

"A FIRE STRONG ENOUGH TO CONSUME THE HOUSE:" THE WARS OF RELIGION AND THE RISE OF THE STATE

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In September of 1993, the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago issued a declaration called "Towards a Global Ethic" meant to locate ethical values common to the world's religions. One of the most emphatic parts of the statement is that condemning wars waged in the name of religion. "Time and again we see leaders and members of religions incite aggression, fanaticism, hate and xenophobia—even inspire and legitimize violent and bloody conflicts. Religion often is misused for purely power-political goals, including war. We are filled with disgust."¹ Is the Parliament of the World's Religions taking a pacifist stand? Well, no. While violence in general is condemned, the document stops well short of calling religious people out of the armies of the world. Only killing in the name of religion is damned; bloodshed on behalf of the State is subject to no such scorn.² What is wrong, then, with killing in the name of religion? The answer can be derived from the definition of "religion" implicit in the declaration. Religion is assumed to be a matter pertinent to the private sphere of values. The individual's public and lethal loyalty belongs to the State.

My purpose in this essay will be to focus on the way revulsion to killing in the name of religion is used to legitimize the transfer of ultimate loyalty to the modern State. Specifically I will examine how the so-called "Wars of Religion" of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe are evoked as the founding moment of modern liberalism by theorists such as John Rawls, Judith Shklar, and Jeffrey Stout.³ I will let Shklar tell the familiar tale:

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liberalism ... was born out of the cruelties of the religious civil wars, which forever rendered the claims of Christian charity a rebuke to all religious institutions and parties. If the faith was to survive at all, it would do so privately. The alternative then set, and still before us, is not one between classical virtue and liberal self-indulgence, but between cruel military and moral repression and violence, and a self-restraining tolerance that fences in the powerful to protect the freedom and safety of every citizen ...⁴

In Jeffrey Stout's view, the multiplication of religions following on the Reformation produced appeals to incompatible authorities which could not be resolved rationally. Therefore "liberal principles were the right ones to adopt when competing religious beliefs and divergent conceptions of the good embroiled Europe in the religious wars ... Our early modern ancestors were right to secularize public discourse in the interest of minimizing the ill effects of religious disagreement."⁵ In other words, the modern, secularized State arose to keep peace among the warring religious factions.

I will argue that this story puts the matter backwards. The "Wars of Religion" were not the events which necessitated the birth of the modern State; they were in fact themselves the birthpangs of the State. These wars were not simply a matter of conflict between "Protestantism" and "Catholicism," but were fought largely for the aggrandizement of the emerging State over the decaying remnants of the medieval ecclesial order. I do not wish merely to contend that political and economic factors played a central role in these wars, nor to make a facile reduction of religion to more mundane concerns. I will rather argue that to call these conflicts "Wars of Religion" is an anachronism, for what was at issue in these wars was the very creation of religion as a set of privately held beliefs without direct political relevance. The creation of religion was necessitated by the new State's need to secure absolute sovereignty over its subjects. I hope to challenge the soteriology of the modern State as peacemaker, and show that Christian resistance to State violence depends on a recovery of the Church's disciplinary resources.

I. *The rise of the State*

In the medieval period, the term *status* had been used either in reference to the condition of the ruler (*status principis*), or in the general sense of the condition of the realm (*status regni*). With Machiavelli we begin to see the transition to a more abstract sense of the State as an independent political entity, but only in the works of sixteenth-century French and English humanists does there emerge the modern idea of the State as "a form of public power separate from both ruler and the ruled, and constituting the supreme political authority within a certain defined territory."⁶ In the medieval period the Church was the supreme common power; the civil authority, as John Figgis put it, was "the police department of the Church."⁷ The net result of

the conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was to invert the dominance of the ecclesiastical over the civil authorities through the creation of the modern State. The chief promoters of this transposition, as Figgis makes plain, "were Martin Luther and Henry VIII and Philip II, who in reality worked together despite their apparent antagonism."⁸

It is important to see that the origins of civil dominance over the Church predated the so-called "Wars of Religion." As early as the fourteenth century, the controversy between the Papalists and Conciliarists had given rise to quite new developments in the configuration of civil power. Marsilius of Padua had argued that the secular authorities had sole right to the use of coercive force. Indeed, he contended that coercive force by its very nature was secular, and so the Church could be understood only as a moral, and not a jurisdictional, body.⁹ Luther took up this argument in his 1523 treatise *Temporal Authority: to what Extent it Should be Obeyed*. Every Christian, Luther maintained, is simultaneously subject to two kingdoms or two governances, the spiritual and the temporal. Coercive power is ordained by God but is given only to the secular powers in order that civil peace be maintained among sinners. Since coercive power is defined as secular, the Church is left with a purely suasive authority, that of preaching the Word of God.¹⁰

Luther rightly saw that the Church had become worldly and perversely associated with the wielding of the sword. His intention was to prevent the identification of any politics with the will of God, and thus extricate the Church from its entanglement in coercive power.¹¹ In sanctifying that power to the use of secular government, however, Luther contributed to the myth of the State as peacemaker which would be invoked to confine the Church. While apparently separating civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions, the effect of Luther's arguments was in fact to deny any separate jurisdiction to the Church. Luther writes *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, "I say therefore that since the temporal power is ordained of God to punish the wicked and protect the good, it should be left free to perform its office in the whole body of Christendom without restriction and without respect to persons, whether it affects pope, bishops, priests, monks, nuns or anyone else."¹² Christ has not two bodies, one temporal and one spiritual, but only one.

The Lutheran doctrine of the two kingdoms signifies, therefore, the defeat of the medieval metaphor of the two swords. The entire edifice of ecclesiastical courts and canon law is eliminated. As Quentin Skinner puts it, "The idea of the Pope and Emperor as parallel and universal powers disappears, and the independent jurisdictions of the *sacerdotium* are handed over to the secular authorities."¹³ Because the Christian is saved by faith alone, the Church will in time become, strictly speaking, unnecessary for salvation, taking on the status of a *congregatio fidelium*, a collection of the faithful for the purpose of nourishing the faith. What is left to the Church is increasingly the purely interior government of the souls of its members; their bodies are handed over to the secular authorities.

It is not difficult to appreciate the advantages of this view of the Church to the princes of Luther's time. It is important to note, however, that the usurpation of papal perquisites in the first half of the sixteenth century was not limited to those princes who had embraced Protestantism. The Catholic princes of Germany, the Habsburgs of Spain and the Valois of France all twisted the Pope's arm, extracting concessions which considerably increased their control over the Church within their realms. As Richard Dunn points out, "Charles V's soldiers sacked Rome, not Wittenberg, in 1527."¹⁴ When Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, finally turned his attention to the Protestants in 1547, igniting the first major War of Religion, his attack on the Lutheran states was an attempt to consolidate Imperial authority rather than an expression of doctrinal zealotry. This fact was not lost on the princes, both Catholic and Protestant, whose power was growing in opposition to that of the Habsburgs and the Church. When in 1552–53 the Lutheran princes (aided by the French Catholic King Henry II) defeated the Imperial forces, the German Catholic princes stood by, neutral.¹⁵ The war ended in 1555 with the Peace of Augsburg, which allowed the temporal authority of each political unit to choose either Lutheranism or Catholicism for its realm: *cuius regio, eius religio*.

Historians often claim that the Reformation and Counter-Reformation retarded the secularizing trend towards the modern State by making politics theological. It is certain that both reformers and their Catholic adversaries in the sixteenth century agreed that the idea of the State should include upholding the true religion. This in itself was, however, a radical departure from the medieval idea of the proper ordering of civilization. Pre-sixteenth century Christendom assumed, at least in theory, that the civil and ecclesiastical powers were different departments of the same body, with the ecclesiastical hierarchy of course at the head. The sixteenth century maintained the conception of a single body, but inverted the relationship, setting the good prince to rule over the Church. The eventual elimination of the Church from the public sphere was prepared by the dominance of the princes over the Church in the sixteenth century.

The policy of *cuius regio, eius religio* was more than just a sensible compromise to prevent bloodshed among the people, now divided by commitment to different faiths. It was in fact a recognition of the dominance of secular rulers over the Church, to the extent that the faith of a people was controlled by and large by the desires of the prince. G.R. Elton puts it bluntly: "The Reformation maintained itself wherever the lay power (prince or magistrates) favoured it; it could not survive where the authorities decided to suppress it."¹⁶ There is a direct relationship between the success of efforts to restrict supra-national Church authority and the failure of the Reformation within those realms. In other words, wherever concordats between the Papal See and temporal rulers had already limited the jurisdiction of the Church within national boundaries, there the princes saw no need to throw off the

yoke of Catholicism, precisely because Catholicism had already been reduced, to a greater extent, to a suasive body under the heel of the secular power. In France the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges had accomplished this in 1438, eliminating papal collection of the Annate tax, taking away the Pope's right to nominate candidates for vacant sees, and giving the crown the formerly papal prerogative to supplicate in favor of aspirants to most benefices. The Concordat of Bologna in 1516 confirmed the French kings' control over Church appointments and revenues. In Spain the crown was granted even wider concessions between 1482 and 1508. France and Spain remained Catholic. Where such concordats were not arranged, as in England, Germany, and Scandinavia, conflicts between the Church and the secular rulers—which, it must be remembered, predated Luther—contributed significantly in every case to the success of the Reformation.¹⁷

After the Concordat of Bologna, the French kings and Catherine de Medici saw no advantage to Reformation in France. The early settlement of civil dominance over the Church was a crucial factor in the building of a strong, centralized monarchy during the rule of Francis I from 1515 to 1547. When Calvinism began to challenge the ecclesiastical system in France, it therefore formed a threat to royal power. The rising bourgeoisie in provincial towns, anxious to combat centralized control, joined the Huguenots in large numbers. Moreover, as many as two-fifths of the nobility rallied to the Calvinist cause. They wanted to reverse the trend toward absolute royal authority and coveted power like that of the German princes to control the Church in their own lands.¹⁸

For the main instigators of the carnage, doctrinal loyalties were at best secondary to their stake in the rise or defeat of the centralized State. Both Huguenot and Catholic noble factions plotted for control of the monarchy. The Queen Mother Catherine de Medici, for her part, attempted to bring both factions under the sway of the crown. At the Colloquy of Poissy in 1561, Catherine proposed bringing Calvinist and Catholic together under a State-controlled Church modeled on Elizabeth's Church of England. Catherine had no particular theological scruples and was therefore stunned to find that both Catholic and Calvinist ecclesiologies prevented such an arrangement. Eventually Catherine decided that statecraft was more satisfying than theology, and, convinced that the Huguenot nobility were gaining too much influence over the king, she unleashed the infamous 1572 St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of thousands of Protestants. After years of playing Protestant and Catholic factions off one another, Catherine finally threw in her lot with the Catholic Guises. She would attempt to wipe out the Huguenot leadership and thereby quash the Huguenot nobility's influence over king and country.¹⁹

The St. Bartholomew's Day massacre was the last time it was easy to sort out the Catholics from the Protestants in the French civil wars. By 1576 both Protestant and Catholic nobles were in rebellion against King Henry III. In

that year the Catholic League was formed, whose stated goal was "to restore to the provinces and estates of this kingdom the rights, privileges, franchises and ancient liberties such as they were in the time of King Clovis, the first Christian king."²⁰ The League wished to check the power of the crown by appealing to the medieval doctrine of sovereignty, in which kingship was based on the will of the people. The Catholic League was opposed by another Catholic party, the *Politiques*, who pushed for an absolutist vision of the State. For the *Politiques* the State was an end in itself which superseded all other interests, and the monarch held absolute sovereignty by divine right. They advocated a Gallican Catholic Church and liberty of conscience in the private exercise of religion. Most *Politiques* allied themselves with the Protestants following the formation of the Catholic League.²¹

Ecclesial loyalties were complicated further by the entrance into the fray of Spain's Phillip II, who wanted to place a Spanish infanta on the French throne. Phillip financed the Guises' attack on Paris in 1588, thus compelling the Catholic King Henry III to ally himself with the Protestants under Henry of Navarre. Upon the King's death in 1589, Henry of Navarre took the throne as Henry IV, and conveniently converted to Catholicism four years later. The war ended in 1598 when Phillip II finally gave up Spanish designs on the French throne.²²

The end of the French civil wars is seen as the springboard for the development of the absolutist vision of sovereign power unchallenged within the State which would come to full fruition in seventeenth century France. It is common to maintain that a strong centralized power was necessary to rescue the country from the anarchy of violence produced by religious fervor. My brief sketch of these wars should make clear that such a view is problematic. The rise of a centralized bureaucratic State *preceded* these wars and was based on the fifteenth century assertion of civil dominance over the Church in France. At issue in these wars was not simply Catholic versus Protestant, transubstantiation versus spiritual presence. The Queen Mother who unleashed the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day was not a religious zealot but a thoroughgoing *Politique* with a stake in stopping the nobility's challenge to royal pretensions toward absolute power.²³

In the seventeenth century, the success of the French example of a centralized State was not lost on the Holy Roman Emperor, who had long wished to make his nominal power real over the lesser princes. The result was the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), the bloodiest of the so-called "Wars of Religion." Emperor Ferdinand II's goal was to consolidate his patchwork empire into a modern state: Habsburg, Catholic, and ruled by one sovereign, unrivaled authority. To accomplish this Ferdinand relied on shifting alliances with lesser princes, mercenary soldiers, and his Spanish Habsburg cousins. Again, ecclesial loyalties were not easy to sort out. On the one hand, Ferdinand relied on the Lutheran elector of Saxony to help reconquer Bohemia, and his troops were commanded by the Bohemian Protestant soldier of fortune,

Albrecht von Wallenstein. On the other hand, the Catholic petty princes opposed Ferdinand's attempts to centralize his power and his neglect of the imperial Diet.²⁴

The war's tide turned against Ferdinand in 1630 when Sweden's Gustavus Adolphus entered the conflict against him. Sweden's effect on the war was great, in large part because France under Cardinal Richelieu had decided to subsidize an army of thirty-six thousand Swedes in German territory. Presumably the Catholic Cardinal was not motivated by love of Luther to support the Protestant cause. France's interest lay in keeping the Habsburg empire fragmented, and France's interest superseded that of her Church. In 1635 the French sent troops, and the last thirteen years of the war—the bloodiest—were essentially a struggle between the Habsburgs and the Bourbons, the two great Catholic dynasties of Europe.²⁵

II. The creation of religion

Historians of this period commonly point out that religious motives are not the only ones at work in fueling these wars. As J.H. Elliot comments, whether or not these are in fact "Wars of Religion" depends on whether you ask a Calvinist pastor, a peasant, or a prince of this period.²⁶ The point I wish to make, however, goes beyond questions of the sincerity of personal religious conviction. What is at issue behind these wars is the creation of "religion" as a set of beliefs which is defined as personal conviction and which can exist separately from one's public loyalty to the State. The creation of religion, and thus the privatization of the Church, is correlative to the rise of the State. It is important therefore to see that the principal promoters of the wars in France and Germany were in fact not pastors and peasants, but kings and nobles with a stake in the outcome of the movement toward the centralized, hegemonic State.

In the medieval period, the term *religio* is used very infrequently. When it appears it most commonly refers to the monastic life. As an adjective the "religious" are those who belong to an order, as distinguished from lay Christians or "secular" clergy. When "religion" enters the English language, it retains these meanings and refers to the life of a monastery or order. Thus around 1400 the "religions of England" are the various orders.²⁷

Thomas Aquinas devotes only one question of the *Summa Theologiae* to *religio*; it names a virtue which directs a person to God. St. Thomas says that religion does not differ essentially from sanctity. It differs logically, however, in that religion refers specifically to the liturgical practices of the Church. Thus, according to St. Thomas, "The word religion is usually used to signify the activity by which man gives the proper reverence to God through actions which specifically pertain to divine worship, such as sacrifice, oblations, and the like."²⁸ In response to the query "Does religion have any external actions?," Thomas answers affirmatively and emphasizes the unity of body and soul in

the worship of God.²⁹ As a virtue, *religio* is a habit, knowledge embodied in the disciplined actions of the Christian. In Aquinas' view virtuous actions do not proceed from rational principles separable from the agent's particular history; virtuous persons instead are embedded in communal practices of habituation of body and soul that give their lives direction to the good.³⁰

Religio for St. Thomas is just one virtue which presupposes a context of ecclesial practices which are both communal and particular to the Christian Church. Wilfred Cantwell Smith notes that during the Middle Ages, considered by moderns the "most religious" period of Christian history, no one ever thought to write a book on religion.³¹ In fact he suggests that "the rise of the concept 'religion' is in some ways correlated with a decline in the practice of religion itself."³² In other words the rise of the modern concept of religion is associated with the decline of the Church as the particular locus of the communal practice of *religio*.

The dawn of the modern concept of religion occurs around the late fifteenth century, first appearing in the work of the Italian Renaissance figure Marsilio Ficino. His 1474 work entitled *De Christiana Religione* is the first to present *religio* as a universal human impulse common to all. In Ficino's Platonic scheme, *religio* is the ideal of genuine perception and worship of God. The various historical manifestations of this common impulse, the varieties of pieties and rites that we now call religions, are all just more or less true (or untrue) representations of the one true *religio* implanted in the human heart. Insofar as it becomes a universal impulse, religion is thus interiorized and removed from its particular ecclesial context.³³

The second major shift in the meaning of the term religion, which takes shape through the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is toward religion as a system of beliefs. Religion moves from a virtue to a set of propositions. Political theorist Hugo Grotius, in his *De Veritate Religionis Christianae*, can therefore write that the Christian religion teaches, rather than simply is, the true worship of God. At the same time the plural "religions" arises, an impossibility under the medieval usage.³⁴

In sixteenth century France, *Politiques* and humanists began to provide a theoretical reconfiguration of Christianity which fit it into the generic category of "religion." In his 1544 work *The Concord of the World*, Guillaume Postel provided an argument in favor of religious liberty based on the construal of Christianity as a set of demonstrable moral truths, rather than theological claims and practices which take a particular social form called the Church. Christianity, according to Postel, is based on common, universal truths which underlie all particular expressions of "religious belief." Liberty of conscience in matters of "religion" is essential because all rational people are able to recognize these universal truths.³⁵

The *Politique* political theorist Jean Bodin also advocates liberty of conscience in religion as part and parcel of a plan for an absolutist State with a centralized sovereign authority. In his landmark *Six Books of the Commonwealth*

(1576), religion is treated under the heading "How Seditions may be Avoided." "Even atheists agree," according to Bodin,

that nothing so tends to the preservation of commonwealths as religion, since it is the force that at once secures the authority of kings and governors, the execution of the laws, the obedience of subjects, reverence for the magistrates, fear of ill-doing, and knits each and all in the bonds of friendship.³⁶

Religion for Bodin is a generic concept; he states directly that he is not concerned with which form of religion is best. The people should be free in conscience to choose whichever religion they desire. What is important is that once a form of religion has been embraced by a people, the sovereign must forbid any public dispute over religious matters to break out and thereby threaten his authority. Bodin cites with approval some German towns' prohibition of "all discussion of religion" on pain of death after the Peace of Augsburg. Religious diversity is to be allowed only where it is too costly for the sovereign to suppress it.³⁷

The concept of religion being born here is one of domesticated belief systems which are, insofar as it is possible, to be manipulated by the sovereign for the benefit of the State. Religion is no longer a matter of certain bodily practices within the Body of Christ, but is limited to the realm of the "soul," and the body is handed over to the State. John Figgis puts it this way:

The rise and influence of the *Politiques* was the most notable sign of the times at the close of the sixteenth century. The existence of the party testifies to the fact that for many minds the religion of the State has replaced the religion of the Church, or, to be more correct, that religion is becoming individual while the civil power is recognised as having the paramount claims of an organized society upon the allegiance of its members. What Luther's eminence as a religious genius partially concealed becomes more apparent in the *Politiques*; for the essence of their position is to treat the unity of the State as the paramount end, to which unity in religion must give way.³⁸

Among the founders of the modern State, no one is more blunt than Thomas Hobbes in bringing religion to the service of the sovereign. He defines religion as a binding impulse which suggests itself to humans in the natural condition of their ignorance and fear. "Gnawed on by fear of death, poverty, or other calamity,"³⁹ and unaware of secondary causes, there develops in all parts of the globe a belief in powers invisible, and a natural devotion to what is feared. Some worship according to their own inventions, others according to the command of the true God Himself through supernatural revelation. But the leaders of both kinds of religions have arranged their devotions "to make those men that relied on them, the more apt to obedience, laws, peace, charity, and civil society."⁴⁰ Religion for Hobbes derives from fear and need

of security, the very same root from which springs the social contract and commonwealth. Where God has planted religion through revelation, therefore, there also has God established a "peculiar kingdom," the kingdom of God, a polity in which there is no distinction of spiritual and temporal. The "kingdom" of God is no mere metaphor; by it is meant the commonwealth, ruled over by one sovereign who is both "ecclesiastical and civil."⁴¹

Hobbes' aim in uniting Church and State is peace. Without universal obedience to but one sovereign, civil war between temporal and spiritual powers is tragically inevitable.⁴² Its inevitability lies in Hobbes' ontology of violence. The war of all against all is the natural condition of humankind. It is cold fear and need for security, the foundation of both religion and the social contract, that drives humans from their nasty and brutish circumstances and into the arms of Leviathan. This soteriology of the State as peacemaker demands that its sovereign authority be absolutely alone and without rival.

In Hobbes it is not so much that the Church has been subordinated to the civil power; Leviathan has rather swallowed the Church whole into its yawning maw. Scripture is nothing less than the law of the commonwealth, such that the interpretation of Scripture is the responsibility of the sovereign. The Christian king is supreme pastor of his realm, and has power to preach, to baptize, to administer the eucharist, and even to ordain.⁴³ The sovereign is not only priest but prophet; the king reserves the right to police all charism and censor any public prophecy. The "private man," because "thought is free," is at liberty in his heart to think what he will, provided in public he exercise his right to remain silent.⁴⁴ In a Christian commonwealth, Hobbes denies even the theoretical possibility of martyrdom, since he defines martyrs as only those who die publicly proclaiming the simple doctrine "Jesus is the Christ." A Christian sovereign would never impede such a simple (and contentless) profession of faith. As for other more specific doctrines or practices for which a Christian might die, these could only go under the title "subversion," never martyrdom, since the sovereign has the sole right to determine proper Christian practice and sanction any public deviations therefrom. Those Christians who find themselves under a heathen regime Hobbes counsels to obey, even unto public apostasy, provided they maintain the faith in their hearts, since Christian faith is wholly interior and not subject to external coercion.⁴⁵

"A Church," Hobbes writes, "is the same thing with a civil commonwealth, consisting of Christian men; and is called a *civil state*."⁴⁶ It follows, therefore, that there is no one Church universal, but only as many Churches as there are Christian States, since there is no power on earth to which the commonwealth is subject. Along with denying the international character of the Church, Hobbes makes another crucial move. He contends that the members of a Church cohere as in a natural body, but not to one another, for each one depends only on the sovereign.⁴⁷ The Body of Christ is thereby severely nominalized, scattered and absorbed into the body of the State.

Hobbes and Bodin both prefer religious uniformity for reasons of state, but it is important to see that once Christians are made to chant "We have no king but Caesar," it is really a matter of indifference to the sovereign whether there be one religion or many. Once the State has succeeded in establishing dominance over, or absorbing, the Church, it is but a small step from absolutist enforcement of religious unity to the toleration of religious diversity. In other words, there is a logical progression from Bodin and Hobbes to Locke.⁴⁸ Lockean liberalism can afford to be gracious toward "religious pluralism" precisely because "religion" as an interior matter is the State's own creation. Locke says that the State cannot coerce the religious conscience because of the irreducibly solitary nature of religious judgment; "All the life and power of true religion consist in the inward and full persuasion of the mind."⁴⁹ But for the very same reason he categorically denies the social nature of the Church, which is redefined as a free association of like-minded individuals.⁵⁰

Toleration is thus the tool through which the State divides and conquers the Church. Locke's ideas were enshrined in England's Toleration Act of 1689, drawing an end to what is considered the "Age of Religious Wars."⁵¹ Catholics, of course, were excluded from the Toleration Act, not because of lingering religious bigotry, but because the Catholics in England had as yet refused to define themselves as a "religion" at all. The English Catholics had not yet fully accepted that the State had won.

Perhaps the best way to get a flavor for the "religious" wars of the seventeenth century is to read the words of one of the interested parties. The following is from a 1685 English anti-Catholic tract penned by the Earl of Clarendon:

No man was ever truly and really angry (otherwise than the warmth and multiplication of words in the dispute produced it) with a man who believed *Transubstantiation* ...; but when he will for the support of this *Paradox* introduce an authority for the imperious determination thereof ... it is no wonder if passion breaks in at this door, and kindles a Fire strong enough to consume the House. This is the Hinge upon which all the other controversies between us and the English Catholicks do so intirely hang.⁵²

Clearly the Pope can inspire deadly passion in a way that Eucharistic doctrine cannot because at stake in the conflict is the loyalty of the Christian to the State; doctrine is being defined as a matter of internal conscience, not available for public dispute. Clarendon continues

Their opinions of *Purgatory* or *Transubstantiation* would never cause their *Allegiance* to be suspected, more than any other error in Sence, Grammar or Philosophy, if those opinions were not instances of their dependance upon another Jurisdiction foreign, and inconsistent with

their duty to the *King*, and destructive to the *peace* of the *Kingdom*: and in that sence and Relation the Politick Government of the Kingdom takes notice of those opinions, which yet are not enquired into or punished for themselves.⁵³

I do not wish to argue that no Christian ever bludgeoned another over dogma held dear. What I hope to have shown, however, is how the dominance of the State over the Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries allowed temporal rulers to direct doctrinal conflicts to secular ends. The new State required unchallenged authority within its borders, and so the domestication of the Church. Church leaders became acolytes of the State as the religion of the State replaced that of the Church, or more accurately, the very concept of religion as separable from the Church was invented.

III. *Discipline and discipleship*

Liberal theorists such as Rawls, Shklar, and Stout would have us believe that the State stepped in like a scolding schoolteacher on the playground of doctrinal dispute to put fanatical religionists in their proper place. Self-righteous clucking about the dangers of public faith, however, ignores the fact that transfer of ultimate loyalty to the nation-state has only increased the scope of modern welfare. Anthony Giddens has shown how, for example, the new sixteenth-century doctrine of the State's absolute sovereignty within a defined territory carried with it an increase in the use of war to expand and consolidate borders. Traditional polities were bounded by frontiers, peripheral regions in which the authority of the center was thinly spread. The territories of medieval rulers were often not continuous; one prince might own land deep within the territory of another. Furthermore, the residents of a territory might owe varying allegiances to several different nobles, and only nominal allegiance to the king. Only with the emergence of nation-states, according to Giddens, are States circumscribed by borders, known lines demarcating the exclusive domain of sovereign power, especially its monopoly over the means of violence. Attempts to consolidate territory and assert sovereign control often brought about violent conflict. More importantly, borders in the nation-state system include the assumption of a "state of nature" existing between States which increases the possibility of war.⁵⁴

The conception of the State as peacemaker was given theoretical form by Immanuel Kant, intellectual forebear to many of today's liberal political theorists. For Kant the State is the condition of possibility of morality in history because it ensures that people do not infringe the freedom of others and are thereby free to develop as rational beings.⁵⁵ The modern republic is the agent for bringing about perpetual peace because it will allow people to transcend their historical particularities, e.g. Lutheran vs. Catholic, and respect one another on the basis of their common rationality. If a "powerful

and enlightened people" can form itself into a republican State, it can act as a "fulcrum" for other States to follow suit and join it in a federation of States towards the goal of peace. It is conceivable that this leverage will include war, but only to bring liberal republicanism to other States, thereby furthering the aim of peace.⁵⁶

The problem is that the State, as guarantor of freedom and peace, takes on the character of an end in itself which has as its goal, as Kant says, to "maintain itself perpetually."⁵⁷ For this reason Kant forbids categorically any type of rebellion or even resistance to the legislative authority of the State, since to oppose the lawfully constituted authority is to contradict one's own will.⁵⁸ A pluralism of conceptions of the good is protected by the liberal State, but in fact this pluralism exists only at the private level. In the public sphere, the State itself is the ultimate good whose prerogatives must be defended coercively. As Ronald Beiner has shown, the liberal State is by no means neutral. It defends and imposes a particular set of goods—e.g., the value of the market, scientific progress, the importance of choice itself—which excludes its rivals.⁵⁹ Wars are now fought on behalf of this particular way of life by the State, for the defense or expansion of its borders, its economic or political interests.

Far from coming on the scene as peacekeeper, we have seen that the rise of the State was at the very root of the so-called "religious" wars, directing with bloodied hands a new secular theater of absolute power. The wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries testify that the transfer of ultimate loyalty to the liberal nation-state has not curbed the toll of war's atrocities. Liberal theorists and the Parliament of the World's Religions both assume that public faith has a dangerous tendency to violence, and thus preclude the possibility of any truly social Christian ethic. I will argue, however, that the Church needs to reclaim the political nature of its faith if it is to resist the violence of the State. What this may mean, however, must go beyond mere strategies to insinuate the Church into the making of public policy. If this essay is a plea for the social and political nature of the Christian faith, it is also a plea for a Christian practice which escapes the thrall of the State.

There have been a number of recent attempts, both Catholic and Protestant, to diagnose and overcome the claustrophobia induced by the Church's confinement to the private sphere. Most take the form, predictably enough, of arguing for the public potential of religion and encouraging Christians to get off the sidelines and into the game. The rules of the game are assumed to be fixed. In this final section I will try to show that being "public" is a game at which the Church will inevitably lose, precisely because the very distinction of public and private, as we have seen, is an instrument by which the State domesticates the Church.

In his *The Naked Public Square*, Richard John Neuhaus makes his case for the public nature of religion by defining religion as "all the ways we think and act and interact with respect to what we believe is ultimately true and

important."⁶⁰ Politics is a function of culture, and at the heart of culture is religion. Neuhaus argues that it would be foolish therefore to try to denude the public square of religion, for it is very much a part of what drives our life together. Law derives its legitimacy from the fact that it expresses "what people believe to be their collective destiny or ultimate meaning."⁶¹ The law of the land is thus the embodiment of the network of binding obligations, the *religare*, from which is derived the word "religion."⁶² Granted, Neuhaus admits, religion in the past has been banned for fear of the kind of fanaticism that tore apart Europe in the era of the religious wars, but he argues that today the only way to prevent politics from degenerating into a violent struggle for power is by constructing a public ethic built on the operative values of the American people, "values that are overwhelmingly grounded in religious belief."⁶³ Religion is not to be narrowly understood, however, for religion and culture are impossible to distinguish sharply; Neuhaus draws on Clifford Geertz to argue that religion is the "ground or depth-level of culture"⁶⁴ and must therefore be present in building a common political culture based on peaceful consensus.

If consensus is the goal, however, Neuhaus claims that religion must gain access to the public sphere with arguments that are public in nature. The problem with the Moral Majority is that "*it wants to enter the political arena making public claims on the basis of private truths,*" that is, arguments "derived from sources of revelation or disposition that are essentially private and arbitrary."⁶⁵ Another recent attempt at "public theology," that of Michael and Kenneth Himes, is more sanguine about the possibility of using the revelation claims of a particular tradition as public discourse. Theological symbols, insofar as they are "classics," (David Tracy's phrase), may bear disclosive possibilities to all persons in the public sphere, even those who do not share one's explicit faith tradition.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, both Neuhaus and the Himeses agree that once we step into the public arena we are bound to common standards of plausibility by which the public assesses any truth claims. As the Himeses put it, "truth in the public realm will be fundamentally a matter of consensus."⁶⁷

For public theologians the lessons of the Wars of Religion dictate that, if religion is to emerge from the punishment corner of privatization and rejoin the public game, it will need to do so chastened, with an enhanced sense of pursuing peaceful consensus. Crucial to the public theologians' project, therefore, is the distinction between State and civil society, which they pick up from John Courtney Murray. The State relates to the society as a part to a whole. The State is that limited part of society which is responsible for public order.⁶⁸ As the State maintains a monopoly on legitimate coercion, the Church will not hope to intervene directly in State affairs, lest the specter of religious warfare once again show its cadaverous face. The State is, as Neuhaus says, "not the source but the servant of the law,"⁶⁹ and the law derives from the deepest moral intuitions of the people. It is here, outside the

State, that the Church goes public in the broader sense of its participation in the free public debate and the formation of religious sensibilities of its members. "The activity of the U.S. Catholic bishops on nuclear weapons and abortion, for example, is often directed toward policies which are established by the state, but the bishops' involvement in these issues occurs in and through the channels a democratic society provides for public debate," writes Richard McBrien. "In such a society voluntary associations play a key role, providing a buffer between the state and the citizenry as well as a structured means of influencing public policy. In the U.S. political system the church itself is a voluntary association."⁷⁰

Now the first problem with the attempt to make religion public is that it is still religion. Neuhaus, the Himeses, and McBrien all abide by McBrien's "working assumption" that "religion is a universal category (genus) and that Christianity is one of its particular forms (species)."⁷¹ Talal Asad's critique of Geertz' work provides us with a useful antidote to these universalist constructions of religion. Asad shows how the attempt to identify a distinctive essence of religion, and thus protect it from charges that it is nothing more than an epiphenomenon of "politics" or "economics," is in fact linked with the modern removal of religion from the spheres of reason and power.⁷² Religion is a universal essence detachable from particular ecclesial practices, and as such can provide the motivation necessary for all citizens of whatever creed to regard the nation-state as their primary community, and thus produce peaceful consensus. As we have seen, religion as a transhistorical phenomenon separate from "politics" is a creation of Western modernity designed to tame the Church. Religion may take different cultural and symbolic expressions, but it remains a universal essence generically distinct from political power which then must be translated into publicly acceptable "values" in order to become public currency. Religion is detached from its specific locus in disciplined ecclesial practices so that it may be compatible with the modern Christian's subjection to the discipline of the State. Echoes of Bodin resound in the public theologians' attempt to make religion the glue that holds the commonwealth together. Religion, that is, and not the Church, for the Church must be separated entirely from the domain of power.

Even in the Himeses' attempt to maintain the distinctive language of Christian symbols such as the Trinity in public discourse, the search for publicly accessible ultimate truths which obey the "standards for public conversation"⁷³ ensures that any "disclosive possibilities" that theology bears to individuals does not challenge the individual's loyalty to the State. Christianity becomes a varied symbol system which stands at one remove from the reality it represents. Thus, for the Himeses, Christian symbols can elicit transformations quite apart from the individual's participation in a disciplined Church body. As Asad argues, however, religious symbols do not, as Geertz contends, produce moods and motivations in the individual believer which are then translatable into publicly available actions. Religious symbols

are rather embedded in bodily practices of power and discipline whose regulation belong to the authoritative structure of the Church, or at least did until modern times. In the modern era, Asad points out, “[d]iscipline (intellectual and social) would abandon religious space, letting ‘belief,’ ‘conscience,’ and ‘sensibility’ take its place.”⁷⁴ This does not mean, however, that discipline has disappeared, only that it is now administered by the State, which is assumed to possess an absolute monopoly on the means of coercion.

Part of the difficulty here is that the public theologians’ theory of State and society obscures the way that the production of consensus in our society is anything but peaceful and uncoerced. In this regard political scientist Michael Budde’s comments on John Courtney Murray, on whom all the Catholic public theologians draw, apply with equal force: “Murray’s theory of the state, such as it is, can only be described as naive, almost a direct transferral from civics texts to political description.”⁷⁵ McBrien claims, following Murray, that collapsing the distinction of State and society is a case of conceptual confusion.⁷⁶ In a society in which up to a third of the work force labors directly or indirectly for the State, however, it is simply empirically false to claim that the State is a small and limited part of the wider societal whole, regardless of the intentions of the Founding Fathers. In fact the supposedly free debate of the public square is disproportionately affected by the State. What counts as news is increasingly determined by spin doctors and media handlers. The media looks for its sources among government spokespersons and various “experts” closely linked with the State apparatus.

Beyond the issue of “big government,” however, political scientists writing on the State in late capitalism tend to emphasize the extent to which civil society and the State have been fused into different moments of a single complex.⁷⁷ The economic, political, social and cultural spheres have merged to such an extent that culture obeys the logic of the market and the political apparatuses in turn create spaces for capital to operate. What is permissible as public discourse increasingly obeys the logic of accumulation; State-funded school lunch programs are defended in terms of increasing students’ performance and thus enhancing America’s position in the global economy vis-a-vis the Japanese.⁷⁸ In this way the State-society complex comes to disempower and coopt other forms of discourse, such as that of the Church. Fantasizing that the State is a limited part of society only makes the Church more vulnerable to its own debilitation.

The State is not simply a mechanism for the representation of the freely gathered general will, nor is it a neutral instrument at the disposal of the various classes. It is rather, in the words of Kenneth Surin, an institutional assemblage which has as its task “the modification and neutralization, primarily by its symbolic representations of social classes, of the efforts of resistance on the part of social subjects.” The State, as Surin puts it, “sub-serves the processes of accumulation by representing the whole world of social production for its subjects as something that is ‘natural,’ as an

inevitability."⁷⁹ Thus, for example, the "laws" of supply and demand and maximization of self-interest are presented as responding to human nature, and economists' predictions are held to be descriptive of reality rather than prescriptive, when they are in fact both.

In an article entitled "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," sociologist Charles Tilly explores the analogy of the State's monopoly on legitimate violence with the protection rackets run by the friendly neighborhood mobster. According to Tilly "a portrait of war makers and state makers as coercive and self-seeking entrepreneurs bears a far greater resemblance to the facts than do its chief alternatives: the idea of a social contract, the idea of an open market in which operators of armies and states offer services to willing customers, the idea of a society whose shared norms and expectations call forth a certain kind of government."⁸⁰ States extort large sums of money and the right to send their citizens out to kill and die in exchange for protection from violence both internal and external to the State's borders. What converts war making from "protection" to "protection racket" is the fact that often States offer defense from threats which they themselves create, threats which can be imaginary or the real results of the State's own activities. Furthermore, the internal repression and the extraction of money and bodies for "defense" that the State carries out are frequently among the most substantial impediments to the ordinary citizens' livelihood. The "offer you can't refuse" is usually the most costly. The main difference between Uncle Sam and the Godfather is that the latter did not enjoy the peace of mind afforded by official government sanction.⁸¹

Building on Arthur Stinchcombe's work on legitimacy, Tilly shows that historically what distinguished "legitimate" violence had little to do with the assent of the governed or the religious sentiments which bind us. The distinction was secured by States' effective monopolization of the means of violence within a defined territory, a gradual process only completed in Europe with the birth of the modern State in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The line between State violence and banditry was a fluid one early in the State-making process. Eventually the personnel of States were able to purvey violence more efficiently and on a wider scale than the personnel of other organizations.⁸²

The process of making States was inseparable from the pursuit of war by the power elites of emergent States. As Tilly tells it, "the people who controlled European states and states in the making warred in order to check or overcome their competitors and thus to enjoy the advantages of power within a secure or expanding territory."⁸³ To make more effective war, they attempted to secure regularized access to the money and the bodies of their subjects. Building up their war-making capacity, and the birth of standing armies, increased in turn their power to eliminate rivals and monopolize the extraction of these resources from subject populations. These activities of extraction were facilitated by the rise of tax-collection apparatuses, courts,

and supporting bureaucracies, in short, the rise of the modern State capable of realizing administrative sovereignty over a defined territory.⁸⁴

The assent of the governed *followed*, and is to a large extent *produced by*, State monopoly on the means of violence within its borders. As a general rule, people are more likely to ratify the decisions of an authority that controls substantial force, both from fear of retaliation and, for those who benefit from stability, the desire to maintain that stability.⁸⁵ As Tilly puts it, "A tendency to monopolize the means of violence makes a government's claim to provide protection, in either the comforting or the ominous sense of the word, more credible and more difficult to resist."⁸⁶

The attempt to construct religion as an actor subject to the rules of the public debate destroys the disciplinary resources of the Church and its ability to resist this discipline of the State. The price of entrance to the public square is acceptance of the myth of the State as peacemaker, as that which takes up and reconciles the contradictions in civil society. By recognizing the legitimacy of the State's monopoly on coercive authority, by handing our bodies over to the State, the Church renounces forever the specter of religious warfare and in turn is granted the freedom of soul to pursue influence in the public sphere outside the confines of the State.⁸⁷ This public realm outside the State is, however, largely a fiction, as is therefore the ideal of a noncoercive public marketplace of ideas. The State is unlimited in another sense as well, for it demands access to our bodies and our money to fuel its war making apparatus. The State is implicated in much more than the maintenance of public order. The State is involved in the production, not merely the restraint, of violence. Indeed the modern State depends on violence, war and preparations for war, to maintain the illusion of social integration and the overcoming of contradictions in civil society.⁸⁸

If the Church accedes to the role of a voluntary association of private citizens, it will lack the disciplinary resources to resist the State's *religare*, its practices of binding. The use of the Church's own practices of binding and loosing is not, however, a call for the Church to take up the sword once again. In fact, it is precisely the opposite. I have contrasted Church discipline with State discipline in order to counter violence on behalf of the State, which has spilt so much blood in our time. Contesting the State's monopoly on violence does not mean that the Church should again get a piece of the action, yet another form of Constantinianism. What I have tried to argue is that the separation of the Church from power did nothing to stanch the flow of blood on the West's troubled pilgrimage. The pitch of war has grown more shrill, and the recreation of the Church as a voluntary association of practitioners of religion has only sapped our ability to resist. The discipline of the State will not be hindered by the Church's participation and complicity in the "public debate." Discipline must be opposed by counter-discipline.

What the term "discipline" refers to here is essentially control over the body. According to Hugh of St. Victor, "it is discipline imposed on the body

which forms virtue. Body and spirit are but one: disordered movements of the former betray outwardly (*foris*) the disarranged interior (*intus*) of the soul. But inversely, 'discipline' can act on the soul through the body—in ways of dressing (*in habitu*), in posture and movement (*in gestu*), in speech (*in locutione*), and in table manners (*in mensa*)."⁸⁹ There is no disjunction between outer behavior and inner religious piety. The modern construction of religion interiorizes it, and makes religion only a motivating force on bodily political and economic practices. The modern Church thus splits the body from the soul and purchases freedom of religion by handing the body over to the State.

The recovery of the Thomist idea of religion as a virtue is crucial to the Church's resistance to State discipline. The virtues involve the whole person, body and soul, in practices which form the Christian to the service of God. Furthermore the virtues are acquired communally, within the practices of a disciplined ecclesial community which, as the Body of Christ, retains the authority to tell vice from virtue, or violence from peace. Christian "political ethics," therefore, is inseparable from an account of how virtues such as religion and peaceableness are produced and reproduced in the habitual practices of the Church. Christian "politics" cannot be the pursuit of influence over the powers, but rather a question of what kind of community disciplines we need to produce people of peace capable of speaking truth to power.

The virtues are acquired by disciplined following of virtuous exemplars. Discipline is therefore perhaps best understood as *discipleship*; whereas the discipline of the State seeks to create disciples of Leviathan, the discipline of the Church seeks to form disciples of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. For this reason our discipline will more often resemble martyrdom than military victory. Oscar Romero, the day before he was martyred, used his authority to order Salvadoran troops to disobey orders to kill.⁹⁰ Romero understood that the discipline of Christian discipleship was in fundamental tension with that of the army. He put it this way: "Let it be quite clear that if we are being asked to collaborate with a pseudo peace, a false order, based on repression and fear, we must recall that the only order and the only peace that God wants is one based on truth and justice. Before these alternatives, our choice is clear: We will follow God's order, not men's."⁹¹

What I am pointing to is not the discipline of coercion but its antidote, to be found in all those practices of the Christian Church which bind us to one another in the peace of Christ. Recall that Hobbes' two crucial moves in domesticating the Church were to make individuals adhere to the sovereign instead of to one another, and to deny the international character of the Church. In contrast, as some Latin American churches have shown us, the Christian way to resist institutionalized violence is to adhere to one another as Church, to act as a disciplined Body in witness to the world. As Romero wrote, "The church is well aware that anything it can contribute to the process

of liberation in this country will have originality and effectiveness only when the church is truly identified as church.⁹² The ecclesial base communities in Latin America come together as Church to incarnate disciplined communities of peace and justice without waiting for an illusory influence on the State while the poor go hungry.⁹³ And the very Eucharistic practices by which the world is fed in turn join people into one Body which transcends the limits of the nation-state. To recognize Christ in our sisters and brothers in other lands, the El Salvadors, Panamas and Iraqs of the contemporary scene, is to begin to break the idolatry of the State, and to make visible the Body of Christ in the world. We must cease to think that the only choices open to the Church are either to withdraw into some private or "sectarian" confinement, or to embrace the public debate policed by the State. The Church as Body of Christ transgresses both the lines which separate public from private and the borders of nation-states, thus creating spaces for a different kind of political practice, one which is incapable of being pressed into the service of wars or rumors of wars.⁹⁴

NOTES

- 1 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions, "Towards a Global Ethic," p 3
- 2 Nonviolence is put against the backdrop of what is possible. For example, the declaration states "Persons who hold political power must work within the framework of a just order and commit themselves to the most non-violent, peaceful solutions possible. And they should work for this within an international order of peace which itself has need of protection and defense against perpetrators of violence." "Towards a Global Ethic," p 6. Did the Parliament of World's Religions have in mind here an endorsement of the U.S.'s prosecution of the Gulf War?
- 3 See, for example, John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (Summer 1985), p 225; Judith Shklar, *Ordinary Vices* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984), p 5; Jeffrey Stout, *The Flight from Authority: Religion, Morality, and the Quest for Autonomy* (Notre Dame, In: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p 13, pp 235-42
- 4 Shklar, p 5
- 5 Stout, p 241
- 6 Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol II, p 353
- 7 John Neville Figgis, *From Gerson to Grotius, 1414-1625* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1960), p 5
- 8 *Ibid.*, p 6
- 9 Marsilius of Padua, *Defensor Pacis*, trans. Alan Gewirth (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp 113-26
- 10 Martin Luther, *Temporal Authority to what Extent it Should be Obeyed*, trans. J.J. Schindel in *Luther's Works*, vol 45 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1962), pp 75-129
- 11 Uwe Siemon-Netto argues this in "Luther Vilified—Luther Vindicated," *Lutheran Forum*, vol 27 (1993), no 2, pp 33-9 and no 3, pp 42-9
- 12 Martin Luther, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, trans. Charles M. Jacobs in *Three Treatises* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p 15
- 13 Skinner, vol II, p 15
- 14 Richard S. Dunn, *The Age of Religious Wars 1559-1689* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1970), p 6. Dunn adds that "when the papacy belatedly sponsored a reform program, both the Habsburgs and the Valois refused to endorse much of it, rejecting

especially those Trentine decrees which encroached on their sovereign authority In refusing to cooperate with Rome, the Catholic princes checked papal ambitions to restore the Church's medieval political power "

- 15 Ibid , pp 48–49
- 16 G R Elton, "The Age of the Reformation," quoted in Dunn, p 6
- 17 Skinner, vol II, pp 59–60
- 18 Dunn, p 24 See also Skinner, vol II, pp 254–59
- 19 Dunn, pp 23–26
- 20 Quoted in Franklin C Palm, *Calvinism and the Religious Wars* (New York Henry Holt and Company, 1932), pp 54–55
- 21 Ibid , pp 51–54
- 22 Dunn, pp 27–31
- 23 See J H M Salmon, *Society in Crisis France in the Sixteenth Century* (London and Tonbridge Ernest Benn Limited), pp 189–90 After the massacre, a flood of Huguenot literature explored the influence of Machiavellianism on the Queen Mother's actions
- 24 Dunn, pp 69–73
- 25 Ibid , pp 73–78
- 26 J H Elliot, *Europe Divided 1559–1598* (New York Harper & Row, 1968), p 108 Elliot quotes the words of the sixteenth-century Venetian ambassador as to the secular motivation behind the French civil wars "In like manner as Caesar would have no equal and Pompey no superior, these civil wars are born of the wish of the cardinal of Lorraine to have no equal, and the Admiral (Coligny) and the house of Montmorency to have no superior "
- 27 Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York The Macmillan Company, 1962), p 31
- 28 St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, ed Blackfriars (New York McGraw-Hill, 1964), II-II 81 8
- 29 Ibid , II-II 81 7
- 30 Ibid , I-II 49–55
- 31 Cantwell Smith, p 32
- 32 Ibid , p 19
- 33 Ibid , pp 32–34
- 34 Ibid , pp 32–44
- 35 Skinner, vol II, pp 244–46
- 36 Jean Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, trans and abr M J Tooley (Oxford Basil Blackwell, n d), p 141
- 37 Ibid , pp 140–42
- 38 Figgis, p 124
- 39 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York Collier Books, 1962), p 88
- 40 Ibid , p 90
- 41 Ibid , p 94, pp 297–99
- 42 Ibid , pp 340–41
- 43 Ibid , pp 395–98 In chapter 42 of *Leviathan* Hobbes provides a lengthy explanation of why sovereigns have this power without needing to bother with such inconveniences as apostolic succession and the imposition of hands
- 44 Ibid , p 324
- 45 Ibid , pp 363–66
- 46 Ibid , p 340
- 47 Ibid , p 418
- 48 John Milbank also points to the kinship of modern absolutism and modern liberalism in slightly different terms "It is precisely the formal character of state power as guaranteeing personal security and non-interference in 'private' pursuits (selling, contracts, education, choice of abode) which demands that this power be otherwise unlimited and absolutely alone Hobbes was simply more clear-sighted than later apparently more 'liberal' thinkers like Locke in realizing that a liberal peace requires a single undisputed power, but not necessarily a continued majority consensus, which may not be forthcoming" John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory* (Oxford Basil Blackwell, 1990), p 13
- 49 John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (Indianapolis The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1955), p 18

50. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
51. Although William of Orange has often been presented as a religious zealot, fervent Calvinist and scourge of papists, recent scholarship makes him out to be a "thoroughgoing *politique*" for whom theology was but a tool of statecraft. On the eve of the Glorious Revolution, William and the Dutch States General embarked on a lobbying campaign aimed at convincing Catholic Europe that they had no Protestant motives for invading England, and that Catholic worship would be protected. The Dutch were at the brink of war with France, and were convinced that their chances of winning hinged on turning the English against the French. At the same time, French propagandists sought to paint the conflict as a *guerre de religion*, not a *guerre d'état*. At least one English pamphleteer thought that interpretation unlikely, writing in 1688 "none that know the religion of the Hollander would judge the Prince or States would be at the charge of a dozen fly-boats or herring busses to propagate it." See Jonathan I. Israel, "William III and Toleration" in *From Persecution to Toleration*, eds. Ole Peter Grell, Jonathan I. Israel, and Nicholas Tyacke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 129–42.
52. Earl of Clarendon, *Animadversions upon a Book, Intituled, Fanaticism Fanatically Imputed to the Catholick Church, by Dr. Stillingfleet, And the Imputation Refuted and Retorted by S.C.* (London: Rich. Royston, 1685), p. 12.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
54. Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 50–1, 86–90. Borders imposed by the nation-state system continue to cause conflict. The 1991 Gulf War was largely a product of artificial borders drawn by the British after World War I, which divided the Arab world into artificial and often mutually antagonistic nation-states. The Iraq-Kuwait border was drawn arbitrarily by the British High Commander Percy Cox, deliberately denying newly created Iraq access to the sea in order to keep it dependent on Britain. See Glenn Frankel, "Lines in the Sand," *The Gulf War Reader*, eds. Micah L. Sifry and Christopher Cerf (New York: Times Books, 1991), pp. 16–20.
55. Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 57 [231]; 123–26 [311–15].
56. Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1957), p. 12. In the *Metaphysics of Morals* Kant explains that war is always fought to eliminate war. "Right during a war would, then, have to be the waging of war in accordance with principles that always leave open the possibility of leaving the state of nature among states ... and entering a rightful condition" (153 [347]). Kant's myth of perpetual peace is often invoked by U.S. foreign policy makers; if we "assist" other countries to adopt liberal democracy, they will have no more reason to go to war. Of course, this position only gives us bigger wars, since now wars are not limited by historical particularities. Now any people in any part of the globe is a potential enemy if it has not chosen to govern itself rationally.
57. Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, 136 [326]. Ralph Walker notes that Kant "clearly regards the stability of the state as an end which the Theory of Right requires us to pursue (though he does not put this in so many words, so that the contradiction with his other remarks about ends does not become obvious)" Ralph C. S. Walker, *Kant* (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 161.
58. *Ibid.*, 131 [320].
59. Ronald Beiner, *What's the Matter with Liberalism?* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 20–28. Beiner also describes how the rhetoric of pluralism masks a numbing uniformity in American life. We eat the same things, wear the same clothes, talk the same, worship the same, coast to coast. Toqueville made similar observations 150 years ago. In private life people tried to assert their independence through "numerous artificial and arbitrary distinctions"; Alexis de Toqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Mentor Books, 1956), p. 248. In public, however, uniformity reigned and the opinions of the majority were a "species of religion" (pp. 148–49). The medieval consensus on the good did not simply fragment into a pluralism of different conceptions. Pluralism exists on the private level. The medieval consensus was replaced by a new consensus, that of liberal society.
60. Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), p. 27. Public theologian Richard McBrien similarly defines religion as "the whole complexus of attitudes, convictions, emotions, gestures, rituals,

symbols, beliefs, and institutions by which persons come to terms with, and express, their personal and/or communal relationship with ultimate Reality (God and everything that pertains to God)" *Caesar's Coin* (New York MacMillan Publishing Company, 1987), p 11 For their definition of religion, Michael and Kenneth Himes quote McBrien, see *Fullness of Faith The Public Significance of Theology* (New York Paulist Press, 1993), pp 19–20

- 61 Neuhaus, p 256
- 62 *Ibid*, pp 250–1
- 63 *Ibid*, p 37
- 64 *Ibid*, p 132
- 65 *Ibid*, p 36
- 66 Himes and Himes, pp 15–19
- 67 *Ibid*, p 18
- 68 *Ibid*, pp 19–20
- 69 Neuhaus, p 259
- 70 McBrien, p 42
- 71 *Ibid*, p 17
- 72 Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp 27–54
- 73 Himes and Himes, p 18
- 74 Asad, p 39
- 75 Michael L Budde, *The Two Churches Catholicism & Capitalism in the World System* (Durham, N C Duke University Press, 1992), p 115
- 76 McBrien, p 25, p 42
- 77 See, for example, Bob Jessop, *State Theory* (University Park, Penn The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), pp 338–69, Antonio Negri, *The Politics of Subversion*, trans James Newell (Cambridge Polity Press, 1989), pp 169–99, and Kenneth Surin, "Marxism(s) and the 'Withering Away of the State,'" *Social Text* no 27 (1990), pp 42–46
- 78 I owe this example to Professor Romand Coles of Duke University
- 79 Surin, p 45
- 80 Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter B Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Theda Skocpol, eds (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1985), p 169
- 81 *Ibid*, pp 170–1
- 82 *Ibid*, pp 170–5
- 83 *Ibid*, p 172
- 84 *Ibid*, pp 172–86
- 85 *Ibid*, pp 171–5
- 86 *Ibid*, p 172
- 87 See Neuhaus, pp 8–9, Himes and Himes, pp 19–20
- 88 See Surin, pp 45–9, and Paul Virilio, *Popular Defense and Ecological Struggles*, trans Mark Polizzotti (New York Semiotext(e), 1990)
- 89 J C Schmitt, "Le geste, la cathédrale et le roi," quoted in Asad, p 138
- 90 Archbishop Oscar Romero, "The Church Defender of Human Dignity" in *A Martyr's Message of Hope* (Kansas City Celebration Books, 1981), p 161 The relevant part of his sermon on March 23, 1980 reads as follows "I would like to issue a special entreaty to the members of the army, and specifically to the ranks of the National Guard, the police and the military Brothers and sisters, you are our own people, you kill your own fellow peasants Someone's order to kill should not prevail, rather, what ought to prevail is the law of God that says, 'Do not kill' No soldier is obliged to obey an order against the law of God, no one has to fulfill an immoral law Why, in the name of God, and in the name of this suffering people whose cries rise up to the heavens every day in greater tumult, I implore them, I beg them, I order them, in the name of God Cease the repression!"
- 91 Archbishop Oscar Romero, homily, July 1, 1979, quoted in *The Church is all of You Thoughts of Archbishop Oscar Romero*, trans and ed James R Brockman, SJ (Minneapolis Winston Press, 1984), p 88
- 92 Archbishop Oscar Romero, "The Church's Mission amid the National Crisis" in *Voice of the Voiceless*, trans Michael J Walsh (Maryknoll, N Y Orbis Books, 1985), p 128

- 93 For an extended discussion of the base communities as alternative ecclesial polities, see William T Cavanaugh, "The Ecclesiologies of Medellín and the Lessons of the Base Communities," *Cross Currents* vol 44, No 1 (Spring 1994), pp 74–81
- 94 This essay is an expanded version of a paper entitled "The Wars of Religion and the Fiction of Pluralism" which I delivered to the History of Christianity section at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in Washington in November 1993 I would like to thank Frederick Bauerschmidt, Michael Baxter, Daniel Bell, Stanley Hauerwas, Reinhard Hutter and D Stephen Long for their comments on various drafts of this paper