



# RECODE

Responding to Complex Diversity in Europe and Canada

2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop

## The Public Management of Religion: from State Building to New Forms of Minorities' Mobilization

Université de Neuchâtel  
October 21-22nd, 2011

Salle B 41, Main Building  
Av. du 1er Mars 26  
2000 Neuchâtel  
Switzerland

Convenors:

Gianni D'Amato (Univ. of Neuchâtel, Switzerland) – Francisco Colom-González (CSIC, Spain)

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In conventional approaches, modernisation was conceived of as intrinsically connected to secularisation, i.e. as a process in which the religious foundations of political power would be increasingly replaced by alternative and secularised forms of legitimacy. Accordingly, cultural change in modernising societies would induce the privatisation of religious belief, diminish collective religious practice and push for secularised moral and political references. However, during recent decades we have witnessed how the relationship between religion and the public sphere has become, once again, a matter of public attention. We are facing indeed a profound transformation in the functional parameters of religion and entering a process in which migration, demographic change and the widening range of life-style options have increased the cultural complexity of Western societies. Even in the largely secularised Canadian and European contexts the debate about secularism in the collective self-perception of society, in relation to the display of religious symbols in public spaces, or about the accommodation of ethno-religious minorities, has strongly re-emerged, sometimes around ethnic and multicultural issues. The thesis of *modernisation as secularization* has therefore undergone a thorough revision in the social sciences without reaching an alternative consensus on the possible meaning of *post-secularism*.

The aim of this seminar is to gain a broad view on the shifting issues and cleavages that have shaped the public management of religion in Europe and Canada. Accordingly, the seminar will be organized around three main themes:

### - **The *secularization thesis* under review.**

The aim of this panel is to discuss the classical thesis of secularization as a plausible account of modernity and of the meanings projected on the idea of *post-secularism* as a normative perspective and/or hypothetical pattern of social evolution. Even if the idea of secularization as the model for modern cultural change has been challenged during the last decades, rendering Europe and Canada as the exception rather than the norm, it still offers a

general background for understanding the new changes operated in the functional parameters of religion.

**- The relations between state-building and religion.**

The political control of religious authority was a key issue during the protestant Reformation and a historical prolegomenon to state-building processes. Elizabethan England has therefore been portrayed as the first expression of *nationalism* long before the republican and romantic ideas of nation saw their time in the XVIII and XIX centuries. Inversely, nation-building in Catholic societies has followed different paths, with experiences ranging from officially endorsed *Laïcité* and *Kulturkampf* to open anti-clericalism or authoritarian religious nationalism. Canada offers here an interesting contrast, since religion did not play the foundational role for state institutions as it did in Europe and, unlike the United States, it also lacks a recognizable *civil religion*. This section of the seminar will focus on the different models and regimes for the political management of religion and their historical relation to state-building experiences.

**- The accommodation of new religious minorities.**

International migration, but also the opening to new forms of spirituality and life-style choices, has altered the religious structure of contemporary Western societies. The issues posed by these religious movements are of a different kind from those mentioned in the section above. Their interaction with mainstream society has sometimes provoked a backlash, as with the *accommodation crisis* in Quebec, or more fundamentally they have challenged its established legal frame, as with the practice of polygamy by some Mormon groups in Canada and the USA or with the demands for officialising some form of legal pluralism by Muslim communities in Canada and the United Kingdom. This section will explore the shifting relations between international migrations, the emergence of new religious identities, and the problems perceived in their legal and political accommodation.

***Program***

**- October 21<sup>st</sup>, Friday**

Chair: **Riva Kastoryano (CNRS, France)** [kastoryano@ceri-sciences-po.org](mailto:kastoryano@ceri-sciences-po.org)

14:00. Session 1: ***Secularisation and State-building: a conventional path to Modernity?***

1. **Jocelyn Maclure (Laval University, Canada)** [Jocelyn.Maclure@fp.ulaval.ca](mailto:Jocelyn.Maclure@fp.ulaval.ca)
2. **Ingvill Thorson Plesner (Norwegian Center for Human Rights)** [i.t.plesner@nchr.uio.no](mailto:i.t.plesner@nchr.uio.no)
3. **Massimo Rubboli (University of Genoa, Italy)** [rubboli@unige.it](mailto:rubboli@unige.it)

***Discussant:*** **Ángel Rivero (Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain)** [angel.rivero@uam.es](mailto:angel.rivero@uam.es)

18:30 End of Session

20:00 Common Dinner (Brasserie le Cardinal, Seyon 9, Neuchâtel, [www.lecardinal-brasserie.ch/](http://www.lecardinal-brasserie.ch/))

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**- October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Saturday**

09:00. Session 2: *Beyond Kulturkampf: Shifting cleavages in Catholic societies*

Chair: **Peter Kraus** (RECODE Program chair; University of Helsinki, Finland)  
[peter.kraus@helsinki.fi](mailto:peter.kraus@helsinki.fi)

4. **Sean L'Estrange** (University College Dublin, Ireland) [sean.lestrange@ucd.ie](mailto:sean.lestrange@ucd.ie)
5. **Francisco Colom-González** (Spanish National Research Council) [f.colom@cchs.sic.es](mailto:f.colom@cchs.sic.es)
6. **François Forêt** (Free University of Brussels, Belgium) [Francois.Foret@ulb.ac.be](mailto:Francois.Foret@ulb.ac.be)

*Discussant:* **Gianni D'Amato** (University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland)  
[Gianni.damato@unine.ch](mailto:Gianni.damato@unine.ch)

12:30. End of Session

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### **Lunch Break**

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14:00. Session 3: *The accommodation of new religious minorities*

Chair: **N.N.**

7. **Denise Helly** (INRS, Canada) [denise.helly@ucs.inrs.ca](mailto:denise.helly@ucs.inrs.ca)
8. **Julia Mourao Permoser** (University of Vienna, Austria)  
[julia.mourao.permoser@univie.ac.at](mailto:julia.mourao.permoser@univie.ac.at)
9. **Tuomas Martikainen** (Finland) [tuomas.martikainen@abo.fi](mailto:tuomas.martikainen@abo.fi)

*Discussant:* **Mathias Thaler** (University of Coimbra, Portugal) [mathiasthaler@ces.uc.pt](mailto:mathiasthaler@ces.uc.pt)

17:30 *Closure of the Seminar*

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