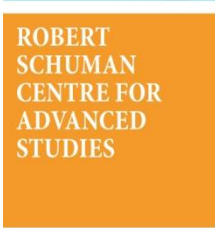




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Multiculturalism and Moderate Secularism

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Abstract

What is sometimes talked about as the ‘post-secular’ or a ‘crisis of secularism’ is, in Western Europe, quite crucially to do with the reality of *multiculturalism*. By which I mean not just the fact of new ethno-religious diversity but the presence of *a multiculturalist approach to this diversity*, namely: the idea that equality must be extended from uniformity of treatment to include respect for difference; recognition of public/private interdependence rather than dichotomized as in classical liberalism; the public recognition and institutional accommodation of minorities; the reversal of marginalisation and a remaking of national citizenship so that all can have a sense of belonging to it. I think that equality requires that this ethno-cultural multiculturalism should be extended to include state-religion connexions in Western Europe, which I characterise as ‘moderate secularism’, based on the idea that political authority should not be subordinated to religious authority yet religion can be a public good which the state should assist in realising or utilising. I discuss here three multiculturalist approaches that contend this multiculturalising of moderate secularism is not the way forward. One excludes religious groups and secularism from the scope of multiculturalism (Kymlicka); another largely limits itself to opposing the ‘othering’ of groups such as Jews and Muslims (Jansen); and the third argues that moderate secularism is the problem not the solution (Bhargava).

Keywords:

Moderate Secularism, Multiculturalism, Muslims in Western Europe

What is Political Secularism?*

Two states that most people will agree are secular states are the USA and the USSR (when it existed).¹ Of course they are very different states; one a Communist Party dictatorship, the other a liberal democratic enablement of capitalism. Moreover they have very different relations with religion. The USSR had a self-declared atheist philosophy and actively suppressed religion, whilst the USA, in a country with vigorous and publicly active Christian churches, has a constitutional ‘wall of separation’ which is actively, if variably enforced by its Supreme Court. What is it that makes these two states exemplars of political secularism? It clearly cannot be the separation of religion and state (the USSR was active in controlling and persecuting churches, mosques etc), and for the same reason it cannot be about freedom of conscience; and nor can it be the idea that religion is a matter of personal, private belief (religion in the USA is a very public matter). I suggest that the core idea of political secularism is the idea of political autonomy, namely that politics or the state has a *raison d’être* of its own and should not be subordinated to religious authority, religious purposes or religious reasons. This is a one-way autonomy (secularism can be supportive of autonomy of organised religion and freedom of religion too, as in the USA, but it does not have to be). Autonomy does not mean strict separation of the US-type; it is consistent with some control of, some interference in, some support for, some cooperation with (selected) religious organisations and religious purposes as is the case in every single Western European state, which after all is the seed-bed for modern, Western political secularisms. Nevertheless, this state control and support must not compromise the autonomy of politics and statecraft: it must be largely justifiable in political terms, not just religious reasons, and it must not restrict (but may support) political authority and state action.

Political secularism is then a value in itself, it is not some kind of ‘neutrality’ nor is its place above the fray of politics; it is something that one can be for or against, or for it under certain conditions or for certain variations. It has no special connexion with democracy, which it predates but in the West has mainly been conjoined with liberal democracy (though as the example of the USSR is meant to illustrate, it is often found without democracy), when, amongst other features, it becomes two-way mutual autonomy: the autonomy of both the state and religion is valued and protected in constitutional arrangements, a mutual autonomy that Stepan calls ‘twin tolerations’ (Stepan 2000). Mutual autonomy – but not strict separation – has historically emerged as the liberal democratic version and the one that is most widespread today. For such secularists, religious freedom is one of the most essential and cherished political values and sometimes this blinds them to the fact that religious freedom is not an unlimited good within all versions of secularism – as the examples of how the French and Turkish state control aspects of Islam vividly reminds us. New thinking about political secularism has suggested that secularism is, in its essentials, really about ‘managing diversity’ (Taylor, 2009; also Taylor, 2014; discussed by Bilgrami, 2014). This has a contemporary pertinence, indeed it emphasises what is central yet under-appreciated today, but it cannot be right as a definition of political secularism. If there was no religious diversity in a country or in the world, if only one religion was present, there would still be a question about the relationship between religion and politics and ‘political autonomy’ would still be a suitable answer.² Moreover, secularism is not an answer to questions about *any* kind of diversity (eg., linguistic diversity). It arises specifically in relation to religion, to the power and authority of religion, and the challenge it may pose to political rule or, say, equality amongst citizens (Bilgrami, 2014). Indeed, one can go further and say that the secular and

* This is a draft of a forthcoming chapter in John Shook and Phillip Zuckerman (eds) Oxford Handbook of Secularism (2016).

¹ For the rather Eurocentric view that the Soviet Union was not a secular but only a quasi-secular state because it did not implement religious freedom, see Berman, Bhargava and LaLiberte, 2013: 8.

² I owe this point to Bhikhu Parekh.

religion are correlative concepts. If there was no religion in the world, not merely that it had passed away, but if it had never existed in the first place, if there was no concept of religion, then secularism would have no reference point; there would be no concept of political secularism. In that sense, secularism is a secondary concept, dependent on the concept of religion. However, once there is a concept of secularism – with advocates, promoters, supportive monarch, armed militants etc – it plays a dialectical relation with religion, not merely being defined by engagement with religion but also intellectually and through political power redefining religion to suit secularist values and purposes (Asad 2003). In this way, in secularist countries what we regard as religion today (‘inner life’, belief, private) is a much more socially restricted set of activities, relationships and forms of authority than was the case before the rise to power of secularism or in non-secularist countries today. Once an outgrowth of religious arrangements (‘secular’ orders of monks being those that were not confined to monasteries), secularism has come to define or redefine religion and its proper place in many countries in the world.

My attention here is confined to Western Europe³. This region is not typical, perhaps even exceptional (Berger 1999; Berger, Davie and Fokkas, 2008). It is the one region in the world in which participation in religious activities (even private prayer) is a minority pursuit as a result not of state ideology or state action but of social change, education, political argument and the working of liberal democracy. Throughout the twentieth century there has been a process of ‘secularization’, including a decline in religious worship and belief and this has accelerated over time and across generations and has spread outwards from urban centres to rural areas, from Protestant countries to Catholic countries, from North Western Europe to Southern Europe. Moreover, the present century has seen no reversal of this trend; indeed, in many places a quickening. Yet, political secularism and its relation to religion has become a ‘hot’ topic, with some scholars and public intellectuals speaking of a ‘crisis of secularism’. What is the character and cause of this agitation and alarm? I contend that it is a product of a concatenation of three independent factors that have contingently come together.

A. Western European Moderate Secularism

For many intellectuals, especially political theorists, secularism or Western secularism is understood in terms of the religious-liberty secularism of the USA and/or the equality of citizenship secularism or *laïcité* of France. An example of this approach is (Bhargava, 2009: 93) where these two secularisms are described as ‘the most dominant and defensible western versions of secularism’ and taken jointly are designated ‘as the mainstream conception of secularism (93).’ As a matter of fact, neither of these models approximates particularly closely to church-state relations amongst West European countries beyond France. In Germany, the Catholic and Protestant Churches are constitutionally recognised corporations, for whom the federal government collects voluntary taxes and grants large amounts of additional public monies so that they between them have a larger public welfare budget than the federal state. In Belgium, a number of religions have constitutional entitlements and a national Council of Religions enjoys the support of the monarch. Norway, Denmark and England each have an ‘established’ Church, Sweden had one till 2000 and Finland has two (Stepan, 2011; cf. Koenig, 2009).⁴ Yet, it would be difficult to dispute that these states are not amongst the leading secular states in the world – more precisely, one could only dispute that if one had some narrow, abstract model of secularism that one insisted on applying to the varieties of empirical cases. So, the question is how are we to characterise the secularisms of Western Europe? I have argued that despite their distinctive histories and institutional diversity that I have referred to, these states can be understood as having

³ That is to say, Europe, west of what used to be called the Iron Curtain.

⁴ The UK too has two state recognised national churches, the Church of England and the Church of Scotland but the latter is independent of the UK state, including of the Scottish state in which it plays no formal role.

evolved what I have called ‘moderate secularism’ (Modood, 2007 and PQ 2010). I sketch this out in terms of five features:

1. Mutual autonomy, not mutual exclusion or one-sided control

This is not distinctive to ‘moderate secularism’ as it is central to US liberal secularism too and to some extent France too, though it leans more towards one-sided control.

2. Religion is a public not just a private good

It is understood that organised religion can play a significant role or in relation to ethical voice⁵, social well-being, cultural heritage, national ceremonies and national identity. This can take the form of an input into a legislative forum, such as the House of Lords, on moral and welfare issues; but also to being social partners to the state in the delivery of education, health and care services; or more intangibly, in building social capital and the production of attitudes that create, for example, family stability or economic hope. Of course the public good that religion can be contributory too is contextual; religion can in other contexts be socially divisive and can lead to civil and international wars. Hence religion can also be a public bad. The point is that the good or bad that religion is productive of is not confined to private lives but is socially and politically significant in many different ways.

3. The national Church or churches (ie. the organiser of this public good) belongs to the people/country, not just to its members and clergy

Non-members of the national church or churches who feel this ‘ownership’ or association feel that as in the case of the Lutheran Church of Denmark or the Church of England, the national church has to, for example, meet certain national standards not expected of religious organisations in general. Hence, for example, when the Church of England’s ruling body, the Synod, failed in 2012 to achieve the two-thirds majority necessary to allow the creation of female Bishops many secular commentators felt that it had let the country down, while the absence of female clergy in the Catholic Church or female imams is not part of a national conversation. This loud criticism by those who are not active Anglicans played a part in the Church reversing its decision in 2014. The Lutheran Church in Denmark is almost universally thought by Danes to be a central element of Danish national identity even though a minority say they believe in its doctrines and even fewer attend worship in Church. In these and other ‘moderate secular’ countries such individuals, even if they be atheists, feel they have a right to use the national Church for weddings and funerals.

4. It is legitimate for the state to be involved in bringing out the public good element of organised religion (and not just protecting the public good from the dangers that organised religion can pose)

If these are recognised as being public goods, then, depending on the circumstances, it might be decided that they are best achieved through some state-religion connexions rather than strict separation. This is a contingent matter but clearly the experience of Western Europe is that some connexions are better than none. Of course, as has been said, religion can also be a ‘public bad’ – it can for example in some circumstances be a basis for prejudice, discrimination, intolerance, sectarianism, social conflict and violence and so on – and so the state has a responsibility to check the bad as well as enhance the good (Modood, 2010). As with public goods, so with public bads, the

⁵ Habermas suggests that this is imperative in the twenty-first century (Habermas 2006). He is however mistaken in suggesting that the perception that this is desirable is new to European publics. It may, however, be a relatively new idea for some secularist intellectuals.

interest of the state will not be primarily theological or a mere preference for or against one religion regardless of the consequence but will be motivated by fostering and maintaining tangible and intangible public – or, what we might call, ‘secular’ – goods. The key consideration for the state will not be secular ‘purity’ but that the means and ends are consistent with secular rationales and are effective, without being constrained by a fetish for ‘separation’. In recent years concern with Islamist terrorism and ‘radicalisation’ have led states to extol and condemn certain kinds of Islam, to co-opt certain Muslim groups into governance, to engage in matters of Iman training and the schooling of Muslim children.⁶ Moreover, if religious organisations are supported with public funds or tasked by the state to carry out some educational or welfare duties then the state will want to ensure that they do not compromise key policy goals, so today, for example, they are increasingly subject to certain requirements such as equal access or non-discrimination (in some European states, such as Britain, more than others such as Germany: Lewicki, 2014).

5. Moderate secularism can take different forms in different times and places and not all forms of establishment should be ruled out without attending to specific cases.

These state-religion connexions take different forms in different West European countries depending on their histories, state traditions, political culture, religious composition, may change over time and so on.⁷ One of the forms it may take is ‘establishment’. Formal establishment is only found in a minority of countries, my point is simply that that it is one of the forms that moderate secularism takes.⁸ Even when it does so, I call this complex of norms and practices ‘moderate secularism’ rather than ‘moderate establishment’ (as Dworkin 2006 calls Britain; cf., ‘modest establishment’ (Laborde, 2013)) because the idea is that secularism is and should be in charge: the place for religion and establishment is dependent on secularist institutions and decision-makers referring to secularist values and principles. Moreover, I think that this is what happens in practice, and not just as an ideal; it is clear both in relation to the church-state relations narrowly conceived or in terms of an expansive sociological analysis, that power lies with secularist institutions, networks and individuals employing secular identities, interests and goals. I hope it is clear that ‘moderate secularism’ is not something to contrast with religion; religion is already a part of it. Moderate secularism is a particular way of relating religion and state/politics.

B. New Ethno-Religious Diversity; Muslims

I refer here to the new post-second world war settled groups in Western Europe. The point is not just demography but claims in relation to shared public space, bearing in mind that initial claims were within newly instituted discourses and policy frameworks of race (Britain) and ethnicity (Netherlands) and guestworkers (Germany). The majority of this post-immigration ethno-religious population is Muslim but the shift towards Muslimness was partly facilitated by an evolving and expansive set of identity politics and equality discourses in general and Multiculturalism in particular (see next section) and the growth in the numbers of Muslims and their becoming more settled in their countries of migration (and birth, for the second generation). It could be said to be part of a more or less global rise

⁶ For a study of various aspects of this in England, see O,Toole et al, 2012.

⁷ Despite this statement I have been criticised by Bader and others for lumping together different models of religious governance into one conception of moderate secularism; he, however, is close to my approach when he says ‘the most important dividing line may be between religious institutional pluralism recognising some forms of selective cooperation between state and organized religions... and strict separationism’ (Bader, pp. 10-11, this Handbook). See also, Ferrari’s (1995) argument that despite some formal-legal differences there is a ‘common pattern of church-state relations in Western Europe’ (421).

⁸ The Western European countries that I say can be characterised in terms of ‘moderate secularism’ are in constitutional-political terms characterised as ‘selective co-operation’ by Ferrari (REF) but are separated by Stepan into the ‘Established Religion’ and ‘Positive Accommodation’ models(2011; 2014).

in Muslim consciousness, both in relation to religiosity, including public religiosity, and the rise of Muslim identity or Islamist politics. In Western Europe the months that form the cusp of 1988-1989 were a particularly pivotal point (Modood, 2012).

C. Multiculturalism

In a number of countries since about the 1960s a new way of thinking and organising minority-majority relations has emerged. Initially associated with the new social movements and identity politics of with gender, race and sexuality, in Western Europe it is identified with the institutional accommodation of post-immigration ethnoreligious minorities, which I shall call multiculturalism (Modood, 2007). It marks a new conception of equality, that is to say, not just anti-discrimination and sameness of treatment and toleration of 'difference' but respect for difference; not equal rights despite differences but equality as accommodation of difference in the public space, which therefore comes to be shared with rather than be dominated by the majority. Instead of creating a sharp distinction between the public sphere of rights and civic relations and a private sphere (of male-female relations, or sexual orientation or religious beliefs), we acknowledge that the public sphere reflects various norms and interests of, for example, masculinity, heterosexuality, Anglophones, Christians) and so equality requires dropping the pretence of 'difference-blindness' and allowing others, the marginalised minorities, to also be visible and explicitly accommodated in the public sphere. Whilst this will sometimes require enforcing uniformity of treatment and eliminating discrimination on grounds such as religious affiliation, it will in addition sometimes require recognising distinctive disadvantages (such as measures to increase the number of women in the legislature) or special needs (eg., the provision of halal meat in state schools). Finally, multiculturalism as a mode of post-immigration integration involves not just the reversal of marginalisation but also a remaking of national citizenship so that all can have a sense of belonging to it, for example, creating a sense of being French that Jews and Muslims, as well as Catholics and secularists, can see themselves in (Modood, 2007).

This is inevitably a too-short an account of a complex set of conceptions and moreover all will be aware that across the world but especially in Western Europe, multiculturalism, especially since the emergence of international Islamist networks of terrorism and attacks in the West, has become an unpopular concept with politicians and publics. Nevertheless, there is good evidence that multiculturalist policies and accommodations are not being reversed (Kymlicka, 2012) and also I believe that there could be said to be a 'multiculturalist sensibility' (Kivisto, 2012): a multiculturalist approach which has been extended from what we might call ethno-racial diversity to ethno-religious pluralism. The important point is that despite the unpopularity of the term 'multiculturalism', doubts about certain policies and anxieties about certain minorities, there is present today within mainstream public discourses a particular way, alongside others, of conceiving of this diversity, namely not in terms of toleration, ie., putting up with something negative, but rather of feeling that minorities need to be included without having to assimilate, without having to conform to the norms and attitudes of the majority. This multiculturalist sensibility did not arise in the context of religious difference, where various regimes of governance, including moderate secularism have accommodated religious pluralism in limited ways and with limited reference to a concept of equality. Yet this multiculturalist sensibility, the idea that 'difference' is not an unfortunate fact to be put up with but worthy of equality and respect, has travelled in different directions from its origins and is now apparent in how some, especially Muslim minorities, see the field of religious diversity.

My argument, then, in relation to the three contingencies I have listed is that current debates about the accommodation of Muslims and Islam in Western Europe must be seen in terms of two conceptual-political complexes that I have mentioned, moderate secularism and multiculturalism. Of course my argument is not that this is the only relevant way in which Muslims claims upon the public sphere are being responded to (Modood, 2012). One way forward, particularly favoured by liberal political theorists and commentators, would be to move towards 'separation' of religion and the state on the grounds that the state should be neutral in relation to 'conceptions of the good' (Rawls 1971

and 1993). This would be a break rather than run with the grain of European moderate secularism but it can be seen to be an extension of some of the trends within European states in the twentieth century. Another way would be to reassert that Europe is a Christian continent as Pope Benedict did or that specific countries such as Germany or Britain are a ‘Christian country’. Interestingly, some religious minorities prefer that to what has come to be called ‘aggressive secularism’⁹ but it is not necessarily a first choice option for the groups agitating for accommodation. My interest is in the third option, that is to say one based on the multiculturalist sensibility of taking difference seriously. This, however, is a sensibility that is open to a number of interpretations. In the rest of this paper, I would like to consider three possible positions and point to some shortcomings. The common theme will be that they have an unsatisfactory conception of multiculturalism and/or moderate secularism.

1. Religion is not Part of Multiculturalism

Will Kymlicka rightly argues that the ‘state unavoidably promotes certain cultural identities, and thereby disadvantages others’ (Kymlicka 1995: 108) but he excludes religion and ethnoreligious groups from ‘cultural identities’ (see also, Werbner, 2012 and Wieviorka, 2012). While his theory of multicultural citizenship is primarily directed toward justifying special support or differential rights in relation to language and indigenous people, most matters to do with the needs of religious minorities seem to fall within the ambit of the traditional freedoms of worship, association and conscience. The only additional questions that his political multiculturalism considers in relation to religious minorities are exemptions (such as allowing Sikh men to wear turbans when others have to wear motorcycle helmets), rather than, as in the case of other cultural groups, demands for democratic participation, for public resources or institutional presence. He thinks that the integration of religious migrants such as Muslims has been best achieved in the US, where no religion enjoys state support but is allowed to flourish as a denomination equal to others (Kymlicka 2009: 548). This last point has also been said by some sociologists to be generally historically true: ‘[w]ithout the separation of church and state, we believe, the religions imported by past immigration streams could not have achieved parity with Protestant versions of Christianity’ (Foner and Alba, 2008: 379). Whether this is true in relation to Muslims in the US and Western Europe today is not obvious; on the one hand, anti-Muslim hostility is comparable in both territories (eg., Pew, 2011 found that only 57% of Americans have a favourable view of Muslims compared to 64% of Britons and French; cf. Putnam and Campbell, 2010 and Pew, 2011) and on the other hand levels of national identification and patriotism amongst immigrants and the second generation is much higher than is often assumed (Reeskens and Wright, 2014) and specifically amongst Muslims in Britain are higher than amongst the population as a whole, despite that country having a state Church (Wind-Cowie and Gregory, 2011).

Whether US denominationalism or European moderate secularism is better at integrating religious groups, the more fundamental question remains: why should language be appropriate for multiculturalism and religion not? A possible argument here is that there is a categorical difference between religion and language. A state must use a language and so a choice must be made, which language? How many languages? Hence state neutrality about language is impossible. Fairness therefore dictates that the state does not pretend to be neutral but pursue an alternative strategy. Religion, on the other hand, is optional. It is not necessary to the functioning of the state and the critique of neutrality does not extend to it. Moreover, citizens can learn several languages but one cannot be a member of several religions at the same time, so while a multi-lingual state is an option, a multi-religious state is not, and so that is a further reason why state neutrality in relation to language means addition but in relation to religion it means disestablishment (Baubock 2003: 43-44). These arguments fail to save Kymlicka’s theory from the charge of an anti-religion bias and nor do they make practical sense. Firstly, while Kymlicka’s theory does centre on language, it extends well

⁹ Baroness Warsi’s speech at The Vatican: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/9083045/Baroness-Warsi-decries-Europes-aggressive-secularism.html>; cf Modood, 1997).

beyond language to cover ‘cultural identities’. The theory is meant to protect and empower ethnocultural groups not merely languages; and all cultures contain elements that are no more necessary than religion, and some cultures are centred around religion. Moreover, the idea that a multi-religious state is impossible is a misunderstanding. Countries as diverse as Germany and India could be described as being quasi-multi-establishment states. The German state has various institutional and fiscal ways of supporting and working corporately with the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Churches. The Indian state regulates and incorporates several organised religions and their legal principles. Such recognition of faith communities is a granting of political or legal status and does not mean that state officials or citizens have to believe in any or all the relevant faiths. Indeed, let us take an even more fundamental case of an either-or exclusivity than the case of religion as presented by Baubock above. One cannot be of more than one sex (with extreme exceptions very much proving the point) but it does not follow from that a state in all its laws and policies must be gender-blind. Rather, it works to promote the interests of both sexes and needs to ensure that differential treatment, where appropriate, can be justified by reference to differential needs and is consistent with a suitably differentiated concept of equality. States support much that is not essential to there being a state and a multiculturalist state surely is no exception.

2. Multiculturalism is about anti-‘secularisation’ than accommodating within moderate secularism

In contrast to Kymlicka who is satisfied with a pre-multiculturalist position on religious diversity, Yolande Jansen explicitly sets out to multiculturalise secularism (Jansen, 2014). With a focus on French laïcité she shows how even in a context of republican universalism, the process of incorporating Jews led French society and state to demand that the Jews give up their communal lives, a pressure not experienced by most other French people in the nineteenth or early twentieth century but strongly faced by Muslims today. Jansen’s solution is a multiculturalism consisting of opposing the ascriptive and stereotypical notions French society creates of groups such as Jews and Muslims, while demanding of individual Jews and Muslims that they publicly distance themselves from these imagined undesirable groups by distancing themselves from their communities.¹⁰ Opposition to this dictation to minorities about how they should live means multiculturalist opposition to what Jansen calls ‘secularisation’. I endorse Jansen’s conclusion that such ‘secularisation’ is a form of coercive assimilation incompatible with multiculturalism. This pressure to secularise ethnoreligious identities, however, takes an extreme form in republican secularism; and moreover there may be no remedies to it within that form of secularism. Yet, moderate secularism, even where it may be susceptible to similar stereotyping of Jews and Muslims, is not intrinsically fearful of religious communities and religion in public life, and can consist of state support for religious plurality, and so is not resourceless in resisting assimilation and accommodating minorities. Moreover, a multiculturalism consisting of anti-ascriptive and anti-assimilation is too modest; a positive, institutional accommodation is critical to multiculturalism – in just the same way that accommodation is a defining feature of moderate secularism. So, a project of multiculturalising secularism cannot take its lead from what is possible within republican secularism and certainly cannot confine the scope and ambitions of multiculturalism within even a reformed version of this unaccommodating secularism (Modood, 2015).

While others see Europe’s inadequacy in not matching up to the US and/or France, Bhargava believes its because Europe is not sufficiently like India. He argues that religious diversity has been central to Indian secularism, unlike in Europe, and that now that Europe is having to adjust to religious diversity, it can usefully learn from India. Whilst this is a useful recommendation, he applies it using a problematic analysis of European secularism. One of his long standing arguments has been that the

¹⁰ Even more radically, cf. Laborde, 2008: ‘What defines a minority is precisely its vulnerability to ‘identity assignation’ by the majority’ (p. 10; see also p.24). Like Jansen, Laborde too thinks that undoing this domination does not require a programme of accommodation but unlike Jansen she thinks what is involved is not a critical multiculturalism but a ‘critical republicanism’.

mainstream conception of political secularism in the West consists of two and only two opposing models, namely the US model and the French model (Bhargava, 2009). I have argued that this is quite inaccurate as most of Western Europe consists of secular states that do not approximate to either of those models but is a distinct model in its own right. Bhargava now accepts this view (Bhargava, 2013:77; Bhargava, 2014b; Bhargava, forthcoming 2015, mss. P.7) but continues to hold the view that European secularism is not sufficiently secular (Bhargava, 2014b; also in 2014a: 44.)

3. Moderate Secularism is part of the problem not part of the solution (and Muslims are much better off in India)

- Moderate Secularism is alienating Muslims

Bhargava has argued that what I call moderate secularism, is ‘irretrievably flawed’ and while it has accommodated Christians it will not be able to accommodate Muslims.¹¹ Indeed, Moderate Secularism is part of the problem, not the solution, ie., it cannot be reformed; specifically it cannot be multiculturalised (Bhargava, 2013: 78; he says that this marks a profound disagreement between us, Bhargava 2014a:45). He has a number of arguments but I shall here only discuss one, namely that the Christian bias inherent in something like the Anglican establishment means that even a reformed version of it will alienate British Muslims. Cecile Laborde also makes a similar argument. She recognises that the Anglican establishment has relatively little power and is largely symbolic but holds that even when ‘establishment is mostly symbolic and cannot be said to put anyone at a serious disadvantage, symbols do matter when the basic identification of citizens with their institutions is concerned’. An example she give assumes that ‘Muslims are likely to be alienated by the distinctively Christian religiosity permeating public institutions...’ (Laborde 2008: 91). She evokes a conception of citizenship which I share, namely that ‘all citizens should be able to not to feel alienated by their political institutions in light of their deepest beliefs, and that institutions should consequently be framed with that aim in mind’ (Laborde, 2013: 84). I actually hold a stronger version of this duty of symbolic recognition: not only must the state not alienate it must positively work to include so that all citizens are able to have a sense of belonging. Leaving that aside, and acknowledging that Laborde may be making a normative point only, I want to stress that Bhargava at least (and perhaps Laborde) is not simply making a conceptual point about civic status but about how citizens feel, specifically how British Muslim citizens feel alienated by the Anglican establishment and yet no evidence is offered. Indeed they ignore the evidence about the strong sense of British identification and national pride amongst Muslims in Britain. For example, an analysis of two Citizenship Surveys concluded: ‘We find no evidence that Muslims or people of Pakistani heritage were in general less attached to Britain than were other religions or ethnic groups (Heath and Roberts, 2008).’ This has in fact been the finding of many surveys, including the most recent, which concluded that overall British Muslims are more likely to be both patriotic and optimistic about Britain than are the white British community’ (Wind-Cowie and Gregory, 2011). In late February, 2015 95% of Muslims in a BBC survey said they felt loyal to Britain (BBC, 2015).

Equally, we know that British Muslims include many vociferous political groups and between them they have mounted many arguments, not to mention campaigns, in relation to socio-economic deprivation, religious discrimination, incitement to religious hatred, various foreign policies, anti-terrorist policies and so on (Modood, 2010). So, Muslims in Britain do seem to feel excluded and

¹¹ Bhargava, *Crisis of Secularism; Rehabilitating Secularism*; forthcoming, 2015. For a fuller discussion of why I think Bhargava misunderstands Western European secularisms, see Modood *Moderate Secularism*; and ‘Moderate Secularism: a European Conception’, *OpenDemocracy*, 8 April, 2011, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/tariq-modood/moderate-secularism-european-conception>; though I note that in *Secularism Rehabilitated* and in this volume he now accepts that Western European moderate secularisms are distinct from and additional to his contention that the American and the French models are the mainstream Western models. See also endnote 11.

alienated by some aspects of British and indeed European society – and this is a critically important datum for multiculturalism to engage with. Yet there is no record of any criticism by a Muslim group in relation to Establishment. On the other hand, many Muslims complain that Britain is too unreligious and anti-religious, too hedonistic, consumerist, materialist and so on. Muslims protest much more about secularist bans on modest female dress, such as the headscarf (banned in French state schools since 2004) and the face veil (banned in public places in France and in the process of being banned in other European countries) than they do about ‘establishment’ or Christian privileges. Muslims and other religious minorities appreciate that establishment is a recognition by the state of the public and national significance of religion, and so holds out the prospect of extending state-religion connexions, which disestablishment would foreclose without conferring any advantage to the religious minorities. This appreciation is partly the result of the fact that the Church of England takes its mission to serve the country seriously, including wanting to incorporate new minority faith communities in its vision of the country and its sense of responsibilities (Modood, 1997). When at Christmas 2011, David Cameron said we should assert that Britain is ‘a Christian country’¹² – the first time a British Prime Minister had spoken like that for a long time – it was welcomed by Ibrahim Mogra, the then Chairman of the Mosque Committee of the MCB, and now the Assistant Secretary General.¹³ Which is of course not to say that Islamophobia is not an issue in Britain and Muslims do not feel alienated in Britain simply that it has very little reference to Christianity, let alone the Anglican establishment. I suspect that they are more likely to be alienated by the kind of secular state that Laborde argues for, namely one which she thinks unavoidably is more suited to non-religious than religious people (Laborde 2008: 88) or to the kind of state that actively seeks to reform aspects of Islam as Bhargava advocates (Bhargava, 2014a). He thinks moderate secularism, which is unreformable, should be replaced by the diversity-friendly secularism developed in India. Given that he does not however discuss how the Indian state has failed to eradicate the very high levels of religious violence in India and is unable to protect Muslims from massacres and systematic discrimination, this recommendation must be treated with caution (Sutton, 2014; Black et al, 2014:2).

An alternative understanding of alienation to the one I have been discussing might not be simply about experience but might be understood as ‘objective alienation’.¹⁴ This is something that might be said to exist even if the sufferers were not aware of it. I suppose the idea would parallel something like what Marx says about alienation, namely that it is not simply an experience but a degraded condition of humanity where labour has no possibility of creativity or self-expression (Marx, 1988). The danger – not at all hypothetical – with a concept of objective alienation is that it will be used to deny the need for evidence in the way that, say, French republicans and others regard girls and women wearing the headscarf as oppressed and dominated even when the females themselves insist they are not, and no evidence can be found to suggest that coercion or intimidation is taking place. In practice it is views such as these that are the basis for some of the domination of Muslims through ‘state paternalism’ or at least ‘educational paternalism’ (de Latour, 2013). A satisfactory account of objective alienation would need to relate how it handles evidence and in particular counter-evidence and this is not present in the accounts I have been examining.

The disestablishmentarian’s argument, then, that contemporary Christian SRCs alienate groups such as Muslims is based on certain secularist assumptions, not evidence. Secularists concerned with minimising the alienation would do well to first focus on how their secularism alienates. Moreover, if I am right in suggesting that Muslims and other religious minorities are seeking equality through accommodation within something resembling a multiculturalised version of the status quo in Europe,

¹² <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/king-james-bible>

¹³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-16231223>

¹⁴ Sune Laegaard, ‘What’s (un)problematic about religious establishment? The alienation and symbolic equality accounts’, Paper presented at the Centre for the Study of Equality and Multiculturalism, University of Copenhagen, 21 September 2012, at: http://cesem.ku.dk/papers/What_s_un_problematic_about_religious_establishment.pdf/ has usefully made a distinction between alienation and symbolic inequality and argued that it is the latter that is at stake.

rather than a dispossession of Christians churches, then what we have is an additive not a subtractive view of inclusivity. Typically, recognition or accommodation implies making a particular social dimension *more* (not less) politically significant. Equality movements do not usually seek less political importance for their organising social category. This is the case with race, gender, minority nationalities, sexual orientation, class and so. It is difficult to see why religion is to be treated differently. Hence the challenge is not how to de-Christianise western states but how to appropriately add the new faiths alongside the older ones.

I believe that multicultural equality requires some kind of public multi-faithism in an SRC way. In relation to Britain, for example, it does not have to be within an Anglican establishment, nor its equivalent in other countries; but that it, pluralised in some way, does offer one way forward and we should consider it as a practical proposition, especially if it is the least disruptive and if it allows those for whom establishment is important, or who are uncomfortable with multiculturalism, a relatively unthreatening way forward. At least I hope I have raised the challenge of how we are to give appropriate recognition to ethno-religious groups if it is not in part by pluralising existing state-religion connexions? By ‘existing state-religion connexions’ I mean the context of moderate secularism within liberal democratic constitutionalism¹⁵, where religious authority does not dominate political authority, where when religious organisations are publicly funded to deliver social services, citizens have options to receive the same services by non-religious organisations, and where religion is not privileged in a unique and special way and a large range of non-religious activities such as sport, opera and banking are also privileged, albeit each in a different way (Modood, forthcoming 2015). A multiculturalism in which religion is just one of a number of valued identities and forms of social organisation, and recognised as such in a public and political way.

¹⁵ In relation to the latter, see Bader 2007.

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