AICGS ISSUEBRIEF

OCTOBER 2006 10

The "Religion" Debates: What Are We Talking About?

BY CATHLEEN S. FISHER with KERSTIN A. JAGER

How do debates about religion and politics differ in Europe and the United States?

How do religion and politics intersect in domestic debates in Europe and the United States?

What can debates about "religion" reveal about politics?

Do domestic debates about religion impact transatlantic relations?

Is there a "values gap" between Europe and the United States?

Debates about the interaction of religion, faith, and politics have dominated public discourse in the United States and Europe over the past several years. National debates related to religion and religious influences in both domestic politics and foreign affairs are present everywhere, ranging from speculation about Christian conservatism influencing the White House and U.S. foreign policy, to commentaries in major European papers lamenting the failure of many European countries to adequately integrate their Muslim populations, to conjectures about the impact of globalizing Islam. These debates point to a growing awareness that religion and politics are increasingly intertwined, but also reveal uncertainty about the potential implications of this development.

In the United States, where religious symbols and rhetoric figure prominently in the public sphere, Americans appear conflicted about religion's place in public life. When queried about the appropriate interaction between religion and politics, 69 percent of Americans say that liberals have gone too far in keeping religion out of schools and government. At the same time, 49 percent say that Christian conservatives have gone too far in pushing their values on the country.[1]

In strongly secular Germany, an April 2006 public opinion poll indicated an increase from 18 to 26 percent among Germans aged 16 to 29 years who profess to draw strength from religion. While some commentators lauded the survey results as evidence that Germany's purportedly steady march toward secularization might be slowing, skeptics suggested that many younger Germans might be in search not of religious faith, but rather of "the feeling of religion," as evidenced in the popularity of religious mega-events, such as the Catholic World Youth Day in Cologne in August 2005. The election in 2005 of a German cardinal to the Papacy has also increased the attention Germans pay to religious matters.

Across Europe, numerous newspaper commentaries and television talk-shows ponder the implications of differences in religious beliefs and practices for the integration of minority (Muslim) populations. Others caution against attributing Europe's integration woes primarily to religion. In the wake of arrests in the United Kingdom in August 2006 following an apparently foiled attempt to blow up transatlantic airliners, the headline of a commentary in the *Financial Times* read: "Western efforts to comprehend non-western peoples exclusively

through their religions has skewed understanding of individual identity and nationhood." A liberal German commentator asserted in a similar vein: "It would be a mistake to filter out the importance of culture and religion in integration. But the current debate suffers from the fact that it is too much focused on Islam."[2]

Given the confusing and sometimes contradictory ways in which religion is being invoked in national political debates and in transatlantic exchanges on differences between 'values' in the United States and Europe, it is worth asking: are we all really talking about religion, and, if we are, does "religion" mean the same thing to all of us?

U.S. and European Debates About "Religion"

The AICGS initiative on religion and politics has brought together a multidisciplinary group of experts from five countries—the United States, Germany, France, Poland, and Turkey—to compare the national debates on religion and the complex interaction of religion and politics in today's world. It is necessary to ask whether religion is the main factor in these debates or whether it becomes a cipher for issues that are less religious and more political in nature. At the heart of these national debates may lie commonalities upon which a more productive transatlantic discussion of "religious" issues can be built.

United States

Foreign observers in mid-2006 might well believe that Americans are engaged in a religious war of words. In recent years, bestseller booklists have included salvos from both the political left and right arguing about the dangers or, alternatively, the benefits, of religion in American public and political life. While some have accused the Christian Right of "hijacking" the Republican Party and American politics, others have evoked a progressive vision of faith and politics to counter conservatives' fear-mongering about "godless" liberals. Analyses of the United States as a nation "divided by God" or of religion resurgent around the world have attracted many readers and won their authors slots on public affairs discussion programs.

But while Americans are apparently eager to engage in debate about religion, there is in fact little consensus on a wide range of issues related to faith, the nation, and politics.

A majority of Americans sees the influence of religion on society in the United States as waning. Americans are, however, divided over whether the influence of religion on politics—including on governmental institutions (e.g. the president, Congress, or the courts)—is increasing or declining and whether such influence is helpful or harmful. Americans' views of the relationship between religious and political institutions are also divided: about half—51 percent—believe churches should express their views on political issues; slightly fewer think that houses of worships should refrain from pronouncements on the political and social issues of the day.[3]

Conservative members of the Christian Right decry the perceived exclusion of religion from schools and other public spaces which, in their view, has made Christians the victims of overly zealous secularists. Controversies over abortion, same-sex marriage, end-of-life issues, stem cell research, religious symbols in public spaces, and the teaching of evolution versus creationism in public schools continue to rage around the country. In 2006, at least seven states have referenda banning same-sex marriages and/or unions on the November ballot.[4]

In response to the political activism of the Christian Right, more liberal Christians have begun encouraging religiously-motivated voters to support a progressive agenda of greater social justice, protection of creation, and peace. Lamenting the discomfort of many liberal political groups with religion, some are urging the Democratic Party to rediscover the religious roots of the twentieth century American civil rights and antiwar movements and to make peace with religion. Whether the "religious left" will emerge as a political force to be reckoned with remains to be seen; studies show the religious left to be more diverse in its origins and in the positions it takes on social and political issues than the religious right.

White evangelical Christians, in contrast, are cohesive in outlook and therefore continue to have more political salience as a voting bloc. In the 2004 presidential elections, white evangelicals—an estimated 23 percent of the population—voted solidly for President Bush. Indeed, religious commitment was a more reliable predictor of voter preference than gender, age, income, or geographic region. In a narrowly divided electorate, victory depends on turning out party loyalists and winning votes from carefully targeted groups of voters. This situation gives white evangelical Christians more influence on the nomination and election of candidates.

The relative influence of the religious right and left is not merely a matter of academic concern. As it has in the past, voter turnout is expected to play a decisive role in determining the outcome of the 2006 mid-term elections. The Republican Party is touting an "American Values Agenda" in an attempt to mobi-

lize conservative voters and to reduce defection by those who express concern about the war in Iraq, rising gas prices, and health care costs, and who believe that the country is moving in the wrong direction. In the 2004 elections, the Republican Party effectively used initiatives to ban same-sex marriages to turn out conservative voters in eleven states, an effort that likely made the difference in close contests in key swing states such as Ohio. The GOP is hoping that a panoply of actions on stem cell research, abortion, same-sex marriage, and the Pledge of Allegiance will have a similar effect on voters' motivations in 2006. In truth, the popular notion that values decided the last presidential election is a fallacy; more than anything, perceptions of each candidate's ability to deal with terrorism were the deciding element. But the myth that "values made the difference" persists and is being actively propagated by leading Christian conservative organizations in an effort to "repeat" the victory of 2004.

Finally, among opinion leaders debate on the impact of religious beliefs and groups on U.S. foreign policy is also stirring. Although many Europeans believe that the American public supports a "faith-based" foreign policy, Americans themselves do not think that religious views have a significant influence on their perspectives on U.S. foreign policy—with the exception of views on Israel, though even on this issue, religion is seen as a minor influence.[5] On the other hand, as Walter Russell Mead of the Council on Foreign Relations observes, the growing number of conservative groups among American Protestants and the concomitant increase in their influence in American politics does impact U.S. foreign policy. In particular, evangelicals have had a notable influence on U.S. humanitarian and human rights policies, and this influence has intensified U.S. support for Israel in the Middle East.[6]

Germany

In a largely secular Germany, conversations related to religion focus on two broad aspects of domestic politics–the difficulties of fully integrating Germany's sizeable minority population, many of them of Turkish origin, and the strains placed on state institutions and structures by growing religious pluralism–and one aspect of foreign policy, namely, the fear that Americans and American foreign policy under President Bush are driven primarily by religious—and therefore implicitly irrational—impulses.

The purported role of religion in the Bush administration's foreign policy and the perceived drift of the United States toward more conservative forms of religion are often the subject of German media commentaries. Some see the rise of American evangelicals and the overt religiosity of many American public figures as proof of a growing values gap between the United States and a secular Europe. Europe is touted as a model of rationality and modernity that implicitly serves as a counterweight to a religious America run amok.

Domestically, much discussion surrounds the issues associated with Germany's piecemeal integration of its sizeable immigrant population. The vast majority—an estimated 2.6 million—are of Turkish extraction, descendants of migrant workers who came to Germany during its economic boom to provide much needed labor and than stayed. Long referred to in German discourse as "*Ausländer*," Germans now refer to this population alternatively as "Muslim" or persons of "migrational background," rarely calling them "Germans of Turkish descent." Specific controversies have surrounded, among other things, the problems of providing religious education to non-Christian children or of exempting them from co-educational or sports activities; the wearing of the headscarf (*hijab*) by public employees; the building of mosques in German towns and cities; and the introduction of so-called "citizenship tests," which critics charge reflect an anti-Muslim bias but which are defended by supporters as necessary to ensure that would-be citizens are duly committed to democratic principles and have an adequate grasp of German culture, history, and the German language.

The practical challenges of integration are also sparking fundamental reflections on the viability of Germany's postwar structure of church-state relations. Against the backdrop of a German and European history rife with religious conflict, many Germans are wary of religious influences in politics, despite the fact that officially recognized church bodies serve as partners to the state in the provision of religious education and social services. The Muslim communities of Germany, which are internally divided, have so far been unable to agree on a single, unified body to represent all Muslims that could be given the status of a "corporation under public law" held by some other religious groups. While some argue that traditional church-state structures must adapt to the new realities of a religiously pluralistic Germany, others argue for preservation of the unique German system, which they believe offers more flexibility than the rigid separation of church and state embodied in the French system of *laïcité*. In the meantime, newspaper commentators continue to ponder such fundamental questions as "How should politics treat religion?" or, put differently, "How does the state treat the religion of others?"

France

Debates related to religion in France are intimately connected with the term "*laïcité*," which translates roughly to the English word secularism, but extends well beyond this concept. The principle of *laïcité* is a core tenet of the French Republic; its uncompromising separation of church and state reaches back to the French Revolution of 1789. Unlike in the United States,

where individuals' right *to* religion is protected by this separation, in France, the separation protects individuals *from* religion. The system corresponds to an ideal of citizenship according to which the French citizen, "is defined solely by his belonging to the national community" which "in principle…abolishes all specific identities conferred by being part of an ethnic, regional, linguistic, religious or other group."[7] *Laïcité* therefore also requires excising, as much as possible, symbols of religion (i.e. as the symbols of a personal and perhaps non-national identity) from public space, where they can threaten to undermine *laïcité*.

The reality of a large population of immigrants and their descendents for whom religion remains a way of life has challenged the concept of *laïcité* in ways that are perceived as threatening not only to the principle itself, but also to the foundations upon which the French state was created, and hence to French national identity. The French concept of citizenship, which included peoples from former French colonies, enabled a steady flow of immigrants from North African countries such as Morocco and Algeria, which accelerated during the mid-twentieth century. Consequently, France is now home to a diverse immigrant population, including an estimated 4-5 million Muslims. Despite many years in France and acquisition of French citizenship by an estimated half to three-fifths of the population,[8] many Muslim immigrants remain marginalized and excluded from mainstream French society. Many, especially among the younger population, are unemployed and live in concentrated housing settlements (*banlieues*) on the outskirts of major metropolitan areas. Riots in the *banlieues* in late 2005, sparked by the electrocution of two teenage boys of immigrant descent while hiding from the police, brought the depressed socioeconomic status of the North African immigrant population in France into sharp focus. The rioting spread across France but was mostly contained within poor and largely Muslim neighborhoods.

The increase in the French Muslim population has forced the French to look more closely at the values that shape their national identity. While many took up the position that Muslim discontent was at the heart of the 2005 riots, others saw a lack of educational and employment opportunities in the *banlieues* as the true catalyst for the violence. Although Stéphanie Giry asserts that the issues of greatest concern in France are the same for all segments of the population—"unemployment, social inequality, education and the cost of living"[9]—many French see the problems as stemming from religious differences that complicate immigrant assimilation. Some French politicians, like interior minister Nicholas Sarkozy, have been accused of helping to shape the perception that the Islamic religion is the core issue by conflating religion with socioeconomic issues in order to gain political traction.

Discussions about *laïcité* and religion have tended to focus on specific issues, for example, whether Muslim girls should be allowed to wear headscarves in public schools. As the institution through which the values of the French Republic are imparted to young citizens, public schools have become a central arena for debates over religious pluralism—and not just in France. In 2004, a law was passed banning all religious symbols from French public schools, including large crosses and Jewish yarmulkes. Muslim girls who insisted on wearing their headscarves to school in spite of the ban were sent home or expelled. While the law was conceptualized by some as a means of freeing Muslim girls from the tenets of a religion perceived as "oppressive," its basis in the principle of *laïcité* left no room for girls who wear the headscarf out of religious conviction to make that choice. The headscarf became a symbol for the widespread perception that Islam permits the abuse of women. Many French perceived the ban on headscarves and other religious symbols in public schools as a reaffirmation of France's commitment to its founding myth of *laïcité* and a reassertion of an important traditional aspect of French national identity.

Poland

Religion and politics have long intersected in Poland. Religion served as a uniting force before and during communist rule, helping to sustain the Polish nation throughout a history of territorial division and conquest. The Catholic Church also played an important political role during the Cold War, most notably by backing the anti-communist Solidarity party. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Catholic Church attempted to retain this dual position as a spiritual and political power in Poland. Polish public opinion following the communist collapse, however, was quick to question whether the Church should continue to play a political role in a democratic Poland.

The compatibility of an influential yet socially conservative Church and Church doctrine with a democratic political system continues to be a sensitive issue.[10] Abortion has been a major rallying point; at odds are public opinion on abortion and the Church's political stance on the issue. The Church fought hard to change the liberal abortion laws that had prevailed under communism, but the social costs of severely restricting a practice that had become a reliable method of birth-control for Polish women were high. Despite the support of some 80 percent of Poles for the continued legalization of abortion, in 1993, Parliament passed a bill prohibiting abortion except under certain very limited circumstances.[11]

Religion has also affected Poland's relationship with the European Union. Religious questions, particularly those concerning morality, were a key issue during the negotiation of

Poland's EU accession. The Church warned that Poland, as an EU member state, could be forced to implement less restrictive abortion laws or acknowledge homosexual partnerships. Nevertheless, support for Poland's integration into the EU by priests and the general population in 2001-2002 was about equal, standing at 59 percent and 60 percent, respectively.[12]

Religious engagement in the battle over public morality has taken other forms as well. The Radio Maryja radio station, founded in 1991 by Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, plays an interesting and controversial role in Poland's political debates. The station carries a strictly Catholic message to its listeners, most of whom are older women living in rural parts of the country. This message often includes anti-Semitic and anti-homosexual rhetoric. Radio Maryja has also not shied away from direct involvement in politics. The station supported the winner of Poland's 2006 presidential elections, Lech Kaczynski, who selected his twin brother, a regular commentator on Radio Maryja's programs, as Prime Minister.

The Vatican's responses to Radio Maryja's controversial broadcasts have become more emphatic as a result of these recent events. Under Pope John Paul II, Radio Maryja was requested to exercise "self-restraint." While visiting Poland in May 2006, Pope Benedict XVI's message to the station was more pointed: political involvement by priests is not condoned by the Vatican.[13] Whether such admonishments will ultimately serve to temper Radio Maryja's message remains to be seen.

Religion and politics in Poland may prove difficult to disentangle, despite the widespread secularization of many of Poland's neighbors and fellow EU member states. Religion and politics are more connected in Polish national memory than in other European countries. The Church was active in the struggle against communism and helped to shape the political face of the country following the Soviet Union's collapse. It continued to engage in political issues such as Poland's accession to the European Union. The voice of arch-conservative Polish Catholicism continues to be broadcast through stations like Radio Maryja. Although Polish public opinion often differs from Church opinion, political decisions on issues such as abortion and homosexuality have been influenced by the Church's moral pressure. The outcome of the 2006 elections seems to indicate that politics in Poland continue to be strongly swayed by pressure from religious voices, making Poland a unique case among the EU's predominantly secular member states.

Turkey

The collapse of the Islamic Ottoman Empire following World War I opened the door to secular government in Turkey. Founded as a Republic in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, many consider Turkey unique among Muslim nations. As part of his vision to modernize the country and catch up with the West, Atatürk secularized and democratized Turkey. He banned religious symbols such as headscarves in public buildings, implemented strict control over religion and religious entities by the government, and enshrined the equality of men and women in the state constitution. Despite numerous political upheavals and attempts by Islamist parties to gain entrance to government, Turkey remains a secular country whose population is 99 percent Muslim.

Though officially a secular state, religion remains a subtext in many discussions of Turkey's future, particularly its future relationship to Europe and the European Union. Turkey is presently ruled by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), a political party with Islamist roots. The Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, renounced any adherence to Islamist political philosophies after being banned from participating in Turkish politics on the basis of Islamic remarks made in 1997. His eligibility for political office was restored through a constitutional amendment following the AKP victory in 2002. However, Erdogan's policies regarding secularism have led some to question the government's commitment to the principle of secularism. The AKP has proposed rescinding the ban on headscarves in public buildings and universities. The current government has also imposed restrictions on the sale and consumption of alcohol, which many view as a slide towards Islamist rule, particularly given the Prime Minister's past affiliations.

Erdogan's attempts to revisit the ban on headscarves have been met with extreme resistance and are perceived by proponents of secularism as an attempt to undermine an important founding principle of the Turkish Republic. Following the May 2006 shooting of a judge who supported the headscarf ban by a religious lawyer, thousands of Turks demonstrated in support of secularism. Prime Minister Erdogan's agenda has also provoked the ire of Turkey's largest business association, the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD), which claims that the government is both undermining secularism and becoming lax in the implementation of reforms requested by the EU.[14]

As these controversies illustrate, Turkey remains divided on the issue of secularism: while the urban elite strongly supports the principle, Turkey's large rural population remains connected to a lifestyle based on principles derived from Islam. In August 2006, Turkish newspapers reported that a woman wearing a bikini on a public beach was harassed and attacked by a group of Islamists wearing body-covering swimsuits after she asked that the group restrain their children from defecating on the beach. The incident was interpreted by some as highlighting the divide between Turkey's rural and urban populations, a

divide many news reports portrayed as based on differing attitudes towards religion, not differing attitudes towards environmental cleanliness and public decency.

As a potential member of the European Union, Turkey has been under close scrutiny by the EU for decades. As a prerequisite to EU membership, the Turkish government has implemented numerous legal and social reforms, but much remains to be done. EU demands have touched not only on economic and political issues, but also on the Turkish state's strict adherence to its secular ideology, which the EU says restricts freedom of religion. At the same time, however, Turkey's Muslim heritage has unsettled some in the EU, who feel that Europe's Christian heritage makes the two entities incompatible even as partners in an economic and political endeavor. If influential politicians or member states in the EU play the "culture card" to slow or even block Turkey's accession, the result could be a nationalist backlash within Turkey. In this sense, the question of "religion"—understood as cultural compatibility—could eventually become a deal-breaker not for Europe, but for Turkey.

The "Religion" Debates: Many Debates, Many Meanings

Though they are framed in diverse ways—as debates about integration, freedom of expression, or citizenship—Americans and Europeans are discussing issues that relate to religion. But do we mean the same thing when we speak of "religion"? Are there common threads in our respective national conversations? If not, how may that affect transatlantic relations?

Whether the issue is religious instruction in German public schools, the Christian Right's influence on American politics, or the wearing of the *hijab* in French schools or Turkish universities, there is no singular concept of what constitutes "religion" and no consensus, either within Europe or across the Atlantic, on how religion relates to the legitimacy, acquisition, or application of power or to the creation of a nation's bonds. History, culture, and a myriad other factors shape each country's understanding of religion, and conceptions of the religious continue to evolve in response to the forces of modernization and globalization.

In the United States, some debates touch directly on the relationship between spiritual beliefs, moral convictions, and worldviews, and attitudes toward the politically thorny issues of abortion, stem cell research, or end-of-life issues. At other times, debates about religion and politics appear less directly related to how or whether religious faith should inform or influence political decisions and much more related to the instrumental use of religion for partisan and electoral gain.

Across the Atlantic, "religion" has become short-hand for connoting difference—difference not only in beliefs about the supernatural and transcendental or behavioral expressions of faith, but also cultural, ethnic, or racial differences that distinguish the majority population from the immigrant "other." Whether the societal differences that impede integration of immigrants are in fact rooted primarily in religion or, alternatively, ethnicity, race, or socio-economic class, is often unclear. The reduction of difference to "religion" obscures the fact that individuals within modern societies typically look to multiple sources, including religion, but also class, geographic origin, or national heritage, when forging communal bonds or fixing their identity.

American and European discussions about "religion" also carry different normative connotations, often implicit and unarticulated. Secular Europeans would deny that they are, in fact, having conversations related to religion—in contrast, they believe, to Americans. In commenting on religion in politics in the United States, many European commentators imply that (a) Americans are "too religious"; (b) religion should be a private, not a public, matter; and (c) modern Europeans, thankfully, are and should be secular. American discussions of religion, in contrast, are colored by a different set of normative beliefs, including the notion that religion is a positive influence on the nation and that the United States is a country "blessed by divine providence."

When our respective conversations intersect, as they often do in an age of global media, Americans and Europeans often fail to understand the historical, cultural, and normative prism through which each society views religion. Although using the same term, they often mean different things.

Religion and Identity

Beyond questions of spiritual belief, many discussions about "religion" concern the contested nature of national identity in an age of porous borders and mass migration, global communications, and rapid social change. Over the past several decades the United States and Europe have become home to more heterogeneous and diverse populations. Because of their immigrant origins and history, Americans' understanding of what it means to be American has always been contested. Nevertheless, America's self-understanding and national narrative as a country defined by the pursuit of freedom, including freedom of religion, has meant that commitment to democratic principles—not to race, ethnicity, or religious affiliation—in the

end has defined the nation. With an increasing number of immigrants now residing permanently within their borders, many European countries now also are engaged in intense debates about what it means to belong to the nation and participate as a full member of society.

The debate about what it means to be a modern German, or French, or Turk also spills over into the broader controversy over what it means to be a modern European. Turkey in this sense faces a dual challenge: Turks are now engaged in a struggle to define both what it means to be Turkish and whether that identity will continue to be linked to Europe. A concomitant debate about whether Europe's identity will be grounded in political principles or in historical and cultural legacies, including a Christian religious heritage, is being waged in the member states of the European Union. The two debates intersect. An EU rejection of Turkey's membership on cultural—i.e. "religious" grounds—could have far-reaching repercussions for discussions in Turkey about its relationship to "the West" and to Muslim-majority countries in the greater Middle East and beyond.

At issue for both the United States and many European countries is whether and how societies can construct a unified national identity amidst significant and possibly growing ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. How do societies cultivate the social bonds that are necessary to maintain a modicum of social and political cohesion? How much difference can we tolerate? More specifically, how much religion can democracy tolerate if societies are home to competing religions, each with ultimate and often mutually exclusive truth claims?

Implications for Transatlantic Relations

In recent years, public opinion polls have charted the ups-and-downs of U.S.-European relations, and it has become fashionable to speak of a growing transatlantic "values gap," particularly with regard to our respective attitudes toward religion. While 2006 opinion surveys suggest that American and European perceptions of global threats are quite similar, Americans and Europeans approach the issue of religion and its relationship to the nation, to politics, and to public life in fundamentally different ways because of their disparate histories, cultural legacies, and societal evolutions.

Though we view religion and politics through different lenses, we are, paradoxically, grappling with very similar challenges as a consequence of greater religious pluralism domestically and politicized and globalized religion outside national borders. A clearer understanding of the origins and underpinnings of our domestic debates about religion could lead to more fruitful transatlantic exchanges on such diverse issues as integration of religious minorities, Islamist-motivated terrorism, or religion as a factor in civil wars and international conflicts.

One potential starting point is recognizing that there is a marked tendency in current discussions about the integration of minorities to conflate separate categories of difference—race, ethnicity, national origin, or class—with religious practices and beliefs. Understanding the role of religion, as well as these other factors, in either advancing or slowing integration, is essential if effective policy solutions are to be found. A misdiagnosis, for example, of the root causes of failed integration of Muslims in Europe could lead governments to focus on actions that are seen by minority populations as part of a crusade against Islam, when more effective remedies might be found in programs to advance job creation, education, and economic opportunities for these populations.

Americans, with a tradition of greater religiosity, may be more comfortable with the new religious debates than more secular Europeans, who—because of their own historical narratives—have reason to distrust the intrusion of religion into the public sphere. In the end, however, more debate and analysis is needed on both sides of the Atlantic if we are to find effective and perhaps common solutions to the challenges of a new religious age.

NOTES

1 "Many Americans Uneasy with Mix of Religion and Politics," The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, August 24, 2006.

2 Pankaj Mishra, "Identity Crisis," *Financial Times* ,12 August 2006; Heiner Bielefeldt, "Das Minarett in Duisburg-Marxloh," *die tageszeitung*, 8 April 2006.

3 "Many Americans Uneasy with Mix of Religion and Politics," The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, August 24, 2006.

4 See http://www.stateline.org/live/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=136&languageId=1&contentId=20695 and http://www.ncsl.org/programs/press/2006/pr060816ballot.htm.

5 Bruce Stokes, "Fervor in Foreign Policy," *National Journal*, 20 May 2006, 36-43.

6 Walter Russell Mead, "God's Country?" *Foreign Affairs* 85 no. 5 (September/October 2006), 24-43.

7 Danièle Hervieu-Léger, "Islam and the Republic: The French Case," (working paper, l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 7).

8 Stéphanie Giry, "France and Its Muslims," *Foreign Affairs* 85 no. 5 (September/October 2006), 88.

NOTES continued

9 Ibid., 97.

10 Stanislaw Burdziej, "Polish Religion and Politics since 1989," *Religion, State & Society* 33, no. 2 (June 2005): 168.

11 Sabrina P. Rahmet, "Thy will be done: the Catholic Church and politics in Poland since 1989" in *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, ed. Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 137.

12 Ibid., 138.

13 Jan Puhl "Papal Reprimand for Catholic Radio," *Spiegel Online*, http://service.spiegel.de/cache/international/0,1518,413976.html (accessed 7 September 2006).

14 Vincent Boland, "Turkish PM accused of undermining secularism," *FT.com*, 2 June 2006. www.ft.com/.

AICGS Project on Religion and Politics in Germany, Europe, and the United States

AICGS programming on religion and politics seeks to enhance transatlantic understanding about the role of religion in American and European public life and its impact on transatlantic relations and foreign policy. In partnership with scholars from the *Forschungsbereich Religion und Politik* from the Humboldt University, Berlin, AICGS is undertaking a German-American dialogue on religious pluralism, fundamentalism, and democracy. The dialogue is made possible through the generous support of the Transatlantic Program of the Federal Republic of Germany, with funds from the European Recovery Program (ERP) of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technologies. With support from the Robert Bosch Foundation, AICGS is organizing a U.S.-European dialogue on religion and politics with participants from France, Germany, Poland, Turkey, and the United States. Both dialogues are interdisciplinary, engaging experts from diverse disciplines, as well as public officials and journalists.

This Issue Brief is in part a response to discussions at the first of three conferences hosted by AICGS with the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation. The conference, held in Washington, DC in July 2006, addressed "Concepts, Definitions, and Trends" as part of the AICGS Transatlantic Dialogue on Religion and Politics. The next conference in October 2006 in Brussels, Belgium, addresses "Religion and Politics in European Integration and Transatlantic Relations." The final conference in the series will be held in Spring 2007 in Berlin, Germany, and will look at "Transatlantic Perspectives on Religion and Politics in Global Affairs."

AICGS

AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY GERMAN STUDIES

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

1755 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20036 – USA
T: (+1-202) 332-9312
F: (+1-202) 265-9531
E: info@aicgs.org
www.aicgs.org