

The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe: Racism, Identity & Community
Ed. Tariq Modood & Pnina Werbner. Zed Books. 1997

Ch 1. Introduction by Tariq Modood

Inclusion and Exclusion

Late 1940s to 70s drawing into Europe of ethnic diversity for economic productivity. This new multiculturalism is different from that which is engendered by natural birth place.

Add to this the formation of EU which may transform nation states.

Add to this the end of cold war.

There remains the negative image of the Other across Europe particularly those in the east. Centuries of warfare between Christians and Muslims, esp understanding Serbs as bulwark against Muslim Turks. Bosnians are same ethnicity but Muslim but have increasingly been seen and see themselves as ethnically different.

Islam hatred can be racist and alternatively simply fear of anti-western threat from east. An anti-Muslim bias can be found even in progressive writing, especially in branding as 'fundamentalism'. But Islamophobia is more a form of racial prejudice than religious intolerance.

The differing histories make racism different across Europe. France assimilates European and Latin immigrants but not Asian. GB is content with multiculturalism but denies equality of membership of national community. In Germany it depends upon ethnicity not place of birth, and Gastarbeiter find it hard to gain citizenship.

From Immigrants to Citizens

Some Muslims argue only for mutual respect rather than rights. Not challenging national identity of hosts but prising it open for insertions and new syntheses.

In Bradford things are so politicised, especially after Rushdie and Gulf War angers. CofE especially helpful in giving institutions and voice to minority there.

In GB immigrant groups are defined on ethnic not religious base and Muslims are angered by this, esp when they are unable to found Muslim Schools in same way as Xn and Jewish communities.

GB Churches have not fought one another but worked well together - and given lead in inter-faith work. Prince Charles asks to be Def. of Faiths.

In Germany multi-culturalism is organised by Germans in Amts. In GB it is devolved down to the local populace - e.g. syllabus design.

The Politics of Plural Identities

We assume incorrectly that each culture has a fixed essence, and use terms such as 'multi-culture' from this slanted perspective. Many now happy with fluid hybrid status for themselves. But even this presupposes that prior to the mixing, there were two separate cultures to mix! The key however is 'domination' in cultures not their fixity.

Cultures change, although to say so assumes an essence to change rather than to assume there is no substance to the continuity. What is the essential "I" of one's life?? A person and a culture are both made *through* change, it is not defined by an essence. We can trace historical *connection* but not necessarily *essence*. (Caglar) Black-British or Turkish-German requires frozen collective identities or else such groups can not be institutionalised.

How people classify themselves is fundamental to defining ethnicity. So 'ethnicity' really stands for a group that is excluded from the dominant cultural hegemony. Politicians often

shape cultures by throwing weight behind one style or group, usually influenced by desire to avoid conflict.. In GB citizenship of a kind is offered but without naturalisation.

Is positive discrimination integral to racial equality? Better to target need than groups?
Is social justice any longer possible in only one country? Nationality and territory would be lessened if voting rights were not tied to citizenship but to residence.

Different kinds of multiculturalism are evident in different cities of UK and different countries. Youth music cultures are a case in point, but can transatlantic youth culture combine with radical Islamic student culture?

Folk cultures (domestic) have been subsumed to civic culture in many instances with regard to law and public domain economics. This is the distinction between public and private culture. The multicultural state limits the folk cultures within it. And yet can a state stand outside culture in this way? Surely the changes in the folk culture will always effect the state or it will burst. Political culture cannot be separated from wider national culture.

In GB the identity of Englishness is expressed in public ways as redefinition takes place On the other hand there is a residual historical framework in which this operates. The whole question of English identity cannot therefore be hung upon a few quaint customs - (private) but nor can it be reduced to a political system (public)

All this means that cultural identity is complex and a society is both the public political structural institutions of a community plus the 'private' folk culture of domestic habit and language preferences. Public and private, national and ethnic, are then not strict divisions. So the public sphere, often grown up out of interrelationship with the private cannot be morally neutral in regard to its preferred values etc. It can never be 'colour-blind' or gender-neutral.

From this base of private/public differentiation come two approaches to society:

1. Assimilation preferred.
 2. Separate cultures affirmed.
- Multiculturalism affirms both approaches.

The Multicultural State

So this argument about public and private is crucial in political project.

1. The decentred self

Post-modern person no longer centres anywhere. We therefore construct a narrative of self about ourselves.

Self is not connected to one location or society at all. Post-modern thoughts about multiculturalism centre therefore upon life-style description.

2. The liberal state

Individuals will become disorientated by change but will find equilibrium again. Lifestyles in the east change but all OK in time. Legal entitlements are the only state interference with these phenomena to be considered acceptable.

3. The Republic

Relates to each citizen as an individual, not recognising groups. But it does recognise the civic community (itself) as the goal of community -liberty equality fraternity or some other value base. The individual is asked to assimilate.

4. The Federation of Communities

Communities not individuals are prime building blocks. State exists to protect rights of these communities. (The Millet Ottoman system allowed Jewish or Christian groups to administer selves within state. But does not offer equality!

5. The Plural State

Individuals and groups recognised. Mediating groups and unions fostered to represent both. Families and groups foster citizenship. Psychologically nationhood reinforces this togetherness if it is not too heavy. The presence of difference guards against monocultural statism.. The challenge is integrating difference.