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CIVIL RELIGIONS IN DERBY, 1930–2000*

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ABSTRACT. *This article explores the impact of immigration on the social history of Derby, England, after the Second World War. In particular, it studies the changes in the city's religious culture associated with the decline of Christianity as the city's civil religion and the increased religious pluralism due to immigration. This local study challenges assumptions about the nature and timing of secularization, and the characterization of religion in late twentieth-century Britain as militant. As new communities from South Asia and the West Indies settled in Derby, their politicization resulted in a growing emphasis on their religious identity that countered interethnic conflict and fostered civil society. The Christian churches are an important part of this story as they found new ways of remaining relevant, sometimes in concert with members of other faith traditions. Between 1930 and 2000, Derby experienced a shift from a civil religion to an array of religions that were civil to each other and concerned for the good of society. Religion continued to play a constructive role in English society at the end of the twentieth century.*

Judith Raven was born in Derby in 1921. At eight, she moved to Upper Dale Road and began attending the church of St Giles, in whose parish she still lived in 2015. St Giles is the parish church of Normanton-by-Derby, a village that had long since been swallowed by the town. The parish stretched from some of Derby's principal industries, and the homes of migrant families who worked there, to middle-class suburbia. Judith Raven was thus well placed to observe some of the major social changes in England during her lifetime.

Raven remembers a happy childhood in a part of town that was working class and homogeneous. Even Catholics were thin on the ground. People were British and proud of it: Empire Day was a big occasion at school. The centre

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of Raven's social life was St Giles. Her parents did not attend, but sent her to Sunday school. She remembered the annual Sunday school outing, when the church hired a dray for the younger children and went to a field on the edge of the city for races and treats. Her mother was involved with the Mothers' Union. Raven made her close friends at the church and became part of its thriving social scene, which included a badminton club, a dramatic society, and an orchestra.[1]

In the 1950s, immigrants began arriving in Derby from the Caribbean and South Asia. By 1971, the city had 3,607 residents from India, 1,080 from Pakistan, and 2,205 from the West Indies. The majority lived either in or adjacent to the parish of St Giles in the streets around Normanton Road. They worked at the mile-long Leys foundry and at textile factories such as Celanese and Meridian.[2] They worked as bus conductors and as nurses in the National Health Service.[3] But aside from one West Indian man, Judith Raven and her husband, Eric, who arrived in Derby in 1950, had no memory of any of them attending St Giles, although some children from the West Indies came to Sunday school each week. When the Ravens moved to Sunnyhill Avenue in 1963 the area was all white. Fifty years later, many of the people on their street had roots in South Asia. St Giles continued to flourish, with congregations similar to if not larger than they had been in the 1950s.[4] Yet during the lifetime of Judith Raven, the parish had experienced very rapid social change.

This article is a study of religion and social change in England between 1930 and the end of the century. It uses Derby as a case-study, examining how its religious character changed in the face of two major shifts: the declining social significance of Christianity and the establishing of new religious communities in the city. The article will argue that the historic, Christian civil religion of Derby gave way to a new era of civil religion and civil religions, in which multiple religious communities committed to the health of society lived together and built a new, multi-faith form of civil religion. The result is a picture of English society at the end of the twentieth century in which religion continued to play a significant and constructive role.

Secularization has long been the dominant paradigm for understanding religion in modern Britain.[5] Its basic premise, that the social significance of religion has declined, is hard to resist, especially for the period after 1945.

[1] Interviews with Judith and Eric Raven, 18 June 2014, 25 July 2014.

[2] Interview with Soshain Bali, 17 June 2014.

[3] Interviews with Edna Williamson, 10 June 2014; Gloria Newell, 17 June 2014; and Vida Johnson, 17 June 2014; H. S. Bains, *Asians in Derby* (Derby, 1982?), p. 4.

[4] Interview with Judith and Eric Raven, 25 July 2014; email from Chris Cremin, 28 July 2014; St Giles Register of Services, D3611/7/3, Derbyshire Record Office, Matlock, Derbyshire (DRO).

[5] The best introduction to secularization theory is S. Bruce, *Secularization: in defence of an unfashionable theory* (Oxford, 2011). For a discussion of recent developments in the historiography relating to secularization, see D. Erdozain, '"Cause is not quite what it used to be": the return of secularization', *English Historical Review*, 525 (2012), pp. 377–400. See also J. Morris, 'The

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Debates have therefore centred on the nature and extent of the phenomenon. Perhaps the two most influential contributions have come from Grace Davie, who argued that popular religion was still alive and well in Britain, with most people retaining basic Christian beliefs even if they never went to church, and Callum Brown, who in a series of studies has argued that changes in gender discourse in the 1960s affected women's attitudes to everything from sex to family to religion, with one result being a decline in churchgoing in their own lives and those of their children.[6] Brown is one of many scholars who further the discussion of the causes, timing, and nature of secularization, while others such as Davie have argued either against simplistic notions of secularization or for some form of desecularization. There is a growing willingness, however, to acknowledge truth in both pictures. This is the position of Linda Woodhead and Paul Weller, for example, with Weller describing Britain as now Christian, secular, and religiously plural.[7] Davie's most recent work fits this category.[8]

This article contributes to these debates through a local study of individual, conventional religion in multiple religious communities and its relationship to civic religion. All five of these characteristics are important. There are some excellent local studies of Christianity in England in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and even the early twentieth centuries, but few for the period after the Second World War.[9] As churchgoing declined, it became easy to assume that one could understand English religion through the single lens of secularization theory, and most debates on the subject take place at a high level of national abstraction. One exception is Ian Jones's *The local church and generational change in Birmingham, 1945–2000*, a study of six churches in Birmingham that gives a satisfyingly complex picture of the fortunes of Christianity in Birmingham after the Second World War. There is a need, however, for

strange death of Christian Britain: another look at the secularization debate', *Historical Journal*, 46 (2003), pp. 963–76.

[6] For Davie, see especially *Religion in Britain since 1945: believing without belonging* (Oxford, 1994). For Brown, the two most important books are C. G. Brown, *The death of Christian Britain: understanding secularisation, 1800–2000* (London, 2001), and idem, *Religion and the demographic revolution: women and secularisation in Canada, Ireland, UK and USA since the 1960s* (Woodbridge, 2012). For an interdisciplinary response to Brown, see J. Garnett, M. Grimley, A. Harris, W. Whyte, and S. Williams, eds., *Redefining Christian Britain: post-1945 perspectives* (London, 2007).

[7] P. Weller, *Time for a change: reconfiguring religion, state and society* (London, 2005), p. 111; L. Woodhead, 'Introduction', in L. Woodhead and R. Catto, eds., *Religion and change in modern Britain* (London, 2012), pp. 24–6.

[8] G. Davie, *Religion in Britain: a persistent paradox* (2nd edn, Chichester, 2015).

[9] See especially J. Cox, *The English churches in a secular society: Lambeth, 1870–1930* (Oxford, 1982); S. J. D. Green, *Religion in the age of decline: organisation and experience in industrial Yorkshire, 1870–1920* (Cambridge, 1996); J. N. Morris, *Religion and urban change: Croydon, 1840–1914* (London, 1992); M. Smith, *Religion in industrial society: Oldham and Saddleworth, 1740–1865* (Oxford, 1994); S. C. Williams, *Religious belief and popular culture in Southwark, c. 1880–1939* (Oxford, 1999).

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more case-studies of lived religion in modern Britain.[10] Second, there is a growing body of work on migrants in post-war Britain, but typically these studies are limited to one ethnic or religious group and they often pay only modest attention to religion. Moreover, they are more often the work of sociologists and geographers than historians, and even when there are local studies, these typically focus on the cities with the largest migrant populations, such as London, Birmingham, and Bradford, which are unlikely to be representative.[11] Matthew Grimley has provided a useful study of the Church of England and multi-culturalism, but his focus is on the institutional church at the national level.[12] The closest analogue to the current project is Chris Baker's study of religion in Manchester in the twenty-first century, but it does not describe or explain change over time.[13] Thirdly, much of the debate surrounding Christianity in twentieth-century Britain has focused on popular religion, or common religion: the religion of those who continue to believe in the supernatural and pray but do not go to church.[14] This has been a good argument against simple notions of secularization, but it has had the effect of marginalizing those

[10] I. Jones, *The local church and generational change in Birmingham, 1945–2000* (Woodbridge, 2012). The churches Jones studied were predominantly historic and therefore white. When he was drawing up his list of churches to study, he did approach the city's large, charismatic churches – which would almost certainly have had a much greater number of non-white members – but none of them were willing to take part; Jones, *The local church*, p. 14. For a local study of popular religion during the Second World War, see S. Parker, *Faith on the home front: aspects of church life and popular religion in Birmingham, 1939–1945* (Bern, 2005).

[11] See for example P. Hopkins and R. Gale, eds., *Muslims in Britain: race, place and identities* (Edinburgh, 2009); R. Gale and S. Naylor, 'Religion, planning and the city: the spatial politics of ethnic minority expression in British cities and towns', *Ethnicities*, 2 (2002), pp. 387–409; J. Chatterji and D. Washbrook, eds., *The Routledge handbook of the South Asian diaspora* (London, 2013); P. Weller, 'Addressing religious discrimination and Islamophobia: Muslims and liberal democracies, the case of the United Kingdom', *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 17 (2006), pp. 295–325; D. Goodhart, *The British dream: successes and failures of post-war immigration* (London, 2013); J. White, *London in the twentieth century* (London, 1991), ch. 4; T. Abbas, ed., *Muslim Britain: communities under pressure* (London, 2005); H. Ansari, *The 'infidel' within: Muslims in Britain since 1800* (London, 2004); R. Weight and A. Beach, eds., *The right to belong: citizenship and national identity in Britain, 1930–1960* (London, 1983); D. Feldman, 'Why the English like turbans: multicultural politics in British history', in D. Feldman and J. Lawrence, eds., *Structures and transformations in modern British history* (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 281–302; and Woodhead and Catto, eds., *Religion and change*, passim. The dominance of non-historians in the field is long-standing; see C. Holmes, *A tolerant country? Immigrants, refugees and minorities in Britain* (London, 1991), p. 1.

[12] M. Grimley, 'The Church of England, race and multi-culturalism, 1962–2012', in J. Garnett and A. Harris, eds., *Rescripting religion in the city: migration and religious identity in the modern metropolis* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 207–21.

[13] C. Baker, 'The contagion of the sacred and the right to the city: modalities of belonging, becoming and participating amongst diasporic religious communities and the growth of the post-secular city', in Garnett and Harris, eds., *Rescripting religion*, pp. 89–101.

[14] See especially Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: believing without belonging*, and Williams, *Religious belief and popular culture*. On distinctions between common religion, conventional religion, and other types, see G. Ahern and G. Davie, *Inner city God: the nature of belief in the inner city* (London, 1987).

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whose actions suggested that they were the ones for whom religious belief was most important. This article is most interested in civil religion in Derby but it explores this in large part through studying the conventional religion of those who attended churches, gurdwaras, mosques, and temples, on people whose self-understanding was often highly religious in nature. Callum Brown has made a useful recent contribution by studying those who claim no religion at all, but it is not possible to understand religion in modern Britain if we see those who remained committed as deviants from the norms of secularism and popular religion.[15] This also explains, fourthly, why individuals are central to the story told here. Modern British religious history is usually portrayed with broad brush strokes. This is true for Davie's characterizations of the religious nature of British society, Hugh McLeod's history of the religious crisis of the 1960s, and Brown's depictions of the changing discourses that moulded people's lives. By contrast, this study follows James Hinton's call for a biographical turn in history, which would allow us to glimpse 'those deeply personal processes from which history's vast impersonal forces are, in the end, constructed'.[16] This article will therefore privilege the stories of those who walked through and therefore helped to form the changing cultural and religious landscape of post-war England.

This article is interested in more than people's private religious lives, however. It is also a study of the changing place of religion in Derby's civic life. At the end of the Second World War, Christianity was still a significant part of the city's culture. It was Derby's civil religion. People saw their city as part of a national society with a semi-sacred quality.[17] This civil religion was expressed in what David Martin and Rebecca Catto have described as 'a contingent union of selected aspects of Christianity, neighbourliness, proverbial wisdom, Stoic courage, and loyalty to country, realm and polity'.[18] The article will argue that this civil religion faded in the years after the war, but it was to return in a new form. Over time, members of Derby's new religious communities wanted to make a contribution to the civic good of their adopted city, and Christians too reimagined and reconfigured their social role to the same end. The result was a new civil religion, more concerned with local society than national identity and tied to religion in general and not only Christianity. It was also an era of civil religions, in which religious groups worked together for the good of the city and resisted extremism. Here, the article challenges Callum Brown's characterization of religion in late twentieth-century Britain

[15] See for example Davie, *Religion in Britain since 1945: believing without belonging*, pp. 199–200; Brown, *Religion and the demographic revolution*.

[16] J. Hinton, *Nine wartime lives: Mass-Observation and the making of the modern self* (New York, NY, 2010), pp. 204–5.

[17] G. Ganiel and P. Jones, 'Religion, politics and law', in Woodhead and Catto, eds., *Religion and change*, p. 300.

[18] D. Martin with R. Catto, 'The religious and the secular', in Woodhead and Catto, eds., *Religion and change*, p. 377.

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as militant. Brown supports his position by focusing on the Christian charismatic movement, the controversy over Salman Rushdie's *Satanic verses*, Orthodox Judaism in north London, Presbyterianism in the Scottish Highlands, Roman Catholic social thought, and Ulster Unionism.[19] These phenomena grabbed headlines but they reflect only part of British religious life in the closing years of the twentieth century.[20] Looking at the breadth of religious experience in Derby suggests that Brown's sample is unrepresentative and his characterization of religion in late twentieth-century Britain therefore misleading.

The broader applicability of any local study is always questionable, but Derby has advantages for a study of religion in modern England. Its greatest attraction may be just how unremarkable it is. Twentieth-century Derby is famous only for its 1970s football teams and its engineering, notably its railway works and Rolls Royce's nuclear and aero engine divisions. Historians have ignored it.[21] It is a small city, with a population of 141,267 according to the 1951 census and 248,752 in 2001. Politically, Derby has leaned left but not exclusively so: both of the city's constituencies, Derby North and Derby South, voted Labour for more than sixty years after their creation in 1950, with the exception of a spell of support for the Conservative party in Derby South between 1983 and 1987. Derby experienced significant immigration after the Second World War, but the city did not become a major centre for West Indian or South Asian settlement in the way that others in the English Midlands did, notably Birmingham and Leicester. By the time of the 2001 census, Derby was home to 19,006 Muslims, 8,891 Sikhs, and 2,198 Hindus; Buddhists, Jews, and all others claiming a religion other than Christianity amounted to fewer than 2,000 people. For all these reasons, Derby is more likely to provide a representative picture of the impact of immigration on English society than London, Birmingham, or Chichester.

Part I of the article chronicles the decline of civil religion in Derby after 1950. This was a major change for a society where Christianity had long been a dominant social force. Part II looks at the arrival of citizens from the West Indies and South Asia from the 1950s and the initial responses to this change from long-term residents up to the mid-1970s. It is possible to see the emerging characteristics of a different society during these decades, but this part of the article will emphasize the uncertainties and a range of different possible trajectories by privileging the stories of the migrants. This section and the following one make use of a series of interviews conducted in Derby in 2014–15.[22] Part III

[19] C. G. Brown, *Religion and society in twentieth-century Britain* (Harlow, 2006), pp. 297–314.

[20] Davie has commented on the distorted picture of religion given in the media; Davie, *Religion in Britain: a persistent paradox*, p. 64.

[21] The exception is R. Stevens, '"Rapid demise or slow death?" The Independent Labour Party in Derby, 1932–1945', *Midland History*, 22 (1997), pp. 113–30.

[22] One challenge has been the extent to which the interviewees' memories have been coloured by their experiences since the events they describe. This is a particular problem with representatives of migrant communities that have become increasingly politicized over the

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studies the development of the major faith communities in Derby after 1975 and the way this changed the religious culture of the town. The article concludes that Derby entered an era of civil religions and renewed civil religion.

I

Popular religion, civil religion, and conventional religion were all prominent in Derby in the 1930s and 1940s. Judith Raven remembers her friends all going to Sunday school, most of them assuming the rightness of Christian morals even if they did not practise them; the newspapers regularly reflected all three.[23] The principal local daily newspaper, the *Derby Evening Telegraph*, often linked religion, civic life, and moral values. As it did so, Christianity was usually explicit. It was not always clear whether civil, popular, or conventional religion was in view, but it is clear that the newspaper nurtured a discourse that made Christian beliefs and practices appear normal and normative. Civil religion, which included religious observance, moral rectitude, and commitment to civic involvement, was the goal. Over time, however, this vision atrophied and the attendant discourse lost its position of influence in the pages of the local paper. This section describes civil religion in Derby and its decline after the Second World War.

Prior to 1960, the *Derby Evening Telegraph* regularly gave space to clergymen's positions on a contemporary social or moral issue. The bishop of Derby explained and advocated a biblical view of sex.[24] Rev. Douglas R. Jones provided a biblical rationale for opposition to flogging.[25] A Methodist minister argued that 'traffic in intoxicants and the Christian religion are utterly irreconcilable'.[26] R. Motson Thomson, a Congregational minister, wrote a regular Saturday column that provided conservative comment on subjects including divorce, greed, and swearing.[27] The paper even reported on a speech by the bishop of Oxford, who expressed the fear that 'moral paralysis' was 'spreading over the nation'.[28] Clergy writing or quoted in the paper were often critical of the status quo but assumed a set of shared values consistent with Christianity's special place in Britain's history and society.

past sixty years. Interviews therefore may tell us as much about Britain in 2014 as in 1964. Historians have recognized that this process is in itself useful (for a good introduction to these debates, see the discussion in Alessandro Portelli, 'The peculiarities of oral history', *History Workshop Journal*, 12 (1981), pp. 96–107).

[23] Interview with Judith Raven, 24 June 2015.

[24] 'Bishop on sex problems', *Derby Evening Telegraph* (*DET*; the paper was produced as the *Derby Daily Telegraph* until Mar. 1932), 26 Jan. 1937, p. 5.

[25] D. R. Jones, 'Christianity, not flogging as crime cure', *DET*, 28 Mar. 1950, p. 11.

[26] 'Derby attack on drink', *DET*, 22 Nov. 1937, p. 5.

[27] E.g. R. M. Thompson, 'I suspect men with swearing habit', *DET*, 15 Apr. 1950, p. 3, and idem, 'We need a fiery crusade against drink', *DET*, 6 Aug. 1955, p. 5.

[28] 'Defeatism "naked and unashamed"', *DET*, 8 May 1947, p. 4.

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Political and civic leaders also appealed to religious beliefs and values. A local councillor protested against cemetery inspections taking place on Sundays.[29] The mayor alluded to heaven and encouraged people to read the Bible.[30] An alderman's wife blamed people outside the church for many of the world's wrongs.[31] Allan Reid, local Conservative MP between 1931 and 1945, urged people to support the church, arguing that 'the only remedy' for the world's ills lay in 'a return to God'.[32] At the opening of a new Sunday school in Derby in 1937, Labour MP Philip Noel-Baker declared: 'We need in our national life to-day greater strength for what we sometimes call the spiritual forces.'[33]

Christianity was especially prominent in the pages of the *Telegraph* at Easter and Christmas. In 1930, it noted large congregations on both Good Friday and Easter Sunday, and the same was true at the end of the decade.[34] There were articles by clergymen and reports on the bishop's Easter address.[35] At Christmas, there were often messages from the mayor, the bishop, and the editors of the paper, all of whom used the occasion to encourage peace and goodwill in Derby. For example, in December 1930 an editorial commented on growing unemployment and privation, but said there were 'signs that a better time is coming, and they can be deepened by the co-operation of all classes. The old message of peace on earth and good will towards men still rings true.'[36] The following year, the mayor wrote that the message of peace and goodwill that came with the birth of Christ 'was meant to be applied at all times and seasons of the year'.[37] In 1939, the bishop used the occasion to encourage all Christians in Derbyshire to attend church, so that Christmas day might find everyone 'assembled in church for an act of corporate worship at the feet of the Redeemer whose coming into the world is on that day commemorated'.[38] In 1947, the paper published a doctrinally rich Christmas poem by a local writer.[39]

Civil religion could be seen in more indirect ways, too. Adverts frequently mentioned religious festivals and holidays as an enticement to buy. Writers assumed that people would know terms such as incarnation and canon law.[40]

[29] 'Spondon councillor's protest at Sunday cemetery inspection', *DET*, 8 July 1937, p. 7.

[30] 'The mayor of Derby and age', *DET*, 16 Feb. 1937, p. 5; 'The mayor's advice on Bible reading', *DET*, 8 July 1937, p. 4.

[31] 'Church being killed by carping criticism', *DET*, 11 Nov. 1937, p. 5.

[32] 'World neglect of church', *DET*, 21 June 1937, p. 5.

[33] 'Forces of spiritual strength', *DET*, 10 May 1937, p. 5.

[34] 'Good Friday services', *DET*, 19 Apr. 1930, p. 5; 'Easter celebrations in Derby and district', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 21 Apr. 1930, p. 9; 'A Derby man's diary', *DET*, 10 Apr. 1939, p. 4.

[35] See e.g. C. H. Hodgson, 'An Easter message', *DET*, 11 Apr. 1936, p. 4; 'Civilisation's futility', *DET*, 13 Apr. 1936, p. 8.

[36] 'A merry Xmas', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 24 Dec. 1930, p. 4.

[37] Letter from W. H. Salisbury, *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 24 Dec. 1931, p. 4.

[38] A. E. J. Rawlinson, 'Bishop's Christmas message to diocese', *DET*, 23 Dec. 1939, p. 5.

[39] 'A Christmas poem', *DET*, 24 Dec. 1947, p. 3.

[40] 'Christmas at Derby churches', *DET*, 27 Dec. 1937, p. 6; 'Need for readjustment in church–state relations', *DET*, 13 Apr. 1950, p. 5.

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In 1950, the *Telegraph* took notice of a local campaign to ban the selling of ice cream on Sundays.[41] It reported on the ringing of church bells that were part of the 1951 Festival of Britain celebrations.[42]

None of this is to say that the people of Derby were especially devout. Indeed, those who wrote in the *Derby Evening Telegraph* often remarked on the gap between public pronouncements of faith and the lack of faithful practice. One example comes from as early as 1932, when a correspondent contrasted the presence at Easter services among 'even the most indifferent', which showed that 'the religious spirit is still deep-rooted in the masses of our countrymen', with 'the apathy which is shown during the remainder of the year'.[43] The columns of R. Morton Thompson reveal his own struggle to make sense of a country that seemed so Christian and non-Christian at the same time. In 1948, he bemoaned how many ignored Easter: 'the day on which the Lord of All Good Life was crucified becomes a holiday with men and women bent on the pursuit of their own pleasures'.[44] Two years later, he wrote: 'for the great majority of people in this country, Easter is just a holiday. It bears no religious significance at all for them…[T]his country…is now largely pagan.'[45]

By the mid-1950s, Christianity was fading in the pages of the *Derby Evening Telegraph*. Those who took the paper read less and less about what had previously been the religious foundation of their city's public life. The discourse that undergirded civil religion was disappearing. Easter saw fewer comments on churches and more on holidaying by the sea.[46] Articles at Christmas focused more on shopping and the royal family and less on the Christ child.[47] Addresses from the bishop and Christian encouragement from the mayor all but disappeared.

Indicative of the change was the way the paper dealt with two public disagreements over football matches during this period. In 1952, the Milford British Legion planned a parade and a game of football for Good Friday. The local vicar protested, saying that 'the anniversary of Our Lord's crucifixion should not be held in such contempt'. 'On national occasions, such as days of prayer, the Milford branch of the Legion sends representatives to the parish church and I am always glad to receive them. As recently as last year there was a special service for the dedication of the branch banner.' To the vicar, this all looked 'illogical' and 'inconsistent', but evidently not to those

[41] 'Objections to Sunday ice cream', *DET*, 29 Mar. 1950, p. 8.
[42] 'Festival bells at Derby', *DET*, 7 May 1951, p. 5.
[43] 'A Derby man's diary', *DET*, 28 Mar. 1932, p. 4.
[44] *DET*, 20 Mar. 1948, p. 3.
[45] 'Easter message holds only hope for this tired world', *DET*, 8 Apr. 1950, p. 6.
[46] E.g. 'All ready for Easter rush', *DET*, 9 Apr. 1952, p. 6; 'Rain or shine, many to travel at Easter', *DET*, 15 Apr. 1954, p. 6.
[47] E.g. 'Christmas boom is biggest-ever in Derby', *DET*, 23 Dec. 1955, p. 1; 'The royal family's Christmas', *DET*, 27 Dec. 1955, p. 1; 'Royal party go to Sandringham', *DET*, 23 Dec. 1963, p. 1; 'Christmas Eve shoppers shiver', *DET*, 24 Dec. 1963, p. 1.

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running the local branch of the British Legion, who were quite happy to make use of the church for civic purposes even though they had no intention of going there on Good Friday.[48] Two years later, there were objections to a Good Friday match in Duffield, but the local council was on the side of the organizers. In its reporting of the argument, this time the *Telegraph* dispatched its correspondent not to the vicarage but, it seems, to the pub. One Mr E. S. Hansbury did not think that anyone should 'force their faith down other people's throats', while Mr Penington did not think that those who would go to the football match would have attended church anyway.[49] By 1972, the paper's 'Cute Easter chick' had a bikini, not feathers.[50] Derby saw a transition from an era in which Christian cultural norms were respected even if people did not go to church to one in which people felt free neither to attend nor respect the norms.

More local studies would provide a more precise chronology of religious change in post-war Britain. Reading the *Derby Evening Telegraph* suggests that Christianity as civil religion faded before what Callum Brown, Hugh McLeod, and others have identified as the religious crisis of the 1960s.[51] There is a contrast here to the national press and parliament, where protestations of national religion were more consistent into the early 1960s.[52] This is unsurprising: national leaders who saw themselves as in some way guardians of the nation's soul would be more likely than journalists in Derby to continue to speak of England as a Christian country and thereby uphold a central plank of civil religion. The evidence from Derby's press does not support Brown's picture of a mild religious revival in the 1950s followed by a sudden decline in the discourses that undergirded Christian faith and practice in the 1960s.[53]

There is one part of the experience of Derby that appears to fit Brown's chronology, but even that serves to underline the point being made here. Empire Youth Sunday, later Commonwealth Youth Sunday, began at the time of George VI's coronation in 1937. A variety of worthies formed this organization, which encouraged young people throughout the empire to imitate their sovereign in dedicating their lives to God and the service of the realm. The heart of the movement was uniformed youth organizations joining local dignitaries at a Christian service.[54] It became popular in many English parishes and colonies after the Second Word War, and the *Derby Evening Telegraph* reported

[48] 'Good Friday football: protest by vicar', *DET*, 9 Apr. 1952, p. 1.

[49] 'Council will not object to the revival of Good Friday game', *DET*, 14 Apr. 1954, p. 14.

[50] 'Pretty girls, bonnets, eggs – and bears', *DET*, 4 Apr. 1972, p. 10.

[51] This parallels the argument made in S. J. D. Green, *The passing of Protestant England: secularisation and social change, c. 1920–1960* (Cambridge, 2011).

[52] Alister Chapman, 'The international context of secularization in England: the end of empire, immigration, and the decline of Christian national identity, 1945–1970', *Journal of British Studies*, 53 (2015), pp. 163–89, at pp. 166–74.

[53] Brown, *The death of Christian Britain*, passim.

[54] Lord Elton, *Commonwealth Youth Sunday, 1937–1962: a history* (n.p., 1962), p. 3.

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on the annual celebrations. In 1950, the mayor received the salute on the steps of the council house before 300 youth from the scouts, the guides, the St John's Ambulance, the Derby Arts Club Brass Band, the Girls' Life Brigade, and the army, sea, and air cadets, who then marched on to the cathedral for a service.[55] In 1958, 700 took part. The preacher stressed the importance of 'allegiance to Queen and God' and 'pride for our country and what is has done'.[56] By 1962, 1,000 were in the parade.[57] Two years later, numbers were still high, yet the paper noted that this would be the final Commonwealth Youth Sunday.[58] The national leaders of the movement were disbanding it. Records from the central office reveal some of the reasons for their decisions. Participation was down in many English parishes, and the newly independent states of Africa and Asia had lost their enthusiasm. Its leaders were now also able to see the anomaly of a movement that centred on a Christian act of worship in a commonwealth where the 'great majority' were not Christians.[59] Conservatives from London with a robust vision of Britain and its Christian mission in the world organized Commonwealth Youth Sunday and for a while it seemed to be going from strength to strength in Derby.[60] But when the national leadership saw in the mid-1960s that Christian Britain and the commonwealth were not what they once were, they abruptly killed the movement. Civil religion was not what it had been. Readers of the *Derby Evening Telegraph* could have seen, or perhaps admitted, that before the elites in London. For a decade, Commonwealth Youth Sunday stood out in the paper's pages as a vestige of a time when Christianity was the city's public religion, attendance ensured by leaders of youth organizations for which it had become part of the calendar.

The change did not take place overnight and it was not total. Civil religion reappeared, as when the bishop of Derby made public comment on road safety in 1966, and the *Telegraph* still reported on Good Friday processions through the city.[61] But that the paper now published an edition on Good Friday was the telling sign.

This is not to say that Derby's churches were emptying during this period, nor that they had given up on the idea of social influence. In the future, however,

[55] 'Mayor takes salute from youth parade', *DET*, 22 May 1950, p. 2.
[56] 'Rain spoils youth Sunday in Derby', *DET*, 19 May 1958, p. 4.
[57] '1,000 parade for Youth Sunday', *DET*, 5 June 1962, p. 8.
[58] '750 in youth parade at Derby', *DET*, 11 May 1964, p. 1.
[59] 'The reasons for the discontinuance of the observance', *Commonwealth Youth Sunday: report for 1964*, Royal Commonwealth Society Library Collections, Cambridge University Library, R11/43.
[60] Although one must remember the element of tacit coercion that would have been involved with getting these youth to participate: if they were in the sea cadets, they would have had little choice about attending the service. On coercion and religion, see Bruce, *Secularization*, p. 55.
[61] 'Road safety depends on law – and love, bishop', *DET*, 30 July 1966, p. 5; 'More join in Good Friday procession', *DET*, 10 Apr. 1971, p. 13.

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the churches would have to forge a social role without the support provided by a widely shared Christian cultural consensus.

Civil religion was thus already on the way out before non-Christian immigrants started to arrive in Derby in the 1950s. One can argue that this was good timing, for it made it much less likely that English whites would base antagonism towards newcomers on religion, as had been the case with Irish immigrants in the nineteenth century. It certainly made for a cleaner slate on which to build what would have to be a new public religious culture. Religion would again find an important social role. That was not clear, however, when immigrants from the Caribbean and South Asia began to arrive in Derby. It is to their experience, and that of the long-term residents who received them, that we now turn.

II

There have been four major phases of immigration to Derby. The first, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was Irish Catholics. The second took place during the 1940s, when Poles and other people displaced by the Second World War came to the city. The third wave came from the West Indies and South Asia between the 1950s and 1980s. The fourth has occurred during the twenty-first century and is associated with the expansion of the European Union and Derby's designation as a refugee dispersal centre in 2001. This article focuses on the third of these, but it is important to note that there were immigrants in Derby before people started to arrive from Jamaica, India, and Pakistan. The Irish had by and large assimilated, but the East Europeans were still new in the 1950s. In 1950, the *Derby Evening Telegraph* reported that there were 2,000 'aliens' in the city.[62] In 1953, the paper provided Christmas greetings 'to our readers from other lands' in Polish, French, Serbo-Croatian, Hungarian, German, Lithuanian, Italian, Dutch, Ukrainian, Spanish, Rumanian, Latvian, Estonian, and Czech.[63] Reports of ethnic tension were rare, one exception being the banning of Polish, Latvian, and Czech men from a Derby ballroom because of rowdy behaviour.[64]

By 1961, Derby had 880 residents from India, 232 from Pakistan, and 1,077 from the West Indies. On rare occasions, they came as professional people with university training, for example Subrata Dasgupta who arrived in Derby in 1953 as a doctor.[65] In the main, however, they came in search of a good education for their children and work – in factories, textiles, or the National Health Service.[66]

[62] 'Alien did not report move to Derby', *DET*, 24 Mar. 1950, p. 4.
[63] 'They will have no traditional Christmas dinners', *DET*, 23 Dec. 1952, p. 3.
[64] 'Poles banned from Derby ballroom', *DET*, 8 Apr. 1950, p. 1.
[65] S. Dasgupta, *Salaam Stanley Matthews* (London, 2006), p. 20.
[66] Interview with Mohammed Riasat, 18 June 2014; interview with Raj Bali, 12 June 2014; interview with Edna Williamson; interview with Hardial Singh Dhillon, 14 June 2014; interview

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This section recounts the experiences of people in this wave of immigration. It does not emphasize religion, for that was not typically central to their initial encounter with British life. Over time, however, many developed a growing sense of religious difference, the beginnings of which will be covered in this section.

For adults who came, early memories centred on the industrial nature of Derby, the climate of England, and the difficulty of finding work. Edna Williamson (neé Lilly) arrived from Jamaica as a twenty-six-year-old in 1962. She struggled to find work, but found it difficult to believe that there were no jobs as she watched factories belch smoke. She had been a teacher in Jamaica, but a receptionist at the doctor's told her that she would never be able to do that in England. When she applied to train as a nurse, she was initially rebuffed by someone who told her that they already had their full complement of colonial nurses.[67] Vida Johnson, also from Jamaica, saw all the chimney pots on houses and thought they were factories. On especially foggy days, her sister would listen for Johnson's bus and then call to her from the front stoop so she could find her way home.[68] Soshain Bali, an Indian who arrived from Kenya in 1974, remembered the transition being especially difficult for his mother, who found it hard to find employment. On one occasion, a company told her of a job by phone, only to tell her that there was no vacancy when she turned up in her sari.[69] Gloria Newell, an arrival from Jamaica in 1956, recalled a similar experience.[70]

Those who came as children tell a complex story of their experience at schools in Derby. Those who arrived in the 1950s and 1960s recalled incidences of racism, but also interethnic friendship and kindness. Subrata Dasgupta came to Derby as a nine-year-old in 1953. For most of the time, he was the only non-white at his school, and on occasion his classmates called him brownie. There was also a stern female teacher at a Catholic school he attended briefly who insisted, to his dismay, that all the pupils learn the catechism. But alongside painful stories of dislocation, Dasgupta spoke of friendships built through playing and watching football with local white boys.[71] Mohammad Riasat came as a nine-year-old to join his father in Derby in 1961. He was the youngest Pakistani in the city, and the first at all the schools he attended. He remembered his teachers as kind and patient as he struggled to pick up English (there was no specialized instruction at the time). Others welcomed him in part because he was very good at sports, eventually playing football for the Derby Boys team.[72] Hardial Singh Dhillon came to join his father at thirteen in 1966. His Sikh

with Vida Johnson, 17 June 2014; interview with Gloria Newell, 17 June 2014. For a brief introduction to the push and pull factors relating to work, see Holmes, *A tolerant country?*, pp. 49–52.

[67] Interview with Edna Williamson.

[68] Interview with Vida Johnson.

[69] Interview with Soshain Bali.

[70] Interview with Gloria Newell.

[71] Dasgupta, *Salaam Stanley Matthews*, pp. 31–43, 56, 81–96.

[72] Interview with Mohammed Riasat.

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father had been attracted to Derby by the prospect of work, and had found a job at a local foundry. Neither had much English, and school was a difficult transition for Hardial. On his father's orders, he cut his hair before his first day (although the English barber he approached refused to do it, saying that he did not want sin on his hands). Most teachers were kind, but when his French teacher caught him speaking Punjabi to a neighbour as he tried to make sense of the lesson, the teacher made him stand up, put a pencil between his outstretched fingers and twisted hard.[73] By the time that Soshain Bali arrived in 1974, there were more South Asian students in his school. Racial slurs were more developed than in Dasgupta's time, if still inexact: while Dasgupta's friends thought he was perhaps African, Bali's called him a Paki as well as Sambo.[74] Over time, however, Bali, Riasat, and Singh settled in their schools and all succeeded.

Religion was not as important as ethnicity in the experience of these early migrants from South Asia. Most migrants to Derby came from rural areas of Punjab and Kashmir (many of the Sikhs were Jats, or farmers), areas with large numbers of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs, yet religion was often more assumed than articulated in these families.[75] The children went to schools that had a daily service of Christian worship, but this seemed to have bothered few of them. Their sense of difference rested on their ethnicity. Mohammed Riasat was not aware at first that the assembly at his school was Christian, but his understanding of Islam at the time was limited. He knew that he was not allowed to eat pork but, with no mosque in Derby when he arrived, there was little opportunity to learn more.[76] Hardial Singh Dhillon's father had little education and his understanding of the Sikh faith was modest. Hardial made friends at school with Muslims who spoke his language, and at the time felt there were few differences between them. Eventually, however, one Muslim boy began to encourage others not to say the prayers in assembly (receiving a caning as a result). Soshain Bali came from a Brahmin family that understood their Hindu faith better. He had already encountered greater religious diversity in Kenya, and so the Christian assemblies did not bother him.[77] Over time, migrants founded their own houses of worship, a process that featured heavily in people's recollections and contributed to a process of growing confidence that will be discussed in the next part of this article.

By contrast, Jamaican adults came to England planning to go to church, and some have memories of cold shoulders when they went.[78] Life was a little easier for Vida Johnson, a Seventh Day Adventist, who found a place in that

[73] Interview with Hardial Singh Dhillon.
[74] Interview with Soshain Bali.
[75] Interview with Raj Bali, 26 June 2015; see also J. Law, 'The religious beliefs and practices of Hindus in Derby', Community Religious Project Research Papers (Leeds, 1991), p. 11.
[76] Interview with Mohammed Riasat.
[77] Interview with Soshain Bali.
[78] Interviews with Edna Williamson, Gloria Newell, and Vida Johnson.

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denomination's congregation in Derby.[79] West Indians who went to Pear Tree Baptist Church found that the church had little idea of how to integrate them into the membership and ministry of the church.[80] It was not long, therefore, before West Indians began to form their own churches.

Most migrants came to the Pear Tree or Normanton Road area of Derby where housing was cheap and factories close. For the local schools, the question of how to integrate and educate a growing number of children, many of whom came with little or no English, was pressing. The minutes of the Derby Borough Teachers' Association reveal a group of people who, while sharing some of the prejudices of those long-time residents who feared that the presence of immigrant children would harm their own children, were working hard to serve the newcomers.[81] In the early 1960s, they asked for and got additional teachers, extra classroom space, greater administrative help, and improved welfare assistance, but they saw little improvement in the situation because of the rapid rise in the numbers of children coming from West Indian and South Asian families.[82] These numbers increased by 30 per cent in 1965 alone.[83] In 1966, they determined that of the 1,236 total immigrant pupils, only 359 had no problems with basic spoken and written English.[84] The records of one secondary modern school detail the struggles and kindnesses of these early years, telling of everything from girls assaulted by South Asian boys to teachers taking recent arrivals on a tour of Derbyshire and to a local clinic.[85]

Especially relevant for this article is the question of what schools did about their Christian assemblies. One of the buttresses of civil religion in Britain was the 1944 Butler Education Act, which had specified that each school day should include an act of corporate Christian worship. This became problematic as religious pluralism increased. One Derby school that addressed the question was Homelands School, a secondary modern school that by the 1980s had a majority of non-white children. In 1976, the staff held a meeting on 'Assembly in a Multi-cultural School'. In preparation for the meeting, teachers had been asked to submit their thoughts on paper. One teacher summarized one aspect of English civil religion: 'The folk-lore content of Christianity can be defended as relevant in its own right; i.e. it contains reference to moral ends desired in our society.' This teacher went on to ask whether it was possible to divide what he or she called the religious from the moral content of this type of

[79] Interview with Vida Johnson.

[80] S. Greasley, *Pear Tree Baptist Church, Derby, 1870–2000* (Derby, 2000), pp. 161–2.

[81] On parent concerns, see 'Children of coloured immigrants', Oct. 1964, p. 1, Derby Borough Education Minutes, D4989/3/10, DRO.

[82] 'Immigrant children', Derby Borough Education Minutes, Feb. 1966, D4989/3/10, DRO.

[83] Ibid., p. 1.

[84] Ibid., p. 3.

[85] 8 Feb. 1968, 17 July 1968, 28 Nov. 1968, Hardwick Secondary Modern Girls School Log Book, 1962–72, D6139/1/3, DRO.

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Christianity, and whether the moral dimension, which the school wanted to keep as a way of forming good citizens, could be 'incorporated into other value systems such as that of the Sikh, the Moslem or the Buddhist cults'. She or he wanted to split the ethical dimension of civil religion from its Christian roots. This teacher stated that part of what it meant for England to be a 'Christian society' was to bring into their religious services 'material…which can be found in the literature of other cultures'.[86] Another teacher, S. M. Wabe, raised the question of whether Christianity should retain its privileged place given the religious diversity of the school. Readings should now include 'items from other religions and cultures'. Wabe also raised the question of whether the point of assemblies was religious or social. She or he suggested the possibility of 'other religions having a separate assembly once a week', but was not sure whether having non-Christian assemblies might contravene the 1944 Education Act and worried that 'this might cause more problems by emphasizing divisions and differences'.[87] The vision of multi-culturalism at this school was integrationist, meaning that it recognized a majority group.[88] But it was clear to all the teachers that even the society serving, doctrinally light Christianity of the Homelands assembly was no longer going to work as the numbers of non-Christian pupils at the school grew. This became an issue at more schools in Derby as non-Christian families moved out of the areas in which they had initially settled and spread throughout the city.[89]

For all the stories of unwelcoming churches, many Christians were thinking about how to serve migrant families. Indeed, this was a way for the church to assert its civic usefulness at a time when, in the face of the declining social prominence of Christianity, some were calling for the church to re-engage social affairs.[90] Welcoming newcomers, helping them to settle, and fostering racial toleration were the important goals in these early years. The Derby and South

[86] 'Notes on assembly in school', 15 Jan. 1976, Minutes and Papers from Meetings, Homelands School, D5512/3/3/3, DRO. On the importance of the ecumenical movement and the Second Vatican Council for thinking of this sort, see J. Doney, 'The overlooked ecumenical background to the development of English religious education', in S. G. Parker, R. Freathy, and L. J. Francis, eds., *History, remembrance and religious education* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 139–66.

[87] S. M. Wabe, 'The place of assembly in the multi-racial school', Minutes and Papers from Meetings, Homelands School, D5512/3/3/3, DRO.

[88] Goodhart, *The British dream*, pp. 170–1. S. Parker and R. Freathy have shown that even the Birmingham *Agreed syllabus of religious instruction* (1975), which at the time caused widespread fears about the watering down of Christianity within schools, continued to emphasize the pre-eminence of Christianity for the curriculum; see S. G. Parker and R. J. K. Freathy, 'Ethnic diversity, Christian hegemony and the emergence of multi-faith religious education in the 1970s', *History of Education*, 41 (2012), pp. 381–404.

[89] See Greasley, *Pear Tree Baptist Church*, pp. 182–3.

[90] See for example 'Heard in Heanor', *Ilkeston Pioneer*, 10 Mar. 1967. On the churches' desire to re-engage society during this period, see S. Brewitt-Taylor, 'The invention of a "secular society"? Christianity and the sudden emergence of secularization discourses in the British media, 1961–1964', *Twentieth Century British History*, 24 (2013), pp. 327–50.

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Derbyshire Committee for Social Welfare Association reported on the efforts made by Mrs Gate at St James's church to start a playgroup to help South Asian children learn English before starting school.[91] The vicar of St Thomas's Anglican church on Pear Tree Road spoke of the Christians in the area who were helping with language tuition and called for the building of non-sectarian community centres to reduce ethnic tensions.[92] The Anglican diocese's missionary and ecumenical council wanted to draw up a list of people who could act as interpreters for Pakistanis, and people to whom they could turn for advice.[93]

The primary desire of the churches, however, was to see the immigrants come to church, so that they might become Christians or at least imbibe some of the ethical and cultural norms of Christianity. The churches were relatively successful with children. One quarter of the children at St Thomas's Church of England Sunday school were from immigrant families in 1966.[94] Across the street from St Thomas's, more than half of the 130 children at the Pear Tree Road Baptist Sunday school in 1968 were listed as 'coloured'.[95] West Indian children went on Sunday afternoons to St Augustine's Anglican church; the problem was that the parents did not 'follow their children to church'.[96] This was a common experience. Another church in the Pear Tree area, Dairy House Road Methodist, had an evening service attended by West Indians in 1955, but they soon moved on.[97] By 1960, the church was considering asking them whether they wanted to use the church for services of their own.[98] The church dwindled as the congregation aged and the local white population declined, but still in 1964 they resisted an invitation to amalgamate with another church because they felt they had 'a mission to the immigrant population in the neighbourhood'.[99] Within six years, the decision was made to close the

[91] Minutes, 21 Jan. 1966, Minutes of the Derby and South Derbyshire Committee for Social Welfare Association, 1963–70, D4956/33/4, DRO.

[92] Minutes, 29 Nov. 1973, Minutes of the Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council, D7140/1/5–6, DRO.

[93] Minutes, 17 Sept. 1975, Minutes of the Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council, D7140/1/3–4, DRO. In light of the evidence provided here, Clifford Longley's assertion in the *Times* in 1974 that the presence of other religions had 'scarcely had any impact on the life of the Christian churches' is questionable. Quoted in Parker and Freathy, 'Ethnic diversity', p. 388.

[94] Minutes, 22 Mar. 1966, St Thomas Parochial Church Council Minutes, D5447/2, DRO.

[95] Minutes, 7 Oct. 1968, Pear Tree Road Baptist Church Deacons Meeting Minutes, D2660 J/B 77/10, DRO.

[96] Minutes, 20 Mar. 1973 and 16 Mar. 1971, St Augustine's Derby Parochial Church Council Minute Book, 1947–74, D3307/12/3, DRO.

[97] Minutes, 25 Nov. 1955, Leaders Meeting, Dairy House Road Methodist Church, D4131/3/3, DRO; Minutes, 24 Mar. 1956, Leaders Meeting, Dairy House Road Methodist Church, D4131/3/4, DRO.

[98] Minutes, 21 Sept. 1960, Leaders Meeting, Dairy House Road Methodist Church, D4131/3/4, DRO.

[99] Minutes, 6 Sept. 1964, Leaders Meeting, Dairy House Road Methodist Church, D4131/3/5, DRO.

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church.[100] Pear Tree Road Baptist Church started an Indian Women's Group with tea once a week, but it does not seem to have taken off.[101] Personal relationships could be strong, as they were for Tony and Helen Lyon, a couple who went to a Pentecostal church on Whiston Street and then to St Giles Anglican church. Helen established a friendship with a Jamaican family who came to the Pentecostal church (the husband becoming one of the church's leaders), and the Lyons were good friends with a Sikh family that lived next door. But although the Lyons ferried West Indian children to Sunday school and Helen had South Asian children involved in a playgroup at St Giles (she delighted in having Asian wise men in the nativity play one year), the adults had little interest in the church.[102]

Derby changed a great deal between 1955 and 1975 as it became home to several thousand people who looked different and believed differently. How this would shape the city's culture was unclear, however. To what extent would the newcomers assimilate? Would language, ethnicity, or religion become determinative for their identities? Would racial antipathy ebb or rise? Would different ethnic and religious groups become politicized? Would they become enclaves or seek to serve society? How would the churches' attempts to reassert their civil role fare? That there would be a new Derby was obvious, but what would it be like? The next section offers a picture of some of its principal characteristics, with particular attention to the growing importance of religions for Derby's civil society.

III

When Hardial Singh Dhillon arrived in Derby in 1966, his family told him to keep his head down, fit in, and study hard. He was there to take advantage of English schools, and his parents did not want his Sikh background to get in the way: hence the order to cut his hair.[103] A similar picture emerges from the story of Mohammed Riasat, a Muslim who played football with white friends and did not grow a beard.[104] Both Singh and Riasat arrived, however, at a time when immigration and race were becoming major political issues in Britain. The first restriction on the free entry of commonwealth citizens had been in 1962; 1965 had the first race relations act, and 1968 witnessed both a new immigration act and Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. One result was the politicization of the immigrant communities along ethnic lines, and one could see evidence of this in Derby. The Derby West Indian

[100] Minutes, 22 July 1972, Leaders Meeting, Dairy House Road Methodist Church, D4131/3/5, DRO.
[101] Minutes, 24 Mar. 1969, Pear Tree Road Baptist Church Deacons Meeting Minutes, D2660 J/B 77/10, DRO.
[102] Interview with Helen and Tony Lyon, 19 June 2014.
[103] Interview with Hardial Singh Dhillon.
[104] Interview with Mohammed Riasat.

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Association was formed as early as 1961, the Derby Indian Association later in the decade. In 1971, the chairman of the Indian Association, Ajmer Singh Khakh, wrote a letter to the *Derby Evening Telegraph* protesting against the immigration bill then before parliament, which he dubbed 'blatantly racialist' and 'more or less a surrender to Powellism'.[105] Khakh had come from India in 1964, where he had served in the British army and gained a degree in politics. At the time of the letter, he was a Liberal candidate in the municipal elections. Indian migrants also wrote in support of the East African Asians then stranded in Kenya and Uganda.[106] There was also evidence of increasing antipathy towards South Asians and West Indians in the city, with letters calling for an end to immigration that accused the newcomers of everything from disease to drugs.[107]

Yet over time, religion assumed greater and greater importance as a focus for immigrant identities. Building places of worship bolstered the new communities' confidence, a factor given little attention in a standard work on the changing experience of immigrants.[108] The first mosque opened in 1963. The first Hindu temple opened in a house on Normanton Road. By the 1990s, there was a variety of mosques and several Sikh gurdwaras. Jamaicans had started a church in someone's home as early as 1957. Before long, there were numerous black churches representing a variety of denominations.[109] There was resistance to the building of some of these religious sites, including a Muslim garage-owner's three-year-long refusal to sell a piece of land that was necessary for the building of the Hindu temple, but the fights did not leave deep scars on intercommunal relations.[110]

By the 1980s, it was obvious to Derby residents that their city was not just multi-ethnic but also multi-religious.[111] Sikhs encouraged their children to wear patkas and more Muslim men grew beards. This change made a difference for the first generation of immigrants and not just, as Goodhart has argued, for the British-born second generation.[112] Hardial Singh Dhillon's father had told him that if he met people at school from India or Pakistan who spoke his language he should hug them and make allies, regardless of religion. But as Singh experienced persecution at school he began to visit the local Indian Workers' Association library to read books about the Sikh faith. As more South Asians went to university, they became more articulate about their faith. Nationally, religious communities began to argue for their rights as British citizens, galvanizing the local religious communities in Derby. For

[105] Letter from A. S. Khakh, *DET*, 23 Mar. 1971, p. 18.
[106] Letter from J. Rajpar, *DET*, 9 Apr. 1971, p. 9; letter from M. Modi, *DET*, 9 Apr. 1971, p. 9.
[107] See e.g. letter from 'White and proud of it', *DET*, 6 Apr. 1971, p. 6.
[108] Goodhart, *The British dream*, pp. 115–62.
[109] Interview with Gloria Newell.
[110] Interview with Raj Bali, 12 June 2014.
[111] Interview with Andrew Battie, 13 June 2014.
[112] Goodhart, *The British dream*, p. 138.

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Sikhs, the two crucial moments were the Motor-Cycle Crash Helmets (Religious Exemption) Act of 1976, by which men with turbans won the right to use a motorcycle without a helmet, and the 1983 Mandla-Dowell Lee case in which the House of Lords upheld the right of a Sikh boy to wear a turban to school. It was integration into the educated middle classes that allowed Sikhs to win the case for their distinctiveness. When Hardial Singh Dhillon and his wife, Rupinder Dhillon, sent their son to school in Derby, he went with a patka. Singh himself began wearing a turban in 1989.[113] Mohammad Riasat, who in his youth had been a clean-shaven powerlifter and a champion arm-wrestler, decided to make the hajj and grew a beard. Riasat was part of a group of Muslims who successfully argued for sex-segregated physical education in local schools. That campaign was evidence of the impact on Derby of the growing numbers of wives and children who were arriving to join husbands and fathers, a phenomenon which contributed to a sense of rootedness and a desire to build their own religious communities. Islam, the Sikh faith, and Hinduism subtly morphed as the communities' leaders negotiated their place in English society.

By the 1980s, religion was thus trumping ethnicity as the primary defining identity of South Asians in Derby.[114] This could lead to tension between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, as it did at one point in the 1980s but it was leaders of these three religious communities, plus Christians, who met in the gurdwara and diffused the situation, much to the relief of the local police.[115] In 1992, a petrol bomb ignited Derby's Hindu temple on the day that Hindus in Ayodha, India, demolished the Babri mosque, but local Hindu and Muslim leaders stood shoulder to shoulder. 'I was surprised that it happened…in Derby', a Muslim councillor said; 'We've had excellent relations between ethnic groups in the city.'[116] The chair of the Indian Community Centre said that Muslims and Hindus had 'lived in harmony in Derby for years'.[117] There was a candlelit vigil at the Pakistan Community Centre that gathered representatives from all religious communities for prayer.[118] The crisis quickly passed.

As it became clear that the migrants were going to stay and that they were becoming more not less attached to their own religious traditions, white Christians had to adjust their response. This was made more difficult by the fact that Derby's churches were not immune from the national trend of declining attendances. Especially in areas of immigrant settlement, churches struggled to keep the doors open. In 1980, the vicar of St Augustine's told a gathering of local Anglican clergy that it was not easy, 'to minister to a declining congregation. The white people were leaving steadily, and being replaced by immigrant

[113] Interview with Hardial Singh Dhillon; interview with Rupinder Dhillon, 14 June 2014.
[114] On the importance of religion for cultural transition and defence, see Bruce, *Secularization*, pp. 49–52. See also Brown, *Religion and society*, p. 313.
[115] Interview with Raj Bali, 12 June 2014.
[116] Fareed Hussian, quoted in A. Comber, 'Pray for peace', *DET*, 11 Dec. 1992, p. 4.
[117] Ibid., p. 4.
[118] 'Candlelit vigil for peace', *DET*, 14 Dec. 1992, p. 3.

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families, bringing with them their own religions and culture.'[119] The vicar of the neighbouring church of St Chad's told a similar story.[120] One can read the minutes of the Dairy House Road Methodist Church and the Normanton Road Congregational Church and watch as they expire.[121] Daljit Singh Ahluwahlia commented that the Derby where there was a pub or church on every corner had disappeared since his arrival.[122]

This was not the whole story, however, or even the dominant one. Many churches survived and even flourished, and they wanted to renegotiate and thereby reclaim a role in society. As they did so, they sometimes faced a tension between their belief that Jesus Christ was the saviour for all, and the need to respect other religions, the latter being essential if they wished to fight racial injustice. One can see this clearly in the records of local Anglican committees. The Derby Deanery Synod helped to organize a vigil for racial harmony in 1978.[123] Anglican leaders wanted to build relationships with the growing number of local black churches.[124] The missionary and ecumenical council talked about the need to help the white population treat immigrants with warmth and respect.[125] They organized multi-faith services, a departure influenced in part by Roman Catholicism's growing openness to other religions after the Second Vatican Council.[126] But the council also spent a lot of time discussing the need to share the Christian faith with others, including immigrants.[127] Several Anglican parishes banded together to bring a priest from the Church of North India to Derby to minister to the few Indian Christians and share Christianity with other South Asians in the city.[128] A long discussion at a meeting in 1981 focused on the potential tension 'between the desire to welcome people of others faiths and not to appear patronizing and superior, and our Christian conviction of the uniqueness of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ'.[129] The evidence suggests that they were able to combine civic

[119] Minutes, 18 Sept. 1980, Derby Deanery Synod, D2104A/PI45/3, DRO.
[120] Minutes, 7 May 1981, Derby Deanery Synod, D2104A/PI45/3, DRO.
[121] Leaders Meeting Minutes, Dairy House Road Methodist Church, D4131/3/3–5, DRO; Church Meeting Minutes, Congregational Church, Normanton Road, D4931/5/7–9, DRO.
[122] Interview with Daljit Singh Ahluwahlia, 9 June 2014.
[123] Minutes, 10 Nov. 1978, Derby Deanery Synod, D2104A/PI45/3, DRO.
[124] E.g. Minutes, 1 Feb. 1977, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council, D7140/1/5–6, DRO.
[125] Minutes, 15 Oct. 1974, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council Minutes, BMU/HC/D102, Church of England Record Centre, South Bermondsey, London (CERC).
[126] 'Report on inter-faith worship', 24 Sept. 1981, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council Minutes, BMU/HC/D102, CERC.
[127] See e.g. Minutes, 17 Sept. 1981, Derby Deanery Synod, D2104A/PI45/3, DRO; Minutes, 5 Mar. 1979, 22 Apr. 1980, 24 Sept. 1981, 6 Dec. 1982, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council Minutes, BMU/HC/D102, CERC.
[128] Minutes, 3 Feb. 1981, Derby Deanery Synod, D2104A/PI45/3, DRO.
[129] Minutes, 24 Sept. 1981, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council Minutes, BMU/HC/D102, CERC.

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concern and their convictions, which was vital for their claim that Christianity could continue to serve a useful, if attenuated, role in society.

To return to local congregations, some white congregations paid only modest attention to Derby's other religious communities but nevertheless found ways to play a part in civil society very much along the lines of what the churches had done earlier in the century, even if the *Derby Evening Telegraph* did not pay much attention. As they did so, they found that their congregations were slowly becoming more diverse. St Giles fitted this category. As noted above, the church continued to attract good congregations and was a thriving community, even if it no longer had an orchestra.[130] Several people of West Indian heritage now went to St Giles; Edna Williamson, who was so hurt by the rejection she found in Derby churches in the 1960s that she stopped attending church for almost two decades, began to visit the church, which was just down the road from the one she typically went to, the Pentecostal Church of God of Prophecy.[131] Another example was Woodlands Chapel. Woodlands was started in 1966 in Allestree, a suburb that was largely white. Numbers grew such that they had to extend their building in 1978, which they had outgrown again by the 1990s. The congregation was conscious of immigration, and helped fund the South Asian pastor in the city.[132] There were always people in the congregation who had not been born in Britain, including several from India; typically, they were firmly middle class. The women's group on Thursday mornings had a strong international flavour.[133] The Acorns toddler group drew dozens of women and children from the community to the church several mornings each week. St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church was very close to Normanton Road, but saw few immigrants come to the church. Congregations declined, but there were still several hundred regularly attending mass at the end of the century, including a number of immigrants from the Philippines.[134] The fact that thousands of people in Derby continued to go to churches enabled them to claim and play a continued role as a religious foundation for society, even in the absence of the old discourse of civil religion.

Some churches made a concerted and successful effort to reach out across ethnic and religious lines. Pear Tree Road Baptist is one example. Its struggle to integrate the West Indians who started coming to the church has already been mentioned. By 1970, attendance was falling and the future looked bleak. Over time, however, congregants from different ethnicities began to work together in the church, which grew again in the 1990s. The continued vitality of the church owed much to the immigrants who made it their home.[135]

[130] See the church's website: stgiles-derby.org.uk.
[131] Interview with Edna Williamson.
[132] Business Meeting Minutes, 24 Jan. 1987, Minute Book 3, Woodlands Chapel, held at Woodlands Chapel. I am grateful to Tim Gunn for allowing me to see these records.
[133] Interview with Angela Bunting, 12 June 2014.
[134] Interview with Father John Trenchard, 12 June 2014.
[135] Greasley, *Pear Tree Baptist Church*, pp. 161ff.

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Another example was one of Derby's Assemblies of God Pentecostal congregations. Originally meeting on Whiston Street, in 1976 it moved into the old Congregational Church on Normanton Road and became Normanton Road Assembly of God. At that time, the youth work at the church began to grow under the leadership of Geoff Pickup, who became the church's senior minister in 1982. When Pickup arrived, he sought to reach out to the young people in the streets around the church, many of whom were Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim. Sikhs and Hindus began to come, and over the years approximately sixty were baptized. Into the twenty-first century, most of the children who came to the Sunday school were of South Asian descent, and for the annual trips the church filled half a dozen double-decker buses with these children and their mothers. In 1972, members of the church went to Derby station to help South Asians who had been expelled from Uganda and were being resettled in Derby. When Pickup came to Derby, he only worked part time for the church, his regular job being education advisor for ethnic minorities for the Derby borough council. This made it easy to build relationships in the local community, and he enjoyed meals with Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus who became friends through this work. He helped set up language centres to teach immigrant children English. He was vice chair of the Community Relations Council, the local expression of the Race Relations Board, and was targeted by the British Nationalist Party, who smashed his window and carried placards saying 'Pickup is a black lover.' Today the church is known as New Life Centre. On a typical Sunday morning, 600 adults attend and although they come from a wide geographical area, approximately one third walk to church.[136] In 2002, Pickup bought twenty flags to represent the home countries of those who worshipped there.[137]

Pickup is one example of the care that Christians in Derby continued to feel for their city, even if Christianity was no longer its civil religion in the way it had been before it lost its public pre-eminence in print and before the establishment of multiple new religious communities in the city. Pickup and others like him continued to be motivated by a concern for society; there is not much evidence of the subcultural militancy that Callum Brown has said was characteristic of British religion in the late twentieth century.[138] Brown's primary example of militancy among British Christians is the charismatic movement, but Pickup, who was a charismatic pastor, would say to his Hindu and Muslim friends: 'I am not going to change, so let's take it you're not going to change. So let's not argue about whether we've got three gods or whether our Bible has been

[136] Interview with Geoff Pickup, 17 June 2014.
[137] Email from Geoff Pickup, 5 Sept. 2014.
[138] Brown, *Religion and society*, pp. 297–314. Even one of the city's most conservative churches, the Meeting Room on Curzon Street, has almost no reach beyond its own, few members.

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tampered with. Let's not go down there. But let's go and eat together.'[139] Christians continued to find that their faith caused them to care about their city.

This was certainly true for Anglicans. To give only a few examples: at the diocesan level, a 1981 report on inter-faith worship said that Christians could 'help those of others faiths to find their own identity in an alien and sometimes hostile land'.[140] When they saw a non-Anglican church moving in what they deemed a racist direction, they got involved.[141] Centrally, Derby cathedral sustained a civic role through special annual services for AIDS, animal welfare, and the legal profession and overfull carol services whose number was limited only by the endurance of the choir's voices.[142] One member of the clergy approvingly quoted a leader of one of the South Asian communities as saying 'This is our cathedral, too.'[143] Senior Anglican clergy were vital figures in the development of the city's inter-faith movement.[144] Matthew Grimley has argued that Anglicans were often hampered in their attempts to address racism by the old idea of a single national community, but the evidence from Derby suggests that the latter was not as much of a millstone as it may have been at the national level.[145] At the parish level, churches such as St Alkmund's, a charismatic congregation, provided basic social services such as meals.[146] This was part of a wider trend of Christians seeking to fill gaps left by the retreat of the welfare state from the 1980s; Margaret Thatcher's policies did much to encourage churches to renew their commitments to social involvement.[147] Racial prejudice existed in Derby, but churchgoers at least heard countless sermons which made it clear that welcoming strangers was the Christian thing to do.[148] As one teacher at Homelands School argued, openness to other cultures was what it meant to be a Christian society.[149]

Derby's Christians remained committed to the importance of Christian faith, morality, and social action for a pluralist civil society. And the attitudes of Christians mattered. One of the most frequently quoted statistics about religion in modern Britain is that 73·5 per cent of Muslims surveyed in 2005 said they were actively practising their religion, compared to 30·9 per cent of

[139] Interview with Geoff Pickup.

[140] Report on inter-faith worship prepared for the Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council, 24 Sept. 1981, BMU/HC/D102, CERC.

[141] Minutes, 30 Jan. 1969, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council, D7140/1/3–4, DRO.

[142] Interview with Roger Chapman, 24 July 2014. This fits a national pattern in which cathedral attendance was increasing rapidly; see M. Guest, E. Olson, and J. Wolffe, 'Christianity: loss of monopoly', in Woodhead and Catto, eds., *Religion and change*, p. 67.

[143] Nicholas Henshall, quoted in interview with Roger Chapman.

[144] Interview with Jonathan Powers, 14 June 2014.

[145] Grimley, 'The Church of England', p. 208.

[146] Interview with Tony Steynor 13 June 2014.

[147] Woodhead, 'Introduction', pp. 18–22. For evidence of this, see Minutes, 13 May 1980, Derby Deanery Synod, D2104A/PI45/3, DRO.

[148] On racial prejudice, see especially interview with Lloyd George Newby, 23 June 2015.

[149] 'Notes on assembly in school'.

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Christians. But given that 10,885 of the 11,927 of those surveyed in this Home Office Citizenship Survey were Christians and only 355 Muslim, that meant 3,363 active Christians and 260 Muslims.[150] Applying the percentages to Derby's 2001 census figures on religion, one could conclude that there were approximately 40,520 practising Christians in the city, and 14,000 Muslims. Local Christians were less worried about numerical decline because on their view those who had stopped coming could not have been deeply Christian in the first place.[151] Conventional religion not popular religion was what mattered to them, even if the government was more interested in how religious groups could be a resource on social projects.[152] Christianity's social significance had declined in Derby, but it was still an important social force in the late twentieth century.

It was certainly not only white Christians that felt responsibility for the city. Raj Bali was a trustee in the Hindu temple, a governor at a local school, and a leader of the multi-faith movement in Derby. Born in the Punjab in 1934, he remembers Sikhs attacking Muslims and vice versa at the partition of India in 1947. He moved to Kenya in 1958, then to Derby in 1974, where he worked in the finance department of a local small business. For him, the multi-faith movement was a means to social peace in a diverse society. He worked with leaders of other religious communities at moments of tension, and the Muslim owner of the large Pak Foods on Normanton Road became a grateful friend as a result. Bali also attended Derby cathedral regularly.[153] Mohammed Riasat was the manager of the Pakistan Community Centre and he was adamant that there was a reason it was not called the Pakistanis' Community Centre: it was there for people of all faiths or none. He had become a more observant Muslim by the 1990s, but maintained good relationships with his Sikh powerlifting friends. Praveena and Kanty Patel, doctors who came to Derby in 1978, gave conscientiously to the community, taking a leading role in the local medical society as well as the Hindu temple and reaching out to sick Muslim women.[154] Edna Williamson, a member of the black Pentecostal Church of God of Prophecy, served for many years as a justice of the peace.[155] It would be incorrect and uncharitable to characterize these people's religion simply as a militant means of cultural defence. It stood in a tradition of civil religion that stretched back to the 1930s and beyond. The nature of civil religion had changed: secularization, immigration, and the decline of British power all meant that it was less tied to national identity than it had been. The links that some had to global communities

[150] Statistics taken from Hopkins and Gale, eds., *Muslims in Britain*, p. 10.

[151] Interview with Geraldine and John Battie, 13 June 2014; interview with Tony and Helen Lyon.

[152] A. Dinham and R. Jackson, 'Religion, welfare and education', in Woodhead and Catto, eds., *Religion and change*, pp. 272–94.

[153] Interview with Raj Bali, 12 June 2014.

[154] Interview with Praveena and Kanty Patel, 9 June 2014.

[155] Interview with Edna Williamson.

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of faith meant that the new civil religion was not a monolith. But people of faith continued to believe that local society needed moral foundations and that they had a responsibility to help provide those, through words and deeds.

Part of the explanation for the healthy relationships between Derby's different religious communities is that none were so large that they could realistically avoid engagement with others. This also made it possible for Christians to maintain some degree of mild cultural pre-eminence. The situation at St James's Anglican primary school illustrates the situation. In 1982, it had 400 pupils, 220 of which were Muslim, 100 Sikh, and half a dozen Hindu. The school produced its brochure in Punjabi and Urdu and included readings from non-Christian religious texts in its assembly. But the assembly was still basically Christian.[156] Derby was a multi-cultural society in which one religion retained a historically and numerically rooted precedence. Will Kymlicka, a leading theorist of multi-culturalism, has argued that states committed to multi-culturalism cannot be neutral: they necessarily promote certain cultural identities.[157] In this local study, however, the evidence points not so much to the state favouring certain identities as society embodying them.[158]

For all its official popularity, the term multi-culturalism was not always the one that people in Derby used to describe their city.[159] Among the religiously observant, more common was the term multi-faith, in part due to the establishing of a multi-faith centre at the University of Derby between 1992 and 2004, yet the term was current long before then. This points to the potentially secular implications of the term multi-culturalism – culture not religion is what is most important, even though culture includes religion. Privileging the self-understanding of people in Derby, however, means taking seriously that for many, religious conviction became increasingly central to their identity. Moreover, they developed the ability to hold convictions about the truthfulness of what they believed while remaining civil to those with whom they disagreed. Their religions provided resources not just for tolerance but for respect. Hindu leaders in particular had much to contribute in this regard. Indeed, the secularization seen in the decline of Christianity as the city's unquestioned civil religion may have encouraged believers of all sorts to see each other as allies. Derby had its fair share of prejudice and discrimination, as examples here have shown. But it was also a city of civil religions, whose presence did much to foster interethnic respect and therefore civil society.

Since 2000, Derby has become home to many new immigrants, primarily from Eastern Europe. On the Normanton Road, alongside the shops selling

[156] Minutes, 27 Apr. 1982, Derby Diocesan Missionary and Ecumenical Council Minutes, BMU/HC/D102, CERC.

[157] W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural citizenship* (Oxford, 1995).

[158] This conflicts with the vision of multi-culturalism put forward by British sociologist T. Modood. See especially T. Modood, *Multiculturalism: a civic idea* (Cambridge, 2013), especially pp. 20–45. See also the 2000 Parekh Report, *The future of multi-ethnic Britain* (London, 2000).

[159] M. Savage, *Identities and social change in Britain since 1940* (Oxford, 2010), p. x.

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abayas and curries there are now Polish supermarkets and Latvian newsagents. Many resent the newcomers, accusing them of indolence and immodesty in terms very similar to those used of West Indians and South Asians in the 1960s. Now, however, West Indians and South Asians are among the critics, not the criticized. They fear that recent migrants are here to drain society rather than contribute to it, and see that in stark contrast to their own families who came with sleeves rolled up, willing to take whatever jobs they could.[160] One can disagree with the characterization of those who have arrived in the twenty-first century, one can question the seemingly uncritical acceptance of certain stereotypes, but the critique assumes a shared set of values of what is good for Derby: hard work, education, the English language, and sobriety. The language of integration risks being inadequate and patronizing here, for people like Kamal Manan, Gloria Newell, and Avtar Singh did not need England to teach them the value of hard work.[161] The language of multi-culturalism, with its emphasis on pluralism and diversity, does not capture the reality either, for the shared moral sense is striking.[162] Religion was central to how these people saw the world, and therefore merits a prominent part in describing the multi-ethnic society they helped to shape. Whether religion, especially Islam, has become a more divisive force in the twenty-first century is an important question.[163] But for the twentieth century, the reconfiguration of civil religion and the advent of civil religions was a major development in the social history of Derby, and likely of many other parts of England, too.

[160] See e.g. interview with Vida Johnson; interview with Mohammed Riasat.

[161] Interview with Kamal Manan, 9 June 2014; interview with Avtar Singh, 14 June 2014.

[162] Meer and Modood argue that integration and multi-culturalism can co-exist more easily than is sometimes suggested, an argument that the current article would support. N. Meer and T. Modood, 'The multicultural state were in: Muslims, "multiculture" and the "civic re-balancing" of British multiculturalism', *Political Studies*, 57 (2009), pp. 473–97.

[163] There are hints of this in the interview with Mohammed Riasat, and interview with Raj Bali, 12 June 2014. 'There is evidence of Islamic extremism in Derby after 2000, although the only known terrorist was radicalized while a student in London. R. Pantucci, '*We love death as you love life': Britain's suburban terrorists* (London, 2015), pp. 172–5.

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