Multiculturalism and Propaganda

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Paul Cliteur
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First theme: Multiculturalism, diversity, pluralism
Multiculturalism: protean concept

1. multiculturalism as an empirical condition of a society;
2. multiculturalism as a policy of the state; and
3. multiculturalism as a norm or ethical position that is in contemporary discussion closely tied to cosmopolitanism.

Zvetan Todorov (1939-2017)
Multiculturalism, according to Todorov

“la coexistence de plusieurs cultures au sein d’une même société”.
Shorthand labels

1. empirical multiculturalism,
2. ideological multiculturalism, and
3. cosmopolitan multiculturalism.
“Europe will be diverse, or war!”
An example of multiculturalist propaganda
Cultural diversity is not always morally acceptable.

There are many morally obnoxious practices.

Human rights, European rights are invented to *reduce* this obnoxious cultural diversity.
FGM Unicef 2016 (prevalence)
Polygamy Worldwide Map
Child Marriage for girls

Laws Concerning Child Marriage for Girls
Sealed 2015

- Underage (16 or younger) marriage is illegal and/or only granted with judicial approval
- Underage (16 or younger) marriage is not legal, but there is no government enforcement of marriage law and/or there are many exceptions to the law such as underage marriage only requires parental, not judicial, consent
- Underage (16 or younger) marriage is legal
- No Data

Map by Think Spatial
Capital punishment around the world
Stoning
Political diversity in the world
Democracies worldwide

Democracy has grown across the world over the past four decades

Source: Center for Systemic Peace’s Polity IV Project.
Second Theme: The Secular State as righteous model

How to accommodate religions in a diverse word?

The European model of accommodating state and religion.

Do we need one model or is diversity possible?
Romania Religious Affiliation
Czech Republic: religious affiliation

Religious affiliation (2011)

- Roman Catholic: 10.3%
- Evangelic Church of Czech Brethren: 0.5%
- Nonreligious/Other: 89.2%

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Hungary: Religious Affiliation

Religious affiliation (2011)

- Roman Catholic: 37.1%
- Reformed: 11.6%
- Lutheran: 2.2%
- Greek Catholic: 1.8%
- Orthodox Christian: 1.4%
- Other: 45.9%

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Netherlands: religious affiliation

Religious affiliation (2009)

- c. 28.0% nonreligious/atheist
- c. 19.0% Roman Catholic
- c. 11.0% Protestant
- other†

*Significantly the Reformed/Lutheran tradition.
†Includes a significant Muslim population.

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The Five models of accommodating religion

1. Political atheism. The Stalinist option.
2. Theocracy. The Khomeinist option.
3. State religion (theocracy light, very light)
4. Ideological multiculturalism
5. Secular state (*laïcité*).
Third theme: Saving religious criticism and free speech

The case of E.S. v. Austria (2018)

Elisabeth-Sabaditsch-Wolff
Conclusions

1. An important challenge for Western European countries at this moment in time is Islamist terrorism (9/11, London, Paris, etc.).

2. Islamist terrorism is based on a worldview that needs to be analyzed, scrutinized, and criticized. Analyzing the worldview behind this terrorism teaches us that it is theoterrorism.
Conclusions continued

3. To make this analysis and that criticism possible, Europe has to safeguard free speech and free inquiry and preferably also a religiously neutral state (or secular state, the fifth of the five models).

4. The problem is that free inquiry and free expression is targeted by theoterrorist individuals and organizations as the Rushdie Affair and the cartoon affairs exemplify.
Conclusions continued

5. This terrorist intimidation is *successful* in the sense that European jurisdictions (both the legislature and the judiciary) tend to comply with the demands of terrorists in the sense that they criminalize, prosecute and convict those people (*E.S. v. Austria*, 2018) that are seemingly the cause of a breach of the religious peace, i.e. the critics of Islamism (and not the terrorists themselves).
Conclusions continued

6. This shooting at the pianist is wrong from a strategic point of view (terrorism works), but also because it is unjust (unjust to convict E.S.).

7. What we should do in Europe, is both safeguard the religiously neutral state, but also bolster the freedom of critique, even offensive critique (Handyside) and reject the protection of religious feelings (Otto Preminger).
Conclusions continued

8. An important element of realizing these goals is cultural criticism that demystifies contemporary identity politics, multiculturalist rhetoric (Todorov), misconceived diversity-talk (Timmermans) and other red herrings that obscure our vision on the real problems of our time.
Conclusions continued

9. Even “populism” is not the central problem of our time. Populism is a reaction on failing intellectual and governmental elites in our time. Solve the problems and populism evaporates.
Conclusions continued

10. Multiculturalism in the sense of factual diversity (first concept of multiculturalism) is a given. Multiculturalism as state ideology is something to be rejected, as is cosmopolitan multiculturalism in the sense of a tacit acceptance of identity politics and the undermining of state sovereignty.
Populism: reestablishing sovereignty

• Populism: A political approach that strives to appeal to ordinary people who feel that their concerns are disregarded by established elite groups.

• [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/populism](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/populism)
Two totally different visions