

Violence And The Sacred

"Why is there so much violence in our midst?" René Girard asks. "No question is more debated today. And none produces more answers." In Girard's mimetic theory it is the imitation of someone else's desire that gives rise to conflict whenever the desire can be shared. This mimetic rivalry, Girard argues, is responsible for the frequency and escalating intensity of human conflict. For conflict comes not from the loss of reciprocity between humans but from the transition, imperceptible at first but then even good to bad reciprocity. In this landmark text, Girard continues his study of violence in light of geopolitical competition, focus and outcomes of violence across societies latent in the process of globalization. The volume concludes in a wide-ranging introduction by Sicilian cultural theorist Maria Stella Barberi, where Girard's twenty-first century emphases on the continuity of all religions, and the necessity of apocalyptic thinking emerge.

Employs the sectarian battles which divided African Christians in late antiquity to explore the nature of violence in religious conflict. In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the work of René Girard, thought by many to be one of the most important cultural theorists of the twentieth century. Girard's work is extraordinarily innovative and wide-ranging, cutting across central philosophy, psychoanalysis, literary theory, anthropology, theology, and sociology. In this much-needed introduction, Chris Flerba develops the development of Girard's thought over forty years, describing the context in which he worked and his influence on a number of disciplines. It unpacks the hypotheses at the centre of Girard's thought - mimetic desire, surrogate victimhood and scapegoating, myth, ritual and provides an assessment of Girard's place in the contemporary academy. Comprehensive and clearly written, this book provides an excellent overview of Girard's work and is essential reading for students and researchers in continental philosophy, theology, French studies, and cultural studies.

This brilliant study of good and evil examines the presence of ritual violence in sacred ceremony.

A Comparative Study of Sacrifice

Cannibalism

Girard, Derrida, and Deconstruction

Human Aggression and Cultural Form

Violence, Desire, and the Sacred

René Girard Violence and the Sacred

McKenna explicates key elements of the anthropology of René Girard and the literary theory of Jacques Derrida in terms of each other--to create an interpretive strategy that he hopes will "salvage deconstruction from the flashy sterility it favors."

Showcases the application of René Girard's mimetic theory across a range of disciplines, including philosophy, religious studies, literature and cultural studies.

This book is primarily for researchers and students in the archaeology of the Ancient Near East. The volume results from intense interaction between archaeologists at these sites and a group of theorists studying the scholarship of René Girard.

How is symbolic violence related to the real acts of religious violence around the modern world? The authors of this book, first published in 1992, explore this question with reference to some of the most volatile religious and political conflicts of the day:

Hezbollah in Lebanon, Sikhs in India, militant Jewish groups in Israel, and Muslim movements from the Middle East to Indonesia.

In addition to providing valuable insights into these important incidents, the authors - social scientists and historians of comparative religion - are responding to the theoretical issues articulated by René Girard in *Violence and the Sacred* (1977). The present volume is the first book of essays to test Girard's theories about the social significance of religious symbols of violence against real, rather than symbolic, acts. In some cases his theories are found to be applicable; in other cases, the authors provide alternative theories of their own. In a concluding essay, co-authored by Mark Anspach, Girard provides a response.

Religion and the History of Violence

Religion and Political Violence

Religion, Violence, and the Interpretation of Sacred Texts

Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence

Sacred Violence in Early America

Polluting the Sacred

This book provides a multidisciplinary commentary on a wide range of religious traditions and their relationship to acts of violence. Hate and violence occur at every level of human interaction, as do peace and compassion. Scholars of religion have a particular obligation to make sense out of this situation, tracing its history and variables, and drawing lessons for the future. From the formative periods of the religious traditions to their application in the contemporary world, the essays in this volume interrogate the views on violence found within the traditions and provide examples of religious practices that exacerbate or ameliorate situations of conflict.

His fascinating and ambitious book provides a fully developed theory of violence as the 'heart and secret soul' of the sacred. Girard's fertile, combative mind links myth to prophetic writing, primitive religions to classical tragedy.

Presenting an original global theory of culture, Girard explores the social function of violence and the mechanism of the social scapegoat. His vision is a challenge to conventional views of literature, anthropology, religion and psychoanalysis. René Girard is the Andrew B. Hammond Professor Emeritus of French Language, Literature and Civilization at Stanford University, USA.

*In *Battling to the End* René Girard engages Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), the Prussian military theoretician who wrote *On War*. Clausewitz, who has been critiqued by military strategists, political scientists, and philosophers, famously postulated that "War is the continuation of politics by other means." He also seemed to believe that governments could constrain war. Clausewitz, a firsthand witness to the Napoleonic Wars, understood the nature of modern warfare. Far from controlling violence, politics follows in war's wake: the means of war have become its ends. René Girard shows us a Clausewitz who is a fascinated witness of history's acceleration. Haunted by the French-German conflict, Clausewitz clarifies more than anyone else the development that would ravage Europe. *Battling to the End* pushes aside the taboo that prevents us from seeing that the apocalypse has begun. Human violence is escaping our control; today it threatens the entire planet.*

Sacred Violence

Sacred Protest in the Modern World

Towards Reconciliation

A Discussion with René Girard at Esprit (1973)

Paul's Hermeneutic of the Cross

The Ambivalence of the Sacred

This text explains what religious terrorists and religious peacemakers share in common and what causes them to take different paths in fighting injustice.

This book represents the first comprehensive application to the whole Bible of René Girard's theories on violence, civilization, and religion.

René Girard (1923–) was Professor of French Language, Literature and Civilization at Stanford University from 1981 until his retirement in 1995. Violence and the Sacred is Girard's brilliant study of human evil. Girard explores violence as it is represented and occurs throughout history, literature and myth. Girard's forceful and thought-provoking analyses of Biblical narrative, Greek tragedy and the lynchings and pogroms propagated by contemporary states illustrate his central argument that violence belongs to everyone and is at the heart of the sacred. Translated by Patrick Gregory>

Drawing on spiritual and legal sources, this book provides a novel perspective on how late medieval Christianity problematized parishioners' use of violence and how parishioners tried to reconcile the demands of their faith with cultural norms that honored violent conduct.

Girardian Conversations at Çatalhöyük

The European Crusades to the Middle East, 1095–1396

Heidegger and Nietzsche through Mimetic Theory

The (De)Legitimization of Violence in Sacred and Human Contexts

Conversations with Benoit Chantre

Sacred Fury

Never before translated in English, this 1973 discussion between René Girard (1923–2015) and other prominent scholars represents one of the most significant breakthroughs in mimetic theory. Organized by the French journal *Esprit*, the conversation was an opportunity for Girard to debate with his interlocutors the theories he expounded in *Violence and the Sacred* (1972). These scholars prompted him to reconsider the book's strictly sociological interpretation of religion, highlighting the misrecognition of violent scapegoating at its origins and in its myths and ritual practices, by addressing the relation between his critique of primitive or archaic religion and the role of Judeo-Christianity. The ensuing discussion opened up an entirely new and admittedly startling phase of his thinking, where he deployed an epistemology rooted in Biblical revelation, which he viewed as an ongoing deconstruction of sacrificial practices. In this text, he vindicates for the very first time the anthropological relevance of Judeo-Christian scriptures. The 1973 discussion thus marks a new and decisive step in Girard's intellectual journey, making this volume a critical document for understanding the transition period between *Violence and the Sacred* and *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (1978).

From the renowned and best-selling author of *A History of God*, a sweeping exploration of religion and the history of human violence. For the first time, religious self-identification is on the decline in America. Some analysts have cited as cause a post-9/11 perception: that faith in general is a source of aggression, intolerance, and divisiveness—something bad for society. But how accurate is that view? With deep learning and sympathetic understanding, Karen Armstrong sets out to discover the truth about religion and violence in each of the world's great traditions, taking us on an astonishing journey from prehistoric times to the present. While many historians have looked at violence in connection with particular religious manifestations (jihad in Islam or Christianity's Crusades), Armstrong looks at each faith—not only Christianity and Islam, but also Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Judaism—in its totality over time. As she describes, each arose in an agrarian society with plenty of powerful landowners brutalizing peasants while also warring among themselves over land, then the only real source of wealth. In this world, religion was not the discrete and personal matter it would become for us but rather something that permeated all aspects of society. And so it was that agrarian aggression, and the warrior ethos it begot, became bound up with observances of the sacred. In each tradition, however, a counterbalance to the warrior code also developed. Around sages, prophets, and mystics there grew up communities protesting the injustice and bloodshed endemic to agrarian society, the violence to which religion had become heir. And so by the time the great confessional faiths came of age, all understood themselves as ultimately devoted to peace, equality, and reconciliation, whatever the acts of violence perpetrated in their name. Industrialization and modernity have ushered in an epoch of spectacular and unexampled violence, although, as Armstrong explains, relatively little of it can be ascribed directly to religion. Nevertheless, she shows us how and in what measure religions, in their relative maturity, came to absorb modern belligerence—and what hope there might be for peace among believers of different creeds in our time. At a moment of rising geopolitical chaos, the imperative of mutual understanding between nations and faith communities has never been more urgent, the dangers of action based on misunderstanding never greater. Informed by Armstrong's sweeping erudition and personal commitment to the promotion of compassion, *Fields of Blood* makes vividly clear that religion is not the problem.

Violence, Desire and the Sacred presents the most up-to-date inter-disciplinary work being

developed with the ground-breaking insights of René Girard's mimetic theory. The collection showcases the work of outstanding scholars in mimetic theory and how they are applying and developing Girard's insights in a variety of fields. Girard's mimetic insight has provided a fruitful way for different disciplines, such as literature, anthropology, theology, religion studies, cultural studies, and philosophy, to engage on common anthropological ground, with a shared understanding of the human person. The aim of this edited collection is to present this interdisciplinary work and to illustrate how Girard's insights provide fertile ground for bringing together disparate disciplines in a shared purpose. As academic work on Girard's insights is growing, this collection would meet the need to show the critical, interdisciplinary applications of these insights.

Why do humans sacralise the causes for which they fight? Who will decipher for us the enigma of 'sacred violence'? Paul Gifford shows that the culture theorist and fundamental anthropologist René Girard has in fact decoded the obscurely 'foundational' complicity between violence and the sacred, showing why it is everybody's problem and the Problem of Everybody. René Girard's mimetic theory, especially his neglected writings on biblical texts, can be read as an anthropological argument continuous with Darwin, shedding formidable new light to a vast array of dark and knotted things: from the functioning of the world's oldest temple to today's terrorist violence, from the Cross of Christ to the Good Friday Agreement, such insights illuminate superbly ('from below') the ways of creation, revelation, redemption - which is to say, ultimately, the Christian enterprise and vocation of Reconciliation. Here is a novel and exciting resource for scanning the hidden 'sacrificial' logic that still secretly shapes cultural, social, and political life today. Girard puts us ahead of the game in the key dialogues required if we are to avoid autogenerated apocalypses of human violence in the world of tomorrow.

Rene Girard

The One by Whom Scandal Comes

Beyond Sacred Violence

Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World

Girard's Mimetic Theory Across the Disciplines

Studies into religion and violence often put religion first. René Girard started with violence in his book *Violence and the Sacred* and used the Durkheimian term 'sacred' as its correlate in his study of early religions. During the unfolding of his theory, he more and more distinguished the sacred from saintliness to address the break that the biblical revelation represented in comparison to early religions. This distinction between the sacred and saintliness resembles Henri Bergson's complementing Emile Durkheim's identification of the sacred and society with a dynamic religion that relies on individual mystics. Girard's distinction also relates to the insights of thinkers like Jacques Maritain, Simone Weil, and Emmanuel Levinas. This element explores some of Girard's main features of saintliness. Girard pleaded for the transformation of the sacred into holy, not their separation.

At the heart of many religions are sacred texts that depict or even incite sexual violence. Most of this violence is directed against women and girls. *Sexual Violence and Sacred Texts* opens up an informed, passionate, interfaith dialogue for scholars and activists seeking to transform social problems that impact women and girls globally. Situated within struggles toward gender equity and widespread spiritual flourishing, these essays empower religious leaders, academics, and laypersons to confront and to creatively engage with sacred texts that re-inscribe sexual violence.

Continental and postmodern thinking has misidentified the source of violence as originating from Western metaphysics. It has further failed to acknowledge the Judeo-Christian source of its ethic—the ethic of concern for victims. In this volume Duane Armitage attempts a critique of continental philosophy and postmodernism through the lens of René Girard's mimetic theory. This critique is directed primarily at the philosophies of Nietzsche and Heidegger, both among the foremost representatives of continental and postmodern thought. Armitage argues that Girard's engagement with Heidegger and Nietzsche radically alters many of the axioms of current postmodern continental philosophy, in particular the overcoming of metaphysics on the theoretical level and continental philosophy's tacit commitments to (neo-)Marxism on the practical level. Detailed attention to the implications of Girard's philosophical thought results in a paradigm shift that deals perhaps a deadly blow to continental and postmodern thinking. Armitage further argues that Girard's thinking solves the very problems that continental and postmodern thinking sought (but failed) to solve, namely the problems of violence and victimization, particularly within the context of the aftermath of the Second World War. Ultimately, this volume shows that at the heart of postmodern thinking lies an entanglement with the violent sacred.

"His fascinating and ambitious book provides a fully developed theory of violence as the 'heart and secret soul' of the sacred. Girard's fertile, combative mind links myth to prophetic writing, primitive religions to classical tragedy."--Victor Brombert, Chronicle of Higher Education.

Understanding Religious Violence

Transforming the Sacred into Saintliness

Sacrifice Imagined

Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World

Girardian Conversation at Catalhoyuk

Fields of Blood

This book uses the theory of social movements and first-hand interviews to create a new analysis of religiously motivated political violence in the modern world. Examining the movement to restore Sharia law to a dominant place in the Egyptian government, the movement to make abortion illegal in the United States, and the religious effort to secure territory in Israel, the author contends that religion becomes violent not because of ideology or political context alone, but because of the constantly evolving relationship between them. The ebb and flow of opportunities for political access ensures that secularization and religion, although polar opposites, depend on each other to define themselves. As a result, while their respective degrees of influence will inevitably undulate over time, both will remain a part of the political process for some time. Thus, a full understanding of both is critical to a meaningful understanding of the political process. Much work has been done to understand secular social movements as part of the political process, and consequentially researchers now know a great deal about the motivations, resources and timing of secular social movements. Considerably less research has been done in the field of religious social movements and this book fills that gap in the literature. This book will be of great interest to students of political violence, religion, sociology, and Politics and International Relations in general. Jennifer Jefferis is Assistant Professor in the Department of Government, Regent University, USA, and has a PhD in Political Science from Boston University.

Sacrifice Imagined is an original exploration of the idea of sacrifice by one of the world's preeminent philosophers of religion. Despisers of religion have poured scorn upon the idea of sacrifice as an index of the irrational and wicked in religious practice. Nor does its secularised form seem much more appealing. One need only think of the appalling cult of sacrifice in numerous totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century. Yet sacrifice remains a part of our cultural and intellectual 'imaginary'. Hedley proposes good reasons to think that issues of global conflict and the ecological crisis highlight the continuing relevance of the topic of sacrifice for contemporary culture. The subject of sacrifice has been decisively influenced by two books: Girard's *The Violence and the Sacred* and Burkert's *Homo Necans*. Both of these are theories of sacrifice as violence. Hedley's book challenges both of these highly influential theories and presents a theory of sacrifice as renunciation of the will. His guiding influences in this are the much misunderstood Joseph de Maistre and the Cambridge Platonists. What is the relationship between the sacred and the political, transcendence and immanence, religion and violence? And how has this complex relation affected the history of Western political reason? In this volume an international group of scholars explore these questions in light of mimetic theory as formulated by René Girard (1923-2015), one of the most original thinkers of our time. From Aristotle and his idea of tragedy, passing through Machiavelli and political modernity, up to contemporary biopolitics, this work provides an indispensable guide to those who want to assess the thorny interconnections of sacrality and politics in Western political thought and follow an unexplored yet critical path from ancient Greece to our post-secular condition. While looking at the past, this volume also seeks to illuminate the future relevance of the sacred/secular divide in the so-called 'age of globalization'.

In *Sacred Violence*, the distinguished political and legal theorist Paul W. Kahn investigates the reasons for the resort to violence characteristic of premodern states. In a startling argument, he contends that law will never offer an adequate account of political violence. Instead, we must turn to political theology, which reveals that torture and terror are, essentially, forms of sacrifice. Kahn forces us to acknowledge what we don't want to see: that we remain deeply committed to a violent politics beyond law. Paul W. Kahn is Robert W. Winner Professor of Law and the Humanities at Yale Law School and Director of the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights. Cover Illustration: "Abu Ghraib 67, 2005" by Fernando Botero. Courtesy of the artist and the American University Museum.

Violence, Atonement, and the Sacred

Explorations on Mimesis, Violence and Religion

Violence and the Sacred . Rene Girard. Transl. by Patrick Gregory

Violence, Transformation, and The Sacred: "They shall be called Children of God"

Violence and Mimesis

Understanding Violence and the sacred after Rene Girard

Renowned medieval historian Jill N. Claster examines warfare between Christians and Muslims for control of the embattled city of Jerusalem.

Violence and the Sacred is René Girard's landmark study of human evil. Here Girard explores violence as it is represented and occurs throughout history, literature and myth. Girard's forceful and thought-provoking analyses of Biblical narrative, Greek tragedy and the lynchings and pogroms propagated by contemporary states illustrate his central argument that violence belongs to everyone and is at the heart of the sacred.

From ISIS attacks to the conflict between Israel and Palestine, *Sacred Fury* explores the connections between faith and violence in world religions. Author Charles Selengut looks at religion as both a force for peace and for violence, and he asks key questions such as how "religious" is this violence and what drives the faithful to attack in the names of their beliefs? Revised throughout, the third edition features new material on violence in Buddhism and Hinduism, the rise of ISIS, "lone wolf terrorists," and more. This up-to-date edition draws on a variety of disciplines to comprehend forms of religious violence both historically and in the present day. The third edition of *Sacred Fury* is an essential resource for understanding the connections between faith and violence.

One of the critical issues in interreligious relations today is the connection, both actual and perceived, between sacred sources and the justification of violent acts as divinely mandated. *Fighting Words* makes solid text-based scholarship accessible to the general public, beginning with the premise that a balanced approach to religious pluralism in our world must build on a measured, well-informed response to the increasingly publicized and sensationalized association of terrorism and large-scale violence with religion. In his introduction, Renard provides background on the major scriptures of seven religious traditions--Jewish, Christian (including both the Old and New Testaments), Islamic, Baha'i, Zoroastrian, Hindu, and Sikh. Eight chapters then explore the interpretation of select facets of these

scriptures, focusing on those texts so often claimed, both historically and more recently, as inspiration and justification for every kind of violence, from individual assassination to mass murder. With its nuanced consideration of a complex topic, this book is not merely about the religious sanctioning of violence but also about diverse ways of reading sacred textual sources.

Battling to the End

Torture, Terror, and Sovereignty

Violence, Faith and the 'Civilizing' of Parishioners in Late Medieval England

The Bible, Violence, and the Sacred

Violence, the Sacred, and Things Hidden

Violence and Difference

Argues that the modern Western world's reductive understanding of sacrifice simplifies an enormously broad and dynamic cluster of religious activities, drawing on a comparative study of Vedic and Jewish sacrificial practices to demonstrate not only that sacrifice has no single, essential, identifying characteristic, but also that the elements most frequently attributed to such acts--death and violence--are not universal.

Sacred Violence in Early America offers a sweeping reinterpretation of the violence endemic to seventeenth-century English colonization by reexamining some of the key moments of cultural and religious encounter in North America. Susan Juster explores different forms of sacred violence--blood sacrifice, holy war, malediction, and iconoclasm--to uncover how European traditions of ritual violence developed during the wars of the Reformation were introduced and ultimately transformed in the New World. Juster's central argument concerns the rethinking of the relationship between the material and the spiritual worlds that began with the Reformation and reached perhaps its fullest expression on the margins of empire. The Reformation transformed the Christian landscape from an environment rich in sounds, smells, images, and tactile encounters, both divine and human, to an austere space of scriptural contemplation and prayer. When English colonists encountered the gods and rituals of the New World, they were forced to confront the unresolved tensions between the material and spiritual within their own religious practice. Accounts of native cannibalism, for instance, prompted uneasy comparisons with the ongoing debate among Reformers about whether Christ was bodily present in the communion wafer. Sacred Violence in Early America reveals the Old World antecedents of the burning of native bodies and texts during the seventeenth-century wars of extermination, the prosecution of heretics and blasphemers in colonial courts, and the destruction of chapels and mission towns up and down the North American seaboard. At the heart of the book is an analysis of "theologies of violence" that gave conceptual and emotional shape to English colonists' efforts to construct a New World sanctuary in the face of enemies both familiar and strange: blood sacrifice, sacramentalism, legal and philosophical notions of just and holy war, malediction, the contest between "living" and "dead" images in Christian ideology, and iconoclasm.

Violence and the SacredA&C Black

Fighting Words

Violence and the Sacred

Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation

The Sacred and the Political

Violence and the Sacred in the Ancient Near East

Sexual Violence and Sacred Texts