Religion and Globalisation: Bringing Anthropology and International Relations together in the study of religious-political trans-national movements.

Introduction
The central aim of this article is to show that inclusion of the anthropological perspective alongside other micro approaches has more of a contribution, than currently realised, to bring to International Relation’s global analysis of religious-political trans-national movements. This article acknowledges from the outset the enormous contributions made to micro analysis of globalisation from within other social science disciplines. Most notably Sociology and the Study of Religion have been engaging with globalisation for some time. Beyer’s (1994) work is much cited in discussions on religion and globalisation. Sociologists seek to understand the intersections between globalisation and religion. How each have impacted on the creation of new boundaries that in turn impact on new patterns of social formation and relationships (Beyer and Beaman 2007, Hopkins, Lorentzen, Mendieta 2002, Tehanian and Lum 2006). Scholars from within the study of religion often take a comparative approach examining the impact of globalisation on religious traditions. Cross-culturally this research includes consideration of religion’s role in peace keeping efforts (Hopkins, Lorentzen and Mendita 2002). Alternatively scholars will focus on a particular tradition often combing history, sociology and religion to document the rise of social, political movements within that religion (Coleman 2000, Warburg, Hvithamar and Wasmind 2005). Sociologists of religion have also paid close attention to the impact of globalisation on issues of gender and religion (Elliott 2007).

By contrast Anthropology has been relatively slow to stake ground in this important contemporary area of research. This article aims to illustrate the contribution the anthropological lens can bring to work on religion and globalisation. The article will focus on developing a partnership between the macro discipline of International Relations and Anthropology. Anthropologists make a valuable contribution to research on religion and globalisation because
they commonly study communities and cultures that display a strong religious identity. This focus contrasts against International Relations scholars whose focus is at the level of macro relations. The inclusion of religion into the frame of IR research is limited largely to the study of religion as a global force founding political-religious trans-national movements. Anthropologists’ present religion not as exceptional phenomena but as one deeply embedded in the lives of the people they study. Religion as a category in ethnographic research is used to understand the way in which religion is lived and experienced daily by people. This article closely examines how religion is studied by anthropologists and shows the value of this work for IR scholars.

I believe a dialogue between anthropologists and IR scholars could forge an interesting and useful analytical frame because micro analysis conducted by anthropologists could fill some of the gaps left by the macro focused work of IR scholars. Firstly, IR scholars who engage with religion recognise it as a permanent global force but find it hard to say ‘why’ this might be. Macro focused work is insightful in mapping and commentating on global patterns and relations but answering ‘why’ these patterns/relations form needs micro research. Ethnographic research conducted by anthropologists of religion could contribute more to the venture of other social sciences that seeks to produce answers to global questions from within the micro areas of people’s lives. Anthropologists argue that religion is fundamental in shaping how adherents relate to and understand the world. It is this link between belief and behaviour that is the primary focus for anthropologists. Anthropology is essentially the study of human behaviour. Ethnographic research looks to document how people relate to their world and how they respond to internal and external changes. Religion has been a popular category of analysis for anthropologists because it is within sacred, ritual spaces that adherents often seek answers to their problems and concerns. Furthermore, for those who possess a strong faith, religion is a vital aspect of their identity, one they seek to project in all spheres of their lives. The embeddedness of religion in the lives of adherents explains its endurance as a global force. If IR scholars were to look into anthropology of religion their macro
analysis could produce more answers to the question; why has religion not been replaced by secularism?

The second question a dual IR/anthropological perspective could provide more answers to; why is religion so prominent in the construction and rise of political trans-national movements? The personal, emotional dimension of religious actions and spaces allow those that study them to identify feelings and experiences that may turn into clear defiant actions. Those who study trans-national movements recognise that the motivation for individual membership is likely to relate to their religious identity and life experiences. Religion functions in two ways; firstly the growth of a movement is linked to the construction of a religious identity that reflects and empathises with the experiences of its members. This identity may involve the manipulation of history and/or reinterpretation of religious discourses in order to package itself in a manner that resonates with adherents. Secondly, religion operates at a private personal level. Sacred spaces create a safe environment within which an adherent can communicate with the divine. Personal feelings are expressed here that may not be articulated in any other sphere of life and actions determined. Pratt (2003) takes an anthropological approach showing how political movements begin with the formation of a specific discourse that becomes emotionally charged drawing in a bigger membership. Religion provides emotional and spiritual dimensions to adherents’ lives. The use of religious narratives to tap into these personal experiences provides a strong base from which political identities and movements can be built. However, this process of building authoritative narratives about the world also acts to exclude groups. For example, anthropologists who employ a gendered perspective show how women are particularly vulnerable to marginalisation within political and social movements (Leach and Scoones 2007, Meyer and Staggenborg 1996, Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998). This process of exclusion as well as inclusion is central to how religion is enacted, interpreted and lived. It highlights the need to view religion and power as inextricably linked. Narratives change as the world they try and
make sense of alters. Since trans-national movements are founded on narratives about how the world is and how it should be, it is likely that religion will unite those who share the narrative but will exclude those who do not or only partially see their experiences in it. Anthropological material on the Liberation Theology and Hindu Nationalist movements shows that this process of marginalisation also occurs within movements isolating those members that may at the start support the narrative but later find their needs are not being met.

Anthropology has a further contribution to make to IR. According to Bentham (1991) and Edelman and Haugerud (2005) the anthropological critique of power should be incorporated more widely into discussion on globalisation. Anthropologists, as shown in the literature cited above on gender and trans-national movements, use their micro focus to seek out voices that are usually hidden from view and audibility by macro focused studies. This perspective highlights how global processes produce marginalising effects at the local level. It also reveals how people display resourcefulness in how they respond to repressive situations. For adherents, religion is an important part of the process by which they make sense of change and decide on the best course of action.

In short this article will argue that IR scholars should embrace the critique anthropologists apply in analysing global power relations raising the profile of marginalised voices. A dialogue between IR scholars and anthropologists could also produce a dual application of the category ‘religion’, one that recognises the collective and personal ways non-western adherents turn to religion to make sense of their world.

This article begins by reviewing IR literature on religious-political trans-national movements. The critical analysis of this material acknowledges the important contribution it makes whilst also highlighting the understandable gaps/questions left unanswered by it. The second section offers a more detailed review of the work of anthropologists of religion, looking at their treatment of the sacred and divine spheres. The last section will give examples of trans-national political movements that help to highlight what can be gained by bringing the anthropological perspective into IR debates on religion and globalisation.
Liberation Theology Movement and the Hindu Nationalist Movement will be given as examples.

1. International Relations and Political-religious trans-national movements
IR scholars study the macro level operational structures of political-religious trans-national movements. Research shows how religion firmly embeds itself into the structures of the movement. However, a movement’s growth is determined largely by how well it taps into processes of globalisation. Haynes (2006, 1999, 1998, 1993) believes globalisation has made the rise of trans-national religious-political organisations and movements possible. He highlights that trans-national terror groups such as al-Qaeda are able to take advantage of the global communications network. Haynes (2006, 1999, 1998, 1993) stresses that religion should remain a lens through which to view shifts in global relations specifically power relations. He argues that religion manifests itself globally in a variety of ways each of which carries influence in shaping the world. For example religious fundamentalism has become a means of exercising power; furthermore religious power is now a means for conflict resolution and peace-building. The benefit of religion in peace building efforts was recognised by the World Bank through funding the world faith dialogues programme (www.wfdd.org.uk). In effect globalisation has drawn more and more of us into extensive networks and new layers of regional/global governance. Through joining these networks individuals are able to express their feelings about aspects of globalisation. The collective weight of these views creates a global civil society capable of challenging hegemonic discourses on a number of issues ranging from human rights to poverty alleviation (Howell and Pearce 2002). Religion provides a unifying platform out from which adherents can project their worldview. Fox (2001) argues that the inclusion of religion in IR research is long overdue, but he sees it as just one more dimension alongside politics and economics that leads to the formation of trans-national movements. Fox misses the extent to which religion encompasses and enacts political and economic processes and influences peoples’ reactions to globalisation.
This is acknowledged in the work of Thomas who calls for greater inter-disciplinary engagement over the role of religion in shaping the world. His analysis of the rise of religious movements acknowledges that ‘religion often helps to constitute the very content of a social movement’s identity, and religious values, practices, traditions, and institutions really do shape their struggles, encourage mobilization, and influence their type of social or political action.’(2005:23) Thomas’s inter-disciplinary vision combines international relations, economics, religious studies, sociology of religion and theology. His work asks for deeper debate within IR over what it means to be religious and what implications the beliefs of each individual have for global processes of development. As already argued in this article the anthropological perspective has much to offer this venture as it seeks to get to the core of how religion shapes human responses to the world. Anthropology could contribute further working alongside other micro disciplines working to build an analytical bridge. This bridge links the macro impact of religion in shaping the identity of trans-national movements and the experiential aspect of religion which motivates the actions of individuals. Anthropologists could help provide more answers to the question; what are the specific experiences that provoke adherents to take their feelings to a global stage? Anthropology could also further the understanding of the dual function religion plays as both the site for the personal expression of marginalisation and powerlessness whilst also functioning as the counter platform for the pursuit of power.

This frame could make a useful contribution not least because what is intentionally absent from macro focused literature is an appreciation of how resistance is experienced and enacted by individuals, often by those marginalised by structures of power. Juergensmeyer (2005) argues that radical ideologies have become the vehicles of rebellions against authority linked to social, cultural and political grievances. However, these ideologies are shaped by people’s everyday experiences of living with marginalisation and injustice. Individual accounts of injustice and exclusion are vividly documented by anthropologists of religion. For example the themes of witchcraft, spirit
possession and shamanism are commonly studied in anthropology and often involve recording feelings of anxiety and concern over unwanted occurrences or traumatic experiences (Bowie 2000). These themes are categories of ethnographic analysis used by anthropologists to record how communities and individuals explain shifts in the status quo. Religious figures such as shamans are turned to for help in taming forces of change that disturb the desired rhythm of life (Brain 1993, Gessler 1995, Kamat 2004, Kendall 1985, Kramer 1993). Work on spirit possession shows that distress and resistance are often articulated through the act of being possessed by a spirit (Csordas 1994, Feiderman 1985, Lambek 1993, Legerwerf 1987, Masquelier 1994, Rekdal 1999). Radical ideas are expressed and explored during the assumed safety of a trance state as the ideas voiced can be blamed on external forces rather than the individual they embody (Geschiere and Cyprian 1994, Janzen 1992, Manji 2003, Marwick 1982, Pool 1994, Rekdal 1999, Swantz 1995). Similarly religious transnational movements represent spaces within which individuals are encouraged to vent their anger and frustrations at the forces that oppress them. At the micro level adherents create physical spaces for the expression of their faith. Global and national movements must offer the individual opportunities to affirm their religious identities through the expression of the core values that shape their perceptions of the world. Trans-national movements magnify beliefs and grievances expressed at a local level. A combined micro/macro approach highlights how religion acts as the vehicle through which these feelings find themselves embedded into the structures of trans-national movements.

Haynes states: ‘there is a growing awareness in international research of the importance of religion as a trans-national actor in the context of globalisation.’(11) This viewpoint has a growing body of evidence behind it. Studies of international movements conducted within IR and anthropological accounts of the role of religion in shaping individual and community identities provide convincing evidence that religion is a permanent force in the world today. However, these two discourses are as yet unlinked by a single analytical thread.
2. Anthropology of Religion

So where/how does religion interface with globalisation? ‘Religion’ entails dialogue with a sacred image or images or with a notion of the divine. This dialogue then directs and motives peoples’ actions and perceptions of the world around them. According to theorists of globalisation it is penetrating virtually all areas of the globe, pushing change in even the most remote areas. It is likely that those with religious beliefs will respond to and make sense of this change through their religion. At a macro level this is clear in the rise of global religious movements such as Pentecostalism and fundamentalist religions. At a local level too, individuals will privately and collectively articulate and understand change working through their responses to it within a religious domain. Religion has been studied at a local level in the sub discipline of anthropology of religion. Anthropologists such as Aigbe (1993), Angro (2004), Akinnasi (1995), Barber (1981), Bennett (1996), Knauf (1996), Gold (1989), Swantz (1995, 1990), Lambek (1993), Gottlieb (1992), Hirschkind (2001), James (1988, 1995) highlight religion as a source of beliefs and values that structure everyday life. Literature within the anthropology of religion shows religion to encompass more than faith in a God. Religion is also a space that people turn to for an understanding of the world and their place within it. Anthropologists of religion look at how religious beliefs, specifically a notion of the sacred, inform and determine the shape of everyday life.

There has been a notable recent output of edited volumes focusing on the link between anthropology and religion (Angro, 2004; Bowen, 2002; Bowie, 2000; Crapo, 2003; Glaizer, 2003; Hicks, 2002; Lambek, 2002; Scupin, 1999; Whitehouse and Laiulaw, 2004). These texts stress the fluidity of the category religion and urge scholars to move away from viewing religion purely through a western Judaeo-Christian lens. The amount of time devoted in these texts to exploring what religion means reveals an absence in IR literature on religion. IR scholars do not spend much time critically engaging with the term ‘religion’. Mandir (2007) is directly critical of Juergensmeyer (2005) whose usage of both the terms ‘religion’ and ‘power’ reflect a narrow view of religion. Religion is
viewed by Juergensmeyer simply as a reactionary force setting itself in opposition to secular global process of change. Mandir writing specifically about Indian religions, wants to see religion reclaimed from its colonial roots. If this does not happen, Mandir warns, non-western adherents will consistently be forced to articulate and express their epistemological perspectives through a limited western derived concept of religion. A fluid understanding of religiosity more accurately portrays the freer more responsive way in which Indians use religious spaces to negotiate with the rest of the world on their terms.

In the introductory statements of the key anthropology of religion texts cited above religion is placed at the heart of life not only in terms of its impact on human relations, politics, economics and cultural identity, but also in regard to its role in shaping world views and beliefs. Religion is understood as providing beliefs relating to a spiritual or supernatural sphere. The source of these beliefs is a concept of the sacred. The sacred origins of ideas and values ensure that they possess an authority that restricts the degree to which they are challenged. The sacred is experienced by the believer and is often described in terms of a relationship with a divine being or spirit. Claims to understand the sacred give a religious group and/or leader legitimacy; it therefore follows that the leadership of a trans-national movement must show their members they have a close relationship with the divine by proving that the sacred has directly inspired their actions. The role of religious leadership in the formation of the Hindu Nationalist movement is seen in McKean’s (1996) ethnographic research reviewed in section three.

Anthropologists regard religion as fundamentally an experiential concept, rather than one that can be understood through mapping out a series of behaviours. Bowie (2000) defines religion in her overview text on religion and anthropology in terms of a supernatural realm to which people look for explanations for why and how human life came to be. Bowie describes religion as the arena through which spiritual and practical guidance is offered to people. Asad (1993) links the personal dimension of religion to the formation of national power bases. He is concerned with how power and discipline impact on people’s
everyday lives. Asad highlights the links between religion and power. He argues that religious symbols are not only intimately linked to social life but also support or oppose the dominant political power. His views resonate with those scholars positioned at a macro level. For example Reychler and Paffenholz (2000) argue that faith often presents itself as a soft power shaping discourses that describe how the world should be, driving people to act according to that vision.

Anthropologists such as Asad support this view claiming that religion shapes how people perceive their role in life thus influencing actions. Although Asad does not write specifically about trans-national movements his work offers explanations as to how and why religion is such a pervasive element in the formation of trans-national movements. Religion becomes the authoritative platform on which trans-national movements are built. Asad acknowledges that religious beliefs and practices are not static but change with history. The authority of religion is ensured through the adaptation of beliefs and practices, in order to suit the needs of a new emerging order. His work offers ethnographic historical evidence to support scholars from IR who argue that religion has not and is not likely to subside as globalisation persists. But also pinpoints a concept of authority at the heart of religion which allows for the assertion of counter hegemonies. Adherents give authority to those religious worldviews that reflect their cultural identity whilst also offer explanations and direction at times of crisis. In other words adherents seek out authoritative voices from within their own tradition that seem to empathise with their experiences. Religious movements must adapt their beliefs to reflect the concerns and anxieties of their ‘target’ membership. It is this ability to adapt that determines a movement’s pervasiveness.

This article will now consider more closely what anthropology can offer our understanding of how religion impacts on the formation of trans-national movements. Anthropologists who work on religion as a collective body, seek to understand how people view their world, how they respond to changes from outside, and the changes individuals and communities push for from within. Primary evidence can be found in ethnographic literature to support macro level views that marginalisation and exclusion are common experiences that result in a
person joining a movement. Movements offer the powerless the opportunity to challenge the authority of others. For example anthropological literature on the theme of politics and religious identity focuses on the emergence of militant or radical religious identities. Most of the literature argues that these identities are formed as political and emotional reactions to globalisation, which is blamed for causing marginalisation (Ranger 1993, Shaharaw and Canfield, 1984, Hefner 1998, Van der Veer, 1996). These scholars, like Asad, argue that a historical approach should be adopted in ethnographic research in order to give a sense of how communities are responding to the impact of globalisation. Other (Contusrs, 1989; Cunningham, 2000; James; 1995) anthropologists of religion show that religious subjectivities often form the platform for political mobilisation and result in the prominence of certain national and ethnic identities as they reaction to change.

3. Two Examples
a. Liberation Theology Movement
Liberation theology is a good example of how this analytical link between IR and anthropology could operate. Liberation theology enabled Catholics to bring their personal agendas for change to the attention of trans-national religious actors demanding religious institutions represent and campaign for social justice. This is documented in Bruneau’s (1980) article which looks at the impact of local, poor Catholic communities in Latin America on Catholic teachings of social justice for the poor. In other words the poor of Latin America demanded that their religious leaders took up their cause.1 Clearly the movement itself was shaped by feelings experienced at a local level (Beyer 1994). A concept of social justice magnified these experiences onto the national and then global stage. IR scholars and sociologists tend to focus in on the success of the movement in creating an international platform from which to propound its message of social justice. A network of Catholic activists and organisations sprung up all determined to

achieve greater equality for the poor. Sociologists such as Beyer (1994), Hopkins, Lorentzen and Mendieta (2002) and IR scholars such as Haynes (1998) combine history, politics and sociology in their accounts of how Catholicism was forced to create the platform for this now trans-national movement. Unlike many IR scholars Haynes acknowledges that religion operates publicly and privately in the lives of adherents. He goes on to argue that the success of a movement depends in part on its ability to preserve the private, spiritual space within its public institutional structures. It is here that Anthropological studies can make more of a contribution to IR. As already argued in the previous section anthropologists who study religion are concerned to link these two aspects of religion by understanding how it is lived. In the context of liberation theology anthropologists can offer a critical picture of how well the institutional aspect of the movement responds to the needs and experiences of local Catholic communities. In doing this anthropology can contribute to the work of IR scholars such as Haynes who allude to the importance of the micro, private sphere of religion but whose discipline base does not stretch this far.

Norget (1999) presents her extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Oaxaca, Mexico showing on the one hand how socio-economic class distinctions affect religious practice. She also shows how resilient and adaptable Catholicism has been in reflecting the competing needs and experiences brought about by these divisions. Catholicism has helped people negotiate modernity and marginalisation. Norget also, as Bentham urges anthropologists to do, applies an anthropological critique questioning how effective the movement is in bringing the transformations it promises. Catholic activism has increasingly been drawn into a neo liberal approach cooperating with multinationals who release funds for micro projects in poor Catholic communities but then command influence implanting a secular agenda. The impact of this macro power relation makes Catholic organisations less able to respond to local needs (Morse and McNamara. 2006). This anthropological perspective highlights the tensions between the macro and micro in the formation and growth of this trans-national movement. Religion on the one hand operates effectively at the local level, providing a personal space
for reflection and also in forming a platform for people to share their collective experiences of marginalisation. However, religious movements have to exist alongside powerful secular global forces that hold the financial resources needed to realise the demands of the poor (Edelman and Haugerud 2005). In return multi nationals expect loyal commitment to neo-liberalism which many community level Catholic activists hold responsible for the inequalities suffered by rural people.

The benefits of taking a critical ethnographic approach can be seen in the work of Burdick (1991) and could be of use to Haynes in further appreciating the importance of the personal aspect of religion he acknowledges. Burdick’s micro study of a Brazilian town questions the success of liberation theology in addressing local needs. He makes audible the voices of those groups marginalised by the movement’s agenda, low class women, youths and ethnic minorities. Instead the movement aligns itself with more affluent groupings. Religion remains a vital part of the lives of marginalised groups Burdick studies, but instead traditional concepts of the sacred are used to express their continued frustrations at being excluded from any political platform.

Anthropological material highlights that as religious movements rise and fall religion remains a vital part of the lives of marginalised groups. Despite the growth of modernity and globalisation traditional concepts of the sacred are still used to express frustrations at being denied a political voice. Other ethnographies also look at how struggles over differences (class and gender) acknowledged in religious spaces give way to politically driven identities (Bloch, 1986; Scott; 1990). Contusrs (1989), Hale (1994) and Imam (1994) have produced research that locates new radical religious identities that are emerging as a result of social marginalisation on the basis of class and gender. These identities do not mark a move away from traditional concepts of the sacred but show the inability of existing trans-national movements to respond to local needs which forces people to create their own platforms. These anthropological studies reinforce Asad’s claim that if a movement is to be successful it must adapt to the changing needs and demands of its members. Clearly the Catholic Church’s
failure to respond to the needs of some marginalised groups has resulted in them turning away from the church and also a Catholic identity.

Macro and micro studies of the liberation theology movement show how religion provides an active platform and energy that drives social, political and economic change. The global endurance of this religious movement is due to the way in which religion has been harnesses as a resource for activism. But the anthropological accounts that offer personal, face to face accounts of the lives of poor Catholic communities reveal a stark contradiction. The movement was created to respond to the marginalised, yet the global growth of the movement seems to have reduced it ability to maintain close responsive local relationships with the very people it sought to support. In these critical ethnographic studies the negative, damaging effects of globalisation can be seen.

b. Hindu Nationalism
IR scholars focus on religion and Hindu nationalism at the level of public discourse. Van der Veer (1994) in his ethnographic research looks at the historical construction of Hindu and Muslim identities in India and the transformation of these identities in the colonial and post-colonial periods, in the context of nationalism. His central focus recognises religion’s dual function in peoples’ lives. His analysis shows the link between private, more intimate religious spaces and the public religious discourse. Here is the main point of departure with IR. IR scholars tend to do one of two things either they focus on defining ‘Nationalism’ and use religion as a dimension of it (Chiriyankandanath 1994, Mitras and Rothermund 1997, Ferguson and Jones 2002, Jaffrelot and Blom Hansen 2004). Or, as in the case of Kinnvall (2006), they combine religion and nationalism to produce an analytical frame that focuses on understanding a particular aspect of the movement. Kinnvall focuses on understanding the insecurities people feel at the pace of global change. In other words find a reason for the rise of the trans-national movement. In short IR scholars place emphasis on the movement and how it uses religion. Anthropologists have a contribution to
make to this work by revealing the complexities and diversity of religion and how it impacts on people’s lives.

Van der Veer’s argument is that religious identity is constructed through ritual discourse and practice that begins at the level of individual worship. Nationalist discourse must step into these spaces if it is to utilise the insecurities experienced by adherents that can then be used to build an ideology attractive to them. Anthropologists seek to emphasise this internal diversity and the impact it has on the social and political life of India (Nirad 2003, Gellner 2001, Biardeau 1994). A focus on ritual respects this diversity whilst enabling religion to be appreciated as a central dimension in the rise of nationalism.

The IR material cited above views nationalism largely as the vehicle through which people gain security and control over their lives. Hindu nationalism manipulates religious discourses to achieve this. Religion is often presented as a means to gain control and capture people’s minds for the purpose of achieving a political goal. However religion is also a space within which people respond to their world. Van der Veer, sharing Haynes view discussed in the previous section, shows how essential it is for any movement to reach into these spaces if it is to have a lasting presence.

A nationalist community is founded through a common religious identity. The public discourse stresses unity between all members which, it is claimed is achieved despite caste and class differences. As material in relation to Liberation Theology revealed, an anthropological perspective is able to contest this impression of unity by uncovering the experiences of those excluded by the ‘community’ (Burdick 1991, Norget 1999). The critical anthropological view states that the creation of discourse requires an authoritative voice that normalises a particular identity. Those who do not fit will find themselves excluded by the internal hierarchy this process of identity making results in.

At the level of public discourse Van der Veer’s work supports and reiterates much of what IR scholars record. Van der Veer’s work, as with many IR scholars working on this topic, concentrates on a case study of conflict over the Hindu temple burning at Ayodhya in 1984. The temple was largely rebuilt with
labour and money from Hindus outside India. The focus provided by the temple reconstruction allowed Hindus around the globe to unify behind a strong national identity and reconnect with their traditional culture. This in turn led to a re-imagining of that past.

The point of departure in Van der Veer’s work comes in his inclusion of a micro focus which he believes must be used to appreciate how religion has interfaced in the construction of Hindu Nationalism. In bringing into view the impact of micro religious spaces he shows how religion can and should form a more central part of the analysis IR scholars give to the rise of religious-political trans-national movements. Van der Veer shows how the roots of the movement lie in the personal ritual spaces of individual Hindus. Within Hindu practice rituals are central in communicating concepts of personhood. The sacred spaces within which rituals are enacted make them emotive and deeply personal. The physical bodily involvement of a person’s whole self in the expression of ritual devotion makes these religious spaces hugely important in the lives of adherents. Ritual actions do not change but the social spaces within which they are performed do. Different meanings and experiences will be brought to an adherent’s ritual performance. In other words the adherent will bring into the ritual space the problems and concerns of the time. As the outside world changes rituals maintain a reassuring pattern through which these external events and new ideas can be processed. When conflicts erupt and adherents feel their world threatened political groups can influence the interpretations people make of these changes. As Van der Veer states: ‘by engaging people’s consciousness of their world and their personhood, nationalist ideology attains motivating power . . . Ritual can thus be seen as a form of communication through which a person discovers his identity and the significance of his actions. It works largely by defining not only the self but also the ‘other’” (1994: 84) Both Muslim and Hindu religions incorporate narratives of hostility in which evil is violently defeated so that cosmological order can be restored. Nationalist discourses use ritual communication to direct the adherent towards the belief that violent actions are needed to defeat the oppressive actions of the ‘other’.
Ethnographic research conducted by McKean (1998) identifies a religious form of patriarchal power as integral to the successful manipulation of religious discourse by Hindu Nationalists. Her gendered perspective could help IR research that points to how such movements marginalise as well as support agency. She shows how the VHP utilise the ‘soft power’ of Gurus to gain supporters. The ethnographic approach of McKean highlights the entrenched patriarchal view of these gurus which has helped to embed gendered notions of the feminine in the nationalist discourse. Indian Nationalism relies on patriarchal symbols of the female body. Submissive images of femininity represent the honour of the Indian nation symbolically projected through the concept of ‘Mother India’. Dis-harmony is often blamed on destructive feminine forces like Kali and Durga (see Kinsley 1987). Male authority is deemed necessary to restore balance and harmony to society. Her gendered analysis of religion points to the marginalisation of women from the process of creating the discourse which in turn indicates that women within the movement may find it hard for their specific interests/needs to be meet. This view parallels with the findings of Burdick (1991) in relation the Liberation Theology movement. McKean conducted extensive ethnographic interviews with Gurus and Sadhus (religious and spiritual leaders and teachers) whose religious teachings reflected the orthodox narrative projected by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). Members of the VHP recognised the useful role Gurus and Sadhus could fulfil utilising their hold over adherents to assert a social power directing and influencing how people perceive of and act in the world around them. Sadhus and Gurus acquire their status by claiming a close relationship with the divine. This relationship is often displayed by Sadhus through the performance of physical feats of endurance which adherents take as signs of a divine connection. As a result these religious figures are awarded religious authority and their teachings are heard and endorsed by those who accept their sacred identity. The political significance of such figures cannot be seen in McKean’s work, what she shows is the need to view religion as culturally relative and multifaceted. Religion will appear and be used by political movements in different ways to varying effect. Her work also shows how
personal religious identities and experiences become translated into political actions but not without a process through which religious beliefs become rein interpreted through a political frame. Somewhere in the process religious beliefs and convictions conflate with political objectives and are magnified and encapsulate within a global, trans-national movement.

For van der Veer (1994) and Pratt (2003) the growth of a religious-political movement is its ability to bring together a political discourse with the emotive dimension of religion to construct a strong identity among its members. In this micro focused literature links are made between local level experiences of global processes of change and the emergence of national and trans-national platforms through which these experiences become magnified. Religion is the space that allows people to acknowledge their views and feelings about what is going on in their lives. It then becomes the mechanism through which these individuals act to control processes of change. A common world view secures a connection between members of an organisation. Global technologies allow these networks to practically operate to achieve shared goals.

As the anthropological material on the Liberation Theology and Hindu Nationalist movements reveals, it is unlikely that trans-national religious movements succeed in fully addressing feelings of marginalisation. In other words trans-national movements are likely to possess internal hierarchies and divisions hidden from site at a macro level. The intersection of international relations and anthropology could bring to vision the complete journey from grass roots experiences of marginalisation to membership of trans-national movements to the possibility of the individual experiencing further exclusion once faced with a new set of power relations from within the very organisation that claims to represent his/her interests.

**Conclusion**

The objective of this article was to highlight the contributions to the debate on religion and globalisation made by two different bodies of literature and to argue
for these approaches to intersect. Multi-disciplinary research already offers a comprehensive picture of how globalisation and religion interface in the formation of trans-national movements. However, anthropology has not made a prominent contribution to this debate.

The anthropological perspective could further enhance the micro work of scholars from sociology and the study of religion developing the dialogue between researchers who position themselves at the macro or micro level. I have identified two key questions ethnographic research could help to answer. Firstly; why has religion remained such a prominent force in the world today? Secondly, why is religion such a central element in the formation of so many trans-national political movements? Scholars within IR could use anthropological studies to highlight how local people react to processes of change that challenge their status quo. These studies show how religion impacts at a personal, emotional level and also operates as a vehicle through which resistance can be mounted. IR scholars could use this material in their analysis producing an even more dynamic picture of globalisation as a negotiated set of processes. One in which all actors, to varying degrees, have a stake in determining its cause and direction. As I have shown in my two examples of the Liberation Theology Movement and the Hindu Nationalist Movement, power and religion interface at all levels of a political movement. Religious narratives and even rituals are manipulated and reinterpreted by movement leaders in order to create a common, popular identity that supports their agenda. However, those who feel marginalised by this discourse may turn to religion to express these feelings and consider what strategies of resistance they can employ. Combining anthropology with IR leaves no doubt that concepts of power and authority are central to the formation of a successful movement but rely heavily on a claim to ‘know’ the sacred. In other words religious insight must be claimed if the political cause of a movement is to achieve a growing membership. Additionally, because religion is experienced at a personal level, leaders must influence the intimate spaces within which adherents express their spirituality. Van der Veer’s work shows how this has been achieved by Hindu nationalists by reaching into the spaces where
private rituals are performed. IR scholars show how movements can use global technologies to extend their claim to knowledge beyond their community and cultural of origin. A chain of processes and events are more clearly revealed through the intersection of IR and anthropology. The strengthening of the relationship between these two disciplines combined with other micro disciplines could make even more important links between global hegemonic processes and structures and peoples lives. Making audible individual responses to globalisation and highlighting platforms that people create for themselves to articulate dissent. Furthermore, activists could use this work to shape their responses to these voices by supporting the direction of change demanded by them. Finally ethnographic research shows that religion is a vital part of many peoples' lives which is not likely to diminish, not least because it is from religion that many people gain a sense of their world and place within it.

References


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