Chapter 1

Introduction

Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities of the New Second Generation

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It’s like regardless of your race or background, everybody comes. You see—well, there’s not too many whites, [but] you know, we had that Bosnian guy, he came. And we have some African Americans, we have a whole lot of Arabs and people from the Indian subcontinent. We have an Indonesian guy who comes. . .

It’s just everybody comes together. We come and pray together, and it’s just awesome. . . . It’s—we’re all equal, all standing in line together, we’re all praying to the same Lord, and we’re all listening to the same speaker. It’s unreal.

—Shaheed, second-generation Pakistani Muslim, describing how his university’s Muslim Student Association transcends race and ethnicity

I think that Nueva Esperanza is what our people have been looking for, for years. And I think that if these folks stay on track, the Latino community is going to have a voice like never before over the next ten years. I think the black church is organized; I think that African Americans in this country have organized. It’s time for our people to organize! You know, we’re the least respected, least educated, most impoverished, and I think that that season and that age is changing now with organizations such as Nueva Esperanza.

—Pastor Francisco, a second-generation Puerto Rican evangelical, describing how his national organization mobilizes Latino religious leaders

Race and religion matter enormously for the new second generation, the children of post-
1965 immigrants. They are negotiating who they are and where they belong in a United States that has transformed with contemporary immigration. In the epigraphs, Shaheed delights in how his Muslim identity transcends ethnic and racial differences; for Pastor Francisco, on the other hand, religion offers a way to mobilize Latino solidarity and organization toward social justice. What accounts for such different manifestations of their religious traditions?

This volume investigates the intersecting relationships between race, ethnicity, and religion in the lives of second-generation Asian Americans and Latinos, examining how faith traditions transform in the American context. The diversity of religious traditions held by Asian Americans and Latinos—including evangelical Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and ethnic popular religions—provides potential resources for reconfiguring racial and ethnic relations in the United States today. Faith traditions are sources of innovation and self-determination.

This book engages with the influential thesis on religion and ethnicity that social theorist Will Herberg proposed 50 years ago. Building on the traditional view of assimilation at that time, Herberg argued that commitment to national and ethnic heritage would decline for the descendants of immigrants. He went on to argue that religious affiliation—as Protestant, Catholic, or Jew—would become their primary source of social identity in the United States. He explained, “The newcomer is expected to change many things about him as he becomes American—nationality, language, culture. One thing, however, he is not expected to change—and that is his religion. And so it is religion that with the third generation has become the differentiating element and the context of self-identification and social location” (Herberg 1955, 23). Herberg’s theories, however, were
based on the experiences of the descendants of European immigrants at a time when mass immigration to the United States had halted for over 30 years. Like other social theorists of the time, Herbert did not account for race in a manner that would be largely taken for granted by observers today. To Herberg, race was less relevant to the immigrants he saw; religion instead constituted their main identity, especially after the first generation. Notably, race was important for black and Asian (then sometimes called “Oriental”) Americans, who sustained a permanent inferior status. Other European-origin Americans who held on to their national (i.e., ethnic) culture risked similar marginalization. But they could maintain their religious identity permanently and without social penalty because Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism reflect American “spiritual” values of democracy and the dignity of the individual. Indeed Herberg argued that adherence to other religions such as Buddhism and Islam identified an individual as non-American.

In this volume, we examine religion, race, and ethnicity among Asians and Latinos, the largest ethnic/racial groups among contemporary immigrants to the United States. Much has changed since Herberg penned his treatise. We argue that in light of critical social and demographic changes, ethnicity does not become eclipsed. Instead, the experience of race and ethnicity not only foregrounds but shapes the religious experiences and identities of the new second generation. To answer the questions of “Who am I?” and “To which group do I belong?” the second generation today does not look merely to religion, as Herberg claimed, but to religion, race, and ethnicity simultaneously. The core motivating question for this volume, then, is, How does the second generation negotiate these three different forms of competing and possibly conflicting claims on identity and belonging in America?
The second generation may be seen as negotiating race, religion, and ethnicity in four different ways: (1) religious primacy, (2) racialized religion, (3) ethnoreligious hybridization, and (4) familistic traditioning. Latino and Asian American evangelical Christians who belong to multiethnic congregations, Muslims, and Asian American Jews are examples of members of the new second generation who practice religious primacy and prioritize religious identities over all others. For those who practice racialized religion, religion does not transcend race and ethnicity but rather affirms racial boundaries that are a product of the racialized experiences of Asian and Latinos in the United States. Both Latino faith-based organizations and Latino gang ministries are examples of racialized religion. Ethnoreligious hybridization describes the processes by which second-generation groups such as Korean American evangelicals and Filipino Catholics employ multicultural discourse to reinvent religious traditions and to combine ethnic and religious identities. And finally, noncongregational religious and spiritual traditions that are domestic and kin centered fall into the category of familistic traditioning. Practices such as Chinese popular religion, Vietnamese ancestral veneration, and Indian American Hinduism are often not identified as “religions” by practitioners, but they are family traditions that affirm identification with and belonging in an “ethnic” family.

The four religious trajectories of the new second generation are structured by three factors that have emerged since Herberg’s time of writing. First, the racial composition and economic opportunities of the American population have shifted as the new post-1965 immigrants have primarily been people of color. Their assimilation has
been segmented, so that they do not necessarily adopt a singular “American Way of Life,” nor do they have equal access to upward mobility, as Herberg described. Second, much of American discourse now embraces a racialized multiculturalism, in which both ethnic and racial identities are valued. Consequently, religious mobilization along these identities has been legitimated and even prized, which Herberg could not have foreseen when he predicted that assimilation must occur exclusively on religious grounds. Finally, the religious landscape in the United States has radically changed, so that the public authority and institutional role of religion in constructing individuals’ and groups’ identities has altered. These socioeconomic and cultural changes thus provide the context for the religions of the new second generation.

The Effect of Race and Class on Religious Identities

With the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act and the 1990 Immigration Act, newcomers from Latin America and Asia have significantly changed the racial make-up of the United States (Rumbaut and Portes 2001). Overall, in the 2010 U.S. Census, Latinos made up 16.3% of the population (50,477,594), and Asian Americans were 4.8% of the population (14,674,252). Their children—the new second generation—are now coming of age and compose significant proportions of America’s youth and emerging adult populations. Their religious socialization and affiliation signal social change unlike any other in this nation’s history. These demographic shifts, in turn, are also shaping the new religious landscape of America (Foley and Hoge 2007; Lorentzen et al. 2009; Min 2010; Raboteau, Dewind, and Alba 2008).

The new second generation, which currently makes up nearly 11% of the U.S.
population, is made up of primarily people of color, whose racialization marks them as “ethnic” Americans. Given the current anti-immigrant political context of the United States, their opportunities to assimilate into mainstream American denominations are mixed, at best. As seen in figure 1.1, over half of the new second generation is either Latino or Asian American: 29% of the new second generation is from Mexico, 18% is from Asia, and another 16% is from other countries in Latin America. Members of the second generation who have parents from Europe or Canada make up one-third of this subpopulation. We note that while this latter group is significant in size, its members are generally much older than are the Asian Americans and Latinos in the second generation. According to analyses by the Migration Policy Institute, using data from the Current Population Surveys of 2005–2006, the European- and Canadian-origin second generation has a median age of 54, while the median age of the Mexican-origin second generation is 12 years, of other Latin American origin (13 years, and of Asian origin (16 years—all below 18. Put differently, the non-European-origin second generation surveyed in 2006 has a median birth year between 1990 and 1994, whereas the European- and Canadian-origin second generation has a median birth year of 1952. We can safely presume that the majority of the members of today’s nonwhite second generation are the children of immigrants who arrived as a result of changes in immigration policy since 1965.

Thus, the new second generation will change the racial composition of the United States, as well as its religious landscape. By 2050, Latinos, as the largest minority group in the nation, will compose 29% of the population, and whites will be a minority (Fry 2008). The Asian American population will grow to make up 9% of the U.S. population. Neither white nor black, the racialization and Americanization of Latinos and Asian
Americans will chart race relations for decades to come, as they adapt to a globalized, segmented economy in the United States.

Although Herberg argued that religious identity is primary, segmented assimilation theorists privilege the structural factors of race and class in the adaptation of the new second generation. They note that post-1965 immigrants differ from prior groups because the former are nonwhite and incorporated into a more multicultural, racialized society and into a postindustrial, segmented economy (Rumbaut and Portes 2001, 2006; Zhou 2009).

Both race and class prominently structure the religious experiences of the new second generation—not only the context in which individuals live out their religion but also in how theologies, institutional forms, and identities become established. The second generation’s concrete material conditions frame the context in which members produce their theologies, build their congregations, and experience their religious traditions. Globalization and the concomitant restructuring of America’s industrial base have led to an hourglass-shaped economy, with a large pool of service-sector jobs, little union-wage manufacturing work, and increased demand for high-tech professionals. Without the availability of the kind of union-waged jobs that were afforded previous immigrants, the new second generation has much more limited economic opportunities. Many low-income immigrants remain trapped in underclass neighborhoods, and their children may adopt values and practices of oppositional culture. On the other hand, professional immigrants can bypass urban centers and move straight to suburbs with significant concentrations of racial minorities, or ethnoburbs, where their children can maintain their privilege by attending better schools and utilizing professional ethnic networks.
Members of the new second generation therefore do assimilate but enter a segmented economy in which their opportunities for economic and social integration into the American middle class differ. Recent research shows patterns of segmented assimilation, in which educational attainment and income of the new second generation are shaped by structural factors such as race, class, and ethnic networks (Rumbaut and Portes 2001, 2006; Zhou 2009). Likewise, these structural factors continue to shape the second generation’s religious affiliations in segmented trends.

An explicit comparison of different classes of the Asian American and Latino second generation highlights how segmented assimilation shapes religious traditions. In this volume, both the chapter by Milagros Peña and Edwin I. Hernández and the chapter by Edward Flores analyze how some Latino ministries clearly develop theologies and programs around the impoverished neighborhoods where they are based. As Flores demonstrates, “color-blind racism” has created racial inequalities that are addressed by these Latino ministries. Similarly, the children of Vietnamese refugees in Linda Ho Peché’s chapter and the children of Toisanese working-class parents in Russell Jeung’s chapter do not assimilate into the white middle class and their religions. Instead, they are much more likely to maintain their ethnic popular religious practices than are their Asian American upper-middle-class counterparts.

In fact, middle-class Latinos and Asian Americans have more ethnic options available to them than low-income Latinos and Asian Americans have (Waters 1990). Gerardo Marti in his chapter examines mostly middle-class Latinos, who are able to become “ethnic transcendent” as they enter multietnic congregations in which their religious identities are primary. The Asian Americans in Sharon Kim and Rebecca Y.
Kim’s chapter, as well as those in Jerry Z. Park’s chapter, are also upwardly mobile, but they utilize their class resources in a different trajectory. They choose not to assimilate religiously but instead to hybridize their ethnic and religious identities and to maintain ethnic solidarities. Not only have the racial demographics and economic opportunities of the new second generation shifted, but so has the dominant American discourse on race relations.

*Racialized Multiculturalism*

In contrast to the triple melting pot that Herberg described in the mid-20th century, American social institutions today may establish contexts in which racial differences and ethnic culture may be prized. Those who favor American multiculturalism not only acknowledge but celebrate ethnic, racial, and religious diversity. The term *racialized multiculturalism* highlights the twin discourses that now shape the religious trajectories of the new second generation.

Through racialization—the process of categorizing by race or extending racial meanings to practices or groups—the categories of *Asian American* and *Latino* have become taken-for-granted communities in the United States (Omi and Winant 1994). The United States employs a multicultural discourse that normalizes five major racial labels: white, black, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian American (Hollinger 1995). Seen as neither whites nor blacks, post-1965 immigrants from Asia or Latin America face a cultural context that symbolically and structurally minimizes significant political-national differences in favor of these panethnic racial constructions that position them.

Beyond establishing panethnic groupings, racialization also creates a racial
hierarchy in the United States, with Asian Americans and Latinos positioned in between African Americans and whites (Bonilla-Silva 2003; C. Kim 2003; Lee, Ramakrishnan, and Ramirez 2007; Light and Bonacich 1991). Because of their physical characteristics, geopolitical positioning, class backgrounds, and historical racial discourses, Latinos and Asian Americans are racialized on a nativist dimension and stand apart from both whites and blacks. Members of the new second generation are often considered outsiders and foreigners. In fact, the process of Americanization and determination of who is considered authentically American requires the creation of a deviant, non-American grouping. In the anti-immigrant sentiment of the times, Latinos and, to a lesser degree, Asian Americans become portrayed as “illegal aliens” and “suspect foreigners.” Thus racially oppressed, the new second generation maintains ethnic and racial groupings out of reactive solidarity, despite the claims of new assimilation theorists (Alba and Nee 2005; Kasinitz et al. 2008).

Asian Americans and Latinos, including those involved with faith-based organizations and congregations, have taken these racial categories and rearticulated them as self-determined, empowered racial identities (Espinosa, Elizondo, and Miranda 2005; Jeung 2005; Park 2008). Religious leaders and institutions have also mobilized around these identities to build their congregations, to relate to other groups, and to engage their sociopolitical environment. Indeed, if the multiculturalist discourse were to be believed, being black, white, Asian, or Latino is as “American” as being Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish was in Herberg’s frame.

Beyond these racial categories, individual ethnic groupings such as Mexican American or Pakistani American are also reinforced by dominant institutions in society.
Multiculturalism, albeit sometimes superficial, prizes all forms of diversity, especially ethnic and cultural (Hollinger 1995; Taylor 1992). Politics, popular media, education, and even capitalist markets now may support the maintenance of ethnic groups to target. Indeed, multiculturalism is a preferred ideology used to reject racism, with its insistence that everyone’s heritage and background be recognized equally (Darder and Torres 2004).

Although Herberg argued that religion was the only social identity legitimated by the government during his time, the multiculturalism of today acknowledges several identities. For example, hate-crimes legislation protects individuals against bias based on race, religion, disability, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation. Similarly, multicultural education policies, approved in some communities across the United States, promote the understanding of different cultural groups and the appreciation of these groups’ values and differences.

While the extent to which religious groups acknowledge ethnic heritages differs, few openly espouse the denial of one’s heritage and culture. Given the broadened acceptance of these new identities, members of the new second generation have generally embraced and integrated their ethnic backgrounds with their religious identities by fusing or hybridizing the two, as Hammond and Warner (1993) described in their typologies of the relationship between ethnicity and religion. Ethnic fusion entails the subsuming of religious culture into one’s ethnic culture (Hammond and Warner 1993; Min 2010). Ethnic hybridization, on the other hand, is the innovative process of combining elements of religion and ethnicity to create two types of new subcultural identity, either ethnic religion or religious ethnicity.
The ethnographies and interview studies in this volume illustrate how these discourses operate. For example, Peña and Hernández describe the panethnic, Latino mobilization of Christian ministries. They do not necessarily emphasize denominational differences but do explicitly recognize the role of racial dynamics and racialization in the creation of faith-based organizations. Joaquin Jay Gonzalez III describes how Filipino Americans adopt multiculturalist viewpoints in “filipinizing” congregations. In a desire to maintain their ethnic heritage, second-generation Filipino Americans are more likely to establish and congregate in hybridized congregations than to enter white, mainstream ones.

*The Changing American Religious Landscape*

Just as racial and ethnic discourses—and the very populations themselves—have shifted in ways unforeseen by Herberg, the American religious landscape has also dramatically altered in two major ways. It has become religiously pluralistic, while concurrently the public influence of its religious institutions has dramatically declined. In consequence, the new second generation of Latinos and Asian Americans have greater religious options than before, including the option of being spiritual but not religious.

Immigrants have transformed not only the racial and ethnic landscape of America but also its religious composition. This shift has furthered the gradual de-Christianization of American religion. While the numbers of Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, and members of other non-Judeo-Christian faiths make up only about 3% of the American population, their institutional presence and influence stand out (Eck 2002; Foley and Hoge 2007). For the second generation, these new religious spaces provide opportunities to preserve
culture, to socialize with coethnics, and to develop identities distinct from white Americans (Chen 2008; Joshi 2006; Kurien 2007; Lawrence 2004; Min 2010)

Figure 1.2 illustrates the religious identities of Asian Americans by generation. Asian Americans are primarily responsible for the religious diversity that we see in contemporary immigration. Among East Asians, nearly one-half are not Christian, and among Central and South Asians, 86% are not Christian. Among the second generation, a slightly smaller proportion of the second generation identifies with non-Christian religions than the first generation does. Interestingly, there are slightly more in the second generation who identify as Buddhist than in the first generation. The most dramatic finding is the drop in the second generation of those who identify as religious “nones”: 29% of immigrants claim no religion, whereas only 19% of the second generation claim no religion. This drop seems to indicate that some type of religious affiliation becomes more important as Asian Americans acculturate.

Figure 1.3 illustrates the religions of the Latino population by generation. Latinos today constitute one-third of the American Catholic Church, and with the continuing flow of Latino immigration and Latinos’ higher-than-average birthrate, they will become an increasing proportion of the Church (Pew Hispanic Center 2007). Just as Irish Catholics transformed American Catholicism during their mass immigration over 100 years ago, so too are Latinos having a significant influence today. For example, Latinos are generally more supportive of a more charismatic practice of Catholicism (ibid.). Over half of Latinos identify as charismatic Catholics, compared to only one-eighth of non-Latino Catholics. Moreover, Latinos are maintaining the ethnic nature of their Catholicism. Native-born and English-speaking Latinos are not joining white Catholic parishes but
rather are continuing to worship in ethnic congregations. Thus, both the Asian American and the Latino presence in Protestant and Catholic congregations mark a significant de-Europeanization of the American church.

While America’s religious diversity increases, the significance of American religious institutions has been on the wane. According to Kosmin et al. (2009), the number of those who do not affiliate with any religion, the religious “nones,” has doubled in the past two decades to 34 million. Of all the racial groups, Asian Americans have the highest rates of religious nones, at 29%. Latinos have seen the fastest increase among all racial groups in the number of religious nones, tripling to 13% in the past 20 years.

Those who are young adults, from 21 through 45 years old, are even more likely to be spiritual but not religious than are those who are older. According to one study, only 19% of young adults say that their religion or spirituality is influenced by Christian teachings and practices. In contrast, 48% say their spirituality is shaped by other influences, such as music and art (Wuthnow 2010). Two-thirds have opted to use personal experience as the best means to understand God, while only a quarter have opted for church doctrines (ibid.).

In the 1950s, Herberg described Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism as America’s three religious communities, “something in which one is born, lives, and dies, something that identifies and defines one’s position in American society” (1955, 87). Today, however, these institutional arrangements no longer apply, and Asian Americans and Latinos are developing religious identities in a very different context. The chapters in this volume by R. Stephen Warner et al., Peché, and Jeung illustrate how both the Latino and Asian American members of the second generation have ambivalent relationships
with institutional religion. Given this mistrust of established traditions, they are not attending local congregations but are continuing their own personal spiritual practices and values. With the decline of religious institutions, the new second generation is thus able to establish spiritualities that are more fluid, hybridized, and eclectic. Indeed, the spiritualities of these individuals may be more representative of the “American Way of Life” than are those who embrace more orthodox Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish beliefs today.

These three contextual factors—changing demographics, new racialized multicultural discourses, and shifting religious values—intersect such that, as described earlier, we have identified four main trajectories for the new second generation. This book is organized into four parts to reflect these trajectories.

**Religious Primacy**

The cases discussed in part 1 conform most closely to Herberg’s model, in which religion transcends and trumps racial and ethnic categorization/identification. In these chapters, individuals identify more strongly with religion than with ethnicity or race. Interestingly, we see this pattern, or perhaps the potential for this outcome, among only certain religions and not others—namely, evangelical Protestantism, Islam, and Judaism—religions that, in comparison to other religious traditions from Asia, are congregationally based and, with the exception of Judaism, tend to have a proselytizing bent. Evangelical Protestantism, Islam, and Judaism, we argue, have strong group boundaries that differentiate people within from those without. Furthermore, evangelical Protestantism and Islam, with a substantial proportion of their population as converts, tend to
emphasize the universality of their tradition and cultural/ethnic particularism as counterproductive to collective unity. Their absolutist claims call for allegiance beyond nation, ethnicity, or even family. Even still, race and ethnicity play important roles in how these individuals negotiate religion in the United States and their religious experiences. Herberg’s theory continues to apply to some of the new Latino and Asian American second generation, however, in revised and racially inflected new ways.

Chapter 2, by Gerardo Marti, perhaps best illustrates how religion transcends race and ethnicity for the new second generation. At Mosaic, a multiracial evangelical church in Southern California, Latinos have chosen to leave their ethnic churches and worship in a multiracial community with whites, blacks, and Asians. Because of the church’s emphasis on evangelism and its vision to be diverse, Mosaic members downplay their ethnicity. The “ethnic transcendent Latino” at Mosaic prioritizes his or her evangelical Christian faith and identity over his or her racial and ethnic identities and commitments. As Herberg would predict, the Latinos at Mosaic are second- and third-generation individuals who, according to Marti, “have largely lost a meaningful connection to their own ancestral heritage.” Still, as a result of the racialized multicultural discourse, race and ethnicity do not fade away completely for these Latino evangelicals. Marti argues that ethnicity is contingent and fluid, at times emphasized and other times downplayed, depending on the context.

Chapter 3, by R. Stephen Warner, Elise Martel, and Rhonda E. Dugan compares attitudes toward religion and ethnicity among South Asian Muslim women and Latino Catholic women. The authors find that the Muslim women separate religion from culture and identify more strongly and affirmatively with Islam than with their ethnic culture.
The Latino Catholic women, on the other hand, see their Catholicism as inextricably connected to their Latino heritage and express a great deal of ambivalence toward Catholicism.

Although the Muslim case appears to conform to Herberg’s theory, there are important differences that distinguish the new second generation from the descendants of white ethnics. Ethnicity does not naturally fade away for Muslim women. In fact, ethnicity is imposed on them by both society and their parents. These South Asian women are physically marked as “ethnic” by society because of the color of their skin. In this context, Islam is a way for these women to assert their independence from the inherited culture of their parents and, we conjecture, a way for them to assert their independence from the racialization of dominant society. In other words, a Muslim identity is a way for these women to self-identify over against the marginalization they experience.

For the Latino Catholic women, religion is so bound up in ethnicity that the two cannot be separated. To be Latino is to be Catholic. And the Catholicism of these women is not the “mainstream American” Catholicism that Herberg predicts but a Catholicism that is explicitly and unapologetically Latino. Nothing flies in the face of Herberg’s theory of religious primacy more directly than the persistence of Latino Catholicism several generations out. The inextricability of religion and ethnicity/culture is a characteristic we see also in later chapters among Vietnamese American Buddhists and Catholics, Indian Hindus, and secular Chinese Americans.

Chapter 4, by Helen K. Kim and Noah Leavitt, touches on a subject that Herberg hardly saw possible: the phenomenon of racial and religious intermarriage between Asian
Americans and Jews. The ways that these families negotiate ethnicity and religion suggests the primacy of religion. It is far easier for these couples to pass on Jewish traditions and identities to their offspring than to pass on Asian traditions and ethnic identities. To be sure, Kim and Leavitt’s sample is unusual in that the respondents with children are nonreligious Asian American men who are married to Jewish women. Since women are the traditional bearers of culture in the family, the results could reflect this bias. But the data also show that Jewish traditions and identity are easier to pass on to children because they are institutionalized in Judaism, as Herberg predicted. This points to the significance that religion and religious institutions are accorded in organizing identity and community, over and above ethnicity, in the United States.

**Race and Class**

The chapters in part 2 highlight how the intersecting processes of racialization and economic restructuring impede the new second generation from simply adopting the triple melting-pot identities of Protestant, Catholic, or Jew. As mentioned earlier, while changes in immigration legislation opened up new geographical sources of immigration, the nature of the American economy changed as well. Opportunities to climb from low- or semiskilled labor to mid- or high-skilled labor shrank, thus creating a segmented pattern of low mobility. Thus, unlike in Herberg’s time, new immigrants in poverty or in the working class can no longer be confident that they or their children will ascend to middle-class status. This reality bears heavily on how religious ministry functions for these immigrants and their children compared to the immigrant middle class and their children.
Along with the process of racialization described earlier, institutional racism promotes religious segregation (Deyoung et al. 2003; Emerson and Smith 2001). Both historical racism and contemporary, color-blind racism forge racial inequalities. Historical racism included the Orientalization of Asians as pagans, patriarchal relationships between white-denomination missions and organizations and Latinos and Asians, and the establishment of segregated ethnic congregations (Chang 2010; Iwamura 2011). Entering this religious landscape, new immigrants have patterned their own congregations after the ethnic institutions of late-19th- and early-20th-century Mexicans, Chinese, and Japanese. This emulation of religious institutional form, coupled with the principle of religious homophily that Kim and Kim discuss in this volume, have perpetuated separate ethnic congregations (Dimaggio and Powell 1983).

Contemporary, color-blind racism remains founded on historical racism. Concrete indicators of such racial inequalities include income gaps, underclass ethnic enclaves, health disparities, and consequently, segregation of congregations (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Hirschman 2004). The two chapters in this part explicitly address racialization and these racisms in their case studies.

Chapter 5, by Milagros Peña and Edwin I. Hernández, profiles several Latino congregations and faith-based organizations that demonstrate this trend toward panethnic religious mobilization. Arguing that diverse Hispanic groups such as Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Dominicans have similar experiences, socioeconomic backgrounds, and national issues, they show how race relations in the United States construct a different American religious experience for Latinos today than for white immigrants during Herberg’s time. Echoing political scientist Catherine Wilson’s thesis, they suggest that
both the content of Latinos’ theology and beliefs and their context intertwine to shape their religious identities. In particular, a sense of community—drawn by space, generation, and common struggle—pull these panethnic groups together.

In chapter 6, Edward Flores asserts that the corrections system in California targets black and brown men of color, such that one in six Latinos will be incarcerated at some time in his life. The perpetuation of such inequality stymies the religious mainstreaming of Catholic and even Protestant Latinos into a triple melting pot and ultimately results in the development of uniquely Chicano faith-based organizations.

Ethnoreligious Hybridity

Whereas part 2 highlights racial dynamics of the new second generation and its religions, part 3 critically explores the intersecting relationship of ethnicity and religion. Roberto Trevino argues in his history *The Church in the Barrio: Mexican American Ethno-Catholicism in Houston* (2006) that the intertwining of Catholicism and Mexican heritage provided Mexican Americans a singular identity to address their minority status in that city. This concept of ethnoreligious community, in which a group’s identity combines both cultural tradition and religious affiliation, may be accepted by the immigrant generation but is problematic for the second (Hammond and Warner 1993). Indeed, the intersection of these two major sources of identity complicates how the new second generation will develop religiously. Herberg noted in passing that immigrants face marginalization if they continue in their national, cultural, or ethnic mores. For many Asian American religious communities, retaining ethnic mores does not appear to intensify marginalization but instead can reinforce religious group commitment. In the
three chapters in this part, ethnic attachment coupled with religion appears to bolster religious commitment. In other words, these chapters exemplify a kind of ethnic-bonding social capital in which religious group commitment is enhanced by shared ethnic ties.

Jerry Z. Park, in chapter 7, documents how Korean American Protestant students at elite universities are more likely than any other ethnic group to maintain ethnic solidarity and group identity because of hybridized ethnoreligion. He first highlights the racialized university environment, where Korean Americans are lumped with other Asian Americans in programs and studies. In choosing which campus fellowships to attend, Korean American students have organizational options already based on ethnicity. Korean American university students then accept these racialized and ethnic identities as “the way things are.” Park’s findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Freshmen reveal that not only are Korean Americans more Protestant and religiously observant than their fellow Asian Americans are, but their churches are also more likely to be racially insular compared to other minorities. This insularity is not necessarily due to Korean Americans’ feelings that there is racial prejudice against them but instead to a worldview that couples Korean and Protestant identities. This merging of ethnic and religious identities is a process of hybridization that takes on uniquely American characteristics.

Chapter 8, by Joaquin Jay Gonzalez III, illustrates how Filipino Americans “filipinize” their Catholic religiosity through choosing particular types of ministry and charity, especially the practice of sending balikbayan boxes of goods back to relatives in the Philippines. At the same time, the church helps to reinforce and pass on Filipino values, such as utang na loob, a debt of gratitude, and bayanihan, mutual cooperation for the common good. Even the second generation continues the practice of remitting
*balikbayan*, with 40% of them sending goods back to their parents’ homeland. In addition, institutions such as Catholic universities, parachurch organizations, and student groups provide the infrastructure and space to develop Filipinized Catholicism. In these ways, religious institutions and structures merge with ethnic values and transnational connections to further ethnoreligion.

Along with providing the institutional space to establish ethnoreligion, Korean American Protestant congregations also host entrepreneurial leaders who actively hybridize ethnic traditions with contemporary religious sensibilities. In chapter 9, Sharon Kim and Rebecca Y. Kim describe how second-generation Korean American ministers make use of both Korean American spirituality, such as an intense prayer style, and contemporary evangelical worship styles and organizational structures. Their chapter and Gonzalez’s point to the fact that these new, hybrid congregations may reconfigure what is considered a minority or mainstream church in today’s multicultural America.

**Minority Religions**

The chapters in part 4 look at religious minorities in the United States—Hindus, Buddhists, and Chinese popular religionists—who do not assimilate into Herberg’s tripartite religious world of Protestant, Catholic, and Jew. Among the groups in these chapters, the lines between religion, ethnicity, and family are closely blurred. Many of the respondents in these chapters, like other young Americans, no longer identify with their religious tradition, and others have never identified with a religious tradition in the first place (Greeley and Hout 2006; Smith and Denton 2005; Wuthnow 2010). Yet they all maintain some aspect of their parents’ religious/spiritual practices and traditions,
which they understand as being closely tied to family and/or ethnicity. The common
thread among the Hindus, Buddhists, Catholics, and “seculars” in this section, for whom
religion and ethnicity are one and the same, is a strong practice of religion as a home and
family tradition rather than as a congregational and public faith (Ammerman 2006).

In all these cases, religion does the opposite of what Herberg predicts: rather than
universalizing the boundaries of membership and transcending parochial affinities,
religion reinforces the particularistic ties of family especially but also of ethnicity (Min
2010). Furthermore, religion, in and of itself, does not seem to offer a strong sense of
identity, as it does for Muslims, evangelical Christians, and Jews. For the second-
generation members of minority religions, the meaning and practice of religion and
spirituality are highly personal and eclectic, each innovating according to his or her
individual needs and sense of family. In fact, the cases of new immigrant religion in this
volume do not necessarily take American religious congregational forms, as hypothesized

The family is the center of religiosity and spirituality in chapter 10, Russell
Jeung’s study of second-generation Chinese Americans. Jeung illustrates the dissonance
between Western definitions of religion as a public institutionalized phenomenon and
Asian practices of religion that are noninstitutionalized and centered around the family.
These Chinese Americans identify as nonreligious; however, they still make use of
religious repertoires of Chinese popular religion. The second generation engages in what
Jeung calls “Chinese American familism,” practices and rituals of family sacrifice and
filial piety. Similar to the Vietnamese Americans in Peché’s chapter, the family is the
object of worship, sacrifice, and moral obligation. The lines between ethnicity and
religion are blurred in Chinese American familism. But the Chinese Americans in Jeung’s sample do not interpret their practices as religion, because Western discourse defines religion as a matter of belief and truth. Instead, Chinese Americans interpret their practices of Chinese American familism as ethnic and family traditions. Contrary to Herberg’s theory, these Chinese Americans do not need a religious identity to belong in the United States. Instead, the collective identity and solidarity of the family seems to be enough.

Family takes center stage as the site for religion and spirituality among the second generation in this part. Linda Ho Peché’s study of Vietnamese Americans in chapter 11 illustrates this most clearly. Home shrines play an important role in the religious and spiritual practice of both Catholic and Buddhist second-generation Vietnamese Americans. People in Peché’s sample are interested in continuing these personal and individualized religious practices at home, even though some no longer identify with an institutionalized religion. And with considerable leeway and freedom to imbue these rituals with their own meanings apart from the institutionalized religions, these Vietnamese Americans have innovated, creating their own symbols and rituals to represent their own relationships to faith and family. Contrary to Herberg’s theory, the highly personal faith practices of second-generation Vietnamese Americans do not draw them to identify with other coreligionists; rather, they are rituals that strengthen the solidarity and identification with family.

In chapter 12, Khyati Y. Joshi highlights how Hinduism’s status as a religious minority in the United States shapes the ethnic and religious development of second-generation Indian American Hindus. Joshi points out that the experiences of Indian
American Hindus are not monolithic but vary by both life stage and the time of their parents’ immigration, which she divides into Generations A and B. To Indian American Hindus, Hinduism and Indianness are interconnected. Importantly, Indian American Hindus explore and negotiate the meanings of being Indian American Hindus as racial and religious outsiders in a white and Christian America. In fact, the persistence of ethnicity among Indian American Hindus seems to be tied to both the racial and religious unassimilability of Hindus in the United States. In examining Indian American Hindus, Joshi shows the limits of an approach that only recognizes religion when it is linked to an identity, an institution, or formalized practices. Joshi’s approach to second-generation Indian American Hinduism as a *lived religion* underlines the persistence of Hinduism in the second generation even when it is not officially professed or formally practiced.

**Conclusion**

Much in American society has changed since Will Herberg argued that new Americans can affiliate themselves as Protestant, Catholic, or Jew. Racial minorities have emerged and constitute the largest share of Americans under 18 and of the children of immigrants, the new second generation. American cultural discourse has shifted from the religious triple melting pot to one that celebrates ethnic, religious, and racial identities. The members of this new and emerging diverse population, particularly the second generation, are positioned to combine their backgrounds in ways that their parents and earlier generations were not permitted to, lest they risk marginalization from mainstream public life.

The studies in this volume illustrate how these religious innovations have served
members of the second generation, affirmed their ties to their parents and families, and reconfigured their social life through the beliefs and practices of faith in its manifold forms. The four trajectories described in this introduction are not typologies exclusive of one another; the groups display a range in their combinations of religious, racial, and ethnic identities.

While we argue that the sociohistorical context of how religion is lived in America has changed much since Herberg’s day, we do agree with his conclusions about the continued salience of religion in America’s public life and of the secularization of American religion in Americans’ private lives. Herberg summarized, “Religion has not disappeared; it is probably more pervasive today, and in many ways more influential than it has been for generations” (1955, 265).

Likewise, religion has been front and center in the political lives of members of the new second generation, who have come of age since the events of 9/11 and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite the government’s insistence that the United States is not at war against Islam, many Americans feel just the opposite—that they are. Religion also holds sway in several other key public debates, including abortion, the federal budget, same-sex marriage, and even the environment. Similarly, American religious institutions factor in the social construction of racial and ethnic identities. Through the funding of faith-based initiatives and the establishment of ethnic- and racial-specific ministries, these institutions have consciously promoted Asian American and Latino constituencies. Indeed, the fact that members of the Asian American second generation are more likely to affiliate with a religion than their parents are demonstrates the continued significance of religious identity in becoming American.
Paradoxically, while institutionalized religion continues to have an influential public role in American public life, its significance to the new second generation’s private life has declined. Herberg coined this social process the “secularization of religion,” in which particular creedal beliefs and practices are no longer adhered to or followed. Instead, members of the new second generation, like other young Americans, value an individualistic, therapeutic spirituality that mistrusts religious authority and instead embraces authenticity in being and relationships.

This value for authenticity now frames the questions “Who am I?” and “Where do I belong?” for the new second generation of Asian Americans and Latinos. Their racialized status as outsiders, foreigners, and “probationary Americans” challenges their claim to be truly American (Park and Park 2005). At the same time, racialized multiculturalism and religious pluralism afford them discourses and institutional sites to resist this marginalization and to claim identity in America. By making use of religious, racial, and ethnic resources, the new second generation is staking its claim in America and perhaps forging a new “American Way of Life.”

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