

Globalisation and Religion. An Overview

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More often than not, social studies of globalisation and religion begin with an attempt to characterise globalisation. Ironically, religion is by no means easier to define and has been the subject of crucial debates (Asad 1993; Beckford 2003). Yet, the uneasiness of students of religion with globalisation reflects the difficulties of using a fresh, ambiguous and abstract notion, now overused in popular discourses, and whose meaning is vigorously disputed amongst social scientists. That is the reason why this introduction first provides a brief account of the various sociological understandings of globalisation, not least because debates on what *is* globalisation are of importance when addressing the relationships between globalisation and religion in particular.

Debating Globalisation

The concept of globalisation originated in highly theoretical and macro-sociological discussions that aimed to grasp various complex processes. These theories variously outline the emergence of a “global village” as a result of communication technology, now linking individuals throughout the globe (McLuhan 1968), the spread of a world capitalist system organising the distribution of wealth and power between countries (Wallerstein 1974), or a “world polity” through which political models of authority such as the nation-state are increasingly common (Meyer 1980). Globalisation therefore implies an increasing interdependence of regions and countries through communication, finance and governance; but it also involves an intensification of the subjective consciousness of this interdependence, coined “globality” by Robertson (1992: 8). In other words, globalisation is also about social actors’ ideas and perception of the world as a whole: consumption products are thought for a global mass market, military and political issues are linked to the idea of a world order, ecumenism reflects an awareness of an inescapable religious diversity, social movements are increasingly transnational in their organisation and aims, environmental threats are thought on a planetary level (Waters 1995: 42, 63).

In the light of these different uses of the concept of globalisation, it is not surprising that its meaning has been debated and contested by social scientists. It seems to us that four of these debates are particularly important. Firstly, globalisation has often been associated with a process of de-territorialisation, hence addressing the meaning of space in the global world. Globalisation has indeed been described as a process of time-space compression: communication transport and the acceleration in production, exchange and consumption are said to annihilate space and shorten time (Harvey 1990). The distanciation between time and space is also central to Giddens’ (1990: 64) approach to globalisation, which emphasises the fact that in modern societies social relations are increasingly disembedded from their local context, while worldwide social relations linking different localities are intensified. The signification of space is also addressed by depictions of globalisation that insist on the *fluidity* of modern social phenomena. Appadurai (1990), for example, describes global cultural “flows” of people, information, technologies, capital and worldviews, which he termed ethnoscaples, mediascaples,

technoscapes, finanscapes and ideoscapes, respectively. It is precisely through de-territorialisation that, for Appadurai, these flows find their paths, albeit in a fragmented and disjointed way. On a cultural level, interrelatedness and fluidity contribute to what Hannerz (1989) calls a “global ecumene”, a world culture within which subcultures are ordered by centre-periphery relationships. However, other anthropologists have been prompt to stress that no social fact is “groundless” or totally dissociated from any locality (Assayag 1998, Friedman 2000, Amselle 2002). It could be claimed that de-territorialisation necessarily involves re-territorialisation and that rather than being in tension, globalisation incorporates locality itself (Robertson 2003: 48)¹.

Secondly, a fundamental debate regarding globalisation results from the understanding of its cause (McGrew 2003: 341). One approach is to understand globalisation as the result of the economic, military and technological hegemony of the West, and accordingly equate globalisation with westernisation (Therborn 1995). The idea that a capitalist monoculture will dominate and spread standardised cultural goods has been developed for example by Ritzer (2000), who termed the process McDonaldisation, insisting on the expansion of the rationalisation process formerly analysed by Weber. By contrast, other scholars make a distinction between globalisation and westernisation and insist on the contribution of other regions of the world. In this perspective, westernisation is only one particularism amongst others, no more meaningful than Japanisation for Koreans, Indianisation for Sri Lankans, Russianisation for the Baltic republics, etc. (Appadurai 1990: 5-6). This means that globalisation can be polycentric, and that some peripheries may act as centres to other peripheries. The importance of this debate is paramount: equating globalisation with the westernisation of the world assumes that this process leads to the standardisation of culture and the uniformity of institutional structures around the globe. Yet the thesis of the homogenisation of culture might overlook the importance of processes of the appropriation of circulating cultural resources, which involves selection, interpretation and adaptation (Tomlinson 1999: 84). This is precisely because globalised cultural resources are adapted to local settings that their globalisation can occur. This is what Robertson (1995, 2003) tries to capture with the notion of glocalisation; it implies that universalising and particularising tendencies coexist and that the global is only possible when being adaptable to local contexts. Finally, the homogenisation thesis ignores the fact that “it is through the consumption of imported commercial products and foreign ideas that we can sometimes observe the strongest manifestations of cultural and national identity” (Amselle 2002: 216) – in other words globalisation enables the production of cultural diversity itself.

Thirdly, crucial discussions relate to the issue of the impact of globalisation. Globalisation’s effects can be envisaged in a deterministic way, that is to say as a process ineluctably imposed on contemporary societies. Another approach consists in shedding light on the ways in which globalisation elicits responses and resistances. At the grassroots level, alternative social forums, and transnational networks of social movements and civil initiatives, constitute what has been called globalisation-from-below, challenging the authority of national and international forms of governance – globalisation from above (Falk 1993). Thus global civil society has become an increasingly important social actor shaping globalisation, for example through anti-

¹ It is also worth noting that there is no consensus on globalisation’s time-scale. Globalisation is alternatively considered as an unprecedented social phenomenon, hence embedded in a theory of modernity (Giddens 1990), or resituated in a longer continuum as a process that precedes modernity (Robertson 1990).

globalisation movements combating a neoliberal world order and asking for global justice and integration.

Finally, the understanding of globalisation's impact relates to the question whether the legitimacy and authority of nation-states is undermined in the new world order. Transnational social movements may be seen as constituting new and independent forms of counter-power, the expansion of capitalism as limiting the scope for progressive politics, and world governance as undermining the autonomy of national laws and policies. In other words, as key networks of power increasingly transcend national boundaries, it is discussed whether globalisation contributes to a denationalisation of territorial space or at least to a re-shaping of the state (McGrew 2003: 343).

These four fundamental discussions regarding globalisation – de-territorialisation and the significance of space, homogenisation and diversification of culture, responses to globalisation, and denationalisation – are reflected in those social studies focusing on religion in global context. In particular, studies into the globalisation of religion aim to understand the relationships between transnational religions and space, they discuss the westernisation and diversification of religion in global context, they explore the ways in which globalisation elicit religious responses, and they analyse the ways in which global religions challenge national states. These essential thematic approaches to globalisation and religion structure the four volumes of this Reader: Religion and Space in Global Context (vol. 1), Westernisation of religion and its Counter-trends (vol. 2), Religious Responses to Globalisation (vol. 3), and Religion and Politics in Global Context – New Challenges (vol. 4). Each of these themes will be discussed in this Introduction, but before this, two points need to be made at the outset and will be expanded in the next two sections. To start with, in such an Introduction, it seems unavoidable to stress the very particular relations between religion and the phenomenon of globalisation, often thought as being consubstantial to each other. It is also particularly important to point out how globalisation, as a conceptual tool, has impacted on the sociological understanding of modern religious phenomena.

Religion and Globalisation

Sociological analyses of globalisation have predominantly focused on world capitalism and international relations, and have only recently looked at globalisation's relation to culture and religion. However, there might be good reasons to view religion as an essential component of the making of the contemporary global situation. To begin with, one could claim that religions inherently think globality, since religious worldviews are deeply concerned with the idea of "wholeness". They attempt to grasp ultimate truth, to provide a totalizing, all-encompassing explanation of the universe and its origins, the beginning and end of time, its cycle, the essence of nature and humankind, or the meaning of life.

Furthermore, if we understand globalisation as interdependence and consciousness of this interdependence, we could claim that religions have always been global in the sense that they never have been isolated from each other. Religions have had permeable boundaries, and through circulations of peoples and ideas they have moved and interacted with one another, generating borrowings, adaptations and syntheses of beliefs and practices (Juergensmeyer 2003: 4-5). Doing so, religions break through frontiers and play a fundamental role in the constant re-elaboration of new boundaries, to such an extent that Lehmann defines them as the "original *globalizers*". As an example, he describes how the expansion of so-called 'world religions' through missionary activities

and often alongside colonisation, has entailed the development of universalistic ambitions as well as an understanding of “the other”, allowing them to transcend their former collective identity and culture, and to export a religious metaculture capable of remaining identifiable while being absorbed locally. In other words, religions’ de-territorialisation and permeability entail the relativisation of worldviews and practices². Through the encounter with religious ‘others’, social actors are compelled to address their fundamentals, identities and values, hence making them more reflexive (raising questions such as: what does my religion stand for? What is the truth?), and sometimes responsive to difference through various discourses of apostasy. It is precisely because religious encounters (whether acculturation or opposition) raise the problems of religious universalism and particular identities (Robertson and White 2003: 32) that we cannot but agree with Robbins’ claim, in ‘Is the Trans- in Transnational The Trans- in Transcendent?’, that religion has alterity as its object.

Finally, it may be claimed that globalisation elicits religious responses because, as Robertson and Chirico argue, globalisation is itself intrinsically religious. This claim entails that in order to understand the worldwide resurgence of religious phenomena (such as fundamentalism, the emergence of new religious movements, and tensions in the relations between states and religions), we need to understand the making of modern global circumstances. In their seminal text, Robertson and Chirico argue that two aspects of globalisation “accentuate or at least open-up religious or quasi-religious concerns”. Firstly, globalisation involves the relativisation of societies and selves, in such a way that it raises issues about the legitimacy of the world order of societies and the meaning of mankind. Secondly, these processes of relativisation involve reactions and resistances within societies, toward a politico-religious definition of particularistic identity and values, raising fundamentalism and civil religion problems. That is to say, in a globalised world that entails increasing levels of contact and proximity between a diversity of religions, hence the growing awareness of this diversity, religion is likely to play a significant role in the construction of identities, in social conflicts and in political issues. While this could be seen as a politisation of religion, Robertson and Chirico also note that the conflation of politics and religion in global circumstances also derives from the fact that conversely the state has increasingly taken charge of matters about the meaning of life and humanity which were traditionally associated with the religious sphere.

From Secularisation to Globalisation

Robertson and Chirico’s argument concerning the conflation of politics and religion inevitably bears on the secularisation thesis and more broadly on our understanding of the significance of religion in contemporary societies. This leads us to another important reflection, regarding the ways in which the concept of globalisation may contribute to renew social sciences’ understanding of religion in modernity. The sociology of religion has been dominated by the question of whether religion is compatible with modernity. Influenced by the Enlightenment’s rationalism and optimistic belief in progress, the founders of sociology believed religion was somewhat doomed in western societies. Rationalisation, individualism and the decline of collective consciousness, or industrialisation would undermine religion’s role and influence. As sociologists (Berger 1967; Luckmann 1967; Martin 1978; Wilson 1976) described the gradual separation of churches and states in contemporary western Europe and observed

² Robertson and Chirico: "By relativization we mean a process involving the placing of sociocultural or psychic entities in larger categorical contexts, such that the relativized entities are constrained to be more self-reflexive relative to other entities in the larger context".

the decline of religious commitment and practice in the post-Second World War period, the concept of secularisation became the sociology of religion's great narrative, the framework commonly used to understand the relations between modernity and the decline of religion's influence in social life.

Introducing globalisation into the equation, it may be argued that religion's influence and role could be undermined. Beyer (1999) advances that religion is disadvantaged compared to social systems it competes with, such as politics, economy, science or mass media. Religions are fragmented as a plurality of organisations and movements in a non-regulated market; in a world dominated by technologically oriented systems, and they have no common standards through which they could be assessed like science does, they have no equivalent channel of globalisation such interchangeable currencies or political diplomacy. **If globalisation entails the worldwide standardisation and specialisation of social relations, that is to say a process of rationalisation universalised, then globalisation restricts the social and cultural significance of religion on the world scale. Generating the global conditions for secularisation, globalisation may then transcend religion,** as Lechner argues in 'Trajectories of Faith in the Global Age: Classical Theory and Contemporary Evidence'.

But thinking with the concept of globalisation may also address the relevance of the secularisation paradigm itself. Like secularisation, the concept of globalisation aims at explaining and understanding social change in relation to modernity. Yet, in focusing on social trends that cross boundaries and interactions *between* societies, globalisation compels social scientists to think globally too. It demands cross-cultural comparisons and multi-local investigations, and hence a shift away from the "methodological nationalism" (Martins 1974: 276) adopted by most sociologists that makes the nation-state the natural container of social life. By contrast, secularisation theories have focused on modern Europe and its decline of religion, making of secularisation an isolable and distinctive historical development unavoidably linked to Christendom (Robertson 1987:31). This means that at the very least, testing properly the theory of secularisation on a worldwide scale entails the broadening of our horizons, and the questioning of what counts as religion or as religious decline. Since religion's trajectory and manifestations vary across the world, different indicators of secularisation will be needed (Beyer 1999: 295). Moreover, a comparative perspective on the significance of religion in various regions of the world could well point out the extraordinary resilience and vitality of religions in various social contexts. Undeniably, religion can still play a fundamental role in giving substance to identity and collective membership (such as in Northern Ireland (Mitchell [2006:17]), as an actor in the public sphere (see for example Casanova's [1994] seminal study of the Catholic church in Poland, Brazil, Spain and the United States), in international conflicts (such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict), and in terrorism. This list is far from complete. These examples show that religion has become a significant means for various regions to assert themselves in the global world, as Robertson and Chirico suggested. It might lead us to conclude that modernity and religious decline may not always be coterminous in every part of the world. Thus the assumption that modernisation generates religious decline cannot be considered as a universal law. The issue of secularisation and its focus on the specific internal dynamic of the western Christendom model should be subsumed by an emergent global perspective (Robertson 1987: 31).

Accordingly, the use of the concept of globalisation entails a shift away from the old narrative towards other issues. In other words, the globalisation of religion allows us to address new questions that could be overlooked if we focus too much on the idea of

religion's decline in modern societies and its relation to the state. For example, how do migrants reconstruct their religious tradition in host societies? How do religions become transnational and interact with new cultural environments? What impact do they have on nation-states and their response to religious diversity? How do transnational religions conceptualise territories and communities? What are the consequences of religion's use of global media and modern communication technologies? More importantly, religions in modernity cannot be exclusively explained by national or local factors. Beyer (1999: 292-3) gives three examples in this regard. The Catholic Church cannot be resumed to its local manifestations. Migrants' religions have to be understood in their transnational dimension, involving their place of origins and of new settlement, but also transnational circulation of people, capital, knowledge and practice. Finally, Pentecostalism's upsurge all over the world cannot be grasped from one region or country exclusively, considering its local variations and transnational development. This, we would add, is true for other religions that are presented in this reader, from Buddhism in the West to Yoruba religions and their transatlantic diffusion. Now that these preliminary remarks have shed light on the importance of globalisation for the social understanding of religion, the following sections of this Introduction present, in turn, the theme from each volume in this Reader.

Religion and Space in Global Context

We have described globalisation as a social phenomenon addressing the significance of space through processes of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation. It is therefore understandable that the relationship between religions and space in global context has become an important sociological issue. Indeed, this relationship is particularly fascinating and complex: while religions relate to sacred homelands and acknowledge particular geographic roots, they have never been nationally bounded and always have crossed boundaries. Thus contributions in the first volume outline the ways in which religions construct geographic representations of the globalised world. They also address religions' changing territories and boundaries in global context, in particular through diasporas and the use of communication technologies.

The relations between space and religions in global context has sometimes been analysed through the centre/periphery framework (Hannerz 1989), a perspective which underlines the asymmetric nature of interdependences between regions of the globe. Applied to religion, the centre-periphery perspective addresses *where* religions are constructed in global society. In 'The City and Beyond as Dialogue: Negotiating Religious Authenticity in Global Society', Beyer presents 17th century Europe as the 'centre' where religions, conceptualised as distinct and coexisting subsystems, were formed. This particular societal construction of religious sub-systems became the model of religion for the rest of the world through the impact of western imperialism, just as the nation-state was to encapsulate social life and shape identities around the globe. Yet the 'periphery' also contributes to the globalisation of religion in many ways; examples include the emergence of indigenous Pentecostals in Latin America and Africa, the religious vitality of migrating populations from non-western countries to Europe and North America, and the success of Buddhism and Hinduism in the West. It is striking that this centre-periphery relationship is sometimes reflected in representations of space elaborated by religions themselves. Robbins' fieldwork on converts to Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in Papua New Guinea focuses on their concern with the separation between heaven and earth, particularly dramatised by these forms of Christian doctrines. Pentecostal and Charismatic cosmology indeed devalues the world as a place

full of temptation and evil influences and by contrast magnifies heaven as an inaccessible and desirable place to be. This dual religious representation of space finds meaning in that it mirrors the way Papua New Guineans interpret their social lives in the global world: namely at the periphery. It expresses their sense of remoteness from unreachable places of power, wealth and well-being. This fascinating case study emphasises the importance of analysing the religious meaning of space, a theme suggested by McAlister's agenda for the understanding of 'Globalization and the Religious Production of Space'³.

Furthermore, what becomes fundamental with globalisation is what is happening *between* locations, such as "centres" and "peripheries"; in other words *movement*. Indeed, globalisation implies complex and mutual influences between places, through the intensification of circulations of people, ideas, commodities, money, and so forth. It is consequently a challenge for social scientists to find ways of understanding how the intensification of these "flows" affect religious practices, beliefs, and identities, and how de-territorialised religious communities develop. This challenge has probably led to the renewal of interest in the concept of *diaspora*. For Saint Blancat, who analyses the transformation of Islam in Europe, this concept sheds light on transnational mobility, extraterritorial bonds of identity and constant adaptation to local contexts of residence. Similarly, what Werbner calls diasporas' 'chaordic nature' emphasises their de-territorialisation and de-centralisation, but also their sense of sharing a collective past and common destiny beyond national boundaries.

How precisely do religious diasporas combine local adaptation and transnationality? One approach to this question is to single out one religious tradition and compare its variations in new local contexts, which is what Vertovec does. Conversely, one can focus on the changes different immigrants' religions undergo in one particular host society. Ebaugh and Yang, for example, conducted an ethnographic study of several immigrant religious institutions in the Houston metropolitan area. They outline common patterns of adaptation to contemporary American society, such as adopting a congregational form of organisation and ritual and adapting to a pluralistic environment. More challenging is the attempt to grasp the "transnationalism of the middle" as Malher and Hansing put it, and map what is transmitted *in between* locations within transnational religious communities. In this regard, Levitt uses the term "social remittances" to account for ideas, practices, identities and social capital that are exchanged between migrants and non-migrants from their community of origin. This concept, argues Levitt, allows us to capture the ways in which beliefs and practices are transformed, in both host country and sending-country communities by ways of communication and travel, and therefore to understand globalised everyday religious life at the local level.

Finally, relationships between religion and space have been dramatically transformed by the development of channels of communication linking different part of the world. Maxwell provides a detailed account of the global spread of Pentecostalism, emphasising the importance of print media. Emerging at the beginning of the 20th century, the Pentecostal movement crossed the globe within a decade. This phenomenal growth was facilitated by the invention of mechanised typesettings and by the system of

³ In 'The Many Who Dance in Me: Afro-Atlantic Ontology and the Problem with Transnationalism', Matory notes that "religions are among the most widespread and institutionalized ways in which people employ the image and reality of faraway places and times as models of underlying, ideal, or superpowered realities". Accordingly, the representation of the "Other Place is not merely geographic" and has a metaphoric function.

universal flat-rate postage at the end of the 19th century, making Pentecostal literature inexpensive and easy to publish and spread. New media technology of the 20th century increased the expansion of religious discourse, as shown by American Televangelism, a form of religious broadcasting operated by conservative evangelicals who particularly aim to reach regions of the world where their missionary activities are difficult, forbidden or challenged by competition. In the last decade, the Internet has been employed by all sorts of religious actors, raising a new area of the study around the themes of online religions and virtual communities. However, it seems to us that a satisfactory analysis linking globalisation, religion, and *practices* of Internet users remains to be done.

The ways in which global media facilitate the expansion and modification of religious teachings represent only one aspect of the relationships between religions and communication. It is equally fundamental to take into account the *reception* of messages disseminated by printing, broadcasting or the Internet and to analyse how globally spread religious ideas and representations impact upon audiences and their religious lives. In this regard, we found Kirsch's article particularly interesting. Focusing on mission societies such as the Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church that disseminate their literature on a worldwide scale, Kirsch points out that these organisations, in order to maintain control over interpretations of these publications, encourage their members to follow certain literary practices. Yet their ability to control interpretations "depends on the readiness of local participants to become involved with them in a manner that is always tied to their respective headquarters", where the adoption of these literary practices can provide a source of empowerment such as increased participation or promotion within the local church. Again, as many of the studies discussed above show, the study of globalisation entails taking into account how different localities are linked together through extensive networks of circulating practices and ideas, which certainly do not preclude power relations.

Westernisation of Religion and its Counter-trends

Another key debate concerns whether globalisation is a process of westernisation, hence of homogenisation, or whether it maintains and generates cultural diversity. How this issue relates to religion is the object of the second volume of this reader. Beyer's analysis of "The Religious System of Global Society" poses the problem with great subtlety. It states that globalisation involves the expansion of religion, as elaborated in modern European Christian societies, that is to say as a differentiated subsystem (from science, law, economics, and so on), and as a plurality of religious entities distinguished from one another. This is precisely religion's relative differentiation that made it transportable to other societies, under the influence of western imperialism. As a result, in the last two centuries, through selective processes, non-western regions of the world have identified and constructed "non-western religions as distinct entities comparable to, but different from, especially Christianity". This western model of religion has expanded and given shape to a 'global religious system', in which distinct religious sub-systems (such as Christianity, Hinduism or Islam) have become a means of identifying and expressing difference in cultural encounters, in particular in a globalised world. Indeed, the more the world becomes globalised, the more societies and individuals may feel the need to differentiate themselves and draw clear-cut boundaries and identities (Robertson: 1992)⁴. Thus, the global religious system might be seen as a

⁴ More largely, Robertson (1992: 97-114) describes this coexistence of homogenising and heterogenising trends within globalisation as a two fold process, involving the universalisation of particularism and the particularisation of universalism.

factor of homogenisation, which paradoxically is able to maintain heterogeneity at the same time. Consequently, westernisation of religion coexists alongside the dramatisation of differences. This coexistence of paradoxical tendencies is important to recall, as the thesis of westernisation has often been over-simplified by its critiques.

It is not surprising that the debate over westernisation is present in the analysis of global forms of Christianity. Beyer advances that western imperialism has led to the globalisation of Christianity so that it remains the largest religion in the world. Nonetheless, Freston notes that while 81% of Christians were white in 1900, only 40% were in 2000. This drastic change is the result of a low birth rate and a continuous process of secularisation in the West, combined with the impressive growth of Christianity in non-western regions of the world. In other words, one could say that Christianity has become a non-western religion. Transnational evangelicalism is indeed increasingly initiated within the Third World itself by autonomous local agents. African churches have developed and expanded beyond the African continent: Adogame shows that while these churches have maintained their particular ethnic religious identities in European societies, they successfully have taken advantage of new forms of communication technologies, as well as of the religious, economic, and socio-political opportunities in their host countries, and they have engaged in new roles such as assisting immigrants and asylum seekers. This should remind us of the importance of the so-called “peripheries” in the making of globalisation. Indeed, one of the criticisms made to the westernisation thesis is that it risks overlooking the active process of “indigenisation” and instrumentalisation of religious and cultural “imports” from the West by non-western societies.

Thus, numerous social studies link the vitality of contemporary Christianity, in particular its Pentecostal and Charismatic expressions, with their ability to become embedded within cultural, political and economic contexts of non-western societies. For example, Burgess claims that the popularity of Pentecostalism in Nigeria can be explained by the fact that its doctrines “resonate” with the search for spiritual power in African religious traditions. Similarly, Mullins argues that Pentecostal Korean churches have been significantly influenced by indigenous folk religion and shamanism, precisely the combination that allowed them to spread in Japan. Both Hurbon and Austin-Broos emphasise Pentecostalism’s affinity with the Caribbean social, religious and economic context. There is by and large a tendency to account for the success of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in non-western societies through the identification of affinities and resonances, and in this regard Robbins’ critique of this anthropology of continuity is most welcome. While these studies undeniably outline crucial factors for the understanding of Christianity in non-western societies, Robbins argues that judgments of continuity should be made more carefully: these approaches often overlook Pentecostalism’s discourses and rituals of disjunction involving rupture and discontinuities with local cultures.

The debate over the westernisation of religion is also reflected in the study of Asian religions’ spread in the West. Indeed, an influential approach to this issue has been Campbell’s (1999; 2007) assumption that a process of easternisation of the West has occurred. Linking the decline of Christian beliefs in Europe with the increasing success of Eastern religious practices and beliefs, Campbell advances that the West witnesses a major paradigm shift because, by the middle of the twentieth century, it lacked a coherent and morally satisfying meaning system. While Campbell’s concern was more the secularisation of western societies, scholars who analysed the spread of Eastern religions in the West thought otherwise. They cannot but notice that these religions were deeply

impregnated by western values even before shining in western societies. Altglas outlines that modern gurus who are successful in North America and Europe today inherited a drastic transformation of Hinduism that occurred in 19th Century India, influenced by the European romantic quest for the 'mystical East' and the criticisms of Christian missionaries. It is suggested that this neo-Hinduism that then spread in western societies, although perceived as exotic and 'Eastern' by the western audience, was far from being alien and unfamiliar. Baumann describes a similar process, wherein Buddhism was reinterpreted in its confrontation with western ideas and missionary Christianity. Buddhists elaborated a text-based, pragmatic, rational, universal, and socially active Buddhism which, in the 20th century, seduce westerners. Moreover, eastern religions increasingly undergo westernisation as they settle in North America and Europe. Both Altglas and Baumann observe the development of Hindu and Buddhist groups, respectively, in the West, detached from their traditional cultural roots and focused on a quest for personal self-fulfilment. In short, these Eastern religious practices and beliefs might well tell us more about religious attitudes in western societies today, than about Hinduism or Buddhism themselves. Indeed, Rocha shows that through their interest for Zen Buddhism, Brazilian middle and upper middle classes express a desire of modernity (though one different from Brazil's modernity that implies corruption, inequalities and violence) and integration to a cosmopolitan elite oversea.

However, the idea of the westernisation of religions has been particularly challenged by students of Afro-Atlantic religions who shed light on their transnational character, long before western imperialism. Products of interactions in the Gulf of Guinea, Yoruba religions became global by sharing their orisas (spirits) with their West African neighbours and by adopting some of their deities. Then the Atlantic slave trade provided the context for a globalisation of Yoruba traditions in the Caribbean and South America, where a syncretism with Christianity in Brazil, Cuba, Haiti and Trinidad gave birth to religions such as Candomble, Santeria, Xango and Batuque. Finally, Frigerio identifies a contemporary process of transnationalisation of Yoruba religions, which he coined 're-Africanisation'. Through this process, members of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Brazilian religions such as those mentioned above decide to look to current day Africa, as the true source of theological and ritual knowledge⁵. All of this explains why Matory considers that the newness of globalisation is a matter of perspective: exile, translocality, multiple identities and belonging to different communities have always been part of the Yoruba worldview.

The debate on Yoruba religions' transnationalism underlines that a strong emphasis on westernisation may lead theorists to overlook the polycentric nature of globalisation and the existence of *multiple religious globalisations*. Van Bruinessen and Dilley both analyse the encounter of Islam with local cultures (here, Indonesia and Senegal) and explore how this fundamentally transnational religion has negotiated its values and practices locally. The two authors describe the ways in which local Islam today is confronted not only with secular western influences but also with a 'global' or reformist Islam, aiming at regulating and standardising Muslim practices and doctrines, more in line with those of the Muslims of Arabia that are perceived as purer and more authentic. These two case studies underline the encounters, adaptations and tensions that bind a global religion with its local expressions. It seems that we cannot stress enough the complexity of the relationships between globalisation and religion.

⁵ An excellent synthesis on Afro-Brazilian religions' contribution to the study of globalisation is written (in French) by Capone (2002).

Religious Responses to Globalisation

Responses and resistance to globalisation with particular reference to religion is discussed in the third volume. Because religions address the world order and the meaning of life, they prove to be extremely responsive to globalisation. Beckford in 'Globalisation and Religion' indeed notes that religions are by definition self-reflexive, and in this perspective they are bound to reflect on globalisation, a topical issue not only for the media, politics and social scientists. Like any social change which poses new questions, globalisation challenges religions and their ability to elaborate a message that remains relevant in changing social contexts. Drawing on popular understanding of globalisation, religious actors borrow the term, think through its moral and doctrinal implications, and may modify actions and activities accordingly. Whether globalisation is perceived by religious groups as an opportunity to extend its influence on a planetary level, or as a threat to values and identities, religions generate various and contradictory responses to globalisation. These responses show that religions are not simply passive agents subjected to globalisation, but also significantly involved in the making of globalisation itself.

Globalisation challenges religions because, through pluralisation and the relativisation of values, it alters their influence and authority. For Beyer, in 'Privatization and the Public Influence of Religion in Global Society'⁶, this challenge may lead religion to opt for a 'liberal' position and accept to become a matter of private choice. In the public sphere they would favour ecumenism and inclusion. By contrast, 'conservative' religions find themselves in conflict with the reduced role of religion in the globalised world; they endeavour to reassert tradition and community solidarity, and wish to see religious norms imposed by law. This conservative option is best illustrated by cases of fundamentalism, which have also been described as a form of anti-globalism. Lehmann offers another distinction between 'cosmopolitan' and 'fundamentalist' forms of globalisation of religion. Cosmopolitan religious globalisation accounts for an erudite and institutionalised form of religion, which attempts to grasp otherness and difference. Catholicism and its mission in Latin America and Africa, for example, implied the acceptance of the fact that in order to change others' beliefs and practices, an understanding of their cultural context was necessary. This is precisely the understanding of otherness and the resulting process of inculturation that allowed Catholicism to absorb and refashion local cultures worldwide, writes Lehmann. The fundamentalist form of globalisation is by opposition rather popular and more disorganised; it involves independent social actors who choose and mobilise elements from different cultures. It proves to have "a remarkable ability to adapt to local custom, and establish local forms of identity", yet it does so without theorising otherness. This explains fundamentalism's capacity to overlook existing political or ethnic particularities and to create transcultural communities.

Fundamentalism appears to be at the heart of the analysis of religious responses to globalisation. Fundamentalism has increasingly been understood as a defensive reaction to globalisation, an attempt to return to cultural or religious purity in response to what is perceived as a universalising global culture. Eisenstadt describes it as a reinterpretation and re-appropriation of the cultural programme of modernity in its own terms, through anti-western or anti-Enlightenment themes. Turner outlines that paradoxically, while fundamentalism tends to counter and challenge the western differentiation of the

⁶ See also Beyer (1994).

religious sphere, it remains a form of modernisation and certainly not a traditional response to the global context. It constitutes ways of finding a place within the global world, focused on particularism and representations of authenticity. In other words, in a global world involving the relativisation of cultures and religions, identity becomes power. This explains, writes Robertson, 'the search for fundamentals' of religious, nationalistic and indigenisation movements around the world.

Four different case studies illustrate the relationship between fundamentalism and globalisation. Friedman provides us with a history of a Jewish Orthodox movement, Habad, which after being restricted to particularistic-local boundaries, responded to secularisation and to its relocation in the West by developing a worldwide mission toward secular Jews. Frikenberg explores the concern in India, more particularly among the defenders of Hindutva, regarding conversions to Christianity, perceived as an Americanisation that undermines India's religious and national identity. Roy understands radical Islamic groups – which he calls 'neofundamentalists' – as a response to the end of the Muslim world as a geographic entity and to western influence penetrating Islam. Fitting with Lehmann's model, neofundamentalism attempts to decontextualise Islam. According to Roy, it rejects the idea of the internal diversity of Islam and looks for purity beyond nationality, ethnicity, language and culture, thus transforming Islam into a set of 'portable' codes. Finally, Agadjanian and Rousselet analyse Russian Orthodox responses to Russia's new political context. The collapse of the communist block involved the loosening of national borders, a new situation of structural secularism, pressures for freedom of expression and a diversification of religions. All of these factors undermine the traditional nation-centred model of the Church, now having large Russian Orthodox communities in the near abroad and in a worldwide recent emigration.

However, the awareness of the world as a whole may also represent an opportunity to deliver a universal religious message and to celebrate 'unity within diversity'. Beckford notes that the sociology of religion tends to focus on fundamentalism, and neglects the study of less spectacular responses to globalisation. In addition, an emphasis on Islamic fundamentalism could lead to the assumption that some religions are more prone to this orientation than others. This is why Iqtidar's article is important in that it addresses cosmopolitanism in contemporary Muslim societies. Likewise, Coleman's ethnographic study explores how charismatic Christians in Sweden elaborate and sustain a 'global culture' through religious practices, communication through ministries, media consumption, common language, themes and aesthetics. It is the 'global ethos' of a neo-Hindu movement, Sahaja Yoga, that Coney explores, through its celebration of world peace, activities such as festivals, tours of local centres and Hindu sacred places, arranged marriages between members from different nationalities, and schools for the children of disciples. The Baha'i religion is often presented as the typical case of global religion. Baha'i developed from Shi'i Islam in the middle of the 19th century but eventually broke away to become an independent religious movement. Data gathered about the Baha'is in Denmark by Warburg sheds light on a liberal outlook and a particular commitment to globalisation through the celebration of world citizenship, the unity of humankind, and the ideas that all the basic principles of the great religions are in harmony and that religious truth is relative. At the same time, paradoxically, the Baha'i would like to see their religious tradition as the basis for this new harmonious global society. Similarly, while Japanese new religions tend to promote a universalistic orientation in conjunction with an international missionary zeal, Cornille observes that they also have retained explicit nationalistic and ethnocentric tendencies. Seeing Japan as the origin of creation and the Japanese as the chosen people, they value a

return to traditional Japanese values and rituals. In other words, Baha'i and Japanese new religions demonstrate that universalistic and particularistic tendencies are not exclusive but can be combined.

Finally, because economy and finance have often been described as predominant features of globalisation, it is not surprising that particular religious phenomena have been understood as a response to the global spread of capitalism and consumerism. The obsession with witchcraft in many parts of present-day Africa may reflect ways in which people try to deal with modernity's challenge, in particular new forms of wealth and new circuits of goods. Geschiere considers that the interactions of local societies with global capitalism and the introduction of foreign commodities can provoke a sense of danger, then translated into religious discourses and practices such as witchcraft. Yet Van Dijk⁷ provides us with a very different perspective in his exploration of Ghanaian Pentecostalism and its emphasis on giving and receiving. Ghanaian Pentecostalism does not present foreign commodities as a source of moral panic. On the contrary, because these commodities are foreign, their exchange is synonymous with freedom from constraints and anxieties. By contrast, Pentecostalism emphasise the dangers of gifts. Associated with family ties and ancestral bonds, gifts carry sentiments, messages and intention; therefore they involve dangerous obligations of reciprocity, or may provoke the spirit of envy and jealousy. In this fascinating text, Van Dijk analyses how, through its concern with goods and their exchange, Pentecostal discourse and ritual practice in Ghana supply believers with an increased sense of individuality by freeing them from the constraints of family and local bonds. But Pentecostalism also problematises the relation to the global world through its own transnational dimension and the wealth it may portray and possess.

Religion and Politics in a Global World

The globalisation of religion increases religious diversity in contemporary societies. New practices, identity-claims and political involvements by minority religions challenge nation-states' management of religious and cultural diversity, but also national constructions of the relations between politics and religion based on particular historical trajectories. The question whether religious diversity and transnationality undermine the power and authority of nation-states lies at the heart of the fourth volume. More broadly, this volume addresses the political aspects of religion in a global world.

Thinking about religion and politics in a global world is, to begin with, an epistemological challenge. Robertson reminds us that since their emergence, the social sciences have adopted a methodological nationalism, considering the nation-state as the natural container of human life. Thus secularisation, the sociology of religion's main paradigm, has been discussed mainly in reference to nation-states; the question could be resumed as to whether religion is facilitated by nationally demarcated societies or not. For Robertson, who believes that we now live in a new world, it is necessary to address the significance of religion in a different way. This issue is crucial since most discussions regarding religion and politics in global context concentrate on process of denationalisation – the extent to which transnational forces such as religions challenge nation-states. Another reason to try to understand politics beyond the nation-state frame is that, as shown by Stolow's study of contemporary Jewish Orthodoxy (specifically Agudat Israel), not all religions imagine their communities in line with the one postulated by nation-states. Therefore the political motives and mobilisation of such transnational

⁷ See also Van Dijk (1999).

religious networks need to be understood beyond a nation-state frame.

One way of addressing this issue may be to look at the relationship between religion and politics at the transnational level. In this regard, Lechner recalls the importance of law: laws convey values and norms which often have a religious origin, so that the contribution of religion to the global order is likely to take place via the legal sphere. Lechner also advances that the idea of a legal order itself has special religious significance in the western tradition and has come to be treated as sacred; to some extent this view now pervades global governance. For example, Spickard notes that human rights, despite their western origins, are claimed to be universal and have acquired a quasi-religious status in the political world order. Thomas has another way of characterising the religious features of the global world. While it is thoroughly secular and dominated by a global rationalism, this global rationalism nevertheless functions like an immanent salvation religion, having a teleological discourse, myths and rituals, a promise of salvation and threat of chaos. Therefore religious collective action in world society can be interpreted as a challenge to global rationalism, an attempt to resist its secularism and to compete with its implicit religious character at the same time. Such analysis also brings us back to the debate on the westernisation of the world and resistance to such social trends.

In a less theoretical and general approach, social scientists also look at the impact of international governance on religions. Here, the case of Europe is particularly interesting. While Davie explores the role and contribution of Christian churches in European civil society and the formation of a European identity, both Koenig and Bader focus on the incorporation of Muslims in Europe and address the transnational management of religions. On the one hand, Koenig argues that the Europeanisation of religious governance has contradictory implications for the incorporation of Muslim migrants. Europeanisation provides a legal, political and cultural frame in favour of the recognition of minority religions such as Islam, hence enabling their political mobilisation. Yet it also marginalises Muslims: “Europeanisation also strengthens established actors in the field of religious governance and gives new legitimacy to historical institutional arrangements by re-framing them as expressions of national identities”. On the other hand, Bader questions the existence of a European regime of religious governance, particularly with regard to Islam. In his view, the European legal framework regarding religion does not lead to uniform responses to religious diversity. Institutional and historical differences remain important among European countries and lead to divergent interpretations and applications of European regulations. In addition, the European Union does not enforce a harmonisation of laws and practices at a national level.

Finally, religions constitute interesting prisms to debate the process of denationalisation. Do transnational religions contribute to the declining sovereignty and political legitimacy of nation-states? Undeniably, religious transnational networks attempt to exert political influence and do trigger reactions from nation-states. The transformations of post-soviet Islam in Central Asia, investigated by Peyrouse, is one example. The post-communist period and consequent liberalisation of political life allowed the reconstitution of a religious role in politics and in forming ethnic identities. This includes the influence of transnational Muslim radical movements recently introduced in Central Asia. Alleging that these religious groups threaten political and social stability, states like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan developed an authoritarian policy regarding religion – hence maintaining or restoring control structures created under the Soviet system. Corten provides us with another case study, Pentecostalism in Latin

America, and an interesting argument. For Corten, Pentecostalism constitutes an “emotional insurrection”. Through ‘logico-linguistic mechanisms’, the Pentecostal discourse fashions a new emotional and cognitive order which undermines the worldview on which political legitimacy is founded. By making of personal conversion a public solution to social and political issues, it brings to the fore the withdrawal of the Latin American states from the social. Secondly, the exclusive participation within the Church community limits converts’ engagement with Latin American forms of political mediation, whether liberalism or clientelism. *It also opposes a strong social cohesion to states whose legitimacy is undermined.* Lastly, Pentecostal narratives of miracles and healing erode the legitimacy of political representations because they involve the acceptance of another source of transcendent authority.

By contrast, Bruce and Voas question the idea that organised religion can be a polity and compete with the state. The authors see no evidence of the capacity of religion to undermine states’ autonomy, nor their willingness to do so as religions have often chosen to develop ties with nation-states. In fact, the political system of nation-states proves particularly resilient around the globe and largely capable of controlling religion’s influence. Haynes’s analysis, based on the Roman Catholic Church and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, also concludes that the activities of transnational religious actors, while sometimes influential, do not undermine state sovereignty. Furthermore, Beckford notes that the thesis of denationalisation overemphasises a rupture with the past, while it seems instead that relationships between religions and states are to a certain extent characterised by continuity. Indeed, his examination of responses to religious diversity in the United Kingdom and France show that the national specificities of such responses remain extremely significant. Koopmans’ and Statham’s analysis of claims-making and participation in the public sphere of migrants in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands concurs with Beckford’s emphasis on the durability of national traditions of management of religious diversity. They note that in these European countries, there is considerable variation in approaches in terms of citizenship, migrant integration and response to religious diversity⁸ which shape minorities’ forms of mobilisation and claims making – an observation that concurs with Bader’s emphasis on Europe’s internal diversity and divergences.

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Overall, the contributions presented in these four volumes shed light on the fact that globalisation has become an unavoidable issue for the understanding of religion in today’s world. While the growth of works on globalisation and religion has been phenomenal in recent years, this selection of research aims to reflect the multi-faceted and complex character of globalisation and accordingly provide innovative methodological and conceptual tools to address globalisation and its complexity. We also endeavoured to present the most diverse set of case-studies from every region of the world and every form of religious expression to emphasise that cross-cultural comparisons and multi-local research are the indispensable means to account for the global nature of social life and the wide range of religious responses to it. Finally, the diversity of these reprinted contributions from anthropology and sociology in particular also aims to emphasise what we believe is necessary for a satisfactory approach to this complex and multi-faceted issue: a perspective which takes into account both theoretical and empirical angles, so that the making of globalisation in everyday lives at the local level is not overlooked in this new grand narrative of the social sciences.

⁸ See also Statham *et al.* (2005) on Islam in Britain, the Netherlands and France.

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