

## **CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM POPULATION AND FIRST USE OF FORCE BY STATES, 1946 – 2001**

### **Abstract**

A variety of domestic characteristics of states affect their propensities to armed conflict, including power, regime type, wealth, and economic strength (in addition to the dyadic characteristics of power differential, alliances, proximity, and the peace-learning process). Compared to these, religion is an understudied characteristic. Religions instill norms and ethics for the use of force just as secular ideologies often do. These war ethics influence the propensities to armed conflict of the states whose people and leadership adhere to those religions. Whether religious war ethics raise or lower those propensities depends on how permissive or restrictive they are. I show the empirical effect of those religious war ethics, working through states' populations, on states' probabilities to initiate armed conflicts against other states. The Christian war ethic is more restrictive and Christian populations are negatively correlated with states' propensities to resort to force. The Islamic war ethic is more permissive and Muslim populations are positively correlated. The effect of religion is often strong and statistically significant, even after introducing conventional controls.

**Key Words:** first use of force, Christianity, Islam, war ethics, populations

### **Introduction**

In the opening issue of this journal, Jevtić Miroljub (2007: 64) outlined three dimensions of the study of religion as a phenomenon in politics: (1) the open and visible connections of religious doctrine and teachings with politics; (2) the invisible connections of religious practices (and teachings) which nevertheless provoke directly political consequences; and (3) the attitudes of political actors toward religion and religious communities. This paper examines a phenomenon of the second dimension. I argue the religious war ethics that are infused in a state's population translate into the propensities of the state itself to resort to military force in conflicts with other states. However, I also submit that the influence of religious war ethics in this manner takes place subconsciously.

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The key decision-makers that take a state into armed conflict often are not aware of the religious influence on their decisions.

The effect of religion on political preferences and outcomes is well documented in cases in which the parties' goals are sacralized or the competing groups are defined in whole or in part by their religious identities. However, the phenomenon examined here is no different. The literature is replete with studies of political conflicts *within* states that are generated by religious differences, whether those differences be defined by socio-economic or ethnic identities (e.g. Venugopal 2013, on religious identities in India) or by majority attempts to suppress a particular practice of the minority, which the majority has deemed undesirable (e.g. Engbers 2013, on suppression of plural marriage by Mormons in the United States).

Religion overall has remained an under-studied and under-theorized dimension of political science (see Kettel 2012), and the international relations (IR) field has not devoted significant study to the effect of religion on states' preferences and inter-state interactions which themselves are not overtly religious in character. Regime type, trade dependence, and GDP are several characteristics of states that are widely accepted to influence conflict outbreak between states, even though comparatively few conflicts pertain specifically to those things. In this paper I test the effects of another type of domestic characteristic: *religion*. Working from the premise that what states want, they do (Moravcsik 1997: 518-9), I hypothesize that religion *also* affects states' preferences and interstate outcomes, in this case the outcome of war and peace.

The precise dependent variable is whether the observed state in a directed dyad-year is the first user of force in a Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) with the other state; it is a binary exposition of the propensity of a state to initiate an armed conflict. The independent variable, which is the religious identity of the state, could be operationalized several ways (religion of population, religious preferences of the governing regime, religious identity of the state's chief executive, and others); here we quantify and test the religious identity of the observed state's citizenry. Due to space limitations, only two religions are tested and their effects contrasted: Christianity and Islam (which are also the two most dominant major world religions today). I show that a Christian population is negatively correlated with the state's propensity to resort to force: the greater percentage of Christian citizenry, the lower the probability. I also find that Islam is positively correlated: the greater percentage of Muslims, the higher the probability.

## Theory

The role of religion in traditional Neorealist theories of IR is the role of states or state-like entities with religious preferences. To function in this model, religious institutions and/or actors would have to act as functionally equivalent

to states and interact with them as well as with each other. Religions and religious institutions enjoyed the status of system-level actors in the pre-Renaissance world, when the Roman Catholic Church and the Islamic Caliphate were major political powers, but that no longer the case today. For this reason, scholars attempting to incorporate religion into Neorealism have done so only with difficulty (Sandal & James 2011: 10). Nukhet Sandal and Jonathan Fox (2013: 62-9) theorize that religion is a unit-level complement to the system level, that religious worldviews may contribute to threat perception thus balancing behavior (Walt 1987), and that religion may be a form of nationalism. All of these claims are plausible but they are peripheral to main approach of Neorealism, which is influence of systemic pressures, constraints, and incentives on outcomes of interaction.

Religion's place in traditional Institutional theories of IR is that of an organization of states that have common interests or identities, possibly under the auspices of a religion institution or with rules or styles of interaction that are influenced by specific religious norms and practices (though not necessarily so). A prominent institution of states exists in the domain of Islam—the Organization of Islamic Cooperation—but the OIC is fundamentally an organization of states that ascribe to a particular identity (they are Islamic) and it wields no religious authority. No analogous major institution exists today in any other religious domain. The primary role of religion in Neoliberal Institutionalism is as a source of principles and norms (Sandal & Fox 2013: 90). These principles may contribute (or perhaps even constitute) a rules regime (Krasner 1982; Keohane 1989), or they may inform states' use of soft power (Nye 2004; Haynes 2008: 143). Either way, religions and their institutions are acting as non-state actors, which again renders them peripheral to the core tenets of Institutionalism, in which the primary actor is still the state.

The theories just mentioned are perfectly sound and useful in their own terms, but I submit that one most useful to explaining the phenomenon taken up here is Neoclassical Realism. This theory posits that states' foreign policy preferences are influenced, at least in the short term, by their own domestic characteristics and political structures, along with the domestic interest groups that happen to be the most influential at the time (Rose 1998; Lobell Ripsman & Taliaferro 2009).<sup>2</sup> Many types of incentives and identities can, of course, define domestic factions and generate their interests (therefore their agendas). But whereas the best-known literature focuses heavily on material interests and how those interests induce rent-seeking behavior, it is also well established that some domestic interest groups are defined not so much by material interests, but by their ethnic identities (Smith 2000; Brown 1993). Within states and also within and between blocs of states, ethnic and similarly sectarian differences can and

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<sup>2</sup> However, whereas Jack Snyder (1991) posits that states' preferences are influenced by domestic factions' *rent-seeking* interests, I maintain that factions' interests can be altruistic as well.

frequently do include differences in *religion*; a few well-known examples include the Serbs (Orthodox) and Croats (Catholic), the Iraqi Sunnis and Shiites, and the Israelis (Jews) and Palestinians (Muslim and some Christian). Religion institutions act as “firms” and as such they function in the same manner as secular interest groups, with the interests they advance being as much (or more) material as/ than transcendental (Johnston & Sampson 1994 *passim*; Kalyvas 1996; Gill 1998; Fox 1999; Warner 2000; Norris & Inglehart 2004; Bellin 2008).

In the Neoclassical Realist model, the position of religion is as an identifier and/or generator of domestic groups, some of whom influence states’ interests more than others. One prominent theory for when and how this happens is the theory of sacralization. Ron Hassner (2009) argues that religion sacralizes certain objectives to the point of rendering certain issues indivisible (see Fearon 1995: 381-2), e.g. the ownership of the Sikh Golden Temple or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Such sacralizing renders the dispute a zero-sum game, raising the likelihood of armed conflict being the disputants. Although Hassner’s focus is on intrastate conflicts, the theory is easily applied to interstate conflicts as well. But however plausibly this theory explains disputes with overtly religious dimensions, it would appear to have little application to disputes which are not overtly religious in origin or character (which is most of them).

Furthermore, antecedent to a conflict over sacred spaces must be the religious *differences* between two parties. However, many agendas of domestic interest groups, states, and groups of states are rooted not in the differences between political actors, but rather in the *characteristics* of those actors. A variety of characteristics have been theorized to influence a state’s propensity to resort to military force: absolute power, regime type, economic system, economic cycles (Cashman 1993: chap. 5). In this paper I take up an understudied state-level characteristic: its *religion*. The field’s attention to religion was raised somewhat by the publication of Gilles Kepel’s *Revenge of God* (1994), the emergence of Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilizations thesis (1996), and the 9/11 attacks. However, what comparatively little literature there is on religion in security studies appears to focus on conflicts either that are overtly religious in character, or are precipitated or exacerbated by religious differences. In this paper, I submit that a state’s propensity to resort to military force is influenced not merely by religious differences, but by the worldviews, ethics, and behavioral prescriptions that religion instills in the state’s own population, and through it its culture, and through that, its leaders.

How does the religion of a state’s population affect its preference for using force or not? Max Weber theorized that the prescriptions for taking life, along with all the rest of the meanings, values, prescriptions, etc., are first conveyed to the masses through a charismatic prophet, and the prescribed behavior is induced through psychological sanctions (Weber 1958; see also Laitin 1978: 565-6). In a related theory, Nukhet Sandal (2011) proposes that a religious institution acts, through its clergy, as an epistemic community, providing expertise that informs

and even programs a political agenda to a certain interest group. What is true for Hassner's theory is also true for Sandal's: it may explain the preferences not merely of domestic interest groups, but also governing regimes and ultimately states themselves. In addition, religious epistemic communities may inform not only the agendas of interest groups, but also the agenda and behavior of the entire body of adherents of that religion. This is one way that religion can influence states' political preferences through their populations. This is a different phenomenon from religious institutions functioning like other, secular interest groups; here, religion affects a state's political preferences because the epistemic community inculcates values and world views and prescribes behaviors to individuals, groups, communities, and ultimately entire populations, along with the governing regimes that draw their officials from those populations.<sup>3</sup>

For the epistemic communities to accomplish the things just described, religion must first influence the clergy. Religions do this through scripture and other written classics, and for some, also the historical narrative. Scripture such as the Bible, Quran, or Pali Canon provides a written record of the teachings of the prophet, plus accounts of historical events, circumstances, and environments that are relevant to interpreting the prophet's teachings. A basic principle of biblical exegesis, for example, is to take into account *whom* the prophet is addressing and *why*. As a written record, scripture memorializes the prophet's teachings in a more permanent fashion than oral histories do, and the more widely disseminated the scripture, the more resistant it becomes to meaning-altering changes. The scripture may influence people directly, i.e. by being widely read, or its content may be disseminated through the clergy (Sandal's epistemic community). The priestly teachings that enjoy the most durable persuasive power are those that are written down, so that they, like scripture, are accessible to a much wider audience. Examples of such writings include the works of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and classical Islamic scholars (especially legal scholars, given the centrality of law in Islamic life). The third type of influence is historical tradition. Some religions, including Islam and various forms of Buddhism, emphasize events and actions and the stories that emerge from them. Examples of this medium include compilations of Islamic *hadith* (non-scriptural compilations of the words, actions, and decisions of the Prophet Muhammad), traditional biographies of the Prophet and histories of the early expansion of Islam, and classical historical sagas in Buddhist tradition. These narratives serve as the bases for analogizing current events to past events, and thus assist in prescribing the appropriate reactions. Yuen Foong Khong (1992) shows how states' leaders make decisions in crises by analogizing those crises to previous crises and their outcomes; I argue that in religion traditions, such analogizing takes place within entire cultures.

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3 For other theories and arguments on how religious belief systems lead to certain outcomes, see Laitin 1978: 563; Dark 2000: ix; Hasendever & Rittberger 2000: 647-8; Otis 2004: 19; Philpott 2001; Stark 2005.

Through these three media (scripture, priesthood, and historical tradition), the meanings, values, priorities, cognitions and prescriptions of human life are instilled into whole societies and cultures, one person at a time. Through these media religion can influence the population directly, without the intermediaries of epistemic communities. This manner of influence is not overt or deliberate, nor even conscious. Nor do populations' religiously-inspired value sets always override material incentives, pressures, and constraints (which admittedly are very strong). On the other hand, there is empirical support for the proposition that not all states seek material power to the exclusion of all else. The Caribbean micro-states have not been swallowed up by larger states, and some humanitarian interventions have been undertaken by states that had no genuine material interest in doing so. State behavior is not always strictly egoist, not even in security matters; some ideology is mixed into the internal deliberations of states as to whether to use force or not (see Haas 2005, 2012). Such ideology includes religious principles.

The norms that are promulgated by religion influence the worldviews, behaviors, actions, and interactions of entire populations. This is as true for norms of statecraft as for norms of interpersonal relations. For example, Michael Koplrow (2011) argues that U.S. governmental support for Israel is the result of American *public* support, which itself is generated by ideological affinities for Israel, especially among conservative Christians. Joseph Daniels (2005) observes an empirical relationship between a person's religious affiliation and his or her international policy preferences. Mira Sucharov (2011) makes the case that Diaspora Jews are more likely to invoke specifically Jewish values when critiquing Israeli policy. By informing the principles of right behavior (and right statecraft) that are held by the public, religion influences public preferences for certain decisions of their political elites.

This is particularly true for decisions to resort to violence. At the level of interpersonal relations, religious norms define the circumstances in which resorting to violence is regarded as legitimate, e.g. individual self-defense, defense of others, duly-authorized law enforcement, and so on. At the level of interstate relations, religious norms set limits on the legitimate use of a state's armed forces, i.e. when the right of self-defense is triggered, and the purposes for which an offensive use of force is morally permissible (such as protection of a state's own nationals, humanitarian or ideological interventions, and even conquest of other states). Put another way, each major religion has a code of ethics of war, and individuals of those religions tend to follow their respective war ethics over the long term. This is not to claim that states' leaders do not violate the war ethics of their religions in the short term; we can postulate a priori that they do. However, the empirical evidence presented in this paper supports the hypothesis that over time (decades) and space (multiple continents), states that are dominated by religions with restrictive war ethics resort to force at lower rate than states that are dominated by religions with permissive war ethics.

## War Ethics of Christianity and Islam

In this paper, I focus on two major world religions: Christianity and Islam. These two are selected because together they are dominant in nearly 80% of the state-years in the global system from 1946 to 2001. This section examines the war ethics of those two religions. Entire books are written on the war ethics of Christianity and Islam, and no single journal article can possibly do them justice. Therefore these two expositions are necessarily oversimplified due to space limitations—but they are *not* stereotyped as several Islamic scholars claim is often done with Islam (Bsoul 2014: 21; Mefttah & Ahmad 2014: 79-80). I show that the war ethic of Christianity is restrictive and that of Islam is permissive.

### *The Christian War Ethic*

Three types of war ethics have dominated Christian thought since the religion's inception (Bainton 1960). First, the holy war ethic, which legitimizes war in pursuit of a divinely-ordained goal, including propagating the faith. Second, the just war ethic, which legitimizes war only when necessary to remediate an injury. Third, pacifism, which delegitimizes war and other forms of violence regardless of cause or provocation. The holy war ethic has been repudiated in mainstream Christian thought today, leaving just war and pacifism to vie for dominance (Childress 1982; Miller 1991; Webster & Cole 2004: chap. 6).

I am claiming that the Christian war ethic is restrictive, therefore I shall interpret it in the light that is least favorable to my claim and posit that the just war ethic is the more dominant of the two. The scriptural basis for the just war ethic is more obscure than that for pacifism, which includes the well-known admonitions to “love your enemies” (Matthew 5:43-4) and “do not resist evil” (Matthew 5: 38-41). However, nowhere in the New Testament is Jesus recorded as urging soldiers to give up their professions. John the Baptist urges them, rather, to comport themselves professionally (Luke 3:14). Furthermore, in the vignette of the coin, Jesus teaches his followers to honor and obey the civil authorities to whom honor is due (Mark 12:17), but he does not say to honor and obey those to whom honor and obedience are not due. This passage leaves open the possibility that some resistance to evil conducted on a larger scale than simply a personal affront *is* appropriate. Finally, in the vignette of the whip, Jesus himself resorts to violence, fashioning a whip to drive the moneychangers from the Temple (John 2: 13-16).

The just war ethic itself originates with the works of two Doctors of the Catholic Church, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Augustine theorizes that it is just to resort to force to remediate an injury, however contrite the warrior must be in doing so (e.g. *Quæstiones in Heptateuchum*, bk. 6, sec. 10b, in Eppstein 1935: 74). Thomas Aquinas outlines three criteria for legitimizing war, and these criteria remain the classic formula for discerning a just from unjust war today (1952: pt.

ii-ii, q. 40, art. 1). They are: (1) Proper Authority (only a state can legitimately use force; a non-state actor cannot<sup>4</sup>); (2) Just Cause (the attacked must have committed some injury or “fault”); and (3) Right Intent (the use of force must be for the advancement of good or avoidance of evil). Embedded in the second criterion is a fourth: Proportionality of Cause (the injury must be grave enough to warrant the drastic measure of military force to remediate it). In 1612, the Spanish Jesuit theologian Francisco Suárez (1944: chap. 1, sec. 7) advanced the criterion of “right manner,” from which three additional criterion for a just war today are derived: Reasonable Prospect of Success (the use of force must be likely in foresight to actually achieve some good, i.e. not be futile); Last Resort (all other reasonable alternatives must be exhausted); and Just Means (the military operation must distinguish between combatants and noncombatants and refrain from using excessive force) (Brown 2008).<sup>5</sup>

The product of all of these conditions is a war ethic which *can* legitimize war in extreme circumstances, e.g. defend one’s own nation or another from unjust invasion, or intervene to stop gross, large-scale violations of fundamental human rights. However, it is restrictive compared to the war ethic of the other major world religion taken up here: Islam.

### ***The Islamic War Ethic***

Whereas the Christian war ethic today is a tension between just-war and pacifism, the Islamic war ethic of today is a tension between self-defense and the holy war ethic. In self-defense, force is legitimate, even required, to protect the domain of Islam from threats or defend it from actual attack. In the holy war ethic, force is sanctioned to eradicate polytheism (regarded in Islamic thought as evil per se) or to extend the domain of Islam.<sup>6</sup> Like Augustine’s rationale for force to punish a sinner, the holy war ethic is regarded as serving the best interest of and benefit for non-believers.

Islam calls for the ordering of submission and service, all taking place within the community of believers (the *umma*). In Islamic thought, God’s kingdom is achievable on earth, but only within the *umma* and only after the *umma* has overcome all opposition (Martin 1991: 107). The sole path to prosperity in this

4 An alternative formulation of this criterion is “Legitimate Authority,” positing that a state must get authorization to use force from the Security Council. Although this restriction is in contemporary international law, it is a major departure from the original formulation of Proper Authority. See Brown 2011.

5 James Turner Johnson (2005) argues that the first three/four criteria are “deontological,” in that each is a *sine qua non* for the use of force to be just, whereas the remaining ones are “prudential,” in that a minor lapse in any of them does not negate the legitimacy of the use of force overall.

6 Several works cited in this article, namely those from this journal’s Volume 8 No. 1, are devoted to disaggregating the concepts of jihad and terrorism. I do not dispute claims that the two concepts are properly dissociated from one another. My point, however, is that the principles by which force is legitimized in Islam (*jus ad bellum*) is fundamentally permissive, which is entirely independent of whether those same principles legitimize terrorist attacks on innocents (which the authors rightly claim they do not).



world, and salvation in the next, is membership in the umma. All other loyalties are superseded by the brotherhood (Khadduri 1955: 3-4). Inherent in the umma, as in any society, is the concept of authority (there must be some emanating from somewhere for the society to work). In this case, that authority consists of a body of laws issued by a supreme lawgiver (God). The umma is necessary to suppress the evil and aggressive propensities of man, and thus the Islamic “state” is born (Tibi 1996: 140-1).

For reasons having to do with historical tradition, Islamic thought emphasizes the separation of itself from non-Islam. This strong separation of Other from Self led early on to the division of the world between the *dar al-harb* (abode of war/conflict) and *dar al-islam* (the abode of submission, or of Islam) (Quran 10:25; Tibi 1996: 129-30). The *dar al-harb* is the forces of deception, unbelief, and *shirk* (the association of other beings with God), as opposed to the forces of the straight path and submission to God (the *dar al-islam*). Even the other Abrahamic religions were viewed as communities that had rejected their prophets and distorted their scriptures.

The core of the Islamic war ethic is the doctrine of *jihad*. Derived from the Arabic root *jahada* (exert), the word is usually translated into English as a struggle, striving, or great effort.<sup>7</sup> A classical, post-Quranic legal construction divided jihad into two types: (1) Greater or high, which is the struggle of the soul to overcome the sinful obstacles that keep a person from God; and (2) Lesser or low, which is the struggle of Islam against its enemies. Which type of jihad prevails today is a point of disagreement. Radical Islamists are widely regarded as embracing the lesser jihad over the greater. But the tone of many scholarly works on Islam today suggests that even mainstream Islam might be moving on that direction as well (Kelsay 2007; Tibi 2012).

The lesser jihad is further divided into defensive and offensive. That a defensive jihad would permit Muslims to defend themselves from aggression is obvious; the primary scriptural basis for defensive jihad sanctions fighting by those who have been oppressed and even imposes a *duty* of self-defense (Quran 22: 39-40; Aslan 2005: 84; Sonbol 2009: 289), as Labeeb Ahmed Bsoul rightly points out (2014: 21). However, Abdul-Aziz Sachedina (2002: 42) documents another interpretation of defensive jihad, featuring an additional cause for force in self-defense: “moral wrong” (Quran 8:39, 2:193). If “moral wrong” includes the failure to worship and obey the one true God, as is the position of many scriptural verses and Islamic classical writings, then the concept of self-defense is broadened beyond what would be considered self-defense by the standard of today’s *jus ad bellum*. In such a case, Islam then would sanction the use of offensive force to do two things: (1) eradicate polytheism, despite a lack of material injury toward Muslims, and (2) eliminate obstacles to the propagation of Islam. Unlike the re-

7 Strictly speaking, that translation does not necessarily denote an *armed* struggle, but such has been the historical connotation of the word “jihad” in the West.

sort to wanton banditry, which as Bsoul (2014) notes is an illegitimate cause for war (and is illegitimate in Christian thought as well), the two causes for war just mentioned are considered legitimate in traditional Islamic thought.

In offensive jihad, Muslims are enjoined to attack their enemies anywhere, at any time (Quran 9:5, 9:29). In fairness to Islam, the Quranic passages just cited are revelations that pertain to how the prophet and his followers should treat several specific enemies who had betrayed them. However, Islamic education places considerable emphasis on the life of Muhammad and other early Islamic history (Cook 2005: 42-3)—and in the first hundred years of the faith, jihad *did* mean holy war to propagate Islam and extend its territorial domain (Sonbol 2009: 294; Donner 1991: 51; Khadduri 1955: 59; Sachedina 2002: 37). Compared to the Christian just war tradition of Augustine and Aquinas, the Islamic war ethic is more permissive.

## Hypotheses

The above are samples of the worldviews and ideologies that religions instill into the political ethics of their adherents: from entire cultures (of most of which religion serves as a foundation), to individual political officials up to and including the chief executive. Following the trend of literature on religiously based norms of war in concentrating on armed conflict initiation, I advance two hypotheses:

H1: Religious demographics of states influence their propensities to initiate armed conflicts.

H2: Different religions of states' populations have different effects on states' propensities to initiate armed conflicts.

## Research Design

The observations consist of all politically relevant *directed* dyad-years from 1946 to 2001 (Reiter & Stam 2002: 48; Quackenbush & Rudy 2009: 281). The dataset includes 198 independent states (including 5 that no longer exist). Of the approximately 1.1 million directed dyad-years during that time period, 116,362 of them are designated as politically relevant by EUGene software (Bennett & Stam 2000; i.e. the two states are proximate to each other or one of them is a great power). The starting year is selected for two reasons: (1) states are more religiously diverse after 1945 than before;<sup>8</sup> and (2) the legal and normative environment governing the use of force is uniquely restrictive during the post-World War II period, compared to earlier epochs of international law (see Grewe 2000; Neff 2005).

8 For such a claim on control variables as well, see Russett 1993: 73.

The dependent variable, which is binary, is the initiation of an interstate armed conflict by the *first* state in the directed dyad-year (see Rousseau et al. 1996; Russett & Oneal 2001; Souva & Prins 2006).<sup>9</sup> It is possible to operationalize the DV as a range of levels of hostility, e.g. threat of force, show of force, use of force, and war. Indeed, a state's leader may consider (and opt for) a lesser form of hostility than outright use of force, and a binary exposition of the DV does not capture that particular nuance.<sup>10</sup> However, it is the *use* of force that constitutes an act of aggression according to the UN Definition of Aggression as well as the new crime of aggression in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. International organizations such as the United Nations react most strongly to the *first use* of force, not merely the threat or show of force. That is the state behavior that I seek to capture and explain. Therefore the state's propensity to use force is operationalized here as binary variable rather than ordered categorical.

Data on observations and dependent variables was generated from the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) and other data sets from the Correlates of War Project (COW), using EUGene software (Ghosn Palmer & Bremer 2004; Bennett & Stam 2000).<sup>11</sup> Using the UN Definition of Aggression (1974) as a baseline, the DV "initiate an armed conflict" is defined as first militarization of a dispute at the COW Highest Activity level 12 or higher. However, in order to alleviate the concern that this definition may capture too many low-level or trivial cases (see Wollebæk Tøset, Gleditsch & Hegre 2000: 984), this study employs five models, each with a dependent variable in which the threshold for defining a use of force is graduated upward. The five models are as follows:

Model 1: Initiated armed conflict at Highest Activity (HiAct) 12 or higher

Model 2: Initiated armed conflict at HiAct 13 or higher

Model 3: Initiated at HiAct 12 or higher, but seizure cases (HiAct 15) removed

Model 4: Initiated at HiAct 13 or higher, but seizure cases (HiAct 15) removed

Model 5: Initiated armed conflict that resulted in fatalities (Souva & Prins 2006)

A final refinement was to exclude armed conflicts that were initiated with authorization from the UN Security Council (only five cases are affected).<sup>12</sup>

The independent variables are the Christian-ness and Muslim-ness of the state's citizenry. Each observation includes the percentage of citizenry of the first

9 A "joiner" state, i.e. one that joins a MID on the side of the state that first initiated the armed conflict, is coded as the initiator as well.

10 I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

11 The MID Dataset ends in 2001, hence the last year of observations here.

12 The cases are: (1) by NATO and other states against Bosnian Serbs in 1993 (S.C. Res. 836; MID # 3551); (2) by the U.S. against Haiti in 1993 (S.C. Res. 873; MID # 4016); (3 & 4) by an Australian-led force in East Timor prior to its independence (S.C. Res. 1264; MID # 4264 & 4265); and (5) by the U.S. and other states against Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks in 2001 (S.C. Res. 1386 with authorization further implied in S.C. Res. 1368; MID # 4283).

state in the directed dyad that is Christian, and the percentage that is Muslim.<sup>13</sup> Each observation also includes dummy variables denoting whether or not Christianity and Islam are “prevalent” among the citizenry of the first state; the threshold for prevalence is set at 66.5% of the population.<sup>14</sup>

Each model contains a battery of conventional control variables. The first, power differential, is measured using the directed ratio of the Composite Index of National Capability in the dyad-year (Russett & Oneal 2001: 103; Correlates of War Project 2010). The next two are the lowest Polity score of the two states in the dyad and the Polity score of the observed state, incorporating measurements of the dyadic and monadic effects of the democratic peace, respectively (Marshall Gurr & Jagers 2010).<sup>15</sup> Next is the effect of alliances using the COW Formal Alliances dataset (Gibler & Sarkees 2004; Gibler 2008), but following Russett & Oneal (2001: 104) I control only for *defensive* alliances. I also control for the “learning process” of pacific relations (Cederman 2001) and for the closest contiguity level (direct or colonial), using the ordered categories of the COW contiguity data sets (Stinnett et al. 2002; Correlates of War 2 Project 2003).

Several other potential control variables are not used in this study except as robustness checks. One is the possession of nuclear weapons.<sup>16</sup> Another is wealth, operationalized as the logarithm of the directed ratios of GDP and GDP per capita of the two states in the dyad-year (Haas 1980; Russett 1993: 25ff, 82; Russett & Oneal 2001). Trade dependence is also a factor in decisions to use force, the conventional argument being that greater economic dependence lessens

13 Data was obtained from the CIA World Factbook and its predecessor (1976-1980, 1981-2008), U.S. State Department religious freedom reports (1999-2009), the Information Please Almanac (1947-1981), and the World Almanac (1968-1995). This dataset was constructed prior to the recent release of the religious demographics dataset by the Correlates of War (Maoz and Henderson 2013). The latter is unfortunately not suitable for this project; it reports observations only for every five years rather than every year, and a careful review of the dataset has exposed a great many inconsistencies—enough to induce concern about the overall internal validity of the data. A new, more rigorous dataset on national religious demographics is currently under construction. However, as a first cut at measuring the degree to which Christianity and Islam are prominent within states, I submit that the dataset used for this paper will suffice.

14 For a state in which neither Christianity nor Islam are prevalent by themselves, but one of the two is prevalence when combined with another religion (e.g. Christian-Muslim Mix, Christian-Buddhist Mix, etc.), the dummy variable for that religion is coded as missing. It is further important to note that this measurement captures only religious identity, not religiosity. The World Values Survey (2009) provides data on religiosity of selected states’ populations, but it does not cover enough states or go back far enough in time to be suitable for this study.

15 The scores actually used in the regression are *adjusted* Polity scores, which are needed to reflect the extent of the democratic nature of the state’s central government, without regard to territorial control. The behavior being examined is the militarization of a dispute by a *state*; in international law and diplomatic practice the behavior of the state and its *government* are virtually synonymous. The “interregnum” code in the Polity and Polity2 scores reflect that the state’s regime is not in full control of its territory. I submit that during such an “interregnum” period, the last non-missing Polity score of the state is a reasonably good indicator of the democratic or autocratic traits of the government, and thus of the effects of democracy/autocracy on the state’s decision to use force. In addition, I have corrected what appear to have been several typographical errors in the original Polity IV data set.

16 The precise nature of the effect of having nuclear weapons is disputed. I am indebted to Victor Asal for suggesting this line of inquiry.

the probability of using force (Mueller 1989: 219; Souva & Prins 2006).<sup>17</sup> In addition, the dyadic democratic peace and land contiguity both potentially could be represented using binary dummy variables. These variables are not included in the standard models because correlation tests (not reproduced here) revealed each of them to be highly correlated with other, core variables, rendering them superfluous.

## Results

The results of a series of logit regressions show that a Christian or Muslim prevalence in the citizenry of a state (the IV) is correlated with the state's probability of initiating an interstate armed conflict (the DV). Christianity is negatively correlated and Islam is positively correlated.

### *Effect of Christianity*

We begin with some descriptive statistics. Table 1 tabulates all observations in which a Christian state "initiated" an inter-stated armed conflict in which there were fatalities, which is the highest threshold of using force of the five models presented.

Table 1. Christian States as Initiators of Inter-State Armed Conflicts with Fatalities.

<u>State</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Regional Breakdown</u>
Antigua & Barbuda	1	Total Europe: 71 (50.4%)
Argentina	1	Total Africa: 5 (3.5%)
Armenia	9	Total Middle East: 9 (6.4%)
Australia	2	Total Asia-Pacific: 2 (1.4%)
Barbados	1	Total Americas (not incl. U.S.): 24 (17.0%)
Bulgaria	4	United States: 30 (21.3%)
Chile	1	
Croatia	4	
Cuba	1	Total Initiations by Christian States: 141 (20.17%)
Czechoslovakia	2	Total Initiations by All States: 699
Dominica	1	
Dem. Rep. Congo	3	Total Christian State-Years in Dataset: 61520 (52.87%)
Ecuador	4	
El Salvador	2	
France	10	
Germany, East	4	
Germany, West	1	

<sup>17</sup> In addition, Dale Copeland (1996) argues that the mitigator of armed conflict is the *expectation* of future trade.

Germany (united)	2
Greece	3
Guatemala	2
Honduras	1
Hungary	6
Iceland	2
Italy	2
Macedonia	2
Nicaragua	2
Panama	1
Paraguay	2
Peru	3
Romania	4
Russia/USSR	8
St. Vincent & Grenadines	1
Uganda	2
United Kingdom	8
United States	30
Yugoslavia/Serbia	9

The propensity of Christian states to initiate armed conflicts against other states is clearly driven primarily by states in Europe and the Americas. This is not a surprise, since both of those regions consist nearly entirely of Christian states. It is also not surprising that the U.S., UK, France, and Russia are among the most frequent initiators. As great powers, they are expected in realist theory to resort to force more often than lesser powers. In addition, great power state-years are disproportionately high in the dataset, because all dyad-years that involve great powers are included regardless of the distance between the two states in the dyad. In contrast, the dataset only includes dyads of lesser powers only if the two states are near each other. It should be noted also that despite the high initiation rates of the great powers, the rate of initiations overall by Christian states, 20.17%, is considerably lower than the expected rate based on the proportion of Christian state-years to the entire state system, which is 52.87%.

Table 2 shows the effect of a dichotomous Christian prevalence (either the citizenry is mostly Christian or it is not) on propensity to use force, and Table 3 shows the effect of 10% increase in the percentage of Christians in the state's citizenry.

Table 2. Logit Estimates of Christianity as Prevalent Religion (Dichotomous).

Variable	Model 1 (Robust SE)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Christian Prevalence (binary)	-.2085° (.1121)	-.2082° (.1182)	-.2788* (.1250)	-.2907* (.1338)	-.5973* (.2329)
Odds Ratio	-18.8%°	-18.8%°	-24.3%*	-25.2%*	-45.0%*
Log CINC Ratio (.0120)	.0135 (.0123)	-.0071 (.0130)	.0399** (.0134)	.0178 (.0187)	.0040
Low Polity Score of Dyad	-.0267** (.0094)	-.0230* (.0098)	-.0381*** (.0106)	-.0342** (.0113)	-.0407* (.0162)
Polity Score (State 1)	-.0152° (.0084)	-.0237** (.0090)	-.0136 (.0091)	-.0243* (.0098)	.0004 (.0151)
Defensive Allies (.1013)	-.0074 (.1050)	.0253 (.1095)	-.0724 (.1142)	-.0392 (.1937)	-.0690
Log Peace-Years (.0358)	-.6596*** (.0374)	-.6738*** (.0389)	-.6632*** (.0410)	-.6791*** (.0618)	-.5982***
Closest Contiguity (.0207)	-.3111*** (.0214)	-.2966*** (.0228)	-.3350*** (.0238)	-.3194*** (.0358)	-.2545***
Constant (.0954)	-1.9140*** (.0980)	-1.9701*** (.0987)	-1.9514*** (.1012)	-2.0043*** (.1658)	-3.2807***
Observations	86,651	86,651	86,651	86,651	86,452
Wald $\chi^2(7)$	973.38	984.82	900.01	908.03	319.92
p<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1323	.1326	.1414	.1423	.0962

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\* p<.001

Table 3. Logit Estimates of Percentage of Christian Citizenry.

Variable	Model 1 (Robust SE)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Christian Citizenry (every 10%)	-.0341** (.0132)	-.0342* (.0140)	-.0459** (.0148)	-.0478** (.0158)	-.0814** (.0265)
Odds Ratio	-3.4%**	-3.4%*	-4.5%**	-4.7%**	-7.8%**
Log CINC Ratio	.0218° (.0112)	.0035 (.0114)	.0489*** (.0122)	.0292* (.0126)	.0113 (.0177)
Low Polity Score of Dyad	-.0243** (.0093)	-.0212* (.0097)	-.0358*** (.0105)	-.0329** (.0111)	-.0423** (.0158)
Polity Score (State 1)	-.0142° (.0080)	-.0224** (.0086)	-.0108 (.0086)	-.0208* (.0093)	.0051 (.0137)
Defensive Allies	-.0169 (.0958)	.0196 (.0991)	-.0639 (.1037)	-.0251 (.1079)	-.1164 (.1849)
Log Peace-Years	-.6458*** (.0341)	-.6593*** (.0356)	-.6423*** (.0371)	-.6568*** (.0391)	-.5598*** (.0591)
Closest Contiguity	-.3150*** (.0195)	-.3012*** (.0201)	-.3423*** (.0216)	-.3276*** (.0226)	-.2731*** (.0345)
Constant	-1.9262*** (.0901)	-1.9821*** (.0928)	-1.9707*** (.0935)	-2.0231*** (.0962)	-3.2634*** (.1517)
Observations	95,418	95,418	95,418	95,418	95,197
Wald $\chi^2(7)$	1071.02	1072.62	985.73	981.56	346.43
p	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1309	.1307	.1404	.1405	.0942

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001



These tables indicate that a state with a Christian citizenry is less likely than a state with a non-Christian citizenry to initiate an interstate armed conflict. All coefficients in all models are negative and statistically significant at some level. For every 10% of the citizenry that is Christian, the state's probability of initiating an interstate armed conflict is reduced from three to nearly eight percent. The negative effect of Christianity grows stronger as the severity of the force needed to trigger the DV increases. The effect is strongest in Model 5, in which only armed conflicts with fatalities are counted (the most severe threshold); the logit coefficient for the binary Christian prevalence is nearly three times that of the same variable in Model 1, in which only a low-level of force is necessary to count as an armed conflict.

Figure A. Graph of DV and Percentage of Christian Citizenry.

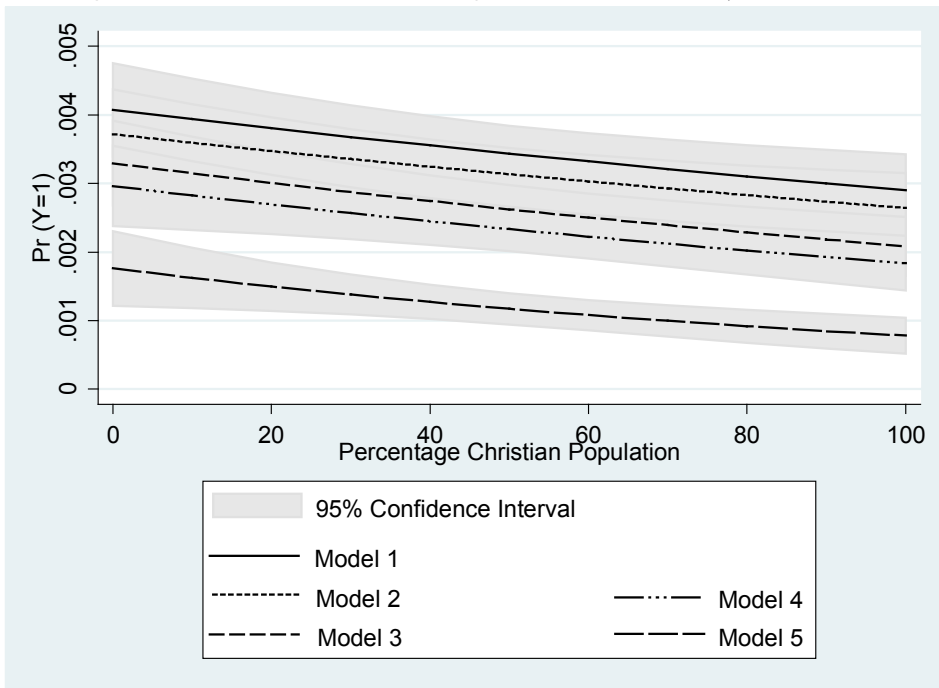


Figure A graphs the effect of a Christian citizenry on the predicted probability of initiating an armed conflict. It shows a steady decline in the propensity to use force as the percentage of Christians in the population increases.

### Effect of Islam

Whereas the results above suggest that Christian states are less likely to use force than non-Christian states, those below suggest that Muslim states are somewhat *more* likely to use force than non-Muslim states. Table 4 tabulates all

observations in which a Muslim state initiated an inter-stated armed conflict in which there were fatalities.

*Table 4. Muslim States as Initiators of Inter-State Armed Conflicts with Fatalities.*

<u>State</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Regional Breakdown</u>
Afghanistan	4	Total Europe: 6 (2.8%)
Albania	6	Total Africa: 25 (11.5%)
Bangladesh	1	Total Middle East: 148 (68.2%)
Egypt	16	Total Asia-Pacific: 38 (17.5%)
Guinea	3	Total Americas: 0 (0.0%)
Indonesia	7	
Iran	10	
Iraq	38	
Jordan	22	Total Initiations by Muslim States: 217 (31.04%)
Mali	2	Total Initiations by All States: 699
Morocco	3	
Niger	1	Total Muslim State-Years in Dataset: 17889 (15.37%)
Pakistan	21	
Saudi Arabia	6	
Senegal	3	
Somalia	10	
Sudan	2	
Syria	29	
Tajikistan	2	
Turkmenistan	1	
Tunisia	1	
Turkey	25	
Yemen, North	1	
Yemen, South	1	

The propensity of Muslim states to initiate inter-state armed conflicts is clearly concentrated in the Middle East. It is possible of course that Middle East regional effects are influencing the results (e.g. the presence of Israel, and the proximity of the rival epicenters of Sunni and Shia Islam to each other (Saudi Arabia and Iran, respectively). However, Muslim states in Africa initiated inter-state armed conflicts in five times as many state-years in Christian states in Africa did. The paucity of initiations by Muslim states in Europe and the Americas is due to the paucity of Muslim states in those two regions. Note that, in contrast to the rate of initiations by Christian states being far lower than the expected rate, the rate of initiation by Muslim states is far higher: 31.04% as opposed to the expected rate of 15.37%.

Table 5 shows the effect of a dichotomous Muslim prevalence, and Table 6 shows the effect of 10% increase in the percentage of Muslims in the state's citizenry.

Table 5. Logit Estimates of Islam as Prevalent Religion (Dichotomous).

Variable	Model 1 (Robust SE)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Muslim Prevalence (binary)	.0738 (.0993)	.0625 (.1022)	.2540* (.1067)	.2593* (.1108)	.5368** (.1782)
Odds Ratio	+7.7%	+6.4%	+28.9%*	+29.6%*	+71.1%**
Log CINC Ratio	.0191 (.0119)	.0002 (.0122)	.0494*** (.0132)	.0296* (.0137)	.0183 (.0198)
Low Polity Score of Dyad	-.0276** (.0093)	-.0247* (.0098)	-.0380*** (.0105)	-.0352** (.0111)	-.0439** (.0158)
Polity Score (State 1)	-.0220** (.0075)	-.0304*** (.0080)	-.0193* (.0080)	-.0296*** (.0087)	-.0081 (.0128)
Defensive Allies	-.0537 (.0987)	-.0127 (.1022)	-.1399 (.1054)	-.1004 (.1097)	-.2461 (.1816)
Log Peace-Years	-.6528*** (.0348)	-.6698*** (.0363)	-.6455*** (.0378)	-.6638*** (.0399)	-.5760*** (.0594)
Closest Contiguity	-.3127*** (.0200)	-.2972*** (.0207)	-.3372*** (.0222)	-.3204*** (.0231)	-.2591*** (.0352)
Constant	-1.9570*** (.1053)	-2.0090*** (.1080)	-2.1007*** (.1141)	-2.1600*** (.1176)	-3.5707*** (.2069)
Observations	90,441	90,441	90,441	90,441	90,233
Wald $\chi^2(7)$	1043.36	1048.90	975.80	979.38	350.16
p	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1319	.1323	.1410	.1419	.0957

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Table 6. Logit Estimates of Percentage of Muslim Citizenry.

Variable	Model 1 (Robust SE)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Muslim Citizenry (every 10%)	.0142 (.0115)	.0127 (.0119)	.0346** (.0125)	.0349** (.0130)	.0696*** (.0206)
Odds Ratio	+1.4%	+1.3%	+3.5%**	+3.6%**	+7.2%**
Log CINC Ratio	.0246* (.0118)	.0061 (.0120)	.0564*** (.0131)	.0368** (.0136)	.0258 (.0198)
Low Polity Score of Dyad	-.0253** (.0093)	-.0224* (.0097)	-.0357*** (.0104)	-.0329** (.0111)	-.0408** (.0157)
Polity Score (State 1)	-.0203** (.0075)	-.0286*** (.0080)	-.0168* (.0080)	-.0270** (.0087)	-.0036 (.0129)
Defensive Allies	-.0665 (.0967)	-.0289 (.1001)	-.1397 (.1034)	-.1029 (.1076)	-.2547 (.1788)
Log Peace-Years	-.6502*** (.0343)	-.6642*** (.0357)	-.6440*** (.0374)	-.6589*** (.0394)	-.5598*** (.0595)
Closest Contiguity	-.3143*** (.0194)	-.3006*** (.0200)	-.3395*** (.0217)	-.3246*** (.0226)	-.2674*** (.0347)
Constant	-2.0320*** (.1080)	-2.0809*** (.1105)	-2.1958*** (.1184)	-2.2533*** (.1218)	-3.7193*** (.2153)
Observations	95,418	95,418	95,418	95,418	95,197
Wald $\chi^2(7)$	1066.68	1068.16	991.49	989.01	356.67
p	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1302	.1299	.1399	.1400	.0942

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

We cannot conclude with certainty that Muslim states are more or less likely to initiate a low-level interstate armed conflict, i.e. when the threshold for defining an “armed conflict” is low (Models 1 and 2). When the threshold is raised, however, we are more certain. When simple seizure cases are no longer

counted as armed conflicts (Models 3 and 4), states with Muslim citizenries are significantly more likely to use force than state with non-Muslim citizenries. At the highest threshold, in which only MIDs with fatalities are counted as armed conflicts (Model 5), the increase in probability more than doubles, to 71% for a dichotomous Muslim prevalence and an increase of 7% for every 10% of the citizenry that is Muslim.

Figure B. Graph of DV and Percentage of Muslim Citizenry.

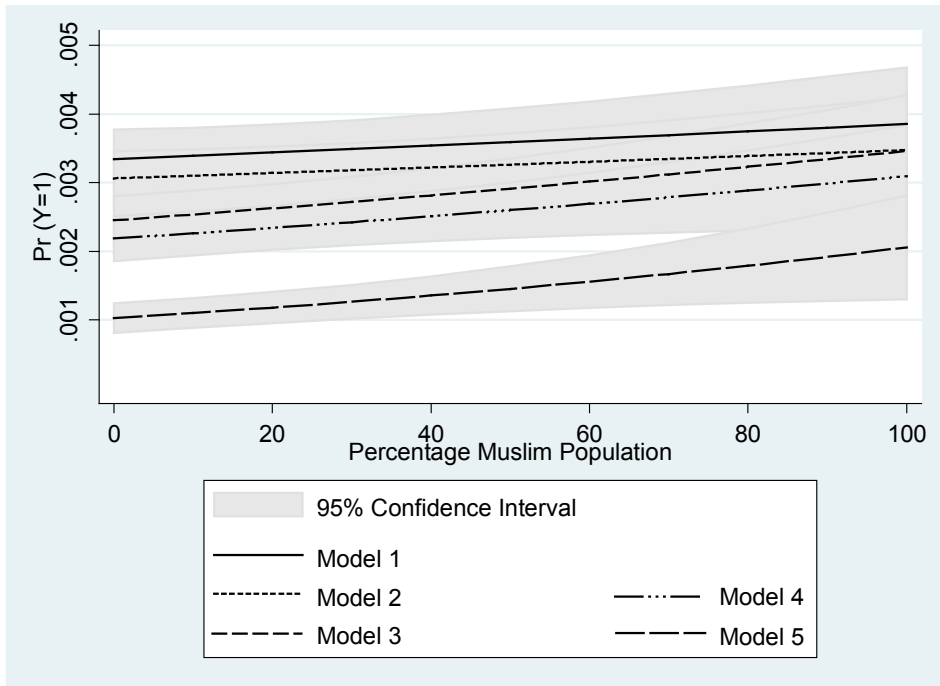


Figure B graphs the effect of a Muslim regime preference on the predicted probability of the state initiating an armed conflict. The graph shows a steady increase in probability as the percentage of Muslim population increases. Although the confidence intervals for Models 1 and 2 (the lower thresholds) are large enough to negate their statistical significance, it appears that the models with higher thresholds have deep enough slopes and narrow enough confidence intervals to be more conclusive.

### **The Problem of Collinearity**

Regressions of variables on religious identity inevitably suffer somewhat from the problem of collinearity; in this case, a state's population that is pre-

dominantly Christian is by definition not predominately Muslim and vice versa. Although a population that is not of one religion is not necessarily of the other, this problem is more acute for Christianity and Islam than for other religions, because populations of those two religions combined are dominant in 83% of the state-years in the system from 1946 to 2001.

To account for this problem, additional tests were also performed in which the Christian and Muslim population variables were regressed together. The results are summarized in Tables 7 and 8.

*Table 7. Logit Estimates of Christian & Islam as Prevalent Religion (Dichotomous).*

Variable	Model 1 (Robust SE)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Christian Prevalence (binary)	-.3552** (.1220)	-.3684** (.1283)	-.3236* (.1395)	-.3380* (.1491)	-.5305* (.2519)
Muslim Prevalence (binary)	-.1811 (.1149)	-.2051° (.1181)	.0324 (.1258)	.0265 (.1305)	.2648 (.1986)

[coefficients on control variables not printed]

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

*Table 8. Logit Estimates of Percentages of Christian & Muslim Citizenries.*

Variable	Model 1 (Robust SE)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Christian Citizenry (every 10%)	-.0371* (.0156)	-.0386* (.0165)	-.0349* (.0177)	-.0369° (.0190)	-.0533° (.0310)
Muslim Citizenry (every 10%)	-.0046 (.0136)	-.0068 (.0140)	.0170 (.0149)	.0164 (.0155)	.0431° (.0233)

[coefficients on control variables not printed]

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

The negative correlation of Christian populations to a state's propensity to first use of force remains strong, though the statistical significance of that effect is weakened somewhat in the higher models (in which the threshold for defining a "use of force" is higher). Nearly all of the Muslim coefficients lose their

statistical significance, and several of the Muslim coefficients are actually negative in the lower models. However, each Christian coefficient is far more negative than the corresponding Muslim coefficient. Particularly telling are the results for Model 5, in which the observed state has initiated a *deadly* armed conflict. We may interpret the standard errors in the light least favorable to my claim that Christianity has a restrictive war ethic and Islam has a permissive one; we do so by adding the standard errors to the Christian coefficients and subtracting them from the Muslim coefficients. When this is done for Model 5, the Christian coefficients are still negative and Muslim coefficients are still positive.

### ***Robustness Checks***

In this section, selected independent variables are retested using different methods and with different parameters, to rule out potential biases in the research design.

*Rare Events Bias.* Armed conflicts are rare events in the international system; only 1,771 of over 116,000 observations contain the event being analyzed (the initiation of an armed conflict). Standard logit analyses tend to underestimate event probabilities and are more error prone in finite samples of rare-events data. Gary King and Langche Zeng have introduced an alternative method of performing logistic regressions, the RELogit, which is tailored to correct the rare-event bias (King & Zeng 2001a, b). Since Christian and Islamic citizenries appear to have the strongest effects in Model 5, that model was re-tested using RELogit. The results (which are not reproduced here) yielded no difference greater than 0.01 in any coefficient. We may infer that the rare events bias, although present, does not threaten the validity of the research design.

*Alternative Controls.* The same independent variables in Model 5 (in which the effects of the two religions are strongest) were re-tested with a set of alternative controls. For the logarithm of the Directed CINC Ratio, I substituted the logarithm of the Directed GDP Per Capita ratio and the nuclear capability binary variables.<sup>18</sup> For the Low Polity and Polity scores, I substituted a binary variable for whether the dyad is democratic (both states having an adjusted Polity score of +7 or higher). For the Closest Contiguity level in the dyad, I substituted a binary determinant of Land Contiguity (direct or colonial). Tables 9 and 10 show the changes in coefficients for Christian and Muslim populations, respectively.

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18 The logarithm of the Directed GDP Ratio was not used, because that variable was found to be nearly perfectly correlated with the logarithm of the Directed CINC Ratio.

Table 9. Comparison of Standard and Alternative Controls for Christianity (Model 5).

Variable	MODEL 5 Standard (Robust SE)	Alternative	MODEL 5 Standard	Alternative
Christian Prevalence (binary)	-.5973* (.2329)	-.5339** (.1977)		
Christian Citizenry (every 10%)			-.0814** (.0265)	-.0769** (.0240)
Log CINC Ratio	.0040 (.0187)	.0113 (.0177)		
Log GDPPC Ratio		-.1313* (.0663)	-.1039° (.0611)	
Nuclear (State 1)	-.2952	-.2485 (.2351)	(.2348)	
Nuclear (State 2)	-.2359	-.1549 (.2300)	(.2201)	
Nuclear (Both)		.2622 (.7783)	.1739 (.7775)	
Low Polity Score of Dyad	-.0407* (.0162)	-.0423** (.0158)		
Polity Score (State 1)	.0004 (.0151)		.0051 (.0137)	
Democratic Dyad		-1.2570** (.4216)	-1.2198** (.4174)	
Defensive Allies	-.0690 (.1937)	.0634 (.2007)	-.1164 (.1849)	.0088 (.1926)
Log Peace-Years	-.5982*** (.0618)	-.5601*** (.0701)	-.5598*** (.0591)	-.5178*** (.0668)
Closest Contiguity	-.2545*** (.0358)	-.2731*** (.0345)		
Any Land Contiguity		1.1173*** (.1885)	1.2256*** (.1839)	
Constant	-3.2807*** (.1658)	-4.8416*** (.2002)	-3.2634*** (.1517)	-4.9318*** (.2041)
Observations	86,452	78,172	95,197	85,765
Wald $\chi^2$ (7 Std/9 Alt)	319.92	239.60	346.43	259.75
p	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.0962	.0979	.0942	.0943

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\* p<.001



Table 10. Comparison of Standard and Alternative Controls for Islam (Model 5).

Variable	MODEL 5 Standard (Robust SE)	Alternative	MODEL 5 Standard	Alternative
Muslim Prevalence (binary)	.5368** (.1782)	.5631** (.1785)		
Muslim Citizenry (every 10%)			.0696*** (.0206)	.0736*** (.0208)
Log CINC Ratio	.0183 (.0198)	.0258 (.0198)		
Log GDPPC Ratio		-.1494* (.0621)	-.1382* (.0607)	
Nuclear (State 1)	-.1291	-.0355 (.2528)	(.2555)	
Nuclear (State 2)	-.1928	-.1837 (.2176)	(.2209)	
Nuclear (Both)		.2855 (.7757)	.2839 (.7777)	
Low Polity Score of Dyad	-.0439** (.0158)	-.0408** (.0157)		
Polity Score (State 1)	-.0081 (.0128)	-.0036	(.0129)	
Democratic Dyad		-1.3869** (.4013)	-1.2942** (.4031)	
Defensive Allies	-.2461 (.1816)	-.1077 (.1938)	-.2547 (.1788)	-.0990 (.1908)
Log Peace-Years	-.5760*** (.0594)	-.5346*** (.0662)	-.5599*** (.0595)	-.5167*** (.0669)
Closest Contiguity	-.2591*** (.0352)	-.2674*** (.0347)		
Any Land Contiguity		1.2214*** (.1827)	1.2486*** (.1836)	
Constant	-3.5707*** (.2069)	-5.3054*** (.2314)	-3.7193*** (.2153)	-5.4911*** (.2426)
Observations	90,233	81,173	95,197	85,765
Wald $\chi^2$ (7 Std/9 Alt)	350.16	282.68	356.67	279.69
p	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001	<.0001
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.0957	.0985	.0942	.0949

° p<.10 \* p<.05 \*\* p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

The difference in coefficients from using alternative control variables appears to be slight. Using them appears to weaken the coefficients for Christianity, but not enough to undermine the correlations and the inferences that may be drawn from them—and the consequence of using the alternative controls is also to strengthen the coefficients for Islam. There appear to be no significant biases or errors attributable to the selection of the specific control variables used for this study.

## Conclusion

The central, overall conclusion is that preferences for Christianity and Islam have definite, measurable effects on the propensity of a regime to militarize a dispute into an armed conflict. This conclusion holds despite a variety of controls; indeed, the effect of religion is not out of place with the effects of several other variables often theorized to have an effect. Furthermore, religious regime preference appears to explain the outbreak of armed conflicts about as well as some of the other conventional control variables—and sometimes better. As further evidence of this claim, Table 11 summarizes the diagnostics of uncontrolled logit regressions on the four religion variables studied here, in comparison with the same diagnostics for the control variables used in the standard models (for Model 5 only).

*Table 11. Comparison of Logit Diagnostics of Selected Variables Regressed Individually (Model 5).*

Variable	Observations	Wald $\chi^2(1)$	p	Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>
Christian Prevalence (binary)	105,039	365.72	<.0001	.0463
Christian Citizenry (every 10%)	115,407	396.31	<.0001	.0464
Muslim Prevalence (binary)	109,776	103.95	<.0001	.0126
Muslim Citizenry (every 10%)	115,407	111.91	<.0001	.0131
Log CINC Ratio	115,527	0.92	.3385	.0001
Low Polity Score (Dyad)	103,353	153.77	<.0001	.0189
Polity Score (State 1)	109,076	107.85	<.0001	.0129
Defensive Allies	112,095	24.47	<.0001	.0029
Log Peace-Years	109,666	161.00	<.0001	.0502
Closest Contiguity	115,621	649.95	<.0001	.0761

The results of this table suggest that although religion certainly does not have the greatest explanatory power of all the variables tested, it certainly does not have the least either. The results also suggest that different religions influence the onset of armed conflict differently.

A few caveats to this study are in order. First, I make no claim that the effect of any religion remains constant over time. It is certainly possible, even probable, that the effects of the three religions studied here were different 500 years ago, and different again 1000 years ago. However, until sufficient data on armed conflict onsets and control variables during those time periods are available, as well as the practices of states and state-like entities outside the European/Westphalian state systems, the effects of any state-level characteristics—including religion—would be exceedingly difficult to test empirically. In addition, I make no claim that the effect of religion overall today has the same strength as that of religion overall even 200 years ago. An implicit assumption of this article has been that the behavior of states is influenced by *secular* norms as well, including *jus ad bellum* in international law. If states generally comply with *jus ad bellum* as the legal field claims they do (Henkin 1979: 47; Chayes & Chayes 1995), and if *jus ad bellum* were highly permissive (as it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), then we could expect states to use force more often than during a period in which *jus ad bellum* is highly restrictive (as it is today). This phenomenon may affect states of all religions.

Finally, I submit that the subfield of security studies has been too slow to acknowledge (or perhaps, re-acknowledge) the role of religion in generating outcomes. Over the last few decades we have uncovered and studied a variety of state characteristics believed to generate international outcomes—and even if their actual effects are contested, the utility of examining those characteristics does not appear to be widely disputed. Similarly, it would seem to behoove the field to devote more attention to the role of religion, beyond inter-religious and/or civil conflict, and beyond conflicts with overtly religious objectives.

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## ХРИШЋАНСКА И МУСЛИМАНСКА ПОПУЛАЦИЈА И ПРВА УПОТРЕБА СИЛЕ ОД СТРАНЕ ДРЖАВЕ 1946 – 2001

### Резиме

Разне карактеристике држава утичу на њихову склоност ка оружаним сукобима, укључујући моћ, тип режима, богатство, економску снагу (као додатак дијадичним карактеристикама диференцијације моћи, савезима, близине и учењу мировног процеса). У поређењу са овим, религија је карактеристика која се није истраживала. Религија успоставља норме и етику за употребу силе исто као што то раде секуларне идеологије. Војна етика наметнута од стране религије утиче на склоности ка војним сукобима држава чији грађани и вођство припадају овим религијама. Да ли ће религија повећати или смањити ове склоности зависи од тога колико су норме попустљиве или рестриктивне. Аутор показује емпиријски ефекат ових војних етика заснованих на религији на државне склоности да иницирају војни сукоб против других држава. Хришћанска ратна етика је више рестриктивна и хришћанска популација је негативно повезана са државним склоностима за употребу силе. Исламска ратна етика је више попустљива и муслиманска популација је позитивно повезана. Ефекат религије је често јак и статистички важан, чак и након увођења конвенционалне контроле.

**Кључне речи:** прва употреба силе, хришћанство, ислам, ратна етика, популација

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