

Abstracts

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Cultural Conflicts from Intra- and Interstate Perspectives

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The connection between culture (measured as linguistic, religious and cultural fractionalization) and both domestic and international conflict is scrutinized for a full sample of countries between 1950 and 2005. Drawing a theoretical divide between a conflict's cause and its issue we ask (a) when does culture foster conflict and (b) when does culture itself, in the form of the protagonists' identity, become the issue in a conflict. Regarding the first question, results indicate a nonlinear effect: a medium degree of linguistic fractionalization raises the conflict probability. A similar pattern can be observed for religious fractionalization, but it is less robust. Regarding the second question, a subsample of conflicts is considered, in which language, religion or historically derived identities play an important role giving the conflict a cultural cast (cultural conflicts). Although these conflicts clearly show an increased level of violence, statistical analysis yields little indications for a differing causal structure.

Johannes Marx

Is There a Hard Core of IR?

A Philosophy of Science Perspective on IR-Theory

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Usually, in textbooks written for students, a variety of theories explaining the functioning of international relations can be found. However, the same books neither show how these theories are related to one another nor which one is to be applied in what kind of situation. This article seeks to show that the relationship between at least some of the different theories is not competitive. They do not exclude each other. Instead, it will be argued that the different theories can be understood as varieties of the same research program. The author suggests that these varieties only differ from each other with regard to their assumptions about the structure of international relations and the effects caused by this structure while sharing the same hard core. Therefore, these theories of international relations can be considered as contextualized specifications of a general model of international relations.

Karsten Lehmann

Interdependence between Religious Communities and International Politics

Remarks from a Religious Studies Perspective on Concepts of Religion in Political Science

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This paper deals with different concepts of religion occurring in political science debates about religion in international relations. From a cultural studies perspective on religion, the paper highlights the following two aspects of this debate in particular: (a) Two distinct concepts of religion are used more or less in parallel. (b) Furthermore, the paper argues that specific religious groups are frequently treated like black boxes. In contrast to these notions of religion and religious communities, the author introduces a concept of religion that draws attention to multidirectional interdependences between religious groups and political settings. On the basis of a case study on the human rights debate in the World Council of Churches (WCC), the author argues in favor of an interdisciplinary approach: On the one hand, religious studies scholars should increase their cooperation with political scientists in order to analyze the role of religion in international relations. On the other hand, political scientists should incorporate the findings and basic concepts of religious studies in their research on interdependences between religion and politics.

Claudia Baumgart-Ochse

Faith-Based Civil Society Actors and the Opportunity Structure of International Relations

A Reply to Karsten Lehmann

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The article critically reviews Karsten Lehmann's reading of the debate on religion's role in International Relations. Contrary to Lehman, it is argued that IR by and large remains a secularist discipline. Moreover, his distinction between micro- and macro-perspectives of religion in IR scholarship lacks the analytical clarity needed to conceptualize the interdependence of religion and politics. Alternatively, his empirical example of human rights advocacy by the World Council of Churches could serve as an example for a broader research endeavour on transnational religious activism. Borrowing from social movement theory, research should focus on how and to what effect a rapidly growing population of faith-based actors constructs collective action frames, mobilizes resources and uses the opportunity structure of global governance.

Mariano Barbato

Post-Secular International Relations

A Reply to Karsten Lehmann

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Karsten Lehmann's contribution to the interdependence between religion and politics for an interdisciplinary discourse addresses important issues from the perspective of religious studies. When looking deeper into the political science debate, one can, however, observe that in the constructivist writings – only briefly mentioned by Lehmann – a far more differentiated understanding of religion exists than the one Lehmann postulates for International Relations in general. Therefore, by focussing on these contributions, the first two sections of my response are trying to put the interdisciplinary debate within IR on a more solid foundation. On this basis, and by drawing on Jürgen Habermas, the third section points towards an alternative approach for interdisciplinary discourse. Motivated by analytical and normative interests alike, the remaining sections of my reply attempt to correct secularist shortcomings in the Habermasian sense into the direction of post-secular International Relations.

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd

Debates within a Single Church: Secularism and IR Theory

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»How does religion relate to international relations theory?« is a question circulating in International Relations. This essay considers the possibility that there is no universal definition of religion. This means that, in an important sense, the preceding question makes no sense. If the categories of religion and politics are the products of complex cultural, historical, religious and political negotiations, then what we need to ask is how do these categories become authoritative in particular times and places, and with what political consequences? To define the secular and the religious is a project with political implications. Religion participates with political authority in ever-changing formations that fail to align neatly with secular modernist assumptions. This essay takes a closer look at these assumptions.

Jonathan Fox/Nukhet A. Sandal

Toward Integrating Religion into International Relations Theory

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This study discusses the multiple potential influences of religion on international relations. These include religious legitimacy, religious worldviews, non-state religious actors including religious institutions, local religious issues crossing borders, transnational religious movements, religious terror, and international issues which overlap with religion such as human rights, the status of women, proselytizing, family plan-

ning and stem-cell research. We then begin the process of integrating an understanding of these issues into a major international relations theory: Classical Realism. We find that Classical Realism has room for religion in its role as an explanatory theory, but is not as accepting of religion in its policy prescription role.