

# Intellectual Discourse

---

Volume 33

Number 3

2025



**International Islamic University Malaysia**  
<https://journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/id>

# *Intellectual Discourse*

---

Volume 33

Number 3

2025

## **Editor-in-Chief**

Danial Mohd Yusof (Malaysia)

## **Editor**

Tunku Mohar Mokhtar (Malaysia)

## **Guest Editor**

Nerawi Sedu (Malaysia)

## **Associate Editors**

Anke Iman Bouzenita (Oman)

Khairil Izamin Ahmad (Malaysia)

Saadah Wok (Malaysia)

## **Book Review Editor**

Mohd. Helmi Bin Mohd Sobri  
(Malaysia)

---

## **Editorial Board**

Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu (Nigeria)

Badri Najib Zubir (Malaysia)

Daniel J. Christie (USA)

Habibul H. Khondker (UAE)

Hafiz Zakariya (Malaysia)

Hazizan Md. Noon (Malaysia)

Hussain Mutalib (Singapore)

Ibrahim M. Zein (Qatar)

James D. Frankel (China)

Kenneth Christie (Canada)

Nor Faridah Abdul Manaf (Malaysia)

Rahmah Bt Ahmad H. Osman  
(Malaysia)

Serdar Demirel (Turkey)

Shukran Abdul Rahman (Malaysia)

Syed Farid Alatas (Singapore)

Thameem Ushama (Malaysia)

## **International Advisory Board**

Anis Malik Thoha (Indonesia)

Chandra Muzaffar (Malaysia)

Fahimul Quadir (Canada)

Farish A. Noor (Malaysia)

Habib Zafarullah (Australia)

John O. Voll (USA)

Muhammad al-Ghazali (Pakistan)

Muhammad K. Khalifa (Qatar)

Redzuan Othman (Malaysia)

## **Founding Editor**

Zafar Afaq Ansari (USA)

---

*Intellectual Discourse* is a highly respected, academic refereed journal of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). It is published twice a year by the IIUM Press, IIUM, and contains reflections, articles, research notes and review articles representing the disciplines, methods and viewpoints of the Muslim world.

*Intellectual Discourse* is abstracted in SCOPUS, WoS Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), ProQuest, International Political Science Abstracts, Peace Research Abstracts Journal, Muslim World Book Review, Bibliography of Asian Studies, Index Islamicus, Religious and Theological Abstracts, ATLA Religion Database, MyCite, ISC and EBSCO.

ISSN 0128-4878 (Print); ISSN 2289-5639 (Online)

<https://journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/id>

Email: [intdiscourse@iium.edu.my](mailto:intdiscourse@iium.edu.my); [intdiscourse@yahoo.com](mailto:intdiscourse@yahoo.com)

Published by:

IIUM Press, International Islamic University Malaysia

P.O. Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Phone (+603) 6196-5014, Fax: (+603) 6196-6298

Website: <http://iiumpress.iium.edu.my/bookshop>

**Intellectual Discourse**  
**Vol. 33, No. 3, 2025**

**Contents**

<i>Note from the Editor</i>	767
 <i>Research Articles</i>	
Metaphysical and Phenomenological Doubt in the Search for Truth: A Comparative Study of al-Ghazālī and Edmund Husserl <i>Müfit Selim Saruhan</i>	773
Inclusive Education for All: A Case Study of Bosnia and Herzegovina <i>Almasa Mulalić</i> <i>Ratnawati Mohd Asraf</i> <i>Safija Bušatlić,</i>	789
Globalisation and Religion: A Study of Thai Muslims' Experiences on Gender Diversity in Thai Muslim Society through an Islamic Perspective <i>Jiraroj Mamadkul</i>	809
Mohd. Kamal Hassan's Perspectives on Family Relationships: Strategies for Strengthening Malaysian Muslim Families <i>Fatimah Karim</i> <i>Sayyed Mohamed Muhsin</i> <i>Nur Elyliana Abdul Hadi</i>	835
Community-Centric Governance: Unveiling the Challenges and Strategies in West Aceh Villages <i>Afrizal Tjoetra</i> <i>Aizat Khairi</i> <i>Nellis Mardhiah</i> <i>Nodi Marefanda</i>	865

- Bringing Religion Back to the Forefront: 891  
 An Opinion-Oriented Study from IR Scholars  
 in Malaysia's Research Universities  
*Siti Zuliha Razali*  
*Nadhrah Abd. Kadir*  
*Razlini Mohd Ramli*
- Coalition Rule by Pakatan Harapan, 2018-2020: 917  
 Key Consociational Lessons  
*Muhammad Azzubair Awwam Mustafa*  
*Kartini Aboo Talib @ Khalid*  
*Nazri Muslim*
- “Should I Pay a Living Wage?” A Systematic Review 939  
 on Employers' Decision from an Organisational  
 Justice Perspective  
*Nurul Izzati Asyikin Zulkify*  
*Ruhaya Hussin*  
*Maisarah Mohd. Taib*
- Prophetic Model of Islamic Spiritual Care from Muslim 967  
 Professional Practitioners' Perspectives: A Systematic  
 Review within the Ṭibb Nabawī Genre  
*Zunaidah binti Mohd Marzuki*  
*Nurulhaniz binti Ahmad Fuad*
- Designing and Evaluating a Culturally Grounded 993  
 Digital Parenting Initiative in Malaysia  
*Shafizan Mohamed*  
*Nazariah Shar 'ie Janon*  
*Mohd Helmi Yusoh*  
*Norsaremah Salleh*  
*Nur Shakira Mohd Nasir*  
*Wan Norshira Wan Mohd Ghazali*

Perception about Islam, Attitude, Subjective Norms,  
and Behavioural Intention in Using Artificial  
Intelligence among University Students 1017  
*Aini Maznina A. Manaf*  
*Tengku Siti Aisha Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen*

Parental Perceptions of Islamic YouTube Animation:  
The Case of ‘Abdul Bari’ in Pakistan. 1043  
*Saima Waheed*  
*Mohd Khairie Ahmad*  
*Zafar Iqbal Bhatti*

Development of a Model for Advertising Professionalism  
from the *Maqasid Al-Shari’ah* Perspective 1071  
*Aida Mokhtar*  
*Faiswal Kasirye*  
*Mohd. Fuad Md. Sawari*  
*Amilah Awang Abd. Rahman @ Jusoh*  
*Ahasanul Haque*

***Book Reviews***

Gozde Hussian (2024). *Islamic Doctrines and  
Political Liberalism: Muslim’s Sincere Support.* 1101  
Palgrave MacMillan. pp. 253, ISBN 978-3-031-72266-0  
*Reviewer: Mohamed Fouz Mohamed Zacky,*

Asad, Muhammad & Asad, Pola-Hamida (2024). 1105  
*The Unpublished Letters of Muhammad Asad.*  
Kuala Lumpur, Islamic Renaissance Front &  
Islamic Book Trust. pp. 252, ISBN: 978-967-26388-4-1.  
*Reviewer: Ahmad Farouk Musa.*



## Transliteration Table: Consonants

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	th		ع	‘
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	’
ض	ḍ		ي	y

## Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
اَ	a		اَ، اِيَّ	an
اُ	u		اُو	un
اِ	i		اِي	in
اَ، اِ، اِيَّ	ā		اَو	aw
اُو	ū		اَي	ay
اِي	ī		اُو	uww, ū (in final position)
			اَي	iyy, ī (in final position)

*Source: ROTAS Transliteration Kit: <http://rotas.iium.edu.my>*



# **Bringing Religion Back to the Forefront: An Opinion-Oriented Study from IR Scholars in Malaysia’s Research Universities**

**Siti Zuliha Razali\***

**NadhrAh Abd. Kadir\*\***

**Razlini Mohd Ramli\*\*\***

**Abstract:** In the wake of major global events such as 9/11, it is becoming increasingly necessary to consider Religion as a tool to analyse these conflicts. Unfortunately, the field of International Relations (IR) has sidelined Religion in favor of other mainstream, secular theories, particularly in the West. This research aims to highlight the non-Western perspective of Religion in IR and discusses how to effectively implement it in the discipline. The study was conducted by analysing data collected during interviews with 13 IR scholars from three Malaysian research universities (RU). The findings revealed a strong consensus on the importance of integrating Religion into IR. Scholars largely dismiss the field’s secular bias, and suggest a constructivist approach when analysing Religion in IR due to its emphasis on ideational factors and normative change. Lastly, the scholars recommended multidisciplinary and experiential approaches to prepare students to engage with the complexity of Religion in IR.

**Keywords:** Religion, International Relations (IR), Non-Western Perspectives, Constructivism, IR Pedagogy

---

\*Senior Lecturer, Political Science Unit, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. Email: siti\_razali@usm.my. Corresponding author

\*\*Senior Lecturer, Political Science Unit, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. Email: nadhrAh@usm.my

\*\*\*Senior Lecturer, Political Science Unit, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. Email: razlini@usm.my

**Abstrak:** Perkembangan konflik global selepas peristiwa 11 September menunjukkan keperluan untuk meletakkan agama sebagai alat analisis dalam kajian Hubungan Antarabangsa (IR). Namun, disiplin IR arus perdana, khususnya di Barat, masih cenderung meminggirkan agama dan mengutamakan teori-teori sekular. Kajian ini bertujuan mengetengahkan perspektif bukan Barat mengenai peranan agama dalam IR serta membincangkan kaedah pengintegrasian secara efektif ke dalam disiplin tersebut. Penyelidikan ini dilaksanakan melalui temu bual bersama 13 sarjana IR dari tiga universiti penyelidikan (RU) di Malaysia. Hasil kajian menunjukkan kesepakatan kuat bahawa agama perlu diberikan perhatian yang lebih luas dalam IR. Para sarjana menolak bias sekular dalam disiplin ini dan mencadangkan pendekatan konstruktivisme bagi analisis agama kerana penekanannya terhadap faktor idea dan perubahan norma. Tambahan itu, pendekatan multidisiplin dan pembelajaran berasaskan pengalaman turut disarankan bagi meningkatkan pemahaman pelajar terhadap kerumitan hubungan antara agama dan IR.

**Kata kunci:** Agama, Hubungan Antarabangsa (IR), Perspektif bukan Barat, Konstruktivisme, Pedagogi IR

## Introduction

For years, the academic discipline of IR has relied on its objective mainstream paradigms, like Realism, when addressing real-world issues. Using secular means to analyse the world's events has long been regarded as the primary method for conducting academic research. However, global events since World War II (some argue even before that) have demonstrated a strong connection between Religion and a country's political, economic, and spiritual climate.

The 20th century was marked by industrialisation and materialism with capitalism serving as the driving force behind the world's economic and political systems. However, as societies reached material prosperity into the 21st century, deeper concerns emerged, such as purpose and mental health, that capitalism and endless productivity could not address. As a result, many began to turn back to Religion and spirituality to fill the void that capitalism could not.

The 20th century witnessed two world wars driven by both political and economic reasons, yet with the start of the 21st century, Religion emerged as a critical global issue. Key events such as the Iranian Revolution in the 1970s, the Mujahideen's war with the Russians in the

1980s, and the rise of Christian resistance against corrupt governments in Latin America in the 1990s paint a picture of Religion's growing role in global conflicts. This role seemed to grow in the new millennium with the September 11 attacks, the Taliban defeating the U.S. in 2022, the long-standing Israel-Palestine conflict which began in 1948 and then escalated in 2023 with Israel's genocide in Gaza (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2024), and the increase in religious extremism across regions further highlight this trend. All this goes to show that IR scholars can no longer ignore Religion as a vital factor when studying global issues, even with its subjective and immeasurable nature.

This study was carried out to investigate the necessity for Religion to be used as a tool in IR and ways in which to bring it into the discipline. This research was conducted qualitatively by interviewing 13 Political Science and International Relations scholars from different universities across Malaysia to seek their views on Religion and its role in IR.

### **Debating the Role of Religion in International Relations**

The dynamic relationship between Religion and IR has now become a vital area of study, one that opposes secular assumptions historically rooted in the field. IR scholars such as Haynes (2021), Williams (2022), Adams (2021), Sandal and James (2010), and Fox (2018) have contributed works to the discipline on how Religion, the once neglected IR child, is finally being acknowledged as a major player in shaping international politics. Through this academic view, these scholars, among many others, believe that Constructivism is the theory that best explains the complex relationship between Religion and IR today.

### **The Secular Foundations and Oversight of Religion in IR**

Historically, IR was set on a secular foundation. According to Haynes (2021), Religion was excluded from conventional IR until the late 20th century. This exclusion was primarily due to the field's secularist nature in which scholars worked under the assumption that modernity and progress would inevitably lead to a decline in religious influence. In 1648, the Treaty of Westphalia enacted the belief that Religion should be kept out of political governance. Along the same lines, Realism, advocated by prominent figures such as Kenneth Waltz (2010), places an unequal emphasis on material power while overlooking ideological

forces, including Religion. Even during the Cold War, which lasted from 1947 to 1991, the discourse was framed in terms of capitalism versus communism, rather than secularism versus Religion (Haynes, 2021).

May et al. (2014) bolster Haynes' view by stating that the dominance of secularism in IR prevented a deeper analysis of how Religion has always had an ongoing historical influence on the field. Even with the deep Judeo-Christian roots of many modern political institutions, Religion was still confined to the private sphere. Additionally, May et al. (2014) state that the post-secular theory provides more critique of the secularist nature of IR. According to this theory, the black and white secular-religious binary is inadequate to understand global dynamics. In contrast, Religion has reemerged as a political force that is not in contention with modernity but as an actor within it. Academics such as Casanova (1994) and Habermas (2001) emphasise that the resurgence of Religion in the public sphere challenges the presumed neutrality of secularism and underscores the need to revise IR theories.

The beginnings of interest in religious influence on IR stirred with the occurrence of two major events before 9/11. These two events were the 1979 Iranian Revolution and Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* thesis (Haynes, 2021). With these events, scholars began to rethink the role of Religion in international politics. During the Iranian Revolution, the secular Shah was overthrown, transforming the country into a theocratic Islamic state. This situation challenged the broad assumption that modernisation leads to secularisation. Similarly, Huntington's disputed 1993 thesis labelled the post-Cold War international conflict as one between the West and Islam, thus framing Religion as the primary cause of global conflict. Although it was heavily criticised, it became more relevant after the 9/11 attacks.

### **Post-9/11: The Securitisation of Religion and Its Theoretical Consequences**

The September 11 terrorist attacks were a crucial turning point for the study of Religion in IR. After this calamity, the goal shifted to the securitisation of Islam as the West began to view Islamic extremism as a major threat (Haynes, 2021). The subsequent "War on Terror" led to more military interventions in Muslim-majority nations and increased surveillance of Muslim populations worldwide. This incident not only

altered the perception of Religion in international security but also accentuated the drawbacks of existing IR theories (Haynes, 2021).

The real test came along when conventional IR frameworks like Realism, liberalism, and even Marxism, had trouble integrating Religion into their studies. Realism primarily focused on power and security issues, while largely ignoring the influence of religious ideologies on foreign policy. Liberalism, on the other hand, prioritised cooperation between international institutions while overlooking religious actors as secondary forces that influence diplomacy and global governance. Contrarily, scholars found Constructivism to be the most effective theoretical framework for studying Religion in IR as it highlights the importance of identity, norms, and beliefs in moulding state behaviour. Thus, Constructivism is believed to be the optimal method for understanding how Religion is actively involved in IR (Adams, 2021; Williams, 2022).

### **Constructivism: The Ideal Framework for Understanding Religion in IR**

Many scholars defer to Constructivism when analysing Religion within the context of IR due to its capability in incorporating religious factors into global affairs. According to Haynes (2021), Sandal and James (2010), and Fox (2018), Constructivism provides a distinct explanation of how Religion shapes state behaviour, identity, and global norms. Constructivism focuses on the power of ideas and beliefs, recognising that Religion is not merely a passive cultural backdrop in international politics, but also an active force with the potential to reform diplomatic processes, global governance, and national policies.

A prominent example that demonstrates this is the impact of religious ideologies on human rights discourse. Catholicism, for instance, places high importance on human dignity and the sanctity of life. This belief played a crucial role in shaping the post-World War II human rights regime (Haynes, 2021). Moreover, Sandal and James (2010) demonstrate how religious groups such as American Evangelical Christians and Middle Eastern Islamic NGOs influence policy decisions and impact international diplomacy.

Furthermore, Constructivism offers an enlightening perspective on the role that Religion plays in soft power. Religious institutions

typically wield considerable influence through their humanitarian aid, moral authority, and diplomatic efforts. Pope Francis's backing for climate action and refugee rights is a clear example of how religious organisations can influence global norms and policies. The increasing importance of religious diplomacy, exemplified by actors such as the Vatican and Islamic organisations, demonstrates the growing role of religious organisations in global governance (Fox, 2018).

### **The Need for a Broader Conceptualisation of Religion in IR**

Where Haynes (2021) presses on the need for moving beyond security concerns in IR, Sandal and James (2010) call for a broader definition of Religion in IR that does not follow the reductionist perspective that sees Religion as only a source of conflict. Their work showcases how, contrary to the violent image often associated with Religion, it can actually serve as a means towards peace, conflict resolution, and the forging of new international norms (Sandal & James, 2010). They share similar views with Haynes, who has previously called for further research that goes beyond studying Islamist terrorism and instead prioritises non-state religious actors who influence international affairs through diplomacy, humanitarian efforts, and soft power (Haynes, 2021).

Furthermore, other scholars also support the notion that religious influence can transcend state borders through transnational movements, diaspora communities, and religious NGOs. Juergensmeyer (1994), and Mavelli and Petito (2012) explain how globalisation allows religious actors to dispute the state-centric model of IR. Whether it is through humanitarian aid, education, or grassroots activism, these actors reinvent political engagement in such a way that traditional IR theories can only hope to emulate.

This notion of religious peacebuilding coincides with Fox's (2018) study of the role of Religion in advancing and deterring cooperation in global governance. In his research, Fox found that religious groups can impact state behaviour by advocating for moral authority and global norms. This situation was evident in the Catholic Church's support for climate change and refugee rights. On the same note, the growth of religious nationalism in countries like India, Turkey, and the United States displays how Religion can also act as a tool for populist agendas. Heads of state, such as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Donald Trump, have used their religious identities as a bargaining chip to consolidate

domestic power and redefine national interests on the world stage (Fox, 2018).

These viewpoints align with the idea that Religion and politics can work together hand-in-hand. As Philpott (2002) and Berger (1999) claim, Religion remains a crucial resource for identity formation and moral legitimacy, particularly in regions where secular establishments struggle to maintain their authority.

This movement towards understanding the multidimensional role of Religion in international politics indicates an increasing awareness that religious actors, whether state or non-state, have a significant impact on world affairs in ways that secular theories can no longer overlook.

### **Expanding Religion's Role in IR Theory**

Based on the aforementioned scholarly works, it is apparent that Religion is no longer just a background noise in the field of IR. After 9/11, the role of Religion in shaping global politics has been put in the spotlight, from its involvement in security concerns to soft power and diplomacy. IR scholars like Haynes (2021), Sandal and James (2010), Fox (2018), and Williams (2021) call for a broader and more distinct method to studying Religion in IR, one that transcends the narrow scope of terrorism and security and involves the full potential of religious actors and ideologies that impact international affairs. Additionally, other scholars also advocate for a more nuanced, multidisciplinary approach that acknowledges the co-constitutive nature of Religion in politics, especially within the post-secular context (Hurd, 2008; Wilson, 2012; May et al., 2014).

Out of all the IR theories, Constructivism offers the best theoretical framework for comprehending how Religion affects IR. By accepting the power of religious beliefs and identities, Constructivism allows academics to navigate on how Religion determines state behaviour, global norms, and the dynamic structure of IR. As we head toward the future, IR as a discipline must recognise Religion as a major factor in global politics, as it has the power to shape diplomacy, global governance, and the future of IR.

With that in mind, this literary review discusses prominent Western perspectives on Religion and IR. In order to broaden the

scope of understanding Religion and its role in the field of IR, other perspectives from outside the Western hemisphere should also be taken into account. This research is conducted with the intention of adding the voices of non-Western, specifically Malaysian, IR scholars to the discourse.

### **Methodology**

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach in order to study the role of Religion in IR. This initiative was conducted by directly interacting with academic experts in the field. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 scholars specialising in International Relations and Political Science from the top three research universities (RUs) in Malaysia: Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and Universiti Malaya (UM). These schools were selected based upon their academic reputation and research influence in the social sciences.

The interviewees were picked based on their academic standing, IR specialisation, and hefty teaching experience in their field. 75% of the respondents have 10-15 years of teaching and research experience at their respective universities. The interviews were done on an individual basis with the following questions:

1. Do you think Religion should be included within international relations?
2. Do you think it is possible to include Religion as a variable in the mainstream IR?
3. If so, how?
4. What approaches do you use to teach your courses?

These open-ended questions opened the door to deep, scholarly discussions with academic experts, who shared their insights on the incorporation of Religion into IR theory and pedagogy.

This qualitative study provided a rich, interpretive understanding of the respondents' perspectives, highlighting their personal experiences and theoretical leanings. The data was analysed thematically to determine recurring patterns, contrasts, and unique viewpoints across all the responses.

## **Religion and IR: Should Religion Be Included in IR, Is it Possible, and How?**

### ***Research University I (RUI)***

#### *Scholar 1 (S1)*

When asked whether Religion should be included in IR, S1 criticised how Religion is simplified and viewed in a binary manner as either good or bad for democracy and governance, particularly within the field of IR. He further contends that the concept of Religion should not be defined in strict terms; rather, Religion should be viewed as complex and multifaceted, since even within religious communities, there are different perceptions of the same Religion. Studying Religion in this way would pave the way for a deeper understanding of how Religion affects politics and governance (Scholar 1, personal communication, 7 October 2021).

#### *Scholar 2 (S2)*

S2 agrees that Religion is becoming more relevant and should be included in IR. He refers to how in the past, Religion has influenced historical conflicts (i.e., religious wars). He explains that the current IR discourse has become more secular, especially after the World Wars. However, with growing global problems like terrorism and climate change (which are already viewed within religious contexts), Religion is starting to be pulled back into the limelight in international politics. With these increasing issues, S2 argues that Religion can no longer be ignored in IR, especially when discussing non-state actors like terrorist groups who have the potential to destabilise nations, as occurred during the events of 9/11 (Scholar 2, personal communication, 12 October 2021).

S2 suggests that one way Religion can be included in mainstream IR is to analyse it on two different levels. The first would be the individual, such as how the religious beliefs of a single leader could influence foreign policy. The second level would be domestic, such as how Religion influences domestic conflicts or state behaviour. He further calls for the need to study conflicts through a religious lens, like those involving fundamentalism or separatism. He predicts that the role of Religion in IR will increase because of international events, with countries like Afghanistan being used as prime examples.

*Scholar 3 (S3)*

S3 supports the inclusion of Religion in IR. He considers Islamic organisations, such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), as crucial global actors. Before events like 9/11, Religion was mostly sidelined in the field of IR, and the secular views of Western academics failed to consider Religion's political role in non-Western societies. For instance, Islam has often been perceived in contention with Western civilisation, especially in discussions about political Islam and fundamentalism.

S3 also points out how Religion is already sometimes used in IR teachings when studying topics such as transnational terrorism and Islamism. However, he reflects that IR currently lacks a comprehensive framework to analyse the role of Religion in international conflicts (Scholar 3, personal communication, 4 April 2023).

*Scholar 4 (S4)*

When discussing Religion in Social Sciences and IR, S4 maintains that the entire discipline of social sciences, with IR in particular, is heavily secularised, especially in the West. Historically, after the Renaissance and the French Revolution, Religion and governance have been separated. Even so, he argues that after the 1990s, the resurgence of religious movements displays the considerable role of Religion in reacting to global issues like capitalism, marginalisation, and poverty (Scholar 4, personal communication, 11 October 2021).

S4 proposes that Religion in and of itself is too large a concept to be used as a primary variable in IR. However, religious movements, on the other hand, specifically those that respond to globalisation, may serve as a more effective variable in understanding global dynamics. He uses the Pentecostal movement in the Philippines as an example, as it emerged as an alternative to Catholicism in response to political instability and poverty. The Tzu Chi Buddhist movement also occurred in response to neoliberal challenges. Although S4 believes that Religion itself might not be a useful main variable in IR, he thinks that it can be a handy tool for understanding global events, particularly when referring to crisis response and social systems.

S4 attributes the challenges of studying Religion in the social sciences, IR specifically, largely to the Western secularisation of

academic discourse. He states that when studying Religion, difficulties arise when scholars delve into the theological aspects, notably when analysing political and social responses within religious belief systems. The stigma surrounding Islam and its connection to terrorism, especially after 9/11, convolutes the study of Religion in IR. S4 emphasises the importance of historicising these concepts to help understand their social and political dimensions.

*Scholar 5 (S5)*

In his interview, S5 explains how secularism shaped the IR discipline as it rose alongside Western hegemony. After World War II, secularism set aside faith in what it viewed as the success of modern civilisation. This change impacted all academic disciplines, especially IR and Political Science, as Western universities began adapting a secular approach (Scholar 5, personal communication, 4 December 2021).

Historically, many early Judeo-Christian scholars were religious authorities who wrote largely about Christianity, with their ideas still being referenced in modern times. Nevertheless, since IR developed during a secular era, it naturally adopted its *zeitgeist*. It was not until the 1980s and 1990s—specifically after the Iranian Revolution—that Religion made a comeback in IR, which shocked the West, especially the United States and the United Kingdom. S5 recommends reading Jonathan Fox’s works on Religion and IR for further study.

***Research University 2 (RU2)***

*Scholar 6 (S6)*

S6’s interview delves into Religion and IR through an Islamic lens and Middle Eastern politics. S6 explains that in certain regions, such as in the Middle East, Religion cannot be easily left out of political systems. In other regions, Religion may not be as relevant to politics as it is in the U.S. or Europe, where secularism is more prevalent. Hence, in regions like the Middle East, using Religion as a tool when analysing IR would be more suitable. He uses the 1979 Iranian Revolution and Iranian foreign policy as examples of how Religion can determine political decisions and IR (Scholar 6, personal communication, 29 March 2021).

When addressing the challenges in using Religion in IR, S6 proposes that while mainstream IR theories like Realism or Liberalism are not

very suitable to describe Religion, Constructivism may be a better alternative. The absence of specific academic methods for incorporating Religion into IR theories still proves to be a challenge for the discipline as a whole.

S6 also touches on the issue of Religion in the Arab Spring, stating that it was not the main cause, but rather provoked by socio-political problems such as economic hardship and political repression. On the other hand, Religion seemed to be a consequence of the Arab Spring, as religious groups like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt gained political traction and formed new governments afterwards.

#### *Scholar 7 (S7)*

S7 asserts that Religion has a large hand in IR, especially in conflicts and understanding international law. She explains that in conflicts like Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda, Religion acted as both a cultural element and the driving force in the conflict, with religious superiors fueling the fire for hatred and persecution. These two issues display the deep interactions between Religion, ethnicity, and war conduct, particularly when religious figures are complicit in igniting violence or dividing communities (Scholar 7, personal communication, 2 July 2021).

S7 also points out how Western IR theory neglects Religion due to its secular and materialist paradigms, like Realism and liberalism. This forms a void in the IR discipline, especially when studying non-Western conflicts like in Asia or in the Middle East, where cultural and religious determinants cannot be ignored. She proposes that Religion may be an effective variable in IR, but there are still obstacles in actually integrating it into mainstream theory, given the complexity and variety of religious beliefs around the world.

Moreover, S7 explains how religious and cultural factors can be studied in IR from an Asian standpoint but this is still underdeveloped. She suggests that non-Western historical records, such as the Malaccan Maritime Laws, could help provide previously untapped resources for studying IR outside of the prominent Western discourse. All in all, S7's interview highlights the importance of Religion in shaping IR and proposes that more inclusive perspectives could improve the study of global politics.

*Scholar 8 (S8)*

S8 strongly supports including Religion in IR and explains that Western academics tend to minimise the importance of Religion. He believes that not only do religious teachings affect personal behaviour, but they also impact state behaviour and international relations. Religious teachings consist of concepts like diplomacy, tolerance, and compromise, which can all be implemented in IR regardless of religious background (Scholar 8, personal communication, 17 April 2021).

He explains in depth an Islamic concept called *shura* which means consultation and acts as a useful tool in international diplomacy. Using this model, countries are inspired to participate in discussions, focusing on shared values and compromise. He compares this to the Western concept of democracy. However, he highlights the main difference: where democracy allows the majority to make decisions, Islam places limits, particularly when those decisions go against Islamic principles.

*Scholar 9 (S9)*

In her interview, S9 discusses how both Religion and culture have important roles in IR, especially when analysing conflicts in the Middle East. She describes how, after the Cold War and the onset of globalisation, the concept of a “world without borders” emerged, making it more challenging to exclude Religion from international politics. For instance, religious factors are part of the reason why Turkey struggles to join the EU. S9 claims that, especially after crises like 9/11, Religion must be reincorporated into IR because modern conflicts not only involve political and economic factors, but religious ones as well (Scholar 9, personal communication, 28 March 2021).

In spite of this, mainstream IR scholars oppose the inclusion of Religion as they see it as a postmodern approach. S9 criticises this mindset as certain Religions like Islam offer an extensive foundation for understanding life as a whole. She says that Islam is usually misunderstood and should not be grouped with other Religions, especially in the Middle East, where Religion and culture are deeply interconnected.

In order to incorporate Religion into IR, S9 proposes the usage of empirical studies, case studies, and comparative research. For example, studying the levels of democracy in both Islamic and non-Islamic

countries could help discern between religious and cultural determinants. She suggests studying countries like Israel, Turkey, and Iran to assess whether their political systems are influenced more by Religion or culture. Furthermore, she claims that Islam should be studied first as the starting point for incorporating Religion into IR. Then other Religions should be studied subsequently within the same time period to ensure that comparisons are done objectively.

*Scholar 10 (S10)*

When studying social phenomena, S10 uses multiple theories from IR and political anthropology, like Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, Marxism, and Feminism. He recognises that Religion can be a useful tool in research, but only when it is relevant to the case study. For instance, when studying Chinese converts in Indonesia, Islam should not be used as a starting assumption, but rather it should be incorporated as a natural part of the analysis and studied in context (Scholar 10, personal communication, 26 March 2021).

***Research University III (RU III)***

*Scholar 11 (S11)*

S11 takes a deep dive into the precarious position that Religion holds in IR. He describes the historical conflict between Religion and IR ever since the Treaty of Westphalia, which established secularism in Europe. This treaty marked the beginning of the modern state system, which emerged as a result of the Reformation and the Catholic-Protestant wars in Europe. These historical events put a negative light on the inclusion of Religion in IR and instead shone a more positive light on secularism (Scholar 11, personal communication, 17 March 2022).

Although Religion had a rather infamous history in the field of IR, S11 presses that its political impact can no longer be ignored. After events like the Iranian Revolution and 9/11, the role of Religion in modern geopolitics is now more crucial than ever. Thus, a paradox is established: although Religion is deeply involved in influencing global events, it has historically been ignored within mainstream IR.

S11 introduces the concept of transcendentalism, which describes how Religion transcends physical limits and extends into the supernatural. These kinds of subjective concepts are challenging to

understand using Western secular knowledge. IR generally employs empirical data and rational thinking, which makes it challenging for Religion to be incorporated into conventional IR frameworks. However, political campaigns like Political Islam, fundamentalism, and events like the clash of civilisations object to this.

S11 also highlights the reemergence of religious movements in global politics, like the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and Hinduism in India, which shows that Religion can no longer be excluded from politics. He notes that there are already existing IR frameworks that help to understand Religion, but they are often neglected in favor of issues like terrorism or soft power. This digs a large gap in the pathway to incorporating Religion into mainstream IR.

*Scholar 12 (S12)*

S12 supports the inclusion of Religion into IR, but when it comes to countries like Malaysia, the matter becomes more complicated. Analysing Religion through an IR lens in Malaysia would be challenging, considering the country's vibrant religious diversity and the many interpretations of its major Religion, Islam. S12 states the need to acknowledge universal perspectives while simultaneously considering local practices (Scholar 12, personal communication, 26 April 2021).

Another challenge S12 introduces when discussing Religion and IR is the obstacles in defining the concept of Religion itself. S12 claims that having a solid definition for Religion is imperative before using it in research. However, its personal and abstract nature complicates its usage as an applicable variable in IR.

S12 also notes how religious views can be influenced by human rights issues, such as discrimination. When discussing contentious issues like LGBT rights, she says it is important to try to find an equilibrium between religious values and human rights principles.

*Scholar 13 (S13)*

S13 believes that even though it is not always recognised, Religion does have a heavy role in IR. He notes that, before the Enlightenment period, Religion was often incorporated into political theory and international studies, but was later replaced by more secular and objective study methods. He claims that even during the separation of Religion from

academic disciplines, it still has a firm hold in IR theories like classical Realism. Religious ideas like “original sin” and “just war” are still deeply rooted in such theories, often without acknowledgment (Scholar 13, personal communication, 22 April 2021).

S13 mentions other IR theories, such as social Constructivism and neoclassical Realism, which acknowledge the significant hefty impact of Religion in shaping political behaviour. This suggests that religious teachings should be considered when examining foreign policy. For example, when analysing how Islam influences Malaysia’s stance on Israel or how Protestant values are incorporated in U.S. political decisions.

Table 1 displays a summary of the scholars’ input during the interviews regarding the inclusion of Religion in IR.

Table 1: Summary of Scholars’ Views on Religion In International Relations

University	Support for Religion in IR	Key Points	Challenges	Suggested Approaches
RU1	Generally supportive	Religion has been oversimplified; should be treated as complex and multifaceted. Historically sidelined but resurfacing after 9/11 and the Iranian Revolution. Religious movements (e.g. , Pentecostalism, Tzu Chi) reveal its political role.	Heavy secular bias in IR; Religion too broad a variable; lack of a clear framework for studying it.	Study Religion at multiple levels (individual leaders, domestic politics); focus on movements rather than Religion as a whole; historicise its role; integrate works of scholars like Jonathan Fox.
RU2	Strongly supportive	Religion central in Middle East politics; crucial in conflicts (Bosnia, Rwanda); influences state and personal behaviour. Islamic principles (e.g., syura) provide alternative models for diplomacy. Culture and Religion are intertwined in regions like the Middle East.	Western IR theories neglect Religion; difficulty generalising due to diversity; risk of over-assuming Religion’s role in some contexts.	Use Constructivism; apply Asian/ non-Western perspectives; employ empirical/ comparative studies; contextualise Religion in case studies; integrate cultural-historical records.

University	Support for Religion in IR	Key Points	Challenges	Suggested Approaches
RU3	Supportive but cautious	Religion historically embedded in IR (e.g., “just war,” “original sin”) but sidelined since Westphalia. Still highly influential in modern geopolitics (Islamic fundamentalism, Hindu nationalism). Local diversity (e.g., Malaysia) complicates analysis.	Secular dominance in IR; transcendental aspects of Religion resist empirical study; challenges in defining Religion; tensions with human rights values.	Recognise Religion’s historical roots in IR theories; adopt Constructivist/ neoclassical approaches; balance universal norms with local practices; study Religion alongside human rights discourse.

## Teaching Approaches

### *Research University I (RU I)*

#### *Scholar 1 (S1)*

When discussing teaching approaches, S1 says he likes using critical discussions in his classes. Living in Malaysia, where many have Religion as a focus in their day-to-day lives, having these kinds of conversations helps to challenge students’ worldviews on Religion. This method encourages students to study Religion with a critical lens, enabling them to understand its intricacies and various interpretations rather than simply accepting certain views without question (Scholar 1, personal communication, 7 October 2021).

#### *Scholar 2 (S2)*

S2 does not view Religion as a proper “tool”. However, he does acknowledge its relevance to many important concepts in IR, such as political Islam, religious ideologies in foreign policy, and the conflict between universal human rights and religious rights (Scholar 2, personal communication, 12 October 2021).

#### *Scholar 3 (S3)*

S3 believes that when teaching IR, Religion can be a helpful tool, especially when studying regions like Southeast Asia, where Religion

is a strong determinant of political affairs. He says that secular theories tend to flounder in capturing how Religion shapes power dynamics. For example, he mentions the potential application of Confucianism in understanding China's global expansion (Scholar 3, personal communication, 4 April 2023).

S3 also mentions that IR does not have a distinct framework to study the role of Religion, Islam in particular, in transnational terrorism. Although some IR courses hint at religious aspects when teaching terrorism, there is still not a committed theoretical method that can be used to teach the phenomenon. Hence, S3 suggests that IR needs to glean from other fields like political science and cultural studies in order to better comprehend Islamism as an ideology.

He points out that in the past, there were no prominent resources that connected Religion and IR in depth, but nowadays there are academics like Jeff Haines who have studied the topic thoroughly albeit from a Western perspective. He says that the problem with the Western viewpoint is that scholars hail from societies where Religion is not deeply rooted in everyday life. He proposes that academics from religious societies should be at the forefront in studying the role of Religion in IR instead of only depending Western scholar perspectives.

#### *Scholar 4 (S4)*

S4 supports the inclusion of religious movements as a variable in IR studies but admits that the topic is complicated to study. He suggests that a multidisciplinary approach, combining social sciences and historical context, would be helpful in understanding the role of Religion in international affairs and teaching it to students (Scholar 4, personal communication, 11 October 2021).

#### *Scholar 5 (S5)*

Based on S5's interview, his teaching methods involve discussing the historical context into how the IR field developed. He also encourages his students to critically engage with the influence of secularism on the field of IR and whether alternative mentalities would be more suitable to the field. He suggests reading works by Jonathan Fox who has written broadly about Religion and IR. Lastly, he uses using past events like the Iranian Revolution and its effect on IR to show how Religion affects

IR in modern times (Scholar 5, personal communication, 4 December 2021).

### ***Research University II (RU II)***

#### *Scholar 6 (S6)*

When teaching his classes, S6 mainly uses Realism because he says it is easier for his students to understand as a foundation for studying global events, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict (Scholar 6, personal communication, 29 March 2021).

#### *Scholar 7 (S7)*

S7 jokes that her coworkers found her course to be boring, so she took it upon herself to make it a little more interesting by incorporating her IR background and religious views on genocide. She used cases like Bosnia and the Hutu conflict, and noticed that her students were more engaged with the material compared to those of previous lecturers who had not taught in this manner. Although she specialises in biosecurity, she surprised her students by talking about eugenics, using Hitler's genocide of Jews and the current persecution of Uighurs in China as examples. She notes that eugenics is determined by both ethnicity and Religion, as was seen in armed conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda. She claims that using these sorts of examples helps make her course more exciting for students to attend (Scholar 7, personal communication, 2 July 2021).

#### *Scholar 8 (S8)*

S8 says he discusses Religion in his classes only when relevant to the lesson at hand. He teaches courses on Islam and Western thought, as well as Islamic Government and Administration, which centred on elements such as *shura* (consultation), justice, and equality. He admits that although his teaching method is not strictly limited to Religion and IR, he does refer to religious views when they match the course content. He believes it is essential for all students, regardless of their religious backgrounds, to understand how Islam and other Religions perceive different concepts. His goal is to guide his students to an understanding of life itself, which he views as the primary takeaway from his classes (Scholar 8, personal communication, 17 April 2021).

*Scholar 9 (S9)*

S9 prefers hands-on, real-world lessons over conventional classroom learning. She often takes her students on field trips to various countries, allowing them to interact with local students and conduct their own research on real-world international problems (Scholar 9, personal communication, 28 March 2021).

*Scholar 10 (S10)*

S10 favors empirical research and using an open-minded, interdisciplinary approach when teaching. He emphasises the importance of avoiding bias and not letting personal or predetermined values influence research, instead encouraging critical thinking and objective analysis. He enjoys using various theoretical frameworks, such as Liberalism, Constructivism, Marxism, and Feminism, so that his students can study religious and social issues from different viewpoints rather than relying on a single framework (Scholar 10, personal communication, 26 March 2021).

***Research University III (RU III)****Scholar 11 (S11)*

S11 calls for IR scholars to adopt a new approach to Religion within the discipline. Instead of depending on Western frameworks, he believes that scholars must establish dialogue starting at the local level when studying the role of Religion in daily politics and IR. The goal should be to understand the influence of religious actors such as the Taliban and to stray away from seeing Religion solely as a background topic. S11 advocates for IR scholars to move past theoretical debates and participate in practical discussions that incorporate Religion into the ever-changing dynamics of global politics (Scholar 11, personal communication, 17 March 2022).

*Scholar 12 (S12)*

S12 shares that in her IR courses, students often raise the topic of Religion especially when discussing human rights and social movements. Although she believes that incorporating religious perspectives into IR is helpful for critical thinking, she is wary about students pushing their religious views on others in order to respect diversity (Scholar 12, personal communication, 26 April 2021).

S12 admits that while including Religion in IR classes might challenge the mainstream approach, it can still improve students' comprehension. She proposes that it could be an interesting activity, albeit with some difficulties, especially when considering whether Religion can be studied objectively in the field.

*Scholar 13 (S13)*

S13 employs caution when discussing Religion in his classes due to the diverse and multi-religious environment in Malaysia. He worries about accidentally misrepresenting religious teachings and making students uncomfortable with his own personal views. Nevertheless, he intends to organise discussions about the importance of Religion in political research. He believes it could be a useful way to inspire students to think more critically about the role of Religion in international affairs (Scholar 13, personal communication, 22 April 2021).

Table 2 presents a summary of the various teaching approaches used by the scholars from the three RUs.

Table 2: Summary of Teaching Approaches

University	Teaching Approaches
RU1	Emphasises discussions to challenge students' worldviews; uses historical and contemporary cases (e.g., Iranian Revolution, political Islam, Confucianism) to show Religion's impact; incorporates scholarship (e.g., Jonathan Fox); encourages interdisciplinary study of Religion and IR.
RU2	Takes diverse and applied approaches: Realism as a foundation, interdisciplinary use of multiple IR theories, and inclusion of Religion in topics like genocide, biosecurity, and Islamic governance; methods include case studies, empirical research, and even field trips to connect theory with practice.
RU3	Promotes cautious, dialogue-based engagement with Religion in IR; highlights local actors (e.g., Taliban) and student-led discussions on Religion, human rights, and social movements; stresses sensitivity in a multi-religious environment while encouraging critical reflection and respectful debate.

## **Findings**

These interviews with the 13 scholars divulged a rich and nuanced interpretation of the role of Religion in IR. The data collected produced several key themes:

### ***Strong Support for Including Religion in IR***

Almost all the scholars interviewed approved of the inclusion of Religion in the IR discipline. Experts like S2 and S3 pointed out that both historical and contemporary world events, like religious wars and the upsurge of transnational terrorism, prove that Religion still holds political relevance. They claimed that Religion is no longer a peripheral factor but a central element in understanding both state and non-state actions in contemporary geopolitics. Similarly, S7 referred to Religion's part in past conflicts like Bosnia and Rwanda, highlighting its effect on identity and violence.

### ***Challenges of Integrating Religion into Western IR Theories***

Most of the interviewees criticised the secular tendencies of mainstream IR theories. S5 and S11 both mentioned that IR grew within a secular Western environment and therefore neglected any mentions of Religion. S12 brought up the point that Religion, in itself, is challenging to define, let alone apply regularly across different geopolitical contexts. The interviewees' concerns echoed those raised by Sandal and James (2010) and Williams (2022), who disputed that mainstream liberal and realist frameworks often refer to Religion as a reactionary or subordinate force, thereby ignoring its deeper philosophical and political roles.

### ***Constructivism as the Preferred Framework***

Most of the interviewees, like S6 and S13, claimed that Constructivism is the ideal theory for understanding Religion in IR. Their views mirrored those championed by Haynes (2021), who praised constructivist thinking for its malleability in discussing identity, belief, and normative change. Constructivism places significance on ideational power, which aligns with the real-world phenomenon that Religion determines global narratives, behaviours, and alliances beyond material interests.

### ***Regional Relevance and the Importance of Non-Western Perspectives***

Numerous scholars pressed the need for a regionalised lens when studying Religion in IR. S6 highlighted how Religion is much more politically rooted in regions like the Middle East than in the secular West. S9 and S7 called for incorporating local religious histories, such as Islamic and Asian traditions, into the IR discourse to balance out the Western dominance of the discipline. This mirrors Fox's (2018) and Mavelli and Petito's (2012) arguments that religious policy and influence are practiced globally and not only within authoritarian or theocratic states.

### ***Diverse Teaching Approaches to Religion in IR***

Lastly, the respondents disclosed a wide range of teaching methods that they employed in their classrooms, which could also be utilised for incorporating Religion into IR education. Some of the scholars like S1 and S4, often resort to critical discussion and multidisciplinary methods to challenge their students' assumptions and get them thinking outside the box. Others, like S7 and S9, prefer to use real-world case studies, historical conflict analysis, and experiential learning methods, such as fieldwork. All of these teaching approaches demonstrate that Religion can be incorporated into IR discourse, not just theoretically, but also practically. Sandal and James' (2010) research similarly called for a more distinct incorporation of Religion into IR and political science education.

### **Conclusion**

This research was conducted to explore the viability of Religion as a variable in IR, and ways in which to incorporate it into the field. The findings show that Religion is not a side note in global affairs, rather, it acts as a driving force that can no longer be ignored in mainstream IR discourse. Prominent IR scholars, such as Haynes, Sandal and James, Fox, Adams, Williams, among others, have already laid the academic foundation by introducing the idea that secular IR theories, like Realism and Liberalism, are antiquated in their disdain for Religion. They concluded that Constructivism is the ideal theory best suited to studying how religious beliefs, identities, and norms influence international behaviour and institutions.

Through subjective interviews with 13 scholars from three of Malaysia's top research universities, the findings from this project reported hefty approval for the incorporation of Religion into IR theory and pedagogy. Although the scholars recognised the historical and cultural reasons behind the exclusion of Religion in IR, they still affirmed that global events, especially after 9/11, have made it relevant once again. Their discussions confirmed that religious ideologies determine everything from conflict and diplomacy to policy-making and transnational governance.

This research also highlighted that the secular Western model of IR is not universally viable. As discussed by the scholars in their interviews, in many non-Western societies, Religion is deeply embedded in political and everyday life. This study hopes to amplify more non-Western voices, like those from Malaysia, to help diversify the IR discourse and represent more people from outside the Western lens in order to challenge the prominence of traditional Western-centric narratives. By focusing on regional experiences, alternative worldviews, and religious pluralism, this study offers an invaluable corrective to help balance out the field.

All in all, this paper aims to contribute to the growing call for a more inclusive and representative IR discipline. This view regards Religion not as an aberration or problem, but as a powerful tool that can be used to understand international relations better. Future studies and IR pedagogy must adopt interdisciplinary methods, regional perspectives, and theoretical innovation in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic and vital role of Religion in global politics.

### **Acknowledgement**

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) for supporting this research under the Short Term Grant program number:304/PSOSIAL/6315325. We are also sincerely thankful to all the lecturers, scholars, and researchers who took the time to participate in my interviews. Their insights, honesty, and generosity in sharing their knowledge made a huge impact in my research and helped me tremendously. Lastly, we would like to thank our peers who supported and encouraged me throughout this process.

## References

- Adams, N. (2021). The birth of “Religion and international relations”: Questions of scale. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 89(2), 411–431.
- Berger, P. L. (1999). *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington, DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center.
- Casanova, J. (1994). *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fox, J. (2018). A world survey of secular–religious competition: State religious policy from 1990 to 2014. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(3), 325–345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09637494.2018.1532750>
- Habermas, J. (2001). *Faith and Knowledge*. In *The Future of Human Nature* (pp. 101–115). Malden: Polity.
- Haynes, J. (2021). Religion and international relations: What do we know and how do we know it? *Religions*, 12(5), 328. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12050328>
- Hurd, E. S. (2008). *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Juergensmeyer, M. (1994). *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mavelli, L., & Petito, F. (2012). The postsecular in international relations: An overview. *Review of International Studies*, 38(5), 931–942.
- May, S., Wilson, E. K., Baumgart-Ochse, C., & Sheikh, F. (2014). The religious as political and the political as religious: Globalisation, post-secularism and the shifting boundaries of the sacred. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 15(3), 331–346. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2014.948526>
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2024, November 14). *UN Special Committee finds Israel’s warfare methods in Gaza consistent with genocide, including use of starvation as weapon of war* [Press release]. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/11/un-special-committee-finds-israels-warfare-methods-gaza-consistent-genocide>
- Philpott, D. (2002). The challenge of September 11 to secularism in international relations. *World Politics*, 55(1), 66–95.
- Sandal, N. A. & James, P. (2010). Religion and international relations theory: Towards a mutual understanding. *European Journal of International Relations*, 17(1), 3–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066110364304>
- Waltz, K. N. (2010). *Theory of international politics*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press. (Original work published 1979)

- Williams, A. L. (2022). Religion and international relations theory: The case of “new” historiography of human rights. *Religions*, 13(1), 39. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13010039>
- Wilson, E. K. (2012). *After Secularism: Rethinking Religion in Global Politics*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

## GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

*Intellectual Discourse* is an academic, refereed journal, published twice a year. Four types of contributions are considered for publication in this journal: major articles reporting findings of original research; review articles synthesising important deliberations related to disciplines within the domain of Islamic sciences; short research notes or communications, containing original ideas or discussions on vital issues of contemporary concern, and book reviews; and brief reader comments, or statements of divergent viewpoints.

**To submit manuscript**, go to <http://www.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse>

The manuscript submitted to *Intellectual Discourse* should not have been published elsewhere, and should not be under consideration by other publications. This must be stated in the covering letter.

1. Original research and review articles should be 5,000-8,000 words while research notes 3,000-4,000 words, accompanied by an abstract of 100-150 words. Book review should be 1,000-1,500 words.
2. Manuscripts should be double-spaced with a 1-inch (2.5 cm) margins. Use 12-point Times New Roman font.
3. Manuscripts should adhere to the *American Psychological Association* (APA) style, latest edition.
4. The title should be as concise as possible and should appear on a separate sheet together with name(s) of the author(s), affiliation(s), and the complete postal address of the institute(s).
5. A short running title of not more than 40 characters should also be included.
6. Headings and sub-headings of different sections should be clearly indicated.
7. References should be alphabetically ordered. Some examples are given below:

### **Book**

In-text citations:

Al-Faruqi & al-Faruqi (1986)

Reference:

Al-Faruqi, I. R., & al-Faruqi, L. L. (1986). *The cultural atlas of Islam*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

## **Chapter in a Book**

In-text:

Alias (2009)

Reference:

Alias, A. (2009). Human nature. In N. M. Noor (Ed.), *Human nature from an Islamic perspective: A guide to teaching and learning* (pp.79-117). Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press.

## **Journal Article**

In-text:

Chapra (2002)

Reference:

Chapra, M. U. (2002). Islam and the international debt problem. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 10, 214-232.

## **The Qur'ān**

In-text:

(i) direct quotation, write as 30:36

(ii) indirect quotation, write as Qur'ān, 30:36

Reference:

*The glorious Qur'ān*. Translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1977). US: American Trust Publications.

## **Ḥadīth**

In-text:

(i) Al-Bukhārī, 88:204 (where 88 is the book number, 204 is the ḥadīth number)

(ii) Ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 1

Reference:

(i) Al-Bukhārī, M. (1981). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

(ii) Ibn Ḥanbal, A. (1982). *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*. Istanbul: Cagri Yayinlari.

## **The Bible**

In-text:

Matthew 12:31-32

Reference:

*The new Oxford annotated Bible*. (2007). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Transliteration of Arabic words should follow the style indicated in ROTAS Transliteration Kit as detailed on its website ([http://rotas.iium.edu.my/?Table\\_of\\_Transliteration](http://rotas.iium.edu.my/?Table_of_Transliteration)), which is a slight modification of ALA-LC (Library of Congress and the American Library Association) transliteration scheme. Transliteration of Persian, Urdu, Turkish and other scripts should follow ALA-LC scheme.

Opinions expressed in the journal are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, or the publisher. Material published in the *Intellectual Discourse* is copyrighted in its favour. As such, no part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or any information retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

IIUM Press (Marketing Unit)  
Research Management Centre  
International Islamic University Malaysia  
P.O. Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Phone (+603) 6196-5014, Fax: (+603) 6196-4862  
E-mail: [intdiscourse@iium.edu.my](mailto:intdiscourse@iium.edu.my); [intdiscourse@yahoo.com](mailto:intdiscourse@yahoo.com).  
Website: <http://iiumpress.iium.edu.my/bookshop>

# In This Issue

## *Note from the Editor*

### *Research Articles*

#### **Müfit Selim Saruhan**

Metaphysical and Phenomenological Doubt in the Search for Truth: A Comparative Study of al-Ghazālī and Edmund Husserl

#### **Almasa Mulalić, Ratnawati Mohd Asraf & Safija Bušatlić,**

Inclusive Education for All: A Case Study of Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### **Jiraroj Mamadkul**

Globalisation and Religion: A Study of Thai Muslims' Experiences on Gender Diversity in Thai Muslim Society through an Islamic Perspective

#### **Fatimah Karim, Sayyed Mohamed Muhsin & Nur Elyliana Abdul Hadi**

Mohd. Kamal Hassan's Perspectives on Family Relationships: Strategies for Strengthening Malaysian Muslim Families

#### **Afrizal Tjoetra, Aizat Khairi, Nellis Mardhiah & Nodi Marefanda**

Community-Centric Governance: Unveiling the Challenges and Strategies in West Aceh Villages

#### **Siti Zuliha Razali, Nadhrah Abd. Kadir & Razlini Mohd Ramli**

Bringing Religion Back to the Forefront: An Opinion-Oriented Study from IR Scholars in Malaysia's Research Universities

#### **Muhammad Azzubair Awwam Mustafa, Kartini Aboo Talib @ Khalid & Nazri Muslim**

Coalition Rule by Pakatan Harapan, 2018-2020: Key Consociational Lessons

#### **Nurul Izzati Asyikin Zulkifly, Ruhaya Hussin & Maisarah Mohd. Taib**

"Should I Pay a Living Wage?" A Systematic Review on Employers' Decision from an Organisational Justice Perspective

#### **Zunaidah binti Mohd Marzuki & Nurulhaniy binti Ahmad Fuad**

Prophetic Model of Islamic Spiritual Care from Muslim Professional Practitioners' Perspectives: A Systematic Review within the Ṭibb Nabawī Genre

#### **Shafizan Mohamed, Nazariah Shar'ie Janon, Mohd Helmi Yusoh, Norsaremah Salleh, Nur Shakira Mohd Nasi & Wan Norshira Wan Mohd Ghazali**

Designing and Evaluating a Culturally Grounded Digital Parenting Initiative in Malaysia

#### **Aini Maznina A. Manaf & Tengku Siti Aisha Tengku Mohd Azzman Shariffadeen**

Perception about Islam, Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Behavioural Intention in Using Artificial Intelligence among University Students

#### **Saima Waheed, Mohd Khairie Ahmad & Zafar Iqbal Bhatti**

Parental Perceptions of Islamic YouTube Animation: The Case of 'Abdul Bari' in Pakistan.

#### **Aida Mokhtar, Faiswal Kasirye, Mohd. Fuad Md. Sawari,**

#### **Amilah Awang Abd. Rahman @ Jusoh & Ahasanul Haque**

Development of a Model for Advertising Professionalism from the *Maqasid Al-Shari'ah* Perspective

### *Book Review*

ISSN 0128-4878 (Print)

ISSN 2289-5639 (Online)

