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Francis Davis

To cite this article: Francis Davis (2022) Diplomatic Leadership Development after the “Weaponization of Everything”: Approaching Religion or Belief as a Professional Competence, *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 20:4, 68-79, DOI: [10.1080/15570274.2022.2139506](https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2022.2139506)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2022.2139506>



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Published online: 13 Dec 2022.



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DIPLOMATIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AFTER THE “WEAPONIZATION OF EVERYTHING”: APPROACHING RELIGION OR BELIEF AS A PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

By Francis Davis

In this article, I will describe aspects of extended work to develop religion for international engagement training for those working in international affairs and diplomacy. This article draws on work with five government departments—including two foreign ministries—and nine international non-governmental organizations in seven countries and on four continents. Where necessary participating organizations and persons have been anonymized to protect their identities.

First, I turn to the matter of “security” and its extension from and to religion as modern diplomacy has come to be characterized by the “weaponization of everything” (Galleotti 2022). Second, I describe new education and research work which has shed initial fresh light on the complexity of—and opportunity to devise—manageable paradigms of learning for those engaged fulltime in global politics and policy.

Finally, and drawing from the research summarized here I propose a move away from an

Abstract: This article describes new education and research work with government departments and major NGOs to develop fresh approaches and paradigms of leadership learning about religion and security for those engaged full time in global politics, diplomacy, and policy. Drawing from research in seven countries, it proposes a move away from an embrace of specialist “religious literacy” education advocated by high-profile religious actors. Instead, this article proposes the opportunity for leadership development which assesses religion or belief as a generic evidence-based *core professional diplomatic competence* worthy of serious attention no more nor less important than any other professional field. As a first step in that goal, it delineates a new open-source tool entitled the *Religion for International Engagement Matrix* and describes its positive reception when trialed, including with two foreign ministries.

Keywords: religious literacy, religious engagement, security, diplomacy, professional competence, NGOs, development

embrace of specialist “religious literacy” education advocated by high-profile religious actors. Instead, I propose the need for leadership development that assesses religion or belief as a generic evidence-based *core professional diplomatic competence* worthy of serious attention like any other professional field.

Bringing Religion Back In: The Expansion and Complexity of Security

“Security” as a concept and field of interlocking diplomatic, national, and military endeavor has long been dominated by military and intelligence forces but also contested (Hughes and Lai 2011). On the one hand, there have been sustained attempts to challenge narrower definitions of security’s scope with the presentation of a search for capability and “human security,” often linked to debates regarding aid or global investment (Thomas 1987). On the other hand, empirical work in political anthropology and elite policy-making studies have shed new light on what might truly be “sovereign,” have “power,” or function as a “security driver” when, for example, weak states and domestic nationalisms dilute the salience of rational actor theories, the clarity of “borders,” or the making of policy choices (Migdal 1988, 2004; Levine 1994).

In turn, between the dominance of normative security perspectives and their dilution through empirical studies and lived experience, there has emerged a growing realization that a wide range of international actors may not in the end have been entirely ordered by the demands of “states.” The ANC in exile and underground (Thomas 1987; Shubin 2017), the diversity of NGOs and terrorisms (Hopgood 2013; Richardson 2006), and the rise of neo-conservative networks (Stone and Denham 2004) are all examples of almost epistemic communities simultaneously within and beyond state, civil society, and market institutions, not to mention the cultural flows of crime, media, technology, and diaspora (Bales and Soodalter 2010; Appadurai 1996).

Within, across, and beyond such patterns of flux, “religion” has increasingly struggled to be

seen as a salient variable. If “power” and “sovereign” actors were the crucial agents in the international system before the end of the Cold War, then religious ideas could be downplayed or only acknowledged as expressive of “exhortation” (Hanson 2014). Where East-West ideological tensions were perceived to be the main ordering principles of international affairs, Islam could be ignored and other religious assets and control of land or resources remain out of sight (Davis 2022). Modernization and secularization theories—at least in the West—had claimed to have washed such questions away with the decline of Christianity and other religions being one of their certain outcomes (Spalek and Imtoul 2007).

Even post 9/11 this led to a focus on “deradicalizing” Islamic “ideas” rather than detailed empirical attention, for example, to the differences in the religiously articulated political bases, resources, and reach of Iran’s revolution, Saudi’s ruling families, Burkina Faso’s commercial classes, and Indonesia and Malaysia rising within ASEAN (Maika 2019; Yahuda 2003).

No wonder Christian mobilizations—as contrasting as those that supported Zambia’s President Chiluba, were active in planning and operationalization of genocide in Rwanda, defended Darfur’s minorities, and targeted China—have perplexed and challenged (Gifford 1998; Longman 2010; Power 2010). It is unsurprising that France at times crackled with elite confusion in its encounters with the religious diversities of the Minsk Group and its post-colonial relations with North Africa; nor that China might deny that “dissident” Buddhists, Christians, and Uighur Muslims had anything to do with its internal security choices in Tibet, Hong Kong, and Xinjiang (Maika 2019; Davis 2022). Meanwhile, a good deal of religious advocacy—especially as the Evangelical Right grew in influence under President Trump—could too easily be delineated as time-limited, or exceptional, or distinctively of one faith group or another (Hopgood 2013).

Religion, it could be said, was being brought back by design, by accident, by populism, and by sheer demographics into human rights, military, diaspora, aid, and local and international politics

—to every realm of “security.” However, it seemed enduringly considered in the great part by Western policymakers as entirely irrelevant and unworthy of research and leadership development. The surveys described below confirmed this view: As one diplomat interviewed observed, *if* religion was back, it was “at best a mistake,” but “also we have few other areas where a global social phenomenon is not routinely analyzed as part of our forward planning ... and this *must* be driving up risk.”

Frustrated with such stances, religious groups dealing with governments and modernizing NGOs enhanced their calls for training in “religious literacy” for policymakers (e.g. FCDO 2019). One UK cabinet minister I interviewed, a secularist, was sympathetic. He observed that he “could tell we were getting it wrong ... because of the feedback from the communities and the feeling in my political gut ... but I could not say how we were religiously illiterate ... because the government had no evidence base for its proposals and I did not understand the language from religious voices ... for they almost totally lacked credible policy content” (Cabinet Minister 2016).

While religious groups alleged “religious illiteracy” among policymakers then, what seemed also to be coming into sight was that the quality of the “policy literacy” of religious advocates did not reach professional standards either.

On what basis then could fresh approaches and training for both be established on common foundations to enable a shared search for effective leadership?

It is to describe an approach to that challenge that we now turn.

Which Evidence, What Training, and Whose Needs?

Each of the fourteen ministries and international non-governmental organizations I worked with had accepted either the need for forms of “religious literacy” training for their teams or had recognized that some aspect of their “religious engagement” was either not working or was being externally criticized.¹

In the former cases, the question asked was whether a gap in religious insight would in the long-term impact effectiveness of delivery or reduce support either from donors or voters. In the latter cases, external advocacy was shining light on questions and issues that internally had been omitted from decision-making or scarcely addressed in small silos of a department or an organization.

I undertook 3 surveys and over 100 stakeholder conversations, internally to those organizations and external to them, with a mind to identifying needs and preparing varieties of support. There is no space to describe full responses here—and in some cases, this would identify the organization. But across organizations and religious communities, key themes emerged that can be summarized into three substantive fields: I call these “prism,” “theological attachment,” and “empirical discounting.” In the next section, I present a small number of exemplar variables emerging from each.

Prism: Institutional Location and Mandate

A crucial factor in exploring which new training materials might be appropriate within the organizations surveyed seemed to be which department within it, and with what mandate, had commissioned the training on “religion.” Another factor was how each contrasting organizational unit viewed “religion” as a policy problem.

For example, when surveyed, Human Resources and protocol functions focused on “religion” as “beliefs,” “values,” “food,” “clothing,” “equalities,” and, sometimes, “the challenge of unconscious bias.” By contrast departments from policing, development, and military leadership training consistently began conversations with terms such as “social risk,” “extremism,” “radicalization,” and “crime” in relation to “religion.” As if merging the two prisms, interviewees reported that in one UK department of state, that upon HR receiving a request for more water taps in their prayer room from Muslim staff, a response was drafted from their “counter extremism” section on the grounds that the taps were “a Muslim question.”

Another government department, in designing its community interventions, had specifically aligned spending allocations to “risk” which was deemed to correlate exactly and generically to “Muslim headcount” in each locality irrespective of other factors in such a locality’s complementary social geographies. Here “religion” was assumed to trump every other shaper of thought, politics, or preferences for resource allocation even while the relevant department denied “faith” could be so powerful in its other policy output.

Other prisms included “religion” as an obstacle or asset in securing public health; or as “the place to go (in Africa) when all else has failed in development terms;” or as a “radically distinctive,” “new” field.

A major global evangelical NGO, meanwhile, in pursuit of income and better partnerships wanted to better understand “the Catholic Church.” Being among the largest in its donor community it was repeatedly surprised to learn of Catholic Archdioceses, Religious Orders, and other sub-global branches of Catholic civil society, including regional parts of the Caritas federation, with larger revenues and staff teams than its own. It was equally surprising to discover that one of its senior regional leaders had played an influential role, alongside the future Pope, in developing Catholic social thought and action initiatives (and that the Pope did not have untrammelled operational command and control line management over every branch of Catholic activity).

Government Ministers or those in equivalent roles, meanwhile, could express “huge frustration” in getting their departments to take religion seriously. One reported that even when they did, it was challenging. For example, “local staff in Asia had never heard of the (European) Holocaust or the Reformation ... while analysts repeatedly advise me that there is no religious dimension at all to the tensions between the (“self-proclaimed”) Burmese Military government and its (mostly Muslim) Rohingya minorities.”

The question of what was “enough” training then was live too. In one foreign ministry, a “highly recommended” course is required of all

those being posted, whereas in another “we cover off a couple of hours in our academy.” These programs were intended to improve the insight of officials or diplomats, but one eminent Ambassador observed “the resistance from officials is really proactive.”

For another department still, proposed training aimed to “modernize the governance” of religious groups, “upgrade the way they treat women,” “improve their understanding of the law.” This latter example placed all the risk and need for training on mostly minority religious groups (Cabinet Minister 2016).

One senior team from a health ministry funding such forms of training, upon visiting a mosque for the first time, were heard to observe to each other that “this is not normal.” Famously, an awayday of UK Foreign Office officials to prepare ideas for a Papal visit of state facetiously suggested that the Pontiff open an abortion clinic or brand contraceptives with his name.

Theological Attachment: The Extrapolation of Personal Convictions

One surprise for organizations and departments, when staff were surveyed, was just how much religion was going on within their corridors, or how that religion contrasted with their everyday working assumptions. A global evangelical NGO learnt that upwards of 40% of its staff in one global region were Catholics, a community often anathema to their donor base. A department of state had had among its most senior officials those advising major religious groups on their investments in their spare time, while another still had over 60 team members who led their religious congregations on weekends or played a part in their governance. One foreign ministry, having had a central policy of not prioritizing religion-based training, discovered more than 10 courses commissioned for staff locally because of “felt need.” In some surveys, colleagues reported that they had “done” religion “at school” or that because they had played tennis with a Bishop in Australia “they understood the work of Bishops globally.”

In some contexts, surveyed, the word “faith” was used interchangeably with “belief,” religion,”

and “conviction.” These terms all have contrasting meanings in law, but they also reflected explicit—or implicit—theological positions. These became more noticeable when the notion of “culture” was inserted as a factor in religious affiliation, behavior, or political and diplomatic profile.

For example, in developing training about Christianity an officially recognized internal staff Christian network within a government department pushed back very intensely when it was suggested that the training should be entitled “Christianities.”

While the aspiration of using “Christianities” as a descriptor was to help officials discern the diversity among that religion’s adherents, the staff network could not accept it as a useable term: “There is only one Bible,” it was said, and the rest is a “mere” matter of “cultural difference” and “minor” translation issues.

Groups claiming to be Christian but rejected by dominant Christian communities, and significantly persecuted, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons, were on these grounds suggested to be outside the scope of necessary training. Likewise, the political role of Russian Orthodoxy was discounted as “cultural.” Notably, the same staff network—dominated by one Christian tradition—was happy to include Ahmadiyya as Muslims in elucidating groups “at risk” from Sunni and Shia Islamic bodies despite Ahmadiyya, arguably, having a similar relationship to “Islam” as Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses can be said to have to “Christianity.” In this way, personal theology was presented as fact and personal testimony as potential policy.

This habit could take particularly notable forms. Because one faith-based NGO had a theology that only recognized “local” manifestations of Church as legitimate, its fundamental orientation made it unable to observe—or respond to the fact—that one of its partners had developed pan-local networks and an HQ that was extracting resources from vulnerable elders in poverty-stricken villages through the use of spiritual threats (Davis and Muringira 2020). Meanwhile, even in dialogue with senior diplomats one repeatedly

encountered assertions of religious knowledge that replicated school-age errors or, more often still, a working assumption that all religion was “magic,” “irrational,” or “dead.”

One experienced Ambassador observed that their foreign ministry had once refused to train diplomats in economics with the ministry arguing at that time that it was “a dubious discipline and specialist trade that should not be trusted or needed by the professional mainstream.” The Ambassador’s contention today was that in the same way that economics preparation had changed to become a mainstream offer and professional competence, so religious training for security would have to be recognized as complexity and diverse social force morphed and grew. “After all,” observed another, “in a few years’ time India will be the world’s largest Muslim nation, and yet Islam will comprise less than 30% of voters ... the signs are already there that this will generate breath-taking local and geopolitical stress.”

Empirical Discounting: The Avoidance of Observation by the Pursuit of the Normative

This professional challenge and concern from the Ambassadors brought to the surface other important questions that had been identified in the surveys and stakeholder conversations.

First, because of the power of the prisms represented by the influence of human resources and/or human rights teams and/or other organizational silos, religion had often been reduced to “belief” alone. For governments and NGOs, this could have the (un)intended consequence that religiosity, religious assets, civic behaviors, and power that had religious connection became entirely dematerialized and thus “outside” the view of society. Second, it meant that policies to shape, address, or engage with religions were often focused on changing “beliefs” or on seeking an understanding of professed or alleged “religious ideas” alone. Third, this meant either that policymakers took what religious leaders said about themselves entirely at face value or, more often, that religion was discounted for all empirical analytical purposes.

The form of this removal was often mirrored by some advocates, and some organizations, insisting on the word “faith” as an empirical descriptor. “Faith” may be one legitimate theological position, but its implication of a normative (ir)rationality is itself a political imposition. More than that, discounts hugely contrasting uses of time, memory, relational strategy, taboo, purity, territory, and reason even by those seemingly from the same global community (Douglas 1962).

This caused several departmental analysts to remove religion entirely from their analytical paradigms preferring to insert “more verifiable” criteria such as “ethnicity,” “environmental degradation,” or “economics.” Despite voluminous evidence to the contrary then for these analysts, Nigeria’s dynamics were totally and entirely explicable by reference to economic and environmental factors while for “faith” based interlocutors their prism removed any but the most “faith-based” explanation from consideration whether the context was Nigeria, the U.S.A., or in Asia. The notion of a robust political and empirical anthropology or policy analysis of religion and states and NGOs “in” society, both shaping and being shaped by each other, was foreclosed.

The challenge then was how to begin to devise a multi-dimensional approach to leadership development which brought political anthropology, the broadest realm of religious studies, empirical observation, and political science back in to training discussions where “prism,” “theological attachment,” and “empirical discounting” were holding sway.

Developing a “Religion for International Engagement Matrix” for Education and Training for Security

Learning from these surveys and drawing on feedback from those attending other courses and taster workshops, work was undertaken to design not a series of trainings around “beliefs” or “faith” but the development of an analytical matrix as a prelude to supporting analysis of religion as a professional competence. Given the complexities identified above, leadership training

which enabled the exploration of evidenced-based questions, and which framed assessing the implications of “religion” as a professional skill, seemed potentially fruitful. A total of 140 officials, staff, and board members took part.

Indeed, the approach adopted was evidence based, thoroughly empirical, accepting religion and religions in their sheer variety as legitimate social phenomena worthy of testing and assessment. Influenced in turn by the work of Joel Migdal’s seminal historical institutionalism and anthropologies of meaning, politics, memory, place, boundaries, and power the paradigm that emerged was multi-faceted (Migdal 1996, 2001, 2004). Through testing via trainings with two foreign ministries, a Commonwealth nation’s High Commission’s training, NGOs, two private companies, and several domestic government departments a model emerged based on bracketing of the self combined with a five or six field range of enquiry.

An Emergent Framework: Bracketing the Self

An approach was needed which did not intend to exclude personal convictions or narratives, but which also inserted a primacy of social evidence and analysis as a first step. The adoption of “bracketing” was consequently intended to make transparent the tendency identified in the surveys described above for colleagues to apply a departmental or organizational *prism*, to foreground personal *theological attachments*, or to *discount religion* because of prior training or the imposition of a single perspective on their analysis.

“Bracketing” is a strategy recommended by Nobel Peace Prize winner, Georges Pire, (Compagnoni and Alford 2007) as a way to approach important questions which can cause conflict and where there is no consensus. Georges Pire worked on the practical development of conflict resolution and refugee support in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Husserlian in framing, this technique of “bracketing” means keeping personal perspective out of a debate for some time to help the participant to effectively hear, listen, and assess what is going on. The steps here are to (bracket)

the self (prism, attachment, analytical discounting), to be open to analyze and then to describe and only then to act or advise on religious social phenomena as they relate to international engagement.²

An Emergent Framework: Five or Six Fields Through Which to Explore Religion for Security

In conversation with interviewees five fields of enquiry were identified through which to begin to channel training for teams. These were (i) Social and political context, (ii) Ideas, metaphors, and beliefs, (iii) Finance and resources (iv) Legal position and presence, and (v) policy, state strategy, and development.

The first of these would, for example, frame questions that looked at which beliefs or communities had minority or majority manifestations, or the form of their relationship with state, market, or civil society institutions or networks. An Imam in Kuala Lumpur, for example, faces an entirely different context to one in Paris, a diplomat arriving in Ethiopia a contrasting religious-political-social-ethnic context to Brazil.

The second field might explore religious beliefs but in relation to their political use, through the understanding of time and in relation to (imagined) communities of belonging. Diasporic religious communities might be a factor here, in the way that they perceive and resource their “homeland” and this, in turn, might change with each generation of the same diaspora. What seem to some as “ancient historical events” are for others current and deep grievances. From the position of Ukraine to the role of icons in public imagery Russian Orthodoxy presents grievances and commitments often confusing to American or “modern” ears (while the UK’s Brexit was, for others, a “recovery of chains of memory buried by our elites”). Meanwhile, the attacker of a mosque in New Zealand had been immersed in radical Serbian nationalist literature and publications before launching his attack in 2019.

On finance and resources, asking about cash flows, assets, and other resources sheds light on religious families, networks, and institutions. In

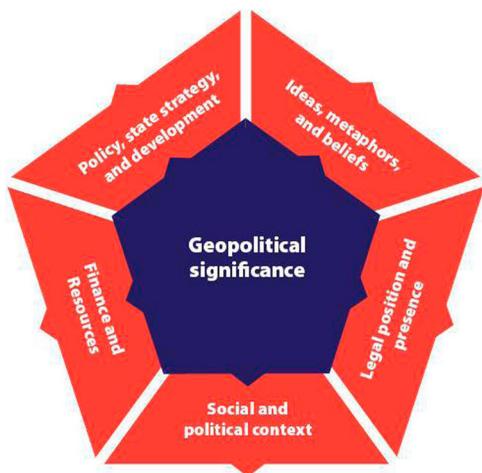
turn, legal position and presence might in certain contexts be shaped by civil law, religious law, commercial law, or an outright ban. In others, legal treatment may be subtle with nuances in employment law, legal preference for particular religious groups combining with other factors to embed particular communities. A Cardinal in Karachi lives in a small walled compound leading a community often at grave risk from informal and formal discrimination while in Sydney his “Diocese” has significant political reach and pathways to billions of cashflows and net assets across at least three major government areas of intervention (Davis 2022).

In each case noting interactions between the fields is important. Consequently, ideas, resources, legal position, and social context were in turn shaped by the fifth field namely policy and state strategy where religions may be recognized, others outlawed, most regulated or even if the President or a department of state takes on a designated religious role. Rwanda, for example, requires clergy to hold theology degrees and register their churches while the Jehovah’s Witnesses are subject to summary imprisonment in Eritrea. Saudi Arabia regulates its mosques and aspects of charitable works through the Ministry for Islamic Affairs, Dawah, and Guidance. The US White House has had an Office focused on faith and community initiatives while the UK delivers around a quarter of government education in legal partnership and joint governance with Anglican and Catholic Dioceses and Religious orders.

As the matrix was trialed in the five-field approach the interplay between each field and “geopolitics” was considered key (as per Figure 1.) Several workshop participants, working across national settings, advised that geopolitics and the other fields were so significantly interplayed and interlocked with each other that geopolitical factors specifically merited a “sixth field” as per Figure 2:

In testing training with participants, the purpose of each field was elucidated not to offer up “answers” but to function as prompts for participants to devise relevant questions for each organization, context, national situation, or

Figure 1. The Five Field Matrix.



diplomatic initiative and/or the teams working in them with regard to religion and international engagement.

Figure 2 includes exemplar questions that could be linked to each field. These and other questions would then be intended to be used to prepare a brief to request further empirical research from direct reports or multiple directorates to better explore a new posting or fresh challenge encountered. Alternatively, they might be harnessed as a framework to inform talking points as relationships or stakeholder maps are drawn up by newly appointed or existing leaders. At the more local level questions framed around the five or six fields could be combined to shape a walk through a new city or region previously unvisited.

Figure 2. Six field matrix with exemplar questions for each field.

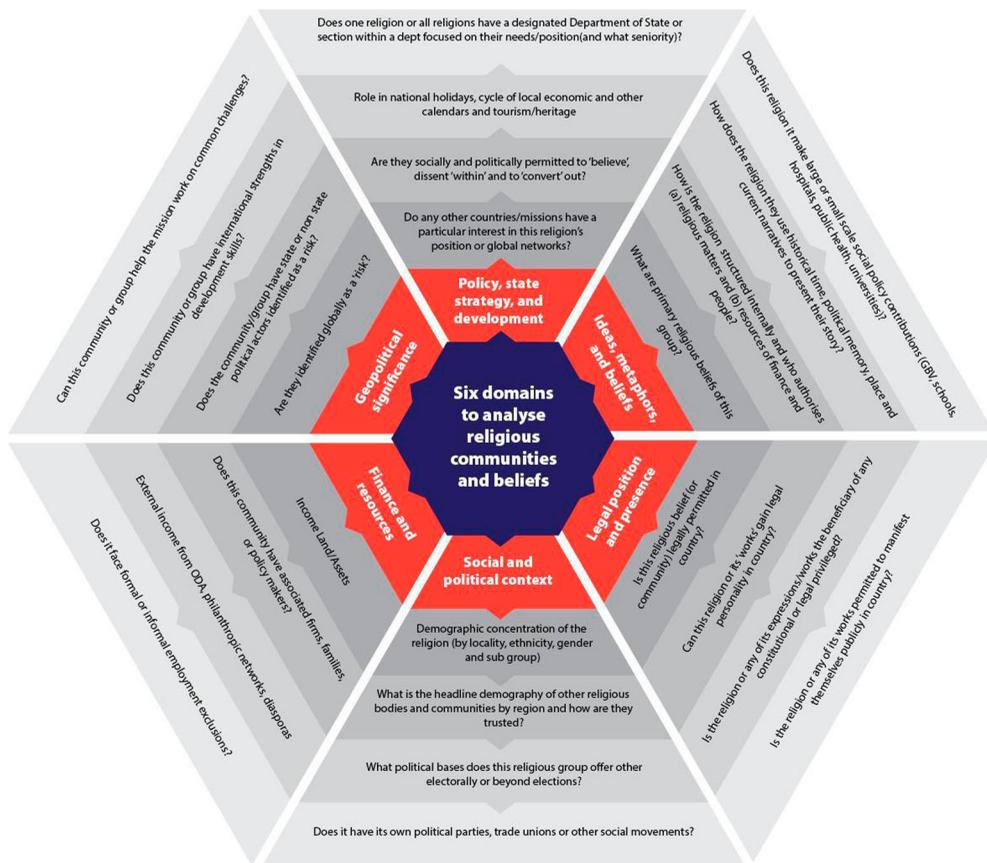
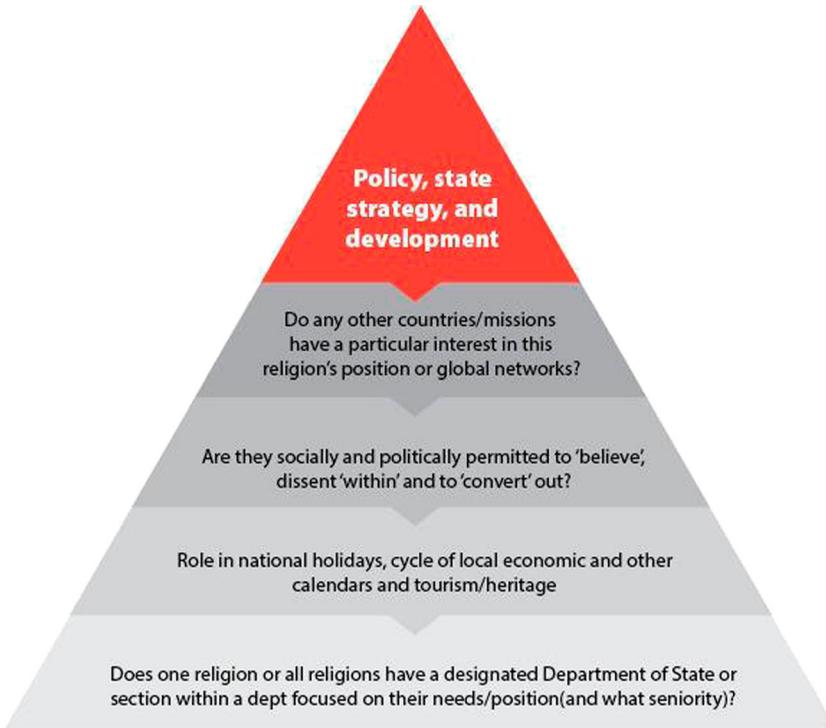


Figure 3. The Policy, State, Strategy , Development field as an stand alone exemplar use with exemplar questions/sites of enquiry.



In each case fields can be used together or on their own. The latter approach could be a standalone point of entry for a colleague exploring its areas of focus or tasked to do so because of its link to their areas of responsibility. Figures 3 and 4 show segments/fields of the matrix as exemplar standalones.

The interplay between the consolidated matrix and the individual fields hoped to add texture to the analysis and debate between those with contrasting professional disciplines in international and policy-making work. When the matrix has been trialed, this has been judged to have been a helpful feature of its emerging design and to have broken up some common bases for conversation and planning between interlocutors who had previously talked past each other.

Description of Trial Workshops and Training Using the Analytical Matrix

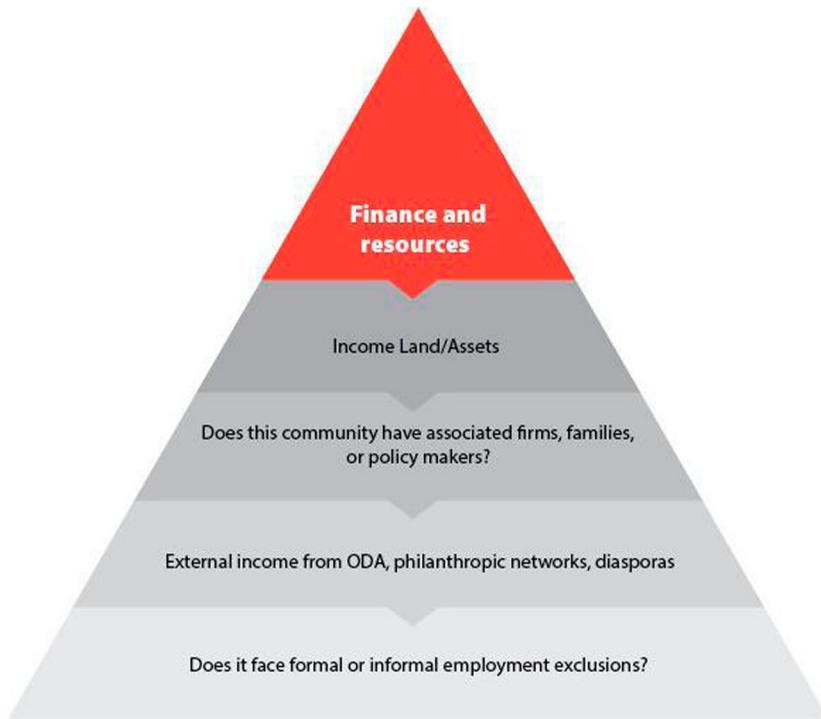
Indeed, leadership development programs, online resources, and training workshops were

trialed. Starting with the five-field approach, positive feedback was received reporting the possibility to use the framework to shape shared questions, establish evidence-based points of enquiry and exploration, and see how they related to each other when religious factors could be widely distributed in every facet of a local polity.

As the matrix was trialed with those in roles more closely aligned to the foreign service of states the six-field approach, based on feedback as above, to identifying key issues and contextual questions by which officials and staff members could explore the position of religions for international engagement, became preferred.

In a small number of cases the matrix though was described as “complicated” and in a few more those characterized as “theologically attached” above were uncomfortable. One eminent Roman Catholic participant asserted that the Church is a “spiritual entity” and expressed reservations about fields that

Figure 4. The Finance and Resources field as a stand alone exemplar use with exemplar questions/sites of enquiry.



considered finance and the political position of each Catholic community rather than a normative frame. Some respondents—often but not only Evangelical Christian—objected to any analysis of “religion” at all because only “faith motivated” public action (and ought not to be qualified by power, ethnicity, law, or other

diplomatic or political factors found in the fields).

Nevertheless over 80% of participants fed back positively and very positively and the more senior they were the more they reported how helpful they found the matrix to “devise a strategic approach ... beyond personal preferences and professional ignorance ...” Senior figures in government departments or very large civil society organizations who took the matrix tool away, tested it in situ, and brought back insights to subsequent sessions gave positive feedback and also suggested areas for improvements. These centered on how helpful it would be to have completed exemplar templates from various

settings which could be used as reference points, along with a wider and larger number of exemplar questions to support each field. These might also be enhanced, it was suggested, by links to

trustworthy sources of data and/or examples of good and bad practice in census, social protection, military, management, and other data

IF IT EVER “WENT AWAY” IT IS
NOW “BACK”

gathering and capacity building with regard to religions that could be drawn upon.

Conclusion and Tentative Next Steps

In this article, I set out to describe the changing security context globally and the way that religion has endured, shaped, and been shaped by the emergence of those security patterns. If it ever “went away” it is now “back” and is a cross-cutting and underestimated factor in international affairs. This presents new leadership needs and demands, but ones that need robust and professional assessment and deliberation from those involved in international

affairs rather than a simplistic reach for departmental preference, personal theological or conviction attachment, or the uncritical adoption of a single pathway of analysis to make sense of every demanding local situation or global security trajectory. This work was underdeveloped even in the surveyed organizations that were concerned about its lack.

Having identified the pitfalls that the combination of such preferences, attachments, and discounting of analytical depth can generate, I described one program of work undertaken to begin to develop a new *Religion for International Engagement Matrix*³ as a framework by which to shape new leadership training and exploration in this complex security realm.

I set out aspects of the lessons learnt in this task, elucidated the attributes of the matrix, and recorded examples of the areas for further improvement that those who have used it have provided from what in the end is an extensive process of consultation and trialing informed by research evidence and a cross-disciplinary approach.

Having made the approach at least in part “open source” the hope now would be for further improvements to be possible on the way to credibly establishing religion for international engagement as an evidence-based and meaningful profession within security, diplomacy, policy making, and religions themselves. ❖

About the Author

Francis Davis is a Professorial Fellow at the University of Oxford. Since 2016, he has also been a professor of Public Policy and Religion at the University of Birmingham. He has been a ministerial advisor in three UK governments.

Notes

1. Criticism might come from external NGOs, parliamentary voices, or internal leaderships concerned at income decline or the lack of partners in emerging or long-term “trouble” or “strategic priority” regions or geographies.
2. For an application of “bracketing” to other areas of public service, see <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/2022275/>.

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