Article

Religion, Identity, and Global Governance

January 7, 2024

A book on how faith informs politics and self-definition on the international stage

Religion, Identity, and Global Governance: Ideas, Evidence, and Practice (University of Toronto Press, 2011) is a book that addresses some of the central questions of religious studies: Is religious identity an independent social construct, or is it an extension of other social constructs? Does religion influence the human condition positively or negatively? In his summary, editor Patrick James arrives at a definitive answer to the first question: "Religion in sum, is real," he concludes. "So are the effects of religious identity on politics."

Source: Erica Zhao via Pexels

The second question of the book—whether religion has a beneficial or deleterious effect on human history and events—is much more difficult to answer. The fourteen chapters of *Religion, Identity, and Global Governance* examine the question from different regional and disciplinary perspectives. The book's authors discuss faith and international relations theory; sharia in Ontario; the impact of religious nongovernmental organizations; Christian mediation; Catholic Just War theory; and the Iraqi civil war, among other subjects. In summary, James writes:

> ***Overall, the jury is still out on religion. NGOs and some governments work toward a better world, but other governments and religious extremists continue to engage in oppression and acts of violence.***

Chapter 15 of the book, which contains the editor's summary and analysis of the volume, is included below with permission from the editor.

Front-Matter-and-Chapter-15Download

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