

# LESSICO DI ETICA PUBBLICA (“PUBLIC ETHICS LEXICON”)

Call for Papers

## **Public (Non-)Violence and Religious Justification**

Edited by Paolo Monti

The religious justification of violence has been, historically, a central challenge to the foundation of civil coexistence: from Socrates’ charge of impiety to the wars of religion in the XVI and XVII centuries up to contemporary religiously inspired terrorism. The democratic thought, the liberal tradition and the modern inquiry on toleration have all emerged, to some extent, from this challenge. Nonetheless, the relationship between violence and religion is multifaceted. The most brutal conflicts of the XX century were rooted in secular ideologies and ethnic hatred, leaving religious justifications to the side in favour of political, economic and cultural reasons. Moreover, compassion, love and non-violence hold a special place in the spirituality of most world religions. Protagonists of our recent history like Gandhi, Martin Luther King or Desmond Tutu have justified their non-violent option based on religious grounds. And recent non-violent movements like Solidarność’s protest in Poland and the Saffron Revolution in Myanmar were animated by a significant religious inspiration.

The crisis of the standard theories of secularization and the return of religions on the main stage of the political scene have determined a revival of ethical and political reflection on the relationship between public violence and religion. The inquiry has taken multiple paths, like the inquiry of the relation between religious thought and socio-political conflict (Girard, Taylor, Esposito, Agamben), the interpretation of religious justification and motivation in terrorist and fundamentalist movements (Asad, Strenski, Juergensmeyer), the investigation of the history of the philosophy and theology of just war theory (Steffen, Clarke).

These analyses show that the forms of religious justification of violence and non-violence are mutating within the framework of late secularization. The political strength of religious conservatism and fundamentalism (Saudi Arabia, India, United States) is nurtured by the separation between fideistic belief and cultural elaboration (Roy). Nevertheless, in technologically and economically advanced societies, religions still offer a relevant public contribution to face the challenges of intercultural dialogue, solidarity and social justice (Habermas). Violent radicalism mixes spurious imaginaries of the origin with ultramodern forms of communication and seeds of contestation of the global political and economic order (Žižek). But churches and religious movements also contribute to the cause of the peaceful coexistence of peoples and the reception of migrants that flee from regional conflicts, thus supporting a global concern for justice beyond national boundaries (Beck).

In this context, the contributions can cover, among others, the following areas:

1. The problem of the religious justification of violence and non-violence in the history of moral and political theory.
2. Secularization and violence: the transformations of the religious justification of violence in the Modern era.
3. Violence and the Sacred: René Girard’s heritage.
4. Liberalism, cultural pluralism, social injustice and global conflicts (Rawls, Dworkin, Kymlicka)
5. The liberal way to civil coexistence and the challenge of non-Western contexts: rights, democracy and religious fundamentalism in India (Sen, Nussbaum) and China (Bell).
6. Just war theories and religious justification in Christianity and Islam.
7. Non-violence as ethical ideal and political mean: philosophical and theological perspectives.
8. Radicalization and de-radicalization: the call to violence as a problem of public communication and education.

The scientific journal “Lessico di etica pubblica” (Public Ethics Lexicon) devotes to these topics a special issue that is to be published in 2017.

The articles need to be sent by 26/04/2017 in blind review format: in the first page, the author’s First Name and Last Name, email address, paper title and abstract; in the following pages, title, text and notes. The submission can be in English, Italian and French, need to comply with the editorial norms published on the website (<http://www.eticapubblica.it/>), up to 30.000 characters long (including the notes and an English Abstract of no more than 150 words).

The special issues is edited by: Paolo Monti (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore).

Article and abstract need to be sent in a single file (.doc) to the email address [paolo.monti@unicatt.it](mailto:paolo.monti@unicatt.it)