

Call for Papers:
Special Issue of *Studia Gilsoniana*
On the Relationship, If Any, Between Religion and Economics
(Religion as the Basis and Measure of Economics)

In her novel *Atlas Shrugged*, Ayn Rand famously, and provocatively, upended the Gospel teaching about the love of money being the root of evil to assert that morality was the root of money. In a speech in that novel put into the mouth of fictional character Francisco d'Anconia, Rand outlines her theory that trust among market participants is what gives the medium of exchange, money, its value.

Rand was an atheist, and in her other works she dismissed any religious component to the morality in which she rooted her Objectivist philosophy, the grounding for the morality-as-underpinning-of-money theory she advances in *Atlas Shrugged*. However, a deeper study of economics, morality, and religion—as well as of history, culture, and philosophy—reveals that the question may be more complicated than Rand assumed.

For example, the late Prof. Clayton Christensen of Harvard Business School argued, such as in the short lecture linked below, that religion was indispensable to capitalism. To press the argument farther, it might also be said that religious beliefs are foundational to morality in any market—that, without religion, which teaches the dignity of the human person and the need to view others as deserving of fair-dealing and respect, there can be no viable economic activity of any kind.



<https://tinyurl.com/y22autbs>

Yet, despite the wide circulation of views similar to those expressed by Prof. Christensen, modern economics is viewed as a positive scientific discipline whose material aspects, and more recently psychological aspects, are measurable. Thus, how could religion be indispensable to capitalism as an economic system designed to create material wealth? Prof. Christensen seems to suggest that the normative aspects of economic activity are perhaps even more important than the science of economics today. Is this a proper role for religion to play? How can the philosophical materialism of economics be squared, if at all, with religious beliefs?

In the spirit of Prof. Christensen's bold vision for a religiously-grounded capitalism, in this volume we invite scholars to contribute papers on the relationship, if any, between economics and religion. Does religion bolster markets? Do religious people behave more morally in business? Is it possible to have a purely secular morality govern economic exchange? Thinkers as diverse as Thomas Aquinas, Max Weber, Ludwig von Mises, Uzawa Hirofumi, Giorgio Agamben, and Francisco Suarez have pondered the question of religion and economics. Do their arguments, or the teachings of any religious tradition, help frame counter-positions for thinking beyond Rand's anti-objectivist Objectivism and thereby recovering a healthy understanding of the human person as economic agent?

Papers of around 8,000 to 10,000 words are welcome. Please submit to Marvin Peláez (marvinpelaez119@gmail.com) and Jason Morgan (morgan.jason.michael@gmail.com) by June 1, 2021 for consideration for inclusion in the special edition of *Studia Gilsoniana* on religion and economics.