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Interculturalism at the crossroads

comparative perspectives on concepts, policies and practices

Edited by **Fethi Mansouri**

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Coordinator of the UNITWIN Network
on Interreligious Dialogue for Intercultural Understanding
Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

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Foreword

With the globalization process, the world has been offering a myriad of opportunities, in particular to young people. Opportunities to meet with each other, to travel, exchange ideas, discover other cultures and backgrounds enrich from the differences. People today live closer together than ever before in the history of humankind, but at the same time, this fact does not mean there is more understanding. Societies and cities are increasingly more diverse, but many challenges, such as intolerance, prejudice and misunderstanding, social fragmentation, violent extremism, remain rife. All of this undoubtedly raises new questions. Questions about the meaning of 'progress', about the foundations for peace and sustainability, for interculturalism and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Most fundamentally, how can we accompany all countries in building a true and lasting rapprochement of cultures?

In this context, sustainability, the promotion of cultural diversity, of intercultural dialogue, are not a matter for governments alone, but for all segments of society, including universities, civil society and the private sector. Sustainability has deeper roots than financial and economic assets. It is about respecting cultural diversity, fostering equal opportunities and learning to live together. It is about building on the experience of the past for a better future. It is about adapting to local needs and contexts. This is UNESCO's message today, and it has been at the heart of our mandate since 1945.

More than ever, we must indeed strengthen the values we share and recognise the destiny we hold in common. This is not a 'clash of civilizations'. This is a clash between those who do not believe that we can live together, and those who believe that we can. We need stronger media literacy and freedom of expression, to ensure every woman and man can reject messages of hatred. We need a new focus on young people, on education for peace, for global citizenship, because young women and men are architects for the future we want for all. This is why safeguarding culture is far more than a cultural issue today – this is about peace-building. Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are not a threat. They are an asset.

Advocating for a soft power, based on the resources of culture, education, the sciences, communication and information, UNESCO, as a laboratory

of ideas, has a unique mandate in the United Nations. The Organization has been assigned with the role of lead agency within the UN system for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022). UNESCO has been relentlessly advocating for the respect of cultural diversity and the clarification of concepts. UNESCO, thanks to its research networks, has spared no effort to demonstrate the reality of mutual enrichment and cultural overlapping throughout the history of humanity.

Preventing conflicts means investing in capacity and institution building, and helping governments to address the needs of their citizens and to respect their rights. The mobilization of worldwide research networks, and notably the UNESCO Chairs/UNITWIN networks, reaffirms their role in the democratic organization of society and the promotion and recognition of diversity.

This academic compendium, the fruit of collaboration between UNESCO and the 'UNITWIN Network on Interreligious Dialogue for Intercultural Understanding', presents the current state of affairs with regard to the interpretation and application of intercultural dialogue in different contexts and parts of the world. The articles in it also seek to highlight today's challenges in the field of intercultural dialogue, while proposing a set of innovative recommendations, including to UNESCO.

Through this critical perspective of the appropriation and interpretation of intercultural dialogue within policies and practices, it is argued that, as the Charter of the United Nations told us more than 70 years ago, human dignity and dialogue are central to peace and development. Today, this vision must be at the core of all efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16 within the frame of a new UN Peace Architecture. I would add that culture, and the protection of cultural heritage as a shared memory, must be integrated in all peace-building efforts.

In this spirit, it is my sincere hope that this opus will be a worthy contribution to one of the most topical questions: how to generate a genuine dialogue based on equity in today's increasingly diverse and complex societies?

Irina Bokova
Director-General of UNESCO

Contents

List of contributors

Charles Amone is a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of History at Gulu University. He is a former Fulbright Scholar of the University of Millersville in Pennsylvania, US, a former Fellow of the Institute of Languages and Communication of the University of Southern Denmark and former Fellow of the Institute of Development Policy (IOB) of the University of Antwerp in Belgium. He specializes in ethnicity studies and has thirty publications.

Ruth Arber is Senior Lecturer (TESOL) and Co-Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning language (CtaLL) and Director of the Masters of TESOL (Education) at the Faculty of Arts and Education, Melbourne Burwood Campus, Australia. Her research interest in intercultural and identity studies and her knowledge of social cultural and critical theory supports her research and teaching directions. She has published widely in the area of globalization, multiculturalism and identity, and her education research includes edited volumes and a book *Race, Ethnicity and Education*. Her most recent work brings together her interest in innovative language education, multilingualism and 'whiteness' studies to explore the multidimensional and reflexive conditions of language, culture and identity, and the implications of this complex interrelation for research and teacher education.

Gary D. Bouma is the holder of the UNESCO Chair in Intercultural and Interreligious Relations–Asia Pacific and Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Monash University. He is an ordained Anglican priest and a researcher in the fields of sociology and public policy. He has authored or co-authored over twenty-five books, including: *Australian Soul: Religion and Spirituality in the Twenty-First Century* (2006); *Democracy in Islam* (2011); *Being Faithful in Diversity: Religions and Social Policy in Multifaith Societies* (2011); and *Religious Diversity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands: National Case Studies* (2014). He has served as past president of the Australian Association for the Study of Religions as well as past chair on the board of management of the Parliament of the World's Religions (2009). In 2013, he was invested as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

Amanuel Elias is a research fellow for the UNESCO Chair for Cultural Diversity and Social Justice at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship

and Globalisation, Melbourne University, Australia. He received a Masters in Economics from Monash University (2012) and a Ph.D in health economics from Deakin University (2015). His latest research estimated the economic cost of racial discrimination in Australia (BMC Public Health, 2016). Prior to his academic career, Elias worked on development projects in Eritrea for a local government until 2005. His research interests include the socio-economic and health impacts of racial discrimination, experiences of migrants and cultural minorities, and intercultural relations and cultural diversity.

Alon Goshen-Gottstein is acknowledged as one of the world's leading figures in the field of interreligious dialogue. Since 1997, he has been founder and director of the Elijah Interfaith Institute. His work bridges the theological and academic dimension with a variety of practical initiatives, especially involving world religious leadership. A noted scholar of Jewish studies, he has held academic posts at Tel Aviv University and has served as director of the Center for the Study of Rabbinic Thought, Beit Morasha College, Jerusalem. A multi-volume series of interfaith studies edited by him has been published by Lexington Books. He has also authored several monographs and many articles. His most recent publications are *The Jewish Encounter with Hinduism: Wisdom, Spirituality, Identity and Same God, Other God: Judaism, Hinduism and the Problem of Idolatry*, both published by Palgrave Macmillan (2015).

Mike Hardy is Professor and founding Executive Director of the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University, UK. Formerly an economist, Mike has also worked for the UK government and the British Council with responsibility for intercultural dialogue, youth engagement and 'soft-power' global strategic partnerships, including postings to Cairo, East Jerusalem and Jakarta. From 2011, he has led research into intercultural dialogue, pluralism and diversity. He is the director of RISING Global Peace Forum and a special adviser to the Baku Process for Intercultural Dialogue. He was twice honoured in the UK, first with an OBE and then with a very distinguished appointment as Companion of Honour of St Michael and St George for his work in intercultural dialogue. He publishes works on identity, dialogue and inclusion, including his most recent prize-winning volume on *Muslim Identity in Europe*.

Amineh Hoti is the Executive Director of *Markaz-e-Ilm*, the Centre for Dialogue and Action (Islamabad, Pakistan). She was a Fellow-Commoner at Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge, an honorary post awarded to women who are particularly distinguished in their field. She

specialized in Peace and Conflict Studies and Women in Islam, and has taught at Georgetown University, Doha; the Riggs Library Georgetown University, DC (2015 and 2016); the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS)/National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Pakistan; and at the American University, Washington, DC. She designed and taught a unique interfaith university course in Pakistan called *'Ilm, Adab aur Insaaniyat'*, which was taught to students at Forman Christian College University, Lahore. Recently, she was chosen as the 'Torchbearer' for Peacebuilding by *Hello* magazine in Pakistan (2016 December).

Serena Hussain is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University. Her previous roles include Principal Scientist on Multiculturalism and International Migration at Charles Darwin University, Australia, and Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the School of Geography, University of Oxford.

Geoffrey Brahm Levey is an Associate Professor in Political Science at the University of New South Wales (UNSW Sydney), Australia. His current research focuses on contemporary political theory, with special reference to multiculturalism, ethnicity, religion, nationalism and citizenship. He was the founding director of the UNSW Program in Jewish Studies. From 2012 to 2016, he was an Australian Research Council Future Fellow. He is also the editor of *Authenticity, Autonomy and Multiculturalism* (Routledge 2017, 2015) and *Political Theory and Australian Multiculturalism* (Berghahn Books, 2008), and co-editor of *The Politics of Citizenship in Immigrant Democracies: The Experience of the United States, Canada and Australia* (with Ayelet Shachar, Routledge, 2017, 2015), *Secularism, Religion and Multicultural Citizenship* (with Tariq Modood, Cambridge University Press, 2008), and *Jews and Australian Politics* (with Philip Mendes, Sussex Academic Press 2004).

Fethi Mansouri is Professor of Migration and Intercultural Studies and founding director of the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalization at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. He is the UNESCO Chairholder on Cultural Diversity and Social Justice, and since 2017 the Coordinator of the UNITWIN network on interreligious dialogue for intercultural understanding (IDIU). He is the editor of the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* and founding Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Citizenship and Globalisation Studies*. His scholarly books include: *Islam and Political Violence: Muslim Diaspora and Radicalism in the West* (2007); *Political Islam and Human Security* (2008); *Identity, Education, and Belonging: Arab and Muslim Youth in Contemporary Australia* (2008);

Youth Identity and Migration: Culture, Values and Social Connectedness (2009); *Australia and the Middle East: A Frontline Relationship* (2011, 2nd edn); *Migration, Citizenship and Intercultural Relations: Looking Through the Lens of Social Inclusion* (2011); *Muslims in the West and the Challenges of Belonging* (2012); *The Arab Revolutions in Context: Civil Society and Democracy in a Changing Middle East* (2012); and *Global Perspectives on the Politics of Multiculturalism* (2014). His recent books include The *Multicultural Challenge* (2015) and *Women and Migration* (2017). Professor Mansouri's 2004 book, *Lives in Limbo: Voices of Refugees Under Temporary Protection*, was short-listed for the 2004 Human Rights Medals and Awards.

Tariq Modood is Professor of Sociology, Politics and Public Policy and the founding director of the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship at the University of Bristol and the co-founder of the international journal *Ethnicities*. He was awarded a MBE for services to social sciences and ethnic relations in 2001 and was elected a member of the Academy of Social Sciences (UK) in 2004. He served on the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, the National Equality Panel, and the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life. His latest books include *Multiculturalism: A Civic Idea* (2nd edn, 2013). As co-editor, he has published *Multiculturalism Rethought* (2015), *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines* (2016) and *The Problem of Religious Diversity: European Problems, Asian Challenges* (2017). His website is www.tariqmodood.com.

Paul Morris holds the UNESCO Chair in Interreligious Understanding and Relations in New Zealand and the Pacific, and is a Professor of Religious Studies at the Victoria University of Wellington. He is also co-chair of the New Zealand Council of Christians and Jews. His areas of research include religious diversity and policy, religion and politics, and multiculturalism and religion. His current research focuses on religion and governance in the Pacific, developments in intercultural and interreligious dialogue, and the exploration of options for the management of religious diversity within and between states. In 2012, Morris led the New Zealand delegation to the Regional Interfaith Asia-Pacific Dialogue in Indonesia. Morris is the author of the National Statement on Religious Diversity in New Zealand (2009) and was awarded the 2007 International Council of Christians and Jews gold medal for 'Peace through Dialogue'.

Hassan Nadhem is a university professor, writer and translator. He is the holder of the UNESCO Chair for the Development of Interreligious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World at the University of Kufa, and the Editor-in-Chief of *Kufa Review* and Founding Director of Intellectual Studies, a

series of books published by the University of Kufa. Nadhem has taught in several Western and Arab universities and institutions including the Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS) at Middlesex University, London, Nasir University in Libya, and Kufa University. He has authored and translated twenty books. His current research activities mainly involve intercultural studies, hermeneutics, critical theory, linguistics and modern Arabic literature.

Steven Shankman holds the UNESCO Chair in Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue and Peace, University of Oregon, US. His work on the Western classical tradition includes Pope's Iliad: *Homer in the Age of Passion* (1983) and *In Search of the Classic* (1994). His books *The Siren and the Sage: Knowledge and Wisdom in Ancient Greece and China* (2000) and *Early China/Ancient Greece: Thinking through Comparisons compare classical traditions*. He is a co-editor of *The World of Literature* (1999), an anthology of world literature from a global perspective that contains some of his poetic translations from Chinese, Greek and Latin. Two of his more recent books are: *Other Others: Levinas, Literature, Transcultural Studies* (2010) and *Turned Inside Out: Reading the Russian Novel in Prison* (2017). He is co-director of the University of Oregon/UNESCO Crossings Institute.

Priyankar Upadhyaya serves as the UNESCO Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding and Director of the Malaviya Centre for Peace Research at Banaras Hindu University. He is affiliated with the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) as a Global Fellow. He is a Recipient of the Guest Scholar Award of Woodrow Wilson Centre of International Scholars, a Senior Fulbright Award and the Australia-India Council Senior Fellowship. Upadhyaya has recently been an ICCR Chair and Visiting Professor at the Dublin City University. He has authored books published by OUP, MUP, CUP, Sage, Ashgate and Routledge. His recent volume on *Peace and Conflict: South Asian Experience* (Cambridge University Press) has been widely acclaimed.

Ricard Zapata-Barrero is a Professor at the Department of Political and Social Sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain. His main lines of research deal with contemporary issues of liberal democracy in contexts of diversity, especially the relationship between democracy, citizenship and immigration. He is the Director of the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration (GRITIM-UPF) and the Master on Migration Studies at UPF. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the largest research network on Immigration in Europe, IMISCOE, and coordinates two Standing Groups with other colleagues relating to lines of research on Cities and Multi-level Governance, and Diversity and Cultural Policy. He is an expert of the

Intercultural Cities programme of the Council of Europe. For more details about his research and publications see: http://dcpis.upf.edu/~ricard-zapata.

Introduction: the conceptual conundrum around intercultural dialogue

Fethi Mansouri

In our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, multicultural societies are exhibiting new and complex forms of diversity that are creating new opportunities, as well as anxieties, as communities experience the effects of major transformations relating to security, the economy, climate change and diversity (Giddens, 2003; Hage, 2012; Turner, 2010). Challenges associated with cultural diversity and social cohesion, in particular, are becoming more salient and requiring new and more effective policy frameworks. Such new frameworks and intervention paradigms are needed to provide better calibrated policies for managing diversity at all levels, in particular the local level, where everyday encounters with difference take place (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006; Mansouri, 2015; UNESCO, 2013, 2016; Zapata-Barrero, 2015). This is the concrete aim of UNESCO's (2016) International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022).

Yet, and in spite of the growing diversity of academic literature on all things 'intercultural', there remains an urgent need to clarify the conceptual contours for 'intercultural' initiatives and to test their capacities for policy interventions and empirical applications, in particular as these applications need to take place within increasingly super-diverse settings (Kymlicka and Norman, 2000; Mansouri and Halafoff, 2014; Young, 2000).

Current research suggests that state-centric approaches (many of which are framed within civics education policies) have been limited in their capacity to increase positive levels of intercultural understanding and social cohesion (Kamp and Mansouri, 2010; Mansouri and Jenkins, 2010; Noble and Watkins, 2014). Some of the ongoing deficiencies within such approaches have been the lack of emphasis on local initiatives and city-specific strategies; the lack of appreciation of individual agency, in particular among youth (a disposition explicitly promoted within intercultural understanding literature); the almost exclusive focus on migrant and refugee youth in various government policies; and the routine exclusion of youth from Anglo-

Australian and Indigenous backgrounds. Even within the few educational programmes that supposedly target all youth cohorts, the learning process itself is often delivered through top-down pedagogical models rather than building on young people's capacities as reflexive intercultural practitioners and globally connected citizens in diverse social spaces (Walton, Priest and Paradies, 2013).

More broadly, the discourse on diversity management has seen a number of major historical shifts that have tried to posit models – both philosophical and concerning policy – to govern diversity and the consequent variant social implications. These have ranged from the forced assimilation ideologies of the Chicago School in the United States to the White Australia policy in Australia and its emphasis on ethnic screening within the country's migration policy. However, following the civil rights movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, these policies were gradually replaced with more egalitarian approaches articulated through a new emphasis on minority rights, cultural diversity and multiculturalism (Mansouri, 2015). And despite its early promises and relative success in a host of culturally pluralist societies such as Australia and Canada, multiculturalism itself came under significant criticism, in particular in relation to new security threats associated with Muslim migrants living in Western cities. This signalled a gradual shift towards alternative models that incorporate migrants and minorities, as well as towards managing the complex dynamics of diversity within securitized policy agendas. Indeed, many theorists, public commentators and political leaders have made various, and at times contradictory, attempts to at least 'rethink' multiculturalism, if not 'abandon' or 'reject' it altogether. In the context of Europe in particular, and as Taylor (2012, p. 414) states:

> anti-multicultural rhetoric in Europe reflects a profound misunderstanding of the dynamics of immigration into the rich, liberal democracies of the West.

In this regard, it is increasingly argued that multiculturalism, as a policy that called for cultural identities to be supported and maintained rather than forced to assimilate, has led to increased communitarian segregation and societal divisions. Therefore, and in order to prevent the entrenchment of divisions within the same societies and communities, alternative policies are being explored that would encourage communities and individuals to interact reflexively, engage cross-culturally and become more competent interculturally.

Yet, and despite a recent explosion in the academic and policy literature on all matters 'interculturalism', there remains a lack of conceptual clarity around what the term itself (and its many variants) actually means. As some have argued, there is persistent imprecision and diversification around the term as it has developed over time (Levey, 2012), ranging from a focus on relations between citizens and groups in civil society, to a more state-oriented endeavour in recent times in the context of the global war on terror and the resultant 'Muslim question' (Mansouri, Lobo and Johns, 2015).

Therefore, this book aims to provide rigorous theoretical explorations, contested policy articulations and aspired practical interventions around intercultural dialogue from divergent global perspectives, while reflecting apparent conceptual shortcomings and practical challenges. It includes different but thematically synthesized contributions from many UNESCO Chairs members of the UNITWIN Network on Inter-religious Dialogue and Inter-cultural Understanding (IDIU), as well as from experts working in the broad areas of interculturalism, multiculturalism and inter-religious dialogue. The collective contributions, therefore, reflect disciplinary diversity as well as geographic specificities, and are all guided in a systematic manner by the following three questions:

- How is intercultural dialogue (ICD) understood and conceptualized philosophically in the academic literature?
- Are there specific spatial and temporal variants (attributed to locale/social milieu) that shape the way ICD activities are approached? How are these reflected in articulated public discourse and policies (if any)?
- How does ICD and its local manifestations contribute to addressing emergent social fissures and intercultural tensions (as per UNESCO's own Cultural Rapprochement agenda)?

These interlinked questions reflect the ongoing debate about the meaning, domain and application of ICD and its many variations. The questions are examined and explored rigorously and systematically across the book's three main sections dealing respectively with theory, policy and practice.

Book structure

The overall focus of the book is on ICD as a broad conceptual and policy tool that seeks to harness and develop the potential of diversities emerging from everyday spaces to generate conviviality, cooperation, reciprocity and care.

The book has three main sections pertaining to theory, policy and practice/practical interventions from different fields and geographic locations. The conceptual section lays the theoretical foundations for the book and engages with the depth and breadth of literature on 'interculturalism'. The chapters offer reflexive/critical insights and reflect both the disciplinary and geographic diversity of approaches towards ICD. The policy section explores the link between the conceptual articulation of ICD and various policies, highlighting regional divergences and field-specific articulations. The third and final section on ICD in practice highlights case studies of ICD initiatives translated into systematic practice, especially in educational and cultural practice settings. The case studies vary across regions, as well as fields of action ranging from education, inter-faith interventions, media and local governance.

In the first section, Fethi Mansouri and Ruth Arber locate the book's key themes within broader cross-cultural encounters and intercultural relations, as these reflect an increasingly globalized and interconnected world shaped by transnational migration and human mobility. This chapter focuses on how intercultural understanding has been understood internationally and in Australia, as a way of interrogating the ways in which it can be formulated, operationalized and implemented. This is particularly important in the context of education, where intercultural understanding is an important vehicle for introducing and sustaining positive attitudinal orientations among teachers and students alike, and for managing increasing levels of diversity in contemporary schools. One of the dilemmas encountered in this context has been the extent to which a focus on intercultural understanding can be balanced with a more proactive anti-racism agenda. The chapter raises the critical question of whether ICD can indeed be pursued successfully without a systematic shake up of pre-existing structural inequalities, the underlying notional and institutional frameworks that support them, and the entrenched ethno-specific privileges and oppression that are so often their enduring outcome.

Adopting a more reflexive approach, Steven Shankman's chapter interrogates the very terms 'intercultural' and 'transcultural', arguing that, at least in the humanities, the term 'transcultural' may be preferable because it implies 'a beyond' of the very concept of culture, which has so often been posited as the *nec plus ultra* in literary and humanistic studies in today's academia. Shankman asks whether culture can truly have the first and last word, or whether it rather reflects a notion of ethics – one that

is situated both before and beyond culture, as Emmanuel Levinas would argue, and that allows an evaluation of culture and cultural expression.

Going beyond an ethical exploration of culture and dialogue, Mike Hardy and Serena Hussain's contribution examines intercultural dialogue as an object of concern in response to conflicts, and the extent to which this can be used to resolve conflicts or at least minimize their likely occurrence. This chapter locates the discussion of intercultural dialogue firmly within the conflicts and desired transformations characteristic of contemporary Europe in which connection enables exchange and engagement and disconnection risks indifference, at best, or conflict. Hardy and Hussein argue that conflict is not an inevitable by-product of cultural difference; rather they assert that differences often lead to confrontation, or, as we are seeing in contemporary Europe, are used by politicians, media or ideologies as weapons of competition in the battle for resources or of ideas. Indeed, as globalization and political alignments have made national borders more porous, cultural borders and boundaries have sharpened and become increasingly visible and, in some case, more separate. This dynamic context for dialogue in Europe demands a new assessment of both concept and context, requiring not only well-intentioned words and statements, but more importantly new social compacts with clearly delineated economic, political and social requirements.

It is within this new dynamic context that Tariq Modood's chapter considers the role of public intellectuals in engaging with fellow citizens on civic as well as academic concerns. This public intellectual engagement, as Modood argues, can take the form of explaining the triggers of multicultural or intercultural conflict, and the possibilities for re-framing current dominant understandings of this complex situation within a larger – both temporal and intellectual – horizon than is usually presented by civic and political actors. This form of public intellectual engagement, which is a feature of civic or republican traditions, and aspires to be normative and contextual, is elaborated in two ways. The first relates and contrasts this engagement with other modes of intercultural/interfaith dialogue including: ethical-philosophical dialogue, public diplomacy as in 'the dialogue of civilizations', and micro-level encounters and the sociability of everyday multiculturalism. The second expresses this dialogical engagement in the form of an interview – itself a dialogue – in which Modood explains how he has tried to engage as a public intellectual, and how this relates to his sense of being as at once a British Asian Muslim and a multiculturalist.

The second section of the book focuses on the policy articulations of ICD, and is framed by Geffrey Levey's chapter on the pitfalls and possibilities of intercultural paradigms in the Australian context. Levey reminds us that ICD takes place in Australia in a plethora of ways, even if it remains very much part of the national context of Australia's multiculturalism regime. This means that, contrary to some conceptions of ICD in Europe and elsewhere, ICD in Australia operates largely on the basis of a background majority/minorities duality, rather than its repudiation. Levey's chapter examines two case studies of attempted ICD that reveal the inadequate application of the concept by political leadership in the context of the struggles of minoritized groups for recognition and justice. Levey discusses two high-profile cases where the protection of cultural rights was contested, and argues that these cases are instructive and suggest that respecting the terms of Australian multiculturalism, far from undermining ICD, would actually help to make it possible. Indeed, Levey contends that ICD, if implemented, could contribute to improved policy outcomes for all Australians.

The Australian context also provides the background for Gary Bouma's chapter on the often-overlooked differences between packaged and lived religion(s) in the consideration of diversity policy. The practice of ICD too is shaped by the ways in which religions are conceived. Once again, the failure to recognize the many ways that people are religious denies a great deal of richness, while channelling energy largely towards attempts to encourage various packaged religions to converse through top-down communication and directives. Bouma argues that all forms of religion and religiosity need to be involved in ICD for it to achieve the aims of enhancing mutual respect and decreasing intergroup tension and peace.

Extending the geographic reach of the book beyond Australia to neighbouring New Zealand, the chapter by Paul Morris explores the place and understanding of religion in key ICD policy documents, discussions and debates. The chapter traces both the radically different accounts of 'culture' utilized at different levels (EU, national and local), and the equally diverse and sometimes contradictory notions of religion. Morris contends that effectively managing religious difference requires models of religion beyond 'ideology', and policies beyond de-radicalization, 'secular' education for citizenship and empowering women, and advocates for a more nuanced and evidence-based understanding of religious affiliation and commitment that is clearly distinguished from culture.

Ricard Zapata-Barrero, in the context of the EU, outlines the paradigm shifts that have catapulted the saliency of ICD across super-diverse societies. He argues that the recent debate about multiculturalism and interculturalism illustrates the onset of a gradual process of policy paradigm change. Zapata-Barrero analyses the key features of this new policy trend by examining why it has become attractive to policy-makers.

Moving away from theory and policy articulations, the third section of the book zooms in on key challenges facing ICD in practice. Taking the debate about ICD away from Europe, Priyankar Upadhyaya's chapter examines ICD in South Asia. This chapter explores in particular how multicultural rituals and everyday practices facilitated a peaceful transaction of intercommunity demotic superstitious and local practices and led to the rise of such spiritual traditions as Sufism and Bhakti. Such spiritual traditions exemplify ICD in the way they blended and coalesced the orthogenetic and heterogenetic elements of the great interreligious traditions of Hinduism and Islam, thus blurring the difference between the two religions.

Along similar lines, Hassan Nadhem's chapter examines the role of the literary canon in the multicultural and multi-faith society of Iraq, focusing on concepts of cultural capital and the possibility of bridging diverse cultures through the revival of literary icons. The chapter focuses on the great literary icon Fuẓūlī, whose multi-lingual writings in Arabic, Persian and Turkish provide contemporary connections between these diverse cultures and leave an enduring legacy for maintaining social peace within a volatile multi-cultural region.

It is in this context that Fuẓūlī and his literary works in Arabic, Persian and Turkish represent an opportunity to open up a dialogue among the cultures and peoples of Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey.

Amineh Hoti's chapter examines the challenges and practical outcomes of interfaith dialogue in Pakistan and the UK, with a special focus on the role of women. Hoti provides personal reflections that examine the challenges and possibilities offered through ICD and reports on innovative intervention courses designed to change students' perspectives and mindsets on intercultural and interreligious relations. From a broader perspective, Amanuel Elias examines ICD as a potential anti-racism intervention tool.

Elias explores the utility of ICD as a concept that can emphasize the importance of a 'respectful exchange of views' among members of different ethnic groups, in order to mutually understand each other's values and practices, ways of life and worldviews. The chapter approaches ICD as a

concept for de-emphasizing a focus on cultural minorities, and promoting inter-group dialogue rather than intra-group closeness.

Alon Goshen-Gottstein's chapter provides a systematic review of the practical work of the Elijah Interfaith Institute in convening think tanks of scholars from diverse religions to examine issues that are either of concern to contemporary society or relevant for sustaining the interfaith movement. These practical interventions have been published in the *Interfaith Reflections* publication series, which offers critical reflexive tools for various audiences from the academic, religious and public spheres interested in ICD and, in particular, inter-faith rapprochement.

Taking a historical and more critical perspective on intercultural encounters in Africa, Charles Amone's chapter critically examines the Euro-centricity inherent in conceptions of ICD in the case of Uganda's Acholi peoples and their experience with British colonialization. The colonial encounter was constructed as a 'civilizing mission' by the British – a kind of discursive sugar-coating of what was essentially economic imperialism, presented instead as a benevolent discourse purportedly aimed at transforming Black Africans into a civilized race, in order to end hitherto negative cultural practices. In the process, Western European culture was superimposed onto African culture. Such cultural imperialism practised against the people of northern Uganda, shows that intercultural encounters can be discursively constructed and manipulated by states and other groups to justify oppressive practices against vulnerable groups.

The postscript chapter by Fethi Mansouri and Ricard Zapata-Barrero synthesizes much of the theoretical and empirical insights contained in this book in a critical future-oriented manner. It argues for ICD as an emerging paradigm for diversity management – one that is urgently required in the current international context on the basis of theory-driven, policy and ethical arguments. The question is no longer whether interculturalism is superior to multiculturalism, or whether it should replace it; rather, it concerns the promise of intercultural paradigms as they focus on contact and interaction between individuals at the local level within city-based initiatives, rather than state-centric directions.

Today, most societies across the world are witnessing rising levels of social and cultural diversity brought about by globalization and, in particular, increased human mobility and significant advances in information and communications technologies. The dilemma, therefore, has been how to best manage the resultant diversity and what optimal social policy

paradigms to adopt towards this end. Assimilation, multiculturalism and, presently, interculturalism have all been proposed as possible policy conduits for managing socio-cultural diversity. This book in focusing on the latter concept, and in particular on its ICD manifestation, offers at once theoretical examinations, policy discussion and practical explorations of its uptake across the world. The core argument connecting the book's three distinct sections is that while assimilation in its racist manifestation is no longer a viable option in today's world, ICD within existing multicultural settings has much to offer. In particular, it has the potential to enshrine diversity as a social pillar for regulating social and political affairs, and for ensuring social inclusion and political engagement are achieved in the most productive ways among all individuals regardless of culture, religion, gender or any other personal attribute that distinguishes a person.

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I. Theoretical explorations into intercultural dialogue

1. Conceptualizing intercultural understanding within international contexts: challenges and possibilities for education

Fethi Mansouri and Ruth Arber

Introduction: theoretical imprecision

Many policy initiatives relating to intercultural understanding have been articulated at national, international and supra-national levels, in the current context of rising levels of diversity, increased interconnectivity and more pronounced forms of human mobility (Beck, 2011; Benhabib, 2002; Wiater, 2008; Zapata-Barrero, 2015a). Many initiatives have emerged almost exclusively as reactions to perceived problems associated with cultural diversity policies, in particular, those articulated within multiculturalism (Bradley, 2013; Berry and Southwell, 2011; Castles, 2010). Historically, multiculturalism has been an important policy framework across many émigré societies wanting to manage and facilitate migrant integration (Mansouri, 2015). Yet more recently, questions have been raised as to the overall utility of this policy framework, particularly at a time when problems of integration and social cohesion are being widely reported in public discourse (Akbarzadeh and Mansouri, 2006; Hage, 2011; Ramadan, 2004). Concerns about the ways in which multicultural policies and practices have been understood and implemented are the focus of much recent literature on diversity, race relations and social inclusion (Arber, 2015; Mansouri, 2015).

Many policy-makers and researchers have started to advocate alternative approaches and policies aimed at overcoming the supposed shortcomings of multiculturalism (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006; Cantle, 2012; James, 2008; Taylor, 2012; Zapata-Barrero, 2015). In this context, the Council of Europe's White Paper on *Intercultural Dialogue, Living Together as Equals in Dignity* (2008) and a series of documents produced by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) have been particularly influential in various policy and practice

circles. These papers and subsequent reports from Australia and elsewhere argue for alternative approaches to managing ethno-cultural diversities from different conceptual and historical perspectives. They share the premise that the intercultural approach, as opposed to other approaches to migration and diversity, most notably multiculturalism, offers a new conduit towards 'managing cultural diversity based on shared values and respect for common heritage, cultural diversity and human dignity' (Byram et al., 2009, p. 26). Intercultural dialogue, in this regard, encourages 'the acquisition of knowledges, skills and attitudes – particularly the capacity for reflection and the self-critical disposition for life in culturally diverse societies' (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 94). A key focus remains the role of intercultural dialogue in engendering social cohesion, defined as stated below:

> Social cohesion, as understood by the Council of Europe, denotes the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding polarization. A cohesive society is a mutually supportive community of free individuals pursing these common goals by democratic means (ibid., p. 5).

Within this approach, intercultural competence is considered as the practical foundation for achieving and sustaining social peace. Though education is invoked as a key vehicle for acquiring intercultural skills and techniques of immediate relevance to democratic citizenship and culturo-religious diversity, the Council of Europe White Paper nevertheless retains a highly normative and in many ways uni-dimensional tone that raises many questions as to its practical application. Indeed, it approaches one of the key concepts in interculturalism, namely reciprocity, as being essentially the domain of migrants and minority groups, rather than all Europeans, including minority and dominant groups alike.

Arguments within the Council of Europe document, although laudable, add to the differentiation between empowered dominant groups and vulnerable minoritized others. Documents from UNESCO define the relationship succinctly as one of human rights, whereby intercultural competence is described in terms of the responsibilities of the dominant group and 'the need for tolerance and respect for peoples in the world through the inclusion of human rights principles in the school and the curriculum' (2006, p. 7). The highly critiqued notion of 'tolerance', assumed to imply passive acceptance, suggests that cultural and situational differences are not only noted (albeit reluctantly), but also permitted to continue unchallenged (Arber, 2008, 2011). The notion of 'respect' similarly suggests that groups

of people exhibiting difference but who, in this case, represent a silent but empowered 'us' will hold others within our gaze as a matter of admiration and esteem (Rizvi, 2010). The notion of 'human rights' suggests that an empowered group holds a universal and progressive approach towards the assumption of ethical claims, which are de-historicized, seemingly neutral and all inclusive (Brown, 2007). Against this notion of the dominant but universal 'white man' is that of the uncontained 'other' who needs to be constrained from destabilizing the (European) nationalist project (Young, 2003).

This chapter interrogates the ways in which intercultural conception has been defined in diverse contexts, providing the framing context for policy and curriculum measures to work with the manifestations of global population movement, diversity and change. It asks questions the ways in which conversations about intercultural understanding can be broadened to consider how entrenched systemic inequalities, the underlying notional and institutional frameworks that support them, and the mono-cultural and specific privileges and oppression, which are so often their enduring outcome, can be dismantled. To that end, it examines how policy and notional and practical work, in relation to intercultural understanding, can better encompass structural and cultural change regarding the ways in which cross cultural encounters and intercultural relations are shaped and take place.

Mono-cultural perspectives

Despite the stated focus of intercultural understanding to bring together culturally differentiated groups, a mono-cultural mindset still prevails which understands and positions some groups and cultures in opposition to others. The trope of an empowered core group of 'us' vis-a-vis 'others' is interwoven throughout documents related to intercultural understanding, often in ways similar to those advocating multiculturalism. The Council of Europe's White Paper describes the relationship between ourselves and others pragmatically, and as one which 'leaves no room for moral relativism' (2008, p. 11). The legitimacy of the dominant group to assert its authority in relation to minority stakeholders is described in relation to the ways that that 'public authorities' arbitrate fairly (2008, p. 11) in the event that some individual or group does not share 'the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law' (Council of Europe White Paper, 2008, p. 9). Similarly, language learning is explained as a process where minorities must acquire the majority language in order to 'act' as full

citizens (Council of Europe White Paper, 2008, p. 16). 'Minority' language education is described as a matter of enrichment and not a necessity for majority community members. Even the introduction of the concepts of 'intercultural competence' and 'democratic citizenship', a supposed step further from active citizenship, assumes that this discussion is concerned with obstacles for minority individuals rather than one concerned with the rights of white European citizens as members of the dominant cultural group.

Similarly, despite their intention to support better intercultural skills and knowledge for students in culturally differentiated societies, documents such as the UNESCO (2006) *Guidelines on Intercultural Education* contain tropes that reassert a dominant and mono-cultural perspective. The guidelines are concerned with 'managing' othered diverse migrant groups entering contemporary Western contexts. They are framed by the premise that the authors are uniquely qualified to set standards of culture and practice for others and convene the diverse cultural and ideological perspectives made in relation to curriculum and for policy-makers and community members worldwide. UNESCO itself is described as having a unique role as a neutral conveyer of standards and ways of thinking, which can be universally described, categorized and applied.

Intercultural education is conceptualized as framed in enlightenment terms (Bauman, 2000) – such as that of 'universal progress' – progress towards peace and light – and the 'upheaval' and 'dysfunction' that occurs as traditional cultures are brought together and disrupted. The task of the body is an immense one whereby:

> In a world experiencing rapid change, and where cultural, political, economic and social upheaval challenges traditional ways of life, UNESCO represents progress and provides objective arbitration able to proscribe educational standards which can bring together differentiated and often disruptive groups. It is concerned with providing education to promote social cohesion and peaceful co-existence [and] ...programmes that encourage dialogue between students of different cultures, beliefs and religions...[and] make an important and meaningful contribution to sustainable and tolerant societies. (UNESCO, 2006, p. 7).

The focus of the document's examination of intercultural understanding is the relational process of 'dialogue'. The terms and conditions of intercultural dialogue are framed within an understanding that greater communication and knowledge of 'each other's' lives will bring about the peace and

cohesion sought for throughout the document. This is an ambiguous notion described in Whiteness literature (Arber, 2015; Garner, 2007; Hage, 1997; Preston, 2007) whereby persons ascribed differently by their cultures, beliefs and religions are considered similarly diverse and encouraged to respect and engage with each other on equal terms. The unequal power relations that underpin these conversations are ignored, even as they are reinforced by an omniscient and universal self who describes a vehicle to connect tolerant and sustainable societies. As discussed earlier, the notion of tolerance suggests that 'we' can permit differences exhibited by 'others', however reluctantly. The notion of social sustainability brings together seemingly differentiated ideas: those of intercultural understanding and progress, and biology and the survival of the species itself. The upheaval and danger that underpins the document's concerns about the possibility of conflict emergent from traditional ways of life is placed against its emphasis on education as a way to ameliorate these dangers and bring about the United Nations' vision for universal and sustainable progress. The ultimate aim of the policy of social cohesion and peaceful coexistence brings to view the notion of a differentiated a traditional society, which needs to be tolerated and respected in ways that can be educated about.

A particular role described within UNESCO documentation (2006, 2010, 2013) is that of 'international standard setter' and convenor of diverse cultural and ideological perspectives. Guidelines for standard-setting are described as contributing to understanding and a product of numerous conferences drawing together the standard-setting instruments required to bring about an intercultural approach to education. The standardization and measurement of intercultural understanding normalizes and objectivizes cultural and ethical understandings. It suggests a condition of neutrality, scientific control, objectivity and rationality. It ignores the partiality brought into play in the design and implementation of these measures and the politics of their construction. It provides definition and legitimation to ways of thinking which become understood as universal, de-historicized, neutral and unbiased. The UNESCO paper (2006) suggests that the values and standards it describes have been developed as part of an accredited and rational process. The fact that the conference participants and the UNESCO leadership setting those standards are themselves working through paradigms framed by the terms and conditions of language and culture is not broached. This not only engenders and sustains a false consciousness of objectivity, but also serves to preserve and indeed enhance already dominant social structures and hierarchies.

An important focus of the documents examined in this chapter is the descriptions of different and minority groups and the knowledges and skills required to work with those groups. The project of 'knowing the other' is described within the post-colonial literature as the ways in which dominant representations of 'who they are' and 'who they are not' become powerful such that the narrative of the other becomes all but obliterated (see Arber, 2008; Young, 2003). Arguably, standards such as those described within the UNESCO document (2006) describe what is known about minority groups and how this knowledge is to be practised. Such moves towards dialogue and mutual knowing work to reinforce conversations about the otherness of the other and about the ways in which others can be communicated with; they legitimize rather than work against the structures and notions which support the classed and racialized others. A critical examination of the ways in which intercultural understanding have been described and operationalized, both in Australia and internationally, suggest that despite the good intentions and strategic importance of these policy initiatives, the tropes of identity and difference that frame them often work to entrench rather than shake-up normative understandings and behaviours which support older thinking about identity and difference.

Intercultural understanding and multiculturalism

Crucially, both the Council of Europe and United Nations' documents differentiate between what they define as 'multiculturalism' and the thinking that defines intercultural understanding. Multiculturalism, it is argued, describes a static and unchanging range of differences including linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity, which remain homogenous and differentiated from the social mainstream. It describes the culturally diverse nature of human society, referring to elements of ethnic or national culture, but also includes linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity (UNESCO, 2006).

While such policy articulations do envisage education as the main platform for potential intervention endeavours, the fact is that these remain confused and imprecise about what is exactly meant by 'intercultural understanding' and how it is be operationalized and assessed. The challenge does not only refer to the broad notion of 'intercultural citizen' in the context of the socio-political sphere, but also to intercultural understanding in educational settings. Perhaps the difficulty in unpacking the notion of 'interculturalism' lies in the fact that it means different things to different actors. Discussing the ongoing debate about multiculturalism, Vertovec

and Wessendorf argue that 'it is an illusion to consider 'multiculturalism' as being one philosophy, structure, discourse or set of policy measures. The term is invoked differentially to describe a number of discrete – albeit sometimes overlapping – phenomena' (2004, p. 3). But over time, the critiques of multiculturalism become more prominent and come from all directions. This relates especially to the minimalist celebratory versions of everyday multiculturalism, with the tendency to essentialize 'cultural diversity' (Alibhai-Brown, 2000), keeping it in the ethnic box. And even multicultural education, as a key conduit for multicultural aspirations, lacks the transformative tools capable of challenging, critiquing and changing pedagogical approaches and societal attitudes. Critiques argue that multiculturalism has come to be a 'code word' for the discussion of racism and difference (Arber, 2008). Its core argument, that everyone is the same in their difference, suggests a 'colour-blindness', which glosses over the notional and structural conditions of difference even as it emphasizes them (Arber, 2015; Mansouri, 2015).

The treatment of intercultural understanding becomes even more challenging and complicated as a result of the dearth of intellectual, policy and practice foundations akin to those underpinning multiculturalism in the context of amplified movements of people from diverse cultures and management of the resulting ethno-religious diversity. Meer and Modood (2012, p. 3), focusing on the political dimensions of this debate, argue that 'interculturalism' as compared to multiculturalism is supposed to be more dialogic, less 'groupist', more committed to national attachment and social cohesion, and less illiberal and relativistic. Levey concurs, emphasizing intercultural and multicultural policies' 'geographical and historical variations' (2012, p. 217), highlighting the political nature of the attempt to surpass multiculturalism with interculturalism. Therefore, if we are to accept a strictly positive conception of 'interculturalism', the question remains: how to operationalize, implement and assess the acquisition of intercultural knowledge and associated skills within educational practices, without duplicating multicultural education's deficits?

Intercultural understanding in international contexts

Definitions of interculturalism and intercultural understanding, and the differentiation from multiculturalism, have been evidenced differently in different contexts. The conversations and silences that also underpin multiculturalism the ways in which interculturalism is defined, and codified in different ways and in different jurisdictions. In UNESCO (2006)

documents, the dynamic and procedural aspects of diversity are described as aspects of interculturalism, as are notions of equity, dialogue and exchange. As such, interculturalism is understood as going beyond the unchanging characteristics ascribed to multiculturalism and to the creation of understanding of, respect for and dialogue between different cultural groups. Tropes of peaceful co-existence, respect, tolerance, sustainability and dialogue are ascribed only to interculturalism, and described as a:

> dynamic concept [that] ... refers to evolving relations between cultural groups. It has been defined as 'the existence of interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect.' Interculturality presupposed interculturality and results from 'intercultural' exchange and dialogue on the local, regional, national or international level (UNESCO, 2006, p. 8).

Alternatively, the Council of Europe White Paper (2008, p. 9) defines the central focus of intercultural understanding as that of dialogue, which in this version, is to be open and respectful. Different from the UNESCO (2006) document, their somewhat ambiguous definition describes dialogue as being about personal communication between individuals and groups. The exchange of viewpoints is seen as central to this definition, as it is considered representative of both one's 'background' and one's 'worldview'. The term 'background' encodes the notion that ways of understanding and behaving are evidenced within familial and contextual environments and are in a sense primordial in origin. The term 'worldview' describes a viewpoint inclusive of notions of ontological conception. Intrinsic to the document is the understanding that such terms – whether of ontology or performance – can be described in terms of practice and perception. Intercultural dialogue is defined as:

> a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect. It requires the freedom and ability to express oneself, as well as the willingness and capacity to listen to the views of others. Intercultural dialogue contributes to political, social, cultural and economic integration and the cohesion of culturally diverse societies. It fosters equality, human dignity and a sense of common purpose. It aims to develop a deeper understanding of diverse worldviews and practices, to increase co-operation and participation (or the freedom to make choices), to allow personal growth and transformation, and to

> promote tolerance and respect for the other (Council of Europe White Paper, 2008, p. 9).

The tropes of world peace and progress – so central to the UNESCO documents – are not mentioned here. Instead, there is a central focus on tropes of equality, dignity and common purpose. The social justice perspective introduced by the trope of equality is placed against two conflictual narratives – the dignity of the person and the common purpose of the public sphere. The notion that participation is about the freedom to make choices needs to be unpacked. Choice requires that the notional and structural terms and conditions that define difference and social participation be challenged and dismantled. This is not broached in these documents.

The amelioration of unequal power relations existing between those belonging to majority/minority groups is brought about through a process of:

> Integration (social integration, inclusion) [which is] is understood as a two-sided process and as the capacity of people to live together with full respect for the dignity of each individual, the common good, pluralism and diversity, non-violence and solidarity, as well as their ability to participate in social, cultural, economic and political life. It encompasses all aspects of social development and all policies. It requires the protection of the weak, as well as the right to differ, to create and to innovate. Effective integration policies are needed to allow immigrants to participate fully in the life of the host country. Immigrants should, as everybody else, abide by the laws and respect the basic values of European societies and their cultural heritage. Strategies for integration must necessarily cover all areas of society, and include social, political and cultural aspects. They should respect immigrants' dignity and distinct identity and to take them into account when elaborating policies (Council of Europe, White Paper, 2008, p. 6).

In the Council of Europe White Paper (ibid.), the constituent elements of integration and intercultural dialogue are understood as dynamic and negotiated within 'unequally empowered shared spaces'. Cultural backgrounds and worldviews interweave with one another to encapsulate cultures which are hybrid and new. The systemic frames that shape the unequally empowered shared spaces, and the unequal power relations and structures that frame the dynamic integration of differentiated group identities and epistemologies, remain unchallenged within the document.

A document search of sites published by the United States (US) Government did not uncover any official policy documents that use or discuss the term 'intercultural understanding'. A blog distributed by the US Department of Education mentions the term, but in quite a different sense than that discussed in the documents so far, and does not call for multicultural or for intercultural policy. Rather, it calls for the government to maintain rather than dismantle particular educational programming.

In Canada, the official website of the Government of Canada states:

> Canada was the first country to adopt multiculturalism as an official policy. Documents reaffirm the value and dignity of all Canadian citizens regardless of their racial or ethnic origins, their language or their religious affiliation. Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging. (Government of Canada, n.d. a)

The manifestation of policies of multiculturalism are understood as bringing about intercultural understanding, as it 'gives Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding' (ibid.). The search for references to interculturalism by the Government of Canada refers only to the website of the Canadian Department for Foreign Affairs. The Centre for Intercultural Learning provides cultural information about a breadth of topics (e.g. communication styles, display of emotion, dress punctuality and formality, preferred managerial qualities, hierarchy and decision-making, relationship building and so on), provided as a series of cultural perspectives from Canadian and local points of view. It is difficult to work out how the terms 'local' and 'Canadian' are defined. It seems that locals are born in countries outside Canada and are not of Anglo or Francophone background (Government of Canada n.d. b).

Intercultural understanding in education

The examination of policy statements and sites in diverse world contexts suggests that conceptions of intercultural understanding are described and operationalized differently. Too often, the systemic conditions that frame the representation of identity and difference within those documents are described in terms that emerge from entrenched notions of self and others, and remain silent about, or describe in euphemisms, the ways to

reshape them. Educational institutions provide particular sites from which conversations about identity and difference, and their redesign in terms of intercultural understanding, can be discussed and engaged with (Bennett, 2003). Schools have reflected and continue to reflect social trends, cultural processes and intercultural relations that characterize the broader societies within which they exist (Mansouri and Kamp, 2007). Efforts to deal with social inequalities and cultural oppressions must also commence at schools as sites for such resistance (Delgado and Stefancic, 2013). Thus, supranational agencies have assigned schools the responsibility to ensure that future generations have the intercultural knowledge and skills to build interculturalism, social inclusion and cohesion (see, for example, Council of Europe, 2008; UNESCO, 2006, 2009, 2013). The UNESCO report on *Education for Intercultural Understanding* for instance, is explicit about the central role of schooling in this agenda: 'Education systems, schools and teachers are therefore responsible for strengthening the child's cultural identity and values, while also promoting respect and understanding for the culture of others' (2010, p. 9). The school curriculum becomes the arbiter between those cultures and the purveyor of competencies, attitudes and values that appear as neutral and are placed against the cultural symbols of other and traditional cultures.

The problem in the intercultural understanding debate, and ongoing academic and policy articulations in Australia and internationally, is the imprecise and at times confusing perspectives articulated and introduced in different contexts, all claiming to deal with intercultural understanding from a particular angle. The literature abounds with terms and concepts such as 'awareness', 'understanding', 'capacity', 'ability', 'orientation', 'repertoire', 'knowledge', 'attitude' and 'skills', to name just a few (Praxmarer, 2014). These terms reflect different disciplinary and philosophical perspectives on the cognitive, pedagogical and social processes involved in understanding and relating to increasingly complex manifestations of ethnic, racial and cultural diversity in society. This complex amalgam of perspectives muddies the meaning and clarity of interculturalism as an object of study, and reflects the political dynamics of curriculum development and design.

UNESCO (2006, 2009, 2010, 2013) has taken up the challenge of attempting to clarify the meaning of interculturalism through a series of policy statements and guidelines designed to provide a framework for education systems to incorporate interculturalism into school curriculum and practice, including a conceptual and operational framework for intercultural competencies. In a series of documents, UNESCO (2010) conceptualizes

intercultural understanding as a component of Education for Sustainable Development that encompasses principles, content, values and skills. From a pedagogical perspective, it is suggested that 'learning activities include a mix of knowing, understanding, valuing and acting' (UNESCO, 2010, p. 22). A framework of competencies describes how culture is enacted through communication via language, and suggests that understanding one's own cultural background is a prerequisite to learning about other cultures and as a way to 'cope [during] intercultural interactions'.

Promoting international education policies, as the Council of Europe and UNESCO has done with intercultural education, is a difficult task. Education systems are complex and vary across states and even local districts (Leeman, 2003). In the next section of this chapter, we focus on how interculturalism has been operationalized and implemented in Australia, as an example of how the international move toward intercultural education has been taken up in one specific nation state.

Intercultural understanding in the Australian curriculum

Since the 1970s, multicultural education has been a core feature of the formal school curriculum of Australian states and territories. The curriculum emphasized learning about and celebrating the ethnic and cultural diversity of Australia's multicultural identity. In the first national Australian curriculum, introduced in 2013, multicultural education was replaced with the cross-curricula area of intercultural understanding – one of seven 'general capabilities' to be cultivated in students during their schooling. In curriculum terms, the general capabilities are procedural knowledges. These described non-disciplinary knowledge, understandings and skills that policy-makers and curriculum designers deem students will need in their future lives, and followed from other such statements including a framework for values education focusing on civics and citizenship (Australian Government, 2005) and the *Report on Intercultural Language Learning* (Liddicoat et al., 2003). The incorporation of values education into Australian education policy reflected both an international trend and local concerns that public schools were failing to build students' 'character' (Lovat, 2009, p. xiv). The prominence of interculturalism in languages education came about because forms of procedural knowledge such as interaction, reflection and responsibility are necessary for successful communication – more than linguistic knowledge and skills. The intercultural understanding capability expands on this agenda and aims to produce:

> active and informed citizens with an appreciation of Australia's social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, and the ability to relate to and communicate across cultures at local, regional and global levels [and to cultivate] values and dispositions such as curiosity, care, empathy, reciprocity, respect and responsibility, open-mindedness and critical awareness, and support new and positive intercultural behaviours [for] learning to live together (ACARA, 2014, p. 1).

Teachers and schools are expected to integrate the intercultural understanding capability into all subject and discipline areas throughout all years of schooling. In practical terms, the move from multicultural to intercultural education represents a shift in focus from knowledge (learning about) to knowledge *and* practice (learning to do). In accomplishing this goal, the curriculum expects students to develop three intercultural dispositions or capabilities throughout their schooling: expressing empathy, demonstrating respect and taking responsibility (ACARA, 2014).

In Australia's federated political system, the different states and territories have control over the translation of national educational initiatives, including the curriculum, into related policies, guidelines and practices that are consistent with state and territory agendas. The individualization of interculturalism reflects broader social shifts in community and state responsibilities and accountability to individuals (Rose, 1992). Victoria, for example, has redefined the intercultural understanding general capability as a 'personal and social capability' to better reflect the dialogical relationship between individuals and their social worlds. At the local level, our experience working with schools in Victoria that are seeking to accomplish the Australian curriculum's agenda to build intercultural citizens showed that the shift from multicultural to intercultural education raised fundamental but important challenges for schools. In particular, these included the requirement to move beyond learning *about* racial and cultural diversity. This knowledge focus encouraged the essentialization of cultures and cultural differences, and was vulnerable to being reduced to simplistic, stereotyped representations of cultural traditions, colloquially known as the 'food, flags, and festivals' approach (Arber, 2008). Accordingly, teachers and schools had to confront the pedagogical challenge of how develop both intercultural knowledge and practices among students (Mansouri and Percival-Wood, 2008; Mansouri and Trembath, 2005).

At the national level, however, a consequence of federalism is that there is no nationwide agreement on the meaning of intercultural understanding or the optimum processes for implementing its agendas in schools. Discussions

about intercultural relationships in Australia are influenced by socio-cultural and identity theory, as distinct from the human rights and enlightenment perspective of the UNESCO documents, and the Council of Europe's moves between discussions of institutional racism and the description of culture as artistic and creative. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA, 2014) document acknowledges the work of theories in several fields including cultural studies (Hall, 1997), language education (Kramsch, 1998; Liddicoat et al., 1999), multicultural education (Banks and Banks, 2004; Noble and Poynting, 2000), and more broadly in sociology, linguistics and anthropology. Acknowledging the differentiated theoretical and strategic perspectives taken by these theorists, the ACARA document attests to the fuzzy nature of an intercultural approach, adding that, given its diverse origins, it is not surprising that the nature and place of intercultural learning are by no means settled and the definition of the term 'culture' is not agreed upon. The disjunction between the different perspectives, which underpins thinking in this document, can easily be seen in the definition of intercultural understanding itself:

> In the Australian curriculum, students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages, beliefs and those of others. They come to understand how personal, group and national identities are shaped, and the variable and changing nature of culture (ACARA, 2004, p. 1).

Notions of culture and identity are understood as multidimensional, negotiated and dynamic. At the same time, they are envisaged as unidimensional, static and primordial, as sets of cultural and linguistic characteristics and beliefs that belong to selves and others.

Regardless of the complexity of definitions of culture and identity, it remains unclear what culture and identity mean, and what the characteristics of and relationships between these discrete differentiated and personal group and national identities are. For the purposes of curriculum, the characteristics of culture and identity are described as those assessable as capabilities. Intercultural relationships are understood as relating to the assessment of student capabilities – the accumulation of skills and knowledges, and description and measurement of the ability to achieve them. Cultural understanding is a matter of doing rather than knowing. The capabilities delineate what and how this doing is to be done. They involve 'students in learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognize commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect' (ACARA, 2004, p. 1).

There are important differences between the Australian and UNESCO documents. Unlike standards, the notion of competencies suggests flexibility in the way that students are assessed as having different abilities to carry out prescribed skills and knowledges. The focus of intercultural relationships – to learn about and engage with diverse cultures – is different to the concept of 'knowing' – to be aware of something as fact or truth – described within the UNESCO document. Learning is a more modest concept, meaning to gain or acquire knowledge of or skill in something by being taught. It does not assume an all-knowing watcher who knows the facts about the cultures of others. The word 'engage', meaning to participate and to be involved with diverse cultures, is different from notions of tolerance described in older Australian documents and the UNESCO document. The focus of such engagement – mutual respect – suggests an appreciation of the worth of others and consideration of their feelings, wishes and rights.

Nevertheless, the concept 'competencies' continues to legitimize, essentialize and standardize skills and knowledges related to culture, identity and difference. The notion 'diverse' suggests that individuals and groups within Australia are differentiated culturally in ways that are clearly defined and static. The notion that groups can be described in terms of their commonalities as well as their differences adds to this perception, and brings to view critiques of multiculturalism. The notion that all groups are understood as the same in their difference is suggestive of the terms and conditions of 'colour-blindness'. Difference is simplistically defined as static, discrete and essential. The accommodation of difference is reduced to the implementation of a set of cultural skills and knowledges, removed from consideration of racializations and of structural and notional systems which include some and exclude others differently. The notion of respect is a relatively passive concept in that it does not say how the rights of others will be protected and goes only some way to challenge the critique of that concept. Moreover, the ACARA document resurrects many of the same tropes used within discussions of policies for multicultural education:

> The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians recognizes the fundamental role that education plays in building a society that is cohesive and culturally diverse, and that values Australia's Indigenous cultures (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 4).

The notion of cohesion placed against cultural diversity suggests that older notions of unity within diversity remain central to discussions of multiculturalism. The valuation of Australian Indigenous cultures is a different and important addition to the discussion. From the subsequent

document from ACARA, this next paragraph shifts from the discussion of relationships between differentiated cultural groups living within Australia to outlining the skills and knowledges young people require to move internationally in a culturally differentiated world:

> Intercultural understanding is an essential part of living with others in the diverse world of the twenty-first century. It assists young people to become responsible local and global citizens equipped through their education of living and working together in an interconnected world (ACARA, 2004, p. 1).

The notion that intercultural understanding is concerned with assisting young people to be responsible local and global citizens does not apply to the amelioration of the structural and notional conditions that elevate some and provide barriers to others. Rather, it applies to the responsibilities of all to gain the requisite skills and knowledges to work within a world in which such systemic and unequally empowered differences are encoded as cultural. Whereas documents for multicultural education discussed the terms and conditions under which different migrant, religious and ethnic groups can live together within an Australian context, descriptions of intercultural education describe the personal competencies students require to live and work both in Australia and internationally. This recoding of the conversation neglects discussions about social justice and equity, which underpin earlier documents. The systemic and normative structures that allow some to partake in Australian culture differently remain out of view. The subsumption of the intercultural and international skills as those required for international communication and travel completely ignores the (often elitist) ways in which mobility is enabled differently for some than it is for others. The ACARA document attempts to expand the ways that notions of identity and culture are discussed and assessed:

> Intercultural understanding encourages students to make connections between their own world and the world of other, to build on shared interests and commonalities and to negotiate or mediate difference. It develops student's abilities to communicate and emphasize with others and to analyse intercultural experiences critically. It offers opportunities for them to consider their own beliefs in a new light and so gain insight into themselves and others (2004, p. 1).

The personal qualities of communication, empathy and analysis and the argument that intercultural relationships require the examination of the self before others makes some demands on self-understanding and

learning. Nevertheless, the ACARA document upholds the notion that the attributes of culture and identity are discrete, separate and unidimensional in their approach to ontology, performance and relationships. Intercultural understanding here is a personal rather than social project, whereby the development of the skills and knowledge required makes behavioural and cognitive demands on each individual, in order to express particular dispositions: habits of empathy, respect and responsibility.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that part of the difficulty of pursing an intercultural understanding agenda within an educational setting has been the lack of conceptual clarity and precision as to what specific competencies are teachable and what the assessment framework might be for testing such pedagogic approaches (Besley and Peters, 2012). Despite numerous attempts by international agencies such as UNESCO, as well as certain states such as Australia, curriculum reform has not always reflected the pedagogical requirements of intercultural understanding practice. This is also the case with teacher training and professional development programmes, which have struggled to keep up with the demands of intercultural practice in increasingly diverse schools. These conceptual and professional challenges have been compounded by the school organization leadership responsible for initiating, implementing and sustaining such change, which has at times failed to sustain these efforts against an environment dominated by retentionphilic and overall rankings, particularly in relation to numeracy and literacy (Kamp and Mansouri, 2010).

This chapter engages with the observation that the commendable intentions and strategies discussed within intercultural understanding policy documents, promulgated internationally and in Australia, too often remain framed by politics of representation (see Hall, 1997) not dissimilar to those that shaped documents of multiculturalism. Arguably, such tropes of alterity need to be interrogated if the intercultural understanding project's intention – to bring together groups and individuals in socially just and respectful ways – is to be carried out. Greater attention to policies that support anti-racism and strategies to dismantle systemic and normative conditions, which enable some groups and individuals and exclude others, is an important first step to furthering the effective nature of intercultural understanding policy-making.

The future of intercultural understanding in Australia and globally, both within education and in other policy areas, will depend very much on how it is defined, designed, resourced, implemented and assessed. It is encouraging to see UNESCO taking the lead on this at the level of conceptualization and overall pedagogic articulation (UNESCO, 2013). From this supra-national perspective, intercultural understanding competencies should constitute the foundation of an emerging 'universal communicator' – an individual who is at once a critical thinker and a reflexive open interlocutor, and who has knowledge about their own culture in its own right, but also in relation to other cultures. But as UNESCO (2013) reminds us, there is still a need to clarify, synthesize and operationalize what we all mean by intercultural understanding competencies:

> Synthesizing research from multiple disciplines and cultures into a coherent whole requires ongoing effort because such research continues within a variety of disciplines. Just as one definition is inadequate (and inappropriate), so one disciplinary approach, or investigations prepared by scholars based in a single country, will be insufficient to providing a full understanding of a complex topic (UNESCO, 2013, p. 24).

Dealing with difference and managing diversity requires ongoing sustained policies and enabling strategies. This is particularly the case in the critical area of education, where youth are exposed to diversity in all its manifestations and are expected to become equipped with the required intellectual tools and educational capabilities to successfully navigate intercultural relations (Berry, 2013; Cantle, 2015a, 2015b). The effort to overcome cultural racism and social disempowerment is an ongoing struggle that our increasingly diverse and interconnected societies must win. Otherwise, there is a real risk of slipping back into discriminatory, exclusionary frameworks reminiscent of the racist immigration policies of years gone by.

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2. Conceptualizing intercultural understanding within international contexts

Steven Shankman

Multiculturality, interculturality, transculturalty

In 2006, we founded the UNESCO Chair in Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue and Peace at the University of Oregon, the first UNESCO Chair of its kind in the Americas. Note that ours is a UNESCO Chair in 'Transcultural Studies', not 'Intercultural Studies' or 'Multicultural Studies'. Why was the adjective 'transcultural' chosen, rather than 'multicultural' or 'intercultural'?

Any single culture is in fact – in its lived concreteness – a mixture of many cultures and is therefore, by its very nature, a 'transculture'. The adjective 'transcultural' is therefore preferable to 'multicultural' because the word 'multiculturalism' might suggest that individual cultures, which allegedly embody distinctive essences, are homogeneous and insufficiently diverse unless they are seasoned by other cultures. But all cultures are, to greater or lesser degrees, multicultures. We think of early China and ancient Greece as completely separate cultures that invite comparison by virtue of their very differences (Shankman and Durrant, 2000); however, Chinese silk has fairly recently been discovered in a late fifth-century BCE tomb of the family of the flamboyant ancient Greek political figure Alcibiades (Acton, 2014, p. 149), suggesting that there was indeed actual contact between early China and ancient Greece back as far as the fifteen century BCE.

The term 'transcultural' was more appealing not only because it implies the value in our studies of going beyond a single culture – however diverse that culture might in fact be. The adjective 'transcultural' in the phrase 'transcultural studies' in our Chair's title is meant to suggest that there is something in our humanistic studies and practices that transcends or goes beyond culture. Does culture truly have the first and last word? Or is it rather ethics, as understood by the influential philosopher Emmanuel

Levinas, that is situated both before and beyond culture, and that allows us to evaluate culture and cultural expression (Levinas, 2003, p. 36)?

Other Others

In humanistic studies today we are more or less thoroughly acculturated to view the Other as the person who is quintessentially 'different' from ourselves, especially in the sense of being culturally, racially or sexually 'different'. But can the Other be my own son, my own daughter or my neighbour? There is a difference between difference and otherness.

The term 'the Other' is continually evoked in contemporary literary and cultural criticism. Mineke Schipper, a scholar of African and comparative literature, has remarked on the 'Western multinational Otherness industry' that has developed in recent years. Schipper goes on to observe that the term 'the Other' has become 'so fashionable in [the] Western academy that words such as 'difference' and 'Otherness' have come to function – in the words of Edward Said ... – as a talisman, serving to guarantee political correctness' (1999, p. 2). While the Otherness industry is indeed in high gear, the term 'the Other' has gone remarkably unexamined. It seems to have lost its moorings in – or rejects the reality of – the intersubjective encounter, as discussed by Martin Buber (1878–1965) and especially Levinas, who is surely one of the most influential of contemporary philosophers. Levinas, whose work participates in the phenomenological tradition of philosophical analysis, was a student of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, and was the revered teacher of such important modern (or postmodern) thinkers as Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard and Luce Irigaray. Alarmed by the apparent complicity of the most sophisticated philosophical speculations on the nature of 'being' with ethical turpitude and indifference, as evidenced by the great philosopher Heidegger's association with Nazism, Levinas sought to rethink the relationship between philosophy and ethics. He argues that ethics must precede ontology (the science of 'being'), which is always in danger of betraying ethics. By ethics Levinas means the face-to-face, concrete encounter with a unique human being for whom one is personally and inescapably responsible.

For Levinas, the Other is the other person, the stranger or one's neighbour, but not necessarily or even primarily the culturally different person. Indeed, for Levinas, to view the Other primarily as culturally (or racially or sexually) different would turn the face of the Other into an object of knowledge that has been assimilated by one's consciousness, and hence not an occasion

for the transcendence of the ego in the direction of what it is not; that is, of what is truly other. For Levinas, the Other is precisely that which eludes construction and categorization (or what Levinas calls 'thematization'). In my book *Other Others: Levinas, Literature, Transcultural Studies* (Shankman, 2010), I searched for this other notion of 'otherness' in literary texts both within Western and Judeo-Christian culture (in ancient Greece and Israel, for example), as well as in cultural traditions other than the Western, and religious traditions other than the Judeo-Christian, such as the Confucian tradition in early China, Mahayana Buddhism and Islam. In this essay, I extend what I mean by 'other others,' and thus by the 'transcultural', to the Hindu tradition as it finds expression in one of the two great epics of ancient India, the *Mahabharata*. In their essay 'Positioning Intercultural Dialogue – Theories, Pragmatics, and an Agenda', Shiv Ganesh and Prue Holmes remark that the Council of Europe, in a white paper published in 2008, locate 'intercultural dialogue beyond mere tolerance of the Other' (Ganesh and Holmes, 2011, p. 81). They conclude that 'intercultural dialogue' is 'predominantly an ethical issue' (ibid.), but they do not, in my judgement, sufficiently distinguish between politics and ethics (i.e. between the unique subject's search for justice within society or the state, and that same subject's irrecusable responsibility for the unique and irreplaceable Other in front of him or her). My own essay finds this 'beyond mere tolerance of the Other' precisely in the unique subject's irrecusable responsibility for that Other.

I should say, first of all, that what I mean by 'other others' is not precisely what Emmanuel Levinas means by this locution. For Levinas, I am responsible – infinitely responsible – for the Other in front of me. This is the ethical relation, pure and simple. But I and the Other in front of me are not alone in the world. Things become more complicated as soon as a third party enters the scene, because I am now also responsible for him or her, and for all the other others who make up the state, and for whom I seek justice, even if this means limiting my infinite responsibility for the Other in front of me.

Thus, in using the phrase 'other others' I mean something different from Levinas. I also mean something different from the sense commonly ascribed to the term 'the other' in humanistic studies, and even in common parlance, where alterity is often mistaken for difference – where the Other is other by virtue of his or her cultural, sexual or racial difference from the norms of the hegemonic culture. For Levinas, in contrast, the Other is the other person, my neighbour, and not necessarily or even primarily the

culturally different person. Lastly, by 'other others' I mean the articulation of this Levinasian notion of otherness in religious traditions other than the Judaeo-Christian. We should not be surprised to find this Levinasian notion of alterity expressed in a variety of religious traditions. As Levinas himself remarked in an interview given at the University of Leiden on 20 March 1975: 'There is not a single thing in a great spirituality that would be absent in another great spirituality' (Levinas, 1998, p. 93).

Beyond dharma, beyond destiny: *The Mahabharata* and Genesis 18

In Genesis 18, Abraham demonstrates remarkable moral audacity by asking God if he will truly, as he had just declared to Abraham, go so far as to 'wipe out the innocent with the guilty' in Sodom (Genesis: 18.23). For Levinas, these bold words of Abraham bear witness to 'a finite life that receives a meaning from an infinite responsibility for the other' that constitutes the very 'subjectivity of the subject, which is a tension toward the other. It is here, in ethics, that there is an appeal to the uniqueness of the subject, and a bestowal of meaning to life, despite death' (1996, p. 77). I propose to consider the stunning relevance of these comments of Levinas in relation to the words and actions of the character Yudishtira towards the end of one of the great ancient Hindu texts of the subcontinent of India, the epic poem *The Mahabharata*, which contains the famous *Bhagavad Gita*, with its insistence on the necessity of remaining true to one's *dharma*, traditionally understood as one's duty or role in society.

The most stunning of all ethical interruptions of ancient poetic narrative occurs in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The two great armies of the Pandavas and the Kurus are approaching each other and are about to begin fighting when the great Pandava warrior Arjuna becomes utterly arrested and paralyzed by what he sees: the faces of those he is about to kill, including the faces of family members and revered friends. Arjuna's charioteer, the god Krishna, finally persuades Arjuna that he must be true to his *dharma*, to his duty as a great warrior, and fight. Arjuna does so, and the epic narrative of the *Mahabharata* resumes.

The Bhagavad Gita is an enormously complex text, far too complex to engage with in detail here, or certainly to simplify in any way. Let me simply register my disappointment at Krishna's moving so rapidly beyond ethics and politics to presenting a metaphysical argument as to why Arjuna must engage in battle: you must be true to your *dharma*, Krishna tells

Arjuna, and in order to do so, you must detach your emotions from the consequences of your decision to fight. Krishna's argument would have been more compelling, for me, had he emphasized that justice requires Arjuna to fight, that the Pandavas are, after all, fighting a just war, for the Kurus are clearly the aggressors – although this acknowledgement of the justness of the Pandavas' engagement in the war is perhaps implied in the very first word(s) of the *Gita*, where the poet refers to the battlefield on which the Pandavas are fighting against the Kurus as the *dharmakshetra* (the field of virtue). Krishna's insistence on the warrior's *dharma* – on his duty to fight – perhaps returns us to the fatalistic ethos of the *Iliad*, in which the sympathetic and humane Trojan hero Hector likewise defends his country without question, though Troy is clearly the aggressor in the conflict between the armies of Greece and Troy known as the Trojan War. Krishna's insistence on Arjuna's obedience to *dharma* also appears to preclude the possibility of there being something beyond *dharma* (in the narrow sense of 'duty'), transcending the set role a person plays out within a certain social hierarchy, unless it would be to escape the seemingly endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth. That 'beyond' would consist of the possibility of rising to the dignity of a singularized subject by assuming responsibility for the Other in front of me. Ethics is beyond *dharma* understood as the playing out of one's given role in the social hierarchy.

But perhaps, as Indra Nath Choudhuri (n.d.) suggests, this obligation to undermine and then to transcend *dharma* is precisely what the *Mahabharata* teaches. By the end of the enormously long poem – an epic almost twenty times the length of the *Iliad* and fifteen times longer than the Bible (that is, the Hebrew Bible plus the New Testament), the Pandavas have defeated the Kurus in a terribly violent, bloody battle. In Book 17, Section 3, the god Indra offers the righteous Yudishtira entrance into heaven only if he will abandon his dog.

Yudishtira refuses 'to commit such an unrighteous act'. 'I do not wish for prosperity', he continues, 'if I have to abandon a creature who is devoted to me' (Westling et al., 1999, p. 258). Immediately upon his uttering these words, 'the dog was transformed into Dharma, the God of Virtue'. The 'beyond' of *dharma* is here *dharma* understood as an act performed without regard for consequences, as a selfless action – a selfless action that, at the same time, singles out that very self-emptying self *as* a self. 'Well pleased with Yudishtira', the poem continues, the deity Dharma 'praised him in a sweet voice. He said, "You are well born, O king of kings, and endued with the intelligence and good conduct of your fathers! You have

mercy for all creatures. Just now out of consideration for the dog which was devoted to you, you renounced the very car of the celestials. Hence, O king, there is no one in heaven to equal you."' Yudishtira wins heaven by rejecting it – by rejecting it as a goal desired and sought as a reward that would nullify the very meaning of ethics – of responsibility for the other, including the canine other.

But is the god Dharma of Book 17, Section 3 of the *Mahabharata* truly beyond *dharma*? Two sections later (18.2.12), Yudhisthira arrives in heaven and is indignant at seeing there the belligerent and self-serving Duryodhana, the leader of the Kurus, who was responsible for the devastating war that forms the subject of the poem. Yudishitira is deeply disappointed, as well, to discover that none of his brothers – whom he knows to be just – are present in heaven. 'This, in my opinion', Yudishtira says to the gods who are assembled in heaven and who have granted Yudishtira a coveted place there, 'is not heaven' (Westling et al., 1999, p. 259).

Yudishitira then leaves heaven and makes the arduous and terrifying journey to hell, where he hears and responds with compassion to the 'mournful cries' of his brothers and sisters whom he knows to be good. How could they possibly find themselves in hell, while Duryodhana resides in heaven? Yudishtira decries their 'perverse destiny' (daivakāritam, 18.2.42), is 'filled with righteous indignation, and censured the celestials as well as Dharma himself' (Westling et al., 1999, p. 260). Then, 'though almost overcome by the foul smell' of hell, Yudishtira tells the celestial messenger who has brought him from heaven to hell: 'Go back to those whose messenger you are. Tell them that I shall not return to them, but shall stay here since my companionship has brought comfort to these suffering brothers of mine' (Westling et al. 1999, p. 260). The god of Righteousness (*Dharma*) later tells his son Yudhisthira, that this, like the temptation to leave his dog behind when he originally came to heaven, has been a test (18.3.35). Because he has chosen to 'stay in hell for the sake of' his 'brothers' (the *Mahabharata*, 2003, p. 579), Yudhisthira has become clean and purified of sin. As Gurchuran Das (2009) argues, by 'choosing to live in a certain way, Yudhisthira creates moral value... Despite repeated References to *daiva* (fate), what shines through is the value of human effort in the *Mahabharata*' (p. 275).

'Go back to those whose messenger you are. Tell them that I shall not return to them, but shall stay here since my companionship has brought comfort to these suffering brothers of mine,' Yudisthira tells the god Indira. These morally audacious words and actions of Yudishtira in Book 18 of

the *Mahabharata* are reminiscent of Abraham's stunning rebuke to God in Chapter 18 of Genesis. When God informs Abraham that he intends to destroy utterly the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, even if this means destroying the innocent with the wicked, Abraham responds:

> Will you really wipe out the innocent with the guilty? ... Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put to the death the innocent with the guilty, making innocent and guilty the same. Far be it from You! Will not the Judge of all the earth do justice? (Genesis, trans. Alter, pp. 81–82)

These words of Abraham, for Emmanuel Levinas, as I mentioned earlier, bear witness to a 'finite life that receives a meaning from an infinite responsibility for the other' that constitutes the very 'subjectivity of the subject, which is a tension toward the other'. For Levinas, 'it is here, in ethics that there is an appeal to the uniqueness of the subject and a bestowal of meaning to life, despite death' (1996, p. 77). As Levinas writes in an earlier reflection on Kierkegaard, 'the annihilating flame of divine ire burns before Abraham's eyes each time he intervenes' (1996, p. 74), but Abraham bravely intervenes nonetheless. In the final book of the *Mahabharata*, Yudishtira, by rejecting a hollow possession of the eternity of heaven and by assuming, instead, an infinite responsibility for the other, ventures, as did Abraham, beyond destiny and beyond *dharma*, or rather, perhaps, to a realization of *dharma* in the highest possible sense of the word. Towards the end of Section 6 of this final *parva* (i.e. book or chapter) of the poem, the poet tells us that, 'Indeed, for the sake of even life one should not cast off Righteousness' (the Mahabharata, 1970, p. 12).

The moral bravery of Yudishtira and Abraham consists in their willingness to place care and empathy for others above the pressure to conform to conventional understandings of religious identity. We would do well to recall these ancient examples in our efforts to engage in intercultural dialogue today.

Transculturality, prison and the experience of being turned inside-out

Those of us that participate in UNESCO's intercultural dialogue programme assemble in various parts of the world to discuss the nature of intercultural and interreligious dialogue. But how truly intercultural is this dialogue? Are those of us who participate in such attempts at dialogue truly from very different cultures? It depends on what you mean by 'culture'. I would imagine that many of us – maybe even most of us – who participate in

such attempts at dialogue have had similar advantages in life. Each of our national cultures can be broken down into subcultures that are determined by differing levels of formal education, gender differences, cultural background, physical and mental capacities or incapacities, upbringing, and the presence or absence of drug and alcohol addiction. Engaging in intercultural dialogue within one's own culture may offer a much greater confrontation with cultural difference than the activity of participating in a conference on intercultural dialogue – in say, Almaty or Baku – although you may be from Azerbaijan or Kazakhstan and I from the United States, half a world away. One environment in which this kind of intercultural or transcultural dialogue can take place is prison.

In some of our UNESCO conferences, we have talked about the importance of 'sustainable development'. Is it sustainable for the United States, or for China or the Russian Federation, to be imprisoning more and more of its citizens, rather than to be addressing the root causes of crime? In prisons and jails in the United States, according to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, 80 per cent of convicted offenders suffer from drug and alcohol addiction, a statistic that is inextricably linked to the reason these inmates find themselves incarcerated in the first place. The United States accounts for 5 per cent of the world's population and 25 per cent of the world's prison population. Almost 750 out of every 100,000 people in the United States are currently incarcerated. The United States leads the world in this category. The Russian Federation is a close second, with more than 700 out of every 100,000 people behind bars (see the recent BBC News [2006] analysis of the world's prison populations).

The scandalously high incarceration rate in the United States is a peace issue. The Global Peace Index ranks countries around the world based on their perceived contribution to world peace. In 2016, the United States ranked 103rd out of 163 possible rankings (Risen, 2016). This dismal ranking is due largely to the high incarceration rate in the United States. For the Global Peace Index, the mark of a peaceful nation is a low incarceration rate. The lower the incarceration rate, the more peaceful the nation. The stature of the United States of America as a nation that promotes peace, therefore, has been significantly lowered because of its scandalously high incarceration rate. Our UNESCO Chair, through its three-year initiative on Prisons and Peace (2010–2013), aimed to raise the public consciousness of the scandal of mass incarceration in the United States and to lift America's ranking in the Global Peace Index.

In late 2013, the UNESCO Chair in Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue and Peace at the University of Oregon culminated its three-year Prisons and Peace initiative with a conference on Prisons, Compassion and Peace. The conference itself culminated in a stirring, unforgettable production by the Eugene Opera of *Dead Man Walking*, an adaptation of Sister Helen Prejean's testimonial book about the death penalty in the United States, which was made into a movie starring Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn in 1995. In *Dead Man Walking*, Sister Helen draws deeply on her faith tradition of Christianity, and Roman Catholicism in particular. In anticipation of the performances of *Dead Man Walking* by Eugene Opera, the UNESCO Chair organized a series of lectures that viewed the death penalty from a variety of religious perspectives including Buddhist, Jewish, Christian and Hindu.

For those engaged in higher education, to venture inside prison walls is to engage with a population which has often been demonized and marginalized, and thus to increase the possibility of spreading compassion and peace in the world. Through the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, a number of faculty at the University of Oregon are now teaching courses inside prisons to a mix of college students and incarcerated men and women. In fact, the University of Oregon now has the most robust Inside-Out programme in the world. Inside-Out brings together students from very different environments for a transformative experience which functions as a paradigm for engaging in a dynamic dialogue across differences.

For the past decade, I have been teaching classes on literature and ethics in two prisons – one a maximum-security and the other a medium-security prison – in the state of Oregon. What is unique about the Inside-Out model is that it consists half of university students ('outside' students) and half of incarcerated students ('inside' students). One day a week for an academic quarter, I drive with my students from University of Oregon up to the state capital in Salem, where we study the Russian novel – particularly works by Dostoevsky and Tolstoy – alongside philosophical texts by Emmanuel Levinas, whose thought was deeply influenced by these authors, especially Dostoevsky. Dostoevsky spent four harrowing years in prison in Siberia following his conviction for political subversion. His experience of prison inspired much of his later fiction. As I mentioned earlier, by ethics, Levinas means the face-to-face, concrete encounter with a unique human being for whom one is uniquely and inescapably responsible. Inside-Out classes proceed through real dialogue. There are no lectures. We sit in a circle with inside students sitting next to outside students. The atmosphere is electric.

Face-to-face! Those of us who teach Inside-Out classes will immediately think of the Wagon Wheel, the signature Inside-Out ice-breaking exercise we use with our students. The Wagon Wheel consists of two concentric circles of facing chairs. The inside students sit in the outside circle, the outside students in the inside circle. The facilitator asks a 'fill-in-the-blank' question. Inside and outside students share their responses for several minutes. Then, with a signal from the facilitator, those in the outside concentric circle, consisting of inside students, rise up from their seats and move to their right, sitting in a chair facing a different outside student. This procedure is repeated until each and every inside student sits, face-to-face, opposite each and every outside student. It is crucial that it be the outside students who sit in the stationary, inside circle. Were it the inside students who sit in this stationary position, it could create the feeling that the inside students are being made objects of the gaze of a group of tourists from the outside.

The face-to-face encounter is central to the way in which Levinas explains the ethical relation. 'The best way of encountering the Other', Levinas says, 'is not even to notice the colour of his eyes! When one observes the colour of his eyes one is not in social relationship with the Other. The relation with the face can surely be dominated by perception, but what is specifically the face is what cannot be reduced to that'. Levinas continues:

> There is first the very uprightness of the face, its upright exposure, without defense. The skin of the face is that which stays most naked, most destitute. It is the most naked, though with a decent nudity. It is the most destitute also: there is an essentially poverty in the face; the proof of this is that one tries to mask this poverty by putting on poses, by taking on a countenance. The face is exposed, menaced, as if inviting us to an act of violence. At the same time, the face is what forbids us to kill (1985, p. 86).

In the Wagon Wheel, one feels both responsible and vulnerable at the same time.

Inside-Out. The name of the programme refers to the fact that each class taught in the programme consists of incarcerated students – students on the inside – and those from outside the prison walls. But to me, the phrase 'inside-out' suggests something that happens, emotionally, to those participating in the class. You're turned, somehow, inside-out; you transcend labels and categories – 'student', 'teacher', 'prisoner', 'criminal' – and encounter the other as fully human. The class becomes a community

of learning based on the dignity of every individual. It is a transformative experience for all involved. We not only read about and discuss ethics in these classes, the students enact the ethical encounter in which the ego (the 'moi'), as Levinas describes this encounter, is experienced as 'a being divesting itself, emptying itself of its being, turning itself inside out [*à l'envers*]' (2001, p. 117).

Dostoevsky draws on his prison experience in a remarkable passage in *The Brothers Karamazov*. The novel's moral beacon, Father Zosima, remarks that it isn't truly possible to be 'a judge of anyone'. Zosima continues:

> For no one can judge a criminal, until he recognizes that he is just such a criminal as the man standing before him, and that he perhaps is more than all men to blame for that crime. When he understands that, he will be able to be a judge. Though that sounds absurd, it is true. If I had been righteous myself, perhaps there would have been no criminal standing before me (2011, pp. 276–77).

How can 'I' possibly be responsible – as Dostoevsky's revered Father Zosima insists that I am – for someone else's crime? I asked my students to think about this extraordinary passage from *The Brothers Karamazov*. An inside student named Terry remarked that he'd been thinking deeply about this passage ever since he first encountered it the week before. He resolutely refused to allow anyone else to take responsibility for his crime. 'If I did not commit my crime', Terry insisted,

> people would not have had their precious lives cut short by my selfish act. Putting it any other way feels like an avoidance of the truth and a violation of the memory of the lives of my victims (Aisha et al., 2011, p. 44).

Danny, an outside student, broke the hushed silence that followed Terry's disarmingly honest words. Danny said that his best friend from high school, at the age of nineteen, was killed in a fight in a parking lot after a professional baseball game. Since his friend's death, Danny said, he 'swiftly passed judgment on his murderer, and there was not a doubt in my mind', he observed in his final paper, 'that he [the murderer himself] was solely responsible for his actions'. After reading Father Zosima's words, especially within the context of the feelings of deep friendship that developed between the inside and outside students in our class, Danny said that he has reflected upon the ways in which he may have contributed to the murder. 'My actions in high school condoned violence. Fighting others was a rite of passage; it exemplified masculinity and dominance, and was even glorified.

I have accepted the possibility that my involvement in these actions helped create an atmosphere that shaped the outcome of my friend's death'.

This, for me, was one of the most extraordinary moments of teaching literature and ethics in the Inside-Out program. Let me try to explore why.

First, there is the absolute honesty of this exchange, an honesty that is rare in the conventional academic setting, and that encourages students to be vulnerable and take risks. A large part of what makes Inside-Out classes so special is the fact that inside and outside students come to class, like Prince Myshkin in Dostoevsky's novel *The Idiot*, without an agenda. In a class I taught in early 2009 on *Don Quixote* and *The Idiot*, the students and I had the opportunity to reflect on the relation between Prince Lev Nikolaevich Myshkin's surprisingly consistent – indeed, his disruptive – openness toward the Other and the particular atmosphere that made the class such a special experience for the students. We noted how often the notion of emptiness came up in the course of the novel. This occasioned some remarks, on my part, on the doctrine of *kenosis* – of Christ's emptying and humbling himself – that was so central to Dostoevsky's understanding of the Eastern as opposed to the Western church. Roman Catholicism, for Dostoevsky, equated spiritual with temporal power, and hence with a triumphalist notion of Christianity epitomized by the crusades. Even Don Quixote, despite or rather because of his idealism, continually exerts his will upon others, not restraining himself from physical violence in pursuit of his ideals, although his weapons are generally hapless and ineffective. Don Quixote has an agenda. What is remarkable about Prince Myshkin, the students maintained, was that, in his relations with others, he has no agenda. In the complex, materialistic, competitive, and upwardly mobile social world depicted by Dostoevsky in his novel *The Idiot*, everyone has an agenda. This fact is exemplified in Ganya Ivolgin's quest for marriage with the beautiful but tragically unstable Nastasya Filippovna, whom Ganya tries to purchase, as if she were a thing rather than a human being.

Inside and outside students, in the respective worlds from which they come and which they leave behind when they cross the threshold of an Inside-Out classroom, typically encounter those who have an agenda. Honors College students often make remarks in Honors College classes at the University of Oregon, as do Dostoevsky's characters in fashionable St. Petersburg society, in order to impress those who are capable of advancing their careers. They have an agenda. Inside students come to distrust many of the people around them. Even gestures of apparent kindness and openness can be viewed, with suspicion, as insincere forms of manipulation. Inside

and outside students come to study together without an agenda. Students know each other only by their first names. Once the class is over, no further contact is permitted between inside and outside students. This helps to ensure that inside students are not tempted to use their acquaintance with outside students as a way to cultivate contacts that might lessen their sentences. Outside students, in turn, are discouraged from possibly misusing their friendships with inside students.

Second, this moment confirms for me the reason why I was drawn to teaching literature – great literature – inside prison. When I was trained to teach Inside-Out, the paradigmatic class was in criminal justice. And that made good sense. If the subject you are studying is criminal justice, it seems perfectly fitting for a professor to bring his or her college students inside to give them a first-hand experience of the prison environment. But the teaching of literary texts? This question haunted me the first time I taught an Inside-Out class. Why do it here, in this particular environment? Why drive an hour and a quarter from Eugene to Salem, and then back again, with a group of University of Oregon undergraduates to study literary texts when you can do the very same thing back in the classroom in Eugene? Inside-Out classes bring together students from the outside and students from the inside. They come from very different worlds to study together. Reading a shared, great literary text creates community. A great text has the potential of eliciting powerful, individual responses. Indeed, it *require*s such responses. While outside students often have better training as academic analysts of literary texts, the inside students teach the outside students how to read great texts from a profound experiential level.

Third, the exchange between Terry and Danny illustrates key aspects of the ethical encounter upon which Levinas insists. For Levinas, the 'I' is absolutely responsible for the Other. No one can take my place. As Father Zosima's brother Markel says earlier in the *The Brothers Karamazov*, 'Each of us is responsible for all before all, and I more than all the others' (Dostoevsky, 2003, p. 297). I more than all the others! This is what Terry was insisting, as did Nat, another inside student, in his written response to this passage, in which he remarked that 'I can ask mercy for all others, and refuse it for myself.' At the same time, indeed precisely because of this untransferable responsibility of the I, it is only 'I' who can save the world. For Levinas, what the Other does is his or her affair. If there is injustice in the world, *I* need to step up. No one can take my place. I am responsible for the Other, for the world. I can do more. If only I had been more righteous, perhaps there would not be a criminal standing before me now. Perhaps,

as Danny observed, if I had worked to create a more peaceful, more loving environment in my high school, I could have prevented the death of my best friend. What is my role in the phenomenon of crime? Of mass incarceration? What have I done to address the deep social ills that have created the current crisis? I am responsible!

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to share with you three poems written by Ray, an inside student who participated in the first two classes I had the privilege to facilitate in spring 2007 and spring 2008 at the Oregon State Penitentiary, a maximum-security prison in Salem, Oregon, the state capitol. Ray's poems were included in an anthology of creative writing that appeared as part of a group project produced by our class. After the first combined session of inside and outside students, I met separately with each group the following week. The outside students were anxious about meeting with the inside students. I found it remarkable, however, how much more truly intimidated, on the whole, were the inside students about meeting the young University of Oregon students. In his poem, Ray expresses both nervousness and the miracle that can be created by a gesture of welcoming, of hospitality.

The first poem is entitled *Angst*:

I approach each meeting
with a light fluttery heart.
Thinking up to the last minute,
that I will turn around.
But I step through
the threshold,
and all I feel is welcoming,
accepting, warmth,
I am incredibly happy
and glad that I came,
eager for a new
experience with these

young, fresh minds.

(*Turned Inside-Out*, 21)

The second poem has Buddhist undertones, with its hints about previous lives (Ray became a Buddhist in the course of his more than ten-year period of incarceration). The poem is entitled *The Troupe*:

We came together
not knowing how wonderful
it was going to be.

New faces from
different places
all eager for a new experience

But what happened
was more wonderful
than we could know

We were all old friends
having met many times before
our faces and the times had changed
but our hearts had stayed the same.

Besides, we were all just humans
meeting time and again through the ages
our love and compassion growing each time.

Awaken old friends
see me for whom I am

what I am is your friend again.

(*Turned Inside-Out*, 26)

In the final week of the class, I met with the inside and outside students separately. During that week, Ray gave me a copy of the following poem, which he asked me to share with the inside students from the University of Oregon, whom he would never see again, as one of the rules of the Inside-Out programme is that – for security reasons – there must be no contact between inside and outside students once the class is over. The poem is entitled *Woe*:

I feel a profound sadness
A deep hole in my heart
Why did I allow this to happen
Why did I agree to take part?

Never to see them again
To share a smile or a look
To tell them something personal
Yes, that was the hook

To make such good friends
And then lose it all,
Ahh! The torture the pain
To rise so high, and then to fall

I miss them now, and forever
Please let them know
My heart will always beat for them
My sadness always in tow.
We all got turned inside out.

Over 100 instructors from institutions of higher education in thirty-seven of the fifty-one United States of America have taken the Inside-Out training. The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program is taught in prisons in more than eleven of these states, and it has now expanded beyond the borders of the United States – to Canada and England, for example. At the University of Oregon, students take Inside-Out class in conjunction with programmes in Global Ethics, and by doing so will be in the process of fulfilling the course requirements for a certificate in intercultural dialogue.

As Dostoevsky commented in his novel *The House of the Dead,* the level of culture of any civilization can be determined by the nature of its prisons. I invite readers of this chapter to come to Philadelphia or Michigan or elsewhere in the United States for the week-long training and then to introduce an Inside-Out course into one of the prisons in your own city and country. Many of those in prison are hungry for dialogue, hungry with a rare and precious hunger.

Openness and hospitality towards the other is a risky business, but it is a risk that must be taken. Otherwise, our homelands will become inhospitable spiritual wastelands with high fences and secure borders protecting those inside who all think and feel alike: an inside closed to the outside. Especially at a time when we are witnessing – on a global scale – nationalist and nativist rejections of the reality of global connectedness, we must take the necessary risk of being turned inside-out, of going beyond culture and beyond ourselves, or, rather, towards our truest selves. Now more than ever, we need to pursue intercultural dialogue both beyond and – perhaps even more importantly at this particular historical moment – within our national borders. The place to begin is with the face-to-face encounter. For to truly see the face of the other is to be emptied of the categories and the stereotypes that feed enmity and division rather than healing.

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3. Dialogue, conflict and transformation: concepts and context

Mike Hardy and Serena Hussain

Introduction

The question of how we interact and co-exist with people who are different is a rather curious one (Fenger, 2012). This is even more the case as rapid change and the mass movement of people create new communities and new neighbours (Cheong et al., 2007). A key challenge for policy-makers has become how to manage the mounting fears of the public and create more inclusive places and feelings (Demireva, 2014). This is also central to our personal sense of security and stability, for our families and our communities. As diversity and the consequences of global conflicts have become more diffuse, strategies for cultural relationships have developed and spread. New experiences of cultural engagement in all walks of life have to be crafted to help us to cope with what is now a permanently diverse and connected world. Culture connects people of difference, and connection enables encounter and exchange. Dialogue between and within cultures can become a powerful antidote to rejection and violence, by enabling people to live together peacefully and constructively in a multi-cultured world, with a sense of global community and belonging.

The backdrop to this chapter is the understanding that little in our evolutionary history specifically prepared us to live in large societies, let alone super-diverse societies that have diversity within the diverse groups that comprise them (Parekh, 2000; Vertovec, 2005). Yet, almost everything about the way in which contemporary cultures work requires the ability to do so. Thinking about 'culture' gives rise to a number of conundrums, such as the reality that we are social animals and have an exceptional ability to collaborate and cooperate. However, it is this very social aspect that leads to divisions. As communities and individuals, we create difference in order to deal with difference; we need both to be different – one from another – and to belong (Jaspal and Cinnirella, 2012; Wimmer, 2008).

Culture is about who we are, how we see the world and how we relate to those around us. However, as such, culture is also a reflection of contemporary power relations and can be used as a vehicle for fuelling fears and tensions, and to exclude others (Hewstone, 2015). When difference leads to social relations that are divisive and violent, these tend to reflect created tensions rather than reactions to essentialist issues, and these tensions are part of normal intercultural relationships. However, since they are created, they should also be avoidable.

It is with this in mind that we examine intercultural dialogue as a transformational tool that can be applied in a wide variety of contexts, both local and international. This chapter focuses on intercultural dialogue as a proposed object of concern in response to conflicts; that is to say, its use for resolving conflict and intercultural tension or at least making these less likely. Using a transdisciplinary approach that we feel is essential to a constructive analysis, we explore the challenges to this, considering the influence of asymmetric power relations within changing cultural boundaries. We do this with reference to the literature, highlighting the significance of the shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism as a more appropriate concept for approaching diversity. We problematize discussions of intercultural dialogue assessed at the level of *meaning* and the seeking of mutual knowledge and understanding; as well as at the level of *performance*, where the potential for non-violent exchange among those in conflict or between potentially conflicting parties may be created. We therefore, first, explore assumptions about what intercultural dialogue should and could do vis-à-vis the reality that it is – both in form and substance – still very much a 'work-in-progress'.

We begin by recognizing that conflict is not an inevitable by-product of cultural difference, but that differences can often sponsor confrontation or, as we are seeing in contemporary Europe, be used by politicians, media or ideologies as a weapon of competition in a battle of ideas or for resources (Hewstone, 2015). Thus, difference is mobilized into conflict and conflict into cultural difference. Indeed, as globalization and political alignments have made national borders more porous, cultural borders and boundaries have sharpened and become more visible, and in some cases more separate. This dynamic context for dialogue in Europe, as in other places, demands a new assessment of both concept and context requiring more than the words and statements within dialogue.

The 'shoulds' and 'coulds' of dialogue

There is a notable absence of sound explanations and prescriptions when it comes to discussing how best to maintain peaceful and sustaining relations between people where difference matters, is visible, recent or changing – in short, where the 'other' is a focus for unease, and where all the resources of time and evolution point us towards 'like' and 'just-like-us' communities of kindred spirits. Being an active and engaged citizen is straightforward only where a majority prevails in all senses – and only for those who are part of that majority – where common ground is assumed or given, but never negotiated.

Purposeful and successful intercultural dialogue in our complex world should comprise an essential toolkit, able to help people cope with the unprecedented challenges and pace of change in our modern times. Tools and capabilities that recognize dialogue as dynamic and engaging, and that promote openness and respectful sharing while simultaneously acknowledging hopes and fears, need to support successful intercultural dialogue. This sharing ultimately provides the basis of better understanding and a stronger prospect of living peacefully in diverse communities. In their commitment to shared security, participants should work to encourage and enable dialogue, sometimes in contexts where the various players seem to be at odds with one another. Governments, both at regional and national levels, are strongly placed in this regard and should promote cultural diversity and social cohesion through rights-based strategies and the responsibility to protect. Civil society actors and other practitioners, even when alienated from the political process, could nonetheless promote dialogue as an essential social skill based on lived experience in neighbourhoods.

In contrast to other forms of debates or negation, intercultural dialogue emphasizes the purpose of dialogue as an opening to engage with the cultural other. As such, its primary objective is not to look for solutions but to enable exchange for its own sake (Ganesh and Holmes, 2011). Drawing upon scholars such as Marleen van de Kerkhof (2006) and Robert Wakefield (2008), Shiv Ganesh and Heather M. Zoller (2012) stress how dialogue is not about persuading societies, communities or individuals to be more like 'Us', but is instead a process to promote deliberation about disparity and divergence rather than gaining consensus.

Amin Maalouf (2011) suggests that our twenty-first century is disordered. In this view, we live in a time of multiple influences, complex identities,

growing inequality and total interdependence. Maalouf discusses how concepts of place and proximity are being challenged by the rapid changes in communications that we are unable to hide from or avoid. Cultural, socio-political and economic events and processes have become truly global in their character. It is here that we must judge the efficacy of dialogue: it 'should' and 'could' help, but why is this not a given? What gets in the way?

Obstacles to effective dialogue

To gain further insight into contemporary challenges for intercultural dialogue, the authors of this chapter consulted with delegates at the 2015 World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue (WFID). This took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, as part of the so-called Baku Process, and was attended by over 800 delegates from more than ninety countries. Ongoing work by Hardy and Hussain is exploring the findings from this forum in more detail. Overall, they suggest that asymmetrical power dynamics are a significant stumbling block in realizing the potential of intercultural dialogue, and a selection of quotes are used here to illustrate this point. This assessment reflects the assertions of critiques within related literature (e.g. Aman, 2012; Ganesh and Holmes, 2011; Kersten, 2005).

> We, we are poor, so if we are poor, we are poor at everything including communication, and this is even more important for us – for the poor countries to have this chance. We need to discuss poverty. How can we integrate the poor into this process? Not just my country, but other countries. When you become rich everyone wants to know you. When you are poor you aren't given the same value for your dialogue (Delegate at the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, Baku interview 2015).

Delegates at the conference looked at cultural rights and the importance of the media, as well as training tools and frameworks for the promotion of intercultural competences. Side events considered how tourism could mobilize encounters and exchanges, and a special session with UNESCO University Chairs initiated a continuing debate about the role of scholarships and higher education. The participants took time to examine the obstacles and constraints, inter alia, to productive dialogue. Their conclusions at one level were disappointing, although they were consistent with the view that dialogue is powerful in its own right and could be explored as a process that promotes forces for pluralism and erodes those for prejudice. Contemporary intercultural dialogue will be most significant in the particularly sensitive

area of cultural relationships and, as such, will be inherently contentious and open to different, contradictory interpretations. Mutual respect – not the same as mutual approval – will become crucial. Reasoned disagreement can build stronger and more authentic and lasting relationships. Avoiding difficult questions (such as political conflict or differences in values) is counter-productive; instead, addressing them directly and respectfully can build trust. In contemporary societies, the demands of human security should also entail a focus on the needs of vulnerable people in order to address problems of inequality and disparity. We often generalize about that which we do not know and, as such, stereotypes are usually exaggerated views of particular characteristics, which result from our own cultural frames of reference. This becomes a problem when such generalizations become prejudices that affect the way we act towards others.

Despite the limitations highlighted by these conclusions, discussions at WFID 2015 reflected a contemporary view that intercultural dialogue is important because it enables long-term and intensive engagement with people from another culture, helping communities to see their own culture from a different perspective, and helping all to re-evaluate views and ideas. Moreover, dialogue also re-introduces some of the detail – the diversity – into perceptions of others (Hewstone, 2015).

However, our findings support Prue Holmes' (2014) assertion that, although intercultural dialogue as a concept provides much hope for engaging with both local-level diversity and increasing globalization, a lack of desire to surrender or share power and privilege remains as relevant to the success of intercultural dialogue as any other form of exchange and negotiation. Holmes writes, 'in a world where challenges for resources, power and ownership are often accompanied by an unwillingness to relinquish them; the result is often intractable conflict. In such contexts, the aims of intercultural dialogue are unrecognisable and meaningless' (p. 2). In this view, intercultural dialogue never occurs on a blank canvas where parties are equal; instead, dialogue takes place between the lines of an existing script that provides demarcations and limitations. Consequently, asymmetric power relations can be understood as implicit in intercultural relations, rather than as external influences.

Power, culture and ethnocentric dialogue

> From my point of view? The comment about Saudi Arabia – it was not the right time to raise this. Oppression and violence is everywhere, not just Saudi Arabia. It's everywhere. There needs to be political awareness. If someone from the Saudi delegation didn't like this statement, what would be the point of bringing them here? (Delegate at the World Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, Baku interview, 2015).

Asymmetrical frameworks for dialogue have been explored through a number of approaches within the literature. The importance of connecting these is highlighted by Lily A. Arasaratnam's (2014) review, in which she found little cross-disciplinary reference among studies on intercultural competence, and stresses the necessity of doing so in order to build upon existing theory. In this vein, the section here approaches power, culture and dialogue through several lenses.

Claudio Baraldi (2006) provides a useful framework within the field of communication studies from which to consider the relationship between globalization and intercultural dialogue. He does so by discussing typologies of societies based on Niklas Luhmann and Raffaele de Giorgi's (1992, in Baraldi, 2006) social system theory, in this case 'functionally differentiated' and 'stratified' societies. He argues that globalization occurs as a result of communication among and between differently structured societies (ibid., p. 54). Functionally differentiated societies are those that value pluralism, modernism and individualism. These cultural values or forms, he argues, are characteristic of European societies. In contrast, stratified societies (or collectivist societies [Hofstede, 1980]) are those in which hierarchies exist and belonging is derived from identification with a stratum that forms a segment of the societal whole. Therefore, it is through one's belonging to a social grouping that one links to the wider society of which the group is a part. The emphasis for such societies is on collective belonging and allegiance.

The tension for intercultural dialogue here, as presented by Baraldi, is that, 'In a functionally differentiated society, globalization is meaningful as a generalisation of values ... which are considered indicators of a "civilised" cultural output, in the name of pluralism, modernism and individualism' (2006, p. 55). He goes on to explain that, 'intercultural communication is *culturally* (and not interculturally) conditioned' (ibid., p. 57).

To present oneself as being part of a globalized system would, in this view, require one to adopt the standpoint of the functionally differentiated

(individualistic) society, the typology associated with European societies. Intercultural dialogue within a globalized framework is therefore embedded within a form of 'modernist ethnocentrism' (Baraldi, 2006) in which positive dialogue is seen to emulate and promote pluralism, modernism and individualism; whereas dialogue that promotes norms associated with stratified societies, such as hierarchies and collectivism, are seen as negative and a threat to the progress of globalization. It will be evident to those familiar with post-colonial studies that this interpretation of the relationship between globalization and intercultural dialogue is in keeping with debates on globalization as a form of neo-colonialism that seeks to promote European social and political values as normative across the world (Rao, 2000).

This line of thought lends itself to discussion of the potential of intercultural dialogue for both collaboration and co-optation, as explored by Ganesh and Zoller (2012). Overwhelmingly, intercultural dialogue is viewed as a vehicle for fostering collaboration, understanding and exchange through the provision of platforms for divergent and marginalized voices to be heard. This requires a willingness to be open to hearing the perspectives of others (Pearce and Pearce, 2004). However, Ganesh and Zoller also discuss intercultural dialogue as a tool for co-optation when they explain how 'dialogue as co-optation assumes that what appears to be collaboration is better understood as a tactic of power. This perspective continues to depict dialogue as a specialized form of communication, but treats power as pervasive and difficult, if not impossible to suspend' (2012, p. 74). Co-optation can also be viewed as a method for increasing acculturation among stratified societies for the purposes of globalizing a particular worldview, such as the aforementioned modern ethnocentrism.

> Yes, let's be honest, the greatest conflict, be it religious, economic, political, it is felt in what you would call today the third world and Africa is part of that. And if you are changing the perception of that and bring in this new and positive thought of looking at intercultural and cross-cultural interactions and you don't include Africa, but you only include Africa as a passive spectator, I think we've missed it (Delegate at the World Forum for Intercultural Dialogue, Baku interview, 2015).

Robert Aman's (2012) paper, 'The EU and the Recycling of Colonialism', provides a critique of the standpoint from which the Council of Europe approaches intercultural dialogue as a way of dealing with cultural differences between ethnic Europeans and non-ethnic European minority groups living in Europe, and between Europe and the rest of the world. One

of the most commonly cited definitions of intercultural dialogue comes from the Council of Europe, who describe the process as, 'an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds on the basis of mutual understanding and respect' (2008, pp. 10–11).

Aman discusses how the European Union approaches intercultural dialogue from the perspective of 'us' (Europeans) engaging with 'them' (the other). It places Europeans as the resolvers of difference, rather than contributors to difference, due to their role as inventors and initiators of dialogue. If the non-European other refuses to take up invitations to engage in dialogue, they are seen as uncooperative and unwilling to resolve conflict. Furthermore, he describes intercultural dialogue as yet another strategy for Europe to manage diversity on its own terms, by setting the parameters for exchange to occur.

Aman points out that the very invention of intercultural dialogue as a concept played a role in cementing ideas of a shared European culture as dialectically positioned against and simultaneously reinforcing the other. Social construction theorists provide a useful backdrop to this line of thought by arguing that group identity is dialectical and relational, and as such self-identification is negotiated through social interaction with others (Jaspal and Cinnirella, 2012; Wimmer, 2008). Sandra Wallman (1986) discusses how groups and indeed entire states develop and define their markers of membership by enhancing descriptions not only of who they are, but also of who they are not. Jan Stets and Peter Burke explain how a consequence of self-identification with a group, 'is an accentuation between the perceived similarities between the self and other in-group members, and an accentuation of the perceived difference between the self and out-group members' (2000, p. 225).

Crucially, Aman highlights how intercultural dialogue is laden with expectations on the part of Europeans, who developed a framework for dialogue with their own strategy of managing difference and diversity at its core. Holmes (2014), citing Alison Phipps (2014), provides a poignant illustration of this. Holmes writes,

> Phipps questions the idealized meanings of intercultural dialogue, as promulgated by European organizations such as UNESCO, the British Council and the Council of Europe. Through an ethnographic study of peace work in Gaza, she argues that concepts which have arisen

> in contexts of relative peace and stability in Europe are not suited to conditions of conflict and siege (Holmes, 2014, pp. 3–4).

Such observations support Aman's critique of intercultural dialogue being developed by Europeans for Europeans to engage with the world. In this view, the very frame of reference around which the concept was developed is the maintenance of European (cultural) boundaries.

Intercultural dialogue and the problem of culture

Fredrick Barth (1969) argued that ethnicity and the cultures from which they derived their identities ought not to be viewed as something based on unchanging characteristics that are specific or intrinsic to a particular group. Instead, he described culture as a form of social organization, rather than a measure of explicit qualities. In this view, social actors organize themselves around markers of identity that provide meaning and value. Markers can shift or be replaced by others, influenced by everyday engagement within the social environment that the actors occupy. Demographic, political, social and economic progressions all motivate the continuity, reinvention or creation of ethnic group boundaries and the markers of identification that are employed (Nagel, 1994, p. 153).

Consideration of the shift from multiculturalism to interculturalism provides useful insights into how our conception of cultural diversity is changing. Interculturalism is now viewed as an alternative to multiculturalism for the management of minority groups (Taylor, 2012); yet the terms are used interchangeably by practitioners working within diverse settings (Hardy and Hussain, forthcoming), despite a clear rejection of multiculturalism as a state policy within the United Kingdom and elsewhere (Abbas, 2005; Meer and Modood, 2012). It is worth drawing out distinctions between the two terms from a theoretical perspective for the purposes of this discussion, before moving onto the difficulties associated with interculturalism more broadly as a vehicle for dialogue.

For Clara Sarmento (2014), the most noteworthy difference between multiculturalism and interculturalism is that the former works on the premise of distinct cultural categories and the latter seeks permeability and encourages emergent and new ways of viewing the other. Multiculturalism presumes the actuality of groups who are defined by characteristics, such as language, heritage, religion, skin colour, shared myths, values and ideals. Within the boundaries of societies, such groups commonly accept each other's right to co-exist, have equal rights to resources and access

to decision-making, regardless of whether they are part of the dominant grouping (such as white British in the UK context) or a minority group. Sarmento describes this as having, 'not only the right to share a territory, but also the obligation to live in it according to the cultures of those various groups and communities' (ibid., p. 607).

Although multiculturalism was the prevailing method for approaching and indeed governing diversity in the United Kingdom, it fell out of political favour in the early 2000's due to a belief that it reproduced cultural distinctions among groups, instead of encouraging shared or common values (Kalra and Kapoor, 2009). This concern was motivated by a series of global and local events, such as the 2001 bombing of the twin towers in New York (most commonly referred to as 9/11) and the 2005 terrorist attacks on London transport (7/7). This instigated debate – focused largely on Muslims – are centred on whether minorities had integrated into British (and other Western) societies. Rhetoric on 'British values' became commonplace and policy on Community Cohesion replaced multiculturalism as the method for managing ethno-religious diversity (Meer and Modood, 2012).

Interculturalism, on the other hand, is associated with moving beyond distinct categories and group boundaries. According to Sarmento (2014), interculturalism is the process of moving cultures into a space for joint experience and learning, and encourages merging rather than emphasizing distinction. Interculturalism is therefore seen as allowing for permeability of existing cultures. In his oft-cited book, *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha (1994) writes about the hybridity that emerges from the coming together of cultures in a third space – an open space set apart for sharing and exchange to generate understanding. Others discuss this exchange as a possibility for the emergence of a 'third culture' (Evanoff, 2004, p. 421). But how do we ensure one group's cultural norms do not take precedence within the third culture? Kalscheuer (2013) describes how there is a paradox within Bhabha's perspective, whereby he encourages platforms for those in marginalized and disadvantaged positions to be heard, yet does not address the fact that the platform or, in this case, the third space, can be occupied by those with the most power as in any other space. The potential influence of power dynamics even within this third space remains the glaringly obvious elephant in the room.

Another consideration regarding interculturalism and dialogue is how to deal with the subject of culture itself. We have heard how, unlike multiculturalism, interculturalism seeks to moves beyond fixed and what are often referred to as 'essentialist' notions of group cultures (Asante and

Miike, 2013). There has been a shift within the social sciences to deconstruct the idea of culture, influenced by the deconstruction of racial and ethnic categories (Barth, 1969).

As Richard Jenkins (2008, p. 10) elaborates, cultures 'are not in fact real. It is only the shared sense of image or group-ness that is real'. What is important are both 'the common claims [of ethnic or cultural groups] which do not need to be founded on fact; and the self-consciousness of the claims' (Burton, Nandi and Platt, 2008, p. 5). Therefore, culture is understood in terms of boundaries that actors ascribe meaning to in order to make sense of their place within society (Nagel, 1994). Yet, cultures are not devoid of tangible features required to provide shared collective meaning. It is therefore agreed by most social construction theorists that culture is not entirely arbitrary, as it encompasses markers that are ascribed to by members (Eriksen, 2001; Nagel, 1994). The key point to note here is that cultures are not set in stone, as the features that define a culture can become redundant or be replaced.

Intercultural dialogue and the 'other' as centre

> So I was surprised from the discussion this morning in the plenary session. The fact that there were three Europeans or four, no Asians, no Latin Americans, no Africans – I think that was a huge minus. It was of course Eurocentric; it feels like that here; you don't see many Asians around, Indians or Chinese. It doesn't feel global; it feels European. And the discussion in the plenary felt entirely European (Delegate at the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, Baku, interview, 2015).

How does the movement away from viewing culture as a tangible force impact intercultural dialogue? And how can one come to a third space from a place of one's culture, if that culture is in constant flux and cannot be defined in any meaningful way? In their paper, 'Paradigmatic Issues in Intercultural Communication Studies: An Afrocentric-Asiacentric Dialogue', Molefi Kete Asante and Yoshitaka Miike (2013) grapple with this topic in one of the most impressive demonstrations of intercultural dialogue at work.

To do justice to the expansive body of work on redressing the neglect of non-European knowledge systems and its impact on asymmetrical power would be beyond the scope not only of this chapter, but of an entire series of edited volumes. For the purpose of the discussion presented in this chapter, we focus on the movement for re-centring one's cultural standpoint for the study of intercultural communications away from Europe. Asante

and Miike explain how, due to the legacy of colonialism, the European worldview, standpoint or as they describe it 'centre', became and remains the most privileged in the world. European-derived institutions, theoretical propositions, or philosophies and ways of communication – including the language by which communication takes place – have become the ultimate benchmarks by which all knowledge and practice are measured.

Within this idea of a self-declared consummate culture, which became the hegemonic cultural ideal, lie several of the perspectives we have already visited within this chapter. Miike describes, for example, the tension regarding globalization and European hegemony from an explicitly Asian position,

> Asians have also been moved off from their traditional cultures. I think it is important to point out however, that Westernization in the context of Asia has been advanced under the slogans of 'modernization' in the nineteenth century, 'internationalization' in the twentieth century and 'globalization' in the twenty-first century. Therefore serious confusion exists about something Western and something modern, international and global (Asante and Miike, 2013, p. 5).

In attempts to redress this continued hegemony, scholars have sought to assert worldviews, standpoints or centres from non-European geographical spaces. In so doing, they place themselves within an African, Asian or Latin American (for example) cultural frame of reference. Asante explains centricity as '*how* we theorise rather than *what* we theorise' (2015, p. 8).

As the social sciences move beyond the idea of tangible or fixed cultures, Afrocentic (e.g. Asante, 2012; Karenga, 2006) and Asiacentric (e.g. Miike, 2007; Tsuda, 2008) approaches are moving towards reclaiming and reaffirming the necessity of recognizing cultures as a way of engaging with the other. One approach for navigating the prevailing discourse of cultural essentialism was put forward by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1999). She developed the concept of 'strategic essentialism', which temporarily draws upon, highlights and even over-inflates the importance of shared cultural markers of a group or society, in order to mobilize and lobby for the group's political goals. From this viewpoint, one can legitimately draw from one's ideas of culture for positive purposes, such as engaging in cross-group dialogue. However, this approach in and of itself is Eurocentric in that it adopts prevailing ideas within European scholarship on culture and ethnicity as its frame of reference.

Asante asserts a clear need for allowing individuals and groups to claim a cultural position. He writes, 'By regaining our own platforms, standing in our own spaces and believing that our own viewing of the universe is just as valid as any, we will achieve the kind of transformation that we need to participate fully ... however without this kind of centeredness, we will bring almost nothing to the multicultural table but a darker version of Whiteness' (2013, p. 5). As such, picking up and dropping one's cultural 'baggage' in response to the risk of appearing essentialist is a demonstration of European cultural hegemony upon non-ethnic European others, who must attempt to engage in interculturalism within the terms of the dominant cultural parameters. As Asante points out during his dialogue with Miike, French-centred notions of history are not scrutinized as mythical or imaginary in the same way that other cultural centres are being dissected as reinventions of convenient symbols that support the restoration of equality and redistribution of power (Asante and Miike, 2013).

Dialogue for transformation

Linking dialogue with transformation is important as it demonstrates that deep structural, behavioural and attitudinal change is required for transformation to take place. Alongside the academic debates, two areas concerned with dialogue that are especially significant in providing impetus and direction for contemporary change are those relating to faith and youth. It is within these groups that the potential for non-violent exchange is most likely to reside. Participants at WFID 2015 looked, for example, at the nexus between faith and education. Religion was highlighted as an emergent critical component within intercultural dialogue globally. Religion and faith, it was suggested, still constitute a backdrop for the day-to-day lives of the majority of the world's population, and the contributions at WFID provided a unique opportunity to approach some of the key current intercultural and interfaith debates of global significance, including the intersection between religion and violent extremism, through the lens of belief. These conversations between religions clearly play a central role in intercultural dialogue and human security generally, as well as providing a clearer understanding of the role that faith can, and will, play in rapidly changing globalized twenty-first century societies. However, the differing cultural contexts of faith do not simply come down to understanding differing cultural practices, values or doctrinal stances within communities. Alongside that of culture, the nature of the role of faith in the private

and public sphere and individual, community, national or trans-national identity is also changing. This, too, is problematic for dialogue.

In public affairs, the role of faith can be a highly contentious issue in international and cultural relations. It could be argued that the position of faith in society is central to some of the most pressing international political and security issues/debates of the day. However, in an increasingly pluralist and globalized world, building a more nuanced and cross-cultural picture of the role that faith plays in our societies may help to tackle some of the preconceptions that drive these clashes at home and internationally – particularly in a multi-polar world where assumptions about the global order are challenged.

The role of intercultural dialogue in this sphere should seek to progress from simply bringing together faith leaders towards engaging seriously with misconceptions and polarizing narratives concerning the nature of secular governance and the role of belief, faith and religion in society. In particular, such dialogue needs to recognize the implications of the asymmetrical power dynamics inevitably embedded in that dialogue.

In relation to young people's involvement in contemporary dialogue, two of the most remarkable transformative developments lie in demographics and in the ways people connect. The measured and increasingly important role of younger people exists in combination with the growth in interaction among people around the world generally. Both these factors reflect the reality that we are connecting with each other more, and becoming interdependent more quickly than ever before. We are doing so during a period of unprecedented faster, deeper and broader economic growth. Young people are experiencing these deep societal changes daily and emphatically.

Whether these developments have the ability to transform current asymmetric dynamics and allow for more equal dialogue is difficult to assess. While young people embrace the potentials of new technologies most quickly, their aspirations are most readily dampened by economic growth that widens disparities, stunts social mobility and promises much but delivers little. Crucially, when the uneven distribution of gains from growth and unequal access to technology run mainly along cultural lines, divisions can be deepened and even new ones introduced.

Three important issues arise from challenging dialogue that does not embrace young people. The first concerns the role of youth as agents of change and positive contributors to peace and dialogue processes. The

second questions how well we understand and can learn from the way young people engage in dialogue through social media and digital platforms. The third is a reminder that any failure to provide a strong platform for young people to be showcased as positive and progressive contributors of and to intercultural dialogue will be an important and continuing obstacle to effective dialogue.

As culture is not set in stone, the question of whether young people's agility with current technological and conceptual changes will reproduce or transform asymmetric power relations remains uncertain.

Conclusion

Intercultural dialogue has received much attention and commitment as a concept. However, attempts to reconceptualize intercultural dialogue in a way that transforms its apparent asymmetry have led us to acknowledge the fact that entering into dialogue with those who are not perceived to be from the same cultural background is far from straightforward. Even within a framework of mutual respect and without an emphasis on consensus, we find that the very platform upon which we ask others to come and engage with each other is uneven. Whether intentional or not, a dichotomy of advantage and disadvantage cannot simply be willed away, as well-meaning as intercultural dialogue practitioners may be.

This chapter outlines some of the most pressing challenges for intercultural dialogue vis-à-vis existing power dynamics in our contemporary world. In so doing, we highlight two areas for further consideration: firstly, the requirement for the field of intercultural dialogue to draw from disciplines outside of dialogue and communication studies as a way of engaging holistically with the challenges of inequality and asymmetrical power dynamics; and secondly, an acknowledgment that the utility of intercultural dialogue – as both a concept and a toolkit – is yet to be fully measured and assessed. As such, applying intercultural dialogue as a strategy for managing conflict in an increasingly globalized and connected world still requires much consideration.

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4. Intercultural public intellectual engagement

Tariq Modood

Dialogue and reason in political theory

A good place to begin the topic of dialogue and the contribution of intellectuals, and especially of political theory, is with Socrates. Not only does he, as he appears in the works of his student Plato, take us to what may iconically represent the founding moment of Western philosophy and political theory, he also takes us to the most basic meanings of the term 'dialogue', namely focused oral communication between at least two interlocutors or its portrayal as a literary genre. Socrates was famous for endlessly questioning individuals in the public square, the *agora*, and Plato wrote dialogues. Plato's dialogues take two forms. Most of the early dialogues, referred to as *eristic*, take the form of an interrogation. Socrates is portrayed engaged in a hostile series of questions aimed to show that his interlocutor, often a well-known 'Sophist', does not know what he is talking about. Socrates sets out to destroy the argument of his interlocutor and to discredit him either as a teacher, a learned person or an authority on wise conduct. These dialogues typically end in a breakdown with Socrates' opponent alleging that Socrates is constantly twisting his words for his own self-aggrandisement, so there is no point carrying on. The other kind of dialogue, of which *The Republic* is the most famous example, resembles more an interview and consists of a rational cooperation to discover the Truth.

While both of these kinds of oral exchange have lived on and are central to the disciplines of philosophy and political theory – as in the 'Q and A' after a lecture, at a seminar or tutorial – the dialogue as a literary form is the exception rather than the norm in any academic discipline. While oral exchanges, principally of the adversarial kind, do have a lively presence in certain democracies, not to mention in courts of law, the dominant mode of reasoning together that modern theorists have conceived as appropriate for the most fundamental questions of political life is altogether different.

The dominant tradition in modern Western political theory is that of the 'social contract'. When theorists like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke or Jacques Rousseau pose questions about why polities exist and what gives rulers the right to rule, they assume that the question is posed of individuals who can be hypothesized to give their free consent. This assumes that the individuals know what they want. They negotiate among themselves to obtain the best deal for oneself or for all parties, yet they reason about the founding of states and coercive laws on the basis of pre-existing desires and preferences, which are already known to them. There is, however, one line of continuity with Socrates. While it is assumed that individuals will vary in their desires, it is further assumed that there is a single truth, a single set of principles or correct answer to be discovered by Reason.

Hobbes postulated that all would rationally choose to subject themselves to absolute authority, because the alternative, the 'state of nature', was permanent insecurity and constant likelihood of death (Hobbes, 1968 [1651]). However, Locke thought that all persons had certain natural rights that could not be overridden, and so individuals would only give their consent to be ruled by a state that had a mechanism for self-limiting its power by, for example, having an independent judiciary to check that the government respected the rights of each individual (Locke, 1966 [1690]). Rousseau took this idea of individuals contracting to obey a common authority further by conceiving it not just as a foundational act, but also as a process of democratic law-making by citizens. For him, this meant that that the conditions for the emergence of law in an assembly had to be of a particular kind. Above all, they should be such that the citizens should not be thinking in terms of their personal desires or gain, their class interests or political party membership, but should think in terms of what was best for the republic. Only then would their 'general will', as opposed to a collection of personal wills, manifest itself (Rousseau, 1920 [1762]).

John Rawls is the most important recent theorist in this tradition. He too looks to found politics and social justice on the basis of collective agreement among free, rational individuals after discussion. Like Rousseau, Rawls thinks that the conditions or circumstances in which such dialogue takes place are critical. The discussants should be able to focus on what is good for individuals in general, or to put it differently, what all individuals would want after reflection, not on what individuals like themselves would want. They must think selflessly – literally. Rawls designs a thought experiment, the centrepiece of which is what he calls 'the Veil of Ignorance' (Rawls, 1971). For the deliberation of individuals to lead to the discovery of social justice or

'fair terms of social cooperation' (Rawls, 1985, p. 232), they must be made ignorant – stripped – of their specific identities such as their gender, their class, their nationality, culture, religion and so on. So none of the reasoners knows, for example, whether they are rich or poor, black or white, Christian or Muslim and so on. As a result, no one will risk favouring laws and policies that unduly favour a particular class, culture or religion, in case it turns out, once the Veil is lifted and they (re)learn who they are that they are not part of the group they favoured.

Rawls' claim, then, is that the principles of social justice can only be worked out by individuals, intellectuals, law-makers, benign governments and so on to the extent that they approximate self-less or identity-less reasoners. That, however, means that dialogue among such individuals is not necessary because, stripped of all their differences, such reasoners are identical. One reasoner can in theory come up with the just solution without the necessity for a dialogue among all citizens. Moreover, behind the Veil of Ignorance, the debate makes no difference to what is of value in terms of the outcome of the debate. The product – the principles which a diverse society should live by – are not influenced by who is or is not included in the debate, and so remain the same regardless of the debate. That is to say, they are not influenced by the debate and could indeed have been known without any dialogue taking place. More precisely, they are known by *reason* not by dialogue, or by who participates in the dialogue.

Dialogue as used by multiculturalists

This is not, however, how multiculturalists have approached political theory. Dialogue, rather than abstract reasoning by a sole reasoner or identical identity-less individuals, has motivated multiculturalists. They assume that the context for politics is already thoroughly imbued with dominant ways of thinking and doing – with cultural orientations such as national history and language, with religious and/or secular perspectives, with institutional norms and so on – and that these contextual factors cannot be abstracted to identify a set of culture-free problems. Moreover, the relationship between the relevant parties is likely to involve domination–subordination, or inclusion–exclusion, and that the weaker or newer party is likely to lack recognition or be misrecognized (Taylor, 1994). Dialogue rather than identity-less reasoning will be relevant here for at least three reasons. Firstly, the solution to the problem, or the process of arriving at a principle by which to address the problem, requires an effort at cross-cultural understanding. This is not just a question of taking material interests into account, but

a matter of (re)designing the shared public space and rules of conduct, so that diverse cultural commitments and needs are explicitly taken into account. Accordingly, the public space should not simply reflect the dominant culture, but be opened up to accommodate new or marginalized minorities. Secondly, this means that the solution is genuinely open. By this I do not mean that 'anything goes'. Rather, I mean that the solution cannot be predicted in advance, like with the final step in a piece of mathematical reasoning, where we say the answer was waiting to be discovered. The dialogue makes a difference: it contributes to a growth in understanding that is genuinely novel or additional to what was present before, and the quality or character of the dialogue is dependent on the participants. This is the case not simply in terms of their power of reasoning, but also in terms of 'where they are coming from', such that the presence of different parties leads to a different outcome. Thirdly, the dialogue is important not just in relation to discovering an outcome, but also for building a *relationship* of trust, cooperation and ultimately of belonging together between parties to the dialogue. These three reasons result in a dialogue very different from the 'behind the veil' reasoning of identity-less reasoners.

Multiculturalist political theorists include Iris Young, who helped people to perceive themselves as oppressed and to discover themselves in collective identities such as black or gay, and thus develop a liberatory identity and group politics to engage with other groups to institute a new form of democratic politics (Young, 1990). Anoter such example is Charles Taylor's idea of a dialogical ethics and politics based on 'recognizing' those whose distinct cultural identities have been dismissed or held in contempt – such as the identities of African-Americans in the United States or Francophone Quebecers in Canada (Taylor, 1994). Interestingly, in his more recent work Taylor relates his approach to diversity to a Rawlsian idea, that of 'an overlapping consensus' (Rawls, 1987; Taylor, 2009). For Rawls, this referred to the body of laws and policies that those with different religious and cultural perspectives could all agree on by focusing on politics, rather than their full set of religious and value commitments. Taylor rejects the idea of the identityless self (sometimes referred to as 'the unencumbered self') and abstract reasoning as the method for arriving at a consensus. He borrows and adapts 'overlapping consensus', but makes the process of arriving at it much more expansive and dynamic, so that it is best understood as consensus building – something not given but to be worked at, including through new interpretations of actors' points of views, a component that one might expect from a dialogue (Taylor, 2009). James Tully has continually stressed that cooperation under conditions of deep diversity

or 'multiplicity' requires a 'multilogue' (Tully, 1995), and has proposed the idea of 'public philosophy', the questioning of society's dominant assumptions in order to expose their contingency – their lack of necessity – and so open the way to identifying other possible ways of thinking and living (Tully, 2008). Bhikhu Parekh explicitly makes intercultural dialogue central to his conception of multiculturalism. His interventions in relation to the *Satanic Verses* affair, in which he argued against a freedom-of-speech absolutism stated that angry Muslims must be given a sympathetic hearing, are exemplary (Parekh 1989). While fully recognizing that in such public controversies the majority dominate public discourse, and often in a manner not conducive to dialogue or mutual learning, he argues that multiculturalism is not about allowing each minority to-live-as-it-wishes relativism (Parekh, 2006). Rather, it is about ensuring that there is a genuine dialogue and that the minority is allowed to express its point of view. Such dialogues inevitably have a majoritarian or status quo starting point, because even while wanting to express unfamiliar sensibilities and bring in new arguments, minorities are primarily trying to persuade the majority. This often takes the form of a minority arguing that what it is seeking is not so different to what the majority has sought for itself, at one time or another. In so arguing, the minority must justify itself by appealing to – even while seeking to modify – the existing 'operative public values' that structure public debate and what is thought to be legitimate or reasonable in that polity at the time (Parekh, 2006, p. 267).

For such multiculturalists, the principles of social justice are not known in advance or simply by reason, but are arrived at through conflict and *learning*, dialogue and negotiation in circumstances of inequality and minority claims- making. Admittedly, in Rawls' methodology, there is a to-ing and fro-ing from principles and experience/particularities/context – what he calls 'reflective equilibrium' (Rawls, 1971). But it can be achieved by an isolated reasoner or an assembly of identity-less, self-less reasoners, because at its best it is disinterested, self-less reasoning carried on far away from conflict. For the multiculturalists, the dialogue is claims-based and contentious, and based on identity-assertion (relative to other identities), not identity effacement. It seeks to get beyond – even if it never gets there – the conflict or challenge to which it gives rise, by urging the recognition of the excluded, the inferiorized and the misrecognized, and by the formation of new, inclusive, hyphenated and multiple overlapping identities. The dialogue comes into being because of identity-based claims; it proceeds by recognizing identities; and its goal, its teleology, is the construction of new identities and new relationships, which are not reducible to redistribution.

Multiculturalism and interculturalism

The kind of public intellectual engagement or multiculturalist dialogue I am arguing for here needs to be contrasted with other conceptions of intercultural dialogue. It can, for example, be contrasted with a philosophical multiculturalism that is concerned to develop a framework in which different cultures and religions can come to an understanding of each other and, therefore, to a richer understanding of humanity. Taylor, for example, sees the ultimate frontier of the politics of recognition as being the development – which he sees far off from contemporary capacities – of sensibilities and ways of thinking, so that we can understand cultures radically different from our own and thereby evaluate their contribution to human civilization (Taylor, 1994). Similarly, Parekh, emphasizes that the ultimate value of multiculturalism lies in cross-cultural and cross-civilizational understanding through which we simultaneously appreciate the varied ways to be human, while more profoundly understanding one's own distinctive location (Parekh, 2000). While my own formulation of multiculturalism is built on a reading of Taylor and Parekh (among others), the philosophical views I have just ascribed to them carry important and controversial philosophical theses, which I can leave to one side. Such examples include Taylor's suggestion that different cultures can be evaluated and ranked by and against each other, or Parekh's moral intersubjectivism – the view that values and morality, while grounded in a conception of human nature, ultimately have no foundations independent of reasoning selves (Parekh, 2006, p. 128). These are debates that I do not need to enter. My interest and advocacy is confined to political multiculturalism. While Parekh and Taylor locate their political multiculturalism within a wider, philosophical multiculturalism, I am not locating political multiculturalism in anything bigger than itself, or, more precisely, in nothing bigger than contemporary ideas of democratic citizenship and belonging (Modood, 2013, pp. 60–61).

In relation to this, I also leave to one side the matter of how what I am presenting as multiculturalist dialogue relates to identity groups at an international or global level, as in the idea of a 'dialogue of civilizations'. Instead, I confine myself here to an intra-national context, and more specifically to liberal democratic contexts. Within such contexts there has been a reaction to multiculturalism that relates to the question of dialogue, specifically to intercultural or inter-faith dialogue. Multiculturalism has been criticized at many levels and across the political and intellectual spectrums, but I am referring to one specific position that goes under the name of 'interculturalism'. To be more precise, there are at least two reactions that

use the same self-label. One reaction is specific to Quebec and is very much connected to Quebec nationalism (Meer and Modood, 2012; Modood, 2014). This interculturalism, however, is not a rejection of dialogical or identity politics. On the contrary, it conceives of the multiculturalism of the Canadian federal government as not sufficiently dialogical, but as being too based on justiciable individual rights and judges, rather than on political dialogue (Gagnon and Iacovino, 2006). The other interculturalism is associated with the Council of Europe (2008) and UNESCO (2008). These bodies have produced a critique of multiculturalism, which, with Nasar Meer, I have examined and rebutted elsewhere (Meer and Modood, 2012). Our argument was that this interculturalist critique is of a caricature without any significant reference to the views of any multiculturalist authors, theorists and advocates, or even to policies advanced in the name of multiculturalism, say in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom or the United States. It simply associated multiculturalism with separatism, ghettoization and anti-integration (Meer and Modood 2012; see Meer, Modood and Zapata-Barrero, 2016 for a multi-sided debate). My focus here is on only one aspect of the interculturalist critique and the corresponding positive recommendation: the argument that multiculturalists have been too focused on general public discourses, especially at a macro national level, whereas the real work of social acceptance, equality and living in diversity exists at the level of everyday life in one's neighbourhood, school, workplace and so on (Loobuyck, 2016). At the level of the latter, people rub along without major value conflicts; however, intercultural encounters rather than avoidance of contact are essential for a multicultural society and it is at these micro levels that the techniques for intercultural dialogue needs to be learnt and practised (Wise and Velayutham, 2009). Multiculturalism, it is alleged, is too focused on the macro and the conflictual; dialogue should be redirected to the micro and the cooperative. My response to this critique is to accept it as a correction to an exclusively macro and political focus, but to reject it as presenting an either-or choice. One can welcome the interculturalists' focus on micro-relations, but this does not require abandoning the idea of dialogue at the level of political controversies and public discourses. Groups and inter-group problems exist in society and cannot be simply handled at a micro-level of contact, interaction and sociability.

Public intellectual engagement

The kind of macro-level dialogue that I am speaking of can also be understood as a form of public intellectual engagement. One of the best-known statements on the nature of public intellectuals in recent times is that of Edward Said (Said, 1996). Following Gramsci, he drew a contrast between traditional intellectuals, who we might understand here as academics, and 'organic intellectuals', namely those who serve particular organizations, such as journalists, or lobby for particular interests for a fee, or have an expertise, such as an economist or a scientist working for a government (ibid., pp. 4, 13). Derived from a characterization by Benda, Said writes of a third kind of intellectual, 'of the intellectual as a being set apart' (ibid., p. 8), angry and oppositional, a critic of all worldly powers. They marry the academic's commitment to intellectual values, but combine it with a critique of injustice, which is aimed, not just at fellow specialists, but at as wide a public audience as they can manage. I can offer my understanding of public intellectual engagement by relating to Said's idea of a public intellectual, which I find too one-sided and painted too starkly.

An example of the one-sidedness I mean is the detachment from society that Said attributes to public intellectuals. He argues that their aim is to uphold universal 'standards of truth about human misery and oppression … despite the individual intellectual's party affiliation, national background, and primeval loyalties' (ibid., p. xii). Of course, this kind of integrity is what one requires not just from public intellectuals, but from all professionals, such as academics, doctors, judges, engineers and so on. It is neither distinctive of public intellectuals, nor does it mean that those with such responsibilities have to be any less members of their society; that they share less understanding and concerns with their co-ethnic, co-religionists or co-nationals, or do not care for the well-being of their groups (including protesting when they think injustice is being done by their groups). Yet, Said describes public intellectuals as, indeed exhorts them to be, 'outsiders and exiles' (ibid., p. 51) and admiringly quotes Adorno: *'It is part of morality not to be at home in one's home*' (ibid., p. 57; itals in original). Said notes that '[b]ecause the exile sees things both in terms of what has been left behind and what is actual here and now, there is a double perspective that never sees things in isolation' (ibid., p. 60). Thus, despite presenting a self-image of the intellectual as standing outside or above the society she or he is engaging with, Said recognizes there actually has to be a – or more typically, multiple – commitment to a people(s) or concrete institutions and

practices, not just to abstract principles like Truth or Justice or Humanity. My point is that commitments to groups, people, causes, institutions, one's country and so on are not incidental to an engaged public intellectual or a nuisance it would be best did not exist. They are as essential to the public intellectual as the commitment to intellectual integrity. The public intellectual has to care about a people, a place or a cause and not just about being an intellectual (brought out nicely in relation to George Orwell and Albert Camus in Walzer, 2002). The public intellectual has to have a home, but this commitment must not be blind or incompatible with an equally strong commitment to intellectuality. Just as, of course, there must not be a blind commitment to certain intellectual points of view and theories, including those that have the prefix of 'critical' – a prefix that seems to some to be a badge of adherence rather than something to deconstruct. The public intellectual endeavour is to engage in and lead the moral, ethical and political conversation that any society has with itself, and while some 'outsider' features can offer some epistemological advantages (and no doubt some blind spots), one needs to be part of the society that one seeks to engage.

Said cites the African-Americans James Baldwin and Malcolm X as exemplars of public intellectuals (Said, 1996, p. xvii). Yet, they were individuals who knew which side they were on. They were outsiders to certain structures of power, but not outsiders to groups, to belonging and commitment to the well-being of the groups they (thought) they belonged to. It is most unlikely that they endorsed Said's motto of 'Never solidarity before criticism' (ibid., p. 32). In Said's own case there was a passionate lifelong commitment to the Palestinian people. Moreover, when it comes to multiculturalist public intellectuals they are likely to belong to more than one group and so, are unlikely to be either wholly insiders or outsiders – again something that describes Said as an eminent American. The public intellectual, then, has to negotiate critical outsiderness and epistemological insiderness and belonging, solidarity and rootedness. She or he does not need to entirely renounce her social roots; indeed, to do so is to risk losing an important understanding and sympathy for her group or society, as well as trust and standing with the group and/or society. The answer is neither to cultivate a blind loyalty, nor to go into exile; it is much better to develop multiple belongings and possibilities of dialogue rather than exile or aloofness from the concerns of one's group or society.

A similar one-sidedness characterizes Said's distancing of public intellectuality from 'specialization' (ibid., p. 76) and 'expertise' (ibid., p. 77),

overlooking the point that a public intellectual has to come from one or some intellectual discipline(s). He argues that '[t]he particular threat to the intellectual today... [is] an attitude that I will call professionalism' (ibid., p. 73), which he describes as treating intellectual work as just a job, on a nine-to-five basis, the demotion of an intellectual vocation to what today is likely to be called 'work-life balance'. Said also worries about intellectuals seeking acceptance, prestige and honours (ibid., pp. 100–01). I agree that some university institutional cultures – such as that of Britain, say, during 1990–2010 – encourage a narrow scholasticism, typified by the high esteem bestowed on disciplinary jargons and low esteem on clarity, but Said is too dismissive of expertise (Modood, 2009). Much scientific expertise improves material living standards, public services and personal well-being. It is about engaging with the pressing needs of individuals and communities, such as seeking a cure for cancer, reducing world poverty or contributing to the advancement of 'the knowledge society' with a view to improving regional and national productivity and promoting technological innovation. We may agree with Said, however, that such activity is not public intellectual engagement, which centres on an intellectual speaking in their own voice to a public, not about research teams, new techniques and purely material concerns. And as for an intellectual not seeking honours, this cannot be the primary motive, but it is the case that there is – and should be – honour and recognition, and social status in public intellectual engagement, and it is odd that Said, who received such acclaim (including being chosen by the BBC to deliver the prestigious Reith Lectures, in which he presented the views I am discussing), should fail to mention it. A better understanding of the interplay between professional and the personal, and what one might call honourable ambition, is captured in this description of public intellectuals as 'those who live with the tensions generated by the contrasting pulls of specialist focus and peer recognition, on the one hand, and on the other the risks and thrills associated with being known as someone who addresses a much wider range of publics on issues of general concern' (Kenny, 2008, p. 7). Of course, these different elements are not always in harmony, but it does not constitute a betrayal of vocation to recognize the fact and dangers of competing motives and purposes than to define public intellectuals in ascetic and purist terms.

Despite Said's tendency to sometimes express himself in a one-sided manner, he also offers a more complex characterization and is closer to the mark when he does so, for example:

> There is therefore this quite complicated mix between the private and the public worlds, my own history, values, writings and positions as they derive from my experiences, on the one hand, and on the other hand, how these enter into the social world where people debate and make decisions about war and freedom and justice (Said, 1996, p. 12).

There is, however, one issue on which I do not simply think Said has a preference, albeit exercised inconsistently, for one-sidedness, but where our views collide. In talking earlier of Parekh as a multiculturalist public intellectual, I evidenced his interventions in relation to the crisis around Salman Rushdie's novel, *The Satanic Verses*. It happens that Said too refers to this crisis and states that to have failed to have defended this novel is 'to betray the intellectual's calling' (ibid., p. 89). This is because 'uncompromising freedom of opinion and expression is the secular intellectual's main bastion' (ibid., p. 89). In addition to what I have already said in relation to Parekh, I give my own reasons for my intervention in this crisis in the interview below, and so will not add anything more here. It may be that by 'secular' Said does not mean non-religious, but someone who does not have a 'belief in a political god' (ibid., p. 109) or 'a total dogmatic system' (ibid., p. 113). If so, I share that view and have warned of 'the danger of ideology' in discussions of multiculturalism (Said, 2013, pp. 118–22). I suspect, however, that in at least one respect I take the freedom owed to public intellectuals further than Said, who passionately defines the latter in anti-establishment and anti-national terms. Michael Burawoy, who initiated a major, international debate about the nature of public sociology, offered the same kind of political restrictedness, arguing that it 'defends the interests of humanity', which he interpreted to mean standing up for civil society against the market and the state (Burawoy, 2005, p. 24). My colleague, Gregor McLennan, has added that if one can impose political tasks on sociology, then his own list includes resistance to 'the encroachments of religiosity' (McLennan, 2007, p. 859). In contrast, I think a public intellectual must be politically free to be left-wing, right-wing, centrist, religious, secular and so on – and of course to argue for his point of view by attending to other, especially dissenting voices, and respond to objections and critiques. Public intellectual engagement is of course political, not neutral, but it is a dialogue or a multilogue of complementary and contending intellectual-political positions, and one cannot appropriate

a whole discipline such as sociology or political theory for one's own normative position or against a colleague's (as Burawoy, 2005, also, if inconsistently, argues). Or, as Hashemi argues, by juxtaposing the theorist of the Iranian Revolution, Ali Shariati, with Burawoy, 'public sociology can work as a frame of debate about the priority of each battlefield. Otherwise, it can be easily turned into a target for the criticism of those who do not share the interest in Burawoy's preferred struggle' (Hashemi, 2016). The field outside the academy that public intellectuals are committed to is not civil society, but the home of 'the public', which we may call 'the public sphere' following this excellent quote from Andrew Gamble, which sums up in what way intellectuals are public or political:

> The political theorists of multiculturalism such as Bhikhu Parekh ... have been active participants in politics in the sense that they seek to advance the political education of citizens, by articulating choices, framing questions, offering alternatives, and challenging orthodoxies and entrenched attitudes. They address themselves to the public, not to [just] coteries of experts, or office holders. They are essential builders of the public sphere (Gamble, 2015, p. 297).

One of the ways, then, that intellectuals can contribute to societal dialogues is through what I will call 'public intellectual engagement'. As an exemplification of what I have in mind as an aspiration and in relation to multiculturalism, I offer here the interview I gave to Simon Thompson (Modood, 2016a). It refers to my own engagement with some of the challenges the presence of British Muslims as British citizens creates for British public culture and national citizenship. In relation to this theme, I have already mentioned Bhikhu Parekh above and my appreciation of him as an outstanding British public intellectual.

Tariq Modood: on being a public intellectual, a Muslim and a multiculturalist

Interviewed by Simon Thompson

What does it mean to be a public intellectual?

Intellectual or academic life is usually organized in disciplines, and intellectuals' questions come out of those disciplines. But in public intellectual engagement the question does not primarily come out of a discipline. It comes from the public. It concerns our relations with each other as members of a society and especially as citizens of a polity. A

public intellectual is a concerned citizen who accepts responsibility for their society and brings to its understanding insights of their discipline.

Most of what salaried academics do is contribute to their disciplinary community or to a broader academic community. So, a political theorist may say, 'Hannah Arendt was engaged with this question. This is a question that is still alive and her thought on this is strangely lucid. I want to revisit it and perhaps recover neglected aspects of it'. These questions all arise organically from thinking about Hannah Arendt.

But we also at times think about questions that don't just arise from the discipline. So, for example, we think about the relationship between religious identity and political equality. Is there any relation? Does political equality simply mean we are not interested in anybody's religious identity? We simply don't suppress or promote any such identities? Sounds plausible. But then if we think about it, we realize that in fact, some people's religious identity tells them to have an ethical orientation which is clearly social *and* political – to do with questions like what kind of economic relations to have or not have, to be hospitable to refugees or not. Whereas for other people their religious identity is an entirely private matter.

So if political equality means merely ignoring religious identities, we are favouring religious identities that are purely private, and *not* treating all religious identities equally. We're *preferring* a particular kind of religious identity. So now we are not just talking about, say, Hannah Arendt's ideas. We're thinking about our existing political arrangements in light of the claims that some Muslims or some Christians or – for that matter – some 'new atheists' are making about political life and equality. We are engaged in public questions. But we are still drawing on academic conversations, academic tools, academic perspectives.

Do you think we've resolved this question – about how to square equality for all religious identities with political equality – in Britain?

I think we have entered a period where we are rethinking the place of religion in relation to equality and the public sphere. But there's a deep antipathy to treating religious identities on a par with others. A good measure of this is how in the Labour Party or in a major trade union there can be a women's section, an LGBT section, a black or ethnic minorities section, but we can all imagine the consternation if and when Muslims ask for a Muslim or a religious minorities section!

Should all intellectuals or academics be public intellectuals?

Intellectual life, like society, has a division of labour. I'm not saying: 'all academics or sociologists or political theorists must engage in intellectual activity of just one kind'. The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is a good, though it's not the only good we should be concerned with. We need a certain amount of publically supported fundamental or 'blue skies' or pure academic research, because who knows what will come from it? Even the publically engaged intellectual working on political theory will still get a lot of value from the person who says 'I really want to understand Arendt'.

Public engagement is desirable rather than essential for individual academics. But when it comes to the collective – a department of politics or a school of sociology – I think it is essential for at least some of its members to be engaged. And what I mean by desirable is not simply 'optional'; public engagement is something that should be pursued *if possible*.

Do you see yourself as bringing a specifically Muslim voice to public debate?

To answer this we need to go back to the Rushdie affair. The Rushdie affair was a pivotal intellectual and biographical moment for me, because in some ways I came to *be* a Muslim at that time. It would have been quite straightforward for me to walk away from all these angry, aggressive Muslims and simply say: *they have nothing to do with me*. But I thought instead: *these people* are *something to do with me*. I was working in racial equality and community relations; I had a sense of belonging, solidarity, with a community of suffering. I was aware of and proud of my Pakistani roots. I thought of myself as British Asian, so to extend that to think of myself as a British Asian Muslim didn't seem such a leap. But it wasn't obvious either. I knew other British Asians who didn't want to have anything to do with these 'fundamentalists'. I felt I needed to address Muslims as much as I needed to address the wider public, and I needed to address them in a way that both exhibited identification and solidarity with them and said: *this is where I stand and this is where we should stand – and we should distinguish ourselves from some other Muslim positions*. So it was a critical stance, but I was expressing it as a Muslim.

My biography, or my social location, as a brown Brit of Pakistani origins and Muslim background, is very present in my work – both in the questions I am engaged with, and also to some extent the answers. But I don't think of myself as *simply* speaking as a Muslim. When I speak, I speak as a

multiculturalist above all. This is the intellectual commitment that I bring to public debate.

Should public intellectuals stand up for the marginalized or dispossessed?

I don't accept the argument that the role of intellectuals is to always support the weaker party. We should all attend to the state of the weaker party. But that is an issue of justice and fairness, it's not especially to do with political theory or sociology or being an intellectual.

The answer to your question comes back again to the Rushdie affair. At that time, there were at least two prominent things motivating me. Concern for the well-being of British society. *And* concern for the well-being of British Muslims as a particular part of British society. I was trying to follow these two deep personal commitments *equally*. It wasn't just Muslims and Salman Rushdie who were affected. British society was affected by this incident – and, in fact, this set of issues is not confined to one country.

Some people might say about me: 'He doesn't care about Britain, he just wants to look after the Muslim constituency.' I personally have never thought along those lines. I have an abiding concern for the well-being of British society, which doesn't mean that British society sometimes doesn't misunderstand where its well-being lies. When I try and engage with a broader British public, I am trying to get people to think about what is *really* good for British society. What is consistent with its beliefs and long-term character? Because, of course, British society has to work and adapt to include in a fair and just way what we might call the new British. What I have been concerned about – in the Rushdie affair and after – has not been the well-being of Muslims *per se,* but the well-being of Muslims who are part of British society and whose future is part of British society. The well-being of these parties is entangled, and the conflictual parts of the entanglement have to be worked out so that the well-being of each becomes interdependent and, if you like, integrated.

Does sharing an identity mean sharing solidarity?

My biography gives me insights and a sensibility that others don't have. I don't claim to be especially empathetic, but I can say that I know certain things, having been brought up as a Muslim, having been an Asian in Britain since I was a child, and going to a very white, working-class school with a lot of racist and other kinds of bullying. I think this was the basis for my career. I could see that the way that British society was beginning to

politically conceptualize the issues around race in the 1970s and 1980s just did not fit with my own sense of who I was. And I felt that I was actually the norm in Asian communities and not the exception; for example, like most British Asians I did not think I was black, nor, of course, white; and nor did I define myself against Britishness, but as making a new, distinctive claim on it. That gave me the basis for arguing against a kind of black–white racial dualism and towards ethnic pluralism – towards multicultural Britishness, where there are different ways of being British.

The emergence of religion as a live issue, in particular the assertion of Muslim identity, was actually a bit of a surprise to me. When I first heard about the Rushdie affair I thought, 'it's not right for Muslims to be getting so angry'. But *being* among Muslims made me realize that this really mattered to some Muslims, and they were unable to do what their sympathizers were asking them to do – which was basically to just forget about the novel entirely. I could see that these Muslims were headed for a confrontation, and this wasn't good for Muslims or for British society. And because I could identify with them I could understand: not because I'm particularly empathetic, as I say, but because I belong to a certain social world.

You said above that the issues raised by the Rushdie controversy are not confined to one country. Could you expand on that?

Comparable issues to do with Muslims protesting how their religion, especially the Prophet Muhammad, is portrayed arose with the Danish Cartoons Affair and more recently the cartoons in *Charlie Hebdo*. In each case, an important question has been to look beyond the horrific violence and murder and to ask how, in a multicultural society, groups of people such as Muslims or Jews or blacks should and should not be portrayed. We need incitement to hatred legislation, but I think in the main, these issues should be dealt with through 'censure not censor' (Modood, 2006). We should handle the offensive portrayal of racial and religious minorities through censuring rather than legal bans. When several prominent European newspapers and magazines republished the original Danish cartoons of Muhammad, no British newspaper or magazine did so, on the grounds that they were not in the business of giving gratuitous offence. This is the same British approach that, unlike France and many European countries, has not tried to make Holocaust denial a criminal offence, but dealt with it through a culture of civility and censure.

Do you think that racism, and in particular Islamophobia, are growing problems in this country, and what can politics do to fight against this rise?

Most of the evidence suggests that racial discrimination, say in relation to jobs, persists. Ethnic minorities continue to make progress in terms of socio-economic mobility and participation in public life, but that's mainly because of the extra qualifications they achieve, rather than because there is a level playing field. On the other hand, I think that racial prejudice is in relative decline if we look at the views of younger people compared to older people, and at friendship, dating, relationships, marriage and so on. Yet, both in terms of employment and social life, suspicion of and hostility to Muslims continues to rise. Partly, this is collective blame for jihadi terrorism, but it's also an antipathy to publicly asserted religious identities. This 'Muslim penalty' has to be much more publicly stated as a problem. Blanket condemnation of racism is not enough. We need positive national narratives which feature Muslims and Islam as aspects of what it is to be British. Politicians also need to work with Muslim communities to identify, isolate and defeat the processes leading to terrorism, rather than speak as if Muslims were the problem or that terrorism is a problem the Muslim community could solve on its own – or indeed that it could be solved without the full engagement of the Muslim communities, including conservative Muslims and critics of government foreign policies.

You said that you see yourself as a multiculturalist intellectual. Do you think multiculturalism is still the model we should be following in Britain?

Multiculturalism is the accommodation of minorities, not just as individuals, but as people sharing, promoting and remaking their group identities within a common citizenship and the rethinking of a national story. No doubt this has sometimes been expressed too simply, both theoretically and politically, so we must learn from critics emphasizing community cohesion, or the fluidity and multiplicity of identities, or what is called 'interculturalism'. But these are really modifications of multiculturalism, not alternatives to it. This is clear as soon as you pose the question: what is it that anti-multiculturalist countries like France or Germany have achieved that Britain has failed to achieve? In fact, by virtually any measure you care to pick – discrimination and victimization, social mobility, presence in and participation in public life, rethinking national identity in a more inclusive way, inter-ethnic friendships, interfaith dialogue and cooperation and so on – the position of non-European origin minorities in Britain is better

than in most or all other European countries. So, to paraphrase Churchill, British multiculturalism may be the worst model, except for all the others. In the last few years, I have been particularly sympathetic to voices on the centre-left (like Jon Cruddas) emphasizing that the cultural identities and anxieties of the majority need to be part of a communitarian One Nation politics. I think that is right, but it is important that such a politics should not be cast as anti-multiculturalist, but should include what might be called a critically evolving multiculturalism.

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II. Policy articulations of intercultural dialogue

1. Intercultural dialogue under a multiculturalism regime: pitfalls and possibilities in Australia

Geoffrey Brahm Levey

Forms of intercultural dialogue take place in Australia in a variety of ways and places. Ethnic community councils, civic associations, interfaith meetings, parents and friends school associations, and everyday workplaces are just some of the many venues where such dialogue is routinely, if implicitly, conducted. One might suppose that intercultural dialogue (ICD) is also well established nationally in terms of how public policy concerning cultural minorities is made. Australia helped to pioneer multicultural policy along with Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, a policy it maintains. Yet, ICD has scarcely figured in the Australian national experience. Even the term 'intercultural dialogue' has little resonance in Australian public affairs. Of course, the government consults a wide range of stakeholders in fashioning policy, including minorities. However, there is little inclination or appetite for a serious, sustained and genuinely open engagement with cultural minorities on issues that directly affect them and their place in Australian society, notwithstanding the almost forty-year commitment to state multiculturalism.

In recent years, a lively debate has erupted over whether and how interculturalism differs from multiculturalism as a response to cultural diversity (e.g. Barrett, 2013; Bouchard, 2011; Kymlicka, 2012; Levey, 2012; Meer and Modood, 2012; Meer, Modood and Zapata-Barrero, 2016; Taylor, 2012; Wieviorka, 2012). An influential argument in this debate is that multiculturalism itself militates against ICD (e.g. Cantle, 2012; Council of Europe, 2008; Zapata-Barrero, 2015). In this chapter, I want to scrutinize this argument and challenge its applicability in the Australian context. I argue that the paucity of ICD in Australia can be traced rather to the indifferent attitude of 'Anglo-Australia' towards minorities. My contention is that ICD would be both possible and positive for policy outcomes if the terms of Australian multiculturalism were actually respected. I analyse two prominent cases in recent political history in support of these arguments: the 2006 clash between John Howard's conservative government and

the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria over the introduction of a citizenship test, and the attempt by Tony Abbott's conservative government during 2013–14 to reform the *Racial Discrimination Act* 1975 (Cth). The cases illuminate the pitfalls but also the possibilities of conducting ICD in Australia.

Why the paucity of ICD in Australia?

Two very different arguments have been put forward as to why multiculturalism works against ICD. According to one account, multiculturalism as a public philosophy and policy has this effect because it treats cultural minorities as discrete communities mainly interested in their own identity preservation. While such an approach may have made sense in the post-war decades when cultural communities were concerned with resisting the pressures of assimilation, these conditions no longer apply, so goes the argument. In today's globalized world, which includes mass travel and instantaneous communications, what is needed instead is a model that allows for cosmopolitan interests and attachments, where cultural group members interact, exchange and dialogue with diverse others, and who are open and forward-looking rather than culturally blinkered by their pasts. In a word, what is needed is 'interculturalism' rather than multiculturalism (Cantle, 2012; Zapata-Barrero, 2015).

This interculturalist critique of multiculturalism is unconvincing. For one thing, it overlooks versions of multiculturalism that stress ICD (e.g. Parekh, 1996, 2000). But it also misses the mark regarding the Australian experience. Even in its early years, when the tendency was to construe ethnic minorities as discrete communities, Australia's multicultural policy did not preclude interaction between cultural minorities. To take one example, the Ethnic Communities' Councils in each state were among the first non-government institutions established to advance the multicultural agenda in Australia. The Councils comprised representatives of all ethnic groups that wished to participate. Australian multiculturalism has also refrained from boxing people into their ethnic, religious or linguistic group heritage. Australian multicultural policy has always been highly individualistic. The rights to cultural identity and respect and to access and equity apply to individual Australians, however they define and practise (or not) their cultural identities. As the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia puts it, 'Fundamentally, multiculturalism is about the rights of the individual' (OMA, 1989, p. 15). Individuals are free to identify with their cultural heritage groups, assimilate into the mainstream or forge hybrid identities

and patterns of identification. Interaction and dialogue with diverse others is standard operating procedure among individual Australians.

A second line of criticism is that multiculturalism is based on an unhelpful majority/minority dichotomy. The Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008, p. 18) contends that while multiculturalism 'was ostensibly a radical departure from assimilationism', it 'in fact ... frequently shared the same, schematic conception of society set in opposition of majority and minority, differing only in endorsing separation of the minority from the majority rather than assimilation to it'. This observation takes us a step closer to the heart of the matter. Australian multiculturalism is formulated on the basis of a dominant cultural majority – typically, dubbed Anglo-Australians or Anglo-Celts – and the rest, a plethora of minorities. All four national multicultural policy statements reference the Anglo-Australian majority and the institutions they established based on British precedent, Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their distinct experience as the original and dispossessed inhabitants, and the large and growing proportion of the population who are immigrants or the children of immigrants – many from non-English-speaking backgrounds (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999, 2003; DIAC, 2011; OMA, 1989).

However, neither multiculturalism nor Australia's version of it constitutes the problem in this respect. Firstly, not every version of multiculturalism is based on a majority/minorities dichotomy. Much multicultural theory argues for broad parity in state recognition and accommodation across all constituent groups in a society (e.g. Bader, 2007; Carens, 2000; Fraser, 2002; Young, 1990). Gérard Bouchard (2011, p. 463) notes that federal Canada's policy of multiculturalism officially operates on a 'diversity' paradigm that does not recognize a majority culture, and instead places all constituent groups and individuals on an equal footing. Rather, he says, it is Quebec's *interculturalism* policy that endorses a 'duality' paradigm that sanctions a foundational majority culture and 'ad hoc majority precedence' (Bouchard, 2011). The Canadian case, in other words, exhibits the very opposite terminological situation to that asserted by the Council of Europe. It is clear that the labels 'multiculturalism' and 'interculturalism' have highly variable and contextual meanings (Levey, 2012, 2016; Meer and Modood, 2012). Treating these labels as though they represent fixed and contrasting approaches to cultural diversity is bound to be misleading.

Secondly, Australian multiculturalism has always sought to sensitize 'Anglo-Australia' to the necessity of understanding and being responsive to Australia's minorities. For example, an early policy discussion paper,

'Multiculturalism for All Australians: Our Developing Nationhood', observed that if Australia's core institutions are to be relevant to all Australians, then 'they will sometimes have to go out of their way to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the many groups comprising Australian society' (ACPEA, 1982, p. 16). The architects of Australian multiculturalism understood that intercultural exchange is essential for building inclusive relations because, without it, one is unlikely to appreciate what is even at issue or how one may be undermining positive relations, despite one's best intentions.

Bouchard's suggestion of looking beyond the labels to the underlying paradigms at work is more pertinent. *Some* forms of multiculturalism and interculturalism operate on a duality paradigm involving an established majority and culture, and then the rest of the population. However, even this paradigmatic level only takes us so far in explaining national differences. If Quebec's and Australia's cultural diversity policies are both predicated on a majority/minorities duality, why is it that Quebec has proved comparatively open to and adept at ICD whereas Australia has not?

The paucity of ICD in how Australia deals with its minorities is not attributable to its multicultural policy. Equally, it cannot be explained simply in terms of the existence of an underlying majority/minorities duality governing Australia's approach to cultural diversity. Rather, the paucity of ICD is a corollary of *how* the dominant cultural majority goes about exercising its dominance. This is an attitudinal matter with deep historical, cultural and institutional underpinnings. Australian multiculturalism was intended to combat and civilize these longstanding attitudes and practices. That they still prevail is testimony not to the effect of multicultural policy, but to its limitations in the face of entrenched cultural patterns and political interests.

There is no shortage of examples. Multicultural policy proclaims, and Australian governments stress, the importance of all Australians respecting the country's democratic traditions and institutions. Yet, at the same time that John Howard's conservative government was telling Muslims in 2005 that they must abide by democratic norms, it was informing the Muslim and Indigenous communities which individuals among their number would represent them in their dealings with government (DIMA, 2006; Kuhn, 2009; Shaw, 2004). This was not exactly a lesson in democratic representation, let alone an intercultural dialogue. In 2008, Kevin Rudd's Labor government convened a national summit designed to bring together 2000 of Australia's best and brightest to discuss future directions for the nation. However, the

Prime Minister scheduled the summit on the first days of the festival of Passover, thus ensuring that many of the Jewish Australians invited could not participate in the discussions (*Australian Jewish News,* 2008). It was almost as if multicultural policy did not exist.

Let us consider two cases in detail. The first is the 2006 clash between the Howard government and the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) over the proposed introduction of a citizenship test. The second case concerns the failed attempt by the Abbott Coalition government in 2013–14 to reform the anti-vilification provisions of the *Racial Discrimination Act* 1975 (Cth). The first case reveals how a pretense of dialogue quickly deteriorates into a pointless spat when there is little trust in the government's bona fides, and when parties to the dialogue resort to loose language and fail to respect the ground rules of Australian multiculturalism. The second case reveals a government wholly uninterested in seriously dialoguing about a major reform that is overwhelmingly opposed by minorities and the public at large, and which results in the government's humiliating defeat. The cases are instructive both in terms of identifying the difficulties involved and underlining the importance of conducting ICD in Australia.

Case Study 1: The Howard Government's clash with the ECCV

The background to the case is as follows. On 17 September 2006, the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Andrew Robb, released a Discussion Paper, 'Australian Citizenship: Much More Than a Ceremony', to seek the Australian community's views on the merits of introducing a formal citizenship test (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). The paper sought comments on a range of questions concerning the need for, and nature of, such a test, including facility in English language and familiarity with Australia's values and way of life. On the face of it, this seemed a promising initial step towards a public and intercultural dialogue.

The ECCV (2006a) submitted its responses to these questions on 15 November. It argued that the case for change had not been made, that the proposed reforms were discriminatory, especially in relation to refugees from Africa, and that the government's stress on 'Australian values' was bogus. In an address to a conference later that month, Parliamentary Secretary Robb took exception to the ECCV's position, characterizing it as 'essentially a separatist view' (Robb, 2006a). The ECCV (2006b) issued a media release the same day rejecting this characterization and

contending that Robb had misunderstood their position. Two days later, the ECCV's Executive Officer, Peter van Vliet (2006), rounded on the Howard government and its proposed citizenship test in an opinion piece in a Melbourne newspaper. The 'dialogue' between the ECCV and the government, such as it was, never recovered from this point.

The episode is salutary because *both* parties diminished public debate and undermined ICD by conflating positions and engaging in unwarranted provocations. Moreover, both the government's and the ECCV's positions failed to respect the terms of Australian multiculturalism. Before I defend these contentions, some broader context is required.

Firstly, Prime Minister Howard was well known as an arch opponent of multiculturalism. After assuming power in 1996, for several years Howard could not bring himself even to say the word 'multiculturalism' (Kelly, 1997). Although the Howard government nominally continued multicultural policy, a number of institutions (such as the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research) were abolished and funding was reduced. The 2003 policy statement, 'Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity', was a mere five pages long and suggested a government going through the motions (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003). There was a palpable sense that it was only a matter of time before the Howard government would recant on multiculturalism.

That time came in late 2006 in the wake, secondly, of international developments. Following a spate of Islamist terror attacks abroad, and reassessments of multiculturalism and general concerns about the integration in particular of Muslims in Britain and the Netherlands, the Howard government signalled its intention to drop the word 'multiculturalism' from government use (Robb, 2006a). In January 2007, for example, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs was renamed the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Also, the residency eligibility period for acquiring citizenship was extended from two to four years.

The government's proposed citizenship test was thus widely perceived as being part of Howard's move against multiculturalism. In this light, the government's Discussion Paper exploring a citizenship test takes on a different hue. Was the government genuinely seeking to consult the public and stakeholders on the idea? Or was the Discussion Paper rather a public relations exercise to 'sell' a reform that had already been finalized and to which it was already committed? The paper itself observes the best

bureaucratic protocols of the genre: the language is inquisitive, searching and tentative. It concludes with a useful survey of citizenship tests and procedures that other comparator countries have adopted.

Barely a month after the release of the Discussion Paper, however, the Parliamentary Secretary gave a different impression. In an address to the Jewish National Fund in Melbourne, Robb responded to common criticisms of the proposal and otherwise made the case for the new test (Robb, 2006b). This much is to be expected. Robb even advanced the debate, I think, by effectively rebutting a few criticisms of the proposal. To the argument 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it', Robb replies that the 'system is not broken because we have continually sought to improve it'. And to the complaint that many migrants to Australia have become good citizens with little fluency in English, Robb notes how that incontrovertible fact is connected to labour conditions in the 1950s and 1960s, when migrants mainly filled unskilled and labour intensive industries. The Australia of today, he observes, is a service-based economy, which requires English facility to secure employment and advance (Robb, 2006b).

The problem lay rather with the concluding remarks of Robb's address. Early in the address he was careful to stress that the 'proposed formal citizenship test ... is the subject of a Discussion paper and public consultations at the present time'. But the concluding section states the benefits of a citizenship test in such unequivocal terms that it leaves the option of not proceeding with the proposal as morally and politically irresponsible. Robb left little doubt that the government was committed to a citizenship test and had decided its format ahead of the public consultations.

The ECCV entered the public debate a few weeks later on 15 November (ECCV, 2006a). Its main concern, it said, was that the proposed citizenship test would unfairly burden migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds and, especially, refugees from Africa. The concern was a reasonable one. Early data suggested that the failure rate of the test within its first year was higher than 20 per cent, with refugees and people from non-English-speaking backgrounds faring even worse (Butterly, 2008). While rates soon improved to less than 4 per cent failing overall on the first attempt, there remained considerable variation based on national origin (Anderson, 2015). Most of the ECCV's fire was directed, however, at the government's account of Australian values. The Discussion Paper lists these values as including respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual, support for democracy, commitment to the rule of law, equality of men and women, the spirit of a fair go and mutual respect, and compassion to those in

need (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006, p. 11). The ECCV took this list as suggesting that the 'underlying premise of the Discussion Paper is that Australia is a mono-cultural society with "one overriding culture"', a phrase that Robb invoked in his foreword to the paper. The ECCV stated that they endorsed only democracy, the rule of law and Australia as 'our shared homeland'. They would not ascribe Australian value status to respect for the individual, equality and a fair go, and mutual respect (ECCV, 2006a).

The ECCV's reservations about some of the claimed core Australian values are hard to fathom. The core Australian values listed in the Discussion Paper are almost identical to the core values and institutions specified in Australia's successive multicultural policies, namely, reciprocity, tolerance and equality (including of the sexes), freedom of speech and religion, the rule of law, the Constitution, parliamentary democracy and English as the national language (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999, 2003; DIAC, 2011; OMA, 1989). Yet, the ECCV had never before objected to this list of values and now claimed to be upholding Australian multiculturalism against a perceived attack by the government. The ECCV bracketed 'respect for the individual' because it 'draws on Western liberal traditions'. Such a value is problematic, they said, because the Discussion Paper ignores 'social democratic or communitarian values which are also part of Western liberal and democratic traditions' (ECCV, 2006a). It is unclear why a fair go, equality, mutual respect and compassion for the needy do not count as social democratic values. It also unclear how rejecting this subset of the listed core values can be reconciled with the ECCV's concern about discrimination and the plight of refugees.

The ECCV objects to a fair go and mutual respect on the grounds that they are 'hardly Australian values', being rather 'universal values found in a vast array of nations and among different religious and secular belief systems'. This observation scarcely explains why these values can or should not also be Australian values. The ECCV's favoured Australian values of democracy and the rule of law are also practised by many other nations.

Seeking to engage in a public dialogue over the proposed citizenship test is commendable. However, the ECCV's curious stance on Australian values allowed the government to avoid confronting its own contortions regarding Australian multiculturalism. The Parliamentary Secretary quickly accused the ECCV of 'separatism': 'When a group as prominent as the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria rejects, in the name of multiculturalism, the notion of an overriding Australian culture based around a core set of values we have a problem because this is essentially a separatist view'

(Robb, 2006a). In fact, for all its incoherence, the ECCV's position strains the meaning of separatism. They were not arguing for secession or self-government; they *were* endorsing the same democratic system and the same law for the same country. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how a body like the ECCV *could* be separatist, a point made by the ECCV (2006b) in its reply to Robb. The organization is law abiding and participates in the social, cultural and political life of Australia. It represents dozens of community groups, themselves representing hundreds of thousands of individual Australians who are also immersed in, and committed to, the life and institutions of the country, as it is presently constituted.

The charge of separatism was not the only instance of loose language used by the Parliamentary Secretary. In his address to the Transformations conference at the ANU, Robb (2006a) had much to say about community, core values, citizenship, Australian national identity and Australian culture. Unfortunately, much of what he had to say collapsed these notions into each other, as if they all amounted to the same thing. They do not.

At the heart of Robb's position is a legitimate concern of any democratic state, namely, national and social integration. He worries that the term multiculturalism has been misinterpreted or misappropriated by some groups as sanctioning 'separate development, a federation of ethnic cultures, not one community'. One might argue that this worry is misplaced in the Australian case. While it may have a basis in Britain, the Netherlands and perhaps some other places, Australia has a far more selective immigration programme (Hartwich, 2011), as Robb himself acknowledged. Moreover, ever since the inception of multiculturalism, Australian governments have recognized that many Australians do not much understand it. Previously, their response had been a renewed commitment to better explain and promote the policy. People rightly wondered why some misunderstanding of multiculturalism in the community should suddenly require the word, if not the policy, to be dumped.

But here I want to put aside these points to simply grant the in-principle interest of democratic states in political and social integration. My concern is how this valid point gets lost amid careless language and allusions. For example, Robb's legitimate objection to 'separate development' and a 'federation of ethnic cultures' becomes elsewhere in his address an objection to the emergence in Australia of a 'community of communities'. Yet, Australia has been a community of communities for a very long time. How could it not be given the ethnic, linguistic, national and religious diversity of the country's inhabitants? One need only review the list of

organizations that responded to the Discussion Paper – a veritable cross section of Australia's multicultural society. Australia is certainly not a federation of ethnic cultures (although Victorians like to argue that New South Welshmen are culturally challenged). Nor is Australia *only* a community of communities; it is also a national community comprising individual citizens with multiple and varied interests and memberships. But self-evidently Australia is *also* a community of a vast array of communities

Denying this much unhelpfully raises the stakes of what Australia might otherwise be. Soon after the denial, the Parliamentary Secretary told his audience that 'Australia has successfully combined people into one family with one overriding culture, based on a common set of values' (Robb, 2006a). The ECCV was exercised by this reference to an 'overriding culture', which, as noted, figured also in Robb's foreword to the Discussion Paper, and which the ECCV equated with a 'mono-cultural' society. To me, the word 'overriding' implies the legitimate existence of other cultures. What is troubling is describing Australians as 'one family'. This is loose language commissioned to do political work. It implies a kind of relationship and degree of integration that is inappropriate for a liberal-democratic political community. The Howard government was concerned that all Australians should be proficient in English. All of us should be concerned how the government and others use and abuse the English language in these debates. Australia is *not* a federation of ethnic cultures; nor should it be. It is *not* one family; nor could it be. It *is* a community of communities: how could it not be? Finally, it is also something more than a community of communities: it is a national community of individual citizens.

What, then, of Robb's 'overriding culture' and 'shared national identity'? Invoking 'culture', let alone an overriding one, in the context of a citizenship test is bound to provoke stakeholders in a multicultural polity. But one should not get too precious about such a term. Liberal democratic institutions and values can also be construed as constituting a certain culture. If by an 'overriding culture' Robb meant the core Australian values as specified in multicultural policy – which is how he elaborated the phrase in his foreword to the Discussion Paper – he was not saying anything new or particularly controversial in the Australian context. The trouble is that the Discussion Paper proper seemed to enlarge the idea of core values.

The slide from a core set of values based on liberal democratic norms and institutions (as stipulated in multicultural policy) to Anglo-Australian cultural patterns and an Anglo-Australian way of life is almost imperceptible if one is not alert to the significance of the distinction. The Discussion Paper

identifies 'themes on which applicants are tested in other countries', among them 'customs and traditions' (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006, p. 12). It neglects to clarify that for Australia's main comparator nations – Britain, Canada and the United States – the customs and traditions tested are typically civic in nature, such as public holidays, historical commemorations and national symbols, or, in Britain's case, also practical information for 'getting by'. (The British citizenship test asks a multiple choice question about what one should do if one accidently knocks over a patron's beer in a pub). The Discussion Paper then asks whether prospective Australian citizens should have to demonstrate some knowledge of 'Australian culture and traditions' as distinct from Australian history, national symbols and system of democracy (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006, p. 13).

In his subsequent public addresses, Robb reinforced this impression of an expanded notion of culture by variously invoking 'the Australian culture' and 'Australia's way of life' (Robb, 2006b) and equating an overriding culture and core values with the idea of a 'shared national identity' (Robb, 2006a). National identities surely exist and are important but, as I have written elsewhere, the point about national identities is that they are dynamic and develop organically. They cannot be legislated, for the most part, without trading in gross caricatures and violating liberal democratic norms (Levey, 2008). Least of all can a national identity be instilled in people through a general knowledge test.

For almost half a century, Australia followed the example of other liberal democracies and progressively redefined Australian citizenship from one of a national-cultural community and emotional connection to one of 'proceduralism' and the formal acceptance of rights and obligations (Betts, 2002; Betts and Birrell, 2007). In 1986, for example, the requirement in the Australian Oath of Allegiance to state one's name and to renounce all other allegiances was dropped. In 1994, the Oath of Allegiance was replaced in its entirety with a Pledge of Commitment as a Citizen, in which reference to the Queen was omitted. The Australian Citizenship Amendment Act 2002 (Cth.) permitted Australian citizens to acquire other nationalities without losing their Australian citizenship. And so on. Yet, here was the Howard government, in 2006, apparently seeking to renationalize citizenship. And indeed the citizenship test that Howard introduced controversially included questions on cricket heroes and other Anglo-Australian sporting and cultural icons along with questions on Australian political history and institutions (Levey, 2014; Tate, 2009).

The episode underscores a number of points. First, the Howard government's Discussion Paper on the citizenship test was less than a genuine attempt at public consultation and dialogue with interested parties on this significant reform. The government had clearly already decided on the test and its general format. Second, the ECCV was presented with a prime opportunity to press the government on departing from its proclaimed core set of Australian values in the Discussion Paper (and in multicultural policy). Only, the ECCV could not prosecute this case because of its own puzzling and indulgent rejection of this long-settled list of liberal democratic (and Australian multiculturalism) ground rules. Where the Howard government radically expanded the list to include cultural aspects associated with Anglo-Australian icons and norms, the ECCV radically eviscerated the list of core Australian values from seven to a skeletal three. It thereby blew wind into the government's sails. Finally, Australian multiculturalism was not the cause but a victim of this failed attempt at public and intercultural dialogue.

The Howard government was removed from office less than a year after the introduction of the citizenship test. Following a formal review, the Rudd Labor government removed the 'cultural questions' from the Australian citizenship test, a situation that prevails to this day, notwithstanding two subsequent conservative governments. The unfortunate and costly episode that was the Howard government's approach to citizenship reform was entirely avoidable. Had the government been genuinely interested in consulting the public and community groups, and had the government and some influential ethnic advocacy groups respected the liberal democratic terms of Australian multiculturalism, a constructive dialogue about the merits and format of a new citizenship test would have been possible.

Case Study 2: the Abbott Government's reform of the racial hatred provisions

Our second case study concerns an issue that underpins the very possibility of public and intercultural dialogue, namely free speech and its appropriate limits. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right that entitles people to express their views and concerns. At the same time, hate speech can intimidate and marginalize individuals and groups such that they are or feel themselves to be excluded from society. Since 1995, Australia has balanced these twin concerns with Part 2A of the *Racial Discrimination Act* 1975 (Cth) (RDA). Part 2A of the RDA addresses discriminatory action based on racial hatred. It includes section 18C, which renders unlawful behaviour

that 'offends, insults, humiliates or intimidates' in a discriminatory manner on the basis of a specified group characteristic. And it includes the 18D 'exemptions' that protect action that is done reasonably and in good faith in artistic, scientific, academic or journalistic pursuits in the public interest. For some sixteen years these provisions served Australians well and without incident.

The latter at least changed in 2011. A Federal Court found conservative columnist Andrew Bolt to have breached the race hate laws in two published articles in which he questioned the identity and motives of light-skinned Indigenous people (*Eatock v Bolt* 2011). Abbott, then Liberal party opposition leader and a friend of Bolt's, denounced the decision and pledged to reform the RDA if elected to govern. Following the Abbott Coalition victory in September 2013, the Attorney-General, Senator George Brandis, announced the government's intention to repeal the RDA's anti-vilification provisions in the name of free speech. Brandis stated that he wanted to 're-centre [the] debate so that when people talk about rights, they talk about the great liberal democratic rights of freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of worship and freedom of the press' (Wright, 2013).

The proposed changes to the RDA sparked a public outcry, not least among cultural minorities. Their sense of acceptance and belonging in multicultural Australia is still largely tied to the legal protections against discrimination. The anti-vilification provisions of the RDA are considered to be a vital extension of the principle of non-discrimination and a public sign of minorities' social acceptance. As reforming Labor Prime Minster Gough Whitlam (1975) proclaimed on its passing into law, 'The Racial Discrimination Act wrote it firmly into the legislation that Australia is in reality a multicultural nation, in which the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Aboriginal people and of peoples from all parts of the world can find an honoured place'. For cultural minorities, at stake was the message that a dilution of the federal protections would send about their standing in modern Australia. It would throw into question whether they still retained 'an honoured place'.

Brandis responded to the controversy by appointing an outspoken free-market libertarian, Tim Wilson, to the role of Human Rights Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission in December 2013. Wilson had once called for the abolition of the Commission as an illegitimate use of state authority. Dubbed the 'freedom commissioner' by Brandis, his role now was to balance the alleged social justice focus of the other Commissioners and to prosecute the case for free speech as the most fundamental and

cherished of all liberties. Wilson assumed the role with zeal, denouncing the protections against non-discrimination and of equal opportunity as dangerous 'positive liberties' and further antagonizing community groups.

The government's apparent deafness to public and minority group opposition to the proposed reform ironically saw leaders from the Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Indigenous, Jewish and other communities cooperating and mobilizing against the changes like never before. In March 2014, the government circulated a draft of its proposed changes to the RDA for comment and announced it would hold a review on the matter. The exposure draft proposed repealing Sections 18C and 18D and replacing them with protections against vilification and intimidation on the basis of the "race", colour or ethnic or national origins of a person or group of persons. However, the meaning of vilification was to be limited to the 'incitement of hatred' and the meaning of intimidation was confined to causing 'fear of physical harm' only. Furthermore, whether an act has these effects was to be determined 'by the standards of an ordinary reasonable member of the Australian community, not by the standards of any particular group within the Australian community' (Brandis, 2014). Not only was the government indifferent to minorities' concerns about watering down the anti-vilification provisions, it was now proposing to have people who likely had never known the hurt of racism decide what racial discrimination is and when it has occurred, *and* to specifically exclude from the exercise those who know it best, namely, its routine victims. ICD and minority input could hardly have been further sidelined.

In August 2014, it was revealed that more than 76 per cent of the 4,100 submissions to the review inquiry opposed the government's draft amendments (Aston, 2014a). Days later, the Prime Minister announced that his government would no longer pursue changes to the RDA, saying 'Leadership is about preserving national unity on the essentials and that is why I have taken this position' (Aston, 2014b).

For some advocates of the government's proposed reform, such as the Attorney-General, the issue was a matter of principle. Free speech, in their view, is simply too fundamental to liberty and/or to democracy to be balanced against protection from discriminatory action of any kind. However, other advocates of the reform were primarily concerned about the insidious consequences of regulating speech. For them, such regulation makes people over-cautious about speaking their mind, introducing a 'chilling' effect that drains public discourse of authenticity, which in turn undermines democratic legitimacy. This concern is the mirror image of the

concern that certain kinds of speech can intimidate minority members from participating in society as equals. In either case, a full and frank intercultural dialogue seems impossible.

This important issue was lost in the public debate. Those opposed to amending the RDA provisions sometimes challenged the reformers by asking, 'What is it that you want to say that isn't already protected under section 18D?' (Soutphommasane, 2014). It is a fair question, but it does not tackle the issue of the chilling effect. Sensing this, Commissioner Wilson (2015) rather unkindly called the question a 'party trick', protesting that the question assumes that one wants to say something racist, which is not the case. As an example, Wilson cited his own self-censorship on hearing the boxer Anthony Mundine say that Aboriginality and homosexuality are incompatible according to Aboriginal law. Wilson says that he wanted to 'harshly criticize' the basis of Mundine's comment but because of 18C, he and other non-Aboriginal Australians 'have to cautiously discuss the topic' lest they offend Mundine's 'ethnic origins'.

In fact, Wilson's example only highlights the force of the question he derides. What does he mean by criticizing *harshly*? As Justice Bromberg made clear in his decision in *Eatock v Bolt* (2011), 18C does not prohibit anyone from critically discussing aspects of Aboriginal identity and tradition. Were Wilson's 'harsh' criticism to be reasonably made – for example, by suggesting that if Aboriginal law condemns homosexuality, it is homophobic and discriminatory in just the way that Christianity, Judaism and Islam traditionally are – there would be no issue even if the remark upset some Indigenous Australians. Were his 'harsh' criticism to condemn Aboriginal law and culture in their entirety, Wilson might have a problem. But then he would have succumbed to the rub of the 'party trick' question.

The chilling effect is *not* most pernicious when there are things that some people are just itching to say, but which would put them in jeopardy under 18C and 18D. Discouraging racist and discriminatory behaviour is the very point of these provisions. Rather, the concern about the chilling effect is that regulating speech may discourage people from publicly engaging in discussion about controversial issues, even when what they have to say may be valuable and perfectly legitimate, as far as the law is concerned. The concern, in other words, is that a climate of political correctness is created in which people 'walk on egg shells' or worse, simply disengage.

Three points are worth making about this concern. First, the psychology and sociology behind such 'chilling' effects are well documented. People

do routinely anticipate and assess the likely consequences in managing their choices and conduct. In political science, the theory of anticipated reactions identifies a key dimension of power (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970; Lukes, 1974). For example, presidents and prime ministers sometimes decline to bring a legislative bill to a vote if they think they lack the numbers to have it passed. Employees will often not vent a grievance at a meeting with the boss if they fear a tirade or retribution. And ordinary citizens nay not publicly engage with contentious issues if they anticipate a public brawl or legal ramifications. These effects are elementary, mundane and real.

Second, the idea that sections 18C and 18D of the RDA have created in Australia just such a generalized and pernicious chilling effect seems fanciful. This would mean accepting that Australian public discourse has been the recipient of this effect since 1995. On this argument, our public discourse has been artificially impoverished through self-censorship and less than robust. Such propositions fly in the face of evidence. For example, when Howard came to power in 1996, there was much talk by him and his government of how for too long Australians had been living under the scourge of political correctness, unable or unwilling to speak their mind for fear of offending minorities. Although Part 2A was added to the RDA in the year prior to Howard's coming to power, the next half-decade saw the xenophobic phenomena of Pauline Hanson and Hansonism. Nothing in the RDA caused people to refrain from speaking their minds, often in ugly ways. And nothing in the RDA prevented Hanson from being elected to the Senate in 2016 and from continuing to rail against particular minorities.

Third, those who believe that 18C does have a generalized and pernicious chilling effect need a better *cause célèbre* than the Andrew Bolt case. As one of the most read columnists in the country and a man who, in the aftermath of his legal entanglement with the RDA, was handed his own public affairs television programme, Bolt is hardly a compelling example of the way 18C silences people. The general public seemed instinctively to appreciate this in overwhelmingly withholding their support of the government's reforms.

Any semblance of symmetry between ordinary folk being intimidated by 18C from speaking their minds and minorities being intimidated by hate speech is not borne out by the circumstances. Importantly, this does not mean that the current racial hatred provisions should be the last word on the matter. Soon after the racial hatred provisions were added to the RDA in 1995, the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Zita Antonios, oversaw a review of the legislation. The review asked probing questions about whether

the right balance between protection from discrimination and free speech had been struck (Race Discrimination Commissioner, 1995, 1996). This review should be ongoing. For example, a case can be made that the words 'offend' and 'insult' in the 18C provisions are, semantically, too sensitive. In the RDA, they operate together with other criteria in the context of discrimination to form a 'high bar' for legislative purview. No one merely insulted or taking offense can seek relief under the Act. Nevertheless, these terms lend themselves to public misunderstanding, frivolous and opportunistic complaints, and polemical mischief.

The 2016 national election saw Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (who had earlier replaced Abbott in a Liberal Party leadership spill) and the Liberal-National Coalition retain majority government by a single seat. Soon after, a group of conservative and libertarian parliamentarians sought to put reform of 18C back on the agenda. This time, the quest was to have the words 'offend' and 'insult' removed from the anti-vilification provisions (Lewis, 2016). Turnbull initially refused to revisit the issue given his predecessor's debacle. After further agitation by some conservative colleagues, he agreed to a parliamentary inquiry into freedom of speech in Australia. The irony is that had the Abbott government sought this modest reform of a few words in the first place, in proper consultation with ethnic minorities, it might well have won the day. Instead of riding roughshod over minorities' concerns, a genuine attempt at ICD could have bequeathed sensible improvements to the current racial hatred provisions. All Australians are arguably the poorer for this missed opportunity in ICD.

Conclusion

The proposition that multiculturalism stands in the way of meaningful ICD is increasingly advanced in international scholarly and policy discourse. The Australian experience does not support this proposition. The main obstacle to ICD in Australia has been a powerful current of Anglo-Australian indifference, if not condescension, towards cultural minorities and their place in Australian society. Australian multiculturalism was meant to check Anglo-Australian dominance, but remains challenged by it.

Australian governments all too often ignore the concerns of cultural minorities in formulating policy that has a direct bearing on them. In this, they flout the spirit and terms of Australian multiculturalism. Minorities also have a responsibility to respect these terms. The two case studies considered in this chapter – the federal government's flagging of a proposed

citizenship test and its attempt to reform the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) – suggest that far from undermining ICD, respecting the terms of Australian multiculturalism would help to make it possible. Moreover, these cases suggest that if implemented, ICD could contribute to improved policy outcomes for all Australians. ICD is not only possible under a multiculturalism regime; it is also made possible by a multiculturalism regime such as Australia's and, indeed, is required by such a regime if the latter is to be successful.

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2. Religions – lived and packaged – viewed through an intercultural dialogue prism

Gary D. Bouma

Cultural diversity is increasingly appreciated as an abiding reality in the world (UNESCO, 2009). Diversity is no longer seen as a problem to be overcome on a path to some universally integrating viewpoint. Similarly, cultures are not seen as fixed blocks of separate and largely unchanging beliefs, values and artefacts, but as interconnected, interrelating and themselves rich with internal diversity (Bouma, 2011; UNESCO, 2009). While the term 'multicultural' has been used to describe societies with diverse populations, there has been increasing use of 'intercultural' to refer to modes of communication among persons and groups that differ culturally, religiously or otherwise. Neither of these terms is without its detractors and both generate much debate (Kymlicka, 2012; Levey, 2012; Meer and Modood, 2012).

Following current UNESCO practice, this chapter uses the term 'intercultural dialogue' to refer to programmes designed to promote intergroup understanding and respect both among groups and individuals. In this context, the Council of Europe (2008) describes intercultural dialogue (ICD) as 'an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.' UNESCO (2009) rightly notes that ICD is 'largely dependent on intercultural competencies, defined as the complex of abilities needed to interact appropriately with those who are different from oneself'. According to UNESCO (2013), intercultural competences 'are closely integrated with learning to know, do, and be'. Furthermore, UNESCO emphasizes that ICD involves both listening and telling in an 'open and respectful interchange in which diversity is maintained but is also included rather than being excluded'. While ICD does involve different cultures, UNESCO sees it as fundamentally occurring between interacting individuals – cultures do not interact, but people do.

This chapter focuses on ICD designed to promote interreligious understanding and respect, and argues that a richer understanding of religion both enhances the chances of success and makes the effort more challenging. Religions are among the cultural elements usually uniting but also often dividing people. When religion divides and intergroup conflict threatens, ICD is often proposed as a desirable way forward to reduce tensions and the likelihood of intergroup violence. Religious differences have been used to divide, motivate hatred and legitimate violence. While UNESCO has encouraged some forms of interreligious dialogue, religion does not feature prominently in UNESCO literature on ICD (Bouma, 2013). Part of this has been due to the ways in which religion, when it has been considered, has been conceptualized by UNESCO. Too often, religions are seen as systems of belief partially reflecting identity concerns, and blocks of internally uniform culture led and controlled by heads of faith working out of 'head offices' (see, for example, Giddens, 1997). Recently developed UNESCO approaches to ICD and intercultural competences promise to change this situation through richer and more diverse forms of interaction that attend to the whole person and the fullness of religious phenomena (UNESCO, 2013).

The practice of intercultural dialogue (ICD) is shaped by the way in which religions are conceived (Jackson 2012). Given this, the failure to recognize the many ways that people are religious deprives ICD of a great deal of richness (Arweck and Jackson, 2014). If the focus is on belief and creed, arguments ensue as to what is correct and what is not. If the focus is on formally organized religious groups, the energy is directed largely toward attempts to get various leaders to converse with each other via 'head office' communication and to shape the views of adherent a through directives. Such approaches omit less organized groups or sub-groups that exist within the larger organization, but which are out of touch with leaders or formal structures. Engaging people in their daily lives where they encounter the religious 'other' is critical to the promotion of effective ICD. This chapter argues that all forms of religion and religiosity need to be involved in ICD for it to achieve the aims of enhancing mutual respect and decreasing intergroup tension and peace. It begins with an exploration of the implications of the differences between packaged and lived religion for ICD.

Religions come in several forms. One distinction that has gained attention arises from the fact that religions can be seen to be 'contained and packaged' on the one hand and 'lived' on the other (McGuire, 2008;

Woodhead, 2011). Recent attempts to define religion have increasingly added 'spirituality' to capture some of the breadth of what is encountered when observing people as they make meaning, negotiate crises, foster hope, and form moral and ethical judgements (Bouma, 2009).

Packaged religion. Contained and packaged religions are most readily found in formally organized expressions of religion – churches, denominations, synagogues, mosques and so on. The most familiar forms of packaging to Western eyes derive from Western Catholicism and its rebellious children, Protestant and Pentecostal groups. Indeed, it is through this competition with each other that religious packages are produced and the boundaries around them are constructed (Beyer, 2016). Within Christianity, each competing package, whether an American-style denomination, European State Church, mega-church or single non-denominational congregation, purports to contain and present a complete religion together with leaders, creeds, and sets of rules and practices declared to be normative, seeing their form both as normal and correct expressions of the religion, accompanied by communities of association providing identities along with both sacred and secular services. Each package traces its pure version of the religion back in time and usually denies borrowing or being influenced by other packages, despite often being in vigorous reaction against one (e.g. Protestants versus each other and versus Catholics). Somewhat similar packaging occurs in Islam in the distinctions between Sunni versus Shi'a versus Ahmaddiyah versus others. Then, there are the several Buddhist traditions, and the list is endless.

From the perspective of packaged religions, religious identity is singular, and those who approach religion in this way expect adherents to identify with only one religion, and in so doing to accept the entire package of that religion. Multiple identities along with taking bits and pieces from several religious traditions (referred to as bricolage) and instances of syncretism – combining elements from different traditions – are scorned by those who adopt this perspective. Viewing religions as packages has the methodological advantage of enabling the correlates of religious identity to be assessed and interpreted as being due to religion. This relies on the assumption that the act of identification involves either a selection among or differential exposure to socio-cultural mutually exclusive available options, which come with a range of preferred and at times enforced orientations on religious, political and social issues (Bouma, 1992; Bouma and Dixon, 1986). The comparative ease of this type of analysis and its apparent accuracy can tempt the researcher to make the demographic

fallacy of ascribing to individuals those traits generally observed to apply to a religious group; for example, assuming that because a person says they are Christian they will believe in 'resurrection' but not 'reincarnation'. Treating religious identity as reflecting a singular choice among whole packages and the adoption of one, renders invisible the ways by which the contents of the package are selected and used alongside material not in the package (McGuire, 2008).

The packaged religion approach reflects a very Protestant Christian view of religion. Protestant Christianity stripped Roman Catholicism of rituals, pilgrimages, shrines, sacred spaces, rich imagery and limited religion to matters of belief – to the cerebral, creedal, rational and organizational. The key concern became orthodoxy with sermons providing the main focus of services of worship, not sacraments (Bouma, 1992, 1991). Protestants have dominated the sociology of religion, particularly in the United States, and this dominance is reflected in the focus of much research (Smilde and May, 2015). Moreover, until quite recently, much of the study of religion in the West focused on contained and packaged religions (Beyer, 2000; Kniss, 2014). This form of religion is comparatively easy to research through official statistics, demographic data, organizational structures and interactions with other parts of society. While religion is often referred to as an institution, it is studied as an organization, taking the most organized expression of the institution for the whole (Bouma, 1998). A parallel can be found in viewing education as an institution and focusing research on the study of schools and universities.

Clergy and religious leaders favour packaged religion, as this approach facilitates their control of the religion and both uses and enhances their power positions in their organizations/communities (Sullivan, 2015). The very strong negative reaction to 'spiritualities' by religious leaders stems in no small part from their sense of loss of control and failure to contain what they offer in the package: the loss of their monopoly on the trade in religious goods and services (Stolz, 2006). Failure to contain a religion and what it offers can result in loss of their share of the religious market and consequently of status and income to its clergy (Iannaccone, 1990, 1994).

Contained and packaged religions are usually patriarchal, dominated by men and accustomed to using non-inclusive language (Jule, 2005). Moreover, most are quite resistant to the ministry and leadership of women, except in rare cases (Brubaker, 2013). They are not only packaged, but quite hierarchical and, as such, have tended to be controlling and oppressive of diversity (Sullivan, 2015). Indeed, for Western Christianity the current

form of religious packages was largely established amid the processes of urbanization and industrialization in the mid-nineteenth century. Most churches served the rising middle classes, and provided legitimation for their status, training in manners and morals, clubs and societies offering sociality and entertainment, schools to educate youth and hospitals for the sick. Incidentally, some churches such as the Salvation Army and certain religious organizations also provided social services to the poor and needy (see, for example, Grimshaw et al., 1994; Kaye, 2002).

It is also true that well-established and articulated packaged religions offer deep wells of spiritual, liturgical and theological experience to be drawn on in nourishing a religious life, as well as grounded and well-tested disciplines in their use. The very fact of their persistence over generations indicates that religions do promote sustainable values and orientations. Packages are not all bad, but they do defend their turf.

Since UNESCO deals primarily with nation states it follows suit that the Organization takes a packaged religion approach. From the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, which ended the 'wars of religion' in Europe, each nation state was presumed to have a single state religion, along with a distinctive culture and cuisine (Beyer, 2016). This packaged religion conceptualization has largely formed the approaches that UNESCO has taken in dealing with religion, which leads to a focus on dealing with religious leaders, identifying the different belief systems of groups, and querying what policy documents regarding ICD they have produced (Bouma, 2013). This approach is seductively easy as it facilitates approaching religious groups and communicating with them as organizations. In the process, ICD becomes a tool for encouraging different leaders to speak to each other resulting in platforms filled with 'heads of faith' – Bishops, Muftis, Ayatollahs, Chief Rabbis, Swamis and so on. While this form of interaction may have been a useful first step in interreligious ICD, it is far from a complete approach, because it overlooks differences within groups, treating each as homolithic rather than being comprised of diversity, and presumes that religious leaders have control over their adherents.

Lived religion. Religions are also experienced as 'lived' – diffuse, diverse, personal, local, derivative, innovative, vital, precarious and precious (McGuire, 2008). Lived religions involve ritual practices engaged in by individuals and small groups, creation of shrines and sacred spaces, sharing beliefs about the nature of life, and taking actions to celebrate and sustain hope. Lived religion often mixes modes of encountering or drawing on power from and connection with the 'more than', the divine, the supernatural or

the powers of the universe using meditation, guided reflection, silence in carefully selected or prepared spaces, and travel to special places (Tacey, 2000). Lived religions tend to be more experiential and more ephemeral than lasting. Lived religions often deal with activities, practices and places that promote mindfulness, hope, healing, renewal and justice. There is a strongly pragmatic aspect to lived religions – if a practice, prayer, amulet or a visit to a shrine works, do it; if not, reject it (Hall, 1997; McGuire, 2008).

Lived religions are usually reported as being practised more, but not solely, by women (McGuire, 2008; Tacey, 2000). This perception may well be due to the fact that researchers are more able to 'see' women's private devotional practices and modes of seeking to secure safety, hope or blessing. Men's religious behaviour may not be more 'rational' (itself a mode of action grounded in belief, presupposition and ritual practice), so much as different from women's. As such, it would require a different approach to identification and study. The fact that lived religions are found more often among women has contributed to their invisibility and to their being dismissed as wrong, out of control and dangerous, at times leading to outbreaks of violent oppression from packages, but always scorn and deprecation. Lived religions and spirituality were despised by Robert Bellah, who coined the term 'sheilaism' to refer these more amorphous forms of spiritual life (Bellah et al., 1985). Sociologists have dismissed lived religion just as earlier social scientists disrespected practices engaged in by Australia's Indigenous people, which might have qualified as lived religion if contemporary researchers had been studying them and writing in the 1820s. This disparity in the sociological and policy forms of looking at religion prevents practitioners from seeing some aspects of life that are deeply important to people and to intergroup relations. Lived religion can provide liberating alternative sources of power and strength, but it can also be patriarchal and oppressive as Meredith McGuire found among Latinas in Texas (McGuire, 2008). Lived religions are often seen as free from domination, as out of control and free floating. Religious identity has become a matter of individual choice as people negotiate their ways through à la carte offerings of spirituality and religion, leaving packaged religions caught between being open enough to attract and disciplined enough to maintain a coherent core (Hervieu-Léger, 2003). Control is not a feature of lived religion unless enough people are attracted to a particular shared practice. Then, as with all human action that is shared and repeated, it becomes normalized, standardized, then controlled, and finally organized and packaged.

Elements of lived religion are freely (and not so freely) shared on the internet and in religious and spiritual stores. There are also sites that have come to be experienced as very spiritual, such as Sedona in Arizona, and many pilgrimage destinations. Some of these, like Lourdes, are managed by packaged religious organizations, but provide opportunities for kinds of lived religion including experiential encounter and reflection. The distinction is far from absolute. For example, a developing element of lived religion in Australia has been the practice of making pilgrimages to Gallipoli and to the cemeteries on the Western Front, walking the Camino, making the Haj to Mecca and Medina, or walking other historic sacred paths (Aly, 2015). Tens of thousands of Australians make these trips annually and return reporting all sorts of encounters, transformations, renewals and life enriching experiences (Scates, 2013). More destinations are being added each year.

There is some evidence that, while packaged religions are declining, lived religions continue at persistent levels (Alper 2015; Gill et al., 1998). The Pew research organization measures spirituality through four dimensions: 'feel a sense of spiritual peace and well-being, ...feel a sense of wonder about the universe, ...feel a sense of gratitude or thankfulness, ...think about the meaning and purpose of life' (Alper, 2015). When measured across generations of Americans, they find the same levels of agreement with these measures of spirituality, while measures of religious belief and practice decline. To focus on packaged religion in the West is to study organizations in decline, and also to miss the ways in which people are negotiating the challenges of life, maintaining hope, and finding inspiration to form communities and contribute to the common good.

Lived religions are notoriously difficult to study (Beyer et al., forthcoming; Mason et al., 2007). Much of this difficulty is due to the fact that scholars have been trained to focus on packaged religions. Indeed, most definitions of religion point to beliefs and organizations (see, for example, Giddens, 1997). These dimensions are easily tapped through the responses generated by questions in quantitative survey research. However, to detect lived religions it is necessary to listen with open ears and look with open eyes (Ammerman, 2013a), as the standard approaches used to study packaged religion lead to the conclusion that there is not much out there and that because, at least in the West, the packages are losing their appeal and power, all else including lived religions will follow. While some attempts to measure religiosity can be seen as attempts to get an empirical handle on lived religion, most of the approaches are too shaped by the expectations

of packaged forms of religion – attendance, affirmation of orthodox belief, and conformity with set ethical and moral positions – to provide a view of a person's lived religion. The dominant modes of research in the sociology of religion are probably inappropriate for the study of lived religions. More ethnographic approaches are required; however studying religious practices requires a new openness – a readiness to observe with senses that have been numbed by secularism (Spickard et al., 2002). Moreover, both research colleagues and practitioners may well resist the application of the label 'religious' to some observed practices. Researchers do not know which questions to ask to unlock what people are actually experiencing, doing and believing (Beyer et al., forthcoming). Moreover, participants are not accustomed to giving accounts of this part of their lives – a part which is sacred and precious to them, which they will be inclined to protect from prying eyes and to profoundly reject classification, especially being tagged as 'religious'.

For example, my wife and I are both Anglican clergy and are regularly the recipient of stories recounted by people who, feeling safe with us, and tell us about their spiritual experiences – healings, senses of supporting presence, encounters with deceased friends and relatives, and other experiences that are not encouraged by most packaged religion or are not well received by very secular acquaintances, but which are very precious to them and serve to give them hope, meaning and comfort. Similarly, when being with someone, even those who are resolutely not religious, I have never had someone reject an offer of prayer or a blessing.

The emerging re-awakening to the continued presence of religion in life, particularly in social policy debates, has moved some to call this age post-secular (see, for example, Calhoun et al., 2013; Taylor, 2007). To use the term 'post-secular' presupposes an age labelled 'secular.' As I see it, the term was used by social scientists who were blinded to lived religion by a focus on contained and packaged religions, and then blindsided by the return of packaged 'head office' religion to public policy debates (Sullivan, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2015) – but not to increased participation in the forms of packaged religions – and the persistence of spiritualities that had gone unnoticed. The use of the term post-secular tells us more about those using it than about the social worlds they seek to study.

A balanced view. While different packaged and lived forms of religion and spirituality are often perceived as conflicting forms of religious life, it is more useful to appreciate how they exist continuously in complex relationships (Ammerman, 2013b). To put it simply, any packaged religion

that does not inform and inspire forms of lived religion among its adherents is dead, and any lived forms of religion practised for any period of time tend to become organized and start to exhibit qualities of packaged religions. The choice is not between one or the other, but rather to ensure that in any analysis of religion the full range of understandings of religion are present and appreciated, or at least that a deliberate and argued decision is made to view religion one way or the other.

The need to take a balanced view becomes particularly poignant when devising a study of youth spirituality and worldviews. Western youth are highly likely to declare that they have 'no religion'. However, it soon becomes very clear that they are not atheists, or all that secular. They experience being lifted out of themselves, are attracted to ideals and inclined to make value judgements formed by ideas of the common good. Moreover, studies of radicalization of youth indicate that while religion plays a role, it is not packaged forms – churches, mosques, temples – but lived religion forms – such as informal, familial, personal yearnings for recognition, divine approval and other-worldly reward (Lentini, 2013). Given this, efforts to take seriously the distinction between lived and packaged religions have implications for the ways in which ICD is imagined and its aims formulated, and the manner in which it is practised. The need for a balanced and inclusive approach also becomes clear.

Religion, UNESCO and ICD. UNESCO deals with nation states. From a Westphalian perspective nation states were assumed to have a single and unified state religion (Beyer, 2016). Now that this situation is no longer the case, there is a need for much more diverse and often creative ways of engaging religious diversity in social policy including ICD efforts. While internal dissent has been violently repressed, it has become impossible to maintain religious uniformity in either states or packaged religions. Over time, single churches have fragmented into dissenting groups, many of which eventually became tolerated and then formed denominations – an American term for formally organized religious groups, which were acceptable variants of a religion and could be counted on to support the state (Niebuhr, 1929, Herberg, 1955). Many European states have maintained a state church along with a few tolerated smaller groups, but none have completely suppressed diversity among groups, let alone diversity within groups.

UNESCO's approach to religion is very much shaped by the Westphalian denominational assumptions of religious organization, which were profoundly present in the United States at the formation of the United

Nations (Herberg, 1955), and by the ethos of French *laïcité*, which deems all things religious to be private and not relevant to public policy (Beckford, Joly and Khosrokhavar, 2005). Thus, on the one hand UNESCO, in developing ICD, deals with religious 'head offices' and arranges for 'heads of faith' to speak with each other on the presumption that this brings their communities into harmonious relationship. While effective at a ceremonial and symbolic level this approach deals with only part of the picture. On the other hand, French *laïcité* renders it impossible to take seriously the public policy implications of both packaged and lived religion.

While the recent decline in packaged religions in the West might provide the basis for overlooking religions in ICD efforts, this would be a mistake, in no small way due to the religious dimensions of intergroup tensions in the West and violent conflict in the Middle East and elsewhere. The need for effective programmes to promote intergroup understanding, respect and cooperation has increased dramatically in recent decades. The use of ICD to address these issues in the twenty-first century cannot be done without the inclusion of religions. Recent UNESCO documents do not refer explicitly to lived religion (UNESCO, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013), and when they do refer to religion, it is seen as basically encompassing beliefs expressed in physical culture under the aegis of religious organizations. An abiding concern for UNESCO has been freedom of religion and belief, but this is usually seen as the right of a group to practise official, approved or dominant forms of their faith, rather than the freedom of persons to explore, create and celebrate. The language of freedom of belief has also been hijacked by sub-groups within religious communities who use the state to enforce orthodox views on their members (Bouma et al., 2011; Sullivan, 2005, 2015; Sullivan et al., 2015). There are also references in those UNESCO documents that do include religion to faith-based organizations, which provide aid in various forms.

Religion was often ignored by the social sciences toward the end of the last century, as theories of secularization led many to believe that religion was dying out and would soon disappear (Berger, 1999). This approach to both the study of religion and the development of social policies regarding religion is a form of Western hegemony. That this thinking was highly Euro-centric and is no longer tenable has become clear and made evident by recent terrorist attacks, particularly following 9/11 (Berger, 1999; Lentini, 2013; Thomas, 2005). However, the role of religion in contemporary conflict is not driven by packaged religions, or by their head offices. Religions are officially at peace, with extremely few exceptions. It is informal networks

of people, some of whom use religion to legitimate violence that, for example, drive neo-jihadism (Lentini, 2013), and who perpetrate violent acts against those involved in providing abortions. This pattern is true of right-wing political violence, as well as of most of what gets labelled as Islamist violence. Moreover, as increasing numbers of people, particularly youth, declare that they have 'no religion', focusing on packaged religion misses the beliefs and practises of approximately 30–40 per cent of people in the West and increasing numbers elsewhere (Beyer et al., forthcoming; Bullard, 2016). The ability of packaged religions to shape and control their adherents has declined not just in the West, but also globally, resulting in vastly more internal diversity.

Conclusion

Given the rise of religious diversity in most parts of the world, due to globalization and the role of religion in intergroup tension and violence, ICD efforts to reduce the likelihood of conflict by promoting intergroup understanding and mutual respect will only go a small part of the way to addressing these issues, if they are limited to working with religious 'head offices'. Similarly, education about religious diversity that simply provides the official or 'packaged' version of a religion will not prepare people for the rich diversity of religious life and practice to be encountered in the lived experience of their neighbours (Jackson, 2012, 2014). Until research examining the full range of religious life is conducted and respected by policy-makers and educationalists, much of the energy of religions will not be understood or appreciated.

A more holistic approach to interreligious dialogue as part of ICD is required by the changes in the ways that religion is and is not organized and the ways people are religious, and by the realization that packaged religions form only part of the story. Interreligious dialogue, at least in the West, but also in those parts of the rest of the world where Western Protestant ideals of religion did not and do not sit comfortably, will have to include those whose spirituality is shaped in places other than formally organized religious groups. When religion is not comprised of beliefs and norms set and enforced by organized communities, then attention must be paid to a much wider range of human activity. This is even truer if the aim is to include those under the age of 40. A much more diverse array of people must be involved than those who might qualify as religious leaders, let alone official clergy. Those involved in ICD should also be drawn from people who have declared that they have 'no religion', as PEW Foundation and other

research increasingly shows that while such people are not organizationally committed, they are not atheists, nor are they anti-faith, but instead nurture religious and spiritual matters (Blumberg, 2016). Matters and activities previously associated with formally organized religion have now moved out of the control of religious professionals, as people take charge of their own spiritual lives, seek out what appeals to and works for them, and also decide on the implications of this for action. ICD that only deals with religious leaders misses most of the action. This has become clear in many ways, including in studies of radicalization (Lentini, 2013).

Taking a holistic approach to interreligious ICD implies no longer seeing religion as special, as requiring its own domain and needing different approaches. Religions both packaged and lived must be part of ICD and, of course, religions need to be treated with respect. But, like all other cultural elements, religions, whether packaged or lived, have both positive and negative aspects from the perspective of promoting intergroup harmony, mutual respect and reducing conflict. In this context, UNESCO's move to develop intercultural competences (UNESCO, 2010, 2013) will provide precisely the skills and openness needed to detect and appreciate all forms of lived and packaged religion, and to comprehend their roles in the lives of people and societies. While not particularly designed to enhance our understanding of religion, using these skills and orientations will, in fact, provide precisely the tools needed to do so, as they are much more sensitive to the role of lived religion in a person's life. In this way, UNESCO can provide new and creative avenues to promote human well-being and intergroup relations.

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3. 'Le vivre ensemble': intercultural dialogue and religion in the European Union

Paul Morris

Introduction

The European Community is the unique and fascinating development of an initially economic and now political union of nearly thirty nation states (Berend, 2016; Blair, 2014; Gilbert, 2012; Jovanovic, 2015; McCormick, 2014; Saurugger, 2014; Stivachtis, 2016). Concerns with integration in such a complex union raise issues of understanding beyond national narratives and borders, and generate vital debates as to what constitutes sufficiently shared values and common ground to foster a stable European identity, alongside other sub-European identities – national, ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, class and spiritual (Bodiroga, 2016; Bonnar, 2014; Cerotic, 2011; Day, 2012; Dieter Fuchs, 2011; Feltin, 2007; Friedman, 2012; Gould, 2014; Green, 2015; Klonari, 2015; Keulman, 2014; Lucarelli, 2011; McMahon, 2013; Vogt, 2014). In the post-Rawlsian world, assumptions about 'overlapping consensus' and shared political principles are much more difficult to assume, or even to argue for. Polities appear to manifest massive divisions and differences on almost every substantive matter of values, and common ground is less and less evident (Arts, 2004, 2014; Ghazaryan, 2014; McGhee, 2010; Rawls, 2005, p. 340, 1987). This debate about identity and integration in the European Union (EU) is illuminated by looking at the European discourse on intercultural dialogue (ICD) as the principal contemporary vehicle for fostering integration by overcoming divisions, marginalization and misunderstandings (Council of Europe, 1997, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2015; European Commission, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008; De Kock, 2010; Wilk-Wos, 2010). Alongside this, there is another discourse about religion, both intersecting and running parallel with that on ICD (Chaplin, 2016; Council of the EU, 2013; Faltin, 2007; Kratochvíl, 2015; Leustean, 2013, 2014; Nelsen, 2013; Wildmann, 2012). The role of religion in the EU both supports and challenges the potentialities of ICD. The examination and analysis of the relationship between these discourses provides an opportunity to explore

contradictions and tensions between these two distinct literatures, so as to suggest more effective ways of addressing issues of European integration and identity.

The EU, born as a bold response to the crises of the two European-initiated world wars of the twentieth century, and dramatically enlarged by the end of the Soviet system, continues in seemingly perpetual crisis. The EU is beset with a torrent of refugees and migrants, challenges to the Schengen agreement, an alarming growth in the popularity of anti-immigration right-wing parties, the financial vicissitudes of the Eurozone and a rising crescendo of terrorist attacks. Brexit, the 2016 referendum on EU membership decision to leave the EU by the United Kingdom, has served to highlight fundamental EU concerns with its identity and integration (European, national and local), sovereignty and security (Adler-Nissen, 2014; Liddle, 2014; Zimmermann, 2016).

The argument in this chapter is that the EU commitment to ICD – an ICD that includes religion as an aspect or dimension of culture alongside ethnicity and language – paradoxically limits the EU and its participant states from responding adequately to issues that manifest themselves as discretely religious concerns. This, coupled with the poor and limited framing of religion, is evidenced in the recent example of the 'burkini' in France. This modest, body-covering swimwear, originally developed in Australia, and understood by some Muslims to be 'Shariah compliant', is favoured by some Muslim women and others (Covertogs, 2016; Glassman, 2016; Liphshiz, 2016). The choice to don the burkini by Muslim women is widely reported as being religiously motivated. More than twenty-five mayors of southern French towns and cities issued bans on the burkini during the 2016 Northern hemisphere's summer.

Religion in the European Union is governed by the European Convention on Human Rights (formally the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, European Convention on Human Rights, 2002):

> Article 9 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
>
> 1 Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
>
> this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom,

> either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest
>
> his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
>
> 2 Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such
>
> limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society
>
> in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or
>
> morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
>
> (European Convention on Human Rights, 1950)

Leaving aside two concerns that are returned to in the conclusion – first, the priority of the external over the internal (thought and belief over practice and observance) and, second, that it is understood that religion does not have the capacity to make any discrete and unique contribution to the common good – Article 9/1 recognizes the absolute freedom to observe one's religion by choosing to wear the burkini, as long as it does not negatively impact on democracy, public safety or order, health or morals (Article 9/2). Thus, the mayoral bans were framed not as religious issues, but in the unseemly and absurd terms of threats to public order, referencing the terrorist attacks in Nice and Paris; and, of course, none of the bans actually made explicit mention of the burkini at all. So, for example, the Nice (*Le Monde*, 26 August 2016) ban focused on 'correct dress, respectful of accepted customs and secularism, as well as rules of hygiene and of safety in public bathing areas'. The case was brought to the notice of the Conseil d'État, France's highest administrative court, by the Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France (CCIF) and the Ligue des droits de l'homme (LDH). The Court ruled unsurprisingly that the bans were 'unlawful', as there were no proven risks of disruption to public order, or risks to 'hygiene, decency or safety when swimming' (*Le Monde*, 26 August 2016).

The fallout included an intervention by Prime Minister Manuel Valls, who was supportive of the bans; an attempt to make them an election issue by potential presidential candidate, Nicolas Sarkozy; and the transformation of this controversy into a leading global news story, widely reported in negative terms. The failure on the part of the mayoral bans, the Court and

the media to substantively engage with the evident and obvious religious dimensions of the case, and the oblique interpretation of the issue as an example of incomplete cultural assimilation (and not a dangerous one at that), resulted in little, or no, progress on the underlying religious concerns. This example brings into sharp relief European – in this case, French – difficulties with effectively and meaningfully managing religious diversity.

The EU and intercultural dialogue

Intercultural dialogue, first entertained by the institutions of the EU in the 1980s as a strategic path to greater cultural and political integration, has risen in importance due to a variety of factors. These include: the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the response to them; the expansion of the EU to include nation states beyond Western and Central Europe; the academic and political challenges to multiculturalism; the 2005 UNESCO Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression and the increasing importance and centrality of ICD for UNESCO (e.g. UNESCO documents reference 'ICD for peace' from 2002 onwards); the UN's International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures 2010 and the 2011–2020 Decade of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace; the influx of migrants and refugees from the Middle East and Africa, particularly since 2011; and the ongoing threats of terrorism, including from individuals who were born and live in Europe.

For UNESCO, this cultural shift is visible in its new Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue and reflected in the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001; see also its precursors UNESCO, 1982, 1996, 1998). This declaration begins with the statement 'culture is at the heart of contemporary debates about identity, social cohesion, and the development of a knowledge-based economy' and links the promotion and protection of 'cultural diversity' explicitly to 'international peace and security' (UNESCO, 2001, pp. 1–2). While the emphasis here is on the inherent value of cultural diversity based upon a universal human right to culture, there is a recognition that increased awareness of cultural diversity 'creates the conditions for renewed dialogue among cultures and civilizations'. The following year in the aftermath of 9/11, Koïchiro Matsuura, then Director-General of UNESCO, spoke of the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural as 'an opportunity for States to reaffirm their conviction that intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee of peace and to reject outright the theory of the inevitable clash of cultures and civilizations' (UNESCO, 2002, p. 1). The same document reiterates that ICD is the essential vehicle

for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2002, p. 11). The central importance of these these linkages between cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and development have undergone further development by UNESCO (Sténou, 2007; UNESCO, 2001, p. 61).

Intercultural dialogue is also the subject of 'Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue' (UNESCO, 2009a). Here, the underlying reality of cultural diversity has 'its corollary' in ICD; and it is through ICD that cultural diversity is protected and 'effectively managed'. ICD is no longer an add-on or one approach among alternatives, but the basis of a 'mutual understanding' that 'permeates all UNESCO's fields of competence' (UNESCO, 2009a, pp. 2–3). ICD is necessarily dynamic, reflecting the changing nature, complexities and permeability of cultures that generate 'multiple affiliations' rather than 'exclusive and fixed identities' (UNESCO, 2009a, p. 45). ICD 'is necessary as a permanent corrective to the diversity of our cultural allegiances' and the 'only enduring response' to 'mutual stereotyping' and the 'unbridgeable differences' of 'identity-based and racial tensions' (UNESCO, 2009a, pp. 41–43). ICD has here become the 'necessary' centre of the transitions to sustainable development, social integration, and peace and reconciliation (UNESCO, 2009a, p. 49).

A parallel cultural shift can be traced to increasing awareness in EU documents. While the first and immediate *referent* of 'culture' was the national cultures of the EU, it was just as important to recognize that cultures were not exclusively bound to national or regional territories, but due to migration and history were increasingly transnational and/or global. Furthermore, the intertwining of these elements generated the task of consciously developing a European culture. Alongside this was a growing recognition of the significance of the cultural dimensions of life-predispositions, rituals, myths, narratives, practices and languages – in terms of meaning, values and belonging. Culture also became evident in the anti-discrimination legislation that made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of culture, sex, gender, age, ethnicity, linguistic group and, of course, religion. This new sense of culture as identity and habitus, alongside older understandings of culture and cultural production, fed into the notion of ICD as the vehicle for the management of cultural diversity, and the need to develop the 'competencies' to develop this. The events of 9/11 intensified and securitized the case for enhancing ICD, as reflected in the European Ministers of Education 2003 declaration on intercultural education in the EU, which acknowledged both the diversity of Europe and the overarching value of democracy, and expressed their confident hope that intercultural

education could reduce social exclusion, racism and marginalization across Europe (Council of Europe, 2003, p. 2).

The Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention/Opatija Declaration highlights the role of ICD as an instrument for 'conflict prevention' (Council of Europe, 2003, p. 1). ICD here aims to extend to every possible element of culture, without exception, whether these be cultural in the strict sense or have a political, economic, social, philosophical or religious dimension' (Council of Europe, 2003, p. 3). A further broadening of ICD can be seen in the European Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue/Faro Declaration, which proposes that the development of ICD provide the foundations for 'the political vision' of the Council of Europe, 'both inside European societies and between Europe and the rest of the world' (Council of Europe, 2005, p. 1). ICD is understood to be essential to 'peace and international stability in the long term, including with respect to the threat of terrorism' (Council of Europe, 2005, p. 3). Of particular significance is the transition to the new post-2008 ICD as the pre-eminent means 'to manage cultural diversity' (Council of Europe, 2005, p. 5).

The European Parliament's explicit focus on ICD began in December 2006, and led to the European Commission announcing the 'European Strategy for Culture' six months later, with its focus on awareness of 'cultural diversity' and shared 'EU values'. The 'European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World' lists three dimensions to culture: intercultural dialogue, culture as integral to foreign policy, and culture as vehicle for creativity – that is, the 'cultural economy' (European Union, 2007; Näss, 2009). The Council of Europe White Paper on ICD, *Living Together as Equals in Dignity*, followed in 2008, with the same year being designated the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, with a focus on cultural diversity, dialogue leading to enhanced mutual understanding, and support for EU civic education promoting European-wide solidarity and social justice (*European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008*).

The Council of Europe's White Paper contends that there is an urgent need for a new approach to the 'management of cultural diversity', a diversity now intensified by 'history' and 'globalization', with ICD as the principal mechanism and practice to address this within the context of ICD's 'increasing role ... in fostering European identity and citizenship' (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 17). ICD is defined as an 'open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect' (Haydari and Holmes, 2015, p. 177). The older

approach is multiculturalism, understood here, as the 'coexistence of majorities and minorities with differentiated rights and responsibilities', stressing distinct ethnic, religious and cultural, programmatic assimilation, and the eradication or public effacement of significant and unacceptable differences. This is rejected in favour of a more dynamic alternative, ICD, in the attempt to build a future, inclusive 'European identity', based on 'shared fundamental values, respect for common heritage and cultural diversity as well as respect for the equal dignity of every individual' (Aman, 2012; Brie, 2013; Demenchonok, 2014; Dervin, Gajardo, and Lavanchy, 2011). The best strategic instrument for overcoming existing, and preventing future, divisions is ICD and, this, it is contended, is utterly dependent upon the 'democratic governance of cultural diversity', the active promotion of intercultural competencies, and the fostering of ICD both within the EU and at the international level. The White Paper acknowledges a tension between intercultural dialogue and the greater awareness and appreciation of diversity, and the primary need for robust and sustainable European social cohesion (Council of Europe 2008, p. 4).

Generally speaking, there is little consistency in the various EU formulations of the relationship between ICD and interreligious dialogue (IRD). For example, both are equally but separately promoted in the Warsaw Declaration (Council of Europe, 2005) as vehicles for fostering 'European identity and unity, based on shared fundamental values, respect for our common heritage and cultural diversity'. *Living Together as Equals in Dignity,* Section 3.5, focuses on 'the religious dimension': there is a reaffirmation of a universal and non-negotiable 'freedom of belief', though there can be restrictions on manifestation of that belief 'under defined conditions'. The Council of Europe enters into 'open, transparent and regular dialogue' with religious organizations, while recognizing that this must be underpinned by 'universal values and principles'. It is stated that 'Christianity, Judaism and Islam, with their inner range of interpretations, have deeply influenced our continent'. And although this is clearly true at some level, Christianity's predominant role is not acknowledged, resulting in a misleading and distorted view of the past and present significance of religion in the individual and collective lives of Europeans. Religious influences are further minimized by reporting that, 'Europe's rich cultural heritage is a range of religious, as well as secular, conceptions of the purpose of life', effectively giving equally weight to secular conceptions alongside the religious. The plural is revealing in that it suggests both a religious diversity as well as a religious/secular diversity of the purposes of life. Religion here is also reductively framed as a resource for the 'conceptions of the purpose of

life', a philosophical idea, or notion, rather than a way of life that is lived by individuals in communities. The notion of religion used here is abstract and difficult to locate in any identifiable religious 'form of life', although this gap between theoretical abstraction and ethnographic realities is perhaps just as evident in the discourse on ICD. The priority in this section, however, is to emphasize that there is an overlap between the interests of the EU, on the one hand, and religious communities, on the other, in the promotion of 'human rights, democratic citizenship, values, peace, dialogue, education and solidarity' (Council of Europe, 2008, para. 72).

Furthermore, this document contends that interreligious dialogue (IRD) has a contribution to make to ICD. The management of cultural diversity is simply deemed here to include religious diversity: 'Religious practice is part of contemporary human life, and it therefore cannot and should not be outside the sphere of interest of public authorities, although the state must preserve its role as the neutral and impartial organiser of the exercise of various religions, faiths and beliefs' (Council of Europe, 2008, para. 73). Religion is significant and, as such, in need of government regulation and management. However, the lack of an understanding of the discrete and distinctive role of religion in European societies – even as a possibility – together with the reification of religion and the reduction of religious practice to cultural activity and religious belief to a broad category of beliefs, necessarily limits the analytical grasp of Europe's religious past and present significance and, therefore, the capacity to effectively manage contemporary religions and religious diversity.

The very success of ICD in the EU is reflected in the raft of projects and activities all promoting and engaging in ICD (Ecotec, 2009; Vidmar-Horvat, 2012). The clarity of the White Paper has perhaps been submerged in the plethora of ICD agendas ranging from cultural heritage and museum ICD policy, diversifying the cultural arts, tackling discrimination and prejudice, to explicit ID components in settlement policies for refugees and migrants. Since 2008, the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) has fostered cooperation between EU member states in the field of culture. There are fourteen OMC groups, one of which is ICD. Under the OMC in the latest *Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018* of the Platform for Intercultural Europe, four priorities are listed: (1) Accessible and inclusive culture; (2) Cultural heritage; (3) Cultural and creative sectors: creative economy and innovation; and (4) Promotion of cultural diversity, culture in EU external relations and mobility (Council of the European Union, 2014). The Council of the EU in 2015 reaffirmed the centrality and priority of ICD in the context

of developing a 'comprehensive strategy' to address 'the migration and refugee crisis'. They acknowledge that 'culture and the arts have their role to play in the process of integrating refugees who will be granted asylum status as they can help them to better understand their new environment and its interaction with their own socio-cultural background, thus contributing to building a more cohesive and open society' (European Union, 2015, p. 7). ICD is a means to 'bring individuals and peoples together, increase their participation in cultural and societal life' (European Union, 2015, p. 4).

More recently, ICD has come to be framed as leading to 'civic integration', with ongoing intercultural dialogue between co-existing cultures (Agustín, 2012; Barrett, 2013; Levrau and Loobuyck, 2013; Jackson, 2013; Jackson and Passarelli, 2008; Jesse, 2017). The balancing act between social cohesion and host country values and respect for diversity is still evident, but ICD has the notable value of starting with, and giving full recognition to, ongoing cultural diversities. ICD education and specific policies and programmes have had a positive impact in creating new spaces for conflict prevention and resolution, and have made progress simply in fostering awareness of cultural diversity (Bergan, Harkavy and van't Land, 2013; Innocenti, 2015; McMahon, 2013; Wiater, 2010).

ICD aims to break the idea of established, majoritarian hosts helping newer citizens and residents to settle on their often 'generous' terms, in favour of the state acting as an impartial catalyst promoting ICD agendas and obligations for all citizens and communities. One parallel is the transition from the United Nations Millennial Goals, wherein established nations were to help less developed countries, to the UN's Sustainable Developments Goals, where all states have obligations supporting the broader agenda (Fukuda-Parr, 2016; Maurice, 2015; Sachs, 2012; United Nations, 2015). The broader ICD agenda still appears to be somewhat assimilatory at the civic level, while allowing new spaces for acceptable cultural expression (see the Conclusion below for more on acceptable and unacceptable 'culture').

The EU and public religion

In spite of the crucial, and often not fully acknowledged, role played by the Christian Democratic parties of Western Europe, together with Catholic intellectuals and activists, in the initial developments of first economic, and then political, arrangements for a single European polity, there has been little formal EU deliberation about religion (Grotsch, 2009; Mudrov, 2011, 2014). Former European Commission President, Jacques Delors, in a speech

in 1990 is reported as having spoken of the need for a 'soul for Europe' (*une âme pour l'Europe*) to ensure Europe's very survival. The European interpreted Commission Delors' comment as 'giving a spiritual and ethical dimension to the European Union' (see Hogebrink, 2015). He established links with European religious and other non-confessional organizations with the intention of creating dialogue partners with regard to values and spiritual concerns, and fostering important civil society players to actively participate in the processes of developing a unified Europe.

The first official recognition at the EU level of religious and non-religious philosophical organizations is found in 1997 in the Treaty of Amsterdam, Declaration 11, which acknowledged the existing relationships between member states and their 'churches and religious associations' in state law, and expressed respect for such organizations (European Union, 1997, p. 113). This reflected the very different relationships across the EU with established churches, state churches, and different models and degrees of the separation of church and state. The Declaration also granted equal recognition to non-confessional organizations, such as humanists, reflecting earlier formulations that insisted on understanding religion not as an independent factor, but as an alternative to humanism, rationalism and Freemasonry. As part of the EU's work towards a constitutional treaty from 2002 there were a series of consultations about the role of the churches and the place of Christianity in the EU, including a particularly acrimonious debate over whether god, and/or the centrality of Christianity should be directly referenced (Menendez, 2005). For example, in 'The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe, Reflection Group, Concluding Remarks' (European Commission, 2005) the significance of religion is vouchsafed in terms of the most insightful claim that 'markets cannot produce a politically resilient solidarity', and the acknowledgement that religion might have an important role to play in this regard. Stress is put upon the secular and religious elements of European heritage, again insisting on paralleling the religious and the secular. It is equally clear, however, that these religious elements are not just 'heritage', as 'only in the past', but an integral part of contemporary European life, as seen in the recognition that:

> The presence of religion in the public sphere cannot be reduced to the public role of the churches or to the societal relevance of explicitly religious views. Religions have long been an inseparable component of the various cultures of Europe ... active 'under the surface' of the political and state institutions; they also have an effect on society and

> individuals. The result is a new wealth of forms of religion entwined with cultural meanings' (European Commission, 2005, p. 5).

This recognition of the fact that many European nations have national forms of Protestant or Orthodox Christianity, or Roman Catholicism, as integral features of the life of the nation is important not only in terms of acknowledging the specific histories of member states, but also with regard to addressing the Christian role in the formation of national identities, and the ways this is challenged by secularists and adherents of minority, migrants faiths. The other side of the same coin is, of course, the embracing of secular ideologies as a weapon against minority faiths, as seen recently in le Front National's espousing of secularism in relation to Muslim dress codes. Religious symbols do have cultural, national and other identity meanings, raising concerns about the illegitimate and legitimate use of religious signs and symbols in public life. The report advocates that the EU should foster the 'power of Europe's religious faiths' and support and deploy this 'on behalf of the cohesion of the new Europe' (European Commission, 2005). There are clear indications of the need to rethink state 'laïcité' to allow for this greater public profile of religion, and there are sketchy deliberations about the 'political relevance of Islam' in Europe and beyond (European Commission, 2005, p. 7).

The 2004 draft European Constitution excluded god and Christianity from the Treaty Preamble and allowed only a more general reference to 'religious heritage' but the Treaty of Amsterdam, Declaration 11, as above, was included (Treaty, Art. 37). The debates continued after the failure to ratify the European constitutional treaty in 2005 with the President of the Commission meeting Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious leaders in 2005, and attending a colloquium in 2008 organized by the European Humanist Federation (EHF) and the Centre Action Laïque on Laïcité et droits de l'Homme.

The core EU document, the Treaty of Lisbon, was signed in 2009 (European Community, 2007; Mudrov, 2016; Schlesinger and Foret, 2006). The Treaty preamble begins:

> Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.

This serves to place the religious heritage of Europe alongside, and equal to, Europe's cultural and humanist traditions, as the foundations of the

core value cluster, the 'ultimate good' of the EU. 'Religious' rather than 'Christian' heritage further obscures the fact that Europe's religious heritage is, in fact, overwhelmingly Christian. The understanding of heritage as that which is in the past is highlighted by the first two words. Religion is one inspirational source among others, and has no particular authority, or perhaps contemporary presence (Leustean, 2012; Leustean and Madeley, 2013; McCrea, 2009; Mudrov, 2016). The sense is one of religious, and other, actors initiating the process in the past that led to human rights and democracy in the EU, but even this is unclear and vague.

Finally, in 2009 the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, 2007, effectively updating the 1957 Treaty of Rome) was adopted, including Article 17 (European Union, 2012). This section reaffirmed in law – based on the Treaty of Amsterdam, Declaration 11, 1997 – that the EU 'respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States' (Article 17/1), and 'respects the status under national law of philosophical and non-confessional organisations' (Pollock, 2013). Furthermore, the TFEU provides a legal basis and framework for dialogue between the churches and other religious, philosophical and non-confessional organizations, and formalizes existing dialogues with the Commission President, the European Parliament and the European Council. The fact that many MEPs have religious, and other affiliations, that can impact their decisions and voting behaviour, emphasizes the problems of attempting to separate people from their values and convictions. All major religious groups in Europe now have full-time, permanent representatives in Brussels or Strasbourg, as do various humanist and rationalist associations (Foret, 2015). There is thus a degree of recognition of the religious dimensions of the constitutional values and public morality in the life of the EU.

In 2006, the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education commissioned a briefing paper on intercultural and interreligious dialogue which reports the potentially negative consequences of intercultural agendas and debates that explicitly set up Christianity against minority religions, such as, Islam and Judaism, or religion as opposed to secular norms. The report understands ICD as being the 'wider frame', and it is within this framework that interreligious dialogue should be located in order to reduce the polarization of secular and religious groups. The paper rightly reports the broad church and religious support for ICD (Figel, 2007). Following an ombudsman's report on a complaint about unwarranted religious privilege by the European Humanist Federation (EHF) in 2011, the Council of Foreign

Affairs published guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion, or belief, in EU external relations. These include reference to the freedom from religion and the freedom to change religion, and an explicit statement as to the secular neutrality of the European Parliament, and by implication, the EU itself.

The idea of secular neutrality is reaffirmed in the Situation of Fundamental Rights in the EU, a resolution adopted by the European Parliament in 2015, ostensibly to prevent discrimination against any religious or non-religious community, and to guarantee equal treatment for all. This resolution also expresses concern that issues of religious insult and blasphemy laws could threaten freedom of speech in the EU. And while antisemitism, Islamophobia and all forms of fanaticism and attacks on religious buildings are condemned, it seems to be the case that attacks on religion are in fact permitted, while damage in the physical realm is vehemently denounced.

The context of religion in the EU is changing rapidly. The older impact of the French laïcité model is in decline, but still evident in decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and the domestic legislation and decisions of a number of member states. So, for example, some of the older secularist prejudices still appear evident, as in the decisions of the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in 2013 (under the auspices of the Council of Europe) concerning the wearing of crosses at work in Britain, where it ruled that wearing a cross is not 'an essential manifestation' of Christianity, and that a crucifix was a 'health hazard'. However, these rulings this can be contrasted with Lautsi v Italy (2011), which resulted in a wider and perhaps more sophisticated recognition that religion does have a role in European public life, in this case pertaining to the presence of crucifixes in the classroom (ECHR, 2011; McGoldrick, 2011). The right to be free of religious coercion, that is, of having freedom from religion, as evidenced in secular state education, is giving way to the recognition of parental rights to choose their children's education, including religious education (European Parliament resolution, 13 June 2013). The US model of self-regulated religious freedom nationally (internally) and pressure for increased religious freedom in international relations (externally) is in the process of being adapted and adopted in the EU (European Union, 2013). This has created the inconsistency that the EU (Lisbon Treaty, Article 17) allows European member states to determine their own relationships with their own state churches and religious institutions, but does not afford the same right to states outside the EU, and takes on the right to advocate for regulation and change of the content of religion in its external relationships.

The Europeans still appear fixed on combining religion with other 'beliefs' and thus refuse the recognition of even the possibility of a unique religious contribution to values and public life. The 2013 Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom or belief recommend that the phrase 'religion or belief' always be used in full. They also, by distinguishing between people who hold beliefs and the beliefs themselves, permit and legitimate offence. Most recently, the debate about hate speech has attempted to address this issue. The neutrality of the EU in matters of religious content is based on not being aligned to any specific religion (or belief). A final consequential addition in the Guidelines is the need to balance religious rights with other fundamental human rights, such as 'freedom of expression or equality'. This balancing of human rights is somewhat predetermined by the Council of Europe's 2007 resolution that, 'states must require religious leaders to take an unambiguous stand in favour of the precedence of human rights, as set forth in the European Convention of Human Rights over any religious principle'.

The American model of 'reasonable accommodation' (Rehabilitation Act, 1973), initially developed in terms of disabilities, was extended to religious diversity. The American model of 'reasonable accommodation' of religious diversity seems to be a most useful principle, particularly in relation to religious diversity in the workplace and in education, and it is making steady inroads in the EU. In 2015, for example, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in its report, 'Tackling intolerance and discrimination in Europe with a special focus on Christianity', advocates reasonable accommodation especially in the workplace and education (Council of Europe, 2015). The EU already operates a reasonable accommodation framework for disabilities and there are good reasons to support the development of this model as a contribution to managing EU religious diversity. It is not necessary to follow the US in determining that reasonable accommodation should be subject to the limitation of 'fiscal neutrality to employers' or operated on so-called free market principles. Europe is in no need of US-style culture wars. This new emphasis on the freedom of religion is increasingly separating ICD from religion. This has both the advantage of addressing religious concerns independently, explicitly and directly, but also the very significant disadvantage of detaching religion from the management of cultural diversity with discussions and debates on the creation of policies on the management of religious diversity. The management of religious diversity should parallel the management of cultural diversity in the need for education in religious diversity – religious literacy – and the development of competencies in religious diversities. The

management of religious diversity should not be interpreted as interfaith dialogue – dialogue among religions and between religions and the state – nor is it the use of the courts and legislation to ensure religious rights. However, both UNESCO and the EU currently subsume the management of religious diversity under the broader rubric of cultural diversity. ICD as the vehicle for the management of cultural diversity is predicated on the central role and responsibility of the state, or super-state, to maximize the freedom and opportunities of its citizens, including religious and spiritual, and to ensure that citizens have a life together with their differences. The management of religious diversity should likewise be a state/government responsibility in dialogue with religious communities and social stability and society more generally.

The EU has not treated all religions equally and certainly is not neutral in that it favours those that have a history of compromise with secular humanists and with the state. This ensures that other religions, particularly those of migrants to Europe from colonial contexts with their very different histories and theologies of political power and political theologies, are pressured prejudicially to adapt themselves to Christian European models of the role of religion in Europe.

Conclusions

ICD has made significant contributions to enhancing relations between different communities and to the 'masterplan' for fostering European-wide solidarity and social cohesion. However, the tensions between different understandings of culture have led to ICD sometimes seemingly moving in contradictory directions. There are, at least, two different senses of 'culture' in the EU documents on ICD. The first, descriptively, is 'national culture' in the sense of predispositions and characteristic beliefs and behaviours derived from shared experience, education and histories, particularly where there are significant overlaps of ethnicity, language and religion. The second refers to culture, again descriptively, in the more anthropological sense, as broad practices and behaviours associated with a locality, ethnicity or particular migrations. There is also a normative element that arises from the second cluster – the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable cultural practices, or at least debates about where this line is to be drawn. My contention is that practices and people deemed unacceptable rarely reflect anxieties about culture *per se*, but more often reflect concerns about religion.

The Hungarian, Polish and Slovakian debates about acceptable and unacceptable identities and practices of potential migrants are, in fact, directed against Muslim refugees and migrants. Muslim dress codes or manifestations of Islam are 'unacceptable culture' in the public arena but are, in fact, about religion. The supposed malleability of culture misleads when dealing with religious issues, which so often prove to be resilient to pressures to change or external claims that these practices are not essential or significant. This distinction between acceptable and unacceptable practices is vital to promoting positive changes in the management of religious diversity in the EU. Rather than arid discussions of 'common ground' or shared values reported as supposedly held by more than one person or group, the discussion needs to be pursued at a different level. Religion/culture as food, festivities, folkways, fashion and fables are acceptable, as reflected in their inclusion in pedagogical materials, and likewise of Eid al Fitr, or Diwali or the Chinese New Year in civic calendars. However, differences about the moral limits to freedom of expression and communal offence, polygamy, same sex relationships, crime and punishment, a good society and a meaningful life, ways of behaving that create social cohesion in particular communal settings, the origins of human rights and morals and ethics, and social, communal and individual responsibilities, are all in that anthropological sense cultural too. However, these issues are clearly analytically different and need thinking about and managing differently. These differences are perhaps more appropriately labelled as 'religious', and while it is true that differences rather than banal commonalities constitute forms of cultural diversity that are easier to manage, the airing of profound religious differences can foster prejudice, chauvinism, exclusion and fear. The question might better be formulated to ascertain not what is common ground, but to establish what can be accommodated while maintaining dignity for all those concerned. Just as corporate directors and those involved in governance are asked to contemplate their 'risk for appetite', those involved with religious governance might consider their 'appetite for acceptable religious difference' (Hassani, 2015).

To say that a European is a Protestant does not mean that he or she necessarily subscribes to a theory of consubstantiation rather than transubstantiation, or adheres to a particular model of ecclesiastical leadership. Likewise, being a European Muslim does not necessarily entail expertise on specific legal interpretations of a practice. Rather, it means that she or he were formed in, and know how to live within, a particular religious community that distinguishes itself from other communities, and is aware of the dynamic debates and discussions within the community

over matters of consequence. Religion is not belief alongside other ethical beliefs that logically gives rise to particular behaviours, but beliefs and behaviours that arise and are manifested in tandem. Religious practice is epistemologically a way of knowing, not a secondary and subsequent feature of religious belief. This European legacy of philosophical dualism that disembodies and privatizes religious freedom and structures and manages the physical, while distorting Christianity alongside other religious traditions, reflects the Protestant priority on personal belief providing the basis for individual and communal religious life. There are newer and more applicable philosophical alternatives. Other religious traditions are not so easily rendered as a list of fundamental beliefs that in turn generate individual and communal religious practice.

In the case of S.A.S. v. France held in the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in 2013 and 2014, the Court ruled that the French ban on face covering did not violate the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) provisions on the right to privacy (Art. 8), or freedom of religion (Art. 9) or Art. 3 (inhuman or degrading treatment), Art. 10 (freedom of expression), Art. 11 (freedom of assembly) and Art. 14 (discrimination) (European Court of Human Rights, 2014). The judges, however, decided by a majority of fifteen to two that the French state did have the right to ban the use of the burqa or niqab to cover the face in public places (Law #2010-1192, 2010). The French state argued that under Article 9/2 the limitations on religious freedom were 'necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others'. The Court found this convincing and the ban was upheld as a necessity to ensure 'le vivre ensemble', so that people could live together. This seems unreasonable and unaccommodating and the public safety angle unconvincing. Who exactly is living together with who? The development of a model for the management of religious diversity which intersects and overlaps with ICD models of managing cultural diversity, focuses on religious literacy and competencies, and incorporates reasonable accommodation within a dynamic framework of democratic human rights, would open a new era for religion in the EU and directly address the barriers to 'le vivre ensemble' in terms of Europe's changing social realities and ideals.

In summary, religious diversity is a European social fact. We could refer to this growing religious diversity as a hyper-religious diversity of Christianities, Islams, Judaisms, Sikhisms, Buddhisms, Hinduisms and secularisms, where major religious traditions intersect with established host cultures

and waves of immigration, with near infinite varieties of commitment, practice and identifications. The EU has only just begun to engage with this increasingly complex social reality. As yet, *laïcité* and existing legal and political structures promoting forms of assimilationist integration are proving to be inadequate as means of managing this new religious diversity. This new diversity requires a new model for its management that opens up creative opportunities for living together with our differences, rather than a closing down of the same. The EU has a crucial and central governance role to play in this process. The dynamic and changing religious diversity in Europe guarantees that there will be further religious tensions over religious practices and values. The important issue is not the elimination of such conflicts, but the development of a framework and policies to openly and peacefully manage them. New narratives and collective practices (civil religion?) are needed that embrace the past and allow us to frame an inclusive future. The whole issue of possible Turkish membership of the EU generated calls for recognition of the foundational and ongoing Christian character of Europe. This is an invitation for dialogue, not its closure (Hurd, 2006). There is a need to have a more sophisticated and less dualistic account of religion that recognizes the subtle interplay between beliefs and practices. There is also a need to be open to the particular contribution that religion has played, and can play, in fostering solidarity and social cohesion, alongside its unique spiritual contributions to creating meaningful and purposeful lives (Nelsen and Guth, 2015, Chapter 10). Separating ICD from religion is helpful as long as the benefits of ICD are not compromised or lost, in particular the model of explicit state and civic society responsibilities for the management of diversity.

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4. The intercultural turn in Europe: process of policy paradigm change and formation

Ricard Zapata-Barrero

Introduction: continuities and change in diversity management

The question of 'how to focus diversity policy' is more easily accepted today when the answer is 'interculturalism'. This policy is gaining attention mainly among policy-makers working at the local level, as demonstrated by the Intercultural Cities programme (ICC) of the Council of Europe, with more than 100 cities working together, sharing practical knowledge, and involved in policy experimentation and policy failure processes. This allows me to assert that we are presently in a process of policy paradigm formation: an *intercultural turn in Europe*.

The main purpose of this chapter is to enter into the recent debate around multiculturalism vs interculturalism policy (see Barret ed., 2013; Meer and Modood, 2012; Meer, Modood and Zapata-Barrero, 2015; Zapata-Barrero ed., 2015, and others quoted throughout the text) and show that we are likely witnessing a process of policy paradigm change in Europe. The intercultural policy paradigm (IPP) of diversity management claims to fill what the multicultural policy paradigm (MPP) seems to have underestimated: contact and dialogue, and interpersonal relations between people from different backgrounds, including nationals and citizens. This *descriptive sense* of IPP is being promoted by the Council of Europe (2008, 2011) and has been penetrating key European Union documents and programmes (e.g. European Commission 2008a, 2008b, 2015). In the first instance, IPP has appeared in some seminal urban, business and social management literature (Blommaert and Verschueren, 1998; Bloomfield and Bianchini, 2004; Clarijs et al., 2011; Sandercock, 2004; Sze and Powell, 2004; Wood, 2004; Wood and Landry, 2008; Zachary, 2003), and now is making an appearance in current normative policy debates on diversity and migration studies (Zapata-Barrero ed., 2015; Barrett, 2013; Cantle, 2012; Lüken-Klaßen

and Heckmann, 2010; Taylor, 2012; Zapata-Meer et al. ed., 2016). It arises in a context in which multiculturalism is experiencing a drop in popularity (Lewis, 2014). Multiculturalism is under suspicion of having promoted segregation rather than union, of giving rise to ethnic conflicts rather than a common public culture, of having difficulties in grounding community cohesion and trust (Cantle, 2012), and even of founding affirmative actions without enough public legitimization. Following Peter Hall's (1993) seminal analysis on policy paradigm change, we will call these *policy anomalies*. These unintended outcomes of multicultural policies have been the main source of information for many political leaders, such as Angela Merkel in Germany in October 2010 and David Cameron in the United Kingdom in February 2011 – with even Nicolas Sarkozy in France joining this view. This has promoted a crisis, backlash or even the 'death' of the multicultural paradigm, initiating a great European public discussion (*Daily Mail Reporter,* 2011; Joppke, 2004; Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010). At the same time, there is growing concern in Europe at the rise of populist parties and anti-immigrant narratives that have passed through different waves during recent decades (Yilmaz, 2012), nurtured by most of the contradictions within the politics of immigration of the liberal states (Hampshire, 2013).

Interculturalism as a particular policy paradigm takes its normative background from many areas of public policy. From urban studies, this approach emphasizes the view that diversity is a community asset and a collective resource, since it is assumed that optimizing diversity increases social and political benefits (Wood and Landry, 2008). The managerial economist Scott E. Page (2007) is often quoted from this emerging literature, as he shows that in a problem-solving situation, diverse groups have better tools and resources to give a variety of perspectives than a homogeneous group. But this 'diversity advantage' approach also comes from global business studies (Zachary, 2003), which focus on the economic benefits of managing diversity. This 'diversity advantage' assumption functions as the epicentre of the *normative sense* of interculturalism and constitutes the core of my focus.

In presenting this theory, I place policy paradigm change literature at the centre of my discussion. Understanding that continuity and change in policy-making constitute a fundamental challenge to social scientists, policy-makers and everyday citizens, I argue that within this emerging debate on intercultural policy formation, such change is occurring within a specific context (of multicultural backlash) and place (interculturalism is firstly an urban policy initiative).

Following the presentation of this theory, I structure my chapter as follows: first, I outline the interpretative framework to follow the multiculturalism/interculturalism debate, taking into account the current debate on policy paradigms. I then enter into the current narrative context that is directly influencing policy paradigm formation, and the current normative framework based on the diversity-advantage assumption, namely the view that diversity is a resource and an opportunity. I speak of the intercultural turn in Europe, taking the ICC of the Council Europe as a main source of information (and inspiration), which involves more than 100 cities, alongside national networks in Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Ukraine (Council of Europe, 2011). I end by providing a critical assessment identifying shortcomings of this IPP expansion in Europe, arguing that the consolidation of this current policy paradigm will occur only when the main assumed pillar (diversity-advantages) is tested at economic and mainly social levels.

1. Policy paradigm change and formation: an interpretative framework to analyse the intercultural turn

Following the emerging literature on policy paradigm change, inspired by the path-breaking work of Hall (1993), I propose an interpretative framework to better define what I term the 'intercultural turn' in diversity policy-making.

The focus here on policy paradigms begins with the recognition that ideas are not only important, but are key to identifying patterns and processes of policy dynamics (Hogan and Howlett, 2015a, p. 6). Some even label this debate as an 'ideational turn' aimed at understanding the ideas that cause policies (Béland, 2009). A policy paradigm constitutes a theoretical tool with which to understand the guiding principles or ideas for creating public policy, and to ascertain which actors are involved and why they pursue the strategies that they do (Hogan and Howlett, 2015a, p. 3). Applying Hall's (1993) views to describe the intercultural approach to public policies dealing with diversity, and taking into account the Intercultural Cities programme of the Council of Europe, we can say that we are facing a new paradigm, since this an approach is becoming institutionalized by policy-makers and politicians, and academically legitimized among expert scholarship. It is also agreed that a paradigm must not only be adopted by an inner policy-making circle, but also legitimized by outside actors including in academia, media and civil society. This is the case with the media and the network of

associations endorsing the intercultural policies initiatives, and even the constitution of a network of intercultural centres (Bloomfield, 2013).

A paradigm is defined by Hall as follows: 'policymakers customarily work within a framework of ideas and standards that specifies not only the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing' (1993, p. 279). We then have to identify the main ideas and standards of the intercultural approach, the kind of instruments proposed to attain these ideas, and of course the problems this approach is addressing. Ideas have recently gained ascendency in social research alongside the 'usual suspects' of interest, institutions and socio-economic factors. The fact that we say that a policy paradigm is made of ideas means that behind a policy are values, principles, beliefs and assumptions shared by a policy community (Daigneault, 2015, p. 50). In our particular case, the IPP is interpreted as an ideational construct (Hogan and Howlett, 2015a, p. 5) that provides some continuity/change in relation to a previous MPP. We know that one of the main 'business cards' of interculturalism is its character as a third way between assimilation and multiculturalism, which legitimizes its main ideas by filling the gaps of the MPP. The ideas legitimizing the policy paradigm also seek to be permanent in time. For us, this means 'resisting' ideological variations in political governments, and being colour-blind from an ideological point of view, as is the case for most intercultural cities participating in the ICC of the Council of Europe. This undoubtedly facilitates broader expansion and faster absorption by the whole policy and social community.

With the intercultural policy turn we are indeed faced with what Hall (1996) called a third-order policy change. Within this framework, I take some aspects of the framework proposed by Pierre-Marc Daigneault (2015) and also the focus on policy anomalies of Matt Wilder and Michael Howlett (2015). The third-order framework states that a change in a policy area affects objectives and means in a structural way, so that other policies must be reoriented according to the new paradigm. There is an assumed causal relationship between policy change at the normative level and changes at strategic and operational levels (Carson *et al*., 2009). This interpretative framework provides then an explanation as to how policy change results from intertwined ideas and institutions at a micro level (through instrument settings), a meso level (through policy instruments selection) and a macro level (through the formulation of goals). Then, by considering the importance of context (how politics, society and particular actors

influence policy formation) and conceptual frameworks to understanding policy change, we can also define normative ideas as taken-for-granted assumptions about values, attitudes, identities and other 'collective shared expectations' (Campbell, 2002, p. 23). In the case of the intercultural policy turn, a core conceptual idea is the particular view of diversity as a resource and as an advantage and opportunity for community cohesion resulting from interaction among people from different backgrounds, including citizens and non-citizens.

Even if policy paradigm change does not produce the desired outcome, the clue to understanding this change is that normative ideas are viewed as constraining decision-making and limiting the range of alternatives that political elites are likely to perceive as legitimate. What interests me in this debate is not only how ideas influence policy-making, but how the normative ideas of interculturalism (community cohesion and common public culture) drive most of the decision-making processes in the cities, although, as I show, this needs to be tested empirically to consolidate and institutionalize this policy paradigm. Its fragility could demonstrate that instead of reaching their normative ideals, interculturalism also produces policy anomalies, as the MPP has demonstrated. Normative beliefs may be so strong that they override the self-interest of policy-makers (Campbell 2002, p. 24). It is at this ideational normative level, then, that I focus the intercultural turn, as a situation where the IPP fulfils most of the shortcomings of the MPP. Of course, there is some continuity within this policy change, in the fact that the respect and recognition of difference and diversity are the priority equality concerns, even ahead of the assimilationist approach, which tries to see diversity and difference as an anomaly. But the IPP and MPP differ in how diversity policy is focused and how this policy intervention is conducted. The multicultural approach tends to defend a rights-based and a group-based approach of difference, then devotes all its normative force to the recognition of this way of categorizing difference, having a nation-based view of culture (Zapata-Barrero, 2015a).

Applied to the intercultural turn, the normative drivers of interculturalism (community cohesion and common public culture) influence decision-making and the expansion of intercultural policies, even if there are not strongly tested empirical studies. For us, the focus is not merely on ideas, but on *normative* ideas, and how these normative assumptions influence the decision-making process, as well as the reaction between the policy-maker and the political elite in local contexts. This debate makes evident that the normative powers of ideas are strong enough that they do not

need empirical outcomes to be convincing and shared by a broad social and policy community.

2. Narrative context and normative drivers of the intercultural policy change

Policy paradigm change is of course a multifaceted process that must be understood in the context of larger societal and political contexts. For us, a paradigm is an interpretative framework in Hall's terms (1993, p. 279) and the definition is clear: there is a discursive change on how to approach diversity dynamics and this narrative has effects in policy and governance. The three levels (public discourse, policy and governance) need to remain interrelated, since it is their internal coherence that can engender a policy paradigm shift. *Public discourse* explicitly incorporates contact promotion and intercultural priorities within not only immigration policies, but all public policy narratives. This expansion of interculturalism as a principle of public policy in general is being carried out with some difficulties and restrictions in all the intercultural cities, as is shown in the ICC Index (Council of Europe, 2011). However, the central aim is that the intercultural discourse becomes both the city-project and the mainstream city focus on how to deal with diversity. Secondly, the *governance dimension* involves coordinating a range of public and civil society actors participating in the policy-making process, distributing an even burden of responsibility shared across multiple territorial levels of government, from the neighbourhood to the whole city and beyond. Finally, *the policy* dimension refers to adaptations of mainstreaming policies that incorporate intercultural priorities. This policy incorporation is designed to better serve the diverse populations that benefit from social policies by responding to their specific needs (Scholten *et al.*, 2016).

Following the main guidelines of the literature on policy paradigms (see Hogan and Howlett, 2015b), we can say that interculturalism is a set of coherent cognitive (how policy and social actors interpret diversity-related problems) and normative (how actors approach these problems in terms of goal setting) ideas shared by people in a given policy community about how to focus diversity management, the appropriate role of the local administration and the problem-solving that requires intervention. That is, interculturalism as a policy paradigm demonstrates that it has policy objectives that should be pursued and appropriate policy means to achieve these ends (Daigneault, 2015, p. 49).

The IPP also provides some continuity to policy content and discourse over time, and functions as a social learning process (Hogan and Howlet, 2015a). Inspired by Hall (1993, pp. 280–81), we can retain three main dimensions of policy paradigm change and focus on the differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism.

Firstly, IPP is a bottom-up process, namely a social and policy process beginning at the city level rather than the result or product of a top-down process or of academic reflections on diversity without clear contact with policy-making. The process to replace the MPP by the IPP is likely to be more sociological and policy oriented than an academic plan, as perhaps was the case with the MPP. It has been rightly argued that the MPP has shown little engagement with the reality it seeks to manage (Mansouri, 2015). That is to say, although the changing views of experts may play a role, their visions are likely to be controversial, and the choice between paradigms can rarely be made on academic grounds alone. Pragmatisms and local policy dynamics prevail most of the time. The movement from the MPP to the IPP ultimately entails a set of judgements that are more political in tone, and the outcome depends, not only on the arguments of competing factions, but on their positional advantages within the broader city institutional framework.

Secondly, it is a leadership process whereby experts provide authoritative arguments to policy-makers to influence political decision-making (the policy makes politics) and even help policy-makers to articulate their practices and 'intuitions'. The movement from one paradigm to another is likely to be preceded by significant shifts in the locus of authority over policy. Local politicians decide whom to regard as authoritative, especially on matters of technical complexity and electoral impact.

Thirdly, it is an innovative process of policy experimentation and testing through which dynamic change policies and paradigm changes might be achieved. This is the method promoted at most of the city meetings organized by the Council of Europe. Hall (1993) shows that a policy paradigm can be threatened by the appearance of what he calls 'anomalies', namely by developments that are not fully comprehensible, even as puzzles, within the terms of the paradigm (Hall, 1993, p. 280). In the case of MPP, anomalies can take the form of segregation, discrimination and social relations among people from different backgrounds. As these accumulate, *ad hoc* attempts to stretch the terms of the paradigm to cover them are generally made, but this gradually undermines the intellectual coherence and precision of the original paradigm. Efforts to deal with such anomalies

may also entail experiments in the adjustment of existing lines of policy, but if the paradigm is genuinely incapable of dealing with anomalous developments, these experiments will result in policy failures that gradually undermine the authority of the existing paradigm and its advocates even further.

Finally, we can adapt the fourth-fold conceptualization proposed by Daigneault (2015, p. 50). The condition for a policy paradigm is coherence among these dimensions, as contradictions are not conducive to producing a paradigm. These four dimensions must, therefore, exhibit a significant number of actors in a given policy community (Baumgartner, 2014), most notably:

1. Nature of the reality and the role of administration: there is a shared view on diversity and its consequences if there is no policy intervention or if there is a 'wrong' intervention, as is the case in the MPP intervention.
2. Anomalies (of) power: that is, policy problems that cannot be solved by current policies and instead require a new public intervention. There is a shared view of what the unintended consequences of applying the MPP are: segregation and separation, lack of contact among different cultures and, even worse, a populist narrative nurtured by affirmative.
3. Policy objectives that should be pursued, as we see in section 4, when describing the normative drivers of interculturalism.
4. Appropriate policy tools to achieve these ends, including governance dimensions. The intercultural strategy focuses always on the promotion of contact, and always on what bonds people instead of what separates them. The differences are also taken as an opportunity to build bridges among people.

3. Framing the policy paradigm change: beating three multicultural idols

To frame this policy paradigm change, I would like to provocatively suggest – and following from the three dimensions of policy paradigm change presented in the previous section – that we are in a similar historical period to that which Nietzsche once termed the *Twilight of the Idols*. The IPP's change focus applied to migration and diversity debates acts against some policy assumptions in migration studies that recognize multiculturalism as the sole policy paradigm authority against the assimilationist policy answer to diversity. Francis Bacon famously identified what he considered the main

errors in the human attempt to gain knowledge as 'idols,' suggesting that ideas that are taken for granted influence the way we produce knowledge, and explain why so many minds hold so many false ideas for long periods of time. For our purposes, we might call them *idols of the multicultural policy paradigm*. These *idols* have framed a great part of the last decade's scholarly output on diversity management and are now being disputed by the IPP. I present them here in the form of policy narratives.

Multicultural idol 1: Beyond the national narrative domination: the local turn

There is a common trend in Europe to move from a state-centred to a local-centred approach in diversity policies, whereby cities are increasingly recognized not only as implementers of policies, but also as new players (see Alexander, 2003; Borkert et al., 2007; Caponio and Borkert, 2010; Collet and Petrovic, 2014; Crane, 2003; Lüken-Klaßen and Heckmann, 2010; Penninx et al., 2004). There are many European institutional documents and initiatives that evidence this link. For instance, we can highlight the report from the Zaragoza Summit of the 4th Ministerial Conference on Integration of Immigrants, 'Integration as an Engine for Development and Social Cohesion' (April 2010), as one of the first to emphasize that local governments need to develop and obtain capacities to better manage diversity, and to combat racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination.

The local narrative taking shape within migration studies is doing so with a growing recognition that cities are becoming agents in a traditional governance framework dominated by states. Cities are managing their own policy agenda, giving local answers to local concerns with their own criteria and, definitively, developing their own policy philosophies on how to manage diversity. This 'local turn' contributes to a better understanding of why and how cities behave differently to similar challenges, and why/how these different policy answers can directly affect the dominance of the national-centric models of immigration management. This is why it is argued that the local turn produces poly-centric policy-making (Scholten et al., 2016) and can only be understood within the framework of multi-level governance (Zapata-Barrero *et al*., 2017).

This marks a turn away from the focus on so-called 'national models of integration' (Amelina and Faist, 2012) that has characterized research in this area in recent decades. The national models of integration were first criticized by transnational literature (Thränhardt and Bommes, 2010; Wimmer and Glick-Schiller, 2002) and by some preliminary multi-level and

local analyses of immigration (Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero, 2014). Scholars drawing attention to the local level have revealed that such 'national models' rarely provide an adequate understanding of how immigration policies develop (Scholten, 2013). The intercultural policy interest is directly related to this 'local turn'. The intercultural cities programme of the Council of Europe also contributes in this way to strengthening the importance of cities in developing intercultural policy projects.

Multicultural idol 2: Beyond ethnocentrism and group-based narrative hegemony: the return to the individual

The multicultural policy narrative has been accused of being too right-centred and of being the main source of a normative machinery for legitimizing specific policies for specific ethnic differences that neglects interpersonal relations among people from different backgrounds. The assumption of this policy paradigm has always been that immigrants bear the culture of their own countries, and that these distinctions need to be recognized within liberal societies as the rights of individuals and cultural groups. The original focus of Will Kymlicka (1995) was the most powerful foundation of this narrative, which was followed by an explosion of literature within diversity, immigration and citizenship studies (see Barry, 2001; Carens, 2000; Crowder, 2013; Hesse, 2000; Isin and Turner, 2002; Modood, 2007; Modood et al., 2006; Parekh, 2000; Phillips, 2007; Stevenson, 2001; Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2009). We already know that one of the main impacts of Kymlicka has been to reconcile group minority cultures with the national group majority, while offering a group-based perspective of culture, always taking for granted that culture has a political and social function that fosters feelings of belonging and loyalty.

The epicentre of the debate in Europe is that this multicultural narrative has neglected the social and political value of the contact hypothesis (Cantle, 2012), emphasizing the need for communication. This is why its primary normative force is that it is viewed as a set of arguments sharing one basic idea: that contact among people from different backgrounds matters.

Interculturalism also shares the premise that from a policy point of view we cannot condemn people to self-identify with a fixed category of cultural identity, because of their nationalities and culture of origin. Many people simply do not like to be singled out or held up as an example of their cultural group. This is the most flagrant evidence that the concept of diversity itself is a politically constructed category and far from neutral. The intercultural narrative expresses the challenge that we need to break this

epistemological barrier that was in part created by the former multicultural narrative. Taking this perspective, we can even say that the multicultural narrative has more in common with assimilationism and homogeneity, since it maintains the idea of a primarily belonging to one society with a loyalty to one nation state (Castles, 2000, p. 5).

Assimilationism and multiculturalism share an interpretative framework of diversity, apparent in the way attributes such as nationality, race, religion and cultural community are similarly categorized. The multicultural narrative, to my knowledge, has never formulated a critical interpretative framework regarding the way homogeneous cultural and national states categorize diversity dynamics. The intercultural argument is that we cannot impose the majoritarian understanding of diversity categories upon others. Ethnicity is self-ascribed, flexible and cannot be imposed by those with the power to define diversity categories. The intercultural narrative reacts against the process of political ethnicization of people. This substantial criticism of the multicultural narrative in the domains of ethnicity and nationalism is very close to what Rogers Brubaker calls 'groupism', namely, 'the tendency to treat ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities to which interests and agency can be attributed' (2002, p. 164), or even 'solitarism' by Amartya Sen (2006, pp. xii–xiii), which criticizes this tendency to reduce people to singular, differentiated identity affiliations – to 'miniaturize' people into one dimension of their multiple identities.

Multicultural idol 3: Beyond the immigrant/citizenship divide of the population narrative framework: the mainstreaming turn

The third and probably least-mentioned narrative is what I call the 'immigrant/citizenship divide', which has dominated the diversity debate in migration studies. What interests me in this divide is the consequence of always reproducing a certain discourse where 'we' citizens are not the subjects of diversity policies. In the policy-making process the population is divided into citizens and non-citizens, nationals and non-nationals, immigrants and citizens. This has the effect of reproducing a certain power relation between majority-citizen and a minority-ethnic that fails to create bridges among these two sets of people. Instead, this framework reinforces the idea of separate categories of people, just as diversity policies have mainly targeted one section of the population, whether they are called immigrants, non-nationals, ethnic minorities, or a range of other conceptualizations in different countries and contexts.

It is likely that the multicultural-based diversity narrative has contributed to the reinforcement of a division among populations. We know from migration studies that there are three main migratory process stages specific to immigration: admission policies, reception policies and citizenship policies. Other policies that seek to manage the accommodation of diversity, and the settlement and incorporation of immigrants into the main public sectors, are incorporated within policies that also target citizens. Specific policies are given their justification when circumstances of discrimination due to religion, language, skin colour or whatever mark of cultural difference, become a factor of inequality and even power relation. The specificity centres on differences within diversity frameworks, and is not specifically related to the practical situations that an immigrant encounters in his or her process of incorporation. The fact the immigrant has no political rights is specific to immigrants and has nothing to do with diversity. The idea that diversity must be based on the competences of immigrants, and also on context, is what drives the concept of super-diversity, which is quite different from the concept of diversity as it has been understood within frameworks of multiculturalism (Vertovec, 2007, 2014). Mainstreaming policy dismantles this narrative framework, incorporating the entire population (immigrants and citizens) as the target of policy. This becomes so prominent that we need now to leave aside immigration policy as a policy directed only at migrants, and instead speak about mainstreaming an intercultural policy, which has the feature of including all citizens within the scope of diversity policies.

What contributes to the intercultural turn, then, is the interplay between these three reactions to the three *multicultural policy idols*: the local turn, the return to the individual and the mainstreaming turn. The coherence between all three frames IPP formation in cities. But as we have already mentioned, behind a policy paradigm there is a determinate cosmovision and a way of identifying what Hall termed as 'anomalies' (1993). It is towards this philosophy that we now turn.

4. Intercultural policy formation: main normative drivers

As tends to happen with the MPP (e.g. Crowder 2013), we cannot assume a generalized view of IPP. The internal intercultural debate is more complex than multiculturalists seem to admit. This can be seen in the work of Nasar Meer and Tariq Modood (2012) and also with Kymlicka (2003, 2016), all of whom present a plain conception of interculturalism, as simply a narrative

that promotes dialogue. In this second stage of my argument, I present the IPP as sharing, in its descriptive sense, a coherent set of three basic premises and, in its normative sense, as being grounded in two main hypotheses and following two main drivers.

As I have argued, at the core of the IPP lies one basic idea: that the interaction among people from different diversity groups matters, and that this has been overlooked by the MPP paradigm, which has mainly concentrated on securing the cultural practices of diverse groups in terms of rights and equal opportunities. Currently, the strategy based on the promotion of interaction, community-building and prejudice reduction is one of the approaches most widely recognized by international institutions, especially European ones.

The IPP offers a real change of focus with its lens placed on the contact of citizens with one another. This is perceived in gradual terms, from circumstantial and sporadic communication to inter-personal dialogue and even interaction, which implies the sharing of a common project. From this point of view, the IPP focuses on three basic premises:

1. *(Positive) contact promotion:* the concern here is not only the promotion of interpersonal contact, but also the resulting negation of stereotypes and reduction in prejudice towards 'others'. In this sense, it is a means to an end through an ongoing process intended to develop and maintain relational competences. In other words, this premise tries to ensure that the contact zones between people are areas of (positive) interaction rather than areas of conflict. Here, conflict is understood in a broad sense, encompassing racism, poverty and social exclusion (Cantle, 2012, p. 102). This premise is due to the IPP being a network-centric way of seeing relations rather than an agent-based way of thinking. This is why interrelations are at the centre of its focus.
2. *Anti-discrimination promotion:* this is a fundamental element of the IPP since it focuses on the factors that hinder or support intercultural relations. There are contextual, legal, institutional and structural factors that reduce the motivation of people to interact and even build walls of separation between people based on misinterpretations of differences. Here we take into account legal frameworks concerning voting rights for foreigners and naturalization policies, as well as socio-economic opportunity gaps among citizens, when differences become the explanatory factor in reducing contact. Anti-discrimination promotion also includes tackling disadvantage, since it is hard to see how IPP can

continue over time if one or more sectors of society are so unequal that people are led to believe they have no real stake in that society.

3. *Diversity advantage promotion:* this means re-designing institutions and policies in all fields to treat diversity as a potential resource and a public good and not as a nuisance to be contained. In practice, this diversity management is effective in terms of providing equal opportunities for education, employment, entrepreneurship, holding civil office, etc. (Guidikova, 2015; Wood and Landry, 2008).

These three premises cover different angles of intercultural practice, and their coherence contributes to the consolidation of the IPP. Going from the descriptive to the normative sense, we can identify two empirical hypotheses emerging from the literature that focus on the potential impacts of diversity and required IPP promotion. I assess here how each hypothesis develops a theory that informs the two main normative drivers.

Understood from the beginning as positive interaction, anti-discrimination and diversity advantage (the three dimensions defining descriptively the IPP), the first key question is how to justify these promotions. At least two hypotheses underlie the IPP normative drivers (see Zapata-Barrero, 2015a, 2016a):

- The social hypothesis says that diversity without policy intervention tends to provoke segregation and exclusion, reducing social capital and the sense of societal belonging, either through social inequality or through differing flows of information and knowledge between immigrants and citizens (see Putnam, 2007). The IPP seeks to restore social cohesion, trust and feelings of belonging through social equality policies together with policies that seek to promote knowledge formation and prejudice reduction.

- The political hypothesis argues that diversity tends to alter the traditional expression and function of national identities, threatening traditional values and systems of rights and duties, which guarantee a common sense of loyalty and stability between citizens and the basic structure of society. In this case, the three basic premises of the IPP seek to maintain control of any justified change in national traditional values, protecting equilibrium between the loyalty of citizens and the rights of immigrants (see Bouchard, 2015).

Each hypothesis reflects a theory that informs a normative driver. Answering the social hypothesis requires the development of a *social*

theory of diversity, grounded in Gordon W. Allport's (1954) well-known contact theory, which posits the idea that contact reduces prejudice and promotes knowledge formation; and based on Ted Cantle's (2008) view of IPP as effecting community cohesion and community-building. We must also take into account the relationship between class and interculturalism, whereby the physical segregation of particular areas often occurs (Zapata-Barrero, 2015a).

Hence, supporting positive interaction involves transforming initial conflict zones into areas of positive contact, in order to ensure optimal peaceful coexistence and social inclusion. The basic aim here is social conflict reduction, as diversity has become an explanatory factor in social disturbances. The incorporation of the IPP into the main social networks of a society is also a priority in fostering cohesion.

To react to the political hypothesis we need to develop a *political theory of diversity*. The most recent illustration of this view is the work of Gérard Bouchard (2015). Bouchard focuses on managing the relationship between the immigrant and the society that they have entered into, ensuring what he formulates as an equilibrated relation between the majority and minority groups, thereby avoiding dualism in society between traditional values and those that are introduced through immigration. This theory seeks to provide the most appropriate spaces for motivating agreements between traditions, accepting unavoidable changes together with the context of diversity, through participative policy channels and other means of vertical communication. Its purposes are to manage the potential impact that any change can have on tradition, to regulate the behaviour of nationals, and to minimize impacts on the loyalty of citizens and the rights, duties and access to equal opportunities of immigrants.

Comparatively speaking, each theory brings about its own mode of justifying the need to promote IPP, to pursue specific goals and to establish its own limits to diversity. The social theory of diversity shapes a cohesive strand of IPP and has a normative driver of social inclusion and trust, with social conflict as its basic 'diversity limit'. The political theory of diversity seeks to legitimate a contractual strand of IPP, with stability (of tradition and rights/duties) as its normative driver and the loss of national identity as its basic 'diversity limit'.

Concluding considerations: IPP as the main driver to xenophobia reduction?

There is a lack of support for diversity management in the current atmosphere of anti-multiculturalism (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010) and the increase in support for xenophobic and Euro-sceptic political parties with populist narratives against migrants (Chopin, 2015; Hartleb, 2011; Leconte, 2015). The new context of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007) together with the embracing of radicalization by second-generation migrants poses a highly volatile situation for Europe. The last European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) report, for instance, signals growth in anti-immigrant sentiment and Islamophobia as being among the key trends in 2015 (ECRI, 2016). The recent terrorist attacks in Copenhagen, Nice and Paris further add to the Islamophobic sentiment being misused by populist political parties to stir up prejudice and hatred against Muslims in general. Likewise, the decision of the UK to leave the European Union in June 2016 (Brexit) is also connected to anti-immigrant sentiments. In most EU and Council of Europe documents, interculturalism is linked to European values such as human rights, democracy, a culture of peace and dialogue, and European identity (Bekemans, 2012; Council of Europe 2008; European Commission, 2008b; Ksenija Vidmar-Horvat, 2012). The ten-year strategy 'Working Together Towards 2025' of the Anna Lindh Foundation (2015), an inter-governmental institution bringing together civil society and citizens across the Mediterranean, also argues for interculturalism as an alternative to the extremist narrative.

While interculturalism in this context of crisis of ideas is manifesting in some local policy and academic circles and in many European programmes, it still faces challenges in being considered as a consolidated policy paradigm. This is because it has not yet tested its normative arguments, which are based on assumptions of diversity advantages.

Many empirical studies generally present normative assumptions, while normative arguments often tend to presuppose empirical evidences. As the debate on the IPP illustrates, the question of how to reconcile normative and empirical thinking presents a crucial challenge for innovation and a real imperative to influence societal processes of change and political decisions in Europe. Kseniya Khovanova-Rubicondo and Dino Pinelli (2012) undertook a review of the literature on diversity to understand whether there is sufficient evidence to support the ICC. Given that an intercultural approach is relatively new, it has not been widely analysed within the literature. Yet, as Khovanova-Rubicondo and Pinelli (2012) show, a number of studies

focusing on the key elements, concepts and settings of the intercultural approach have been conducted. These studies include discussions of the growth, productivity and employment impact of diversity; of governance structures and processes (see, for instance, Zapata-Barrero, 2016b); of urban space planning (see, for instance, Wood, 2015); of housing and neighbourhood policies; and of security and policing policies.

The diversity-advantage approach to interculturalism (Wood and Landry, 2008) is embedded within an *economic development hypothesis*. This is likely due to the necessary translation of this approach from economics and business studies. This line of discussion connects with other studies that follow the traditional view of the economic benefits of immigration (Borjas, 1995). The link between diversity and economic performance is already producing interesting work and contributing to consolidation of the formation of the IPP (see Alesina and Ferrara, 2005; Bakbasel, 2011; Bellini et al., 2009; Janssens et al., 2009; Khovanova-Rubicondo and Pinelli, 2012; Wagner, 2015). But the argument that the IPP contributes to the economic development of cities still requires more empirical evidence through case studies and comparative research.

There is also a need for further exploration of the *xenophobia-reduction hypothesis*. The argument that interculturalism can contribute to reducing the popularity of anti-immigration sentiments and can be a tool informing anti-racism policies is yet to be tested. The key idea here is that the two normative drivers (social and political) of the IPP can contribute not only to the process of policy change from multiculturalism to interculturalism, but can also reinforce the *xenophobia-reduction hypothesis*. Through this they would work to reduce ethno-national narratives, racism, prejudice, false stereotypes and negative public opinions, which limit the reasons for contact between people from different backgrounds.

This hypothesis is related to efforts seeking to reduce the conditions and spaces that make xenophobia and racism possible. This policy is strengthened by its non-ideological focus, alongside its potential for neutrality (see Zapata-Barrero, 2015b). We can also say that even if interculturalism is a strategic non-neutral decision to diversity management, as it does not seek to favour any specific ethnic group on equality grounds, it is impartial. This particular function of IPP has still not been examined, either theoretically or empirically, and could be analysed at different levels. From a political party point of view, the hypothesis can mean that the application of IPP in cities tends to leave no place for political parties with clear xenophobic narratives. From a public opinion perspective, it can also mean that once

the intercultural policy has been put in place, the negative attitudes towards diversity tend to reduce.

Xenophobia, racism, and intolerant discourses and practices are increasing their presence in all spheres of European societies from political parties to social discourses, and among citizens (Triandafyllidou et al., 2011; Zapata-Barrero and Triandafyllidou, 2012). They are currently gaining primacy in several national governments and are an emerging headache for European institutional discourse and practices. Xenophobia, racism and intolerance are becoming a new 'political ideology' in Europe and, as such, they are framing political opinion and legitimizing politics and policies. Scholarly work demonstrates that while this trend originates in cultural anxiety, it also emerges from approaches to welfare, entrenched inequalities and emerging insecurity, all of which are also nurtured by the inconsistencies arising from the management of complex issues such as access into European territory and diversity (Hampshire, 2013).

Populism and neo-conservatism are the main forms that this new ideology takes. Most of the public debate around migration and diversity is basically focused at the explanatory level, seeking to identify the main factors provoking such an emergence, as well as strategies seeking to invade political power and governments, and less on the political and policy instruments we have to prevent and reduce the conditions that make it possible. The specific argument of this chapter was to consider that the normative drivers of interculturalism could also be drivers for reducing xenophobia. For the IPP approach, xenophobia is seen as an ideology and as a factor threatening the conditions of setting the three basic premises of the descriptive dimension of the IPP (positive interaction, anti-discrimination and diversity advantages) and the two normative drivers (social and political). It is at this point that the connection becomes meaningful both theoretically and empirically. The question of how to explain, measure and prevent xenophobia is not new in Europe. We can mention here the report of the European Commission (area of Justice) on coding and measurements of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) (see Cea D'Ancona, 2014). However, there still remains work to be done on treating the nexus between xenophobia-reduction and interculturalism. This would certainly respond to the gap between normative assumptions and policy outcomes.

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III. Putting intercultural dialogue into practice

1. Intercultural dialogue: lineage and practice in the Indian subcontinent

Priyankar Upadhyaya

This chapter delineates the lineage and lived practices of intercultural dialogue (ICD) in India's cultural and educational settings. It draws on India's long civilizational tradition of nurturing diversity and pluralism to reflect on contemporary pedagogies and everyday cultural practices. It highlights how the intercultural understanding that sprouted in the foundational Hindu scriptures proliferated in the mediaeval era through Indo-Islamic confluence and spiritual movements such as Sufi and Bhakti, and was embedded in the Gandhian pedagogy of tolerance and non-violence. While exploring pan-Indian intercultural relations, this chapter looks closely at the practice of intercultural dialogue in the ancient city of Varanasi, and how it relates to emergent social fissures and intercultural tensions. The overall concern here is to unravel the unique historical context within which intercultural understanding and dialogue has emerged and evolved in India.

Diversity and dialogue

The acceptance of diversity and dialogue has been a constant feature of Indian civilization. Often described as a river, constantly refreshed by new streams, Indian civilization reveals a remarkable propensity to respect and absorb traditions and rituals from other cultures. There are countless references to diversity and plural visions in leading ancient Indian (Sanskrit) texts such as the Vedas and Upanishads. The Rig Veda, one of the most coveted texts of Hindu philosophy, thus declared *'Ekam sad vipra bahudha vadanti'* (truth is one; sages call it by various names) and '*Aano bhadra krtavo yantu vishvatah*' (may noble and auspicious thoughts come to us from all over) (Rig-Veda 1.89.1). The doctrine of the *ishta-devata*, or the chosen Deity, allows each Hindu to become a centre of his or her own universe or to be single-minded in his or her devotion without being judgmental about others. There is neither a single founder, nor a holy book that represents Hinduism quintessentially and there is no one singular path

of worship. Hinduism thus reveals itself as a religion, which has its centre everywhere and its circumference, nowhere. The quest for truth through a reconciliation of diverse viewpoints has been innate to Hindu thought. Even the nature of divinity has been a subject of intellectual as well as experiential debate right through the Upanishads through medieval Sufi and Bhakti mystics to saints and religious leaders in recent times. Seemingly Hinduism manifests as a mosaic with no singular vision claiming to be the centrepiece. Sometimes defined as a way of life or a culture, Hinduism embodies a range of creeds and cultural norms and 'little traditions' that infuse the quotidian life of its followers (Upadhyaya, 2010, p. 102).

The spirit of dialogue and admissibility of heterodoxy matches the respect for plurality in Indian traditions (Sen, 2005, pp. 3–33). The ancient Sanskrit dictum '*Vade vade jayate tattvaBodha*' (through continuous dialogue alone does one arrive to the truth) still resonates in the popular imagination. The tradition of dialogue, or *Shastrartha,* allows people to experience their own truth, following whichever path they choose. Pursuit of truth and knowledge is the only objective, and there is never a loser, nor a winner in these debates.

The spirit of pluralism and dialogue has found expression in all phases of Indian history ranging from the rock edicts of King Ashoka (circa 270 BC) to the Moghul Emperor Akbar (circa 1580 AD), who frequently organized dialogues between the Sunni Ulemmas, Sufi Shaikhs, Hindu Pundits, Parsis, Zoroastrians, Jains and Catholics in search of shared values and practices. At the level of the common masses, multicultural rituals and practices facilitated a peaceful transaction of intercommunity with demotic, superstitious and local practices. This tradition of dialogue continued in the twentieth century with spiritual leaders like Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj and J Krishnamurti constantly engaged in dialogues with their own disciples and others (Landis and Albert, 2012, p. 148).

Coexistence of religions

The lineage and practice of intercultural dialogue has been predicated on the coexistence of varied religious traditions in India. Across the millennium, the Indian subcontinent saw the dawn of four major religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism) and nurtured successive waves of religious communities including Christian, Jewish, Parsee, Muslim and Baha'i. The Jews came after the fall of Jerusalem, while Muslim Arab traders began their

settlement in the eighth century.The Syrian Christians (also known as the Nazarenes) are the living remnants of such forms of historic intercultural immersion on the Malabar Coast of south-western India, where they arrived 2,000 years ago. The continued nurturing of diversity and a culture of dialogue has given the Indian landscape a unique diversity, creating composite spaces across varied religious and cultural affinities. It extends from the on-the-ground contact of travellers to high-profile meetings of religious leaders (Goshen-Gottstein, 2016). The plural ethos of Hinduism, enriched through its interface with Buddhism and Jainism and its creative encounter with Islam, has inspired a range of multi-religious rituals and practices drawing on tolerance and interreligious understanding.

One of the most valuable ideas that has constantly inspired intercultural dialogue in India and across its borders draws from the Jain doctrine of *anekāntvāda* ('many sidedness' or 'relative pluralism'). Traced back to the teachings of the 24th Jain *Tīrthankara* Mahāvīra (599–527 BCE), this doctrine teaches the principles of pluralism and multiplicity of viewpoints – that reality is perceived differently from diverse points of view, and that no single point of view is the complete truth, yet taken together they comprise the complete truth. The ancient Jain texts often explain the concepts of anekāntvāda with the parable of the Blind Men and an Elephant. Mahatma Gandhi's visions of religious tolerance and non-violence were much inspired by the doctrine of *anekāntvāda*.

Sikhism, the other Indian homegrown religion, places equal emphasis on interfaith understanding and social harmony, while blending elements of Islam and Hinduism. Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Sikh Guru, and one of the most influential Sikh preachers, says in one of the *Shabad (*holy prayer):

> Someone is Hindu and someone a Muslim, then someone is Shia, and someone a Sunni, but all the human beings, as a species, are recognised as one and the same. The temple and the mosque are the same, there is no difference between a Hindu worship and Muslim prayer; all the human beings are the same, but the illusion is of various types (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib, n.d., p. 56).

In addition, the most sacred Sikh religious book Guru Granth says:

> The Almighty Lord can be worshipped through innumerable languages and by innumerable names – Creator, Allah, Ram, Gobind, Guru and God. All names are equal; no single name is superior or inferior. We may praise Him by any name and still gain acceptance by Him. Those who love him achieve the goal of their lives (Guru Granth, n.d., p. 8).

The pedagogies of intercultural dialogue so well enshrined in Indian ethos of interreligious coexistence took new forms in the wake of Indo-Islamic confluence. The Moghul Emperor Akbar (1556–1607) frequently organized dialogues between the Sunni Ulemmas, Sufi Sheikhs, Hindu Pundits, and Parsis, Zoroastrians, Jains and Catholics in search of shared values and practices (Davies, 1960, p. 317). During these interreligious sessions, the representatives from various religions were encouraged to talk about their faiths, religious practices and the paths to realize God. The most important feature of Akbar's efforts was that he turned the process of religious dialogue into a public campaign (Wasey, 2010, p. 60). The Moghul Emperor Akbar's proposal of establishing *Din-i-ilahi* (Religion of God) combined the best elements of several religions (Davies, 1960). His great-grandson Dara Shikoh's distinguished work *Majma-ul Bahrain* (mingling of two oceans) constitutes a remarkable exploration of the syncretism-convergence between Hinduism and Islam and how both absorb each other's good practices (Nazeer, n.d.).

Bhakti and Sufi traditions

Perhaps the best example of intercultural dialogue and interreligious understanding is to be found in India's spiritual traditions of Sufism and Bhakti, which for centuries have encouraged Hindus and Muslims to surpass their religious insularity and enrich each other's cultural practices (Burman, 1996; Sikand, 2003). If the Bhakti tradition represents the Hindu core of spiritual peace, Sufism or *tasawwuf* exemplifies the mystical face of Islam. Over time, both Sufism and Bhakti movements developed a symbiotic relationship with their respective followers equally venerating many sages across their sects. Both spiritual traditions espoused intercommunity accommodation and blended the orthogenetic and heterogenetic elements of 'great and little' traditions of Hinduism and Islam, thus blurring the difference between the two religions. There are no instances of a Sufi Pir (elder) or Bhakti Sadguru trying to convert a Hindu or Muslim to any other religion.

Bhakti saint-poets, both men and women, led this movement from all regions and castes of India, unshackling Hindu religion from the burden of ritual and caste. Through a devotion to one's Lord that renounced all other loyalties, one could inwardly defy many of the conventions of caste, class and gender, while outwardly conforming to them. It also made it possible for the devotee to accept the insights of other religious traditions. Bhakti

traditions engendered a remarkable ethos of intercultural peace, which enabled both Hindus and Muslims to transcend their religious insularity and enrich each other's cultural practices. The celebration of religious diversity led by the poetry of Kabir-das, Dadu, Ravi-das, Sena and Mira Bai adorned the lived religious life during the medieval era. Bhakti hymns, evoking the peaceful coexistence of all communities, thus resonated at *Kirtan* (devotional singing) in Hindu Temples, Qawalli in Sufi Dargahs and at Gurbaniat in Sikh Gurdwaras.

The life and philosophy of Kabir, the fifteenth century mystic poet-saint, stands out as the quintessential exemplar of interreligious synergy. Known for his syncretic visions, Kabir's popular verses inspired the Bhakti movement, *as well as the foundational teachings of Sikhism*. He interrogated the ritualistic aspects of both Hinduism and Islam as enshrined in their religious texts. Despite his staunch criticism, his work and legacy is claimed equally by all Indian religions. While Hindus refer to him as *Kabir-das* (servant of God), Muslims call him *Kabir-muwahhi* (The Unitarian) and the Sikhs call him a Bhagat. Hindus revere him as a Vaishnavite Bhakta, while the Muslims venerate him as a Peer. There are diverse claims about his ancestry as well. While some folklore maintains that despite being raised in a Muslim weaver family he was a born Hindu who became the devotee of a Hindu Vaishnava poet saint Ramananda, another version tells that he was initiated under the patronage of a Pir from Jhansi named Sheikh Taqi. The legend is that both Hindus and Muslims sparred bitterly over his remains (Rizvi, 1983, p. 412).

The converging influence of Hindu and Muslim communities is manifested in his famous saying, 'Some say Ram, Some Khuda (*koi bole Ram koi Khuda kahe*)'. His poetry, often labelled as pantheistic, presents a quintessential fusion of the Hindu doctrine of *advaita* (non-otherness) and the Sufi doctrine of *wahdah-al-wujud* (unity of being). He ridiculed the religious and caste divide and espoused the essential oneness of humankind. He urged Hindu and Muslim religious leaders to transcend parochial sectarianism and hypocrisy and to live in mutual harmony. He is equally revered as a follower of Bhakti and as a Sufi (Vaudeville, 1993).

The lineage of Sufism in India goes back to Moinuddin Chishtī – a Persian Pir (1140–1233 CE) who arrived from Afghanistan and set up a Sufi Order (called tariqah-s) at Ajmer in north India. Successive Sufi orders patronized by Muslim dynasties over the next six centuries remained open to the influences of indigenous religious traditions. Sufism practises the ethos of

oneness of human beings and tolerance and respect for other religions. It goes beyond mysticism to accept all living creations as one and paves the way for interreligious dialogue. The Sufis sought to find common ground in the multi-racial, multi-religious and multilingual mosaic of the Indian subcontinent. Sufism emphasized that there are varied paths leading to God, but that none is quicker and more effective than loving one's fellow humans, irrespective of their social background. The practice of *Sufi-Sulh-e-Kul* (peace to all) has functioned as a key Sufi pivot, facilitating a mutually enriching understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims (Kinra, 2013).

The Sufi Saint Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi (1164–1240) who founded the doctrine of *Wahdat al-wujud* considered all human beings as manifestation of God. He used to say: 'My heart is a mosque, a Church, a synagogue and a temple. God is love and my heart is the seat of love.' Amir Khusrau, another leading Sufi saint, said: 'Though the Hindu is not a believer like me; he nevertheless believes in many things, which I believe' (Nizami, 1985, p. 6). Following this ethos, many Sufi thinkers explored the convergence between the Islamic *wahdat al-wujud* and the canons of the Upanishads (Sikand, 2003). Sufis thus believed in linguistic diversity and promoted Hindi and other regional languages to communicate their ideas and visions (Nizami, 1999).

Sufi traditions continue to hold sway in the Indian subcontinent. The most visible manifestations of Sufism in India are the thousands of intercommunity shrines, dargahs and pilgrimages, which are revered by all communities. Spread all over the subcontinent, these sites exhibit a multifaceted medley of cultural, lingual and regional diversity. In southern India, for instance, people of all religions visit the Festival of Jatre of the deity Anjaneya and the annual Urs of Jamal Bibi Ma Saheba. In the Punjab, Sikh devotees of Muslim saints such as Rode Shah Fatte Shah, Jogi Pir and Sakhi Sarwar believe that they were Sikhs and followers of Guru Arjun. They gave them new names such as Rode Singh, Fatte Singh, Jogi Bir and so on after Partition, but have now reverted to their old names. They organize annual festival (*urs*), pay homage to the Sufi saints and conduct Akhand Paths of Guru Granth Sahib. At Sheikh Farid's Dargahs in Faridkot in the east of the Punjab, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus visit together, listen to qawals in praise of the Prophet Muhammad, and Sikh Ragis (musicians) sing the hymns of Sheikh Farid and Sikh gurus from the Granth Sahib. There are many other common Dargahs and Gurudwaras in the Punjab, such as the Gurudwara Dargah Nabi Khan. Sufi saint Miyan Mir was invited by the sixth Sikh Guru Arjun Dev to lay the foundation of the Golden Temple (Srivastava, 2009; Upadhyaya, 2014).

Veneration of the same saints and their dargahs both by Hindus and Muslims encourages communal confluence and harmony. In many places, Muslim saints are elevated and worshiped as *Gram Devta* (village deity). These local traditions at shared sacred spaces have absorbed rituals from diverse traditions. On Thursday, when believers gather to seek the blessings of the Pir, the shrine is ritually cleansed with rose water, which is then distributed to devotees as a holy offering (*Prasad*) – a unique Hindu practice without precedence in Islamic traditions. The ritual crossover is also notable on the Urs – the anniversary of the saint's death – when quite like the Hindu tradition of *sringar* (decoration), the Pir's casket is given a fresh covering sheet (*chadar*) with songs (*qawwali*) rendered in praise of the Pir, while food is offered to worshippers (Litvak, 1984). Thus, in many ways, the visitation to the mazar creates the impression that one has gone to a temple for *darshan* ('seeing' the deity). The ritual crossover presents Mazars as 'institutions of cultural adaptation' (Engineer, 2004, p. 69).

This cultural crossover has traditionally encouraged the participation of diverse communities in each other's festivals and rituals (Freitag, 1989, pp. 165–66; Kumar, 1988). While Hindus join in Muharram and URS-celebrations, Muslims participate in the Ram Lila and other Hindu festivals (Katz, 2007). Among the Muslims, the Barelvi and Shia have been more forthcoming and are often joined by Deobandi in such interactions (Ahmad, 1984). Musicians from both communities perform in temples and shrines on important celebrations. Musical performances in *Mushayara* and *Quavallis* (Muslim musical events) and the celebration of annual Urs are a part of everyday experience in the city, drawing audiences as well as patronage from across the communities. Leading artists such as Chand Putli and Majid Bharati have adorned both Biraha and Urs (Upadhyaya, 2011).

Evolving pedagogies

In the modern era, Mahatma Gandhi, along with spiritual leaders such as Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, propagated the freedom of an individual to choose his or her own path of devotion and asked others to be respectful of the same. Sri Ramakrishna famously advised, 'as you remain firm in your faith and opinion, give the others the same freedom to remain firm in their faith and opinion' (Mysorekar, 2015). Swami Vivekananda echoed the sentiments by proclaiming that all religions should be treated with equal veneration, because God is only one, irrespective of what name he is known by. His equal admiration and respect for all faiths was evident

in the concluding prayer in his historic speech delivered at the first World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893: 'may he who is Brahman of the Hindus, the Ahura Mazda of Zoroastrians, the Buddha of Buddhists, the Jehovah of the Jews, the Father in Heavens of Christian, give strength to you to carry out your noble ideas'. He further stated that, 'we believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. Our civilization is great as it is based on the idea of the coexistence of faiths – *Sarva Dharma Sambhavathat* implies that we have equal respect for all Dharmas, for all faiths' (Narasimhananda, 2012, p. 146). Vivekananda used the metaphor of many rivers flowing into one mighty ocean to express his vision of diversity. He referred to an ancient hymn to elaborate his viewpoint: 'As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee' (ibid., p. 134).

Mahatma Gandhi strongly supported the idea of learning good teachings from different religions through constructive conversations for peaceful co-existence among people of different faiths. He found it essential for young students to develop their understanding of different religious systems and suggested that the 'curriculum of religious instruction should include a study of the tenets of faiths other than one's own. For this purpose the students should be trained to cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the doctrines of various great religions of the world in a spirit of reverence and broad-minded tolerance'. Mahatma Gandhi looked upon all religions as so many flowers from the same garden, or branches from the same majestic tree. 'Just as the tree has many branches but one root, similarly the various religions are the leaves and branches of the same tree. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are the main branches, but as far varieties of religion, there are as numerous as mankind' (Gandhi, 1962, p. iv). Gandhi frequently mentioned the imperative of learning all religions to discover their underlying unity and to develop equal respect for all religions. To him, God, Allah, Rama, Narayana, Ishwar and Khuda were expressions of the same Being. He had courage to say that 'the Bible is as much as a book of religion with me as the Gita and the Koran'. Gandhi emphasized the importance of religious understanding by suggesting that 'students should be trained to cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the doctrine of various great religions of the word in a spirit of reverence and broadminded tolerance' (in Ravindra Kumar, n.d.)

The pedagogies of intercultural understanding were further enriched by such eminent spiritual leaders and educationists as Jiddu Krishnamurti, who gave a spiritual dimension to religiosity and felt that what is sacred or truly religious could not be conditional, culture-bound or time-bound. He wanted children to be educated so that they become religious human beings and develop an understanding of correct action, the depth and beauty of this relationship, and the sacredness of a religious life (Forbes, 1997). Sri Sathya Sai Baba, worshipped by millions of disciples, celebrates intercultural understanding as peacefulness. He set up a chain of schools for young children, which celebrate the festivals of all major religions and teach through *Bhajans* (prayers), which are non–sectarian and universal in appeal. Similarly, Mata Amritanandamayi accepts the various spiritual practices and prayers of all religions as various systems for the single goal of purifying the mind (Kumar and Jacobsen, 2015).

Recent initiatives

Currently, there are numerous initiatives afoot that aim to promote intercultural understanding using divergent terminology and networking trajectories. One outstanding initiative that has contributed immensely to the growth of interfaith dialogue in India is the 'Temple of Understanding India Foundation' (TOU-India). Founded by Dr Karan Singh in 1990, the TOU-India works as a branch of 'The Temple of Understanding' – a global NGO that has Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council. It has organized numerous events and activities to promote interfaith dialogue and education during recent decades.

One innovative initiative to promote intercultural understanding in recent times has been the 'Walk of Hope' undertaken by the *Manav Ekta Mission* in 2015–16. Led by Sri M, this 7,500 kilometre-long journey for communal peace is joined by thousands of people from all communities. Born in a Muslim family as Mumtaz Ali Khan, Sri M became a living yogi entranced by mystical stories of Sufi saints and dedicated himself to promoting inter-faith harmony transcending religious, racial, geographical, cultural and ideological differences (Sri M, 2010). He also leads a *Sarva Dharma Kendra* – a spiritual retreat to facilitate dialogue between religions and to serve as an experiment for humankind's realization of the essential unity of all religions. The Walk of Hope commenced on 12 January 2015, the birth anniversary of a great prophet of interfaith harmony, Swami Vivekananda. Starting from the Gandhi Memorial Mandapam in Kanyakumari, it concluded in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir on 29 April 2016, reaching 10 million fellow Indians

during the Walk. The walk covered 15–20 kilometres a day and halted in the evening at a pre-determined village or town on the route. The evening was spent meeting with the local populace, which usually included meaningful dialogues, interfaith prayers, eating together and resting overnight in their homes.

Some UNESCO-sponsored initiatives have also left their mark in the realm of intercultural understanding and dialogue. For instance, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development – a UNESCO Category 1 institution based in New Delhi that recently launched the Campus Ambassadors Project – deals with higher education, youth, intercultural competencies and intercultural dialogue. This global project is targeted at Institutes of Higher Education with the primary purpose of developing a series of student-led and student-driven activities that will build and nurture spaces for intercultural dialogue within Indian Campuses, with the flexibility to develop their own inter and intra-campus activities. The UNESCO Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding located at the Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi has also emerged as a hub of intercultural dialogue in north India. It networks with a range of institutions and NGOs to explore and highlight the potential of cultural and, in particular, religious diversity as a resource for peace rather than a barrier. The Chair has undertaken many practical activities harnessing academic resources to promote intercultural dialogue in cultural and academic settings. Similarly, the Confederation of Voluntary Associations (COVA) functions as yet another important national network of voluntary organizations working for inter-communal harmony in India. COVA is engaged in training 15,000 children, youth and women in the city of Hyderabad, and has collaborated with over 1,000 organizations at the national level to promote communal harmony at different levels. Similarly, the Society for Rural Integrated and Youth Association (SRIYA) trains youth from different religious and minority groups as cultural ambassadors. These young men and women will facilitate and provide channels of communication within and across their communities. Through its project, SRIYA aims to target the rising threat of religious fundamentalism, caste violence, and violence against women and minorities. The Inter Cultural Dialogue and Exchange (ICDE), a Bangalore-based multi-cultural and secular organization aims to act as a bridge between diverse cultures by creating training and orientation opportunities for young people to promote cross-cultural learning. Many similar programmes and initiatives are active in various parts of India which strive to promote intercultural understanding and dialogue.

ICD experience in a city

Varanasi, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world (also known as Banaras or Kashi), is known to be the holiest place of Hinduism. It is also recognized as a significant gathering place for other religions. It is in this city that Lord Buddha preached his first sermon (*dhamma chakra parivartan*) in 528 BC; three top preachers (*Tirthankars*) of the Jain religion belonged to the city, and Guru Nanak Dev, founder of Sikhism, was greatly inspired by this municipality. Sant Kabir, Sant Raidas and Sen Nai, who espoused interfaith understanding, belonged to Varanasi. It was in this historic city that the poet-saint, reformer Tulsidas wrote one of the most popular versions of *Ramayana*, advocating reconciliation between diverse castes and religions.

In the realm of music and theatre too, Varanasi is an exemplar of multiculturalism. The Banaras Gharana (family) of music incorporates the Sarod from Afghanistan, and the Shehnai and Sitar from Persian culture with the same pride they reserve for Indian instruments. Bismillah Khan, a world-renowned Muslim musician from Banaras, was a devout Shia Muslim who also worshipped Saraswati (the Hindu Goddess of music). He learned *Shehnai* (musical instrument) from his uncle, who served as the official musician at the famed Hindu Vishwanath temple. 'I am proud of this city Banaras ... where Hindus and Muslims live in perfect harmony like the confluence of Ganges and Yamuna – the two holy rivers' (in Upadhyaya, 2011 p. 83).

The ancient city has traditionally been hailed as a gathering place of all religions and cultures, wherein both Hindus and Muslims actively participate in each other's festivals. The intercommunal mingling in the everyday life of Banaras finds both Hindus and Muslims braided together in worship, culture, craft and commercial affairs. Celebrations, festivities, theatre and music concerts transcend communal relationships. It is customary for skilled Muslim artisans to make the traditional masks for the annual Ram Lila – the dance-drama depicting the tale of the divine Hindu god-king, Ram. Muslim artists also traditionally play the role of Hindu Gods in the religious drama. Several thousand residents of Banaras and other cities witness these religious performances each year. The actors and the audience are drawn from the entire community, with people of all ages, gender, social and culture backgrounds mingling in the sanctified space of ritual drama. Such inter-communal inclusion in the month-long enactment of Ram Lila creates a lasting feeling of community belonging that transcends communal and caste divides (Katz, 2007, p. 17; Kumar, 2012, p. 196). Katz gives examples

of how children are initiated in the experiences of communal-inclusion in the neighbourhood of Assi in Banaras. The children learn to absorb religious and social-cultural experiences outside their families and homes and begin to acquire a social identity based on social community relationships and activities (Katz, 2007, p. 145). Some recent empirical studies have endorsed the active participation of both Hindu and Muslim communities in each other's festivities and cultural activities (Pandey, 2014, p. 173).

In recent times too, the city has manifested the practical strength of its interreligious understanding, notably in response to the twin bomb blast that occurred inside the Sankat Mochan Temple on 6 March 2006 (Upadhyaya, 2011). The temple dedicated to the Hindu God Hanuman is a highly revered Hindu shrine, renowned for its reputation as a deliverer from troubles. It is also seen as an epitome of the syncretic spirit of Banaras. It was founded by a great sixteenth century poet named Tulsidas from the Bhakti tradition, who promoted caste and communal inclusion, and whose *Ramacharitamanasa* (religious saga of Lord Rama) is still read in millions of Indian households. The attacks were carried out with the clear intention of offending religious sensibilities among pilgrims in one of the most sacred sites in India. The blasts killed twenty-eight people and injured over a hundred more. The strike on the temple occured on a pious day with numerous worshippers in attendance, and was intended to inflame passions and pit injured Hindu religious sentiment against perceived Muslim savagery.

However, the proactive and timely role played by the religious communities, especially two key religious leaders – the late Mahant Veer Bhadra Mishra (then Chief Priest at the Sankat Mochan temple) and Maulana Abdul Batin Nomani (Mufti-e-Banaras), a respected cleric – made them role models for the rest of the country. The two religious leaders worked in tandem for long hours to pre-empt any communal provocation. Having experienced the practical possibilities and results of peace-building through religious confluence, local peace networks have worked to continue the practice through these channels.

The distinctive feature of this unique experience has been the proactive role of religious leaders in nurturing a tradition of intercommunal dialogue and practical intervention to pre-empt the outbreak of communal frenzy during turbulent times. Many religious-based organizations follow the practice of organizing interfaith prayers and dialogues year round on different religious and cultural occasions.

Perhaps the most remarkable model of intercultural and interreligious dialogue in the holy city of Varanasi is the *Maitri Bhavan* (Home of Friendship). This collaborative venture of Jesuits and the Diocese of Varanasi has for many decades actively engaged in interreligious dialogue along with the dissemination and training of personnel for interfaith dialogue. As one of the affiliated institutions of the UNESCO Chair for Peace and Intercultural Understanding at the Banaras Hindu University, it has emerged as the nucleus of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in the city. It networks with a range of educational, cultural and religious institutions including: Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, the Tibetan Institute for Higher Studies, the Sarna Mahabodhi Society, Sarnath, the Parshvanath Vidyapeeth for Jain studies, Jamia Salfia and Jamia Islamia (Islamic centres of higher learning), the Islamic Foundation of India, Shri Vidya Muth, Kedarghat, the Sankat Mochan Temple, the Kashi Vishvanath Temple, the Gyanavapi Mosque, Gurubag Gurudwaras, the Bahai Local Assembly, Kabir Muths, Kala Prakash and Shilpayan, and various other religious, social and educational organizations.

Maitri Bhavan regularly organizes cultural and academic programmes to promote interreligious peace and communal harmony. It invites spiritual leaders representing various faiths with the aim of bringing out similarities between religions, which help to bridge gaps and enhance interreligious peace and harmony. It promotes an open forum for active interfaith dialogue, where all religious heads meet and discuss the similarities and differences and steps to be taken to prevent any forms of conflict. Tree plantation is another activity taken up by Maitri Bhavan through which the younger generation is taught to channel their energy and resources in a constructive and positive manner. This is also done with the view of creating a sense of responsibility for the conservation and protection of environment. Participants from all religious and cultural backgrounds celebrate the major festivals of all the religions, such as Eid, Diwali, Christmas, Easter, Guru Purnima, Buddha Purnima, Guru Parv and Mahavir Jayanti. These cultural events have now become common events at the neighbourhood level, and also engage intellectuals, businesspeople and professionals.

Summing up

The main focus of the chapter has been to highlight India's long civilizational tradition of nurturing diversity and pluralism and to reflect on contemporary pedagogies and everyday cultural practices. While it reveals

the historic synergy of intercultural and interreligious understanding, it also presents a synoptic view of several ICD initiatives currently afoot.

Indeed, ICD practices in India have undergone varied changes and evolved new trajectories and terminology amid the continued challenges of religious intolerance and communal politics. For instance, the 'Walk of Hope' led by Sri M covering thousand of miles and engaging with millions of people across diverse regions, religions and culture has created new paths for ICD. The evolving practice of interfaith dialogue around global networks, such as the Temple of Understanding, is also instructive here. Similarly, the recognition and promotion of the terminology of 'interfaith dialogue' by such contemporary exponents of Hindu philosophy as Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Karan Singh has opened new avenues for ICD in India (Singh, 2004). The widening scope of interfaith dialogue across religions and cultures in India has been a transformative development, challenging conventional opinions that Indians lacked a tradition of interfaith dialogue, leaving Christians to take the main initiative and invite Muslims and Hindus to talk to each other (Engineer 2010, p. 49). It also refutes insinuations of some fringe radical elements that construe a subversive agenda behind the initiatives of 'interfaith dialogue' (Jain, 2012).

The cultural fusion between Bhakti and Sufi traditions has created a range of spaces for dialogue between religious groups with differing beliefs. Many Sufi saints have drawn parallels between the terms 'Allah' and 'Parmeshwar', inspiring such devotional songs (*Bhajan*) as 'Ishwar Allah Tero Nam' ('your name is Ishwar Allah'). This favourite *Bhajan* of Mahatma Gandhi continues to evoke interreligious amity in Indian popular thinking. The continued nurturing of such syncretic traditions in the popular imagination, as well as by politicians across party lines, constitutes yet another valuable living path to intercultural understanding (Pathak, 1915).

The chapter has also unravelled the unique case of intercultural synergy in the ancient city of Varanasi, which has traditionally discouraged communal polarization and accorded a communitarian identity to the city dwellers. However, this may not be truly representative of modern city life in India. Unlike the closely knitted village neighbourhoods, which still engender intimate intercommunal engagements, India's fast-expanding urban hubs provide few public spaces and occasions for community mingling. Impulses of modern lifestyles have alienated city dwellers from their social capital and traditional community values. The absence of civic and cultural interactions across religious and ethnic lines is often cited as a major cause

of communal violence in urban centres in recent years (Varshney, 2002, p. 9)

However, the Varanasi experience of multiculturalism is not to unique to India. There are many other Indian cities, such as Cochin or Kochi and Ajmer, which offer living examples of pre-colonial synergies of cultural pluralism (Mayaram, 2005; Nandy, 2000). These local examples of intercultural dialogue reveal how the narratives and metaphors of intercultural ethos might serve as a shield against religious and communal estrangement. Such intercultural engagements, embedded in intersecting histories and the shared historicity of the Indian subcontinent, offer instructive insights into the prospects of intercultural dialogue and understanding in today's world.

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2. Identity and literary canon in a multicultural society

Hassan Nadhem

This study is cross-cultural in its substantial intent. I endeavour to bring into focus the question of multicultural identity and the idea of writing and living in more than one language, which may approach the concept of linkages between world regions and identity formation. I concentrate exclusively on one poet who lived between approximately 1494 and 1556 AD in Iraq. But despite his location, he composed his major writings in Azerbaijani Turkish, with some contributions in Persian and Arabic. An abridged study on the subject of Muhammad Fuẓūlī seems a difficult task. His unstable life, prolific poetry, and multilingual books on theology and history, along with the tremendously repressive environment in which he lived, present difficulties. But one may begin with some questions that elicit significant points as to what can be learned from a versatile personality like Fuẓūlī in relation to our present theme. What does Fuẓūlī represent for the languages and cultures in which he lived? Is he an Arabic poet and writer because he wrote Arabic poetry and books? Is he a Turkish, Turcoman or Azerbaijani poet because he wrote his major works in Turkish? And what do we mean by the 'Turkish language' in the time of Fuẓūlī, the sixteenth century? Is he a Persian poet because he also wrote poems in Persian? Why has Arabic scholarship about Fuẓūlī been hitherto limited compared to that in Turkish? Some of his major Turkish and Persian works have not yet been translated into Arabic, including *Laylā and Mejnun* and *Hadiqat al-Suada'*. Finally, since Fuẓūlī lived and died in Iraq without ever leaving it (Fuẓūlī, 1994, p. 6), can we consider him to be an Iraqi poet, writer and thinker, rather than Azerbaijani, Turkish or Persian?

Fuẓūlī's literature along with the contextual circumstances of his life can help us invigorate the debate on engaging with cross-cultural issues, which could be defined as a dynamic element of international relationships and interactions. The interdisciplinary discussion regarding Fuẓūlī's status in multiple literatures, cultures and languages may nurture, first and foremost, a dialogue between societies, addressing the challenges of diversity and human rights through more critical approaches.

Prior to its establishment as a modern state under the British mandate of Mesopotamia in 1921, what Arabs know as al-Iraq was located in the southern delta region of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; that is, the provinces of Baghdad and Basra. Fuẓūlī spent all his life in Baghdad, Karbalā', Najaf, Kufa and Hilla (Demirel, 1991, p. 4) and lived under three dynasties: the White Sheep Turcoman (*Ağqoyunlu*), the Safavids (1508–1534) and the Ottoman Turks.

Muhammad ibn Sulaymān Fuẓūlī al-Baghdādī was born either in Hilla, Najaf or possibly even Karbalā' in the late fifteenth century (the most probable date of his birth is 1494), and died in Karbalā' during the plague pandemic of 1556 (Fuẓūlī, 1994, p. 6; Mahfūẓ, 1958, pp. 11–12). Although the details of his early life are obscure, he lived and died in the holiest Shi'a cities in the world: Najaf and Karbalā'. These two cities are adjacent and well-known for the shrines of Imam 'Alī (al-Najaf) and his son Imam al-Husayn (Karbalā'), who also lived in Baghdad and Hilla. 'Ata Tarzi Pashi, a prominent Iraqi Turcoman scholar, was of the unique view that Fuẓūlī was born and raised in Kirkuk. He claimed that the ruins of Kirkuk Citadel still contain what people called *bayt Fuẓūlī* (Fuẓūlī's house). Dr. Husayn Ali Mahfuz, a professor of Oriental Studies at the College of Arts, Baghdad University, maintained that: 'Fuẓūlī was descended from Bayāt tribe, a tribe that belongs to Oghuz, a Turcoman confederation settled in Iraq' (Mahfūẓ, 1958, p. 7). Meanwhile, the Qara Naz, a sub-tribe of the Bayāt tribe, claims that Fuẓūlī belonged to them (Al-Bayāti, 1973, p. 8; Bayāt, 2009, p. 9; Ughlu in Fuẓūlī, 1994, pp. 7–8).

In the introduction to his Persian divan, Fuẓūlī states that he wrote his poetry in three languages: Arabic, Persian and Turkish (Fuẓūlī 1994, p. 9). However, his Arabic poems are limited in number compared to those written in Persian and Turkish. The following table may shed some light on Fuẓūlī's contributions in the three languages:

Table 1: Frequency, style and language of Fuẓūlī's poetry

	Qasīdas	**Ghazals**	**Mu'ammyat**	**Qit'a**	**Rubā'is**
	Poems	Love poems	Enigmas	Stanza	Two-line stanza with two parts per line
Turkish	44	305	13	44	84
Persian	49	410	3	46	106
Arabic	11				

Source: Demirel (1991, p. 252).

Abd al-Latīf Bandar Ughlu, an Iraqi Turcoman poet and writer, studied Fuẓūlī's *Matla' al-'Itiqād* and his twelve Arabic poems and published them in Baghdad on the occasion of the fifth centennial of the birth of the poet, September 1994 (Fuẓūlī, 1994, p. 18). *Qasīda* is the only type of poem that Fuẓūlī wrote in Arabic, whereas he wrote *rubā'iyyāt, ghazal, qit'a and mu'ammayat* in Persian and Turkish.

These facts raise the question of literary canon and how literary works come to be accepted into certain canons. In fact, the concept of canon can be approached in two ways: firstly, as 'the choice of books in teaching institutions' (Bloom, 1994, p. 15) or as 'a catalog of approved authors' (p. 20) and, secondly, 'as the relation of an individual reader and writer to what has been preserved out of what has been written' (p. 17). In the first meaning offered by Bloom, Fuẓūlī's literary works have not entered the Arabic-Iraqi literary canon. If one may consider the second meaning of the canon as the relation between us and the preserved masterpieces, we find that Fuẓūlī's literary works have not been preserved in the Arabic-Iraqi literary canon. Therefore, the absence of Fuẓūlī's major literary works in Arabic opens up new areas of discussion between the Arab and Turcoman literary and intellectual communities. In fact, such discussions already began in Iraq following the invasion and the fall of the dictatorship in 2003. In this new context in Iraq, new literary canons have been developed to satisfy Kurds and Turcomen who previously lived under oppressive cultural strategies.

The concept of the canon is fundamentally associated with questions of inclusion and exclusion of cultural capital. The concept of cultural capital was first articulated by Pierre Bourdieu in the context of his sociological work; however, theorists introduced it into the debate of canon formation in order to be able to present a new theoretical perspective (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 47–51). Although Bourdieu confirms that *class* is the proper social context through which cultural capital may be analysed, the exclusion of specific literary works from the canon may not necessarily be based on the race, gender or class identities of authors (Guillory, 1993, p. viii). In the case of Fuẓūlī, seen as an Iraqi-Turcoman poet, modern political orientations in Iraq since 1921 have been the major shaping factor of the literary canon with respect to the literary works of minorities such as Kurds and Turcomans. According to the Arab Nationalist ideology as practised in Iraq and some other Arab countries, non-Arab minorities have been integrated and even considered as Arabic regardless of their autonomous existence and history. Therefore, Fuẓūlī's literary works have been degraded for both

ideological and linguistic considerations. Seen as a Turkish poet for Turks of the Ottoman Empire, Azerbaijan and Central Asia, the attitude towards Fuẓūlī in Iraq remains ambiguous and he remains unrecognized as an Iraqi poet. This ambiguous position may be approached in terms of the historical context of Iraqi identity in the years of Fuẓūlī's life (1494–1556). During those years, Iraq was predominantly an arena of political tussles and military conflicts between Safavids and Ottomans. Fuẓūlī, as already described, descended from a Turcoman tribe in Iraqi called Bayāt. His mother tongue, therefore, was naturally Turkish, the language in which he wrote his most well-known literary works. Furthermore, he lived approximately half of his life under the Safavid's reign (Shāh Ismāīl al-Safawī captured Baghdad in 1508) and the other half under Ottoman rule (Suleiman al-Qānūnī – known by Europeans as 'The Magnificent', and by the Turks as Q*ā*n*ū*n*ī*, or 'the lawgiver' – captured Baghdad in 1534). This political volatility influenced not only political also literary life in Iraq. It may be plausible to state that had Fuẓūlī lived in Iraq during the Golden Age of the Abbasid dynasty (750–847), he would have written his major literary works in Arabic, as was the case for Ibn al-Rūmī (221–283 AH/836–896 AD), who descended from Roman origin, together with the Persians Bash-shār Ibn Burd and Abū Nawās (Mixed Arab and Persian).

Fuẓūlī's trilingualism (Arabic, Persian and Turkish) is explainable if one realizes that trilingualism was common among Turkish writers of his period. This was because the cultural environment was rooted mainly in Arabic religious and scientific tradition and Persian literary tradition. As Sufi Huri writes, 'In Fuẓūlī's case, the use of the three languages was conditioned by his particular environment because all three tongues were in use in Iraq in his time' (Fuẓūlī, 1970, p. 22). During the Ottoman and Safavid reigns, foundations for a new literary canon were established that supported not only literary works in Arabic, but also Persian and Turkish literary works. Some of the Ottoman Sultans and the Safavid Shāhs were themselves poets and had their own programmes in the promotion and development of literary life in Turkish and Persian, respectively. Therefore, the literary canon was formed and developed according to certain political hegemonies. Although not rivalled and widespread like the Arabic canon, a parallel literary canon emerged in Ottoman-Safavid Iraq. Great literary works were written in those days both in Persian and Turkish, including the literary works of Fuẓūlī. A linkage can be seen between literary works and political hegemony in the shift of the literary canon from predominantly Arabic to Turkish and Persian. Fuẓūlī's fame and popularity was renowned during the rule of both the Ottomans and Safavids. He was well-connected

to both the Shāh Ismaśl al-Safawī and to Sultan Suleiman al-Qānūnī ('The Magnificent'). In the modern era, Fuẓūlī has become increasingly popular among Iraqi Turcomans, Azerbaijanis and Turkish readers alike, although his presence has diminished and abated in the modern literary Arabic canon.

State institutions reproduce social classes through the mechanism of selection, meaning the selection of values that the state imposes on the public. Therefore, these institutions have selection processes in place that ensure the achievement of social integration. The accumulation of values and traditions results in the formation of cultural capital that represents the major umbrella under which the literary canon is constituted. The cultural capital and the literary canon are interwoven in such a way that any form of transmission in one affects the other. Indeed, the formation of a literary canon can be associated with the constitution and distribution of cultural capital (Guillory, 1993, p. ix). The connection between both cultural capital and the literary canon is sustained through the passage of time. They constitute an arena wherein diverse communities acculturate unified values and traditions. Considering the importance of the literary canon in shaping the perceptions of communities, diverse cultures can be bridged by developing new literary canons that contribute to the unity of these communities. This may require revisiting the very concept of the literary canon. Cultural capital promotes people's culture and acts as a channel through which diverse peoples can develop a unified perception of their shared heritage and tradition.

In the case of Fuẓūlī, the cultural capital of literary canon goes beyond the sublime content of his literary masterpieces (in particular the Sufi dimension of his work, as shall be discussed shortly) to encompass the language in which Fuẓūlī wrote his major literary works, that is, the Turkish language. This is the spoken language of the Iraqi Turcoman and Azeri peoples. Hence, the idea of cultural capital finds its realization in the form of linguistic capital. Linguistic capital is an exchange, interaction and a means of communicating. It is the wealth of a people that has been used by communities to gain effective cultural privileges. The diverse communities that share a language often have common values that enable them to achieve a greater possibility of peaceful co-existence. The literary works of Fuẓūlī represent a cultural and linguistic capital that encompasses diverse communities and builds bridges disrupted by the geopolitics of the modern era.

Taking into account the conditions upon which the Iraqi literary canon was established, there are three reasons for the previously described decline

in popular interest in Fuẓūlī's literary works. Firstly, readers in Iraq – literary audiences and critics alike – who are significantly Arabic speaking, only have access to a limited number of Fuẓūlī's major literary texts written in Arabic. Compare this to the wider availability of his masterpieces written in both Persian and Turkish (*Laylā and Mejnūn* was written in Turkish). Secondly, the fairly new modern Iraqi state, established under the British Mandate in 1921, sustained the literary Arabic canon, which is attached exclusively to Arabic culture. Given that Fuẓūlī was less prolific in his writing in Arabic, his inclusion here was not a priority. The third reason for the decline in interest in Fuẓūlī's literary works is that Iraqi Turcoman literary critics and translators have not translated Fuẓūlī's Turkish literary major works into Arabic, particularly his masterpiece *Laylā and Mejnūn*, which first appeared in English in 1970 (Fuẓūlī, 1970). By the same token, Iraqi translators who mastered the Persian language have not translated Fuẓūlī's Farsi Dīvān. The lack of interest in translating Fuẓūlī into Arabic is determined by the fact that the new state has adopted the tendencies of pan-Arab nationalism under which other ethnic groups and languages have been marginalized, including them Turcoman, Kurdish, Assyrian and Chaldean. One of these ethnic groups and languages was that to which Fuẓūlī belonged: the Turcomans. Therefore, despite the high value of Fuẓūlī's literary works, his status in the Iraqi-Arabic literary canon has not been secured. Worst of all, while Fuẓūlī's literary masterpieces, including *Laylā and Mejnūn*, have not been translated into Arabic, most international literary masterpieces (such as those of Dante, Dostoyevsky, Garcia Marquez, Joyce, Proust, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Zola, etc.) have been translated into Arabic from many languages including English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Certainly, prevailing conditions in Iraq determined what could be included in the literary canon from the abundance of past and present literary works. Nevertheless, it is true that every process in determining a literary canon adopts selection as a mechanism in its formation. The mechanism of selection can be utilized in determining a literary canon if one considers the first concept of the literary canon (i.e. 'the choice of books in teaching institutions'). Hence, the mechanism of selection determines those choices. In this process, Iraq's selection of a literary canon was not unusual among the many other policies adopted since the founding of the Kingdom of Iraq in 1921. Decades later, this policy reached its climax when extremist nationalists showed a disinclination and revulsion towards poets of Persian origins who are canonically part of great Arabic literature. However, we should rethink the concept of the Iraqi literary canon in terms of the current Iraqi situation following the fall of dictatorship in 2003. Since these events,

all Iraqi ethnic groups have been intrinsically required to participate in creating a new configuration of the Iraqi literary canon in which all Iraqi cultural identities and languages might find a place.

It is extremely important to understand the interaction of the three languages – Arabic, Persian and Turkish – at the time of Fuẓūlī. There is no doubt that the Arabic language has had a huge impact on Persian since the early period of Muslim Arabs' existence in Iraq and Persia. The Persian language adopted the vast scope of Arabic vocabularies, terms, expressions and script. This is evident through a multitude of lexical examples showing particular facets of this linguistic influence. In turn, Persian poetry influenced Turkish poetry, notably during the sixteenth century. It is common to find Persian vocabularies, terms and expressions in Turkish poems. The mutual influence among these three languages was a consequence of the coexistence of their communities in the same region.

The unique situation of the coexistence of these three languages and their exchangeability may shed light on Fuẓūlī's position among Arabs, Azerbaijanis, Persians, Turcomans and Turks. Indeed, Fuẓūlī's sophisticated position imposed a specific measure or standard according to which he should be seen and evaluated, meaning that the evaluations of his legacy and belonging are contingent upon the languages in which he chose to write his literary works. Since those languages were essentially and permissibly exchangeable, Fuẓūlī might also be exchangeable among the populace who share with him those languages.

Yet another aspect important here for modern scholarship of the three languages is the fact that Fuẓūlī mutually connects authors and readers in the current interrelated cultures of Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Fuẓūlī's polyglot works created a field that could link authors from Azerbaijan, Egypt, Iraq, Iran and Turkey. Turcomans from Iraq met their Azerbaijani colleagues in Baku at a festival of Fuẓūlī's work in 1958, while Azerbaijani and Turkish scholars met their Iraqi counterparts in Karbalā' in 1994 and most recently in 2009 at a special festival dedicated to Fuẓūlī. In other words, Fuẓūlī brings scholars from different countries together to discuss Fuẓūlī's life, poetry, theology and asceticism. For example, in 1959 the Iraqi scholar Husayn Ali Mahfūẓ (1926–2009) authored a book in Arabic called *Fuẓūlī al-Baghdadi*, then in 1967 the Egyptian scholar Husayn Mujib al-Masri (1916–2004) authored a book in Arabic *On Islamic Literature: Fuẓūlī al-Baghdadi the Prince of the Ancient Turkish Poetry*, and the Azerbaijani scholar Hamid Arasly authored *Fuẓūlī and his Works*. Many others have others found great inspiration in Fuẓūlī's literary works, including the Azerbaijani-Soviet

composer Uzeyir Abdul-Husayn Hajibeyov (1885–1948), who composed the opera *Laylā and Mejnūn* in 1908, the first opera of the Muslim world based on Fuẓūlī's masterpiece. In 2009, *Laylā and Mejnūn* was performed in Qatar, underlining the enduring popularity of this work.

Fuẓūlī's works dominated an entire period of Ottoman poetry from 1450 to 1600 that E. J.W. Gibb in his history of the genre called the 'second period' (Gibb, 1900, p. 5). Gibb also referred to this era as 'the period of Fuẓūlī's poetry' (Gibb, 1900, p. 116). Gibb considered Fuẓūlī an 'Ottoman' poet and avoided discussion of his Arabic or Persian works. This situation can be justified by the Ottoman conquest of Baghdad under the command of Sultan Sulaymān al-Qānūnī (1495–1566). The Ottoman conquest came after twenty-six years of Safavid rule of Baghdad (from 914/1507 to 941/1534) under the command of Shāh Ismā'īl (1487–1524). Sultan Sulaymān's reign saw the nurturing of a literary history of the Ottomans in Iraq, which enabled Fuẓūlī's work to also participate in the new era of Ottoman literary tradition (Demirel, 1991, p. 6).

A poet such as Fuẓūlī must therefore be considered a conceptual conduit for confluence among the contemporary cultures, nations and languages to which he belonged. But the current reality unfortunately opposes this view in the case of Arabic speakers in general, and Iraqis in particular. Fuẓūlī lived all his life in Iraq, but there are no statues to him in the country, although there is a stunning statue in the city of Baku, the capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan. What seems here as a paradox is directly related to Fuẓūlī's personal identity and ultimately to our own concept of national identity. The location of a great poet's tomb or statue may signify the place to which he or she belonged and where a sense of cultural identity might find its locus. However, Iraqis disregarded and largely destroyed the tomb of Fuẓūlī, while a statue was erected for him in Baku, a city he had never visited.

In the early 1970s, Turkey made a proposal to the government of Iraq to renovate the place where Fuẓūlī was thought to be buried. In return, they offered to build a tomb for the greatest Arab pre-Islamic poet, Umru' al-Qays. Archaeologists eventually discovered the location of Umru' al-Qays' burial area at Alma Dag near Ankara. However, the Turkish proposition was ignored.

The Karbalā' municipality later implemented a project to expand the street on which the burial area of Fuẓūlī is located, resulting in the demolition of Fuẓūlī's tomb. The Turkish poet Kamal Biram, in his book *Mesopotamia*,

written during his visit to Iraq to attend the *Mirbad Festival* for Poetry in 1974, witnessed the destruction of the tomb. In 1974, veneration of Fuẓūlī's tomb led Soviet Azerbaijani delegations to urge the Iraqi authorities to form a committee to determine where to build a new tomb for the poet. While the Imam Husayn shrine was considered, the Committee chose another site to build the tomb of Fuẓūlī. Ghazanfar Pashayev, an Azerbaijani philologist, confirmed this fact in his book, *Six Years on the Banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates*, and reported that during a festival held in September of 1994 to mark the fifth centenary of Fuẓūlī's birth, a new tomb was built for the poet in a room belonging to the Library of Manuscripts in the Imam Husayn shrine. In fact, the new tomb of Fuẓūlī took the form of one of the small walls of the shrine adorned with a commemorative plaque (Mardan, n.d.). In any case, this location is well-suited to a poet who revered and sanctified Iman Husayn.

It seems that one essential factor is present in all these discussions: the Azerbaijani Turkish language. According to a certain view, Arabic in Fuẓūlī's time (sixteenth century) was the language of science, while Persian was the language of poetry (Fuẓūlī, 1970, p. 22). But for Fuẓūlī, Turkish was the home in which he dwelled with his feelings and ideas , and was ultimately recognized as 'the Prince of Ancient Turkish Poetry' (Mardan, 2016) and 'the Messenger of Peace and Love among Nations' (Bulat, 1994). Although distanced from his heritage as an Iraqi, with claims that 'he lived in a remote area, a fact which he regrets' (Huri in Fuẓūlī, 1970, p. 22), Fuẓūlī represents the context of Iraq in that era. He was Shī'ī and well-acquainted with the Arabic and Persian languages. His native language was Turkish (Azerbaijani Turcoman dialect), but he 'knew at first hand the works of the Persian masters and was well-informed on the advanced Turkish literary tradition' (Huri in Fuẓūlī, 1970, p. 22). In fact, in the introduction to his Persian divan, Fuẓūlī stated:

> I sometimes versified poems in Arabic and my poems have won the attention of the Arabs' connoisseurs, which was easy for me because the language of scientific research I had was Arabic. I sometimes versified poems in Turkish because my Turkish poems were consistent with my native competence; they were a response to my innate. And sometimes I set type of pearls in Persian' (in Demirel, 1991, p. 41).

One should consider the political circumstances that enabled the Turkish language to supersede Arabic as a literary language. Shāh Ismāīl, commander of the Ottoman conquest of Baghdad, was himself a poet and left a divan in Turkish (Fuẓūlī, 1970, pp. 22–23). On the other hand, Turcoman people in

Iraq consider Fuẓūlī to be the first pillar of Iraqi Turcoman poetry (Bayāt, 2009, p. 8). The indispensable bond that links Fuẓūlī to Iraq will always be the Turcoman community in Iraq. This community views Fuẓūlī as the founder of Turcoman poetry, whereas the Arabs and Iraqis, in particular, append his Arabic poems to what they usually term the literature of the dark ages. However, Iraq in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was an important centre of Turkish literature. Fuẓūlī and Nasīmī were born during these two centuries, when Turkish poetry flourished in Iraq. For instance, Fazlullah al-Hurufi (who was convicted of heresy and killed in 1401), the founder of Hurufiism (*Hurufiyya*, Letterism), was one of the great lettermen, along with his student and successor, Nasīmī Baghdadi (who was also convicted of heresy and skinned alive in 1418 or 1433) (Basri, 1997, p. 17).

Fuẓūlī embodies the multiple languages and cultures of Iraq and, as previously mentioned, was born, lived all his life and then died in Iraq. However, he was ethnically of Turcoman origin and renowned for his piety, asceticism and humbleness amid an atmosphere of fanaticism, intolerance and haughtiness. He produced works in Azerbaijani Turkish, Persian and Arabic. In spite of all of this, it must be remembered that Fuẓūlī lived in Iraq prior to the formation of the modern state in 1921 – in other words, prior to the domination of the national state. In this context, this period might perceived as the domination of the Sunni Arab minority, which led to the coercive and exclusive policies of Iraqi religious and ethnic groups from 1921 to 2003, the year marked by the fall of Saddam Hussein – the most significant contemporary event for Iraqi people. Here, we ought to consider Fuẓūlī's Shi'ism and his Turcoman origin in Iraq, as Iraq was the centre of the Abbasid Empire until the fall of Baghdad in 1258, and a region of both the Safavid state and then the Ottoman state during Fuẓūlī's time.

Fuẓūlī was a moderate Shī'ī poet with Sufi inclinations. His attitude towards Islamic theological debates can be seen in his poetry, where he reveres all religious authorities in Islamic history regardless of their historical differences. Moreover, his contribution to Islamic theology (*Islamic* (*'ilm al-kalām*) in his *Matla' al-I'tiqād fi ma'rifah al-Mabda' wa al-Ma'ād* [*The Emergence of Creed Concerning the Beginning and the Return*] did not engage in distorting the theological beliefs of others. It is the only work that Fuẓūlī wrote in Arabic which approached *kalām* themes such as the divine attributes of God, the prophethood (*al-nubuwwah*) and the concept of leadership (*al-imāmah*) in Twelver Shi'ism. Fuẓūlī's views were dramatically influenced by his Sufi poems and thoughts. We can see that even in his poem of praise (panegyric, *madīḥ*) for the Ottoman sultan, Sulaymān al-

Qānūnī, (when the latter succeeded in invading Baghdad and eliminating the Safavid presence there) Fuẓūlī did not hesitate to mention Imam 'Alī and Imam al-Husayn's tragedy in Karbalā', thereby declaring Shi'I beliefs before the Sunni sultan. However, Fuẓūlī's attitude in that particular poem did not reflect the mainstream attitude of the Shi'a in Iraq at that time. Instead, it is representative of the Sunni attitude towards the first four caliphs after the Prophet Muhammad, which considered Imam 'Alī as 'the last of the "four friends"' (Sufi Huri in Fuẓūlī, *Laylā and Mejnūn*, p. 16). Moreover, Fuẓūlī's literature written under Ottoman rule indicates a moderate Shi'ism that reflects both his tendency toward tolerance and honour. According to this perspective, and regardless of the internal intention of his approach to Shi'ism, Fuẓūlī's poems could be read as a cross-political endeavour that also ignored the sectarian differences and geopolitical crises of his time, in particular the sectarian-military conflict between the Ottomans and Safavids. It is more likely from a tendency toward serenity and peace than hypocrisy or flattery that Fuẓūlī bestowed his support on a tyrannical emperor and even notable figures, but also from a desire to gain the patronage of rulers. While some poets defied mainstream beliefs and faced torture and killing because of their extreme mystical views, it is apparent that Fuẓūlī's mystical views were moderate and acceptable. Unlike Fazlullah al-Hurufi and Nasīmī Baghdadi, who infused their literary writings with what is known as deviant Sufi notions and never recanted them – and consequently opposed the political rulers – Fuẓūlī's Sufi views enabled him to live peacefully; he never vehemently opposed the rulers and was never imprisoned for political reasons. Instead, he received a regular stipend from Sultan Sulaymān and, when it was blocked for bureaucratic reasons, wrote to his well-known *Shikāyat Nāma* (*Letter of Complaint*) (Mahfūẓ, 1958, p. 5; Fuẓūlī, 1994, p. 9).

Let us go back to our central point about Fuẓūlī's current position in Iraq. How could one justify and shed light on the fact that Fuẓūlī has been neglected by modern Iraq, yet is venerated in Azerbaijan? Again, first and foremost, he was born, lived and died in Iraq. There may be several reasons for this ingratitude. The most significant reason, already stated, is that his major works were written mainly in a dialect of Turkish. Although he produced a sizeable number of works in Persian, his Arabic works were relatively insignificant, amounting to only twelve *Qasīdas* and a book on theology, mentioned above (*Matla' al-'Itiqād*). Nevertheless, one could construe an interpretation of his status in Iraq that may be profoundly rooted in the attitude of the modern state in Iraq towards the concept of history and identity. The emergence of the monarchy in Iraq (1921)

was dominated by the Sunni Arabs, who arrived with the non-Iraqi king (Faysal I 1883–1933), imposed as a result of a colonial British strategy. The imposition of the monarchy did not resolve critical ethnic, religious and sectarian Iraqi problems, however, which mainly involved Shi'a and Kurds. Rather, monarchical power was established on the basis of exclusion and coercion.

This exclusionary policy culminated several decades later in the rise of the Ba'ath Party and its Arab-centric ideology via the idea of one Arab nation (Pan-Arabism), which was backed by the Sunni Arab environment, regardless of other ethnic or religious identities of the Iraqi people (including Shi'a, Kurds, Turcoman and other religious minorities). With this chauvinistic ideology as a backdrop, why should the modern Iraqi state claim, rethink or reconsider the status of a non-Arabic poet who lived in Iraq a long time ago? The receptive atmosphere continued to worsen. During the 1980s, the Iraqi government willfully imposed an exclusion policy, in order to ban even ancient Iraqi poets who lived during the Abbasid era because they were descended from Persian origins. Obviously, this situation is quite different from that of Fuẓūlī's, as Iraq had a fragmented identity in the pre-republican age. However, it is emblematic of the exclusionary context in Iraq at that time.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the identity and literary canon in a multicultural society focusing on concepts of cultural capital and the possibility of bridging diverse cultures through the revival of literary icons. Although limited to Arabic literature in recent history, Iraqi identity and the Iraqi literary canon has undergone a new institutionalized revision since 2003. In framing the discussion within the three linguistic traditions of Fuẓūlī in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, it is apparent that the disproportionate and fragile connection between these diverse cultures can be overcome by revisiting Fuẓūlī's literature and his status in each language and culture, as well as by revisiting the concept of an exclusive literary canon. Fuẓūlī's literary works and his enduring influence have a potential worth for any future attempt to protect and maintain the multicultural aspect of any region.

Certainly, the Iraqi canon following the overthrow of dictatorship should swerve overtly from the traditional Arab-centric line of thinking. That is to say that the Iraqi canon should not be always Arabic. The socio-political

context underlying this desirable change in the Iraqi literary canon is currently amid a process of tranformation following the historical events of 2003. The new literary politics that have emerged since 2003 have had an influence on all Iraqi values, including literary values and canon formation. I strongly believe that the Arabic literary canon in Iraq will be challenged, reexamined and revised, not to exclude the core of the Arabic literary canon, but to include non-canonical works and non-Arabic (Kurdish and Turcoman) works.

Fuẓūlī and his literary works in Arabic, Persian and Turkish represent an opportunity to open up a dialogue among the cultures and peoples of Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. These countries, their peoples and traditions are all present in Fuẓūlī's works. He has consistently been revered by these peoples as a poet, writer and Sufi master (even as a Sufi saint '*walī*'). In the context of the modern era, Fuẓūlī has become a national treasure for national cultures and, above all, a pillar of the alliance of cultures.

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3. The challenges and practical outcomes of interfaith dialogue in Pakistan and the UK: anthropological notes from the field of a Muslim woman leading dialogue

Amineh A. Hoti

Introduction

According to the UNESCO World Report 2009, 'cultural erosion has become an issue of global concern in the light of the perceived impact of technologically mediated Western paradigms'; thus, 'there is a "complexification" of cultural identities' (UNESCO, 2009, p. 6). With refugees moving in large numbers from the Middle East and South Asia to Europe and the West there is also asymmetric contact with one culture on the receiving end and the other on the giving end. More complex and frequent intercultural contacts are also giving rise to new forms of religious and cultural diversity, especially resulting from advances in digital technology. The point is not to preserve diversity per se; instead, the 'focus should be on devising new strategies that take account of such changes while enabling vulnerable populations to 'manage' cultural change more effectively. Every living tradition is subject to continual self-reinvention. Cultural diversity, like cultural identity, is about innovation, creativity and receptiveness to new influences'. 'In *Race and History* (1952), the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, writing for UNESCO, argued that: 'the protection of cultural diversity should not be confined to preservation of the status quo: it is "diversity itself which must be saved, not the outward and visible form in which each period has clothed that diversity"' (UNESCO, 2009 p. 3). 'Protecting cultural diversity in this view means ensuring that diversity continues to exist, not that a given state of diversity should perpetuate itself indefinitely. This presupposes the capacity to accept and sustain cultural change, while not regarding it as an edict of fate' (UNESCO, 2009, p. 2).

If, according to UNESCO's 1982 *Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies*, culture is broadly defined as the 'whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group', including 'not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs', what is cultural diversity? Cultural and religious diversity encompass a 'wide range of distinct cultures and religions, which can be readily distinguished on the basis of ethnographic observation:

> even if the contours delimiting a particular culture prove more difficult to establish than might at first sight appear. Awareness of this diversity has today become much more widespread, being facilitated by globalized communications and increased cultural contacts (UNESCO, 2009, p. 3).

While, according to UNESCO, 'this greater awareness in no way guarantees the preservation of cultural and religious diversity, it has given the topic greater visibility. Cultural diversity has moreover become a major social concern, linked to the growing diversity of social codes within and between societies' (UNESCO, 2009). When states are confronted with a diversity of practices and outlooks, as with those in Europe currently experiencing a 'refugee crisis', they often do not know how to respond effectively as a matter of urgency, or how to implement or teach cultural and religious diversity to students in the common interest (UNESCO, 2009, p. 3). Similarly, many countries have not yet made cultural and religious diversity a priority in education. I therefore explore, here, how our work at the Centre for Dialogue and Action introduced innovative subjects on cultural and religious diversity into universities in the UK and Pakistan.

While conducting interfaith dialogue in different regions of the world, as an anthropologist I had to ask at the very outset whether certain (English) concepts and words fit easily into different languages and people's own perceptions and understanding of themselves. For instance, in Pakistan the English term 'interfaith dialogue' itself is seen as problematic by many people, including the students I taught. With a long history of colonization, neo-colonization, and wars in and around the region, many indigenous people react with suspicion to any 'foreign' concepts, which they see as imposed upon them from the outside world. Interfaith dialogue is misconstrued as an alien concept that expects them to give up part or all of their faith and culture. This makes the work of people like myself, who are engaged in creating safe spaces for deeper understanding and peace-building, much more difficult and challenging. It means standing between

different perspectives and explaining to both sides the position of the other, thus bridging the gap and creating communication, which possibly leads to deeper understanding and friendship. Yet, as the 2009 UNESCO report on *Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* maintains:

> dialogue should be seen not as involving a loss of self but as dependent upon knowing oneself and being able to shift between different frames of reference. It requires the empowerment of all participants through capacity-building and projects that permit interaction without a loss of personal or collective identity (UNESCO, 2009, p. 10).

Due to the nature of globalization and the effects of the mass media, tragedies anywhere in the world are no longer distant events but personal sorrows. They are no longer stories that travel by word of mouth; rather they are transmitted into our bedrooms and sitting rooms. This means we are exposed to the stories of 'Others'. It also means that the media has a responsibility to report fairly and in greater depth, not just for the sake of sensationalism. The terrible tragedies in Pakistan, and the rising tensions depicted in the media with 'the Other' emphasize a real need for peace-building strategies and courses.

Personal perspectives on my interfaith work in the UK: finding a space to engage with 'the Other' in dialogue and action

As an anthropologist, I take the liberty here of sharing some of my own experiences in designing and finding safe spaces within educational contexts to engage with 'the Other' in an effort to promote dialogue and action. Immediately after completing my PhD on Muslim women at the University of Cambridge, I became involved in setting up the Society for Dialogue and Action. At this time, interfaith dialogue was not part of the mainstream in the UK. It existed on the periphery of mainstream academia, and we were pushing hard to make space for it. Our first funder clearly stated in 2004 that academics often talk – that is, engage in dialogue – but rarely attach practical 'action' to that dialogue. Therefore, the new organization I would found at Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge, would be called 'Dialogue and Action'.

This was an important step as, in this initiative, academia would not be confined to exclusive ivory towers or the inherently problematic 'armchair anthropology', but instead would aim to connect with the common person – men and women. Engaging in person with men and women implied a good

degree of 'participant observation' and involved ethnographic encounters. This meant that anthropological approaches in the town of Cambridge enabled initiatives such as the Society for Dialogue and Action to bridge the great divide between 'gownies' and 'townies', the former being scholars from the University of Cambridge and the latter being citizens of Cambridge not necessarily involved directly in the university. There was also 'snob value' attached to the former position and an implicit feeling of 'ordinariness' to the latter.

As Executive Director of the Society for Dialogue and Action, I set up the Society at Lucy Cavendish College – one of three Cambridge University's colleges for women – and designed innovative short courses for women. These courses aimed mainly to introduce women to the common ground between Abrahamic faiths, while encouraging a respect for difference. The women who attended came from starkly different backgrounds. They ranged in age from 17 to 80, and came from India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the UK, the United States and various other national backgrounds. They also had very different faith backgrounds (Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, atheist, agnostic and so on) and careers – some were heads of Cambridge theological colleges, others were 'home makers', one was a wife of a taxi driver, while another was the wife of the then Mayor of Cambridge. Having amassed this fantastic diversity of participants, I planned a course for them to attend over the next few weeks, which would emphasize the safe space we were to construct for ourselves. It was a dynamic mix of participants that would allow for deep discussions in the intellectually rich environment of Cambridge.

But I was not going to let the course become inaccessible, so I added another dimension to the plan: while we would devote one session to a discussion of each of the Abrahamic faiths led by intellectuals from the Jewish faith for Judaism, Muslim for Islam and Christian for Christianity, this would be followed by a visit to a synagogue, a mosque and a church in the subsequent sessions. Finally, this introduction to each of the faith communities would culminate in a visit to a Muslim home, a Christian home and a Jewish home. For each session, I arranged for lunch to be provided. This too was different each time, ranging from humus and bread in a synagogue to a Moroccan meal in a mosque. During the last session of the course, participants engaged in a discussion with a convert to Islam, Sister Sheryl, who was the equivalent of an imam or a priest. She was a feisty English woman who bravely shared her experience of engaging with Muslims, embracing Islam and the challenges she faced being culturally

on the periphery of both communities. After a grand Pakistani meal in the 100-acre home of a very hospitable and well-off Pakistani businessman married to an English lady, participants received a certificate. The course proved a great hit with the participants. It brought together women from various backgrounds and allowed them to begin to know one another. A Christian participant from a Cambridge college confessed that she had never been to a synagogue before; a Muslim Pakistani woman was thrilled by the idea of leaving her home and participating in these sessions and thereby forming cordial bonds with Christians and Jews. It also allowed the women to leave their own perspectives and see the points of view of other women from different faith traditions. While providing feedback, the students described the experience in highly positive terms, stating that it allowed them to change their mind-sets and open up their perspectives.

Teaching rabbis, priests and imams at the Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations and at Ridley Hall, Cambridge

In this section, I use my personal experiences to explore how my own anthropological background allowed me to facilitate intercultural and interfaith dialogue and pioneer courses for rabbis, imams and priests. While leading the Society for Dialogue and Action, which had gathered volunteers and well-wishers, I initiated and organized the 'Cambridge Interfaith Festival' in 2005. This included getting to know each of the Abrahamic faiths as participant observers, visiting homes and religious sites, and engaging in dialogue. I invited the Chief Rabbi, Lord Jonathan Sacks, and chaired a discussion on his seminal work, *The Dignity of Difference* (2003), while taking care of every detail, including kosher food. At another event, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, launched our new supplement to the UK's curriculum, entitled *Valuing Diversity: Towards Mutual Respect and Understanding*.

Dr Edward Kessler and I had co-founded the Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations, an offshoot of his initiative, the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations at Wesley Hall. He participated in an event I organized at Mayor John Hipkin's Guild Hall with top interfaith leaders from the UK, including Julius Lipner and David Ford from the Faculty of Divinity, Sir Iqbal Sacranie, the Head of the Muslim Council of Britain, and Sir Sigmund Sternberg. The Queen of England and Prince Hassan of Jordan both sent written messages to be read out at the function. The popular Waitrose supermarket chain with the Queen's royal seal and Amin,

the famous Pakistani shop in Cambridge, contributed delicious foods for the event. I asked the Pakistani media to cover the event and they did, covering it twice. As a result of our efforts to reach out to academic and local community circles, people were beginning to feel included.

Dr Kessler had a track record of ten years of success with his Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations and now, after discussions with Prince Hassan of Jordan, was motivated to initiate a Centre for the Study of Muslim-Jewish Relations. Having participated in the interfaith and intercultural event mentioned above, which drew upon the strengths of all the Abrahamic faith communities, he encouraged me to apply for a post at the newly conceived centre. I was selected. Very quickly, I settled in as Director of the Centre and took on the challenge of engaging with members of the Muslim and Jewish communities, and designing innovative courses after consulting the few 'experts' that existed around the subject. The main challenge was that there were no 'experts' on Muslim-Jewish relations, but there were experts on one or the other subject. This subject was new and being designed and taught for the first time in the 800-year history of the University of Cambridge.

This left me with the huge task of consulting experts on Islam and Judaism to identify the key elements that would make this course work. After many discussions with top academics and religious scholars in the Middle East and the West, a course outline was put together that would be followed as a pilot, to be adjusted and improved over time. To start with basic steps, we would teach an introduction to Judaism in the first term (Dr Edward Kessler), an introduction to Islam (myself and the Muslim Shaikh Michael Mumiza) in the second, and in the third term we would look at historical meeting points between the two faith communities and those that divided them, and finally the way forward. Applications for the course arrived from different parts of the UK.

The students in the classes were mainly priests, rabbis, imams, students and women who had received certificates from the Society for Dialogue and Action in the course I had introduced at Lucy Cavendish College. At the beginning of the course, there was definite tension between the participants – the rabbis and imams sat at a distance from each other. A rabbi came up to me after class and complained – he had a lot of preconceived perceptions in his mind and this course was challenging those, but he also wanted more discussions and explorations of Quranic verses. As the course progressed and these topics were discussed in a respectful and safe environment a relationship started building up among the participants. Preconceived

images were deconstructed and reconstructed. Muhammad Buaben's book (1996) helped me teach how images of 'the other' are constructed and how we can overcome orientalist perspectives by redressing scholarship and so-called 'experts'. The courses led to a Muslim and a Jewish woman undertaking a community project together in Cambridge, and also led an imam and a rabbi to conduct another project in London in a mosque and a synagogue. Barriers had been torn down through knowing about each other.

At Ridley Hall, a Cambridge College that trains priests, I was invited to teach Islam to young men and women aged 21. At the start of the class I asked the students what they thought about Islam and Muslim women and what came to their mind when I mentioned 'Islam' and 'Muslim women'. The answers were fascinating. They reflected how little they knew about the differences between religion and culture and how much they had picked up from the popular media about Muslims and Muslim women in particular. I had a difficult task to undo this mountain of perceptions, so I began swiftly. We first looked at what Islam was and who Muslims – this diverse body of people – were. We examined how Muslim cultures, which may vary from region to region, may be contradictory to Islam the religion. This distinction is not one made in the media and, therefore, leads to confusion about purdah (veiling), honour killings or female genital mutilation, which are thought to be religious practices, but are in fact cultural expressions.

I asked my students to divide into four groups and read a set of books by different authors encompassing a variety of perspectives on Islam, some more sensitive and others less so. The point of the exercise was to allow my students to perceive 'the Other' – here, the Muslim other – empathetically, and as they wished themselves to be understood. Hence, I asked one group of students to read highlighted sections from Buaben's *The Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West* (1996) in order to reflect as to why and how the image of the Prophet Muhammad was constructed by orientalists as violent in response, as Buaben argues, to the memory of the crusades and other such encounters. As a Muslim himself, Buaben gives voice to his religious community and reclaims a sense of dignity and respect lost in the misinformed and misrepresented image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West. The second group of students would read Princeton University's Michael Cook on the Prophet, *Muhammad* (1996). While academically framed, Cook does not avoid stereotypes of the Arabs and the Islamic world. For instance, he writes, 'As raiders, the tribesmen of Arabia were accordingly a persistent nuisance' (p. 8). While writing about 'the

Koran' (his spelling), he writes: 'what it has to say is not intelligible as it stands' (p. 46), and about women in Islam, he writes: 'Women are not equal, and are to be beaten if they get out of hand' (p. 49). It might be understandable if Cook wrote that 'some' clergy/imams may think that this is the case, but as a Muslim woman who has undertaken field work in the Muslim world and lived with Muslim women in order to participate, observe and understand, I do not believe that this is a fair representation of Islam's view of women. In addition, as an anthropologist, neither the generalizations about all Arab tribesmen, nor Cook's presentation of the Quran offer a fair picture. The bright Cambridge students all picked up these points without assistance. Another set of students read Martin Lings' *Muhammad* (1991). Lings was a convert to Islam and allowed us to obtain an 'insider's' view of our topic: Islam. Finally, we read sections of the Quran itself, which both inspired and impressed the students – most of them had never seen the Quran before and certainly did not know about the bridge-building verses, which we discussed in detail (Quran 3: 64; 5: 48; 49:13). After discussing how a certain topic, in this case Islam, can be represented in different ways depending on the author's perspectives, we debated our own perceptions. At the end of the class, many students stated that they had a deeper understanding of the subject. One even said that if the Quran says to be righteous and believe in God and respect Jesus, 'then we are Muslim' in the broad sense of the term. This statement surprised me. My class seemed to have gained a better understanding of their subject and, more importantly, they better understood the Muslim community, which consists of more than 1.5 billion people. They had understood the scale of its diversity and, through a nuanced perspective, begun to reflect upon their own perceptions. The course had opened up doors in their minds – of dialogue, of mutual respect and deeper understanding.

The positive response of the students to the class/course was remarkable. The Director of the Cambridge Centre for Youth Ministry, at Ridley Hall, Reverend Dr Steve Griffiths, wrote:

> Dear Amineh, the impact your class made on our CYM (Cambridge Centre for Youth Ministry) students earlier this year was considerable. They were profoundly affected by your teaching day and it was one of the highlights for them. I wonder if you would be happy to teach for CYM again this academic year? Peace (S. Griffiths, pers. comm., 5/10/2012).

Several students sent me emails stating that the class had helped them break down their stereotypes and resistance to people of other religious and cultural backgrounds.

But the appreciation I received from students and faculty members was not always expressed in my own community and among some members of my extended family. A relatively young female cousin of my husband's, who had newly started wearing the 'abaya' in Islamabad, told me that she thought that 'if Muslims behaved in accordance with Islam they would not need interfaith gatherings', adding that 'no one had interfaith sessions in the days of early Islam ... There's more stress on tolerating Muslims now as if they are some sort of aliens that need integration, it saddens me'. I replied by stating that all of the Prophet's life was about reaching out through interfaith (which is not understood fully). Examples included sending his first supporters to the Christian community to take refuge, and travelling to Madina and establishing pacts with other faith groups; the Charter of Madina is another good example. Another lady (fluent in English and now in her sixties) from Swat but living in Islamabad, labelled interfaith intercultural work as 'rubbish', adding sarcastically: 'How is your work! By the way I do not believe in interfaith.' And a third, her cousin who lives between America and Pakistan, called interfaith work 'rubbish'. These remarks led me to wonder whether they understood what interfaith actually meant.

I also received a threatening letter from a journalist from the United Arab Emirates claiming that by engaging in dialogue with Christians and Jews I was somehow violating the culture of some Muslims. I was also wrongly compared to women who are not mainstream Muslims. This was a complete misunderstanding of who I am, and reflected more readily the ignorance of the journalist in question. I have studied the Quran forty-eight times from the beginning to end, read the hadith, and read up on many biographies of all the Khalifas and Prophets. Above all, I see myself as a believing Muslim scholar who is human, and thus imperfect, but deeply spiritual. As a woman from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region of Pakistan with affinal relations in the region, I was also confined and not given a free hand to seek the highest degrees in education or to work outside the home. But despite these barriers, I tried to manage my life and overcame many obstacles. Under excessive pressure I tried to balance the role of a mother, wife and woman from a particular culture, as well as being a global citizen who cares and wants to help heal humanity by promoting knowledge and teaching ways of peace-building. My work in the UK was to inform my future work in South Asia, in Pakistan.

Successes and challenges of peace education in Pakistan

The following section is based on my ideas and work, which have been explored elsewhere by myself and my colleague Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed (Hoti and Ahmed, 2016). The past decade has seen phenomenal growth in Peace Education programmes, both informally and formally at various levels, for example, at schools, colleges and universities. This is evidenced mostly through the proliferation of numerous undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in universities around the world. According to a conservative estimate, approximately 400 programmes of teaching and research in Peace and Conflict Studies are being conducted worldwide.

In post-9/11 Pakistan, peace education programmes were introduced by international NGOs, sometimes through local NGOs. Such programmes are presently supported by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Search for Common Ground, Oxfam and so on. These programmes have targeted teachers and students of both secular and religious schools (*madaris*) across the country, especially in regions where conflict seems higher, such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Karachi. As far as university level programmes are concerned, peace education has been introduced through degree and non-degree programmes by the following institutions: the National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad; the National Defense University, Islamabad; the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad; the Centre for Dialogue and Action; Forman Christian College University, Lahore; Karachi University, Karachi and Peshawar University.

Other institutions, such as Karakoram International University, are interested in peace education, and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan recognizes this discipline as a stand-alone field of study. The significance of people trained in peace and conflict studies is also recognized in governmental circles, with the recent establishment of a Peace and Development Wing at the Planning Commission of Pakistan.

Peace education at FCCU

Based on my work in the UK, I was able to bring new ideas, the latest textbooks and cutting-edge peace-building tools to form new courses for young boys and girls attending university in Pakistan. At Forman Christian College University (FCCU), the Centre for Dialogue and Action, which I headed, offered peace-building classes under the title, '*Ilm, Adab aur Insaaniyat*' – Knowledge and Respect for Humanity. A variety of topics were taught,

ranging from the difference between religion and culture to examples of historical conflicts and peaceful coexistence. A number of books and local articles were used to teach, including the following compulsory readings: Ahmed and Baxter (2007), Al-Hassani (2012), Armstrong (2011), Hayat (2008), Hoti (2006, 2014a, b, c, d), Howe (2013), Lyons (2010), Menocal (2002), Qazi (2016), Talal (2007) and Umar (2008). This course was named and designed by myself with the help of a team of experts. It was aimed at teaching and cultivating male and female undergraduate students as peace-builders while introducing diversity. Indeed, UNESCO's World Report highlights '*three challenges* relating to cultural diversity that will confront the international community in the years ahead: combating cultural illiteracy, reconciling universalism and diversity, and supporting new forms of pluralism resulting from the assertion of multiple identities by individuals and groups' (UNESCO, 2009, p. 33). These three aims were addressed in the course by exploring Pakistan's cultural and religious diversity and examining notions of pluralism and empathy against an acknowledgement of multiple identities.

Many of Pakistan and India's leaders have studied at FCCU and as peace-builders some or many of these students would become Pakistan's future leaders and work towards deeper understanding in dealing with 'the Other' (i.e. the religious other, the ethnic other, the gendered other and all their neighbouring countries). As friends, the citizens of neighbouring countries can build alliances at the educational level, at a cultural level and at state level; there is so much Pakistanis and their neighbours share, including language, history and culture. However, this project to promote good neighbourly relations remains unsuccessful to date, although we are hopeful that countries in the future will learn to befriend and not create enmity.

In 2014, the course had many participants from the Punjab, as well as from Quetta, Waziristan and the northern areas of Pakistan such as Gilgit and Hunza. The students were young, enthusiastic and eager to learn. Yet, many came into class with negative perceptions, not only of themselves, but also of 'the Other'. This is reflective of some wider attitudes in the region more generally. One boy misunderstood 'dialogue' to be an aggressive act, and not what it is meant to be – peaceful negotiation achieved through the skills of communication. Another boy from the tribal belt said that he did not feel included by the central government as a citizen and felt left on the periphery of society. His behaviour in class often showed signs of unease. Another student at the beginning of the course confidently told

me that his uncle from the village said to him that all non-Muslims were '*wajib ul qatal*' (*wajib* equates to: necessary or compulsory religious task; and *qatal* means to kill). This statement by a third-year student reflects how dangerous these extreme thoughts are and how necessary ideas of *ilm adab (literature studies)* and *insaaniyat* (humanities) are across the board in educational institutions. Many academics and other students were horrified at these extreme perspectives.

In contrast, the course participants studied the education-oriented, progressive and justice-based attitudes of the founding fathers of Pakistan (Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Allama Iqbal and the Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah). In addition, emphasis was placed on how 'the dialogue of civilizations' held more promise for the future of humankind than the idea of 'the clash of civilizations' (Ahmed, 2004, 2015; Talal, 2003). Three building blocks of dialogue were taken from the supplementary textbooks of the Centre for Dialogue and Action on Valuing and Acknowledging Diversity. These are:

- Learning to understand what others believe and value;
- Avoiding violent action and language;
- Preventing disagreement from leading to conflict.

At the end of the course students gave predominantly positive feedback. The student who thought all non-Muslims should be killed, declared: 'I am a changed man!' As a consequence of the course structure, content and our discussions, he now wanted to change his world through the pen (the *qalam*) and certainly not by violence.

I was also asked to teach several secondary schools via the Web through a Blair Foundation programme. I was the main teacher engaging with several schools in India, Pakistan and the UK – all on one screen from my small office in Islamabad. One schoolboy in India said that Pakistan was a terrorist state, but as his teacher I told him not to generalize. I explained that it was not fair to label an entire country with such a negative and extreme label, as there are many ordinary men, women and children who have nothing to do with extremism, let alone terrorism. Pakistanis too pointed fingers at India claiming that it had funded terrorism to destabilize Pakistan. Rather than pointing fingers at each other, it was important to begin to understand and then to heal through dialogue and knowledge. Through empathy, the schoolboy realized that generalizing was not the right approach and apologized. It is indeed important for the younger generation not to follow

blindly the footsteps of older ones by building barriers and walls. Instead, our projects aimed at building metaphoric bridges.

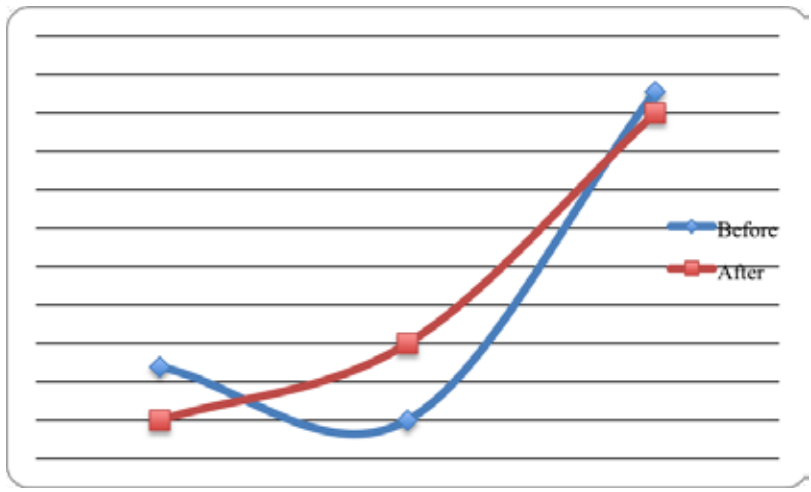
Case study

This section presents an analysis of the Peace Education intercultural interfaith approach applied at the Centre for Dialogue and Action, FCCU. This is done through a case study of this programme, developed through surveys conducted among about eighty-one students from different cycles. There were equal numbers of male and female students, aged 21–22, and their religious backgrounds included Islam (the majority) and Christianity (a small but significant number). Students came from various parts of Pakistan, including Lahore, Quetta and the northern areas of Waziristan.

As the course covered a range of themes stressing the importance of knowing others for developing a good understanding of human and cultural diversity, the evaluation questionnaire was designed to explore changes, if any, in those perceptions after attending the course. The course included readings of local texts (e.g. Professor Sikander Hayat's 2008 book on *The Charismatic Leader*), and we also read and studied international texts such as the seminal work of David Howe on *Empathy* (2013). The same survey was conducted twice – once at the start of the course and once at the end after five months (January 2014 – May 2015). The survey questions are outlined below.

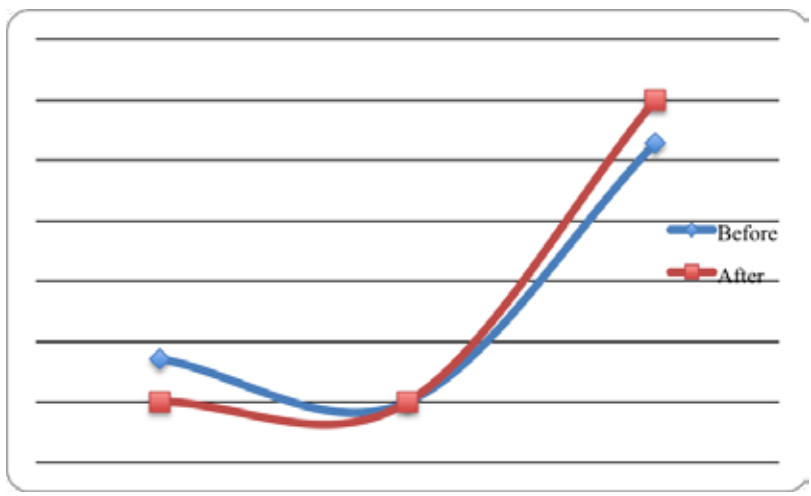
The first question concerned the context of a multicultural and multi-religious society. It is important for peace that people have a general understanding of what other people practise in terms of religion. Therefore, a question was asked regarding commonalities among religions. As can be seen from the data in Figure 1, there was an observed change in students' perceptions: after the course none of them agreed with the statement that religions have nothing in common.

Figure 1: All religions are different and have nothing in common



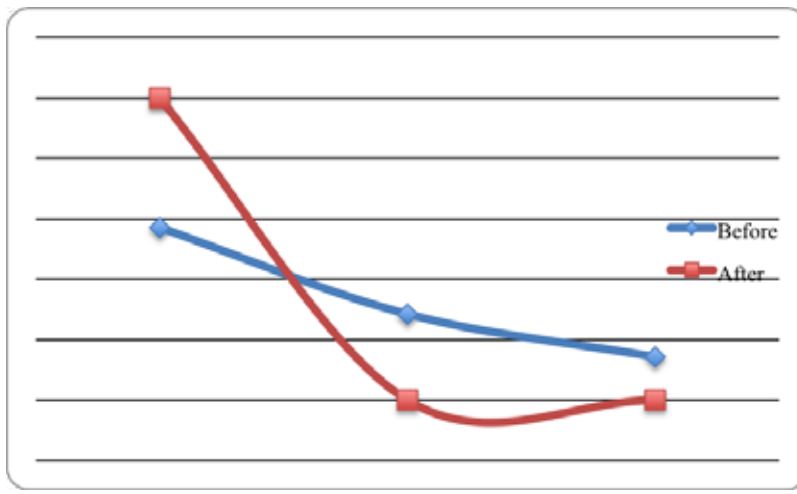
Another important component of the course was to inculcate among the students the importance of knowing about other religions. In this regard, as reflected in Figure 2, all participants after the course disagreed with the statement that learning about other religions makes them less of who they are. At the start of the course, nearly 20 per cent thought knowing about other religions would result in negative impacts for them.

Figure 2: Learning about other religions makes us less of who we are



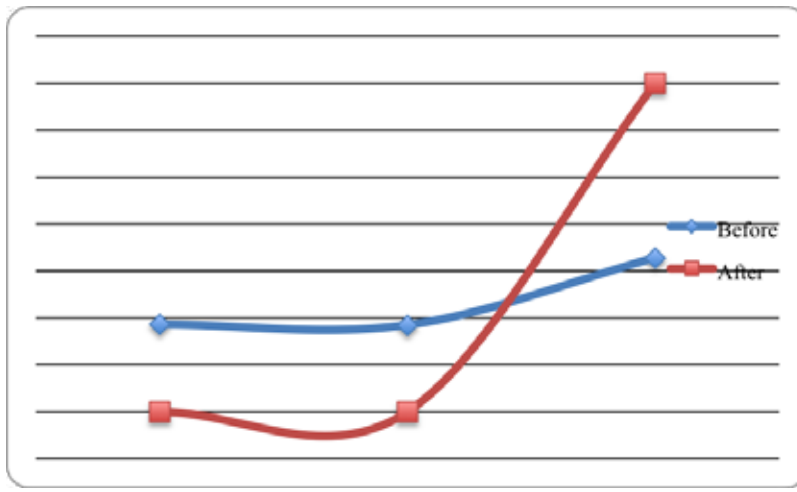
It is important for any peace education programme to promote the value of peace and good relations. This aim has been at the core of the course. At the start of the course, nearly 20 per cent of the students thought that keeping peace and good relations is not better than charity. However, after the course they agreed that peace and good relations are better than charity.

Figure 3: Keeping peace and good relations is better than charity



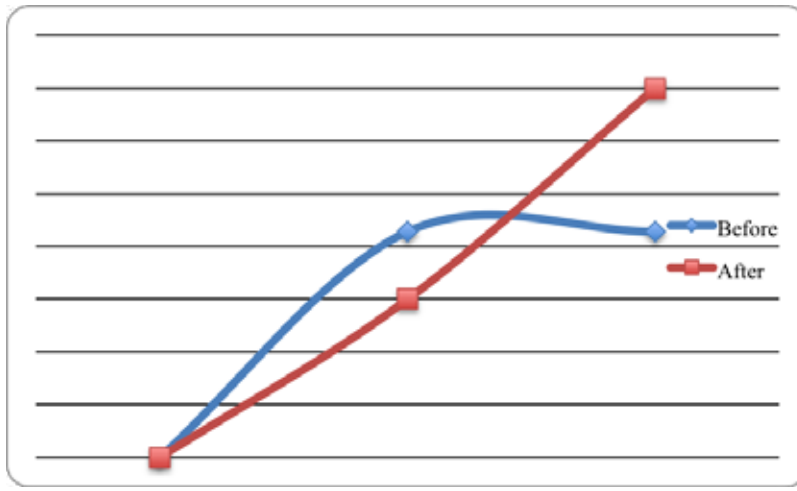
Interfaith harmony is mostly disturbed when one tries to impose his or her religious views on others. At the beginning of the course, nearly 30 per cent agreed that we should impose our religious views on others; however, after the course, the percentage of students in this category dropped to 10 per cent.

Figure 4: We must impose our religious views on others



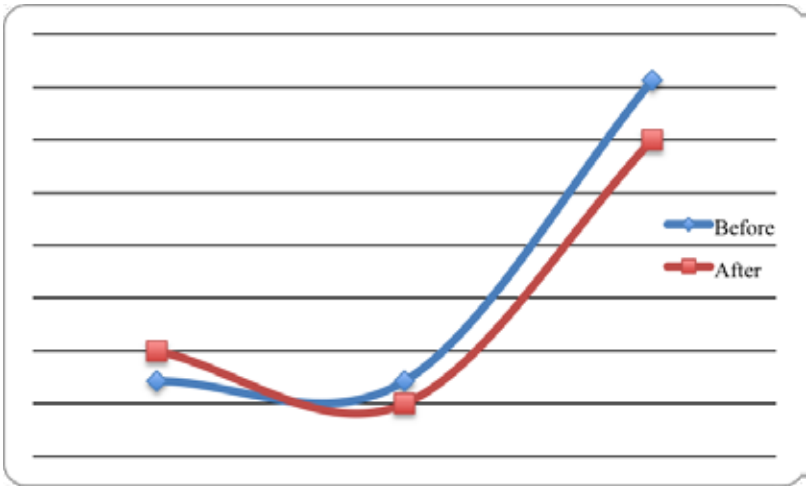
There is a common understanding in Pakistan and other conservative contexts that knowing about other religions negatively affects belief. This question was asked of students taking the course, but none of them outright agreed with the statement, either at the beginning or at the conclusion of the course. However, confusion was clear from the number who preferred to be neutral in their responses (see Figure 5). Nonetheless, after the course, a significant majority of 70 per cent disagreed that learning about other faiths would change or negatively influence their beliefs.

Figure 5: Learning about other religions alters and affects our own belief systems, negatively



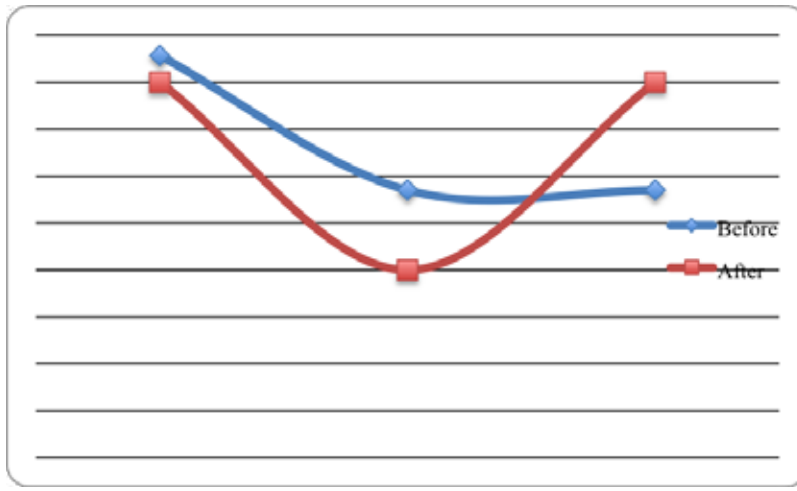
The life of peace-builders promoting interfaith and inter-cultural studies is not easy in a place where 'peace' and related terminologies have negative connotations. Many see them as forms of Western propaganda. Consequently, a peace educator's first job is to clarify the purpose and effectiveness of the tools employed for conflict transformation and conflict resolutions, such as dialogue. As illustrated by the data in Figure 6, confusion remained in the minds of students about the purpose of effective dialogue, as even after the course, 20 per cent thought that the purpose of dialogue was to win the argument. This result occurred in spite of the fact that the course teachers emphasized the difference between dialogue, which is about mutual respect and listening, and debate, which is to prove the other wrong and oneself right. The Centre even produced a booklet on 'Discovering Diversity', which clearly emphasized this difference.

Figure 6: An effective dialogue means to always win the argument



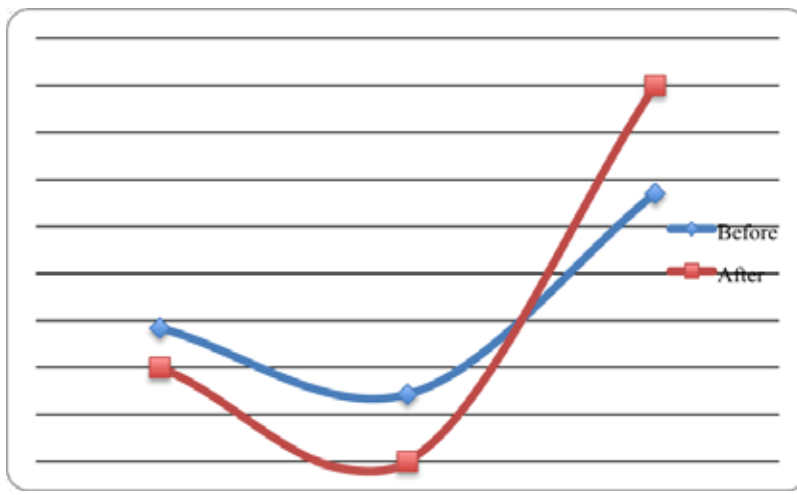
As religion is transferred from parents to children, at least in most cases, it is also practised in the same way it is practised by elders. Our aim in this course was to encourage students to understand religious practices and then to use their own critical thinking instead of following their elders blindly. At the start of the course, more than 40 per cent of students were of the opinion that religion must be practised as it has been practised by elders. This point of view changed after the course, with nearly 40 per cent disagreeing with the statement (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: We must practise our religion as our elders have been practicsing it



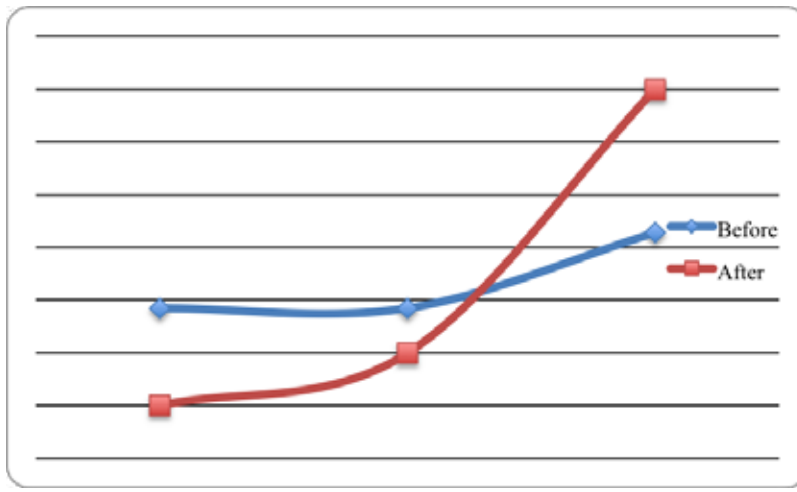
Interaction with people of other faiths and cultures is important for developing trust. If there is less interaction, then naturally there is a trust deficit. Students were asked whether we must only interact with people of our own faith and values. In response, after the course, a significant majority of 80 per cent disagreed with the statement (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: We must only interact with people who share similar beliefs and values



It is common for people of any faith to believe in the value of their religious beliefs, but problems surface when they start thinking that they are superior to others. In 2013, a survey found that Muslims around the world believe that Islam is the true religion and it is their duty to convert others (PRC, 2013). Before the course, approximately 30 per cent of students thought that Muslims are superior to non-believers. After the course – which allowed students to understand other religions and see from their perspectives – there was a significant change in this perception, with nearly 70 per cent stating that Muslims are not superior to people of other faiths (see Figure 9).

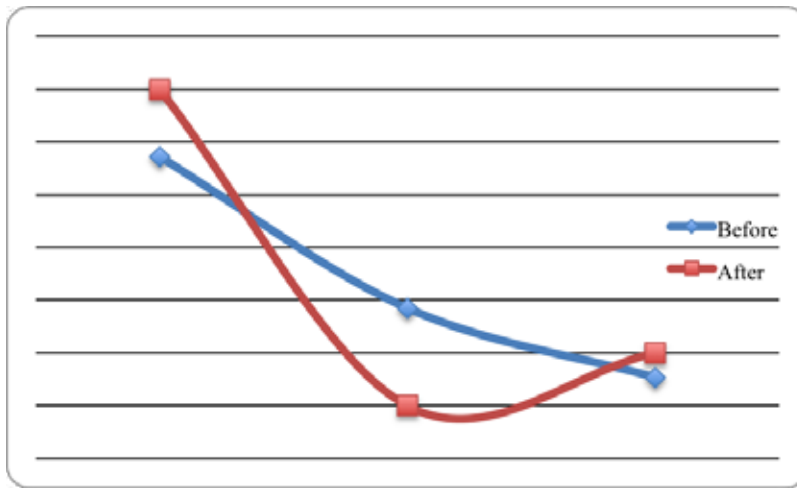
Figure 9: A Muslim is superior to a non-believer



There are misperceptions about the status of women in a Muslim society, both within the Muslim world and outside. A study conducted on *Female Leadership in Islam* found that 'there are no problems facing their leadership and they can be religious, political and social heads' (Bakhtyar and Rezaei, 2012, p. 259). Women played a prominent role in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad; for example, one of his wives was a businesswoman and another a scholar and the leader of an army in battle – equivalent to the position of an army general. Students studied the difference between the religion of Islam, which is universal, and the cultures of Muslim societies (e.g. *Pukhtunwali*, Saudi culture and so on), which are tribal, patriarchal, and often restrictive of women's actions and movements. Where Islam gave women rights to inherit and lead, some cultures restricted these and imposed their own vision of the world on everyday men and women. Thus, it

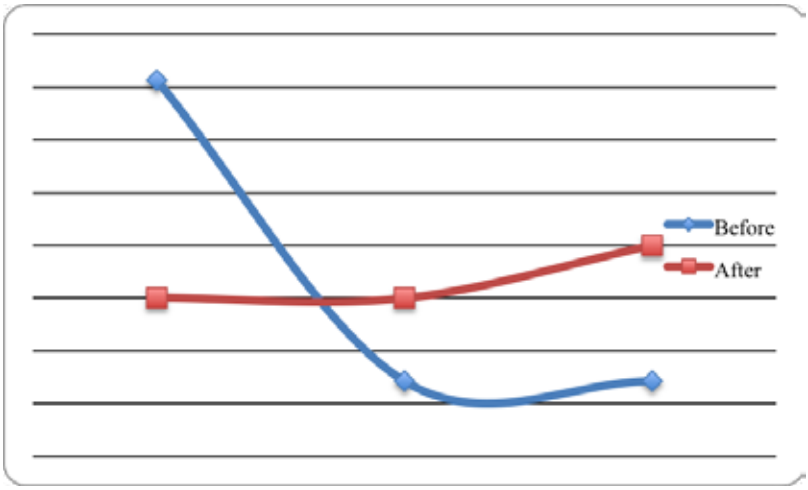
is important to differentiate between the universal values of religion, which emphasize righteousness, compassion, understanding, equal rights and justice for all, and tribal cultures that emphasize family networks headed by a dominant male figure (as we see in the leadership of many Muslim countries). The media, other analysts and everyday people often confuse these categories, which leads to generalizations about large and complex faith groups. Similarly, less than 60 per cent of students before the course agreed that males are equivalent in status to females, but after the course 70 per cent of the students held the point of view that men and women were different but equal.

Figure 10: A male is equivalent in status to a female



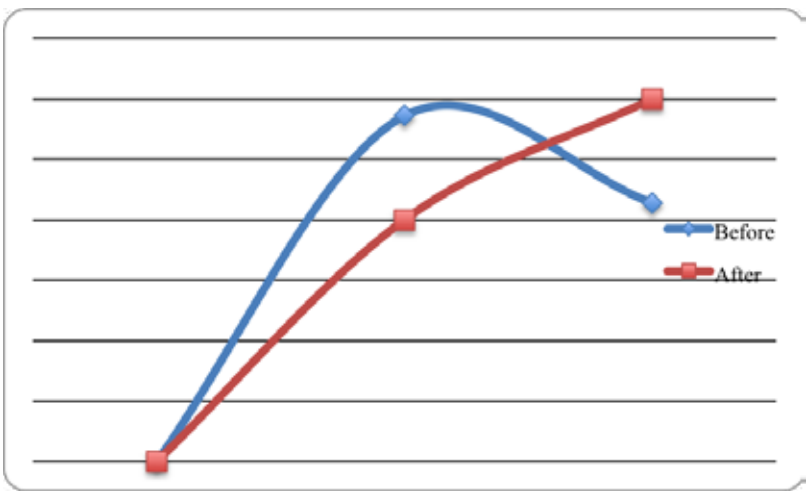
Due to a serious lack of sustained and widely available peace-building education, interfaith and intercultural relations continue to decline in Pakistan. In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States and the war in Afghanistan and other Muslims countries, relations between Muslims and Christians in Pakistan have reached their lowest ebb. One of the biggest challenges to the interfaith struggle in Pakistan is inadequate understanding of what interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution actually are and what they really mean. The situation in Pakistan has produced widespread pessimism with regard to good interfaith relations. This feeling is reflected in Figure 11 in which the majority (approximately 70 per cent) of the course's students stated that it is impossible to promote interfaith relations in Pakistan. This negative attitude changed after the course, with 40 per cent saying that it is impossible.

Figure 11: It is impossible to promote interfaith relations in Pakistan



Data in Figure 12 again reflect students' lack of knowledge and confusion about dialogue when they entered the course. However, this confusion and lack of knowledge was largely dealt with in the course (see Figure 12).

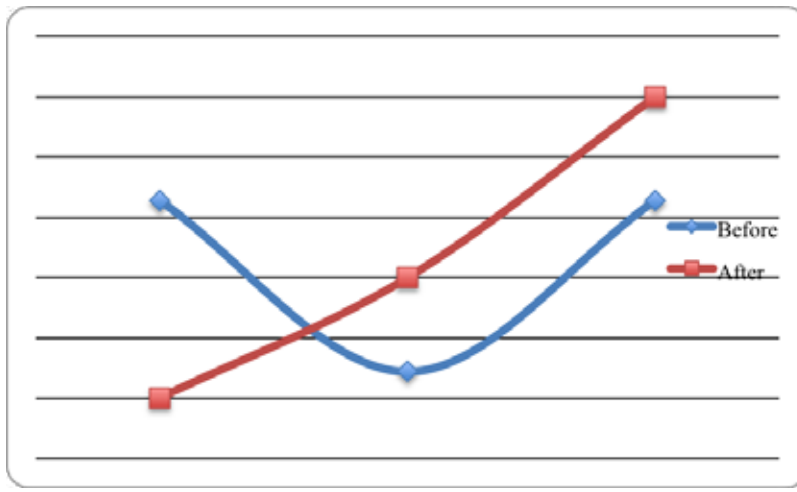
Figure 12: While initiating a dialogue, we must make sure there is no disagreement



There is a sense of insecurity attached to knowing about other religions. Often, people believe that knowing about other faiths will harm their sacred beliefs. Less than 20 per cent of Muslims living in Thailand, a Buddhist

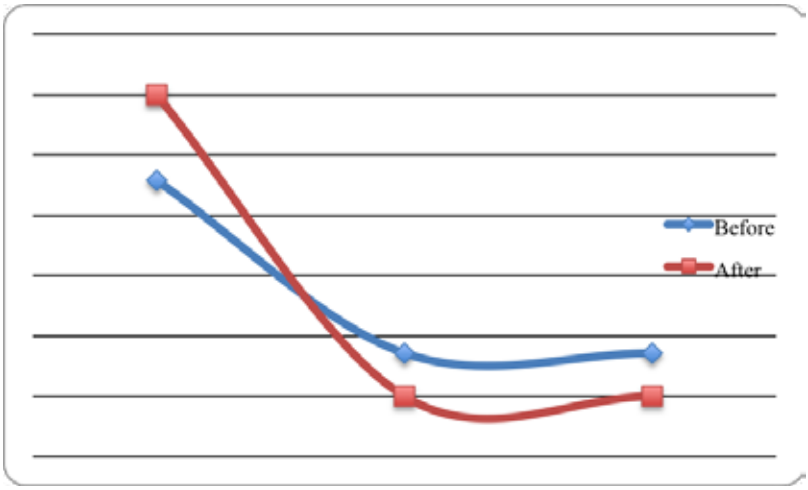
majority country, said they are familiar with Buddhism (PRC, 2013). According to the 2013 survey, almost half of the Muslims in Muslim majority countries said that they are knowledgeable about Christianity, and that Islam and Christianity share a lot in common (PRC, 2013). Nonetheless, knowledge of other religions and its commonalities with one's own religion is very important for good interfaith relations. At the start of the course, more than 40 per cent of the students said that it is better to ignore practices that faiths have in common. This perception changed after the course when the majority stated that we should not ignore commonalities between faiths (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: It is better to ignore beliefs that faiths have in common



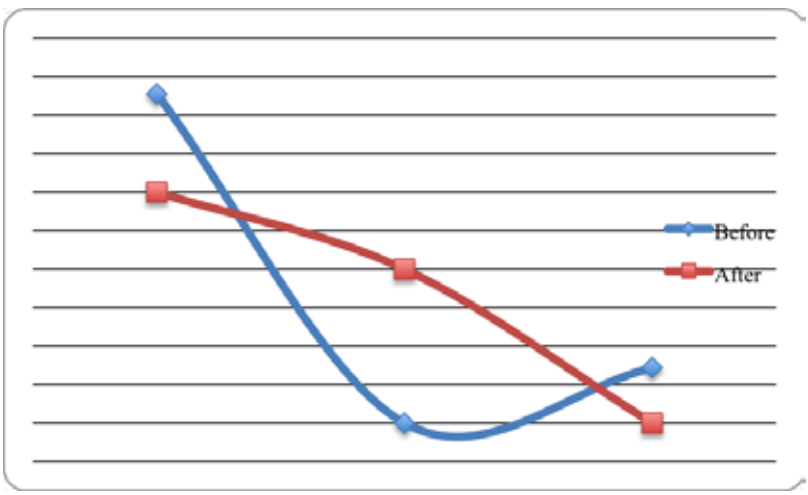
How do we judge others? Often, we judge others based on how they look and what we know about them through others. At the start of the course, nearly 70 per cent agreed with the statement that we must never judge others without knowing them. After the course, all the students agreed with this statement (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: We must never judge others without knowing them



Regarding the connection between actions, feelings, responses and beliefs, students gave mixed responses (see Figure 15). As depicted through data, 60 per cent of students after the course identified a link among actions, feelings, response and beliefs.

Figure 15: Our actions, feelings, response and beliefs are all interlinked

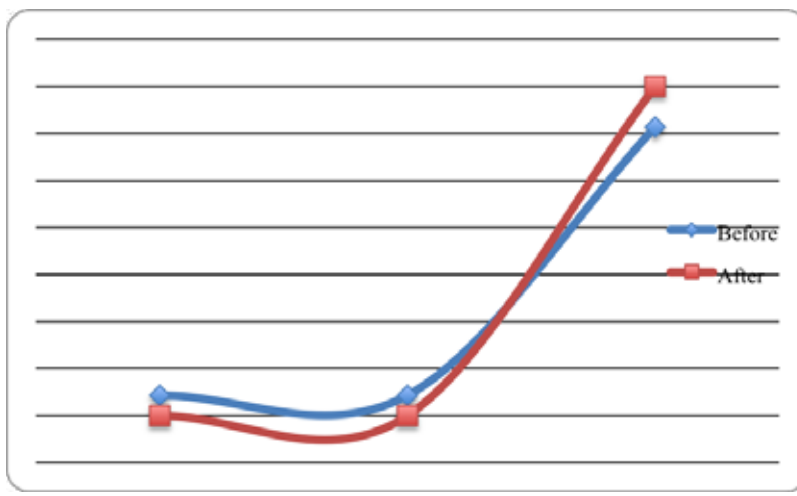


There is often confusion about the ancestry of Muslims in South Asia. A huge majority still believe or claim that they are the descendants of Arabs who came to this part of the world after the arrival of Muhammad bin

Qasim. According to Shah (2012), 'The current thinking in the subcontinent amongst Muslims in both India and Pakistan that Arabs are racially superior to Dravidian Indians and so having Arab genes or an Arab bloodline makes them higher in status than Hindus of Dravidian origin'. This contradicts religious teachings because Islam clearly teaches about equality between Arabs and non-Arabs. The summing up of Islam's message is revealed in the last sermon of the Prophet Muhammad to all of humankind: 'All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action.'

However, some students – less than 10 per cent – still maintained the belief that Arabs today are superior to Pakistanis. Similar debates rage in Parliament in Pakistan today, with the ongoing battle in the Middle East over support with Saudi Arabia against rising tribal separatist groups. With their own challenges, some students rightly opted to stay neutral, emphasizing the difference between the religious history of the holy sites in Mecca and Medina (which have the reverence and love of all Muslims) and the Saudi family. This view, however, is a minority educated and well thought-out perspective. The large majority of Pakistanis still tend to link everything Saudi with the idea of sacredness and the source of their religion. Again, anthropological perspectives can potentially help differentiate religion from culture and history from politics.

Figure 16: An Arab is superior to a Pakistani



Conclusion

With reports of serious, concerning and growing Islamophobia in the West (Ajdini, 2016; Eastat-Daas, 2016; Hafez, 2016; Merali, 2016; Šeta et al., 2016; Younes, 2016), there is no doubt, as the 2009 World Report of UNESCO also points out, that there is a need for new and dynamic ways of introducing tools of cultural diversity into education, media and policy. This will be the key to successful coexistence and countering conflict in the twenty-first century. An important outcome from the examples given in this chapter from an intercultural and interfaith education programme in the UK and Pakistan is that such programmes can be successful if designed to suit the context. Peace education with an interfaith and intercultural focus can be made contextually appropriate after thorough analysis and understanding of the root causes of conflict. Nonetheless, there is a need to learn from globally recognized Peace Education models, such as those offered by UNESCO; however these have to be localized. With regard to the courses described in this chapter – and in response to the particular context of Pakistan and its current challenges – some of us at the Centre for Dialogue and Action tried to encourage the majority 98 per cent of Muslims to give space and recognition to the minority. Ideally, and in a neutral environment, an interfaith and intercultural course should adopt a neutral perspective. As the 2009 UNESCO report on *Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue* points out:

> The key to successful intercultural and interfaith dialogue lies in the acknowledgement of the equal dignity of the participants. This presupposes recognition of – and respect for – diverse forms of knowledge and their modes of expression, the customs and traditions of participants, and efforts to establish a culture-neutral context for dialogue that enables communities to express themselves freely. This is especially true of interfaith dialogue. Interfaith dialogue is a crucial dimension of international understanding and thus of conflict resolution. Beyond institutional exchanges between authoritative or representative figures, interfaith dialogue aimed at reconciling different viewpoints should seek to integrate exchanges of all kinds, including through informal local and community networks, and to involve new partners, especially indigenous populations, women and youth (UNESCO, 2009, p. 10).

The innovative interfaith courses mentioned in this chapter were pilot projects and experiments, introduced by the Centre for Dialogue and Action in a number of Pakistani and UK universities in an effort to sow the seeds of

peace. While the courses explored differences between religion and culture, they also focused on respect for women and people of other cultures and religions. In this they drew upon work already being done by scholars and religious leaders such as Lord Jonathan Sacks (in the UK), Professor Akbar Ahmed (in the United States) and Prince Hassan (in Jordan). The course results, based on the surveys and responses of students, showed that positive change is possible, by promoting universal values of respect for the other and compassion for all, and by educating students about ideas that can bring people from different cultures and faiths together in deeper understanding and mutual respect. It is hoped that these courses will be introduced in other universities in Pakistan and more widely in South Asia. We must therefore join hands with those who undertake interfaith and intercultural work, despite all the odds and many obstacles and challenges, in order to turn discord into accord.

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4. Racism, anti-racism and intercultural dialogue

Amanuel Elias

Introduction

Amid rising anti-immigrant and xenophobic sentiments in Europe, and the recent exploitation of such sentiments by far-right groups, European policy-makers have stressed the necessity of intercultural dialogue as a strategy to foster social cohesion, reduce racism and prejudice, and create understanding (Council of Europe, 2008; Hunyadi and Molnár 2016). Exploring intercultural dialogue as an anti-racism tool is worthwhile, particularly given the utility of dialogue in clearing preconceived bias and prejudice. Research indicates that the utility of a one-way anti-racism strategy is limited at best; a more effective strategy is one that engages people to contribute to discussions designed to reduce racism (Pedersen et al., 2005). In this sense, intercultural dialogue can be useful, as it creates a space for members of ethnically and culturally diverse groups to share their views and values. To what extent this can lead to a reduction in racial prejudice is an empirical question. However, there is emerging evidence that a strategy that provides favourable contact among groups tends to have the greatest attenuating effect on racial prejudice (Jensen et al., 2010).

Drawing on intergroup contact literature, the purpose of this chapter is to explore the utility of intercultural dialogue, an aspect of positive intergroup contact that emphasizes dialogue as a method of communication. Intercultural dialogue has been defined as 'a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect' (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 17). The concept assumes a context characterized by the difference and plurality of group characteristics. In a climate of growing diversity where immigration and globalization continue to push the boundaries of socio-demographic transformation, both in the global

north and south, estrangement between racially and ethnically diverse groups can lead to fear of the 'other' and interracial conflict (Eric Oliver and Wong, 2003). By enabling interpersonal contact, proponents of intercultural dialogue argue that dialogue can bridge and narrow social distance, thereby removing the estrangement between majority and minority groups. For example, Christian Stokke and Lena Lybæk (2016, p. 1) note that 'interculturalism as policy opens up a space for dialogue where minoritized people, individually and collectively, can find their own voices and negotiate their own identities and interests as well as the shared values of larger society.' There is evidence that lends credence to this argument, to some degree, particularly in culturally diverse societies such as Australia and Canada, with multicultural policies achieving better cooperation between cultural minorities and the majority group (Adams, 2008; Ho and Alcorso, 2004). However, in Europe, multicultural policies have come under criticism both from policy-makers and researchers (Cantle, 2012; Stokke and Lybæk, 2016). In its 2008 White Paper, the Council of Europe cited the inadequacy of multicultural policies in creating understanding among ethnically and culturally diverse communities (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 9). Whether the proposed alternative, that is, *intercultural dialogue*, can fix the alleged 'failures' of multiculturalism has been the subject of growing debate in the literature. For example, in concluding their critique of intercultural dialogue as a policy concept, Shiv Ganesh and Prue Holmes (2011, p. 85) pose the following research questions:

> To what extent is intercultural co-production the outcome of dialogue rather than multicultural co-existence? How can local and international levels of intercultural dialogue be brought together in complementary and informing ways? What are the potentialities and limitations of intercultural dialogue for resolving intercultural conflicts? How can intercultural dialogue productively resolve problems of social (in)justice? How can we articulate an explicitly intercultural ethic of dialogue?

Other researchers have cast conceptual doubts on intercultural dialogue, arguing that it lacks conceptual distinction and universal applicability (Phipps, 2014). Some scholars argue that there are little more than semantic differences between the theoretical underpinnings of multiculturalism and the tenets of intercultural dialogue (Modood and Meer, 2012). This argument holds that, whereas multiculturalism tends to be a well-developed system involving coherent policies encouraging the recognition of ethnically, linguistically and/or religiously diverse groups, intercultural dialogue adds little more than interaction within the multicultural environment. It also

contends that countries abandoning multiculturalism as a socio-political policy in favour of interculturalism risk the loss of an important legal and policy framework that allows for the intended dialogue to take place and for 'the voices of minoritised groups and individuals [to be] heard' (Stokke and Lybæk, 2016, p. 1). Generally, the criticism that interculturalism cannot be considered a distinctly superior alternative to multiculturalism is in direct contrast to the Council of Europe's assertion regarding the inadequacy of multiculturalism.

Another argument against intercultural dialogue is the view that it is not universally applicable under all conditions. Citing her experience in Palestinian Gaza as an example, Alison Phipps (2014, p. 107), argues that intercultural dialogue requires cooperation and engagement, and thus is intractable in states of war and conflicts. Based on this notion, she concludes that intercultural dialogue is intractable in the current global security climate, which is characterized by multiple conflicts and the absence of peace.

The conceptual and practical critiques of intercultural dialogue, as well as the nuanced questions Ganesh and Holmes (2011) ask, raise a legitimate challenge for researchers and proponents of intercultural dialogue. To what extent these criticisms have validity is a matter of theoretical and empirical debate. Although I agree that the concept of intercultural dialogue needs conceptual clarity and generalizability before it can be deployed as an effective alternative to multiculturalism (Modood and Meer, 2012), the above criticisms do not preclude the examination of its utility as an anti-racism and intergroup prejudice-mitigating tool. As such, dialogue as a mode of contact can be effectual, whether it is among members of the same group or among diverse groups. Therefore, in the rest of this chapter, as I explore intercultural dialogue, I will review its intersectionality with cultural diversity, racism and anti-racism.

Intercultural dialogue

Dialogue is at the heart of the concept of intercultural dialogue, the goal of which is the creation of understanding among the interacting parties and not necessarily the resolution of differences via a rationalistic deductive reasoning. Via a process of listening and the respectful exchange of views, this dialogue seeks to engage participants in 'a deeper understanding of diverse world views and practices, to increase co-operation and participation (or the freedom to make choices), to allow personal growth

and transformation, and to promote tolerance and respect for the other' (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 17). Although dialogue has a salient history in the evolution of Western philosophy, the idea of intercultural dialogue is novel in the sense that it has some distinct features that are not uniquely part of traditional liberal rationalism. These features include the accommodation of cultural identity, differences and alternative worldviews, while acknowledging universally shared values (Stokke and Lybæk, 2016).

Indeed, dialogue as a communication technique to clear misunderstanding and conflict is an ancient concept. The Socratic dialogues are the prominent examples of how dialogue has been shown as an epistemological tool to disprove false assumptions. Eliminating false assumptions and irrationalities by applying a kind of Occam's razor technique, Socratic dialogue leads to a reasonable conclusion via consensus. In this sense, intercultural dialogue might not lead to consensus as an outcome. Instead, it allows for differences, irrational beliefs and contradictions to remain with each party respectfully tolerating these differences. Yet, in the process of addressing mutual misconceptions and prejudices, such dialogue seeks to achieve an atmosphere of understanding and tolerance. The emphasis of dialogue in this context is on the production of knowledge or learning through collaborative and interactive communication that involves listening and engagement (Ganesh and Holmes, 2011). Highlighting the role of collaboration in the process of dialogue, Ganesh and Holmes (2011, p. 83) note:

> While scholars from a multitude of theoretical perspectives argue that a wide range of communication practices, including conflict, have dialogic aspects, and that dialogue is, and should not be, restricted to practices involving consensus, still dialogue is often culturally constructed as collaboration. Theoretical expansions of dialogue, therefore, need to be contrasted with and contextualised within its practice in speech communities across the world; in this sense, Carbaugh et al. [2006] make a valuable contribution towards sensitizing theories of dialogue to the (intercultural) meanings of dialogue in use.

Collaboration is critical for a constructive intercultural dialogue. As culturally distinct individuals or groups participate in dialogue, intercultural value conflicts are bound to emerge in the process. The way the framework of the dialogue is constructed, determines the integrity and outcomes of the process. As cited previously, a positive outcome of intercultural contact requires the existence of equality in status, absence of completion, common goal(s) among participants and the availability of mechanisms

to address tensions. Dialogue within this setting ensures an atmosphere for respectful communication where participants can listen to one another and learn from their unique experiences. This allows them to appreciate diverse perspectives and cultural values, while at the same time enabling them to evaluate their own values and perspectives.

Even though intercultural dialogue seeks to achieve understanding, this should not give the impression that the evolution of understanding and knowledge transformation is straightforward. Value conflicts, contradictions and difficulties in communication are bound to emerge due to the specificity and diversity of the experiences of the participant individuals and groups in intercultural dialogue (Brie, 2011). Such diversity reflects the unique traditions and cultural heritages shaped and reshaped over the course of each participant's history. Recognition of these heritages is an integral part of the dialogue, as such dialogue seeks to partake in a deeper understanding of other cultures, worldviews and values. Via the complex interaction of listening, learning, participation, reflection and reflexivity, the goal of intercultural dialogue is to achieve transformative growth and competence in intercultural relationships by focusing on shared values (Stokke and Lybæk, 2016).

Under conditions that encourage participants to open up and engage reflectively, intercultural dialogue allows for the critical examination of alternative views and practices. Michael James (1999, p. 589) proposes that 'members of conflicting cultures should practice *critical intercultural dialogue*, whereby they try first to understand and only then to criticize cultural practices they find offensive' (emphasis in original). Via open-ended questions, previously held values are subjected to critical examination in this tradition sometimes leading to a change in views. This indicates that dialogue can lead to change, although the change may come only gradually. Over time, after repeated periods of intercultural interactions, the diffusion of values allows for the mixing and transformation of cultural values. James (1999, p. 592) summarizes this process as follows:

> On the most basic level, it is clear that most, if not all, living cultures change over time. As a result, if one seeks to understand a new culture within which one does not regularly participate, then one's understanding may become outdated or inaccurate. On a more complex level, the content and even the boundaries of a culture may change as it encounters other cultures. While critical intercultural dialogue provides one intentional process whereby intercultural contact

> may lead to cultural change, other, less conscious processes can also be important.

It should be noted, though, that this change is not unidirectional, with minority group members assimilating into the mainstream culture. The outcome of intercultural encounters and dialogue can lead to change in values, perceptions and attitudes in both directions, where the participating individuals and groups mutually change their views of each other (Dessel and Rogge, 2008; Gawlewicz, 2015).

It is conceivable for racism to thrive more in the absence of intergroup contact. The fact that intercultural dialogue affords more intergroup contact means it can be an effective strategy for combating racism. In particular, its provision of space(s) for the critical and reflexive examination of personal bias and prejudices can prompt the desired attitudinal change that is vital in prejudice reduction.

Conditions for intercultural dialogue

As a special form of dialogue, intercultural dialogue can be carried out constructively if it is contextualized and adapted, taking into account the diverse composition of the participants. With this in mind, I outline here, a few minimum conditions necessary for the successful execution of intercultural dialogue, as have been identified in the literature.

Participation in intercultural dialogue requires an outlook of openness to alternative cultural perspectives. As such, dialogue can only proceed in a state of openness, where participants can reflexively mirror each other's thoughts back and forth (Bohm et al., 1991; Isaacs, 2008). So long as this condition is met, participants have the opportunity to clear mutually held assumptions, inferred intentions and preconceptions about one another. Indeed, reflective dialogue in an atmosphere of openness gives participants the opportunity to explore their assumptions about themselves and others (Isaacs, 2008). Thus, James (1999, p. 599) considers openness the minimum condition for such dialogue and notes that there are situations when:

> the commitment to dialogue is superseded by a strategic attempt to secure a prudential modus vivendi. But even within a modus vivendi, residual duties still apply to adherents of critical intercultural dialogue. At minimum, they must retain a stance of openness. This entails the willingness to try to understand their cultures and to hold their own values as open to revision.

Openness, which can be reinforced through mutual commitment to dialogue, allows for trust to develop among participants, which can in turn nurture collaboration in achieving common goals. The common goal, in this case, would be mutual understanding of respective cultural perspectives.

The framework of the dialogue in the conduct of intercultural dialogue should also ensure fairness to all participants. There should not be an asymmetrical power relationship among participants, which could allow some participants to exercise power over others. Power here can mean social, economic or political power. James (1999) proposes that for intercultural dialogue to be fairly prosecuted, both the capacity to coercively manipulate other participants' words or actions and to selectively remove topics as discussion points without unanimous agreement should be stripped from all participants. Ensuring these two conditions enhances and frames the rules for dialogue, while ensuring the grounds of fairness. Without these grounds, it is inconceivable to realize understanding and the critical evaluation of other cultural perspectives through dialogue. James (1999, p. 596) summarizes the argument for abstaining from the exercise of power in the dialogic process as follows:

> because power relations contradict the fair conditions for critical intercultural dialogue, groups may bear asymmetrical residual duties within a modus vivendi. Just as asymmetrical capacities to overcome the empirical limitations to understanding give groups asymmetrical opportunities to engage in intercultural criticisms, so too does the asymmetrical possession of power provide asymmetrical duties to remain open and to generate trust. In this way, critical intercultural dialogue, even when it confronts its most difficult limits, nevertheless prescribes substantial normative duties.

Another essential factor for the success of intercultural dialogue is the willingness and capacity of participants to engage and learn from each other. The capacity to engage and learn is an aspect of competence, which we discuss later. At this stage, I delve more into the concepts 'willingness to engage' and 'willingness to learn', as essential elements of intercultural dialogue. Whether dialogue can be successfully conducted or not depends on the willingness of participants to engage. This relates to the behaviour of the participants in the process of the dialogue, which indicates whether they are prepared to make a genuine effort to be active participants. In the absence of genuine engagement, intercultural dialogue will fail to progress materially. Therefore, participants are required to make a reasonable

effort to listen and understand the views of others, while at the same time expressing their own perspectives.

'Willingness to learn' in the context of intercultural dialogue involves a cognitive process, in that it requires mental readiness to accommodate new knowledge from others' experience. Participation in intercultural dialogue with such readiness is likely to enhance the opportunity for mutual understanding (Isaacs, 2008). In this context, the preparedness to learn and understand others presupposes an acknowledgement of difference and plurality of cultures. Such preparedness also indicates an element of curiosity within each participant – a curiosity to explore the views, perspectives and cultural values of others (Isaacs 2008). Intercultural dialogue is likely to flourish where people are motivated to go beyond their cultural comfort zone to dialogically experience the ways others think, view the world and make sense of reality. Ultimately, the fact that participants are willing to learn from others' experiences is a step towards the attitudinal transformation that intercultural dialogue seeks to effect. This in turn intersects with the main goal of anti-racism, namely, the goal of reducing racial prejudice through intercultural competency training, education, empathy building and so on.

Generally, openness, fairness and genuine engagement are particularly vital in the context of anti-racism. Within the intercultural dialogue model, racial prejudice can be addressed and reduced only if participants critically and reflectively confront their mutual views, prejudices and preconceptions. A reduction of racism through dialogic interaction is also possible under an atmosphere of egalitarian interaction where individuals do not feel coerced to change their views. Otherwise, the outcome can instead be a reinforcement of prejudice rather than its reduction. Finally, a successful anti-racism strategy presupposes the genuine engagement of people. Thus, voluntary cooperation is a key precondition for the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue as a prejudice reduction strategy.

Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue

The recognition of cultural, racial, ethnic and religious diversity is an essential element of multicultural policies and practices in pluralistic Western societies (Wilk-Woś, 2010). These policies seek to achieve tolerance and the appreciation of collective identities among groups. Similarly, recognition of diversity and difference is also the benchmark for intercultural dialogue as proposed in the White Paper (Council of Europe,

2008). The idea of balancing diversity with the notions of cultural and national identity has been challenging policy-makers and scholars in Europe in general, and Western nations in particular, although diversity appears to be accommodated in both multiculturalism and interculturalism.

In academia, a growing body of research has been produced on the causal effect of diversity on economic, social and political outcomes. Yet, the evidence as to whether diversity has beneficial or has an adverse impact across the range of these outcomes is mixed (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2004; Elias and Paradies, 2016; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Homberg and Bui, 2013; Pelled et al., 1999; Putnam, 2007; Qin et al., 2013; Stahl et al., 2010). However, a consensus view has long since emerged regarding the need for coherent policies and structures to incorporate inclusive strategies aimed at addressing diversity across every aspect of life, including the workplace, business, service delivery, community, entertainment and so on. Multicultural policies that were advanced across Australia, Canada and Europe have involved strategies that encourage tracking diversity in management and workplaces; ensuring public services and spaces catering for diversified clients; promoting positive media coverage; and supporting cultural and community associations with the goal of 'accommodat[ing] culture-based differences of value, language and social practice' (Vertovec, 2010, p. 83).

Today, the policy environment has apparently shifted towards the idea of social cohesion and there is renewed debate surrounding diversity and the policies that espouse it. Multicultural policies are now subjected to continued criticisms, particularly by policy-makers who hold the view that it has failed to deliver. The snowball effect of the proclaimed failure of multicultural policies in Western society is visible at the grassroots level. Largely fomented by public discourse around anti-immigration and anti-globalization, opposition to cultural diversity has received traction among Euro-sceptics in England and France and among far-right activists in Australia, Eastern Europe and the United States. In England, these groups and the politicians who catered to their fears were able to influence the outcome of the 2016 referendum on Britain's European Union membership, which saw Britain elect to leave the Union. Despite substantial progress in the intercultural relationships attributable to the range of multicultural policies, the recent rise of neo-nationalism and neo-conservatism will be a challenge to policies that seek to accommodate diversity.

Intercultural dialogue sets a framework for balancing diversity and social cohesion around shared national identity, with a focus on shared universal

values (Stokke and Lybæk, 2016). Generally, the criticisms levelled against multiculturalism centre around the notion that it has created segregated communities by highlighting difference and group identity (Amin, 2002). The idea of intercultural dialogue is to counter these negative social outcomes by creating an environment for communication and social interaction. As Stokke and Lybæk (2016, p. 4) note, '[t]he goals of interculturalism are to counteract processes of segregation and exclusion which presumably take place in culturally diverse societies, while also promoting democratic values and respect for human rights through positive interaction between groups and individuals'.

As it attempts to counteract the push for exclusion, segregation and discrimination, intercultural dialogue can be viewed as having an element of anti-racism strategies. Its focus on bridging differences through dialogue can lead to respectful understanding, which is a step towards mitigating intergroup tension and prejudice. In the following sections, I discuss the role of intergroup contact on racism and further explore the conceptual and practical utility of dialogue within the context of diversity and cultural plurality.

Racism and intergroup contact

Racism as a social psychological construct forms racial categories based on prejudices and misconceptions construing and essentializing the 'otherness' of racial outgroups (Blascovich et al., 1997; Chao et al., 2013; Hook, 2005). These racial categories in turn enable societies to promote racially exclusive practices and policies (Feagin, 2014; McVeigh, 2004). Such emphasis on the difference of the 'other' can have a polarizing effect among groups, particularly in culturally diverse societies (Dessel and Rogge, 2008). Above and beyond curiosity, racism goes so far as to depict the 'other' as hostile or antagonizing. Studies indicate that racially discriminatory practices are more prevalent in the context of amplified outgroup hostility (Habtegiorgis et al., 2014; Pedersen et al., 2003). Like any other prejudice, such views of cultural outgroups rely heavily on stereotypes and ethnocentric attitudes. The prejudices are likely to be exaggerated when the social distance between groups is widened by the absence of intergroup contact (Eric Oliver and Wong, 2003). Intergroup contact narrows social distance, and can therefore offer an avenue for intergroup understanding via intergroup communication (and more specifically, intercultural dialogue).

Research indicates that intergroup contact either reduces or worsens intergroup prejudice depending on the nature of the contact (Pettigrew, 1997; Sigelman and Welch, 1993). Negative intergroup contact tends to lead to racism and the avoidance of other group members (Barlow et al., 2012; Paolini et al., 2010). However, prejudice towards outgroups is attenuated by positive intergroup contact, provided that the groups enjoy equal status, are not competing against each other and envisage common goals, and that institutional structures exist to reduce emerging tensions (Pettigrew, 1997). Further research demonstrates the moderating impact of positive intergroup contact, with studies suggesting that such contact can foster intergroup trust and friendship by eliminating social distance (Barlow et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2013; Wagner et al., 2003).

In race relations, research indicates that positive intergroup contact reduces prejudice and racial discrimination (Pedersen et al., 2003). For example, some studies have reported that participants enjoying positive contact were less likely to express racist attitudes (Pettigrew, 1997; Stolle et al., 2008). This is consistent with the argument that positive contact can improve attitudes towards out-group members such as racial minorities and immigrants (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2008). It could therefore be argued that policies and practices that encourage close and positive contact among members of different racial, ethnic and religious groups are likely to yield harmonious relationships by reducing intergroup tensions and prejudices (Davies et al., 2011; Hewstone et al., 2006). However, the positive effect of such intergroup contact depends on the interaction between contextual and behavioural aspects of the contact. The intergroup contact literature has demonstrated that the mitigating effect of frequent interpersonal contact on racial prejudice depends on behavioural changes that are effected through reduced anxiety and increased empathy (Pettigrew et al., 2011; Stein et al., 2000).

Intercultural dialogue as a communication strategy creates space(s) for the occurrence of intergroup contact, which is vital in combating racism. The fact that the contact occurs through dialogue enables reflexivity and self-reflection, which are critical in prejudice reduction. Through openness and respectful interaction, dialogic contact can also lead to the bridging of differences. By fostering an engagement of actual or perceived differences and critical self-reflection, intercultural dialogue can lead to the toleration or bridging of such differences that sometimes underlie racial prejudice (Nagda, 2006). I discuss this further in the next section.

Intercultural dialogue as an anti-racism approach

The effectiveness of any anti-racism strategy depends on its ability to address the factors and processes underlying racism (Pedersen et al., 2003). Likewise, the utility of intercultural dialogue in countering racism depends on its effectiveness in addressing these factors. At issue here is the ability of such dialogue to dislodge prejudicial racial stereotypes. Although all stereotypes are not necessarily racist, all racism involves stereotypes (Hook, 2005; Lusky, 1963). Similarly, although all race-related stereotypes are not necessarily driven by prejudice (Bonilla-Silva, 1997), prejudice lies at the heart of racism (Blascovich et al., 1997). Racial prejudice serves as an epistemological prism through which members of particular groups perceive themselves and outgroups by exaggerating the difference of the 'other' (Hook, 2005). By dividing people into respective groups, they assign negative traits and stereotypes to outgroup members. Depending on the degree of the prejudice, the strength of the negative stereotypes vary from subtle racial epithets to extreme, dehumanizing characterizations.

Racism, as such, benefits from these denigrating projections against outgroups, which start with the assignment of negative stereotypes. Researchers and practitioners have long held that education and awareness campaigns are key to combating the negative stereotypes that underlie racism (see Pedersen et al., 2003). Yet, despite the increase in awareness campaigns, the resurgence of far-right groups with strong views against immigrants, Muslims and so on in Europe and other Western countries appear to have emboldened traditional prejudices. Therefore, in addition to awareness campaigns and education, countering racism should also focus on delegitimizing prejudicial stereotypes by fostering intergroup communication and dialogue.

The power of intercultural dialogue lies in its ability to establish communication among otherwise culturally segregated individuals and groups. Segregation in the context of diversity can weaken social cohesion by reinforcing stereotypes and outgroup hostility. The long history of racism indicates that in the absence of meaningful and frequent intercultural contact, increased levels of diversity can create an atmosphere for racism and other forms of intergroup conflict (Kesler and Bloemraad, 2010; Putnam, 2007). Today, across the world, cultural diversity has rapidly increased thanks to the constant movement of people, capital and data across countries and continents (Faist, 2009). Across countries, cities have become more cosmopolitan and cultural diversity has become a norm that Steven Vertovec (2007, p. 1024) dubbed 'superdiversity', an attribution that

is 'distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade.' Referring to London as the hub of the 'world in one city', Vertovec highlights the unprecedented complex condition diversity has brought to global cities with the continuous flow of immigrants. Faced with the continuous surge of diversity, the megacities of the West face the challenge of creating harmonious citizenry, while at the same time safeguarding the ethno-cultural rights of majority and minority groups. Cognisant of their interpersonal and group rights, these groups in turn face constant questions of identity and acculturation issues, on the one hand, and self-segregation, intergroup conflict and prejudices, on the 'other'.

The early reaction of policy-makers in Europe and other advanced countries was to protect minority rights in the face of rising diversity through the enactment of multicultural policies. I have discussed above the debate surrounding the argument that multicultural policies that give recognition to difference have enabled the development of self-segregated communities. Although this is contested in the literature, the thrust that negative intergroup views supported by preconceived prejudices and stereotypes can take hold in the absence of meaningful interethnic, intercultural and/or intergroup communication is a reasonable contention. This view has historical precedents in the pre-Civil Rights and Apartheid eras, as well as the frequent race riots in Australia, the United Kingdom and so on. In the current globalized climate, where sentiments against globalization abound, racism and outgroup prejudice tend to find refuge in neo-nationalism and anti-immigration policies. These are likely to be aggravated by economic downturns, which can fuel prejudicial attitudes towards minorities and immigrants, which can lead to racist and xenophobic outbursts targeting these groups. Thus, increasingly diverse and pluralistic societies face the immense risk of lack of cohesion unless they create bridges to encourage inclusive communication.

Intercultural communication may serve as a bridge among individuals and groups hailing from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds. This has been cited as something that multicultural policies failed to bring about. However, intercultural dialogue can facilitate rapprochement by de-emphasizing the salience of separate identities and precluding the development of a cultural chasm between minorities and majorities. By fostering dialogue and an atmosphere for civil conversation within the framework of shared

universal values, it may offer an avenue for tackling racism and prejudice. As critical intercultural dialogue focuses on the willingness and ability of participants to respectfully listen to and learn from the experiences of cultural outgroups, it offers participants the opportunity to reflect on preconceived racial and cultural prejudices. By creating an environment for reflexivity between communication with members of minority groups and critical examination of preconceived prejudice towards these groups, such dialogue provides a potential for attitudinal change to emerge. This potential for change at the individual level results from a 'wider recognition of cultural heritage, tolerance and full respect for different cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious groups' (Wilk-Woś, 2010, p. 82). By bridging understanding through mutual appreciation of differences among cultures, 'it helps prevent racism, isolation and discrimination of immigrants' (ibid.).

To summarize, in addition to the reduction of racial prejudice, there exists a range of beneficial values that people can learn through participation in the conduct of intercultural dialogue. For example, participants in the process can enhance their intercultural competence, relational empathy and egalitarian attitude. Intercultural competence can be defined as the proficiency to conduct effective communication with individuals from different cultures in an appropriate way. Although some level of intercultural competence is essential in the conduct of such dialogue, the participants' level of competence can also increase in the dialogic process. Empathy is another value that can be nurtured through intercultural dialogue. Milton Bennett (1979) defines empathy as 'the imaginative, intellectual and emotional participation in another person's experience' (p. 418). This aspect of empathy is relational, as it focuses on the knowledge of other's views and values through interpretative communication, rather than through psychological perception. Finally, participants can develop egalitarian attitudes in the process of intercultural dialogue, which is one of the key factors for combating racism. As they reflexively evaluate their prejudices and preconceptions, they can learn about their shared values, which they can then use to re-evaluate their attitudes.

Limitations of intercultural dialogue

In the introduction to this chapter, I discussed some of the conceptual criticisms that scholars have levelled against intercultural dialogue. These include its apparent lack of distinction from some elements of multiculturalism, its conceptual ambiguity, and its intractability under abnormal circumstances (e.g. war). In this section, I outline a few additional

limitations regarding the universal applicability of intercultural dialogue, particularly as an anti-racism tool.

Firstly, dialogic interaction framed within rules of openness, fairness and genuine engagement is likely to lead to fruition. However, this can occur only after each party has decided to participate in dialogue. The challenge is getting individuals and groups to come to dialogue as a means to narrow differences and solve problems. An absence of readiness to collaborate and consent to abide by a set of rules continues to be the main obstacle in conflict resolution, both in international and domestic conflicts across countries and regions. Race relations are also not immune. Racism, ethnic prejudice and xenophobia also tend to occur due to the unwillingness of individuals and groups to engage in reflexive dialogue.

Secondly, intercultural dialogue is likely to enhance skill and intercultural competence; however, some level of skill and competence is also among the minimum requirements for the successful conduct of intercultural dialogue. Communication skills and intercultural competence are essential ingredients in developing understanding through dialogue, both at the level of facilitation and participation in the process of dialogue. Willingness and capacity to learn are both vital; a concerted effort to listen to and understand others and the acknowledgement of difference are crucial in fostering positive awareness regarding other cultures and groups (Byram, 2009). Equipped with these tools as ingredients, intercultural dialogue can become a potent instrument when deployed to counter racism. However, these ingredients (i.e. communication skills and intercultural competencies) may not readily be accessible to individuals and groups harbouring racist attitudes and stereotypes. Therefore, the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue as an anti-racism tool depends on its integration with other strategies that focus on education, cultural awareness campaigns, training and so on.

Thirdly, one of the inclusive features of intercultural dialogue is its adherence to allowing for difference. At the same time, such dialogue, at least as outlined in the Council of Europe's White Paper, tends to aim at achieving social cohesion, a concept that 'is often being redefined to equate with homogeneity and assimilation' (Vasta, 2010). It is unclear how participants engaging in intercultural dialogue are expected to balance their own difference and cultural identity, while tapping into the homogenizing focus of emerging discourse on social cohesion. This is particularly tricky in the case of interfaith dialogue, where absolutes are involved and participants hold dear what distinguishes them from each other. Policy-makers and

scholars understand that this is challenging, if not intractable terrain (Abu-Nimer, 2012; Huang, 1995). Yet, provided that intercultural dialogue aims to achieve the accommodation of difference, without too much focus on an assimilatory version of social cohesion, its utility in addressing diversity is conceivable.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored the intersectionality between racism and intergroup prejudice as psychosocial problems in pluralistic societies, and the utility of intercultural dialogue as an anti-racism instrument. Globalization has enabled the evolution of an unprecedented assemblage of culturally diverse communities across countries. Historically, nations and regional powers have attempted to address this phenomenon through a cocktail of multicultural policies designed to accommodate the rights of minorities within the mainstream socio-economic and political landscape. However, the pressures of immigration and diversity on social cohesion amid recurrent intergroup conflict, race riots, racism, extremism and xenophobia have led some policy-makers and scholars to conclude that multiculturalism has failed to deliver. The search for alternative approaches to address the issues associated with cultural diversity has therefore received growing interest among scholars and practitioners. For example, the Council of Europe's 2008 White Paper envisages that intercultural dialogue can better achieve what multiculturalism failed, namely, the creation of understanding among people with diverse ethnic, racial, religious and/or cultural backgrounds.

This chapter discussed the intergroup contact hypothesis as a theoretical framework within which intercultural dialogue can be operationalized. Intercultural dialogue as a form of intergroup contact can lead to positive outcomes when the underlying contact is positive. Participants should interact in a consensual, collaborative and mutually respectful exchange of views in order to learn from each other and to effect positive change that can advance understanding. When intercultural dialogue is prosecuted with the acknowledgement of difference and equality, it can be useful as an anti-racism strategy. By enhancing reflexivity, it gives individuals and groups the opportunity to critically examine their fears, assumptions and preconceptions about each other.

If the conceptual and practical limitations can be properly addressed, intercultural dialogue can be effectively utilized to address a range of social problems including social exclusion and marginalization, racism,

intercultural conflict, extremism and xenophobia. Dialogue involves equal participation and reflexive interaction that can enhance collaboration and understanding in intercultural communication. However, this does not imply that intercultural dialogue should replace multiculturalism as a policy framework. Instead, it should be integrated with the tenets of critical multiculturalism, addressing the range of institutional and structural inequalities in pluralistic societies. I conclude, therefore, by underscoring the point that a focus on dialogic interaction should not ignore the power relations in these societies.

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5. Interreligious reflections – the process and method of collaborative interfaith research

Alon Goshen-Gottstein

Introduction

This chapter describes and reflects upon fifteen years of collaborative team research and reflection projects carried out by the UNESCO Chair in Interreligious Studies at the Elijah Interfaith Institute. The research has been published in a series at Lexington Books, entitled *Interreligious Reflections*. To date, six volumes have appeared and two more are presently in preparation. The ensemble of these publications represents a particular approach to interreligious dialogue within the Academy. Describing the theoretical premises and accomplishments of the series amounts to an invitation to further study of this method, its merits and its possible implementation in other settings. Following a brief overview of different methodological approaches within the broader field, the chapter describes the context in which these studies were undertaken, and further explores methodological assumptions, achievements and possibilities inherent in the process of collaborative engagement in interreligious reflection.

UNESCO and interfaith dialogue – the roads of faith

A look at UNESCO documents over the past fifteen years underlines the centrality of Intercultural Dialogue to UNESCO's educational efforts in a pluralistic world. Virtually all documents, statements and publications focus on intercultural dialogue. It is very telling, that in various summary documents, interreligious dialogue is theoretically subsumed under intercultural dialogue, while in fact very little attention is paid to the particularity of interreligious dialogue and how it can be advanced from within the theological and religious resources of different religious traditions (UNESCO, 2007).

From a UNESCO perspective, this constitutes a change in relation to orientations that were more prevalent twenty years ago, in the 1990s, when the Elijah Chair for Interreligious Studies was established. It will be helpful to return to UNESCO thinking during those years, in order to appreciate how the project described in this chapter stands in direct continuity and fulfillment of governing ideas of that era. Interreligious relations were at the forefront of several UNESCO declarations in the mid-1990s and early 2000s. Noteworthy statements include the Declaration on the Role of Religion in the Promotion of a Culture of Peace (1994), the Rabat Proposals of 1995, and the Malta Declaration, Roads of Faith of 1997. Later documents reflect regional concerns (e.g. South East Europe, West Africa). There has not been a statement or declaration that is specifically interreligious in over a decade, and most of the resources mentioned above are no longer available even on UNESCO websites.

That interreligious engagement seems to now occupy a secondary position may also be gleaned from an examination of UNESCO's relationship to world religious leaders. In the mid-1990s, UNESCO convened a group of world religious leaders in order to advance an agenda of interreligious dialogue. It sought broad representativity across religions, and a high degree of representation of each of the major religions. It boasted quite a significant body of world religious leaders who agreed to be affiliated by name with this initiative. Sadly, the initiative remained on paper. I do not think the body ever convened in person and it never did anything together, even as far as endorsing UNESCO policies or making its own statements is concerned. Attempts over the past decade, led by then Metropolitan Kyrill of Moscow, similarly did not lead to the creation of a working body of world religious leaders, in relation to UNESCO.

While the efforts did not translate into achievements, this does not invalidate the efforts or the thinking behind them. UNESCO sought to develop a culture of peace, as expressed in the Barcelona statement of 2004, and engaging religious leaders seemed – and still seems – a sensible approach. Either the time for the idea had yet to arrive, or the idea lacked leadership. It is, nevertheless, inscribed in the annals of UNESCO's broader educational and peace-making efforts.

This background is relevant to understanding the context for the work described below. In many ways it grows out of the Malta declaration, which I believe is the most nuanced of the various UNESCO statements. It affirms the need for recognizing difference and not settling on commonalities in interfaith engagement. It recognizes the importance of study and

mutual knowledge, not only as means of overcoming contemporary social challenges, but also as sources for mutual enrichment. It recognizes the need for critical study of religious traditions, and of tackling the problematic teachings contained in them as prerequisites for advancement between religions and for global peace. It seeks theological ground for finding a common voice, and does not settle only for a social perspective. It recognizes religions are not static entities, but resources that need to be mobilized toward the stated goals of peace and understanding. It calls for study of textual tradition, sacred history, and of practices and teachings of traditions. In short, it considers that religions need to be studied in depth if they are to play a meaningful role in the establishment of a culture of peace. It considers journeys to hotspots and a spiritual message across religions. It profiles the image of 'the Other' as a subject for study. And it envisions critical study of scripture as a condition for advancing peace. And while it gives priority to Abrahamic faiths, it does offer a vision that consciously reaches out to other faith traditions.

My own participation in the Malta meeting provided the impetus for the creation of the Elijah Chair for Interreligious Studies, in line with the ideals and recommendations of this document. The work described below stands in direct continuity with that process, one that seems to have been eclipsed by other methodologies, but is not completely forgotten. This is also true of the work with world religious leaders, described below. The following chapter and reflection therefore draws upon and seeks to recall an important chapter in UNESCO's approach to interreligious studies and engagement.

Interfaith studies – situating an emerging discipline

Interfaith is young and interfaith studies are even younger. While studies that are relevant to the field of interfaith, or to interreligious dialogue, have been undertaken for decades, it is only within the last ten to fifteen years that a field of interfaith studies has gradually emerged. The field betrays the interests of those who engage in it by studying and appreciating, but more importantly, advancing the field of interreligious dialogue through relevant studies. While the emergence of this field of studies is recent, it has close ties to several other academic fields of study. The field of intercultural studies is one close cognate field, and studies in that field often include interreligious dialogue in their scope. On the whole, scholars working in this area study intercultural and interreligious relations in various geographic territories, and develop theories by means of which these can

be understood and advanced. While not totally disengaged from a *religious* or *theological* perspective, students of this area of research do not engage their religious identities or selves in the processes of study and research. The methods and disciplines are often those of social studies and the social sciences, and the religious component in these studies is more often than not descriptive, relating to religion as a part of culture, and describing the relevant processes in society. Those who engage in this field of study obviously have an interest in it, but they need not be existentially engaged in its study.

The same is true for another area of study relevant to the project being described; that is, comparative religious studies, as this area is variously called in different places. The subject matter is religious, but the scholar or her approach need not be (McCutcheon, 1999). The comparative approach can bring together two or more traditions, comparing ideas, rituals, practices or any other aspect of the religious life. This is a discipline that is well-established in the Academy and one with a significant history (Sharpe, 1994).

Contrast these with theology and the differences in context and methodological assumptions are brought to light. Theology is carried out by insiders who think about the meaning of tradition, faith and scripture from an engaged perspective, that of the faith practitioner. Theology is juxtaposed in various ways with religious studies, at times in contrast and at times in continuity (Caddy and Brown, 2002; Ford et al., 2007). While theology and intercultural and interreligious studies would seem to be methodological worlds apart, in fact there are various academic initiatives that make them closer than many suspect.

One of these is the approach of comparative theology (Clooney 2010, 2011; Thatamanil, 2006). This approach, which is much older than often suspected, but which has enjoyed increasing attention over the past twenty years, combines theological interest with the comparative religious approach. Comparative theology is an engaged theological approach that crosses boundaries of tradition, making two or more traditions the object of theological inquiry, with significant commitment to one or more traditions in the process of study. It is interesting that scholars of comparative theology find themselves at the forefront of issues of multiple religious identities. Identity and faith commitment are engaged in an insider/(outsider) study of two religious traditions or more.

Another disciplinary approach that contributes to the emerging field of interreligious studies is the theology of religions (Knitter, 2002). This branch of theological reflection is concerned with how a given religion views other religions, either in theory or in the specificity of particular relationships.

All these disciplines connect in some way or another and are fed by the same concerns that feed the growing field of intercultural studies. The starting point of it all is the presence of the other, and the need to account for, engage and understand the other, and to further understand, enhance and develop processes – academic and social – that could aid in such increased understanding. One key dimension of otherness is religious, and one central dimension of understanding the religion other involves engaging the other's religious worldview. The interrelated approaches and the shifting perspectives of insider and outsider all provide resources for the emergence of the field of interfaith or interreligious studies.

Introducing interreligious reflections

I would like to situate the *Interreligious Reflections* series within this shifting and dynamic reality of disciplinary approaches and varying degrees of personal engagement. Before describing its context in life, methods of work and key points of interest, I establish here its particularity against the brief disciplinary sketch offered above. The series grows out of collaborative research and reflection that is characterized by the following points, the combination of which lends the series its particularity and uniqueness:

- Multiple religions. Whereas the greater part of studies – comparative, sociological or theological – profile relations on the ground or in theory between two or, at most, three traditions, the *Interreligious Reflections* series is dedicated to the study of multiple religious traditions. Typically, it engages with six faith traditions.
- A collaborative effort. The work of research and reflection of the series is unlike some conferences or edited volumes, to which different scholars contribute by describing multiple religious traditions. It is the work of a Think Tank that works closely together. The result is a much tighter outcome, where ideas are co-created by members of different traditions, and where the ideas of each play an important role in shaping the perspectives of all. It is thus not only a group project, but also a group process.

- The collaboration takes place from an engaged perspective. It is carried out by scholar-practitioners who seek to think on behalf of their tradition. It takes the form of an engaged interreligious theological collaboration, where scholars self-identify with the tradition and work within it in dialogue and conversation with similar minded scholars of other traditions.
- With the exception of comparative religious studies, all the other disciplines mentioned above have a stake in reality, whether it is the social reality they describe and to which they seek to contribute, or the theological reality that informs their worldview and engagement with faith. The engaged scholarship of *Interreligious Reflections* finds expression not only theologically but also in the ways it seeks to be of service to bodies outside the Academy, whether in the form of religious leadership or religious communities. The project thus bridges theory and praxis, theological reflection and various community-oriented educational and practical initiatives.
- Synthesis and the quest for common voice. As a collaborative project, the studies published in *Interreligious Reflections* do more than bring forth the voices of scholar-practitioners of diverse faiths. Beyond identifying similarities, commonalities and differences, they seek to propose a common voice through which religions in their diversity can speak, either to each other or to the 'world out there'.

These distinguishing features of the project make it an important resource for the emerging field of interreligious studies. They suggest a particular approach that can enrich the field in its findings, and they spell out a methodology or make methodological contributions that can enhance other processes of study. In order to better understand the particularity of the research project we must revisit its formation and appreciate its organizational context and ideological and theological premises.

The Elijah Interfaith Academy

In 1996, the Elijah Interfaith Institute – then The Elijah School for the Study of Wisdom in World Religions – was founded as a Jerusalem-based consortium of thirteen Jewish, Christian and Muslims academic religious institutions, in partnership with McGill University. The purpose of the consortium was to develop a full programme of academic interfaith studies. With the outbreak of the intifada in 2000, many of the local schools were emptied of their students and Elijah's international partners refused to go ahead

with the programme for security reasons. The eventual response was to shift Elijah's activities from teaching to research. Recognizing that there was not in existence anywhere an Interfaith Academy, a plan developed to form such an academy. The term 'academy' was intended to refer to a framework or place where engaged scholars of different faith traditions could collaborate on matters of contemporary concern. The intuition was that there was room for religious traditions to join forces in reflective work through collaborations of scholar-practitioners. The first project brought together a group of about eight scholars, belonging to the religious traditions that had been featured at the Elijah Institute since its foundation – Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist. But from the outset the work was to be more than simply a collaboration of engaged scholars.

No sooner had the idea started taking hold than we were being asked who would own the Academy. As there was no similar body anywhere, it seemed it should be more than just a local initiative, or one that our organization could take pride in. The suggestion was made that such an initiative should be owned by, or be at the disposal of, world religious leaders. This would lend it credibility and give it voice. Much to our surprise, when we came to Seville in 2003 for the founding of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, we discovered that some of the world's most noted leaders had signed on to the idea. From the get go, then, the Academy was thinking, reflecting and planning on behalf of world religious leaders, and through them on behalf of their constituencies.

The creation of a forum that brought together world-class leaders and top-level scholars was significant for both sides. Religious leaders found themselves engaging at a level that, as many testified, they had not previously engaged. They did not need to defend or present their tradition. They were free to reflect in a free spirit that made room for self-criticism. It was an experience that was both liberating and enriching. It cemented relations between religious leaders and between them and our organization. Scholars in turn also found themselves engaged in a novel exercise. All of these particular features made this experience different. The process and methodology, described below, were novel. But above all, the engagement on behalf of their tradition, with the knowledge that world religious leaders would be reviewing, engaging and benefiting from their work, lent a different air of purpose, focus and representativity to the work of the scholars. Both groups benefited from the exchange. This process has continued for nearly fifteen years. A significant part of its fruits is found in the ways world religious leaders have been shaped through interfaith

encounters, scholarship and study. But one very concrete outcome of the process is the *Interreligious Reflection* series that brings to the academic community and beyond the research that has served as the focus of discussions in the bi-annual meetings of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders since 2003.

Let me introduce the individual volumes that have appeared in the series, as I will be referencing them in my discussion of methods and achievements. The first volume captures the founding meeting in Seville in 2003. It is called *The Religious Other: Hostility, Hospitality and the Hope of Human Flourishing* (Goshen-Gottstein, 2014a). As a launching point for the Academy, as well as the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, it sought to consider the attitude to the religious other, taking into account the sources and attitudes in each of the five participating traditions that could lead to hostility, or conversely, to hospitality, in the sense of hospitality to the ideas and religious reality of the other. It should be noted that this theme was a recommendation of the Rabat Declaration.

The second project grew out of the very success of the first round of work. Having surprised ourselves at the success of the gathering, we felt that the leaders should take the lead in identifying topics of research. They suggested various subject areas that eventually led to a project we called *The Crisis of the Holy* (Goshen-Gottstein, 2014b). The project sought to consider how all religions share certain contemporary crises that challenge them jointly and provide them with opportunities for growth and re-definition. The third project, for which the inspiration also came from one of our leaders, addressed the question of boundaries, practices and limitations of interreligious sharing, and was accordingly called *Sharing Wisdom* (Goshen-Gottstein, 2016a). It was a reflection on the very praxis we were engaged in. The next project shifted the focus back to the needs and interests of the leaders at whose service we sought to place ourselves. It considered religious leadership across traditions, studied the systemic and contemporary challenges to leadership, and considered the face of future religious leadership, its formation and the place of interreligious dialogue in such formation. It was, accordingly, titled *The Future of Religious Leadership* (Goshen-Gottstein, 2016b). The next project went back to the heart of concerns of interfaith reality and sought to offer a theory for interreligious friendship from the resources of the different traditions. It was titled *Friendship across Religions* (Goshen-Gottstein, 2015a). The following project sought to tackle a thorn in the flesh of healthy relations between faith communities. Memories of past hatred and wrongdoings continue

to impact and at times poison relations between faith communities. How does one deal with historical memory and how does one offer hope against such a background? This was the subject of *Memory and Hope* (Goshen-Gottstein, 2015b).

One additional important project should be mentioned here, as it informs the present horizons of the Academy and the Board of World Religious Leaders. This is the 'Religious Genius' project. It seeks to study exemplary individuals who have been transformative in their tradition, and to explore how they can inspire members of other faith traditions. It also seeks to establish a new area for interfaith engagement, one that goes to the heart of religious concerns, and through which members of religious communities can be inspired by the great figures of other traditions. In so doing, it seeks to offer an alternative to interfaith engagement that serves an agenda external to the religious life, at least as it is narrowly construed, such as peace-making, environmental protection and so on. This project has already engaged about fifty scholars. A monograph from the project is scheduled to appear in 2017 (Goshen-Gottstein, 2017), and another volume of *Interreligious Reflections* devoted to case studies of religious geniuses is presently in preparation.

We are now in a position to begin sharing more about this process and reflecting on its methodology, stakes and lessons.

One significant distinction emerges from a review of the topics of the various publications. Some of these publications focus on issues that are of concern to religions as they engage the 'real world', that is, various challenges in contemporary reality as these concern the work of religious leaders. Others engage issues that are fundamental to interreligious reality. Such studies address theoretical issues that lie at the heart of interreligious engagement, offering theory to a widespread praxis that has developed without such theory, or seeking to explore boundary issues in this area, with the aim of advancing the field and aiding participating religious leaders advance in their theory and practice of interreligious relations.

Research and audience

Research and reflection do not occur in a vacuum. There is an implied community of those who will read the work and benefit from it. Typically, academic work is written for peers. Some theological work is written for religious communities. Our work is situated at an interesting crossroads of audiences. As academic papers, they are written in the form, method and

convention of academic writing. However, the fact that they were written with a very particular group of religious leaders as their initial intended audience lends these projects a very particular air. It is not just that the authors are engaged practitioners; throughout the process of writing we were aware of how the work could impact its initial recipients, how the message should be crafted and how it could be received.

The audience provided affirmation for the method. The stunning response we heard from religious leaders who participated in the first meeting, and that was eventually almost taken for granted, was that they had never previously engaged with each other in such depth. The framing of questions, the range of options, the self-critical approach, the spirit of mutual inspiration and the attempt to forge some kind of common voice all contributed to a unique experience. Affirmation of the benefits of the approach provided further motivation to the scholars.

It is not as if religious leaders received only applause. *The Religious Other* featured the perspectives of five faith traditions, and while Jewish, Christian and Muslim voices were self-critical of their tradition, Hindu and Buddhist scholars lacked that dimension. One of the Buddhist leaders Dharma Master Hsin Dao felt acutely the discrepancy. Moreover, he felt his form of Hinduism was not adequately presented in the Buddhist paper that presented a Theravada perspective. This led him to author a response that was included in the book form of the project.

However, this case was the exception to the rule. On the whole, religious leaders benefited from the scholars' work and engaged with it. Very few went on to dispute it in significant ways. We were disappointed at certain key points when we asked for responses to papers. The combination of busy schedules of important religious leaders and different habits of writing led to the process being less reciprocal than one might have wished.

There is a second dimension to this audience. Because our work was undertaken with an eye to serving dialogue between leaders and communities, at various points the Think Tank authored materials for community study. *The Religious Other* was revised into a version suitable for community study, *Sharing Wisdom* was written as a community study project, and *The Future of Religious Leadership* included a study guide for the community. Of these materials, only *The Religious Other* has been tested in a community setting and successfully so. We are still waiting to receive a community response to the recently published *The Future of Religious Leaders*.

All in all, we have here an interesting experiment in placing scholarship at the service of those communities that need it and that could benefit from it, in its more academic or more popular versions. To fully gauge the usefulness of the community study materials, we are in the process of developing further programming in which these materials can be used.

Methodological considerations and lessons

The entire process described here is an ongoing exercise in method, self-awareness and exploration of the relation of scholarship to its social and communal context and to its religious value. The subjects engaged with were challenging because, in most cases, we were working our way through issues that had no previous history of scholarship. For most projects, some members of our group felt that they could not be stretched adequately to write the paper, or that the paper required great effort. If, as in the case of *The Religious Other,* we had classical resources to draw upon, from the moment we identified new challenges – either those posed by our religious leaders or those that we identified in the interreligious movement – we had to define the discourse, frame the questions and develop the line of argument largely without precedent. Team spirit and the collaborative nature of the process were of great help. It was precisely as we groped with these issues as a group that we were able to chart new ground.

In part, the challenge lay in the nature of the projects in which we engaged. Some were primarily descriptive, especially the topics that sought to address issues in the 'real world'. The more descriptive work still required formulating recommendations, but these were simpler than constructing categories and entire conceptual constructs. Some of the topics we engaged with were novel in their formulation. This is the case for *Sharing Wisdom* and even largely for *Religious Genius*. The latter is a perfect example of a constructive project, inasmuch as the very category is a construct and much of the project was focused on how to construct the key concept.

But even topics that were at first sight less original in their conceptual articulation still required fresh constructive work. The discussion of *Friendship across Religions,* as well as of *Memory and Hope,* was essentially constructive in substance matter, even if not in terms of the guiding category.

Doing constructive work can never be divorced from descriptive work. A contemporary theological vision, founded upon its authoritative sources, must also confront alternative visions that were part of the history of that

tradition. One could not discuss memory without discussing how negative attitudes set the stage for the present discussion. One could not discuss a vision of the hope of human flourishing without tackling problematic parts of tradition that contribute to hostility against the other. Constructive work therefore required engagement with history, interpretation and the psychology of religious communities, all of which were viewed against some high ideal of the tradition toward which we sought to work.

What this has meant is that there is always some self-critical dimension to our work. In some cases, such as in *The Religious Other*, it was clear where hostile attitudes existed in the tradition and that they had to be contained, contextualized or criticized. The same holds true for the approach to memory, where we sought to offer an alternative to holding onto bitter memories as sources of enmity or hostility. Even in the case of *Sharing Wisdom*, the project sought to put forth an alternative to attitudes that were more insular and that did not recognize benefits in sharing across traditions.

These multiple dimensions led us to reflect at various turns upon what we were doing. Were we doing history, theology, the history of interpretation or philosophy? In fact, the various projects required some cross-disciplinary approach. It is worth noting that scholars who came from the American Academy, where multiple disciplines related to religious studies are practised, had greater ease in working within this setting than did scholars who came from other contexts, notably India, where religious studies are less well-developed and where the disciplinary focus is more exclusively upon philosophy or history.

One of the biggest challenges has been speaking for an entire tradition. Our traditions are too vast to have one representative for each tradition. In some cases we dealt with the challenge by incorporating multiple voices. The example of Dharma Master authoring a second piece on behalf of a tradition was followed in certain instances. Thus, some of the reflections on friendship express the voices of more than one Jewish or Christian perspective. More often, however, the author tried to be mindful of the tradition in its entirety. Even though each of our contributors was careful to situate him or herself within a particular sub-tradition, there was awareness of other streams of the tradition, and an attempt to put forth a vision that other members of the faith could recognize. In fact, rarely if ever did we hear from the religious leaders that they could not identify with the piece authored by the scholar of that tradition, because he or she came from another stream. We also took care to hold intra-tradition consultations at

the meetings of religious leaders, in order to make room for the diversity of each tradition's perspectives in dialogue with the tradition-specific concept paper.

The ideal and the real

The balance between descriptive and constructive – and especially the capacity and need for self-criticism – leads us to a consideration of what it means to speak for a tradition. What is it that one is referring to when one speaks of 'Christianity', 'Hinduism' and so on? Is one referring to the traditions as they are or have manifested historically, or does assume some theoretical, ideal perspective? Some balance informs our approach, balancing the ideal and the real. Finding that balance is not always easy. The different voices on attitudes to the other, in the case of Hinduism, represent different emphases on how to describe Hinduism, in terms of its philosophical ideal or in terms of its social and historical reality. To simply talk of the traditions as they are leaves us without a framework from which to evaluate and suggest a way forward for the traditions.

One important expression of the crossover between the ideal and the real is found in the notion of crisis that occurs in several places in our collective work, and frames one project: *The Crisis of the Holy*. To speak of a crisis is to pass judgement on the tradition within a particular historical framework. Such judgement must be informed by a higher perspective, in light of which the crisis is proclaimed. In fact, any criticism or suggestion of change implies some higher perspective in light of which the judgement is made.

Syntheses and the quest for common voice

A purely descriptive project will seek to recognize similarities and differences. A project of engaged scholarship, carried out in the framework of contemporary interfaith relations, can aim for more: it can aim to find a common voice emerging from the sum total of the traditions.

This reveals an ideological assumption. The project seeks not only to describe but also to connect; to affirm a deeper commonality and to encourage religious communities and their leaders to recognize such commonalities. The very act of coming together, whether as a Think Tank or as a community of religious leaders, is an affirmation of unity in diversity. It is then up to scholarship to point to such deeper unity. While all intercultural and interreligious studies may share in the quest for advancing

greater cohesion among communities, a collaborative religious, theological project has the charge of providing foundations for this broader common attitude. Thankfully, it has been possible to articulate these commonalities through the composite pictures and other mechanisms particular to each of the volumes.

What sets this project apart from a volume of comparative studies is the conscious attempt to draw a composite picture of the given topic or to suggest some common vision or voice.

Commonality does not assume agreement on particulars of faith or policy. More often, it relies on the identification of common depth structures and a common grammar that allows us to recognize the same reality across the different traditions. Once the fundamental unity or commonality is recognized, such recognition can then serve as a basis for sharing, making recommendations, adopting strategies and improving the image of each of the religions in the eyes of the other.

Some of our projects have led to the recognition of fundamental commonality; others have recognized a spectrum of perspectives and still affirmed fundamental common elements. It is telling that the two projects that were carried out with an eye to religious leaders and their contemporary realities show the greatest affinity between the different religions. Thus, *The Crisis of the Holy* is perceived as a reality that cuts across religions. And the image of the religious leader emerges as one and the same across religions, despite the fact that the religions have diverse theologies and worldviews.

There are several mechanisms by which the similarity or commonality is affirmed. Each of the volumes has a summary chapter, written by myself, that seeks to draw the various insights into a composite picture. In the case of religious leadership, I attempted to draw the various contributions into a composite image of the religious leader. The similarities were such that they allowed us to formulate a 'Leader's Prayer', a prayer that could be recited by a religious leader of any tradition, and still remain true to the particular vocation and the particular tradition. The success of that prayer among various local groups of religious leaders to this day suggests it has found a resonance in the heart of the faithful. In the case of *Memory and Hope,* I used Jerusalem and the feelings of different religious traditions towards it as a means of tying memory and hope into a composite view of the Holy City. For *Friendship across Religions*, we composed an interreligious manifesto on friendship.

In other cases, we were able to issue a statement that spoke for all traditions. One particular statement is relevant to our project, inasmuch as it goes to the heart of our common work. This is the statement authored by our Think Tank, as a summary of the *Sharing Wisdom* project. The statement is reproduced at the conclusion of this chapter.

Key themes and lessons

Looking at the volumes that have been published in the series thus far, one can identify certain recurring themes. These serve as a preliminary summary of what emerges from the kind of collaborative work undertaken by our project:

- There is a sense of urgency, as well as of crisis, manifesting in various arenas in contemporary life, in the practice of leadership and in inter-group relations.
- Concern for identity: this emerges from multiple angles. Concern for the identity of the community informs its attitude to the other, suggests boundaries and appropriate practices for sharing wisdom and sharing friendship, accounts for why communities hold on to negative memories, and is one of the points of crisis of the Crisis of the Holy. Identity is a significant conditioning factor in interfaith engagement and it is no wonder that it emerges in multiple contexts.
- Quest for integrity of religious traditions: the framework of thinking from within traditional resources about the meaning of engagement between different religions leaves room and brings to the fore the concern for maintaining the integrity and upholding the authenticity of religious traditions.
- The centrality of interfaith dialogue is a requisite for contemporary times, in terms of education, coexistence, leadership training, theological reflection and more.
- Sense of commonality and interdependence of religious traditions: where in the past one could conceive of traditions in isolation, the paradigm that informs our work is one of relationship and interconnectedness. This is part of an emerging mindset, a global reality, as well as part of the background and ideology of the various processes of reflection.
- Viewing religions as processes and highlighting processes of transformation: The view of religions as they emerge from our project

is that they are not static. Religions are dynamic and their dynamism should move in the direction of growth and transformation. This applies to individuals as well as to the traditions themselves. Lack of growth leads to crisis, and growth is the way out of the crisis. Interreligious dialogue emerges as a possible key to the transformation of religions. The notion of transformation is especially highlighted with reference to religious geniuses, who are appreciated in light of the transformation they bring about in traditions.

- Affirmation of the *telos* as crucial to appreciating processes in and between religions. The view of 'ideal' religion relies in large part on the ability to articulate the goal and purpose, the *telos*, of religions. Keeping sight of the *telos* is a strategy for healthy functioning religion and for optimal relations between religions. Probably, all our projects refer in one way or another to the ultimate goal and purpose of the tradition, as a way of orienting an approach towards a given subject.
- An articulation of the centrality of the *telos* relates to God or to the spiritual life as the ultimate frame of reference of the tradition. Processes of transformation seek to lead the individual and the community to God and the spiritual life. This provides the ultimate correction or counterpoint to social processes that can undermine the purpose of religious traditions and their healthy functioning, within and between themselves.

Our work and interreligious dialogue

Where does our work sit in relation to interreligious dialogue? Is it part of it? Does it go beyond it? Is it a precondition for it? In some way, all these answers apply. But one thing does set our work apart from some studies that relate to the interfaith arena. Our work does not study interfaith as a field 'out there'. Our work is part of creating the field from within. It is part of a practice of dialogue, yet it is more than dialogue. It is collaboration. Usually, one thinks of interfaith collaboration in very practical terms: feeding the hungry, providing mosquito netting for the needy and so on. Ours is a collaboration of thought, even a theological collaboration. I would argue that sharing wisdom and thinking together express a deeper commitment that draws on the depth and roots of one's faith. If dialogue typically assumes some difference and then seeks to bridge that difference through understanding or collaboration, our project actually starts with the structural reality of a common body, affirming some fundamental

commonality based on prior experience and reflection grounded in the institutional structure from which our work is carried out. From this fundamental commonality we return to the diversity of traditions and the challenges they present in order to revisit them in light of something we as a group and an organization have experienced that provides us with the platform and the vantage point for reflection. Such reflection expresses a commitment to drawing from the traditions and then to applying the wisdom of the traditions to societal mandates through collaborative thinking.

One way to position our work in relation to what is often practised as interfaith dialogue is to think of it in terms of sharing. Sharing has emerged as a foundational principle that informs our work. The project of sharing wisdom examines the foundations of our common enterprise. Friendship too is something to share. And as we learned from *Memory and Hope*, sharing memory is a fundamental component of healing painful memories between communities. Sharing describes best what we do in learning processes, both within the Think Tank and between our religious leaders, communities and other engaged groups.

One important dimension of sharing extends the notion further and brings it closer to borrowing. As we examine challenging issues, especially as these relate to challenges of the 'Crisis of the Holy' and to issues related to leadership, we become aware of the commonality of challenges and hence the possibility of learning from one another how to deal with challenges. Sharing is practised not as a matter of intellectual curiosity, but as a matter of spiritual urgency. We have to teach each other, based on the recognized commonality that runs deeply through our relationships. Borrowing is relevant not only with reference to crises. All projects assume that different traditions offer strategies for dealing with issues and seek to make them available to others, on the basis of recognition of commonalities.

In a deep way, the ethos of this project runs deeper than conventional interfaith dialogue. Interfaith dialogue affirms the need to know the other and to better understand the other, so as to reduce tension, fear and hatred in society. It often does not go to the core of faith, and therefore leaves profound attitudes unchanged. Our process engages not only ideas, but also deep-seated attitudes. Our project is founded on some dimension of humility. Without such humility it would not be possible to really engage in sharing, to share survival strategies or even to gain a certain depth of friendship across religions. Humility is a mark of the spiritual life, it is not a necessity of interfaith dialogue, neither is it a requisite for study,

certainly not for academic study. But it is indispensable for any meaningful spiritual progress and transformation. If our project is founded upon the transformative appreciation of religious traditions, from their roots to their contemporary manifestations, it must go to the heart of the religious life and must therefore incorporate an attitude of humility also in the engagement with other faiths. The vision that emerges will then be greater than the sum of its parts. While each tradition should hold on to its faith claims and even its sense of ultimate truth, the practice of sharing and the collaborative approach to sharing between religions is one that both requires and inculcates humility.

Concluding statement on sharing wisdom

I opened this chapter with reference to UNESCO statements on interreligious dialogue and the fact that, for over a decade, none have been issued. There is a curious overlap in timing whereby the Elijah Academy began issuing statements on interreligious relations more or less at the same time that UNESCO moved in a different direction. There is, however, strong thematic continuity in terms of interest and intention. I would like to conclude this chapter with an example of one such statement, taken from the *Sharing Wisdom* project. It goes to the heart of our common enterprise. It situates the challenge in contemporary global terms, but also relates our common work to the spiritual goals of the traditions and their higher purpose. It affirms the need for sharing, while also affirming the identity of individual communities and the integrity of traditions. It thus offers the kind of balance that I believe is representative of our project as a whole, and therefore serves as an appropriate conclusion to this presentation of the *Interreligious Reflections* series.

THE SPIRIT OF SHARING WISDOM

The need:

- We are profoundly aware of the many needs, pains and crises in the world and within our own religious traditions.
- We are aware of the violence engendered by practitioners of different religious traditions towards practitioners of other religions. We note with sadness that such violence is often the outcome of misinformation, lack

of understanding of the other, demonization and dehumanization of the other.

- We are aware that our image of members of other faith traditions often lacks respect, leading to sacrilege and abuse of religious symbols of other traditions. We note that this too has become a cause of violent behaviour.
- We are aware of the breakdown of family structures, societal structures and value systems. We note that these breakdowns are often accompanied by a distancing from the wellsprings of the wisdom of our religious traditions.
- We are aware of problematic images of religions in the media and the public eye. We note that often the worst of our religious traditions, in particular the most violent, is featured as representative of our religious traditions in their entirety.
- We are aware of the assault of the marketplace and its globalizing tendencies on our values and lifestyles, leading to a loss of vision, purpose and value in life. We note that many of the problematic forms that our religions have taken, particularly those associated with religious extremism, are related to the power dynamics engendered by these globalizing tendencies.
- We are aware of a variety of crises that affect our own religious traditions, which we refer to as 'The Crisis of the Holy'. We note that none of our traditions is exempt from crisis, and that our crises are interrelated, tying the fates of all religions to global well-being.

The response – a turning to wisdom:

- We wish to express our recognition that there are no facile solutions to the ills of the world. At the same time, teachers of the wisdom of religious traditions must do all they can to alleviate present suffering and to contribute to a solution of those problems that we can address.
- We wish to state our recognition that in the world's present state, all traditions have become interdependent, and must therefore face the challenges of the world in a collaborative manner.
- We wish to affirm our belief that within our traditions are resources of wisdom that can speak to the ills of society and the ills of religion.

- We wish to call upon all our religions to offer their finest teachings as resources to guide humanity to safe harbour, and to identify the teachings they can jointly offer to a suffering humanity.
- We wish to further call upon practitioners of all religions to become aware of the life wisdom and spiritual wisdom of all religious traditions, as a means of obtaining a truer understanding of other religions, in the service of peaceful living.
- We invite thinkers and religious leaders to explore the possibility of addressing their own internal crises in light of the experiences and accumulated wisdom of other religious traditions.

Taking care – sharing wisdom responsibly:

While we recognize the need of the hour points to opening towards the other, rather than to isolation, leading to violence and enmity, we call attention to the following considerations that are the basis of respectful learning and sharing between people as individuals and as representatives of religious traditions:

- Sharing wisdom should never lead to the violation of the integrity of religious identity. Sharing wisdom is not a means of influencing others to change or abandon their religious identity, but rather an invitation to deepen it and become more faithful to it.
- Sharing wisdom should be done in a way that is mindful of power relations and considerations stemming from differences in wealth distribution. It should not become a form of manipulation or coercion, whether personal or cultural.
- Sharing wisdom has a broad universal mandate, almost a human right, grounded in the dignity of the human being, as understood diversely by our religious traditions. It is closely related to the right of religious freedom. As a spiritual process, it should be broadly open, beyond considerations of gender, caste and other forms of limitation.
- Sharing wisdom should respect the integrity of religious teachings. It should not lead to the cheapening of teaching, nor to the loss of authenticity. Consequently, care must be taken to be mindful and respectful of broader theological structures, within which wisdom is couched, and to the internal processes, commitments and conditions that are necessary for successful realization of the age-old wisdom of religious traditions.

- Sharing wisdom should be accompanied by careful consideration of what forms of wisdom are most suitable to broad sharing with others and what forms require greater care and protection, in an effort to preserve their value and integrity.

Our hope:

It is our faith that the ills of the world and the ills of our religions may be addressed through an attitude of openness to sharing and learning from one another. In an increasingly interdependent world we are called to share our wisdom, to offer it to others, and to listen to what they in turn have to offer. It is our sincere hope and prayer that such sharing, carried out in the right spirit, will make our traditions better vehicles to achieve their designated purpose and will make the world a better and more peaceful place in which our religions and humanity can flourish.

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6. Intercultural dialogue during the European civilizing mission in Africa: the Acholi encounter with British colonialists in Northern Uganda, 1898–1962

Charles Amone

Introduction

The scramble for and partition of Africa that began with Leopold II's private colonial activities in the Congo gained momentum during and after the 1884–85 Berlin Conference. When Britain colonized Egypt in 1882, it became apparent that the entire Nile valley needed to fall within the British colonial mandate. The Nile River was the 'Jewel of Egypt' and the entire Nile valley had to be civilized. This meant spreading 'Victorian Culture' to the region (Robinson and Gallagher, 1961).

Africa was a 'dark continent' to the people of Europe. Many groups of philanthropists emerged to 'discover' the interior of Africa. One such organization was the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, founded in 1788 in London (Koponen, 1993). Africa was 'dark' because little was known in Europe about the continent and the information available focused on what was perceived as harmful cultural practices. This view was used to defend European cultural imperialism in Africa.

Many theories have been advanced to explain the European rush to colonize. Eurocentric scholars contend that the colonization of Africa was part of the 'White man's burden', that is, a moral imperative to civilize Africa and Africans. Civilizing Africa meant introducing Western European culture, including the opening of formal educational institutions, introducing coded laws, preaching Christianity and introducing legitimate trade. These were done not only in Acholiland, but throughout Africa. The question is whether it was to benefit Africans or to make it easy to exploit Africa.

Colonization was seen as a right for the people of Europe. Charles Darwin had stated in the theory of evolution that the human race is divided into White, Asian and Black people. John Allan Hobson (2005), argued that 'It is desirable that the earth should be peopled, governed, and developed, as far as possible, by the races which can do this work best, that is, by the races of highest "social efficiency"'. This "race" was "the white race". Europeans took it upon themselves to govern the rest of the human race especially the Black Africans who were at the bottom of the social ladder.

The Acholi are among the ethnic communities living further south in the Upper Nile region who were brought under the realm of Turko-Egyptian administration by the Khedivate of Egypt (1867–1914) under Khedive Ismail. British colonial rule among the Acholi people of northern Uganda came from two opposite directions. From both directions, Christian missionaries were the harbingers of European colonialism. From the south came the Church Missionary Society (CMS) led by Reverend Lloyd, which settled in Buganda (Central Uganda) as early as 1877, and from the direction of Egypt came the Catholic White Fathers under Daniel Comboni.

In 1898, a collectorate or British Overseas' Military Activities (BOMA) was established among the Acholi on the Nile River at Pakuba. Then, in 1910, Gulu Town was established as the administrative headquarters of the Acholi. The shift from Pakuba to Gulu occurred because Gulu is located at the centre of Acholiland while Pakuba lies at the western edge.

The Acholi are one of the Lwo groups of people now scattered throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The Lwo originally lived in Sudan. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they dispersed with the majority following the Nile River southwards until the Acholi settled in their present land straddling southern South Sudan and northern Uganda. Wherever they are, Lwo people are known to be culturally conservative. Despite their cultural conservatism, it was among the Acholi – at the very heart of Lwo civilizations – that the British sought to introduce their Western-capitalist and industrial culture.

Early intercultural encounters in northern Uganda: the Arab influence in Acholiland

The Acholi people have always been known to jealously guard their Lwo culture. Before the arrival of the British, they had been exposed to Arab traders from the Lower Nile Valley, who came in search of slaves and ivory. For this they were resented, although some Acholi chiefs courted them

in order to acquire much-needed guns and bullets for their territorial expansion. Later, when British agents such as Samuel Baker fought the Arabs, expelled them and ended the slave trade, the Acholi saw the British as liberators.

By the time the British arrived, Arabic culture had already had some impact on the culture of the Acholi. Acholi words such as *bakacic* (charitable giving) from the Arabic *bakhsesh* were in use by 1910. Some Acholi *Rwodi* (paramount chiefs or king) like Rwot Camo of Payira and Rwot Ogwok of Padibe chiefdom dressed in Arabic style and greeted in the Arabic fashion. This is how Reverend Lloyd (the Christian missionary in Acholiland) described his meeting with Ogwok, the *Rwot* of Padibe Chiefdom: 'He extended to us the most hearty welcome, ushering us into his hut with the natural polish of a born gentleman. I was greatly struck by this man ... he speaks fairly good Arabic. He sits and sleeps on a kareb and entertains his guests with coffee' (Lloyd, 1911, p. 307).

Nothing illustrates the spread of Arabic culture among the Acholi more than Rwot Ogwok's manners as revealed by Reverend Lloyd in the preceding quote. Reverend Lloyd met Rwot Ogwok in 1903, seven years before the British colonization of Acholiland in 1910. Although the most popular beverage of the Acholi is *kwete* (Millet brew), Rwot Ogwok drank coffee by 1903. Rwot Ogwok also spoke Arabic, although the lingua of the Acholi is Lwo, and he slept on a kareb instead of *pyen* (bed made of hide and skin), which the Acholi used.

Years later, Langalanga, a British colonial official, described Rwot Ogwok thus: 'He speaks Arabic very well, always wears European clothes and came to meet me riding on a donkey, getting off and kissing my hands with all the manners of a polished Arab' (Milner, 1952, p. 121).

The Acholi had been exposed to the outside world through Arabic culture, but this was limited because the Arab traders were more interested in business and trade than cultural transformation of the people they dealt with. The Arabs did not marry among the Acholi, but certainly impacted on them culturally in manners of greeting, dressing and in some cases, worship.

One can say that by the time the British arrived in 1910, the Acholi had been exposed to some foreign cultures, although these differed from the cultural preferences of the European colonialists. Since the Arab traders were largely confined to the palaces of the respective Acholi chiefs they dealt with, their cultural influence was also limited to the palace officials

with whom they interacted. The Arabs built slave deports and captured slaves in the most heinous manner (Lloyd, 1911) and, as such, was little chance for them to be accepted among the Acholi, unlike the British who replaced them years later.

Colonial contexts for intercultural encounters: the British in Northern Uganda

The British took over from where the Arabs stopped, as far as foreign influence was concerned. In a way, both the British and the Arabs wanted to benefit from the human resources of northern Uganda. Africa, as argued by Koponen (1993), was not an empty continent in need of development; rather, African resources were there to be exploited. These resources, therefore, had first to be developed. So, in order for the British to benefit from the labour of the Acholi and cash crops like cotton (for which northern Uganda, especially Acholiland, was famous), there was a need to develop the available human resources. For this reason, the cultural transformation of the Acholi was paramount for the British.

The British used indirect rule to govern Uganda. The officers who supervised indirect rule, called 'Residents' or District Commissioners (DC), acted 'as sympathetic adviser and counselor to the native chief, being careful not to interfere so as to lower his prestige, or cause him to lose interest in his work' (Lugard, 1926, p. 5). Indeed, a DC was immediately placed in Gulu Town to administer the Acholi. The most important responsibility of the DC was to implement British cultural imperialism.

Before its application in Uganda, indirect rule had been used in Southern Asia and West Africa. In those places, indirect rule had registered success for the simple reason that it allowed the colonized to retain and promote their culture. Indirect rule was based as much on autonomy as it was on the cooperation of traditional rulers. It was a more benign form of colonial rule since it permitted the continuation and promotion of traditional African socio-cultural systems (Mandanin, 1999). The object of indirect rule was to make each paramount chief an effective ruler over his own people. The DC who was British supervised the traditional leader through whom he conveyed any instructions to village heads. The messenger of the traditional leaders acted as translator of the DC (Lugard, 1926).

The culture of the Acholi, however, had to be standardized to meet British interest. Frederick Lugard, writing in 1926, argues that as much as there was a need to retain traditional African culture, Africans could not be

left completely in charge of their cultural and traditional practices unless they had 'developed' up to the point that they could live in harmony with British officials. The British introduced formal education as a tool of cultural imperialism to standardize traditional African culture.

The British introduced a Victorian education style under which literacy was emphasized. In 1914, the first formal education facility was opened at Mican, 2 kilometres from Gulu District headquarters. Its first enrolment comprised children of chiefs whom the British regarded as cultural change agents (Retired Revered Canon Opwonya, pers. comm.). The fundamental importance of introducing formal education was that the educated few should be representative of the feelings and desires of the many – who were well known to them, spoke their language, and were versed in their customs and prejudices (Lugard, 1926).

Prior to the advent of the British in Acholiland, informal or indigenous education prevailed in the land. Fathers and uncles trained boys in the domains of war, hunting, dancing, courtship, storytelling, idioms and masculinity. The same applied to girls, who under their mother, aunties and elder sisters learnt how to cook, sing and entertain their future husbands. The formal education of the British differed sharply from that of the Acholi and, in relation to this matter, there was resistance. The Acholi did not allow girls, especially, to enroll in the elementary schools of the British.

Formal British schools did not teach girls to be submissive, nor prepared them for marriage, as was the case with Acholi traditional education. Acholi mothers reasoned that Western education would spoil their daughters and deny them a hefty dowry. Besides, the mother would be blamed if her daughter failed in marriage. So, mothers were the first to oppose girl-child education among the Acholi of northern Uganda (Retired Revered Canon Opwonya, pers. comm.).

The British also introduced a Western justice system. Indirect rule, and indeed any form of colonial control, could only succeed when law and order prevailed. In the pre-colonial epoch, inter-chiefdom conflicts abounded in Acholiland. Much of what was considered criminal in England, including adultery, robbery and murder, were regarded in terms of valour among the Acholi at the time of the establishment of Gulu town in 1910. These acts only became criminal when committed among kinsmen, such as members of the same clan or lineage, and punishments included impalement, mutilation and live burial (Lugard, 1926).

Under the Acholi traditional justice system, the Rwot (paramount chief or king) was above the law. He was the chief judge and his palace was the court. The British legal system did not place the Rwot above the law, and many Rwodi (plural for Rwot) were arrested, charged and punished. This was unique and unacceptable to the Acholi given the special status of the Rwodi before the arrival of the British. Just as the British perceived Acholi traditional forms of punishment to be archaic and violent, the Acholi viewed those of the British to be dehumanizing, especially when formerly revered chiefs were tried alongside their subjects, flogged and even executed. Worse still this was done in public.

Rwot Lagony of Padibe Chiefdom was hanged publicly in 1922 for murdering a colonial soldier facing charges of desertion. The Kitgum District Commissioner, Mr. Waggstaffe, ordered his execution. The Acholi never expected a Rwot to be executed, let alone in public view of his subjects. Many people of Padibe Chiefdom believed that the execution of their chief was a bad omen for their chiefdom. Padibe Chiefdom people still believe that the bad omen created by hanging their chief (Rwot Lagony) is the reason their chiefdom never regained its glorious days and full strength, as existed under Rwot Ogwok.

Many other Acholi chiefs were arrested and imprisoned in different parts of the region. There is a popular residential site in Kitgum Municipality called *Gang Dyang*. Errant Acholi chiefs were imprisoned there, but realizing that their subjects respected them even when in prison, the British named the place *gang ming,* meaning 'the home of idiots', with a view to changing the mind-set of the Acholi people.

Acholi culture promotes communal activities and the society is highly egalitarian. Paid labour was unknown in pre-colonial Acholi socity. People moved about visiting their kin in neighbouring villages. The British vagrancy laws did not match the culture of the Acholi people and many of them were imprisoned, in their opinion, innocently. One of the vagrancy laws was the Idle and Disorderly Law. The origin of this law is fourteenth century England. After the Black Death pandemic of 1348–1350, England faced a severe labour shortage, and the Idle and Disorderly Law was passed to force people to work. The law was introduced in Uganda for the same reason, and became another means of cultural standardization (HRAPF, 2016).

The types of marriage the British recommended in Uganda reflected the capitalist notion of civilization, which they introduced. Marriage had to take place either in church or before a magistrate, known as religious and

civil marriage, respectively. Both church and civil marriage emphasized monogamy as opposed to polygamy, which Acholi culture practised. To the British, polygamy was an aberration (Khapoya, 1994, p. 33), while to Acholi people it was a virtue. The rise of capitalism in Britain necessitated smaller families, while in northern Uganda, the economy was still pre-industrial, hence people depended on manual labour. Women and children were taken as sources of labour, and the more women and children a man had the better.

Acholi men married many wives not only for social prestige, but also for economic security. Women had more roles in the domestic setting than men, and children supplemented the labour of their parents. Given high infant mortality in pre-colonial Africa, polygamy was desirable in order for a man to produce more children, in case some died before becoming adults. The Acholi had a strong argument for polygamy originating from their cultural perspective, but the British also had a defense for monogamy. According to the British, a civilized man must have one wife, as was the case in England. So in order to civilize the Acholi, monogamy had to be emphasized.

For a long time, Acholi men in monogamous marriage were called *Muno* (Whiteman). Those called *Muno* heeded the call for either church or civil marriage as preached by the White British men. Such men did not receive wide approval from their kinsmen and society portrayed them as sexually and culturally weak. The majority of the Acholi continued to practise polygamy as a display of masculinity, wealth, sexual prowess and attachment to culture. Not surprisingly, monogamous men were close to the British colonialists, but detached from their Acholi kinsmen and women.

There were many cases of infidelity among the first Acholi who chose monogamy. The phenomenon of mistresses developed especially in urban centres that were originally colonial headquarters. In the case of the Acholi, these were the Gulu and Kitgum municipalities. This was how prostitution and the problem of street children emerged among the Acholi. Men in monogamous marriages were reluctant to identify with their mistresses and the children they produced with them.

The British abolished human ransom as well. In the Acholi culture, murder was the highest crime punishable by a declaration of war on the clan of the offender. In such a war, cattle, foodstuff, women and children of the offender's clan were raided, but a diplomatic way existed of handling murder. Before war is declared, the family of the murderer would be

approached and asked to pay a ransom of a virgin girl and twelve head of cattle. This was called *culu kwor*. The ransomed girl became the wife of the man whose wife was murdered or the daughter of the father of the slain child. She was expected to produce children. If she became barren, another virgin girl was demanded.

When the British outlawed human ransom, the diplomatic way of handling murder ended. The consequence was heightened inter-clan wars. In the Acholi dialect of Lwo, there is a saying, *too pe kwok, which* literally means 'death does not rot'. This means that when murder takes place the offended family may not exact revenge immediately if it lacks the capacity to do so, but may defer settlement even hundreds of years if the *culu kwor* has not been performed (Yulam Onen, pers. comm.).

The authority and presence of British officials prevented the Acholi from declaring war over certain murder cases. There are murder cases whose compensation is still demanded today between the people of the sub-counties of Palabek Gen and Palabek kal, in present-day Lamwo district. The last time this case situation arose there were political ramifications: a parliamentary candidate from Palabek Kal was told he could not mingle among the people of Palabek Gem because the murder was not resolved, as a result of government officials putting a stop to acts of vengeance.

The intention of the British colonial officials to prevent what to them was barbarism instead resulted in several feuds. If *culu kwor* does not take place, members of the two affected families cannot share a meal, cannot marry and do not shake hands; neither can they belong to the same organization or association. The Acholi always strive to pay the ransom in order to make life easier for the children. Some murders and other serious crimes reported in Acholiland up to the present day have occurred because *culu kwor* was not performed.

Critical reflections on intercultural encounters between the British and the Acholi

British cultural imperialism among the Acholi impacted on many activities including burial, birth ceremonies, marriage, religion, education, artisanal activities and gender practices. According to Rabinder (1999), the criterion of intercultural dialogue is that one cannot validly criticize cultural practices or beliefs until one understands them. The British did not understand Acholi culture or vice versa. In fact, although the British had at least read or heard about the Acholi from explorers like David Livingstone and John Speke,

Acholi people knew nothing of English or Western culture, and for this reason resisted British culture including the laws they introduced.

During British rule, a traditional leader who headed the native courts was empowered to enforce native laws and customs, provided they were not repugnant to British cultural standards and laws. The traditional leader, in the case of northern Uganda, the Rwot and his Council, could also make rules on any subject, provided they were approved by the Governor (Lugard, 1926).

The Acholi people were acephalous and, accordingly, did not have a paramount ruler. Up to fifty or more independent chiefdoms existed in Acholiland. The most popular ones such as Padibe, Payira, Palabek, Pabo and Amyel chiefdoms exercised some forms of cultural influence over neighbouring societies, but lacked any form of political hegemony over them. This weakness prompted the British to appoint a paramount chief over the entire society – the first time this had happened in Acholi history and culture.

According to Koponen (1993, p. 119), East Africa was a region boundless in commercial resources, and bounded in commercial development only by the stereotyped barbarism of its inhabitants. The people performed cultural practices that in most cases were criminal in England. A baby born with deformities could be thrown into a fast-flowing river with the mother making a mock rescue exercise so to appease the gods and avoid *cen* – the spirit of the dead, dreaded among the Acholi. If the mock rescue is not performed, the *cen* of the baby may prevent the mother from producing another child.

The dead child might prevent its mother even from conceiving a child, arguing that 'you threw me away because you never wanted a child'. If the mock rescue was performed the mother could counter the plea of the dead baby by stating that, 'I never threw you, I was robbed by a fast-flowing river'. For this reason, such babies were never thrown into stagnant waters. The British banned child sacrifice and took care of such children, especially in the missionary stations that opened in different sub-counties of Acholiland.

When the British abolished and criminalized the murder of deformed children, many of them were spared, but some eventually died due to improper care and poor medical support. Their *cen* continued to afflict the respective families for which the British colonialists are blamed.

The existence of different clans of Acholi people by the time of the advent of British colonial rule meant that there were also different cultural practices. As Ronald Atkinson (1994) stated, the Acholi people emerged out of the Lwo people, the Madi and even the Plain Nilotics. But culture is defined as a system of knowledge, meanings and symbolic actions shared by the majority of people in a society (Samovar and Porter, 1994). While there were peculiar practices in some clans of the Acholi, the majority practised certain norms that were regarded as standard Acholi cultural activities.

In Britain, political power was centralized under the monarchy, which had governed the people for centuries, but the Acholi were extremely acephalous. The over fifty independent chiefdoms were run by leaders who saw themselves as equals among equals. Placing them under administration was resisted and the British could not understand the basis of such resistance. 'Securing fair conditions acceptable to members of different cultures', as Rabinder (1999) writes, 'will be difficult, since forms of power may permeate intercultural dialogue itself'.

The form of power in Britain differed from that among the Acholi. In Britain, a woman, the Queen, could govern, but among the Acholi this would be a source of civil war. In the Acholi culture, a woman belongs to another clan from that of her husband. Her clan may be an enemy of her husband's. Making her a Rwot would mean surrendering the sovereignty of the chiefdom to the rival chief. At the time of writing this paper, the Rwot of Patiko has died. Patiko is one of the recognized chiefdoms of the Acholi, and the requiem mass in honour of the departed Rwot in Gulu Municipality, the area member of Parliament, Honorable Okumu, made a speech in which he suggested that since the Rwot never had a surviving male child, the elders of Patiko should consider installing one of his three daughters as Queen of Patiko (Speech of Honorable Okumu Reagan, Member of Parliament for Aswa County during the requiem mass in honour of the Rwot of Paiko, the late Bongo Jange Muttu II).

Many people opposed the MP saying he was out of touch with Acholi culture and others even stated that the statement he made might cost him votes in the next election. In his speech, the MP gave the example of Queen Elizabeth of England who has ably led her people since the death of her father King George VI in 1952. Honorable Okumu was certainly influenced by his world outlook and the legacy of British rule in northern Uganda. He probably also wanted to win the hearts of female voters, who constitute the majority in his constituency. However, he crossed the line with traditionalists who cannot fathom the existence of a female Rwot.

One prominent concern and major point of the traditionalists is the question: who will succeed the Queen? Her children belong to another clan, since the Acholi culturally forbid intra-clan marriage and incest is heavily punished. The Acholi tradition dictates that one succeeds his father or paternal uncle. In brief, the phenomenon of a queen is not even up for debate among the Acholi because her children belong to another clan or family, which may not be royal.

The Acholi were not able to appreciate some of the cultural practices of the British, although a good number became assimilated through formal education and Christianity. According to Rabinder (1999, p. 590):

> Critical intercultural dialogue is possible only if the participants satisfy three criteria: they must adopt an attitude of openness towards each other's cultural perspectives; they must come to understand each other's perspectives; and they must communicate under conditions which they mutually can accept as fair. Only when these criteria are satisfied can members of one culture criticize the practices of another.

Since the British viewed Acholi culture as barbaric, it was virtually impossible for them to perceive even the slightest of positive attributes in their culture. Much as the Acholi were patriarchal, women had control over a number of resources including livestock, garden crops and land. A man could not sell anything the family owned without the consent of his wife.

This is why the argument that the projection of one's prior prejudices about the other fundamentally closes off any genuine dialogue through which participants could truly learn each other's perspective (Rabinder, 1999). Had the British been open to the Acholi or Africans generally, the positive aspects of their culture would have been incorporated and catered for in the numerous ordinances that were passed to govern the Uganda Protectorate.

Another major problem that confronted intercultural dialogue during the European colonial period in Africa is that it was inward looking. It looked entirely toward European political culture, particularly Western European political culture, as the sole route to successful intercultural dialogue (Igbino, 2011). In northern Uganda, the British had come with preconceived ideas that arose from colonial ideology itself. Colonization was a civilizing mission and not an attempt to study, understand or appreciate the Acholi or African culture of any kind.

One of the ways in which the British failed completely to appreciate Acholi cultural practices was land ownership and management. Land among the segmentary societies of Uganda was customarily and communally owned. Land in Acholiland belongs not only to the living, but also to the dead who are buried in it and the yet to be born who will inherit. Nobody claims private ownership of land.

Consequently, land among the Acholi is used for three purposes: farming, grazing and hunting. These three activities were also performed communally. There was land for farming called *poto*, for grazing known as *olet* and *tim dwar* for hunting. Each clan had its land for all three economic activities.

The British colonial authorities outlawed communal hunting, with the result that *tim dwar* became useless and ownerless. Some became Game Parks and Game Reserves, but many more of such grounds were never used for any purpose. With time, they became the source of land conflicts between different chiefdoms and clans of the Acholi, as well as between Acholi and neighbouring ethnic communities such as the Langi to the south, the Madi and Alur to the west, and the Karimojong to the east.

The colonial government recognized four types of land ownership in Uganda namely the Freehold system, Leasehold, Customary and Mailo system. Freehold and Leasehold systems prevailed in Britain and were simply introduced in Uganda. Mailo was the system that prevailed in Buganda, where the king and his chiefs owned land on behalf of ordinary people. Under the 1900 agreement between the kabaka or king of Buganda, represented by his regents and the Queen of England, the land that went to the Kabaka and his chiefs was measured in miles and became Mailo land.

The communal land ownership of the Acholi was not formerly recognized, although it was subsumed under customary tenureship. The British believed in their land tenure system and that of the Baganda people, but disregarded the Acholi system. To the British, the Acholi were disorganized politically, socially and economically relative to that of the Baganda of central Uganda and the British themselves. The point, however, is that the Acholi were not disorganized by any standard. They were simply acephalous, which meant that different chiefdoms existed side by side and recognized the independence of one other.

Samovar and Porter (1994) have opined that to understand differences and similarities in communication across cultures, it is necessary to have a framework to explain why and how cultures are different or similar. The

differences between the British political and economic systems and those of the Baganda, on the one hand, and the Acholi, on the other, are that the latter was segmented while the former was highly centralized under the Queen of England and the Kabaka of Buganda, respectively.

Land in Britain belonged to the monarchy; that is, the king or queen held it in trust for the people (Spear, 2003). The same system was in place in Buganda kingdom where the Kabaka was called *Sabataka* (Chief land lord). The British were quick to realize the affinity of their economic system with that of the Baganda, which explains why Baganda agents were employed as colonial officials in many parts of Uganda including the northern region.

The land ownership system among the Acholi differed from that which existed in Britain. There were no landed gentry anywhere in Acholiland. Land belonged to all members of the clan or chiefdom. The Rwot did not distribute land at will. He owned land by virtue of being a bonafide member of the clan just like any other member. This was why communal land tenure became necessary.

Given that capitalism had taken root in England, the officials who came to northern Uganda did not understand or bother with anything communal. The land control and ownership system of the Acholi, therefore, did not impress British colonial officials and they undertook took to eradicate it.

Educated Acholi registered their land on the eve of independence in 1962, as required by the British. Leading farmers like Obadia Latim, Sirayo Nyeko and Nekemiah Oywa either obtained freehold titles or leased their land for a period as long as ninety-nine years. The majority of the Acholi, however, were still involved in communal land control.

It is not surprising that the educated elite among the Acholi accepted the British land model. Those who colonized Uganda and many other countries of the world relied on the processes of acculturation – the transmission of Western culture to the colonies – to create a culturally unified British Empire. Sometimes, the cultural forces of imperialism were as effective as any military conquest (Goucher, LeGuin, and Walton 1998). The largest and oldest colonial empire was that of Britain and one of the most reliable ways of keeping the different segments of the empire together was to acculturate the people.

Schools have been known to influence both the individual and society (Mansouri, Jenkins and Leach, 2009). At the individual level, the colonial schools in northern Uganda caused attitude change among the Acholi

arising from their experience first with their teachers, many of whom were Europeans, especially British and a few Indians. The British teachers and tutors inculcated Western culture including dressing, food culture, religion and speech. European teachers dominated the first secondary schools in Acholiland (Gulu High and St Joseph's College, Layibi) until the mid-1960s. The Acholi men and women who graduated from such schools became the cultural change agents that the British were yearning for.

At the societal level, the schools in northern Uganda were centres of attraction, as students appeared in their uniform in church on Sundays and during sports galas. Every parent dreamt of sending their children to such schools. But the schools also employed many people as non-teaching staff, all of which were Black Africans, the majority being Acholi. The alumni of the educational institutions – primary schools, secondary schools and colleges – went to work in different parts of Acholi, where they continued to lead the kind of culture learnt at school.

But the colonial officials were confined to the provinces, districts and counties, rarely mixing with ordinary people. Uganda was not a colony but a protectorate. Unlike in neighbouring Kenya where colonies of British origin were brought to till and own the most fertile land of the country, in Uganda the presence of British officials was limited. The people who were easily acculturated were the educated elite, who interacted with the British in offices, upscale residential places, churches and at school.

The construction of formal educational institutions, including teacher-training colleges, marked the beginning of the merging of Acholiland into the global community. Worldwide, schools are known to be agents of globalization (Mansouri and Jenkins, 2010). The curriculum taught by colonial teachers and tutors was same as those used elsewhere in the British Empire across the globe. The daily routine activities of the school inside and outside the classroom were reflective of British culture, including saying a short prayer before eating food or performing any activity.

The Acholi educated elite were unable to convince their British classmates, workmates or bosses of the positive aspects of Acholi culture. Left entirely to the British to evaluate existing cultural practices, there was nothing convincing or modern about Acholi culture including its land ownership system. The first major criticism of intercultural dialogue, as stated by Igbino (2011), is that it is a colonial model of intercultural dialogue. This colonial model of cultural dialogue dismisses aspects of the cultural

viewpoints of other cultures and, indeed, specific subcultural elements of their own culture. As it has been pointed out:

> Colonial cultural dialogue lays down the rules and climates that constitute the definition and meanings of words and terms, which the cultures that hold those viewpoints must imbibe and use to displace and disown their viewpoints as a precondition for the permission to participate in the dialogue with the dominant culture (Igbino, 2011, p. 59).

Given that the British came to northern Uganda as conquerors, balanced intercultural dialogue could not take place because the actors related to each other in the manner of master and subordinate. There is a saying among the Acholi that *Dongo wang ogwal*. In brief, it means you cannot tell your boss his weaknesses. The British system was not the best, at least to the Acholi people, neither was everything traditional about the Acholi barbaric. The difference is that the British could easily point out the weaknesses of Acholi culture, while the Acholi, including the educated elite, could not inform the British of the negative aspects of their culture.

Although the British did not, at the official level, appreciate and adopt Acholi models of land control or any other cultural practice, the individual colonial officials who spent a long time among the Acholi were, to some extent, influenced. Some took Acholi names, enjoyed Acholi foods and participated in Acholi cultural practices and activities including communal hunts, birth and death ceremonies, as well as farming activities.

The White Fathers, for instance, were very close to the Acholi people. They were not actively involved in the colonial administration but, as has been stated by Khapoya (1994), 'the flag followed the cross'. In a way, the missionaries were harbingers of the British colonial penetration of northern Uganda. Seen as people who did not take part in colonial administration, but were simply interested in evangelism, the Acholi people, like the rest of Ugandans, became socially and spiritually close to the 'preachers' as the missionaries were called.

Lugard (1926, p. 25), the ideologue of indirect rule and one of the longest serving British colonial officials in Uganda, noted that:

> When I recall the state of Uganda at the time I made the treaty in 1890 which brought it under British control, and contrast them with the conditions of today, I feel that British effort – apart from benefits to British trade – has not been in vain.

The impression stated above emanated from the years of intercultural dialogue in northern Uganda, during which various European groups attempted to transform the Acholi people to become Whites. Indirect rule, like assimilation, had a long-lasting impact on the colonized.

The missionaries were therefore closer to the Acholi people than even the colonial administrators. When the time arrived for them to return to Europe, many of the White Fathers objected. They had become used to the Acholi system and felt loved. One can say they appreciated Acholi culture. This is why Goucher, LeGuin and Walton (1998, p. 1) have reasoned that, 'the colonial experience was not one felt only by colonized peoples. Instead, it was an important means by which European identities were constructed as well'. Although the British loathed Acholi culture and in their civilizing mission took time to eradicate it, a number of them, especially the missionaries, embraced elements of the very culture they came to abolish.

Conclusion

This chapter tackles the difficult intercultural encounter between pre-industrial Acholi culture and the British capitalist and Victorian culture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, arising from the cultural imperialism that epitomized the colonization of Uganda and most of Africa by Britain.

By the time Acholiland fell under European rule, the only form of foreign contact and foreign culture the people of northern Uganda had been exposed to was Arab influence. In 1962, Uganda became independent by which time substantial changes had taken place in northern Uganda. There can be little doubt that at the time cultural imperialism, rather than intercultural dialogue policies, knit the world together as an extension of Europe (Goucher, LeGuin and Walton, 1998).

Britain set out to civilize the Acholi through cultural imperialism: The outcome was significant, but the method and procedure, long and difficult. Certainly, by the time of independence in 1962, the process was not yet complete. Acholi elites adopted British culture, but the majority continued to honour their Lwo culture. Fragmented cultural adaptation among the Acholi people reflected the early difficulties that intercultural relations faced in the context of colonialization, cultural imperialism and the politics of resistance around national identity.

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IV. Postscript: what future for intercultural dialogue?

Fethi Mansouri and Ricard Zapata-Barrero

The impetus for this book emerged out of an upsurge of interest in interculturality, both as a concept and as a policy articulated in different ways as the basis for managing diversity and dealing with a broad understanding of the 'rapprochement of cultures'. Indeed, UNESCO's own International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (IDRC) (2013–2022) sought to reinforce 'Member States' commitment to furthering interreligious and intercultural dialogue (ICD) and the promotion of mutual understanding and cooperation for peace' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 4). The need to ensure that intercultural paradigms form part of the mix for policy articulation is a consequence of emerging forms of diversity and cultural expression facilitated by globalization, human mobility and new information technologies (Mansouri, 2014). But 'while these phenomena have brought people together across geographic spaces, [they have] concurrently exposed a widening moral gap in our societies and the extent to which our societies are ill-equipped to effectively manage and overcome the challenges that continue to arise' (UNESCO 2016, p. 5). It is the difficulty of managing the new challenges associated with living with diversity that academic literature and its many manifestations at the policy level has tried to grapple with over the past few decades (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2015).

Yet, and as the various contributions to this volume show, academic debate in this field of research has exhibited a high level of conceptual and methodological variation reflecting epistemological traditions, theoretical frameworks, assumptions and diversity-related categories of different

disciplines, ranging from communications and cultural studies to business, urban planning, psychology and social sciences in general (including sociology, political science, anthropology, education and so on). Indeed, the individual contributions contained in this publication reflect to some extent these specificities. This is in spite of the fact that each chapter developed from similar conceptual and methodological questions.

Intercultural dialogue in context

Internationally, the last two decades have witnessed an upsurge in intercultural tensions, xenophobia and social disharmony, in particular inter and intra-state conflicts driven by religious, sectarian and ethno-cultural disagreements (Berry, 2013; Kymlicka, 2015). Indeed, since 9/11, new forms of extreme ideologies, radicalization, populism and estrangement have dominated national and global agendas (Akkerman *et al.*, 2016; Cesari, 2010). Migrants, especially adherents of the Islamic faith, have become the focus of some of these debates in Western cities, in particular as they relate to global terrorism, rising insecurity, increased urban segregation and lack of social integration (Mansouri, 2015). This ubiquitous discourse has fuelled rising fear of the diversity agenda and contributed to a palpable 'sceptical turn' against multiculturalism, which has gathered international momentum (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010). Informing this 'multicultural backlash' is a growing popular belief that migrant integration in diverse societies is no longer possible and that the creation of cohesive diverse societies is becoming more utopian and less realistic.

The UNESCO IDRC (UNESCO, 2016) Roadmap is in many ways an attempt to reinvigorate the diversity and ICD agenda. It explicitly reflects a 'pragmatic turn' in debates on interculturality with the aim of moving towards concrete interventions and away from more rhetorical and conceptual deliberations. It is still, however, of critical importance that some level of theoretical and conceptual clarity be provided to help understand how ICD can offer a positive and productive pathway towards human rights extension, social cohesion and peaceful co-existence. A level of inclusionary practice around ICD is of paramount importance to ensure that socio-demographic, as well as geographic representation, remain essential ingredients of a sustainable and far-reaching ICD engagement strategy within the ambitious IDRC agenda.

In a context where polarization and retrogressive political agendas are gaining saliency across the world, identity politics is emerging as a new

driver of social and intercultural relations (Yilmaz, 2012). The rise of far-right groups in Europe and elsewhere is a manifestation of such a polarization, where identity markers – particularly those based on cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds – are resulting in more differentiated societies (c.f. Vidmar-Horvat, 2012). This may have resulted in conflicts provoked by cultural, structural and institutional reasons. Yet, this situation remains in need of a clear policy strategy to counter these tensions at local, national and international levels. This is why the IDRC places a high premium on respect for human dignity, human rights for all, and fundamental freedom of belief and expression. It is within this context that new policy paradigms are being explored which may uncover innovative ways of enshrining positive and sustainable approaches to managing different expressions of diversity. Such emerging paradigms still need to be approached within an ethos that emphasizes openness and respect between different groups and, more importantly, between individuals from different cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds.

The question therefore remains: what future awaits ICD? What role does national and supra-national governance play in shaping this future? Are all stakeholders (policy-makers, inter-governmental agencies, researchers and practitioners) actually asking the right questions and invoking the right theoretical frameworks, approaches and arguments in our push for an 'intercultural turn' (Zapata-Barrero, 2015)? The remainder of this concluding chapter presents three inter-connected arguments exploring the promise of ICD from conceptual, policy and ethical perspectives, respectively.

Conceptual argument

One of the unfortunate developments regarding ICD is that many intellectual, philosophical and policy debates tend to unhelpfully juxtapose interculturalism with multiculturalism. While the argument against this juxtaposition has been taken up elsewhere (Meer, Modood and Zapata-Barrero, 2016), the position in this book is that these two policy paradigms are not and should not be discussed in oppositional terms. Equally, these two concepts cannot be analysed in ontological isolation from public discourses and policies that are shaped and have themselves shaped distinct temporal and spatial contexts (Meer and Modood, 2012).

There is no doubt that the post-9/11 context has given rise to a backlash against multiculturalism in Europe, in particular, but also elsewhere across

the Western world, in particular in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom among other countries (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010). This increasing criticism of multiculturalism revolves around: (i) a perceived communitarianism that leads to lack of social integration, (ii) a cultural relativism that encourages illiberal practices, and (iii) a lack of attachment to a common political culture. This latter problem, in particular, has been equated with perceived cultural groupism that may lead to divided loyalties and even domestic security risks, as has been the case with so-called 'home-grown terrorists' (Mansouri, 2015). These difficulties have been amplified in the European context, where real social problems and security incidents (e.g. the terrorist attacks in Brussels, Paris, London and Nice) have added to public fears of and skepticism towards cultural and religious difference. But in this context, and as Taylor (2012, p. 414) argues:

> too much positive recognition of cultural differences will encourage a retreat into ghettos, and a refusal to accept the political ethic of liberal democracy itself.

Those arguing against 'too much positive recognition' are essentially suggesting that it is the 'protective' rights-based agenda implied by multiculturalism that has sown the seeds of social segregation and, consequently, intercultural tensions. These problems are further compounded by contemporary political challenges arising from international conflicts and national economic difficulties, which often add credibility to those views by advocating for less recognition and support for cultural and religious diversity. Despite this, the multicultural policy frameworks in culturally plural societies, such as Australia and Canada, were designed and articulated to deal with rising levels of migration and consequent socio-cultural diversity (Mansouri, 2015). But acceptance of diversity and coexistence within multicultural paradigms is now being challenged by new types of social fissures fuelled by international conflict, right-wing extremism and radical violent ideologies. It is within this context that the intercultural turn has been advanced as a new paradigm offering possibly remedial but complementary ingredients to current international variations of the multicultural policy paradigm, in particular in its Australian and Canadian versions. And although there is no unified approach to nor application of multiculturalism worldwide, the unifying assumption behind all variations of multicultural policies is a right-based approach that offers support for and recognition of collective cultural claims.

Against these fluctuating contexts across regions and policy articulations, the UNESCO IDRC Roadmap (UNESCO, 2016) clearly attempts to

synthesize diverse orientations from both frameworks, as it seeks to locate ICD both at the collective communal level and at the individual subjective level, aiming for:

> societies and communities where the richness and potential of cultural diversity is better understood and recognized for its vital contribution to improving and shaping development outcomes [and] Individuals who are equipped with the competences and tools to operate in a diverse and rapidly changing world, and who are driven by shared human values in living and working together as custodians of the same planet (UNESCO, 2016, p. 10).

Indeed, as some of the contributors in this book illustrate, ICD offers moments of encounter, understanding and hope for individuals sharing local spaces and engaging in genuine attempts to understanding 'the other' as co-citizens and fellow human beings. To this end, Hassan Nadhem's chapter on the role of literature and transnational literary figures as intercultural conduits for bridging social-cultural divides in present day Iraq is a case in point. The literary legacy of Muhammad Fuẓūlī – the subject of Nadhem's chapter – is now seen as offering real opportunities for bridging intercultural divides within a region that is witnessing unprecedented political and social tensions. Similarly, Amineh Hoti's grassroots interfaith interventions in Pakistan examine the challenges and possibilities offered by innovative ICD interventions designed to change students' perspectives and mindsets on intercultural and interreligious relations.

These chapters and others included in this book highlight the approach that we sought to develop for ICD, which is grounded in a belief that knowledge alone is insufficient for developing critical intercultural capabilities (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006). Instead, ICD is premised among other things on developing skills, behaviours and dispositions that enable individuals to make connections between their own views and those of others, to build on shared interests and commonalities, and to negotiate or mediate difference. In this instance, ICD involves and projects a kind of 'toolbox' that encompasses everyday pedagogical strategies for dealing with intercultural manifestations of super diversity for the mutual benefit and advantage of all concerned. As such, ICD offers the potential to engage positively with diversity as we 'change our concepts of personal and collective identity, and [develop] common bonds, on the basis of a more universal conception of humankind' (Cantle, 2012, p. 143). It is with such aims in mind that European policy-makers have adopted ICD as part of a

paradigm driven by the desire to foster community cohesion and engender common public culture (Zapata-Barrero, 2015).

Policy argument

As a policy paradigm, interculturalism arises within cities and functions as an urban policy strategy. It can even be interpreted as a kind of a 'policy rebellion of cities' vis-à-vis state-centred policy domination in diversity policies for the last few decades. This 'local turn' in migration policy and research (Zapata-Barrero, Caponio and Scholten, 2017), whereby cities are increasingly recognized not only as implementers of policies, but also as new players in diversity management, can offer a new area of focus for the current UNESCO ICD framework.

Taken globally, the promotion of interculturalism can also be applied to foster inner-city (intra-city) as well as inter-city relations on common diversity-related concerns related to how to live in diverse societies (e.g. religious and linguistic concerns, cultural and national traditions). The 'local turn' has, in fact, constituted the central point of the Intercultural Cities Programme of the Council of Europe since 2008, which now has more than 100 cities working together to reduce all forms of prejudice and increase knowledge formation through intercultural lenses. The premise is that integration in diverse societies can only be possible through interpersonal contact (Guidikova, 2016) and by targeting many social and public areas in cities where these encounters can take place (Wood, 2016) and where most diversity-related conflicts could arise. This is viewed as part of a socialization process to foster intercultural citizens (Zapata-Barrero, 2016). As the Council of Europe writes in its founding document:

> One of the defining factors that will determine, over coming years, which cities flourish and which decline will be the extent to which they allow their diversity to be their asset, or their handicap. Whilst national and supra-national bodies will continue to wield an influence it will increasingly be the choices that cities themselves make which will seal their future (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 22).

This is in accordance with European Union initiatives that present empirical evidence for the relationship between cities and diversity policies. For instance, the report from the Zaragoza Summit of the Fourth European Ministerial Conference on Integration of Immigrants highlights 'integration as an engine for development and social cohesion' (EU, 2010). More recently, in January 2015, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of

Europe adopted a recommendation on the Intercultural Cities (ICC) approach, recognizing it as a way forward and recommending it to cities and governments (Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States). This is one of the first policy initiatives to clearly emphasize the need for local governments to develop and build capacities to better manage diversity and to combat racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination. This represents a major turning point, highlighting the critical role of local initiatives as new/additional policy levers for managing these new social fissures. The national models of integration were first criticized by transnational literature (Thränhardt and Bommes, 2010; Wimmer and Glick-Schiller, 2002) and by some preliminary multi-level and local analyses of immigration (Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero, 2014). The multicultural paradigm has been conceived of and implemented from the state level and has not often considered multi-level perspectives in implementing diversity policies. We are now in an historical period in which the UNESCO framework of ICD has the opportunity to emphasize this general 'local turn' dynamics within migration-related diversity studies.

The focus is not only the promotion of 'contact zones' in different spheres, but also the resulting disproval of stereotypes and reduction in prejudice towards 'others'. In this sense, this ongoing process is a means to an end, intended to develop and maintain relational competences. In other words, the premise tries to ensure that the contact zones between people are areas of interaction rather than areas of conflict, which reject racism, poverty and social exclusion. Intercultural policies are thus seen as an anti-racist tool. This promotion of anti-discrimination is a fundamental element of the policy argument for interculturalism, since it focuses on the factors that can hinder positive intercultural relations. There are contextual, legal, institutional and structural factors that reduce the motivation of people to interact and even build walls of separation between people based on misinterpretations of differences. Here, we take into account legal frameworks concerning voting rights for foreigners and naturalization policies, as well as socio-economic opportunity gaps among citizens, when differences become the explanatory factor in reducing contact. The promotion of anti-discrimination also means tackling disadvantage, as interculturalism is unlikely to continue over time if one or more segments of society remain so unequal that people are led to believe they have no real stake in society. It is here that many programmes aimed at debunking rumours, disrupting 'fake news', resisting prejudices and negative perceptions of diversity are expanding in Europe. See, for example, the

Antirumours Networks for Diversity promoted by the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, n.d.).

Ethical argument

The IDRC is very much premised on the broad aspirational goals of Sustainable Development Goal 16, which centres 'on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies [and] provides for specific targets to reduce violence, strengthen institutions and improve decision-making processes' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 8). Reducing violence and working towards inclusive and peaceful societies is not merely a matter of public policy or legal obligation, but also an ethical orientation and a societal condition for ensuring dignity for all. ICD demands that peaceful coexistence among diverse groups and communities, indeed between societies, be taken to a higher and more ethical level whereby individuals not only accept diversity, but also commit to developing the critical tools necessary to engage with it more positively and productively. This is a priority for all members of societies, including first peoples, white settlers, majority groups and migrants.

While strong political leadership will always play a positive role in strengthening the momentum behind the intercultural turn, what is required even more urgently is a grassroots uptake driven locally through cities and local councils, where everyday intercultural encounters take place. What ICD promises are genuine moments of hope and care where individuals within local social milieus not only accept diversity, but are also proactively engaged in acquiring the reflexive and pedagogical tools needed for successful intercultural interactions and exchanges. Social divisiveness grows when difficult cultural, social and political matters are left to fester uncontested and undisrupted by critical deliberative modes of engagement. It is these critical, deliberative modes of engagements that ICD aims to nurture as a mechanism for preventing ignorance of 'others', prejudice and cultural bias.

The ethical dimension of ICD orientation is captured through an emphasis on a human-centric interest in the 'other' as a co-citizen, but also as a fellow human being. The fact that we all belong to a 'common humanity' must prevail over other political and social considerations. This humanitarian dimension of ICD is one of the main drivers of this ethical argument. For this to happen, ICD needs to focus not only on present conflict and difficulties, but also, more importantly, on future challenges that will continue to rise as globalization accelerates further, at least at the

level of socio-economic interdependence, human mobility and information technologies. It is, therefore, at the level of pedagogical interventions among youth that much of the promise of ICD is located and where real investment is needed from policy-makers, inter-governmental agencies, NGOs and educators. Indeed, authentic and agentic ICD practice premised on a critical reflexive pedagogy holds the key for resolving conflicts at the inter-personal, inter-group, intra-national and international levels (Noble and Watkins, 2014). More importantly, this approach to ICD holds the key for ensuring social peace and intercultural understanding at a time when many societies are undergoing deep and unsettling social transformations on many fronts that raise questions about national identities and cultural differences. Within many diverse societies such challenges have often led to the rise of xenophobic ideologies targeting migrants and minority groups, in particular adherents of the Muslim faith (Mansouri, Lobo and Johns, 2015; Mikola and Mansouri, 2014; Modood, Triandafyllidou and Zapata-Barrero, 2006).

In most European Union and Council of Europe documents, interculturalism is linked to European values, such as human rights, democracy and a culture of peace and dialogue, and European identity (Council of Europe, 2008; European Commission, 2008a, 2008b). This view of diversity as constitutive of the new European identity underlines the fact that the latter is neither a pre-existing quality nor a historical given, but rather a process in the making – an identity to be achieved (Bauman, 2004).

Conclusion: interculturalism as an alternative to the extremist narrative

These three arguments (conceptual, policy and ethical) relating to the present context for ICD assume that interculturalism is a mechanism to generate trust and mutual understanding, and to break down prejudices, stereotypes and the misconceptions of others that constrain interaction and contact between individuals living within culturally diverse cities. ICD is akin to a pedagogical technique for bridging differences between individuals and, consequently, bonding groups together as per the social capital agenda. That is, it promotes relations between people who share certain characteristics (bonds), as well as relations between individuals from different backgrounds (e.g. promoting interactions among people across different religions, languages and other characteristics of cultural diversity) that have the predisposition to respect the differences of others (Gruescu and Menne, 2010, p. 10). It is a way, then, to avoid the confinement

and segregation of people, which has become an explanatory variable of social exclusion and social inequality. To this end, social cohesion is now widely promoted as an ICD conduit for encouraging interaction, in order to overcome social and cultural barriers among people, especially at the level of local neighbourhoods and cities (Cantle, 2016). Xenophobia, racism, and intolerant discourses and practices are increasing their presence in all spheres of European (indeed global) society from political parties, to social discourses and among citizens. This is why the incorporation of migrants into the main institutions of democratic societies (e.g. into political parties, see Zapata-Barrero *et al*., 2017) is urgent for a future ICD agenda. Migrants are currently gaining primacy in several national governments and constitute an emerging challenge for institutional policies and practices. In the context of Europe, for example, the current process of re-nationalization of policies, xenophobia, racism and intolerance are becoming a new 'political ideology' framing political opinion and legitimizing politics and policies of exclusion. Scholarly work highlights the fact that while this originates in cultural anxiety, it also emerges from approaches to welfare, entrenched inequalities and emerging insecurity, all of which are also nurtured by the inconsistencies arising from the management of complex issues such as access to European territory and diversity.

Populism and neo-conservatism are the main forms this new ideology takes (Rubio-Carbonero and Zapata-Barrero, 2017). Most of the public debate around migration and diversity is focused more at the explanatory level and seeks to identify the main factors provoking the emergence of far-right groups. Such public debates and associated research aim to identify intervention strategies that seek to invade political power and governments, and focus less on the required political and policy instruments to prevent and reduce the conditions that make it possible. ICD can play a central role here.

The last European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) report highlights growing anti-immigration sentiment and cites Islamophobia as being among the key trends in 2015 (ECRI, 2016). The recent terrorist attacks in Berlin, Copenhagen, Nice and Paris further add to the Islamophobic sentiment being misused by populist political parties to stir up prejudice and hatred against Muslims in general. Likewise, the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union in June 2016 (commonly known as 'Brexit') is also connected to anti-immigrant sentiments. New key questions emerge: Is the policy narrative of multiculturalism, in its current formulation, sufficient to counter the rising extremist narratives

which are often dressed in nationalist terms? Can multiculturalism be a marker of multicultural identity without creating more political cleavages at the national level? These questions cannot be answered with state-centric policy paradigms alone, no matter how well-intentioned. Rather, they require more nimble, locally driven initiatives, such as those articulated within ICD where the agency of the individual, the authenticity of local context, and the heuristic premise of contact and interaction are all given primacy over top-down narratives that no longer reflect the complexity of the world within which we all live.

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Interculturalism at the crossroads

comparative perspectives on concepts, policies and practices

Today most societies across the world are witnessing rising levels of social and cultural diversity brought about by globalisation and in particular increased human mobility and significant advances in information and communications technologies. The dilemma, therefore, has been how best to manage the resultant diversity and what optimal social policy paradigms to adopt towards this end. Assimilation, multiculturalism and presently interculturalism have all been proposed as possible policy conduits for managing socio-cultural diversity. This book, in focusing on the latter concept, and in particular in its intercultural dialogue manifestation, offers at once theoretical examinations, policy discussion and practical explorations of its uptake across the world. The core argument connecting the book's three distinct sections is that whilst assimilation in its racist manifestation is no longer a viable option in today's world, intercultural dialogue within existing multicultural settings has much to offer.

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