Religion and Peace: Possibilities, Challenges and Prospects

Working Group
ISA Annual Convention, Atlanta 2016

Sponsored by: Religion and International Relations Section / Peace Studies Section

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Objective:
To create a network of scholars of religion and peace studies in international relations to have a critical dialogue on the interactions between religion and peace.

Overview:
The theme of the ISA's 57th convention is “Exploring Peace”. This theme encourages the participants to consider multiple approaches to peace. What are its definitions, what are the threats to peace and how can policy circles and academic world cooperate to make peace happen? Taking this unique opportunity, this working group will look at how religion affects those questions and dynamics. Does religion contribute to peace and conflict? How and when? What is the state of literature when it comes to religion and peace international relations? How about policy making? Do policymakers generate novel approaches to peace by tapping into religious sources and go beyond standard liberal/secular approaches? This working group will bring scholars of peace studies and religion in international studies to explore these critical questions from interdisciplinary and multi-method perspectives.
Working Group Agenda
*(Participants are expected to attend all three sessions)*

Pre-conference Meeting:
Tuesday, March 15th, 2016

8:30 - 9:00 am  Welcome by Nukhet Sandal and Turan Kayaoglu; participant introductions

9:00 - 10:30 am  **Religion and Peace I: Methods and Theories in International Studies**  
Discussion Leaders: Jeffrey Haynes, Cecelia Lynch (5 minutes introduction to the topic by each discussion leader, followed by group work/discussion)

10:30 - 10:50 am  Coffee Break

10:50 - 12:30 pm  **Religion and Peace II: Policymaking and Applications**  
Alpaslan Ozerdem, Hrair A. Balian (Carter Center), two other Carter Center analysts (TBA)

12:30 - 1:30 pm  Lunch

1:30 - 3:30 pm  **Religions and Peace: Religious Traditions and Resources**  
Discussion Leaders: Deina Abdelkader, Erin Wilson, Jeremy Rinker

3:30 - 4:00 pm  Coffee Break

4:00 - 5:00 pm  Religion and Peace: Questions and Gaps Discussion Leaders: Jocelyne Cesari, Turan Kayaoglu

Mid-conference follow-up meeting:
Thursday, March 17th, 2016
12:30 - 1:30 pm  
Participants will start discussing the panels they have attended and tie the projects to the themes raised on the first day.

Wrap-up meeting:
Saturday, March 19th, 2016
12:30 to 1:30 pm  
There will also be a wrap-up meeting, which will conclude the discussion on the ISA panels. Participants will brainstorm on what is the best way to continue the discussions on religion and peace, and what the remaining issues are. Participants will evaluate the feasibility of a listserv/social media connection and applying for workshop and other ISA grants to develop new projects.
Nukhet Sandal

Nukhet A. Sandal is the Director of the War & Peace Studies Program and Assistant Professor of Political Science at Ohio University. She received her Ph.D. in Politics and International Relations from University of Southern California in 2010. Nukhet has published articles in the European Journal of International Relations, International Politics, Review of International Studies, Alternatives, Political Studies, West European Politics, Human Rights Quarterly and Canadian Journal of Political Science. Her book (with Jonathan Fox), Religion in International Relations Theory: Interactions and Possibilities came out in 2013 from Routledge. Nukhet is the current Chair of the Ethnicity, Nationalism and Migration Section (ENMISA) and the Vice-Chair of the Religion and International Relations Section of the International Studies Association. She is also serving on the Executive Board of the Peace Studies Section.

Turan Kayaoglu

Turan Kayaoglu is an Associate Professor of International Relations and the Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs at the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, University of Washington, Tacoma. He was a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institute and visiting professor at Qatar University. His research explores international relations theory, international organizations, religion and international relations, and human rights. He is the Editor-in-Chief of Muslim World Journal of Human Rights and the author of Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China (2010, Cambridge University Press) and The Organization of Islamic Cooperation: The Politics, Problems, and Potential (2015, Routledge). His articles have appeared in International Studies Quarterly, International Studies Review, Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Human Rights Quarterly, Muslim Minority Affairs, International Sociology, and Politics and Religion.
**Deina Abdelkader**

Deina Abdelkader is an Associate Professor in the Political Science department and a Visiting Scholar at Alwaleed Islamic Studies Program, Harvard University. She is a Comparitivist and International Relations specialist. Her scholarly interests and research, focus on the Middle East and North Africa, Comparative Democratization in the Muslim World, Islamic Activism, and the Role of Muslim Women in Religious Interpretation.

She is the author of *Social Justice in Islam* (2000) and *Islamic Activists: The Anti-Enlightenment Democrats* (Pluto Press, 2011). She has also authored a number of articles; her latest are: *Coercion, Peace and the Issue of Jihad in the Digest of Middle East Studies*, and a book chapter titled: "Modernity, Islam and Religious Activism", in *The New Global Order and the Middle East*. Abdelkader is also one of two women on the Islamic Jurisprudential Council of North America (Fiqh Council of North America) and she is also part of the editorial board of the Digest of Middle East Studies. Abdelkader is a founding member and co-director of the International Relations-Islamic Studies research cohort: (COIRIS).

**Hrair Balian**

Hrair Balian joined The Carter Center in 2008 as director of the Conflict Resolution Program. Balian oversees the program’s efforts to monitor conflicts around the world and coordinates the Center's cross-program efforts in the Middle East. He is also an adjunct professor at the Emory University Law School, teaching an advanced international negotiations seminar.

Since 1991, Balian has worked in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the independent states emerging from the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, and Africa, serving in intergovernmental organizations (the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and nongovernmental organizations (International Crisis Group and others). He has worked on elections, human rights, and conflict resolution.

Balian received his Juris Doctor degree from Golden Gate University in San Francisco. In May 2009, the New England College awarded Balian the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, for his "lifetime commitment to the dignity, respect, and self-determination of all peoples" and for his "uncompromising effort to resolve international conflicts."
Jocelyne Cesari

Jocelyne Cesari is Professor of Religion and Politics at the University of Birmingham, UK and senior research fellow at Georgetown University’s Berkley Center on Religion, Peace and World Affairs. She teaches on contemporary Islam at the Harvard Divinity School and directs the Harvard interfaculty program “Islam in the West”.


She coordinates a major web resource on Islam in Europe: http://www.euro-islam.info/

Jeffrey Haynes

Jeffrey Haynes is Professor of Politics and Director of Research in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at London Metropolitan University, UK. He co-edits the journal, Democratization. He is the author or editor of nearly 40 books. The most recent are Faith-based Organizations at the United Nations (New York: PalgraveMacmillan, 2014) and Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics (London: Routledge, 2015). He is currently undertaking research into the United Nations entity Alliance of Civilizations as part of a large research initiative funded by the John Templeton Foundation, 'Enhancing Life Project.'

Cecelia Lynch

Cecelia Lynch is Professor of Political Science and Director of International Studies and the Institute for International, Global and Regional Studies (IIGaRS) at the University of California, Irvine. She is the author or co-author of three books and the co-editor of two additional books. She has received two book prizes, mentoring and scholarship awards, and fellowships from the Social Science Research Council, MacArthur Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Henry Luce Foundation, and her articles on IR theory, law, religion, ethics and social movements have appeared in *Millenium, Ethics & International Relations, International Theory, International Journal, Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, and numerous edited volumes. She is completing one book on tensions in Western (Christian) religious ethics on violence and researching another on Islamic, Christian and interfaith religious ethics in world crises. She co-edits the blog, “Critical Investigations into Humanitarianism in Africa,” or The CIHA Blog, at www.cihablog.com, which brings religious perspectives into humanitarian debates.
Alpaslan Özerdem

Professor Alpaslan Özerdem is Co-Director of the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University, UK. With over 20 years of field research experience in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Turkey, he specializes in the politics of humanitarian interventions, disaster response, security sector reform, reintegration of former combatants and post-conflict state building. He has also taken an active role in the initiation and management of several advisory and applied research projects for a wide range of national and international organisations.


Jeremy Rinker

Jeremy Rinker (Ph.D. Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, 2009) researches the intersection between narrative, violent conflict, and nonviolent conflict transformation. Having previously taught at DePauw University and Guilford College, Jeremy has also been a Fulbright Fellow at the Malaviya Center for Peace Research at Banaras Hindu University and served as the Director of a conflict resolution practice clinic on Guilford College’s campus. Jeremy will begin as an Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina Greensboro in the Fall of 2015. Jeremy also has experience as a Peace Corps volunteer (Kazakhstan ’95–’97), an international development coordinator, and a community conferencing practitioner.
Erin K. Wilson

Erin K. Wilson (PhD, University of Queensland 2008) is the Director of the Centre for Religion Conflict and the Public Domain, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen, The Netherlands. Her research examines the interconnections between religion, secularism and global justice, in particular the ways in which underlying secular assumptions affect prevailing approaches to human rights, forced migration, development, conflict and peacebuilding, and engages critical marginalized voices to identify alternative modes of thinking and analysis. She has published in *International Studies Quarterly, Journal of Refugee Studies, Global Society, Globalizations and Politics, Religion, Ideology*. Dr Wilson was previously a research fellow at RMIT University, Melbourne. Her books include *After Secularism: Rethinking Religion in Global Politics*, and *Justice Globalism: Ideology, Crises, Policy*, co-authored with Manfred B. Steger and James Goodman.