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Book Review of Spirit Matters: The Worldwide Impact of Religion on Contemporary Politics by Richard L. Rubenstein

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generate essays based upon four guiding questions: (1) What are the perspectives or approaches, main ideas, and principal exemplars in criminology? (2) What are the advantages and disadvantages of each perspective and have the theoretical assumptions helped or hindered the field of criminology? (3) What research is needed, if any, to address, disconfirm, or support the perspective? And (4) Speculation—where do we go from here?

Part Three contains four articles each examining the assumptions of various theoretical methods, including criminological positivism (Hagan), eclecticism (Tittle), integrative models (Elliott), and typological approaches (Gibbons). The final three essays, each addressing different explanatory components from seemingly incompatible perspectives, includes a discussion of deterrence and classical utilitarianism by van den Haag, a critical examination of the psychiatric diagnosis of psychopathic personality by Hakeem, and a survey article on sociological theories of crime by Cohen.

Each of the 10 essays, independently of one another, is well written and thought provoking. Collectively, the volume fills a much-needed void within the field of criminology questioning much of what we have taken for granted, while simultaneously breathing new life into decades-old perspectives. A concluding chapter by Meier would have been appropriate and its absence is the book's only shortcoming. Highly recommended for honors or graduate criminology courses.

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Richard L. Rubenstein, editor, *Spirit Matters: The Worldwide Impact of Religion on Contemporary Politics*, New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1987, pp. 384, \$21.95.

Spirit does matter, and the authors of the articles collected in this work attempt to show how and under what circumstances religion influences an increasingly secular world.

Spirit Matters attempts a "global portrait of the interplay of religion and politics in today's world." To do this, the book describes the politics-religion issue on a country-by-country basis, with separate chapters on the United States, Iran, Israel, and Poland, and, on a regional basis, with chapters on Eastern and Western Europe, the Islamic world, the Indian subcontinent, Africa, and Latin America. This approach allows the authors to examine the unique political, religious and cultural factors which shape the political-religious dimension throughout the world.

As the authors demonstrate, "religion is not one thing worldwide, but many different things. Nor is the impact of religion on politics the same worldwide; it differs widely from society to society. The ideological forms, institutional embodiments, and social strategies of the world's religions vary immensely from time to time and from place to place. The impact of religion on politics sometimes inhibits and sometimes promotes change, sometimes enhances and sometimes thwarts justice" (Kliever, p. 35).

This collection shows the rich variety of the world's religions while also showing the universal impact of religious values on behavior in the political realm. "Religion," as Huston Smith notes in an excellent introduction, "is about power quite as much as is politics" (p. x). And while religion does not play as central a part in the lives of most people as it once did, it still exerts a strong impact on our politics.

Religion affects us on two levels, the individual-personal and the collective-institutional. This work focuses on the latter, because "it is through its communities and institutions that religion's impact on politics becomes visible" (p. xv). In the West, the "disestablishment" of religion has meant that no "convincing theory of political responsibility" has captured the public. While "the West is living off the accumulated moral capital of traditional religion and traditional moral philosophy," the glue which holds communities together is losing its adhesive quality (Smith, p. xiii). Traditional religion, Smith notes, supplies hope and assurance (what Marx called the "opiate of the masses"), powerful stabilizing forces in society. As these resources decline, external means of social control are likely to increase. In separating church and state, according rights to each, a tension—sometimes creative, sometimes destructive—between Caesar and God is inevitable. While this tension occasionally "erupts in open conflict . . . each basically respects the other" (Smith, p. xxiii).

In the Soviet bloc, the state's efforts to "abolish the religion-politics polarity by removing its religious term" has led to a surfacing of the religious element in disguise. As Smith notes, "communism cannot be understood apart from its religious zeal, its messianic consciousness, and its salvific claims" (p. xxiii).

In the Islamic world, religion permeates all aspects of life and state. While the two main branches of Islam—Sunni and Shi'ite—differ on the particulars, both envision a state imbued with religious dimensions. In China, yet another pattern has developed. Here modern communism comingles with the Confucian past in a way which honors the ancients and builds for the future.

Smith concludes his introduction by noting that religion and politics are arrayed in six distinguishable patterns in the world today. In the West, they are partners. The Soviet bloc tries to deny religion, while orthodox Islam tries to deny the secular state. In China, religion (without the name) enters politics through her present-informing past. In test points in South America, the church confronts the state. In India, religion, through caste, sets conditions through which democratic processes work (p. xxvi).

The remainder of the book contains chapters dealing with individual nations or regions. They demonstrate that religion exercises both a conservative and subversive influence on the world, being both opiate and catalyst.

Overall, this book is serious and substantive. It is a valuable contribution to an important field. The crossnational-comparative perspective is especially useful and rewarding. It covers much ground—perhaps too much—and could be strengthened by a concluding chapter which tied together the many disparate elements in this fascinating and worthwhile book.

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