D.C.  
17/3/05

**27: Molly den Heyer**

Consultant  
PhD candidate, Dalhousie University  
17/3/05

**28: Dr Alison Mathie (phone)**

Senior Program Staff, Coady International Institute  
St. Francis Xavier University  
18/3/05

**29: Dr David Black**

Chair, International Development Studies  
Associate Professor of Political Science  
Dalhousie University  
23/3/05

**30: Keith Olson (phone)**

Consultant and retired Senior Program Officer  
CIDA  
29/3/05

**31: Father William Ryan, S. J. (phone)**

PhD Economics, Harvard University  
Special Advisor to IDRC and CIDA  
Coordinator, Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice  
1/4/05

**32: Dr Jane Parr**

Past President of the Study of International Development  
Lester B. Pearson Centre for International Development Studies  
Professor of International Development Studies  
Dalhousie University  
4/4/05

**33. A**

Vice President  
Title Page  
15/4/05

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*Title Page*  
*1-7*  
*28-126*  
*127-256*  
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