



New Multicultural Identities in Europe: Religion and Ethnicity in Secular Societies

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Good Samaritan), but also refers to foundational concepts from other traditions such as Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. One of the strongest chapters is Chapter 5 where Shannahan gives himself permission to develop a limited number of ideas from four thinkers (Schreiter, Bretherton, Beckford, and Baker) and meld them into a sustained synthesis which articulates what he calls “the hermeneutics of liberative difference” (143).

However, as the above observation suggests, there are some flaws in the overall delivery of the book which impede a fuller impact. One flaw is the rather breathless and rhetorical way in which Shannahan introduces ideas and thinkers, with little space for nuanced thought and argument. There is also a tendency to be rather loose with key terminologies. At certain points, Shannahan asserts that the UK public space is ‘post-religious’, but later in the volume uses the concept of ‘post-secular’. Neither of these terms are explicated or subjected to critical scrutiny and they seem to contradict each other, which adds confusion to the overall analysis.

Given Shannahan’s previous experience at the coal face of community development and his work on the Bromford Cube (an art installation depicting the experiences and imaginaries of gangs in deprived areas of Birmingham), a key omission is the absence of close-textured examples of faith-based community development, by which to demonstrate how a liberative theology of community organising works in practice. This means that the debate tends to stay at the level of abstract ideas rather than embedded principles. This is a shame because what, one senses, Shannahan is trying to do is to move the theology of community organising away from a one-size-fits-all view of say Catholic Social Teaching or Radical Orthodoxy into a more empirically nuanced and inter-disciplinary space.

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New Multicultural Identities in Europe: Religion and Ethnicity in Secular Societies

ERKAN TOĞUŞLU, JOHAN LEMAN & ISMAIL MESUT SEZGIN, eds., 2014

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Current Issues in Islam

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There are many books on religion in the diversity debate so that, initially, readers may approach *New Multicultural Identities in Europe* with reasonable caution. But very quickly, readers will be attracted by the novelty of the

interpretative framework and the focus of the different contributions. This book offers a well informed and theorised hermeneutics of religious diversity in Europe, making clear that context and political environment drive most of the social boundaries and limits of religious identification. From a normative point of view, this book presents the key elements of a theory of religious diversity in Europe. The new theory takes into account the circumstances of diversity in a post-migrant age, where people live with more than one cultural identity and share their religion with other people with different religions. New generations interpret their own religion very differently from their parents, even distance themselves from the original national interpretation. The liberal principle defended in this book is the autonomy of religious identification. The new multiculturalism this book tries to construct is not about the autonomy of religious communities as Michael A. Helfand argues, but a more individualistic approach of religious identification. The book proclaims that individual autonomy prevails over a community's self-government.

The vision of multiculturalism represented focuses on the ongoing debate about the *new multiculturalism*. The contributors address the theoretical political challenges of today, providing new dimensions and perspectives of religious diversity in Europe. For the authors, Europe's new multiculturalism refers to manifestations of identities in a plural post-secular Europe as processes framed by ethnic-religious intersections. Thus, in advancing claims of the new multiculturalism, minority groups typically focus on their ability to preserve the integrity of communal rules and obligations, even if they clash with majority norms. The 'new multiculturalism' debate is different from the one conceptualized by Helfand, for whom multiculturalism is a fight to incorporate marginalised groups into the public sphere, in that it is an attempt by minority groups to exit the public sphere.

In the emerging debate about *new and old multiculturalism*, the authors of this volume develop new dimensions of religious minority groups, concentrating on their autonomy and self-governance. Philosophically, the new European multiculturalism conceptualises the complexity of new religious identities as a result of the interaction between different religious groups. This is why the authors focus on borders and transnationalism, as new empirical frameworks which need to be incorporated in the new vision of multiculturalism. Boundaries mark the limits of group awareness. Changing identity and human mobility drive the new multiculturalism. Thus, after spreading into new geographies, the locally constituted ethnic identity is dis-corporated from the existing original identity. Immigration and mobility make it possible that individuals exchange their identities, even though the boundaries between groups are maintained in terms of cultural difference. Crossing borders is part of identity displacement. Boundaries are always changing and transforming, challenging fixed identities.

Accordingly, the debates about multiculturalism of the late twentieth century—and of the early twenty-first century—have followed the same script, centred on such questions as the minority representation in higher education, the permissibility of religious symbols in state schools and government properties, the incorporation of religious views in public discourse. The shift from old to new multiculturalism represents an important change in how

politics conceptualises religious groups. Global flows, multiple identities, and cross-border networks represented by transnational migrant communities critically test assumptions that the nation–state functions as a kind of container for social, economic, and political processes. Liberal multiculturalists have struggled to address the dilemmas of the new multiculturalism, trying to promote some degree of autonomy for religious and cultural groups without threatening the fundamental rights of their members.

As Stephen Castles (5) points out, conventional multiculturalism generally “does not question the territory principle” and “maintains the idea of a primary belonging to one society and a loyalty to just one nation–state”. Despite their conscious anti-essentialism, the newer interpretations of multiculturalism also perpetuate the model of the nation–state as a territorial container. The book incorporates the transnational dimension into the new European multiculturalism debate, having religious minorities as a reference framework. The past 20 years have witnessed the rise of transnationalism, stressing the attachments migrants maintain to people, traditions, and movements located outside the boundaries in which they reside (see e.g. Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc; Vertovec). Far from revealing ambiguous loyalties or unbridgeable cultural distance, transnational religious loyalties have challenged the national polity. The book emphasises that identity is never only about location, but inescapably about displacement and re-location, the experience of sustaining and mediating multiple affiliations and attachments. The transnational challenges to multiculturalism (old or new) suggest that a real recognition of ‘diversity’ includes not just easily conceived notions of cultural difference or community belonging, but also diversity of attachments and belongings, including those that are outside the limits of the nation–state in which individuals reside.

The contributors show what the post-migrant European landscape is like. How to understand Europe’s post-migrant Islam, on the one hand, and indigenous, anti-Islamic movements, on the other hand? The concluding argument is that ethnicity is self-ascribed and flexible, not imposed by others. Religious boundaries are places of social interactions and this book reacts against the process of ethnicising people, considering ethnicity as a way of categorising groups. Religious communities which have their origins in one context become religious de-ethnicised movements once people leave their origins and settle into another context. In theorising about a *new European multiculturalism*, the book formulates a liberal critique of the way the multicultural debate has treated religion, always related to nationality and ethnic identification, without asking people about their religious experience in their everyday lives in a context that has not been constructed with this assumption.

This collection is valuable in other respects. For instance, in spite of recognizing that identity is over-used and expanded so much that it has lost its specificity, the book is about social change and ethnic-religious self-identification. Its premise is that, from a policy point of view, given people’s nationalities and culture of origin, we cannot condemn them to self-identify with a fixed category of religious identity—we cannot impose our ethnic categories on others. As the editors point out in the Introduction, identities are now shaped by the new circumstances of de-territorialisation.

Three main points are made in the chapters: a) multiple loyalties and de-territorialised identities are formed during daily life practices, discourses, and policies; b) transnational subjects have a direct influence and impact on framing the post-secular new multiculturalism which goes beyond borders, c) de-territorial identifications challenge mainstreaming identities and societies and activate anti-religious reactions to the new multiculturalism, especially in the public sphere. The re-casting of religious change in Europe requires more studies in the field to show how transnational religious loyalties and identifications are re-surfacing. This has an impact on post-secular Europe. Although the contributors to this volume focus on Islam, some attention is paid to Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. Empirical and theoretical work is done in Turkey, Germany, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, Poland, Norway, Sweden, and Belgium, shaping the perspectives on the religious-ethnic manifestations of identity in the transnational context of contemporary Europe.

There is perhaps an assumption that needs to be stressed in this volume and a lack of treatment that could be the next step in the debate on the new multiculturalism. The contributions deal with young people rather than parents. Young generations may deserve special attention, since they challenge the relationship between the self-identification of parents, who have crossed borders and changed their identities, and children socialised in the context of reception and mainstreaming identity. It is probably here that the intersection of identity, religion, and ethnicity becomes complex.

As a dimension of the new multiculturalism is interaction among religious minorities and people with different religious backgrounds, there is a link between the concept of the new multiculturalism and the current debate about interculturalism in Europe (see Wood and Landry; Cattle; Barrett; Zapata-Barrero). Certainly, interculturalism as a paradigm in the new European multicultural age could be explored, but, beyond these considerations, this book has the potential of becoming a seminal work for this emerging debate in post-secular and post-migrant Europe.

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Islam and Public Controversy in Europe

NILÜFER GÖLE, ed., 2013

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Global Connections

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This collective work, the fruit of two conferences held in Paris, in 2011 and 2012, under the auspices of the research project "EuroPublicIslam" directed by Nilüfer Göle, seeks to go beyond traditional approaches to immigration and integration in order to account for demands by Muslims for public recognition of their religious particularisms. The task is two-fold. It consists, on the one hand, of describing an historical moment, the post-immigration period beginning in the late 1980s and continuing to the present day, in which Islam became a criterion of social distinction for third-generation immigrants, and, on the other hand, of developing conceptual tools for understanding this phenomenon.

In her introductory essay, Göle adopts a constructivist approach to build on Habermas's classic definition of 'public space' as the sphere where private interests are discussed as matters of common concern. The public space is not a neutral zone instituted by a higher authority and governed by pre-defined rules, but rather an arena where new social actors improvise to compensate for unequal access to limited resources distributed according to the tacit norms of the majority. It is therefore in the nature of the public space to generate controversy. Although religiously motivated social dissension has been portrayed as a pathological symptom of failed integration, sectarianism or fundamentalism, Göle suggests that it is possible to understand such behaviour as a mode of public agency, even an act of citizenship. Indeed, many of the case studies included in this volume corroborate the view that religious activism promotes participation in the public space and, ultimately, the secularisation of concepts that originated in narrowly confessional contexts.

In her detailed description of the day-to-day working of a sharia council in Birmingham, Julie Billaud notes that the imam does not systematically attend all sessions, but delegates his duties to a variety of other professionals, including a doctoral candidate in Islamic Studies, a medical doctor, a retired pediatrician, and a layperson. This division of labour parallels another trend that sees some sharia councils leaving the premises of the mosque to relocate to buildings which are not identified as 'religious'. The move from holy place to public space is also attested by the Muslim performing artists studied by