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The Multi-faith Paradigm in Policy and Practice: Problems, Challenges, Directions

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A significant infrastructure of multi-faith engagement grew and consolidated throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century in England, called forth, at least in part, by government policy. This arose in response to three narratives of religious faith: a policy narrative which constructs faith groups as repositories of resources; a faith narrative which is concerned with the lived experiences of faith; and a partnership narrative which reflects the growing role of faith groups in the mixed economy of welfare (see Dinham and Lowndes, 2008). It is inflected, too, by a fourth narrative located in the bundle of 'Prevent' policies which sought to address the risks of religious radicalisation and extremism. This article examines multi-faith policy in England, and the issues driving it, and explores its relationship to the faith-based practices which are imagined by it. It asks the question whether the multi-faith paradigm, as crystallised in the policy document 'Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in Our Multi Faith Society' (CLG, 2008), engages with a real and lived experience or remains a policy chimera and a parallel world.

Keywords: Multi-faith, multi-cultural, faith community, welfare, inter-faith.

Introduction

Throughout the New Labour years in the UK (1997–2010), there was a concerted, growing and active engagement of policy-makers with faith communities. This was driven by a specific view of faith groups as repositories of resources – staff, buildings, volunteers, networks and money – which could be deployed to the social good (see Dinham, 2009). Faiths increasingly contributed to the provision of welfare and community services, and to initiatives for community cohesion (see Dinham, 2007). This was a very active agenda which specifically sought out the engagement of faiths.

Although a key impetus was the perceived resources they have, policy-makers' interest in faiths also emerged in a broader policy context which was increasingly anxious about relationships between and beyond religious traditions after civil unrest in Burnley and Oldham in the UK in 2001, 9/11 in the USA and 7/7 in London. Looking through the lens of multi-culturalism, government in this period valorised the notion of 'community cohesion' as a basis for managing ethnic and religious plurality. The resulting policies took two directions at once: on the one hand, cohesion was aligned with 'active citizenship' as a basis for engaging people of all faiths and none in public activities which, in their performance, would embody good relations and bridge difference; on the other, a bundle of 'Prevent' policies sought to tackle religious radicalisation and violent extremism, understood as a particular problem of Islam, although efforts were

made latterly (especially under the Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition from 2010) to rebalance policy to take account of far right extremism and British nationalism too. These two policy trajectories constructed faiths as both heroes and villains.

Policy coalesced towards the end of this period around a significant government report called *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in Our Multi-Faith Society* (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008). This document promoted faith-based social action and dialogue as key strands in public policy for achieving augmented service provision, community cohesion and good community relations. These developments were preceded and accompanied by national funding streams (the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund and Faith in Action), as well as support for nine regional faith forums from the Central Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) via the regional development agencies (RDAs). The vision was of a 'multi-faith society', as the report's title indicates, echoing a multi-*cultural* one which had already been long promoted.

Faith communities responded by developing new infrastructures for multi-faith dialogue and action, or building up existing ones. Their roles, variously, were to broker relationships between faith traditions, support their faith-based social action and engage them with non-faith bodies, such as local authorities and Third Sector actors, in partnerships for community cohesion, service provision and participative governance (see Dinham and Lowndes, 2008). Organisations took to their roles with varying degrees of success, and deploying a range of approaches from social enterprise to community development (see Dinham, 2009).

This all raised substantive questions about faith and the public realm, many of which had been thought to be settled. Some were about the legitimacy of public faith at all in a context which many had assumed to be both secular and neutral on matters religious, though, as has been observed elsewhere, nobody starts from nowhere and, far from being neutral, secularism and liberalism are highly values-based in themselves (see Dinham *et al.*, 2009). Others raised concerns about the enlistment or commodification of faith in pursuit of social or state aims (Bretherton, 2006), with the potential to distend the relationship between faith and social action, which resources and motivates it (Dinham and Lowndes, 2008). Some have challenged the distribution of capacity and power between faith traditions, asking how minority traditions or oppressed groups could participate, represent and be voiced in public contexts in the civil society contest alongside larger, more organised and hierarchical faith groups, especially the Church of England (Dinham, 2009).

After May 2010, when a Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition came into government in the UK, the policy context altered dramatically. The RDAs were abolished and funding for the forums was significantly reduced or removed. Only the forums in the East of England, South East, South West and London continue to have one or more staff members, or equivalent donated time from someone working for another organisation. All have reduced their staff time and/or numbers. The forums in the West Midlands and the North East are now run by volunteers. The Yorkshire and Humber forum is no longer active and the East Midlands forum is currently dormant. In practical terms, *Face to Face* appears to have been set aside without comment.

In these contexts, this article explores the rise of the multi-faith paradigm in the New Labour years, and considers the implications for the current as well as the challenges for its future. In doing so, it reveals and problematises the assumptions underpinning the multi-faith idea and its practices.

The origins of the multi-faith paradigm

There is an established literature on inter-faith and multi-faith paradigms which precedes the recent and extensive policy interest in it. Weller describes a religious landscape which has become 'three dimensional ... exhibiting contours that are Christian, secular and religiously plural' (Weller, 2005: 73). A key issue he identifies is the interchange in the use of multi-faith and inter-faith so that it is not always clear what is meant by each. He attempts to pin this down, saying:

> When a society or an event or a project is described as 'multi-faith', it usually means that it includes a variety of religious groups. While the use of multi-faith highlights variety, the use of the term inter-faith points more to the relationships between religions and the people who belong to them. (Weller, 2001: 80)

Weller locates the origins of inter-faith initiatives in the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 (Weller, 2007: 44), translating to Britain in the Religions of the Empire Conference in 1924. The World Congress of Faiths followed in 1936. It is Weller's view that 'the colonial and imperial projects of the nineteenth century turned out, in many ways, to have been a significant catalyst for a growth in consciousness about religious diversity and plurality' (Weller, 2007: 44).

He identifies a period when inter-faith activity was really only for its 'enthusiasts' (ibid.: 44), but that it subsequently gained much greater and broader purchase in more formal and political organisations, especially in reaction to the Jewish holocaust. Immigration and later globalisation have driven the inter-faith and multi-faith agenda further. The 'Churches Together' umbrella was set up in 1978 and the Inter-Faith Network for the UK in 1987. This, says Weller, 'has provided a major catalyst in the transformation of inter-faith initiatives from ... relatively marginal initiatives into a central feature of the contemporary religious landscape of England and the UK' (ibid.: 45). This took its first expressly policy form in the establishment of the Inner Cities Religious Council (ICRC) in Whitehall in 1991, a body of people from the nine 'recognised' faith traditions (Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian), focusing on the policy and practice about the role of faith communities in areas of urban disadvantage.

In policy terms, the explanation for the crystalisation of a multi-faith paradigm in *Face to Face* can be found in three main purposes: first, it is regarded as a basis for community cohesion; second, as an aspect of prevention of violent extremism; and, third, as a foundation for faith-based social action. In each, it echoes the notion of multi-culturalism as a means of managing plurality and difference.

Thus it is that the policy is entitled *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in Our Multi-Faith Society* (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008) and presents four 'building blocks' for multi-faith partnership:

> developing the confidence and skills to 'bridge' and 'link'; shared spaces for interaction and social action; structures and processes which support dialogue and social action; and opportunities for learning which build understanding. (Ibid.: 9)

The policy regards faith communities as well positioned to:

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> add to social capital . . . through offering local networks with links to those who might otherwise be left out; knowledge of local needs and ideas for how these might best be met; management capacity, such as the capacity to host and run community meetings about local issues; a major source of volunteers; leadership in organising their communities to be active, linking the development of citizenship to the beliefs and teachings of faith traditions; focal points for engaging the wider local community in projects to improve the neighbourhood and the quality of life for those living in it; and inter-generational activities, so young and older people can be brought together to learn from each other. (Ibid.: 28)

There are problems with this three-fold articulation however, residing as so often in the relationship between policy and practice, and the gaps between them.

Cohesion and the multi-faith paradigm

The first key question concerns multi-faith approaches as a basis for cohesion. What is it about multi-faith working that can be said to underpin cohesion? The assumption is that where faith groups can mediate their differences by working together, cohesion will be promoted. There are at least three challenges to this: first, no precise method or methods of multi-faith partnership have been demonstrated as resulting in cohesion either qualitatively or quantitatively, though the assumption is often made that cohesion arises from multi-faith encounter; second, the participation of people of faith in multi-faith partnerships cannot be determined externally and therefore participants will self-select according to their openness and readiness already to engage with people different to themselves. It is not clear how this will address cohesion where it is most needed since the policy aspiration is as much about reaching the marginal as it is about sustaining cohesion where it already exists. At least of some of that marginality will preclude engagement precisely where it is most needed.Third, it is by no means clear that attempting partnership necessarily leads to greater understanding and mutuality. It might equally result in more informed strife and conflict as differences are surfaced and made obvious.

In this context, there is a risk that what emerges is at best a pragmatic cobbling together of people who want to work with people of other faiths. Whether this amounts to a multi-faith partnership is the central question. Indeed, it may be possible to tell in relation to Christianity how mainstream or fringe multi-faith efforts are because there is a more widespread (if nevertheless inadequate) general cultural and religious literacy in England which can begin to decipher them, if only at an instinctive cultural level. With many of the faiths which are newer to Britain however, policy-makers and others are often taking it on trust that participants are what and who they say they are. There is very limited accountability, and processes of checking the validity and legitimacy of participants' claims are necessarily minimal or non-existent. They are probably also undesirable in a context which is seeking to build up partnership in networks of trust and reciprocity. So participants are assumed to be people of good will. The regional faith forums go forward on such a basis of trust. Participants are also unable to stand as representatives of anything. Multi-faith leaders (often, the directors of faith forums) know that people may or may not bring with them constituencies of faith. In this sense, as one faith forum head said to me 'It works because of a willing suspension of disbelief' (private correspondence, July 2011). While efforts are made to maximise trust and dependability, this potentially goes right up from local grassroots multi-faith bodies to the Inter-Faith Network for the UK.

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Prevent and the multi-faith paradigm

A complicating dimension in the story of multi-faith and cohesion is the relationship between cohesion and the prevention of violent extremism. In interviews in 2009 with directors of all nine regional faith forums, there was recognition that there is work to be done to engage with those on the margins and perhaps most vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation. The approach which was sought was one of shared social action with a strategic focus on involving the least participative or most marginalised. But, in practice, multi-faith forum directors saw the 'Prevent' agenda as alienating both sides:

> the Government from the way it's construed that Prevent so far has potentially alienated as it were both sides, the Muslim community because they see themselves being equated with terrorism – the threat singular – and other communities thinking why just the Muslim community, we are all affected by terrorism. (Anonymous)

Prevent was seen as exacerbating existing tensions:

> it always seems that within different communities there is always a feeling that some of the others are getting things that we are not. (Anonymous)

Directors described a reluctance to bid for or accept Prevent funding as a result (although some did so in the end). It was also resisted because of its focus on a single-faith community (Islam), which they thought undermined the 'Face to Face and Side by Side' multi-faith principle. This led to mistrust of the objectives underpinning Prevent and a deep suspicion of its surveillance dimensions,

> which can be summarised around phrases like 'you are selling out to the Government', 'you joined Special Branch', 'you are compromising what you were set up to do – you are set up as a community organisation why are you getting involved with this?' So there are those kind of tensions that I know specifically Muslim organisations, particularly in this area and I'm sure elsewhere, have had to face. (Anonymous)

There was a general view too that Prevent was creating competition between faith groups on the ground:

> And that has actually caused a lot of problems in communities because it's . . . it introduces an element of jealousy . . . why should they get the funding when all they're doing is planting a few bombs. (Anonymous)

In this sense, Prevent was seen as working against relationality and trust in the work that the regional forums were trying to do in bringing faith groups together for multi-faith partnership.

What emerges then is that where people of many (multi-) faiths come together, these are multi-faith settings only by consent and including those already open to the paradigm. Even when we can decipher who participates in multi-faith settings, it is likely to be those whose attitudes to plurality and diversity are already open. How far can they go in building cohesion where there is none, as opposed to consolidating it where it already exists? In

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other words, how much multi-faith partnership can they achieve? To what extent can policy deliver in practice? There is no method for establishing the relationship between multi-faith partnership and multi-faith cohesion. There is to date very little knowledge about who participates and why. More to the point, there is no knowledge about who does not participate, and why. These are pressing research needs.

The multi-faith paradigm can be challenged from *within* the policy perspective too, in terms of the competing strands which compel it. On the one hand, multi-faith partnership is sought because of the assumed cohesion within and between faith groups. On the other, it is feared because of the threat of conflict arising out of religious difference. This matters because these policies play out in the same places at the same time in real lives. This policy incoherence needs to be ironed out more clearly, and it is likely to have damaged the potential for multi-faith partnership as much as it depends on it. In the meantime, in regards to cohesion, the efficacy and affectivity of the multi-faith paradigm in practice is ambivalent at best.

Service provision and the multi-faith paradigm

Another pressing question is how does this play out in relation to aspirations for multi-faith partnership for service provision. Here too, the danger is that the multi-faith paradigm proves a blunt and ambiguous instrument. In terms of *Face to Face*, no distinction is drawn in the first place between inter-faith, multi-faith and faith-based activity. There is no acknowledgement that *multi-faith* social action is not necessarily the same as *faith-based social* action, which may or may not be multi-faith. The assumption is that anywhere that different faiths get together (whether in an inter-faith or multi-faith way), some kind of action will result. These categories, and the relationships between them, may seem arcane to policy-makers but they carry a high degree of practical meaning in faith communities. Yet the *Face to Face* framework is not always clear whether it means one or the other or both.

This is also important because policy-makers have often assumed that single-faith settings will be disengaged from bridging and linking with others. But even within single-faith traditions there are enormous differences and every faith community has its own distinctive characteristics. Bridging and linking is important and necessary if people from one single faith or even denomination are to work together as envisaged. It has been observed for example that:

> Members of single-faith groups were often from different parts of the same town, of different ages, different genders, different sub-religious groups or different national or sub-national ethnic groups. (James 2007: 70)

The importance of cohesion between different parts of the same faith group is often overlooked by policy-makers because of suspicion that single-faith groups are motivated by the desire to evangelise their own traditions. It is feared that what they really hope to do through partnership working is to convert them so policy insists on multi-faith partnership to counter this. Yet, in any case, beneficiaries of activities arising out of single-faith settings frequently include people of other faiths and none. Therefore, as well as multi-faith social action, policy will only succeed where it recognises that activities arising out of single-faith

settings should also be regarded as an important and legitimate part of faith-based social action. The multi-faith paradigm runs out of road in this particular direction, too, therefore.

Nevertheless, policy-makers have almost always insisted that faith-based services must be multi-faith in their generation, their delivery and their beneficiaries. This is reflected, for example, in aspects of Charity Commission regulations and guidelines (though a faith advisory board within the Commission has been nuancing this more recently). So a framework for partnership in a multi-faith society ought to recognise that a multi-faith society is not achieved only through self-consciously multi-faith work. Single-faith activities are in the mix too. This is not only a matter of building cohesion between people from the same faith tradition, it is also because some service users simply will not access services which are open to and widely used by people from other traditions. They seek instead a context which will cater for their own needs in a way which draws on that particular religious tradition. This can also be important where certain constituencies simply will not use a service unless it is delivered to single group constituencies, such as some Muslim women or orthodox Jews, for example. By insisting on an open-access multi-faith model of social action, policy can therefore blunt the tool badly, rendering services to service users inaccessible under some circumstances.

A second key issue is that, although they are presented as linked in *Face to Face*, 'dialogue' is a distinct activity from 'social action' and the relationship between the two varies widely. In some cases, the one is rooted in the other. Elsewhere dialogue and social action are completely unrelated. While the two may overlap, complement or coincide, they can at the same time be quite distinct and happen independently. So is multi-faith a 'dialogue' or an 'activity'? Both social action and dialogue may be beneficial to relationships within, between and beyond faith traditions. For some, 'doing' together is enough. For others 'talking' together is sufficient. And, for many, the space to engage in dialogue becomes a basis for their social action. In many cases, one proves serendipitous to the other. But policy gives no account of the relationship between dialogue and action except perhaps to imply that one might lead to the other; in which direction is also left unclear. Again, the multi-faith paradigm proves stretchy and vague in its purposes and goals.

A third issue is highly practical in relation to multi-faith provision of services. It is located in the fact that multi-faith bodies do not usually have the capacity or the mechanisms in terms of governance, quality assurance, funding, employing staff, contracting and tendering. It is difficult enough to develop the organisational capacity for service delivery in any other kind of partnership. In multi-faith partnerships, this is all the more complicated by the range of motivations, values and background or source organisations fielding participants, such as the Church of England or the Baha'i Assembly. Brokering the organisational apparatus required to deliver services can be very difficult indeed in multi-faith settings. As a result, in reality multi-faith social action very rarely happens. Any policy-maker's hope that faith bodies will get together and provide multi-faith services with pooled resources is largely forlorn. Compared to single-faith services, such as some housing associations, which have become huge and complex organisations, multi-faith bodies face enormous challenges in reaching that stage: in pulling together the vision, representation and participation of stakeholders, effective governance, leadership and management, and reaching out to a diversity of service users. It would appear that the multi-faith aspiration to service delivery is, too, largely a chimera.

In these ways, and in the tension between 'cohesion' and 'prevent', policies for a multi-faith paradigm have been inconsistent, competing with and within one another.

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The muddle which results both valorises faiths and at the same time imagines them as something to be feared. It also sets faith groups up as public realm actors with the appearance, but not a method, for enacting the role envisaged for them. The danger is that the multi-faith paradigm is policy without a theory – or worse, policy which thinks it has a theory. Thus, it is possible to have the dialogue but not really to know who is in it and what it is for. It is possible to have multi-faith services available to anyone, but far harder to provide services as a multi-faith body. It is also obscures the occasional need for single-faith services in order to reach out to those who want them.

The future of the multi-faith paradigm

So what of the future of the multi-faith paradigm? *Face to Face* has been largely folded out of the narrative of faith and policy, and state interventionism of all kinds has become highly unfashionable. There are only clues, then, as to what might happen next. Nevertheless, these take forward the multi-faith story in instructive ways.

One lies in the announcement of a new grant-making programme called *Near Neighbours*, an initiative of the Church Urban Fund, intended to support faith-based work in local communities. While it looks like a timely stream of funding from a well-established body, there are indications that it reflects significant changes of political direction in relation to faiths since 2010. The website explains:

> The idea is to bring people together who are near neighbours in communities that are diverse, so they can get to know each other better, build relationships as people and collaborate together on initiatives that improve the local community they live in. (www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours accessed 01.03.2011)

The press release accompanying the programme's launch explains further that 'The Government has today awarded the Church Urban Fund £5 million to promote interaction in communities through a new project called Near Neighbours' (www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours/press-release, accessed 01.03.2011). The award of this significant sum to a faith-based body appears to represent a degree of continuity with the previous government's funding for and engagement with faiths. But there are elements which suggest that it is in fact quite a different approach.

First, the programme website shows how the programme is dependent upon Anglican parishes for delivery, reading:

> The Church of England parish system recognises a duty of care for all, and has for decades been working locally with partners in multi-faith areas to foster the better relationships and understanding that help build better communities. (www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours accessed 01.03.2011)

What a multi-faith area is, exactly, is not spelt out, but it appears to be an area containing people of many (multi-) faiths. It is entirely unclear how this may connect to cohesion or action in partnership. In this, the phrase 'multi-faith' is not operationalised in practical terms.

Second, the reference to 'multi-faith' working is substantively ambiguous, as this comment in the press release suggests:

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> Near Neighbours taps into the unique Church of England parish system, which has presence in all neighbourhoods and an ethos as the national Church with a responsibility towards all in the parish. (www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours accessed 01.03.2011)

So, although the programme is presented as an 'initiative [which] aims to bring people together in diverse communities, helping them build relationships and collaborate to improve the local community they live in', it nevertheless depends upon the parish system, not only of a single faith but a single denomination within that faith. It also regards itself as building on the Church of England as 'the national church'. This is a momentous claim or outlook, raising questions about whether things have changed for the national church. While reported affiliation holds up, attendance has steeply declined, as Grace Davie's 'believing without belonging' thesis has observed (Davie, 1999). Many parishes can no longer afford a full-time priest. Some have none at all. Churches often struggle to keep the roof on. Funds are committed to clergy pensions and ancient buildings. Yet Davie also observes a phenomenon of 'vicarious religion' (Davie, 2000) to describe a widespread appetite for religious performance by a minority on behalf, so to speak, of the majority which somehow sustains a religious instinct without wishing to enact it. At the same time, the religious make-up of the UK has altered dramatically and religious plurality is embedded in the national psyche after decades of non-confessional RE in schools. Multi-culturalism has been how we manage difference. The multi-faith paradigm echoes this. A plethora of multi-faith bodies have emerged which reach out to ethnic and religious minorities which the Church of England struggles to reach.

While the press release goes on to say that 'Near Neighbours will be set up as a charity by the Church Urban Fund and Church of England to foster better understanding and relationships between people of different faiths' (www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours accessed 01.03.2011), it also makes clear that 'People of any faith will be able to bid for funding through the local parish church'. In light of vicarious religion and in a context of religious plurality, *Near Neighbours* is likely to raise questions for people from other denominations, let alone other faith traditions, about what 'multi-faith' really means in a context which requires all faiths and traditions to access funding via the Anglican church. Government may see in the Church of England the ability to lead the faith contribution, but will people of other faiths, and none? And what can 'multi-faith' really mean when policy appears to construct the Church of England at the policy gateway and everybody else in the queue waiting to get through it?

The other 'clue' seems to run somewhat counter to the first, and is rather harder to spot. It is found in the government programme to train 500 paid 'community organisers' and mentor a further 4,500, as people who will be key in helping deliver the Coalition government's vision of the 'Big Society' (describing the removal of state programmes and intervention in favour of a market of self-help, social enterprise and mutuality). The £20m contract for training these organisers has been awarded to LOCALITY, a new body formed from the merging of the Development Trust Association (DTA) and the British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (BASSAC). Their partnership to train community organisers also includes the Faith Based Regeneration Network (FbRN), a multi-faith body which until early 2011 was represented through its Executive Director on the Faith Communities Consultative Council which advised the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and has since been disbanded. FbRN's position in the LOCALITY programme, and in relation to *Near Neighbours*, may be indicative of

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the shifts which can be detected in the policy ground: first there is a shift represented in *Near Neighbours* from a broadly owned and distributed multi-faith paradigm in which many traditions, and none, have a stake, to one in which the Church of England gate-keeps a primary funding stream and is revalorised as 'national church'; second, support for the remainder of the faith-based contribution is also moved from a central and active position in policy-making (through access to the Secretary of State) back in to the general hurly-burly of the contested civil society arena, where it can try its luck alongside everyone else. Perhaps this accounts too for the disappearance of 'community cohesion' from the rhetoric of *Near Neighbours* in favour of the goal of 'social interaction – to develop positive relationships in multi-faith areas' and 'social action – to encourage people of different faiths, or no faith, to come together for initiatives that improve their local neighbourhood'. Is this potentially oppressive to faith traditions other than Anglicanism who thought the multi-faith paradigm was the future?

In the end, the multi-faith paradigm proves a conundrum. It has no religious creed, buildings, explicit practices, or formal leaders. It struggles to deliver complex partnership and the broadest of participation. It finds it especially hard to engage with the marginalised, radicalised and extreme whom policy-makers most want to address. In these ways, multi-faith practices risk constituting a parallel world running alongside 'real' faith communities, seeming to respond to policy hopes but unable to bring constituencies of faith with them. To this extent the multi-faith paradigm remains a construct of policy hopefulness. In terms of hope for what, the fit between the vision for a multi-faith society and being a multi-faith body is one in which the New Labour government turns out to have been unambitious anyway – largely limiting its hopes to making efforts to accept there is plurality and preventing people from falling out with each other; and harnessing faith groups to provide services. The pressing questions next are whether current and future policy-makers can make something more substantive of the multi-faith paradigm, will they want to, and what happens if it is abandoned. The challenge, should policy-makers really want faith-based cohesion and services, is to work out how to make multi-faith practices some sort of highest state, genuinely reflecting a deeply thought through, widely owned and dynamic commitment to acting together.

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