**UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL**

**A conference in honour of Tariq Modood**

**Thursday 29th September and Friday 30th September**

**Public event, 28th September**

Organised by: Thomas Sealy, University of Bristol

Nasar Meer, University of Edinburgh

Varun Uberoi, Brunel University

The event is generously funded by the Zutshi-Smith benefaction.

A person sitting at a desk

Description automatically generated with low confidence

This two day conference is organised in honour of the contributions to scholarship of Tariq Modood over the last four decades. During this time Tariq’s work has spanned several areas and been at the forefront of scholarship on racism, religion and secularism, ethnic minorities and national identity, and citizenship and equality. Under the notion of multiculturalism, Tariq has made cutting-edge theoretical and empirical contributions in these areas. He is a regular contributor to public debate, and his work is featured in education curricula and routinely cited by policy makers. This conference brings together renowned scholars in the fields central to Tariq’s work, and who have engaged with different aspects of his thought. The papers presented at the conference reflect these scholarly engagements, continue conversations, and also make original contributions to these areas of scholarship.

Location:

Conference panels and plenaries, Reception Room, Wills Memorial Building, University of Bristol, Queen’s Road, BS8 1RJ

Lunch and tea & coffee, Great Hall, Wills Memorial Building

Times:

Thursday 29th: 9am – 6pm

Friday 30th: 9am – 5.45pm

Full programme details below.

**PUBLIC EVENT 28th September 2022**

**Who do we think we are?**

What is the state of multiculturalism in Britain today, and where might we be headed?

Join us in this public event to reflect on these questions and the unfinished conversations they carry into Brexit, migration policy, Scottish Independence, Black Lives Matter, and the making and re-making of our identities more broadly.

Our expert speakers include Zara Mohammed, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB); Gary Younge, writer and Professor of Sociology at the University of Manchester, and John Denham, former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Professorial Fellow on English Identity and Politics at Southampton University.

Location: Wills Memorial Building – Reception Room

Time: 5.30pm – 7pm

To register: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/who-do-we-think-we-are-tickets-405277083667>

**29th September**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **When?** | **Who?** | **Title** |
| *Tea and coffee* | 8.15 – 8.45 | |  |
| *Welcome intro talk* | 8.45 – 9.00 | Judith Squires |
| *Panel 1*  Chair: Anne Phillips | 9.00 – 10.30 | Will Kymlicka  Geoff Brahm Levey  Q&A | *Multicultural nationalism as an ethics of membership* |
| *The status of foundational cultures in multicultural political thought* |
| *Break* 10.30 – 10.45 | | | |
| *Panel 2*  Chair: Jan Dobbernack | 10.45 – 12.15 | | |
|  | Anna Triandafyllidou  Maleiha Malik  Q&A | *Transnational diasporas and digital nomads: National identity in the mid-21st century* |
| *Multiculturalism and law: The British experience - From the Race Relations Act 1968 to Brexit/The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2018* |
| *Panel 3*  Chair: Nasar Meer | 12.15 – 13.45 | | |
|  | James Nazroo  Samir Sweida-Metwally Q&A | *Racism and ethnic inequalities in health: the enduring legacy of the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities* |
| *Beyond labour market status: Job quality and the Muslim penalty in Britain* |
| *Lunch* 13.45 – 14.30 | | | |
| *Afternoon Plenary*  Chair: Tariq Modood | 14.30 – 15.30 | | |
|  | Charles Taylor (via video link)  Q&A | *Re-uniting the people* |
| *Tea and coffee* 15.30 – 15.45 | | | |
| *Panel 4*  Chair: Varun Uberoi | 15.45 – 17.15 | | |
|  | David Boucher  Sune Laegaard  Q&A | *Invoking the idealist world of ideas* |
| *Intimating or iterating? Modood on contextualism and how to respond to the Danish cartoons of Muhammad* |
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| *Closing Plenary*  Chair: Geoff Brahm Levey | 17.15 – 18.15 | Cécile Laborde | *Rawls, Modood, Race and Religion* |

**30th September**

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| **What?** | **When?** | **Who?** | **Title** |
| *Tea and coffee* | 8.30 – 9.00 | | |
| *Opening Plenary*  Chair: Will Kymlicka | 9.00 – 10.00 | Bhikhu Parekh (via video link)  Q&A | *What is a secular state?* |
| *Panel 1*  Chair: Salman Sayyid | 10.00 – 12.15 | | |
|  | Anthony Heath (via video link)  Riva Kastoryano  Nadia Fadil  Q&A | *TBC* |
| *Transnational nationalism: Redefining solidarity and nationhood* |
| *On the cruel optimism of multiculturalism* |
| *Lunch* 12.15 – 13.00 | | | |
| *Afternoon Plenary*  Chair: Nasar Meer | 13.00 – 14.00 | |  |
|  | Michéle Lamont  Q&A | *Who matters: Redefining worth in our divided world.* |
|  | | | |
| *Panel 2*  Chair: Anna Triandafyllidou | 14.00 – 15.30 | | |
|  | Simon Thompson  Gurpreet Mahajan  Q&A | *Tariq Modood and the politics of recognition* |
| *What more can multiculturalists do?* |
| *Tea and coffee* 15.30 - 15.45 | | | |
| *Panel 3*  Chair: Riva Kastoryano | 15.45 – 17.15 | | |
|  | Jan Dobbernack  Erdem Dikici  Q&A | *Multiculturalism’s democratic constellation* |
| *The accommodation of new religious diversity and establishment in liberal democracies: Multiculturalist solutions for liberal predicaments?* |
| *Closing Plenary/remarks*  Chair: Therese O’Toole | 17.15 – 17.45 | Tariq Modood |  |

**Titles and Abstracts**

**David Boucher, Cardiff University and Johannesburg University**

*Invoking the idealist world of ideas*

Tariq Modood began his academic journey exploring the life of the mind through the writings of R. G. Collingwood and Michael Oakeshott in the department of philosophy at Swansea University dominated by Wittgensteinians, particularly the indomitable D. Z. Philips. Despite a considerable retreat from his initial philosophical calling, Modood invokes the philosophical idealist world of ideas to inform his manner of inquiry. The idea of invoking a world of ideas entails implicating a conceptual framework, capable of change, within limits, while tolerating a diversity of conclusions which rely upon a common frame of reference for their efficacy. Multiple worlds of ideas may be invoked by a single thinker. They are not mutually exclusive, and their relation may be characterised as historical populations of ideas in Toulmin’s sense, who himself draws upon the work of Collingwood. This paper will focus upon the philosophical idealist world of ideas that informs Modood’s work. Invoking a world of ideas does not entail fully articulating its contours. It is the background that give a certain intelligibility to a concept, phrase or argument. We see from Modood’s early encounters with Oakeshott, in particular, that through his influence, the idealist world of ideas that Oakeshott inherited and inhabited is brought to bear on problems of multicultural citizenship. We see, for example, a distaste for abstraction; an anti-rationalism manifest in his distaste for ideologies; the characterisation of changing groups of actors in terms of identity in difference, unity in diversity, and continuity through change. Similarly, there is a degree of pragmatism in his conceptualisation of multiculturalism, a tendency found in idealism, especially in Bradley and Oakeshott, and developed by the American Pragmatists.

**Erdem Dikici, UWE**

*The accommodation of new religious diversity and establishment in liberal democracies: Multiculturalist solutions for liberal predicaments?*

Liberal political theorists agree on the importance of religious liberty as an essential right, yet they disagree on whether the state should offer formal recognition to religion (establishment) or not (separation). This paper examines three competing liberal theorizing on the state recognition of religion to analyze the accommodation of new religious diversity and the public role of religion in liberal multicultural democracies. The first liberal theorizing promotes nonestablishment based on the traditional view that religion has no place in politics and the state must be neutral (Martha Nussbaum); the second argues that religion should not be totally dismissed from public life but minimal secularism is preferable (Cecile Laborde); and, the third suggests that religious establishment constrained by liberal principles can be justified on liberal grounds (David Miller). All three positions are justified within liberal political thinking, yet their predicaments about addressing the new religious diversity endure. This paper argues that multiculturalism, as a tradition of thinking centred around equal citizenship and struggle for recognition, offers, at least, three useful principles that liberals can utilize: (1) prioritizing multicultural citizenship, not liberal egalitarianism, as a normative basis can best serve in accommodating new religious diversity, (2) religious establishment should not be considered as an inherently alienating institution, a reformed establishment can help facilitate the incorporation of diverse faith groups, identities and practices, and (3) religion should be considered as a public good, which may help to mitigate (liberal) secular bias as well as institutionalizing religious pluralism.

**Jan Dobbernack, Newcastle University**

*Multiculturalism’s democratic constellation*

Bottom-up, democratic politics is an underrated theme in most multicultural theorizing. Multiculturalists engage with requirements of justice, the political contours of liberalism and secularism or with national identity. They often stay silent on the political conditions and struggles that make multicultural objectives attainable. Especially in liberal multiculturalist accounts, minority claimants seize openings and enact normative scripts, but the circumstances of such mobilizations, their political precarity and potential power, don’t receive much attention. Against such accounts, the paper argues that democratic-agonistic politics needs to be at the centre of the multiculturalist programme. Tariq Modood’s work, especially his contributions on assertive ethno-religious politics, provide resources for this emphasis, which the paper examines in the context of Modood’s broader work. It outlines three themes: associational freedom for marginalized groups; citizenship as an active category of assertive politics; and an emphasis on constitutive participation in the making and shaping of the polity.

**Nadia Fadil, KU Leuven**

*On the cruel optimism of multiculturalism*

In my contribution I would like to pause and reflect on the two strands of work that can be found in the oeuvre of Tariq Modood, which I situate at the interface of critical theory and liberal multiculturalism. Throughout his trajectory, Tariq Modood has been both a harsh critique and defender of multiculturalism, being of the pioneering voices in addressing the impossibility of conceptualizing islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism in the post-industrial British context. Simultaneously, though, Modood has also consistently sought to hold onto the promise of British multiculturalism, both through its inclusive modalities but also through the potential of crafting a new national consensus around this model. Building upon that legacy, and speaking from a European continental perspective, I want to critically engage with this double movement through Laurent Berlant’s notion of cruel optimism as a way of examining how liberalism nullifies the radical critical political through a continuous demand of incorporation.

**Riva Kastoryano, Sciences Po**

*Transnational Nationalism: Redefining Solidarity and Nationhood*

Transnationalism raises the question of the limits of national public space and extends the concept of cultural integration beyond borders. Transnational politics of both communities and states, creates a new configuration of the nation and nationalism, and territory and power *within* globalisation. Whatever the ideology and objective in the understanding of integration, states are confronted today with the transnational actions of activists who try to bypass states in order to reach a global perspective of their identification and action. Communities, based upon cultural, ethnic, religious identifications, and recognised as such by states that increasingly rely on transnational solidarity have sparked new upsurges of nationalism, accompanied by new forms of subjectivity which claim to be non-territorial. States, on the other hand, expand their nationalism in order to maintain the “power” of incorporation and citizenship, while expanding their influence beyond their territories, and compete with transnational communities in their engagement in the process of globalisation. Many questions arise from these developments: what are the implications for the relations between communities and states; for the relations between rights and identities, culture and politics, states and nations. As a matter of fact, transnational practices bring to light multiple memberships and plural loyalties which can lead to confusions among the concepts of community, nationalism and citizenship and the reality of nation-state in a globalized world.

**Cécile Laborde, University of Oxford**

My talk will focus on the concepts of race and religion. I compare and contrast the approaches of John Rawls and Tariq Modood, as representative of US and European perspectives, respectively. Drawing on Modood’s broadly Wittgensteinian approach, I ask what we want our concepts to do, and I offer an interpretive mapping of the normative concerns that underlie controversies about ‘race’ and ‘religion’.

**Sune Lægaard, Roskilde University**

*Intimating or iterating? Modood on contextualism and how to respond to the Danish cartoons of Muhammad*

Tariq Modood has been at the forefront of theoretical debates about multiculturalism since the controversies over the Satanic Verses. His theoretical contributions to these debates have been characterized by combining normative argument with empirically – and especially sociologically – informed attention to context. Modood has articulated this contextual approach in terms of two concepts. One is iteration, which captures the idea that normative principles should be devised, revised and refined through the exploration and evaluation of multiple contexts. The other is intimation, which draws on Michael Oakeshott’s idea of pursuit of intimations, and which Modood presents as a possibility that contextualists can select the interpretation of local norms that best fits with the iterated principles. This iterative contextualism promises a contextual ground for normative political argument. The question is how this works in practice and how Modood practices the iterative contextualism that he proposes. The paper examines this question with respect to Modood’s writings on the Danish cartoons of Muhammad, which provided a new occasion for Modood to address some of the same issues regarding free speech, offense and religion that originally prompted his work on multiculturalism.

**Michèle Lamont, Harvard University**

*Who matters: Redefining worth in our divided world.*

Growing inequality and the decline  of the American dream have coincided with a mental health crisis across all social classes in the United States. In this context it is imperative to consider alternative sources of hope. Broadening Recognition is gaining in appeal for significant segments of the population. To understand this phenomenon, I draw on interviews with Gen Zs and change agents who are producing new narratives in entertainment, comedy, advocacy, art, impact investing, and other fields of activity. They are offering alternatives to neoliberal scripts of self. They feed to recognition chains in response to political polarization and backlashes These transformations point to a broadening of cultural citizenship, not only in the United States but also globally.

**Geoffrey Brahm Levey, UNSW Sydney**

*The status of foundational cultures in multicultural political thought*

Political thinking about cultural diversity and multiculturalism may be classified in a variety of ways. This paper argues that a pivotal issue on which this political thought divides concerns the status of a historical or foundational national culture. Four broad orientations are delineated. One is generally indifferent to cultural identity including a national cultural identity (‘no recognition’). A second is equally responsive to the cultural identities of groups in society and accords no special status to the foundational national culture, if it recognises one at all (‘equal recognition’). A third orientation accords a special status to the historical or foundational culture, offering remedial cultural rights for minorities (‘differentiated recognition’). And a fourth orientation acknowledges a special status to the historical or foundational culture while seeking to refashion and broaden the national culture and identity (‘multiculturalised national recognition’). The paper elaborates these four orientations and their varying expressions as they apply to cultural minorities, focusing on the two orientations that do recognise a special status attaching to a foundational culture. In substantive terms, these include so-called liberal nationalism and Quebecker interculturalism, on the one hand, and multicultural nationalism, on the other. The paper probes the deep assumptions of these positions on a foundational culture towards a fuller understanding of the theoretical models commonly presented as alternative ways of respecting national and minority cultural identities.

**Gurpreet Mahajan**

*What more can multiculturalists do?*

Instead of elaborating a theory of multiculturalism or explaining what is multiculturalism, Tariq Modood’s multicultural perspective is expressed in, and through, his engagement with political issues that have the potential of dividing societies. Whether it is the case of Danish cartoons, Muslim minority schools or British identity, Tariq has confronted these issues and suggested a reasonable way of dealing with them. He is among the few multiculturalists who have tried to allay the fears of the critics and clarified that due recognition of diversity and sensitivity to cultural differences makes for a strong, integrated nation rather than a fragmented society. Yet, despite these efforts, multiculturalism continues to be misunderstood and denounced. Under the circumstances, one is compelled to ask - what more can multiculturalists do? Why does multiculturalism evoke such hostility? A vision of plural and multicultural democracy, where the state-religion relationship is guided by a moderate secularism has already been provided by Tariq Modood. Why is that not sufficient? The paper reflects on some common misgivings about multiculturalism; and, why it is necessary to address them, for the idea of a plural and multicultural democracy can take deeper roots.

**Maleiha Malik, KCL**

*Multiculturalism and law: The British experience - From the Race Relations Act 1968 to Brexit/The European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2018.*

50 years have passed between the Race Relations Act 1968 and the 'Great Repeal Act' in 2018 that cut off the legal relationship between European Law and UK law through the repeal of the European Union Act 1972. During that time Tariq Modood's scholarship has made a unique contribution our understanding of the relationship between racism, culture and religion as well as multiculturalism and secularism. This paper examines the response of UK law to the challenges posed by increasing racial, cultural and religious diversity, that have also been Modood's intellectual focus. The paper suggests that whilst Brexit may seem to be an exceptional rupture, it can be understood as part of a discernible pattern of progress v regression that are the British experience of law's response to multiculturalism.

**James Nazroo, University of Manchester**

*Racism and ethnic inequalities in health: the enduring legacy of the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities*

In the mid-1990s scientific racism remained dominant in health sciences, despite its rejection by the wider science and political communities. A combination of poor quality research coupled with theoretical naivety led to reductionist approaches to explanation. The argument was that the poorer health of ethnic minority people in the UK (and elsewhere) could not be empirically explained by socioeconomic factors, so it must be a consequence of genetic and cultural difference. The Fourth National Survey, led by Tariq Modood, offered unique opportunities to shift this paradigm, in part because of its interdisciplinary approach and in part because the research team brought a creative mix of theoretical perspectives into their engagement with the empirical material generated by the survey. Particularly important was that the survey contained precise, rather than crude, measure of economic inequalities and that it also contained measure of identity, cultural practice and experiences of discrimination and racism. The novel findings from the Fourth National Survey pointed to the health harms of racism and the protective effects of ethnic identity for minoritised groups. This, consequently, reshaped the agenda for health research. So, although we still see reference to genetic and cultural vulnerability – as illustrated, for example, in debates around the higher risk of ethnic minority to die from COVID-19 – both the research and policy environment now emphasise the role of racism in generating ethnic inequalities in health, as evidenced by the activities of the NHS Race and Health Observatory.

**Lord Bhikhu Parekh, University of Westminster and University of Hull**

*What is a secular state?*

The state cannot be indifferent to, or totally detached from, religion. It is concerned with public morality, social harmony, etc., and is necessarily interested in religious beliefs and practices that impinge on them. Likewise, religion cannot be indifferent to the state. It is concerned with such matters as social justice, human dignity, and global peace, and is inevitably drawn into influencing the activities of the state. The relation between the state and religion thus is far more complex than suggested by the idea of the 'Wall of Separation'. This paper explores the complexity and offers a clearer view of the relation between the state and religion, and incidentally of a secular state. The paper then goes on to ask if a secular state can treat all citizens, believers and non-believers, equally. Its secularity gives it a certain structural bias, reinforced by the fact that every state has a particular history and a culturally embedded character. This raises the question of how a secular state can regulate its bias and treat all religions in a non-discriminatory way. This paper suggests a way of doing so, and helps us form realistic and realisable expectations of what a secular state can and cannot do.

**Simon Thompson, UWE**

*Tariq Modood and the politics of recognition*

Tariq Modood has long claimed that the idea of recognition plays a fundamental role in his account of multiculturalism (e.g. Multiculturalism, 2007, p.56; Essays, 2019, p.1). In the first part of this paper, I analyse and evaluate the role that recognition plays in Modood’s thought. Since his conception is derived mainly from his reading of Charles Taylor’s essay on the ‘Politics of Recognition’, I begin by asking whether he understands Taylor right. I then seek to determine whether Modood’s particular conception of recognition plays a clear and distinct role in his account of multiculturalism. In the second part of the paper, I build on my critique in order to propose certain changes to Modood’s conception. In particular, I suggest that a more finely grained account would distinguish between different forms of recognition. Then I argue that, by examining failures of recognition, it is possible to determine how orders of recognition relate to other social subsystems including economic structures and political frames.

**Samir Sweida-Metwally, University of Bristol**

*Beyond labour market status: Job quality and the Muslim penalty in Britain.*

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities, published by Tariq Modood and colleagues in 1997, to the study of ethnic and religious disadvantage in the British labour market. The survey collected data on religious identity nearly five years before the UK Census first did and exposed the absence in the scholarship of research on religious disadvantage in Britain. At the same time, it foregrounded future research into ethno-religious employment inequalities. In the nearly three decades since its publication, ethnic penalty research has been rich and vibrant, revealing the unequal access to work among minority groups, particularly Muslims. While these studies have deepened our understanding of the Muslim penalty, they have focused on only one facet of labour market disadvantage, namely differentials in job *quantity.* Exploiting Understanding Society data, this paper offers a multidimensional measure of job *quality* to investigate the extent to which variances therein are differentiated by religious and ethno-religious affiliation. In doing so, my study builds not only on the Fourth National Survey, but on Tariq Modood’s religious inequalities scholarship more broadly to offer a more expansive understanding of how Muslims and other religious minorities fare in the British labour market.

**Anna Triandafyllidou, Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson)**

*Transnational diasporas and digital nomads: What does national identity look like in the mid-21st century*

The 21st century is marked by accelerating technological innovation, intensified economic globalisation, and the reshaping of geopolitical relationships. These processes bring about critical technological, economic and political changes that are closely intertwined with a transformation in social relationships. A common element that permeates this ‘great transformation’ (Polanyi 2001) of the 21st century is the role of human migration (Castles 2010; Vertovec 2021) in its different forms and facets. Today migration is not always nor necessarily spatial or physical, it can also be virtual/digital. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown how people can be trapped by closed borders but may also work remotely or connect and mobilise in very different locations as if they were physically present. Beyond the economic implications of remote work it is pertinent to reflect on how such complex migrations – physical and virtual – influence our sense of identity and belonging. These developments elevate diasporas participation in their homeland politics to a different level while they also create important gaps for those people who work at one place but live in another. How can we analyse and codify these developments from our theoretical perspectives on national identities and nationalism? What kind of atomised or collective identities will emerge among transnational diasporas at destination or virtual nomads at origin? Do we need to invent new concepts and forms of membership? This paper will start by commenting on the transformations that have been happening in the last 10 years and their impact on physical and virtual migration and the conundrums or contradictions that these create. It will then discuss how theories of everyday nationhood (Fox and Miller Idriss 2008; Skey 2009; Skey and Antonsich 2017) plural vs neo tribal nationalism (Triandafyllidou 2020) or multicultural nationalism (Modood 2019) can inform our thinking of identity in a world of mixed physical and digital migration.