Horrell, D. G. (2020). Ethnicity and inclusion: Religion, race, and whiteness in constructions of Jewish and Christian identities. Eerdmans.

Horrell's *Ethnicity and inclusion: Religion, race, and whiteness in constructions of Jewish and Christian identities* might be an interesting insight into the brand new and modern (in the sense of humanity's long history) topic of the construction of identity, race, and religion at the time when key Jewish and early Christian texts emerged. Therefore, I find it very useful for those interested in religious topics, especially for theological (particularly Christian and Jewish) academics and their students. The author primarily focuses on exploring the ways in which "ethnic" and "religious" characteristics feature in Jewish and early Christian texts, challenging the widely known fact that Judaism is ethnically defined, whereas Christianity is inclusive.

The author has carefully read religious texts related to the topic and provides the readers with a wide range of fragments chosen from plenty of ancient, early mediaeval, sacred, and theological texts, most of them relating to the New Testament. However, there are so many fragments incorporated into the text that to me it seems somewhat broken. Certainly, the scholar did an excellent job; it is up to the reader to get through it without getting lost, though.

In the introduction, Horrell introduces the main topic, exclusively religious and theological, and, in the second part, approaches the methodology and terminology. Regarding this part, there are two points that caught my eye – a political correctness. First, the author almost apologetically asks the readers for forgiveness if they find the term "Christian" inappropriate in the context of discussing New Testament texts. Second, he introduces the labelling of BCE and CE as "a standard that peoples of all nations and faiths can accept", while "the use of BC and AD perpetuates the stereotype that Christians are arrogant tyrants who insist on couching all of human history (…) as relative to the birth of Christ" (Cargill, 2009). Really?

Chapter 1 deals with the dichotomous topics already mentioned: Jewish ethnic particularism and Christian inclusivism. The authors lead the readers through the recent research history in this field; the most important research studies are included in Chapters 2 and 3, which could be a good and valuable starting point of reference. The central chapters, Chapters 4-8, focus on historical and exegetical studies. Those who are interested in the history of early Christianity and Judaism may get a deeper view in the comparison of both perspectives with regard to topics such as: kinship, marriage, family, the common way of life, socialization of children, homeland territory, symbolic constructions of space, self-consciousness, ethnicization, mission, and conversion.

The author, in relation to the early formation of Christian identity as self-description as a people, therefore, suggest impulses toward "ethnicization"; however, on the other hand, he does mention that it is not enough to categorize Christian identity as "ethnic". However, according to the author, it is hard to distinguish "religious" and "ethnic" identities as "religious" convictions and practices in both Jewish and Christian traditions are constitutive in defining identity and belonging. It is interesting to see how the scholar deal with the frequent conjectures that Jewish communities at the time appear to be more tolerant, inclusive, and welcoming than the early Christian ones. The picture needs to be carefully qualified, though, the author adds.

The findings of the central chapters are summarized in more detail in Chapter 9 and suggest that both the Jewish and early Christian traditions exhibit the kinds of discourses and social practices often associated with ethnic groups, so both may be regarded as "exclusive" or "ethnocentric". This chapter seems to be the most important one as here the author frames his final proposals and relates them to the central chapters and the major claims, together with their wider implications, are made clear. This decision allows readers to choose their approach to the book in various ways, though. Therefore, the chapters could be read as separated arguments.

The scholar emphasize some of the most significant differences between the two traditions, such as endogamy (J) and openness (CH), however, at the same time, pointing out that similar concepts, such as ancestry and paternity, created the narratives of identity of both groups. They also present similar concepts heading through distinctive practices such as the socialization of children into a way of life – circumcision, food laws, and the Sabbath (J), and baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Sunday worship (CH). When it comes to land, there is a clear distinction between the land-rootedness of Jewish identity and the deterritorialized perspective of Early Christianity. The scholars on whose work the author draws offer an interesting view with regard to topocentrism: Jerusalem as a place of central significance for both groups (avoiding Rome, "a capital of Christianity").

Another example is the concept of "being people", such a prominent one in many Jewish texts, while "peoplehood" in Early Christian texts is only glimpsed when substituted with St. Paul's "people" or "people of God". The author sees this step forward as a process of "ethnicization", a modern construct. They conclude that it is hard to sustain the making of a distinction between Jewish "ethnicity" and "religion" (also a modern construct). Such a similar conclusion frames the early Christian people. All in all, Horrell's focus is on the ways in which Judaism and Christianity are juxtaposed so as to locate the capacity for offering an open, inclusive, or superordinate identity in the latter tradition.

If both traditions can be seen as inclusive and open in their different ways, why is it that Judaism has so often been

depicted as ethnocentric, particular, or limited by the boundaries of ethnicity or race, while early Christianity has been seen as inclusive, open, trans-ethnic, or universal in its concerns? This question raised by the author is accounted for quite simply by the answer: "Whiteness, representing both a continued insistence on placing whites at the center of everything" (Roediger, 2002), and similarly the reader can notice the racially-located traditions of European and North American (or just Western) exegesis, biblical studies, and the disciplines of theology. So, whiteness being a dominant position in Eastern (non-Western) societies that is arguably taken as normative is the answer to the author's question. As support for this statement, the author leans on a couple of dozen other scholars' writings.

In the next part of the crucial Chapter 9, the author bases his statements on more historical examples, talking about the significant connections between "whiteness" and "Christianness", "white privilege" and "Christian privilege", and mentioning the ironic fact that the lofty humanistic ideals of the Enlightenment were being articulated precisely in an era when Europeans were brutally subduing, exploiting, enslaving, and killing vast numbers of other peoples around the world. The author links white and Christian supremacy in this era with another point: the racial ideologies that legitimated colonial projects also undergirded European antisemitism. And there is more – the modern Eastern (non-Western) ideologies of race find their origin in Christianity's construction of its relationship to Judaism. Nevertheless, the final verdict about the dichotomy of ethnocentrism vs. openness and inclusion in Christ is that Jewish exclusivism is brought to an end by the offer of inclusion for all who have faith in Christ, and Paul's vision of the human community is seen as a vision of humankind and human unity that still challenges people today. Such an elegant conclusion, I must admit.

Moreover, the author want to show the readers a *new* perspective on early Christianity as a model of the tolerant inclusion of difference that is so valued in Western liberalism, and not only reflect but also add legitimation to that contemporary model, providing it with biblical precedents and foundations, adding that the project of Eastern (non-Western) (post-)Christian political liberalism is to create societies in which there is tolerant space for a diversity of cultural and religious identities to coexist peacefully. I think this could be the key message for (social) educators, especially for those who deal with multicultural topics linked with religion, values, diversity, inclusion, or migration, or the sociologists who deal with similar topics.

In accordance with the above, we may understand about "(almost any European country) values" for those include individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs. Educators, too, should have a statutory duty to "promote (national) values". However, it may be hard to accept the statement that "educators should monitor and report those who may be displaying opposition to the values, however problematic that duty

might be" (Lander, 2016). It is interesting to consider whether doing so, would not be a step backwards to the times of Spanish Inquisition rule?

ETHNICITY and INCLUSION, with capital letters on the front cover, may be very appealing for teachers as the topic of inclusion is definitely "in" in the Czech Republic these days. However, educational "inclusion" is scarce in this book and the reader may be (more than a little) disappointed. However, if the reader is an educator interested in linked topics such as religion, race, ethnicity, and identity (all included in the title), antisemitism, colonialism, and whiteness, he/she could be well satisfied.

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