

GEOPOLITICS OF FAITH AS A DEVICE OF POWER: RELIGIOUS INSTRUMENTALIZATION, CONFLICTS AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN THE CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION CRISIS

GEOPOLÍTICA DA FÉ COMO DISPOSITIVO DE PODER: INSTRUMENTALIZAÇÃO RELIGIOSA, CONFLITOS E DESLOCAMENTOS FORÇADOS NA CRISE MIGRATÓRIA CONTEMPORÂNEA

GEOPOLÍTICA DE LA FE COMO DISPOSITIVO DE PODER: INSTRUMENTALIZACIÓN RELIGIOSA, CONFLICTOS Y DESPLAZAMIENTOS FORZADOS EN LA CRISIS MIGRATORIA CONTEMPORÂNEA



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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the geopolitics of faith based on the understanding of religion as a device of power in contemporary dynamics, investigating its instrumentalization in the production of geopolitical conflicts, social exclusions, and forced displacement. Situated within the fields of social sciences and international relations, the study examines how religious discourses and practices are mobilized by state actors, political agents, and armed groups as mechanisms for legitimizing violence, social control, and territorial reorganization on a global scale, with emphasis on the Middle East. The objective is to understand the role of faith in the production of exclusion, conflicts, and migration crises, as well as to analyze its impacts on contemporary geopolitical dynamics. To this end, a qualitative, exploratory, and bibliographic approach is adopted, based on academic literature, reports from international organizations, and institutional documents. Thus, it is observed that, although religion holds potential for social cohesion and solidarity, it has frequently been instrumentalized as a justification for persecution, human rights violations, and the intensification of conflicts, contributing to large-scale migratory flows. The findings indicate that religious instrumentalization constitutes a transnational and multifaceted phenomenon, with direct impacts on the reconfiguration of international relations and the expansion of humanitarian crises, requiring coordinated responses involving diplomatic actions, public policies, and international cooperation aimed at promoting human rights and building scenarios of peace.

Keywords: Geopolitics. Religious Instrumentalization. Forced Displacement. Human Rights. Power.

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RESUMO

O presente artigo analisa a geopolítica da fé a partir da compreensão da religião como dispositivo de poder nas dinâmicas contemporâneas, investigando sua instrumentalização na produção de conflitos geopolíticos, exclusões sociais e deslocamentos forçados. Inserido no campo das ciências sociais e das relações internacionais, o trabalho examina como discursos e práticas religiosas são mobilizados por atores estatais, políticos e grupos armados como mecanismos de legitimação da violência, controle social e reorganização territorial no cenário global, com ênfase no Oriente Médio. Objetiva-se compreender o papel da fé na produção de exclusões, conflitos e crises migratórias, bem como analisar seus impactos nas dinâmicas geopolíticas contemporâneas. Para tanto, procede-se a uma pesquisa qualitativa, de caráter exploratório e bibliográfico, fundamentada em literatura acadêmica, relatórios de organismos internacionais e documentos institucionais. Desse modo, observa-se que, embora a religião possua potencial de coesão social e solidariedade, tem sido frequentemente instrumentalizada como justificativa para perseguições, violações de direitos humanos e intensificação de conflitos, contribuindo para fluxos migratórios em larga escala. Os resultados indicam que a instrumentalização religiosa constitui um fenômeno transnacional e multifacetado, com impactos diretos na reconfiguração das relações internacionais e na ampliação das crises humanitárias, demandando respostas articuladas entre ações diplomáticas, políticas públicas e cooperação internacional, voltadas à promoção dos direitos humanos e à construção de cenários de paz.

Palavras-chave: Geopolítica. Instrumentalização Religiosa. Deslocamentos Forçados. Direitos Humanos. Poder.

RESUMEN

Este estudio analiza la geopolítica de la fe a partir de la comprensión de la religión como un dispositivo de poder en las dinámicas contemporáneas, investigando su instrumentalización en la producción de conflictos geopolíticos, exclusiones sociales y desplazamientos forzados. Enmarcado en el campo de las ciencias sociales y las relaciones internacionales, el trabajo examina cómo los discursos y prácticas religiosas son movilizados por actores estatales, políticos y grupos armados como mecanismos de legitimación de la violencia, control social y reorganización territorial en el escenario global, con énfasis en el Medio Oriente. El objetivo es comprender el papel de la fe en la producción de exclusión, conflictos y crisis migratorias, así como analizar sus impactos en las dinámicas geopolíticas contemporáneas. Para ello, se adopta una investigación cualitativa, de carácter exploratorio y bibliográfico, fundamentada en literatura académica, informes de organismos internacionales y documentos institucionales. De este modo, se observa que, aunque la religión posee potencial para la cohesión social y la solidaridad, ha sido frecuentemente instrumentalizada como justificación de persecuciones, violaciones de derechos humanos e intensificación de conflictos, contribuyendo a flujos migratorios a gran escala. Los resultados indican que la instrumentalización religiosa constituye un fenómeno transnacional y multifacético, con impactos directos en la reconfiguración de las relaciones internacionales y en la ampliación de las crisis humanitarias, lo que demanda respuestas articuladas entre acciones diplomáticas, políticas públicas y cooperación internacional orientadas a la promoción de los derechos humanos y la construcción de escenarios de paz.

Palabras clave: Geopolítica. Instrumentalización Religiosa. Desplazamientos Forçados. Derechos Humanos. Poder.

1 INTRODUCTION

The intensification of forced displacements in the contemporary scenario is intrinsically related to complex dynamics that articulate armed conflicts, territorial disputes, political crises, and identity tensions. In this context, forced migration should not be understood only as a consequence of conjunctural instabilities, but as an expression of power relations that operate in the production of vulnerabilities and the exclusion of certain social groups. Among these factors, the role of religion stands out, which, in addition to its cultural or spiritual dimension, has been mobilized as a power device capable of structuring political practices, legitimizing conflicts, and reconfiguring geopolitical relations on a global scale.

In recent decades, the instrumentalization of faith has been consolidated as a recurrent strategy in contexts of instability, being appropriated by States, political leaders and armed groups as a mechanism of social control and legitimization of violence. From this perspective, religion ceases to act exclusively as a space of symbolic belonging and begins to operate as a technology of power, producing identities, delimiting social boundaries and sustaining narratives of antagonism that reinforce political and territorial projects.

Data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2022) indicate that religious persecution and identity conflicts are among the main vectors of forced displacement on a global scale, contributing to the expansion of humanitarian crises and the significant growth in the number of refugees and internally displaced people. Such a scenario highlights the need to understand the relationship between faith, power and geopolitics as a structuring axis of contemporary dynamics of human mobility.

From a theoretical point of view, this study is based on the conception of religion as a device of power, understood as a heterogeneous set of practices, discourses and institutions that produce norms, regulate behaviors and legitimize relations of domination. From this perspective, according to Foucault (1979), power is exercised through discursive and institutional networks that produce subjects and organize social life. Thus, religion is analyzed as a strategic structure that crosses the political field, contributing to the production of conflicts, the exclusion of social groups and the intensification of forced displacements.

In view of this problem, the research is guided by the following questions: how faith has been mobilized as a mechanism of power in the legitimization of exclusionary practices and violence. And what are the impacts of this mobilization on geopolitical dynamics and migratory flows on a global scale. Based on these questions, the study aims to analyze the instrumentalization of religion as a power device in contemporary geopolitical dynamics, evidencing its effects on the production of conflicts, social exclusions and forced displacements.

In doing so, it seeks to contribute to the deepening of the academic debate on the relations between religion, power, and human mobility, highlighting the centrality of faith in the reconfiguration of the international system.

2 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This study is characterized as a qualitative research, since it is dedicated to the interpretation of social, political and economic phenomena related to forced displacements in the context of the contemporary migration crisis. It is also an exploratory investigation, whose objective is to deepen the understanding of the relationships between geopolitical conflicts, instrumentalization of religion and human mobility, as discussed in the theoretical framework.

The research was conducted based on a literature review, understood as a fundamental procedure for the construction of the theoretical and analytical framework of the study. Such an approach allows us to critically examine the relations between religion, power, and forced displacement, based on academic productions, reports from international organizations, and institutional documents.

To this end, sources such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the World Bank are used in order to contextualize data, migratory trends and contemporary geopolitical dynamics. In addition, international treaties and legislation related to migration and human rights are analyzed, seeking to understand the role of the international community in the management of forced displacement.

This methodological approach makes it possible to articulate the theoretical assumptions, especially the understanding of religion as a device of power, with the analysis of empirical processes, contributing to a critical reading of the dynamics that structure the contemporary migratory crisis.

3 RELIGION AS AN INSTRUMENT OF POWER

3.1 FAITH AS A POLITICAL INSTRUMENT AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Throughout history, religion has played an ambivalent role in social and political conflicts, acting both as a cohesive force and as an element of legitimization of violence. In this context, its understanding as an instrument of power proves to be fundamental for the analysis of contemporary dynamics. As highlighted by Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), "some of the most heinous crimes in history were committed in the name of a

supposedly superior cause" (Annan, 2001), highlighting the risks associated with the instrumentalization of faith as a justification for practices of domination and exclusion.

Although religious principles, in their doctrinal basis, are often associated with values such as compassion, solidarity, and reconciliation, their strategic mobilization by political, state, and institutional actors can contribute to the legitimization of violent and exclusionary practices. In this sense, religion, as a device of power, operates in the production of discourses that define social norms and delimit boundaries between groups, directly influencing the organization of social and political relations.

Contemporary cases illustrate this dynamic. As international news reports and human rights reports indicate, countries such as Saudi Arabia have used religious grounds to justify practices such as repression of minorities, physical punishment, and restrictions on civil rights, often under the argument of maintaining moral order (Human Rights Watch, 2017; The Washington Post, 2015). Such practices show the articulation between religion and power in the legitimization of exclusionary policies.

The use of faith as a mechanism of social control is manifested through the production and dissemination of normative discourses that guide individual and collective behaviors. In many contexts, religious authorities exert significant influence in the construction of narratives that reinforce opposition between groups, contributing to the dissemination of discourses of intolerance and exclusion. Reports by Human Rights Watch (2017) show that in Saudi Arabia's education system, official content promotes discriminatory views towards religious minorities such as Shiites, Christians, and Jews, classifying them as "infidels" or "deviants." This discursive construction reinforces processes of social marginalization and legitimizes practices of institutional exclusion.

Religions, in general, structure normative systems based on moral and ethical codes, often based on texts considered sacred, such as the Bible and the Quran. These references, over time, influence not only religious practices, but also the social and legal organization of different societies. Historically, the articulation between religion and power has contributed to the consolidation of social norms, including the definition of gender roles and family structures. However, the internalization of these values occurs in a complex way, being mediated by socialization processes that involve family, community and religious institutions. The problem arises when such principles are mobilized in an imposing and excluding way, especially by fundamentalist groups, which seek to establish absolute truths and promote radicalization processes.

In contemporary times, the instrumentalization of religion by governments, political groups and extremist organizations shows its strategic potential in the legitimization of actions and in the exercise of social control. Faith, in this context, also operates through symbolic mechanisms of reward and punishment, such as promises of salvation or threats of condemnation, reinforcing adherence to norms and values. In addition, religion plays a central role in building social cohesion and collective identity, by promoting the sharing of beliefs, rituals, and symbols. However, this same process can contribute to the formation of rigid social boundaries, based on the distinction between "us" and "them", often mobilized in contexts of geopolitical conflict, ethnic rivalries and community tensions (Castro, 2012).

In summary, religion is configured as a structuring element of contemporary social dynamics, acting simultaneously as a source of meaning and as an instrument of power. Its capacity for symbolic and social mobilization allows both the promotion of humanitarian actions and the legitimization of conflicts, evidencing its relevance in political disputes and in the transformations of the international system.

3.2 RELIGIOUS EXCLUSION AND IDENTITY CONFLICTS

Religious exclusion is one of the most forceful expressions of the instrumentalization of faith as a device of power, operating in the production of social hierarchies, in the delimitation of belongings, and in the legitimization of practices of violence and control. More than an isolated phenomenon, it is a structuring mechanism of contemporary dynamics of conflict, in which religion is mobilized as a political language capable of defining who can or cannot occupy certain social spaces.

Recent data reinforce this centrality. A study by the independent human rights organization focused on Saudi Arabia (ALQST for Human Rights), based on information from the UNHCR, points out that 46% of Saudi citizens who requested asylum between 2023 and 2024 did so for reasons related to religious repression. Such evidence reveals that the denial of freedom of belief not only restricts individual rights, but also acts as a structuring factor in contemporary migratory flows. In this sense, forced migration is no longer understood only as a consequence of armed conflicts, but is analyzed as a product of power devices that operate in the systematic exclusion of subjects.

From the Foucaultian perspective, this dynamic can be interpreted as part of a regime of truth in which religious discourses are mobilized to produce and legitimize social norms. As Foucault (1979) points out, power is exercised through networks that produce subjects and regulate behaviors, which allows us to understand how institutionalized religious practices can

function as technologies of social control. Thus, religious repression is not limited to the prohibition of beliefs, but involves the production of subjectivities adjusted to the norms imposed by political-religious structures. This logic is particularly evident in authoritarian regimes, in which religious dissent is interpreted as a threat to the state order.

According to reports by Human Rights Watch (2023), countries such as Iran, China, and North Korea use religion as an instrument of surveillance and repression, setting strict limits on freedom of expression and belief. In these contexts, the control of the religious field acts as an extension of political power, evidencing the fusion between state authority and moral normativity. This interpretation dialogues directly with the contributions of Talal Asad (2003), when he argues that religion, far from constituting an autonomous sphere, is deeply imbricated in historical power relations. For the author, religious discourses are shaped by specific political contexts, and are often used to sustain projects of domination and exclusion. Thus, religion not only reflects social reality, but actively participates in its production.

In addition to internal control, the instrumentalization of religion is also manifested in the intensification of geopolitical conflicts, especially when associated with the construction of antagonistic collective identities. In the case of Yemen, for example, the division between Shiite and Sunni groups goes beyond the theological dimension, being mobilized as a legitimizing element of political alliances and military interventions. In this scenario, religion functions as a language of war, giving moral meaning to violence and hindering processes of mediation and conflict resolution (Armstrong, 2001). This dynamic shows that contemporary conflicts cannot be understood only from territorial or economic disputes, but must also be analyzed as symbolic disputes, in which religious identities are mobilized to produce differentiation, exclusion, and antagonism. As a consequence, entire populations are subjected to contexts of prolonged instability, resulting in large-scale forced displacement.

In Sudan, for example, the articulation between religious, ethnic, and political factors has contributed to the perpetuation of cycles of violence, highlighting the complexity of contemporary conflicts. These scenarios reinforce the idea that the instrumentalization of faith not only intensifies violence, but also compromises the conditions of social and economic stability, increasing the vulnerability of already marginalized groups.

Data from the UNHCR Global Trends report (2023), which points to more than 110 million displaced people in the world, show the magnitude of this crisis. In this context, religion emerges as a central element in the understanding of contemporary migratory flows, not only as a cultural factor, but as a political device that structures processes of exclusion and displacement.

Thus, religious exclusion must be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon, articulated with power dynamics that operate in the production of subjects, in the legitimization of violence and in the reorganization of geopolitical space. Such an approach allows us to overcome superficial analyses and understand the contemporary migration crisis as a result of structural processes deeply rooted in the relations between religion, power and identity.

4 CONFLICTS, PERSECUTIONS, FORCED DISPLACEMENTS AND MIGRATION CRISIS

4.1 SOCIO-POLITICAL CHALLENGES OF CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION

In the contemporary scenario, migratory flows have shown significant growth, driven by multiple structural factors, such as armed conflicts, ethnic-religious persecutions, socioeconomic crises, climate change, and environmental disasters. However, beyond their quantitative dimension, such displacements must be understood as the result of power dynamics that operate in the production of vulnerabilities and in the exclusion of certain social groups.

In this sense, the contemporary migratory crisis is not only configured as a consequence of conjunctural instabilities, but as an expression of broader historical and political processes, in which the instrumentalization of religion, as discussed in the previous sections, plays an important role in the legitimization of conflicts and the production of forced displacements. Thus, migration emerges as a phenomenon intrinsically linked to geopolitical disputes and strategies of social control.

The intensification of large-scale migratory flows imposes significant challenges on contemporary societies, especially in destination countries, where the arrival of vulnerable population contingents tends to put pressure on essential public systems, such as health, education, housing, and sanitation, as they claim (Verme; Schuettler, 2019). However, such impacts should not be analyzed in isolation, but understood within social and institutional structures previously marked by inequalities.

From this perspective, migration does not in itself constitute the origin of social tensions, but acts as a catalyst for pre-existing fragilities. As they point out (Castles; De Haas; Miller, 2014), the presence of migrants can be perceived as a threat to cultural cohesion, especially in contexts where national identities are constructed in an exclusionary way. This perception, often fueled by political and media discourses, contributes to the spread of xenophobic practices, discrimination, and violence.

The absence of effective public integration policies intensifies this scenario, favoring processes of social exclusion and socio-spatial segregation. UNHCR reports (2023) indicate

the growth of manifestations of intolerance against refugees, especially in European countries, associated with the rise of far-right political movements that instrumentalize migration as an element of ideological mobilization.

4.2 ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION CRISIS

From an economic point of view, the impacts of migration are ambivalent. On the one hand, as the World Bank (2022) highlights, "well-managed migration can benefit both countries of origin and destination", contributing to economic dynamism, workforce renewal, and demographic balance. On the other hand, when it occurs in a disorderly way, it can intensify disputes for resources, put pressure on public services, and expand perceptions of socioeconomic insecurity.

This ambivalence shows that the effects of migration depend, to a large extent, on the structural conditions and governance strategies adopted by States. Countries such as Italy, Greece and Turkey, for example, when facing intense migratory flows in contexts of economic fragility, experience increased social tensions, reflecting the difficulty of articulating migratory policies and institutional capacities.

In the Global South, such challenges take on even more complex contours. In contexts marked by historical inequalities and institutional limitations, inadequate management of migratory flows tends to reinforce discourses of scarcity and competition for resources, in which migrants are often represented as threats to local populations (World Bank, 2022). This discursive construction, in line with the Foucaultian perspective, can be understood as part of a regime of truth that produces and legitimizes specific forms of exclusion.

Thus, the contemporary migration crisis must be analyzed as a multidimensional phenomenon, in which economic, political, and cultural factors are articulated with power devices that operate in the production of inequalities and in the regulation of human mobility. Migration, in this context, is not only a movement of physical displacement, but an expression of the power relations that structure the international system.

5 RELIGION, GEOPOLITICS, REPRESSIONS AND CONTEMPORARY SCENARIOS

5.1 DYNAMICS OF EXCLUSION AND POLITICAL LEGITIMATION BY RELIGION

In the contemporary context, even in the face of the secularization processes observed in various societies, religion remains a strategic element in power dynamics and international relations. Its presence in the geopolitical field evidences not only the permanence of traditional

structures of authority, but also the reconfiguration of mechanisms of control, exclusion, and political legitimation in a global system marked by interdependence and the intensification of conflicts.

From this perspective, religion should be understood not only as a cultural or spiritual dimension, but as a power device that operates in the production of discourses, in the construction of identities and in the organization of geopolitical relations, as discussed throughout chapter 3. Its instrumentalization by States and political actors reveals the centrality of faith in the configuration of contemporary scenarios of conflict and cooperation.

In the geopolitical field, the instrumentalization of religion is configured as a recurrent strategy of political legitimation and consolidation of collective identities. By mobilizing symbolic elements of faith, States and political groups produce narratives that delimit boundaries between belonging and exclusion, structuring the opposition between an "us" and an "other".

This process can be understood in the light of the concept of symbolic borders, developed by Lamont (2015), which refers to the social mechanisms of distinction and categorization between groups. In the international context, such borders are often constructed on the basis of religious, cultural and ideological differences, and are mobilized to reinforce internal cohesion and justify external policies.

Religion can act as a resource for political mobilization, especially in contexts of instability, in which collective identities are instrumentalized to legitimize conflicts and practices of violence (Brubaker, 2015). In this sense, faith ceases to be just an expression of belief to assume a strategic function in the production of antagonisms and in the definition of geopolitical alliances.

This dynamic is particularly evident in regions such as the Middle East, where tensions between Sunnis and Shiites transcend the religious field, articulating themselves with political, territorial and economic disputes. Thus, religion operates as a political language that confers moral legitimacy to state action and violence, reinforcing polarizations and hindering mediation processes.

5.2 THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Although religion plays an important role in several contemporary conflicts, its performance must be analyzed in conjunction with political, economic, and strategic factors. In this sense, the religious dimension is not an isolated cause, but is part of a complex set of elements that structure international relations.

The civil war in Syria exemplifies this complexity, as sectarian tensions intertwine with regional and global geopolitical interests, resulting in a multifaceted conflict (United Nations Country Team, 2024). Religion, in this context, acts simultaneously as an element of identity mobilization and as a discursive justification for political and military interventions.

The instrumentalization of faith also reveals contradictions in the foreign policies of states, especially with regard to the promotion of values such as human rights, democracy and religious freedom. The coexistence between universalist normative discourses and practices guided by strategic interests is often observed, evidencing the selectivity of international action.

In this scenario, the so-called religious diplomacy emerges as an ambivalent field: at the same time that it can favor intercultural dialogue and conflict mediation, it can also be used as an instrument of political influence and the reproduction of power asymmetries in the international system.

5.3 FAITH AND THE REDRAWING OF POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC BOUNDARIES

Beyond symbolic borders, religion also exerts influence on the configuration of territorial borders and the reorganization of geopolitical space. In various historical contexts, religious criteria were mobilized in the delimitation of states and territories, contributing to the consolidation of political identities and the emergence of lasting conflicts.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 is an emblematic example of this process. The creation of India and Pakistan on the basis of distinct religious identities resulted in mass forced displacement and episodes of extreme violence, the repercussions of which remain to this day (Al Jazeera, 2017; Britannica, 2025). In this case, religion acted as an organizing principle of the political space, evidencing its centrality in the definition of borders and belongings.

Another significant example is Jerusalem, where religious, political, and territorial dimensions overlap intensely. The city, considered sacred by different religious traditions, is one of the main sources of tension in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The dispute for its control highlights how religion can be mobilized to legitimize territorial claims and reinforce collective identities in contexts of prolonged conflict.

In the context of globalization, the expanded circulation of people, ideas and beliefs intensifies both the possibilities for interreligious dialogue and the conflicts of values. Multicultural societies face the challenge of mediating religious differences in contexts marked by inequalities and identity tensions, requiring new forms of governance and social coexistence.

In this scenario, religion reveals its ambivalent character: at the same time that it can foster exclusions and conflicts, it also plays an important role in the promotion of humanitarian actions and international cooperation initiatives. Faith-based organizations have played a significant role in supporting migrants and refugees, offering material and symbolic assistance in different regions of the world (UNHCR, 2025).

Finally, the relationship between religion and forced displacement highlights the complexity of contemporary dynamics. Religious conflicts, persecution and sectarian tensions continue to drive migration flows on a global scale, while religious actors actively participate in humanitarian responses to these crises. Such duality reinforces the need to understand religion as a central element in the geopolitical and migratory dynamics of the twenty-first century.

6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present study sought to understand how religion has been instrumentalized in contemporary political and geopolitical dynamics, evidencing its role as a power device in the production of conflicts, social exclusions and forced displacements. It was based on the assumption that, although faith is historically associated with values of solidarity, belonging and social cohesion, its strategic mobilization by state, political and institutional actors inserts it in circuits of power that produce hierarchies, legitimize violence and reconfigure social and territorial spaces.

Throughout the analysis, it was found that religion plays an ambivalent role: at the same time that it strengthens collective identities and promotes social bonds, it can also be instrumentalized to establish symbolic boundaries between groups, reinforcing dynamics of exclusion and antagonism. This process, in line with the theoretical framework adopted, shows that faith should not be understood only as an individual or spiritual experience, but as a structuring element of the power relations that cross the social and political field.

With regard to the dynamics of conflict and human mobility, it was found that religious instrumentalization directly contributes to the intensification of persecutions, wars and humanitarian crises. The data analyzed demonstrate that the violation of religious freedom is a relevant factor in the production of forced displacements, evidencing the intersection between faith, human rights and international migration. In this sense, the contemporary migration crisis must be understood not only as a demographic phenomenon, but as an expression of structural processes of exclusion and violence.

The analysis also showed that religion goes beyond the internal scope of States, projecting itself significantly in international relations. Its role in the construction of identities, the

legitimization of alliances and the definition of territorial borders reinforces its role in the reconfiguration of the international system. Thus, the geopolitics of faith reveals itself as a central element for understanding contemporary conflicts and power dynamics on a global scale.

From a theoretical point of view, the study contributes to the broadening of discussions on religion in the social sciences and international relations, by evidencing its permanence as a strategic, and not a residual, dimension of contemporary political disputes. Such an approach reinforces the need for analyses that consider faith in its historical, symbolic and political dimensions, articulating it with the processes of power production and exclusion.

On the practical level, the results point to the urgency of public policies and international strategies that address not only the humanitarian consequences of forced displacement, but also their structural causes. This entails recognizing the role of religion in legitimizing conflicts and developing mechanisms that promote religious freedom, intercultural mediation, and the protection of human rights.

It is important to highlight, however, the ambivalent character of religion. If, on the one hand, it can be mobilized as an instrument of domination and exclusion, on the other hand, it also constitutes a space of solidarity, mediation and reconstruction of social bonds. The role of religious organizations in humanitarian actions shows their potential in promoting reception and international cooperation, especially in crisis contexts.

In summary, the instrumentalization of religion is configured as a multifaceted phenomenon, the understanding of which is essential for the analysis of contemporary dynamics of conflict, power and human mobility. The evidence presented allows us to affirm that faith, when politically appropriated, can intensify processes of exclusion and displacement, but also, when mobilized in its ethical and humanitarian dimension, contribute to the construction of paths of dialogue and reconciliation.

Finally, this study is not exhaustive in itself, but opens possibilities for future investigations, especially with regard to the role of transnational religious actors, the relationship between religion and global governance, and strategies for promoting peace in multicultural contexts. Given the complexity of the phenomenon, it is essential to expand comparative and interdisciplinary approaches, capable of deepening the understanding of the multiple articulations between faith, power and geopolitics in the contemporary world.

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