PAUL HEDGES AND ANNA HALAFOFF

Globalisation and Multifaith Societies

Introduction

We live in a world where faiths and cultures can meet with increasing ease. Whether it be directly through transportation of a kind our ancestors could barely have imagined, or virtually through dramatic advances in communication and information technology, a multitude of cultures, religions, beliefs and practices that are not our own are within close reach. More than this, it is not simply that we, in the so-called West, can access these diverse traditions, but they are now living alongside each other as part of our communities. This latter phenomena is not new as almost every society throughout history has known of, been in active contact with, and been influenced by external social, religious, and philosophical systems. Nevertheless, the sheer scope and *awareness* of this diversity certainly seems new, at least within the Western world. As a result of processes of globalisation,[1] we now live in multifaith societies. The development and impact of this phenomenon is what we shall explore in this chapter.

We will proceed in three main stages. First, we will look at the development of religious diversity within the Western world, focusing on the UK and Australia as examples of "Old" and "New" World societies but also including broader contexts. Second, we will discuss the development of multifaith awareness locally and globally. Third, we will consider the social aspects of living in a multifaith society. Finally, we will conclude with some thoughts and reflections on these developments.

The Development of Religious Diversity

The Western world may be seen to have been conceived of as a self-conscious part of Christendom. This applies both to the "Old World" of north-western Europe as well as the "New Worlds" of North America, Australia, and New Zealand; however, to some degree a different dynamic exists in the latter. The idea of a Christian nation applied very strongly in the traditional thinking of nearly all parts of the Western world until recently and this concept needs to be

[1] There are many explanations for the term "globalization"; however, it generally refers to our increasingly mobile and interconnected world. Because space does not permit us to explore the various and contested ways the term is used and understood, we therefore refer the reader to the comprehensive discussions in: Banchoff 2008 and Held and McGrew 2007.

contextualised within historical developments in order to be adequately understood.

The religious diversity that characterized the Roman Empire was eroded in the centuries following Constantine (272-337 CE) as the Christian option became normative throughout Europe. Certainly, a Jewish presence existed, but within the ideology of Christendom at this time this reinforced rather than undermined the sense of a single religious identity pervading society, given the strong historical and biblical links between Judaism and Christianity.[2] Meanwhile, older religious currents, what would have been termed "paganism," remained, and at times heretical groups challenged dominant Christian structures, yet it is fair to say that in most of North Western Europe this did not inhibit the sense of a monoreligious Christian awareness. Certainly, in countries such as the UK, the sense of Christian identity was strong in the nineteenth century (Cox, 2012: 433). Europe had come to know of religious groups outside its own boundaries for several centuries, but for the most part, and certainly in north-western Europe the attitude of Anglo-Euro-Christian cultural and religious supremacy, propagated globally with missionary zeal, acted to strengthen Christian identity. Despite the fact that large sections of society were not Christian, or at least unchurched, the primary British understanding of itself at this time was as a Christian country.[3] What religious minorities there were impacted little, if at all, on this understanding.

This sense of Christian nationhood was exported into the British Empire and the colonies (the same applies, to varying degrees, to the colonies of other European powers). The building of churches in the cities of the empire served to underline the idea that Christian civilization (the two were often seen as inseparable; Fitzgerald 2007: 118ff, Twells, 2009: 4-7) was being planted in new ground. In countries where major religious civilizations were recognized, India and China being two primary examples, it was clear that the Christian identity was one that belonged primarily to the colonial community. However, elsewhere, and Australia is a good example; British colonizers generally believed that there was no indigenous civilization, and the country was initially envisioned as a *terra nullius* (land without owners) upon which a Christian nation could be built. Likewise, the early American colonies, and the continuing sense of identity, of the United States as being "one nation under God" is represen-

[2] This also occurred as many Christians perceived Jews as 'failed' Christians, those who had not recognized their Messiah (Miller 2008: 181-2)

[3] The Census of 1851 was felt to be shocking in showing that only 51% of the population was Anglican and only 60% regularly attended church. However, it did little to shake the foundations of the Anglican state church in the UK. On some issues relating to this, see Cox, 2012: 433ff.

tative of this attitude. In much of the Western world, an "Old-World" sense of the existence of a Christian nation was widespread. As such, whether we speak of the United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden, Germany, or the United States, we find countries which have traditionally understood themselves to be Christian nations, as until relatively recently they did not recognise or respect the significance of indigenous cultures and ways of knowing or religious minorities such as Jewish or Asian communities that are pre-existing traditions or share long histories with majority Christian inhabitants. We will now address the British and Australian experience of religious diversity, and much of this discussion applies in some broad terms, although in different ways, in other Western societies.

In the UK, a Jewish community has existed for centuries. While expelled by King Edward I in 1290, Jews were present in the UK from the seventeenth century and no doubt earlier (Campbell, 1994). Meanwhile, various Christian groups were found in the UK, giving an internal Christian diversity, yet, at least until the nineteenth century, many of these were not seen as part of the sense of English Christian identity (the disputes with Roman Catholicism are notable examples).[4] Also, pre-Christian "pagan" practices co-existed in many places, and the continuity (even recent revival or rediscovery) of practices such as sacred wells and well-dressing are suggestive of this.[5] However, the nineteenth century saw increasing diversity with Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs and Hindus arriving in the UK. Apart from a few high profile visitors, like the Hindu reformer Rammohan Roy or the Sikh prince Dalip Singh, they were mostly merchants and sailors found in small semi-permanent groups in port cities (undoubtedly some had come as visitors in previous centuries but we lack detailed records). For instance, Chinese seamen were found in cities like the northern port of Liverpool from the early nineteenth century but not as permanent settled communities, and we know little, if anything, of their religious

[4] See Parsons 1998. Until the nineteenth century Roman Catholics, and many other non-Anglicans, were barred from universities, holding public office, positions in the army and similar. Still today, of course, Roman Catholics cannot ascend to the throne, nor can the British monarch marry one.

[5] As Ronald Hutton suggests, linking contemporary practices back to pre-Christian roots is difficult and much evidence was "forged" over the last few centuries (Hutton 2008). Nevertheless, many practices and sites clearly go back to pre-Christian times in relation to such things as sacred wells or the Green Man images found in medieval churches, indicating a co-existence of traditions. In Christian terms it might be seen as a "baptism" of pre-Christian perspectives, for others a much clearer case of popular religiosity existing for many centuries "beneath" or alongside the orthodox Christian regime may be suggested (for a discussion of "pagan" remnants in medieval Christianity see Hutton 2011).

beliefs and practices.[6] Indeed, it was probably Muslims who first settled as a permanent group, and it is a surprise to most that the first mosque in the UK dates to 1889, being built in Liverpool. Notably, though, the literature on the growth of the UK as a multifaith society tends to ignore these early groups, with most mention of early Buddhists, for instance, being focused on Western converts (Weller 2008: 39-40; Franklin 2008). Certainly, at this stage, it is probably fair to say that these groups were viewed either as temporary "aliens" or as not part of British society, and so any sense of multifaith awareness was more focused on high profile converts like Christmas Humphreys (a leading London barrister who became a Buddhist) than on immigrant communities.

The growth of religious groups beyond Christianity in the UK became a major factor on society, though—before this the numbers were statistically insignificant—after WWII with immigrants coming, in the main, from the former colonies, bringing large communities of Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus as the major religious groupings. The table below (Table 1) sets out the current state of religious diversity. Before 2001 no accurate figures exist as census data did not collect religious affiliation. It is therefore useful to look at these figures in relation to immigration numbers as, while not coterminous, most non-Christians in the UK are from these groups (see Table 2 where for a snapshot the 2001 figures are given). As to the growth of ethnic and cultural diversity, in the 1950s numbers of non-whites in the UK were in the thousands, by 1970 this had grown to about one and three quarter million, and in the 2001 census this figure, including those of mixed race, was over four million, and around seven and a half million in 2011. Despite this, various forms of white ethnicity still account for 86% of the population, down from 91% in 2001. There is certainly a sharp upward growth in the ethnic population and, with it, the broad non-Christian population, although as noted while related they are far from coterminous. It may be noted that in relation to such demographic changes some alarmist media rhetoric sees the white UK population being "swamped" by immigration, but such rhetoric is often based on distorted analysis of the figures, and if it did ever occur would be generations in the future.

Table 1: UK Religious Demographics, 2001, 2011 Census Data

Tradition	**2001 No. (000s)**	**2001 %**	**2011 No. (000s)**	**2011 %**	**No. +/-**	**% +/-**
Christian	37,338	71.7	33,243	59.3	-4,095	-12.4
No religion	7,709	14.8	14,097	25.1	6,388	10.3

[6] The first known Chinese person to come to the UK, in the eighteenth century, was a Jesuit, though there seems to be a lack of research on the religious demographics of early Chinese settlers.

Muslim	1,547	3.0	2,706	4.8	1,159	1.8
Hindu	552	1.1	817	1.5	264	0.4
Sikh	329	0.6	423	0.8	94	0.2
Jewish	260	0.5	263	0.5	3	0.0
Buddhist	144	0.3	248	0.4	104	0.1
Other religion	151	0.3	241	0.4	90	0.1
Total non-Christian	3,073	5.8	4,457	8.4	1,384	2.6
Religion not stated	4,011	7.7	4,038	7.2	27	-0.5

Table 2: Religious Belief by Ethnic Group (2001 Census Figures)

Ethnic Group / %	Christian	Muslim	Hindu	Buddhist	Sikh	No Religion	Religion Not Stated	Jewish	Other Religion
White British	75.94	0.14	0.01	0.11	0.01	15.45	7.62	0.48	0.24
White Irish	85.4	0.14	0.02	0.19	0.02	6.35	7.42	0.18	0.26
Other White	62.67	8.61	0.09	0.33	0.04	15.91	9.38	2.39	0.57
Mixed	52.46	9.72	0.87	0.70	0.42	23.25	11.54	0.47	0.58
Indian	4.89	12.79	45.00	0.18	29.06	1.73	4.63	0.06	1.75
Pakistani	1.09	92.01	0.08	0.03	0.05	0.50	6.16	0.05	0.04
Bangladeshi	0.50	92.48	0.60	0.06	0.04	0.43	5.83	0.05	0.01
Other Asian	13.42	37.31	26.76	4.85	6.22	3.44	6.79	0.30	0.93
Black Caribbean	73.76	0.79	0.29	0.17	0.02	11.23	13.04	0.10	0.59
Black African	68.87	20.04	0.21	0.07	0.09	2.31	8.14	0.05	0.21
Other Black	66.61	5.97	0.36	0.20	0.07	12.09	13.93	0.13	0.65
Chinese	25.56	0.33	15.12	15.12	0.03	9.75	52.60	0.05	0.49
Other	32.98	25.68	1.32	15.49	1.02	14.08	7.48	1.05	0.90

These types of figures are mirrored in many other places, with, for instance, the Muslim presence in Western Europe growing, in fifty years, from just tens of thousands to around 16 or 17 million by 2010, representing about 1 in 25 of all Western Europeans (Laurence 2012: 1). Muslims are, though, not strangers to Europe, having had a notable presence in Spain for a long period in the Middle Ages as well as sizeable populations in the Balkans and forming the majority population in Turkey with Istanbul/Byzantium/Constantinople—the only city to sit in both Asia and Europe—as the capital of the Ottoman Empire for many centuries.

The notion of multifaith societies is further complicated as in most countries the multifaith environment is far from even. While Buddhists represent a small community in UK terms, being the sixth largest religious group according to the 2001 and 2011 census, in Cornwall and Devon they make up the second largest religious grouping behind Christianity. Meanwhile, in some areas, especially in the British Midlands, Sikhs, Hindus or Muslims outnumber active Christians, and in such places it may be primarily a bi-faith scenario with a large community of one of these three existing alongside a Christian community. In other places a more mixed and clearly multifaith situation may exist, but with each religious community representing a relatively small presence. The spread is, of course, uneven everywhere in the Western world, and even in such a religiously diverse country as the US some central parts lack the presence of such religious diversity, so the fact of being in a multifaith society is less visible than in the British Midlands, or many parts of California, regional Australia, and France, etc. Also, while we have spoken of religious diversity mainly in immigrant terms, it should also be considered that conversion is an important factor. In the UK, compared to the rest of Western Europe, converts to Islam are high, perhaps representing about 5% of all British Muslims,[7] while at least one third of all British Buddhists are white Western converts, which compares to Hinduism where around 1% are white converts.[8] Moreover, religious commitment does not measure the way that various practices that can be construed as "religious" or "spiritual" are also common, with yoga, meditation classes, feng shui, tai chi and other practices becoming increasingly widespread. While most people pursue them without seeing any specifically "religious" content, they are often felt to be part of a "spiritual" lifestyle. Indeed, some have spoken of the UK as moving from "religion" to "spirituality" (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005). While this is debatable, many aspects of various non-Christian religious or spiritual traditions have become commonplace, often in ways removed from their original context, further complicating the notion of a multifaith society.

Turning to Australia, we find religious diversity well before British colonization. Indeed, the Australian experience of religious diversity, like many "New World" contexts has, in some ways, been deeper and longer than that of the "Old World." Indeed, these terms are highly problematic given they ignore indigenous civilisations that long predate Western colonisation. Indigenous ways of knowing of Australian Aborigines have always displayed regional var-

[7] Exact figures are hard to come by, and estimates vary from around 15,000 to 100,000.

[8] For more details on the demographics and history of particular communities, the following sources are recommended: Weller 2008: chapter 1; Ballard 2009; Woodhead *et al*. 2012.

iations and continue to be practiced throughout Australia. Christians, Jews, and Muslims arrived as settlers and convicts in Australia during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from the UK and Australia's early immigrants included: Muslim Macassan fishers and Afghan cameleers, Buddhist, Daoist, folk religionist and Confucian Gold Rush prospectors from China, and Japanese pearl fishers. Sri Lankan workers in the sugar cane fields were also among Australia's early migrants. However, this diversity was not always welcomed. British occupants committed gross injustices against Indigenous Australians, who were politically excluded until 1967. Asian immigrants were also treated with hostility and contempt. Temples were burnt down and people were attacked and in some cases killed. The Immigration Restriction Act, popularly known as the White Australia Policy, was implemented in 1901, restricting immigration to European communities until the late 1960s and consequently religious diversity decreased in Australia from the 1900s until the 1970s (Bouma, 2006: 31; Croucher, 1989: 3-6; Jayaraman, 2000:137-42; Kabir 2005).

From the 1970s to the mid-1990s, changes to the Immigration Act, progressive multicultural policies, in addition to processes of globalization, transformed Australia into a richly culturally and religiously diverse nation. Growing numbers of religious persons in Australia can be attributed to two factors: first, migration particularly of Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims from Europe, Asia and the Middle East, and to a lesser degree conversion in relatively large numbers to Buddhism and Islam, paralleling the UK experience. Australia's cities and regional areas now include many temples, shrines, domes, minarets and mosques alongside churches. This rise of religious diversity has also been accompanied by a decline of Anglicans and other Protestant groups, which once made up the majority. By contrast, Pentecostalism is on the increase in Australia, similarly to other Western societies and Catholicism is now the largest religious tradition in Australia (Bouma 2006: 6, 52, 56, 65-67).

Table 3: Religion in Australia (Religious Affiliation in Australia 2001, 2006, 2011) [9]

	2001 Total	2001 %	2006 Total	2006 %	2011 Total	2011 %
Christianity	12,764,342	67.28%	12,685,828	63.23%	13,150,671	60.53%
Buddhism	357,813	1.89%	418,756	2.09%	528,978	2.43%
Islam	281,578	1.48%	340,393	1.70%	476,290	2.19%
Hinduism	95,473	0.50%	148,123	0.74%	275, 535	1.27%
Judaism	83,993	0.44%	88,829	0.44%	97,336	0.45%

[9] Data drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2011, Census of Population and Housing, T12 Religious Affiliation Comparisons from 2001, 2006 & 2011 Census Information, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

Aboriginal	5,224	0.03%	5,378	0.03%	7,361	0.03%
Other religious groups	84,607	0.45%	103,649	0.52%	160,833	0.74%
Other religious affiliation	354,628	1.87%	133,820	0.67%	174, 281	0.80%
No religion	2,905,993	15.32%	3,706,555	18.48%	4,796,786	22.08%
Not stated	1,835,598	9.68%	2,223,958	11.09%	1,839,649	8.47%

While Australia has never had a state church, the Anglican Church was until relatively recently the dominant religious body. However, diverse religious and non-religious groups have challenged old alliances between Christian groups and the government in many sectors including education, work, and leisure. Spiritual practices such as meditation and yoga are also flourishing in Australian society, and spiritual and religious concepts have informed social and environmental actions (Bouma 2006: 7; Tacey 2003). As Gary D. Bouma (2006: 14-15) has argued, Australians are "seeking wonderment, inner journeying and simply being more deeply attentive to themselves and others. They are enchanting a world disenchanted by secular ideologies of materialism and corporate greed." Australians have always displayed a distrust of authority and a strong preference for individual agency. This informs the way they believe and worship. The vast majority of Australians declare themselves to be religious in census data, which is collected every five years, yet levels of organised religious participation are low to moderate (Bouma 2006: 45). Yet, at the same time, a growing number of Australians are declaring no religious affiliation, and this significant rise in religious "nones" means that Australia is now an increasingly multifaith *and* non-religious society. These figures represent norms found in many other "New" world contexts, such as New Zealand, with the USA being the prime exception (on the former see Christopher van der Krogt's article in the first issue of this Special Edition, and on the latter see Mara Brecht's in this issue).

The Development of Multifaith Awareness

To some degree it is natural that religious diversity and multifaith awareness go together. However, they can be clearly distinguished as well. Indeed, our focus here is not so much on the realisation that society is simply composed of many religions, instead we consider awareness as the process of reflection upon the fact of living in a multifaith world.

In the early modern period most Western Christians simply had no means or even reason to reflect on the other religious traditions and peoples, and it was often encounters beyond the West that led to such reflections. However, from the so-called "Age of Discovery" (the areas discovered were, of course, al-

ready long inhabited and well known to non-European inhabitants) an awareness of non-Christian religions and cultures reached Western Europe. From the seventeenth century on, Jesuit missions to China, Japan and Tibet meant that accounts of Asian religions (admittedly often partial or distorted) reached Europe. However, a sharp change in knowledge and access to world religions came in the nineteenth century (broadly conceived, with historians often speaking of the "long" nineteenth century stretching from c.1789-c.1914) with the spread of the British Empire and increased global networks.[10] By the turn of the twentieth century a vast amount of texts, artefacts and information on Asian cultural and religious practices had been gathered and sent to London and Paris in particular (Baumann 2001: 7). Martin Baumann (2001: 7) explains how "[t]he discovery of the Asian religion[s] was… essentially treated as a textual object, being located in books, Oriental libraries, and institutes of the West." This context is important because it meant that, although the great growth of religious diversity as a major factor in most Western countries is relatively recent, since around the 1960/70s reflection upon being in a multifaith context globally is not.

Much of this reflection came from a Christian missionary impulse, the details of which do not concern us here, however, it is important to trace some broad currents and key events because this Christian discourse would affect the way Christians, as the majority religious group, could later accept or resist their own increasingly multifaith contexts.[11] The rationale of many missionaries, such as William Carey and Robert Morrison, was originally to bring the truth of Christian salvation to the "heathen" who lived in sin, darkness and immorality.[12] However, out of the pragmatics of seeking conversion, missionaries soon came to realize that simply accusing the other as wrong or sinful was not useful. Therefore, missionary training came to involve an engagement with, and study of, the religions they encountered, so as to better overcome them. Many chairs of "oriental" languages, such as Sanskrit, in Europe's universities were founded with an explicit missionary intent. This emphasis upon textual study, resulting to some degree in the "distorted" picture of non-Christian religions we spoke of above, led as well to a knowledge and appreciation of other reli-

[10] We have spoken of the contemporary period as seeing a marked change in our knowledge and encounter for other religions, which echoes a claim made for at least a hundred years (see Nicholson 2011: 33). This shows that globalisation is not a sudden charge but part of a process that has been occurring for centuries.

[11] For a detailed account of some of these changes, see Pratt 2010.

[12] This paints a somewhat monochrome view of early missionaries and their views, which are often more nunanced than the simple "light" and "dark" dichotomy drawn here. For more on this, see, for instance, Cracknell 1995, Twells 2009, and Hedges, 2001.

gions, at least amongst an educated and reading public.[13] An example of the way in which missionary work led to a new knowledge and appreciation of religious diversity, is seen in John Nicol Farquhar, an evangelical missionary who before leaving for India was convinced that Hinduism was an abhorrent religion but later spoke of his regret at his early intemperate language against Hinduism. Indeed, on his return from India, he became the first professor of Religious Studies at the University of Manchester, UK (Hedges 2001: 279n). While unrelated to any sense of the Western world as a multifaith society, it started a growing reflection upon living within a multifaith context internationally, indeed, the historian Tomoko Mazusawa suggests that a large part of the contemporary Western sense of religious plurality is an inheritance from the way Christian theology came to terms with religious diversity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Mazusawa 2005: 312ff).

This Christian reflection on other religions led to them being a key concern at the first World Missionary Conference (WMC) in Edinburgh in 1910, while the second WMC, held in Jerusalem in 1928, went further and spoke of the common values of diverse religions, concerned, as it was, with the rise of secularism. However, theological changes shifted emphasis curtailing these early multifaith initiatives, and when, after World War II, the first World Council of Churches (WCC) Assembly was held in 1948, its focus was "the presumption of evangelical witness" and mission (Pratt 2010: 33-34, 38). Nevertheless, bilateral initiatives of Jewish–Christian relations in response to the tragedy of the Holocaust arose after WWII, and both the WCC and the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II)[14] deplored anti-Semitism and declared their abhorrence for the genocide of Jewish people (Pratt 2010: 44; Braybrooke 1992: 197-98). Notably, in 1967 the WCC and the Vatican held a conference in Kandy, Sri Lanka, and issued a statement on *Christians in Dialogue with Men of Other Faiths* that stressed the importance of dialogue and friendship among people of diverse religious views (Pratt 2010: 53).

While the discussion above is concerned with the global Christian movement, and especially its missionary enterprise, the changing attitude in the churches had important implications on the way multifaith awareness worked out on the ground as, in places like the UK, the churches often looked to former missionaries when it approached dialogue as many native ministers lacked any knowl-

[13] In this regard, Max Müller's translation of *The Sacred Books of the East*, a monumental multivolume epic is important. Notably, while often spoken of as the "Father" of the modern study of religion much of Müller's work was directed to missionary aims (Hedges 2001: 112ff.).

[14] This was a pivotal moment for Roman Catholic reflection on other religions, see Pratt 2010: 169-83.

edge of other religions (McCallum 2011: 136). Active institutional engagement by UK churches beyond sporadic local examples began with the British Council of Churches forming the Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths (CRPOF) in 1977, and this Church of England report written by two experienced proponents of dialogue and mission, bishops Kenneth Cragg and David Brown but published under the name of the Board of Church Commissioners, which was the first working through theologically of this in writing by a British church. A further example of this is the Church of England report entitled *Towards a Theology for Interfaith Dialogue* (1984), which, while addressing the question of theology, showed a strong focus on being in a multifaith society.

Turning now to the development of multifaith initiatives beyond the churches, a pivotal event at the end of the nineteenth century was the 1893 first Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR),[15] held in Chicago in 1893 as part of a World Columbian Exposition celebrating Christopher Columbus' "discovery" of America. Often described as the beginning of the global multifaith movement (Braybrooke 1992: 7-8),[16] it has nevertheless been widely and rightly criticised as a flawed model, exhibiting both a Christian bias and sense of "civilizing mission" (Braybrooke 1992: 8-9, 18, 27, 39-42) as well as racist organisation (Nordstrom 2009: 351-3). However, while Rev. John Henry Barrows (1893: 1581, quoted in Braybrooke, 1992: 15), its most famous organizer, advocated a Christian Dominionist agenda by marking the PWR as "a new era of Christian triumph," co-organisers Charles Carroll Bonney (1894: 73-78, quoted in Braybrooke 1992: 12-13) and Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones intended for the PWR to emphasise the "common essentials of all religions" and shared a genuine wish to develop interreligious understanding.

The international gathering of the 1893 PWR was made possible by increased opportunities for travel and communication, which continued to escalate throughout the twentieth century, thus further enabling the global expansion of the nascent multifaith movement (Braybrooke 1992: 22, 309). Delegates at the

[15] The 1893 Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) was originally titled the World's Parliament of Religions (WPR). The Council for the Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR) was established to coordinate the 1993 PWR and future PWRs. CPWR is now simply called the Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR). Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) is used here to describe all WPR, CPWR and PWR events in order to avoid confusion.

[16] It has been suggested that the idea that it began a "movement" is overstated. However, the studies by Braybrooke (1992, 2007), Brodeur, (2005) and Halafoff (2010, 2011, 2013) have shown significant undercurrents and groups developing from it that make it meaningful to use this phrase.

first PWR included adherents of Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Shinto, Daoism, and Zoroastrianism (Barrows 1893: 70). Indeed, while Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and the Theosophical Society had all been influential in introducing Americans to Hindu and Buddhist thought, the PWR provided the first opportunity for Americans to have direct contact with teachers from Asia (Eck 2001: 96-97, 180-84). These teachers, particularly the Indian Swami Vivekananda, Sri Lankan Anagarika Dharmapala, Japanese Zen Master the Right Rev. Soyen Shaku and Japanese Harai Ryuge Kinzo, utilised the PWR as a platform to challenge Christian Dominionism (Braybrooke 1992: 25: Eck 2001: 182-85; Snodgrass, 2003: 2-3).

A number of Jewish leaders also participated in the first PWR, including the Orthodox Rabbi Henry Pereira Mendes and Reform Jewish Rabbis Hecht, Emil Hirsch, and Kaufmann Kohler. The high level of representation and enthusiastic participation of Jewish leaders at the 1893 PWR is said to have established a tradition of ecumenical relations among Catholics, Protestants, and Jews in America (Braybrooke 1992: 29-30). One of the few Muslim participants at the first PWR was American Mohammed Russell Alexander Webb, who had converted to Islam while posted as America's consul general in the Philippines. Webb publicly acknowledged the negative stereotypes associated with Islam in America yet also articulated his confidence that once Americans had a true understanding of Islam they would learn to appreciate it (Barrows 1893: 989-96; Eck 2001: 234-35). The relatively small Muslim presence at the 1893 PWR clearly illustrates that the first bridges to be built in global multifaith engagement were largely among Hindus, Buddhists, Jews and Christians. It is also important to note that ndigenous people were excluded from the main assembly of the 1893 PWR (Brodeur, 2005: 44), and it was not until around a century later that Indigenous and Muslim participants began to play a prominent role in multifaith initiatives in Western societies.

Despite its many flaws, the 1893 PWR inspired "a normative model" for multifaith encounters conducted in a spirit of openness and respect for diversity, with a new emphasis on non-proselytising, on promoting understanding between faith traditions and on countering common problems (McCarthy 2007: 18; Brodeur 2005: 43; Halafoff 2013: 35-38). Following the 1893 PWR, multifaith congresses and conferences were held in the USA, the UK, and Europe and several multifaith organisations were established including the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers in the US in 1900, which eventually became the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) in 1969, the World Fellowship of Faiths (WFF) in the USA in 1924, and the World Congress of Faiths (WCF) in the UK in 1934 (Braybrooke 1992: 49-52, 114, 66-67). While the First World War (WWI) and WWII restricted global multifaith engagement, several multifaith congresses

were convened in America and Europe by the IARF before WWI and by the IARF and the WCF between WWI and WWII (Braybrooke 1992: 49-52, 67-72). At the end of WWII, the IARF resumed its multifaith congresses and conferences in the US, the UK, and Europe (Braybrooke 1992: 55-56). In the post-war period, another important development was the founding of The Temple of Understanding (ToU), which facilitated many multifaith events from the 1960s onward. However, its attempts to build a multifaith centre in Maryland, an initiative that received substantial global support, were never realised (Braybrooke 1992: 95-108).

The period from the 1960s to the 1980s heralded a new era of social movements, including anti-war, women's and environmental movements throughout Western societies responding to a heightened awareness of global risks and injustices. Fred Kniss and Paul D. Numrich (2007: 227) describe the multifaith movement in particular as "a decentralized social movement of individuals, groups and organizations seeking to foster mutual respect and understanding across religions in order to achieve positive individual, social, cultural, and civic change." The multifaith movement is made up of numerous local, national and global multifaith organisations, networks, and actors, who meet at local, regional and global multifaith conferences, festivals and events. The multifaith movement has often been committed to social change on issues such as protecting the environment, nuclear disarmament, poverty alleviation, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. This commitment aligns the multifaith movement with other twentieth and twenty-first century social movements (Halafoff 2013: 12-13).

The details of numerous multifaith and ecumenical meetings do not concern us here, but it is important to note that as many Western countries were starting to become internally diverse religiously, as described above, the major religious denominations were, from their often global perspective, coming to terms with what it meant to talk with, and live alongside diverse religious groups. As a result, many multifaith initiatives and networks began to be formed in Western societies at the local, national, and global levels. These developments accelerated at the turn of the twenty-first century when global multifaith engagement expanded dramatically in the 1970s to the 1990s. This was evidenced by the 1993 Parliament of World's Religions and the formation of a number of major multifaith organisations such as Religions for Peace; the Inter Faith Network for the UK; the United Religions Initiative; the Interfaith Centre of New York; the Tanenbaum Centre for Interreligious Understanding; the Victorian Leaders of Faith Communities Forum; and, the Interfaith Youth Core (Eck 2001: 370; Kirkwood, 2007: xiv; Halafoff 2013: 41, 55-56).

While it was initially feared that the events of 9/11 would provide a setback to multifaith relations, it had the opposite effect of becoming a stimulus for multi-

faith engagement, particularly in Western societies (Eck 2001: xiii-xix; Bouma *et al.* 2007: 61-6, 106). In addition, since the September 11 terrorist attacks and the July 2005 London bombings, state actors, particularly in Australia and the UK, increasingly initiated and supported multifaith activities with a focus on social inclusion and countering violent extremism (Brodeur 2005: 42; Bouma *et al.* 2007: 69-74, 111-12; Braybrooke 2007: 1, 13). For instance the number of interfaith groups in the UK which had been growing steadily from the 1980s till around 2000, expanded exponentially after 2001, growing from around 20 to 80 in these first twenty years but shooting up to almost 200 by 2005 (IFNUK, 2008: 18). This growth shows the importance attached to multifaith co-operation, as expressed in interfaith solidarity, in response to the global risk of terrorism.

While for the churches and participants in the multifaith movement an acknowledgement of being within a multifaith context has existed for some time in relation to civil society at large, certainly in the UK and to some extent in other Western nations, the questions of being a multifaith society, as opposed to being a mixed race or culturally diverse society, is one that has only arisen at the turn of the twenty-first century. As a report commissioned by the UK Government on the extent of religious diversity in Britain stated:

> Over the last fifty years, the discourse in Britain about "racialised minorities" has mutated from "colour" in the 1950s and 1960s (Banton, 1955; Rose, 1969) to "race" in the 1960s, 70s and 80s (Rex and Moore, 1967; Smith, 1989) to "ethnicity" in the 90s (Modood *et al* 1997) and to "religion" in the present time. (Beckford *et al*. 2006: 11)

The report then continues, explaining this and commenting on its significance:

> This focus on religion has been driven both by major international events which have highlighted the political demands associated with religious movements and by an increasing recognition by academics, policy-makers and service providers of the importance of religion in defining identity, particularly among minority communities. In addition, minority communities are increasingly seeking to press for the accommodation of their religious customs and practices within the legal and economic system of the UK (eg recognition of minority dress codes, family practices and financial structures) (Beckford *et al*. 2006: 11)

These international events and the accommodation sought by communities will form some part of what we now explore in seeking to discuss the social and political implications of multifaith societies in Western countries.

The Social and Political Aspects of Multifaith Communities

In 1968, a Conservative member of the British Parliament, Enoch Powell, made a famous speech, generally known as the "Rivers of Blood" Speech which suggested that racial and community tension, even bloodshed, would surely follow if vast numbers of immigrants were allowed in and, alluding to Virgil's *Aeneid*, says: "As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the

Roman, I see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'" (Sterling Times). Powell's speech was essentially about colour, reflecting the transition of modes of discourse we referred to above, and, indeed, much community tension is related to matters not directly tied in with religion, but with economic crises affecting jobs, housing and un/employment. However, recent events in many nations have pushed religion into centre stage in these regards. Most notably, of course, the destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11 made religion, specifically Islam, a central focus of debate and controversy worldwide. In the UK, the London bombings of 7/7 made this a very real issue when it was recognized that the bombers were not foreign terrorists but people who had been born and bred within the country and who became radicalised within Britain itself (Billings 2009: 23). Such a perception has become widespread across many Western nations, and interviewed in September 2011 on the anniversary of the 9/11 bombings, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper described "Islamicism" as his country's greatest security threat (CBC News 2011). Indeed, fear of Islamic extremism appears to be something of a major fear worldwide with a 2013 Pew Survey Report ranking it as the third most significant global concern (Pew Report 2013), following the rise of ISIS that has ranked as number two in the 2015 pole (Pew Report 2015); indeed, across Western nations as a whole it is far and away the single biggest concern.[17] Religion has therefore become a major issue when it comes to questions of social cohesion—how do countries ensure that their citizens, of all religious persuasions, are part of the harmonious social mix.

Islam has become, within this, the major focus of anxiety, however, the situation is simply not about Islam. For instance, despite the very visible presence of faiths, the fact of multifaith societies does not make people, of itself, multifaith literate, and within various countries, such as both Australia and the US, following the 9/11 attack it was very often Sikhs who were the object of abuse or even physical attack, as they were mistaken for Muslims (Bouma *et al*., 2007; Romney 2011). The UK also saw an increase of Anti-Semitic incidents as it appears that some people blamed the Israeli government for provoking the Islamic extremism that fed these attacks, which fed back on hatred against Jews in general (Gilligan 2015). This multifaith context, and issues of religious vilification, provides a backdrop to the twenty-first century where some degree of religious literacy is arguably a prerequisite for an educated citizen.
However, it would be wrong to focus questions of social cohesion and community tension specifically upon the events of 9/11 or questions of terrorism and counter-terrorism, although these have certainly become a major focus,

[17] On the issue of Western fears and perceptions of Muslim as alien but also on the issue of work for reconciliation and peace it is useful to consult the essays in Hedges 2015.

and also an impetus in interfaith work. The attack in 2010 on a Vietnamese Buddhist temple in Turku, Finland is an example, where following an initial incident when it was daubed with swastikas it was then, a few weeks later, subject to an arson attack (see Illman 2011). It is unclear, however, to what extent an event like this is linked to religious, as opposed to ethnic or racial, hatred. Nevertheless, we see what is seen, presumably by the attackers, as a "foreign" religious building, an expression of immigrant communities within one's home territory being subject to assault. It is notable, though, in terms of multifaith societies, that the response to the events of 9/11, the London and Bali bombings, and the attack in Turku was primarily one of multifaith solidarity with diverse religious groups coming out fully in support of religious minorities affected by these crises (Halafoff 2013; Illman 2011).

As religion becomes part of the mixture playing into the equation of social integration, cohesion, and multiculturalism, the growth of interfaith groups is, at least in part, an attempt by religious groups to come together to foster social cohesion, and, in many cases, they have played a significant role in peacebuilding strategies. For instance, in the southern British port city of Southampton, the local interfaith network, the Southampton Council of Faiths (SCoF)—which dates to 2001 but is derived from an earlier group, Southampton Interfaith Link founded in 1996—has put community leaders in local faith communities in touch with each other and also the police so that possible disputes have been mediated via discussion. While it is hard to quantify, the very active interfaith networking here and elsewhere may play some role in preserving social cohesion in times of tension. In the Australian context, similar links have been established between diverse religious communities and also between these communities and state actors, including police. These "networks of trust" (see Eck 2001: 373) have been praised by religious community leaders and scholars alike for assisting with processes of social inclusion and countering violent extremism (Halafoff, 2013: 137-38, 167-69). Certainly, SCoF sees itself as helping to promote understanding between communities, for instance organising annual peace walks, engaging in youth projects, as well as undertaking activities which may more typically be seen as "interfaith" in terms of learning about each other's beliefs, customs, and practices.[18] As one of the authors of this article has argued, while "*developing understanding of diverse faiths and also of the nature of reality*" has been the primary aim of the multifaith movement, nevertheless the imperative of "*addressing global risks and injustices* and *building multi-actor peacebuilding networks*" has been an important subsequent aim (Halafoff, 2013: 51, italics in the original).

[18] The details on SCoF and the way it views its activities have been gathered in conversation with various figures involved in it.

All of this needs to be seen against a backdrop where religion has re-emerged in the public consciousness of the Western world in new ways. This is especially true of Western Europe, which had become something of a prime example for exponents of the so-called secularisation thesis, that modernity would see religion dying out and becoming increasingly unimportant (Bruce 2002). However, not only does it appear that the Western European example was not representative, such that theorists now often speak of alternative modernities, when considering the high degrees of religiosity in societies in Asia and the Middle East, for example, where religion continues to be a major factor (Smith and Vaidyanathan 2011) as well as where it had once seemed to be less prominent it has returned as a significant issue on community, media and state agendas. Debates and tensions between those who strongly believe religion should play a central role in governance and those who say there is no place for religion in the public sphere have continued to escalate in and beyond the West. This is evident in the events of the "Arab Spring" and also the rise of "New Atheism" in reactions against a resurgence of conservative religion, which occurred at the turn of the twenty-first century and of concerns regarding the proximity between religions and states.

Questions therefore arise as to whether religion may pose an inherent potential threat to social cohesion, or as Alan Billings puts it: "is there not a sense in which the very presence of any religion that makes exclusive claims to sacred and ultimate truths is a threat to cohesion in a plural society?" (Billings, 2008: 94). Certainly, in a poll carried out by IPSOS in 2010 as to whether religion provides the ethical foundations society needs or whether religious beliefs would "promote intolerance, exacerbate ethnic divisions, and impede social progress" an overwhelming majority in many Western nations suggested it would be the latter, Sweden leading the way at 81%, but closely followed by the likes of France (76%), the UK (71%), Australia (68%), and Canada and Germany (64%). The USA was the notable exception in the Western world (35%) (IPSOS, 2010).

The way religion either promotes or distracts from social cohesion is, of course, a complex matter. Many advocates of the multifaith movement and adherents of particular traditions will, of course, suggest that religion is inherently peaceful—which may, of course, lead to the subsequent denial that events like 9/11 and the more recent rise of Islamic State have anything to do with true religion/Islam. Such denial fails to deal with important motivators for the perpetrators of acts of terror and so can make it difficult to deal with their motives and counter extremism (see Hedges 2010: 261-63; 2010: 59-60). Contrariwise, some critics of religion will suggest it is inherently harmful, a view that often seems to be proposed by figures like Richard Dawkins and others amongst the New Atheists (see McGrath 2005: 8). Perry Schmidt-Leukel has suggested that both extremes are ultimately untenable, saying that different

traditions can be "a source of tension and conflict" but also "a force for reconciliation, peace, cooperation and mutual betterment" (Schmidt-Leukel 2011: 1). Likewise, the idea that we exist in a world marked by a potential "Clash of Civilizations," a phrase made famous through the works of Samuel Huntington, who suggests this clash is inevitable (Huntington 1998) seems overly pessimistic, especially in the local context, where we see examples of religious co-operation. For example, the UN has supported an Alliance of Civilizations, since 2005, aimed at building increasing mutual respect for cultural and religious diversity (UNAoC, 2012) and scholars have suggested that the clash exists within and not between civilisations, among progressives and conservatives globally (Halafoff 2013: 52).

The ambivalent nature of religions cannot be ignored, given their propensity to advance both cultures of direct and structural violence and peacebuilding principles (Appleby 2003; Halafoff & Conley Tyler 2005). Several scholars have recently developed arguments regarding the nexus between religion and governance, the most prominent examples being Bouma's (1995, 1999) framework for "managing religious diversity," Veit Bader's (2007) "governance of religious diversity," and Anna Halafoff's (2010) "cosmopolitan governance and religious diversity," which recognises that religions' need to be regulated by legal and rights frameworks, to protect religious freedom and also to ensure that this freedom does not impinge upon the rights of others. This remains a highly contentious issue, played out in a number of controversies surrounding religious exemptions, religious customs and dress, and religions education.

For many, a multifaith society challenges the way they perceive their nation, and so figures such as Germany's Chancellor Merkel have declared that, "those who don't accept [Christian values] don't have a place here," while the former President of France Giscard d'Estaing said, "I never go to Church, but Europe is a Christian continent" (both cited in Triandafyllidou, Modood, and Meer 2012: 9). Such comments reflect a mood that the ideology of Western nations is threatened by its growing multifaith diversity. This raises the question of what a multifaith, or multicultural, society may look like, and the countries we are discussing represent some differences of approach (see Meer and Modood 2012: 61-72). Germany has often taken a stance that opposes long-term immigration and sees itself as very much a monocultural nation. France meanwhile sees religion as part of a private sphere and so has sought to bring diverse religions into a supposedly secular central core, which in part at least reflects its heritage. Britain meanwhile, has been more open to a multicultural diversity, although of late it has been the subject of considerable criticism for creating parallel lives of diverse communities (Billings 2008: 53ff). Indeed, the Prime Minster, David Cameron, has declared that multiculturalism has failed in the United Kingdom (BBC 2011), while across much of Western Europe many governments have decided that previous approaches in which the

multifaith society was integrated have failed (Triandafyllidou, Modood, and Meer 2012: 1). Of course, headline political reactions are not a sure indicator of how integration should, or does, work in practice, [19] and this also provides a contrast to shifting attitudes in Australia where multiculturalism also came under considerable attack in the mid-1990s with the formation of the "One Nation" political party and during John Howard's prime ministership at the national level, while a strong bipartisan commitment to multiculturalism endures in the Australian state of Victoria (Halafoff 2006; Lentini *et al*. 2009). Recent clashes between the Reclaim Australia movement, and the anti-Reclaim Australia pro-diversity movement in many Australian cities indicate that these tensions are escalating, not diminishing, and are being played out on the streets as well as in the media and social media particularly.

It is also important to mention the different degrees of secularity in Western societies and how this relates to the relationship between religion and state in each country. The UK, for instance, has an established church in the Church of England and so, at least officially, *is* a Christian nation, has a context where official Anglican belonging (as recorded by the census) is high yet active Church membership is very low (with some indicators suggesting active Anglicans are lower in number than active Roman Catholics). As such, in practice it may be said to be a secular nation, and this is certainly how many people see it.[20] In the US, on the other hand, while religion and state are clearly separated, we see high levels of belief, and the sense of being a Christian nation, certainly in many places, is high. Australia is more clearly a secular nation with low levels of church attendance and belief recorded, although still having a quite high level of what appears to be nominal Christian belonging. In France, meanwhile, although it is a secular state, Catholicism still provides a dominant cultural focal point. As such, the way in which a multifaith context is present is complicated. While some critics have suggested that the UK's established religion may make an inclement atmosphere for other religions, it is in fact often reported that other religions appreciate the "sacred canopy" which entails that religious ideas are valued and enshrined at the national level (Religious Resource and Research Centre 2000). By contrast, French bans on religious clothing and items, specifically the veil, in many

[19] On a different approach see Modood and Meer, 2012, who contrast "multi-culturalism" and "interculturalism." See also Jura 2012, who suggests that it is not clear what is meant by multiculturalism in the European context.

[20] It is frequently spoken of this way in news reporting and by those in the media, especially when questions concerning where religious beliefs or practices are seen to clash with human rights or perceived public interests.

public spaces has been seen as hostile by some Muslim commentators.[21] In Australia, meanwhile, diverse religions find themselves as contenders with Christianity in an essentially secular sphere, where no one religion is meant to dominate over others, although in certain sectors, such as the government education system, privileges are still granted to Christian groups (Halafoff 2013: 152-56).

Of course, even within each nation, local differences will be important, and differences in traditions and within traditions (interreligious and intrareligious diversity) will see various levels of engagements between particular local churches and the neighbouring diverse religious communities. These local variations will have a large part to play in how any particular Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Bah'ai, for example, experiences the relationship with the more established churches; especially when, in some cases, they may find themselves the dominant religious group (something not uncommon in parts of London and the British Midlands). This mix is what Paul Weller has called a three-dimensional landscape which is not just Christian or Christian and secular but Christian, secular, and multifaith in ways that differ regionally and locally but are also tied into national, European, and even larger frameworks (Weller 2008: 1-2, 9, 52). Australia can similarly be described as a secular and multifaith society, although not necessarily any longer a Christian one. The US, meanwhile, although a secular nation, finds religion, especially Christian affirmation, an important aspect of public debate and consciousness but is yet again a diverse mix of secular, Christian and multifaith albeit in different ways.

Perhaps it is useful here to think of religion in terms of identity markers. As Jeannine Hill-Fletcher has suggested, when I meet a religious person instead of seeing them in terms of diametrical opposition, where, for instance, a Christian meets a Hindu, or a Muslim meets a Sikh, we can understand that identity is far more complex where we come as people of particular gender, class, race, job, etc. (Fletcher 2005: 94) As such, the idea of religious identity instead of being a key signifier of difference becomes part of a more complex set of relationships (see Hedges 2010: 83-7; Hedges 2014; Weller 2008: 15ff.). In terms of social cohesion, our relationship is not simply about what it means to be a Muslim in the UK or Australia, but about how a white, female Shi'a British Muslim doctor or a male, Pakistani Australian Muslim architect relate these multiple identities in relation to the shifting patterns of their community and the surrounding culture. As such, religion may not be taken as a marker of identity against others, which Billings suggests is one possible source of danger in multifaith contexts (Billings 2008: 111).

[21] On some issues surrounding this across Europe, see Göle and Billaud 2011: 119-33.

Conclusion

Multifaith diversity is a factor affecting all Western nations to a greater or lesser degree, and is seen actively reflected in various ways. The development of this has come largely through immigration, which has brought a marked multicultural diversity with it, and has therefore changed the nature and shape of the societies. Alongside this, but in somewhat different steps, an understanding of religious diversity has undergone a transformation in the mainstream host tradition, Christianity, although there is no sign of a single attitude to diverse religious groups. The question of immigration leads, as well, to potential points of community tension between the host and incoming communities, however, many of the communities are now established to such a degree that they are becoming part of the local culture and affecting it in various ways—despite this, there are still suggestions that many Western nations are essentially "Christian" in character, although many show marked secular tones, and often the religious and secular issue becomes a battleground itself. Given the diversity of national, regional and local differences no clear trends for the future of multifaith societies can be plotted except to say that they will surely become a more significant feature of most, if not all, Western societies as time progresses and that there will be various approaches as to how this diversity is managed/governed.

In the UK, clearly the development of the Inter Faith Network for the UK by the government in 1988, which has been active in spreading the proliferation of interfaith societies we have described above speaks of a top-down approach with government initiative spearheading a campaign for recognition and involvement of the communities. In particular, consultations that led up to the publication of significant reports in Australia and the UK, such as *Religion, Cultural Diversity, and Safeguarding Australia* (Cahill *et al.* 2004) *and Face to Face, Side by Side* (DCLG 2008), showed a very keen interest by the government in making faith communities key players in social cohesion and integration. Here the words of James A. Beckford and his fellow co-authors, cited above, that discourse has moved from race, colour, or ethnicity to religion tell us that this awareness of, and bringing of, religious communities into the central focus of debate has been and continues to be part of a conscious government policy and intervention. As such, the language and involvement of multifaith societies has been very much a government-led affair. However, it is not clear that describing the focus on multifaith societies as a top-down affair illustrates the whole picture. The factors that have led to this becoming a policy issue, and so of concern to governments, have come from elsewhere. Obviously, a key aspect has been the public rise of religion worldwide, beyond any single society. However, within societies themselves religion has arisen, as it were, from the grassroots as a matter of growing prominence. From changes on the architectural landscape, it has become increasingly apparent that we live

in a society of not just many races, cultures, or colours but of religions too; as religious groups have seen themselves moving from the status of passing through as migrant workers to long-term inhabitants they have marked the landscape with mosques, temples, and *gurdwaras*.[22] The meeting of faith groups has also become more pronounced, while seeing an exponential rise since 2001, many interfaith, or multifaith, initiatives already existed in the late twentieth century. To what degree local and informal networks have become quantified and institutionalised is hard to assess and an area that requires substantial additional research. Moreover, partly in response to transnational factors, many immigrant communities have also taken on religion as an increasingly overt identity marker. As such, it can be suggested that the importance of multifaith societies in local and community action has arisen from a grassroots level. It cannot therefore simply be said that the awareness and significance, both at policy and social levels, that speaking of, about, and from the context of a multifaith society is simply about a top-down or bottom-up approach.

We must also remember that the issue of our multifaith society had, before it became a social or policy issue, been a matter for reflection within the churches and the multifaith movement. This provides another example, as we discussed above, of the meeting of transnational concerns with a top-down agenda (led often by bishops, theologian, missionaries and others—who, while not necessarily within formal religious hierarchies, often are) but also as meeting a grassroots concern where religious diversity is encountered in local towns, villages, neighbourhoods, and parishes. It is also useful to remind ourselves of Weller's point that the experience differs across, and within, nations and even regions. As such, whether the concern and issues are top-down or from within the community may be understood very differently for each.

The nature of a twenty-first century multifaith society is therefore unclear, although the fact that the multifaith context will not disappear seems certain, and, if anything, will become more marked and prevalent in the years ahead. Whether the once Christian nations of the Western world will come to recognise that they are now multifaith nations is open to debate. In the UK, Prince Charles' suggestion that he should, as king, become Defender of Faith (all religions and beliefs) rather than Defender of the Faith (Christianity, and most specifically its Anglican variation) was met with general disdain.[23] Of increasing importance, as mentioned above, is also the rise in the number of people who identify as having no religion in these secular, multifaith societies

[22] On the growth of religious buildings and what this means see Weller, 2008, pp. 59-64.

[23] Weller 2008: 96; it has also been discussed more recently both for and against by members of different religious traditions, see BBC, 2012.

(ABS 2012; Weller 2008: 12; ONS 2011[24]) and the tensions emerging between religious and non-religious groups. Attempts have been made to include non-religious groups, such as secularists and Humanists, into multifaith networks and educational programmes about diverse religions now typically include an emphasis on non-religious convictions and worldviews to foster social cohesion in diverse societies (Jackson 2014). Facilitating dialogue and understanding between religious individuals and groups and also the non-religious is increasingly important, as is investigating the relationship between religions, non-religious groups and state actors. While Christian affiliation and church attendance in Western societies is declining, there is no doubt that religions' role in the public sphere will continue to be a hotly debated and contested topic for some time to come.

LITERATURE

Bader, Veit. (2007). *Secularism or Democracy? Associational Governance of Religious Diversity.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Ballard, Roger. (2009). "Social and Demographic Characteristics of Britain's Hindu Population." In: Diviash Thakar (ed.). *Caring for Hindu Patients*. Oxford: Radcliffe Publishing. Pp. 25-37.

Barrows, John Henry (ed.). (1893). *The World's Parliament of Religions*. Chicago: The Parliament Publishing Co.

Banchoff, Thomas (ed.). (2008). *Religious Pluralism, Globalization and World Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baumann, Martin (2001). "Global Buddhism: Developmental Periods, Regional Histories, and a New Analytical Perspective." *Journal of Global Buddhism* 2: 1-43.

BBC. (2012). "Defender of the Faith … or Faith?" (audio broadcast). *BBC News*. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-18330969. Accessed 22 June 2012.
(2011). "State Multiculturalism has failed, says David Cameron." *BBC News: Politics* (5 April). www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-12371994.Accessed 19 June 2012.

Beckford, James *et al*. (2006). *Review of the Evidence Base on Faith Communities*, London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Bharat, Sandy, and Jael Bharat. (2007). *A Global Guide to Interfaith: Reflections from around the World*. Winchester: O Books.

Billings, Alan. (2009). *God and Community Cohesion: Help or Hindrance?* London: SPCK.

Board of Church Commissioners [Kenneth Cragg and David Brown]. (1984). *Towards a Theology of Interfaith Dialogue*. London: Church House Publishing.

[24] The experimental statistics by the UK Office for National Statistics based on the 2011 census show an identical level for those with no religion or not stated at 23.2% with the 2001 figures (15.5% of these are "no religion" in 2001), a slight fall in Christian affiliation is offset by growth for Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Other Religion, and Islam.

Bonney, Charles Carroll. (1894). "The Genesis of the World's Religious Congresses of 1893." *New Church Review* 1: 73-78.

Bouma, Gary D. (2008). "The Challenge of Religious Revitalization and Religious Diversity to Social Cohesion in Secular Societies." In Brian S. Turner (ed.). *Religious Diversity and Civil Society: A Comparative Analysis.* Oxford: The Bardwell Press. Pp. 13-25.

(2006). *Australian Soul: Religion and Spirituality in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

(1999). "From Hegemony to Pluralism: Managing Religious Diversity in Modernity and Post-Modernity." In Gary D. Bouma (ed.). *Managing Religious Diversity: From Threat to Promise*. Melbourne: Australian Association for the Study of Religions. Pp. 7-27.

(1995). "The Emergence of Religious Plurality in Australia: A Multicultural Society." *Sociology of Religion* 56: 285-302.

Bouma, Gary D. *et al*. (2007). *Managing the Impact of Global Crisis Events on Community Relations in Multicultural Australia*. Brisbane: Multicultural Affairs Queensland.

Brodeur, Patrice. (2005). "From the Margins to the Centers of Power: The Increasing Relevance of the Global Interfaith Movement." *Cross Currents* 55: 42-53.

Bruce, Steve. (2002). *God is Dead: Secularization in the West*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Braybrooke, Marcus. (1992). *Pilgrimage of Hope: One Hundred Years of Global Interfaith Dialogue*. London: SCM Press Ltd.

(2007). *Interfaith Witness in a Changing World: The World Congress of Faiths, 1996-2006*. Abingdon: Braybrooke Press.

Cahill, Desmond *et al*. (2004). *Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia*. Canberra: Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

Campbell, J. (1994). "The Jewish community in Britain." in S. Gilley and W. Sheils (eds). *A History of Religion in Britain: Belief and Practice from Pre-Roman Times to the Present*. Oxford: Blackwell.Pp. 427-28.

CBC News. (2011). "Harper says 'Islamicism' biggest threat to Canada." *CBC News* (6 September). www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2011/09/06/harper-911-terrorism-islamic-interview.html Accessed 22 June 2012.

Cox, Jeffrey. (2012). "Worlds of Victorian Religion." in Martin Hewitt (ed). *The Victorian World*. Routledge Worlds Series. London: Routledge. Pp. 433-48.

Cracknell, Kenneth. (1995). *Justice, Courtesy and Love: Theologians and Missionaries Encountering World Religions, 1846-1914*. London: Epworth Press.

Croucher, Paul. (1989). *A History of Buddhism in Australia 1848-1988*. Kensington: New South Wales University Press.

DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government). (2008). *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in our Multifaith Society*. Wetherby: Communities and Local Government Publications.

Eck, Diana L. (2005). "Dialogue and the Echo Boom of Terror: Religious Women's Voices After 9/11." In Akbar Ahmed and Brian Forst (eds.) *After Terror: Promoting Dialogue among Civilizations*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 21-28.

(2001). *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. New York: HarperOne.

Fitzgerald, Timothy. (2007). *Discourse on civility and Barbarity: A Critical History of Religion and Related Categories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fletcher, Jeannine Hill. (2005). *Monopoly on Salvation: A Feminist Approach to Religious Pluralism*. London: Continuum.

Franklin, J. Jeffrey. (2008). *The Lotus and the Lion: Buddhism and the British Empire*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Gilligan, Andrew. (2015). "The rising tide of anti-Semitism." *The Daily Telegraph* (25 January). http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11367966/The-rising-tide-of-anti-Semitism.html. Accessed 14 October 2015.

Göle, Nilüfer, and Julie Billaud. (2011). "Islamic Difference and the Return of Feminist Universalism." In: Anna Triandafyllidou, Tariq Modood, and Nasar Meer (eds). *European Multiculturalisms: Cultural, Religious and Ethnic Challenges*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press. Pp. 116-41.

Habermas, Jürgen. (1981). "New Social Movements." *Telos* 49: 33-37.

Halafoff, Anna. (20130. The Multifaith Movement: Global Risks and Cosmopolitan Solutions. Dordrecht: Springer.

(2011). "Netpeace: The Multifaith Movement and Common Security." *Australian Religion Studies Review*. 24:2, pp. 127-49.

(2010). *Netpeace: The Multifaith Movement and Common Security*. PhD Thesis, Monash University.

(2006). UnAustralian Values. Cultural Studies Association of Australasia Annual Conference. *UNAustralia.* University of Canberra. Canberra 6-8 Dec 2006.

Hedges, Paul (ed.). (2015). *Contemporary Muslim-Christian Encounters: Developments, Diversity and Dialogues*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

(2014). "Interreligious Engagement and Identity Theory: Assessing the Theology of Religions Typology as a Model for Dialogue and Encounter." *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion*. Interreligious Studies' Special Issue 27: 198-21.

(2010). *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue and the Theology of Religions*. Controversies in Contextual Theology Series. London: SCM.

(2001). *Preparation and Fulfilment: A History and Study of Fulfilment Theology in Modern British Thought in the Indian Context*. Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity. Bern: Peter Lang.

Heelas, Paul and Linda Woodhead, with Benjamin Seel, Bronislaw Szersynski, and Karin Tustig. (2005). *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Held, David, and Anthony McGrew (eds.). (2007). *Globalization Theory: Approaches and Controversies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Huntingdon, Samuel. (1998). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hutton, Ronald. (2008). "Modern Pagan Festivals: A Study in the Nature of Tradition." *Folklore* 119: 251-73.

Hutton, Ronald. (2011). "How Pagan were Medieval English Peasants." *Folklore* 122: 235-49.

IFNUK. (2008). *Annual Review 2007/2008*. London: The Inter Faith Network for the UK.

Illman, Ruth. (2011). "Reciprocity and Power in Philosophies of Dialogue: The Burning of a Buddhist Temple in Finland." *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue* 21: 47-63.

IPSOS. (2010). "Ipsos Global @dvisory: Is Religion a Force for Good in the World? Combined Population of 23 Major Nations Evenly Divided in Advance of Blair, Hitchens Debate." *IPSOS.*

www.ipsos-na.com/news-polls/pressrelease.aspx?id=5058. Accessed 22 June 2012.

Jackson, Robert. (2014). *"Signposts": Policy and Practice for Teaching about Religions and Non-Religious Worldviews in Intercultural Education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Jayaraman, Raja. (2000). "Inclusion and Exclusion: An Analysis of the Australian Immigration History and Ethnic Relations." *Journal of Popular Culture* Summer: 135-55.

Jura, Cristian. (2012). "Multiculturalism—A Confusing European Approach." *Journal of Politics and Law* 5: 107-15.

Kabir, Nahid. (2005). *Muslims in Australia: Immigration, Race Relations and Cultural History*. Milton Park: Routledge.

Kirkwood, Peter. (2007). *The Quiet Revolution: The Emergence of Interfaith Consciousness*. Sydney: ABC Books.

Kniss, Fred, and Paul D. Numrich. (2007). *Sacred Assemblies and Civic Engagement: How Religion Matters for America's Newest Immigrants*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Laurence, Jonathan. (2012). *The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims: The State's Role in Minority Integration*. Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lentini, Pete, Anna Halafoff, and Ela Ogru. (2009). *Perceptions of Multiculturalism and Security in Victoria: Report to the Department of Premier and Cabinet, State Government of Victoria*. Melbourne: Global Terrorism Research Centre. Monash University.

McCallum, Richard. (2011). *A Sociological Approach to Christian-Muslim Relations: British Evangelicals, Muslims and the Public Sphere*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter.

McCarthy, Kate. (2007). *Interfaith Encounters in America*. Piscataway: Rutgers University Press.

Masuzawa, Tomoko. (2005). *The Invention of World Religions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Meer, Nasar, and Tariq Modood. (2011). "The Multicultural States We're In." In: Anna Triandafyllidou, Tariq Modood, and Nasar Meer (eds). *European Multiculturalisms: Cultural, Religious and Ethnic Challenges*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press. Pp. 61-87.

Miller, Ronald. (2008). "Judaism: Siblings in Strife." In: Hedges, Paul and Alan Race (eds). *Christian Approaches to Other Faiths*. SCM Core Text Series. London: SCM. Pp. 176-90.

Modood, Tariq, and Nasar Meer. (2012). "Interculturalism, Multiculturalism or Both?" *Political Insight* 3: 30-33.

Niebuhr, Gustav. (2008). *Beyond Tolerance: Searching for Interfaith Understanding in America.* New York: Viking.

Nicholson, Hugh. (2011). *Comparative Theology and the Problem of Religious Rivalry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nordstrom, Justin. (2009). "Utopians at the Parliament: The World's Parliament of Religions and the Columbian Exposition of 1893." *Journal of Religious History* 33: 348-65.

ONS. (2011). "Integrated Household Survey April 2010 to March 2011: Experimental Statistics 28 September 2011." *Office for National Statistics*. www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_227150.pdf. Accessed 20 July 2012).

Parsons, Gerald. (1988). "Victorian Roman Catholicism: Emancipation, Expansion and Achievement." in Gerald Parsons (ed.). *Religion in Victorian Britain. Volume I: Traditions*. Manchester: University of Manchester Press. Pp. 146-83.

Pew Report. (2015). "Climate Change Seen as Top Global Threat: Americans, Europeans, Middle Easterners Focus on ISIS as Greatest Danger." *Pew Report Global Attitudes Project*. http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/07/14/climate-change-seen-as-top-global-threat/. (Released 14 July 2015; accessed 14 October 2015).

Pew Report. (2013). "Climate Change and Financial Instability Seen as Top Global Threats" *Pew Report Global Attitudes Project.* http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/06/24/climate-change-and-financial-instability-seen-as-top-global-threats/. (Released 24 June 2013; accessed 26 June 2013).

Pratt, Douglas. (2010). *The Church and other Faiths: The World Council of Churches, the Vatican, and Interreligious Dialogue*. Bern: Peter Lang

Religious Resource and Research Centre. (2000). *Religious Discrimination Project: Interim Report*. Derby: University of Derby.

Romney, Lee. (2011). "Attack on Sikh men triggers outcry in Elk Grove, Calif. and beyond." *Los Angeles Times* (11 April 2011). http://articles.latimes.com/2011/apr/11/local/la-me-0411-sikhs-20110411. Accessed 18 June 2012.

Schmidt-Leukel, Perry. (2011). Four Modes of Interreligious Coexistence: Conflict, Toleration, Appreciation and Transformation. Unpublished Manuscript.

Smith, Christian, and Brandon Vaidyanathan. (2011). "Multiple Modernities and Religion." in Chad Meister (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pp. 250-65.

Snodgrass, Judith. (2003). *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition.* Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press.

Tacey, David. (2003). *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality*. Sydney: Harper Collins.

Triandafyllidou, Anna, Tariq Modood, and Nasar Meer. (2011). "Introduction: Diversity, Integration, Secularism and Multiculturalism." In: Anna Triandafyllidou, Tariq Modood, and Nasar Meer (eds). *European Multiculturalisms: Cultural, Religious and Ethnic Challenges*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press. Pp. 1-29.

Twells, Alison. (2009). *The Civilizing Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The "Heathen" at Home and Overseas*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. (2012). http://www.unaoc.org/. Accessed 24 July 2012.

Weller, Paul. (2008). *Religious Diversity in the UK: Contours and Issues*. London: Continuum.

Woodhead, Linda, with Robert Bluck, Sophie Gilliat-Ray, David Graham, Gurharpal Singh and John Zavos. (2012). "Judaism, Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism: Post-War Settlements." In: Linda Woodhead and Rebecca Catto (eds.). *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*. London: Routledge. Pp. 85-149.