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PCS106 ASSIGNMENT

Before I begin here are the keywords of the topic

-Religion

-Violence

-Reconciliation

Religion is a social-cultural system of designated behaviors and practices, morals, worldviews, texts, sanctified places, prophecies, ethics or organization, that relates humanity to supernatural, transcendental or spiritual elements(REFF religion-Wikipedia https://en.m.wikipedia.org-wiki-religion)

Violence is an extreme form of aggression such as assault rape or murded(REFF violence-American psychological https://www.apa.org-topics-violence)

Reconciliation is an accounting process that compares two sets of records to check that figures are not correct and in agreement(Reff:Reconciliation definition-investopedia https://www.investopedia.com)

I will agree with the fact that religion causes violence. Everyone knows that religion has a dangerous tendency to promote violence. This story is part of the conventional wisdom of western societies and it underlies many of our institutions and policies from limits on the public role of religion to efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East. In this essay, I am going to challenge that conventional wisdom, but not in the ways it is usually challenged by people who identify themselfs as religious. Such people will sometimes argue that the real motivation behind so-called religious violence is in fact economic and political, not religious. Others will argue that people who do violence are by definition not religious. The crusader is not really a Christian for example because he doesn't really understand the meaning of Christianity. I don't think that either of these arguments works. In the first place it is impossible to separate our religioun from economic and political motives in such a way that religious motives are innocent of violence. How could one, for example, separate religion from politics in Islam, when Muslims themselfs make no such separation? In the second place. It may be the case that the crusader has misappropriated the true message of christ, but one cannot therefore excuse Christianity of all responsibility. Christianity is not primarily a set of doctrines, but a lived historical experience enbodied and shaped by the empirically observable actions of Christians. So I have no intention of excusing Christianity or Islam or any other faith system from careful analysis. Given certain conditions, Christianity, Islam and other faiths can and do contribute to violence.

But what is implied in the conventional wisdom that religion is prone to violence is that Christianity, Islam and other faiths are more inclined toward violence than ideologies and institutions that are identified as "secular". It is this story that I will challenge here. I will do so in two steps first, I will show that the division of ideologies and institutions into the categories "religious" and "secular" is an arbitrary and incoherent division. When we examine academic arguments that religion causes violence we find that what does or does not count as religion is based on subjective and indefensive assumptions. As a result certain kinds of violence are condemned and others are ignored. Secondly I ask if the idea that there is something called 'religion' that is more violent than so-called 'secular' phenomena is so incoherent why is the idea so pervasive? The answer I think is that we in the west find it comforting and ideologically useful. The myth of religious violence helps create a blind spot about the violence of the putatively secular nation state. We like to believe that the liberal state arose to make peace between warning religious factions. Today, the western liberal state is charged with the burden of creating peace in the face of the cruel religious fanaticism of the Muslim world. The myth of religious violence promotes a dichotomy between us in the secular west who are rational and peacemaking and then, the hordes of violent religious fanatics in the Muslim world. Their violence is religious and therefore irrational and divisive. Our violence on the other hand is rational peacemaking and necessary. Regrettably, we find ourselves forced to bomb them into the higher rationality(Reff:Does religion cause violence? Https://bulletin-archive.hds.harvard.edu)

Religious violence is undergoing a revival. The past decade has witnessed a sharp increase in violent sectarian or religious tensions. These range from Islamic extremists waging global Jihad and power struggles between sunni and Shia Muslims in the Middle East to the persecution of Rohigya in Myanmar and outbreaks of violence between Christians and Muslims across Africa. According to pew in 2018 more than a quarter of the world's countries experienced a high incidence of hostilities motivated by religious hatred, rhob violence related to religion, terrorist, and harrasment of women for violating religious codes.The spike in religious violence is global and affects virtually every religious group. A 2018 minority rights group report indicates that mass killings and other atrocities are increasing in countries both affected and not affected by war alike. While bloody encounters were recorded in over 50 countries,most reported lethal incidents involving minorities were concentrated in Syria, Iraq, Nigeria, India, Myanmar, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Hostilities against Muslims and jews also increased across Europe, as did threats against Hindus in more than 18countries. Making matters worse, 55 of the world's 198 countries imposed heightened restrictions on religions, especially Egypt, Russia, India indomesia and turkey. How is it that religious-which supposedly espouse peace, love and harmony-are so commonly connected with intolerance and violent aggression? Social scientist are divided on the issue. Scholars like William Cavanaugh contend that even when extremist use theological texts to justify their actions "religious" violence is not religious at all-but rather a perversion of core teachings other such as Richard Dawkins believe that because religions fuel certainties and sanctify martyrdom, they are often a root cause of conflict meanwhile, Timothy

Sisk claims that both hierarchical religious traditions(such as shi ism) and non-hierarchical traditions(such as Buddhism) can both be vulnerable to interpretation of Canon to justify or even provide warrants for violent action. (Reff:religious violence is on the rise. What can faith based communities do about it https://www.weforum.org).

On the other hand, religion also creates a powerful source for reconciliation. Now what is reconciliation? While peace agreements may be written and signed by government leaders, reconciliation is the process of adversaries working towards good relationships after a conflict has taken place. Engaging in this process involves listening, understanding and humanizing "the other"(Reff:Exploring the role of religion in reconciliation-peace makers https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org)

Religion tries to answer some mysteries regarding creation, the presence of God, good living and bad living and the destination of human beings after death. Many religions believe that a Supreme being created all living things. This "being" is called God, father, spirit, and many things. Other names (kalman2009). There are thousands of religious groups in the world today and each group has teachings, holy book and places of worship with different names:churches, temples, mosques.

 The term" reconciliation" runs through all the sacred discourses. It delivers from violence and suffering into a state of restored relationships. This qualifies religion as a potential institutions to promote reconciliation. Spiritual reconciliation which brings a person closer to God, closely complements social reconciliation. Churches have historically played an important role in the reconciliation processes because of their power in civil society and through their religious message construction which constantly preaches forgiveness and reconcilitaion(Crawford, 2002).churches and religious groupings link religion to morality and act as agents of reconciliation (Schreitter1992).

  Scholars are constantly trying to establish the position of religion in social reconciliation and assesing whether reconciliation is possible between denominations or between religions in the first place, and by extension, the capacity for religion to extend the responsibility to other social structures. This world provide a unified approach to reconciliation. The church itself often faces challenges of division within and across religions. Protestant reformation which took place over four hundred years ago arose from religious differences (Raymond, Helmick and person, 2001), tension between Islam and Christianity has been a long standing challenge in Sudan, Nigeria and central African Republic among other nations in Africa, there is also standing conflict between catholics and orthodox in Ukraine but this notwithstanding. Religion is recognised as the universal custodian of morals with the legitimate authority to promote reconciliation in collaboration with other political and social institutions.

Reconciliation may not be looked at as a hasty peace, a substitute for liberation or a managed process. The perpetrators of violence will very quickly propose the principle of let bygones and a religious forgiveness (schreitter1992). This emerges as a trivialized hasty, superficial and

unsustainable reconciliation and peace, which does not necessarily uphold religious values and ignores human identity and dignity (schreitter1992). Most religions take cognizance of the need to address the causes let go of the suffering and to restore relationships in the shortest time possible. According to Lederach(1999).reconciliation brings an aspect of time and is embedded in the past, present and future of a relationship. Appleby Presents three questions related to religion in advancing a social process of reconciliation. If religious actors and religious sensibilities have a role to play in formulating politics of forgiveness and advancing a social process of reconciliation, which religious actors? Which religious sensibilities? And what role Burneman(2002) describes reconciliation as an appreciation of the inter-subjectivity as an appreciation of the inter-subjectivity of the present and a social project not in terms of permanent peace or harmony but as a project of departure from violence. This places a challenge to religion to reconcile in a joint regardless of the religious orientation and for a common good. According to Borneman, to reconcile is to render no longer opposed. The term is therefore, not a fixed concept but must be used as a means for retributive or restorative justice. (Reff:(pdf) The contribution of religion to social reconciliation. A case study of Liberia jypcnet. Com-journals-jypc1. Pdf

The contribution that religion can make to peacemaking as the flip side of religious conflict is only beginning to be explored and explicated. All three of the Abrahamic faiths contains strong warrants for peacemaking there are past cases of mediation and peacemaking by religious leaders and institution for example, the world council of churches and all Africa conference of churches mediated the short-lived 1972 peace agreement in Sudan. In South Africa, various churches where at the vanguard of the struggle against apartheid and the peaceful transition. The most dramatic and most frequently cited cases is the successful mediation the Rome based community of sent Egidio achieved to help end the Civil War in Mozambique in 1992.

Repeatedly citing these cases as the main points of reference distorts the reality of religious peacemaking. Most of the cases of religious of faith-based peacemaking are less dramatic in their outcomes. Also religious peacemaking is becoming much more common, and the number of cases cited is growing at an increasing pace. (Reff:Religious contribution to peacemaking. When religion brings peace, not war. Https://www.usip.org-2006).