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QUICK READ SYNOPSIS

Religious Pluralism and Civil Society

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Pluralisms

Martin E. Marty, University of Chicago

- Background* The presence of a tri-faith America was signaled by an important work in popular sociology, Will Herberg's 1955 *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*.
- The author argued that Americans, while adhering to the idea of a generic "civic faith," found their place by acknowledging their roots in a tri-faith form.
 - That work led to what now is called *pluralism*, a state in which people have thought about what to do about diversity.
 - The author says that citizens are as upset about, hopeful for, bewildered by, and committed to "pluralism" as visionary leaders envisioned or hoped that they would be.
- Pluralism* Pluralism implies and involves a polity, a civic context that provides some "rules of the game," refers to an ethos, and evokes response.
- It means seeing to it that the views and ethos of a group are given a favorable if not a monopolistic place in education, literature, entertainment, and the arts.
 - Combined political and cultural inhibitions set up a circumstance of potential conflict reinforced by an antipluralist ethos.
- Conflicts* Religious pluralism is often the most evocative of issues and provocative of conflicts.
- When citizens act in the name of a transcendent force or person—usually their God—they change the rules of the pluralist games and rule out those who do not share witness or obedience to that God.
 - There is an impulse to respond in communities.
 - Reflecting on religious differences presents issues with which theologians have come increasingly to wrestle; most of the groups within a pluralist civil polity make exclusive claims of how to worship.

Issues of Interpretation

- For many, the fact that a faith other than one's own can be productive of manifest human good is a relativizing assault on what had been a secure absolute hold on faith, morals, and reality itself.

Our concern is to show that religious pluralism is not merely a domestic issue, and that matters of survival, justice, and the common good relate to what is in sacred texts and who is a reliable interpreter of them.

- One must be able to see that resources in the sacred book of "the other" can match those in "my religion."

Three Questions

The author revisits three important questions first posed by Stephen V. Monsma and J. Christopher Soper (1997).

- How far can a democratic polity go in permitting religiously motivated behavior that is contrary to societal welfare or norms?
- Should the state encourage and promote consensual religious beliefs and traditions to support the common values and beliefs that bind a society together and make possible limited, democratic government?
- When religious groups and the state are active in the same endeavor, can we ensure that the state does not advantage or disadvantage any one group, either religious or nonreligious, over the other?

Arguments for Pluralism

In left-wing Puritanism, among Quakers and Christian philosophical modernists, one sees stirrings of the legitimating arguments for pluralism.

- The call for freedom usually came from what might be called "Christian Enlightenment" figures.
- The American participants in what historian Crane Brinton (1964) called the new religion of the Enlightenment "with a capital *E*" tended to remain members of Anglican, Congregational, Presbyterian, and other established colonial religions.
- In public discourse they tended to avoid particularist, including biblical, language and strove for what they thought were less rooted and more generic words for God.

Today's Pluralism

Today we can see several influences on the discourse on pluralism.

- First is the world scene, in which an insecure nation observes the power of militant Islam and how its leaders insist on perfect homogeneity in religion, and prohibit or punish dissenters.
- A second factor that prompts fresh attention is the manifest presence of multiplying religious representations.
- The large population of Muslims after 9/11 did not guarantee easy acceptance, since the presence of the "other" rarely is only positive among those who have long "belonged" in a place—yet whether the welcome was grudging or open, overall the system worked.

The Future

It is natural to ask whether affirmations of pluralism have much of a future—there are reasons for worry about the future.

- One hears religious advocates in the United States who urge that we must "take back America."
- Closer looks suggests that there never was pure consensus, that the founders savagely disagreed with each other on many basic issues, including the role of religion within pluralism.
- It is suggested that we get along enough to make conversation and common acts for the common good possible.

The Constitutional Basis of Religious Pluralism in the United States: Causes and Consequences

Ted G. Jelen, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Background This article shows how provisions in the U.S. Constitution enhance religious pluralism in the United States.

- Religion in the United States serves as a source of social capital and as a check against the conformist tendencies of U.S. public opinion, and religious pluralism ameliorates the tendency to identify the nation with a particular set of religious traditions.
- The presence of religious ideas in public discourse also may render religious values less particularistic and more publicly accessible.

First Amendment Beyond the distinction made in the original constitution between the sacred and the secular, the most important (and controversial) constitutional provisions relating to religion are the religion clauses in the First Amendment.

- Essentially, the establishment and free exercise clauses, taken together, mean minimally that religious life in the United States is, for practical purposes, unsupported and unregulated by government.
- The practice of nonestablishment stands in stark contrast to a number of nations of Europe, who either have legally established national churches or provide other forms of assistance to religious bodies.

Congregation Building Religious organizations in the United States must attract members from a pool of potential members who may be affiliated with other denominations, or who may eschew membership in religious organizations altogether.

- This suggests that religious bodies must provide doctrines, experiences, and other resources attractive to possible members.
- Competition occasions increases in the propensity of laypeople to join, and to participate in, religious organizations.
- Religious organizations that compete for members or supporters will often take pains to distinguish themselves from their rivals in terms of religious doctrine or practice. The more diverse the local or national religious landscape, the more distinctive (and therefore valuable) adherence to one's own religious tradition might seem.

NOTE: The constitution ensures a religious market in which religious organizations are neither supported nor regulated, and this combination of constitutional provisions may promote religious pluralism in the United States.

Capitalism and Religion Does U.S. capitalism increase religious demand?

- Religious pluralism, and the resulting competition, leads to greater aggregate consumption of religious goods.
- Variations in religious activity across different contexts are largely attributable to the competitiveness of the religious market.

*Religious
Nature in
United States*

- Increased personal and institutional religiosity may be linked to psychological insecurity.
 - One can suppose that Americans may experience higher levels of insecurity than do citizens of other Western nations that provide more support. For example, consequences of serious illness or unemployment are likely to be much more severe in the United States than in other developed countries.

It is possible to observe at least four general political consequences of the religious nature of the American people.

- First, and most obviously, religion affects public policy.
- Second, religion is often regarded as a source of social capital.
- Third, religion may provide a buffer against some of the worst tendencies of democratic political cultures.
- Fourth, the presence of religious diversity in the United States has obvious effects on the practice of religion in the public sphere.

*Public
Accessibility*

In a pluralistic culture the requirement of public accessibility may involve both costs and benefits for religious activists.

- On the positive side of the ledger, the ethical dimension of one's religious faith may require religious activists to sharpen their arguments, and render them more "worldly" and more plausible to people outside the tradition.
- On the negative side, being denied the theological bases for one's political judgments may constitute a form of discrimination.

Conclusion

This article makes two general points.

- The religious pluralism and possibly consequent religious vitality of the United States very likely has a constitutional and a political basis.
- Religious pluralism and the resulting popular religiosity of the American people has important consequences for the practice of religious politics.

NOTE: If the analyses of some of the causes and effects of religious pluralism in the United States are correct, it may follow that the ostensible separation of church and state may actually enhance the public role of religion—or at least some form of religion in American political discourse. A stance of church-state "separationism," which is often attributed to hostility to religion, may render religion more politically consequential, and politically powerful, in the United States.

The Languages of the Public Sphere: Religious Pluralism, Institutional Logics, and Civil Society

Rhys H. Williams, University of Cincinnati

Background

Increases in religious diversity in the United States since the early 1970s have led to concerns about American national identity and the health of civil society.

- The question facing civil society from the diversification of the American religious landscape is the extent to which civil society can expand its repertoire of languages, and/or traditionally non-Western religious traditions can adapt to these cultural forms.

- Many fear that American society is more split by political, social, and economic polarization, with more individual isolation and alienation and less collective social trust than at any time in its history.
- This article angles the concern with religious diversity and public life by considering “civil society” and the extent to which American religious diversity is challenging, reinforcing, and transforming it.

*Public Sphere
Language*

A critical dimension of these issues involves the languages of the public sphere and the institutional logics those languages represent.

- How we talk about our public life is “rhetoric.” It is, in the classic sense, language meant to persuade others.
- Religious meanings become entwined with culturally approved ways of thinking, acting, and being. Religion helps legitimate cultural forms and becomes a legitimate mode of expression within a culture.
- This article looks at how religious diversity affects the languages and the cultural and institutional logics used in the public sphere and to what end, and how effectively they are deployed by groups that use them.
- The language is based on the notion of a “social contract” as a deal struck between equals, in which all parties have their interests protected and get something equivalent for whatever they give.

Diversity

There are more people of more different faiths in America, and more variations among the various world religions, than ever before.

- Legal issues concerning the regulation and subsidy of religion by government are complicated by more variety in the religious sector.
- Theological commitments that Americans take very seriously may be challenged by living in close proximity to others of different faiths.
- Diversity in faith may produce a fragmented moral culture.
- There is a chance that social conflict can follow encounters among groups that have different truths by which they orient their actions.

Civil Society

Civil society was originally conceptualized as a realm of social mutuality, equality, and liberty, in that sense reconciling the philosophical tensions between communal obligation and individualism in Western societies.

- That some persons or social groups might be more equal or more free within civil society has been a long-term theoretical and practical issue.
- It is the attempt at reconciling individual autonomy and communal obligation that civil society was designed to call to attention.
- Religious organizations are a particularly important part of civil society as more Americans belong to religious organizations than to any other form of voluntary association.
- American localism and suspicions of government have made it a preference to leave religious regulation to civil society, not the state.

Organization

Religious institutions can and do organize themselves in a variety of different ways, in terms of hierarchy, authority, membership demands, or bureaucracy.

- Some religious groups make distinctions between “religious authority” as that which pertains to doctrine and theology and “agency authority” that runs the organization’s mundane and secular affairs.

*Challenges
Faced by
Immigrants*

- The forms that organizations take shape the impact that civil society organizations have on the public sphere.
- Voluntary organizations tend to move towards being made up of people who are increasingly similar—if different types of people join the same organization, those who are more different often become more marginal within the group and tend to leave it.

There are some particular challenges that Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu immigrants may face when organizing themselves in the United States.

- Neither Hinduism nor Buddhism has a congregational tradition, with trips to the temple only for particular types of ceremonies and rituals.
- Unlike most American Christian denominations, these are not national organizations that bind local groups together, issue policy directives, or exercise agency authority.
- In spite of strong religious differences, Muslim-American organizations are beginning to participate in interfaith forums for community engagement and religious understanding.
- Many dimensions of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism make the voluntary civic association a less than natural organizational manifestation of their religious culture.

NOTE: That Hindus, Buddhists, and even Muslims are less likely to think of themselves as members of discreet congregations may give them more experience with managing the multiple identities that are involved when one associates with several different groups.

Defining Religious Pluralism in America: A Regional Analysis

Mark Silk, Trinity College

Background

Religious pluralism is achieved by putting all religions on an equal footing vis-à-vis the state, or at least by formally protecting a range of religious attachments and commitments.

- It is a cultural construct that embodies some shared conception of how a country's various religious commitments relate to each other and to the larger national whole.

*Regional
History*

Below is a historical look at the regional evolution of religious pluralism in America from the middle Atlantic to the West.

- Since the earliest days of European colonization, the Middle Atlantic region has served as the proving ground for pluralism—only in New York City could anyone have made a reasonable case that the religious scene was in fact shared on something like equal terms among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews.
- New Englanders saw American politics as a place where religion was not to be worn on one's sleeve, where religious pluralism works best when religion is confined to a sphere of its own.

- Beyond the rights-based individualism of Kennedy-era religious pluralism is the spiritual territory of the Pacific region (California, Nevada, and Hawaii), where eclectic styles of religion have long flourished. Boundaries among religions are notably fluid within the region, and people mix and match religious teachings and practices with amazing ease.
- Missouri, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma make up the region the authors have called the Southern Crossroads—a flashpoint region, where the intersection of frontier ideals and Old South realities has historically produced political and religious clashes of pronounced intensity.
 - It is critical to recognize that the importance of the Holiness-Pentecostal tradition is stronger here than anywhere else.

NOTE: Today, there are four remaining regions: the South, or that part of old Confederacy east of the Mississippi; the Midwest; the Mountain West; and the Pacific Northwest.

The Bush Presidency

By the end of the past century, white evangelicals moved decisively into the Republican camp and became the source of the party's activist core.

- During the first six years of Bush's presidency, the GOP was styled as the party of religion and the Democrats as the party of irreligion.
- In the Crossroads dispensation, religious pluralism is the pluralism of "people of faith"—inclusive, but antagonistic to those without faith.

What's Next?

In the repertoire of regions, the best hope for a new pluralist regime looks to lie in the Midwest with a less "ethnic" emphasis on ascribed identity, a greater place for the evangelical voice and a greater emphasis on the common good and on community values.

- The Midwest is a place with the largest political deviations—from deep red states like Kansas and Nebraska to the deep-blue state of Illinois to the swingiest of swing states—Ohio, Mississippi, Wisconsin, and Iowa.
- Evangelical Protestants are a powerful and growing presence, but nowhere does the Protestant Mainline retain much of its historic strength and influence.
- Catholics are represented well in the country as a whole.
- Jews are big players in the big cities—Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Detroit above all.

NOTE: If there is to be a new style of religious pluralism, the country could do a lot worse than have it emerge from the Midwest.

Pluralism as a Culture: Religion and Civility in Southern California

Wade Clark Roof, University of California, Santa Barbara

Background

This article describes Southern California as a particular setting for the study of religious pluralism and civil society.

- The region's history of global religious and cultural encounters, lack of a religious establishment, hypermodernity, and fluid identities have all contributed to "pluralism as a culture."

*California and
Pluralism*

- The article discusses historical conditions giving rise to this culture akin to what is sometimes called “rooted cosmopolitanism” and its relation to core American values and democratic traditions.
- The 9/11 attacks brought all Americans to a sudden awareness of religious diversity within the United States, and particularly to the realization that many of us knew little about our new religious neighbors, as evidenced by the misguided Sikh American retaliations.

Holiday displays in December in cities like Mission Viejo, California, chose a “pluralist” option—a public display open to all faiths as best expressing their views and feelings about diversity.

- Nowhere within the United States has there been greater exposure to expansion of religious and cultural differences than in Southern California.
- A frontier heritage of individualism, religious diversity, and a relatively large secular, nonchurched population all helped to create a peculiar religious and cultural ethos.
- In California it was not so much that people were opposed to a faith, but seemed less predisposed to make strong commitments to it—there never was a strong religious establishment as in other parts of the United States.
- Religious pluralism as a normative system emerged quickly, coming about largely out of the practical necessity of diverse groups having to work out rules for getting along with one another.
- California’s mix of peoples and the pace of life alter how religions encounter one another, interfusing the local and the global while at the same time creating an environment in which social identities are fluid.
- Two tandem principles were important to the development of a culture of religious pluralism:
 - no single faith tradition would have a strong cultural dominance over the others; and
 - all religious groups, large and small, would function as voluntary associations.

*Physical
Environment*

Not to be underestimated is the impact of the region’s natural beauty and its Mediterranean climate: this religious and spiritual impact generates a sense of transcendence and of awe; a style of “nature religion.”

- Spiritual awareness seems not to have necessarily depended upon close connection with the churches, synagogues and temples.
- Belief in God or the sacred here is not so much dismissed as much as it is regarded as a matter of personal choice.

*The Changing
Context*

Southern California, as for the United States as a whole, is more receptive and supportive of religious diversity today than for earlier waves of immigrants.

- A factor in this change of climate is the expansion of higher education during the last half century that has exposed younger generations to cultural diversity of all kinds—including religious differences.

- Influenced by the civil rights movement, younger and better-educated Americans are also more cognizant today of the discrepancies between the nation's egalitarian ideals and its discriminatory practices.
- Nowhere else in the country can claim to have been more on the front-lines in forcing the country to deal with diversity of various kinds—ethnic, racial, gender, and lifestyle.

Assimilation

Assimilation is seen to be a two-way process in which immigrants learn to be Americans while their presence transforms the larger society and culture.

- Individual choice and ethnic distinctiveness are valued.
- The above, along with better ties to their homelands, put immigrants in a position where they can preserve important values and practices from their own culture as they assimilate into American life.
- Religious communities play a critical role mediating old and new cultures, in a process of new multicultural identities.
- The development of a culture of pluralism is greatly aided by effective religious leaders who appreciate diversity and tolerance.
- Religious pluralism in the sense of a habit encouraging and reinforcing respect for people's choices in religious faith, including that of no faith, is obviously an expression of American democracy.

Current Context

In the current social context, two important developments reinforce a strong emphasis upon an individual's freedom to act religiously and in other ways:

- the growing population of mixed-race and mixed-ethnic ancestry in California; and
- given an increased transnational population, multiple citizenship is becoming more common, leading to changes in how we conceive of national loyalty.
- In Southern California's fluid and ever-evolving environment, voluntary communities—and especially religious communities—have a critical role to play in the process of civic engagement and debate.

The Role of Religion in the Process of Segmented Assimilation

R. Stephen Warner, University of Illinois at Chicago

Background

In the past decade, the concept of assimilation in the study of immigrant absorption to U.S. society has been resurrected by sociologists, but it is assimilation with a twist.

- The new concept of segmented assimilation of Portes and Rumbaut (2001) draws on mounting evidence of the rapidity with which the children of most immigrant groups (their second generation) acculturate to American society.
- American culture is such a powerful force that most members of the second generation indisputably become Americans.

- The children of post-1965 immigrants are seen to traverse diverse paths of Americanization, some seemingly on the road to middle-class success, but others downwardly mobile into persisting poverty.
- These segmented assimilation processes are particularly pronounced in America's cities, where, unlike the case of the last great wave of immigration a century ago, the bulk of new immigrants are concentrated and, in many cases, racially segregated.
- The purpose of this article is twofold:
 - to alert students of urban religion to this promising new sociological theory and
 - to remind students of assimilation (and of ethnic and racial minorities) that religion is a factor that they must take into account in their models.

NOTE: The segmented assimilation theorists recommend a strategy of selective acculturation (or additive acculturation) through which groups with nontrivial but vulnerable stocks of economic, human, and social capital, and without the burden of the hostile reception accorded the least advantaged immigrants, can support their young people as they Americanize.

*Selective
Acculturation*

Under selective acculturation, maturing youth maintain fluency with the old-country language and culture and are thereby able to communicate with their immigrant parents, even as they (inevitably) absorb American culture.

- In this way they have a better chance of acquiring a good education.
- The contrary path of dissonant acculturation, by which youth quickly shed old-country culture and adopt maladaptive American oppositional cultures, is seen as a recipe for failure.
- In between is the path of consonant acculturation, where immigrant parents and their children face the challenges of the host society together but without the support of the ethnic community.

NOTE: On the face of it, religious communities would seem to be prime candidates for this strategic role (as well as a potential contributor to at least one form of dissonant acculturation), but the primary mechanism discussed by Portes and Rumbaut for making cross-generational ethnic insertion possible were the bilingual private schools that middle-class Cuban families in Miami availed themselves of.

*Religion in
Assimilation*

Given our knowledge of religion in the United States, we should expect religious institutions to be one of the major types of ethnic association immigrants have access to. Therefore, they should be brought into play in a theory highlighting the role of the ethnic community in assimilation processes.

- Churches and other institutions are a prime locus of the social capital that reinforces families and parental authority, especially by helping parents support one another.
- They also can be expected to provide network closure, by means of which social control of and adult support for youth is diffused throughout the community.
- Where parents and children alike draw on the support of the ethnic community, it is especially relevant that American churches are more likely to be intergenerational than other ethnic associations and less likely to be age-stratified than America social institutions generally.

- Religious institutions also provide cross-generational relationships between youth and adults who are not their parents, promote network closure for the diffusion of social control, and serve as bridges to opportunities in the wider society.

NOTE: From the point of view of segmented assimilation theory, we should therefore expect that families pursuing strategies of consonant acculturation would avail themselves of churches and other religious institutions to help instill moral culture and promote skill development in their youth. It is clear that segmented assimilation theory, formulated to account for as well as to guide the process of immigrant incorporation in the United States, must bring religion into the very center of the picture.

Muslims in the United States: Pluralism under Exceptional Circumstances

Kathleen M. Moore, University of California, Santa Barbara

Background

The concept of pluralism, as fact and theory, is discussed here in light of what the Muslim American experience has to tell us about the limits of tolerance.

- The idiosyncratic circumstances of Muslim Americans gives rise to both an internal struggle to be pluralists and an outward struggle to negotiate rights and liberties in a climate of fear.
- This study of Muslims in the United States illustrates the need to rethink what the term “pluralism” means in America.
- Challenges for Muslims in the United States give rise to adaptations of rituals and convictions in a reflexive project of identity construction.
- There are pressures toward conformity exerted upon individuals in one instance by an external authority—the *ummah*—and in another by the internal dynamics of the adopted homeland.
- In the contemporary United States, can Muslims make legitimate references to authorities living in other, very different societies, and to the normative ideas those authorities espouse?
- In the United States, Muslim leaders have sought to develop a version of Islam and Muslim identity in accord with local norms and values.
- The effort to preserve and adapt is played out in two ways: first, the internal struggles within Muslim communities to be “pluralist”; and second, the tensions between Muslims and state officials, which tend to consider pluralism to be an exclusively political concern.

Pluralism

To be a pluralist means being someone who “prizes cultural diversity along several dimensions and is ready to join others in militant action, when necessary, to support pluralism against counterdrives to Unitarianism.”

- In the modern situation, an individual can choose from multiple sources of knowledge and norms to construct an individuated identity.
- The capacity for reflexive identity construction is premised on certain moral imperatives: individual freedom, human rights, and autonomy.

*Pluralism
Post-9/11*

- By bringing competing ideologies and totalizing worldviews into proximity, pluralism is an accelerator of social change.
- Accommodation in any given society depends on the ability to replace conflict between discrepant ideologies with tolerance or cooperation.
- By allowing change and novelty, pluralism is possibly challenging the assumed permanence and fixity of secularism and modernity.

Muslim Americans find themselves in a difficult social space after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

- Their experience in the United States, particularly after 9/11, shows us a form of pluralism under exceptional circumstances.
 - The exception of the Muslim American experience with pluralism stems from the response of government and the public at large to the problem of terrorism and national security that has made scapegoats of Muslims residing in the United States.
 - Islam represents a universalistic worldview—how can a worldview that is considered to be totalizing and universal accommodate another worldview of a similar conceit?
- Importantly, the political involvement of young Muslim Americans is increasing, demonstrated by the rising number of registered voters, civil servants, and candidates for public office.
- Beginning in the 1990s, Arab community organizations were superseded by new groups established to advocate their interests under the umbrella of a specifically Muslim identity replacing a secular Arab nationalist identity with some form of an Islamic one to foster unity.

*Anti-Terrorism
Act of 1996*

Another event that incited Muslim interest group politics in the United States, and tipped identity-construction toward a religious (as opposed to ethnic-group) orientation, was the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act.

- The law effectively gave congressional approval to the U.S. State Department's definition of who counts as a terrorist.
- This law gave the impression that Islam and Muslims were the new enemy of the United States by selectively constraining Muslim rights.
- Muslim groups have been instrumental in raising public awareness of the situation for Muslims in America post-9/11, drawing media attention to the excesses of hate crimes, workplace discrimination, and school expulsions of young students for wearing Islamic dress.
- The new social and political circumstances that Muslims find themselves in, as a minority population in the West, create an urgent need to reexamine the religious and legal guidelines for living a contemporary "Islamic" lifestyle in a non-Muslim setting.
- For some the solution is adaptation, and for others it lies in the universalization of core ethical teachings.
- Alliances with other faith communities in pursuit of political change is a new and transformative reality that can result in an idiosyncratic expression of American Islam and the fight against secularism.

Conclusion

The new historical reality for Muslims is that they find themselves living as minorities in an established, advanced industrial society that is non-Muslim.

- The relationship between pluralism and Muslim identity in the United States is an idiosyncratic one, moving in contradictory directions with one path following the internal struggle over the meaning of pluralism and the other the relationship between Muslims and the government.
 - The latter path asks if modernity is truly committed to tolerance.

Active versus Passive Pluralism: A Changing Style of Civil Religion?

Richard D. Hecht, University of California, Santa Barbara

- Background* The reform of the United States Immigration Act in 1965 transformed America's unique religious pluralism from passive to active.
- The new immigration patterns have created what the author calls "active pluralism," which lays assertive claim to the meanings of public time and space.
 - In a global context, the immigration transformation of the United States reflects global processes of large-scale movement of peoples and their cultures.
 - While religious traditions change in this environment, it is also the case that these same religious traditions change the environments in which they are reembedded or relocated through the processes of immigration and globalization.
 - The 1970s and 1980s were periods of substantial nationalism. Thus, we might see that civil religion may share much with nationalism, but is not completely coextensive with it in the United States.
 - Civil religion can arise only when there is a social place for it, in between, in the separation between church and state.
- Civil Religion* Herzberg was critical of the "melting pot" conception in which individuals from all nations should melt into a new race or a new racial-cultural blend.
- Herzberg coined the term "transmuting pot" to describe how immigrants move toward the national type that is an Anglo-American cultural ideal and also a Protestant ideal, but they cling to religion, which is the only thing not transmuted in this model.
 - The minority religions, the Catholics and Jews, must adopt a secularized Protestantism that is called "the American Way of Life" (or "our common faith"). Jews and Catholics must shape themselves to the secularized Protestantism that dominates America.
 - Jews and Catholics are passive in this process of acculturation; they turn inward while at the same time adapting to and adopting this secularized Protestantism.
 - Both traditions have systems of religious education, which guarantees the subject matter of public education and the faith matters of their respective religious traditions. Both champion church-state separation.
- Passive Pluralism* Passive pluralism meant the three mainline religions of the United States sought to claim only the acknowledgment of their place in the religious mixture of citizenship and social life.

- They created institutions that would maintain their religious identities, often mirroring the existing socioreligious institutions of the dominant Protestant communities.
 - One could be a good citizen in the public domain, and a good Protestant, Catholic, or Jew at home and in church or synagogue.
- In this world of “passive pluralism,” presence provided the dominant form of participation in the cultural and political worlds of the United States.
- Catholics, Jews, and Protestants sought to avoid conflict with the state in favor of the acknowledged presence of each community, especially at the most important moments of the nation’s collective life—like the inauguration of presidents and the responses to natural disasters.

Active Pluralism A second form of pluralism made its appearance with the extensive immigration of new Americans since 1965; immigrants brought their religious traditions with them.

- Maintaining their religious identities was as important as becoming new citizens. Becoming American led to new hyphenated identities that were not present in earlier periods of our history.
- Active pluralism also meant that it was necessary to make one’s presence a part of the public arena—claims on this arena that were without parallel in earlier periods.

The Eruv Active pluralism seeks to impress religious meanings on public time and space.

- A very good example of this active pluralism in Los Angeles is a recent effort by an Orthodox synagogue to enclose Santa Monica, Venice, and Marina del Rey within an *eruv* or a bounded mixed space.
- These *eruvim* are public spaces for mixed use that allow Jews to treat the space as part of their home so Sabbath laws could still be obeyed and congregants’ movement and activities would be less restricted.
- These *eruvim*, invading public space, have brought challenges from other religious or civil groups and from other, less orthodox Jews.
- Passive pluralism is based on establishment of presence and equality, but without claim to public space or public time as seen in the *eruv*.

Active Pluralism Examples

Neither civil religion nor passive pluralism can account for the religious condition of America in the first years of the new century. Everywhere we see examples of active pluralism.

- Activists can turn a political or legal issue into a moral issue, and that turning of the issue is the result of an active pluralism that impresses religious meaning onto the issues of the day.
- Another example is that in Southern California, over the past five years, it has been quite common for all-news radio stations to broadcast Ramadan messages that remind people when the daily fast ends at sunset.
 - These messages also educate non-Muslims about Islam.
- Finally, the messages are also claims to public time, which, just like the *eruv*, impress particular religious meanings onto public time.

“Today We Act, Tomorrow We Vote”: Latino Religions, Politics, and Activism in Contemporary U.S. Civil Society

Gastón Espinosa, Claremont McKenna College

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Background

In 1851, New Mexico's Bishop Lamy started replacing retiring *Hispano* clergy with Anglo, French, and compliant *Hispano* clergy, a practice that was soon followed by other bishops in Texas, California, and Arizona to reduce the power of Latino activists.

- The above created a Latino leadership vacuum filled in large part by not only Catholic lay activists but also by Latino mutual aid societies.
- Although some of these mutual aid societies were secular, others were church- or faith-based.
- They did not receive the same kind of long-term direct grassroots spiritual formation and infusion of religious values as their African American counterparts, resulting in the birth of a new generation of civil rights organizations that were, largely secular in orientation.
- For this reason, to this day, many Latino civil rights organizations do not have vibrant ties to Latino churches and grassroots faith organizations, although this began to change during the Mexican American civil rights movement from 1965 to 1975.

Cesar Chávez

In 1969 union activist Cesar Chávez required that all of the UFW's civil and union protests be nonviolent—his convictions about nonviolence were immediately put to the test.

- On September 16, farm workers went on strike. This is often cited as the spark that ignited the Mexican American civil rights movement.
- In February 1966, Chávez led hundreds and eventually thousands of migrant farm workers and their supporters on an arduous 250-mile trek from Delano, California, to the state capitol in Sacramento.
- Although the media saw the event as a “protest march,” Chávez said it was a pilgrimage; it was what was needed to give the workers hope.
- After facing stiff opposition on March 16, 1968, Chávez began a twenty-four-day protest fast—the first of four in his life.
- A visit by Robert Kennedy put the struggle into the national limelight and created an enduring link between the Democratic Party and the U.S. Latino community, one that remains strong to this day.

Cardinal Mahoney

Cardinal Mahony and other Anglo and Catholic leaders and laity have used their Justice for Immigrants Campaign as a platform for their proactive opposition to the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Protection Act of 2005. They argue it criminalizes undocumented workers and any churches or faith-based organizations that minister to them.

- Mahony followed up by helping to create the Justice for Immigrants Campaign in January 2006 to educate Catholics about the benefits of immigration and to highlight positive contributions of immigrants.
- By the end of the century, welcoming the stranger in a foreign land was a major theme in immigration reform, a theme that was later picked up by politicians like President Bush in their own speeches.
 - They used the moral authority of Jesus to push for a more humane approach to immigration reform.

NHCLC

Reverend Samuel Rodríguez of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC) joined Mahony in his struggle.

- Both shared a common commitment to comprehensive immigration reform and support for the McCain-Kennedy bill.
- The NHCLC serves “15 million Evangelical Christians and its churches in the U.S. on key issues such as family, immigration, economic mobility, education, political empowerment, and social transformation with a purpose to provide a collective Latino voice.”
- The NHCLC seeks to partner with Latino Catholic leaders and laity.

Immigration Reform Bill

On September 1, 2006, Rodríguez and the NHCLC sent a follow-up letter to President Bush and Congress stating that the lack of passage of a comprehensive immigration reform bill resulted in many Latinos facing increased racial profiling, discrimination, and hostile ethnic polarization.

- They asked Congress for legislation that protects the border, ends undocumented immigration, and creates a guest worker program that facilitates a means by which millions of families already in America can earn legal status in a way that reflects the Judeo Christian value system.

Conclusion

As we reflect on 150 years of faith-based political, civic, and social activism, a number of strategies and insights stand out.

- Latinos have used both nonviolent and violent strategies to fight for greater tolerance and inclusion in American civil society.
- Latino faith-based struggles were revived in the wake of the work of César Chávez and Reies López Tijerina in the 1960s and 1970s.
- Christian clergy and laity have not had the kind of direct, pervasive, influence on Latino civil rights as they did in the black civil rights struggle because of the lack of indigenous clergy and churches.
- Latino Catholic and Protestant leaders and their advocates are gaining unprecedented access to the White House and the Congress.
- Despite numerous strategies, Catholics and Protestants have met with debatable success due to low Latino voter turnout, the lack of strong and well-established leadership and networks, and latent xenophobic fears about undocumented immigrants in American society.

All Need Toleration: Some Observations about Recent Differences in the Experiences of Religious Minorities in the United States and Western Europe

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Background

Differences between Americans and Western Europeans in their public perceptions of largely immigrant religious minorities, particularly Muslims, show Europeans appearing increasingly less comfortable with a growing religious pluralism in their midst.

- Underlying the differences are
 - the continuing high value with which Americans (in sharp contrast to their European counterparts) view religion itself,
 - Americans' historic awareness of religious differences as part of the national landscape, and
 - the willingness of at least some prominent Muslims in the United States to embrace American symbols and attempt to teach others about Islam itself.
- Americans' historic experience of religious diversity has contributed to the public acceptance of broad changes in the religious landscape.
- A key factor in understanding the differences is found in the importance accorded religious faith by Americans.
- This article considers the case of how Muslims in particular are perceived by non-Muslims in the United States and Western Europe.

The Current Era

It would be naïve to describe the current era as one of prevailing public friendliness toward religious immigrants or even unbroken toleration of them.

- Immigrants' problem lies in distinguishing themselves as an essential element of the American religious landscape—not as a separate entity set apart by association with terrorist gangs and violent Iraqi factions.
- To compound the problem, by 2006, some public figures—columnists and politicians—took up the awkward term “Islamofascism.”
- However, despite scattered incidents of harassment, American Muslims have largely been spared the sort of outrages visited upon Mormons and Catholics a century and a half ago.

Europe

Today, some European government authorities emphasize differences between Muslim minorities and the larger societies, in a way that places the responsibility for the differences on the Muslims themselves.

- An example is the view that a well-ordered society is defined at least partly by one's dress causing a cultural gulf.

America

Muslims are taking an active role in working to be recognized as part of the American religious fabric.

- In public conversations with Christians, American Muslims have sought to point out common theological ground.
- Muslims stress that their civic and religious duty is to cooperate with police authorities to protect civilian life.

*Pluralism
Effects*

In recent years, as religious pluralism has increasingly emerged as a public topic, pollsters began to ask questions related to how Americans might live in a society becoming less obviously Christian.

- They picked up some intriguing hints, such as reports in some polls that solid majorities claim to value personal religious tolerance and even to assert that God could be reached by more than one path.
- The United States has come a very long way from the internment of ethnic groups such as the Japanese Americans during WWII.
- Increased attention by media to Muslims since 9/11 has also raised the possibility that other Americans will be able to discern differences in approach to religious and political issues among American Muslims.

*Immigrants in
the United
States*

The value of living in the United States as an immigrant is that one can retain “the flavor of [one’s] ethnicity,” if one also “become[s] an American.”

- “Becoming an American” is an idea that will always set religious immigrants to the United States apart from their European counterparts.
- Polls indicate some crucial differences between American and Western European Muslims that probably work in the former’s favor:
 - less unemployment and
 - better living conditions.

Pluralist Family Values: Domestic Strategies for Living with Religious Difference

Kate McCarthy, Chico State University

Background

One of the dominant themes in the interpretation of American religion over the past quarter century has been the decline in denominational loyalties and general disaffection with religious institutions.

- Americans are increasingly expressing their religiousness in ways not dependent on affiliation with particular churches.
- Forty percent of those respondents who identify with a particular religion report that neither they nor anyone in their household belongs to a religious institution.
- The number of those who do not ascribe to any religious identity more than doubled in the 1990s.

NOTE: Given that religious organizations are among the institutions that have historically fostered the skills of public participation and created some of the strongest social bonds in American culture, such disengagement does not appear to bode well for twenty-first-century civil society. However, this should be tempered by attention to some often overlooked realities of both contemporary and historical family life and a closer look at the religious demographics that show them as not deviant from a previously universal or even normative model.

Interfaith

The most recent national data indicate that 22 percent of Americans marry outside of their own religious traditions, establishing households with those of a different or no religious identity.

- Causes of rise in interfaith marriage includes issues of gender equality, individualism, an increased knowledge and acceptance of religions other than Christianity and Judaism, and the growth of religiously diverse immigrant communities.
- For people who had constructed widely varied religious lives for their families, three consistent strategies emerged: a form of respect for difference called deep tolerance; flexible code-switching; and creative recombination of religious belief, practice, and identity.
- Even in the way they describe their religious identities, interfaith families are exercising a level of creativity that will increasingly stretch the boundaries of survey researchers' categories.
- Children in these marriages may not necessarily believe the full creed of either parent, but this disconnection between religious identity and belief is a common component in interfaith spirituality and raises hard questions about the vitality of the worldviews these families aim to preserve.
 - Grown children of Jewish/Christian marriages noted that they had often experienced a sense of rejection from both communities for being neither fully Jewish nor Christian.
- Unless and until religious institutions find ways to support and integrate interfaith members, interfaith parenting will be a one-generation event, with grandchildren either becoming secularized or returning to single religious identities and affiliations.

Citizenship

The potential of the insights and skills developed in American interfaith families to transfer to the work of citizenship in civil society is limited by a number of factors.

- The populations among whom interfaith arrangements are accommodated are relatively small.
- There is a tendency for interfaith families to be distanced from their religious institutions, while they maintain that religious identity and, in many cases, affiliation.
- Another issue that will significantly affect the impact of interfaith families on the American experience of religious pluralism has to do with the anomalous place of evangelical Christianity in the reconfiguring of family and religious structures.
 - Born-again Christians are the religious group *least* likely to live in a religiously homogeneous household and thus to have become skilled at the “norms of tolerance and civility.”
- Interfaith families demonstrate the potential for managing religious difference with respect, integrity, and creative problem solving.
- Finally, interfaith families may advance the abandonment of the social nature of religion altogether, in which case religion is neither a help nor a hindrance to civil society, but simply irrelevant.
 - In exposing and confronting the gendered and racialized quality of religious difference, these families take interfaith dialogue to a deeper and very important level.
 - At best, they also offer strategies for entering into the otherness of religious difference in ways that cause radical change.

New Opportunities and New Values: The Emergence of the Multicultural Church

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Background

As Christians across denominations face increasing ethnic diversity in their cities and neighborhoods, they are forced to reconsider the purpose of church and what kind of church they wish to join.

- Homogeneous churches are by far the norm, but there is notable interest in ending ethno-racial divisions among Christians.
- Multicultural churches challenge their members to engage with the ethnically “other” and develop skills for living in a diverse world.

NOTE: Discussions of religious pluralism begin with the recognition of increasing numbers of Buddhists, Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, and so forth residing in the United States in the past half century. This newly visible religious diversity requires us to rethink our understanding of religious life in America.

The Religious Others

For many in the white Christian society, encounters with the Christian “other” are as potentially unsettling as encounters with the religiously “other.”

- One might think that as brothers and sisters in Christ, their shared religiosity would be enough to overcome any initial unease, but historically Christians in the United States have developed their churches strictly along racial, ethnic, national, and cultural lines.
- This pattern appears to be changing, or is at least seriously challenged, as the post-1965 influx of new immigrants has prompted new calls for integrating churches.
- There is discontent that Sunday morning continues to be the most segregated hour in America—forcing Christians to reconsider the purpose of church and the kind of church of which they wish to be a part.
- Churches that are integrating can require a complete restructuring of the congregation including hiring new staff, changing the worship style and music, and developing special ministry programs, such as having services and religious education in several languages.

Multicultural Church

Race, ethnicity, and culture are important for understanding the significance of the multicultural church.

- Engagement across ethnic lines is most remarkable when it also crosses racial lines and includes blacks, whites, Asians, and Latinos.
- Culture comes into play because differences in cultural values, family systems, traditions, and so forth are most difficult to resolve.
- For analysis it is valuable to proceed with all three in mind (race, ethnicity, and culture) even if there is no succinct way to capture the multi-racial-ethnic-cultural church phenomenon.

Multilingual Church

The strong tendency toward separatism within the multilingual church undermines its ability to embody a value espoused by all churches: unity. However, some churches serving non-English speakers are willing to spend large sums on simultaneous translation to form a single community for worship.

Assimilated Church

Churches that succeed in forming a single community for both worship and fellowship do so by being English-only.

- The diverse makeup of the church may be the primary draw, but the opportunity to develop social networks with people outside the immigrant community is also appealing for immigrants trying to Americanize their kids.
- Multicultural churches which discourage ethnic ties or “un-American” cultural expressions do so on the grounds that as Christians their identification with Christ trumps all other commitments.
- Assimilated churches do not allow for diverse cultural expressions but expect members to conform to Anglo American cultural norms.
- Writing from an evangelical perspective, the authors of *United by Faith* (DeYoung et al. 2003) contended that the ideal multiracial church is one that reflects aspects of the represented cultures, as well as “a new and unique culture that transcends the worldly cultures.”

Unity versus Diversity

The possibilities for either affirming cultural diversity or transcending it via assimilation, or the creation of a redeemed fused culture, are limited by the social identities of the people in the pews.

- A church serving middle-class Americans of diverse ethnicities will only be able to celebrate diversity to the extent that its members have retained some connection with their cultural heritage.
- As seen in the case of Mosaic church in Los Angeles, the intentionally assimilated monocultural church attracts second- or third-generation Latinos and Asians, as well as whites who enjoy ethnic diversity, but very few African Americans.
- All multicultural churches must grapple with the tension between the real and perceived differences among their members and their goal of creating a community based on shared Christian ideals.

Diversity

There is already some evidence that the positive valuation of diversity is playing the principal role today in the development of multicultural churches.

- By their willingness to be in the minority, boundary crossers enable churches to become arenas for cross-cultural exchange and for the cultivation of skills necessary to make these exchanges positive ones.
- Tolerance and inclusion of difference become more than civic values, they become Christian values.
- Multicultural churches are valuable arenas for cultivating the skills for negotiating cross-cultural exchanges.

Emerging Patterns of Interreligious Conversations: A Christian-Jewish Experiment

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Background

The past few years have seen a renaissance in Christian and Jewish religious life via the formation of new spiritual communities unbound by conventional expectations about the roles and parameters of “church” and “synagogue.”

*Megachurch
and Boomers*

- These new organizations, led mostly by Generation Xers or “cultural creatives” (holistic, urban, artistic) crave spirituality but are not interested in rote rules or in lightweight worship.
- They focus on devotional experiences that move beyond the walls of the institution, build community, and, perhaps most of all, create what they call an *authentic* connection to their traditions and to God.
- The phenomenon has been labeled with various forms of the word “emergence”: the “Emerging Church,” “Jewish Emergent,” or often, simply, “Emergent.”

Preceding the Emergents, urban professionals, baby boomers, created a faith expression that made sense in their world—creating soft-rock praise choruses and down-to-earth preaching.

- In a shock to spiritual elders, boomers removed all traditional practices from their business park/shopping mall-styled churches.
- The “seeker-sensitive” phenomenon appeared slightly later in synagogues (mid-1990s) than in churches (mid-1980s).
- The Emergents celebrated the raw storyteller, they venerated all things urban, they hungered for beauty, and they longed for community.
- There was a growing sense among both Jews and evangelical Christians that generational approaches to religion failed to address current cultural challenges.

Emergents

Christian and Jewish Emergent spiritual communities have a number of traits in common.

- They are based on ritual innovation and a renewed commitment to community-based social justice.
- They suggest that a gospel- or Torah-like response must be made within new global subcultures.
- They often gather for worship, learning, or social justice organizing in their homes, frequently over a meal.
- Jewish Emergents cultivate the opportunity for people to experience Judaism through prayer, education, spirituality, and Jewish activism.
- These communities advocate that what Christians and Jews need to do is create meaningful worship through bringing their own lives to God. They look for everyone to be a producer rather than a consumer.
- They avoid dualisms, like the separating of the sacred and the secular.
- They look to infuse all things with a spirituality and thereby give them meaning and their proper place in relation to God.
- Hospitality is of equal importance to teaching as a core practice of their community, the practice that ties all they do together.

*A New
Dialogue*

The January 2006 gathering of Christian and Jewish Emergents was hosted by Synagogue 3000, a congregational research and leadership organization and Emergent/U.S., the leading network for Christian Emergent leaders.

- The gathering dealt with congregational change in the light of culture.
- The patterns of interreligious conversation that became apparent were substantially different from conventional ones, indeed sufficiently so to justify speculation on whether it marks a new form of dialogue.

- Participants agreed on the value of spiritual community and religious commitment in face of a secularizing world.
- Since the dialogue is based in local congregations rather than in denominational or communal “defense agencies,” conversations have a far more grassroots quality and are rooted in the dynamics of spiritual community, thereby reflecting the move to de facto congregationalism in the 1990s.
- Discussion by Christians and Jews centered on the productive question of how to “repair the world” rather than on the impossible question of whose definition of the “kingdom of God” was preferred.

NOTE: In sum, the prevailing American congregational model largely has been determined by modern culture, with little critique from the respective traditions. Emerging synagogues and churches have deconstructed these forms, creating new spiritual communities formed around a renewed commitment to core principles (principles that share a good deal of common ground).

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