Maya Aronoff

*Maya is a sophomore in the Woodrow Wilson School, perusing a certificate in the History and Practice of Diplomacy. She is interested in conflict resolution, refugee affairs, and both criminal and international law. Her past coursework has focused on the Middle East and East Asia, but by the time she finishes her undergraduate degree she hopes to have exposure to each region of the world.*

Presidents Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush both had “born-again” experiences which revitalized their devotion to forms of evangelical Christianity, and claimed that this experience shaped the way that they viewed their role in the White House and the role of the United States in the world. Previous literature has acknowledged the impact of ideology on individual leaders, and both Carter and Bush formulated a cohesive framework for decision-making embedded in religion. In order to compare the impact of their respective “religious ideologies” on decision-making, I examine their respective foreign policies in the Middle East—specifically, Carter’s approach to the Camp David Peace Process and formulation of the Carter Doctrine, and Bush’s intervention in Iraq. In both cases, it is likely that religious ideology was a contributing factor to the ways in which Carter and Bush selected intelligence, listened to advisors, processed information, and perceived policy options. The evangelical Christian belief system held by both Presidents contributed to their shared belief in a universal Good which the United States—and they as its leader—had a responsibility to promote around the world. The revivalist nature of their faith contributed to both their beliefs in the possibility of adversaries changing their attitudes and behaviors in the interests of this Good, but while President Carter’s belief in the ability of individuals to change motivated his initial approach to the Soviet Union and persistence at Camp David, President Bush was quicker to believe regime change was necessary for progress. Crucially, both leaders perceived rejection by adversaries as a highly personal rejection of their “mission”—and by logical extension, the will of God—contributing to hawkish backlash (Carter Doctrine, invasion of Iraq) when adversaries were deemed unwilling to change. While Bush’s perception of foreign policy as a practically cosmic conflict between Good and Evil was not
demonstrated by Carter, both Presidents believed in the divine righteousness of their pursuits. With similar moral certainty, both Presidents proved unwilling to compromise or back down—regardless of public opinion or the input of advisors—on issues they deemed to be “holy” causes. This analysis indicates that religious ideology is an important consideration when studying leaders, and has implications for the way in which other leaders with similar religious ideologies or personality traits may be likely to behave.

Claire Ashmead

Claire is a Princeton senior who hails from Cleveland, Ohio and will be graduating with a degree in Intellectual History and certificates in East Asian Studies, Humanistic Studies, and Creative Writing.

Should diplomats joke? Humor is an essential component of socialization, lending insight, expressing dissent, and releasing the repressed. In all these ways, humor contributes to healthy, enjoyable conversations that strengthen human interaction and diplomatic engagement. At its best, humor is edgy and enlightening. At its worst, however, is can be rude, vulgar, and demeaning. Diplomats in particular must navigate the fine line between entertainment and offense. The larger and more multi-cultural the setting, the less obvious it is that jokes can be helpful to the process of peace-making. Through a series of case studies of humor, supplemented by glosses on how jokes work both neurologically and philosophically, I will endeavor to lay out a few ground rules for how jokes should be made in sensitive, multi-cultural situations. My hope is that diplomats might use this basic layout to engage in discourse that is at once freer, franker, and funnier. The key to successful diplomacy may be one good joke: Laugh and the world laughs with you; weep and you weep alone.

Annabel Barry

Annabel is an undergraduate student concentrating in English. She studies set design through the Princeton Program in Theater and works as a political research assistant at the Bobst Center for Peace and Justice.

This paper examines the role of performance in the construction of cultural nationalism in pre-Revolution Ireland. In the history of the Abbey Theatre, formerly the National Theatre, this paper locates the materialization of Irish demands for self-determination, both on the stage and, ultimately, on the street. The Irish literary community that staged nationalist plays in the years preceding the Irish revolution claimed as its own many of the men and women who went on to stage performative acts of violent rebellion against the British empire, including the 1916 Easter Rising. I investigate not only theatre as a site of argument regarding self-determination, but also nationalist terrorism as itself an act of theatre. I interrogate nationalist theatre and theatrical nationalism for their relationships to the unique Catholic cultural nationalism that predominated in twentieth century Ireland.
Miriam Friedman

Miriam is a sophomore studying International Relations, and Creative Writing at Princeton University. She has spent time studying Politics in several regions of the world including Israel, India, Iceland, Romania, and Italy.

Israel is a small country troubled by great tensions. When Israel declared independence from Britain in 1948, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria immediately invaded. Although Israel won the war—surmounting a major external challenge to its sovereignty—the country still had many internal difficulties to resolve. And, with sites considered holy to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity within its effective territory, Israel continues to be grounds for confrontation. Moreover, because it is a State where religion and politics are intimately connected, the influence of Jewish religious ideals is often stifling, as it promotes regulations that are unequal to its heterogeneous population. This frustration with a reliance on antiquated Jewish practices continues to be a prominent source of friction today, and contributes to the melting pot that is the current Israeli State.

The interaction between religion and State affairs is a delicate balancing act. The place of Halacha, the Jewish code of ethics, in Israel’s law is one of the most divisive disputes in the State today. Though the source of Halacha is rooted in the Torah, it was not explicitly revealed by the sages, and therefore has no clear source. As a result, there is intense disagreement as to what is truly religiously required. But in addition to the divide between secular and religious Jews and their belief in the necessity of Halacha, there is also a national divide in Israel between Jews and Muslims. The tension in law of these two groups is closely related: the more Israel accentuates traditional Jewish elements in its public culture, the more appealing it is to Jewish religious individuals, but the more intolerable is the condition for Israel’s Muslim and other minority citizens.

This paper explores the complicated relationship between Israel’s reliance on Halacha and its use of secular laws to govern the State. It rejects the notion that a complete separation of church and State is either necessary or feasible; instead, it concludes that to increase equality in a State with changing demographics, Israel must rethink its principles of division and focus on impartial ways to unite its people. This will require being more tolerant of differing opinions and practices, and emphasizing the condition of “Israeliness” over its “Jewishness.” Though there are segments of the population who would be averse to this proposition, the opposition is far smaller than it may first appear. Furthermore, promoting this aspect of Israel’s character would not fundamentally change an individual’s identity or beliefs. Doing so would simply create a bond among members of a previously divided nation. The most effective way to implement this policy would begin with a change in the way the State takes pride in its character.

The motivation for this paper comes from the dearth of research available on this subject. Though information on the Israeli legal system and its human rights injustices exists, there is little literature that evaluates the interaction between religious laws and unequal governance in Israel at length. This paper outlines the theories behind the creation of the State, details some of the major tensions that result from this religious rule, and finally, presents a mechanism most likely to promote increased equality in the future.
Becca Keener

Becca is a senior from North Carolina concentrating in Religion and pursuing certificates in Near Eastern Studies and Arabic Language and Culture.

In this article, I will examine how views of religious difference are shaped through diplomatic relations using the case study of Elizabethan England’s relations with the Ottoman sultan. In opposition to the common understanding of these cultures as dichotomous entities—that of the Occident and the Orient, Christianity and Islam—this relationship shows how they were both influenced by their interactions in the 16th century. In particular, this example illustrates how peoples and cultures become intertwined when state leaders pursue a common interest. I will focus on representations of the other in selected works of cultural production from England and the Ottoman Empire.

Stefan Kondic

Stefan is a Master in Public Affairs (MPA) candidate at The Woodrow Wilson School and Amherst College graduate with honors. His focus is on multilateral diplomacy and intergovernmental organizations and institutions, particularly the United Nations system, negotiation and conflict management.

Prevalence of religious belief and adherence have been dramatically changed by the tumultuous 20th century, and in few places is this more prevalent than in Eastern Europe. In Serbia, the prevalent faith, Eastern Orthodoxy had a complicated and evolving relationship with the government in the previous decades, with said relationship dramatically changing based on the system of government currently in place.

In the early 20th century, the Kingdom of Serbia was an independent polity, and the Serbian Orthodox Church enjoyed a great deal of prestige among the population. This remained largely unchanged after the unification of much of the Balkans into Yugoslavia, which continued the policy of laicité and ecclesiastical independence.

This changed rapidly after the Communists came to power, who at first tried to openly suppress the church, but eventually settled on employing societal pressure to discourage religious belief. As the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia began to fall apart in the late 1980s and early 1990s, religion underwent a resurgence in the country, and became instrumentalized by the emerging strongmen - a useful political and military tool to mobilize support and loyalty among the population, and justify the actions taken during the break-up of Yugoslavia. Now, the Serbian Orthodox Church is in the process of finding its own space in the democratizing politics and society of modern Serbia and defining its relationship with the Russian Orthodox Church.
Jonathan Liebman

Jonathan is a senior at Princeton University originally from Vermont, USA. His research interests focuses on the intersection of law, international relations, and global governance.

For my contribution to the PORDIR research colloquium, I am studying the intersection between religion and political legitimation in post-Soviet and post-Communist Eastern Europe, particularly vis-a-vis Hungary, Poland, and Russia. Investigating the nexus of identity, legitimacy, and religion in this space is important for several reasons. First, studying on the resurgence of religion in "post-atheist" societies may shed light on the role of religion in (re)generating national identity after political transitions. Further, understanding how these regimes wield religion as a means of increasing political legitimacy has implications bearing on the stability of these increasingly--and indeed avowedly--illiberal nations and the degree to which they represent a genuine ideological competitor to the ideals of secular liberal democracy preeminent in the West. Accordingly, by studying state mediation and intervention in the religious sphere (in terms of policy, political discourse, and the like) my paper will present a newfound understanding of the complex ties among church, state and society at Europe's ideological and political frontier.

Amma Prempeh

Amma is a sophomore from San Francisco, majoring in Anthropology and Global Health Policy, in order to explore the intersections and intricacies of culture, development, and wellbeing.

To conclude that religion is a victim to modernity and globalization is to neglect the profound religious growth found in the Global South. This paper intends to go about “bringing those absent” from such discourse in by addressing African transnational religious practices and their influence on international relations. The most devout nations are located on the continent of Africa and it stands to reason the tenets rising from such devotions perform a role in the formation and conduct of diplomatic strategies. It emerges from the idea that religious bodies and beliefs are uniquely migrant actors, that contribute to identity formation by offering shared goals and histories. It will address the prominent role of Christian and Islamic institutions, as well as the re-emerging influence of traditionalist religions which bridge ethnic communities divided only by colonially-established borders. Finally, it considers the power of religious diplomacy in future matters of international cooperation.

We begin with engaging in the Africanization of the study of diplomacy. As offered by professor of theology at the University of Zimbabwe, Ezra Chitando, the

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2 Ibid, 133.
Africanization of research subjects has two requirements: firstly, recognizing the high
degree to which African studies are conducted and evaluated within Western thought
systems, and, in order to correct this, allowing indigenous African individuals and
theories to dominate the inquiry. Therefore, this paper draws on the research of diverse
Africanist scholars and normalizes continental trends, such as the widespread adherence
to and expression of some form of spirituality.

Measuring diplomacy as international relations by negotiation and by other
peaceful means, and a craft of shared norms and rituals, it becomes evident how
religious beliefs held by African leaders or nations may influence the practice. Religious
leadership are often unrecognized actors in foreign policy formation. In an African sense,
where religiosity is centered and highlighted in everyday life and politics, we must
engage with religious diplomacy between countries, recognizing the soft power of these
actors in regional politics.

This paper examines three systems: Islamic institutions, which have taken on a growing
role in the policing of extreme in African, Christian communities, which are an artefact
the unconventional African-Western relations, and traditionalist spiritualities which, due
to diaspora, are necessarily transnational in nature, in order to develop a nuanced survey
of Africa’s religious actors.

**Jorge Silva Tapia**

*Jorge, from Arequipa Peru, is a senior in the economics department specializing in economic development with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.*

The split of the two Sudans has revived discussions on ethnic and religious separatism in
Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in the Sahel region. The successful secession of South
Sudan poses serious challenges for nation building in religiously diverse African nations.
In this paper, I explore, the delicate and complex interactions of ethnic, religious, and
linguistic identities that led to the rise of a secessionist movement in South Sudan. In
addition, I also consider the historical, ideological and political factors that contributed to
the formation of such movement. Studying the secession of South Sudan can be helpful
to understand similar conflicts in other countries in the region such as Nigeria and the
Central African Republic.

**Aleksandar Vladicic**

*Aleksandar is a sophomore student from Bosnia and Herzegovina, concentrating at Woodrow Wilson School.*

The relationship between the individual national and European identities of
people living in Europe has intensified with the increasing institutionalization of the
European Union (EU). Despite the challenges of determining the precise constituencies
of the European identity, the European Commission has committed itself to affirming it
through the constant strengthening of the union.

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Building the sense of community in Europe, which pertains to acquiring a set of shared norms, values or practices between the European community members, proved to be the backbone of the strong European identity. While a top-down Culturalist model derives the source of identification with Europe from core, established European values, a Structuralist model predicts that the identification with Europe stems from the interaction and association with other Europeans. At the same time, some scholars argue that the extensive post-war European integration, which involves some transfer of power to the EU’s institutions, strengthened the sense of European community by increasing both reliance on those institutions and identification with them.

Extensive European integration started to take place at the time when the European societies were undergoing “a rapid, drastic, and seemingly irreversible process of secularization.” Strong opposition to mentioning Christianity in the preamble of the European Constitution and later the Treaty of Lisbon exemplifies the EU’s reluctance to include links to religion in the legal documents and references to the common European values. A Eurobarometer survey shows that the EU citizens prioritized culture, but also frequently mentioned economy, history, values, geography and rule of law among the factors that contribute most to creating a feeling of community in the EU. In last place, only 8% of the respondents mentioned religion.

This paper shows that religion cannot be considered an element of the European identity if it indeed insignificantly or negatively contributes to building of the sense of community in the EU. The paper develops a claim that the secular nature of the European integration coupled with the diminishing religiosity of the European population further dissociate religion from the European identity.

Therefore, integration of any group for whom religion is a significant part of identity might challenge and reshape the European identity. Even though such integrations might span from domestic religious minorities to migrants and groups discriminated on religious ground, the analysis in this paper is based on the state level integration, i.e. the EU enlargement processes. It analyzes the Polish fear of the future secularization of Catholic Poland ahead of the accession to the EU in 2004 and the European insecurities with integrating Poland, a country whose active religious rhetoric shapes its socio-political life.

The paper further challenges an alternative argument, which claims that regardless of the immediate public perceptions, the promotion of interfaith religious dialogue and unity in religious diversity can over time build a sense of community in Europe and shape the European identity. Even though the benefits of promoting interfaith religious dialogue on building the sense of community are acknowledged, the paper shows that cultivating the “we feeling” through the promotion of religious diversity may negatively affect increasingly secular European identity.
Eric Wang

*Eric is a junior in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, and is the Co-President of Princeton’s US-China Coalition on campus.*

On April 28th, 2016, China’s National People’s Congress (NPC) passed the Foreign NGO Management Law, a decree that would tighten the space in Chinese civil society by placing new obstacles and restrictions affecting over 7,000 foreign NGOs operating in China. Many of these NGOs conduct meaningful service-oriented activities—i.e. teaching, poverty alleviation, medical assistance, etc.—and are guided by *faith-based* principles and motivations. Amidst concerns about the new law, this paper explores how religion impacts interactions between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and non-state actors, by investigating how the CCP has treated Christian-faith-based NGOs since China’s “Reform and Opening Up” beginning in December, 1978. First, this paper explores in-brief the CCP’s historical treatment of Christian foreign NGO since 1978, as the CCP has sought to open its economy (and pieces of society) to the world to stimulate economic growth. Second, after looking at history this paper will propose a series of hypotheses on how a foreign NGO’s Christian faith-based status might affect the CCP’s treatment of its operations. Third, this paper will then discuss expected observations arising from each hypothesis. Fourth, this paper will observe specific casual mechanisms through which an NGO’s Christian faith-based status either expanded or further tightened its “operative space” in Chinese civil society. Finally, this paper will conclude by discussing the implications of this study on our understanding of China’s relations with foreign states and non-state actors across the world.