practical matters

Religious Peacebuilding: The Exotic, the Good, and the Theatrical

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Abstract

Most of what takes place in the field of religious peacebuilding has been grounded, implicitly or explicitly, in Scott Appleby's *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (2000) and his phenomenological approach to religion. Because of its focus on the potentially constructive role of religion in transforming conflicts, the "ambivalence of the sacred" thesis with its emphasis on the internal pluralities of religious traditions confronts power and values non-reductionist accounts of religion and conflict. It is this insight that sparked the industry of religious peacebuilding and carved out space for a theological and hermeneutical focus on peace-promoting motifs and resources within religious traditions. However, I argue that this insight is misapplied if the preoccupation with theological retrieval and appropriation precludes a consideration of how historical contexts and interpretations of events from multiple perspectives might, and perhaps even should, challenge and transform religious traditions and political ideologies. Cultivating the field of religious peacebuilding as a rigorous academic reflection therefore would entail self-reflexivity concerning the field's reliance on secularist presumptions about religion, which facilitate complicity with religion's relevance to cultural and systemic injustices, the presumption of the unidirectionality of religion and historical change, and the disconnect from broader conversations about religion in public life.

1

I.   *Introduction*

Numerous works and commentaries in the post-9/11 era begin with an urgent articulation of the need to theorize about religion and violence. A preoccupation with the relationship between religion and violence also has given rise to a concomitant booming of religious peacebuilding. Most of what takes place in the field of religious peacebuilding has been grounded, implicitly or explicitly, in Scott Appleby's *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* and his phenomenological approach to religion.[1] Drawing on theologian Rudolf Otto's view of religion in *The Idea of the Holy* as the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, Appleby argues that religion, or rather the experience of the sacred (the *mysterium tremendum* or *numen*), can generate ambivalent phenomena or responses, ranging from violent to nonviolent militancy.[2] This point of departure further is linked to a non-reductive view of religious traditions as internally plural and multifaceted. Illuminating the special proclivity of religious actors to engage in nonviolent militancy in the pursuit of change and justice underscores the potential constructive and instrumental roles of religion, religious leaders, and institutions, in particular, in processes of peacebuilding. The sociological assumptions undergirding this approach are that religious leaders may have certain credibility within the society and/or religious institutions could provide ready networks to propagate attitudinal shifts (in the same manner that they supposedly are available for the recruitment of radical violent warriors).

Because of its focus on the potentially constructive role of religion in transforming conflicts, the "ambivalence of the sacred" thesis also confronts reductionist accounts such as Bernard Lewis's and Samuel Huntington's "the Clash of Civilizations" argument. While the "clash" thesis does take religion seriously on its own terms as a causal factor in international relations and global politics, it renders religion as an ahistorical, monolithic, and unchanging *essence*.[3] This lens produces an overly simplistic, belligerent, skewed, and deterministic picture of religion and conflict in the post-Cold War era. This picture is an appealing one precisely because of its simplicity; it consequently functions as a self-fulfilling prophecy with both Islamists and xenophobic Western commentators, rendering their objectives in terms of ineradicable and irreconcilable differences between civilizations.[4] The "ambivalence of the sacred" thesis, on the other hand, is grounded in recognition of the internal pluralities of religious traditions, consequently articulating a non-essentialist and non-reductionist constructive and contextually sensitive framework. It is this insight that sparked the industry of religious peacebuilding and carved out space for a theological and hermeneutical focus on peace-promoting motifs and resources within religious traditions.

However, this insight is misapplied if the preoccupation with theological retrieval and appropriation precludes a consideration of how historical contexts and interpretations of events from multiple perspectives might, and perhaps even should, challenge and transform religious traditions and political ideologies.[5] Religious peacebuilding amounts to more than the inverse image of the Huntingtonian frame, and so does the "ambivalence of the sacred," with its often overlooked

emphasis on fallibility and context—an emphasis conceptually grounded in the aforementioned critical distinction between *numen* and phenomena. Rethinking religious peacebuilding, therefore, will necessitate moving beyond a simplistic and unreflective application of the idea that a supposedly "authentic" religion (one that is not perverted by violent "alien" motifs) is and can do good. Such a simplistic formulation gives rise to the same kind of essentialism and ahistoricity that characterize the "clash of civilizations." Likewise, with its inattentiveness to the task of discursive critique, religious peacebuilding is not always in tune with the broader objectives of peacebuilding.

This article provides an overview of the various trends and trajectories of religious peacebuilding. The trends include theological excavations of "good" religion (to combat "bad" or "perverted" religion and to imagine reconciliatory ethics), the role of religion in the theatrics and processes of peacebuilding, the spirituality and inspiration of peace practitioners, the instrumentality of religious leaders and networks in diplomacy and in shifting societal attitudes, and the exoticization of religious peacebuilders by the "industry" component of the field. To be academically rigorous, religious peacebuilding needs to move beyond the exotic, the theatric, and the good and the kinds of limitations they impose on the analysis of religion, conflict, and peacebuilding. I begin with a brief mapping of the field of religious peacebuilding and continue by challenging its presuppositions and agendas primarily with respect to questions arising from structural and cultural violence and broad discursive formations. I refer to this challenge as the "justice dilemma."

II.   *Mapping the Field*

The dominant themes in religious peacebuilding include the ethnographic study of Interfaith Dialogues (IFD), the retrieval of peace-promoting motifs from within the resources of individual religious traditions, the instrumental role of "religious networks" in the dynamics of conflict and peacebuilding, and, more broadly, the role of "faith diplomacy."

I refer to this area of research and activism as the *conflict transformation* approach. This thread of scholarship provides an inductive theory about praxis as well as a focus on the retrieval of theological resources for peacebuilding. The conflict transformation approach, generally, explores the relevance of culture and religion in processes of conflict transformation as they pertain to those who are both directly and indirectly connected to the specific landscapes of the conflict. There are currents within this thread that are thoroughly instrumentalist, asking how is it possible to capitalize on religious networks to further peace and development agendas.[6] Other currents are more theological in that they represent the intimate interlinking between peacebuilding and religious vocations. In what follows, I divide my discussion of this approach into "the theatrical," "the inspirational," and "the theological."

The Theatrical

On the level of praxis, one way in which religion is relevant to questions of peacebuilding is in providing a specific model or technique for conflict transformation. The works of Marc Gopin and Lisa Schirch represent two notable examples of this approach. Gopin has been instrumental in integrating religion into the field of conflict resolution. He focuses on the role of religion in emotional training, interpersonal relations and encounters, respect and appreciation of mourning processes, forgiveness, and honor—all constitutive of meaningful peacebuilding.[7] Schirch captures the ritualistic elements of religious practice as a framework for designing and analyzing the possibility of constructive change. She explicitly deploys the lens of ritual theory in order to outline the "best approaches" for and effectiveness of the actual practice of peacebuilding. Her work on rituals in peacebuilding signals a focus on the theatrics of peacebuilding. The theatrical thread illuminates the practice of peacebuilding as a highly ritualistic engagement, one that optimally might produce liminal spaces and transformative moments when adversaries or enemies move beyond reified interpretations of their respective identities. Reaching a certain degree of receptivity to liminal spaces often resonates with and draws upon religious motifs and symbols. Hence, the theatrical mode that instrumentalizes religion is never too far removed from an intricate sensitivity to religious and cultural memories and narratives as well as to interfaith theological and cultural exchanges and hermeneutics.[8]

The Spiritual/Inspirational

The focus on the particular qualities and cultural sensitivity, creativity, and moral imagination of the peace practitioner has occupied significant space in the literature that connects religion to peacebuilding practitioners. Religion interrelates with conflict transformation through three primary models, which are referred to by Appleby as "crisis mobilization," "saturation," and "interventionist."[9] Triggered by exigencies, crisis mobilization emerges spontaneously but fails to routinize (to use the Weberian term) the charisma of leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. or Gandhi and thus falls short of substantially transforming social and religious institutions in the post-crisis era. The saturation model denotes precisely that—saturation with some degree of permanence of inter- and intra-religious mechanisms for conflict transformation. While this model does focus on the long haul, its success deeply depends on a strong civil society, democratic traditions, and institutional frameworks and thus is unlikely to materialize on its own in contexts devastated by destruction. Therefore, the "interventionist" model, with its emphasis on the instrumental role of external actors in facilitating the indigenous emergence of a saturation model, is deemed the most successful in offering long-term processes of reform and in cultivating, through educational and other initiative-empowering mechanisms, what scholar-practitioner John Paul Lederach calls "constituencies of peace."[10] This focus on the interventionist model unsurprisingly brings to the

fore an introspection of the motivations and guiding principles of interventions.

The interrelation between the saturation and the interventionist models sparked a preoccupation with indigenous leaders as well as with the morality and religiosity of "interventionist" peacebuilders. Some works look at the role of spiritual and religious formation as motivating and inspirational background. To this extent, these works are anecdotal and their proliferation and systematization could and do offer insights concerning spirituality and peacebuilding across different cultural and religious contexts. They often emphasize the prophetic function of religion, the resources that enable courageous individuals to speak truth to power while in the midst of fire, and the significance of self-scrutiny and, at times, uncritical celebration of the interventionist/practitioner's own religious and cultural trappings.[11]

Two key authors and practitioners who highlight the (obvious) relevance of culture and religion to peacebuilding processes are Kevin Avruch and John Paul Lederach.[12] Peacebuilding must be a contextually sensitive enterprise, one that is self-conscious about the cultural biases and baggage that the peace practitioner carries on her back as well as the cultural specificity of the contexts of conflict. "Getting to yes," without a complex comprehension of on-the-ground perspectives, memories, and dreams, has no traction beyond the thin accomplishment of getting some people (male elites, mainly) to agree to terminate direct forms of violence. A move from the "episodes" to the "epicenters" of conflict, the guiding principle of Lederach's approach to conflict transformation, requires thick familiarity with and immersion in the languages, memories, and meanings embedded on the ground.[13] Other works, as indicated above, engage in an explicitly theological hermeneutics in order to locate peace-promoting motifs; sometimes these motifs resonate in the background as part of the spiritual formation and sense of vocation of the peace practitioner and activist. Here the well-known case of the Catholic Community of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique usually is cited. Sometimes those motifs come to the surface through capitalizing on religious networks, and this is when religious peacebuilding connects with the subfield of religion and development. This subfield further explores the implications and often even the inevitability of capitalizing on and collaborating with religious institutional networks and leaderships in the process of providing aid and supporting local efforts for developing infrastructures to cultivate programs to promote better quality of life. In the development business, to ignore the role of religious networks in advancing and implementing objectives amounts to blindness about the realities on the ground.

THEOLOGIES OF PEACEBUILDING AND THE INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS NETWORKS

As in the pursuit of sustainable development, religious peacebuilding that focuses on cultivating saturation through intervention and empowerment operates on various fronts. Sant'Egidio was indeed instrumental in mediating peace agreements. Religious leaders, however, also could become influential in national reconciliation (Cambodian Buddhists[14]) and in transnational religious reform (the Gülen movement). It is the synergy among these various fronts that is deemed most

conducive for sustainable peacebuilding.[15] The focus on religion and techniques of peacebuilding, therefore, probes into how theology relates to the moral and spiritual formation of the peacemaker. An example of this subgenre includes the work of Lederach, who reflected on how his Mennonite background sculpted his attitudes in the field (in conflict zones) and his sense of vocation. Lederach's co-edited volume with Cynthia Sampson,[16] *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding*, attempts to reflect not only the connections between a Mennonite background and the commitment to peacebuilding, but also the ways that changing circumstances propelled internal processes of change, whereby pacifism no longer could translate into isolationism, but rather into active and meaningful peaceful activism toward eliminating direct forms of violence and transforming conflicts. Interlaced with this peace activism are Christian theological concepts such as love, justice, forgiveness, mercy, and hope.

The above overview shows there is a body of literature that documents and analyzes religious peacebuilding as a practice and a vocation. Beyond an exploration of individual peacebuilders, this line of research also is compounded by an explosion of organizations, research centers, and single-tradition and ecumenical peacebuilding networks. Various Mennonite networks and numerous committed Mennonite peacemakers have been pivotal in processes of peacebuilding, including trauma healing and development initiatives around the world. Likewise, the global institutional network of Catholics lends itself to religious peacebuilding around the globe.[17] Other transnational single-tradition networks include the Gülen Movement,[18] Baptist Peace Fellowship,[19] Buddhist Peace Fellowship,[20] and Christian Peacemaker Teams,[21] among numerous other organizations. Representatives of ecumenical "interventionists" include International Committee for Peace Council[22] and World Conference on Religion and Peace.[23] The business of religious peacebuilding is expanded further to research institutions such as the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.[24] and the Program on Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame.[25]

The study of individual prophetic voices and institutional faith-networks, featured in great volume in the literature, interrelates and oscillates between an instrumentalization of religion for peacebuilding and development and for fulfilling religious vocations. This is where distinctions need to be drawn between praxis and theory. The importance of this task will become clear in my exposition of the theological thread and its complex relation to questions of justice and change.

The Theological

As indicated, Appleby's "ambivalence of the sacred" undergirds practice and theory in religious peacebuilding.[26] Theologically, the insight about the constructive and causal qualities of religion translated into sustained efforts to retrieve and cultivate non-violent and peaceful motifs within diverse religious traditions. The act of retrieval presupposes internal plurality.

Gopin's *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* echoes the insight concerning the internal diversity and plurality of a community and the subsequent need to analyze why certain violent, exclusive, or otherwise peace-inhibiting interpretations of religious symbols, texts, and other narratives gained dominance. Such exploration, Gopin suggests, might be pivotal for conflict analysis as well as conflict transformation. At the heart of these processes, therefore, is recognition of constructive hermeneutics as a key peacebuilding method. The analyst may engage in an excavation of the tradition, seeking possible marginalized motifs that would promote peacebuilding ideals and concerns with justice. Applying a psychodynamic approach to conflict, Gopin traces the patterns of change within religious traditions, that is, what circumstances led to the adaptation of violent motifs and by which subgroups.[27] This approach typifies a presumption that violent motifs constitute inauthentic or perverted interpretations of religion. In other words, the task of religious peacebuilding amounts to a recovery of good religion.

This archeological approach later reverberates in the work of scholar-practitioner Mohammad Abu-Nimer.[28] Abu-Nimer underscores the dynamic character of Islamic sources and Islam itself as a continuous, lived revelation. His work consequently exemplifies the premise, despite proclamations of various literalists to the contrary, that religions are internally plural and thus that sacred sources are subject to continuous interpretations. Abu-Nimer labors to develop a nonviolent paradigm for peacebuilding from within the sources of Islam (underscoring core Islamic values such as justice, benevolence, patience, and forgiveness). This theological genre resonates with works on forgiveness, nonviolence, and reconciliation that likewise seek to identify an ethics and practice of reconciliation and peace from within the resources of a given tradition.[29] The growing preoccupation with the retrieval of theological resources that are consistent with principles of nonviolence represents an expansion of the traditional theological focus on the ethics of the use of force. Traditionally, this paradigm has been the most dominant scholarly thread, engaging the questions of religion and conflict, along with an interrelated focus on how religion informs pacifism and "holy wars."[30] The focus on how religion relates to the legitimate and/or illegitimate use of force intersects with the field of ethics, although ethics is not yet an intentional interlocutor with religious peacebuilding, specifically, and peace studies, more broadly. On the part of comparative ethics, an underdeveloped interface with peace studies may be attributed to the enduring persistence of the dichotomous focus on only war and pacifism.

On the part of religious peacebuilding, the lack of interface with comparative ethics and comparative religious studies is costly because it does not account for the decades of methodological critiques and conversations concerning the delicate act of comparison. Comparison without self-reflexivity and discursive analysis risks an essentializing naiveté.[31] As a result of this disciplinary gap, a recent effort within the religious peacebuilding subfield to develop an ethics of political reconciliation may be subject to some of the same critiques conventionally aimed at comparative ethics (as well as comparative religion, more generally).[32]

Political theorist and peace studies scholar Daniel Philpott articulates such an ethics of po-litical reconciliation in the aftermath of atrocities. Philpott's model highlights restoration of right relations within the political realm. He grounds this ethics in an encyclopedic retrieval and cata-loguing of motifs from within Judaism, Islam, and Christianity that are consistent with a view of political reconciliation as entailing building just institutions and relations between and among states, acknowledgement of wrongdoing, reparation, punishment, apology, and forgiveness. This project is in conversation with liberal political theory and ideas concerning a pragmatic endurance of the principle of overlapping consensus and of the tradition of human rights as an instrument designed to identify injustice.[33]

Philpott's approach, however, diverges significantly from a view of liberal peace (the corol-lary of an unrevised liberal political theory) with its distinct presuppositions about religion and how it relates to conflict, peace, and public discourse. These premises involve analyzing religious violence as a matter of epistemological dispute, the solution of which necessitated the rise of the modern liberal state and conceptions of toleration.[34] The field of religious peacebuilding, as I show below in further detail, has not challenged these premises, but rather has operated within them. Philpott offers a correction that resonates with a rich body of literature and, by now, a perhaps in-creasingly resolved conversation in religious ethics that challenges and revises presumptions con-cerning the non-publicity of religion.[35] Tapping into the religion and public life debates, however, proves a valuable maneuver, indicating the need to theoretically enrich religious peacebuilding. Yet unawareness of theoretical and methodological debates that take place in the study of religion can diminish the effectiveness of theorizing about religion in the religious peacebuilding subfield. This may be the case with the model of political reconciliation cited above.

Similar to other exercises in comparative ethics, the pitfall of the attempt to develop an ethics of peacebuilding across different religious terrains is to elide, however inadvertently, meaning-ful and often problematic differences, making them all conform to categories of justice that are indebted to a particular religious and cultural context. From the perspective of the analyst, this model of political reconciliation selectively extracts and essentializes interpretations of contextu-ally specific particularities, practices, and on-the-ground innovative applications and subversions of norms. The model of political reconciliation, like the conventional project of the comparative ethicist, therefore, can become inattentive, blind, and even complicit with underlying structural and cultural injustice.

Distilling an ethics of reconciliation from within Judaism, for instance, does not provide the constructive tools needed to deconstruct and reframe the meta-injustices undergirding the dis-cussion of peace and justice in Israel/Palestine. Israeli liberalism, despite its secularity and even anti-religious stance, embodies a distinct political theology. Religious peace activism in Israel also operates within the parameters set out by this political theology. This is where I identify the limitations of religious peacebuilding in the Israeli case and other cases more broadly.[36] Without explicating and interrogating this theology (a particular reading of Jewish history and identity)

from within the religious, historical, and lived sources of Judaism, a radical transforming of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will not materialize. This kind of contestation of symbolic boundaries (axiomatic conceptions of identity) I term the *hermeneutics of citizenship*. It emerges as a response to challenges from the victims of Zionist practices (internal and external) who appeal to broad (human rights norms) rather than particularistic frames of justice, which, by themselves, are not sufficient as a framework for rethinking the symbolic boundaries authorizing unjust practice. (They primarily serve a diagnostic and empowering function.)

The limitations of religious peacebuilding, therefore, revolve around the secularist framing of religion as a belief and as a distinct variable, empirically manifest but thoroughly ahistorical and transcultural. Another related conceptual limitation is the inclination to articulate religious peacebuilding as a unidirectional process in which religion as an ahistorical and transcultural essence can function positively to influence peacebuilding processes. This conceptualization of religious peacebuilding as a unidirectional process precludes thinking about how historical developments, intercultural exchanges, and multiperspectival demands of justice might work in the other direction as an occasion to transform religion, religious institutions, and the interfaces between religion and ideological formations.[37] But a model of political reconciliation that essentializes and selectively extracts from the sources of religious traditions can afford only a unidirectional view of change. It deploys the "ambivalence of the sacred" thesis in the comparative imagining of an ethics of political reconciliation. However, in the process, it merely inverses the essentializing of religion (as bad) that Appleby sets out to challenge.

The arena of comparative ethics, as indicated, has fallen on occasion into similar pitfalls. Even when expanded beyond a preoccupation concerning the use of force and principles of peace to a related discussion of religion and human rights, it tends to distill selectively what works in accordance with a predetermined theory of justice.[38] Avoiding the complexities, divergences, and subversive spaces on the ground limits this approach's effectiveness as a framework for peacebuilding. However, comparative ethicist David Little, whose earlier work largely framed the subfield of comparative religious ethics, illustrates in his later preoccupation with the comparative study of ethnoreligious national conflicts where fruitful connections between ethics and religious peacebuilding can unfold.[39] Little's view of the tradition of human rights is a critical divergence from Philpott's model of political reconciliation, not as ontologically distinct from the ethics found in the three Abrahamic traditions, but as already representing a multiperspectival, dynamic, and interpretive tradition, with an inbuilt mechanism for self-correction.[40] This view of human rights is indispensible for Little's engagement with questions of peace and justice. While operating with an a priori theory of justice, Little's focus on theological retrieval as an instrument of peacebuilding is thoroughly contextual and anchored within the framework of the nation-state and its mythologies. He asks what kind of interpretations of religion will promote more or less exclusionary conceptions of identity, with the presumption that greater exclusivity relates to violent practices. Yet Little's view, as apparent from his work with Appleby, is non-reductive, taking into account

how institutional and structural conditions also influence and play into cultural and national for-mations.[41] It is not about religions in abstraction as systems of meanings informing behavior but as interpreted and embodied in the complex interplay between social practices and institutional formations.

To reiterate, critical to Little's view of religious peacebuilding is an approach that is at once historical and localized yet also ahistorical and universal in its commitment to human rights.[42] This commitment gestures to a central conceptual divergence from Philpott's articulation of the tradi-tion of human rights as potentially in conflict with the religious traditions. The tension that arises from discussions concerning the relation between religion and human rights brings to the fore the urgency of analyzing the theory of justice underlying the field of religious peacebuilding.

III.   *Religious Peacebuilding and the Justice Dilemma*

In Search of Silent Violence

Peacebuilding is intricately associated with questions of justice or "positive" peace and the transformation not only of direct and obvious violence, but also of structural and cultural forms of violence. As I indicate in my discussion of an ethics of political reconciliation, the concept of "positive" peace challenges "negative" or "liberal" interpretations of peace that understand peace *negatively* as the absence of direct violence, a view that not only has informed various conventions of international relations, conflict resolution, and diplomacy, but that also is indebted to certain political-philosophical conceptions of toleration that could, at once, gloss over meta-forms of in-justice and function to reify those structural problems.

A subgenre in political theory that focuses on democracy in ethnoreligious majoritarian nation-al contexts (ethnocracies) usually does not make it onto reading lists in religious peacebuilding.[43] But it should because a careful analysis might expose how religion relates to meta-injustices (in Israel, for instance, "multiculturalism" is encouraged within strict ethnoreligious boundaries), or it can trace the patterns of increased or decreased inclusivity.[44] The blinders imposed by a theological approach would amount to overlooking an analysis of power and discourse. To return to the case of Israel, the question that is not asked is why a particular hegemonic interpretation of Jewish-Israeli identity emerged as an axiomatic frame. Within the theological thread, the belief that Jewish re-ligious destiny entails political hegemony is framed as a "right" that needs to be respected. This framing already hints at a potential dissonance between the discourse of religious freedom, which attained currency in the early twenty-first century as the main idiom for discussing the plight of minorities abroad and identity politics at home (in the context of the United States), and justice concerns guided by a human rights framework. I return to this point shortly. For now, it suffices to underscore that the language of "rights" and "liberties," if unreflective of its own categories,

assumptions, and locations, can become complicit with injustice. The tool of critique is pertinent for religious peacebuilding. Without discursive critique, creative hermeneutics (a hallmark of religious peacebuilding) risks becoming overly backward-looking and reactionary, diminishing its transformative potential.

Substantially engaging in a discursive critique could expand not only the theoretical scope of religious peacebuilding but also its practical implications. By discursive critique, I mean an analysis that is self-aware of the genealogy and historicity of its categories. Political theorist Elizabeth Shakman Hurd has effectively highlighted how the discourses of secularism have produced preconceptions that have dominated how the so-called "phenomenon of religious resurgence" has been analyzed and how it determined what kind of questions were deemed pertinent to the analysis of religion and politics. That "religious resurgence" is interpreted as subversive and threatening and that religious violence is especially associated with Islam, Hurd argues, illuminates the Euro- and Judeo-Christo-centricity of the discussion as well as its undergirding Orientalism. What conventional analyses of public and/or "resurgent" religion overlooks is an exposition of historical contexts of displacement, marginalization, and colonization and how and why the "resurgence" of religion signals attempts to renegotiate the meanings of the secular in various contexts.[45]

While the *raison d'être* of the religious and peacebuilding industry is to combat overly deterministic renderings of religion as divisive, belligerent, and irrational, it remains rather unreflective about how this outlook is born out of particular modalities or discourses that dominate how "religious" and "secular" are analyzed. Because religious peacebuilding operates within the secularist discourse, it focuses overwhelmingly on direct and obvious violence, overlooking how religion relates to structural and cultural violence. A conceptual shift beyond the secularist frame gave rise to the aforementioned attempt to construct an ethics of political reconciliation that nonetheless reproduced a secularist rendering of "religion" as an ahistorical body of dogmas, rituals, and texts. Exploring discursive formations therefore is intricately relevant to questions of peace and justice. As in the analogous preoccupation in political theory with a discussion of "religion and democracy," what is considered generically "religious" privileges Christo-centric and western assumptions about the "religious" and the "political."

When religious peacebuilding in Israel glosses over the *hermeneutics of citizenship*, it appears as a good force for peace and justice, despite operating within meta-injustice. Cultural anthropologist Saba Mahmood's deconstructive reading of the discourse of religious freedoms and liberties as an umbrella for a host of non-governmental and governmental advocacy and activism likewise illustrates why, despite its apparent positive connotations, deploying this lens may be delimiting because it reflects the universalization of particularistic conceptions of conscience and freedom not easily translated across cultural terrains. Moreover, through the articulation of religious freedom as a universal and ahistorical good, one glosses over historical engagements with the experiences of colonialism and post-colonialism, hegemonic secularist frames of international relations with their Orientalist undertones, and ongoing geopolitical agendas.[46]

To allude to what a geopolitical agenda entails in this respect is to look at how supposed attacks on religious freedoms, primarily of Christians in the Middle East, figures into broader discourses about Islam and Muslims and how those discourses function to authorize belligerence in the region. A curious exception is the case of Christian Palestinians; their silencing in the mainstream corporate media, for example, is, at best, problematic. In the words of a courageous Palestinian Quaker woman Jean Zaru: "Although we are really the modern heirs of the disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem, we have become unknown, unacknowledged, and forgotten. Despite all of this, we are a community that has maintained a strong witness to the gospel in the land of the incarnation and resurrection…unfortunately, a community that is diminishing every day as a result of the political, economic, and religious pressures of the Israeli occupation."[47] What is at stake here for Zaru is to combat—among other forms of violence—religious and cultural structural violence; by this she refers to the stereotyping of Palestinians and Arabs in the media, the imposition of other cultures and value systems, the destruction and shelling of cultural heritage sites, the language of chosenness (deployed both by Jewish and Christian Zionists), and the demonization of Islam, among other issues. In the brief excerpt I just cited, Zaru locates her silencing most immediately with the Israeli occupation but also more globally in discursive formations that enable the kind of marginalization she is combating. Her inability to flourish in Palestine is not classified as a matter of religious freedom. If it is, it is in reference to Muslim-Christian relations within Palestine and not in reference to the Israeli occupation. This enables the perpetuation of a broader paradigm about Christian peril in Muslim contexts, divorcing this discussion from the historical realities of Israeli occupation. This disconnect substantiates the point about the importance of unpacking the political and cultural underpinnings of framing something as a matter of "religious freedom." What goes into this decision politically?

In describing the inherent biases of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1988, Mahmood claims that one needs to engage in a critical exploration of what precisely gets to be classified as a violation of religious freedoms and liberties, along with the ramifications that such classification may have on the formulation of American foreign policy. This exploration involves historicizing why a philosophically, religiously, and culturally embedded articulation of religion as a matter of individual conscience and belief has been universalized and construed as an ahistorical moral good.[48] I argue that this articulation, when it differentiates between religion as a belief and religion as a national and historical consciousness (as in cases such as Sri Lanka and Israel), overlooks the complex ways in which religion interrelates with other indices of identity. If the establishment of a political hegemony is considered the fulfillment of a religious destiny, should not ensuring this project be classified as the exercise of a religious freedom? Are the boundaries of those freedoms confined to private spaces and to individual consciences? Do they become collectivized only insofar as they translate into the language of minority rights and cultural and religious autonomy? This language, while designed to accommodate collective rights, is still philosophically grounded in culturally specific conceptions of personhood, religion, and freedom. The politics enabled by

the idiom of religious freedoms could—under the banner of providing a normative good—naturalize and normalize meta-injustices, as when the case of the Palestinian-Israelis is framed as merely involving questions about minority rights. There are always enduring questions, not only with regard to broad geopolitical frames, but also with regard to the implicit normalcy of who constitutes the majority within those contexts where the plights of religious minorities are debated and how religious narratives, symbols, and institutions may be interlaced into the construction and deconstruction of national ethos.

The testimony of Zaru is especially illustrative of the need to engage in wide-ranging discursive analyses that move beyond the rhetoric of local conflicts. Her analysis not only moves beyond obvious dichotomies between Muslims and Jews or West and East. It also highlights how broader discourses of Orientalism, militarism, imperialism, chosenness, and patriarchy are relevant. The stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims (often through the mere conflation of these identity indices) in the American media, for example, is part of the problem. It betrays a long history of Orientalism that informs the making of American foreign policy while also being constitutive of imagining American Judeo-Christian identity. Zaru is confronting the "silent" structural violence that enables the perpetuation of the Israeli occupation of Palestine on so many levels.[49] It follows that if media representation and stereotyping are part of the problem, part of the solution will involve engaging in discursive critiques that deconstruct received narratives. These kinds of critique and engagement go beyond the geopolitical boundaries of this particular conflict zone and points to global interconnections. Zaru also looks internally at questions of gender and patriarchy. She recognizes intuitively and through her own marginality as a Christian Palestinian woman that domestic gender injustice is not unrelated to the pervasive direct, structural, and cultural forms of violence she so aptly illuminates. I mention this because one fallacy of the field of religious peacebuilding is to privilege occasionally the "local" by myopically obscuring the pertinence of how religion relates to broader questions of "silent" violence.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AS PEACEBUILDING

A conceptual turn that challenges the privileging of the "international" focus of religious peacebuilding would also move beyond the premises informing the extensive involvement of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) with religious peacebuilding initiatives. Consistent with the broader mandate of the USIP, the study of issues related to religion and peacebuilding excludes a focus on the United States. This mandate imposes critical conceptual blinders on peace studies, generally, and religious peacebuilding, more specifically. What it excludes from the analysis are questions about the relevance of the legacies of colonialism, post-colonialism, U.S. imperialism, and the global discourse of neoliberalism to local concerns with conflict and peace.[50]

To move in these new directions, it is important to reflect on the enduring (and somewhat ironic) hold of secularist discourses. It is ironic because religious peacebuilding emerged as a

supposed antidote to the reductive dismissal of or essentializing alarmism about religion plaguing the social sciences and the popular media. From its inception, religious peacebuilding presented itself as a "supplement" rather than a radical challenge to the logic of international relations. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson's pioneering work *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*[51] highlights the potential but untapped role of religion in international relations and in peacebuilding. It generated a series of subsequent works on the role of religion in diplomacy and peacebuilding.[52] These works typify the "instrumental approach" to religious peacebuilding. The usual motif of this instrumental approach is that dogmatic realism in international relations blocks the possibility of recognizing how one's actions are informed by values and religious orientations and how one's processes of healing and religious resources, narratives, and leadership might be instrumental in overcoming trauma and transforming conflicts. The role of religion in diplomacy, subsequently, is referred to as "Track II diplomacy" or "faith-based diplomacy."

Indeed, this subgenre makes significant strides in highlighting the need to take religion seriously in international relations. However, the framing of religion's involvement in international relations and specifically in peacebuilding as "faith-based" is a problematic proposition. It is problematic because it presupposes "faith," a contextually specific category, to be universally applicable and interchangeable with religion. The critical study of religion and the secularism and post-secularism debates alluded to above shed light on why religion-qua-faith is not only a delimiting classification but also one deeply entrenched in the discourses of colonialism and Orientalism.

While the now extensive documentation of various faith-based initiatives and success stories proves to be a wealth of resources for analyzing religion as it relates to questions of peacebuilding, the rendering of faith-based diplomacy as a supplementary but necessary venue for realpolitik is insufficient and problematic. In fact, such a construal overlooks the need to substantially engage in a discursive analysis that brings to bear how unrevised secularist and modernist ontologies and epistemologies inform how we think about the role of religion in international relations. Hence, while on the surface the faith-based diplomacy thread challenged political realism, it did not depart in any significant way from the undergirding secularist discourses that informed conventional modes of thinking about international relations. This includes the international relations (IR) paradigm of constructivism that presupposes "beliefs" in international relations as merely a function of cognition. Hence, despite the relevant and important correction that the faith-based diplomacy and the related IFD foci offer to international relations theory and practice, their general acceptance of religion as having to do with belief, morality, and altogether "soft"[53] power shows the theoretical thinness of the field and suggests possibilities for further research and scholarship.[54]

In fact, engaging in the theoretical questions that deconstruct how secularist and Orientalist discourses have informed the modalities of thinking about religion in international relations can transform the field of religious peacebuilding. The field would shift from its primary preoccupation with constructive religious leadership or faith-based initiatives and interventions in the dynamics of conflict and peacebuilding to a deeper engagement with the rather messy role of

religion-qua-politics as well as the intricate philosophical relations between religion and morality. A constructive retrieval of theological and other religious resources is insufficient as a method of peacebuilding, if there is no accompanying engagement with the kind of historicism and discursive critique that might expose undergirding injustice. Therefore, in a different essay, I highlight religious peacebuilding as entailing a process of "critical caretaking," a synthesis of the constructive, non-reductive insights of religious peacebuilding as encapsulated in Appleby's thesis of the "ambivalence of the sacred" and the deconstructive analytic tools of discursive critique.[55] The various functions of the language of "religious freedoms" typify this observation concerning the need for "critical caretaking" and hint at the conceptual blinders and potential pitfalls of the theological thread as an instrument for the pursuit of a multiperspectival (as distinct from parochial) justice.

Where the field of religious peacebuilding is entirely lacking, therefore, is in recognizing the full spectrum of its potential contribution. This is not merely a problem of scope; it also reflects deep theoretical blinders born out of the misapplication of the insights and potentialities of the "ambivalence of the sacred." While construing the militancy of the nonviolent religious warrior as the inverse of the religiously motivated suicide bomber frees religion from material or ideal reductionism, it also generates conceptual and practical blind-spots that need to be deconstructed for scholarship in the field of religious peacebuilding to grow in a meaningful way. Importantly, the constructive hermeneutics inherent in the "ambivalence of the sacred" could, if expanded to integrate the tool of critique, avoid the power reductionism that constitutes the pitfall of discursive analysis.

JUSTPEACE *AND THE* CONVERSION TRAP

It may be obvious how religion relates to "direct" forms of violence in the Crusades, the messianic theology of Jewish settlers in the West Bank, and the events of September 11, 2001. It is not, however, so obvious how religion relates to the authorization of state violence and a sense of national entitlement, superiority, and destiny. It is not only that even in the cases of the Crusades, the European Wars of Religion, and the Settlement Movement in Israel/Palestine, a simple rendering of religion as a cause of violence and conflict is highly decontextualized and ahistorical. It is also the case that this rendering enables both analysts and practitioners to overlook internal pluralities and contestations as well as nuanced analyses of the interrelationship between conceptions of religion, ethnicity, nationality, and culture. Bracketing religion as a "belief" and an essence outside of history (despite its empirical manifestations in historical space and time) enables the analyst (and by extension the peace practitioner) to gloss over critical junctures between religion and nationalism where religion (often silently) reifies and vindicates exclusive political and social practice. This, as mentioned, is also the limitation of the theological constructivism entailed in the model of political reconciliation. This is also where Little's attention to the contexts of nationalism and the legacy of colonialism in each instance of ethnoreligious national conflict offers important

corrections to the essentialism endemic to a methodologically naïve comparison.

I, therefore, frame the topic as one about religious peacebuilding rather than religion and peace to capture the dynamic, multidisciplinary, multidirectional, and deeply contextual frameworks that need to guide one's exploration of theory and praxis about religion, conflict, and peacebuilding. The concept of peacebuilding entails an active engagement with particular conflicts. It is not a general and decontextualized reflection on religion and peace. The peace sought is this-worldly (social, political, economic), although the this-worldliness should not be viewed as necessarily dichotomous with inner-spirituality or with other-worldly and transcendent conceptions of peace. There is a presumption here that religious peacebuilding as an academic pursuit (and certainly as a practice) focuses on justice as distinct from peace. However, because the field is not sufficiently critical of its own discursive formations, it enables a disconnection between peace and justice, which translates into a lack of reflexivity about how religion relates to structural and cultural violence. This lack of scrutiny, on occasion, also gives rise to curtailing the possibility of reform within religious traditions. The central philosophical issue is whether we historicize and submit religious traditions to a broader conception of morality. Philosophical conversations on religion and human rights and political-theoretical debates (including feminist critiques) on the "justness" of multicultural frameworks and identity politics need to become front and center in thinking about religious peacebuilding.[56] Without such a multidisciplinary interrogation, religious peacebuilding, I argue below, becomes missionary and mono-perspectival in its pursuit of justice.

The recently articulated concept of strategic peacebuilding provides an especially effective lens to think through the role of religion in conflict transformation. Strategic peacebuilding as defined in a co-authored essay by Appleby and Lederach entails a comprehensive, multidimensional, multifocal, and multidisciplinary process, normatively guided by a pursuit of justice or *justpeace*.[57] The normative and comprehensive compass that strategic peacebuilding affords, with its focus on the continuous striving toward this neologism of *justpeace*, viewing it as a contested and continuously debated framework rather than a fixed *telos*, is especially helpful in exploring how religion might relate to "peace" as the cessation of direct violence. It might also be helpful in exploring how it interrelates with cultural, structural, and even "secular" forms of violence. The prism of strategic peacebuilding, therefore, recognizes the instrumental relevance of religious networks and leadership as well as substantive theological and hermeneutical contestations and critique of the endurance of unrevised secularist assumptions in IR.[58] It is potentially consistent with the task of "critical caretaking." On the other hand, "uncritical caretaking" is endemic within religious peacebuilding because it can contribute not only to a reified interpretation of religion, but also could enable the perpetuation of injustice. Conversely, the merely deconstructive turn is power reductionistic (?), unable to extricate critically refined theological and religious content from its negation of colonial discursive formations; in short, throwing out the baby with the bath water. While this power reductionism is further susceptible to the charge of relativism, the religion and reconciliation subfield (in addition to its essentializing and ahistoricity) falls into the colonial

fallacy that privileges and universalizes culture- and tradition-specific categories such as "forgive-ness" and "love." This thread already occupies a fine line between religious peacebuilding and proselytizing, not only through decontextualizing "Judaism" or "Islam," but also through forcing non-Christian worlds of associations to conform to Christian-specific categories.

I refer to this as the conversion trap. This trap also is present on the level of practice. Is it acceptable that the work of religiously motivated "aid" organizations also involves teaching the gospel? This question goes back to a deeper debate about the meanings of humanitarian assistance and whether neutrality should be an unsullied principle. It also highlights the need to reflect on the ethics of peacebuilding intervention. When missionaries proclaim to engage in peacebuilding efforts and demonstrate a lack of self-reflexivity about the historical colonial undertones of this enterprise, as well as the profound disrespect toward other religions and alternative orientations, they contribute to the delegitimization of the subfield of religious peacebuilding as an important and serious scholarly enterprise with immense practical ramifications for real situations. The con-version trap, however, has permeated both scholarship and practice.

Therefore, for religious peacebuilding to develop beyond the enduring dominance of secularist categories, it will have to assume a thoroughly interdisciplinary approach. This will also require an exploration not only of where religious peacebuilding is limited by its own conceptual and theoret-ical assumptions, but also how these presuppositions could potentially derail the field altogether.

Derailment

The task of theological excavation is highly necessary for the field of religious peacebuilding. If one takes religion seriously on its own terms, it is indeed of substantive relevance to engage reli-gious traditions comprehensively and to develop the same kind of fluency in "religion and peace" that was devoted to the study of religion and violence and/or the use of force. However, as I argue elsewhere, this needs to avoid the charge of ahistoricity and essentialism by deploying the tools of critique. This is where operationalizing the "ambivalence of the sacred" thesis is lacking and delimiting. At times, it is even misguided.

It is misguided when religious peacemakers are "exoticized" and when their narratives are presented as a form of theater, as if they perform some peculiar native dance, usually elsewhere and in a different language. Countless times, I have witnessed such exoticization during academic conferences on religion and peacebuilding. This exoticization is, in part, the upshot of the "lo-cal" bias of the field. Related to this exoticization of "religion and peacebuilding" is the work of organizations that foster and feature, on different levels, faith-based peacebuilders. Some of these organizations indeed represent the "industry" aspects of religious peacebuilding (the Tenenbaum Center, for example); others include representatives of religious groups whose peacebuilding work is missionary. The fact that faith motivates missionary work and that this work is perceived as

"peacebuilding," "development," or "humanitarianism" is relevant to the academic study of religious peacebuilding. But to overlook the need for a second-order reflection on systemic and moral issues, such as aggressive proselytism in a post-colonial context, is not only deficient; it also relinquishes the kind of critical rigor necessary for scholarship.[59] The main paradigms of religious peacebuilding as a field of study, however, are conducive to this kind of deficiency. The issue at stake is not that focusing on particular religious leaders and their activism with respect to processes of conflict transformation or on various missionary forms of peacebuilding is irrelevant to the study of religious peacebuilding. Rather, the focus of this scrutiny is that the field of religious peacebuilding needs to move beyond the secularist, the exotic, the apologetic (and the missionary), and the mere reportage mode that has come to dominate the field.

Back to the Ambivalence and the Quest for Critical Caretaking

Regardless of how admirable the actions of various religious actors may seem, one cannot relinquish the critical-analytic lens. This will spell the difference between scholarship and mere showcasing or even crude and unreflective evangelizing. Certainly, showcasing various religious actors in academic conferences may be enriching and humbling. But if this showcasing is not followed by a systematic analysis that probes into the patterns of religious peacebuilding (e.g., what does it mean in various contexts, and what might be the limitations of this undertaking?), this showcasing remains just that—a theater. As such, it not only confirms the suspicion of various critics who either render religious peacebuilding as "soft," "kumbaya" extra-curricular activities in the otherwise brutal realities of international and local *real* politics, but it also risks exoticizing religious peacebuilding and religious actors. Therefore, religious peacebuilding easily can shift from the task of a careful analysis of religion and conflict transformation to an "uncritical caretaking," masquerading as scholarship. The missionary trap is the greatest obstacle for the maturation of the field of religious peacebuilding as a scholarly enterprise with a real potential to think creatively and multidirectionally about *justpeace* in different contexts.

But a rereading of Appleby's thesis shows that the task of religious peacebuilding is not a simple search for the most authentic interpretation of religion, presuming that this interpretation is also "good" and "just." Appleby's thesis is more complex than the mere framing of the "religious peacebuilder" as the mirror image of the "religious terrorist": the one perfects religion, the other perverts it. Both constructs are problematic and deserve a sustained interrogation of the question of causality: Does religion cause violence? Can religion cause peace? Appleby never wants to ask those questions in a decontextualized manner. Neither does he forego a view of the fallible and historical characteristics of religious phenomena or of a deeply pluralistic society. The theoretical poverty of religious peacebuilding can be attributed to missing these points about fallibility and contextual yet non-reductive interpretations of religion and their relevance to sociopolitical and economic institutional frameworks. Missing those points also facilitates the creeping in of an un-

critical treatment of religion, conflict, and peacebuilding, one that overlooks internal and external power constraints so that the missionary woman cannot view the structural and cultural violence within which she self-righteously and faithfully operates.

While many volumes have been written documenting how religious people do good around the world and about locating resources within religious traditions that resemble normative motifs such as forgiveness and reconciliation, there has been very little theoretical reflection and engagement with the premises undergirding these interrelated enterprises. Hence, the limits of religious peace-building revolve around a simplistic appropriation of the thesis of the "ambivalence of the sacred." This has included illuminating internal plurality within a tradition solely as an act of retrieval in order to access resources to combat explicit belligerence authorized by other religious claims. A deeper understanding of plurality also will involve submitting religious practices and ideas to critique and possibly reform, in light of questions of justice.

This inquiry would include a global analysis of the endurance of Orientalist frames in international relations and how it might transpire in distinct conflict zones. The inquiry also would encompass debating on a case-by-case basis how religion, ethnicity, and culture interface with the construction and reproduction of secular national identities and why, especially within explicitly ethnocentric national frames, distinguishing between religion-qua-belief and religion-qua-national identity may function myopically to conceal and reproduce injustice. The tools of critique likewise will be employed in the analysis of the idiom of "religious freedoms" and how it operates within a multiperspectival tradition of human rights norms. The question of whether an American man can circumcise his daughter or kill his wife on the basis of a "religious conviction" is not beyond the scope of religious peacebuilding (although it has been debated primarily within political theory). In fact, this topic is conceptually connected to the need to deconstruct and interrogate the main discursive formations within which those questions arise locally and globally.

Another related trajectory would involve developing a conceptual framework that would enable a multiperspectival prism for the analysis of questions of peace and justice, one that would enable one's particularistic narration of justice to be confronted by others' contextual counter-narratives (including "domestic" underdogs and those who experience gender injustice). This multiperspectival lens confronts the unidirectionality inherent in the phenomenological framing of much of the discussion of religious peacebuilding. Moving the religious peacebuilding from the level of spectacle to rigorous academic scrutiny would necessitate asking not only how religion works in conflict and peacebuilding, but also whether a multiperspectival approach to justice can change traditions themselves when they appear to be inconsistent with justice concerns. Here the academic study of religion and peacebuilding cannot merely report, feature, and inductively theorize about praxis; it must also reflect critically by historicizing religious knowledge and practice. Feminist theories have engaged in such critique in order not only to gain agency and equal standing, but also to reimagine the meanings of the religious tradition itself. Feminist theorist Judith Plaskow's *Standing Again at Sinai* is about highlighting the need to view women coreligionists

as equal to men, as well as deeply challenging male normativity and reimagining the covenantal moment in Sinai through a gendered lens.[60] Such a transformative process would have substantial structural ramifications for questions of religious leadership and household management, among various other loci.

This discussion of feminist critique exemplifies that change depends upon acts of critique, introspection, and reframing. There is limited scholarship that connects gender analysis with religion, conflict, and peacebuilding, however. The inclination is to illuminate the idiom of folk rather than official religiosity (thus private, female religiosity) as potentially subversive and instrumental in its critique, coping with devastation and trauma and anti-militarist organizing (while there is also a thread in the literature stressing that women are as prone to violence as men).[61] At the same time that a gender critique challenges the undergirding categories of political formations (see especially works on gender and nationalism), the interlinking between gender and religion falls back into the same discursive formations that relegated the feminine to the home, the supposed "private sphere." On a different scholarly front, Mahmood's study of the pious Egyptian women—who in inhabiting the norms of submissiveness and humility, became agents in transforming Egyptian secularism—correctly highlights that (female) agency is more complex than mere overt resistance to patriarchy, as conventional feminist theory has it.[62] Yet this theoretical framework does not permit a constructive space to reimagine the normative presuppositions that the pious women inhabit, ipso facto suggesting a kind of relativism inconsistent with the normative orientation of peace studies. What is lacking is a kind of critical caretaking that would rethink the normative presuppositions of religious and political identities in light of critique and through the prism of *justpeace*.

To conclude, the study of religion and peace is a precarious enterprise, one fraught with conceptual traps. While aspiring to move beyond negative "peace" to an engagement with questions of justice or positive peace, religious peacebuilding as a scholarly focus has studied "religion" merely as an addendum to conventional modes of analyzing and mitigating violent conflicts, thereby leaving the conceptual limitation of such approaches intact. In order to avoid the charge of irrelevance and/or mere "soft" background relevance, religious peacebuilding conceptually needs to shift away from the secularist presuppositions underlying the field. Differentiating religion as a distinct variable reinforces secularist presumptions in that it subscribes to a neat compartmentalization of the "religious" and the "secular." Certainly, this differentiation enabled the flourishing of the field of religious peacebuilding because it carved out relevance for religion by articulating its distinctiveness as a resource of peace, both on the level of theologies and ideas as well as on the practical level of religious institutional networks and individual leaderships. This is where the paradoxical turn to critique comes into play. In order to combat the conversion trap, religious peacebuilding needs to avoid the "uncritical caretaking" that amounts to an overly simplistic application of the logic of the "ambivalence of the sacred."

Cultivating the field of religious peacebuilding as a rigorous academic reflection therefore would entail self-reflexivity concerning the field's reliance on secularist presumptions about reli-

gion, which facilitate complicity with religion's relevance to cultural and systemic injustices, the presumption of the unidirectionality of religion and historical change, and the disconnect from broader conversations about religion in public life. Future trajectories would need to focus on the method of the *hermeneutics of citizenship* and its reliance on a multiperspectival approach to justice for critique and reframing. Here the philosophical problem is whether we submit traditions as well as political theologies to a broader concept of morality that is already, as Little understands it, multiperspectival (reflecting cross-cultural and interreligious negotiations) rather than disembodied and ontologically distinct.

Another fruitful trajectory would challenge the Westphalian assumptions undergirding the field of peacebuilding. While an emphasis on the institutional aspects of transnational religious networks is well evident in the religious peacebuilding literature, the privileging of the "local" as the site of conflict still is evident and delimiting of the discussion of global discursive formations that are intricately related to local manifestations of cultural, structural, and direct forms of violence. The "local" bias also imposes constraints on where peacebuilding work might take place. The locus of peacebuilding can be as much with expatriate and diaspora communities in the urban centers of Western cities like New York, London, and Paris than in the "exotic" and far-off villages of Columbia, Palestine, and Sri Lanka. This is not to dismiss the heroism of peacebuilders and the need to identify and rethink axiomatic claims through the counter-hegemonic embodied experiences of indigenous and subaltern victims, but rather to gesture toward the possibility of pluralizing the fronts of peacebuilding. To move beyond the exotic, the good (as in the conversion trap), and the theatrical, as I suggest above, calls for a thoroughly interdisciplinary enterprise, centrally synthesizing the insights of critique with the non-reductive, creative hermeneutics that already dominates religious peacebuilding.

(Endnotes)

1 R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

2 Ibid., especially 28.

3 Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). For critiques of Huntington's argument, see Emran Qureshi and Michael Anthony Sells, eds., *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

4 See José Casanova, "Immigration and the New Religious Pluralism: A European Union/United

States Comparison," Sam Cherribi, "Politicians' Perceptions of the 'Muslim Problem': The Dutch Example in European Context," 113-132 and Danièle Hervieu-Léger, "Islam and the Republic: The French Case," 203-222in *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism*, ed. Thomas Banchoff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

5 In suggesting that the theoretical insights of the "ambivalence of the sacred" are misapplied, contributing to a diminishing relevance of religious peacebuilding and reaffirming secularist presuppositions and even parochial agendas (intentionally or inadvertently), I depart from Katrien Hertog's assessment of how this thesis has informed religious peacebuilding; see Hertog, *The Complex Reality of Religious Peacebuilding: Conceptual Contributions and Critical Analysis* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), especially 19.

6 For works on development and religion that take an instrumentalist approach, see Katherine Marshall, "Religion and Global Development: Intersecting Paths," in *Religious Pluralism: Globalization and World Politics*, ed. Banchoff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 195-228; Marshall and Richard March, *Millennium Goals for Development and Faith Institutions: Common Leadership Challenges* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2003); Marshall and Marisa Bronwyn, *Development and Faith: Where Mind, Heart, and Soul Work Together* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2007); and Jeffrey Haynes, *Religion and Development: Conflict or Cooperation?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

7 Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). See also Gopin, "Religion, Violence and Conflict Resolution," *Peace and Change* 22, no. 1 (January 1997): 1-31; Gopin, "Forgiveness as an Element of Conflict Resolution in Religious Cultures: Walking the Tightrope of Reconciliation and Justice," in *Reconciliation, Justice and Coexistence: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohammed Abu-Nimer (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2001), 87-100; and Gopin, *Holy War, Holy Peace: How Religion Can Bring Peace to the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

8 Lisa Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding* (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2005). Numerous other works reflect on the ritualistic aspects of peacebuilding and on how religion explicitly fits into such processes. Some of these works fall under the broad preoccupation with the instrument of Interfaith Dialogue. See, for example, Abu-Nimer, *Reconciliation, Justice, and Coexistence: Theory and Practice* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001); Abu-Nimer, Amal Khoury, and Emily Welty, *Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East* (Washington,

D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007).

9 Appleby, *Ambivalence*, 230-238.

10 See John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

11 For examples of interventionists' framing of their faith-motivation and training, see Tricia Gates Br own, *Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005); Marry Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat, eds., *Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking among Christian Communities* (New York: Orbis Books, 2003); David W. Chappel, ed., *Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 1999); Adam Curle, *True Justice: Quaker Peace Makers and Peace Making* (London: Quaker Home Service, 1981); Eknath Easwaran, *A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Nonviolent Soldier of Islam* (Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1984); John McConnell, *Mindful Mediation: A Handbook for Buddhist Peacemakers* (Thailand: Buddhist Research Institute & Mahachula Buddhist University, 1995); Mennonite Conciliation Service, *Mediation Training Manual: Skills for Constructive Conflict Transformation* (Philadelphia: Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1992); Swami Agnivesh, *Religion, Spirituality and Social Action* (Haryana: Hope India Publications, 2003); Thich Nath Hanh, *Being Peace* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1987); Hanh, *Touching Peace* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1992); Hanh, *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1993); Marc Ellis, *Unholy Alliance: Religion and Atrocity in Our Time* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997); and Yehezkel Landau, *Healing the Holy Land: Interreligious Peacebuilding in Israel/Palestine* (Washington, D.C.: USIP Press, 2003). For an example of external reportage of indigenous religious peacebuilders, see Tenenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding, *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution,* ed. David Little (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

12 See Kevin Avruch, *Culture and Conflict Resolution* (Washington, D.C.: USIP Press, 1998); Lederach, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation across Cultures* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1996); Lederach, *Building Peace*; and Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

13 See Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003).

14 In connection to the question of religion and national reconciliation, much has been written in reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa; see, for instance, Audrey R. Chapman and Bernard Spong, *Religion and Reconciliation in South Africa: Voices of Religious Leaders* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2003); James R. Cochrane, John de Gruchy, and Stephen Martin, *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Cape Town: Ohio University Press, 1999); and Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Looking Back, Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2000).

15 See Appleby, "Building Sustainable Peace: The Roles of Local and Transnational Religious Actors," in *Religious Pluralism: Globalization and World Politics*.

16 Lederach and Cynthia Sampson, *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

17 For an insightful reflection on Catholicism and peacebuilding, see Robert J. Schreiter, Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers, eds., *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010).

18 For an overview, see John L. Esposito and Ihsan Yilmaz, eds., *Islam and Peacebuilding: Gülen Movement Initiatives* (New York: Blue Dome Press, 2010).

19 http://www.bpfna.org/home (accessed January 14, 2012).

20 http://www.bpf.org/ (accessed January 7, 2012).

21 http://www.cpt.org/ (accessed January 7, 2012).

22 http://www.peacecouncil.org/index.html (accessed December 15, 2011).

23 http://www.wcrp.org (accessed December 17, 2011).

24 http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu (accessed February 8, 2012).

25 http://kroc.nd.edu (accessed February 8, 2012).

26 The conceptual framework for religious peacebuilding is also explicated in Little and Appleby, "A Moment of Opportunity?," in *Religion and Peacebuilding*, eds. Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004).

27 See Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon*, especially 9, 59, and 168.

28 See Abu-Nimer, *Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam: Theory and Practice* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003). For a similar work (in the same subgenre), refer to Abdul Aziz, Nathan Funk, and Ayse S. Kadayifci, eds., *Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam: Precept and Practice* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001).

29 Examples of such works include: Jerald D. Gort, Henry Jansen, and Hendrik M. Vroom, eds., Religion, Conflict and Reconciliation: Multifaith Ideals and Realities (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002); Thomas Scheffler, Religion between Violence and Reconciliation (Beirut: Orient-Institu, 2002); John Ferguson, War and Peace in the World's Religions (London: Sheldon Press, 1977); James Heft, ed., Beyond Violence: Religious Sources of Social Transformation in Judaism, Christianity and Islam (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004); Raymond Helmick and Rodney Lawrence Petersen, eds., Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001); James Turner Johnson, The Quest for Peace: Three Moral Traditions in Western Cultural History (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987); Ronald Kraybill, "From Head to Heart: The Cycle of Reconciliation," Conciliation Quarterly 7, no. 4 (1998): 2-38 ; Donald Shriver, An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Daniel Smith-Christopher, ed., Subverting Hatred: The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions (Cambridge, MA: Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, 1998); David Smock, Perspectives on Pacifism: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Views on Nonviolence and International Conflict (Washington, D.C.: USIP Press, 1995); and Gerrie ter Haar and James J. Busuttil, eds., Bridge or Barrier: Religion, Violence and Visions of Peace (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2005).

30 In an attempt to articulate a systematic approach to religious peacebuilding, Hertog explains that increased "interreligious encounters" in a time of an evident association of religion with violence prompted some intra-religious theological reflections and assessments of violent motifs. This historical moment, therefore, opens up the possibility for introspection and possible reform. A second development posed by the apparent "urgency of certain global problems," such as poverty, global warming, nuclear proliferation and so forth, also sheds new light and enables novel paths for interreligious cooperation and exchange (See, *The Complex Reality of Religious Peacebuilding,* 17). But the dominant thread of ethical engagement remains within the dual focus on just war and pacifism. See, for examples, James Johnson Turner and John Kelsay, eds., *Cross, Crescent, and Sword: The Justification and Limitation of War in Western Islamic Tradition* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1990); Turner and Kelsay, eds., *Just War and Jihad: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1991); Kelsay, *Arguing the Just War in Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); and Lisa Cahill, *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism and Just War Theory* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).

31 For a condensed account of the issues and risks involved in the comparative enterprise, see Kimberley C. Patton and Benjamin C. Ray, eds., *A Magic Still Dwells: Comparative Religion in the Postmodern Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

32 Instructive of the conceptual problems inherent in such comparativist attempts would be the methodological debates that unfolded among comparative religious ethicists in response to the field's shaping work of Little and Barney Twiss's *Comparative Religious Ethics* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978). Those responses include, for example, Jeffrey Stout, "Weber's Progeny Once Removed," *Religious Studies Review* 6 (October 1980): 289-295; Little, "The Present State of the Comparative Study of Religious Ethics," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 9, no. 2 (Fall 1981): 210-227; and Stout, "Holism and Comparative Ethics: A Response to Little," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1983): 301-316. Stout revisits the general lesson from this exchange more recently in his *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 283-286.

33 Daniel Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). See also Philpott, ed., *The Politics of Past Evil: Religion, Reconciliation, and the Dilemmas of Transitional Justice* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

34 For a deconstructive analysis of the liberal discourse and its relation to the "myth of religious violence" as the defining narrative of modernity, see William Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious*

Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); chapter 3 is especially devoted to this historicist exercise.

35 These conversations have unfolded now among religious ethicists over decades; for a succinct overview, see Jason Springs, "On Giving Religious Intolerance its Due: Prospects for Transforming Conflict in a Post-Secular Society," *The Journal of Religion* 92, no. 1 (January 2012): 1-30, especially 2-7.

36 This point is perhaps grotesquely evident in the profiling of Rabbi Menachem Froman as one of the select "peacemakers" of the Tenenbaum Center. Froman is a settler whose ideological and religious formations are both selective (as a discursive analysis will show) and enabling of the very root causes of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Froman can talk about peace and reconciliation, but as long as this talk is stricken by the kind of amnesia I articulate, it is problematic to categorize him as a "peacebuilder." See *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution.*

37 For extensive discussions of the method of the *hermeneutics of citizenship* and for my analysis of Israeli peace activism, specifically, see Omer, *When Peace is Not Enough: How the Israeli Peace Camp Thinks about Religion, Nationalism, and Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming) and Omer, "The Hermeneutics of Citizenship as a Peacebuilding Process: A Multiperspectival Approach to Justice," *Journal of Political Theology* 11, no. 5 (October 2010): 650-673.

38 See, for example, Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina, *Islam and Human Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Ann Elizabeth Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007); Abdullahi An-Na'im, *Islam and Human Rights: Selected Essays of Abdullahi An-Na'im* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); An-Na'im, *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990); Irene Oh, *The Rights of God: Islam, Human Rights, and Comparative Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2007); David Novak, *Conventional Rights: A Study in Jewish Political Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Novak, *Natural Law in Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

39 See Little, "Belief, Ethnicity, and Nationalism," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 1, no. 2

(Summer 1995): 284-301 Little, "Ground to Stand On: A Philosophical Reappraisal of Human Rights Language," *Essays by David Little* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming) [and Little, "Peace, Justice, and Religion," in *What is Just Peace*, eds. Pierre Allan and Alexis Keller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006),149-175.

40 Little often cites the work of Johannes Morsink in documenting the kind of cross-cultural debating that went into the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; see Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

41 See, Little and Appleby, "A Moment of Opportunity?"

42 This approach informs Timothy Sisk, ed., *Between Terror and Tolerance: Religious Leaders, Conflict, and Peacemaking* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011). This work studies the potential constructive and destructive roles of religious leaders within the nexus of religion, nationalism, and state formation as well as in relation to supra-national doctrinal disputes, as in the Sunni-Shi'a divide.

43 See, for instance, Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

44 See Scott Hibbard, *Religious Politics and Secular States: Egypt, India, and the United States* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

45 Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, The Politics of Secularism in International Relations (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

46 See, for example, Saba Mahmood, "The Politics of Freedom: Geopolitics, Minority Rights, and Gender," The Sixth Annual Helen Pond McIntyre '48 Lecture, Barnard College, November 5, 2009, http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2009/mahmood231109.html (accessed February 7, 2012).

47 Jean Zaru, *Occupied with Nonviolence: A Palestinian Woman Speaks* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 42.

48 Mahmood (in collaboration with Shakman Hurd) explains that the principle of religious freedom is intricately related to the story of the emergence of the secular-liberal democratic state. A genealogy of this development shows the carving of religion out of the political and the framing of religion as a belief and/or faith and as a phenomenon also characterized by doctrines, creeds, institutions, and rituals. While this framing seems to make sense in a particular context, its universalization, through a process of colonial classification and domination, was precisely that of an imposition of alien categories, even if those categories may have been eventually internalized and appropriated by colonial subjects.

49 Zaru, 62.

50 In June of 2011, I attended a conference entitled "Local Peacebuilding and Religion: Conflict, Practice, and Models" at Emory University. A small number of the presentations moved beyond the paradigm that privileges the far and the exotic over discursive self-examination. In a paper titled "Sacrifice, Civil Religion, and Obstacles to Peacebuilding in the U.S.," Kelly Denton-Borhaug probed into the relevance of deconstructing an ethos of exceptionalism and sacrifice as key for moving constructively from the belligerent and imperialistic paradigms of American foreign policy. This process of introspection involves an analysis of the selective deployment of religious imaginaries in the construal and reproduction of an American civil religion. Denton-Borhaug's project, therefore, suggests that "religion" can be involved in peacebuilding through a process of critique and rethinking "empire" and "national destiny." Another presentation by William O'Neil challenged the premises and categories of restorative justice as pivotal for rethinking peacebuilding in the United States. Likewise moving beyond the *far* as the focus of peacebuilding (and religion as it relates to conflict), Jason Springs discussed "Peacebuilding in Contexts of Structural and Cultural Violence: The Case of the Headscarf Controversy in France." Here the focus is western Europe and rising Islamophobia. The analysis of this trend requires one to deploy the tools of cultural theory as well as peace studies. Structural and cultural forms of violence as embodied in the ethos of laïcité in France, for example, necessitate a deconstructive critique of secularism, colonialism, Orientalism, and multiculturalism. For an illustrative example of what this kind of critique might look like, see Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

51 Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, *Religion: The Missing Dimensions of Statecraft* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994).

52 Johnston, ed., *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Thomas Scott, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); David Smock, "Religious Peacemaking in International Zones of Religious Conflict," *USIP Religion and Peacemaking List Digest* 16 (2003); USIP, "Faith-based NGOs and International Peacebuilding," www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports (2001); Gopin, *To Make the Earth Whole: The Art of Citizen Diplomacy in an Age of Religious Militancy* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009); and Coward and Smith, *Religion and Peacebuilding*.

53 Here I allude to the concept of "soft power" developed by Joseph S. Nye in *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

54 The designation "faith-based" suggests that religious peacebuilding did not pose a radical challenge to the operative theoretical frameworks in international relations (realism, liberalism, and constructivism). Therefore, it is not surprising that Emily Cochran Bech and Jack Snyder, in their conclusion to an edited volume *Religion and International Relations Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), argue that challenges from discursive critiques, as in Shakman-Hurd, only illuminate some correctable limitations in each of these conventions.

55 See Omer, "Can a Critic Be a Caretaker Too? Religion, Conflict, and Conflict Transformation," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79, no. 2 (June 2011): 459-496.

56 See, for instance, Susan Okin, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

57 Lederach and Appleby, "Strategic Peacebuilding: An Overview," in *Strategies of Peace: Transforming Conflict in a Violent World*, eds. Philpott and Powers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). See also Lederach, "Justpeace," in *People Building Peace: 35 Inspiring Stories from Around the World*, ed. Paul Van Tongeren (Utrecht: European Center for Conflict Prevention, 1999), 27-36.

58 A notable stride in this direction was the convening by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs of a task force to explore the role of global religions in international politics and diplomacy. It is no surprise that co-chairing this task force was Appleby, whose earlier work set the parameters for the study of religious peacebuilding.

59 One way to open up the discussion to critique would be through integrating the philosophical explorations of religion and human rights, especially the issue of proselytizing. See, for instance, Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Toleration, Proselytizing, and the Politics of Recognition," and John Witte Jr., "The Rights and Limits of Proselytism in the New Religious World Order," in *Religious Pluralism, Globalization, and World Politics*, ed. Banchoff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 89-104 and 105-124

60 Judith Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990).

61 See Marshall, "Women, Religion, and Peacebuilding Interview Series," *US Institute of Peace, the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, and the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD)*, http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/women-religion-and-peace-experience-perspectives-and-policy-implications (accessed February 8, 2012). For an analysis that centrally incorporates gender theory (not only an account of women, religion, and conflict/peace), see Monique Skidmore and Patricia Lawrence, eds., *Women and the Contested State: Religion, Violence, and Agency in South and Southeast Asia* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

62Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).