

Workshop

“How public institutions deal with ethnic and religious diversity”

Berlin, WZB, May 24-26, 2012

Organizer: Ines Michalowski, WZB

This ground-breaking, exploratory workshop (see program and participants' biographies at the end of this document) brought together a group of international scholars who work on questions that focus on how public institutions deal with ethnic and/or religious diversities. Whereas existing research consists mainly of single-case studies or cross-national comparisons of one institution, or internal comparisons of different organizations representing one type of public institution, cross-institutional comparisons are still rare. The workshop's focus fills a critical void in current scholarship, creating connections between public institutions that existing studies have failed to address while laying a synergistic groundwork for future cooperation. The workshop was organized as four panels, each focused on different organizations: 1) The military, 2) prisons, 3) police, and 4) – grouped together – schools and hospitals.

Most of the participating scholars had backgrounds in the sociology of religion and international migration research; other researchers specialized in urban sociology, political science, anthropology, and legal issues regarding religious accommodations. One discussant is a specialist of the sociology of organizations.

1. Institution-specific ways of dealing with diversity

Military: Presentations were made by Charlotte Hunter, Irène Eulriet and Elyamine Settoul, Iris Menke, and Ines Michalowski; Christophe Bertossi acted as a discussant. Among aspects discussed were cross-national differences in the representation of faith groups in the armed forces of different countries (e.g., the U.S. military currently has more than 105 different denominations represented by military chaplains whereas only two denominations are officially represented in Germany) as well as the extent to which religious diversity plays a role in recruitment processes in all-volunteer forces. It was noted that there may be striking disparities between liberal 'official' policies endorsed by the upper ranks and persistent discrimination within the lower ranks (Settoul). In general, it seems that there may be a synergy between religion's functionality for the military (e.g., it may help soldiers handle difficult situations, such as combat) and the relative seclusion of the organization compared to other public institutions. Presentations also drew attention to several facts: First, operational requirements remain the primary focus of military leaders, overriding considerations of diversity and its accommodation; second, military institutions are not monolithic (some branches or even sub-branches may be more open to inclusive diversity than others and this holds also true for various professional communities within one branch); third, the scope of religious rights and classifications used to determine the extent of these rights within the military varies significantly from one country to another.

A question discussed throughout the session was how change – particularly with regard to religious diversity – is produced within the military institution? Does such change result principally from external pressures brought by higher political authorities (e.g., a progressive Congress or Parliament); from the mobilization of internal or external advocacy groups or cultural movements; from internal pressures stemming from the need to enlarge the pool of potential recruits by attracting minorities?

One other issue discussed in this session was an often-heard truism that the military is ‘ahead of society.’ Several studies found that, while religious accommodations are granted with relative ease in the military (at least if compared to other public institutions [Furseth]), cautious military policies result in often significant difficulties in conducting and publishing validated research. One researcher (Menke) noted that military officials in one country seemed particularly uneasy when reviewing qualitative research.

Another question discussed was the extent to which military organizations have sought to stimulate or facilitate the professionalization of military chaplaincy by, for example, placing greater emphasis on training and education of chaplains to enhance multi-faith facilitation.

Prisons: Presentations were given by Irène Becci, Sarah Jahn, Inger Furseth, and Sophie Gilliat-Ray; Ursula Unterberger acted as a discussant. Presentations within this panel focused attention on differences between the established institutional chaplaincy (Christian-based and -modeled) and informal models of religious outreach—what Becci describes as the ‘grey zones of religiosity’ in prisons that become obvious when voluntary religious ministry (or related work) is involved. Seen from this angle, the question is whether religion in a prison setting functions differently from religion outside; in fact, in both cases, religious activities are socializing events. Yet, being religious seems more ‘legitimate’ (and this is particular true for secularized European contexts) in prison than outside. In prisons (and, to some extent, in military institutions) religious activities are attractive not only because religion offers coping strategies within difficult situations, but because these activities provide a welcome change from daily prison routines and allow for socializing among prisoners and with those outsiders who initiate and/or lead religious activities.

In prisons, decisions regarding religious accommodations – or modes of negotiating religious freedom (Jahn) – require an understanding of religion and may hinge on 1) perceptions of a particular religion’s ‘safety’: how approachable, acceptable, and controllable that religion seems to be to the decision maker (e.g. security personnel, prison chaplaincy or head of the institution); and 2) the importance of maintaining order and harmony within prisons and preparing prisoners for eventual resocialization into civil life. Yet, if the prison administration usually sees ministry by a pastor (or another official representative) from an established religious tradition as beneficial for such resocialization efforts, ministry by pastors from non-established religious traditions or care provided by individual volunteers are viewed by prison authorities with mistrust, as potential undermining the prison’s function. This raised questions about the nature of religious expression and accommodation within prisons: 1) What are the perceptions about religion on the part of prison administration and what is the utility of religion within a prison or a military organization (Jahn)? 2) Does religion support or undermine the social mandate of prisons (Burchardt)? 3) Does religion promote loyalty to the institution (and/or society) or to the faith and is greater consideration being granted to diversity and religious differences within prisons than outside that organization (Bertossi)? 4) How does the adoption of Christian-modeled chaplaincy impact non-Christian communities and to what extent does the rejection of the established model challenge it (Stoeckl)?

Cross-national differences were further discussed regarding the selection of chaplains (Gilliat-Ray) as well as the power conferred on the prison chaplains (a high degree in Germany). Another specific issue discussed was the provision of religiously-based dietary requirements; using the Muslim experience as an example, presenters explored differences in accommodation (e.g., some Austrian prisons’ failure to offer pork-free meals) and the care with which these accommodations are provided (e.g., British prisons’ confrontation with questions of how to protect halal-certified meat from contamination by non-halal food).

Police: In this panel were presentations by Barbara Thériault, François Bonnet, and Anne van Ewijk; Ingo Bode served as a discussant. Presentations and discussion determined that police organizations may be distinguished from those of the military and prisons by the daily, unpredictable, and often singular interactions police have with the public. Given their high profile among the citizenry, members of police organizations must take into account relations with the public (in contrast to the military, cops police their own citizens—making the organization one which is often only grudgingly acknowledged and prone to criticism). Diversity is discussed not only in terms of career management within the institution (van Ewijk), but also in terms of the diversity of the public with which the police organization interacts, both as an institution and through its individual members. Taking into account diversity, however, raises questions within the police organization about strategies that, while they may address issues of differences, may also (co)exist (in contradiction) with the police’s ideal self-image as a meritocratic organization that is unbiased in its investigations and that applies strict principles of equal treatment. Whereas the police in many countries seems to favor a diversity-blind approach, diversity-conscious strategies may still be relevant with regard to hiring, promoting, and mediating conflict, in particular in racialized environments (e.g., French police officers who are ‘shadowed’ in a shopping mall by private security guards recruited to serve as mediators for youngsters of North-African immigrant origin (Bonnet)) or in the highly charged arena of symbolic politics, in which difference is valued, but not made salient (e.g., such as in the commemoration of the past in the Berlin police department and the nomination of a pre-Holocaust German officer of Jewish background as a distinctly honorable historic figure [Thériault]).

Schools and Hospitals: In this session were presentations by Andrea Rota, Ilke Adam, and Christophe Bertossi. Analysis of religious accommodation requests in Belgian schools and hospitals framed a discussion of inclusive neutrality versus laïcité in a country and culture characterized by a strong anticlerical strain and possessing a high number of self-identified humanists (Adam). The most common religious accommodation issues in these two types of institutions involved requests regarding 1) time off for prolonged holidays (not necessarily for religious purpose), 2) time for prayer during the workday, 3) dietary needs, 4) apparel (e.g., covering the head, wearing long sleeves), 5) hierarchical gender relations, and 6) the adjustment of tasks (e.g., in hospitals, not lifting, carrying, or bathing a person of another gender). Discussion on if, how, and when such religiously-based requests were granted elicited the observation that arguments against religious accommodations – in favor of the hospital or school – often reflect a pragmatic argument (e.g. hygiene). Yet, it was also noted that hospitals, long accustomed to addressing the religious needs of patients and staff, showed an apparent facility to accommodate new religious groups, in particular Muslims. This is also true for France that has a long tradition of promoting a formal colorblind and strict secularist approach (Bertossi).

The fact that schools as organizations are usually open towards their environment could be seen as a potential advantage when dealing with issues of religious diversity. The workshop, however, also showed that this openness towards the environment can be a constraint because decisions on religious accommodation easily become public (Rota). The main arguments put forth by schools and local authorities in favor of accommodation relate to the importance of (religious) tolerance. Yet, these are weighted against arguments such as the importance of gender equality, which might be considered to be threatened by certain religious accommodations. In this respect, an ‘integration duty’ of the (religious) minorities is invoked to deny some accommodations (e.g. exemption from mixed swimming lessons). Moreover, it was noted that in some countries there may exist a double-logic of church-state relations (e.g., in Switzerland), in which national policies guarantee freedom of conscience while leaving the

actual regulation of the religious field to local authorities who can selectively grant privileges to some communities, as long as the freedom of religion is not violated; conversely, local solutions that meet the religious needs of citizens may be frustrated by national politics, in which issues regarding religion become political tools, and/or by extensive or unfavorable media coverage. In these contexts, the reference to a shared secularized “Christian heritage” can serve to draw symbolic boundaries limiting the access of religious minorities to the public sphere.

Overall, it was noted that the space granted to religion is usually smaller in schools than in hospitals.

Differences across institutions: Even though public institutions in one country have to respect that a country’s constitution, research seems to indicate they do not all implement the constitution in the same way. These differences may have to do with the differing functions and missions of these institutions within in each national constellation.

For example, Bertossi emphasized that each public institution frames Muslims in a special way: within military forces, Muslim loyalties often are questioned; in prisons, Muslims may be seen as more dangerous than other criminals; in schools their social and learning behaviors are questioned. Thus, within each of these public institutions, immigrant minorities often are framed as ‘problematic’ with reference to different social and political issues. Bode suggested that Muslims are invalidated as appropriate representatives of any of these institutions.

Furthermore, public institutions may have differing effects on their members’ religiosity. While individuals within certain institutions are confronted with significant psychological and socialization pressures (e.g., militaries and prisons seek total, or near-total, social control over their members), these pressures may be far less powerful, less prevalent, or even absent in others, such as schools and hospitals (Hunter).

Organizations also differ substantially with regard to membership structures: in some organizations only professionals are considered members (military, police) whereas other organizations (hospitals, schools) have a professional corps that is constantly in contact with its ‘users’ (patients, students). Since these ‘users’ spend some or even a long time in the premises of this public institution, they become quasi-members. These differences in membership structure have an influence on the scope of regulations for religious accommodation (Michalowski). They may also have an influence on how change is brought into the organization since the stakeholders may vary across membership structure (Becci).

2. Change within institutions

The different contributions from the workshop show that ideological arguments, organizational needs, and the power of certain stakeholders can be important to the question of how change comes into an institution (Becci). Jahn posited that such change is not necessarily the result of power games between competing actors but may reflect a convergence of the interests of different stakeholders, such as Islamic communities and representatives of public institutions. Change, therefore, may come as a result of how an organization seeks to represent itself to the public as well as by the perceived criticality of recruitment and representation (Bonnet). Each organization has a number of veto players that try to oppose change. In this respect, chaplains within military and prison institutions possess a unique potentiality for introducing or encouraging change. Officially they exist as a means of expressing religion; unofficially, they may act as the expression of the institution’s power over religious expression; but at the same time they act as agents of a potentially subversive

force within the institution, a force that may divert allegiance from institution to faith (Hunter).

3. Methods

Most research is on the comparison of single cases within a country, some studies are cross-national. Research further differs with regard to the perspective taken by the researcher (inside or outside), the institution's complexity and the subsequent possibilities for individual discretion (for example when it comes to granting access to certain information) as well as with regard to the organization's dependency on other organizations in its environment. Several researchers encountered difficulties in gaining access to institutions, particularly prisons and military institutions. Participants agreed that research in public institutions is very time consuming because administrative hurdles have to be passed before research can start. Several researchers commented on the special authorizations needed to conduct surveys, as well as restrictions placed upon the publication of research results. Since several presentations pointed to the internal diversity of public institutions that can be as complex and hierarchical as a country's armed forces, Bertossi raised the question of what constitutes a relevant unit of analysis when studying them.

4. Limits and need for further research

Although the workshop's aim was discussion of both ethnic and religious diversity, nearly all presentations focused on religious diversity, in particular on the situation of Muslim immigrant minorities in Europe that are the focus of current public debates. The focus on religious diversity was so prevalent that other important markers of difference, such as socio-economic status, remained unaddressed. This narrow focus neglects other important social and cultural dynamics (Gektidis), and as Bertossi noted, the strong focus on religion may also lead to research that addresses only the accommodation of religious requests even as there remains the need to study 1) how certain characteristics are ascribed to members of an organization who are perceived as different from the majority; 2) the consequences these ascriptions have for the ways public institutions function; and 3) the agency of minority groups themselves (Burchardt). In sum, this workshop was an attempt to break down cross-national differences, usually phrased in terms of national models, into power relations within institutions (Eulriet).

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

How public institutions deal with ethnic and religious diversity

Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB)

Berlin, 24-26 May 2012

Organized by Ines Michalowski

Thursday, May 24, 2012

2 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Welcome and Introduction

3:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. The military

Dr. Charlotte Hunter, Senior Research Analyst, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, USA

Religious diversity in the US military

Dr. Irène Eulriet & Dr. Elyamine Settoul, Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l'Ecole Militaire, Paris

How the French military deals with ethnic diversity

Iris Menke, Technische Universität Berlin

Ethnic and religious diversity in the German military

Dr. Ines Michalowski, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB)

Cross-national commonalities and differences in immigrant religious minorities' access to military chaplaincy (Austria, Netherlands, France)

Friday, May 25, 2012

9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. Prisons

Dr. Irène Becci, Universität Potsdam

The use and control of religion in prisons: Germany, Switzerland and Italy compared

Sarah Jahn, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster

Between negotiating and organizing religious freedom in German prisons: Muslims and Christians in comparison

Dr. Inger Furseth, KIFO Stiftelsen Kirkeforskning, Oslo

The role of religion in prisons compared with hospitals and the military in Norway

Dr. Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Cardiff University

Leadership and Capacity Building in the British Muslim Community: the case of 'Muslim Chaplains'

Discussant: Ursula Unterberger, Austrian Public Broadcasting (ORF), Unit 'Religion'

2 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. The Police

Dr. Barbara Thériault, Université de Montréal

The Police as Secret Society. Simmel, the Individual, and the Relation toward Difference in Germany

Dr. François Bonnet, Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA)

How to perform 'not being racist'? Colorblind speech norms and race-conscious policies among French law enforcement personnel

Dr. Anne van Ewijk, PhD Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

Diversifying the police force – a comprehensive analysis of diversity policies regarding the Mossos d'Escuadra and the Politie Utrecht

Discussant: Prof. Dr. Ingo Bode, University of Kassel

Saturday, May 26, 2012

9 a.m. – 12:00 a.m. Hospitals and Schools

Dr. Christophe Bertossi, Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI), Paris

Ethnic and religious diversity in French hospitals and the military

Dr. des. Andrea Rota, Universität Bayreuth

Religious plurality in Swiss schools and the state 'politics of religions'

Dr. Ilke Adam, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)

Traditional cleavages matter. Religious Accommodation in Belgian Hospitals and Schools.

12 a.m. – 1 p.m. Summary and Final Discussion

Participants' Biographies

Dr. Ilke Adam, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) www.ies.be/user/63

Dr. Irène Becci, Universität Potsdam (in transition to Université de Lausanne: www.unil.ch/actu?showActu=1342429050782.xml)

Dr. Christophe Bertossi, is senior research fellow and director of the Center for Migrations and Citizenship at the Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI), Paris. His research interests lie at the intersection of citizenship studies, comparative migration research, and the sociology of institutions. He has been researching issues of ethno-cultural, racial, and religious diversity within public institutions from a cross-institutional comparative perspective in France (military, police, and health institutions). He is now interested in cross-national comparisons (Western Europe and the US) and co-ordinates several collaborative international projects on this issue. www.ifri.org/?page=research_fellow_detail&id=39

Prof. Dr. Ingo Bode, University of Kassel
www.uni-kassel.de/fb01/personen/homepages/prof-dr-ingo-bode/prof-dr-ingo-bode.html

Dr. François Bonnet, is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. He holds a PhD from Sciences Po (Paris). He works on crime control, urban studies and race, usually with qualitative methods and in a comparative perspective (France, Italy, United States).

www.urbanstudies.uva.nl/urbanstudies/assistantprofessors.cfm/9E003D7D-BE7A-4D13-959AA0E11BA7CD2D

Dr. Marian Burchardt is research fellow at the Max Planck Institut for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen where is a member of the research groups “legal regulations of diversity” and medical anthropology. His research explores the organization of religious diversity and manifestations of secularity in discourses on cultural identity and heritage. Before coming to the Max Planck Institute, he worked as a researcher in the project “Multiple Secularities”. www.mmg.mpg.de/departments/max-planck-fellows/dr-marian-burchardt/

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Philipp Gektidis, M.A. Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

Dr. Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Cardiff University
www.cardiff.ac.uk/share/contactsandpeople/academicstaff/F-J/gilliatray-sophie-dr-overview_new.html

Dr. Charlotte Hunter, Senior Research Analyst, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, USA (www.deomi.org)

Sarah Jahn is a research assistant at the Institute for the Study of Religions (University of Münster) and PhD-student at the Institute for the Study of Religions (University of Leipzig). Her doctoral dissertation explores the field of religious freedom in the German prison sphere. She is also a member of the working group “Grenzarbeiten am religiösen Feld” within the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” (University of Münster) and member of the editorial board of the “Zeitschrift für junge Religionswissenschaft”. Her research interests are the relation between religion and law in German prisons and the combination of the sociology of law and the Scientific Study of Religions in theoretic and methodological terms. www.uni-muenster.de/forschungaz/person/11221?lang=de

Reini Joosten, WZB, student assistant at the research unit Cultural Sources of Newness, www.wzb.eu/de/forschung/gesellschaft-und-wirtschaftliche-dynamik/kulturelle-quellen-von-neuheit

Dr. Ariane Jossin, Centre Marc Bloch, www.cmb.hu-berlin.de/members/ariane-jossin

Iris Menke, Technische Universität Berlin
www.verkehrsplanung.tu-berlin.de/menue/ueber_uns/team/ehemalige_mitarbeiter/iris_menke/

Dr. Ines Michalowski is a senior researcher in the research unit "Migration, Integration, Transnationalization" at the Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB). She holds a joint PhD from Sciences Po Paris and the Westfälische-Wilhelms Universität Münster. Her research interests lie within the field of comparative migration research and concern in particular issues of citizenship and immigration as well as questions related to religious diversity in public institutions, www.wzb.eu/de/personen/ines-michalowski

Dr. des. Andrea Rota (*1983); études en science des religions, histoire contemporaine et anthropologie sociale à l'Université de Fribourg (CH); 2011 doctorat en science des religions sous la direction de Oliver Krüger; 2010-2012 collaborateur scientifique à l'Université de Bayreuth (D); à partir de septembre 2012 Maître-assistant de recherche en science des religions à l'Université de Fribourg (CH), www.religion.uni-bayreuth.de/de/4_Personen_und_Kontakt/wissenschaftliche_mitarbeiter/Rota_Andrea/index.html

Dr. Elyamine Settoul, PhD Institut des Sciences Politiques de Paris (supported by the Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l'Ecole Militaire, Paris)
www.ceri-sciences-po.org/cerifr/cherlist/doctorant/settoul.php

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Dr. Virginie Silhouette-Dercourt, www.hommes-et-migrations.fr/index.php?id=6158

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Dr. Barbara Thériault, is associate professor at the Department of Sociology and director of the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies at University of Montreal as well as editor in chief of *Sociologie et sociétés*. She holds a Ph.D. from the Max Weber Centre for

Cultural and Social Studies at the University of Erfurt and the Free University of Brussels. Drawing on the sociology of Max Weber, she has recently concluded a book-length study entitled *The Cop and the Sociologist. Investigating Diversity in the German Police*. Her previous work deals with the impact of radical change in 1989, most notably on religious organizations in East Germany,

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